Share Your Knowledge – Get Involved!

“As an AIPC member, you have the kind of knowledge content we need and the ability to put it into the context that will help other members do a better job in their respective communities – and that’s why we need you involved!”

AIPC is built on the principle that our members have the greatest expertise in centre management, operation and marketing and it’s our job to facilitate the exchange of that knowledge to the best of our ability. That’s why we’ve developed so much programming – from seminars and topic summits to the AIPC Academy and the content of events like our Annual Conference – that’s designed to achieve the delivery of content based on the best experience and knowledge we can access.

This process is facilitated by the fact that while members do sometimes compete, there is much more to be gained by sharing than hoarding. Many issues faced by centres are strictly local, and much of our business is regional. Further, events on an international rotation are usually unlikely to return to the same facility on a regular basis or within a short time. So while we may face off on a few specific events, it’s much more likely that the knowledge we can share – from best practices to event logistics – helps everyone do a better job.

That’s where you come in. As an AIPC member, you have the kind of knowledge content we need and the ability to put it into the context that will help other members do a better job in their respective communities – and that’s why we need you involved!

We’re always looking for members with something to say, and the ability to say it in a professional manner. If you have those qualities – and many of you do – you need to let us know you’re interested.

As we plan the shape and content of our growing roster of events, we need a good range of members willing to take on the responsibility of sharing their ideas and insights. Why not put yourself on that list and start becoming a part of the broader educational effort? You’ll be supporting the future of the industry – and you may just find it a very satisfying experience!
"Our feeling is that we always need to begin the discussion of centre-specific issues and challenges by looking outside the industry for what’s impacting the overall political and economic environment in which we work," said AIPC President Geoff Donaghy. "Our 2014 Annual Conference really took a big step in this direction with keynotes that explored everything from globalization to evolving technology, balanced by sessions that addressed the realities of current operations as expressed by case studies from members and colleagues. The result was both realistic and visionary, which is where we need to place ourselves if we are to deliver ongoing service excellence in a rapidly changing world."

Renowned globalization commentator and author Parag Khanna and Wired magazine Editor David Rowan led the discussion of how current trends are shaping meeting and convention expectations of the future, citing such issues as interactive technologies, political realignment and an increasing role for intercultural business transactions as driving forces for change. On the practical side, panels addressing topics including the evolution of food and beverage (see below), the state of exhibitions and centre-related technology provided delegates with the opportunity to acquire insights and ideas for more immediate application.

Also featured were a session providing insights and tactics for understanding and addressing intercultural transactions for outsourcing by clients – it also saw some significant consensus around the core notion that this was an area of increasing importance and complexity, with the potential to be one of the most important factors in event decision-making.

The opening component delivered by chef Richmond Lim of the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre underlined just how complex and demanding high-quality cuisine had become for a centre catering to growing demands and expectations on all fronts. In addition to superb quality and presentation, top chefs have to address the enormous logistical issues of high volume, stringent food safety issues, a wide diversity of dietary requirements and an increasing range of cultural preferences. The result is a level of organizational complexity that is often more demanding than any other area of centre management, with high-visibility consequences to any mistakes.

Leading PCO Ben Hainsworth acknowledged the growing importance of food quality and the dining experience to both organizers and delegates but noted at the same time the financial challenges associations are facing today and the implications that has for the cost of catering along with other...
Centre Workshop Delivers an Array of Revenue Ideas

Following a dynamic session exploring the widely varying issues and opportunities associated with Food and Beverage operations and offerings, delegates to the 2014 Annual Conference in Berlin were challenged to broaden their view of overall revenue opportunities – either existing or potential – and suggest ways in which centre income streams could be enhanced or diversified. Using both a tablet-based “direct enter” system and written notes from discussion tables, a wide range of ideas appeared in a very short period of time – suggesting that this is a subject much on the minds of centre managers around the world! Some examples of the potential innovations that emerged included the following:

- **Food and Beverage-related revenues**
  - Develop special menus for areas of unique demand, such as wellness menus – that can be added to the F&B offering
  - Repurpose underutilized spaces for use as restaurant space for lease to external operators
  - Develop an on-floor ordering system for food services, particularly for exhibitions – essentially a “butler service” for exhibitors
  - Offer sponsored food products (i.e., branded cookies) that carry sponsor identification
  - Shift the location of restaurants to areas of higher traffic and visibility in order to enhance utilization
  - Expand the capacity of on-site catering capacity and sell products to other venues and leisure facilities

- **Developing new service offerings**
  - Create a hotel booking system that supplies a small royalty for the centre when PCO’s are not involved
  - Develop a low cost registration solution that can be utilized by clients on site with no advance preparation

- **Launch a digital event content capture system that can be offered to clients as an added service**
- **Broker transportation services (i.e., schedule transport like light rail at specific times in order to reduce waits)**
- **Provide marketing and sponsorship as a consulting service at a cost**
- **Expanding naming rights, including for specific areas within or around the overall facility**

**Exploring / expanding non-traditional uses, including:**
- Gala's
- Fundraisers
- Entertainment / cabaret shows
- Sporting events
- Teaching / professional development seminars
- F&B / banqueting events
- Parking / premium parking
- Morning & evening events within the same venue

**Repurposing space for added revenue**
- Convert unused land into herb/vegetable garden to enhance food offering and reduce costs
- Rent underutilized space for temporary or semi-permanent (i.e., seasonal) office accommodation
- Utilize digital signage a reader boards for local or event-related advertising
- Explore using under-utilized parking areas for other purposes, i.e., to companies in the area or for truck marshalling

This collection of ideas should make for an interesting list of opportunities for centres to consider as they explore their own options!

Save the Date!

**AIPC**

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**2015**

**Boston July 5–8**

and another covering the results of the 2014 AIPC Performance and Outlook Survey. The latter documented an overall shift into business growth and optimism while also featuring regional comparisons that illustrated some significant global variations in key industry conditions including competition and business outlook (see details below).

“After so many years of global economic challenge, it was a real pleasure to be coming together in more of an optimistic business environment”, said Donaghy. “At the same time, I think we all realize that industry expectations and conditions are evolving rapidly, and we need the kind of beneficial exchanges this conference delivered in order to maintain our momentum going forward”.

centre services and the need for greater flexibility in food services, particularly in terms of being able to access lower cost options.

Congress Center Hamburg CEO Edgar Hirt delivered the centre perspective which included the importance of facilities retaining control not just for the sake of quality and safety but also because it was, in the end, the centre’s reputation at stake in the final analysis.

All panelists acknowledged that their sometimes–conflicting needs and expectations are best served by a rigorous and open review of needs and expectations well in advance of the event, when there is still time to clarify any misperceptions and align realities. In a time where all signs suggest that Food and Beverage is an area that will only increase in importance, this was the best possible advice for a continuously evolving future.
Results of the 2014 AIPC Global Convention Centre Performance and Outlook Survey revealed a long-awaited upturn in business prospects even as it continued to demonstrate significant variability in world-wide conditions. The Survey results were contained in a detailed presentation by Survey author Michael Hughes of Red 7 Communications and will be more formally detailed in a final report to be made available to AIPC members online.

This was the fifth edition of the Survey, which enabled a good reflection on how conditions and prospects had evolved through a period of significant turmoil brought on by the global financial crisis and subsequent recession. Once again, conclusions were strengthened by a 57% response rate which drove confidence limits to a high level. The largest sample group was Europe, with over half of responding centres, but North America, Asia, Australia and Africa also had statistically strong participation levels.

**Amongst the key findings were:**

> Stabilization and optimism is returning to the industry: rates of growth have slowed, but this reflects stabilization as other key indicators are increasing. Business growth overall for 2014 is projected at 4.7% as opposed to a global GDP increase of only 3.6%. Almost 80% of centres now rate the strength of the economic recovery as either strong or moderate as opposed to just over 50% only a year ago.

> Europe, North America are playing "catchup" with projected revenue increases for 2014 of 5.1% and 4.8% respectively as opposed to only 2.8% and –3% the previous year. Increases are also focused on more traditional revenue areas such as space, services and concessions than in previous years.

> Government policies and cutbacks lead recovery concerns in most areas, with reductions in government participation seen as potential threats to business prospects, particularly in North America, Australia and Africa. Overall, respondents saw a 12% reduction in attendance due to government-related cutbacks.

> Having said that, investment in centre-related projects is increasing, suggesting that more owners are seeing the business as an economic recovery opportunity. A significant 71% of members have some type of renovation, expansion or new building project underway or in the planning stages, with a particularly visible increase in new-builds and renovations. Technology infrastructure and meeting room supply were identified as the two areas most in need of investment.

> Both associations and corporate meetings are now exhibiting strength, vs. the kind of "lopsided" business situation where associations were carrying the load through much of the recessionary period. While pricing has stabilized, with 95% saying rates were either increasing or holding, over half of centres indicated they were still seeing increasing expectations for incentives and subsidies in order to secure business.

> Competition for business remains the top challenge for centres overall. Changes to Sales and Marketing-related tactics exhibited strong regional differences, with North America and Asia focused on pursuing new markets and local alliances while Europe is investing more and changing tactics and messaging.

> The rate of new revenue development is slowing, likely reflecting both the exhaustion of available opportunities after 5 years of recession but also, on a more positive note, increasing stability in traditional streams such as space rental and services.

> The top focus for clients is on mobile tech and Wi-Fi capacity – a reaction to a "content explosion" all are having to deal with in their events.

**Overall, there were some clear conclusions to be draw from the Survey, including:**

> Trends and sentiment are positive, members are optimistic

> However, competition continues to increase – and investments are now also increasing

> There is a major focus on Wi-Fi, telecom and technology in order to handle a content explosion

> Looking back, the past five years were not as bad as feared – but they still brought about some key changes that may be long-lasting.

### The AIPC Convention Centre Curriculum Framework

With so many forms of content delivery emerging, one of the most pressing needs identified both within the Association and amongst centre managers working in their own communities has been the formal definition of an agreed centre-based educational curriculum – in other words, a comprehensive outline of the topic areas that collectively make up what we want to be able to address in any program that purports to define key knowledge areas for centre management.

This has been an issue to ensure continuity of content within a growing array of AIPC programming – but is also an issue for the increasing numbers of AIPC members who are called upon to support local educational programming as offered by colleges, universities and other institutions that deliver industry-related education.

With this in mind, AIPC is now carrying out a program to develop a complete overview of centre-based knowledge areas which can both serve as a framework for specific education programs and as a guide to the development of educational resources like lesson plans and support materials. It is expected that the initial curriculum outline, along with preliminary supporting materials, will be available before the end of the current year, where it can then be used to inform 2015 professional development programming.
AIPC Educational Opportunities
Expanding in New Directions

As announced in the 2014 AIPC General Assembly program update, AIPC’s professional development activities are expanding on a number of fronts, including both enhancements to existing programs and through the addition of new components designed to support members in their own regions and communities. Here’s an overview of what’s coming up:

The AIPC Academy has for the past nine years provided a uniquely convention centre-specific learning experience designed to address the critical need for centres to maintain fully qualified staff in a highly competitive industry and to establish the kind of industry networks that facilitate future professional growth. With a strong track record and an evolving program that ensures every Academy is entirely up to date and relevant to the most current needs, it is quite simply the best professional development opportunity available in our industry today.

Now, the Academy has implemented an inter-disciplinary approach that puts the emphasis on issue identification and practical problem-solving at a management level. With an increasingly diverse international faculty, it offers a broad experience that addresses the needs of staff who are seeking to broaden their knowledge of the industry and prepare for more senior management responsibilities as well as those who already have significant management experience and who are looking for a forum in which they can work with Academy faculty and colleagues on developing strategies to meet today’s most pressing management challenges. This includes:

> centre managers with several years of industry experience who are expected to grow their responsibilities,
> those that have recently moved into this sector and require an overall orientation to the industry, and
> previous attendees who wish to continue to upgrade their knowledge, credentials and networks by returning participants in the new issue-oriented format.

The program takes place at the Dolce la Hulpe, a dedicated training facility just outside of Brussels that provides a perfect learning environment with full technical facilities along with sophisticated accommodation and services.

FEES AND TIMING

DATES
Sunday, February 8 | 14:00 to Friday, February 13 | 12:00

FEES
2.495 EUR | five day program
Early registration up to November 15, 2014
2.695 EUR for registration on/after November 16, 2014

DISCOUNTED REGISTRATION RATES
Available for long haul attendees in recognition of the costs of travel to the Academy:
- 6-8 hour flight: 20% discount
- Over 8 hour flight: 50% discount

SCHOLARSHIPS
A limited number of Professional Development Program scholarships are available through the support of our Corporate Partner IMEX and AIPC members. Application criteria are outlined on the AIPC web site at www.aipc.org/trai_schol.php.
AIPC Quality Standards Accreditation for Durban International Convention Centre

Durban ICC is the latest AIPC member to achieve “Gold” level accreditation from the AIPC Quality Standards Audit. Here’s what they had to say about the experience and the outcome;

Why did you decide to pursue AIPC Quality Standards qualification?
The Durban International Convention Centre (Durban ICC) has always strived to provide world-class service and deliver exceptional events experiences. As we have held the highest grading from the South Africa Tourism Grading Council (Five Stars) for a number of years now, it was felt that we should complement that certification with the most respected international quality accreditation in the convention industry, namely the AIPC Gold Level Quality Standards Accreditation.

How challenging was the process for your staff?
What other benefits came out of the exercise?
The process was fairly straightforward given the fact that Durban ICC already holds several; we simply needed to compile the documentation stipulated by the AIPC Quality Standard which demonstrated the management processes already implemented in the operation of the Centre. The advantage of the AIPC Quality Standard programme is that it uses a holistic approach to total quality management, so the process helped us review our entire operation from all four perspectives, namely the Client, Community, Internal and Owner perspectives. In future the Durban ICC will be able to use the standard as an annual appraisal of our internal quality improvements.

What benefits do you think your accreditation will provide?
The AIPC Quality Standards accreditation is an undeniable indication of a centre’s quality in the international business events industry. As Africa is still emerging as an attractive meetings destination, accreditations like this help to raise awareness of the first rate meetings venues available on the continent. The AIPC Quality Standard also serves as a road map to other convention centres on the continent as well as the level of quality of the industry as a whole.

How do you intend to use your new qualification going forward?
The Durban ICC is constantly competing in the international meetings arena to secure events which will benefit not only the city of Durban, but South Africa as a whole. We believe that the AIPC Gold Level Quality Accreditation will assist the Durban ICC to attract more of these valuable events to our shore in the years ahead.

Don’t Forget Other Ongoing AIPC Education Programming Over the Next Year!

The AIPC International Sales and Marketing Summit
May 17, 2015
Frankfurt, Germany
A ‘must attend’ for sales and marketing managers who need to keep up on the latest market developments and exchange perspectives with colleagues and key client groups.

The AIPC / ASAE Joint Seminar at IMEX America
October 15, 2014
Las Vegas
An exploration of key factors to be considered by centres and clients to facilitate interactions involved in taking events into new regions of the world with different practices and expectations from the perspectives of both centres and organizers.

www.aipc.org

For the second time in the past 8 years, Cairns Convention Centre in Australia has taken top honours in a hard-fought competition that saw 15 finalists and the Ottawa Convention Centre and Palais des Congrès Montréal as runners-up. Communique talks to Cairns GM Ross Steele about what this honour will mean for them;

How do you intend to use this Award to advantage?
Winning the AIPC Award has given added credibility to the Cairns Convention Centre in the community and highlights the world class infrastructure the city of Cairns has to offer. The award also provides a marketing opportunity and we have begun highlighting our achievement in bid documents and correspondence with potential clients. We have received a great response to our win domestically and with our owners, and we intend to capitalize further in international trade and vertical media throughout the coming two years.

What did you get out of it in terms of performance insights and staff engagement? This is in fact the only real opportunity, to benchmark ourselves against the best Convention Centre's in the world. The report we receive provides feedback on areas where we are doing well and areas we can work on in line with our own philosophy of Constant Small Improvements. We were thrilled to have attained very strong results in all areas of the report and this provides an opportunity for our department teams to take great pride in their individual achievements as well as our collective success in winning the award. Also, as we are part of the AEG Ogden family of facilities, the support we receive throughout our network is unique and clients recognize they will receive a consistently high level of quality and service when working with any of the other AEG Ogden venues.

I would encourage AIPC members to participate in the awards as it provides a unique client insight into your business as well as a great sense of achievement for the whole team in winning.

www.cairnsconvention.com.au
CHANGWON EXHIBITION CONVENTION CENTER (CECO)

Since its establishment in 2005 in the City of Changwon, home of high-tech industries and environmentalism, the CECO has successfully hosted numerous international and national meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions at its state-of-the-art facilities which include a multi-function complex with a first class hotel, multiplex theatre, food court, duty free shop, shopping mall, and office towers. These developments have allowed CECO to achieve its goal to become a one-stop convention service that provides convention facilities, hotel accommodations, shopping, entertainment, and residences in one place.

Its 60,240sqm of existing facilities are to be enhanced with an additional 18,600sqm of exhibition hall, conference hall and offices by the end of 2016 in a new building designed as a “Dynamic Wave” to symbolize the power for infinite growth and the coexistence of high-tech industry and environment.

Managing Director Inhoan Jung says: “We can inspire confidence by reinforcing our international networking and global marketing strategy with advanced convention management know-how from AIPC. This is the most efficient way to identify CECO as a superior product in today’s highly competitive market, and provides a means for learning about and participating in the key issues and opportunities facing the industry, both today and into the future.”

WELCOME NEW AIPC MEMBERS!

JULIUS NYERERE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE (JNICC)

The Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC) is a new purpose built, state-of-the-art facility near the Indian Ocean in the heart of Dar es Salaam, the business capital city of Tanzania. Managed and operated by the veteran Arusha International Conference Centre (AICC), it is within walking distance of a wide range of hotels and classic restaurants featuring traditional and international cuisine.

JNICC offers services for a wide range of events including meetings and conferences, exhibitions, banquets, cocktail parties, weddings, fashion shows. It offers 12 conference rooms that can accommodate 5-300 delegates in flexible formats. The largest hall can seat 1003, theatre style, and the Centre is equipped with high-tech AV facilities, SIS, high volume photocopiers, printers and scanners, a modern communication system and full information technology services.

Dar Es Salaam is the gateway to some of the most exotic places in Tanzania including the famous Selous National Park, the world renowned Serengeti National Park, the iconic Mt Kilimanjaro, the historical towns of Bagamoyo and Mafia, and the exotic Island of Zanzibar. JNICC is therefore an ideal place to meet with access to some of the most exciting attractions in the world.

Says Deus Kulwa, Convention Centre Manager: “The principal objective of JNICC is to promote and provide quality Business Tourism Services to National and International clients in order to enhance socio economic development. AIPC is an ideal platform that provides the opportunity to network and engage with fellow industry colleagues in exchanging professional experiences and helps positively demonstrate to clients and community that our facilities and services are of international standards to ‘Bring the World to Tanzania’.

THE OMAN CONVENTION & EXHIBITION CENTRE

The new Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC) is the catalyst for the Sultanate of Oman as one of the world’s newest and most exciting convention destinations. Oman has serious delegate appeal combined with all the key elements to attract business events – welcoming, air access, strategic location, a hospitality and service tradition, affordable range of hotel rooms, and rapidly expanding infrastructure.

The OCEC is being developed within a fully integrated convention precinct, supported by four hotels, a shopping mall and commercial business park, yet only four kilometres from the new Muscat International Airport. Construction is well under way with 22,000 sqm of column free exhibition halls, hospitality suites and full service catering kitchens on track for completion at the end 2015. The 3,200 seat and 450 seats tiered auditoria, luxury ballrooms and additional meetings rooms will be completed at the end of 2016.

OCEC General Manager Trevor McCartney said the Sultanate is renowned for its traditional warm and welcoming hospitality and will provide the ultimate delegate experience at the Centre. “Personally, I am proud to have been involved with AIPC for many years and am equally proud to be the newest AIPC member for the AEG Ogden Convention Centre network. I look forward to sharing our pre-opening experiences and challenges in a new and emerging convention destination in the Middle East and strengthening our network of like-minded convention centre executives for global knowledge exchange, ongoing education for our new team, as well as the essential benchmarking studies and surveys that AIPC continues to grow and support.”
When you step inside the Swiss Tech Convention Center in Lausanne, Switzerland, the spacious amphitheater is ready to welcome 3,000 guests. Hard to imagine that just 15 minutes earlier this same space was divided into three distinct conference rooms, with their own stages, and that, later in the same day, it will become a banquet hall for 2,000 seated guests. Between each event, the rows of seats pivot, the floors raise and lower, stage elements appear or disappear, all in a choreographed mechanical ballet handled by just one operator. The automated change-over is a performance in and of itself, created and developed by Montreal-based, Gala Systems.

The vision of Gala is to create completely multifunctional spaces, whose configurations and capacities can be modified within 10 to 15 minutes, and it’s clear that the venture has paid off: from the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Center, to the fully modular floor system of the EICC in Edinburgh and the future Baku Convention Center in Azerbaijan, the concept of a transformable space has convinced architects and venue managers the world over, that there is a strong economic logic to creating such flexible spaces.

It has been more than 30 years since Gala began supplying performance and conference halls with automated transformation systems to increase a space’s modularity, such as stage lifts, orchestra podiums and rotating seats using patented Spiralift units (ultra-compact lifting units originally designed for auditoriums and stages). In all, the company has participated in some 1,500 projects around the world.

"From an architectural point of view, it’s a revolution that blurs the boundaries between the arts and business," explains Robert Heimbach, Vice President of Business Development. "The same space can now host a classical concert, a corporate meeting, a rock show, a teaching seminar or an exhibition space. From an economic standpoint, it’s a high performance solution that increases a space’s rental rate, by targeting a larger and more diverse clientele."

For the audience or visitor, it’s impossible to tell the difference between a traditional fixed venue and a “transformable” one. This is what makes Gala so attractive to architects and venue managers, who expect the highest standards when it comes to design, materials and finishes. Because Gala venues are custom designed, they can be integrated into any auditorium, from modern to historic, from construction projects to large renovations or extensions.

As for how the system works, the answer is simple: with just the press of a button! A remote equipped with a control screen allows a technician – just one person – to modify the entire configuration of a space. Most transformations can be completed in less than 15 minutes… in silence. "With their fixed structure, traditional venues are limited to a few events a week," notes Robert Heimbach. "By contrast, Gala venues can meet the needs of all types of presentations and audiences often accommodating two or three events within the same day. This system ensures the flexibility to host any client and guarantees a proper modular space for future opportunities."