New Technology Requires Realistic Response

“We need to be thinking about what we as centres need to do to enhance our ‘experience’ products so that we will always have incremental value to offer.”

Whenever the topic of the future comes up in connection with convention centres one big factor is always technology – specifically, what will the future bring in the way of new demands and formats, and how will we be able to accommodate these?

You only have to look back ten years to realize how little we can predict about the direction technology will take in the next ten. But we at least need to narrow the range of possibility and act on those things within our control if we are to be somewhat prepared. Here are some things worth thinking about in that regard:

First, there will be associated costs, and these will need to be paid for in some way. Whether in the form of new equipment or servicing, time has shown that not only can these be substantial but that it isn’t easy to collect from the users, particularly when we live in a world where access is increasingly seen as something that should be available for free – a view that may work for smaller clusters such as retailers but becomes problematic when you are talking about the demands of thousands of users in a convention centre environment. This puzzle needs some creative thinking and cooperative decision making in conjunction with clients sooner than later so that there is some kind of approach established when it comes time to address future growth.

Secondly, we will have to create structures and systems within centres that can readily adapt to future changes, possibly on a very large scale. The “imbedded technology” that seemed like such a good idea twenty years ago was proven to be a very bad idea when the direction of that technology changed drastically (i.e., the ascent of wireless) and one can only assume that equal surprises await in the future. The challenge will be to ensure that facility design can accommodate any number of possibilities without massive structural disruption, and that is something we need to be encouraging our architects and others who must think through building configurations to be working on even now.

Third, and again on a design theme, we need to recognize that every new technologically-enabled development will have spatial counterparts that will also need to be addressed. For example, the growth of hybrid meetings is only in its infancy but already it is clear that accommodating this extra audience demands different servicing and even layouts to reach its full potential. New forms of presentation, up to and including “virtual speakers” will bring new requirements as well, and we must assume that as these capabilities increase and become more affordable there will be greater use of them across the board rather than just in specialized cases as it is now.

We may, in fact, become more in the way of communications hubs for information flow than space to accommodate live bodies, but to remain relevant we will have to be ready to adapt to the times.

Finally, all these developments mean we will have to focus even more on the “experiential” dimension of our respective products to make sure that there is added value to actually being in attendance at future events as it becomes easier to participate without actually being there. We continue to say that this value is about the opportunity for personal interactions and networking but here again, technology is enabling those aspects as well in ways not imagined a decade ago. We need to be thinking about what we as centres need to do to enhance our “experience” products so that we will always have incremental value to offer, whatever direction technology may take.

It’s a big job – but something that will shape our future regardless of whether or not we choose to address it.

Geoff Donaghy, AIPC President
This year’s AIPC Annual Conference theme deals with all the big issues – and big issues need a global context, along with a view to the future and some good advice on dealing with the realities already upon us. This year’s keynotes will deliver all that, and more!

Dr. Parag Khanna is a leading global strategist, political observer and best-selling author. Named one of Esquire’s 75 Most Influential People of the 21st Century and featured in WIRED magazine’s “Smart List”, he is a Director of the Hybrid Reality Institute, Senior Fellow at the New America Foundation, Adjunct Professor in the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore and Senior Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations. The author of Hybrid Reality: Thriving in the Emerging Human-Technology Civilization (2012) and How to Run the World: Charting a Course to the Next Renaissance (2011), he lectures frequently at international conferences and gives executive briefings to government leaders and major corporations on global trends, systemic risks, future scenarios, economic master planning, emerging market strategies, and technological disruptions.

In describing his session “Globalization, Urbanization and the Future of the Meetings Industry” he says: “We are entering an age of hyper-globalization in which robust inter-continental patterns of trade, finance, migration and travel are expanding across the world. In such a competitive landscape, countries and cities must do more than play host to conventions; they must become portals to mutually beneficial economic opportunities. Countries that invest in infrastructure and diversified national experiences for visitors will be the most attractive venues for global audiences”.

David Rowan is editor of WIRED magazine’s UK edition, which won BSME Launch Editor of the Year in 2009. His most recent awards include Techmark Technology Journalist of the Year, DMA Editor of the Year and BSME Editor of the Year in 2012. He has written regular columns in GQ, Condé Nast Traveller, The Times and The Guardian. He has wide newspaper experience as an editor, including editing The Jewish Chronicle and The Guardian’s websites and Comment pages; has made TV films for Channel 4 News; and has written long features for The Telegraph Magazine, Sunday Times Magazine and Observer. At WIRED he has extended the brand into conferences, apps, and a consulting arm.

He speaks widely on topics ranging from the future of luxury brands to the new rules of business in a mobile-internet age, and recent engagements have taken him to Dubai, Melbourne, Moscow and Shanghai. David’s session is entitled “Changing World; Changing Events” and he will bring his broad perspective on business and technology evolution to bear on this topic.

“From technology to formats and from experiences to objectives, event delegate and planner expectations are evolving daily. This session will offer a perspective on key changes taking place well outside our industry that will nevertheless have a major impact – and how we can begin thinking about them in positive and productive terms.”

Avinash Chandarana represents diversity through his personal and professional life experience – Indian by culture, born in Uganda, Africa and raised and educated in the United Kingdom, his background exemplifies a broad understanding of the sensitivities and needs of the growing international and multi-cultural business environment. With a degree in Business, his twenty year international business career covers engagements in the corporate and not for profit sectors with posts held in the United Kingdom, United States, Norway and Belgium and assignments spanning a further twenty plus countries.

As Group Learning and Development Director at MCI, he founded and leads the MCI Institute. He is professionally affiliated with the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) – the world’s leading workplace learning and performance association. Voted as a Platinum speaker by Meetings Professionals International (MPI) he captivates audiences at regional, national and international conferences and is regularly invited to speak, moderate and facilitate at industry events.

As a leading cross-cultural trainer, accomplished presentation skills coach, facilitator and moderator, Avinash has extensive experience working with clients ranging from consulting firms, pharmaceutical and telecommunications industries to non-profit associations and NGO’s worldwide. His AIPC session “Cultural Adaptations for the Industry: a Practical Guide for Centre Managers” will help delegates better understand how they can interact more effectively. “We’re all working in an increasingly globalized environment but may not always be prepared for the implications of this for our business and personal interactions. This session will provide some solid advice on meeting new challenges.”
Berlin 2014: Here’s the Program!

Our 2014 theme ‘Megatrends!’ has facilitated a wide range of relevant topics, from imagining the future to addressing today’s realities. In addition to our three inspiring keynote presenters, AIPC 2014 in Berlin will deliver a broad range of relevant sessions including:

**Major Sporting Events – a New Market Opportunity for Savvy Centres**
Centres everywhere are looking for new business opportunities to help diversify their business – but the meetings, conferences and exhibitions associated with major sporting events are often overlooked. This session will offer an insight into what these events offer and how they can be more effectively addressed.

**Centre Implications for New Technological Evolution**
As technology evolution continues to dominate discussions of both centre design and client expectations the immediate question is how to meet these demands in a practical and cost-effective way in a centre context. This panel will take a practical view of what immediate and imminent developments are most likely and how these can be managed.

**New Developments and Strategies in the Exhibitions Sector**
Exhibition organizers are having to be much more strategic in their approaches these days as they face ongoing competition from other media and increasing demands from both organizers and attendees. From innovative research to tracking organizer expectations, this session will explore what kinds of adaptations centres need to make in order to accommodate this new world as well as what the future may hold.

**FOOD! Issues and Opportunities Associated with one of Our Biggest Revenue Sources**
In a time of increasing demands for concessions and subventions, food and beverage has become one of the few areas where a centre can actually make money – but doing so requires constant innovation and an ability to manage demands from organizers for free access. This panel session will deal with all aspects of the F&B discussion and table some of the key issues.

**The Evolution of Image: Where Have We Come From? Where do We Go Next?**
There has been a profound shift in the expectations of a destination for selling into the meetings market but not everyone has kept up and there is a lot further to go. This session will demonstrate the changes through a visual depiction of evolving attitudes and case studies of how centres are responding to the new challenges.

**Enhancing Performance Measurement: Economic Impact and Customer Satisfaction**
The new approach being taken to client evaluations in the AIPC Apex Award is creating deeper insights into the driving forces behind customer satisfaction, while the AIPC / Ipsos Economic Impact Model has created greater consistency and credibility around the measurement of reporting event benefits. Both programs are updated in this prelude to the Apex Award winner to follow in the evening.

**AIPC Goes Pecha Kucha: a Global expansion Roundup**
This rapid-fire format made famous in the design world will be used to provide an array of insights into centre expansions and new building projects now underway around the world. Get ready for a whirlwind of information in a very entertaining format!

**AIPC 56th General Assembly**
AIPC’s business session will feature a full Program Update as well as all the important elements of the General Assembly including the President’s Management Report, the presentation of new AIPC members, Board elections, the presentation of AIPC’s Strategic Business Plan for 2014-2015 and both a welcome to the AIPC Conference 2015 in Boston and your opportunity to consider our invitation for the AIPC Conference 2016.
AVERY SPECIAL EXPERIENCE AWAIT IN BERLIN:
A Message from Our Host

Communiqué talks with Heike Mahmoud, Director Conventions, visitBerlin Berlin Convention Office about the learning and destination experiences AIPC Annual Conference delegates can expect at this year’s event;

Above all, Berlin is a place of history. 9 November 1989 was the day the Berlin Wall came down, and to honour this historic milestone 25 years ago, a series of special events and museum exhibitions will take place throughout the city. Around 9 November 2014 thousands of illuminated white balloons will form a 12-kilometre-long lighted wall as a “symbol of hope for a world without walls”. If the weather allows, it will even be seen from outer space.

What ideas / learnings do you think delegates will take away from the Berlin experience that they may be able to apply in their own cities and venues?

Berlin is an excellent place to meet, to exchange knowledge and to discuss future developments and innovations, so this year’s AIPC congress theme is a perfect fit. We hope you will be inspired by the creative atmosphere of the city, the new CityCube Berlin and the Berliners as well. The AIPC Master Class will also be a great way to involve students to educate the future generation in our industry and to leave a legacy in Berlin!

An international network like AIPC is a great opportunity to share and develop new trends. We hope that the “Berlin-network” will be always a part of your association memory!

What will be of particular interest to AIPC delegates in terms of their convention experience in Berlin?

Berlin is one of the most multifaceted cities in Europe – an international trendsetter, one of the leading conference and convention destinations in the world, a vibrant city of arts and design and a pacesetter in sustainability. In short: Berlin is a city that is growing and changing each and every day, and we will show you many different aspects of our exciting city. It will start with the new home for conventions – the new CityCube Berlin – which will offer you the chance to explore this new venue and the flexibility it can offer. At the same time, we have created diverse “Berlin Experience programs” on the Pre-conference day. From a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Site Museum Island, to Architecture and Lifestyle in Berlin, Urban Art or a guided bike tour along the Berlin Wall, I am sure you will find your own hidden places!

How will the social program contribute to this?

Berlin offers an endless variety of event locations and venues, and these provide an ideal basis for successful events. To give you an idea of how different evening functions can be in Berlin, we selected two of them for the AIPC conference: “Beach Mitte” and “AXICA”. Both are very different in style, architecture and in history and will be a part of exploring Berlin in a different way!

What are the biggest changes someone who has not visited Berlin for a few years see? What will have remained the same? Berlin is like a magnet: an astonishing and colourful mosaic of people and languages, cultures and lifestyles. You will be inspired by the creative atmosphere of the city!

As the capital of Germany, Berlin offers a close connection between politics, economy and science. The cultural scene is developing: you will find extraordinary exhibitions in our museums and within the last few years more than 300 galleries have opened their doors. Over 1,500 cultural events take place every day- it will be your choice to select one! Science and new start-ups have created new places for innovations, and the fashion and music industry influence our everyday life.

The city’s hotel portfolio is also expanding. Berlin has tripled its capacities within the last 25 years, and you will find a great diversity – from luxury 5 star hotels to state of the art and trendy or stylish 4 and 3 star hotels and hostels as well. That means we can offer our tourists and congress participants an excellent variety of hotels with value for money.

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AIPC’s Second ‘Master Class’ Will Leave a Lasting Impression

For the second consecutive year, AIPC will be carrying out a legacy project in the form of an industry “Master Class” in our Annual Conference host city. This year, the program will be carried out under the auspices of the University of Applied Sciences of Berlin and with the involvement of a number of other German universities that have been invited to participate.

The target of the Master Class will be German University-level students currently engaged in related studies, those in adjacent areas with an interest in the role of meetings (i.e., business, professions, political) and local individuals currently engaged in the industry looking for a professional update. Its objectives will include helping students to understand:

- the scope and global reach of the meetings industry and the key role played by centres
- the major components of the industry with particular reference to convention centres,
- the overall economic role played by centres in their own communities, and
- the latest industry trends and expectations for the future

Participants will have opportunities to clarify areas and issues of particular interest to them in their studies, including potential career opportunities.

The one day program will consist of University-level lectures / panels on key industry topics, practical / logistical presentations re: current and future industry practices and interactive engagement to help clarify areas of particular relevance and engagement that arise as well as solicit participant perspectives on future directions.

As with the previous Master Class in Cape Town, the Berlin edition will be supported by our host centre, in this case CityCube Berlin along with the visitBerlin Berlin Convention Office. It will take place on the University campus on the Saturday immediately preceding the start of the AIPC Annual Conference.

AIPC members and partners who are investing their time to make this session a big success:  
Jan van den Bosch | RAI Convention Centre
Olga Figuerola | Barcelona Congress Center
Catherine Partington | CityCube Berlin
Julie-May Ellingson | Durban International Convention Center
Marta Gomes | VIPARIS
Aloysius Arlando | Singapore EXPO Convention and Exhibition Center
Rafael Vinoly-Menendez | LMN Architects and
Rod Cameron | The Joint Meetings Industry Council

An interview with Sallie Coventry, Group Exhibition Director, Meetings & Events Portfolio | Reed Travel Exhibitions on the IBTM Family

What are the current up and coming meetings destinations?
South Korea is another up and coming destination, which we believe will nurture a thriving industry. The last UIA statistics from 2012 rank South Korea as the 5th most popular country in terms of international meetings, ahead of both Germany and France. Similarly, Seoul – the capital of South Korea – was ranked as the 5th most popular city for international meetings ahead of Tokyo, Barcelona and Berlin. Mexico City jumped from 64th in the 2007 ICCA rankings to 39th in 2011, a position that will most likely continue to increase in coming years, and Malaysia is fast emerging as a choice destination for international conventions and exhibitions due to its proactive government initiatives, a secure and stable political situation, and growing strength of the local economy.

How does your education program support professional development in the industry?
Across the board, there is something for everyone. Individuals at all levels of their career can benefit from the variety of topics and the experience of our industry speakers from around the world. The details of the IBTM knowledge programme are uploaded onto the website as the year progresses.

Where do you see the portfolio growing from here on? What areas of opportunity do you intend to explore?
The IBTM portfolio has evolved into exhibitions and table-top events on 6 continents. We believe India holds enormous potential so it is very exciting for us to be involved in this market. We will have our first IBTM event in Africa at the end of April 2014 as part of Africa Travel Week, since once again, Africa as a whole has one of the highest growth rates across the world, surpassing even Asia. Reed Travel Exhibitions is continually exploring other areas of the world where the IBTM brand can help develop the industry but for now we are focused on delivering all our events in 2014.
What Do Clients Want Today?
A Double-Barrelled Answer!

The “dueling duo” who made a very big impression debating the relative virtues and prospects of PCO and Association event management approaches at last year’s AIPC Conference in Cape Town are back – this time with their views on what organizers want from venues in today’s complex environment. Oscar Cerezales, Chief Operating Officer Americas & Asia Pacific and Group Director Association Relations, MCI Group and Ben Hainsworth, Association Executive Director, K.I.T. Group GmbH Association & Conference Management air their respective views on client priorities for convention centres in a spirited interview;

What new kinds of support are organizers more likely to be looking for from centres as compared with 5 years ago?

Cerezales: I see several different types of support based on four key issues. First, they want what I would call hyper-networking, which is higher volume networking with more available formats – and which needs things like high end technology, networking dedicated areas – design/area/flow. Secondly they want help in addressing the challenge of the learning experience with different cultures and multi generations attending an event at the same time, which requires multi flexible space (more and more breakouts) and better AV with more interactive tools. Third, they want engagement rather than just participation and the experience is extended before, during and after online and offline, requiring things like better and better Wi-Fi systems, charger stations and dedicated hybrid meeting spaces. Finally, they are looking for business models where both organizers and centres are able to achieve optimal expenditures by participants, which require greater transparency and flexibility to achieve.

Hainsworth: Areas of growing interest relate to things like help in interactions with local ambassadors with authorities, professional bodies, regulators, allied service providers and so forth and a venue infrastructure & design that enhance interaction around content – both within the building and with the surrounding community. It goes without saying that there is also a need for massive & dense Wi-Fi capabilities to meet the demands throughout venues.

What areas are most likely to increase in this regard in the future?

Cerezales: In my opinion, they are first, better technology – whatever makes the experience better/cheaper/faster; one-stop shopping solutions and co-creation, where centres and organizers creating events in a co-ownership basis and share the risk and rewards. Helping enhance engagement (again facilitating hyper networking, learning experiences etc.) and support for delegate boosting in B2C events will also be important. One concern I see is a trend toward shorter events, which will impact the centre yield.

Hainsworth: Centres facilitating more meaningful and cost-effective interactivity, while providing advice on how to achieve it will be increasingly important; this will include not just information exchange but also content building and delivery, as well as nurturing and engaging with communities both formally and informally.

What is the relative importance of destination qualities as opposed to centre features in your evaluation process?

Cerezales: It really depends on three variables: who is the client, what is the project and what is the business relationship between client and organizer. That being said, and as a very generic answer, both destination and centre qualities are of the same importance and need to work together.

Hainsworth: The important variables for regular itinerant events are inseparable core elements for success to organisers. The best packages are characterised by a phenomenon whereby visitors don’t distinguish between the two – they are part of a package.

Assuming comparable destination attributes, what kind of centre features do you find most attractive?

Cerezales: My top list would be:
• Centre itself | new vs. old, design, technology, quality.
• Location | downtown vs. a few km’s away
• Connection | with public transportation especially, to the city, to the airport...
• Housing | number and type of rooms at a walking distance, or 10 minutes by taxi
• In-house services | quality, track-record...
• Team | sales, operations, management, experience, engagement, industry understanding...
• Flexibility | spaces, services, conditions…
Hainsworth: For me, it would be flexibility/scalability from a cost perspective, adaptability from both a layout and comfort perspective and frank, reliable and respectful relationships as a basis for our interactions.

What kinds of centre credentials have importance to you in looking at alternatives?

Cerezales: Basically, a demonstrated ability to handle similar events (type, size, challenges), accreditation and their membership in respected associations that show an interest in quality.

Hainsworth: Not all affiliations, standards and awards have the same value for customers like me – I’d be inspired by venues that continually show themselves to be informed thought leaders and ‘innovations implementers’ in our industry on a global basis.

What kinds of features that you would find valuable do you have the greatest difficulty finding in centres today?

Cerezales: The greatest difficulty it is not about the hardware (building, technology, quality) but the “software” in the form of the team. To me it’s all about talent. A great team can change the whole value perception.

Hainsworth: Outside the US (and parts of Asia) larger conferences often have to content themselves with high-cost and relatively low-quality temporary lecture rooms. Costs and architecture often allow nothing more but we do sometimes feel that we’re letting down our visitors, customers and brands with what is undeniably a second-rate lecture room product (both aesthetically and audio-visually). It has come to be accepted but let’s face it – it’s far from ideal. I’d also add to the list decent, affordable and appropriate food for diverse & demanding visitors.

Where in your opinion have centres made the most positive progress in recent years?

Cerezales: For me, there are three areas: design, technology and processes.

Hainsworth: I see a lot of progress in developing sustainable relationships with organisers based on more than just rental and service contracts – there’s still much progress to be made by both parties but it has to be said that the better venues have led a noticeable change in the way that the business relationship is managed.

OUR NEW AD CAMPAIGN FEATURES AIPC QUALITY

We’re proud of the role our members play in raising and maintaining a commitment to management quality – and we’re going to make that very clear through a highly targeted campaign to air at IMEX in Frankfurt this year. Prominently featured in the IMEX Daily will be AIPC – sponsored ads featuring the AIPC Quality Commitment and encouraging readers and clients to get a copy of the AIPC Global Quality Directory for their ongoing reference.

In a world of heavy competition, the AIPC Quality brand will be used as a way to focus attention on what AIPC members bring to the event experience – and another means of underlying the value of quality commitment to the site selection process.
An Expanding Future for Global Industry Trade Shows:

An interview with Sallie Coventry, Group Exhibition Director, Meetings & Events Portfolio | Reed Travel Exhibitions on the IBTM Family

The IBTM portfolio has evolved considerably in the last few years. What has this meant in terms of the way you approach the overall meetings market?
The portfolio has indeed evolved and now operate 7 events across 6 continents which includes the additions of specialist focused table top events in India and Africa added in the past 12 months. Combined, the seven IBTM shows provide direct access to 5,000 suppliers from 100 countries, 17,000 meeting planners and are responsible for generating over 100,000 pre-scheduled appointments.
The evolution of our event portfolio has seen the development of individual events supporting the meetings industry in their own country and region. These include CIBTM which takes places in Beijing annually and focuses on international and regional exhibitors who want to meet Chinese and regional buyers. The same goes for GBTM which again focuses on the Gulf and wider Middle East, but has now developed into an event where not only the region is represented by more and more international exhibitors are wanting to get their brands in front of those regional and local buyers who are increasingly looking to take their meetings and events overseas.
Wherever our events take place they are all run with the same values in mind, ultimately to provide the very best business platform for all our attendees, as well as giving them the networking that brings this industry together and the programme of education that provides not only knowledge but also career development. In striving to make every event a success, we also have to keep on top of the Hosted Buyer programme which of course is the pinnacle of the business opportunity. The quality of our buyers is the key, and that means continually searching the world for new buyers as well as developing the pool in those new economies that are emerging in the world where we may not have tapped into previously.

What have been the biggest changes you’ve seen in the industry over the last five years?
The meetings industry has seen considerable advancements in technology in recent years, and also in the ways in which technology can be used to support meetings requirements. As the industry is evolving at such an exponential rate we make it one of our core objectives to stay ahead of innovations, and deliver education and resources which support all of our attendees in remaining at the forefront of the industry. Digital innovations such as webinars, online presentations, tweet chats, podcasts, QR codes and blogs serve as a primary support networks these days, and also provide added depth and dimension to education content which is vital for industry learning. Technology is also transforming the way that events are organised, and enhancing visitor experiences. In the future an increasing number of events will be organised and run through smartphones and mobile applications that can be utilised for audience polling, networking, lead exchange and provide attendees with venue maps, contact information and up-to-the-minute updates on the meetings and events.

What are the current up and coming meetings destinations?
Following each of our shows Reed Travel Exhibitions conducts post show research that highlights destinations that will be popular for our buyers in the next twelve months. India, Brazil, South Korea, Mexico and Malaysia are all countries that have been identified by our buyers as key areas of interest for future business opportunities. We launched IBTM India in Mumbai on 12th September, 2013 and our second event follows this year in the city of Chennai. India is currently the world’s third largest economy and has a projected GDP growth of 8% in the next five years, making it a strong player in the MICE industry. In addition to this, India is showing an increase in outbound business, estimated to be worth some US$600 million, it is projected to increase by 13% in coming years. Brazil is another destination which we will be hearing more and more about in coming months – not least because they are hosting the World Cup in 2014 and the Olympic Games in 2016. As the largest country in Latin America and the fifth largest country in the world, Brazil was ranked by ICCA in 2012 as among the top ten most important destinations for meetings activity.

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