PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

50 Years of Progress!

Sharing is to everyone’s advantage. We work in one of those rare industries where, even though we compete for business, the benefits of exchanging information, experiences and expertise far outweigh the disadvantages.

50 years is a long life for any organization – and for an organization representing an industry sector that is as relatively new as the convention centre sector, it is practically a miracle. So a 50th Anniversary is an occasion to reflect – not only on what lies ahead, but what we experienced in the development of our industry so far, and what lessons we can take from that experience.

I’d like to suggest that while there have been numerous things we’ve learned, both good and bad, about our industry over the past 50 years, there are three overall themes that have had the greatest effect and that we can expect to continue to influence the industry as we move into the future;

First, sharing is to everyone’s advantage. When you need information, with the strong likelihood that you’ll get it. That makes not only for a higher overall quality of services but a much more attractive and satisfying atmosphere for us all to work in.

Second, quality counts. While this is the case in many different industries, it takes on a special level of importance in the convention centre business because it is the most important way we can distinguish our operations in the face of ever-increasing competition.

Quality can take many forms, from facilities and equipment to the ways in which staff approach their roles in the centre. In fact, one of the biggest challenges we’ve had has been how to measure and capture quality in a way that can be communicated to our clients and industry colleagues. However, even in the absence of real measures, I believe we all know quality when we see and experience it, and that we have all been striving to increase that quality year after year in our own operations. Now, with the intense competition we all face, we have the tools and the motivation to make sure it remains a strong factor in everything we do.

Third, we will always live with change – and change creates opportunities. Due to the very nature of our business, everything is in a state of constant change because of the changes our clients are facing and the way in which that affects their expectations.

Over the past fifty years there have been huge changes in technology, huge changes in the nature of meetings and exhibitions, huge changes in communications and huge changes in what delegates expect out of the events they attend – and we’ve had to respond to all of these. This has created challenges – but opportunities too. We’ve not only been able to meet these changing expectations, but in the process create new products and revenue streams, and in the process make our operations more effective and diversified. As we look to the future, I believe these same factors will be constant.

Whatever else the next years may bring us, the need for quality, the importance of adapting to change and the benefits of sharing and exchanging information amongst ourselves will be critical to survival and success, both for individual centres and for organizations like AIPC. The good part is that we’ve lived with these factors for so long that we’re very well practiced in dealing with them – and that provides and strong basis for the progress of our industry.

Edgar Hirt, AIPC President
In recognition of its 50th Anniversary as an association, AIPC has assembled an extraordinary and complementary group of speakers for our upcoming Annual Conference in Singapore.

“IT’s not often that an association gets to commemorate an occasion like this one, and we want to use it as an opportunity to not simply reflect on where we’ve been but look forward to how the future will unfold and how we should prepare ourselves to address the related challenges and opportunities”, said AIPC President Edgar Hirt. “The feature speakers we have succeeded in gathering for our conference will ensure that we have all the stimulation we need to do this, and at the same time give us some unique insights into the rapid business development process in Asia, which will be a huge factor in the future global economy. These provocative and innovative speakers will provide a springboard for industry-specific sessions where the implications of such global concepts for our own business as international convention centres will be explored”, says Hirt. “Together, we believe this combination will prove to be a very powerful experience for centre managers looking to their future and how business needs to evolve in a changing world”.

The program will include three globally recognized authorities in their respective fields.

JAMES H. GILMORE is co-author of The Experience Economy: Work Is Theatre & Every Business a Stage, the book that spawned worldwide interest in experience design, customer experience management, and experiential marketing. Now published in ten languages, the book continues to find new readers across myriad industries, with customers increasingly spending their time and money on experiences that engage them in an inherently personal way. Gilmore’s most recent book, Authenticity: What Consumers Really Want follows up with the contention that Authenticity is the new Quality—that businesses must learn to manage authenticity as a distinct business discipline. Gilmore is co-founder of Aurora, Ohio-based Strategic Horizons LLP, and is sought by enterprises around the globe for his expertise in conceiving and designing new ways of adding value to their economic offerings. He is a frequent keynote speaker, as well as workshop facilitator and executive coach and his ideas have been featured in numerous articles on business strategy and innovation for such publications as the Harvard Business Review, The Wall Street Journal, and Investors Business Daily, among others.

PROFESSOR KISHORE MAHBUBANI was appointed the first Dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy on 16 August 2004. Currently, he is the Dean and Professor in the Practice of Public Policy at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKY SPP) of the National University of Singapore. He served in the Singapore Foreign Service from 1971 to 2004, was Permanent Secretary at the Foreign Ministry from 1993 to 1998 and also served twice as Singapore’s Ambassador to the UN. Prof Mahbubani has published and spoken in all corners of the globe and is the author of “Can Asians Think?,” Beyond the Age of Innocence: Rebuilding Trust between America and the World”, and of “The New Asian Hemisphere: the irresistible shift of global power to the East” was published in New York in February 2008. He served as a Fellow of the Center for International Affairs in Harvard University from 1991 to 1992. He was awarded the Foreign Policy Association Medal in New York in June 2004 and was listed as one of the top 100 public intellectuals in the world by Foreign Policy and Prospect magazines in September 2005.

HO KWON PING is Executive Chairman of Banyan Tree Holdings, which manages and / or has ownership interests in 22 resorts and hotels, 62 spas, 65 retail galleries and two golf courses with a further 50 new resorts and hotels coming on stream within the next three years. It aims to be an agent of social and economic development through responsible tourism, demonstrating sustainable practices and caring for the environment while improving the well being of the community. An economist by training, both he and his sociologist wife are very keen on economic and social development, an approach which is reflected in their commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility. He sees an explosion of travel fuelled by growing affluence and globalization, and believes that personalization in travel is a strong trend. “I think discerning consumers today gravitate toward brands that share the values they embrace”, he says.
# AIPC 2008 Annual Conference Program

**MONDAY | JUNE 30th**

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<td><strong>THE ASIAN EXPERIENCE</strong></td>
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<td>The New Asian Hemisphere</td>
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**TUESDAY | JULY 1st**

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<td>Successfully Developing and Managing an “Experience Product” in Today’s Market</td>
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<td>The Practical Realities of Delivering a Sustainability Program</td>
<td>Catherine Wong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case presentations</td>
<td>In a series of case studies, members speak to how they are responding to new demands that are impacting the way we need to brand and market our facilities and destinations in an ever more competitive market.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meeting the Challenges of Centre and Destination Branding</td>
<td>Jacqui Rogers</td>
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<td>Launching a new product into today’s market</td>
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<td>Repositioning a product in today’s market</td>
<td>Marcia Lyons</td>
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<td>How can a national centre reposition itself to address the international market</td>
<td>Can a centre in an established leisure destination reposition itself as a “business” product</td>
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<td>From the Experience Economy to Authenticity</td>
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<td>James Gilmore Workshop</td>
<td>How can the lessons of the Experience Economy be applied to convention centres and products?</td>
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**WEDNESDAY | JULY 2nd**

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Closing Lunch Hosted by PALEXCO Palaciode Exposiciones y Congresos A Coruna
AIPC Academy well established with second session in Brussels

The Academy is a comprehensive education program designed to provide a specialized professional development experience for congress centre managers and staff. Its purpose is to provide broad, industry-focused training which will help existing convention centre staff prepare themselves for broader responsibilities while at the same time creating an opportunity for those new to the industry to get a solid orientation.

This February saw the successful completion of the second AIPC Academy program, which, like its predecessor in 2007, was fully subscribed. Held at the Dolce la Hulpe near Brussels, it took place over a 5 day period with 25 students and 8 faculty and guest speakers in attendance.

Faculty members were drawn from around the world, including centres and industry-related businesses in South Africa, Italy, Canada, the US and the UK. The units they delivered ranged from facility operations and financial management to human resources, customer relations, sales and marketing, community relations and security. In all cases, these topics were delivered in a congress centre context using relevant examples from actual centre operations.

As in last year’s Academy, a great deal of emphasis was placed on group exercises which utilized the experiences of all participants and helped encourage a group approach to problem solving. Student assessments showed a more than 80% approval rating for the program along with an array of good suggestions for refining and improving program content and format even further in the future.

The third Academy will again be held in Brussels from the 1st to the 6th of February 2009, and centres wishing to send staff are encouraged to apply early for a place. In order to ensure a high quality of educational experience, enrolment will again be limited to 25 students and experience has shown that these openings are rapidly taken up.

“With this second year complete, we believe we have set a path that will deliver a long term, high quality professional development program exclusively for congress centres” said Academy Chair Barbara Maple. “The ongoing need for service quality and challenges with a shrinking labour force in many areas will make this type of program even more important in the future, and we intend to make sure it is there to serve AIPC member needs.”

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
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JMIC UNITY AWARD FOR 2008 ANNOUNCED

Joint Meetings Industry Council President (and AIPC Past President) Barbara Maple announced the winner of the 2008 JMIC Unity Award as Mr. Hans Friis of Brähler ICS AG. Mr. Friis formally received the award at the IMEX Awards Banquet in Frankfurt, Germany on the evening of April 23.

In making the Award, Ms. Maple said “I’m particularly pleased to be presenting this year’s award as the recipient demonstrates so well the kind of spirit that can advance these objectives. Hans Friis is an individual who has gone far beyond his commercial interests to build better relations and communications not only within the industry itself but with key client and governmental groups that he interacts with. At the same time he has been a strong supporter and contributor to industry events as well as generous in sharing his expertise”.

Friis has been with Braehler since 1992, and is now a member of the Braehler Board of Directors with particular responsibility for subsidiary companies and system wide sales. In this capacity he has been engaged with many of the highest profile meetings in the world, a the industry and a number of the largest client organizations including several key UN agencies. A the same time, he has been a generous supporter of the industry, having contributed his time and energies to a number of industry organizations, including MPI, ICCA and AIPC as well as assisting these organizations in upgrading their knowledge and use of new technology. Specifically, he has participated in training seminars, provided systems, training and support to industry events, and supplied technology in support of association activities.

The JMIC Unity Award was established by the Council as a way of recognizing individuals who have made significant contributions to the advancement of the Meetings Industry and the level of professionalism it represents. The Award is made each year based on criteria which evaluate industry leadership and initiative.

JMIC – the Joint Meetings Industry Council – was established in 1978 as a vehicle for creating a forum for the exchange of information and perspectives amongst international associations engaged in various aspects of the Meetings Industry. It serves as a link between its member organizations as well as a means of reviewing industry conditions and strategies.
The IMEX Industry trade show in Frankfurt saw a particularly intense period of activity for AIPC with numerous events and participation in industry seminars and summits occupying a full five days surrounding the event. Amongst the highlights were:

The third Annual AIPC Sales and Marketing Summit: This session was held on the Sunday prior to IMEX and in conjunction with it, and attracted over 50 sales executives representing member centres (see article to follow).

The Board of Directors of AIPC also used the opportunity to have a full day Board meeting and chart out association activities for the upcoming year, including such initiatives as the AIPC Academy, Quality Standards, AIPC sector summits and the Annual Conference in Singapore.

AIPC Past-President Barbara Maple chaired the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC) meeting which also considered a number of initiatives including upcoming award recipients as well as next steps in the Profile and Power industry awareness campaigns.

AIPC and ICCA jointly hosted the best attended seminar of the trade show with colleagues from MPI and PCMA on the topic of potential impacts from the global financial crisis on the meetings industry.

AIPC also participated heavily in this year’s Politician’s Forum, a session organized to bring government and industry leaders together to exchange information and perspectives on the future of the industry and the role of elected officials in that future.

Finally, the Singapore 2008 reception brought together AIPC members and industry colleagues in an advance promotion for this year’s 50th Anniversary Annual Conference in Singapore. As always, the AIPC booth offered a means for members to connect with both management and each other during the show.

Third Sales and Marketing Summit Delivers New Insights

The third in a series of annual AIPC Sales and Marketing Summits offered more than 50 member participants an opportunity to engage with each other and a series of key speakers on the common topic of new factors in the market and the kinds of strategies that can be employed to address them effectively.

Following a synopsis of the results of the Key Issues Survey that is carried out in advance of each session and a presentation on AIPC’s Quality Standards program (which featured as the number one area of interest in the advance survey), members were treated to a very unique perspective on the potential of the Internet to enhance centre marketing.

Led by Ronnie Overgoor, an Internet strategist and television host who specializes in Internet issues and produces an annual survey of trend-setting online agencies in the Netherlands, the session addressed the ways in which people are using the Internet as a replacement for many different sources of information and how this can create new opportunities for centre managers.

The second guest speaker was Richard Bergstrom, Director General of LIF, the Swedish Association of Pharmaceutical Industries and Chair of the IFPMA (International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Associations) code compliance network.

Mr. Bergstrom’s topic was one of increasing importance to the meetings industry in that it dealt with the impacts of still evolving requirements for support by the pharmaceutical industry of medical meetings, a key long term issue in the financial viability of such meetings. In particular, he dealt with how perceptions of the “luxury” nature of facilities, hotels and even destinations can render some uncompetitive for hosting meetings that involve pharmaceutical funding, prompting new concerns about how destinations and centres who are looking for this type of business will need to position themselves in the future.

The Summit program was rounded out with a workshop session on yield management and a panel discussion on the role and success of marketing alliances in promoting convention centres and destinations. The latter featured input from six different alliances, which collectively represented a wide range of both purposes and approaches to the market.

Initial feedback from participants was that this was the best Summit program ever, and that the range of content addressed most priority areas of member’s market concerns. Planning is now underway for a parallel session in the facility operations area to take place at EIBTM this November.
Storm Clouds or Silver Lining

The session title said it all as industry representatives gathered for what turned out to be the largest seminar session of the IMEX trade Show in Frankfurt.

Jointly sponsored by AIPC and ICCA, the seminar focussed on the topic of what current turmoil in global financial markets and the accompanying threat of a global recession could mean to the future of the meetings industry.

The panel was a very senior level and broadly representative one, including MPI President Bruce MacMillan, PCMA President Deborah Sexton, AIPC Vice President Geoff Donaghy and ICCA Board Member Jurriaen Sleijster. The panel not only represented a range of organizations but various geographic regions and industry sectors as well, further enhancing the perspectives they brought to the discussion.

While there were many different aspects to each panellists contribution, the consensus seemed to be that overall business confidence remained high in most areas, with organizations reporting strong business expectations both this year and next. One of the reasons put forward for this confidence was the fact that booked business was unlikely to cancel at this stage regardless of any economic fallout that might occur in the months ahead.

However, there was also a sense that the impacts might simply not have reached the industry as yet and that a prudent course of action would be to take whatever measures were available to prepare for an eventual downturn. Factors in this regard included looking at product enhancement, business diversification and a stronger role for associations in communicating industry intelligence in a timely manner.

All agreed that longer term factors such as sustainability, potential travel reductions and the need to address the looming human resources shortage had to be part of any long term strategy. As confident as the industry appears today, there was an understanding that conditions could change very rapidly and that good management and preparation would be the key to long term weathering of any “storm clouds” that might lie ahead.

Politicians Get Their Say

This year’s Politician’s Forum represented a transition from sessions in which industry representatives did most of the talking to one where the politicians led the show. Held each year as part of the IMEX program, the Forum is intended to bring together elected officials with industry leaders to discuss issues of common interest in the meetings industry.

Following industry presentations by AIPC’s Rod Cameron, ICCA’s Martin Sirk and Richard Holmes of the International Bureau of Epilepsy, participants from numerous countries toured the show floor an reconvened for a second session opened by Barbara Maple of JMIC and Olivier Lepine of ECM. Then it was the politician’s turn to take over the agenda, led by guest presenters Jane Lomax-Smith, Minister for Tourism, South Australia; Alan Lowe, Mayor Victoria BC, Canada and Ivor Blumenthal, CEO of Government Services Sector Education and Training Authority, South Africa.

Presentations and interactions amongst the four political leaders in attendance stressed the importance of good communications between themselves and the industry and the need to take larger national and international issues into account when shaping the messages. In particular, the political and community benefits had to be identified and stressed in any such communications in order to make those messages more relevant to a government audience.

The purpose of the interaction was well summed up by Mayor Alan Lowe, who said “Dialogue between front line politicians and the convention industry is important as each side doesn’t necessarily know what the other needs or wants. I was pleased to see that everyone here was very interested and engaged in today’s debate.”
CROCUS INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION & CONVENTION CENTRE MOSCOW

Crocus Congress Centre is a part of the International Crocus Expo Centre which with 450,000 square meters of total space is the biggest exhibition and congress facility in Russia. The Congress Centre currently includes 49 transformable halls located in immediate proximity to exhibition areas, which allows hosting of shows and meetings at the same time. In October 2008 a new amphitheatre for 6,000 people will be added to the current premises.

All conference halls are equipped with modern audio-and-video systems, including the for simultaneous interpretation facilities. Spaces can be divided by means of soundproof partitions which allow adjustments in the size of the congress spaces as the event scale requires.

Says Crocus Expo Director Dmitry Ostroushko “AIPC offers excellent opportunities to exchange experience and knowledge of international congress organizations. While Russia is not currently listed as a host country to hold key international events, the opening of Crocus Expo halls and building up of a new hall for 6,000 people will create new opportunities to hold world congresses in Russia, and we believe that the membership in AIPC will help us to attract international associations and worldwide companies to Russia.”

KÖLNKONGRESS

Congress Centre Koelnmesse offers atmosphere and ambience, catering and hospitality and outstanding event technology. The venue is located close to the city centre and offers easy access via three international airports. The centre offers a total of 41 rooms with varying capacity with a total seating capacity of 19,500. The Congress Centre East and Congress Centre North Koelnmesse are connected by a covered Boulevard that also offers direct access to an event hall which delivers space for up to 9,600 guests, while the 284,000 s.q.m. of exhibition space in the surrounding halls offer plenty of room for accompanying exhibitions and company presentations.

KölnKongress is Cologne’s largest provider of event locations, marketing eight other locations in addition to the Congress-Centrum Koelnmesse. “We can make optimal use of the synergy effect arising from the variety of the objects as well as the convenient geographical location and excellent infrastructure of Cologne for the benefit of our customers,” says Bernhard Conin, Managing Director of KölnKongress. “As we increasingly focus our attention on the international marketing of the Congress-Centrum Koelnmesse, our membership in AIPC will allow us to gain access to well-founded industry know-how and the specialist exchange with other members”.

WORLD FORUM CONVENTION CENTER THE HAGUE

The World Forum is based in the international zone of The Hague, and lends its support to meetings concerned with peace and justice while at the same time serving as a perfect location for meetings, product presentations, association congresses and spectacular theatre shows and music festivals.

World Forum has the largest auditorium of Holland, with 2,161 seats. It also has 30 break-out areas which vary from 20 to 360 delegates and an 5,000 sq m exhibition space. In combination with a multifunctional auditorium/theater and various break-out areas there is enough room to welcome more than 5,000 visitors at a time. World Forum has one in-house hotel and two other hotels within walking distance.

Andre van Rooijen, General Manager, says: “To me the membership of AIPC is an excellent way to share knowledge in an international field of large and professional congress centres. This prestigious association provides us a perfect networking environment and in addition gives me the opportunity to visit interesting workshops and presentations, which helps move The World Forum performance from good to great!”
Our New Logo: Yours for the Taking!

We’re so pleased with our new AIPC logo that we’re sure you will be too! If you want to reference your membership in AIPC in your own publications or website, the new logo is available for download on the AIPC website www.aipc.org, members only section. Feel free to use it as a member!