

EYE ON EXHIBITIONS



Was it good for you, too?

It is not uncommon for exhibitors to think a show is over when the doors close on the final day. While the hard work and long hours have come to an end, a post-show evaluation can be an effective and valuable exercise for an exhibitor. It should include visitor follow-up, staff feedback and determining the success of initial objectives – and can often be the key to determining whether or not the trade show has been a success.

Exhibiting can be expensive, so evaluating the company's performance can help show which shows best suit the delivery of products and/or services to a target market.

Here are four top tips to ensure exhibition follow-up produces results...

**1** Contact all business leads by phone or email within two days of the exhibition to develop a professional relationship with potential clients (thank them for visiting your stand and advise of any offers available).

**2** Ask existing clients who attended the exhibition for an objective opinion of your company's stand.

**3** Liaise with staff on their perceptions of being involved in the exhibition. Determine if they thought they were adequately briefed and trained, if they had the necessary resources and marketing collateral, and if they felt their assigned roles best showcased their skills.

**4** Weigh up your company's performance with its original exhibition objectives. Determine whether the outcome reflects the objectives. If a product was launched, did the exhibition provide enough opportunities for leverage?

After following up leads and obtaining staff feedback, the success of exhibiting can be analysed by comparing costs against returns after three, six and 12 months.



**MATTHEW PEARCE**  
President,  
Exhibition & Event  
Association of  
Australasia.  
[www.eeaa.com.au](http://www.eeaa.com.au)  
[www.gotapassion.com.au](http://www.gotapassion.com.au)

CENTRE POINTS

# Stay green, or move into the red...

By P.-Michel Bouchard, CEO, Quebec City Convention Centre.

An increasingly hot topic in the meetings industry has been the "greening" of meetings.

As clients become more aware of the effects of their conventions and exhibitions on the environment, they are demanding eco-friendly actions from the venues. Many convention centres have taken strides toward sustainable development, but how can one distinguish tangible actions from mere trend following? Clients must observe and ask questions. For example, what happens to surplus food and kitchen waste? Does the convention centre have a recycling program? Is there an environmental policy? What measures are available to ensure

events are eco-friendly? And, most importantly, is the venue treating sustainable development as just another trend or is it part of the corporate culture?

Since opening in 1996, Quebec City Convention Centre has moved to establish credibility in this area through measurable actions and innovative programs. With the soaring demand for zero waste and zero-carbon events, the centre has launched Products & Services for Eco-Friendly Events run by an eco-advisor.

Over the years, collective efforts have resulted in tonnes of cardboard and paper as well as mountains of glass and plastic being sent back for recycling rather than to the incinerator or

landfill. We are also in the process of obtaining US Green Building Council Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design.

Centres that take this green movement lightly will soon see their sales decline. In a not-too-distant future, green auditors will certify venues to ensure claims are backed with tangible and verifiable measures. Most importantly, clients must demand eco-friendly actions in order to reduce the environmental impact of their events. Only then will our industry truly be green.

• *Quebec City Convention Centre is a long-standing member of the International Association of Congress Centres, [www.aipc.org](http://www.aipc.org)*

• From page 13

destinations yet). Many are using rolling incentive programs so as to be under the radar."

There was a need to value add and be creative.

**Associations seen as key**  
International association meetings are going to continue to be vitally important to suppliers across the world.

This is the message from a joint survey of international associations by ICCA and IMEX.

Following a similar survey four months earlier, the anticipated and actual attendance at association meetings has continued to be strong with 30 per cent reporting higher attendance than in previous years and 48 per cent seeing no change. Of those recording a fall, 12 per cent described it as "slight" while 9 per cent said it had been "significant". These figures were a few percentage points more optimistic than the earlier survey.

In contrast, the financial pressures on association events were increasing with 18 per cent of those surveyed reporting higher revenue from sponsors and exhibitions than in previous years (down from 20 per cent in the previous survey) and 38 per cent reporting no change. However, 44 per cent (4 per cent more than in the previous survey) reported less revenue from these sources.

And fewer association executives are optimistic about increased attendance at their events next

year, with 48 per cent expecting lower attendances than this year, down from only 6 per cent in the previous survey.

"While there is no doubt that international association meetings have been the star performance sector over the past year, they are feeling the pressure of the continued economic turbulence, especially as corporate sponsorship budgets continue to be cut," says ICCA CEO Martin Sirk. "But the picture is extremely mixed, and we're hearing that many regional – that is, European or Asia-Pacific – events are at record levels while some world events are struggling to attract attendances. The lower expectations for next year are also a matter for concern, but need to be seen against the backdrop of strong attendances this year."

**Technology bringing industry changes**

Increasingly tech-savvy and eco-conscious clients will drive continued change in meetings and events management in the year ahead, according to US meetings management, logistics and event company Publicis Meetings USA.

"Technological advances continue to be increasingly important and are leading to more requests for customisation and interactivity in meetings and events," says managing director Karen Young. "We expect technology to be at the core of several trends."

One noteworthy trend her team has already identified is the use of mobile devices and applications to

promote audience engagement, interactivity and networking.

Apps are being developed for individual events and programs, allowing organisers to communicate with attendees before and during the meeting.

Other apps cover audience response and networking, such as VisionTree, which uses proprietary software on phones to tracking audience responses, and Spotme, which uses proprietary software and equipment for messaging, customised agendas and audience response.

PMUSA expects customised lead generation and comprehensive registration tracking and reporting to become more prevalent through the use of barcode scanning and RFID.

Young says the company expects more requests next year for hybrid meetings.

"Incorporating technology such as live broadcasts and video streaming allows clients to run and attend meetings from a remote location. The cost savings is a major factor, along with the importance of a meeting's environmental responsibility."

Young also forecasts a greater use of technology, such as Skype, to connect clients and meeting managers during the planning stages of events.

While there has been less focus on luxury resorts in the past two years, the company's meetings management team is beginning to see a change, with more clients asking to use high-end properties. ☐