



Will Hutton

# AIPC EXCELLENCE IN CONVENTION CENTRE MANAGEMENT

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT THE 2010 AIPC CONGRESS IN LIVERPOOL

THE GOAL THE ORGANIZERS OF AIPC HAD SET FOR THE 2010 CONGRESS WAS 'TO BRING A VERY UNIQUE AND TARGETED PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CENTRE EXECUTIVES'. DID THEY DELIVER? AND WHAT DID INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS LEARN FROM THIS CONGRESS?  
 REPORT CÉCILE CAIATI-KOCH

Liverpool - let's be honest, not the easiest destination to get to for a lot of attendees - organized the whole thing flawlessly. As genuine hosts for their worldwide peers, Jacquie Rogers, ACC Liverpool General Manager, and her staff managed the event with a flamboyant flair. A perfect example of English excellence in hosting prestigious conferences.

But what about the congress itself? The ambitious programme, themed 'A Multi-dimensional Look at the Critical Processes of Growth and Development' attracted some 150 senior attendees from all over the world. A variety of speakers presented their ideas according to their field of expertise: architecture, finance, economy and of course the meetings industry.

What did we learn? That we are going through difficult times and it is not over yet. Thanks to some banks, some of us are in deep trouble and we will see shifts from Europe to other continents. So far nothing new...

Interesting to notice was that some speakers' ideas did not always coincide: one said that China would be playing a leading role soon, while another argued India or even the USA would be leading the world for the next 2 to 3 generations and that other BRIC countries may encounter difficulties in different fields, such as population growth or politics.

But it was a bit of a pity that the presentation of the results of an interesting survey held among AIPC members missed a dynamic

approach: the presentation came down to reading the results! The subject was highly appealing but missed depth. We concluded in the end that a slight majority of congress centres are still rather optimistic although it remains clearly a buyers' market.

The real highlight of the congress was the presentation the maverick Englishman Will Hutton who developed a totally new idea for the meetings industry. A great speaker on top of that who really brought the audience to life. He argued that not just tourism should be the focus of the meetings industry but the knowledge industry should be the main field of interest for collaboration (and with that he meant not just the clinical knowledge, but all kinds of knowledge). He said: *'Join forces with clusters of excellence, like universities, hospitals, etc., explore all kinds of knowledge industries in your area because those people will always meet all over the world'*. As we are entering the knowledge era this will only grow in future. Did I learn something there? Yes I did!