

KONGRES

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Messe Frankfurt is one of the central instruments for promoting business in the Rhine-Main region

Wolfgang Marzin





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CONGRESS AND
MARKETING AGENCY



A word from the editor



Gorazd Čad

WHERE ARE WE RUNNING TO?

Things will never again be the same

Let me start by borrowing the modern paradigm used by journalists: just a few years ago, we lived in a world with little sources and a lot of history - now we live in a world full of sources and with very little history. In the world of blogs and automatically generated news, I get asked every day by my friends about the future of the media and journalism. Do we still need the media to choose the relevant stories and put them in a broader context? What is relevant, the content or the online community? Who is the loser and who is the winner?

I BELIEVE IN THE INTERNET AND ITS INTERACTIVITY, BUT I DON'T ALWAYS BELIEVE IN THE CREDIBILITY OF THE INFORMATION FOUND ONLINE.

In this internet age a sense of criticism and of journalistic culture often gets lost. Good stories that touch you and draw you to them are, generally speaking, still produced by serious media and journalists. Take a look at your own online media habits. We ache for superficial and sensationalist stories. Media

professionalism is vital and so is a closer connection to the target audiences online.

I BELIEVE WE LIVE IN A HYBRID AGE WHERE CLASSIC AND ONLINE MEDIA COEXIST ON THE VERGE OF A TRUE MEDIA CONVERGENCE.

Kongres Magazine is celebrating its fifth anniversary. We constantly try to understand the world and help you in the process by providing credible and trustworthy information. We never think about the media crisis, instead we prefer to focus on the content. Technology and the internet present us with a challenge. We think about the future of our magazine and our partners every single day. We are interested in interactivity, multimedia, personalisation and convergence. We manage all these things because we are independent, small, flexible and adaptable, and because we truly wish for the meetings industry to make progress, which is what we are dedicated to. We will definitely take a mostly digital form in the near future, but most of all we will remain professional and independent. We will become better year after

year and stay connected with the global media of the meetings industry.

And the answer to the question in the title? To a place where things will never again be the same.

5

KONGRES MAGAZINE IS CELEBRATING ITS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

In just five years from 2007 to 2011, SouthEast Europe has emerged as a global meeting destination and Kongres Magazine followed each stage of its ascen.

- 5 volumes
- 20 regular and special issues
- over 120 meeting professionals have written for us so far
- over 400 carefully edited articles
- Kongres for iPad
- more than 30.000 happy readers
- web portal
- Meet in SEE portal
- more than 80 interviews

Happy birthday KONGRES!



Eric Everald

Reasons to be Cheerful

The economic recession has been painful, but it has shaken us out of our complacency

Eric Everald is the founder and Executive Chairman of Artexis, the exhibitions organiser and hall management company, and easyFairs, which runs approximately 100 trade shows per year in 16 countries. In 2011 he served as the President of UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibitions Industry. Eric lives in Brussels with his wife and four children.

The global economic crisis of 2009-2010 sent shockwaves through the exhibitions industry. It had unfortunate repercussions for many. However, a crisis can also be a catalyst for positive change. It forces us to go back to basics and ask how we can address our customers' needs more effectively.

Most exhibition industry practitioners remain upbeat, but they recognise that we have often been too slow to embrace new business models, communication and networking techniques. This is changing, partly under the stimulus of the economic situation, but even if the economy rebounded tomorrow, we have moved on.

TRADE SHOWS HAVE EXPANDED BEYOND THEIR TRADITIONAL ROLE AS A TEMPORARY SPACE IN WHICH TO CONDUCT BUSINESS.

Stimulated by new online platforms such as blogs and industry portals, the new trade show is evolving into a much more collaborative undertaking that combines physical and online presence – with the latter becoming a permanent fixture.

At easyFairs, we started out as a “no frills trade shows” operation but it soon became clear to us that, while customers understood and appreciated our time and cost-effective approach to the physical show, they wanted more in terms of content and collaboration. This year we introduced our ‘Online365 Pack’, which enables exhibitors to reach out to their market throughout the year.

Relationship brokers

We will see a further shift away from selling rentals on floor space to consultative selling, where space rental is just one element in a total package. Exhibition organisers are brokers of commercial relationships; we provide a platform for information exchange. So long

as we bring buyers, sellers, and other stakeholders together, they do not really mind that much if their first encounter is a virtual one.

HOWEVER, THIS MEANS THAT ORGANISERS MUST UNDERSTAND THEIR STAKEHOLDERS' INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESS MODELS BETTER THAN EVER.

It also implies that we must re-examine our own business models and we must invest in the tools to do the job more effectively, such as intelligent CRM.

It has been a guiding principle for us at easyFairs that our salespeople and marketers should become experts in their sectors. They are required to make at least five non-sales calls a week just to find out what's on people's minds.

New technology

Exhibition organisers no longer regard new communications technologies as a threat. We are seeing more and more smartphone apps being deployed at trade shows and their importance as devices for exchanging information and staying in contact can only increase. I believe the message has finally sunk in that social media and mobile communications increases the likelihood and quality of live interaction; other industries such as retail and hospitality have understood this for some time. Few still need convincing that social media offers great opportunities for promoting shows, carrying out market research, deepening customer relationships and facilitating the creation of show content. Most of all, social media will facilitate matchmaking before, during and after the physical trade show.

While new technologies open up new possibilities, we should not simply embrace

them with our eyes shut. Many in our industry – myself included – have warned against the limitations of virtual exhibitions. As stand-alone events they make sense in specific circumstances. For example, online presentation might be preferable because of limitations on people’s time or mobility. They make some sense if the aim is simply knowledge transfer or the presentation of non-physical services. On the other hand, would you select a lawyer or an architect on the basis of a webinar?

I FIND IT FAR MORE LIKELY THAT VIRTUAL OR CYBER EXHIBITIONS WILL BECOME AN EXTENSION OF PHYSICAL EXHIBITIONS.

For example, a visitor might want to involve colleagues back at the workplace in discussions and presentations onsite. I find the prospects for such onsite-online mash-ups tremendously exciting.

The one new technology development that does scare me is RFID. I know I am probably now in a minority and I have heard all the arguments in favour of improved security and streamlining of processes, but really, I feel uneasy about being tracked around the exhibition floor. I don’t want strangers to know which stands I visited and which I missed, and whatever else I was up to.

Metrics & transparency

An economic downturn forces marketers and other business professionals to look for value. They are under pressure to justify expenditure. “We always exhibit at this show!” is no longer good enough for CFOs, who reply “Then it’s time you considered the alternatives.” In response, organisers are introducing better and more reliable metrics that demonstrate RoI, supported by better dialogue and engagement with stakeholders via the internet and social media. I hope this means that organisers feel under less

pressure to demonstrate constant year-on-year growth in visitor figures and instead provide more realistic and trustworthy information on qualitative outcomes.

ONE OF THE HUGE ADVANTAGES OF OUR APPROACH AT EASYFAIRS IS PRICE TRANSPARENCY. OUR MOTTO IS “THE PRICE OF YOUR STAND IS THE COST OF THE SHOW”.

Price transparency makes it easier for exhibitors to calculate RoI and it was one reason we increased our sales revenue through the recession, while other organisers struggled.

Sustainability

Finally, sustainability is on everybody’s agenda in the exhibitions industry, and I am convinced it will stay there because it makes good business sense. Energy prices will increase and resources, in particular water, will become more scarce, therefore hall owners should be installing renewable energy sources and water management and recycling facilities. This can and should be done in close cooperation with local authorities, who have an interest in keeping exhibition halls open and in promoting a responsible and progressive image. From 2008 to 2010 the hall management side of my company, Artexis, worked with the city authorities in Ghent and their environmental development agencies to modernise Flanders expo with 54,000 square metres of solar panels, making it one of the most sustainable exhibition halls in the world.

At easyFairs we set out to be a green company from the start.

ALL OF THE STANDS AT OUR SHOW ARE BUILT FROM REUSABLE MODULES SO WASTE IS MINIMISED.

But we should also raise our profile as enablers of sustainable business – after all, trade shows greatly reduce the need for business travel and thereby cut carbon emissions. If we want to profit from the upturn, we must communicate more positively about these and all the other economic and social benefits of the exhibitions industry.



Andrej Prpič

On the Greek side of the Alps

We still haven't decided which industries are strategically important

In economics, assessments of individual achievements are only valid when set against other, comparable achievements. Two percent growth might be fantastic, for example, if everyone else is in the red. It is a huge failure, however, when others are recording three to five times that level of growth. The world's largest trade shows, where the offer of an entire industry is on display under one roof, ruthlessly expose who is really who and how much they are worth on the global scale - be it a company or a country.

Our economy is not in the best of shape at the moment, as shown everyday by the latest bankruptcies, blocked bank accounts, laid-off workers or other similar occurrences. Added to that, the country is facing not only corruption, but also white collar crime, often under the patronage of politicians.

WHILST SOME OF US MIGHT FEEL QUITE AT HOME IN OUR COSY LITTLE NEST, THE LARGEST GLOBAL TRADE SHOWS PRESENT AN OBJECTIVE VIEW OF OUR INDUSTRY IN LIGHT OF GLOBAL COMPETITION.

We certainly have companies here who are able to produce good products and confidently present themselves abroad. But that is it - more or less.

None of our industries are globally recognisable or make a substantial impact on the international market. This doesn't mean we are not successful in exporting; rather, we just have to work much harder for profit than more established countries. We never seriously tried to shape and market the Made in Slovenia brand. Consequently, it doesn't exist. And what doesn't exist has no value. So when the press asks chancellor Merkel if Slovenia will truly follow Greece, buyers put even more pressure on prices and loans become a little more expensive.

Current exports still rely too heavily on exporters who foreign buyers can replace overnight, if not with better ones, certainly with cheaper ones. Trademarks able to deliver tangible added value are non-existent. Here and there we can find a notable exception, which can only have come about through overzealous media coverage. When everyone starts to copy them without a second thought, their directors end up becoming more media-present than silicone-filled reality show starlets.

Then there are other inappropriate messages contained within these stories. The first is that relatively small companies feature most prominently here, despite the fact that they employ only a handful of people and their contribution to the GDP is negligible. It's as though big and successful systems are not important to the economy.

THE SECOND, OFTEN FALSE MESSAGE IS THAT SUCCESS IN BUSINESS ALWAYS DEPENDS ON INDIVIDUALS.

If that were true we could completely rule out the state. Only one outstanding student in a class where everyone else is barely making it is a sign there is a problem with the teacher, the school, or maybe the system itself - but not with the students.

THIS, AMONG OTHER FACTORS, IS THE MAIN WEAKNESS OF OUR ECONOMY - WE NEVER BUILT AN ENVIRONMENT PROVIDING THE CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.

Managers and engineers in successful countries are not that much more educated, hard working or capable than our own - the

reason for differences could perhaps lie in added value per employee.

In short, forming a clear economic strategy (with the exception of projects like entry into EU and the Eurozone) was never undertaken in independent Slovenia.

WE KNOW WHICH ISSUES WERE AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE POLITICAL AGENDA IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS - THEY DIDN'T INCLUDE ECONOMIC SUCCESS, TO THE EXTENT THAT WE STILL HAVEN'T DECIDED WHICH INDUSTRIES ARE TRULY STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT.

We export our wood and we import furniture: at the same time our woodworking companies are melting away like snow in the spring sunshine. Officials turn up their noses at everything that doesn't ring of oh-so-high technology, yet we are importing splinter wood from Austria for our stoves and fireplaces. And this is probably a by-product of the furniture made from exported Slovenian wood in the first place.

Even through the spectre of global trade shows, as a mirror on our economy, the now defunct magazine *Gospodarski vestnik* called attention to best practice examples of countries who lifted their national economy on to the international stage - for example, our neighbour Austria - and in the interim period very little to nothing happened. A year or so ago the Chamber of Commerce and Industry suddenly noticed the Austrian model of internationalization and started selling it as a recipe for success. We suffered a decade of delay before beginning to launch programmes such as 'Go International'. For the Chamber to finally wake up, they first had to lose money. What had to happen was Prime Minister Janša, who took away obligatory membership

and achieved another result: some cheap political points among those who never liked the Chamber in the first place. He removed a potentially dangerous centre of power, represented by managers (who could possibly demands the politicians finally address key question) and in the end nailed the final nail in the coffin with changes in the leadership of the Chamber. And whit all that's happened, after one year no one has asked the question how the programme of internationalization would come to life and survive without money.

The point of this story is that today we have more and more countries with efficient internationalization programmes and they are developing or acquiring important competitive advantages (as do, for example, tax systems). A component of these programmes is, of course, good trade shows. Trade shows in Germany, the world's leading expo country, attracted 2.55 million visitors from abroad last year, almost reaching its zenith of a 2008 record year, when they hit 2.6 million. Yet detailed analysis of statistic data clearly struggle is getting increasingly more difficult -

GERMANY WILL END 2011 WITH THREE OR FOUR PERCENT MORE VISITORS AND EXHIBITORS AND ABOUT ONE PERCENT MORE EXHIBITION SPACE SOLD COMPARED TO THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

The German tradeshow industry is developing new projects, builds modern exhibition halls or renews old ones, exports its exhibitions and knowledge all over the world and doesn't leave a trail of unpaid suppliers behind. On the contrary, for every Euro dropping into the trade show cash register, the companies in the region make six to ten.





Rok Klančnik

On sexy (congress) destinations

Sexy congress destinations are the ones that move and seduce you

I am convinced that this text will be one of the least challenging ones from an expert point of view and at the same time one of the most pleasant ones that I have ever published in this amazing magazine. Those of you who are naughty will have to be disappointed: I will not talk about sex, romance, porn and brothels, so this is the first and last time I mention them here.

'By Toutatis', as Obelix would say, what is a sexy congress destination? Is this a place where uniformed, long legged stewardesses walk around (and muscular, young and sweaty construction workers in tight shirts and helmets, to be fair to the ladies)? Where workshops, congresses and conventions last for half an hour and the remaining three days are spent sipping cocktails prepared by luscious female bartenders and eating fresh Norwegian salmon canapés? And we know what the night time brings. Well ... not really.

'Sexy' has become one of the cutest descriptions over the last decade and tourism professionals use it to describe hotels, places, food, means of transport, everything that they come across.

THE WORD IS DERIVED FROM THE WORD SEX, THAT MUCH IS TRUE, BUT OUR USE OF THE WORD IMPLIES NO SUCH ACTIVITY.

Since this is of course not a technical term, anyone can imagine a sexy destination in their own way. Anglo-Saxon journalists came up with this description and they usually refer to destinations next to a warm ocean with long, sandy beaches, palm trees and top hotels where piña colodas leak out of faucets (or Sex on the Beach, if you so prefer – and I do mean the cocktail, of course). Travelsexy360.com lists the following three destinations: Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic, Hawaii's third largest island, Oahu, and Langkawi in

Islamic Indonesia. The same website also lists the best parties happening in Thailand, sexy destinations on Santorini and Ibiza, etc.

Another blog (Jeffrey Baynes on MSN Travel Canada) gave the top spot to Rio de Janeiro, followed by Amsterdam, Budapest, Paris, Mykonos, Las Vegas, Berlin, Negril (Jamaica), Havana, Ibiza, Tokyo, St. Tropez and Barcelona. Yes, even Buenos Aires and Seville. No, Portorož is not on the list. Neither is Bled.

A few years ago Poland became known as a sexy congress destination.

THIS WAS PROVEN BY AN INCREASING PRESENCE OF THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY IN WARSAW, KRAKOW, KATOWICE, ETC. BUT THE MAIN REASON FOR THIS WAS THAT THE COUNTRY IS (STILL) RELATIVELY CHEAP.

The five sexiest hotels are said to be Hotel Casa Angelina in Amalfi (Italy), Central Palace in Istanbul, Hotel de l'Europe in Amsterdam, Bleibtreu in Berlin and Fresh in Athens. All designer hotels, to be honest, and I like to imagine that the gatherings in these hotels are sexy as hell.

Sexy congress destinations are the ones that move and seduce you.

But what is it that we know and they don't? Is Belgrade a sexy destination? 'Of course it is', many of you will say. The grey Serbian capital with many crumbling buildings cannot be compared to most European capitals, despite its Balkan charm. But its hospitality, friendliness and warmth, lately even its professional approach to congresses and other events, beats many of them. Not just Slovenian, but many Western congress tourists would rather travel to Belgrade than to 'been there, done that' Budapest, Vienna

or imperial Moscow. But beauty is in the eye of the beholder, to each heart its own priority list and to each head its own memories. There are some places that will forever remain sexy, such as Paris, Rome and Madrid (you can even add Barcelona to the list if you are an FC Barcelona fan). These cities are connected with love, romance, and sex if you will, as Tony Perrottet wonderfully puts it in his book, 'The Sinner's Grand Tour: A Journey Through the Historical Underbelly of Europe'. The book even lists the Vatican as a sexy destination because of Raphael's almost erotic frescoes.

A SEXY DESTINATION IS THEREFORE ANOTHER WORD FOR A BRAND NAME, BUT MUCH MORE RELAXED AND CLEAR.

A sexy destination is not desperate to attract us, because we already want to go there. We want to go there to hold our congress or take our incentive trip. Last but not least, a sexy destination is where we want to bring our money and where we want to leave some of it as well. We almost want to come home disappointed by the fact that the business trip had to end so soon. Basically, a sexy destination offers not just excellent meeting opportunities, but brings the joy back into our lives and awakens the hedonist in us, be it in the form of excellent food, company, sunshine, nature and partying, or maybe even an occasional passionate moment (Shhh!).

Forget about those Anglo-Saxon websites for a moment, they don't realize how amazing, beautiful, nice and exciting our country is.

So, do you think Slovenia is a sexy congress destination?

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News from SE Europe

A NEW FAMILY HOTEL IN MARIBOR

The family run Hotel Bau *** is located just five minutes from Maribor city centre. The proximity of Pohorje offers the guests numerous sporting activities that can relax their body and mind and revitalise them with life energy and working zeal. Hotel Bau offers 47 spacious, modern and comfortable rooms suitable for guests from business to families and 2-wheeled adventurers to hikers. The hotel conference room is well equipped and of ample capacity for business presentations, meetings, seminars and other aspects of socialising and networking.

www.hotel-bau.net



HOW BIG IS YOUR EVENT'S CARBON FOOTPRINT?

Sava Hotels Bled, the largest hotel company on Lake Bled, Slovenia, launched a new "Green for events" programme, offering conference organisers the opportunity to take into account various environmental and sustainable criteria when planning and organising their events. The first large international event organised under the principles of this programme was the 6th Bled Strategic Forum, organised by the Republic



of Slovenia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Centre for European Perspective.

www.hotelibled.com

PLAN IT GREEN!

As autumn draws in, so too do new possibilities. In 2012 Bohinj Park ECO Hotel is expanding its congress capacities and building the ECO Ski-Resort 2864. Since it opened in 2009, it has been acclaimed as the hotel most frequently receiving awards.

www.2864.si



DESIGN HOTEL MONS BECOMES AN OFFICIAL PARTNER OF THE GREEN GLOBE CERTIFICATION STANDARD

In September Design Hotel Mons became an official partner of the Green Globe Certification Standard, which represents the international standard in the area of sustainable development for the tourism and hotel industry. The standard covers the areas of energy (net impact on the environment), water (water treatment, sewage water), waste management (separation, recycling) eco-activities (training, workshops) and protection of the environment (using organic detergents and fair trade products). Hotel Mons becomes the second eco-certified hotel in Slovenia.

www.hotel.mons.si



GOOD NEWS FROM DVORSKA VAS

The project Dvorec Drnča got a new boost of energy after years of uncertainty. It now has a new name, the Lambergh Chateau & Hotel, new capacities in its congress halls and expanded Wellness offer, and new tastes, an a la carte restaurant, and all at the same address!

www.hotel-lambergh.com



MARKO FILEJ BECOMES SALES DIRECTOR AT MONSADRIA D.O.O.

Marko Filej officially became the Sales Director at Monsadria d.o.o. on November 14th. Before taking up this post he worked as marketing director at DELO News Publisher and as the Sales Director at Žurnal Media.



THE FIRST PRIVATE PCO AGENCY – BETWEEN TRIGLAV AND PYONGYANG – CELEBRATES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Back in the socialist Yugoslavia it was practically impossible to establish a private tourist agency. However, Majda Zidanski and Andrej Ristič managed to do just that. The beginning was a bit

rocky: the unfavourable conditions of socio-political turbulence and the war in the nineties were major challenges. Today Albatros is a recognised brand in the PCO arena with its achievements including a number of internationally renowned meetings in Slovenia.

www.albatros-bled.com



LJUBLJANA'S BEST WESTERN PREMIER SLON HOTEL FRESHENED UP

The Best Western Premier Slon Hotel continues investing year on year to upgrade the property's quality and enhance the guests' experience. After a soft refurbishment of the rooms and a complete makeover of the conference facilities and lobby area, the existing wallpapers, carpeting and lights in the Hotel's corridors are being

replaced through to mid December 2011. The selected new materials, accessories and colours are to add a touch of warmth and elegance to the interior decor.

Another important novelty that immediately received positive feedback from guests is the new Health Club, featuring a fitness room with high-quality Technogym equipment (open 24 hours a day) and a small, yet cozy and relaxing spa area with saunas. The total investment is close to €500,000.

www.hotelslon.com








Bled – The green image of paradise in all seasons.

It is not a myth; this is how Bled is described by the media and by the majority of those who have ever set foot in this town.







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SANDRA ENDERS IS THE NEW MANAGEMENT BOARD MEMBER OF VALAMAR HOTELS AND RESORTS

Valamar Hotels & Resorts Ltd. Supervisory Board are proud to announce the strategic setup of their Top Management and welcome Sandra Enders as the new Management Board Member responsible for Sales, Marketing and Revenue Management, as of 26 September, 2011. The internationally experienced hotel expert's skills will complement those of Mr. Peter Fuchs, reputable CEO and President of the Valamar Management Board. Fuchs has been CEO of Croatia's leading hotel company since 2005 and has just reconfirmed his mandate for the years ahead.

www.valamar.com



DUBROVNIK TRAVEL WINS THE 2011 'GAZELLE'

Dubrovnik Travel DMC, a specialist agency for group travel and congresses, just keeps on picking up awards for their success. During the November 11th gala event at Hotel Le Meridien Lav, Split, Dubrovnik Travel received the important 'Gazelle' award for the second time.

www.dubrovniktravel.com



ARTION HAS WON THE RIGHT TO HOST THE 16TH EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF NEUROSURGERY IN 2016 IN ATHENS

An amazing success lies in Athens being chosen to host the 16th European Congress of Neurosurgery in 2016, following a successful bid by the Hellenic Neurosurgical Society (HNS) at the presentation of the candidate cities during the 14th congress taking place in Rome on 13 October, 2011.

www.artion.com.gr



THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF NEUROSURGICAL SOCIETIES

HOTEL EXCELSIOR NAMED 2011 'LEADING FIVE STAR HOTEL ON THE ADRIATIC'

Hotel Excelsior scooped the top prize, the 'Leading Five Star Hotel on the Adriatic', reconfirming its key role in the region. Opened in 1913, Hotel Excelsior has been visited by royalty, celebrities and politicians and remains the pinnacle of luxury and impeccable service.

www.alh.hr



OPATIJA TO PLAY HOST TO THE SKÅL COUNCIL MEETING

The Mid-year International Skål Council meeting, with approximately one hundred participants,

will take place in Opatija from April 19-22, 2012. At the congress in Finland, Opatija's bid was successfully presented by the president of Skål International Kvarner, Mrs Katarina Hauptfeld, with the support of Mr Nik Račić MSc, Director of the Croatian Convention and Incentive Bureau and former president of Skål International, and Dr Zlatan Fröhlich, member of the International Skål Council. The Opatija Convention & Incentive Bureau also participated in the preparation of this successful bid. Opatija's competitive candidate to host the event was Marmara, Turkey.

www.opatija-convention.com



NEW TOOLS FOR MEETING PLANNERS IN SERBIA

The 'Serbia Meeting Planner's Guide', listing the capacities and other useful information on major meeting destinations in Serbia, is a handy tool and a 'must-have' resource document, not only for meeting planners, but for a regular visitor as well.

Going a step beyond a standard 'Guide', Serbia Convention Bureau has launched 'Serbia Destination' mobile application, optimised for all platforms. With all the information you need to hand, organisers have the convenience of navigation through a user friendly interface for planning and organising events in Serbia. Special features allow customisation and tailoring for individual events.

www.scb.travel



NEWS FROM THE CROATIAN CONVENTION AND INCENTIVE BUREAU

EIBTM 2011 – considering EIBTM is one of the most important trade show in the congress industry, CCIB planned its 190 m² exhibition in detail. Together with 27 co-exhibitors from all over Croatia, CCIB guarantees successful promotion of the Croatian convention and incentive offer.

Co-exhibitors are: Adria Events, Adriatic Luxury Hotels, Atlas DMC, Ban Tours Croatia, Croatia Airlines, Croatia Hotels, Dubrovnik Convention And Incentive Bureau, Dubrovnik Travel DMC, Elite Travel, Eridan Travel Agency, Gulliver Travel, Importanne Resort, Kompas.hr, Lošinj Hotels

& Villas, Macondo Management, Meridien Ten Travel, Opatija Convention & Incentive Bureau, Radisson Blu Resort & Spa Dubrovnik Sun Gardens, Rijeka Convention Bureau, Rina Travel & Events, Spektar Putovanja DMC, Sunčani Hvar Hotels, The Regent Esplanade Zagreb, Uniline DMC, Valamar Hotels & Resorts, Venevent DMC and Zagreb Convention Bureau.

Find us at stand no K500.

ILTM 2011, Cannes – for the first time the CCIB is exhibiting at International Luxury Travel Market together with 4 co-exhibitors: Adriatic Luxury Hotels, Grand Villa Argentina, Hotel Vestibule Palace and Spektar Putovanja DMC.

www.hrvatska.hr



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SOUTH AFRICA: IAPCO'S 40TH MEMBER COUNTRY

South Africa has become the latest country to join the ranks of IAPCO members, bringing the total to an impressive 40 countries. With the addition of new members African Agenda, based in Cape Town, South Africa, and Gyro Conference, based in Lillehammer, Norway, IAPCO can now also boast 114 quality-driven members.

www.iapco.org



OVATION WINS GOLD AT THE UK MEETINGS INDUSTRY MARKETING AWARDS

Ovation Global DMC is proud to announce that the company has won the Gold Award for Best Brand Marketing Campaign at the 2011 UK Meeting Industry Marketing Awards. Announced at a gala ceremony held at the Park Plaza Riverbank, London, last Monday, Ovation beat off strong competition from Zibrant, Corporate Innovations and Hard Rock International to claim the coveted accolade.

www.ovationdmc.com



THE 16TH ESOT CONGRESS WILL BE HELD IN VIENNA IN SEPTEMBER 2013: AIM GROUP INTERNATIONAL APPOINTED AS PCO

'The International Transplant Congress™', organised by the European Society for Organ Transplantation, brings together the leading experts of all fields related to transplantation and will be held once again in Vienna after a sixteen year hiatus.

Austria can boast a renowned clinic and academic tradition in transplantation and this aspect was certainly important in the choice of destination. Equally important was the appeal of the town, which besides being an ideal location thanks to its conference, hotel and transport facilities, offers delegates and visitors an extraordinary environment where history and architecture are strongly integrated into the current variety of a dynamic cultural offer.

www.aimgroupinternational.com



'GLASGOW MODEL' WINS ICCA BEST MARKETING AWARD

A joint entry from Glasgow City Marketing Bureau and the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre won the ICCA 'Best Marketing Award' 2011. The winner was announced during the closing session at the 50th ICCA Congress in Leipzig, Germany.

Aileen Crawford, Head of Conventions at Glasgow City Marketing Bureau, and Ben



Goedegebuure, Director of Sales at the Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre, presented 'The Glasgow Model' as a case study at the World Parkinson Congress 2010.

www.seeglasgow.com

FORMER ICCA CEO TOM HULTON RECEIVED THE MOISES SHUSTER AWARD AT ICCA'S 50TH CONGRESS IN LEIPZIG, GERMANY

The Moises Shuster Award, awarded this year to former ICCA CEO Tom Hulton, is the association's highest honour for outstanding service in the international meetings industry, named after one of ICCA's founding fathers and past presidents.

www.iccaworld.com



A VERY LUCKY THIRTEEN!

PCOs in the Czech Republic have formed a special group to become the 13th national member of EFAPCO.

The new group will operate on the same lines as EFAPCO's German members, with Prague Convention Bureau's PCO group representing the country's leading event planners: as the PCB – PCO section.

www.efapco.eu



HOTEL PERFORMANCES ACROSS EUROPE STABILISED

Instability of economic conditions throughout most European countries has impacted upon hotel performances, slowing down the rate of RevPAR growth and the generally good momentum that had previously been enjoyed. Results have, however, managed to regain some normality, now reaching pre-crisis levels.

www.europeancitiesmarketing.com



POLAND, COUNTRY OF YOUNG LEADERS!

Rob Davidson, esteemed expert of the meetings industry from the University of Greenwich, has made his decision! From hundreds of essays submitted he has chosen the 20 best, giving 20 people (under30) working in the meetings industry the possibility to attend one of its most appealing training initiatives - the Forum for Young Professionals, Barcelona 2011. Invitation to this elite training was the prize in a competition for young professionals (under 30), whose task was to write an essay on one of the four themes proposed by the organisers. This year Poland doubled its success! Two of its participants, Agata Walczak-Ziller, Gdansk Convention Bureau and Davide Odella, Trip Group Warsaw (DMC and

PCO), will be attending the Forum.

www.poland-convention.pl

THE BEST PLACE TO CONNECT WITH WINE & ARCHITECTURE

The second LOISIUM Wine & Spa Resort in Austria is set to open in June 2012 in Ehrenhausen, Southern Styria. In line with the LOISIUM philosophy, this hotel, like its internationally highly recognised sister in Kamptal, has also been planned as a four-star superior wine hotel with a refined contemporary design. It offers a thrilling counterpoint to the current hotel status of Southern Styria.

www.loisium.com

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News from the Slovenian Convention Bureau

SUCCESSFUL FAM TRIP WITH "FEEL THE CHARM OF SLOVENIA" WORKSHOP FOR BELGIAN, DUTCH, FRENCH AND GERMAN MEETINGS ORGANIZERS

The Slovenian Convention Bureau (SCB) and Slovenian Tourist Board (STB) in cooperation with DMC agencies Intours and Liberty Congresses & Incentives Slovenia hosted 66 foreign event organisers this year. The first Fam trip was carried out in July, the next two in October.

Foreign event organisers spent two and a half days getting to know Slovenia as a meetings and incentives destination. For most of them this was their first visit to Slovenia and they enjoyed the diversity of the offer, quality of services and the professionalism of the staff. The responses of clients were more than positive.

Including a DMC in the preparation and technical organisation of the Fam trip proved to be the right decision. They prepared an interesting, diverse and surprise-filled programme.

Ms. Karina Schuil, sales director at Sparkz corporate events, captures her experiences of Slovenia, which she calls 'the last of the unexplored European territories', in an article you can read more of at: www.bbtonline.eu



SLOVENIAN CONVENTION BUREAU (SCB) AND BUSINESS CLUB SDBP – BENELUX IN BRUSSELS

On 28 September SCB and Business Club SDBP – BENELUX hosted a meeting where both organisations presented themselves and took the opportunity to acquire new business partners and clients. The SCB carried out the meeting within the framework of the 'Push up Slovenia 3' campaign.

The event was a good opportunity for everyone interested in organising meetings in Slovenia and those seeking business contacts with Slovenian companies. It included the presentation and meeting of the SDBP – Benelux Business Club and presented Slovenia as a meeting and incentive destination along with its leading suppliers. SCB presented Slovenia as a destination for hosting smaller to medium sized business meetings. With the goal of reaching our business, economic and tourism ambitions, the SCB presentation occurred at the meeting of the SBDP – Benelux Business Club to facilitate economists being able to get to know the services of the bureau and at the same time meet the main suppliers and establish personal contacts, which will promote the successful organisation of business meetings in Slovenia.



MANAGING DIRECTOR OF THE KENES GROUP VISITS LJUBLJANA

At a Town Hall reception, Mayor Zoran Jankovič and Deputy Mayor Tjaša Ficko received Dan Rivlin, Managing Director of the Kenes Group, one of the largest professional congress organisers in the world. The Kenes Group specialises in meetings in the field of medicine. Dan Rivlin is the managing director of the company, that employs more than 300 people. The seat of the company is in Geneva with supporting offices throughout the world (London, Munich, Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Madrid, Istanbul, Tel-Aviv, Singapore, Santiago de Chile). The Kenes Company annually organises over 2,800 meetings in more than one hundred countries with over 110 thousand experts. Last year the Kenes Group organised the Autoimmunity congress at the Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention Centre, with 1,300 participants. Mr. Rivlin signed Ljubljana's Guest Book and enjoyed a stroll through the city centre with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

LJUBLJANA BEATS NEW YORK - WITH THE HELP OF BEES!



Ljubljana was chosen to host the IMEX Challenge 2012, an international, socially responsible humanitarian project. The project is carried out by the IMEX trade show organisers and Ljubljana won with its idea of building an educational bee house for the pupils of Training, Occupation and Care Centre in Draga. Ljubljana beat the rival candidate, no less than New York. After the idea was approved by the Slovenian Convention Bureau members a representative of IMEX visited their assembly and conducted interviews with representatives of the Slovenian Beekeeping Association and the Centre Draga. The final event will take place next July, a full year after the winner was announced.

A group of congress and incentive professionals from all over the world will help build the beehive, in cooperation with the Slovenian Beekeeping Association, in the garden of Centre Draga. "This will be a unique, socially responsible and humanitarian project. The learning bee house will be built by 15 participants. They will cover their own travel costs and donate at least 2,250 Euro to participate in the IMEX challenge. All proceeds will go to the centre," said Miha Kovačič. The pupils - special needs children - will get a chance to learn about the bees, their uses and learn how to make honey. The group will also renovate the only greenhouse for honey plant seed production and sponsor the world's first textbook on beekeeping for the special needs children, which will be translated into English. This socially responsible project presents Slovenia as a young congress and incentive destination where innovative stories are born and congress stakeholders are always willing to contribute to a better future for all. The IMEX Challenge project is organised by IMEX trade show with partners Slovenian and Ljubljana Convention Bureau, Go.Mice, Grand Hotel Union, Kompas DMC and Jezeršek Catering.

CONVENTA 2012 PREPARATIONS IN FULL SWING

The Slovenian Convention Bureau and technical organiser Go.mice d.o.o. along with other partners are actively preparing for the 4th Conventa trade show taking place on 18-19 January 2012 in Ljubljana. Their aim is to attract 300 selected foreign congress organisers from across Europe, who will have the chance to conduct meetings with 140 exhibitors from Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, Austria and Italy. Registration for foreign event organisers is now open and the SCB has already been busy. Exhibitors who have not yet registered are invited to do so as soon as possible. For more information visit: www.conventa.info

SLOVENIAN CONVENTION BUREAU COUNCIL WILL MEET IN PORTOROŽ DURING THE DAYS OF SLOVENIAN TOURISM

The Slovenian Convention Bureau will organise its annual Meeting of the Council, an event traditionally held in the autumn. It will take place during the Days of Slovenian Tourism, organised by STB, between 8 and 9 December. All members of the Slovenian Convention Bureau are invited to participate in the assembly on 9 December between 9:00 and 12:00.

For more information contact azra.botonjic@slovenia-convention.com or visit www.slovenia.info/dst

ANNOUNCEMENTS: SLOVENIA TO PARTICIPATE AT EIBTM IN BARCELONA

From 29 November to 1 December the Slovenian Convention Bureau, in cooperation with STB and around fifteen other Slovenian companies, will again take part at the traditional EIBTM in Barcelona. During the event the Slovenian Convention Bureau and STB will select foreign meetings organisers and introduce Slovenia as an attractive meetings destination by organising a dinner at renowned El Principal del Tragaluz restaurant in the centre of Barcelona.

Congress Slovenia will introduce itself within the SE Europe stand with the aim of attracting international attention to the offer of SE Europe as a

new, attractive congress and incentive destination and at the same time increase compatibility of all participating destinations on the European and global market.

PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN "PUSH UP 3.0"



The Slovenian Convention Bureau concluded its one year promotional campaign: Push up 3.0. The project received grants from a tender of the Ministry of Economy for additional promotion of thematic tourist products in 2010 and 2011. Based on this grant the SCB received €148,158.00 of non-repayable funds to promote the meetings industry.

The innovative promotional campaign with the working title "Push up Slovenia 3.0" included the combination of different marketing tools to reach diverse segments of a broad client base. The campaign targeted buyers of congress services in our primary foreign markets (Germany, United Kingdom, Belgium, France and Italy) and the domestic market of international meetings organisers.

With a target group of congress and incentive buyers from our primary market a number of marketing tools were used to increase sales, advertise effectively, make personal connections and establish public relations. The promotional campaign "Push up Slovenia 3.0" was the largest by SCB to date. According to measured results, we achieved an increase in recognition and competitiveness for the Slovenian congress and incentive product and its business benefits. Among the achieved results there are some that we would especially like to highlight:

- 30.7% increase of Request for Proposal (RfP) received by the SCB from 1 January to 1 October 2010 and 2011;
- Extensive media coverage of the "Slovenia Green Meetings" and "BeBee" brands. In foreign

and domestic professional media 16, free articles on the campaign were published worth at an approximate €20,000 worth;

- Excellent response of congress and incentive stakeholders to the "BeBee" Campaign. The campaign to adopt bee families attracted 821 congress and incentive stakeholders from over 50 countries so far;
- The creation of tools for sustainable meetings management in Slovenia, including the "Road to Green Meetings in Slovenia" as well as an online calculator of CO2 emissions of meetings;
- Increasing the number of green meetings and incentive products and a higher level of communication on sustainable tourism in Slovenia;
- Bringing the largest international socially responsible event - IMEX Challenge - to Slovenia between 2 and 4 July 2012. Hosting the IMEX challenge enables additional promotion through communication channels of the IMEX international trade show.

Members of the Convention Bureau participated in the aforementioned activities as partners. More information available from the Slovenian Convention Bureau Office.

PROPOSED NEW MEMBERS OF THE SLOVENIAN CONVENTION BUREAU



LTO Bovec, standard A
(local, regional, national convention bureau), www.bovec.si



LTO Sotočje, standard A
(local, regional, national convention bureau), www.lto-sotocje.si



Zavod za turizem Bled, standard A
(local, regional, national convention bureau), www.bled.si



Hotel Cubo, Standard G,
Hotel with conference facilities,
www.hotelcubo.com



Hotel Kompas Bled, Standard G,
Hotel with conference facilities,
www.kompashotel.com



M-Hotel Ljubljana, Standard G,
Hotel with conference facilities,
www.m-hotel.si

"A Breath of Fresh Air"

The first edition of IMEX America reinvigorates business with a successful new collaborative model

Feedback from over 2000 hosted buyers, 1700 attendees and nearly 2000 exhibitors who attended the debut of IMEX America in mid October confirms that the new trade show for the meetings, incentive travel and events industry lived up to its promise of delivering high quality business, networking and professional education over four days.

Speaking at the show's closing press briefing at The Venetian®|The Palazzo®, IMEX Group Chairman, Ray Bloom, expressed his delight that the first show had gone so well and had received a widespread positive reaction. Reiterating a comment made earlier in the week by Bruce MacMillan, CEO & President of the show's strategic partner and premier education provider, MPI, he said: "We have successfully delivered a new, collaborative business model, which is not a US trade show in Las Vegas but a truly global marketplace in America plus a tremendous education program. That was always our vision but, of course, over the past four days thousands of industry professionals have been able to see and experience it for themselves. They now completely understand what we set out to do and have appreciated the fresh dimension it has brought to the industry here in the US."

BUSINESS EXPECTATIONS FULFILLED

Bloom delivered some key statistics about the first show's performance. 53% of hosted buyers attending had budgets in excess of \$1 million. Over 30,000 total appointments were made before and during the show including 23,930 individual appointments. Downloads of the IMEX App (developed by IMEX, MPI and QuickMobile and sponsored by Freeman) also reached high levels with 2050 people using it to enhance and inform their IMEX America experience. The

use of RFID badging technology for the first time (thanks to sponsors Experient and Lygase) will also provide new and deeper levels of information. "We will definitely be using this new insight to develop and refine the show in 2012," explained Bloom.

POSITIVE BUZZ

Bloom also described how several of the professional education sessions had left a lasting impression on attendees, with a noticeable 'buzz' around the MPI keynote speakers and USTA President Roger Dow's update on the US 'Meetings Mean Business' campaign. The invitation-only Executive Meetings Forum, for C-level corporate meeting executives, was also extremely well received. Many participants confessed that, although they knew the

trade show offered an extensive professional development program, few had realised quite how big it really was.

In his closing remarks, Bloom concluded that "this has been a successful first show and everything we had hoped for. IMEX America and MPI both agree we've found a formula for success and we now intend to build on it. I look forward to seeing many of you in Frankfurt come May, when we will celebrate the 10th anniversary of IMEX in Frankfurt and I very much look forward to returning to Las Vegas in 2012 when I expect IMEX America to hit another home run."

www.imexamerica.com



Conference: Carbon Footprint as a Measure of Success



In November 2010 Umanotera organised its first specialised conference titled 'Carbon Footprint as a Measure of Success', which had around 100 delegates from the field of economics, public administration, government ministries, educational institutions, municipalities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The delegates were introduced to the European Commission's plans regarding carbon footprint legislation, the preparation of climate legislation in Slovenia, best practice in carbon footprint calculation as well as dilemmas and challenges for the future.

The response to the conference as well as the increasing international use of the carbon footprint calculation go to prove that carbon footprint will remain one of the tools for calculating greenhouse gas emissions caused by product development or by an organisation. This autumn, the Greenhouse Gas Protocol Initiative launched two new and long awaited greenhouse gas accounting standards (GHG Protocol Standards for Product and Value Chain GHG assessments), and the British Standards Institution (BSI) reviewed and updated the PAS 2050 protocol. The European Commission issued a draft of a unified environment and carbon footprint accounting method.

Information on France's national environmental labelling plan, including practical approaches to communication, has also been published.

In order to reduce our carbon footprint, we have to understand it and use it correctly in the first place. An insight into a company's supply chain is of vital importance in this process as well. The carbon footprint needs to be intertwined with all business processes, because this is the only way for it to help the management make new business decisions and for the company to communicate it successfully to its business partners, suppliers, customers and other stakeholders. The company thereby has a better control of its costs and risks and it can improve its status on the market as well as its social standing.

This was the impetus for Umanotera (Slovenian Foundation for Sustainable Development) to organise the second national specialised conference on Carbon Footprint as a Measure of Success: Carbon Footprint in Supply Chains, Calculations, Reduction, Communication. The conference took place on 17 November 2011 at the Grand Hotel Union Business hotel in Ljubljana. It was aimed primarily at leading figures responsible for strategic aspects of sustainable development and social

responsibility, at energy and environment managers, quality system leaders and other experts from the field of sustainable development employed in private companies and public administration. Other participants included members of NGOs, consultants and researchers.

Participants were introduced to current legislation on the carbon footprint in Slovenia and in the EU, as well as the new carbon footprint calculation standards of the GHG Protocol for the public sector and supply chains. During the conference, the carbon footprint was presented as part of a company's strategic management (carbon footprint in the supply chain). The reasons for, and main dilemmas concerned with, reporting and delivering a reduced carbon footprint were also discussed.

Read more about the conference at www.umanotera.org

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TRAVEL ZOOM

2nd Conference on strategic and creative Marketing in Tourism, 21 to 23 March 2012, Bled, Slovenia



MIND THE GAP

The gap between what we've learned and what we do, the gap between what we do and what brings results, the gap between the results and expectations of our guests, the gap between expectations and reality, the gap between the reality and desires, ambitions, ideas, the gap ...

The Second International Conference on strategic and creative Marketing in Tourism TRAVEL ZOOM will host professionals from the academic circles of internationally renowned schools for tourism, marketing representatives of tourist companies, creators of sales tools in tourism (booking.com, Groupon, Tripadvisor) and the driving forces behind ad and marketing agencies – they will all help us build bridges between the gaps.

LET'S MEET ON THE BRIDGE!

Information and application at www.travel-zoom.si. Speed it up, the level of what you pay depends on when we receive your application, so the sooner the cheaper!

The conference is organised by the Faculty of Tourism Studies Portorož – Turistica in cooperation with Go.mice, the Public Institute for Tourism Bled and other partners.

travelZoom²⁰¹²
2nd Conference on Strategic and Creative Marketing in Tourism
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SERBIA GOING MOBILE IN THE MEETING INDUSTRY

The information era made a step forward in everyday life, but in the business as well. Modern technology makes information available anywhere and anytime at no costs. But how it influences our industry and especially emerging destinations like Serbia is.

Although the Serbia Meeting Planners guide is an important project, taking us almost half a year in producing the right tool for all the international clients, we really wanted to do something completely different, something that will be unique not just in the region but foremost easy to communicate among new generations of meeting and incentive planners. So the "Serbia Destination" application project is initiated and the world promotion of the App took place during the IMEX America in Las Vegas and ICCA Congress held in Leipzig, Germany where Serbia has been recognized for applying the latest IT in the field of meeting industry marketing.

App provides insight in major selling points of a Serbia and major international destinations (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Subotica, Zlatibor and Kopaonik), each of them providing facts on hotels, venues, restaurants, must see attractions, activities, shopping and entertainment possibilities. Clients have possibility to find their pco, dmc or av partner in Serbia, while incentive operators can find more on incentive possibilities in Serbia. In "hot deals" users will see what discounts can get from a service provider. Each service provider can further be contact through "contacts" and social media integrated tools.

The platform of the App and the complex and

matrix structure in combination with effective and up-to date info with significant possibility for customizing to fit a requirement of an international event taking place in Serbia, and following are some of the essentials:

1. All platforms adjusted: the App works on every mobile platform (iOS, Android, Symbian, Blackberry, Java). We just didn't want to focus on Apple or Android phones, since we would miss the significant proportion of the market using other phone and even old phone. That's why we wanted the App for all phones and platforms, and for user with old phones we have even developed the mobile web site (m.scb.travel) with the same features as regular mobile app users.
2. Off line nature of App: after downloading the app from the markets all info will be in your phone, saving the extra costs of roaming internet while being abroad. In case you decide to update the App, the structure is created for net consumption. The App is free of charge on every market.
3. Search engines: aloud meeting planners to find easier hotels, venues and service providers that best matches the requirements. All hotels can be browsed based on their accommodation size and meeting room size, while venues can be searched by their type and size.
4. "Delegates" option: has main purpose to go step forward from being a tool prior an event in Serbia. It aloud content customization to fir the Event in Serbia. This aloud Organizer to create part of App that will provide delegates of



event with info they want (divided into several categories). Besides content management, it also helps them with revenue management and relationships with sponsors. The App is given as an in-kind support from Serbia Convention Bureau side, but Organizer can sell App to a sponsor as a separate package or to include it in a already existing ones (For example: this Info has been brought to you by Sponsor) and the exposure is made through the developed banners systems. Every Event featured in "Delegates" has its own banner system and customized information.



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DIARY



Kristina Jurjevec

MONDAY:

The number of hosted buyers is still exceeding the results of last year. At the moment we are noticing that our potential clients are busy preparing their exhibition at EIBTM in Spain. That's why we don't ask too much of them at the moment. Since we are also taking part at this global trade show at the end of November, we can see a difference in the number of hosted buyer application. Our process is also different. If a client was selected as hosted buyer to EIBTM or to any other trade show, it doesn't necessarily mean they will qualify for Conventa. Due to Conventa's size and the limited number of hosted buyers we can invite, we have a better overview of who's who and are able to forge personal ties. With the help of our exhibitors' assessments we can quickly find out if clients don't show the potential to do business in our region or, in fact, at all. There are also those who apply to trade shows just so the destinations can host them for free. Every year we are stricter about the criteria of selecting hosted buyers.

TUESDAY:

Our biggest challenge at Conventa is to attract hosted buyers with real purchasing power. The fact is, the best of them don't have the time to attend every trade show so they are very selective of events they will contribute their time to. We want to offer our potential clients the possibility to get to know the Southeast Europe destination and conduct new business with partners of their own choice. At Conventa hosted buyers attend meetings of their own choice on one day. It is obvious that the role of group coordinators is growing in importance. Through personal relations they inspire trust in meeting planners to attend a trade show they're not aware of. In cooperation with agents from all over Europe we made a huge leap in the quality of companies attending Conventa. The participants are becoming more and more selected. This is a big achievement for us. Since most exhibitors have been supporting us for at least four years our biggest wish is for them to be satisfied with Conventa. Rather than the quantity, we want to focus on the quality of meetings.

WEDNESDAY:

To our qualified hosted buyers the most attractive topic is the participation at Fam trips before and after Conventa. Getting to know a new destination in combination with a one day business trade show turned out to be extremely efficient. The destinations are thrilled to host clients who take time to familiarise themselves with their product. But Fam trips are a live process that change daily. So it's hard to put them into frames. Participation at Fam trips depends on many factors. We wish our guests could participate in programmes of their first choice, but this can be difficult due to air connections and the limited number of spots available at each trip. We are certain our guests will have an unforgettable trip, regardless of which Fam trip they attend. In cooperation with other destinations we are renewing our standards, as we wish to meet the demands of meeting planners, who are different from regular tourists.

THURSDAY:

The preparations for the most successful Conventa to date actively includes our official partners. Without their cooperation, Conventa could not host such a large number of potential international clients. I can stress that they are willing to share the results of Conventa with their colleagues from the region. Austria Trend Hotel Ljubljana, Best Western Premier Hotel Slon, Grand Hotel Union, Hotel Lev, Hotel Mons, GR – Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention centre, Kompas DMC, Go.mice PCO, Ljubljana Tourism, Slovenian Tourist Board and our national air carrier Adria Airways are the names with the biggest role in our everyday work. Not only do our partners support us, but they constantly improve the level of their services to satisfy our guests. Our hosted buyers will be able to experience all of that in person.

FRIDAY:

To be active in marketing with the volume of other work it involves is a true challenge. Even the best marketing experts can't carry out successful campaigns without the help of operatives in the company. We therefore have

to sacrifice our time to create new stories and content. In cooperation with all of the employees on the project, we are trying to create interesting content for our readers, partners and clients to grasp their attention. We are fortunate that Conventa is different to other trade shows, so we can easily turn its advantages into attractive headlines. Because we are always interested in the results of our events as well as Conventa for our suppliers and buyers, we often give them the possibility to be included in our marketing materials for free. Considering our stories reach thousand of contacts throughout Europe, it is a pity that some never take advantage of this option.

Conventa is creating a new image of Southeast Europe in the global sense. Did you know this year EIBT added Southeast Europe as a separate region of choice for the first time?

According to the participants companies gain a competitive advantage by attending Conventa. It is therefore no surprise some of the largest companies already confirmed their participation at Conventa 2012, among them: Congrex Sweden, Kenes, Dekon, Viagens Abreu and Carlson Wagonlit Travel.

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CONVENTA

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Photo session

'FEEL THE CHARM OF SLOVENIA' FAM TRIP FOR GERMAN CLIENTS

The Slovenian Convention Bureau (SCB) and Slovenian Tourist Board (STB) organised this year's final fam trip with a half-day workshop for German clients between 21st and 23rd of October. The event was carried out in cooperation with 11 Slovenian companies, members of the Convention Bureau.

The entire technical organisation of the programme was carried out by DMC Intours, who prepared a surprise-filled creative programme that was tailor made for event organisers and included elements of an incentive trip. The clients visited key meetings and incentive destinations, such as Bled, Ljubljana and Portorož/Piran, at each of which a pleasant surprise awaited them. During the fam trip, Slovenian partners had the opportunity to meet and interact with the foreign clients at a half-day workshop held at the Kempinski Palace in Portorož. The German clients were impressed by the Slovenian offer, including congress facilities, its diversity of locations, culinary art and wines, the programme and the professionalism of Slovenian partners. As a result of the trip some Slovenian partners have already reported initial inquiries for events next year. This kind of positive feedback proves that fam trips are the right marketing tool for presenting Slovenia as a meetings and incentive destination for even the most demanding of clients.

The German market is very important to Slovenia as a congress destination. Direct flights and the number of corporations, event agencies and professional associations allows us access to a significant market of potential clients.

For more information contact:
azra.botonjic@slovenia-convention.com



Photo session

'FEEL THE CHARM OF SLOVENIA' FAM TRIP FOR FRENCH CLIENTS

The Slovenia Convention Bureau (SCB) and Slovenian Tourist Board (STB) organised a successful fam trip with a half-day workshop for French clients between September 30th and October 2nd. The event was carried out with the help of 8 Slovenian companies, members of the Convention Bureau. Their representatives were present at all social events and at the half-day workshop with foreign clients.

The technical organisation of the programme was managed by DMC Liberty Congresses & Incentives Slovenia, who prepared a creative and interesting programme full of surprises.

Participants visited Bled castle and island and enjoyed the culinary delights of cooks from Vila Bled. In Ljubljana they visited key congress locations and had a welcome dinner at Ljubljana Castle. The workshop, where 8 Slovenian partners took the opportunity of presenting their offer to individual participants, took place at the City Museum in Ljubljana. The clients also enjoyed trekking between Pivka and Postojna cave and the evening gala event at Tartini Square in Piran, where they experienced the culinary masterpieces of Jezeršek Culinary House. The highlights of the tour were the regatta in Izola and the visit to the Fonda sea-bass farm in Portorož, the finale of the two and a half day presentation of Slovenian congress and incentive destinations. Slovenian culinary art, top-notch wines and the participation of Slovenian partners helped fulfil and satisfy the demands of French event organisers. For most of them this was their first visit to Slovenia. Considering their positive feedback, it is likely that they will become our ambassadors.

For more information contact:
azra.botonjic@slovenia-convention.com



I FEEL
SLOVENIA

DNEVI SLOVENSKEGA TURIZMA 2011 DAYS OF SLOVENIAN TOURISM 2011

Slovenska turistična organizacija, Ministrstvo za gospodarstvo, Turistična zveza Slovenije, Turistično gostinska zbornica, Sekcija za gostinstvo in turizem pri Obrtno-podjetniški zbornici Slovenije, Združenje turističnih agencij Slovenije in Kongresni urad Slovenije vas vabijo na prvi osrednji slovenski dogodek "Dnevi slovenskega turizma", ki bo potekal 8. in 9. decembra 2011, v Portorožu.

From 8 to 9 December 2011, Days of Slovenian Tourism will take place in Portorož. This is a new, two-day event which brings together all major institutions from the field of tourism, including Slovenian Tourist Board (STB), Ministry of Economy, Tourist Association of Slovenia, Chamber of Tourism and Catering, Chamber of Crafts and Entrepreneurship of Slovenia, Association of Tourist Agencies of Slovenia and Slovenia Convention Bureau.

www.slovenia.info/dst



DNEVI SLOVENSKEGA TURIZMA
Portorož | 8. in 9. december 2011



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In post for just over 18 months as Group Exhibition Director for RTE, Craig Moyes' portfolio includes developing and expanding CIBTM, with a new 3-year MoU recently signed with Beijing's Municipal Commission of Tourism Development (BTD). As a veteran of exhibitions and events across the globe and currently managing teams across five continents, from his wealth of experience he considers what it will take to make this event succeed and what South East Europe might learn from Asia's rise.

CRAIG MOYES

Take Advantage of What You Have

Can you tell me how you arrived at your current position, what level of input this requires from you and what you consider the main challenge of today?

Before starting here I was the World Travel Market Event Director at Reed for 4 years and before that I worked in the UK exhibition sector for more than 20 years. The past 18 months for me have been personally and professionally extremely exciting: launching shows such as the AIBTM is truly fantastic and it will go on to bigger and better things. All of our shows demand great attention as there are so many aspects to look at for business travel with a global market focus. The main challenge now is that we're not quite out of the recession – there is definitely confusion and uncertainty, however not in the BRICS economies. This is a big consideration for events. All in all, it's a very exciting time.

Given your global overview, how have you seen the MICE industry change and how do you think Asian growth might affect the global balance?

This is a very difficult angle to take on things as there are many determining factors. It depends on the sector and the corporate objectives and challenges: whether it is an Asian or global company, what are the regional differences in the industry (e.g. pharmaceuticals have huge regional differences) and what the opportunities might be by entering the Asian market. Against all this, Asia now offers new and interesting destination choices and can relieve 'destination fatigue' – Beijing might be chosen against 'not again' Las Vegas, for example. It's a complex question but the new facilities in Asia – and the Middle East too – will definitely affect the industry in a beneficial way. They will be able to offer good deals to win events and drive performance of the industry around the world.

What potential do you foresee for Chinese MICE outbound to Europe?

The Chinese outbound MICE potential is enormous [estimated to be a \$150billion market in the coming years] and is only beginning for Europe. Germany is Europe's largest market and biggest trading partner with China, but France is currently the most popular destination for Chinese outbound, the UK second. There is obviously a lot of development ahead but the potential is vast. However, it will also be important to have a presence in China and look at how inbound traffic can be promoted. This will be beneficial in the long term.

With Beijing still without a CVB, how important do you think a strong and proactive CVB is for a destination's success?

The track record of this for successful cities speaks for itself – Melbourne has an amazing CVB and has made startling progress in MICE development. Team Vienna have delivered results through hard work and are a prime European example. And in Asia Seoul's CVB are another excellent team who have demonstrated the importance of investing in sponsorship. These three examples, from different continents, show how indispensable a good CVB is.

What, in your opinion, are the most important ingredients of a successful convention?

We do a lot of research on this by asking our stakeholders for their reasons in choosing destinations. We get different answers depending on when and who we ask. However, four constant themes for any chosen destination are:

- price and, more importantly, value;
- overall service (hotel quality, food options etc);

- location's relevance to exhibition market; and
- increasingly, security as a consideration.

Depending on the event, some organisers may be happy to pay a higher price if this reflects better quality. But this would have to tie with good service and a relevant market. In my opinion these are the stand-out elements and are a good starting point to consider for meeting organisers.

What lessons do you think SEE can take from Asia's growth and success?

The European economic situation is the reverse of BRICS economies at the moment. It is therefore really important to concentrate at what you are good at and to go after the low-hanging fruit first. Inter-regional meetings are always interesting and it's a good idea to focus primarily on easy business to enhance the learning process. In the European region – and in South East Europe – there is lots of business to be done. So, think locally first of all and develop this with experience and revenue. There will certainly be corporates looking seriously at this MICE market place, so take advantage of what you have!

Artemis Skordili is a TV reporter and freelance journalist based in Athens, Greece.

Rob Cotter is a freelance journalist based in London, UK. T

Ranko Filipović has been in the meetings, incentives and events industry for over 20 years. His special field is international and domestic meetings in Croatia. Currently, he is running a PCO - PerfectMeetings.hr and is also a co-founder and Vice-President at Croatian Meeting Professionals Association.

Slaven Reljić is co-founder and Managing Director of VenEvent, DMC & PCO. His enthusiasm for meetings, incentives & travel started during his studies. He graduated in Business Studies with a specialisation in Tourism and submitted a master's thesis on 'Repositioning of Croatia in the International Meeting and Incentive Market'. He is co-founder and Secretary of Croatian Meeting Professionals Association.

Pavle Marković is working in a family company, Ban Tours. He graduated in Business Studies with a specialisation in Tourism at Zagreb's University. He is co-founder and President of Croatian Meeting Professionals Association.



RANKO FILIPOVIĆ, SLAVEN RELJIĆ, PAVLE MARKOVIĆ, CROATIAN MEETING PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION

Croatia Needs New Congress Centres

What are your thoughts on the meetings industry in Croatia?

RANKO: The meetings industry in Croatia has got a long-standing tradition, excellent opportunities and bright prospects for the future. It is the industry which brings business to destinations and venues in the autumn, winter and spring periods, when there is no or little tourism business going on. SLAVEN: I would like to say that the meetings industry in Croatia is now in its introduction to growth phase, when talking about 'product life cycle'. It has a great opportunity to become a mature destination soon, for small and medium sized meetings/events. Both public and private sectors are giving their efforts to always improve the industry and position it better on the international meeting market.

PAVLE: Croatia as a destination has so much to offer. I agree with my colleagues and think that we have not reached our full potential yet.

Could you highlight its positive and negative sides?

RANKO: Its positive sides are a long tradition, experienced professionals with their know-how, excellent location on the world's meetings map, fairly good infrastructure, amazing sites and an environmentally well-preserved country. The negative sides are the absence of congress centres, the absence of quality indoors venues for groups larger than 200-300 people, and not enough flights beyond the tourist season.

SLAVEN: The positive sides are in the fact that geographically Croatia is really close to all major European markets. And they all want and need a new destination. Our meeting hotels are all refurbished and every day more and more venues, V.S.O.P. and other attractions and products are added for the meetings industry. Many meeting professionals and service providers do consider the meetings market as their chance

for growth and want to compete for this demanding clientele. This enthusiasm will definitely yield results soon. The weaknesses of Croatia as a meetings destination would be in non-existent convention centres (quite an obstacle for association meetings), lack of direct air lines and the image of Croatia as a predominantly leisure/holiday destination. PAVLE: After these answers what can I say? My colleagues said almost everything. I think that we should work more on education and developing new products. Tourism and especially the meetings industry is changing daily so education is essential to keep up with our competition as well as clients' demands and expectations.

Are changes needed? If yes, which changes?

RANKO: Of course, things always could and should be better. A bylaw from the Ministry of tourism is expected to help agencies transform into PCOs, specialising primarily in the meetings industry. Local and national authorities need to be made aware of the industry's potential in helping the local and national economy.

SLAVEN: Changes and improvements are needed in both the public and private sectors. Apart from certification for PCOs, some kind of standardisation of all meeting service providers should be introduced. One convention centre (in Zagreb) and probably one more (in Split or other coastal town) would push the meetings market and attract larger international associations' meetings. More direct air lines are also a must, throughout the whole year. New creative products in destinations are constantly needed (important for events & incentive travel market). And the general marketing and communication strategy should give more space to the meetings industry.

PAVLE: Change is the only constant thing in the world. Clients' needs are changing; new products are coming daily. So, to stay competitive we have to change and see what is going on in the industry market.

You have recently established the Croatian Meeting Professionals Association (CMPA). Why did you decide to do so and what are your goals?

RANKO: We wanted to bring together all meeting industry professionals, as united we can push things forward more powerfully and try to get changes going. Our aim is to show that the meetings industry is a forceful tool for a better economy if conducted in a proper way for the benefit of all involved and the country itself.

SLAVEN: Like Ranko says, the meetings industry can be a strong generator for growth of Croatian tourism and the economy in general. Croatian Meeting Professionals Association gathers all professionals within the meetings industry and gives new energy, since only by working together can we achieve our vision. We want to prepare and re-position Croatia as a recognisable and desired meetings destination in Europe.

PAVLE: United we can be more successful and make things much better. Two heads always think better than one.

What is your relationship with the Croatian Convention Bureau and also other convention bureaus in the region? What are the differences between your association and the Convention Bureau?

RANKO: We have already established very close relationships with the Croatian Convention Bureau as well as local bureaux, with the Croatian Association of Travel Agencies and the Croatian Hotels Association. We believe we have got many similar problems and the same goal – to make the tourism industry in Croatia an all year round profitable business whilst advocating responsible tourism in terms of the environment and cultural heritage.

SLAVEN: The Croatian Convention & Incentive Bureau and local Convention bureaux do support us. We act as partners and plan to work closely on many different projects and

tasks, which lead to a stronger market position of the Croatian meeting industry.

PAVLE: As my colleagues said, we all need each other and we see the relationship and cooperation as a must.

Who is this association aimed at? Who are the members of the association and who else would you like to attract?

RANKO: The Croatian Meeting Professionals Association is aimed, primarily, at professionals in the meetings industry but also at the public – first of all at meeting planners, letting them know that if they choose to work with our members they will have a peace of mind in knowing that professionals will deliver a good service resulting in a successful event.

SLAVEN: Exactly, all meetings professionals are welcome – from PCOs, DMCs, CVBs, conference hotels, venues, catering services, A/V, airlines and other transportation companies, other segments of the industry but also media covering tourism and the meetings industry.

PAVLE: Yes, professionals from all parts of the industry are more than welcome – networking is our key word!

Are you happy with the response so far? Do you think the decision to form the association was the right one?

RANKO: Yes, the decision was definitely right. The response is good, bearing in mind that we started promoting it a month ago when our targeted members were fully occupied with their daily business.

SLAVEN: We are all enthusiastic about the association. It is important to mention that even before founding it, industry professionals that we were meeting and contacting were in favour of such an association. Now some time will have to pass until the administrative part can be done. We are not all waiting to join, we begin the actions now and that strategy will also attract new members.

PAVLE: Most feedback was very positive. Industry colleagues facing similar problems recognised good intentions and the need to change and improve things.

How will the association be financed?

RANKO: From different sources like many other similar associations – memberships, donations, national and international projects-based funds.

SLAVEN: We will also bid for available European funds. Some projects (education) might be charged, because the production costs are quite high. Anyhow, ROI for members will always be there.

PAVLE: As Ranko and Slaven already said, from different sources but transparency in finances is crucial so all our member can see the income, the expenses and the reasons for expenses.

What are your plans for the future? Membership of international associations?

RANKO: Certainly – membership of international trade associations is a target. International cooperation and support is expected especially in a field of education where we have already established contacts with such industry leaders as Linda Pereira, Paul Kennedy, Rob Davidson and Gary Grimmer.

SLAVEN: Yes, we have to internationalize the association and we will consider which international associations are the best and most worthwhile for us to be in.

PAVLE: International experience is vital for our industry and we plan to include selected international industry leaders in many of our projects.

What is your message to readers of Kongres magazine?

RANKO: The meetings industry is a great profession to be in! All together we can make it even better and more beneficial to our

members as well as to the country itself.

SLAVEN: Kongres magazine is a great magazine, giving the best opportunity to decision makers (especially European, but also intercontinental) to completely discover and understand the South-Eastern European destinations. I invite them to consider South-Eastern Europe for every project they plan, because the participants of any meeting or incentive programme in our destinations return home with a smile, positively surprised and wanting to come back. We thank Kongres magazine for actively promoting our destinations. I would invite all readers, no matter if buyers or suppliers, to network and communicate in every opportunity, both ways, because that way we all improve our businesses and can fully enjoy working in this attractive industry.

PAVLE: Keep reading and get to know this fascinating region much better! It is so close and yet so different and attractive in its special way.

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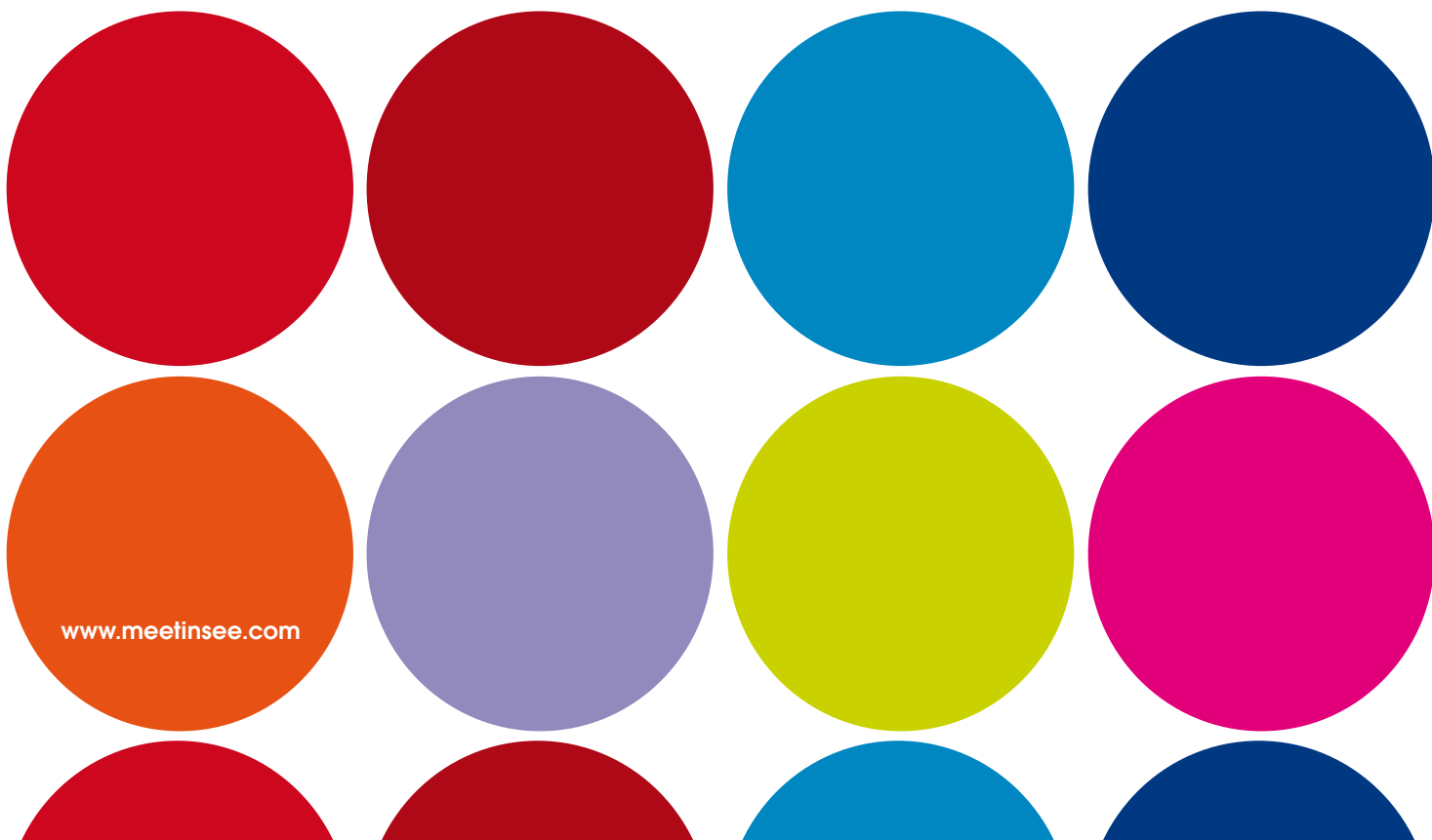


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CHRISTIAN MUTSCHLECHNER

“Social Programs are Becoming Nonexistent”



Christian Mutschlechner started in the meetings industry back in 1977. After having worked for a PCO Company for 8 years he moved to the Vienna Tourist Board in 1985 and became Director of the Vienna Convention Bureau (a department of the Tourist Board) in 1991. Since that time he re-engineered the Bureau. Christian Mutschlechner is former ICCA President, teaches at universities and lectures at various industry events.

According to ICCA statistics Vienna hosted 154 congresses fulfilling the ICCA criteria in 2010. Do you have any data covering the events ICCA excludes?

Since 1991, when we started, we have been collecting data about the meetings industry in Vienna. The events counted by ICCA represent only a small portion of the events we register. In 2010 we had a total of 935 national and international congresses.

The Vienna Convention Bureau regularly publishes statistics on economic (and other) effects of the meetings industry. How do you measure these effects? What methods do you use? What is your methodology?

Since 1991 we established a cooperation with the University of Economy. They developed a calculation model to show the economic impact of meetings and events in Vienna. The calculation is based on very extensive research carried out every five years. The most important part are the delegate interviews – 4,500 personalised interviews are made. We also interview exhibitors at meetings. The university talks to organisers and gets the real budget data for the events and finally we talk to the agencies (PCOs etc.) involved in handling businesses to see what else delegates spend.

How do you collect the data? Are the sources of your data meeting participants or meeting suppliers?

The most important source today are the congress organisers themselves – so the associations, national or international. The second source are the hotels in Vienna, providing – on a confidential basis – data about corporate events each month. Every three months we get information from the PCOs and business agencies on the business they handled. And finally, we constantly continue our research online.

How long have you been measuring the economic (and other) effects of the meetings industry? Could you highlight some trends you picked up in this period?

We started in 1991 and achieved a consolidated result etc. 4-5 years later. Some of the trends include:

- _ Dramatic decrease of accompanying persons:
 - in 1991 0,6 acc. persons per delegate, by
 - 2010 this had fallen to 0,18% acc. persons per delegate;
- _ Social programs are becoming nonexistent;

- _ Delegates do not stay in the city longer than the duration of the event;
- _ Average stay reduced to a maximum of the duration of the event.

Why do you think such research is important?

There is no doubt that everybody playing a role in the meetings industry should be aware of its importance for a destination and the economy. The logical centre of knowledge should be the convention bureau, guaranteeing confidential data handling. Economic evaluation helps a lot when it comes to investments, but also proves how many jobs are secured by the meetings industry – not to forget the tax income for the state, regions and cities.

Can you briefly sketch the economic (and other) effects of the meetings industry in Vienna?

In 2010, a total of 935 national and international congresses attracting 305,608 delegates and requiring 1,128,901 bed-nights added €652.09 million to gross domestic product and generated €182.34 million in tax revenue. This in turn secured 12,204 jobs. In the year 2010 congress destination Vienna benefited from the meetings industry to the tune of €21.99 million in tax revenue.

How do you use the survey result in running the convention bureau?

It's a ongoing piece of reference material, nowadays also increasingly used by politicians.

WHAT IS THE TRUE VALUE AND WORTH OF THE DMC

“40 years of Growth: the Art and Science of the DMC”



Padraic started Delaney Marketing with Patrick Delaney in 1993. Before that he was a teacher at secondary and university level and is one of many “italofiles” on the Ovation team. Passionate about Italy, music and Arsenal Football Club, Padraic has been known to play guitar and sing all night (if let!). He is married to Rita and they have 6 teenage/adult children and 1 grandson. He lies awake at night mentally writing and re-writing the 5 different speeches he’ll have to make as “father of the bride”. A Past President of Site and member of the Advisory Boards of IHG and The Special Event, he is a regular speaker at industry events, seminars and conferences worldwide. He blogs regularly on destinations and industry matters at padraicino.wordpress.com

According to a recent exchange on LinkedIn the term “DMC” or “Destination Management Company” was coined by either Tom Risbecker, Gunter Roleff or Phil Lee. Tasso Pappas and Ralph Holt, both DMC legends in their own right, opt for Europeans Risbecker and Roleff respectively and date the coining of the term to the mid seventies.

CHRIS LEE OF ACCESS DESTINATION SERVICES THEN TRUMPS THEM BOTH WITH THE CREDIBLE ASSERTION THAT PHIL LEE (HIS DAD) ACTUALLY FIRST USED THE TERM IN 1972.

Two years later – and this is historically documented - Phil persuaded the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau to officially adopt the term as a means of differentiating the elevated value proposition of the destination expert from the ground services agency. If Chris is correct, and I believe he is, then 2012 marks the 40th anniversary of the birth of the DMC.

Two industry associations offer useful definitions of the term DMC. Industry Guru, Tasso Pappas, provides a useful summary of these on LinkedIn (on the ADME Group). Site, formerly known as the Society of Incentive and Travel Executives, defines the

DMC AS “A LOCAL SERVICE ORGANISATION THAT PROVIDES CONSULTING SERVICES, CREATIVE EVENTS AND EXEMPLARY MANAGEMENT OF LOGISTICS BASED ON AN IN- DEPTH KNOWLEDGE OF THE DESTINATION AND THE NEEDS OF THE INCENTIVE AND MOTIVATION MARKET”.

ADME, the US based Association of Destination Management Executives, offers this one: “DMC is a professional services company possessing extensive local knowledge, expertise and resources, specialising in the design and implementation of events, activities, tours, transportation and programme logistics”.

But what does this definition mean in real, tangible terms? What is the true value and worth of the DMC? After 40 years of industry evolution what does the DMC bring to the table as its own unique, irreplaceable and indispensable offering? I believe successful DMCs build their unique value proposition upon the following 5 pillars.

1. Wide Industry / Business Knowledge

DMCs provide destination services to the Meetings Industry, but this is far from a homogeneous community. The Meetings Industry is truly multi-faceted and includes meetings, incentives or motivational experiences, conferences, events and exhibitions. Clients come from the corporate, association, government and not-for-profit sectors. Good DMCs will understand the diverse and, indeed, divergent distribution channels of each sector and segment. They’ll know, for example, how to reassure a medical doctor concerned about the scientific aspect of his conference or a marketing director in search of that elusive, indefinable “Wow!” experience. They will be well versed in the rules and qualification processes that determine participation on a motivational experience and will know the priorities for impactful delivery of Strategic Meeting Management Programmes.

2. Local Knowledge

Another bedrock of the successful DMC, central to the definitions quoted above, is local knowledge. This extends across the entire gamut of possible destination realities, from up-to-date product knowledge concerning hotels, restaurants, venues, visitor attractions

and activities to in-depth knowledge of the language, history, heritage and culture of the location. Crucially it includes knowledge of local logistics – traffic patterns, parking protocols, motor-coach access, airport formalities – as well as knowledge of local customs formalities, taxation etc. It is wide ranging and multi-disciplinary and extends way beyond the one dimensional data that may be accessible on-line.

3. Local Connections

The third pillar of the DMC value proposition is local connections. Successful DMCs are intimately connected in their destination to a broad and deep network of contacts. They'll be on first name terms with the General Managers of all of the iconic hotels in the destination. They'll be known by all of the major restaurateurs and will have the cell phone numbers of the key holders to various destination attractions. When the wife of the client CEO declares, during the site inspection, that she'd like to add some local samples to her collection of beer glasses, the good DMC will be able to direct her straight to the best local source and provide a personal introduction. The good DMC will sit on the many local boards both inside and outside of our industry and will have strong links to business leaders in the destination.

4. Creativity

The first three pillars may be regarded as key elements in the "science" of good destination management. Essentially these are skills or competencies that can be acquired over a period of time by focused determination and effort. The final two pillars belong more to the "art" of good destination management and are God-gifted qualities with which you are born. The first of these is creativity and is a key differentiator for quality DMCs. Good DMCs contribute the essential creative spark particularly to destination events where their destination knowledge and connections fuse with client objectives to give birth to one-off, unique experiences. They also bring their

creative approach to bear on all destination logistics and always find new ways of doing all the old, standard things.

5. Passion

The fifth pillar upon which good DMCs build their value proposition is also part of the "art" of destination management. This is the indispensable quality of passion which will always be integral to the DNA of the DMC. Good DMCs are in love with their destinations and this love is expressed by means of a tangible, palpable passion which, in most cases, is infectious and irresistible. You too fall in love with the destination because you start seeing it through the eyes of a true lover, the local DMC.

1972 was the year that Mark Spitz won an astonishing 7 gold medals at the Olympics in Munich. It was also the year of the invention, by Texas Instruments, of the pocket calculator. But for those of us in the Meetings Industry it was a watershed year that produced a specialised service category in our industry that helps corporations and associations to stage extraordinary meetings and events in destinations all over the world.



SOCIAL MEDIA & DESTINATION MARKETING – SUCCESS HAND IN HAND

Through social media we address the specific person rather than a group



Anja Renko is Head of Marketing for Social Media at the Agency for Digital Marketing Sonce.net. Her knowledge of psychology and experience in the marketing world provide an excellent basis for research and use of creative marketing approaches in a fast paced digital environment.

Today we just can't imagine how ten years ago we lived a perfectly normal life without a cell phone. And without constant (online) contact to all our friends and acquaintances. Not so long ago we received web content in a totally different way. We looked up and received information, but rarely created it. The world of information was generated by "others"; an average user of the web was only on the receiving end. Today the situation is completely different. These changes have come to define our way of life and the only thing we can do is to accept them and use them to our advantage.

THE ARRIVAL OF SOCIAL MEDIA DOESN'T SIGNIFY CRUCIAL CHANGES IN THE MEANS OR CONTENT OF COMMUNICATION; IT MERELY ESTABLISHES NEW CHANNELS FOR IT.

Most conversations moved from closed environments to the web, where they are visible (or can be) to (almost) all.

Research demonstrates that people increasingly use the internet as a source of information on specific destinations. Fact is we also trust the assessments and references of other people, rather than advertisements. For example, for a person looking up information on a certain destination, social media is definitely the best source. Photos, videos and first hand advice from other users, available through different social media channels, provide quick, and more importantly, up-to-date information on any location around the world – in a genuine and emotionally intensive way.

This is also true if we consider the story from another perspective – as the creator of information. We also want to share our experience of a destination. From the narrow circle of our friends, the spectre of people we

share information with spreads not only to our friends and acquaintances, but also to friends of friends and acquaintances of acquaintances. Of course, we don't share everything with others – we only share information which stirs up certain emotions. As a brand we can use all of this to our advantage.

IF THE VISITORS TO OUR DESTINATION FIND IT THRILLING AND WANT TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE, WE GET BRAND AMBASSADORS, WHO PROMOTE US IN THE BEST WAY POSSIBLE.

Social media positively impacts the communication between the brand and its users, since the former monologue is turning into a constant dialogue between user and brand.

THE USERS NO LONGER LISTEN TO THE BRAND; THEY WANT TO COMMUNICATE WITH IT AS 'FRIENDS'.

Social media represents an ideal platform to bring this idea to life, as Iceland recently discovered. The promotion campaign "Iceland wants to be your friend", which speaks directly to the users, impressed both critics and the public alike. With a fun approach based on social media communication they personified the brand, in this case the country, gave it a sense of humour and set a path they are consistently following. The users established a friendly relationship with the persona – which was the aim of the campaign.

A direct chat with the users also provides access to priceless feedback, which gives us the insight into the consumer and a chance to improve our product. Maybe a user comment will serve as an inspiration for a locally

targeted mobile application, such as a virtual guide to the city's graffiti.

THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA WE ADDRESS A SPECIFIC PERSON RATHER THAN A GROUP, WHILE THE SUCCESS OF OUR EFFORTS CAN BE MUCH BROADER THAN JUST THE INDIVIDUAL WE HAVE CONTACTED.

If we succeed in winning over a person of influence with our offer, we ensure priceless content available online forever. We can be the suppliers of this content ourselves, which paid off for Valencia, which attracted a number of bloggers and relevant web users and thereby created a number of city ambassadors. We can invite local people to participate and create a reliable online resource, such as the portal 'Spotted by Locals'.

If we were sceptical at first, good practice examples demonstrated that social media is extremely useful, yet it is essential we choose the right channels among the numerous options. Location services, where a user checks in at a specific location and receives relevant information, are just right for tourist services. Of course the choice of channels used to communicate with users depends on our focus group.

The best examples of social media marketing of destinations or in other areas have a few elements in common. A personal approach proves we're not just another dull institution, but a brand with personality. Quick response demonstrates the brand understands trends and follows its consumers. Honesty, showing the brand wants a genuine relationship with the consumer. And a touch of inspiration, which sets the brand apart from others swimming in this lively sea of social media.



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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

HOW TO PREPARE SUCCESSFUL ASSOCIATION BID?

The First Step is to Understand the Association's Goals

Philippe Fournier,
IAPCO President



How do you prepare successful bid?

To make a long story short, preparing a bid is always a long task; it involves lots of research, constant networking and good finance! But before everything else, the “will” of all stakeholders involved is crucial. It is then about creating and selling a product. Therefore it takes time. The success will come from team work! You will need to be persistent and, if you don't succeed at the first attempt, don't hesitate to bid again with what you have learnt from the experience.

Who should be involved in the preparation of a successful bid?

You will have to identify the stakeholders for your bid: of course the members of the local community must be involved from the outset. Then, the convention bureau, convention centre, hoteliers and local authorities should be part of the game. Build a “team”, as said above, and motivate its members for the project.

What is the role of a PCO agency in the bidding process?

The IAPCO PCOs play an important role not only in supporting the bid with the other stakeholders but also often in putting it together (i.e. helping to finance, preparing the budget, organising the inspection visits and setting up the whole process). The IAPCO PCO will also be the communication and consulting agency for the association who wants to bid. Our experience and connections, as well as our professionalism, are a great asset for the bidder. As it is a long adventure, it is important that you choose the right company (an IAPCO PCO!) to help and be alongside you for the duration: one of the recommendations that we, as IAPCO, always make, is that your PCO will accompany you from the very beginning (putting together the bid) to the very end after you have won (organising the meeting). You will, by doing it that way, motivate him even more.

Who should cover financial investments in the bidding process?

It depends: you can have various financiers: the city, convention centres, regions, country, corporate sponsors, local associations, PCOs. It all depends on the financial structure you decide to set up. There are various models. But the fact is that a bid costs a lot of money for the simple and single reason that it takes time!

Nicolas Le Brun,
EFAPCO President



How do you prepare a successful bid?

The market for international association congresses has become ever more competitive, with PCOs being challenged and put under intense scrutiny even for the smallest of events. The first step is to understand the association's goals and this usually means a meeting and an exchange of views with its governing body. You need to understand the essence of the meeting and sometimes translate the final objectives of the President and his or her board. Why do participants, or members, (the client's clients) register to participate, and what benefits should they get from the event? Then, what is the expected financial outcome from the congress?

Who should be involved in the preparation of a successful bid?

The PCO will identify people in the team with the experience and dedication to pass on their know-how and the capacity to convert it into

a written bid, and then possibly to present it orally.

Depending on the size of the project the PCO will be looking to involve associated partners including:

- The local CVB. It has an essential role in the compilation of bid books for larger conferences and in securing dedicated support from local politicians and involved authorities;
- A selection of possible venues both for the conference and for hotel accommodation and social programme options;
- A limited number of preferred suppliers, especially if the congress needs other specific services.

What is the role of a PCO agency in the bidding process?

A CVB's central role is to attract new business to the destination it serves.

A PCO's role is quite different. In order to win new business it needs to convince the association decision makers that it is the best team to make the congress a successful reality. They have to prove they understand the client's briefing, that they are capable of advising the association and that the team can handle all the administrative and logistical challenges involved.

In short the bid should carry sufficient evidence that the PCO is the right choice to help the association reach all of its expectations from the event.

Who should cover the financial investments of the bidding process?

Let's be clear here: there should be no financial investment for the PCO. On the other hand, bid preparation is time-consuming and the PCO's managers will probably dedicate a hefty number of hours to research and written preparations. "It's a key part of the game" and the reason why PCO agencies need to evaluate all the opportunities to respond to a bid request.

It's worth bearing in mind that all too often

associations do not supply a sufficiently detailed briefing about their event, so there can be quite a lot of groundwork to cover even before the bid process can begin.

Breda Pečovnik, Cankarjev dom, Congress and Commercial Programme Director



How do you prepare a successful bid?

If we are addressing the association market we know every association has its own rulebook for preparing a bid, which we must study and stick to thoroughly. The bid must cover all areas: we're usually talking about transportation to and within the country, information on capacities, hotels and venues, the record of expenses, accommodation, taxes, possibly experts and a social programme. Destination security is more and more often coming into play. The bid documents are just the beginning of the organisation process. The bid is usually presented live to members of the association or to the organisation committee.

Who should be included in a successful bid?

A successful bid convinces the decision makers to support it, so we include all actors who are an indispensable part of the congress and those who are economically, professionally, logistically and politically tied to it. These are the representatives of the expert programme (clients), sponsors, hotels, carriers, agencies, caterers and others. A successful bid should be presented and prepared by a person who believes in its success from the very beginning – this is the only way to convince others.

What is the role of PCO agencies in preparing a bid?

The PCO is a key link between the client (usually their local representative) and the international association as well as other stakeholders necessary to execute the meeting. The PCO prepares the bid, presents it and answers all of the questions linked to the event from a financial, organisational and logistical point of view.

How should the financial burden of preparing a bid be shared?

It depends on the congress, there is no standard formula. In practice the fairest model is by the weight of the input – those who invest the most should get the biggest piece of profits. If we are realistic, all the stakeholders should work together and contribute to the bid: air carriers, hotels, venues, DMC, caterers, national and city convention bureaux.

How to prepare a successful bid and who should be involved in the preparation of a successful bid?

1. We asked some European Convention Bureaus how to prepare a successful bid?

2. We further asked some European Convention Bureaus who should be involved in the preparation of a successful bid?

Poland Convention Bureau



1:

The Poland Convention Bureau prepares the bid in cooperation with regional convention bureaux, hoteliers, incentive travel companies, PCOs and other suppliers. Of course, it always depends on the character of the client. Usually what successful means to us is content plus creativity. We want to show the true destination, the best aspects of Poland, Polish hospitality plus professionalism. Aside from that we want to 'Move Your Imagination' and this is often really crucial. A well prepared bid includes details about the destination, but also feedback from local people, those interested in hosting a particular event and those who are just helping another client.

2:

A bid should include a feeling of the destination and at the same time demonstrate a professionalism of suppliers. This means not only thinking about organisers, but the CVB should also consider the attendees' perception and their opinions. We need to be magicians of our jobs to also be able to show them something new, interesting and surprising.

Croatian Convention Bureau



A successful bid contains many aspects and the Croatian Convention and Incentive Bureau (CCIB) is preparing a positive image of the country as congress and incentive destination in international convention and incentive market. We are trying to convince buyers to choose Croatia for their meeting or incentive,

informing them of our facilities and in the end enticing them to Croatia. It is up to them to choose the destination and location of the congress (congress hotel, university, etc.), the DMC and PCO and together with them and the logistic help of the Croatian Convention and Incentive Bureau they create a bid.

Estonian Convention Bureau



1:

First of all, follow the basic rules – get to know the bid procedure, requirements in detail and selection criteria. Evaluate objectively whether you are able to meet all the requirements. Prepare a professional and attractive proposal document and presentation. Follow the bid book providing exactly the information that is required.

Do your homework – speak to previous organisers, familiarise yourself with the event you are bidding for, host organisation and local host. Find out who are your competitors. Make sure that your USPs are clearly stated and tailored to the particular event you are bidding for. Also, do not forget to include the wow-factor!

As a final touch a CVB should brief and support the local host who is presenting the bid.

2:

Cooperation of the host organisation, CVB and suppliers (venues, hotels, PCOs etc.) is essential for a successful bid and any support from the local stakeholders can enhance the chances of winning – partner organisations/ universities, government or local municipality, potential sponsors etc. There should be one person or team, usually the CVB, leading the bidding procedure. Having a clear checklist of tasks that are distributed to the partners and

a calendar of deadlines to be followed helps to communicate and keep focused. And the focus of all involved should be on winning the bid first, then sharing the business.

Slovenian Convention Bureau



1: I believe this is a question without a simple answer. Each bid is a unique story. The winning bid has to be the most convincing to the decision makers and also have a bit of luck. Of course there are rules in preparing bids. The experiences of successful and unsuccessful bids make us better. The golden rule of preparing a successful bid is a thorough analysis of the event we are deciding to bid for. We never really have enough time, but thorough research of the event as well as the client, their event history, their participants, decision making processes and the bidding process is key. To prepare a bid we must first put together a successful project team including Convention Bureau representatives, PCOs and the client. Bigger projects demand bigger teams. We have to be careful not to make them too big. It is important the bid team has a leader and clearly delineated roles. During the presentation of the bid we need to take advantage of all lobbying possibilities, since the competitive destinations will do the same. The presentation of the bid is key for its success and must as such be carefully planned. For success we also need a bit of luck too. We mustn't forget: 'Fortune favours the brave!'

2: Every bid is a unique story and should be treated as such. Depending on the scale and size of the event, the bid team can be very small, from three people, to a whole consortium when a large project is in

planning. Imagine how many people prepared the London Olympic Games bid! Despite the team size it is very important to establish a leader and rules and responsibilities for each member. I think the smallest team should consist of at least three people, representing the Convention Bureau, the PCO and the client. They cover all key areas represented in a bid.

Zagreb Convention Bureau



1: In order to prepare a successful bid it is essential to have an appropriate strategy prepared. Every event has its own specifics, but some things are in common. It is essential to undertake all the research which will help in the process (previously chosen destinations, the good and bad from previous events, advantages of your destination and how to overcome disadvantages).

2: The process involves different institutions and agencies working together. The most important is close work between the local and/or national CVB, local host and appointed PCO at all stages of the process. The strength of local representatives/decision makers (if any) in the ruling body of international organisations (main organiser) can influence the final decision. Government/city support is very important because it sends a clear message that the event is welcome and that organisers can expect help at certain stages of event preparation. Support of transportation companies (e.g. airlines or railway) is a big plus. In the later stages of a bid, if your destination is shortlisted it is extremely important to organise a "HQ" site inspection

involving all the key persons from the venues planned to be used.

Serbia Convention Bureau



1: Research, understand, ask and communicate are major elements of any bid. Finding the right information in a suitable format is always the start of any bid, but you need to fully understand the information and the needs of a potential client. If you are not sure about certain questions you should ask the client directly, if permitted, or start asking through the network you have built. And at the end client-specific information needs to be communicated in a user friendly format. It is important to be emphatic; no two bids should be the same.

2: The idea of an event coming to a destination is to create benefits for all the stakeholders. However, you do not always need to include every stakeholder in bid preparation. This depends on the quantity of information you need to provide in a bid document. For a large scale conference it is a must to coordinate with the main venue because the requirements can be complex. For setting a budget it is necessary to involve a local PCO. For smaller events, working with a hotel will be just fine. A local contact must be included in the process, but at a level as defined by the bid specs.

ARE WE AWARE OF THE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES OF FORMAL LUNCHEES AND DINNERS?

A highly formal lunch or dinner needs no candles or intricate floral arrangements



Prof. Janez Bogataj, PhD

An integral part of the meetings industry is based on various types of refreshments. I'm not just talking about coffee breaks and refreshing drinks, I mean different types of more or less formal lunches or dinners which usually form the most sociable part of a congress or a professional meeting. I am not implying that snack breaks during a congress are less important than formal lunches or dinners as one has to treat all culinary delights provided for congress participants in the same manner. The extent, contents, logistics and service vary however. Taking a look back at my work diaries of the last twenty or thirty years, I takes me just seconds to see that our hotels and restaurants often didn't know how to organise formal lunches and dinners.

IN SIMPLE TERMS, THE SERVICE WAS AVERAGE AND AUTOMATIC AND WITHOUT ANY GOOD, UNIQUE OR INNOVATIVE IDEAS, JUST LIKE SLOVENIAN TOURISM.

There are of course some bright exceptions to this rule.

We do have what it takes for this area of meetings and tourism activity as well: several appropriate venues with a relatively good equipment, even waiters (even though some of them are just students trying to earn some money) can be taught the basics and florist can do some nice flower arrangements, especially if the funds for the congress take these aspects into consideration. But this is just one side of the story. The other side, the one that is most important and connected with the 'content' of the event, is the weaker one. As an apology to all restaurants I have to say that they often have to take into consideration the 'expert knowledge' of their clients and their whims.

A formal lunch or dinner needs to be regarded as a great opportunity for the promotion of restaurants, towns and cities hosting a congress, and most of all the culture and gastronomy of the entire country. Lunch or dinner is not just about showing off technology or culinary knowledge, it's about demonstrating the stories based on culinary knowledge and excellent service. After all, this is expected from each and every congress organiser and restaurant. This is just like hairdressers showing off their sharp scissors and not providing great haircuts and other hair interventions to their clients.

If the lunch or dinner is formal, one has to consider what formal actually means. Is it formal because of candles, the dress code, the dancing, perhaps because of the background music? You can have a formal lunch or dinner in a village pub, on a farm or in a community centre, to name a few extreme examples. The question that arises is how do we perceive and approach formality. We have been spoilt in this area unfortunately as we are exposed to global models seen in average Anglo-American movies and television shows. A highly formal lunch or dinner needs no candles or intricate flower arrangements. Formal can mean festive as well.

A FORMAL LUNCH OR DINNER IS A FESTIVE FEAST WHICH MEANS THEY DIFFER FROM THE EVERYDAY AUTOMATIC LIFE IN EVERY ASPECT.

For example: even beef broth that can be found in every hotel restaurant should be prepared differently for a formal lunch or dinner but this is unfortunately not the case in Slovenia. There is thankfully more emphasis on the food at formal lunches or dinners, not on weird decorations or wardrobe changes among the staff yet most average catering services in Slovenia do not understand this. An emphasis on the food and drinks gives

people the great opportunity to talk to other congress participants. We introduce them to the customs and daily lives of places and countries by choosing the right dishes. It's a very good idea to include house specialties of a restaurant in the menu (that is if they even have one). I once asked a waiter what their house specialty was and I was given this memorable answer: Anything we cook is good! The congress topic or the participants' profession can be a great starting point for special menus. And they shouldn't be written in such a lifeless manner and without any substance as is typical of everyday menus in our hotel restaurants. Instead they should emphasise the restaurant's uniqueness, the stories behind the dishes, etc.

The location also has an effect on the formal character of a lunch or dinner. A historic location such as an old hotel, a castle hall or a state reception centre should be reason enough for an event to be formal but this is not so.

À FORMAL EVENT WITH A FORMAL ATMOSPHERE CAN BE HELD ANYWHERE, EVEN IN A TENT.

There are few good hotel restaurants and venues where a formal event can be held in Slovenia. Most of them are very »cold«, not because of the heating but because the surroundings and the atmosphere are cold. Lifeless walls and decoration, a lack of understanding coloured light effects and a whole range of other weak points. Unfortunately we also have no specialised experts who know how to decorate such venues and no classes on how to garnish dishes on plates or on serving counters.

A formal lunch or dinner can be held where the congress or meeting takes place. This is a good idea for large hotels where the guests get to know the venue only when the lunch or dinner is taking place so it's not just a slightly

changed congress venue. Formal lunches or dinners have been proven a great success outside the congress venue.

WE CAN TAKE THE GUESTS ON A TRIP OR EXCURSION AND TAKE THEM TO A RESTAURANT OR TO A TOURIST FARM THAT DOES NOT CATER FOR THREE OR FOUR BUSES.

They can have a formal lunch or dinner on a boat sailing across the Slovenian sea, on a museum train, on a river boat sailing along the Ljubljanica or Drava River, on a Slovenian lake, etc. If the participants of the congress take a walk to a local restaurant they are better off than if they go to a congress venue that has been changed into a hotel restaurant where the tables have been moved around and where they are served by the same tired faces they have been watching for days during the congress.

I will not discuss tableware and other technologies necessary to carry out a proper formal lunch or dinner, but I would still like to point to a certain detail. The menus. Menus at formal lunches or dinners often contain dishes from the standard menu that have just been arranged differently on the plate. They are missing out on an amazing opportunity because it's the right menu that creates the pleasant atmosphere of a formal event among the guests. If the dishes are prepared and served as they should be and the right music is played, the response from the congress participants will be amazing and they will shower us with promises of coming back again. And they don't just say these things to be polite.



INTERNATIONAL PROFILE OF SLOVENIAN WINES

Slovenian winemakers are in tune with nature and have a lot of imagination



Dušan Brejc has been in the wine business for three decades. After graduating at the Biotechnical Faculty and finishing his oenology specialisation in France he worked as an oenologist for ten years. Over the next decade he focused on marketing his produce and for the last ten years he has been managing the Wine Society of Slovenia. He is a wine writer (Nedelo-OK), lecturer and international taster.

What is Slovenia best known for on the international wine market? Which wine is immediately attributed to it? The answer to this question is never unanimous in established wine-growing countries. It would be too simplistic to say that France is known solely for Champagne, Bordeaux and Burgundy and forget about the Loire and Rhone valley and the entire south of France, where over a third of all its wine is produced. But it is still true that Bordeaux is a step ahead of the other regions, in the opinion of many connoisseurs. Countries we immediately connect to a certain wine brand on the international market usually export 30 or even over 50 percent of their wine produced.

IN THIS SENSE, SLOVENIAN WINES LIMIT THEIR CHANCES OF BECOMING VISIBLE, SINCE EXPORTED VOLUMES ARE STILL RELATIVELY SMALL, REPRESENTING NO MORE THAN 7 PERCENT OF TOTAL WINE PRODUCED.

This raises the classic dilemma: what is more prudent – to export larger quantities of wine in the middle price range or smaller quantities of prestigious, expensive wines? As always the answer isn't simple. Chile is known for low prices and a wide presence in a number of countries around the world. New Zealand doesn't have a significantly larger wine-growing area than Slovenia, but is world famous for its sauvignon and the highest average price of exported wines. Nonetheless, in terms of quantity and value of export it can't really compete with France or Chile. Within this dilemma we have refined the question we need to address professionally.

Let's take a brief look at how it was, how it is and, since we're daring, let's try to figure out how it will be. Lately we have been pretty

optimistic, despite serious consequences of the general financial and economic crises, which can be especially serious for a small and dependent economy like Slovenia's. Yet the positive development of quality and style we have witnessed in the last few years are encouraging: if you work long enough and well enough the results are sure to follow.

How it all began

It would be wise to begin the story of Slovenian wines in the period following the Second World War. We were a part of Yugoslavia, yet at the same time our own republic. The seat of the once great Slovin wine producer, with 6000 employees across the country from north to south, was in Ljubljana.

DURING THE TIME OF ITS PEAK EXPORTS, SLOVIN CONTRIBUTED ALMOST 2 PERCENT TO THE WORLD WINE TRADE.

Until the mid eighties quantity oriented brands were important in the United Kingdom, Germany and the USA. These were the three most important export markets. Scandinavia, Benelux, Japan and Poland followed with a significantly smaller percentage. Slovenian wines represented a small part of the export and they were mostly white. The nineties and Slovenia's independence completely changed our options. At the same time we lost our export markets. The large Slovin industry was struggling to grow before that, with the market having become globalised and moves in the quality game became sharper and quicker.

When true independence came in 1991 we inherited large quantity markets, yet lost the wine. On the Yugoslavian market almost a fifth of the wine came from Macedonia, which was always lower priced. The only logical reaction was to turn towards quality!

In the first decade of independence the quality imperatives took over some smaller family businesses, with some making it big and succeeding internationally. Of note here is Aleša Kristančiča – Movia, who made it into some important international magazines due to his immense personal energy. Of course it would be inaccurate to say that the international profile of Slovenia increased due to the success of a few individuals - it has much more to do with the presence of wine on the market than with a limited number of top-notch winemakers and wines.

Systematic approach after 2000

If the nineties were marked by the progress of smaller winemakers, after 2000 larger Slovenian winemakers who systematically invested in technology started to catch up and sometimes overtake the smaller ones. Growth and, more importantly, adaptation to the trends on the international market is the best recipe for creating 'Wine Destination Slovenia' – the only assurance of long-term

success in marketing wines on the foreign and domestic market. Partners of the Wine Society of Slovenia, which brings together the most important winemakers, set a strategy of 80:20 in 2006. This means that we aimed to export over 20 percent of our wine, which we managed to do. With the help of in-the-field oenologists style adjustments were carried out, there was participation at the biggest trade shows (Prowein, Germany; VinItaly, Italy; LIWTF, UK), we published in the most important B2B publications, carried out pre-planned PR activities and participated at international competitions, and encouraged important buyers to include wines of Slovenian partners in their sales programme.

We can certainly say today that our hard work paid off. And now we are faced with the equally difficult task of maintaining and increasing these numbers. It is interesting to note that the wines of our largest producers (Goriška Brda z.o.o., Vipava 1894 d.d., P&F wineries) first appeared in restaurants and not

in stores, as one would expect. This suggests the ratio of quality to price of our wines first leads to more demanding consumers, which is evidence of the general high quality of Slovenian wines. The family Pukalvec and friends (P&F) made considerable investments in modern technology and brought some formerly famous wine-growing locations back to life. With large exports to China, UK and the Benelux region it now significantly impacts on the quality and profile of Slovenian wines.

What's next?

In 2010 Slovenian wines were sold in 60 countries across almost every continent. Many people got to know our excellent wines, some for the first time. We realised it's also about the diversity of the offer, not just the quality.

SLOVENIAN WINEMAKERS ARE IN TUNE WITH NATURE AND HAVE A LOT OF IMAGINATION. IN MOST SLOVENIAN VINEYARDS GRAPES ARE GROWN IN A NATURAL AND ECO-FRIENDLY MANNER.

This fact should not be overlooked. What we are missing is a common way of thinking: each winemaker is in essence an individual. Winemaking demands the entire dedication of the winemaker, leaving little time for teamwork. This can be a major flaw. When Australia published their strategy to 2025 they asked themselves: after we share our strategy will the competition breathe down our neck even more? The answer was: of course not! The success of a wine-growing country depends mostly on teamwork and the Aussies are pretty good at that.

This year's talks and deals between large and small winegrowers demonstrate that the idea of teamwork is gaining momentum. This is our greatest hope for raising the profile of all Slovenian wines on the international market.



RESEARCH ON CONFERENCE DELEGATES IN LJUBLJANA

A look in the mirror of a conference delegate



Maruša Rosulnik, early stage researcher at Go.Mice, congress and marketing agency, assistant at Anton Melik Geographical institute, Scientific Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and doctorate level student in the area of sustainable congress destinations.

To ensure successful positioning of Ljubljana on a global and in particular a regional meeting industry market, it is of great importance to research the local market from the perspective of conference delegates (B2C) and meeting planners (B2B).

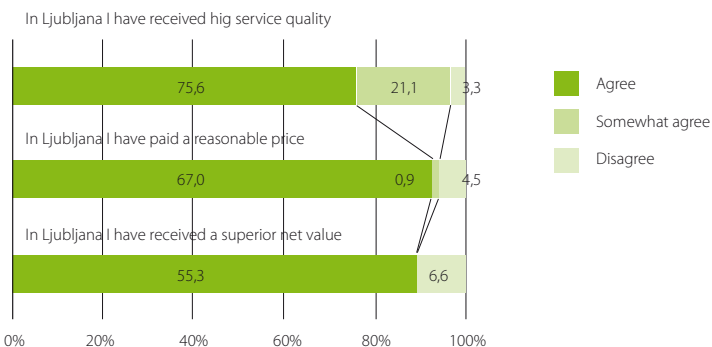
From August to September 2011 face-to-face interviews were conducted with a representative sample of 347 conference delegates attending six international conferences in Ljubljana. The conference

delegates touched on the perceived quality of services in Ljubljana, satisfaction levels, likelihood of a re-visit to Ljubljana and positive word-of-mouth recommendations.

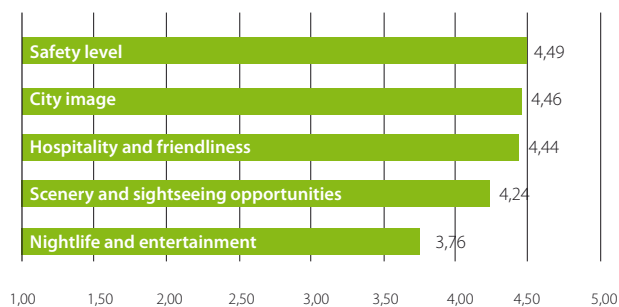
Ljubljana provides conference delegates with high quality services

On a Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) average assessment of high service quality in Ljubljana is 4.1, 3.8 for reasonable prices in Ljubljana and 3.65 for a superior net value received in Ljubljana.

Perceived quality of services in Ljubljana



Perceived quality of destination factors



On a scale of perceived quality of services from 1 to 5, the average assessment mark of destination factors in Ljubljana is 4.28 and of meeting industry factors 3.83.

Delegates are satisfied with visiting Ljubljana

9 out of 10 conference delegates have expressed satisfaction with their visit to Ljubljana, taking into account the total experience. Compared with other conference destinations they have visited, 78.2 % of

conference delegates are satisfied with their visit to Ljubljana.

Meeting industry generates leisure tourism

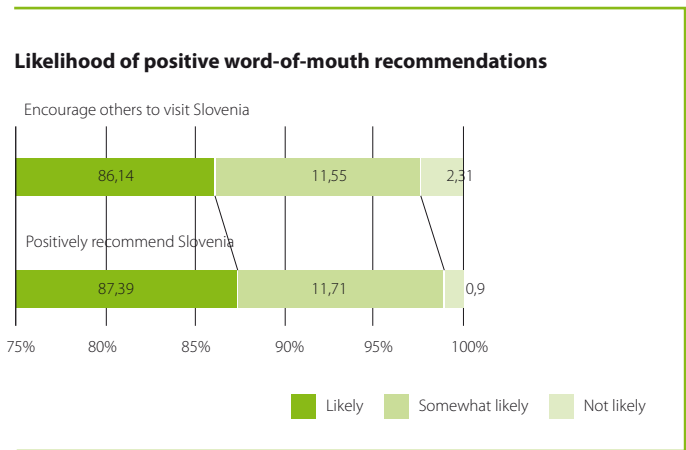
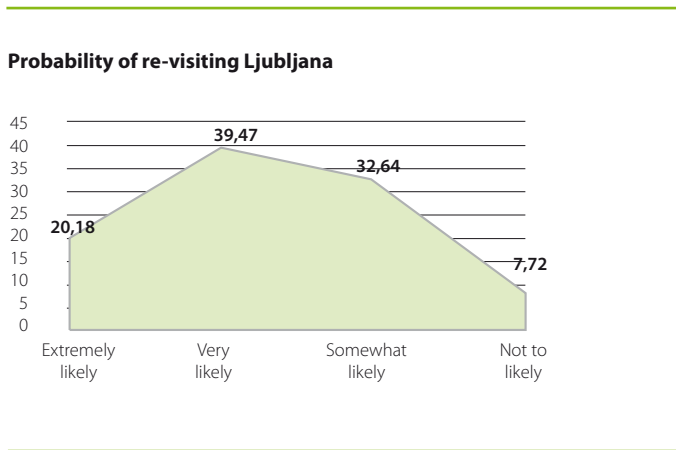
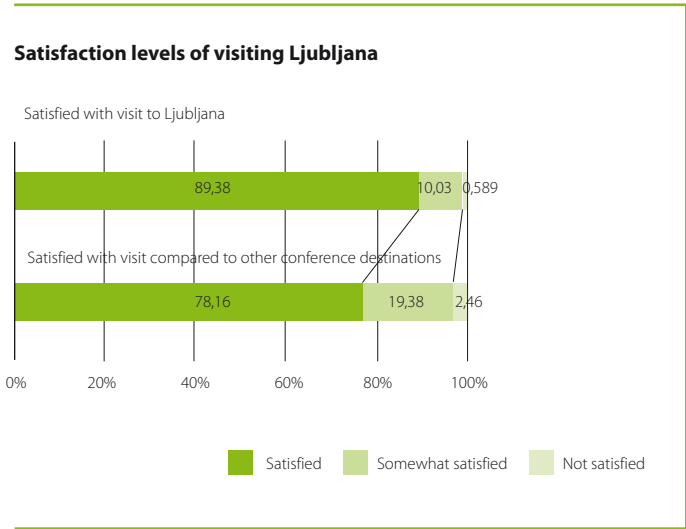
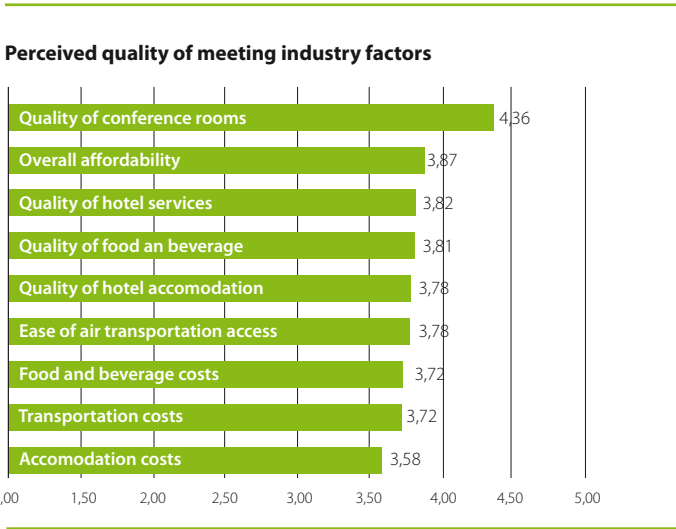
92.3 % of conference delegates are likely to visit Ljubljana again, either for pleasure or business.

Meeting industry raises profile of slovenia

99.1 % of conference delegates are likely to positively recommend Slovenia to friends and colleagues. Based on their overall experience

in Slovenia 97.1 % of delegates are likely to encourage other people to visit Slovenia.

Further results of the B2C research on profile of conference delegates (age, educational level, employment status, country of origin, expenditure, extension of stay), their attendance motives and factors influencing their attendance as well as B2B research on meeting planners shall be published in the following issues of the Kongres magazine.



2011 AIPC MEMBER SURVEY

Survey highlights significant regional variations signalling different levels of economic performance



The results of the second comprehensive AIPC member outlook survey chart changes and progress during a period of economic instability. Essentially the survey results show some modest gains in business activity and confidence levels, but overall not the robust recovery that had been hoped for. At the same time, it highlights significant regional variations that signal different levels of economic performance in various parts of the world.

The survey, carried out in conjunction with Red7 Communications, was designed to assist AIPC members in sourcing the nature of information they need to properly benchmark their performance and plan future strategies. With a 70% response rate from 170 AIPC member centres representing 53 countries around the world, the survey provides a highly reliable and geographically comprehensive picture of global convention centre conditions.

Some of the key findings this year included:

- The majority of Centres in Europe and North America reported only modest revenue growth (2-3%) in 2010, although Australia and Asia indicated stronger growth during this same period (9.3 and 21.6% respectively). As a result, Asian centres have much more optimistic expectations of future business revenues and price increases than other regions.
- Associations remained the strongest business sector in most areas, with some increases in corporate business corresponding to the strength of the recovery in the respective geographical areas.
- Centres noted a number of changing business practices that had resulted from the recession. These included more negotiations, shorter booking times and slower overall business growth than in previous recoveries. Respondents also expressed an increasing expectation for discounts and incentives, although this was much stronger in North America and Australia than amongst European centres.
- New construction and planning for Centres has slowed somewhat, with a shift toward renovation / refurbishment of existing facilities. However, the growth in supply has still been greater than any increase in convention and exhibition business, which suggests the intensity of competition will continue. Most recent new-build and expansion activity reported was in Australia, indicating that centres in Europe and North America see their respective governments as less inclined to invest in new facilities than previously.
- The areas of greatest increase in client demand / expectation reported by centres include:
 - More and higher quality meeting rooms;
 - Higher levels of technology, including AV and connectivity; and
 - More variety and quality in food and beverage offerings.
- Members felt that 'the jury is still out' on the impact that virtual meetings are having and will continue to have in the future, with many centres seeing them as largely complementary to existing activities and others seeing them as competitive and likely to reduce facility business over the long term.
- In general terms, centres identified three major challenges to future business growth: increasing competition from new facilities, an uncertain economic recovery and potential increases in transportation costs. However, there were again significant regional differences, with, for example, North American centres most concerned about transportation costs and Australian centres identifying growing competition as their top concerns.
- Government policy changes were also identified as a potential threat in most areas, including decisions to reduce investment and / or discourage meetings amongst their own staff. North American centres expressed a high level of concern with respect to the impact of government policies on visas / access on event attendance.
- Centres are spending more time interacting with local government and communities, particularly in terms of their key role in economic development, with over 70% reporting that they are putting more emphasis on community, government and business relations.

The survey will be repeated again next year in order to continue tracking the progress of business conditions and the impacts they are having on centre performance and practices. www.aipr.org

KOMPAS NOVO MESTO

*Slovenia – undiscovered wine paradise.
Vineyard retreats – stay in unique, beautifully
converted slovenian vineyard cottages*

Explore the wines of Slovenia in a 6-day wine tour through the country

Slovenia's wines can match the best in the world and are the pride and joy of Slovenes. We offer the colourful palette of rosé, white and red wines, ranging from tender and fresh to rich, full-bodied, flavoursome wines, with smooth and sparkling wines in the mix too. Let us introduce the excellent wines, culinary delights and historical sites of our diverse country through a 6-day wine tour. The tour includes:

Region Goriška Brda, an area that produces quality wines, whose white wines are a stand-out and have been awarded numerous world-recognized certificates of excellence. Stop-offs on the tour include Dobrovo, where the wines will be served with excellent smoked ham and cheese; Kristančič, one of the most renowned cellars with its wines available at famous restaurants all over the world, such as Ducas in New York and the cellar of Vina Koper (Slovenian Istria). There is then the Dolenjska region, with the story of famous local wine Cviček; the Bela krajina region, recognised as the best wine producer in Slovenia for 2010; the sparkling wines of the Istenič family, winner of three Prix d'excellence awards in Paris, gold medal in Verona and a double champion title in Ljubljana. Later comes the natural wonder of "repnica", where the wine is kept in special old caves; Ptuj, the oldest wine cellar in Slovenia, the House of Wines Cuk, the sparkling wines at Radgonske Gorice, where "champagne" was first made in 1852; and "The Golden Hill", an idyllic location above the round hills and vineyards ... Enjoy the sightseeing of the beautiful natural and cultural heritage of Slovenia through its fine wines.

Vineyard retreats – stay in unique, beautifully converted slovenian vineyard cottages

Vineyard cottages are a unique accommodation, standing on the edges of vineyards in beautiful locations with stunning lovely views. The agricultural component of the vineyard cottage is represented by the cellar, which contains the tools and the wine; the living quarters on the ground floor

consist of a kitchen, toilet, bathroom and sleeping quarters. The vineyard cottages are fully fitted with modern equipment and provide visitors with everything they need for a pleasant vacation. While staying in these unique buildings, you will be able to enjoy hiking, cycling, horseback riding, boating, swimming and wellness programmes, playing golf, hunting, fishing, tennis, flying in a plane, ballooning or paragliding, discovering natural and cultural heritage, cuisine and wine, visiting numerous traditional events and enjoying the serenity and quiet contemplation; reading a book, taking in the beautiful nature and the magnificent scenery ... need any more?

Information and reservation:

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SPLIT

Congress Impressions from the Heart of Dalmacija

“Mediterranski brevijar” by Zagreb author and scholar Predrag Matvejević is an award winning work I recommend to all lovers of the Mediterranean, the cradle of western civilization. It’s a book full of folksy anecdotes, smells, turbulent history, architecture, natural phenomena and tradition. Everything, in fact, that makes me unintentionally reflect on Split, a city that has actually and spiritually been with me throughout my life and represents for me the heart of the Mediterranean.

SPLIT IS FULL OF STORIES AND MYTHS. FIRST OF ALL, THE CLASSIC CLASH BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH, BETWEEN ZAGREB AND SPLIT, DINAMO AND HAJDUK.

Split reproaches Zagreb with claims of centralism and exploitation of the south. The story is similar to the eternal clash between Štajerska and Ljubljana, which takes advantage of Maribor politically, economically and culturally.

The fact that Hajduk is more than just a football club with numerous fans, who stick with them even in times of drought, speaks volumes of the character of Split and its inhabitants.

The city was formed as part of the ambition of one of the most important Roman emperors, Diocletian, born in nearby Salona. It can be compared to a sort of Dubai of its period, since Diocletian built his palace and urban plan to be a part of the world’s history as the new capital of the Roman province Dalmatia. The monumental architecture of the city and a number of important individuals give it a specific cosmopolitan character, occasionally blended with the rebellious spirit of its inhabitants. Maybe this explains the attachment of the inhabitants to their football club and the Split state of mind, wittily characterised by the late Dino Dvornik:

“YOU MAY SPEAK ILL OF ME OR OF THE WHOLE WORLD, BUT I NEVER WANT TO HEAR YOU SPEAK ILL OF SPLIT...”

The Split spirit and energy are a fertile ground for excellent musicians, sportsmen and scientists.

What thrills tourists the most is the Mediterranean ambiance of the city with its street life and the famous riva, which functions as a public square, concert venue, night gathering place and the spot for all of Split’s important events.

This rivalry between the capital and the provincial capital exists in all other European congress countries. Split was virtually non-existent in the meetings industry until a few years ago. In the battle with Opatija, Dubrovnik and other tourist places in Istria it got the short end of the stick. It was deemed as a more or less ‘transit’ meetings destination. There were numerous plans and ideas to build a congress centre. In 2007 there was talk of a project called ABC, which would combine an exhibition, business and congress centre.



IN 2008 THE IDEA OF A CONGRESS CENTRE GAINED MOMENTUM, AS THE GOVERNMENT SUPPORTED INVESTMENT ANALYSES FOR FOUR NEW CONGRESS CENTRES IN ZAGREB, OPATIJA, DUBROVNIK AND SPLIT.

The centre would be located at the eastern part of the port of Split, on the site of the Dalmacijavino factory, with a 1,500 capacity plenary hall. Unfortunately the economic crisis put a halt to all of the projects.

Yet, everything changed completely with the arrival of large hotel chains a few years ago. The first was Hotel Le Meridien Lav in Podstrana near Split, which is the largest congress hotel in the city. Excellent service, international connections and know-how of the Starwood chain drew numerous international events to Split. The hotel is the flagship of the Dalmatian meetings industry and has received several prizes. It's among the best in the Adriatic for functionality, and very appropriate for incentive groups and product launches due to its excellent additional services.

Last year Split saw the opening of the Radisson Blu Split Resort. The four star hotel with 240 rooms has a smaller congress centre, the largest hall accommodating 350 people and six smaller halls with ancillary services. Atrium followed the foreign hotel chains and opened a hotel in 2007. The maximum capacity of the halls is 300 and additional services of the hotel are of a very high level. Smaller congress capacities are also available at Katarina, Park, Dalmina, Globo and President.

Hilton Marjan Split, owned by Split's mayor Željko Kerum, should be opened at the beginning of the next year after a number of delays. It will boast excellent congress facilities (the largest hall will seat 1,000) in an elite location. The newest acquisition of the

town, the Spaladium sports arena, can also potentially serve as a congress hall.

The city is also full of special venues for receptions and accompanying events. Among the traditional venues there is the Diocletian palace. Receptions can also be held at Prokurative square, the Croatian national theatre, Villa Dalmatia and numerous picturesque outdoor locations just waiting to host events. The restaurant scene is lively, as is the nightlife. In the last two years Split gained the reputation of being the party metropolis of the Adriatic and not just a transit destination on the way to the Dalmatian islands.

The development of the meetings industry has encouraged the development of the agency segment. This occurred firstly through numerous DMC agencies and has been followed by a number of specialised incentive and team building service providers. Split offers a lot in a concentrated area, in terms of both the seaside and its inland area, that is not recognisable enough on the international market.

SPLIT IS FACED WITH THE CLASSIC ISSUE OF MANY DESTINATIONS, WHERE THE CONVENTION BUREAU IS FORMALLY A PART OF THE CITY TOURIST ORGANISATION AND THUS LACKS INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION.

Split urgently needs a well organised and branded convention bureau.

The major disadvantage of the destination is air traffic access. The infrastructure improved with the renovation of the airport platform and a planned construction of a new terminal. The airport will soon be able to receive up to 2 million passengers annually.

Air transport is mostly an issue in the low tourist season, which is at the same time high congress season. This element of an attractive destination is the main one preventing Split from becoming an excellent congress destination. Split is the diamond amongst the coal.



Comparison to the Region:

Among the Adriatic congress destinations Split has become serious competition to Dubrovnik in the last years. The main disadvantage of the destination is bad cooperation among the service providers, lack of air traffic connections to key markets and not enough destination marketing. If Split gets a real convention centre in the future it could become one of the leading congress destinations in the Mediterranean. New and excellent hotel capacities, good road connections to Europe and wonderful surroundings, with islands offering numerous incentive programme opportunities, all bolster this proposition. Split is one of the most unexploited congress destinations in the Mediterranean.

Assessment method:

The region's meetings industry is progressing with speed and steadiness. Buyers are becoming increasingly interested in its

destinations. We wish to offer an objective and realistic assessment of destinations, which is often different from the attractive pictures in brochures. The assessment is based on the experience of the destination without sponsorship or privileges. Only destinations the author has visited or organised events in can be assessed.

Gorazd Čad

Destination mark:
3,96 – quality convention destination

Marks:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 5 | excellent congress destination |
| 4 | quality congress destination |
| 3 | recommendable congress destination |
| 2 | average congress destination |
| 1 | pass |

Individual marks:**A. Natural and cultural factors 4.2**

The mild climate, lively atmosphere, historical attractions and architecture are the main advantages of destination Split. Its disadvantage is the attitude towards the environment and sustainable development.

B. General and transport infrastructure 3.8

With the completion of the motorway Split has an excellent connection to the continent. Air and rail accessibility is steadily improving. The downside is local traffic infrastructure with public transportation as well as communal infrastructure.

C. Tourism infrastructure 4.3

Tourism infrastructure has improved immensely in the last few years. Even before that Split was well equipped with sports venues and leisure offers. Split is the cultural centre of Dalmatia. The progress of the hotel scene is making great strides.

D. Congress infrastructure 3.8

Congress hotels, professional services, ongoing development and a variety of congress products are a strong part of the offer. On the downside are its congress history and references as well as the number of hotel rooms appropriate for congresses, the weakest link being the lack of a convention centre in Split.

E. Subjective assessment 3.4

Political stability, safety, ratio of quality to price and general competitiveness of the destination are the main attributes of Split's offer. Split does somewhat worse in the area of meetings industry support, e-services and the image of Split as a congress destination.



BOUTIQUE + CHIC + GOURMET = CUBO HOTEL



The recently opened four-star Cubo Hotel, a valuable addition to Ljubljana's accommodation portfolio, boasts a privileged location just a few steps away from the Old Town and its many important city institutions, among which the closest include Drama –Slovenian National Theatre and the Cankarjev dom Culture and Congress Centre.

The original building's history goes back to the 1830's, when it became the family residence of an influential local attorney, serving this purpose for over 100 years. Restyled in the 1930's, after WWII the premises housed uses such as a ballet school, a magazine editorial office, a centre for first aid courses and then exams for driving licences, and 'Miška' - once a legendary dairy cafe. Following a total refurbishment and an investment worth 2.4 million Euro, the Cubo Hotel has started a new chapter on the site.

The property features twenty-six rooms/suites decorated in a modern, yet discreet style with a touch of sophistication, which is reflected in the choice of excellent materials and room amenities.

To highlight just a few – the prestigious Rivolta Carmignani bed linen, found in luxury hotel chains such as Hilton, Ritz and Four Seasons, and L'Occitane toiletries and room accessories. However, the Hotel is building its image and reputation among modern nomads not only with the trendy comfort provided, but with a strong focus given to excellent service and an attention to each individual guest. As an added value, the use of Wi-Fi Internet throughout the property is complimentary and the mini bar is included in the room rate.

A well-equipped conference room that can welcome fifty participants for business meetings can also be privatised and adapted for other functions. By the end of 2011, a fitness room is set to complement the existing hotel amenities.

The name Cubo in Ljubljana is primarily known to gourmets, as it originally stands for one of the most favoured fine dining restaurants whose brand and creative culinary art were developed by chef Boštjan Trstenjak. This concept has been successfully transplanted into the city centre, under the roof of the Cubo Hotel, whose restaurant offers seasonal menus influenced by contemporary Mediterranean fusion cuisine, based on selected and fresh local ingredients. Shortly after its soft opening, the restaurant continues to delight both hotel guests and external visitors with its innovative menu and extensive wine list, not to mention its exclusive accessories – Bauscher porcelain and Riedel glasses.

The hotel conversion, including the refurbishment and opening, was carried out in less than two years, and was partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

www.hotelcubo.com

NEW TIPS FOR INCENTIVES

Ljubljana Tourism / Convention Bureau has recently issued a revamped edition of "Tips for Incentives", with a geographical emphasis on Ljubljana and Central Slovenia. Produced in both printed and digital format, the publication

is intended as an informative and helpful destination toolkit for incentive and meeting planners. The project was partly financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

'Tips for Incentives' showcases an array of individual products that can be easily combined to create authentic and dynamic incentive programmes or give an added value to business meetings. A large part of the contents focuses on the capital city and the Central Slovenia region, while another section is dedicated to activities in other areas, since many attractive locations in Slovenia – from the Adriatic coast to the Alps – can be reached within a maximum of 1.5 hour's drive.

Over eighty tips provide a selection of themed programmes encompassing everything from outdoor adventures and team building to ethno-heritage, nature and eno-gastronomy. The brief descriptions set out the seasonality and minimum/maximum number of participants.

'Tips for Incentives' can be downloaded from www.visitljubljana.si/meetings, but should you wish to receive a paper or digital copy, kindly request it via convention@visitljubljana.si.



PORTOROŽ

Congress Impressions from Slovenia's number one tourist destination

From Portorož's rich tourism history the story I remember most is that of the Benedictine monks who in the 13th century treated symptoms of rheumatism with the sea-mud from the nearby salt-pans. The convent of Saint Lawrence stood on the site of today's hotel Metropol. The Josephinian Reforms signalled the last works of the monks in 1806, at the approximately same time as the founding tourist development of Portorož started to take place.

The other story that I recall is about the legendary Palace hotel. Its predecessor was apparently built in 1891, based on the design of English health resorts. This was a period of intense development of tourism during which the promenade, the public bath and the pier with its restaurants were built. Portorož even had a seaplane station from 1897 and was officially declared a health resort.

THE PRIME AREA OF THE CITY IS CONNECTED WITH HOTEL PALACE, WHICH WAS BUILT BETWEEN 1908 AND 1912.

With the Palace, Portorož became a luxurious resort, with the likes of Grado and Opatja adding to its offer. The Palace was high-spec for its time: it even hosted the first congresses and events in Portorož, especially the social events of its legendary Crystal Hall.

In 1921 Portorož hosted its first large international conference. It was the conference on the succession of the former states of the Austro-Hungarian empire. This major event can be regarded as the foundation of the meetings industry. The period of prosperity under Austrian rule was followed by one of decline of tourism, lasting until 1954, when the Slovenian coast was finally annexed to Yugoslavia.

The largest period of growth for Portorož was in the 1970s, with the completion of the hotels Metropol, Slovenija and Emona (now Bernardin). The urban planning framework for this was coordinated by Edo Mihevc, who also

designed the Avditorij Portorož, opened in 1972. At this time it was a modern convention centre, with its own PCO agency. In the period up to the dissolution of Yugoslavia, Portorož, along with Bled and Ljubljana, was the most important Slovenian congress centre and Avditorij the flagship of the meetings industry. The period coincides with the development of the Metropol casino, which many hold responsible for the development of a number of further tourist facilities along the coast.

THE STAGNATION OF THE CENTRE STARTED DIRECTLY AFTER SLOVENIA'S INDEPENDENCE. THE HOTEL COMPLEXES WERE SLOWLY GROWING, ALONG WITH THEIR CONGRESS CAPACITIES, AND AVDITORIJ WAS LOSING MORE AND MORE BUSINESS TO THEM.

In 2002 the convention centre Portus was built. In Bernardin the renovation of the biggest congress hotel in the country, able to host up to 2.600 participants, was finally finished.

Portorož is unquestionably an appropriate destination for the meetings industry, given its climate, cultural diversity and range of social and leisure options. The architectural form of Portorož was defined by Edo Mihevc and includes colourful modernist architecture enriched with Mediterranean elements. Expensive yet accurate and precise renovation of the secessionist hotel Palace and several historic buildings ensured we can also still enjoy a part of its historic glamour too. Piran also positively supports Portorož, with its medieval architecture and rich history. A lot of unexploited congress potential, or spin-off potential, is latent in the authentic Istrian villages in the hinterland.

The general infrastructure of Portorož is satisfactory. The traffic, however, is the town's worst feature. The traffic regime, parking,

public transport and green areas usually receive the most complaints. Many dislike the large salt warehouses on a precious coastal location which are occasionally used as an event venue. The central beach has been much improved since 2010, but the problem of the coastal road between the hotels and the sea is still a difficult one to solve. The biggest infrastructure issue is air accessibility. The idea to extend the existing airline is old, but not likely to come true anytime soon. Also, it doesn't seem likely that the airport will witness international air traffic in the near future. Meeting organisers are forced to use other airports in the vicinity. Reviving the airport would improve the competitiveness of the congress offer and facilitate easier access. I am certain Portorož will be able to solve this problem, since it once had a permanent seaplane connection to a number of Italian cities.

The tourist infrastructure of Portorož is currently still in step with the Croatian competition. Hotel capacities are broadly suitable and after the renovation of Palace Hotel Portorož are able to host even the most demanding guests.

SOME 4 AND 5 STAR HOTELS IN THE CONGRESS CATEGORIES ARE REACHING THE POINT OF REQUIRING RENOVATION AND MODERNISATION, AS TIME HAS STARTED TO TAKE A TOLL ON THEM.

Rooms need to be regularly renovated and adapted with additional and contemporary services to meet the demands of modern guests. All hotels came to the realisation that today free wireless internet is as necessary as water and electricity. Occasionally, however, in the transition period between the high tourist season and the congress season there are not enough rooms available in Portorož. The same situation can arise at the time of really big events.

In the low tourist and main congress season it appears that the nightlife is the more problematic part of the overall offer. The range of shops and boutiques open compromises the status of the destination and is constantly a target of sharp criticism from hoteliers and guests of the prestigious and congress hotels, as they struggle to be able to spend any money. The restaurants fare little better, being mostly average and, in fact, borderline fast food, again not doing justice to the hotel offer. For more demanding culinary adventures visitors need to travel into the hinterland, or at very least to Piran. Portorož is making great efforts with its events work, but for a breakthrough into the elite category it needs to re-attract some more exclusive events that it has previously hosted and from time to time look towards Koper, where they have become very innovative in the events arena.

The congress offer is concentrated in the Hotel Bernardin, which includes the largest congress hotel in the region, the congress centre Portus in LifeClass hotels as well as the Kempinski and Metropol. The congress centres are modern, with high-tech equipment and in good condition. Bernardin is one of the largest congress centres in the Adriatic and can host up to 2,600 participants in its 16 multi-function halls. The biggest hall, Evropa, can

seat 1,100 people. This makes it appropriate for larger events and it has hosted the Golden Drum Festival and for the past several years a number of other annual conferences and events. Congress centre Portus is smaller and consists of seven halls, the largest with a plenary capacity of 520.

The reference list of organised events for the congress centres is long and accomplished. Both centres became the driving force of the meetings industry and dethroned the Auditorij, which can struggle to follow the needs and demands of the modern congress organisers. The luxurious segment of the congress offer is covered by the centre at hotel Kempinski, with the wonderful Crystal Hall and a smaller congress centre. Smaller congress capacities are also available at hotel Metropol, Marita and Lucija. There are a few special venues in neighbouring Piran, at the Tartini theatre.

THE WEAKEST LINK OF THE PORTOROŽ'S CONGRESS STORY IS THE LACK OF A CONVENTION BUREAU TO ROUND UP THE OFFER AND PROMOTE IT ON THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET.

Without it, the destination is directionless and has already lost a lot of potential congress business. With a bureau, the meetings industry in Portorož would gain tremendously and formally receive political and other important stakeholder support. Without it, we are witnessing independent marketing without a clear and coordinated strategy that is leaving the meetings industry of Portorož to its own devices.

The image of the destination is improving thanks to some individual efforts and the innovative viral campaign 'Jump to Portorož', but it is high time to raise the level of the congress offer and improve the destination marketing of Portorož and Piran as well as their surroundings.

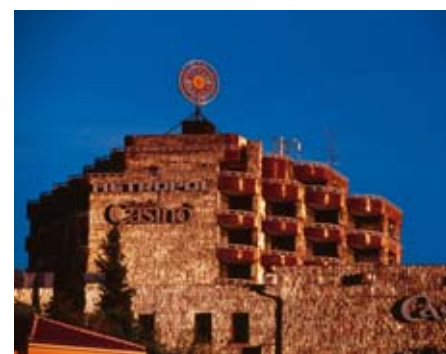


Foto: UbaldTrnkoczy

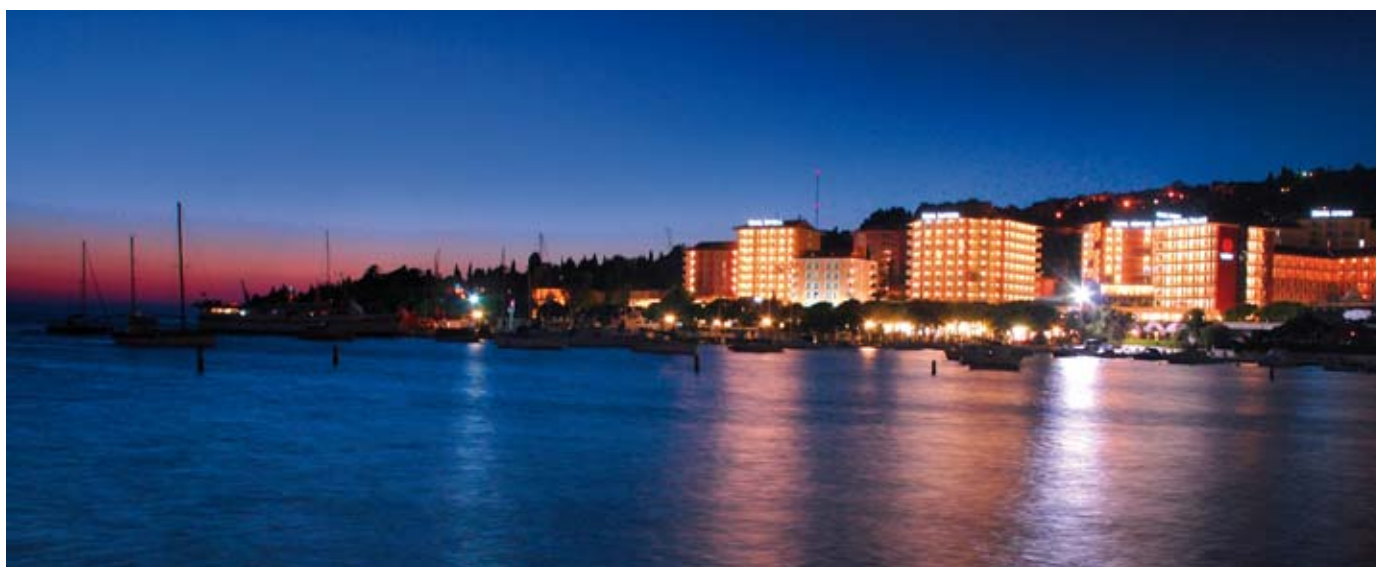


Foto: UbaldTrnkoczy

PORTOROŽ WILL HAVE A DIFFICULT TASK IN COMPETING WITH LOW-COST MEDITERRANEAN CONGRESS DESTINATIONS, WHICH ARE ALREADY TEMPTING ORGANISERS WITH THEIR 'ALL-' AND 'ULTRA-INCLUSIVE' PACKAGES.

With its own high quality and making best use of its natural advantages, it can reclaim the spot it has held several times in the past. For this to happen, a clear definition, strategy and organisation of the congress product is necessary.

Unfortunately the philosophy of knowing that the overall offer will only be as good as the sum of its parts is breaking through very slowly.

Comparison to the Region:

The historic laurels of the leading Adriatic congress destination are slowly starting to gather dust. Portorož is still in hard

competition with Dubrovnik, Opatija and new Adriatic congress destinations that are developing all the time.

A rich congress history, tradition and the existing infrastructure are a competitive advantage. The meetings industry is by no means a tree to sleep under and simply harvest its fruit of wealthy congress participants. Despite that, Portorož has proven resilient and adaptable many times in the course of history, so some innovativeness and marketing opportunities should ensure it has a bright future.

Gorazd Čad

Destination mark:
3,42 – recommendable convention destination

Marks:

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 5 | excellent congress destination |
| 4 | quality congress destination |
| 3 | recommendable congress destination |
| 2 | average congress destination |
| 1 | pass |

Individual marks:

Natural and cultural factors **4,1**

The climate, cultural diversity, access to the coast and experience index are the main advantages. The weakest part is the architectural value and state of the environment.

General and transport infrastructure **3,4**

Highest marks for road access, destination security, communal infrastructure. Low marks for bad air and rail accessibility and condition of the airport.

Tourism infrastructure **3,4**

The strongest feature of Portorož is the offer of sports activities, cafes and bars, not so great is the offer of shops, restaurants, nightlife and cultural options.

Congress infrastructure **2,8**

Congress hotels, history and references, quantity of appropriate hotel rooms and incentive offer are the strongest part of the congress infrastructure. Bad marks for a lack of a convention bureau, non-existent support of congress services and the inappropriate position of the Avditorij Portorož convention centre.

Subjective assessment **3,4**

Political stability, security, e-services and professionalism are the strongest parts of the offer. Portorož does somewhat worse in the area of political support of the meetings industry, ratio of quality to price, hospitality of the locals and the general competitiveness of the destination.



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LAŠKO AND ITS SURROUNDINGS

An excellent starting point for trips and connecting with nature

Laško is known for its beautiful nature, rich cultural and historic heritage and a vast cultural, sport and touristic offer. The town is also renowned for beer production, being home to the largest Slovenian brewery, which dates back to 1825. Healing thermal water was discovered here by the Romans and it is a tradition carried out to this day in the form of the town's modern wellness centres in the Thermana Laško and Rimske terme spa resorts.

The numerous tourist attractions, picturesque landscape and breathtaking treasures dotted around the area are sure to leave you wanting more and are also an excellent starting point for trips and for connecting with nature. Take a bike trip where you can also take a guide with you or simply go hiking on one of the several hiking trails in the area. You can visit the Laško Brewery and try out some of the beers there, visit the Jurklošter Carthusian monastery, the birth house of the poet Anton Aškerc, go rafting on the confluence of the Savinja and Sava River or, if you're feeling adventurous, try tandem paragliding.

The town is full of lively events throughout the year, including July's most visited tourist event in Slovenia, the Pivo in cvetje (Beer and Flowers), which makes for an unforgettable experience. Live music and fireworks, a water symphony on the Savinja River and the beer and flower parade are unique and definitely well worth a visit.

Laško is also known for its cuisine and its restaurants follow the culinary tradition of the area and combine them with international influence. The local inhabitants are known for their eco-friendly and traditional culinary delights and you can always get something delicious to eat in one of the nearby hill lodges.

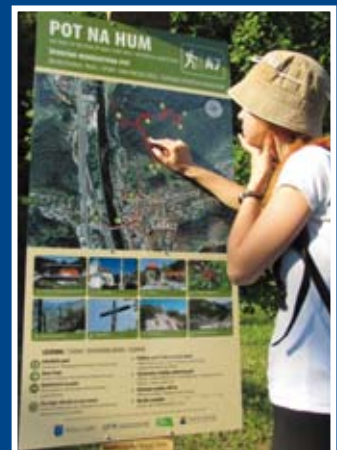
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Jurklošter Carthusian monastery, foto: Tomo Jeseničnik

Laško - the town of health, beer and flowers



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A popular stop for outdoor activities is Rakov Škocjan, with unique karst phenomena and a network of forest trails appropriate for hiking and cycling. At Rakov Škocjan, the heart of the Green Karst you are in the proximity of the world famous intermittent Cerknica Lake and the mysterious Postojna Cave, where you can organize unforgettable business meetings or organize team buildings full of nature, sports and excellent culinary offer.

Because of its peaceful location and rich cultural heritage Bloška planota at the edge of Notranjska between Cerkljiško polje and Loška and Ribniška dolina is also an ideal location to organize gatherings. In the winter they offer cross-country skiing and kiting with an evening visit to the sauna, in other seasons you can hike in the surroundings.

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IMMENSUM, AD ANTRUM ADITUS

Enter, traveller, into this immensity

The Jamski dvorec mansion, converted into a modern events centre, opens its doors to all who wish an ideal venue for a wide variety of exclusive events or unforgettable gastronomic experiences. It has room for up to 1000 guests at the same time. On entering the mansion you will find, on your right, the Hall of Pillars, but the swing doors in the lobby reveal the mansion's pride and joy: the Venetian Hall. A touch of art, the painted ceiling, period furniture and attractive decoration are perfect for exclusive business meetings, press conferences and special gastronomic experiences. The Jamski Dvorec is in fact often used as a venue for State protocol functions and frequently hosts foreign diplomats and representatives of foreign companies who are visiting Slovenia on business.

The Jamski dvorec is also a place where you can find relaxation and entertainment in a delightful natural environment while looking after your business interests.

The famous Postojna Cave is one of the most beautiful subterranean caves in the world. It

extends over almost 21 kilometres of stalagmite- and stalactite-covered passages, galleries and chambers, shaped by Nature over the course of millennia. You are transported into the beautifully illuminated and well-presented interior of the cave by a unique cave train, the only one of its kind in the world, and expert guides are on hand to make sure you enjoy your visit.

Postojna and the village of Predjama are joined by 9 kilometres of winding road. Nowhere do you get such a strong sense of the Middle Ages as here below the sheer cliff that serves as a backdrop to the mighty Predjama Castle - a castle which even today is full of surprises. The sixteenth-century Renaissance castle conceals an even older nucleus - a true cave castle that reveals the image of past centuries and the castle's most famous owner, the robber baron Erazem. Unspoiled nature, rich history and unforgettable experiences – all are waiting for you!



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Predjama Castle



Postojna Cave

PATHS TO SUCCESS

Winning Asia and Beyond

For this year's 19th Incentive Travel and Conventions Meetings Asia (IT&CMA) and Corporate Travel World (CTW) Asia Pacific, there was more than double-bill cause for celebration for the 10th anniversary of Asia's only double-bill event taking place in Thailand's 'City of Angels' capital, Bangkok.

The elevated space at Level 22 of CentralWorld's Bangkok Convention Centre (BCC) was at an apposite height for the elevated success of the event. Pre-event registration hit a new high: the 2,457 delegates from 60 countries/territories consisted of over 800 exhibitors from more than 300 exhibiting companies across 20 countries; almost 500 buyers and corporate travel managers from 56 countries; 145 conference delegates to CTW Asia Pacific from 20 countries; and well over 100 international and local media from 28 countries.

BEHIND THESE CATCH-ALL STATISTICS WERE SOME EVEN MORE STRIKING DETAILS - NEW PARTICIPATING COMPANIES COMPRISED 45% OF THE TOTAL AND A TARGET OF 50% NEW BUYERS AND CORPORATE TRAVEL MANAGERS WAS HIT, ENSURING THE EVENT'S YEAR-ON-YEAR RENEWED VITALITY.

"For our delegates, we trust that the event is a winning one that achieves their many global objectives," said Darren Ng, Managing Director of TTG Asia. "As event organisers, this is a goal we have realised over the last few years. We have indeed won the support of the MICE and Corporate Travel industry in Asia and across the world. This year's show statistics clearly reflect the event's success."

Engaging this year's 'Winning Asia and Beyond' theme, there was for the first time a strong presence from the Indo-China region, Cambodia and Vietnam both debuting, and a new entry into the European market, Poland,

using the event as a platform for its own MICE destination aspirations. At the city level, Seoul, Hyderabad and Sabah all emerged from their national stands with independent booths at this year's event.

ALONGSIDE SUCH CLEAR SIGNALS OF THE EVENT'S PROFILE AND GROWTH, THERE WERE A NUMBER OF NEW, BAR-RAISING INITIATIVES COMPLEMENTING THE STAPLES, SUCH AS THE STRONG EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

A feature of this year's exhibition floor was the hosted delegates lounge, a chance to pull back from a hectic business appointments schedule and relax, or engage in more intimate networking. There was also a dedicated networking zone and, in conjunction with the international media zone, a new 'pigeon-hole' feature inviting delegates to leave contact details to schedule meetings with selected media.

And so to the celebrations - and very good reasons for them. The tenth birthday of the event in Bangkok was an opportune moment to flaunt host city confidence, which came via some announcements made at the event. The first of these addressed Bangkok's increasingly accessible location, Thai Airways presenting an important new Bangkok to Brussels European connection starting this November, making them the only non-stop Southeast Asian carrier to the heart of the EU.

The distant roar of a Thai Airways engines being perhaps not sufficient, Bangkok is also bidding for inclusion in the Formula 1 circuit, based on its 1939 city circuit that was accepted before the European war broke out. Hosting such a profile sporting event will be a momentous boon to its destination status.

Finishing the hat-trick of announcements was one reflecting the success of the event itself: a new addition to the calendar, IT&CM

India, will begin from August 2012 in New Delhi. With the Indian market constituting the majority of visitors to Thailand, stronger synergies can be developed with this new fixture, something all involved will eagerly look forward to.

So much change could easily forgive one for thinking that there might be benefits from a new logo for next year. Clearly this thinking was already germinating behind the scenes, a new logo also unveiled in readiness for the bigger and better plans for 2012. The timing of the new logo coincided with IT&CMA becoming not just Asia's, but now the world's only double-bill event.

Whilst the innovative features of this now unique event are certainly cause for celebration, little of this could have been realised without the orchestration and successes behind the scenes of the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB).

"TCEB is a government agency under the Prime Minister's office, set up in 2003 to support the development of Thailand's MICE industry," explained Mr. Akapol Sorasuchart, TCEB President. "Since its inception, we have worked very closely with other government agencies, especially the Tourism Authority of Thailand, as well as the private sector to identify constraints to growth and to develop strategic roadmaps for the industry."

This hard work is now reaping dividends: focusing on three branches of MICE events - Meetings, Trade Shows and International Events - 2011 has marked their most successful year to date, with over 700,000 MICE visitors expected, generating THB57.6 billion (\$1.9 billion).

ALSO, TCEB-ORGANISED PRE- AND POST-SHOW TOURS ALLOWED VISITORS TO GET 'BEHIND THE SCENES' AND SEE THAILAND BEYOND THE BUSINESS MECHANICS OF

BANGKOK'S CONVENTION CENTRE.

These social events highlighted the 'Destination of Choices' theme promoted by TCEB as part of their 'Believe in Thailand' campaign - not just for meetings, but for the cultural and leisure options on offer too. The especial allure of Bangkok and Thailand as a meetings destination is its ability to adeptly mix business and pleasure. There is a warmth of hospitality and genuine happiness of the people renowned across the world, all helping TCEB's latest campaign of 'No matter which path you choose, success is sure to follow.'

Thailand itself must now choose a path that does ensure success, as the region is set to become intensely competitive. Cambodia and Vietnam also presented at this year's IT&CMA, as they want to make a footprint in the industry. With their own offer, one sure to provide value for money, Thailand will be kept on its toes.

After three vibrant and successful business-generating days and the BCC and Centara bidding a farewell to its international delegates, it was apparent that the floods that had been dominating the news and taking a toll on areas in the north of the country were starting to make their way southwards. Despite hopes that they wouldn't impact on the capital, sadly this has happened and Bangkok has had to brace itself for buckling flood defences and potential damage to the CBD and the wider city.

Thailand has had to deal with political and fiscal issues over recent years, but it has bounced back from these stronger. Now mother nature is testing the country too. It will take stern resolve, but the country will return from this stronger too. Kongres and South East Europe extends its sincere wishes for the speediest possible return to normal, everyday life after the floods. When the waters do subside, the country stronger than ever, its MICE industry will have to prepare for floods of the welcome kind - floods of interest in their facilities and floods of new and return

visitors to this very happy, hospitable and welcoming destination.

Rob Cotter attended this year's IT&CMA representing Kongres.

You can most certainly 'Believe in Thailand' as a destination, one where whichever path you choose, it will indeed lead to success.



ENFANT TERRIBLE

Daniel Marušić



Could you introduce yourself in two sentences – one in your private capacity and the other as a public persona?

Soon to be a boring 40 year old guy, oh, but still kicking in my 30's and feeling like in my 20's! I do feel good in this skin of mine – I don't hide it – even in business!

Which are your favourite magazines in the tourism category?

I am very happy with the regional magazines such as Kongres, UT etc. Ediman MICE magazines Italy and ICJ MICE German magazines are great too.

Which was the last book you read and which book would you recommend to our readers?

I am just finishing Larsson's trilogy, the 'Millennium' – in Swedish – but a good Coelho, combined with one of the Croatian big reds, is actually my perfect match!

Which was the last event you attended?

I was planning to go to IMEX America but couldn't make it, had to cancel, unfortunately, but I will definitely attend EIBTM 2011 and Conventa 2012.

Which was the last movie you saw?

Larry Crowne – funny, relaxing, “our generation” movie!

How many foreign languages do you speak?

Croatian is my mother tongue, but I also speak English, Russian and Swedish. I definitely need to improve my German.

Who were your idols when you were growing up and who are they today?

As all kids, I also had my idols: TV idols, music idols, sport idols.... Most of mine are

still active and doing really good after all these years! So they are still the same idols, ha!

What was your first and your current job?

My first real full-time job was at an American-Russian cruise company some 15 years ago: cruise management aboard vessels along the Russian waterways combined with repeated caviar and ice-cold vodka tastings (OMG!). Currently I am very active at Dubrovnik Travel.

What is the first thing you do when you come to work?

I work all the time more or less, have no specific working hours, so coming to the office is only to be at the disposal of my colleagues face to face, the rest I am at the disposal of my clients. I am often on the road and also supervising the majority of the DT events in Croatia.

What was the greatest influence on your life? Was it a person or an event?

People around me made the events of my life, I love people, and I love events! I started



throwing parties at home when I was a little kid, true!

Could you highlight your best and worse life experience?

I have not just one, but three best life experiences – MARK, 11, ERIKA, 10 and NIKA, 7! The worst experience was definitely the winter of 1991, when Yugoslav war criminals brutally attacked my home town, Dubrovnik.

What are you most proud of?

I am most proud of my big family, especially my wife Sanja and her B.I.G. support! Which success story from the area of tourism would you mention? The story of Ovation Global... Chapeau!

Which marketing idea sticks out the most in the area of tourism?

Funny and unusual ideas like the Ovation Bear project, funny, relaxing “make me smile” videos like the Portorož Destination video....

What do you think is missing most in Croatian and SE Europe’s meeting industry?

I definitely see a lack of understanding from local and national authorities. These guys don’t understand how different and important it is to host an international or a national event, how the destination gets a more professional exposure and how the meeting industry opens other opportunities for development and success! The first one that discovers the huge benefit of this industry will be the regional winner! But they always have more important issues ...mostly under the table.

Would you share with us your favourite places to visit in spring, summer, autumn and winter?

Spring and autumn, definitely Croatia – the famous Croatian triangle: Zagreb, Split and Dubrovnik. In Summer I love the mountains and fresh air like in the Slovenian Alps. In

winter, hmmm, I like warmer places, sorry, once Sanja and I went to the Seychelles (without kids) and that was perfect, inspiring too.

What do you do in your free time?

Free time? What is that? You mean when I sleep?

Your life’s motto

“And in the end, it’s not the years in your life that count. It’s the life in your years.” - Abraham Lincoln.

LAMBERGH, CHATEAU & HOTEL

The Paths of Centuries Past lead to a Bright New Future

This beautiful part of Upper Carniola has been overlooked for decades. Now Dvorska vas near Begunje is unveiling the dreamy and romantic Drnča manor.

The manor has had several owners over the centuries. The first written mention refers to Iwan (owner of the manor from 1050 to 1065), who laid the foundations for a property that not only defied time but also became more and more exquisite. It was later owned by the Counts of Ortenburg and the Drampcz family (also Drempcz). In the early sixteenth century, the Gallenberg family took over the manor.

THE NEXT OWNERS WERE THE COUNTS OF LAMBERG, FROM KAMEN, WHO OWNED DRNČA FROM THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY TO 1810, WHEN IT WAS ACQUIRED BY THE BOURGEOISIE. FROM A HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW, THE LAMBERGS WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT OWNERS OF THE MANOR.

Jakob II of Lamberg was a member of a brotherhood of knights called the Golden Cross, who advocated a moderate lifestyle. He carried out a complete Renaissance renovation of the manor in 1531. He had a memorial plaque made for himself in 1558, onto the façade of which his life motto - "May the Lord bless us with a happy ending" - was carved, the motto featuring again in a book by his father, Gašper II. Jakob's uncle, Krištof I of Lamberg, may also be the inspiration behind the hero in the Slovenian folk ballad 'Pegam in Lambergar'. The fully preserved wooden ceilings and stone stairs of the manor were made during his time.

The manor's most mysterious story dates back to the Second World War. At this time the manor was owned by Josephine Baronin Baillou, née. Sedlar (born in Vsetin, Czech Republic), and her husband, Baron Raoul

Baillou (born in Zduša near Kranj). Before and during the war, their story is closely connected to the inhabitants of Begunje and Dvorska vas. The Baroness saved many Partisan fighters, held in a notorious prison in Begunje, from a certain death. The couple's time at the manor ended quickly at the end of the war, when the manor and all their other property was nationalised. This is when much of the archives from the manor library were destroyed. For this very reason, many other interesting stories about the manor will never be uncovered.

The manor was completely renovated in 2011 and is now open to the public. It includes 8 luxurious rooms, with Josephine's favourite suite named after her. She might also have loved the amazing wellness centre, culinary delights and the friendly staff. A completely new hotel is located adjacent to the manor, with views over the surrounding landscape and Mount Triglav in the background.

The hotel has 34 rooms (including 2 suites), a whirlpool, spa centre, an exquisite à la carte restaurant as well as meeting rooms and halls for business guests. The manor garden (based on Josephine Baillou's ideas) is an excellent spot for hosting receptions and romantic weddings.

The renovation gave the hotel a new (old) name: Lambergh, Chateau & Hotel. The name gives the manor and hotel a Renaissance feel as they both look forward to a successful future.



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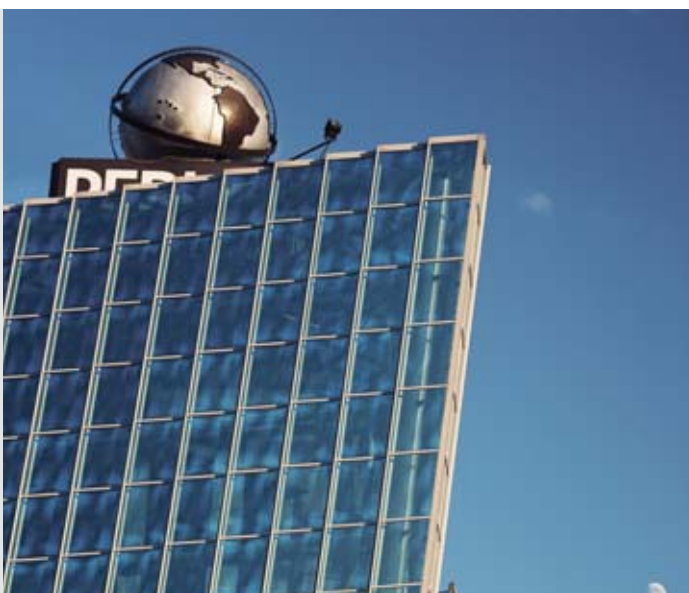
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Beekeeping Tourism in Practice

Contractor: Institute for Tourism and Culture
Žirovnica

Client: Iskra Medical, d.o.o., Ljubljana

Date: June 2011

A company specialising in research and development of medical equipment and cosmetics received a visiting delegation of 40 foreign business partners at the beginning of June.

Company management wanted to treat their guests to an adventure day outdoors with a buzz, so the business partners were taken to the cradle of Slovenian beekeeping and culture – Žirovnica. The Institute for Tourism and Culture have upgraded the 'Trail of Cultural Heritage' in line with current trends in tourism and added authentic beekeeping elements.

The roots of beekeeping can be traced to the heart of the villages at the foot of Mount Stol. The village Breznica is the birthplace of the first beekeeping teacher in the world, Anton Janša.

The first recognised beekeeping fraternity, the predecessor of all beekeeping associations, was established in Rodine in 1781.

The visit to the villages beneath Mt. Stol began at the birthplace of Matija Čop, famous Slovene intellectual, in Žirovnica, where the guests were served delicious homemade bread and honey. They were allowed to discover the most interesting nooks and crannies of the house and through film could learn about the history of ten villages on the foothills of Karavanke, joined to the municipality of Žirovnica. The guests were served honey based drinks and presented with a travel bundle before embarking on the trail with a horse-drawn carriage.

Beginning with a visit to a local beekeeper, the presentation of the world of the indigenous Slovenian Carniola bee proved to be a special experience. The trail carried on through the village towards the reconstructed Janša beehive, complete with painted beehive fronts.

Further along the route the trail led to a museum house, the birthplace of Fran Saleški Finžgar, the famous Slovene author. The local tour guide disclosed interesting and less known facts on

the life and work of this renowned figure. The exploration of cultural and beekeeping heritage finished with a special culinary experience featuring a stew – ajmoht, a dish traditionally served at weddings – and žganci, a typical Slovenian farmers food.

www.zirovnica.eu



Your partner for 60 years

Looking for Ideas for New Year's Gifts?

Visit the fair trade shop

A computer bag, made from eco-cotton and naturally coloured, was made by fair trade manufacturers through a local NGO, KAFULI, in the city Bobo Dioulasso in Burkina Faso. The organisation started out as a support group for educating children, continued with the creation of a youth centre and later started education programmes on fair trade in cooperation with a fair trade atelier for colouring fabrics. In time, they helped educate around 20 different manufacturers of varying handicrafts and art products. The production is mostly based on traditional local techniques, everything being handmade, and the materials are mostly eco-friendly, some even recycled. The manufacturers are a part of the KAFULI family and meet regularly to discuss common issues. They agree a proportion of their profits to be earmarked for developing production, searching for new markets and supporting the youth centre. Adiarra Traore, Aissa Gouem, Thiam Mounirou, Dicko Mohammed, Zongo Parfait and the blacksmiths/

artists called "Libre comme l'art" are among the first and permanent members of KAFULI, their products ranging from textiles and clothing made with the Western African technique of colouring to leather Tuareg products, bronze statues, jewellery, musical instruments and woodcarvings.

www.odjuga.si

A Shop for Adventures in City Park

A New Store Offering Innovative Gifts

A new shop - "Pot in Dar" - offering adventures and unforgettable gifts has opened in Ljubljana City Park, part of the project to establish a regional Ptuj - Ormož destination. In cooperation with the renowned ticket vendor company 'Eventim', the shop offers adventure vouchers appropriate for families, romantic couples, smaller groups and individuals. All of the gift vouchers come wrapped in a neat package along with a useful gift. In this innovative way you can discover the unspoilt beauty of the Lower Drava Valley, from Haloze, to Slovenska Gorice, to

Jeruzalem, Ormož, and to Slovenia's oldest city, Ptuj. From the pre-prepared gifts you can make your selection by type or price class, starting at €25. You and your family can embark on a picnic prepared at the top of a vineyard, meet the knight Parcival, discover hidden secrets of the Romans in Ptuj, enjoy local cuisine, play a game of golf at one of the most breathtaking golf courses in the world or enjoy a romantic stay at a mediaeval mansion. There is certainly plenty to experience! Currently the packages are available at the Eventim sales point in City Park Ljubljana. From the end of November they will also go on sale in City Centre, Celje and Qulandia, Maribor. They will also be available on Eventim's webpage (www.eventim.si) and on the "Pot in Dar" page (www.potindar.si). Next year they plan to open further shops in Graz, Austria and in Zagreb.



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KONGRES STARS OF SE EUROPE

People Changing the Meetings Industry of the Region

The editorial board of Kongres magazine has been following the work of individuals contributing to the reputation and development of the meetings industry for the last five years. For our readers we chose people who have demonstrated excellence, exceeded the expectations of partners and clients and have set an example through their innovativeness. We created this list that we intend to update annually and encourage others to become stars in their fields.

CONVENTION BUREAU STARS

A complete congress product is successful if it has proper destination management which contributes greatly to the image of the destination. The key role of destination organisations is the coordination of all the stakeholders. We have chosen some of the most important people that the editorial board believes are indispensable in the SE Europe region and who contribute to the reputation and recognition of the meetings industry - people from whom we can expect much more in the future.

Vladimir BAKIČ, Convention Bureau of Dubrovnik and Neretva County



The first man of the convention bureau of Dubrovnik is discreetly, elegantly and persistently taking care of the marketing of the congress icon of the region – Dubrovnik. With his work he quickly and efficiently brought Dubrovnik back to where it once was.

Danica CERANIĆ, Montenegro Convention Bureau



One of the youngest convention bureaux, in operation since 2008, is led by the charismatic Danica Ceranić. Montenegro, mostly known for its leisure tourism, has been successfully positioned as a congress and more so incentive destination on the international market. Today the bureau has 19 members.

Miha KOVAČIČ, Slovenia Convention Bureau



The 'hyperactive' director of Slovenia Convention Bureau managed to put Slovenia on the international congress map. The Slovenian congress community, with a complex membership structure, is managed and standardised properly and is amongst the leaders of the region. Especially commendable is his role in pioneering the green meetings industry, which

will host the IMEX Challenge and the annual Conventa, bringing together the meetings industry of the entire region in 2012.

Miloš MILOVANOVIĆ, Serbia Convention Bureau



The Serbia Convention Bureau grew from a practically zero-basis three years ago to now be bringing a number of international congresses to Serbia. Miloš and his team are credited for employing innovative marketing tools, amongst which they developed the first destination app and also digitised the entire marketing communication process. He further managed

to bring together the entire meetings industry of Serbia and achieve the fastest growth in the associations market, according to ICCA data.

Zlatan MUFTIĆ, Zagreb Convention Bureau



In love with Zagreb and taking great care of its promotion, Zlatan was an advocate for the construction of a new convention centre in Zagreb that would further encourage its MICE development, now set to host an ECM marketing conference in 2012. A man who is active in international associations, with Zlatan's help Zagreb has also acquired a number of

internationally renowned events.

Nik RAČIĆ, Croatia Convention Bureau



With a very successful year including a number of awards and a successful presidency of Skali International, he has continued to build the image of Croatia as a congress destination through intense marketing, monitoring statistical data and forging ties. Over the last years his biggest rewards have been Croatia's excellent business results.

BUSINESS STARS

Roman MATEK, Thermiana, Laško

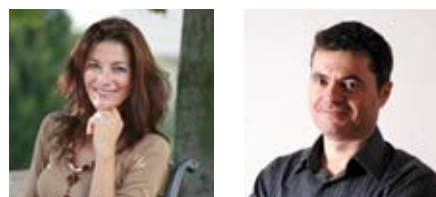


Roman vigorously undertook the completion of a new congress centre, which, given the possibilities it offers in the area of congresses and wellness, now ranks highly amongst the most competitive Slovenian congress products. Environmental and social responsibility have earned Thermiana the official EU 'Eco-label', the first congress hotel

with this certificate in the region.

Tomaž KRUŠIČ, Miro HRIBAR, Intours DMC, Ljubljana

Intensive international marketing by agency Intours has delivered excellent results and brought them to a leading position of the incoming market to Slovenia. Among their innovations is the Meet Adria SE European DMC cooperative project.

Mirjana in Ante TOLJ, Rathanea, Dubrovnik

The agency Rathanea has been steadily growing and evolving their client list for over 13 years and is today responsible for a number of congress events in Dubrovnik. Their speciality as a family company is their own production of events and a number of creative innovations.

Daniel MARUŠIČ, Dubrovnik Travel, Dubrovnik

The hard work of Daniel and his team has paid off, with Dubrovnik Travel becoming the leading DMC in the region with offices in all the major Croatian cities. This year they received an award for being a fast growing company, 'The Gazelle', as well as the 'Zlatna kuna HGK' award.

Ninoslav VIDOVIĆ, Maistra Rovinj

Rovinj has always been known as the tourist capital of Istria. Ninoslav Vidović used creative marketing approaches and ideas to put it on the meetings industry map as well. Among the turning points was the opening of hotel Monte Mulini and the opening of the first design hotel, Lone.

Anže ČOKL, Bohinj Park Hotel, Bohinj

among them a conference centre planned for Bohinj.

Definitely the youngest leader among Slovenian hoteliers for his innovativeness and daring, all stemming from his dynamic hobbies and broad knowledge. The eco resort in Bohinj will soon be joined by Slovenia's largest ski resort between Kobra and Soriška planina, 'Bohinj 2864', built to eco standards. In the future we can expect other daring and sustainable projects from Anže,

Snežana VEJNOVIĆ, TALAS-M

The family company Talas-M brought incentive and team building products to Montenegro and continued to develop them. With an impressive list of executed events and a knack for discovering attractive and picturesque new locations, it is certainly among the leading regional DMCs.

Maruša ROSULNIK, GO.MICE, Ljubljana

On our list for the development of a green meetings methodology and a successful implementation of the BEBEE campaign, both projects that set the foundation for green meetings in SE Europe based on science and that reach into every area of sustainable meetings development.

Slaven Reljić, Ranko Filipović and Pavle Marković, Croatian Meeting Professionals Association

In 2011 they founded the Croatian Meeting Professionals Association, which was well received in Croatia. Each of them is also a director of a successful company. Slaven Reljić – VenEvent, Ranko Filipović – PerfectMeetings and Pavle Marković – Ban Tours.

TOP 10 ADRIATIC LUXURY RESORTS FOR MEETINGS

A long history of competitiveness in luxurious tourism between Dubrovnik and Venice was put on hold for a while, due to the events in the Balkans. In the last five years, however, a renaissance has taken place through a number of new luxurious hotels with its epicentre in Dubrovnik and its surroundings. Our selection is based on a comparison of different criteria, the emphasis being on the assessment of congress capacities.

HOTEL FALKENSTEINER IADERA, Zadar



The hotel combines top-notch architecture, excellently laid-out wellness facilities, professional staff and superior congress capacities, all wrapped into a quality product - suitable for congress groups of up to 200 participants.

Mark: BALANCED

HOTEL LAV MERIDIEN, Split



The concept of a hotel with a marina. The services and personnel are amongst the best in the Adriatic, despite tough competition. It's no surprise that the hotel has already received eight 'World Travel Awards', the Oscars of tourism. Congress capacities are some of the largest of the Adriatic luxury resorts, since the centre can host up to 850 participants.

Mark: AWARDED

HOTEL KEMPINSKI PORTOROŽ, Portorož



One of the most renowned hotels in Slovenia and one of the first in the Adriatic. With a rich heritage it strives to provide the most prestigious space for boutique congresses and meetings as well as elite events for up to 225 participants.

Mark: HARMONIOUS

HOTEL DUBROVNIK PALACE, Dubrovnik



Hotel Dubrovnik Palace was named the best hotel resort in Europe this year, before which it had already received a number of prestigious awards for its spa facilities. The congress centre can seat up to 750 participants.

Mark: IRRESISTIBLE

HOTEL LONE, Rovinj



The first Croatian member of the design hotels group is set within the wonderful environment of the Mediterranean forest park Zlatni rt. It is defined by its extraordinary architectural layout. Along with its neighbouring boutique hotel Monte Mulini and utilising other facilities it can host events for up to 750 participants.

Mark: CREATIVE

HOTEL SPLENDID, Budva

The star Montenegro hotel is defined by luxurious furniture, a lot of hotel glamour, an excellent spa and a spectacular congress hall. The hotel is the centre of social life in Montenegro. The largest congress hall can seat up to 780 participants.

Mark: PLAYFUL

HOTEL EXCELSIOR, Dubrovnik

It has been the epitome of luxurious tourism since 1975. The hotel lobby has witnessed royalty as well as Hollywood stars. This is a hotel with a reputation, excellent staff and probably one of the best views of the Dubrovnik walls. The largest congress hall can seat up to 450 participants.

Mark: FRIENDLY

HOTEL KEMPINSKI ADRIATIC, Savudrija

The first luxurious hotel in the Adriatic incorporating a golf course. The modern and richly furnished hotel is managed and taken care of by the Kempinski chain. A smaller congress centre seats up to 230.

Mark: RELAXED

RADISSON BLU DUBROVNIK, Dubrovnik

A top-notch resort 10 km from the centre of Dubrovnik surprises with its incredibly functional congress centre able to host up to 900 participants. The offer is rounded off by spa and recreation facilities, ideal for incentive programmes.

Mark: HARMONIOUS

HOTEL IMPERIAL HILTON, Dubrovnik

Hilton has had a presence in Croatia since 2005 and became known as one of Croatia's most luxurious hotels shortly after opening. Hilton has an excellent location near the city gate Pile with a view of the old town. It distinguishes itself from the competition through its excellent services and staff. The congress facilities can seat up to 259 participants.

Mark: ORGANIZED

RAFAEL PUPOVAC, DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL CORPORATION FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

First Serbian Tourism Business Forum



As a member of the National Corporation for Tourism Development, the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development of the Republic of Serbia, Globmark Business Research, the ESPI Institute, and as a freelance consultant, Mr. Pupovac has been involved in a range of assignments, including: project management, market research, tourism, rating and financial analysis, advertising campaigns, marketing and business planning, strategic development, internet marketing, brand management, and many others.

The Serbian Tourism Business Forum will take place in Belgrade for the first time, from 24-26 November, organized by National Corporation for Tourism Development, a governmental body working under the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development. The corporation is a public sector initiator and partner, playing a key role in Serbian tourism's competitive growth.

The three-day conference will explore investment possibilities in new tourist markets. The main objective is on how to attract new investments in tourism and to emphasize just how attractive and competitive tourist destinations in Serbia really are.

What, in your opinion, are the latest trends in tourism and hospitality industry across the world today?

The major trend in the tourism and hospitality industry is its recovery - a stabilized growth rate across the world, with larger growth in the emerging countries. And the growth is continuing. New destinations will emerge and existing ones will upgrade their offer and improve in order to stay competitive. Technology is now more important than ever - social networks and mobile technologies are changing the way the tourism industry communicates with tourists. As a result of the new tourist offer, I expect that emerging and developing countries will in the near future have more than 50% share in total international tourist arrivals.

How has the global economic crisis affected the tourism offer? Which category of tourists is currently the most interested in spending money?

After two years of turmoil, the tourism and hospitality industry is on the mend. With increasing demand and limited supply growth, operating fundamentals have stabilized and are in the early stages of recovery, though the degree depends on the particular segment and region. However, the crisis has influenced the way tourists behave, resulting in more but shorter vacations and choosing destinations closer to home. Also, tourists are interested

in new experiences and thus chose new and undiscovered destinations. Although international arrivals are rising, expenditure does not follow at the same rate - people like to travel and do not stop in the crisis, but they are spending less money. Of course, some things never change - luxury tourists always spend the most money. However, being a limited segment of tourists, countries have to focus on creating new tourist experiences - tourists are interested in spending money on new offers.

How can small countries attract investments in tourism today? What new partnerships are possible in tourism?

Emerging markets remain a catalyst for growth for the tourism and hospitality industry and I am expecting them to be a primary target for tourism investments. An array of growth opportunities arising from multiple world-stage events in the coming decade, along with increasing domestic disposable income, is attracting extensive global attention for these nations. Tourists are interested in new, undiscovered destinations. Small countries have to keep up with the trend and prepare and offer good investment projects to the market. Get the investors familiar with the market, the local offer, the potential for growth, and clearly plan how to turn that potential into reality. Investment resources are scarce, and small countries should share the risk of development with investors through various forms of Public-Private Partnerships and joint ventures.

What you think about Serbia's meeting industry?

This is one of the activities which has improved greatly in the region. I am proud to see the improvement in Serbia in recent years, making it into the top 50 MICE destinations in the world. There is still work to be done in further improving the MICE industry, but that can only happen with constant education of the stakeholders and building the capacities of local MICE business providers.

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The last word



Jonathan Bradshaw

IMEX CHALLENGE 2012

Slovenia gives something back

About 3 years ago I was chatting to the IMEX Group CEO Carina Bauer about an idea that had been on the agenda for a while. It involved some type of challenge whereby IMEX would recruit volunteers from our industry to undertake a 3 day humanitarian project that would make a real difference to the lives of others. The discussion resulted in me finally getting round to producing a more detailed document that we then revisited a few weeks later. The concept was simple - we'd work with a destination to find a suitable charitable project that could be accomplished within a 3 day time frame. Once the project was agreed upon we'd then recruit volunteers who'd donate a substantial amount to charity to be part of a 10 person team charged with achieving it. It would be physically and mentally challenging and would not only produce immediate change, but leave a lasting legacy for the local beneficiaries. Further discussion followed but by early 2009, and having agreed to head the project, I was already on the hunt for a destination willing to host what would become known as the IMEX Challenge.

Those involved in the inaugural Challenge in September 2010 will never forget it. 10 volunteers flew in from as far away as San Diego, Miami, Iceland and Dubai to be part of the event in Warsaw, Poland and the bonds that formed between them, as well as with the family and children whose garden they transformed will never be broken. Following the 3 days of digging, planting and building the emotions that we all experienced when

we welcomed the parents, helpers and 7 foster children home from their first holiday in years to see their newly equipped garden were the most powerful I've ever witnessed. It was a chance to be reminded of how lucky we are to work in an industry full of generous people prepared to invest their own time and money to help people who they don't know and had never met.

So what next?! Well I am delighted to say soon as they heard that the project would be held every 2 years Ljubljana and Slovenia showed exceptional creativity and desire to hold it in 2012 and in July an expanded team of 15 will descend on the DRAGA Training, Occupation and Care Centre for mentally and physically handicapped children and adults on the outskirts of Ljubljana to undertake another exceptionally tough challenge.

MANY IN THE INDUSTRY WILL HAVE BEEN AWARE OF SLOVENIA'S INNOVATIVE BEEBEE CAMPAIGN - A CSR CAMPAIGN THAT COMBINES ECOLOGICAL ISSUES WITH SLOVENIA'S LOVE FOR NATURE AND THE OUTDOORS.

The IMEX Challenge 2012 will be centred around helping sustain the local bee population whilst creating a project for staff and students of the DRAGA Centre to manage which will not only be great therapy for the

children but also provide financial income for the school itself via the sale of honey as well as the plants needed to help bees produce it.

One of the wonderful things to witness has been the generosity from the local partners. Whilst the DRAGA Centre will be the beneficiary of the project itself, the Slovenian Convention Bureau, Ljubljana Convention Bureau, Slovenian Beekeeping Association, Grand Hotel Union, Kompas DMC, Go-MICE, and Catering Jezeršek have all generously given time or money to get the project off the ground.

Having been lucky enough to visit Slovenia a number of times, and having just returned from Ljubljana only last week, I am in no doubt that 2012 will see another extremely worthwhile and no doubt emotional 3 days as we help improve still further the fantastic facilities that the DRAGA Centre offers. The staff we met were simply amazing and the Challenge will see us spend 3 full days with both the staff, children and adults of the Centre and I know they have plans to put the team to good use! At the time of writing we have a number of tasks we'd like to work with staff and residents with to achieve that will be announced early in 2012.

So, Slovenia - watch out. The IMEX Challenge is coming to your beautiful country in 2012 and I can tell you it is going to be very special!

Jonathan Bradshaw, IMEX Consultant, jon@meetingsmindset.com



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Gorazd Čad

EASY FAIRS

For a successful fair or event we must create a movement based on honest values

When we asked key fair directors in Slovenia for our supplement on fairs, on whether Slovenia is mature enough to organise a world renowned fair, the answer was unanimous – it's not very likely. Only Celje Fair was slightly more optimistic about its specialised fairs.

That things can be achieved, however, is proved by the legendary Andrej Jus and his team from the public institute Heureka, which this year organised its 11th outing of the F3ŽO 'Festival for the third life period' in Cankarjev dom.

Recording 15,000 visitors, which makes it the biggest event for the elderly in Europe, it consists of 15 'theme parks', conferences and a rich cultural programme. The event has evolved into a movement that has been bolstered by intergenerational cooperation.

So, what can other fairs in Slovenia learn from the success story of this festival?

1. For a successful fair and event we must try to create a movement based on honest values.
2. Honest values create a sense of 'community', held together by common interests.
3. The interest of visitors and followers of the movement should be thematically united, which the F3ŽO calls 'a theme park'.
4. Regardless of age we are all connected by the desire to learn. Participants can, through numerous lectures, acquire new knowledge on health, illness, food, exercises and modern technologies.
5. People are social beings. At F3ŽO this fact is addressed in the form of its cultural programme.
6. The project should include politicians and experts. This goal was reached by a conference on volunteering bringing together the generations.

7. We need to take care of the spiritual side of life through accompanying exhibitions and a positive vibe of the entire project that is built over years and is recognised by the public and the media. Consequently we are achieving an unconscious communication that not even the best spin doctors are able to create.

By following these pointers we are able to create internationally renowned exhibitions and educational projects.

THE PREMISS IS AN HONEST STARTING IDEA AND AN HONEST EXECUTION, NOT A SENSELESS RACE FOR PROFIT THROUGH SELLING EXHIBITION SPACE IN A BADLY CONCEIVED EVENT WITH ILL-THOUGHT CONTENT.

If the desire of Slovenian fair houses is for long-term growth and development, then the right way to go about this is to work towards the quality of content and offering and a good concept, rather than just measuring in square meters. And keep things in proportion to who we are and the facilities available: aim for specialisation and the right focus group representing the right market niche.

Does F3ŽO therefore offer a good example and a guiding light for the future? It's certainly not the only recipe, but it's highly sustainable, as it grew out of an honest idea. A slightly different path is demonstrated by Eric Everard, owner of the largest fair house Artexis. Eric is an innovator, a sort of Michael O'Leary of the world exhibition scene. In 2004 he founded the Easy Fairs company, offering exhibitors services similar to those of low-cost airlines. His key point was high added value at a

fraction of the price exhibitors normally pay for exhibition space. The key was in offering exhibition stand packages which included marketing, enabling the best use of time and environmental efficiency. The company has been running since 2004, organising up to 80 fairs annually and employing 170 people. Its annual revenue is over €37 million and this year alone they grew a staggering 28 %.

This business model analysed and was able to take advantage of the weakness of classic fairs.

SUCH FAIRS AND EXHIBITIONS ARE OFTEN DRIVEN BY EGO: 'IF OUR NEIGHBOUR OR A COMPETITIVE COMPANY HAS A STAND OF 100M², OUR COMPANY'S SHOULD BE AT LEAST 200M²'.

These extra square meters often bring extra costs, for example additional increments to a basic airline ticket. Now at the height of the crisis such thinking is unacceptable from the added value perspective, as well as the need for concrete sales results. With uniform stands, the product or service is at the forefront. It's therefore not surprising Eric Everard became president of UFI. The business model EASY FAIRS is obligatory study material for all fair and congress organisers, since the initial scepticism was quickly replaced by enthusiasm and many copycats seven years later.



WOLFGANG MARZIN, MESSE FRANKFURT

Messe Frankfurt is one of the central instruments for promoting business in the Rhine-Main region

Wolfgang Marzin is President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Messe Frankfurt GmbH. He is also: Member of the Board of Directors of AUMA (Association of the German Trade Fair Industry), Chairman of the Society for Voluntary Control of Fair and Exhibition Statistics (FKM), member of the Board of Directors of UFI (Global Association of the Exhibition Industry), Vice President (Relations with the European Union) of the Board of EMECA (European Major Exhibition Centres Association), and member of the Supervisory Board of FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH International Marketing of the Region.

How do you rate Frankfurt as an exhibition and trade fair venue?

Frankfurt is the most attractive, highest-grossing and by far the most international trade fair venue in Germany. The city has a central location in Germany and in Europe – right at the international transport hub of Frankfurt Airport and at the intersection of the European motorway and high-speed rail networks.

Messe Frankfurt has the highest international character of any German trade fair company – with 72 percent of exhibitors and 47 percent of visitors coming from outside Germany, it is well in excess of the industry average. And the company generates profits year in, year out – the exception rather than the rule in the exhibition industry.

How do you rate your business performance in 2011?

The first half of the 2011 trade fair year was very strong, both in Germany and internationally, with often double-digit growth in visitor figures being recorded at our Frankfurt base as well as a high level of visitor satisfaction and many high-profile politicians in attendance – among them the Portuguese

Prime Minister and the German Minister for the Economy, to name but a few. What is more: our customers benefited from the economic recovery.

The second half of the year also had a very promising start. As part of its repositioning, Tendence was held at the end of August, reaffirming its status once again as an important platform for international trends, above all for Christmas 2011, but also for the 2012 spring season.

How is the trade fair business supported by the City of Frankfurt and its tourism policy?

The synergies between the region and the trade fair business are very significant indeed. The City of Frankfurt is a majority shareholder in Messe Frankfurt – together with the Federal State of Hesse, which holds a 40 percent stake – and the Mayor of Frankfurt is Chairperson of our Supervisory Board. We are very happy with this constellation and have a very productive working relationship with all state bodies.

Messe Frankfurt is one of the central instruments for promoting business in the Rhine-Main region. Every year, we bring around two million people to Frankfurt. Our company is an important driving force behind regional business and city marketing. Our high-quality events generate high sales, safeguarding jobs in the entire Rhine-Main region. In other words, our trade fairs generate strong socio-economic effects. Many people benefit from these, e.g. hotel and restaurant owners, stand construction companies, taxi drivers, the communications industry, retailers, etc.

What are your expectations for next year and how will you respond to the changing needs of trade fair visitors?

Our portfolio of outstanding specialist events – both our own and guest events – form a very solid foundation upon which we can build. We also wish to increase our expertise in capital goods fairs. On this basis, we are working to

further develop our business abroad as well. In the future, our aim will still be to improve the individual products in close collaboration with our customers.

Our aim is not only to maintain a leading role in the global exhibition industry but also to build upon our market leadership in consumer goods, textile and technical trade fairs. And we are well on the way to achieving that. However, we have also moved into a number of new areas of expertise such as logistics, IT, digital communication, which we are now implementing.

Which fairs do you think are gaining in importance in terms of visitors?

Messe Frankfurt constantly reassesses its trade fairs. Our market research department conducts representative surveys at our events; visitors' suggestions and ideas are channelled into new or improved trade fair concepts, thereby once again offering new impetus to our visitors. In addition, we interact extensively with associations from industry and trade. They are directly involved in planning and organising trade fairs through our advisory boards. In this way, we can integrate the needs of the sectors in question within our events and reflect their ongoing development. A trade fair can be said to be successful when the right providers are brought into contact with the right visitors.

IZTOK BRICL, LJUBLJANA EXHIBITION AND CONVENTION CENTRE

*We're simply too small to be the centre
of the world*



Iztok Bricl

What do you think about this year's trade fairs and what are your company's biggest business challenges?

We continued with our traditional programme – the Home Fair, Ambient Ljubljana Furniture Fair, Alpe-Adria: Tourism and Leisure Show, the Boat Show and Nature-Health – and we added the LOS – Ljubljana trade fair. As we are open for other fair organisers we also hosted a number of other events. We have noticed a slight decrease in the latter – a number of potential organisers who used to organise fairs at our centre could not manage to put their events together in these times of economic upheaval. Despite this, all our fairs are noting a good numbers of exhibitors and visitors. This is certainly the result of a higher input on our part and it will definitely impact our business result. We recorded better results from our core business in 2011 than we did in 2010. Of course, fairs are not the only part of our core business; we also organise conferences, business and entertainment events, from corporate presentations to traditional proms and concerts – recently most of which have been electronic music.

Are Slovenian trade fairs internationalised and open enough? How can we improve this?

According to the UFI criteria the exhibition centre hosts 6 international fairs. Despite this, we would like to have more international cooperation. As the exhibition centre is relatively small in light of international competition and since the Slovenian economy is also small, we have to be realistic when planning our events. Nevertheless, internationalisation is definitely one of our goals. Concrete examples of this are the Alpe-Adria: Tourism and Leisure Show spreading in the region of the Alps and Adriatic and the partner project Conventa targeting the region of SE Europe on one hand and buyers from all over the world on the other. We have also signed a contract with a partner in India to help us connect with exhibitions and business visitors from Asia. And finally, we are trying to internationalise through our membership of organisations such as UFI and CEFA for fairs and ICCA for the meetings industry.

What is your view on the possibility of cooperating with other fair companies on common projects in Slovenia and across the region?

Every cooperation can result in added value, but of course we first need to set clear project goals and tasks. Cooperation in sharing exhibitors, suppliers data etc. is common practice. In the near future we are planning to cooperate on a specific exhibition project with one of the exhibition centres of a neighbouring country.

What is the future of general fairs as opposed to specialised ones?

All the events hosted by the Exhibition Centre are specialised. In Ljubljana the general offer is plentiful throughout a number of shopping centres. Fair visitors have become very demanding. Their motto is 'time is money' and they don't like to sacrifice time or money

to aimlessly wander around a fair. They want to know exactly what is on offer before they decide to visit. We believe that despite new technologies and internet usage, fairs will always have their place, since they facilitate the personal contact between producer and buyer.

Are the national and regional tourist organisations fulfilling their role in promoting trade fairs?

In my opinion the fair industry is something that is forgotten far too often – it is overlooked as an important revenue source and as a means of promoting tourist services in Ljubljana.

What is Ljubljana currently missing to make a developmental breakthrough?

We believe Ljubljana is a city of fairs, the Ljubljana fair; our predecessor was a founding member of UFI. Together with Tourism Ljubljana we will keep on trying to achieve a higher profile of Ljubljana as a city of fairs.

When do you think Slovenia will be ready to host an internationally renowned fair?

If we look at the numbers (and these are the only relevant thing in business) we are simply too small to be the centre of the world. A different answer would be welcome and preferable, but also misleading.

What are your ambitions for the development of the Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention Centre in the future?

The vision of our company is certainly to expand beyond our borders and become the leading event organiser in SE Europe, given our success in developing our existing fairs as well as hosting new events and congresses. With ambition, knowledge and teamwork we will definitely see improvements in our business results.

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BREDA OBREZ PRESKAR, CELJSKI SEJEM

The Awareness of the Trade Fair Multiplier Effect is Growing



Breda Obrez Preskar

What do you think about this year's trade fairs and what are your company's biggest business challenges?

Trade fairs reflect the condition of the industries they represent. If the industry is not doing well the organisers can expect additional challenges in preparing the fair. Our business challenges are therefore basically identical to those our exhibitors and visitors face. As trade fair organisers we form a link between them, so we try our best to prepare trade fairs with rich content and aim to fulfil the expectations of both target groups.

Concerning the industries we work with, we have had the biggest issues with the quadruple car shows in 2010, since the automotive industry was affected most by the global recession. We are noting favourable statistics with other trade fairs – the number of exhibitors is growing slightly. In our experience this is the consequence of companies being aware of the importance of market presence even in times of recession. Trade fairs are very important in decreasing its negative effects. Most of all they are an

ideal marketing tool for companies looking to the future and towards foreign markets.

Are Slovenian trade fairs internationalised and open enough? How can we improve this?

We can only fairly assess our own company and our own trade fairs. Our internationalisation results certainly prove we are an open company. We can back this up with our statistics, as the number of countries present at our fairs is increasing. This year the 44th MOS (International Trade Fair) hosted companies from 36 countries, which is a record so far.

Of course it is fair to note that the international aspect of the trade fair depends highly on the industry type and its international connections. As much as the industry is proactive and successful in the international market the more open will be the fair showcasing it. One of the internationally open fairs is definitely our professional biennial fair of tool making and tool making machines – Forma tool. This year the fair hosted the delegates of the assembly of the International Special Tooling and Machining Association (ISTMA). Toolmakers from 11 countries visited the fair, not only from Europe but also leading toolmakers from the USA, Canada and South Africa.

Of course, there is still room for improvement. In part it's investing in our own education. Our team has been more or less the same for a few years now, which gives us stability and at the same time the opportunity to gain new knowledge and become familiar with new technologies. In this time we've faced the ups and downs of our industry, which was the consequence of the conditions in the industries we work with. Our industry has offered a number of solutions – new trade events and new strategic partnerships, for example. And most importantly we don't let ourselves rest on our laurels, we aim to be industry trendsetters.

What is your view on the possibility of cooperating with other fair companies on common projects in Slovenia and the region?

Perhaps Slovenian fair companies are less connected on the inside, in our local environments, as we could be, since the challenges of our domestic environment are different from those internationally. Slovenian fair organisers like to connect with foreign partners. Our company is a member of the Central European Fair Alliance (CEFA), the association of fairs from 14 countries from Central and Southeast Europe. The association aims to strengthen the international importance of fairs in this geographic region. Its members share knowledge and experience in the areas of marketing, IT and infrastructure. The experience is certainly positive, since the membership provides a lot of additional knowledge and the exchange of best practice examples. We also have some bilateral partnerships linking us to other organisers.

What is the future of general fairs as opposed to specialised ones?

Our own observations confirm those of world fair trends, which see the future in specialised fairs. Our professional, biennial fairs (Forma tool, Plagkem, Graf&Pack, Casting, Energetics, Terotech-Maintenance, Welding & Cutting, Eko, Car & Maintenance, Moto boom, Logotrans, Utility Vehicles Exhibition) support this position. Despite everything, we are pleased by the fact our largest fair - MOS - remains a phenomenon in these times. Attracting a large number of visitors and exhibitors, it is actually widening its influence, especially in the international environment. MOS is recognisable and has its own place, not only in the region of the Southern Balkans where we are noticing a constant growth of exhibitors and visitors, but in the more remote corners of the world. The width of the exhibition programme enables MOS to develop in step with modern technologies and new issues marking the business world and our private lives.

Are the national and regional tourist organisations fulfilling their role in promoting trade fairs?

Sadly, we've noticed we haven't received much support from national tourist and other organisations. We're having trouble getting the basics, such as putting up signs for the fair on the motorway, never mind altogether cooperating in promoting our country. Our experience demonstrates that in preparing projects abroad we are often missing a key element, an institution which would listen and help right away, without bureaucratic delays. In the discussions with our exhibitors we often notice that actual economic expectations differ from our national priorities.

What is Celje currently missing to make a developmental breakthrough?

The Celje Fair is working mostly on upgrading its infrastructure. Other than that I don't think we are missing much for a clean

breakthrough. We have knowledge and experience, we do however need a stable economic environment. We would appreciate concrete, and not only declarative, support from the decision makers.

When do you think Slovenia will be ready to host an internationally renowned fair?

If we are talking about world renowned and established fairs, some of them are definitely brands already owned by our company. The feedback we get in our filed work fills us with pride, as our fairs and the Celje Fair company rank high in visibility, not only in the Balkans but elsewhere throughout Europe. MOS, Energetika and Forma tool are definitely brands known not only in our region, but worldwide. Our fair house recently hosted the European dog show, where over 15,000 dogs from 57 countries were on show. This fair also contributed to the increased prominence of our company.

Of course, as an organiser we wish Slovenia

would become host to, for example, the World Expo, but we realise our country is not a big enough player in the global scale.

What are your ambitions for the development of Celje fair in the future?

Firstly, we wish for more stable conditions, given the turbulent time and challenges we are facing with our visitors and exhibitors. Other than that our main priority is in strengthening the position of Slovenia's leading fair company. The development of our strategy is based on new content and new partnerships to strengthen our fair brands. We will strive to change the perception of trade fairs as a necessary tool for a breakthrough to the local market and beyond. We have noticed that the awareness of the trade fair multiplier effect is growing, yet we still often neglect the positive effects it has on the broader economic environment.



JANEZ ERJAVEC, POMURSKI SEJEM

We're not aware of the benefits we could all experience



Janez Erjavec

What do you think about this year's trade fairs and what are your company's biggest business challenges?

Considering the economic and general state of Slovenia and the world, I can say this year was good. We've managed to carry out all three of our projects and plenty of additional events, which were successful for the exhibitors as well as other participants. At the moment it is important to remain present in the market with all our products and programmes focused on tradition. We are also looking for new challenges, but we are aware there are few truly successful new opportunities in our area.

Are Slovenian trade fairs internationalised and open enough? How can we improve this?

I think Slovenian fairs are open enough but the Slovenian market is too small to host international fairs, which are highly important for certain industries or in the international sense. We all try to get as much domestic and foreign exhibitors and institutions as possible, but the most important international fairs will stay in the most developed countries of Europe and the world. The state can improve only through extreme growth of the Slovenian economy and with that a better purchasing power of companies and private individuals.

What is your view on the possibility of cooperating with other fair companies on common projects in Slovenia and the region?

There has been formal cooperation among Slovenian fairs and in the Alps-Adriatic region, but they didn't bring much to the table. I don't see a lot of potential here. Pomurje Fair is a member of UFI with a seat in Paris and the experience of this association is that large fair houses in Europe already divide key markets between themselves.

If we put all our exhibitions under one roof, the venue would still not be used to its fullest. For Slovenia new possibilities could arise from ex-Yugoslavian countries joining the EU.

What is the future of general fairs as opposed to specialised ones?

Both types of fairs have a future, but it depends on the industry. The leading specialised fairs will stay in the economically developed regions, with general and smaller specialised fairs staying in the smaller and less developed environments and on the periphery.

Are the national and regional tourist organisations fulfilling their role in promoting trade fairs?

Tourist organisations are important for cooperation at the local, regional or national level, but the initiative for tourism developments should come from individuals. Tourist organisations haven't played a crucial role in the fair industry to date. The fair industry overlaps with the tourism industry and fair events should include tourist promotions of the region or the country. Fairs should cooperate more with tourist organisations, so there is certainly a lot of room for improvement.

What is Pomurje currently missing to make a developmental breakthrough?

Pomurje and Pomurje Fair host the AGRA fair, which has long outgrown the limitations of this region. The lingering question is whether we are aware of its potential or not. We certainly don't use it enough for our own promotion. Furthermore, Pomurje is missing a strong coalition for sustainable development with a clear vision, which would not be shaped by a regional strategy but could have its own development goals. People who have travelled around can see that there is no richer region than Pomurje - we just need to harvest these treasures from the sun, earth and water. Successful models such as ABC Pomurka and Radenska should be brought back to life. Alongside them we need to develop new sustainable projects to place Pomurje among the leaders. The people here are certainly industrious, diligent and ready enough.

When do you think Slovenia will be ready to host an internationally renowned fair?

Slovenia will be ready to host an internationally renowned fair when it will have an internationally renowned economy or at least one industry that is competitive in the global scale. The fair VINO is certainly one of the possibilities, since we have a number of top ranging wines. We could also host an event for skiing equipment, since Elan is one of the best ski makes around. If Slovenia really wants to host a world renowned fair, we could certainly pull it off, but we would all have to really want it and really work on it. Current fair organisers cannot do it, since there isn't enough awareness of the benefits we could all experience.

What are your ambitions for the development of Pomurje Fair in the future?

Pomurje Fair has half a century of tradition of organising fairs suited to the needs of the region around Mura and neighbouring Austria, Hungary and Croatia. In this wider region the biggest natural treasure is agriculture and its industrious, open, modest and honest people. The Pomurje Fair is in this sense responsible in offering events that make the region comparable to more developed regions, since the event theme can promote the regional economy and the region itself. Besides its rich agriculture, this region has also produced many construction companies and hunting, fishing and tourism are important. This is also the region which supplies the largest number

of professional soldiers to the army. Therefore the vision of Pomurje Fair is to develop fairs in areas of Agriculture, Construction, Energy, Hunting & Fishing, and Defence, Security, Protection and Rescue. These projects and many sub-projects will help us adapt to trends and develop further.



MATJAŽ TURK, PRIMORSKI SEJEM

Well organised fairs are an efficient tool in combating the recession



Matjaž Turk

What do you think about this year's trade fairs and what are your company's biggest business challenges?

This business year was successful despite the recession. Fairs were of a high quality, we recorded a number of foreign and domestic exhibitors and visitors, in some statistics we even outshone last year. The organisation of fairs in these inclement economic times is quite a challenge! So, we are trying to maintain the level of quality, attract exhibitors and visitors and even upgrade and improve the existing and establish new fairs.

Are Slovenian trade fairs internationalised and open enough? How can we improve this?

It depends on the type of fair. In Slovenia regional fairs are currently the most dominant, there are only few international ones. The conditions can improve with an increase of quality and by establishing new, specialised international fairs.

What is your view on the possibility of cooperating with other fair companies on common projects in Slovenia and across the region?

We are always open for it and prepared to cooperate, the question remains, however, if other parties would feel the same. It depends on the nature of the project and other factors that the project involves. It's a positive way of thinking, since cooperation brings synergy and multiplier effects to all of the engaged parties!

What is the future of general fairs as opposed to specialised ones?

If the general fair has a solidly profiled target group of exhibitors and visitors, it doesn't have to fear for its future. Our regional Primorje Fair has been occurring for 18 years and this year recorded a slight increase of visitors against last year. Also, over the last years since the recession struck we've

managed to upgrade the accompanying events and increase the quality.

Are the national and regional tourist organisations fulfilling their role in promoting trade fairs?

As always, there is unexploited potential and reserves. One of them is, for example, tighter cooperation with fair organisers.

What is Primorska currently missing to make a developmental breakthrough?

Mostly fair infrastructure, since without it it's impossible to stage big international and specialised fairs.

When do you think Slovenia will be ready to host an internationally renowned fair?

Only time will tell. But in times of globalisation, with relative proximity to other European fairs, the ongoing recession and Slovenian fair infrastructure, it isn't likely to happen in the near future.

What are your ambitions for the development of Primorje Fair in the future?

Our company organises four fairs – at Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention centre we host the specialised GASTexpo & Sladoled and Vino, and in Koper the regional Primorska fair. Our main ambition is to keep our fairs at the same quality level – every possible upgrade is a success. Despite the recession every organiser needs to add something to the fair or else it becomes uninteresting. So we try our best to upgrade our events, we put special emphasis on our visitors and adapt fairs to current market conditions. So far we're doing a good job and we hope to continue that in the future. We are convinced that a properly organised trade fair is an efficient instrument in combating the recession.

TONI LAZNIK, ICM D.O.O.

*Well organised fairs are an efficient tool
in combating the recession*



Toni Laznik

How would you evaluate the current situation of the Slovenian fair industry?

The state of Slovenia's fair industry is a reflection of the Slovenian economy, which means that there are some good fairs because the economy is good as well.

When will Slovenia be ready to organise a world renowned and established fair?

I believe it will take quite some time before Slovenia is mature enough and before it gets the opportunity to organise a world fair comparable to those abroad.

How has fair technology changed and what are the current trends in this area?

Fair technology adapts to the needs of our business partners, i.e. exhibitors. The trends follow the latest technological achievements in this area.

What fairs do you believe represent the future of the region?

The future and types of fairs in the region depend on the economy: supply and demand. The country certainly has quite an effect on this, as it set forth the strategic development of the economy, of the country's competitiveness in the region and on a global scale as well. Many associations and agencies working on behalf of the country need to become more efficient, so as to satisfy the needs of the economy.

How would you evaluate regional cooperation when it comes to fairs?

An evaluation of the situation in Slovenia is impossible, because there is no cooperation except for a few bilateral agreements and talks. There are also no business ethics and values and I assume there is no desire to establish them either. As a member and delegate of UFI (Union of International Fairs), the Marketing & Education Committee, and CEFA (Central

European Fair Alliance) I can say that things are different at the international level, where we have noticed an increasing interest and a need to come together and cooperate actively. We have also managed to establish values and standards that the members support and aim to reach.

Is there any room left in Slovenia for new or differently organised exhibition companies?

The market will always welcome better exhibition companies or organisers and the old ones will disappear or change. This can be seen at the international level, where new fairs and organisers result in fairs being sold or bought by larger fair organisers, not in fairs being "stolen", as is the practice in Slovenia.

Are Slovenian fairs internationalised and open enough to the world? How can the current situation be improved?

I believe most of our fairs are not even good on a national level. Improvements of the situation are not solely in the hands of the exhibitors and organisers who make up the fair. More needs to be done by the government, the relevant associations, chambers and the agencies responsible. A good example of how to be successful internationally and how to internationalise fairs is Germany, which has succeeded in China thanks to direct financial support given to the economy. This is how Germany became a very important business partner.

What are your ambitions for the future development of your company?

Our company remains dedicated to its mission and strives to remain the best organiser of professional B2B fairs in Slovenia and abroad. We are successful in organising our own fairs in Slovenia, Serbia and Bulgaria.

The last word



Rastko Aleš

DOES ICT HELP BUILD OR DESTROY EXHIBITIONS?

What is the connection between the huge number of neuron interactions in our brains and exhibitions, as demonstrated by meetings industry events?

Sunset announced the dusk; darkness would soon cover the countryside. It was time for me to leave Bela Krajina, where I was spending the Sunday afternoon with an old friend, and head home to Ljubljana, into the city that is becoming better and more beautiful at first, second, and maybe even third glance. The more it is renovated and restored, the more magnificent it appears.

Yet sadly I have to realise that I will probably never find the warmth and kindness I felt of the people in the country side in the city.

We are the ones who invented urban centres and the countryside, maybe due to their differences, their contrast, which we are reminded with a sort of meta reflective, intuitive thought. As with all our conscious thought, even my current reflection on their difference is actually a result of neuron processing, happening right under the surface of the skull.

It happens through one of nature's biggest wonders: in the human brain, pondering our own existence and the creation of the world.

A few years ago Professor V.S. Ramachandran held a lecture in Monterey, California, where he spoke about what brain injuries tell us about our thought processes and brain activity. And later in India he spoke on how the neurons shaped civilisations. Both times he began his lecture with a startling calculation.

According to his estimate, the human brain holds one hundred billion neurons. Each of them forms something between thousands and tens of thousands connections with other neurons. According to this, one human brain produces more permutations and combinations than there are particles in the universe.

To illustrate, let me offer this data – most of the known universe consists of “dark matter”, which includes 400 photons and 100 neutrino-particles per cubic centimetre. If we imagine space as a sphere with a diameter of 30 gigaparsecs (light would take 95 billion years to cross this distance) and “count” the elementary particles we get a really huge number: 2.5×10^{89} .

So, what is the connection between this huge number of neuron interactions and

exhibitions, as representatives of meetings industry events? The analogy I perceive here is in the interaction itself and in understanding the importance of a meeting of businessmen, buyers, sellers and information-seekers in an exhibition space, which happens in the mirror of our neurons: at the exhibition. I understand the significance of the physical interaction, this irreplaceable form of interpersonal relations, which gives us much more than any other means of communication.

The president of UFI (The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, with a seat in Paris), Eric Everard, claims there is no substitute for in-person or face-to-face communication, despite some ICT companies' efforts to steal a piece of profit from exhibitions by offering online information on exhibitions (and mostly their exhibitors, service and products) through social media ads. Digital media and social networks in the hands of exhibition organisers should strive for a more important goal and should be the tool to improve in-person meetings for the breakthrough the meetings industry desperately needs.

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