Responding to Increasing Security Challenges

It’s pretty clear from events over the past year that attention to security is just going to increase in the years ahead if our industry is to continue to grow. This is not just security as it affects our facilities, but also destinations overall, as it is increasingly evident that there is a move toward exporting terror in ways that mean simply sticking to “safe” destinations is no longer a guarantee of avoiding trouble.

From a centre perspective, we are actually in relatively good shape, for a number of reasons. The vast majority of centres have well defined policies and procedures already in place, including not only security measures but response procedures should something happen. We are generally well connected with our respective communities and all the resources that might need to be brought to bear should there be an incident. But at the same time, we can be a magnet for those who are looking to target a large assembly, and the past has shown clearly that we may be at further risk by virtue of our very clients, many of whom may attract the wrong kind of attention.

What to do? There are three areas where we can advance both our prospects in an increasingly demanding area;

First, we can share information, experiences and technologies with one another, as while every incident is somewhat unique, there is still a lot that they all have in common. In particular we have, through our interactions and networking, the ability to learn from the actual experiences of colleagues who have had to deal with such incidents first-hand, in terms of both what worked and what went wrong. The same can be said for design and technology – two very big pre-emptive areas – where knowledge and experiences with variations on the overall safety theme can be hugely valuable to others making decisions on where and how to invest.

Secondly, we can make sure we remain very active participants in overall efforts to create better preventative and response systems in our own communities. No centre can do the job in isolation, as we must inevitably interface with counterparts in other public venues as well as the broader measures aimed at potential issues outside of the centre. Many are already well imbedded in the local systems – but this is an ongoing job, as things change rapidly when the security risk increases. By taking an active role in these discussions, we will ensure we are not simply recipients of whatever is decided, but active participants in the process of determining what it is.

Finally, we can make sure that we have very good and detailed conversations on this topic with our clients – not often an area where a sales program wants to put its emphasis. Sometimes, as suggested above, those clients are actually contributing factors in attracting the wrong kinds of attention, and they are in that respect the best possible source of information available on what may be a sensitive topic. But even if there is nothing to suggest a given group may in fact be a catalyst for disruption, there is still a lot of discussion to be had around how various activities may make an event more vulnerable and how things should be handled should there be either an actual incident or even simply a threat.

All indications are that we will be living with an increased threat potential for some time. This being the case, it is to all our advantages to take all the right preparatory actions now instead of waiting for an imminent emergency. And as always seems to be the case, the AIPC membership itself is best positioned to use its collective knowledge and experience to everyone’s advantage.

Geoff Donaghy, AIPC President
Getting to Know Nantes: Lessons from Competing in a Challenging Market

Our 2016 Annual Conference host La Cité Nantes Events Center exemplifies the circumstances in which many centres find themselves today – competing for business – often against major regional competitors - in an intensely competitive market while at the same time having to demonstrate value to their owners and local community. Here’s how they’ve approached that challenge, including a number of features that will be on full display at the upcoming Annual Conference, as revealed in an interview with Eric Montant, Nantes’ Head of Sales and Development;

What kinds of more local / regional events can help a centre diversify its business mix?

In today’s economy we do believe that every centre needs to be as effective as possible, and therefore needs to find a good and appropriate business mix. The proportion of regional and local events is bigger in mid-sized cities like Nantes: for us it is approximately one third of our revenue, with the remaining two thirds being equally split between international and national events.

What do you think local residents would see as the biggest benefits your centre creates?

Apart from hosting events, La Cité also organizes and produces its own events, which are most of the time showcasing fields in which Nantes can be seen as a leader. In 2015 we hosted Velocity, a global conference that showcased how Nantes successfully develops new approaches of bicycle use in a city. We also had the Eccocity conference in 2013, the year Nantes was chosen as the European Green Capital.

Is your centre seen as a “community amenity” in the sense of supporting local activities and initiatives? Do you think activities like concerts and theatre contribute to this image?

Does it win you more local support?

Cultural production is our DNA. La Cité has initiated and co-organized “La Folle Journée”, a 300-concert festival that takes place in late January and has become through the year one of the most recognized events in Nantes and in France. “Utopiales”, a major science-fiction convention attracts more than 60,000 people every year and this is an event we produced. Our role as a culture contributor is big and really helps us prove our quality and added-value at the local scale. When small events become huge ones, it also helps our business grow; it is a win-win situation.

Overall, Nantes has adopted a Charter for hosting events with a view to making life easier for corporate event organisers. Through this Charter, the Nantes region demonstrates its determination and ability to work closely together with public and private players.

What benefits do you think a centre in a smaller destination can offer over those in major cities? How do you use this in your marketing?

In a smaller city, the same event will look much larger than it does in a huge one, so when we host a 3,000 people event in Nantes, delegates really feel they make this 900,000-person city beat. People will be friendly to them, not as stressed out as in big cities, and as a result, delegates feel totally welcome. We developed a welcome pack that is really appreciated and involves all the local players, from hotels, to the international airport, the train station and all the other points of contact a delegate is likely to make.

As an economic tool for creating global exposure, La Cité helps to promote the regional centres of excellence both in France and internationally. Close partnerships have been established with local competitive clusters such as Atlantole Biotherapies (biotechnology, health) and EMC² (materials, microtechnology, mechanics) in order to stage international meetings, and we use these close relationships and are happy to offer our clients access to our partners, so that they can easily be linked to local top players.

We also try to showcase in our marketing tools the quality of life that one can find in Nantes: it does not matter if you spend your life in our city, or only 2 or 3 days for an event at la Cité, you will feel this way of life, and appreciate the difference.

How do you distinguish yourself from competing centres? What makes Nantes a special place to hold an event?

We try to bring the best possible value for our customer in everything we do and this focus is embedded in our staff mentality. At La Cité Nantes Events Center, our best asset is the wonderful people (73 people representing 46 different positions and competencies) that belong to our structure. From the sales team, to the event managers, the technical teams, the central services, everyone is dedicated and involved in delivering the best possible event, and this is something our clients acknowledge. We also invest a fair amount of money in our building and equipment, keeping it up-to-date and renewed, so you know as a client you are going to be provided with the best technologies, in-house technical equipment, and that the service will be delivered by well trained and highly professional staff.
Governments are major investors in the industry, and have a responsibility to understand at least the basics of how it works. The Politician’s Forum (PF), held in conjunction with one of the largest trade shows in the world, is a very efficient and effective way to get this kind of overview.

**Why is AIPC Involved?**

AIPC has been heavily involved with the Forum for one simple reason: the vast majority of our member centres are either wholly or partly owned by some level of government. As a result, we are all more vulnerable to government decisions and attitudes than virtually any other segment of the industry. The Forum therefore has important potential to help advance political understanding and support amongst our most important stakeholders.

The key to utilizing this potential is for AIPC members to take advantage of this vehicle to provide their government officials with an opportunity to educate themselves in the industry, exchange views with others in the global industry and achieve some prominence for themselves in a high-profile global forum.

**Centres who have brought government representatives to the Forum and related activities have consistently reported a range of resulting benefits including a better understanding of the industry, an appreciation of the challenges and opportunities faced by centres and an enhanced relationship with government owners. The direct benefits of the Forum can be enhanced further by scheduling time for meetings with key clients, many of whom will also be at the show, or with colleagues from other centres.**

The opportunity is yours to exploit. In deciding who would be best to approach, you will want to assess which of your governmental leaders are most directly engaged as well as where you and your facility would most benefit from improved local government awareness and understanding of the industry. In simplest terms, the question is: who do you want to get a better sense of the industry, its benefits and how it works?

**Making the argument:**

In deciding who to approach and what kinds of arguments would be most likely to convince them to participate, there are a number of points you may wish to make. Amongst these are:

1. Governments are major investors in the industry, and have a responsibility to understand at least the basics of how it works. The PF, held in conjunction with one of the largest trade shows in the world, is a very efficient and effective way to get this kind of overview.

2. Conventions and exhibitions are ideal vehicles for governments to address their broader public policy agendas in key areas such as economic development, health, education, resource development and social/cultural programming. The PF addresses this area as well, which can expand the potential benefits of the overall learning experience.

3. Things are changing rapidly in the industry. IMEX brings together key industry leaders and these are all represented at the PF, making them available for any issues or questions your officials may want to raise.

4. Politicians who choose to attend can help raise the profile of their respective centres and destinations in the global industry, which is a major marketing benefit that will support their local industry. Visiting politicians, particularly those that have something to say about the industry, can get strong coverage from the trade media which helps build profile and business in the global market.

5. Overall, this is a very good investment of their time – and one that will pay dividends in terms of better stewardship of their facilities and business prospects. It is also a cost-effective one, given the role that IMEX is willing to play in supporting their participation with VIP access and accommodation.

**Start making your plans – and your arguments – now!**

With just over three months until the next Forum, you can’t start too soon to encourage your candidates to attend. Both AIPC and IMEX staff can help support your efforts in many ways, including the issuance of invitations, liaison with organizers and even helping propose issues and responses they may want to introduce into the discussion. All you need to do is let us know how we can help. It’s a worthwhile investment for everyone!
As a result, the specific examples that really seem breathe life into the wider economic, academic, professional and government policy benefits that arise from events such as meetings, exhibitions and conventions. Here’s the rationale as developed in the recent JMIC Value of Meetings Conference in Paris.

In the process of an intensive review of industry research, data and strategic communications issues taking place at the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC) conference on the Value of Meetings in Paris this past May, an interesting consensus emerged. The conclusion: that the most powerful way to communicate the real impact of meetings, conventions and exhibitions may in fact be to simply provide good, compelling stories about how these kinds of events drive outcomes that benefit everyone from participants and host destinations to society as a whole.

This is more of a departure than it may seem. For many years we’ve played the numbers game, using a range of measurements from delegate spending and economic impacts to hotel room nights and incremental tax revenues. But in a world where pretty much everyone is constantly bombarded with big figures, it is the individual examples of how a specific gathering brought about professional advancements and positive change that seem to best capture people’s imaginations and demonstrate the real value of these events.

There’s no question the numbers are important – they provide the solid rationale for what are often big investment decisions that have to show measureable returns. But when it comes to illustrating what these events actually do in terms of delivering broadly desirable outcomes – everything from advancing organizational and societal objectives, driving economic and academic progress and even profiling a destination in the way locals most want it to be seen – it is the specific examples that really seem to deliver the goods.

On reflection, it’s not hard to see why. All those numbers have little emotional quality, and as emotional creatures, we respond best to messages we can relate to terms of our own concerns and interests. At the same time, there is a lot more flexibility to be had from being able to identify and document a wider range of beneficial outcomes than simply the financial ones, particularly when the latter include everything from innovation and knowledge transfer to new investment and academic advancements that are hot topics today.

This realization has big implications for how we handle the value conversation from here on, as reflected in the overall recommendations arising from the conference. There was unanimous agreement on a need to focus on well-documented and creatively delivered case studies that can not only express the value of specific event achievements but at the same time imply what benefits are likely to be achieved by similar events in other subject areas.

This is particularly important when we realize that two of our most important audiences are communities and elected officials. As mentioned, the former typically most want to relate things in terms of their own interests – so things like improved medical practices, inward investment, new job opportunities and overall economic prospects really resonate. Politicians, on the other hand, can best relate to the ways in which events support their policy agendas, raise profile and generate non-resident tax revenues that help take the pressure off of locals. At the same time, they know only too well the power of storytelling, as it is an important element of their own strategies – a way of demonstrating understanding and personal affinity with the electorate.

So both groups are more likely to react positively to the industry story when it is put in terms of what meetings, conventions and exhibitions accomplish in growing community and economic value than if they are just presented with the hard numbers. But that doesn’t mean there isn’t some discipline required. In order to be credible, event accomplishments must be well researched and documented rather than just trotted out as anecdotes. And that’s where there’s a lot more work to be done. Many suppliers and organizers aren’t even clear on what specific outcomes they expect from the events they support, let alone how to measure the extent to which those are actually delivered. But in a world where accountability is increasingly required in return for the investment of time and resources that successful events demand, the ability to measure these kinds of factors more precisely is now more of an expectation than an option.

Finally, it’s clear that this is where all parts of the meetings equation need to work together to achieve the desired result. The distinctions between organizer and supplier are far less important than the overall goal of documenting and delivering the kind of value proposition that will ensure the ongoing relevance of meetings as a key element in driving global progress on many different fronts.

So let’s start working together to become better storytellers – and we’ll all benefit from the results!

AIPC will be actively looking for case studies such as described above in order to support the JMIC initiative and bring attention to our members. If you have a good candidate, let us know and we’ll make sure you get all the details on developing it to the standards now being developed!
Renewal of AIPC Quality Standards Now Available

With the AIPC Quality Standards program now well established as the pre-eminent management framework for international convention centres a number of members have requested a procedure for renewing what for some is a credential that was achieved a number of years ago. As a result of extensive consultation with our AIPC QS auditor, we now have such a procedure in place.

Renewal of the QS credential may be undertaken for either or both of two reasons:
1 | First, in order to upgrade to a higher level, where a centre originally scored below “Gold” but has now enhanced its policies and procedures to address any deficiencies, or
2 | To re-affirm and update certification as a way of demonstrating that the policies and procedures that resulted in the initial rating have been maintained over time.

We have also had regular feedback to the effect that the internal audit process (which creates the documentation required for the external audit) is a valuable team-building exercise for staff who benefit from the broad review process by making everyone more familiar with how the facility is managed.

Essentially, renewal of the QS credential is a streamlined version of the original process, requiring a re-affirmation that the processes submitted for initial qualification are still in place while updating their current status where there has been a change and adding new program information when internal procedures have been enhanced.

As a result, the requalification process differs from the initial certification process in two important ways;
First, centres applying for recertification will be required to submit documentation to support only those standard elements that show an increase over their previous benchmark score. This significantly reduces the amount of documentation required compared to the initial certification.
Second, all centres applying for recertification must submit answers to 8 questions intended to stimulate experiential learning and help focus future effort on the points of greatest leverage. This new requirement is set out in the renewal document.

The requalification audit process has two parts:

1 | An Internal Audit
Facilities begin the process by reviewing the execution of their programs and submitting to AIPC a brief written program review including an Internal Audit that benchmarks relevant policies, processes, programs and practices against the 50 elements of the AIPC Quality Standards. This review and the Internal Audit must be documented in English using the forms in this Guide, and submitted to AIPC.

2 | An External Audit
An External Audit of each submission is carried out by an auditor appointed by AIPC. Facilities must also provide relevant supporting documents to AIPC for review by the appointed auditor. If the supporting documents are not in English, the facility must also submit an English language synopsis briefly summarizing the contents of each non-English supporting document; supporting documents, where required, must be submitted electronically via the AIPC’s FTP site.

BRONZE
To requalify at “Bronze” level Certification, the facility must:
Complete a written program review including an Internal Audit;
Achieve an average aggregate score of at least Benchmark 1.5;
Set and approve improvement priorities for the coming year;
Submit its Internal Audit and supporting documentation to AIPC;
Meet the requirements of an external audit to verify the results of the facility’s Internal Audit.

SILVER
To requalify at “Silver” level Certification, the facility must:
Complete a written program review including an Internal Audit;
Achieve an average aggregate score of at least Benchmark 2.5;
Set and approve improvement priorities for the coming year;
Submit its Internal Audit and supporting documentation to AIPC;
Meet the requirements of an external audit to verify the results of the facility’s Internal Audit.

GOLD
To requalify for “Gold” level Certification, the facility must:
Complete a written program review including an Internal Audit;
Achieve an average aggregate score of at least Benchmark 3.0;
Set and approve improvement priorities for the coming year;
Provide performance measurement records to show that the facility is consistently meeting or exceeding customer expectations;
Submit its Internal Audit and supporting documentation to AIPC;
Meet the requirements of an external audit to verify the results of the facility’s Internal Audit.

These three levels of certification allow each facility to set its own aspirations taking into account its unique needs, business challenges and capabilities.

Complete details of the requalification procedure, along with necessary instructions, can be obtained via the AIPC Secretariat office.
After 10 successful years, the AIPC Sales and Marketing Summit is bigger and better attended than ever and an important addition for many members to the IMEX Agenda. The reasons are diverse, as explained by a number of regular attendees and contributors;

“The Summit is the best annual forum to address our specific venue issues that I have attended, says Peter King, Chief Executive of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. “The networking of like-minded business associates is invaluable and gives us all great confidence that whatever we are dealing with has been dealt with before by somebody. The interactive sessions provide an opportunity for banter, involvement and the ability to contribute to the conversation”.

Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre General Manager Trevor McCartney agrees. “Over the last 10 years the AIPC S&M Summit has gone from strength to strength and is the ideal forum to learn from colleagues about the various issues that face us in an ever-changing world and also hear from clients who share their concerns and challenges. Our market place is changing at an alarming rate and if we don’t keep up to date with these changes our venues will be left behind in this very competitive environment”. Adds Mala Dorasamy, Marketing, Sales and Events Director, Durban ICC “AIPC has served as a catalyst for change; marketing and sales in the convention industry is constantly evolving and AIPC ensures we stay involved, innovative and inspired whilst sharing our best practices”.

And there’s more. Angeline Lue, Director of Sales & Marketing for the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre says the Summit is “Invaluable, as being exposed to colleagues from other venues and geographic regions of the world is inspiring. Sharing common challenges and opportunities with colleagues with the same roles and responsibilities is extremely helpful and beneficial as it helps to build a network across the world and put things in perspective”. Kerrin MacPhie, Director of Conference and Exhibition Sales for ACC Liverpool sees the Summit as “Quite unique, in that it is a stimulating event that creates open discussion about what is happening in our world – convention centres – there is no other event like it that brings the world together for sharing, learning and educating colleagues. The event is not the same each year but reaches out to the industry for what is ’hot’ and ’happening’ that attendees will benefit learning more about”. While much of the attendance each year is repeat – a testament in itself – the Summit is also the ideal place for newcomers to get a very fast and thorough orientation.

Simon Burgess, Director Convention & Exhibition Sales at the Adelaide Convention Centre says “As a newcomer to the conference industry, I found the sessions and trend reports to be invaluable and even now a few years on, I always leave the sessions with at least 4-5 ideas for improvements. The sessions are growing because new people joining the industry are using it as a ‘basic training’ and to establish a network.

The AIPC Sales and Marketing Summit at IMEX–Ten Years and Counting! The 2016 Sales & Marketing Summit will take place on April 17 at the Congress Center Messe Frankfurt | Register now via secretariat@aipc.org to secure your place!
HEYDAR ALIYEV CENTER, BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

Recognized as one of the world’s masterpieces in architecture, the Heydar Aliyev Center is a signature landmark combining the Heydar Aliyev Museum, 9 floors of function space encompassing an auditorium, multifunctional conference halls, 7 meeting rooms, and the White Garden Cafe. The multifunctional halls can accommodate up to two thousand delegates, while the auditorium has 967 seats. The complex also includes underground parking and adjacent landscaped areas.

Winner of the Design of the Year award in 2014 by the Design Museum in London, the building’s unique architectural design depicts Azerbaijan’s future aspirations coupled with respect for national values and traditions. In its short history, the Center has already hosted a number of local, regional and international conferences, symposiums and other events by cooperating with similar international institutions involved in a broad array of projects in science, education, culture, sports, ecology and other fields as well as a venue for a series of solo exhibitions by many of the world’s recognized artists.

The Center was certified ISO 9001:2008 and was the first institution in the region to get its forums, conferences, exhibitions, concerts, performances and other events certified pursuant to ISO 20121:2012 Standard on Event Sustainability Management.

CONGRESS CENTRUM ALPBACH, TYROL, AUSTRIA

At the heart of the Tyrolean Alps in Austria, the architecture of Congress Centrum Alpbach is in unique harmony with the traditional Alpbach building style of building into the mountain slope. On completion of an expansion in early summer 2016, the green meeting destination will offer 2,819 square meters of modular areas and the latest technology. Those spaces include 2 plenary halls for up to 750 persons, 1,292 square meters of foyer / exhibition area, 8 flexible combinable seminar rooms and a large sun terrace & forecourt. A glass cone and large glass fronts maximize daylight and offer beautiful views of the mountains.

Achieving the Austrian Eco Label for Green Meetings and the international “Green Globe Certification” are evidence of the high standards set by the congress center. Alpbach owes its outstanding infrastructure to its greatest and most famous event, the “European Forum Alpbach”, which has taken place in August for more than 70 years and now attracts over 5000 participants from 80 nations.

“Alpbach and its congress center is one of the leading Green Meeting-destinations in the German speaking congress and conference industry and has committed itself to follow this path into the future.” says Managing Director Georg Hechenblaikner “We look forward to accessing networking opportunities with other AIPC members to share our experience, discuss our business challenges and to gain access to valuable knowledge to improve our operation even further.”

CHRISTCHURCH CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

With construction scheduled to begin in 2016, Christchurch Convention and Exhibition Centre will offer a boutique-style events centre set in a beautiful, well organised and compact city. Capable of hosting events for up to 2000 guests, the Centre’s spaces and services will showcase New Zealand’s internationally-renowned welcoming spirit in world-class facilities including a multi-divisible auditorium for 1500, a beautifully appointed room for banquets, 14 flexible meeting rooms and multi-functional exhibition space which will work together with professional services to deliver fabulous events in a truly remarkable South Island destination.

Says Chief Executive Officer Rob McIntyre “Only 15 minutes from the international airport, the Centre will be surrounded by 1200 immediately adjacent hotel rooms and provide organisers and delegates with an easily accessible, high quality convention centre set centrally in an attractive city that enjoys a great reputation for its hospitality. Accor has an excellent track record of managing successful international convention centres that exceed the expectations of clients – and the Christchurch Convention and Exhibition Centre will be no different but for the unique destination appeal of Christchurch”.

McIntyre sees their membership in AIPC as a two-way exchange. “We completely support its values and encouragement of excellence in convention centres, and can also provide value through our local and international experience and networks. Information exchange in any industry is important, and even more so in our sector where we have the opportunity – and indeed, the obligation – to promote the true value of the events industry.”
Meet One of Your New Directors:

The 2015 AIPC General Assembly elected a number of new AIPC Board members representing a diverse set of regional and professional backgrounds, and we will be introducing them in the next few issues. Here are some details about the first:

Marc Rodríguez is General Manager of the GL Events CCIB, Barcelona’s International Convention Centre, one of the largest convention centres in southern Europe and capable of accommodating events of up to 15,000 delegates. Ten years after its inauguration, the Centre has hosted over 4,250,000 delegates and generated an estimated 3300 million Euros for the city. Marc’s career has been entirely within the hospitality sector, and includes a range of roles in four-star hotels as well as opening and launching two outstanding Spanish hotels, one of which included convention centre facilities. This background has shaped his management style and led him to see the importance of global competition and technological change as being two of the key factors shaping today’s industry, but not at the expense of service. “We tend to focus our investments on the most advanced equipment to gain market share, but cannot forget that the essence of the meetings industry is the client”, says Marc. “I encourage my team to foster sincere communications with our clients based on a spirit of cooperation, reliability and mutual benefit.” Based on that commitment, the CCIB has hosted the AIPC Operations Summit since 2010, and they have achieved a range of industry certifications.

Getting to Know Nantes: Lessons from Competing in a Challenging Market

What advice would you give to other centres in similar destinations to yours about how they can best increase their business?

Centres in mid-size cities really need to work hard to help their destination emerge from the competition, not just by being the best possible venue, but also by being at the forefront of the efforts in making the destination recognizable as possible. In Nantes, a decision was made many years ago to develop a new positioning for the city, which used to be a major industrial port until the late 80’s, and which has now become a cutting-edge cultural place, where people come to discover new things and be surprised. This major turn reshaped our destination and at the same time offers great assets on which we can develop our convention centre business. Our clients now find our city amazingly creative, bustling and above all surprising, with stunning venues, the giant elephant walking in the city centre, gala dinner venues among huge odd creatures and other elements of delight that can become an integral part of their event experience.

The AIPC Sales and Marketing Summit at IMEX – Ten Years and Counting!

Simon Burgess sees “Increased competition, subvention and the need to diversify our business to find new revenue streams” as the key issues to address. According to Angeline Lue, “The content is always on trend and relevant to what we encounter in our daily activities as venues and it is driven on educational as opposed to marketing and promotional content – keeping it that way is crucial to retain participation. I always like the trend analysis and being kept up to date on issues specific to venue management and operation and how it relates to the broader industry challenges and opportunities we face”.

Dawn Baldwin, Director of Sales, Halifax Convention Centre says “The summit is the only event where globally we gather as venues to really only dig into what is happening or about to happen in our world that will have an impact on our business. A good example is having Association Executives share their expertise and provide details about their meetings - with the information garnered, we are able to approach local members and make inroads in bidding future meetings”. And Gina Salzborn, Sales Manager for Congress Center Hamburg sees “Technological progress, new ways of communication and the involvement of attendees” as key areas. “Also, cooperation between CVB and venue is becoming more and more challenging in terms of responsibilities, decision power and well-defined processes”. These are all tall orders and high expectations to be met – but the success of the Summit has always been its ability to adapt and respond to emerging challenges. In Trevor McCartney’s words “It has to remain relevant - how would we know what is happening outside our own little cocoons if we did not engage and learn from our colleagues?”

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