Resisting Terrorism as Part of Our Job?

“Business travel, and particularly travel related to meetings and conventions, were both the most resilient and the first to recover from such setbacks. We have a legacy of leadership in driving travel recovery and now more than ever that needs to be maintained.”

At first glance, recent terrorism incidents seem remote from much of our everyday responsibilities. It’s easy to think that they are someone else’s problem and beyond sympathizing with those directly affected, not a big priority for the rest of us. But the fact is that in many respects, they may represent a challenge that will shape the long term survival of our industry.

Fortunately, we have some positive history in that regard. A quick look at the travel-related impacts of global incidents suggests that business travel, and particularly travel related to meetings and conventions, were both the most resilient and the first to recover from such setbacks. Certainly this was the case in the aftermath of the global financial crisis, where association meetings in particular were least affected in terms of both attendance and cancellations. In fact, a case can be made that it was the continued support from this sector that kept the industry alive during what was a very challenging time.

But the recent terrorism incidents represent an even greater challenge in that they not only invoke the fear factor but will inevitably result in even greater security measures and potentially even a weakening of cross-border agreements that have facilitated travel in recent years. Together, these will reduce travel inclinations at a time when industry recovery was only just beginning to gain traction.

But as has been pointed out so many times before, to succumb to the threat simply delivers the kinds of wins those responsible are hoping for – the disruption of global exchanges and economic prosperity that have made the world a better and more tolerant place. And as the clear leaders in this respect for so many years, this is a threat we must do all we can to resist.

So far, anecdotal evidence suggests the pattern has held: even in those areas hardest hit, there have been relatively few event cancellations even as leisure tourism has suffered significant impacts. Once again, the desire to meet has outweighed the desire of others to keep that from happening.

Let’s keep it up. We have a legacy of leadership in driving travel recovery and now more than ever that needs to be maintained.

Geoff Donaghy, AIPC President
From the latest research results to explorations of how other sectors have addressed similar issues and challenges, our 2016 program will offer the opportunity for creative thinking while illustrating what innovation has delivered for meetings destinations around the world, covering a wide range of topics and updates in addition to the sessions specifically associated with our overall program theme. Included in the mix will be:

“FUTURE-PROOFING”: LESSONS AND STRATEGIES FROM OTHER SECTORS
A look at how other business sectors have faced and coped with disruptive change and what lessons may have application to centres planning their future.

EVENT EVOLUTION: HOW NEW FORMATS ARE CHANGING CLIENT NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS
Increasingly, it is delegate behavior that is driving event change – and planners are as much on the receiving end as driving the process. Here are their views on how a range of events are already evolving and where that will take us.

DESIGNING FOR THE FUTURE
As part of an intensive, ongoing study based on industry “megatrends”, this session will report on the “Future Meeting Space” component focusing on how centres can expect to evolve over the next decade.

ARCHITECT’S RESPONSE: HOW CAN DESIGN HELP DELIVER?
Flexibility doesn’t just happen – it needs to be designed in, even though it may not be entirely clear what future demands will be. Here’s how progressive designers are approaching the challenge.

THE EVOLVING WORLD OF HOTELS PART 2
The past year has seen major shifts in terms of investment, consolidation and mergers. What does this mean for the future of centre’s requirements and relationships?

2016 AIPC ANNUAL SURVEY: CENTRE PERFORMANCE AND PERSPECTIVES IN AN INDUSTRY CONTEXT
The sixth in the series of comprehensive industry performance / outlook surveys of AIPC members will both deliver another step in the trend analysis and add more quantitative measures to compare with other industry sectors.

HOW PLACE BRANDING IS RESHAPING MARKET EXPECTATIONS
Destination branding is now a major focus for cities around the world. Is our sector getting the access it needs to provide input and advance its own needs?

SHARED INTERESTS AND JOINT RESPONSES
Two very different destinations show how the pursuit of new development strategies means shifting alignments and roles for local centres and the business events sector overall with other groups in their respective communities.

ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES: RESPONDING TO POTENTIALLY DISRUPTIVE CHANGE
Major changes are sweeping many industries today and there have been different forms of adaptive response. This session will describe some of these and what the counterparts may be in our sector.

ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES 2: A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO PREPARING FOR CHANGE
Following up on the previous session (above) this workshop-format discussion will look at practical responses convention centres can use in planning for change.

SECURITY AND COMMUNICATIONS: A TACTICAL RESPONSE TO GROWING CHALLENGES
As terrorism threats continue to grow centres not only need emergency plans to help manage security measures but a back-up strategy to deal with potential fallouts from reputational damage.

AIPC APEX AWARD: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!
The 2016 AIPC Apex Award: Key factors and findings of importance to AIPC members and how these can be put to better use.

TECHNOLOGY: WHAT’S COMING; WHERE’S THE REVENUE POTENTIAL?
While technological development always has an element of surprise, many of the core features for the future are already set. How can this knowledge help centres direct their investments to optimal effect?

NEW RESOURCES ADVOCACY STRATEGIES – AND A CHALLENGE TO MEMBERS
Community support and awareness create a more positive operating environment for centres in their respective communities - but increasingly require evidence-based advocacy to succeed. Here are new tools to help succeed in your own city.

www.aipc.org
Meet the Keynotes

Supporting this year's programs will be a range of speakers who will bring their expertise from other sectors to bear in an effort to find practical parallels with the issues and opportunities facing centres today. Amongst our guests for 2016 will be:

John Thackara  Author of How To Thrive In The Next Economy, John Thackara has travelled the world in the pursuit of stories about the practical steps taken by innovators to realize a sustainable future and shape a new economy. He worked for ten years as a book and magazine editor and was the first director of the Netherlands Design Institute in Amsterdam, was program director of Designs of The Time, the social innovation biennial in England; and commissioner in 2008 of France's main design biennial, Cite du Design. A Senior Fellow of the Royal College of Art, in London, and a Fellow of Musashino Art University in Japan, he is also a member of the UK Parliament's Standing Commission on Design.

Robert Govers  Robert Govers is the managing research partner of www.good.country, Chairman of the International Place Branding Association and an independent advisor, researcher, speaker and author on the reputation of cities, regions and countries. He has also been an adjunct or visiting scholar at the University of Leuven, Belgium; Rotterdam School of Management, The Netherlands; IULM University Milano, Italy; and several institutes in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He teaches Place Branding on the UNESCO World Heritage at Work Master program in Torino, Italy and is co-editor of the quarterly journal, Place Branding and Public Diplomacy.

Simon Naudi  An honours graduate in Psychology, Simon in 1986 established Answers Training which quickly became an international consultancy delivering sales and management programmes in over 60 countries throughout Europe, South America, Canada, the Middle East and the Far East. He writes monthly columns on management and sales related topics and is regularly called to deliver events on behalf of the Associations, Universities, Training and Enterprise Councils, Business Organisations, the Chartered Institute of Training and Development and other national and international government bodies, and has written two books - Advanced Telesales – The Definitive Guide to Success and The Gentle Art of Firm Persuasion both published by Capita.

Gary Kayye  Gary Kayye has worked in technology branding and marketing for more than 25 years, and served as the Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Estron and an executive VP at AMX Corporation before taking on his current role as president and CEO of rAVe Publications, a publishing, digital strategy and communications company that he founded in 2003. Gary has been the keynote speaker at over 1000 technology shows and events and teaches, leads workshops and writes about technology and the future of advertising, marketing and public relations. Gary is recognized as a social media and new media technology expert, especially in the B2B markets.

Elizabeth Randall-Winkle  As Chief Strategy Officer for Smith Travel Research (STR), Elisabeth is responsible for the development and execution of the organization’s strategic initiatives. She has held several positions within the STR organization; most recently serving as Managing Director for the organization's expansion and operations outside of North America based in the London office. Elizabeth also served as Director of Operations from 2008-2009. Elizabeth is active in the industry, speaking at international conferences and participating on panels at various events and was invited to take part in the Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series (DDLS) at the Cornell School of Hotel Administration (SHA) in 2011 and at Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) in 2012.

Co-author of Place Branding (2009) and editor of the International Place Branding Yearbook Series, Robert typically advises companies such as economic competitiveness, place identity and image, tourism policy and strategy, educational policy, tourism and investment promotion, and major international events.

With destination branding now a major focus for cities around the world, his AIPC session will explore the question of how this process is evolving and what centres must do in order to get the kind of access they need to ensure their more specific image requirements are being addressed.

He has worked with the event industry for over 29 years selling stands, organising conferences, running exhibitor workshops and exhibiting at numerous shows. He has delivered the Association of Event Organisers in the UK as well as UFI worldwide.

In a two part session, Simon will be taking a hard look at how major changes that are sweeping many industries today have created different forms of adaptive response, followed by a workshop that explores what such adaptive responses might look like within our sector and the practical responses convention centres can use in planning for change.

In 2004, he was recognized as InfoComm’s Educator of the Year and in 2007 he was given the NSCA Instructor of the Year award. In 2014, Gary was named to the list of the Top 100 People in the Triangle You Should Connect With. His session will focus on the perennial question of what lies ahead for centres grappling with today’s ever-changing technology scene and specifically how centres can use new developments as potential revenue streams. While technological development always has an element of surprise, many of the core features for the future are already set. How can this knowledge help centres direct their investments to optimal effect?

She joined STR from the financial services industry, having served as Interim President/CEO for Pasadena Federal Credit Union in California after previously serving as Vice President, Member Services for the $120 million organization.

Ms. Randall-Winkle serves on the Board of Directors of STR Global and International Society of Hospitality Consultants (ISHC) and holds a bachelor’s degree from Vanderbilt University. She will be updating members on the latest news from the critical accommodation sector, where major mergers and buyouts have rocked the sector and altered the playing field over the past year.
AIPC 2016 in Nantes: The Social Program

As our 2016 Annual Conference Host Destination, Nantes offers a very intriguing opportunity to see a classic French city evolving through an economic transition to become one of the most unique destinations anywhere! Our social program will introduce you to the full range of unique qualities, from the traditional ambience of a country chateau to one of the most innovative theme areas anywhere, all overlain with an artistic and entertaining atmosphere that will ensure a delightful event experience!

SATURDAY JULY 2 | PRE-CONFERENCE WELCOME RECEPTION AT LE NID

Towering 144 m (472 feet) above the Nantes skyline, and incorporating a 90 000 litre water reservoir, the 32 floor Tour Bretagne offers a 360° panorama over the City, offering the perfect orientation for visitors. But there’s more: the design of the space was entrusted to Jean Jullien, a fêted artist in the international world of graphic design serving commissions from all over the world and offering a sensitive and lunar universe, emphasized by the “handmade” aspect of his work. Le Nid is the home of an enormous white bird, half-stork, half-heron, who sleepily watches over the city, its large body doubling as a bar and gigantic eggshells transform into seats and tables. On the walls, the artist’s hand has immortalized the city’s emblematic spots on bright posters. You will have the whole Nantes before you, a drink in hand.

SUNDAY JULY 3 | A FRENCH COUNTRY EXPERIENCE!

A short tour through local vineyards will bring you to Clisson, a stunning and highly walkable town in the Pays de la Loire, where guides will show you around the village and its castle. Clisson has its imposing ruins, parts of which date from the thirteenth century. The sculptor François-Frédéric Lemot bought the castle, and the town was rebuilt in the early part of the 19th century according to his plans. There are picturesque parks on the banks of the rivers, crossed by an old gothic bridge, and the Clisson Castle, a fortress that is a valuable witness to the evolution of defensive architecture in the Middle Ages.

WELCOME GARDEN PARTY

Château de la Pigossière: this classic French chateau and gardens, the home of Mr and Mrs de Lambilly, will welcome you to a local wine tasting experience followed by an informal welcome dinner. Enjoy a traditional summer event on the lawn by the river and celebrate the Conference opening in the traditional style.

TUESDAY JULY 5 | AIPC AWARDS DINNER

AIPC Apex Award dinner and presentation ceremony will take place in one of the most unique entertainment sites on earth and a signature element of Nantes’ artistic revival! Les Machines de l’île are a totally unprecedented artistic project at the crossroads of Jules Verne’s “invented worlds”, the mechanical universe of Leonardo da Vinci, and of Nantes’ industrial history at the site of the former shipyards. Strange and wonderful machines born of their creator’s imaginations come alive here, including the Grand Éléphant, a Manta Ray, a Sea Snake and all kinds of incredible boats that take possession of the banks of the Loire River. Those of Les Machines de l’île move back and forth between the building workshop and the Galerie, conveying a mysterious reality to this island just like the time when vessels were launched there destined for all parts of the world. The entire creative process is on display, from the very first sketches to the fabrication of their component parts and final assembly. Using natural materials, and with their mechanisms all visible, they create an unprecedented performance experience that is both entertaining and educational.
AIPC has just celebrated the 10th anniversary of its AIPC Academy – a real accomplishment for an institution that has survived and prospered through a period of intense transition for the industry!

With an intensive professional development program that addresses objectives ranging from exploring solutions for today’s top management concerns to preparing managers for more senior positions in their respective facilities, the Academy over the past 10 years has expanded and diversified to include the full spectrum of centre issues, from sales and marketing management and business development to facility operations and event management. Consistent with new demands being placed on centre managers, the curriculum now also incorporates content based on strategic business development, communications and shareholder relations, centre design and development.

During this same period, the Academy faculty has grown and instructor-based sessions have been enhanced with presentations from key client, business and specialist guests. The result is a well-rounded program that addresses essentially every aspect of centre management and looks to the future for new tactical requirements at all levels of centre operation and management.

With a capacity attendance every year since inception, the Academy has graduated almost 300 participants in the past decade. This growing group of alumni leave well prepared for the rigors of centre management, having completed a team exercise – the Academy Challenge – that requires graduates to demonstrate their take-aways with well-organized responses to hypothetical planning strategies set by Academy faculty.

And the experience doesn’t end there. With a 10 year history in place, the Academy is now attracting return participants who are further updating their qualifications and at the same time contributing to the curriculum with their own experiences. Graduates also leave with a globally diversified network of peer contacts, many of which serve to help professional exchanges for years to come. And finally, AIPC’s ongoing seminars - help maintain both content and contacts on an ongoing basis.

This all demonstrates what knowledge-sharing can achieve – a great industry legacy, and something for AIPC members to be proud of!

AIPC Academy Celebrates 10 Years of Academic Achievement!

AIPC Academy 2017 | February 12 to 17!
The AIPC Facility Operations Summit
Taking a New Step Forward in 2016

Barcelona November 27 and 28

The AIPC Facility Operations Summit has been a huge and to some extent surprising success story. Unlike other events that rely largely on the participation of centre managers and staff who are already present at an event like one of the major industry trade shows, this session attracts many who must make a special trip just to attend this event.

However, on reflection it’s clear why: many working in this specialized area have few opportunities to get together with peers and colleagues to discuss what are increasingly shared issues relating to facility management, and they both need and appreciate the opportunity to do so. Now in its 9th year, the Summit has also become a meeting place for those representing other areas of centre interactions, attracting centre managers from event management, building management, and smart sales people who want to know more about how the events they sell are managed. The value of these interactions – again, rare in terms of the opportunities to have them – is that they facilitate the invaluable exploration of how to manage the multiple interfaces with clients and suppliers in the most effective ways possible – a growing demand from hard-pressed planners who are often working with limited resources and increasingly relying on centres staff for this kind of support.

This year, the Summit will again take place in Barcelona in November – and with so many hot topics on the horizon for Centres, an all-new format will be introduced to cater to the varying needs of the attendees. While maintaining the unique ability for different disciplines to interact and exchange innovative ideas, a range of topics will address the needs of both return attendees and first time participants with “streams” that enable both specialized discussions as well as the important interface planning.

These topic areas will include:

- New technological solutions to strengthen product development, marketing and customer engagement, creating an advantage over competitors.
- Risk management strategies, including Security/CyberSecurity in today’s security-sensitive world

Given this range of topics, the 2016 edition of the Summit will have an even broader appeal, offering something of specific interest to Event/Project Managers, Building/Facility Managers and Sales and Marketing Managers. By enabling both a specific focus on individual topic areas as well as the ability to better plan for internal interfaces and hand-over strategies, this event will broaden its appeal even further and becomes an even more valuable vehicle for promoting functional integration in a market that is increasingly demanding this!

As always, attendance is limited – so make sure your centre will be properly represented to take full advantage of what will be a very advanced approach to this most important area of centre management!

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Bring Us Your Case Studies!

Over the past few years, industry consensus has developed around the idea that while almost all of the value measures applied to meetings, conventions and exhibitions relate to organizer and delegate spending, the real value of these events – and the ones we most want to use in advocating for the value of the industry in general and convention centres in particular – are related to what they actually achieve in terms of economic, academic, professional and business advancement. The problem has been that these are often difficult to measure with any real precision.

As a result, the primary conclusion of the most recent Joint Meetings Industry Council Conference on the Value of Meetings in Paris last year was that the best possible way to demonstrate the often-elusive benefits is to develop specific case studies that look at an individual event, and document how these benefits are delivered. JMIC has now created a program to do just that in cooperation with the University of Technology in Sydney Australia – pioneers in this field.

Centres are of course in the perfect position to identify potential candidates – and have a lot to gain from the positive stories about broader community benefits that arise – and as signatories to the program AIPC is looking for member centres prepared to work with the program on developing such case studies.
Measuring Customer Experience is a Critical Need for Centres

A guest perspective by Michael Rodenburgh, Executive Vice President, Ipsos Pacific Northwest

Customer satisfaction research is enjoying a renaissance in today’s modern business world. Two years ago a major study among businesses suggested that by 2016 89% of them would compete primarily on the basis of the customer experience and even in the early days of the year that’s already come true. Part of the reason is that humans are social animals, and if brand experiences are positive, they can become powerful drivers of choice among our social networks and decision-making.

In short, there has been a global realization that customer experiences are extremely important. And like any other active business, convention centres face the question of how to best drive customer loyalty and satisfaction for all the same reasons – they influence retention of events and at the same time substantially influence the rate of positive recommendations.

The reverse is also true: failing to meet customer expectations can have disastrous effects on a business. Another recent study found that in six out of ten cases, customers felt they have had to put more effort than companies to sort an issue, which in turn made them four times more likely to use the company less or stop using it entirely.

So if it is important to manage your customer’s experience, how does one go about accomplishing this? In our view that there are three key elements:

First, you should always start with the basics – your employees. The employee's level of personal engagement and motivation is key to delivering the quality, value and superior service that enhances the organization's reputation and success, and this can be explored in several ways.

Employee Engagement Surveys help identify from the employee’s perspective the improvement opportunities that will have the greatest impact on their overall level of engagement. From there, actionable strategies can be implemented to improve engagement, and this in turn has a positive impact on the customer and event attendee experience. Bottom line: engaged employees are motivated to make the attendee experience the very best it can be, which can have a significant impact on word of mouth recommendations and even the decision to revisit the centre again in the future.

Secondly, there is the direct assessment of client loyalty/satisfaction through event planner/delegate surveys. In this regard, absolute scores are less important than how your brand compares to the competitive set; if your brand is considered your customer’s first choice over the competitors, you will get the lion’s share of business even if not fully meeting your customers’ expectations, because the only metric that matters is if you are perceived to be better than the other available options.

The primary mechanism for this measurement is to administer follow-up surveys with event planners/delegates, which can determine the important touchpoints for event planners/delegates that drive loyalty and identify priorities for improving performance. Many centres already do these - however, they must be rigorously carried out and analyzed in order to deliver the depth of insight required to act upon – and that isn’t always the case. Through advancements in marketing sciences and consumer behavior, advanced analytics can enlighten business problems and highlight opportunities for improvement beyond just relying on stated opinions; but these tools still require a skilled researcher to fully leverage the learnings.

Finally, there is a need to assess actual compliance, and for this, “mystery shopping” can provide a detailed, objective measurement of the entire client experience as well as audit for compliance on specific organization standards and staff/service protocols. A mystery shopping program raises service levels through increased staff understanding of the importance of maintaining consistent standards, but can also be used to motivate/reward employees for excellent service, establish norms for baseline standards, follow-up and resolve problems as they arise and identify training needs and opportunities.

In summary, there’s a lot at stake – and to realize the benefits, it needs to be done right!

Michael.Rodenburgh@ipsos.com

Participation is easy. Here’s how it works:

1 | As a centre, you’d identify an event (conference, convention, exhibition) whose outcomes you believe to have generated the kinds of benefits (business, social, professional, innovation, educational) that illustrate the broader values arising from the industry

2 | Get any required agreements from organizers, destinations or suppliers to participate in case study development

3 | Communicate your intentions to the team leaders at UTS via JMIC. They will then:
   a. Register your interest as part of the program, and
   b. Supply any initial guidance they feel would be useful in developing the case study (i.e., measurements that would document the identified benefits)

4 | Proceed with development of the case study, submitting it on completion to UTS for review by the Academic Panel now being established to review and assess submitted case studies.

5 | The Panel will then:
   a. Review the case study and its findings and provide feedback for future work
   b. Incorporate the findings and procedures into their recommendations for future guidelines

Once a case study has been completed, JMIC will undertake to publish the results in appropriate academic journals, consolidate and present it as part of an industry library of documentation for advocacy and publicize it via industry and other relevant media.

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De Boer Structures

De Boer Structures is a leading international supplier of temporary structures for events and business space usage. Says Mical de Boer: “Not one exhibition or congress building can suit all needs of all clients and all visitors, so flexibility is a key characteristic of organizations and venues that are successful in meeting their ever changing needs without investing in infrastructure that will not be needed again in the same shape or form”.

This is typically where De Boer steps in, offering temporary infrastructure design advice and rental of temporary structures from a portfolio of over 300,000m² of space consisting of over 80 different modular models. De Boer delivers turn-key solutions to many exhibition and congress organizers and facilities throughout Europe and the Middle East with optimal customer service which is reflected in very high customer satisfaction scores.

De Boer was founded in 1924 and today has offices in the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, the UK, Spain, France, Qatar and Abu Dhabi with representation in Sweden and the United States. With the use of aluminum, glass and most recently composite materials, the structures are now approaching the look and feel of permanent buildings, with matching acoustic and thermal qualities.

The biggest exhibition project for De Boer is the Farnborough Airshow, where a team of fifty build four giant exhibition halls totaling more than a kilometer in length and covering close to 90,000m². For the annual International Broadcasting Convention at the RAI in Amsterdam, De Boer built 8,700m² in 13 days to provide 2 extra halls next to the existing buildings to help accommodate the more than 1,700 exhibitors from 170 countries that participate.

De Boer also builds inside existing buildings, such as for the GSMA’s Mobile World Congress (MWC) in Barcelona where 20,000m² of indoor space is turned into a Conference and Ministerial Program with a 1,500 person restaurant, networking areas and auditoria space for more than 5,000 persons.

We also take the environment very seriously, as was recognized last year when we received the Sustainability Award from the EU Business School, a testimony to our investment in the ISO14001 program, an ongoing improvement process and subsequent reduction of our footprint. For example by using re-usable materials and rail-road solutions for the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona, the largest conference and exhibition space was certified as ‘carbon neutral’.

Deboer.com

Bring Us Your Case Studies

All the related publicity will reflect well on the sponsoring centre and provide an excellent resource to illustrate to owners, communities and governments the benefits of supporting and investing in the centre.

As a signatory to the Case Study Program, AIPC is prepared to help in the process – let us know if you have any questions on how to proceed or what kinds of events might be most suitable. In addition, we can forward proposals to UTS Program leaders on your behalf and set up the contacts for ongoing communication.

Together we can start really documenting why the kinds of events centres host deliver a wide range of benefits that enrich and advance the life of the community!