

Meetings®

INTERNATIONAL

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A portrait of Catherine Boissier, a woman with long brown hair and blue eyes, smiling. She is wearing a red and white patterned top under a dark blazer. The background is a blurred bokeh of blue and yellow lights.

CATHERINE
BOISSIER

Astra Zeneca

“What new can we do
based on what we learned
together?”

THINK
COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE
ACTION
HUMAN-CENTRIC APPROACH
KELLERMAN



LET'S MEET IN THE KINGDOM OF JORDAN!



Jordan Tourism Board
Convention Bureau

visitjordan.com



A Global and Regional Leader

As a hub for various international and regional associations, regional HQs for numerous international corporations with established global reputation in the medical, pharmaceutical, IT, renewable energy and entrepreneurship fields, the Kingdom of Jordan offers state of the art meeting facilities, a wide range of international hotel chains, a well-developed base of meeting planners, DMCs, service providers, as well as a passion for quality services.

Ready for Business

The Jordan Convention Bureau (JCB) was established under the umbrella of the Jordan Tourism Board with the mission to attract, facilitate and support international MICE organizers plan their next successful event. The bureau represents the destination as a whole and leads the process of attracting international conventions and events to the country.

With three international and regional bids won in less than two years since inception in July 2017, JCB boasts the region's first Ambassador Program that celebrates a plethora of Jordanian leaders, experts, and influencers who are recognized on global stages.

This year, JCB is pleased to announce the release of Jordan's first Meeting Planner's Guide, which will assist MICE organizers when planning events in Jordan. Designed for planners, this new guide is available in both print and digital copies and offers insights and information on Jordan's appeal as a destination, a database of convention centers, hotels and meetings venues, service providers, ideas for meetings and incentives, and much more.

The Perfect Backdrop to any Event

Jordan is rich in history, deep-rooted culture, iconic World Heritage Sites, and diverse landscapes; from the lush woodlands of the north, to the modern capital of Amman, to the magical deserts and canyons of the south, and the refreshing seas, the Kingdom of Jordan has all the ingredients for your next event!

“Jordan is a vibrant country that embodies the true meaning of east meets west, and where old blends effortlessly with the new. The Meeting Planner's Guide serves as a planning tool for MICE organizers to create a successful and memorable event for delegates.”

Luma Khatib

Head of Jordan Convention Bureau

How we can be of Assistance:

To request a free copy of the Meeting Planner's Guide and for any additional information about organizing your next MICE event in Jordan, please contact:

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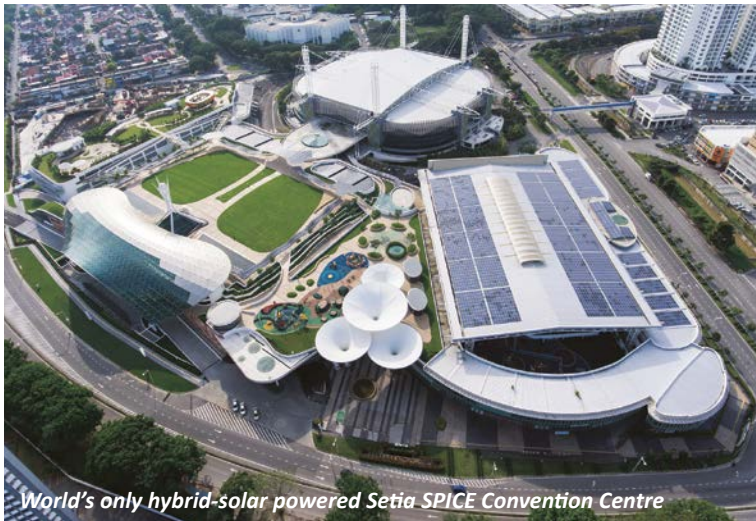
EXPERIENCE PENANG UNFILTERED

Up in the northern region of peninsula Malaysia sits the world-famous destination of Penang. Comprising an island and a strip on the mainland, this scenic Malaysian state and tropical paradise is home to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of George Town.

Penang is one of few authentic melting pots in the world where multiple Asian ethnicities thrive within a diverse social and cultural setting. This confluence of various

communities, lifestyles and landscapes sits where East has been meeting West for centuries.

As an international cosmopolitan city, Penang is a treasure trove of living heritage which boasts picturesque colonial and pre-war architecture. It contains Malaysia's most vibrant arts and culture scene and is considered one of Asia's most colourful culinary hubs.



Extraordinary Venues

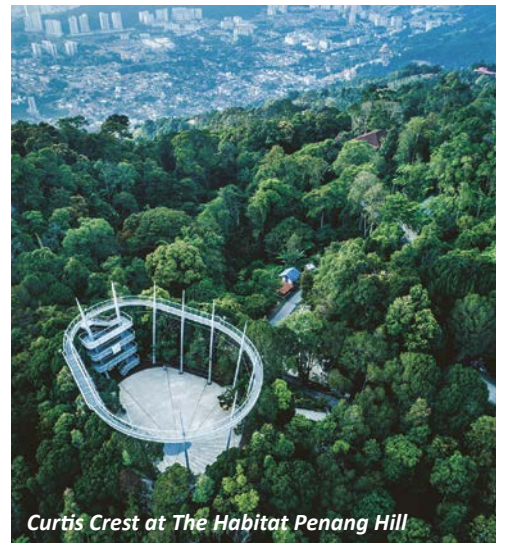
Home to the world's first and only hybrid solar-powered convention centre and many unique venues, Penang has plenty to offer in regards to meeting spaces. We hosted 2,733 Business Events in 2018 with our largest convention hosting 16,000 delegates from 70 countries!

Gastronomical Fix

Food is a common unifier in Penang and we take pride in the authentic cuisines served across the state. Whether vivid Penang Peranakan food, spicy South Indian banana leaf fare, or Penang's much-raved about street food, dining during meetings and conferences is sure to be a highlight.

Lush Nature

While Penang is a modern international destination undergoing rapid development, it is very much a green city. In the heart of Penang Island is a 130-million-year-old rainforest that blankets the area known as Penang Hill. Here you can escape the city and breathe in the fresh air 833m above sea level, complete with captivating sunset views. For something more adventurous, explore the trails of Malaysia's smallest forest reserve at the Penang National Park or take a boat ride to the secluded Monkey Beach.



PENANG DNA

CONVENTION CAPACITY

PENANG ISLAND
30,000

MAINLAND PENANG
4,000

Beach Hotels
3,606

ROOM INVENTORY

City Hotels
12,058

Mainland Hotels
2,331

Knowledge Hub

Penang is one of the world's leading medical tourism destinations due to its numerous cutting-edge medical facilities. Ranking highly in the region in terms of concentration of medical specialists, this rapidly-developing city is home to over 470 multinationals, with the largest names in technology, medical devices and computing setting up large campuses complete with R&D facilities.

Penang also hosts over 10 private colleges and Malaysia's only APEX university, the University of Science Malaysia (USM). This mix of knowledge sectors, expertise, professionals and facilities offers conferences and their delegates a wealth of resources for networking and knowledge exchange.

Cultural Harmony

Located within the bustling UNESCO World Heritage Site of George Town, Penang's 'Street of Harmony' pairs complex diversity and peaceful coexistence. Within footsteps from each other lie the Indian-Muslim Kapitan Keling Mosque, the Chinese Kuan Yin Temple, the Anglican St. George's Church, the Hindu Sri Mahamariamman Temple, the Catholic Cathedral of Assumption, and the Khoo Kongsi clanhouse and temple.

For more information on Penang's Experiences Unfiltered, contact Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau at info@pceb.my or visit www.pceb.my

pceb penang convention & exhibition bureau

SETTING THE BLUE PRINT FOR THE FUTURE OF ACCOUNTING AT ICC SYDNEY

The prestigious World Congress of Accountants (WCOA) returned to Australia for the first time in 46 years, taking place at the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney), a global symbol of excellence located in the heart of the city.

A testament to Australia's global reputation, ICC Sydney hosted thousands of accounting professionals across three days for the staging of WCOA. The venue provided a world class platform for collaboration and networking while allowing visitors and delegates to tap into the expertise and knowledge economy that surrounds ICC Sydney. Visitors also enjoyed a full-spectrum Sydney experience, from harbour views and Indigenous cultural tours to world class restaurants, cultural attractions and more.

4,000

delegates from 119 countries across four days



70

exhibitors



60

sessions



77,000

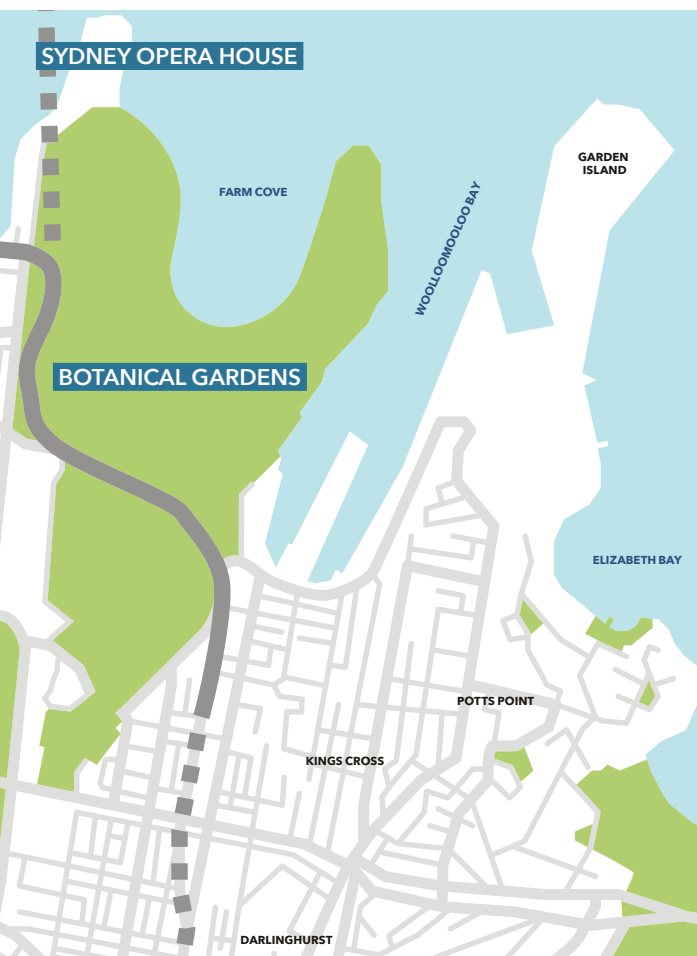
square meters activated across integrated precinct including Convention Centre, Exhibition Centre and ICC Sydney Theatre, alongside 44 meeting rooms



CONGRESS MANAGER, JODIE HUNT SAID, "HAVING THE RIGHT VENUE TO BRING GROUPS TOGETHER AND FACILITATE DIALOGUE UNDERPINS THE SUCCESS OF ANY EVENT, AND THIS COULD NOT HAVE BEEN DONE ANY BETTER THAN US WORKING WITH ICC SYDNEY FOR OURS."



Welcome to Country, ICC Sydney Theatre



HELPING CLIENTS SUCCEED

These outstanding results are a key example of driving best practice and showcasing both ICC Sydney and Australia as a premium event destination. To cultivate a lasting legacy for your next event, book with ICC Sydney today.

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All hotels and Grimaldi Forum are eco-certified in Monaco

It's easy to think of Monaco as just a playground for the idle rich. But the principality is like a swan. Above the waterline it is serene, stylish and spectacular. But beneath the surface it is striving hard to maintain its position and steer a new and successful course to an exciting future. The result has enhanced its reputation with developments in key sectors of science, industry and sustainability.

Monaco is a dynamic, competitive and innovative community possessing real knowledge hubs and experts in these sectors. It is a tiny territory of just two square kilometres packed with the culture and entertainment you would expect but also offering a surprising entrepreneurial spirit and determination to become *the* place to meet, live and invest because of the expertise that resides in the business and academic communities.

Monaco is also a leader in responsible business tourism sector. All hotels, representing a total of 2,500 rooms and its convention Center, the Grimaldi Forum, are eco-certified.

In the meantime, Monaco was ranked 13th in 2018 for its first participation in the Global Destination Sustainable Index (out of 60 participating destinations) with very high supplier performance.

At a time when the environment and the problems of climate change increasingly affect business decisions, the Principality of Monaco has won the Green Palm for Europe's best carbon balance sheet.

Choosing Monaco enables a reduction of 15 to 40 % in the carbon footprint, on average, compared to cities such as Barcelona, London or Paris.

Monaco is a country mobilised by its sovereign on the overarching theme of the environment,

All its tourism professionals are committed to energy transition, the aim of the principality being to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality in 2050.

Monaco is also considered one of the safest nations in the world and where everything is within walking distance. Monaco offer a high-tech, eco-certified centre, the Grimaldi Forum, with 35,000 m² of floor space, it can host events up to 3,000 people,

Monaco Convention Bureau offers a unique package to congress organisers, including discounted hotel rooms and meeting space rental, complimentary welcome cocktails and free delegate transportation.



Monaco, a country where event is in harmony with environment

Monaco is a country mobilized by its Sovereign, H.S.H. Prince Albert II, to tackle universal challenges linked to the environment. Most of the hotels and the convention center, Grimaldi Forum, are eco-certified. All MICE professionals are already committed to the energy transition, with the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% in 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

The Principality of Monaco hosts numerous conferences related to sustainability and is recognized for its expertise in the organization of green events.

Choose Monaco and take advantage of our expertise to guarantee the success of your event.

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CONVENTION BUREAU

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REDEFINING GLOBAL TRIBES

Business Events are driving the world's new economy.

Be part of the bigger picture by choosing the fastest emerging destination in Asia for your next business event and unearth your capabilities to power global communities.

To find out more about the campaign and BESarawak's support for Business Events (meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions),

www.businesseventssarawak.com
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BY SARAWAK CONVENTION BUREAU



Driving the World's Knowledge-Centric Economy

Empowering meeting and conference delegates is arguably one of the most discussed topics among associations and meeting planners, leaving many wondering if there is a bigger picture to all that input of time and research. How does Sarawak incorporate its three tribal values – community, identity and unity – into its custom-tailored business events for greater value?

Malaysia's largest state on the island of Borneo is often overshadowed by first-tier destinations. Contrary to belief, this challenge is welcomed by Business Events Sarawak with a revolutionary movement that has stood out far in the ASEAN region and beyond, thus attracting a large number of business events from around the world since its beginnings in 2017. The state is the fastest emerging dark horse in Asia and one of the strongest second-tier destinations in the world.

Business Events Sarawak's highly-acclaimed Redefining Global Tribes (RGT) campaign is a breakthrough to rally business events communities from around the world to share its common goal in yielding non-economic impacts from meetings and conferences. This would ultimately transform societies and change the social mechanics of the state. The close co-operation and support from the Sarawak Government and local industry players give meeting planners a peace of mind as these important alliances become the backbone when bidding for business events.

Business Events Sarawak and the government have tapped into specific indicators of change namely Urban, Economic, Social, Agriculture and Industrial Development (inclusive of the Sarawak Corridor of Renewable Energy), plus Service Industry and Digital Economy. These are best known as Sarawak's 7 Key Focus Areas that ensure growth boost and impactful actions; pivotal for

associations and the upcoming business events that would be held in Sarawak.

Mirroring the indicators are the 5 pillars of impact beyond tourism outlined by Business Events Sarawak, identified as Knowledge Expansion, Networking, Relationship & Collaboration, Education Outcomes, Fundraising & Future Research Capacity and Raising Awareness & Profiling. These pillars act as weights to optimise and empower every business event, crucial for the growth and evolution of the world's business events landscape.

So what does this imply? That associations will drive the knowledge economy. That Sarawak has marked a solid flagpole in determining its aspirations for change in which associations can leverage from. RGT is not just to gather business events communities but to strengthen new and existing webs to create ultimate impact.

Up until today, the surge of bureaus hoping to reposition their relevance in the sector has never been more apparent, making it a habitual challenge for meeting planners to choose a destination that perfectly matches their objectives while offering a well-crafted plan to boost delegate numbers. It is no surprise that Sarawak is playing a unique deck of cards to give other destinations a run for its money.

Community, identity and unity are the three tribal values that are embedded into Business Events Sarawak's brand new Redefining Global Tribes – Impact (#RGTImpact) campaign – to boost value into every meeting and conference. Launching at IMEX Frankfurt 2019, the ingenuity is in the handshake between Sarawak Tourism Board and its own respective campaign, Visit Sarawak Campaign, to diversify the values and return of investments in business events. Step aside routine conferences – an adventure is brewing!



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MOVEMENT

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Pressure

ON MEETINGS INTERNATIONAL

ON 2 DECEMBER 1766 Sweden became the first country in the world to have freedom of the press written into the constitution. The Swedish Freedom of the Press Act also broke ground for the principle of public access to information, which made it legal to publish and read public documents. The principle of public access is still a cornerstone of the Swedish Constitution.

During my over 40 years as a journalist, I have rarely been subjected to pressure. Some years ago, Ikea wanted to stop an article by trying to scare us with their size, but we published the feature anyway. Nothing happened. Now, while writing this column, we just decided on the cover image to the cover story. The interview took place in April in Gothenburg during the Association World Congress 2019 (AWC19) at the Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre. Robert Cotter, our global reporter, based in London, flew in for three assignments. And our photographer Sara Appelgren, who we have been working together with for 17 years, took the train from Stockholm to meet with two of the interview persons. At this point, and from an

editorial perspective, everything was fine. Then something happens.

As usual, we sent the article to the person we interviewed to avoid misunderstandings and factual errors. The communications director, not the interviewed person of the company, calls and claims that we cannot publish the article. She questions why we have a reporter from London, and why we didn't work with a photographer from Gothenburg. Wait a minute, is this any of her business at all? Furthermore, the communications director states that the person we interviewed doesn't recognise her answers. Of course, we always record all our interviews. Also, as promised, the interviewed woman received our questions in advance. We also made a site visit to the company she represents together with some of the delegates from the AWC2019.

Now, and still on the telephone, the communications person says that the person we interviewed is not entitled to talk about what she was talking to us about. How is it possible in our country that a communications director interferes in an article for a magazine that writes about the meetings and events industry? The

interviewed person said, but not to us, that she got the impression that we should do an interview about meetings in Gothenburg. We did. And that is what the article is about. The communication director, still upset, says that we should not publish the article. All at once it is her decision and not ours. Suddenly it feels like we have ended up in a global company with internal problems that should not go over to us.

The communication director wants to come back with a proposal for a rewritten article. "But it will be much shorter. And why have you taken so many photos?" At this point, we do not believe our ears, but welcome her to come back with their changes. Are there any controversial issues in the article we are going to publish? Something that we feel we need to change to avoid standing with the shame of being convicted by The Swedish Press Council? No, actually not. The cover feature is a good story well worth publishing.

*Swedish-Indonesian **ATTI SOENARSO** has worked as a journalist for close to 40 years. She has worked for Scandinavia's largest daily newspaper, was TV4's first travel editor, has written for many Swedish travel magazines and has had several international clients. She has travelled the length and breadth of the world and written about destinations, people and meetings.*



PHOTO Magnus Malmberg

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**Basis for
Business**







BOISSIER

TEXT

Robert Cotter

PHOTOS

Sara Appelgren



An ache, a sprain, a niggle or a nagging throb can occur at any given time, which is the cue for us to go straight to the medicine cupboard and reach for the staple we all have in there, the painkiller.

WHICHEVER OF the most common ones it may be, such as aspirin, paracetamol or maybe even an ibuprofen, we know that within a short time the active ingredient will alleviate our pains and enable us to get on with whatever it is that we need to do.

When we pop the pill, however, what most of us are not aware of is just how complex the full contents of that little tablet can be. Alongside the active pain-killing agent are a multiplicity of others without which the medicine wouldn't be possible: sweeteners to ensure we can consume it easily, a polymer coating to help ingestion and release the active ingredient, disintegrants to help it break up in the digestive system, binders to hold the tablet together before it gets down there, and a host of other active substances and excipients that all come together within this little pill.

One of the world's largest pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies, British-Swedish

multinational Astra Zeneca is responsible for the research into and manufacture of pills that go far beyond the scope of painkillers, producing some of the world's leading-edge medicines for conditions such as oncology, cardiovascular, renal & metabolism and respiratory. And just as the medication for all of these conditions brings together a multiplicity of ingredients in the same manner as the humble painkiller, so too do the meetings held at Astra Zeneca to ensure it can continue to deliver the most innovative solutions to today's most pressing medical needs.

"Astra Zeneca is a global biopharmaceutical company working worldwide and in different disciplines, so there are a variety of competencies that we need to have within our company," says Catherine Boissier, Associate Professor and Associate Director, working as a Chemistry, Manufacturing and Control (CMC) Project Lead at Astra Zeneca in

“The key to preparing a good meeting is to have the overview of what you want to achieve and an openness”

Gothenburg, Sweden. “We go from early discovery to late phase developments, establishment and commercialisation, and all of that has to come together in the end, there are so many skills involved. In addition to that we are also a research intense company and we rely on research to bring new and innovative medicines to patients.”

Put all of that together with the fact that a medicine is not only what you put in your mouth, it is so much more beyond a clinical area, and so we have so many disciplines that have to come together just to bring something new to a patient. Scientists and science have to be open. We have to encourage openness and interdisciplinary, otherwise we will not bring innovation and novelty to what we need for innovative medicines to come through.

“Meetings are a vital tool to achieve that,” says Catherine Bossier. “Regardless the science, we need to encourage scientists to communicate and collaborate, and that’s why meetings are so important. It is also important just to get people to communicate and when we are speaking specifically of meetings there is not one type of meeting, as the type of

meeting that can take place can differ so much.”

With a company base of more than 60,000 employees globally, as well as the three strategic research and development sites with one in Cambridge, one in Gaithersburg, Maryland, USA, and one in Gothenburg, Sweden, there are clearly a lot of different types of meetings taking place at any given time.

“The type of meeting that can take place may be very diverse – in my view the overarching purpose is primarily for people to meet, and to attract and retain competence.”

Engaging externally for meetings is part of a much wider and productive collaborative initiative that also brings scientists at Astra Zeneca into close interface with some of the other companies and institutions in the Gothenburg region, heightening intellectual exchange and driving innovation.

“Here in Gothenburg we have one of our global strategic research sites. Beside the research we do within the company, it is also important to partner up with others, for example, the Sahlgrenska University Hospital, and the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm being another that is very important for us.”







“What benefits other regional companies of course in the end also benefits us”

“It’s not only hospitals, but also the universities, academia, consortia and other research partners that we can team up with to ensure we interact with different parts of science and diverse competences. We reinvest a substantial part of our growth back into R&D and science, more than €13.1 million every day.”

Acknowledging the significance of such meetings and collaboration as well as their wider contribution to the region, the city of Gothenburg took the initiative to work in partnership with the region’s key sectors to explore how best to attract more high-profile meetings to the city and also how best to elevate it to being the top destination worldwide for people working in those fields, bestowing the title of Meeting Ambassador for the city on those engaging with them.

“Together with the city we decided to team up in 2016 and see whether we could attract more scientific meetings to the region, which is important to increase the competitiveness within the whole region, and one way to do that is to attract people with the right competencies, but to also retain those people in the Gothenburg area.”

“Astra Zeneca is only one player here, but still one of the biggest in

the region with 2,400 employees in our research site here and those employees come from more than 50 countries worldwide. We play on a global arena. Putting Gothenburg in that context I think we are working in the right direction; we have big universities, we have a big hospital with a lot of students coming into the city, which all helps. Sweden has a strong culture in science going long back.”

“What benefits other regional companies of course in the end also benefits us. Because if we can nurture the region and bring people in and get them to see how attractive and vibrant it is to stay in Gothenburg it benefits the whole arena,” says Catherine Boissier. “It’s not only what we do as a large company here, but it’s also that network that the city of Gothenburg has created to enable this, so together now we are starting to ask how we can collaborate further.”

Some of the early win meetings that have been generated by the partnership with the city could provide the catalyst for further collaboration, such as a successful one that came about through taking the opportunity to cast a lens over the kind of meetings the city might be able to attract

“Together with the city we decided to team up in 2016 and see whether we could attract more scientific meetings”

as it moved forward with its longer-term ambitions.

“When we kicked off this initiative what we did as a company was to map out what the existing meetings were globally and what was out there, but equally importantly and together with this network to map out what we couldn’t see and what was not out there and to then start to fill in those missing gaps. We then started to work towards those scientific meetings together in this network by teaming up with Chalmers University of Technology and also Sahlgrenska University Hospital. One example of an outcome was to kick off a congress called ‘Engineering Health’, to further strengthen the collaboration between disciplines in the life science area, based on this role as an ambassador in the city.”

“What happens when an engineer interacts with a medical doctor? I would say this is a really good example of what we can do in the region,” says Catherine Boissier. “We got worldwide speakers to come here and talk about the innovation that was created in that meeting and that has now continued. It’s a good example of what we can do together and a really interesting way of meeting. In the region the whole life science

sector is trying to gear up towards innovation and this is one way of creating innovation, which for me is about that multidisciplinary, the coming together and meeting, so we need to foster that as a whole. This was one example, but I think if the whole region comes together in this network to interact, I’m sure we’ll see others.”

As the Gothenburg network evolves and continues to engage and collaborate for the purposes of progressing its meetings industry – and by extension the attractiveness of the region as a globally leading one for its main sectors – the key players involved increasingly understand the important role of hosting successful meetings in order to deliver this and the necessity of always being innovative in planning a meeting and constructive with its outputs.

“The key to preparing a good meeting is to have the overview of what you want to achieve and an openness, which for me is key to a lot of things here. You need to bring in the required disciplines, but in this region as a global multidisciplinary company it’s also to expand and push the boundaries of everything we do, so in setting up a meeting I always personally try to encourage bringing

in new aspects oriented to the agenda from the start.”

“It’s important to be innovative in creating new meetings, to bring new things in, to get excitement into the meeting,” says Catherine Boissier. “For the outcome they should bring aspects of innovation, not only in a way that is beyond business but also in a way to bring something back to science, what new can we do based on what we learned together? That, for me, is a good meeting.”





Cities across Canada ARE ATTRACTING GLOBAL MEETINGS

WHILE TORONTO, Montreal and Vancouver have long been some of Canada's top destinations for international business events, cities across Canada are attracting global conferences, thanks in large part to the academics and industry innovators across a variety of sectors.

With ten post-secondary partners, New Brunswick, in Canada's Maritimes, is growing its education system to meet the demands of cybersecurity, one of the fastest-growing segments in the Information and Communications Technology sectors, and Fredericton is ground zero. The city features Canada's first advanced cybersecurity training programme, the Canadian Institute for Cybersecurity. It has attracted investments from IBM, Canadian Nuclear Laboratories, and most recently Siemens, who announced the opening of a new global cybersecurity centre in Fredericton last year.

It's estimated that global cyber-crime cost as much as \$600 billion in 2017 and that there will be a shortage of talent with as many as 3.5 million unfilled positions in the industry by 2021. Businesses will look to Fredericton to meet their talent and infrastructure needs. They'll also look to this inventive riverside city to host conferences such as the Cybersmart Summit, which welcomes security experts from around the world to

explore the issues facing online businesses and governments, including the need to create the cybersecurity workforce of the future, discussions surrounding international cyber readiness of business and governments.

The automotive industry is one of Canada's largest manufacturing sectors, and as one of the world's top ten auto producing countries, it comes to no surprise that Canada has emerged as a leader in the auto parts sector and cutting-edge R&D.

Ottawa has particularly shined in this arena, making national headlines in 2017 when the first trial run of a driverless vehicle on a public street in Canada was held here. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recently announced an investment of \$40 million in BlackBerry QNX, a business unit of BlackBerry Limited, to develop safe and secure software systems for the next generation of connected and autonomous vehicles.

With this funding, BlackBerry QNX will develop new automated control systems, upgrade and secure communications in vehicles, and improve vehicle safety and security by expanding its advanced driver-assistance system. BlackBerry QNX will also develop and use concept cars as labs for technology and software development further establishing Ottawa as Canada's AV capital, and

the host location for events such as CAV Canada, Ottawa's Autonomous Vehicle Summit where delegates learn about Canada's expertise in AV technology.

Strategically located in the center of Canada, Winnipeg is often over-seen as a just another Canadian city. But it is a centre for Advanced Manufacturing, thanks to the cutting-edge R&D on additive manufacturing and industry 4.0 technologies being done at the University of Manitoba, Price Research Centre North, Red River College and Canada's National Research Centre.

Host city of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporter's Conference, Winnipeg, is also home to venues such as the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, the Assiniboine Park Zoo with its Journey to Churchill Exhibit, and a soon-to-be-completed downtown revitalisation project, True North Square.

When added together: intellectual capital, industry expertise, world-class attractions, hotels at virtually every price-point and expanded, sustainably operated convention centre, Winnipeg offers a value proposition for meeting organisers in the Advanced Manufacturing space.



The Cost OF NOT THINKING

TEXT

Mark Turrell

YOU'RE IN A HURRY in the morning, a little distracted. You'll take the U-Bahn in Berlin for a half hour to get to where you need to be. In your wallet you have two remaining unused tickets, tickets that need to be validated before you step onto the train. Berlin has an honour system rather than controlled barriers, so it is easy to jump on a train without a ticket ... If you are willing to take the risk. Or if you are not thinking.

*Cost of mind wandering and not stamping your ticket? 40 Euro. Cost of the single ticket, bought in a four-pack? Euro 2.25.**

You are a bit busy booking flights. You have a lot of options open, but then you are delighted to find a cheaper ticket that seems perfect. You go through the payment process, whilst doing something else in another tab of your browser. A few days later you print out your boarding pass and go happily on time to the airport. At the security entrance your ticket does not scan problem. You show it to the supervisor. Your ticket

is for July not June. You now need to buy another super-expensive ticket at the last minute to go with your friends, whilst losing the money from the old ticket.

*Cost of not paying attention and buying on autopilot? 80 Euro for the first ticket, 280 Euro if you buy another, or add in an extra 300 Euro loss for not going on holiday. Lost memories? Priceless. Apart from the memory of standing like an idiot at the ticket desk complaining that it is the web site's fault and not yours.**

I am intrigued by the amount of overtly thoughtless behaviors that permeate today's life. Entrepreneurs deciding to spend half their meagre cash on an online marketing campaign ... without having a clear grasp of their target customer, and before they have a shipping product. People clicking on the first story they see and sharing ... without digging around a few extra minutes to find out if the story is real.

As I dig in more, I find that this lack of thinking is a lot more

pervasive than I initially considered. Sensible looking people recite mantras about how things work, how 'people' do things ... and when poked, me asking, "Ok, so if everyone lies, do you lie and when was the last time?", they stumble, mentally and verbally confused, fighting to internalise their personal experience with the generalities they happily spout out automatically.

There is so much nonsense and non sense going around. I could imagine there is a comfort factor of being in a herd that does the same thing, unthinkingly making decisions, sharing opinions, and generally going about life.

But maybe if we stop to think, and then stop to think again about the consequences of non-thought, we would save ourselves time, money, effort, heartache.

I did some personal experiences a while ago on eating with thought. I decided to cut back on sugar and began a two-week period of making changes to make that happen. I had

“There are ways of working with yourself to help you think more”

been inspired by the book *Mindless Eating* which had opened my eyes to a lot of programmed behavior we have in the specific area of food. Sure enough I was suddenly captivated watching myself as I walked into the kitchen, opening the cupboard doors where the chocolates might be hiding, taking one if they were there (and then another), or closing the door, saddened, opening all the other doors, walking out ... and then a half hour later doing the same thing again.

Applying conscious thought began to make a big difference. I decided to buy carrots to have something fun and nutritious to munch on. I changed the food requests on the shopping lists to not buy the things I craved but did not need. I gave myself in-head challenges going out to have no dessert, or to only have a single spoonful if at an event with a free dessert shoved under my nose in a social context.

Thinking really does make a difference. Thinking about things can save you a ton of money.

Do you really need this thing you want to buy? (No – that answer works in almost all cases.)

Is this the best option I can find (for booking a trip, etcetera)? Probably not, and another ten minutes

of digging might save you a bunch or open up new possibilities.

Do I sound like a TED-talk loving robot-idiot? Which impresses most people, for sure, just not the people you might want to impress.

There are ways of working with yourself to help you think more. If you have areas where you often make mistakes, work out a way of fixing those mistakes. For instance, I used to lose my bus tickets in back pockets. Then I put them always in the same place in my wallet. And then, major improvement, I switched to the online app version which was faster to use, cheaper, and meant I never made a mistake (unless the phone died!).

You can programme yourself so that questions pop up in your head at key moments. When I am chatting about deeper philosophical issues, relationships and more, I use the questions ‘does this make sense?’ and ‘does this apply to me ... or to you?’. The later is helpful to separate out bland general statements of little value with personal insights that can usefully expand one’s model of the world.

I am positive in a future where more people think more of the time in ways that add personal and social

value. No one can be happy looking like an idiot forking out fines for things they forgot or spending thousands and draining a company bank account for nonsense expenses.

Today’s people are ready to change, and ready for a more thoughtful future.

OK, most of them. Most of the time. Hopefully.

**Note: these were not my direct experiences! I see the first all the time in Berlin on certain routes, and the second was at Berlin SXF with the guy coming in behind me stranded.*

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Dubai Tourism LAUNCHES SPONSORSHIP SCHEME

DUBAI'S DEPARTMENT of Tourism & Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism) has announced the launch of a new sponsorship scheme to drive continued innovation and sustainability across Dubai's events industry. Reaffirming Dubai's position as a global events hub, the scheme is designed to further empower leisure event organisers with additional incentivisation opportunities in the form of event sponsorship.

The new process will build on the growth and competitiveness of the city's event sector, which recorded an increase of over 100,000 ticket sales and 25 additional events in the first quarter of 2019 when compared to the same period last year. Continuing to effectively showcase Dubai's proposition as a host city for international events from around the world, the plan will target entertainment events and will be applicable for events that are ticketed and open to the public, with an eligible leisure event permit. With state-of-the-art venues across the city, Dubai is well placed to compete on the global stage to host

international events, as it continues to grow its reputation as a world-leading leisure and entertainment destination.

The scheme will work in conjunction with the Department's ticketing and permits services to streamline management and coordination of event licensing activities and provide greater operational efficiency.

"The sponsorship scheme forms part of our commitment to retain the city's status as a leading global event destination and has been designed to build on this momentum and act as a catalyst for the local events industry. This has been further fueled by our cross-industry public and private sector partnerships, which serve as a crucial component in helping us identify and pursue opportunities to empower local event organisers further as we set the stage to welcome audiences from around the world," says His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai Tourism.

The sponsorship plan, which will directly support event organisers, will

take effect for events being held from May through an online application process.

Dubai's position as a global events destination has been enhanced with the addition of event venues across the city.

"Dubai's events sector is continuing to grow at an impressive rate, with its sustainable and engaging offerings playing a vital role in growing our tourism numbers and driving the city's competitiveness for global audiences. The dedicated incentivisation scheme will aim to further position Dubai as a major player in the sector by providing additional support for event organisers across the city, and attracting prominent event organisers and international initiatives," says Ahmed Al Khaja, CEO, Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment.

Dubai's position as a global events destination has been enhanced with the launch of the new Coca-Cola Arena in City Walk 2, a 17,000-seat air-conditioned venue.

Dubai Expo 2020

TO DELIVER \$33BN BOOST TO UAE ECONOMY

EXPO 2020 DUBAI will boost the UAE economy by AED122.6 billion (\$33.4 billion) and support 905,200 job-years between 2013 and 2031, according to an independent report published by global consultancy EY.

During the peak six-month period of the World Expo, the largest event to be held in the Arab World is predicted to add the equivalent of 1.5 per cent to UAE gross domestic product.

The scale of investment pouring in to construct and host an event of this ambition, as well as goods and services consumed by the millions expected to visit and the businesses that will occupy the Expo site in the legacy phase, will result in an economic dividend that will benefit businesses large and small across a range of sectors for years to come, according to the report.

From November 2013, when Dubai won the bid to host the Expo, until its opening in October 2020, the economic impetus will be driven by the construction sector as work continues on building the site and supporting infrastructure such as roads, bridges and the Dubai Metro Route 2020 line, EY noted.

“This independent report demonstrates that Expo 2020 Dubai is a

critical long-term investment in the future of the UAE, which will contribute more than 120 billion dirhams to the economy between 2013 and 2031. Not only will the event encourage millions around the world to visit the UAE in 2020, it will also stimulate travel and tourism and support economic diversification for years after the Expo, leaving a sustainable economic legacy that will help to ensure the UAE remains a leading destination for business, leisure and investment,” says Najeeb Mohammed Al-Ali, executive director of the Dubai Expo 2020 Bureau.

The report added that small and medium enterprises, a core component of the UAE economy, will receive AED4.7 billion in investment during the pre-Expo phase, supporting 12,600 job-years. Job-years is defined as full-time employment for one person for one year and describes the employment impact over the life or phase of a project.

During the peak six months of Expo 2020, visitor spending on tickets, merchandise, food and beverage, hotels, flights and local transport will propel economic activity.

The EY report added that the positive thrust will continue in the decade after Expo closes its doors in April

2021, thanks largely to the transformation of the site into District 2020, an integrated urban development that will house the Dubai Exhibition Centre.

“Expo 2020 is an exciting long-term investment for the UAE, and is expected to have a significant impact on the economy and how jobs are created directly and indirectly,” says Matthew Benson, partner, Transaction Advisory Services, MENA, EY.

“As the host, Dubai aims to use the event to further enhance its international profile and reputation. The event will celebrate innovation, promote progress and foster cooperation, and entertain and educate global audiences.”

Expo 2020 expects 25 million visits, with 70 per cent of visitors coming from outside the UAE.



PHOTO © iStock.com/Lukas Bischoff

Calgary's BMO CENTRE SET FOR EXPANSION

CALGARY'S BMO Convention and Trade Centre is set for expansion. Funding has been approved for a \$500 million expansion that will double the size of Calgary's BMO Centre to almost one million square feet, transforming it into Canada's second-largest facility, creating new spaces for conferences, meetings, exhibitions and consumer shows, allowing the centre to host larger conventions and events, boosting spin-off benefits for local businesses.

"Tourism and trade show facilities like the BMO Centre play a huge role in supporting our local economies," says the Right Honourable François-Phillipe Champagne, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. "This project will create a landmark attraction that will attract tourists and strengthen Calgary's economy for years to come."

In a recent interview with the *Calgary Herald*, mayor of Calgary,

Naheed Nenshi noted that the city has had to turn away between eleven and 14 bid opportunities for Tier-1 size conferences each year. This expansion will provide the infrastructure the city needs to bid on those significant events. "The idea here now is that the Telus Convention Centre and this facility will be working in conjunction to attract bigger conventions, and that is a real important part of our economic development strategy and building our tourism business."

With funding in place, construction on the BMO Centre expansion will begin almost immediately and will be phased in over the next five years. The Government of Canada is contributing up to \$166.6 million to this project through the New Building Canada Fund, while the Government of Alberta and the City of Calgary are each providing \$166.6 million through the extension of the Calgary

Rivers District Community Revitalization Levy. The Calgary Exhibition and Stampede Ltd. has previously committed \$3.9 million.

Once open, the expanded BMO Convention and Trade Centre is expected to generate an annual economic benefit of \$267 million, which includes \$223 million in Alberta.

"This is a significant investment that will pay dividends for generations to come," said Naheed Nenshi. "An expanded convention centre is a key part of Calgary's plans for downtown. Not only will this investment in the BMO Centre create jobs, this project is an opportunity to boost Calgary's travel and tourism sector and our overall economy."



The Potential OF CAMBODIA

TEXT

Robert Cotter

ACROSS SOUTH East Asia the period following the end of the Second World War up to the late-1970s was broadly characterised by political upheaval and conflict, but over the course of time turmoil would gradually become transformed into tourism, with Thailand becoming the leading light of the wider region. In the past three decades Thailand has shown that a steady growth in tourism has also supported the flourishing of its meeting and event industry. The benefits of this solid growth and evolution have not been lost on neighbouring countries that whilst today still many years behind, such as Cambodia, are currently making bigger inroads into tapping their full tourism potential with a view to how this can be the platform to allow their meetings and events industry to also take a firm foothold on the world stage.

"In terms of policy with our marketing strategy Cambodia has identified itself as a new and emerging destination for travellers, with

people very excited to come and visit the country, so we're really starting out from the freely independent traveller (FIT)," says Visothy So, Under Secretary of State at the Ministry of Tourism of the Kingdom of Cambodia. "For any new destination FIT has to come first to discover the region and take the knowledge, then the niche markets and the higher markets will come afterwards, so I think it's more like they will be the discoverers and then other visitors, including MICE, will follow them. Our first hard work is on developing and bringing the FIT and that's the aim at the start, because when more and more tourists come, like the Chinese who are coming in numbers at the moment, then the opportunities will develop."

"Like any other kind of destination, however, we are open to all kinds of visitors, so with regards to MICE it is something new for Cambodia to identify itself as a meetings destination, but I think we have to combine it with everything else," says Visothy

So. "Even though we are just starting it now we have received a lot of MICE interest and there is an awareness of a value for money aspect, but that's a reality of Cambodia as we are not expensive. In terms of our strategy we want to attract a lot of meetings and events because we want to have the corporate presence in Cambodia to back up the interest we receive. The quality here is improving all the time which generates more interest from within the region as well as from long haul."

The particular interest in Cambodia focuses on its three key locations of Siem Reap with its UNESCO listed Angkor Wat temple complex, the capital city of Phnom Penh, and the southern coastal destination of Sihanoukville. All three cities exhibit very different sides of Cambodia but share a common feature of the continual development of their meetings and events facilities.

"The three key cities have a MICE component that is one of the sections

that individual 5-star hotels or big resorts take into consideration,” says Visothy So. “In Phnom Penh we have the Diamond Island Convention Centre which can hold up to 300 or 400 booths and there are also reception and banqueting areas that can be drawn in for 500 or 1,000 booths. The Sokha Hotel on the river also has space for up to a 200-booth convention. And we also have the very new Morodok Techo National Stadium in

“International visitor arrivals are now reaching 6.2 million per year and we are targeting 7 or 7.5 million by 2020, with in terms of connectivity over 40 airlines flying to Cambodia, although we do have a challenge in getting direct long-haul flights. As our capacity for receiving tourists in Siem Reap has been very limited we now have concrete plans for the expansion of capacity at Siem Reap airport.”

“For Phnom Penh the plans for the

just low and high as well as a little of something in between. To better attract meetings and events however, we need more international standard, so for the longer term we would consider a masterplan for tourism as a whole for capacity building and training, both for our Ministry of Tourism staff and also throughout the industry. For this we are now creating a Tourism Institute, which is a new body we just formed, and we are currently forming that (as part of its remit) will have to develop the Academy for Tourism.”

“Also, within the ASEAN region Cambodia has the Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) so that tourism professionals can be mobile. We all recognise this so that they can work in neighbouring countries to develop their training tools and other skills, and Cambodia is one of the leading countries in this.”

“There is also the private sector which has the vocational training schools that help the orphanages or underprivileged children to work in the industry, and we are pushing for better training for the tourist tour guides, for which we run annual competitions. This is all more general but for MICE we will have separate specific programmes that we can use these structures to develop. We are constantly learning.”

The appetite for learning is at the heart of the work of the Ministry of Tourism, work that is currently evaluating the best mechanisms to broadcast the country’s meeting and event offer and that could also lead to the formulation of new entities to undertake this task, as well as potentially future bureaus to act as national or regional points of contact.

“At the moment the only entity that is pushing for MICE is the Ministry of Tourism and we’re going to have a promotion board that will be a

“It is something new for Cambodia to identify itself as a meetings destination”

Prek Phnov for the 2023 SEA Games that will also have an exhibition hall that can hold more than Diamond Island, so it’s pretty big too.”

“In Siem Reap they have had the Sokha Convention Centre since 2005, although because MICE didn’t develop so rapidly there, they converted part of it to a theatre and 3D museum, because they couldn’t have the space empty. It still has adequate space and a large exhibition hall. And in Sihanoukville the new Prince development has a convention area and also Sokha has an exhibition hall there too. So, the infrastructure is all happening and gradually coming together, but we are really at the start of our journey.”

The start of the meeting and event journey also requires the wholesale review of the capacity for traveller or delegate arrivals to the country by way of airport infrastructure, which compared to its neighbours still remains constrained but is an issue that is under on-going review and with pipeline plans for upgrading.

airport are to be expanded so it can take up to 5 million and in the long term the government wants to have a new airport. To achieve this the government has already dedicated a new area of the city for a new airport, but an airport doesn’t happen in the short term, so with a lot of study and testing this will take some time. But the plans are under way, they have the plans but not yet finalised the exact location. The next four to five years should see this resolved.”

Addressing the hard infrastructure needed to start attracting business events to the country is just one part of a bigger picture, as significant attention is also being given to developing the softer skills that will be needed in the long term, including the human resources that the country has until now not needed as well as the framework for ensuring that this can be properly cultivated and delivered.

“A challenge for us is in offering quality, because we want a high standard, but at the moment we have



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Top Tech Talk

f.ounders
connects
leading
technology
entrepreneurs
in Macao



Event: f.ounders 2018
Venue: Four Seasons Hotel Macao
Size: 200 delegates
Organiser: Paddy Cosgrave,
CEO of Connected Intelligence Ltd.

(Paddy) Cosgrave believes that fellow entrepreneurs need a platform to share their experience with like-minded individuals. Co-founder of Lisbon's Web Summit and Hong Kong's RISE annual technology conference, Cosgrave's vision led to f.ounders, a forum for technology leaders to establish bonds in relaxed environments where serendipitous encounters form lasting bonds.

Lonely No More

"f.ounders started in 2010 with the simple idea that entrepreneurs seldom get together," explains Cosgrave. "Building companies can sometimes be lonely experiences. We wanted to bring together the founders of the most incredible technology companies, providing them with an opportunity to meet and learn from each other. Almost every major tech company created in the past decade has attended f.ounders."

Macao Magic

f.ounders 2018 was held at Four Seasons Hotel Macao last July. The two days event gathered leading tech entrepreneurs from Greater China, other Asian countries, India, Europe, and the US. Though it was Cosgrave's first visit to Macao, he was immediately captivated. "The city

is very magical at night," he enthused. "For such a small destination, I am amazed at the numbers of people that come here every year."

Hub for Start Ups

Cosgrave believes that Macao is ideal for start-up and tech events. "Many cities—such as Lisbon—have become start-up hubs over a very short space of time. There are some great travel start-ups that have emerged, like Ctrip in China and Booking.com in Europe. Macao makes it easy for tourism or travel start ups to grow."

Extraordinary Meets

Cosgrave feels that Macao's 5-star venues make it an ideal conference destination: "There are so many great venues, so many great hotels, so many great places to eat dinner—the biggest challenge was deciding which one to choose for dinner or an event." When combined with experienced MICE professionals, Cosgrave believes f.ounders' success was ensured: "When I choose an event's location, what matters most is who I work with. All our Macao partners were incredible. The city makes a wonderful destination for events of not just 200 but 2,000 or maybe even 20,000. No matter what size, Macao makes it happen."

Contact

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public/private entity, but it will only be in charge of promotion. Meetings and events are one of their products that we are working on standardising, which we are doing for each of our products. So, let's say you want to do inbound or outbound MICE, we are establishing the criteria that will have to be followed. We are working on all this, but in terms of a one-stop service it remains with us at the moment."

meetings and events industry, and as part of the ASEAN family of countries Cambodia can look to both Singapore and Thailand as leading examples of how to do things well, as well as learn from the pitfalls of what is currently happening elsewhere in the region, with issues such as over-tourism, pollution and the need for sustainability, as it charts its future path in the industry.

numerous advantages for attracting meetings and events. Cambodia has committed to showcasing these advantages by hosting its own travel trade show, Cambodia Travel Mart, since 2017, the maiden show being at the Sokha Convention Centre and Resort in Siem Reap and then moving to the Diamond Island Convention Centre in the capital of Phnom Penh for 2018, where it will also be held in this year. The show has generated significant interest from the ASEAN region and beyond, and as the infrastructure and facilities across Cambodia continue to come on stream it is highly likely that the show will also blossom to reflect this.

"Cambodia has a lot of strengths in terms of being a destination because we are new, so we have a lot of new development and we are unspoiled as a destination. We also have a lot of competitive advantage in terms of attracting the MICE industry to come, because they are always looking for new places to come to. Delegates have often been to Thailand or Singapore, so we offer something new for them."

"Even though we have only started to grow with meetings and events the interest is there, we just have to know how to tap it," says Visothy So. "The government and the private sector do their own individual promotion for MICE together with tour operators and travel agents, but within a few years the meetings and events industry will be growing rapidly in Cambodia and the government would love to see more corporates who will come back again and again, because during their MICE visit they won't have the time, but they will get to see what is here and want to come back."

"Even though we have only started to grow with meetings and events the interest is there, we just have to know how to tap it"

"When the industry has grown enough, we may have a Cambodia Convention and Exhibition Bureau (CCEB) similar to the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), but it's not there at the moment," says Visothy So. "From time to time we work together with them and have meetings, and they also want to expand their arms into Cambodia in terms of cooperation, and also for those visitors they bring who want to explore beyond Thailand they want to bring them to Cambodia. The Ministry of Tourism of the Kingdom of Cambodia and Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) also work closely together and we often receive their fam trips and post-tours when they visit Thailand and expand into Cambodia. It's a good idea that we should have a one-stop service and we have to learn from their expertise and what they have been through to get where they are."

Learning from the experiences of others is one key positive of being a latecomer to both tourism and the

"Right now the coastal area is developing very fast, but in terms of facilities and sustainability we are worried about the speed of growth as the people there and the facilities are not ready for this strong impact of development, so we need to do something in terms of better master-planning so that we don't have to face this kind of unsustainable consequence that can impact on the environment, the local people, the culture and the wider society. We have only 6.2 million visitors now, and when this increases we have to manage the impacts. We know this from general tourism, and this is something we can learn from for MICE development, make it steady and sustainable. This is our current major challenge. For us, we want to have good development and the most important thing is sustainability."

Keeping this major challenge at the forefront of thinking on tourism or MICE expansion will be central to any success for Cambodia, yet at the same time it is a country with



Canada Is the First Country TO HAVE A NATIONAL AI STRATEGY

CAROLINE BESSEGA, chief scientific officer for Montreal's Stradigi AI, was recently quoted in the *Financial Post*, saying, "In the future, AI is going to be as normal and as natural as the electricity in this room right now."

Thanks to well-funded research and a culture of collaboration, Canada is in the lead of a global competition for dominance in technologies with immense economic, strategic and military significance: Artificial Intelligence. Becoming a world leader in the development of ground-breaking technologies that allows computers to observe, learn and adapt at mind-boggling speeds didn't just happen by chance. Curious researchers, scientists whose work was supported by world-class academic institutions, a future-focused government who helped fund innovation clusters, a thriving start-up scene, and perhaps the most Canadian of all attributes: the willingness to come together for a common purpose, have all helped place Canada in the lead of the global AI race.

In an editorial published last year by *The Globe & Mail*, Alan Bernstein, President and CEO of CIFAR, the Canadian Institute for Advance Research, noted: "Canada's success in AI has depended on the willingness of all the players in this ecosystem to align for common purpose. That alignment has created the excitement that has attracted more talent, brought large firms such as Google, Google DeepMind, Facebook, Uber and Microsoft here, unlocked significant pools of capital from Real Ventures, Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec and

others and encouraged some of Canada's largest companies such as RBC, TD and Magna to invest." Bernstein also notes, "Successful scale-up companies such as Element AI have sent a signal to students, government and business that Canada is an attractive place to invest time, talent and money."

Canada is the first country to have a national AI strategy. Canadian research institutes have been developing the foundation of AI technologies for over 30 years. Early pioneers like University of Toronto's Geoffrey Hinton, (Vector Institute), Université de Montréal's Yoshua Bengio (MILA), and the University of Alberta's Richard Sutton (Deep Mind), quite literally built Canada's data-driven research capacity, the substructure of AI. This strong academic infrastructure evolved into a flourishing commercial ecosystem with Canadian start-ups implementing AI in fields as diverse as Fintech, business analytics, life sciences, autonomous vehicles, and CleanTech, creating data-driven solutions to some of the world's most pressing problems.

Leading the way to the future; the multinational companies expanding their research facilities in Canada, including: DeepMind, Google's AI research division, which opened its first international AI research office in Edmonton in July 2017. Facebook, Samsung, General Motors, IBM, Microsoft, Thomson Reuters, Thales, and Uber all have AI research labs in Canada. Microsoft, which first developed its Canadian AI presence by acquiring deep learning start-up

Maluuba in 2016, recently doubled its research centre in Montreal.

Key to the success of these innovative enterprises, Bernstein noted, is "The presence of a vibrant scientific community. [That] means that the private sector has the young talent nearby that is critical to understand, adapt and use new science," which makes an enormous difference to an organisation choosing to invest in new technology. Canada's Global Skills Strategy, the country's fast-track immigration programme, is also key to swiftly reversing a decades-long brain-drain that saw much of the country's top tech talent seek jobs in the US. No more. Compared to the high cost of living in US tech hubs, Montreal, Edmonton, Toronto and Waterloo are much more affordable, and attractive with plenty of high-value jobs in science and tech.

Beyond focusing on innovative research and commercialisation of AI technologies, Canada is also taking the lead regarding the ethical use of Artificial Intelligence. The Pan-Canadian Artificial Intelligence Strategy provides "global thought leadership on the economic, ethical, policy and legal implications of advances in Artificial Intelligence." There has also been an explosion in training opportunities for young people interested in applying AI to advance social innovation, with institutes such as MILA and McGill University's 2018 AI for Social Good Summer Lab and the University of British Columbia's Data Science for Social Good Fellowship Programme.



PHOTO: Anne Kristina Schaefer, IMEX

‘She Means Business’ DIGS INTO DIVERSITY AT IMEX FRANKFURT

“**THE MEETINGS** industry has both a desire and a need to understand and reflect human diversity more fully. I believe that over the past few years, we have seen much greater interest in, and understanding of, these issues and opportunities. The next step is to start to more consciously and consistently factor in a more diverse range of people into meetings, events and conference programmes, with the goal that this becomes second-nature for all of us over time,” says Carina Bauer, CEO of the IMEX Group.

Diversity and inclusion are the linchpin of ‘She Means Business’, created in partnership with the German magazine *TW Tagungswirtschaft* and part of Edu Monday, a programme of

free learning and development taking place on Monday 20 May, the day before IMEX in Frankfurt opens.

Anne Kjær Riechert, co-founder of a non-profit social enterprise teaching digital skills to refugees and migrants, launches ‘She Means Business’ with a keynote open to all Edu Monday attendees. In her keynote ‘Grit and Grace’ Anne Kier Riechert will share the story of how she founded and grew the Redi School of Digital Integration and her work as mentor and ambassador for the Grace Female Accelerator, which supports female-led start-ups.

‘She Means Business’ then continues with an afternoon of sessions where women and men from across

the world will share their experiences and lessons on gender equality or other diversity challenges. Senior Executives from organisations including PwC, Deutsche Bank and Lufthansa HR Management, Eurometropole de Strasbourg, Rwanda Convention and Melbourne Convention will be among the speakers.

Planners, buyers and other visitors can then explore destinations, venues, tech providers and more at IMEX in Frankfurt from 21–23 May. Among the exhibitors are New Zealand, Senses of Cuba, Barcelona Convention Bureau, Visit Brussels, Kempinski Hotels, Meliá Hotels and Latvia.



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The Business and Power OF PLACEMAKING

IMEX POLICY FORUM 2019 puts future city development front and centre on how business events can act as a catalyst in developing inspiring locations.

Expert speakers include cities advisor, Professor Greg Clark CBE; partnership and place management expert, Dr Julie Grail and leading business journalist and media advisor Ursula Errington.

Policy makers from national and regional governments worldwide will explore 'The Business of Placemaking' with leading business events industry professionals on Tuesday 21 May, the first day of IMEX Frankfurt.

The IMEX Policy Forum is where the business events world and public policy makers connect and share insights into how events such as conferences, meetings and incentive travel can make a major contribution to national and regional economies.

The enormity of this contribution has now been quantified. According to the *Global Economic Significance of Business Events*, the first ever worldwide study from the Events Industry Council (EIC) and conducted by Oxford Economics, the direct spend of the meeting and event industry worldwide in 2017 was more than US\$1.03 trillion, matching the consumer electronics sector in size.

All participants have the opportunity to visit the IMEX exhibition in the morning. In the afternoon, invited ministers and senior political representatives will take part in a national government discussion in collaboration with the United Nations World

Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) chaired by Martin Sirk of Sirk Serendipity. At the same time Professor Greg Clark CBE, the world-renowned advisor on cities will facilitate a city workshop specifically designed for local, municipal and regional policy makers and destination representatives, exploring 'business meetings and the innovation economy'.

'The Business of Placemaking' will be put into the spotlight when the keynote speech is presented by Dr Julie Grail, a leading expert and commentator on partnership and place management and a special adviser on Business Improvement Districts at the Institute of Place Management at Manchester Metropolitan University. Julie Grail, who has been involved in managing places for two and a half decades, has in recent years worked on international assignments in Australia, New Zealand, South America, Europe and the United States.

New this year, the interactive Leadership Discussion will feature an invited panel who will present case studies from the perspective of political, urban planning and destinations stakeholders who have all played influential roles in placemaking success stories. The discussion will be moderated by leading business journalist and media advisor Ursula Errington and will provide plenty of opportunity for everyone present to contribute to the discussions.

Each year the political representatives who take part acclaim the event, saying how valuable it is to learn from their peers in other countries and

from the meetings industry experts about the benefits to economic development and business tourism that investment in business events can bring.

Carina Bauer, CEO of the IMEX Group, comments: "Placemaking is a concept that's long been understood and embraced by some city planners and developers alike but now the meetings and events industry understands the power and importance of being part of these conversations. This year's agenda reflects what feels like a tipping point: a recognition that the business events industry can, and should, speak up to influence any city planning or placemaking decisions. This year's Forum will guide by example and show the way. With its new format everyone can contribute fully to a lively discussion and gain valuable insights from the case studies."

Organised under the auspices of the Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC), the IMEX Policy Forum's advocacy partners are Association Internationale des Palais de Congres (AIPC), European Cities Marketing (ECM), ICCA, The Iceberg and UNWTO. The Forum is sponsored by Turisme de Barcelona, Business Events Sydney, German Convention Bureau, Geneva Convention Bureau, Messe Frankfurt and the Meetings Mean Business Coalition.



IMEX Frankfurt SHINES A LIGHT ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

“**ORGANISATIONS** which embrace diversity will see positive repercussions throughout their business, from staff motivation and engagement, heightened innovation and a boosted bottom line. Diversity means diversity of people, minds, ideas, and approaches and it’s something we value at IMEX and recognise as crucial to the future success of the events industry. That’s why it forms a core part of our offering at IMEX in Frankfurt this year,” said Carina Bauer, CEO of the IMEX Group – explaining the show’s spotlight on diversity ahead of International Women’s Day.

IMEX Frankfurt, taking place 21–23 May, offers a wide range of experiences, education and experts enabling planners to discover the latest best practice in business, as well as developments in diversity and inclusion.

A session taking place on Edu Monday, a dedicated afternoon of education taking place the day before the show on Monday 20 May, focuses on cultural diversity. ‘Cultural differences and their impact on destination management’ explores

how to prepare for a culturally different client as well as the principles that should guide planners globally, regardless of local customs.

Also taking place on Edu Monday is ‘She Means Business’, created in partnership with the German magazine *TW Tagungswirtschaft*, a conference celebrating the role of women in the events industry. As one of the inspiring speakers debating the crucial issues facing women today, Gernot Sendowski, Director of HR Global Diversity & Inclusion at Deutsche Bank AG, delivers a male perspective on gender equality and female empowerment as well as exploring the German and European diversity charters.

Angela Dern, Head of Diversity & Inclusion at PwC, talks about gender equality as an economic imperative and details the UN Women 10×10×10 Impact Commitment, an initiative engaging ten governments, corporations and universities around the world.

Developing leadership skills to manage and motivate a diverse team is covered in ‘Industry best practices

on how to be an inclusive leader’, one of the many education sessions taking place on the show floor during the three days of the show. The session at the Inspiration Hub explores the best practices and communication models required to become an inclusive leader.

The design of an event can impact inclusivity and this is discussed in ‘Redesigning inclusive events by overcoming unconscious bias’. The session shows planners how to uncover their unconscious bias and discover practical ways of designing events to embrace diversity and inclusion.

Among the many exhibitors already confirmed are New Zealand, Senses of Cuba, Barcelona Convention Bureau, Visit Brussels, Kempinski Hotels, Meliá Hotels and Latvia. During the three days of the IMEX trade show, buyers can meet and making appointments with more than 3,500 suppliers from every sector of the global meetings and events industry.



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PHOTO Christoph Boeckeler, IMEX

Agency Directors Forum

A FUTURE-FOCUSED PROGRAMME

NEARLY 90 per cent of companies believe human skills are a critical capability for the future, but only 33 per cent have talent practices in place to drive these skills, according to a PwC global survey of 1,246 business leaders.

At IMEX this year owners and managers of mid-sized meetings or events agencies are being invited to close this skill and talent gap by learning how to future-proof their businesses.

This challenge and other business issues such as diversity, technology and management will be discussed at Agency Directors Forum, taking place May 20 at Schlosshotel Kronberg, the day before IMEX in Frankfurt.

The IMEX Agency Directors Forum is an afternoon of highly-interactive small group discussion focusing on 'People & Talent Management' – employee engagement and development; 'Keeping your Leadership Skills Smart' to assess and progress personal and team development; 'Technology for your Business' with advice on how to identify the best, budget-friendly new tech.

The final topic is 'Diversity, Collaboration, Transformation', which explores how agencies define diversity and ensure their organisations are a fair reflection of the fast-moving world at large. The issue of diversity in all its forms is a highly topical one, with research by DDI, The Conference Board, and EY showing that organisations with more women in leadership positions are 1.4 times more likely to deliver sustained, profitable growth.

Within each topic are multiple discussion points and agency heads, leaders and directors can look forward to meeting other professionals at similar responsibility levels to share their experiences, challenges and 'wins.'

Carina Bauer, CEO of the IMEX Group, explains: "We know from meeting and speaking with senior agency professionals that they see a real business benefit from stepping back from the day to day to-do list and assessing their own leadership roles, and that of their organisation's, in the world at large. We've carefully crafted this year's Agency Directors Forum to deliver a highly relevant

and future-focused programme which enables no holds-barred discussion."

"Businesses need to invest and hone in on the human skills of creativity, leadership and adaptability to better prepare the workforce of the future. The impact of automation and robotics over the course of the next few years will mean some jobs and tasks disappear, but new ones will emerge that rely on uniquely human skills such as judgement, empathy and innovation."

Following the Agency Directors Forum, attendees can then explore destinations, venues, tech providers and more at IMEX in Frankfurt from 21–23 May 2019. Among the many exhibitors already confirmed are New Zealand, Canada, Singapore, Barcelona, Hamburg, Azerbaijan, the Faroe Islands, Brussels and Latvia. During the three days of the trade show, planners can meet with more than 3,500 suppliers from every sector of the global meetings and events industry.



Emirates Working On AI-POWERED FLIGHT ASSISTANT

EMIRATES has demonstrated its commitment to fostering innovation in the global aviation industry by signing MoUs with three teams from the sixth cohort of the Dubai Future Accelerators (DFA) programme.

The companies, hailing from the USA, Germany and the UK, were selected from the pool of seven participant teams that worked with Emirates through DFA for nine weeks between March and May. The MoUs were signed by Adel Al Redha, Emirates' Executive Vice President and Chief Operations Officer and by representatives from the shortlisted companies, Opinsta (UK), Predapp (Germany) and Verusen (USA).

"Over the course of nine weeks, the interactions between the teams at Emirates as well as the participants of Cohort 6 of the Dubai Future Accelerators programme have resulted in a number of options we can explore to address the challenges we had defined," says Al Redha, Emirates' Executive Vice President and CEO.

"What we are witnessing here is the advancement of the next wave in aviation innovation led by the UAE government by adopting and testing emerging technologies and reiterating once again Dubai's role in shaping the future of humanity," says Khalfan Belhoul, CEO at Dubai Future Foundation. "The MoUs signed today are

the outcome of DFA's offering of an ideal setting for Emirates, the world's largest international airline, along with the brightest and most innovative minds, to work hand in hand in finding transformative solutions to key challenges in the aviation industry."

Verusen will be working on using Artificial Intelligence to support more agile procurement and supply chains for Emirates. Opinsta will be working on enhancing the internal processes and systems for crew duty travel and Predapp will work on developing an Emirates AI Assistant that will assist airline customers from pre-flight to post-flight.

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The whole purpose of IMEX – its raison d'être – is to help event planners plan ahead. So we know you'll appreciate knowing the dates of **IMEX 2019** and **IMEX 2020** right now.

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Discover new destinations, find inspiration of every kind and kick-start your business planning at IMEX 2019, and you'll have 2020 nailed! How's that for a plan?

IMEX AMERICA 2018: 16-18 October

IMEX in Frankfurt 2019: 21-23 May

IMEX in Frankfurt 2020: 21-23 April (yes – April!)

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PHOTO Sara Appelgren

In a survey of 22,000 business people ranking top leadership gurus, **ROBIN SHARMA** was #2, with Jack Welch. Sharma's books have sold millions of copies in over 60 countries. His new book is *"The Leader Who Had No Title: A Modern Fable on Real Success in Business and in Life"* (Simon & Schuster). Robin Sharma founded the Titan Academy and his blog is at robinsharma.com.

How to Fireproof YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

I STRONGLY encourage you to get away from the noise of life and really digest deeply over the next 5 minutes. (Your potential will applaud you for it.) So, let's go.

All of the billionaires, NBA stars, music legends and ultra-performers I personally advise and who show up at my events are "freaks."

They just see the world through a very different set of lenses than most people. They have a very different sequence of values. And they have a uniquely different series of personal protocols.

And so, like anyone who operates at the highest level of ingenuity, productivity and audacity, they have had to develop a strong interior core that allows them to keep on rising to wow in the face of society calling them strange.

A-players also understand that their five most valuable (and scarce) resources are as follows:

1 Their Mental Focus Without extreme concentration on your craft and "vital few" priorities, you'll spread your brain's bandwidth over many things. And, ultimately,

end up genius at nothing. By dialing in your focus, you'll leverage the neuroscientific rule that says, "neurons that fire together wire together." (Write that one down. Please.)

Next, your massive focus activates a certain type of brain cell called an oligodendrocyte which then triggers the production of myelin, a fatty tissue that wraps around the neural pathway related to the skill you're practicing.

Myelin is "The Material of Genius" in many ways as it accelerates your learning speed and heightens your perception. This is how Wayne Gretzky was able to skate to where the puck was going. And how tennis star Serena Williams has done what she has. Cool, right?

Implementation tactic: Zero Device Days (ZDD). These are days where you put your phone in a plastic baggie and leave your devices in another room. Carve out a space with no distractions called your Dream Room. Go there. Set an old-school timer for two, three hours. And don't get up until you've done real work versus the fake stuff ordinary performers pass off as good.

2 Their Physical Energy I was moving swiftly through an airport recently when a woman named Sheila stopped me. "The best thing I ever learned from you Robin Sharma, was your line 'Energy is more valuable than intelligence.'" She hugged me then kept on going.

It's true. You can be the smartest person in the room, have a market-making product, carry remarkable talent within you and have a future filled with pure opportunity. But without world-class energy, you'll never produce world-class results.

You just won't.

Implementation tactic: Recalibrate your diet. What you eat affects your moods, determines your longevity and drives your energy. No more processed food. Much more vegetables and fruits. Get serious about hydration plus supplementation.

If you're serious about becoming a world-builder, start eating like one. And remember: Eat less food and you'll get more done.

“Neurons that fire together wire together”

3 Their Personal Willpower

I’ve been doing a lot of quiet reflection on this point. In so many ways, the fundamental trait of outright greatness is self-discipline (the ability to translate your lofty intentions into measurable results).

And all epic performers not only build it each day (because science has taught us willpower is like a muscle: flex it and it grows) but they have discovered how to protect it.

Implementation tactic: Set up “Strengthening Scenarios.” These are situations that you engage in that make you feel uncomfortable for the purpose of making your willpower stronger. Navy Seals put themselves in hard circumstances designed to make them unbreakable. Boxers do the early morning road-work so they are resilient in the ring. And all superb producers go to where their discomfort lives. For there your highest power lies.

4 Their Creative Productivity

Everyone is an artist. Each of us has exceptional levels of creativity within us, longing to see the light of day. But for our finest ideas to show up, we need to set up the conditions for them to come out to play.

Genius-level insights (the kind that cause you to own your field plus make history) don’t appear amid stress, distractions, overscheduled days and toxic work spaces.

Make time to get away from your office. Spend more time in nature. Practice daily solitude. Read magazines you ordinarily wouldn’t read. Travel often. Go to art galleries. Prime your creativity. And watch what unfolds.

Then, exploit the creativity that presents itself into high-value productivity. Key move. Because ideas that are not made into results don’t generate success.

Implementation tactic: Write in a journal for 30 minutes every morning, while the rest of the world is asleep. I’ve been teaching this ritual for years and it’s still one of the best methods I know of to harness powerful thinking, download potent visions and capture the creativity that will make you legendary.

5 Their Time

Oh, this is such a key one. Billionaires and icons are fanatical when it comes to respecting the 24 hours of their day. The best performers would never stand for an hour waiting in line to get into a hip new restaurant. They would never waste an eight-hour flight playing games on their tablet or sleeping under a blanket. The great ones couldn’t imagine being in a beautiful hotel room in a cool city and using those hours to watch the news.

Simple yet perhaps a profound principle: the hours average performers misuse, the excellent producer leverages.

See: How can you lead your field plus achieve amazing results plus live a remarkable life if you’re not using your days well?

Implementation tactic: The Daily 5 Rule Five “micro wins” done every day with pristine consistency delivers 150 victories after only one month. Run this protocol daily and after just a year, you’ve achieved 1850 little wins. And as you’ve heard me say so many times: *small daily improvements when done consistently over time lead to stunning results.*

Because a breathtakingly great life is made not by revolution, but via evolution.

//

Everyone went the extra mile and worked together with our team as 'partners' to ensure the success of our Annual Congress event. //

Amanda Stops

CEO

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Volvo Car Group

A HUMAN-CENTRIC MEETING CULTURE

FOLLOWING the global gloom of the 1940s, the explosion of musical expression in the USA of the 1950s and its rock and roll era was just the tonic for the kind of positive living that people had been longing for. Whilst they could rock to the new beats coming through the airwaves on their radio, there was also the chance to roll on four wheels too, as the automobile industry was really taking off at the same time. In tune with the *zeitgeist* there was an emphasis on maximum power and flamboyant design, with hot rods and muscle cars vying for horsepower, curves and angles to the fore and polished chrome brightening the city streets.

At the same time in Europe, however, one manufacturer was taking a very different approach to what the main focus of an automobile should be. A safety cage within the body of the vehicle, padded dashboards, laminated windscreens to prevent shattering and three-point safety belts to reduce injury in accidents were all developed during the very same era that Chuck Berry was waxing lyrical about the hot rod race in Maybellene. Meaning “I roll” in Latin, the Swedish Volvo Car Group were from their Gothenburg headquarters contemporaneously imprinting their own take on what it meant to ‘roll’ in a mostly

rock era for automobile development, making safety and security paramount in a wholly special approach within a packed industry. It is this kind of unique culture that they have also applied to meetings in the company, a culture that persists to this very day.

“We do have a special culture in the company and that of course affects everything, including our meeting culture,” says Paul Welander, Senior Vice President and Senior Advisor to the CEO at Volvo Car Group. “It’s quite difficult to explain because you need to *feel* it, but we have defined how we should live our culture and I think we do that, very human-centric, very non-hierarchical and, from an organisational perspective, we are very flat despite the levels in the organisation.”

“It’s no problem for anybody to knock on the door of the CEO or anyone in executive management. I also think we have a very open and transparent attitude, our CEO calls it ‘coffee machine culture’, where you meet at the coffee machine and you talk, and that’s important and it also helps take you through hard times, which we’ve had a couple of.”

The discussions these days around the coffee machines at Volvo, as well as most other automobile

manufacturers around the world, may be more complex and demanding as the industry, alongside those of accommodation and fintech, is currently facing the highest levels of disruption amongst all major global industries. Added to the need to adapt to climate change and be visibly more environmentally responsible, it all points to the need for a lot more meetings to address a huge range of challenges.

“On these disruptive forces, I think that you will see in the automotive business a rather huge transformation that you can already read about today, but you will see a huge change from combustion engines to electrified vehicles and you will also see changes in traffic when it comes to, for instance, speed and behaviour,” says Paul Welander. “You will see changes in people’s attitude, and you will see other things happening as everybody will be connected, and you will see autonomous vehicles as well, maybe not by 2025 but by 2035. By 2050, instead of taking the night train somewhere you will take the car and sleep in it on the way there.”

“I think you will see these changes coming up, but moreover I think you will see a change in the commercial domain: in retailers, original equipment manufacturers (OEMs)

and customers moving forward. The industry wants to be more B2C. Today we are B2B because we sell to the retailers. With the help of digitisation it might give us another commercial set-up. Look at how the bank-operations have changed and how people are doing their financial business today. You are not running to the bank to pay your bills or put money in. It's all done on the internet."

in a certain way you harmonise the operation. I very often think of ourselves as a small company and that helps too."

Building internal harmony by meeting and challenging the operation may address the internal consequences of today's disruption on the industry, but a further challenge on the previous industry norms is coming from the impact new innovation

the police forces and we touched on when the teams in police cars need to take a break," says Paul Welander. "They drive to the police station and need to park the car, so they drive into the car park and need to find a space, then walk all the way back to the entrance, take the elevator all the way up to the coffee machine and then they have just a minute to take a cup of coffee. So why not allow the team to jump out of the car just outside the entrance and then the car parks itself, and just think what that would do for productivity levels."

Whilst it is meetings such as these that in turn can influence product design and innovation with the aim of delivering much wider social productivity outcomes, one of the challenges faced in achieving this is having the right people at the right meetings with an aptitude to ask the right questions and engage openly and constructively. Since 2010, when Volvo was taken over by Chinese automotive group Geely, it has more than doubled in staff size, an expansion so rapid that it has presented challenges both in the calibre of staff that Volvo has needed to attract, but also to the culture of the meetings that it has traditionally held within the company. This now raises the spectre of how the meeting culture might need to evolve to ensure that decision-making and growth can be maximised, including using meetings as a positive forum for the empowerment of managers.

"In Swedish culture we drink a lot of coffee and we are a very reserved culture, so what is difficult with us, when you talk about the meeting culture, might be that you sit in a meeting, might not speak up, but then go into the corridor and disrupt decisions by the coffee machine. You then learn to work with this culture of corridor decisions and not speaking up in meetings, but it would be easier

"It's no problem for anybody to knock on the door of the CEO or anyone in executive management"

"In terms of how we work and meet in respect of all this change we are able to be very fast at doing things, often with a gut feeling that sometimes decides things, and if with this gut feeling you can explain to senior management why they should do things you can get the buy in and it's done," says Paul Welander. "But we also measure a lot and we try to be rather connected between the various operations in the company, so like others we put up our operational targets and then we break them down almost to the individual for white-collar workers and to the groups for the blue-collar domain. Then we have operational reviews and when you go around and meet people you learn to put certain questions to challenge in the positive way."

"I think that's one of the things that senior management should do, challenge the operation to be better, faster and more human-centric, so if you have the same people moving around, meeting staff, challenging the operation and asking the questions

is having on external parties, creating the need for Volvo to now have a much stronger focus on collaborating and meeting much more outside of the company too.

"If there was a mobility congress taking place maybe some energy providers would be interesting to have there and maybe also some companies working with the development of cities and the utilisation of space would be interesting to have there too, but just ten years ago we would never have been interested in talking to those players. Today we are, and we do. If you look at our science parks in Gothenburg, we have one in particular, Lindholmen, that one of their responsibilities is to work with the automotive sector. They create a lot of conferences and congresses that we are invited to and attend, and it can be anything from sustainability to energy."

"I also had a discussion with the police the other day and we were talking about autonomous driving, but then we got on to the productivity of





A black and white photograph of a man with light-colored hair, smiling and looking upwards. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored shirt and dark trousers. He stands with his arms crossed in front of a large window. To his left, on the window, is a vertical column of seven white dots. Below the dots, the text "L'S EX" is visible in a white, sans-serif font. The man's reflection is visible in the window behind him.

L'S EX

“We do have a special culture in the company and that of course affects everything, including our meeting culture”

if people spoke up and it leads to one of the major challenges we have in the company and that's leadership.”

“I say that because we were 18,000 when Geely bought us and since 2010 we have grown by 25,000 to be 43,000 today, and an extra 25,000 means a lot of new managers and we need to ask if we have given them the necessary prerequisites to do the job in the best way,” says Paul Welander. “This is difficult because we are moving so fast, but they need to look after their employees. Being a manager in the Volvo operation puts certain demands on you and you are responsible for your operation, the result of the operation, the development of the operation, the employees in order to get them to do the job in the right way and for their development. To get employees to do the job in the right way this means that if you have an opinion you have to speak up, and so you need to make them brave.”

“If senior management is talking a lot about wanting a coffee machine culture I think it comes down in an organisation and if we can be transparent and have a management walking around and being out in operations talking to people then managers in the different levels will do something similar. In some cases,

you need to push because the most tricky job is to be a first line manager. You are the representative of the employer and the employees and you need to balance that, so it's a very difficult job.”

Tackling the needs of difficult jobs within an expanding organisation fuels the requirement for even more meetings, and as Volvo continues to build on the growing success it has had in recent years it is clear that the human-centric approach to its meeting culture is set to continue in its inimitable way that puts the spotlight firmly on people interaction whilst also bringing best value to the company.

“When you leave a meeting, you need to have added value to your previous situation, so to speak, so it needs to be value-added every time you meet people. That can be a solution of a certain issue, but it can also be a relationship built over a cup of coffee that will help you do your job better tomorrow when you get to know a person.”

“To me meetings can have these different meanings, sorting out issues and moving forward, but building relations is also a very, very important value-add, and whilst you can have a meeting on the web or on your phone

I used to state that it's important for us to eat together or have a beer together if you should work together in a very positive way, so you need to spend some time on who you are and be a little bit outside the issue as such,” says Paul Welander. “When you meet on the phone or on the web, you're very professional because you never chit-chat and just sort out issues. It's always best when you meet live; for me that's a meeting.”



PHOTO Sara Appelgren

ROGER KELLERMAN *Publisher, business intelligence analyst, trend creator, educator and networker. Has over 30 years' experience of the global meeting industry. Founder of Mötesindustriveckan. twitter.com/thekellerman*

The Art OF TAKING THE CHANCE

IN APRIL, the Associations World Congress & Expo (AWC19) came to the Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre in Gothenburg. With our 30 years plus experience of international congresses, we rate the AWC19 to be one of the best. At least for us. There were 480 delegates, 260 of them representing an international association. Many of the participants said it was the best congress ever.

Gothenburg was shown from the intelligent side. Annika Hallman, head of the convention bureau, Malin Erlandsson and Maria Thylén, both from Swedish Exhibition & Congress Centre/Gothia Towers, and Per Ankaer, MCI, and several of their dedicated team members created a world congress that went outside comfort zones and had lots of exciting things to offer.

We met Ebba Lund, a Danish woman living in Malaga, where she is the CEO of the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation. Here she opened doors for us which we otherwise would have had to spend many hours working on from our computers. Now we took the first step into our Science Parks in Sweden, but also internationally. We also talked to Carianne Buurmeijer,

from FEMS, Federation of European Microbiological Societies, and have now created paths into some upcoming articles on the importance of research for the development of the global meeting and event industry.

Furthermore, we had a meeting with Jane Cziborra, Head of Events at Alzheimer's Disease International, and were able to exchange our experiences from our recent trip to Australia, where we met one of the world's leading researchers in Alzheimer's, Professor Juergen Goetz. We also met Jacqueline Wolde Yohannes, director of administration, FCI, Facilitating Open Account, Receivables Finance and got new insights into economic research which can be quite hard to find. Of course, these meetings were just some of the ones we had, but we were the ones who contacted these people to increase our knowledge from new parts of the world.

Among the exhibitors, about 150, were six cities from Canada, Australia, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore; four exhibitors from India, Thailand, Africa, Tel Aviv, Abu Dhabi, Prague; six exhibitors from Vienna, Ljubljana, Barcelona, Madrid, Seville, Costa Brava, Aberdeen, Edinburgh,

Flanders, Holland, France, Strasbourg, Montpellier, Antwerp, Toulouse, London, Glasgow, Monaco, Munich, Nuremberg, Birmingham, Wales, but also the world's largest hotel chain ACCOR and IHG. Of course, Stockholm was on site, as well as Gothenburg, Malmö and Borås. But there were also the other Swedish convention bureaux.

Gothenburg did not get the AWC19 doing nothing. They were engaged, involved and created the opportunities for the congress to come. Gothenburg has raised the bar: "We want to become the best meeting destination in the world!" Unswedish? Of course, but we have many cities and convention bureaux that must take the next step. And the next. And the next after that. No one else will take that step for us. We must do it ourselves.

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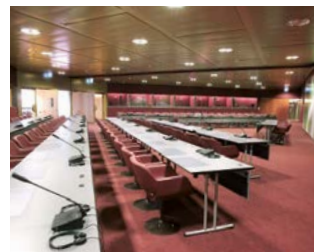


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A man with a beard, wearing a blue wetsuit, a snorkel mask, and a snorkel, is smiling and holding a large yellow and black fin. He is standing in a convention hall with rows of tables and chairs in the background. A small penguin is standing next to him.

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