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CEO, Bizdev

“Let visuals tell the tale”

SHIFT

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ECOSYSTEMS

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KELLERMAN

• REDEFINING •



Boardroom

on the beach





BCCK Emerges Better Than Ever

The Borneo Convention Centre Kuching (BCCK) has spent the last two years enhancing and upgrading its services to meet the coming decades and welcome back international association events to an even more attractive venue.

With 86 per cent of events cancelled or postponed due to the pandemic, BCCK took the opportunity to focus on enhancing and upgrading its facilities. With a three-pronged approach towards ushering the Centre into a new era, of modern comforts, digitisation and efficiency, it has upgraded its systems to the best-in-class versions available, expanded the Centre's products and services as well as beautified the venue and setting.

Enhancement

While the lack of business events was a large issue for the Centre during the pandemic, BCCK took the low traffic as a golden opportunity to take stock of current facilities, plan for the future and execute those plans, particularly within the realm of Audio-Visual Technology, as the Centre also began exploring the realm of virtual and hybridised events.

BCCK has enhanced digitally and technologically, incorporating top-of-the-line sound systems from D&B Audiotechnik, digital signages and billboards throughout the centre, and equipping

selected meeting rooms with 20,000 ANSI Lumens projectors. The Centre's website has been completely overhauled, streamlining client and partner's experience and making it easier for communication and navigation for BCCK's most recent offerings.

Taking the food industry by storm, BCCK has ventured deeper into large scale offsite catering, food delivery and portable food production, while also exploring food retail industry by supplying local grocery stores with BCCK-brand food options, courtesy of BCCK's in-house chefs.

BCCK also took the opportunity to get a proverbial "facelift," refurbishing, fixing and repainting some of its more iconic features such as its leaf-shaped roof and decorative beams, as well as phasing out older linens used in banqueting for a fresher look.

Expansion

Expansion takes a front seat in BCCK's development plans for 2022, in every aspect of the Business Events Industry. Venue-wise, the centre has invested in a Mobile Telescopic Bleacher Seating System that can seat nearly 1,900 people within the great hall, diversifying the types of spectator events BCCK can host.

As Covid-aware and Covid-ready events are the new standard for the foreseeable future, BCCK aims to expand into hybrid, fully digital and televised events, armed with a digital broadcast suite



complete with high-definition recording and broadcasting camera sets and other studio fixings. Offering add-on value to larger international events that wish to broadcast, distribute recordings or archive their events that take place in BCCK.

Redefining Business Events

BCCK has also begun focusing on generating its own home-grown events, with the goal to create annual events that can become Hallmark events that like-minded delegates can look forward to every year, in a uniquely BCCK.

Among the home-grown events to come are the Borneo Extreme Auto Show & Tradefest (BEAST 2023), an automotive tradeshow and expo that will be open to the public and will feature the local Sarawak car aficionado scene, as well as the Asia Pacific Tourism Expo & Conference (APTEC) and Travel & Trade Mart (TTM), which will be held exclusively in BCCK and will bring together local and international members of the tourism & hospitality industry.

BCCK entered into partnerships with like-minded organisations, such as the ARC Creators with the promise of encouraging and

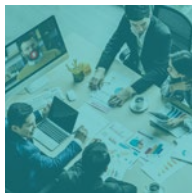
nurturing local events created and led by local people, in an effort to encourage and nurture grass-roots event initiatives into regional events in the near future.

For over a decade, BCCK has served as the largest and best equipped convention centre in Borneo. It has ensured its position into the upcoming decade post pandemic, with much excitement and anticipation for business events. The timely enhancements are designed to welcome back its international and national association's clientele, both in person and hybrid.

BCCK continues to work closely with both local and international counterparts in the reopening of Borneo's borders and continues to strive to ensure smooth execution of events for all delegates and BE partners.



Connect with BCCK at Malaysia Pavilion stand B200 during IMEX Frankfurt, and find out more on www.bccck.com.my



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The Metaverse

A DIGITAL REALITY

THE CONCEPT of the metaverse is quickly becoming a buzzword in technology and business. The idea of the metaverse is that it will create new online spaces in which people's interactions can be more multi-dimensional, where users can immerse themselves in digital content rather than simply viewing it.

The term metaverse comes from *Snow Crash*, a 1992 science fiction novel by **Neil Stephenson** in which human avatars and software demons inhabit a parallel 3D universe.

We have all experienced something of the metaverse during the pandemic. Many of our workplaces shifted from the physical to the digital to cope with lockdowns. Zoom or Teams became where our companies lived. Imagine that expanding out to all areas of life. Now, you have just imagined the metaverse.

Next year, Microsoft will introduce its virtual collaboration platform Mesh into Teams to merge the company's mixed reality and improve meetings. Microsoft entered the metaverse chat through its Teams app just days after Facebook announced its rebranding to Meta.

The metaverse is a virtual world that blends aspects of digital

technologies, including videoconferencing, games like Minecraft or Roblox, cryptocurrencies, email, virtual reality, social media and live streaming.

The key difference between the internet and the metaverse is the idea of presence. The internet is something we access, and the metaverse is something we can be present within. And that's the big change.

Widespread metaverse usage could impact how companies and organisations operate in future. Platforms like Microsoft's Mesh for Teams are making 3D metaverses seamlessly accessible for businesses. People can be present together in virtual spaces or rooms, rather than on-screen conferencing in 2D. Meeting participants can move freely between people and groups, collaborate, participate in workshops, have side conversations, and learn together as if in a physical space.

As the metaverse grows, if it does, it will create online spaces where user interactions are more multi-dimensional than current technology supports. Instead of just viewing digital content, users in the metaverse will be able to immerse themselves in a

space where the digital and physical worlds converge.

There's a window of opportunity right now, and we need to take advantage of it. Start planning, and you can both carve out your corner of the metaverse and prevent other companies from becoming gatekeepers between you and the next wave of digital.

We can expect the competition to be intense, with many interesting partnerships and alliances, epic failures, and spectacular developments that could challenge and change every aspect of human activity. Perhaps the metaverse will be the defining platform for interactivity as we move forward.

Time will tell whether we move from hybrid working to a permanent future in the metaverse. But until then, we know that offices companies and organisations must be ready to facilitate the modern workforce's technological flexibility.

The metaverse will redefine what businesses are and how they should operate. Some companies are watching and learning. Those that don't will be left behind.



PHOTO Magnus Malmberg

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.



A portrait of Scott Steinberg, a man with a receding hairline, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored button-down shirt. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred, high-angle view of a modern building with a grid-like facade. A large, stylized, light blue 'S' logo is overlaid on the image, passing behind the text.

STEINBERG

TEXT

Scott Steinberg

PHOTOS

FutureProof Strategies

The Futurist Consulting Company



Time Spent in Offsite Meetings IS EVEN MORE VALUABLE

Today's workforce lives in a time of growing disruption and uncertainty, where the pace of change is only continuing to accelerate. We're all being asked to absorb more information faster than ever.

CONSIDER SOME of these key stats related to corporate meetings during the pandemic era, compiled from various surveys by AI company Otter.ai:

- The remote work model has increased weekly meeting time by 10 per cent, resulting in three additional weekly meetings per employee.
- The number of meetings attended by a worker on average rose by 13.5 per cent.
- The researchers found a 20.1 per cent decrease in the average length of meetings.

Fundamental Changes As a keynote speaker who trains executives to adapt to change and uncertainty every year, it's become clear that many meeting and event formats

haven't evolved to keep pace with the future of work. We need a way to make sense of emerging business topics and technologies more rapidly through formats such as micro-learning, as opposed to the full-course curriculum.

I believe this will be the case in the future, whether meetings are held virtually or in person, as the pandemic has caused fundamental changes in how we interact.

I've launched a new methodology for exploring and discussing the impact of breaking topics dubbed Pop Future. It provides a blueprint for making future trends, innovations and business concepts more approachable and simpler for audiences of all backgrounds and skill levels to comprehend and deliver in a radically shorter time by using

“It’s become clear that many meeting and event formats haven’t evolved to keep pace with the future of work”

cartoon animations, illustrated infographics, short film skits, interactive games and other forms of artistic expression to boost engagement, learning and retention.

As corporations are getting back to meetings, some top-line items to think about as attention spans shrink, time spent in offsite meetings is even more valuable, and meeting agendas continue to be compressed, whether online or in-person.

Explainer Videos Insider tip: It often takes as little as 30 seconds for a key concept to click in audiences’ minds when you find the right story to tell or an analogy that helps an otherwise complex concept make sense in an everyday context.

Quick-hit videos of no more than three to five minutes in length can often help you hammer home the impact of what might otherwise seem like dry topics, such as cybersecurity or the future of data science, in a more rapid and user-friendly fashion.

Interactive Games and Activities

Listening to a speaker address a topic

from the stage can be informative, but most of us learn best by doing, and experience is often the most effective teacher. Think less talk, more action:

Pepper your schedule with more learning exercises, brainstorming activities and creative challenges. You will keep audiences more active and engaged, and you’ll also provide ample chances for them to network, make new connections and learn from others’ ideas and approaches.

Short Films and Documentaries

Zzzz, huh, wha? Oh, sorry, I must’ve dozed off during that dry corporate reel. Trust me: There are 1,001 ways to get important information on your new marketing program or five-year strategic plan that doesn’t have to come off like a canned infomercial. Music videos, comedic skits, behind-the-scenes looks, making-ofs, getting-to-knows, crowdsourced commentary, game show parodies.

When you’re trying to raise awareness or support for an initiative, don’t be afraid to think differently in terms of approach. Just be sure to lead with a strong hook, whether in the form of





“Look for more opportunities to have presenters speak with audiences, not at them. Conversation is a two-way street”

humour, urgency, impact, etcetera. Remember: Today’s audiences are increasingly tuning out anything that seems even the least bit skippable.

Contests and Challenges Rapid-fire brainstorming sessions. Shark Tank-style innovation programs. Strategic planning activities that challenge you to role-play your way through real-world scenarios that may unfold in the future and impact your business.

Again, think of how you can weave more opportunities to learn into your event schedule and incentivise more audience participation by incorporating a healthy sense of competition and good sportsmanship into these programs.

Promote Two-Way Dialogue Look for more opportunities to have presenters speak with audiences, not at them. The conversation is a two-way street. Possible options might include interactive town-hall-style presentations or panels full of audience polls and questions served up on the fly to participants.

Alternately, they can take the form of call-and-response activities, online group exercises and app-based polls or surveys. However, you tackle the challenge: The fewer time presenters

passively present to viewers, and the more they engage in active real-time discussion, the more engaging programs will be from the audience’s perspective.

Let Visuals Tell the Tale No matter how engaging a presenter is, graphics, animations, videos, illustrations and other visual representations can communicate ideas faster than words.

What’s more, no matter how poetic you can wax in conversation, imagery is often far easier to grasp and understand at a glance and can promote more rapid learning and better retention by serving as a helpful form of mental shorthand.

My advice: Leverage charts, graphics and illustrations wherever possible to simplify ideas, make otherwise dense concepts more approachable, and give viewers a quick, easy entry path into any topic.

Scott Steinberg, President and CEO of Bizdev: The International Association for Business Development and Strategic Partnerships. Hailed as the World’s Leading Business Strategist, award-winning professional speaker Scott Steinberg is among today’s best-known trends experts and futurists, and the best-selling author of “Think Like a Futurist; Make Change Work for You: 10 Ways to Future-Proof Yourself, Fearlessly Innovate, and Succeed Despite Uncertainty,” and “Fast >> Forward: How to Turbo-Charge Business, Sales, and Career Growth.” Find him through FuturistsSpeakers.com.







PHOTO Sara Appelgren

HANS GORDON, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Authorised Psychologist, specialised in Aviation Psychology. Authorised psychotherapist, since 1987 running *Gordon Consulting*. Has for decades been engaged by airline companies, among them SAS and Thai Airways International.

The Delusion OF POWERLESSNESS



We often overestimate our ability to predict the future. Predictions are based on experience, and we expect the future to be like the past. This approach is useful and practical in the short term, but what really determines developments in the very long term? If you bide your time, you will soon experience whole new experiences that turn everything on its head and make all predictions futile”

From *Vårt klot så ömkligt litet* (“Our Globe so Pitifully Small”)

by **ULF DANIELSSON**, professor of theoretical physics

ORGANIC LIFE first appeared on earth just over three and a half billion years ago, initially in the form of unicellular organisms. These and all life forms after that have undergone, and continue to experience, an evolutionary process that has culminated in an enormous variety developed over millions of years, and a life for you and I that is unrecognisable from that of the ancient animals that still inhabit

our ocean floors. And we still have the same basic anatomy, so we are related. The difference between us and all other life forms is due solely to gradual adaptation to various living environments.

As we all know, it was British biologist and zoologist **Charles Darwin** (1809–1882). He, after a study trip to the Galapagos Islands and many years of study, presented his findings

**“When predictability starts to fade
and no longer gives any clear indications
is when anxiety steps to the fore. It casts the dark
shadow of doubt, and we instinctively regress to the
past and take shelter in groups”**

in *On the Origin of Species*. Published in 1859, it explains how the different species of plants and animals came to be and have evolved since life began on earth.

Only an estimated 0.5 per cent of the millions of species have survived since ancient times and more modern times.

All the others have become extinct or so radically altered that their origin can only be found in fossil layers. Modern man, *Homo sapiens*, is a relative newcomer. The species we belong to emerged somewhere between 100,000 to 200,000 years ago, first on the African continent before spreading throughout the world. And 100,000 to 200,000 years is just a blink of an eye in the history of a planet that stretches back 4.6 billion years.

Today, people say that the market does not like uncertainties and works best under calm and collected conditions when most things seem much more predictable. *Homo sapiens* like buying and selling, especially in what we call the developed world.

Ideologically and politically, almost all ‘man-made’ nations follow the capitalist ideology of social structures based on the supply and demand of goods and services.

The traditional religions certainly still exist, but mainly in the form of older cultural expressions, much like museums showing historical and more modern art creations. The number of people who still worship invisible gods and similar powers is slowly declining. Today, more and more people see the Market (with a capital M) as the dominant force that, via the internet, affects everything and everybody at a furious pace.

The Market has a societal function created entirely by humans that have always been controllable. Still, the robotic systems of recent years are run by *artificial intelligence*, a mathematical, statistical product that has shifted control to a few IT experts. Many are following it with great interest. What does the Market predict for tomorrow? How will it react? Where should we place our savings? What will I get in return if I

invest today? We tend to look for the reasonably predictable answers to all our questions.

When predictability starts to fade and no longer gives any clear indications is when anxiety steps to the fore. It casts the dark shadow of a doubt, and we instinctively regress to the past and take shelter in groups where we feel content to wait and do nothing. Some recoil into deep depression or some other mental state. Others return to their church and beg forgiveness. One never knows.

No, one never knows. Anything could happen at any time. We *Homo sapiens* should be used to insecurity because we inhabit a very insecure planet with a history of events that were not even predictable, let alone well-controlled.

Suddenly an earthquake, a volcanic eruption, a giant meteor falling from the sky, a violent solar storm caused by gigantic magnetic explosions on the sun’s surface having a devastating effect on our planet, the outbreak of not just one but several

**“We are evolutionarily prepared
to seek protection, and the most common way
is to form groups like elephants, the deer
on the steppe and small fish species
in the oceans”**

highly contagious viruses, unexpected death in the family, a Russian military invasion of a peaceful European country.

Against all these threats, we are evolutionarily prepared to seek protection, and the most common way is to form groups like elephants, the deer on the steppe and small fish species in the oceans.

We unite and look around for the Leader, who emerges with a presumed overview and with the ability to formulate directions forward and away from the curses of threats. And no, it is scarce for any scientist to aspire to such a position but is more often a power-hungry person longing for the intoxication of adoration from the expectant masses.

Leaders, however, do not choose their people. The people decide who to appoint and worship as their Leader, and they care nothing about past merits. It could be an Austrian painter who later became a corporal in an army, or it could be a film actor from some American B movies, a TV celebrity in Ukraine, or

an above-average politician in any country. They only need to show some authority, verbal ability, and a genuine interest in the type of leadership they wish to exert.

British doctor and psychoanalyst **Wilfred Ruprecht Bion** (1887–1979) made his name known throughout the Western academic world with his books and other writings. As a therapist for soldiers with post-traumatic stress syndrome, he was happy to work with these patients in small groups. In one of his most famous books, entitled *Experiences in Groups and Other Papers*, Bion explains how, when severely threatened, groups tend to go desperately in search of a leader. This process often leads to them making baffling and bewildering choices. Quote:

“In its search for a leader the group finds a paranoid schizophrenic or malignant hysteric if possible. If the group is unable to find someone with those attributes, the group looks for someone with delinquent trends and a

psychopathic personality. Otherwise, the group would just settle on the verbally facile high-grade defective. I have never known a group of more than five members not to include at least one of these types. As soon as the leader is found, the group begins to treat him or her with reverence and uses flattery to strengthen the leader’s position.”

It appears that Bion is exaggerating somewhat, ‘spicing it up’ a little. By this, I probably mean that he does it simultaneously, as he still indicates what could happen in a more pressured and closed culture, especially one with a lack of training in articulated and open intellectual debate.

Then it may be enough for a sufficiently socially prominent person to be assigned a role that does not always rest on broader and well-analysed merits. And then, as we all know, whatever will be will be. And how it has been. Not only in 1930s Germany, not only in North Korea or in Brazil or Iran or Venezuela or

**“When people feel threatened,
especially by forces that seem invincible,
they retreat inwards. They flee there.
Fleeing outwards is like choosing
to go into battle”**

Myanmar, but also Russia and our own country with our former warrior kings and others.

When people feel threatened, especially by forces that seem invincible, they retreat inwards. They flee there, and escaping outwards is like going into battle. Adventurers sometimes foolishly choose that path, but ordinary people usually get the mussel back into the shell.

Mussels seek the oases of tranquility. This they do by forming colonies with others where they build something known as dependency culture, meaning they make themselves dependent on others because they cannot manage all by themselves. They are at least on board a train, even if it is stationary, and they are going along for the ride, pinning their hopes on a Leader or a Saviour.

On the appearance of the Leader or Saviour, they make an active choice. As herd animals, they continue to help shape the dependency culture. It has saved their forefathers, so perhaps it will save them too.

But life wants more than that. All living creatures wish for more than

that. The train, in fact, is only stationary for brief periods. Sitting passively still is like speeding towards death, and silence is the atrium of death.

Life forces resist the temptations of silence and death. **Sigmund Freud** summed up that dynamic in his: Eros versus Thanatos. Many doctors and other academics did not understand what Freud was saying, and some just shook their heads and looked away. Many still do today.

Eros is there, pushing the individual and the group forward. Eros desires and demands innovation and innovators. Away with the delusions of powerlessness and onwards towards something more suited, resilient, and vibrant.

Dependency culture is regularly destroyed and replaced by creative cultures, driven by individuals seeking new individuals who will raise new children or new beings together in both a literal and figurative sense.

Homo sapiens' time on Earth is coming to an inevitable end. But the new ones, or ones, will replace us all. May it go better for them than it did for us.

Bring your green mindset.

We'll do the same

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Name Stephanie Mathas / Age 33
Position CSR & Sustainability manager, RAI Amsterdam / City Amsterdam

What I love about RAI is that it is a venue where so many great moments occur. A large variety of people meets here and this provides very special dynamics. RAI organizes and facilitates events. To me, RAI is so much more than merely this. We are also an organisation that contributes actively to social initiatives in the city.

I started here six years ago in the position of CSR Manager by supporting development of CSR in the organisation in the broadest sense. Besides initiatives to prevent or mitigate a negative impact by RAI, I also started an active quest into opportunities to enhance a positive impact.

Adding social value

To give an example, we were able to support the HeenenWeer Foundation on the RAI grounds with special parking spots for their electric cars. The volunteers of this foundation drive short distances locally in small electrical vehicles to take people with walking challenges to and for shop-

ping or similar matters. But we also find ways to make a difference with our core business. Often, lots of goods are left after a fair; drinks, food, furniture, plants, disposables, you name it. These are either wasted or returned to the country of origin. We have now engaged volunteers with shopping carts to visit all booth occupants on the final day of a fair. They carry a list of goods that regional initiatives could use when they are donated. Our donation programme supports them in obtaining usable goods and we turn 'waste' into social value.

It's about outside looking in

There are so many opportunities to make a difference and I am hugely fascinated by that. It is not about you believing that you are a responsible business, but it is all about being in contact with stakeholders. It's about outside looking in. At RAI we want to do whatever we do in a socially responsible manner. This requires continued attention.



Bring yourself

NL

Netherlands



A person's arm and shoulder, wearing a light-colored shirt with a small dark pattern, are visible on the left side of the frame. The background is a blurred city street scene with a yellow light streak and a large, faint, stylized blue letter 'S' overlaid.

SUCCESS

TEXT

David Larsson Heidenblad

PHOTO

[iStock.com/fizkes](https://www.istock.com/fizkes)



Bye, Bye Powerpoint

A LESSON TO LEARN FROM THE AMAZON SUCCESS STORY

Amazon has found a way to harness the silent power of introverts and sift out bad ideas.

AT 10 A.M. on a Monday, you're called to a mandatory meeting at work. You're told it will last an hour but have no idea what it's about.

During the coffee break, you'll be trying a new work method. Your team leader has read a new book and wants to take the opportunity to experiment with your approach to meetings now that everyone is back in the office again after lockdown.

Everyone is suffering from Zoom fatigue, but few long backs to how things were: long sessions on everything and anything and the same old input from garrulous colleagues. Is it possible to do it another way?

The Monday morning meeting begins with everybody taking their usual seats. Like the prepandemic days, the table is adorned with a fruit basket, a few glasses and a couple of jugs of water. But there is one addition, a six-page document at every

seat entitled "Things we should try to do differently in March 2022."

Your team leader welcomes you with the announcement that the day's meeting, and all other meetings in March, will begin with twenty minutes of silent reading followed by a discussion of what you have read. He asks you to put away your laptops and mobiles, and the silence is deafening.

The above scene depicts how meetings are held at Amazon, one of the largest companies in the world. Here in Sweden, this tech giant is perhaps mainly associated with poor working conditions in the warehouses, an unhealthy monopoly of the market, and founder **Jeff Bezos'** questionable wealth and outlay on space travel.

Much can be said, and rightly so, about all of that, but what happens if we approach the company differently? Can we learn anything from

their success story? Is Amazon doing anything fundamentally right?

For those curious enough to find out, there is a book entitled *Working Backwards: Insights, Stories, and Secrets from Inside Amazon* (MacMillan 2021). It was written by two former high-ranking Amazon executives, **Colin Bryar** and **Bill Carr**.

They began at the company in the late 1990s and stayed 27 years. Up close, they witnessed explosive growth, technological innovation, and the creation of products and services such as Kindle, Amazon Prime and Amazon Web Services.

Despite having left the company, both authors are still very loyal. Symptomatically enough, the first part of the book is called "Being Amazonian" and takes up the principles and work processes developed by the company. This is followed by a shorter second part, "The Invention

“What would happen to our meetings if we devoted a third of our time to silent reading”

Machine at Work”, with four case studies contributing concretisation and in-depth analysis.

The book *Working Backwards* is taken from the company’s concept that products are best developed by working backwards from the desired customer experience.

The focus is on who uses it and how not what Amazon must do to get there. Before a new product enters the development stage, a press release is written with associated questions and answers.

The press release should be one page, and the questions and answers a maximum of five pages. A meeting cannot be held until the document is in place. As we saw above, it begins with everybody reading silently for twenty minutes.

A discussion then takes place as to whether the idea is developable, needs refining or should be rejected. Most ideas never make it past this stage.

The example shows that Amazon puts great emphasis on the written word. “Our presentation tool is Microsoft Word, not Powerpoint”, as Colin Bryar and Bill Carr put it.

The written word is considered a concentrated form of thinking and a distillery of ideas. Writing six pages of

convincing text requires clear, balanced thinking.

There’s no time for old hobby-horses or to side-track into irrelevant issues. Even things you consider important will be pushed aside. The complex format brings priorities and focuses to the fore.

Another reason for moving away from oral presentations and Powerpoints is that they reward skilled presenters. Reserved people or individuals lacking design skills don’t get a look in. But this doesn’t mean that experienced presenters have better ideas. They could, of course, but Amazon puts writing skills ahead of charismatic and entertaining presentations.

The working methods mentioned here were not in place in the 1990s, and they have emerged over time to meet the challenges faced by a fast-growing tech company.

The ambition has been to develop work processes so robust that they work with hundreds, thousands, hundreds of thousands or even millions of employees. A key to this is that the procedures must be simple to understand and follow.

When management at different levels is faced with making a choice, they need a set of guiding principles.

There’s no way to ask Jeff Bezos what he thinks.

For my part, I find it fascinating that an innovation-driven company of this size chooses to work so analogously. Of course, the whole thing shouldn’t be exaggerated. Like other tech giants, Amazon is data-driven, and the information they store about customer behaviour is hard currency.

The six pages may very well contain graphs and numbers, but they are also subordinate to the narrative. The art of reading and writing is valued above all else.

Could Amazon’s process work in other worlds? What would happen to our meetings if we devoted a third of our time to silent reading? Would it enable us to stick with the subject and make better decisions?

Yes, perhaps it would. Why not dedicate a month this spring to put it to the test? It could be a while before an equally good opportunity arises for collective innovation and experimentation.

And, while we’re at it, perhaps an upgrade of the school libraries wouldn’t go amiss. Even future tech companies will need programmers and leaders who excel in reading and writing.

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Association Day at IMEX 2022

WHERE HIGH-VALUE INSIGHTS MEET REAL-WORLD RECOMMENDATIONS

“IN THIS POST-PANDEMIC world associations are re-evaluating their strategies and diversifying their approach to events and community engagement. Our exclusive event, *Association Focus*, will bring association professionals together to review and discuss the steps they must take to meet the challenges of this new chapter.”

Carina Bauer, CEO of the Imex Group, introduces *Association Focus*, a day of networking and learning for association professionals. Global expert speakers lead the Sheraton Frankfurt Airport Hotel & Conference Center programme on Monday, 30 May, the day before *Imex Frankfurt*, held from 31 May to 2 June.

Carola van der Hoeft, President of AC Forum and COO & Congress Director of the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), underlines the business need and the excitement fuelling the sector's reunion at the show:

“The association representatives I've spoken with recently have all shared the same sentiment, they're looking forward to returning to *Imex Frankfurt* and meeting face to face again.

“There are many reasons behind this: they're looking forward to meeting their global suppliers and partners, venues and CBS in particular, doing business and reinforcing those all-important partnerships.

“Alongside this, the associations are also excited about the sheer joy of seeing each other, colleagues, members, partners, face to face again after a long hiatus. By bringing everyone together, the show represents an opportunity to build relationships across multiple areas of the industry, ultimately making our sector stronger in the process.”

Count Me In's Shane Feldman – making teams tick *Association Focus's* topical and interactive programme

“Looking ahead to the association workplace of the future: a world reshaped”

is divided into two streams, designed for association leaders and association events professionals, beginning with a keynote *Leadership Passport: Helping Association Leaders Build a Thriving Community*.

Shane Feldman, founder of the largest youth-led organisation globally, Count Me In, will share the results of his research into community leadership and human behaviour in over 25 countries. He will detail the universal strategies he's uncovered that make teams click and associations thrive.

Michelle Mason, President & CEO of ASAE, looks ahead to *The Association Workplace of the Future: A world reshaped by Covid*. She will moderate a panel session featuring **Jeanne Sheehy**, CMO of Bostrom Corporation and **Liesbeth Switten**, Secretary-General at the Association of Issuing Bodies. Together, they'll explore the economic impact of the pandemic for associations and share advice on how to evolve the business model.

Diversity, equity & inclusion for associations With diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) high on many business agendas, it's essential for associations to attract and retain

diverse talent and craft content that resonates across demographics.

However, the definition of DEI can differ around the world, and associations may need to consider different strategies for incorporating DEI practices across their organisations, from boards to staff, members, events, and beyond.

Tracy Bury, Deputy CEO of World Physiotherapy, **Mike Morrissey**, Chief Executive of the European Cancer Organisation, and **Senthil Gopinath**, CEO of ICCA, join Michelle Mason on a panel covering these topics and more in *Diversity, Equity & Inclusion for Associations*.

Long live content! How to create 365 learning opportunities That's a panel session which sees **Zhanna Kovalchuk**, Executive Director of ESSKA, **Vicki Greenwood**, Director of Global Events at the Association of Corporate Treasurers and **Davi Kaur**, CEO of the European Society for Emergency Medicine at the European Cancer Organisation, discuss how they generate year-round content.

Using content as a transformation tool to drive continued membership engagement and prolong the life of an event will be covered in *Long live*

content! – How to create 365 learning opportunities.

Imex Frankfurt attendees can choose sessions from two streams of *Association Focus* and tailor the day to suit their own needs. Each session is expertly curated and designed with experts using real-life examples and learnings, emphasising open peer to peer discussions. The aim is for attendees to leave armed with new ideas to put into action.

Education partners ASAE, AMCI and ICCA, and supporting partners ESAE and AC Forum have collaborated with Imex to create *Association Focus*.

Sponsored by Tel Aviv and Global Association Hubs, *Association Focus* takes place Monday, 30 May. It ends with an Association Social where attendees can catch up with industry friends and celebrate the start of *Imex Frankfurt*.




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Moving From Virtual to Hybrid Events

37 TIPS AND IDEAS ON HOW TO MAXIMISE YOUR SUCCESS

TEXT

Corbin Ball

A HYBRID EVENT is one that combines a face-to-face (F2F) event at a physical location with a “virtual” online component for remote attendees. Hybrids will likely see widespread adoption as F2F meetings re-emerge from the pandemic for a number of reasons:

- Some attendees may not wish to travel to the event for fear of contagion or other health and safety concerns.
- There will likely be reduced travel funds available for event attendance due to economic downturns.
- Some attendees may simply accept remote event attendance as an acceptable substitute with no travel time, no travel costs and reduced environmental impact.
- A virtual component offers the possibility of opening up to a much larger audience with new and/or geographically dispersed markets not easily available at a F2F event.
- There may not be enough space to hold large events at venues due to reduced occupancy from onsite physical distancing guidelines.

As F2F events re-emerge, meeting designers will face a dilemma: How do you arrange an event with two radically different audiences? The onsite group has social connectivity, focus, and high sensory input. On the other hand, the virtual audience, often times interacting individually on screens, will likely have shorter attention spans, may be in different

time zones and with a limited sensory experience usually just looking at a screen.

Here are several ideas and suggestions for event designers, and planners to consider, to address this dilemma and other issues when planning hybrid events:

Choosing a Hybrid Event Platform

- Choose a hybrid event platform from a provider with significant event planning experience, that

- A hybrid event is more complex than a F2F event with many actions and deadlines expected. Use an event platform or project management system that can help manage these actions.
- Look for a platform that allows remote attendees to interact with speakers, exhibitors, each other and F2F attendees as well.
- Look for a platform that integrates with a mobile event app providing another channel for interactivity

this can build both the virtual and the F2F audiences.

- Be flexible in your registration offering allowing attendees to switch to a F2F or the digital component depending on changing circumstances.
- Promote the event on the social media before the event and encourage social media hashtags during the event to build networking for all attendees.
- Many virtual events held in the past few months have seen audience counts that were many times larger than the F2F events they replaced. If you feel confident of a large remote audience for your hybrid event, then sponsorship revenue could increase substantially. Look for ways to highlight them including banner ads, acknowledgements, short sponsor videos, sponsor-hosted sessions, an event website sponsor page, and lead generation options.

“A virtual component offers the possibility of opening up to a much larger audience”

thoroughly understands the complexities of a wide range of events and has lots of experience running digital and hybrid events.

- Choose a hybrid event platform that can also manage virtual and F2F events to standardise your process and data collection.
- One of the strengths of the online component of a hybrid event is the opportunity for detailed analytics. Nearly every remote attendee's actions (clicks, poll responses, texts, feedback, time spent and more) can be tracked. Choose a hybrid platform that can provide these detailed analytics.
- Look for a hybrid event platform that provides all attendees with personalised agenda setting.
- For remote attendees at larger events, have a separate “help” button different from the chat area going directly to technical help support.

including remote polling, chat, push notifications, networking and gamification options.

- Look for a platform with strong privacy and security provisions including PCI and GDPR compliance.

Promotion

- As you start to promote the event, make it very clear that it will be a hybrid event and what the specific offerings for the F2F and digital components will be.
- Distribute a detailed online schedule with specific presentation start and stop times with local time zone adjustments for geographically dispersed remote attendees.
- As soon as your full schedule goes online, consider building viewer interest through regular, timed releases of content building up to the event. When done properly,

Best Practices

- Consider using an experienced emcee for the remote attendees to provide a unified voice throughout the event, to explain how to use the system and to create continuity.
- Use online moderators to manage the chat rooms and encourage discussion and input.
- Invest in speaker and moderator training focusing on including remote attendees in polls, Q&A, and in other comments during the presentations. Questions from remote attendees should be recognised by name and location from the stage and included as much as those in the room.
- Consider shorter presentation times and sessions, most remote viewers simply have shorter

“One of the strengths of the online component of a hybrid event is the opportunity for detailed analytics”

attention spans than those sitting together in F2F meeting rooms.

- For larger events with multiple sessions and viewers from disparate time zones, consider prerecording some of the presentations and bringing both the F2F and the remote audiences together during a keynote address or general sessions.
- For repeat sessions, consider playing the prerecorded session at designated times for different time zones and asking the presenters to go live at the end of the recorded presentations for Q&A.
- Punctuality of presentation start/stop times is crucial for hybrid events.
- If your hybrid event includes an exhibition, provide a tour of the exhibit hall specifically for remote attendees. Educational sessions streamed from the show floor are also a possibility.
- Consider developing separate content for remote attendees. There are times at the F2F event that may not be well suited for remote attendees including receptions, exhibition breaks, and coffee breaks. Interviews with speakers

and thought leaders and exhibit tours are among the possibilities. Also, leave blank times for remote attendee breaks.

Attendee Engagement

- Audience engagement for remote attendees is probably the biggest challenge in hybrid or virtual meetings. Methods for keeping and measuring their attention should be high on the desired features list for your hybrid event platform.
- Make sure that both the F2F audience and the remote audience use the same polling system with combined tallies. Also, text-based Q&A with social upvoting should be available for all attendees as well.
- In addition to chat and text Q&A, look for a platform that provides real-time presentation feedback from remote attendees similar to social media functions such as: like, applause, standing ovation, don't understand, etcetera. Analytics that track these and related items such as length of viewing and when an attendee leaves can be very useful in gauging

speaker effectiveness and attendee engagement.

- High production values with good graphics, videos, and presentation visuals are especially important to keep remote audience interest.
- Train speakers and set expectations for them to fully utilize these interaction tools.
- High-energy speakers are always good, but especially so to help keep a remote audience engaged.
- Break up the presentations with different format types. For example, consider incorporating breakout sessions similar to Zoom breakout rooms for your virtual attendees. Discussing events content with small groups of other remote attendees can be effective ways of engagement and learning.

Onsite

- Use a production or AV team that has significant experience with video streaming and running hybrid events.
- As the sessions streamed to remote attendees can be recorded easily, this can be a benefit to F2F attendees who missed a session or would like to see the session they

“Audience engagement for remote attendees is probably the biggest challenge in hybrid or virtual meetings”

attended again. It also provides a menu of on-demand viewing options and times for remote attendees.

- Make sure that the venue has sufficient bandwidth, technical support and fail-safe backup options to manage multiple video streams. 7 Mb/second upload speed is a minimum for a quality video stream.

After the Event

- Use the recorded content generated during the event to promote future events, to build membership, and/or to create online community.
- Promote future events to online attendees encouraging them to become F2F attendees in the future.
- Offer your content on-demand after the event. This is especially helpful for remote attendees with shorter attention spans allowing the freedom to access the content at convenient times.

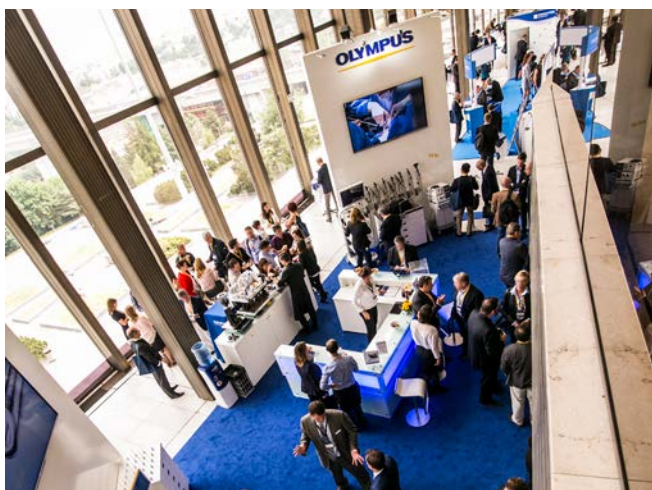
Face-to-face in-person meetings will re-emerge after this pandemic passes. As they do, hybrid meetings will be a bridge for those not able or wanting to attend the event in person. In the long term, hybrid meetings will likely remain a significant component for many events as we all learn best practices and benefit from the many innovations currently being developed at this time.

Corbin Ball, DES, CMP, CSP, is a speaker and independent consultant focusing on events technology. Previously, he ran international citywide technology meetings for more than a decade. For the past 23 years, Corbin Ball has helped clients worldwide use technology to save time and improve productivity through his speaking, consulting and writing services. He was inducted into the EIC Hall of Leaders in 2018, the premier recognition program for the events industry.
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*Why KTH lecturer Jens Edlund
has opted out of hybrid meetings altogether*

Everyone Should Be ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN DISTANCE MEETINGS ON THE SAME TERMS

A job meeting where some participate on-site in the room while others participate remotely via a screen is not a good solution, according to **Jens Edlund**, senior lecturer at the Department of Speech, Music and Hearing at KTH in Stockholm, Sweden.

“People are focused on technical solutions to facilitate hybrid meetings, but technology is not the problem. Hybrid meetings can worsen problems connected to meetings, like exclusion and difficulties cooperating.”

TEXT

Katarina Ahlfort, KTH

THE LONELINESS on the screen is a common thread in the reasoning around distance meetings. After twenty years of observations in the field, Jens Edlund's thesis is that hybrid meetings are less successful. When participants in the same room turn to each other as they talk, this inevitably excludes people joining via video link.

For over two decades, distance meetings via screen have been part of Jens Edlund's research and teaching.

The pandemic accelerated the development of video conferencing, which suddenly engaged almost everyone in society. And one of the biggest challenges that workplaces now face is, according to him, the so-called hybrid meetings.

A well-studied phenomenon when people meet in a group, even if it is the first time they meet, is that they favour and agree with members of the “own team”, for example, people who sit in the same room or are part of the

same group. And when some participate at a distance, you have different conditions.

“The best scenario would be if authorities and large companies could furnish standardised small meeting rooms for each individual participant in distance meetings. It would provide perfect conditions for successful distance meetings, which would be well-invested money. Inef-

Edlund’s thesis is that hybrid meetings are less successful. When three participants are in the same room and turn to each other when they talk, it is automatically excluded from the video link.

“It is easy to complain about technology when meetings fail, but it often depends on how the technology is used and not on the technology itself. In larger meetings, it usually

Jens Edlund and doctoral student **Ghazaleh Esfandiari-Baiat** are now developing a methodology to evaluate distance meetings and see if they are successful objectively.

“We will run test meetings and hand out tasks that the participants can collaborate on. We will test drive the method at the end of the year and hope to have the pilot study completed by the beginning of next year.”

“The whole point of meetings is essentially to cooperate. But hybrid meetings provide a very frail basis for doing that”

ficient and counterproductive hybrid meetings cost the business more in the long run,” says Jens Edlund.

He points out that we humans react with different senses such as smell, sight, and hearing at physical meetings.

“The whole point of meetings is usually to collaborate, but hybrid meetings provide feeble foundations for collaboration. The one who sits in the same room as others become the one who is heard best.”

How does Jens Edlund use hybrid meetings himself?

“As a leader or teacher, I do not use hybrid meetings at all. I use distance meetings. The difference is that everyone can sit with their computer and gallery view, such as Zoom or Teams. Then everyone has the same conditions at the meeting, and everyone meets on equal terms.”

The loneliness at the screen is a common thread in the reasoning around distance meetings. After 20 years of observations in the field, Jens

works well with hybrid meetings where one person lectures and many distance listeners monitor the meeting as passive participants without breaking in.”

When giving distance presentations to large groups of students, he always asks participants to turn on their cameras to get feedback on whether they are bored or engaged.

“Otherwise, the lecture will be like talking to a wall.”

Jens Edlund is now conducting pilot studies with meetings via video links and testing variants. All participants sit in front of their respective cameras with good lighting, steady connection and good sound.

“Our tests apply to small meetings with up to seven people. The larger the meeting, the closer we get to the seminar form, and the meeting becomes another. Then the meeting works best as a form of presentation, where the participants do not interact, except in smaller break-out rooms or through the chat function.”

Jens Edlund tips on how to contribute to better meetings at a distance:

- Meeting participants on-site in a room and remotely via video link is challenging. It is best if everyone can instead sit in front of their respective screens and cameras, preferably in separate meeting rooms. The participants should have as equal conditions to meet as possible.
- Do not try to control the meeting by asking people to use the thumbs-up button or the show of hands. The symbols often appear at the wrong time and linger too long, creating confusion and time-consuming questions such as “Did you want to say something or is that an ‘old hand’?”
- Always turn on the video and gallery view to see everyone’s faces, then you take in confirmations, mine games and nods from others.
- Try to sit where there is good lighting, preferably by a window. It may be worth buying a good lamp with soft light specially adapted for meetings in the workplace.
- Aim your face at the screen of your camera.



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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.

47 Rules TO LEAD THE FIELD IN UNCERTAIN TIMES (IMPORTANT)

THIS MORNING I woke up with the instinct to share these 47 rules with you. These will remind you that leadership (and personal greatness) is less about a title and more about a decision.

To use this crisis to ascend mastery, creativity and service to many. (To not will be to miss the greatest opportunity of your lifetime.) Our world demands that of you and I, yes? I get that it's easy to worry and fret about the future.

Yet, I must enthusiastically share that what makes us human is our ability to invent. And to endure. And to overcome.

I pray you will leverage this season to reaccess the bigness, honour, kindness and strength that I know are you at your best. It's the best time I've ever known to build your most exceptional you. And to upgrade your skills. And to lead your field.

I guess what I'm suggesting with love and respect is this:

Leadership isn't just for CEOs and presidents. We all can lead. Because

leadership's mostly a mindset and a way of doing things.

Taxi drivers can lead, street sweepers can lead, and teachers can lead, as can managers, artists and salespeople.

These 47 rules are drawn from my over 26+ years of passionate work with the Fortune 100 Companies, empire-builders, and world-changers.

1. To lead is to serve.
2. At the heart of mastery lives consistency.
3. Take care of the relationship and the money will take care of itself.
4. The seduction of safety is always more dangerous than the illusion of uncertainty.
5. To double your income, triple your investment in your professional education and your personal development.
6. The swiftest way to grow your company is to grow your people.
7. If you're not leaving a trail of leaders behind you, you're not leading. You're following.
8. An addiction to distraction is the end of creative production.
9. The caliber of your practice determines the quality of your performance.
10. Leaders Without Titles are less about ego and more about getting things done.
11. Don't worry about the economy when you can be so genius at what you do that you create your very own personal economy.
12. Lead where you are planted. Start where you stand. And remember that much of winning is just beginning.
13. The true measure of our leadership is how we perform in volatile conditions versus in times of ease.
14. To lead is to be yourself in a world of clones.
15. Aim for iconic. Why be in it if you're not dreaming of being in the history books? But be kind, decent and ethical along the way.
16. The humblest is the greatest.
17. Energy is more valuable than intelligence. Health is more brilliant than gold.

18. The thing you most fear carries your greatest growth.
19. All change is hard at first, messy in the middle and gorgeous at the end.
20. Criticism is the price brave people pay to arrive at iconic.
21. If you're not lifting people, you're bringing people down.
22. Leadership has less to do with authority and more to do with a mindset.
23. Where the victim sees a problem, a leader sees an opportunity.
24. Don't wait until you're successful to work on your optimism. Work on your optimism, and you'll become a lot more successful.
25. Be alone a lot. All massively creative people value solitude. It allows them to protect their dreams from the voices of dissent, refuel their creativity and get far more done, free from distraction.
26. Small daily micro-wins, when done continually over time, lead to staggering results.
27. Genius has less to do with natural talent and divinely blessed gifts and more to do with a relentless focus [to the point of obsession], extreme practice and uncommon grit.
28. Disrupt or be disrupted.
29. Be the most honest person in every room.
30. Remember that people don't leave companies. They leave the people they worked for.
31. Saying you'll "try" is expressing "I'm not really committed."
32. The secret of passion is purpose. As I shared years ago in *Leadership Wisdom from The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*, when you know your why, the hows start showing up.
33. If you're the smartest person you know, it's time to know new people.
34. Outlearning everyone around you is a game-changer. The best love learning. Because once you know more, you can achieve more.
35. To make more money, help more people
36. Leaders Without Titles talk about ideas versus people and dreams versus others.
37. Eat less food, and get more done.
38. The way you begin your day determines how you live it. So put mind over mattress. Win the battle of the bed. And join The 5 AM Club (another total game-changer).
39. Develop obsessive attention to detail. World-class user experiences are all about winning at the small stuff that everyone else doesn't care about.
40. Even if you clean toilets, do it with pride and love. A few summers ago, I met a man who cleans toilets at the Johannesburg airport. He beamed "Welcome to my office" as I entered. The place was flawless. His passion was palpable. That man is my hero. And he reminded me that all work has dignity and honor.
41. Leaders Without Titles are in the business of making people feel bigger versus smaller. And smarter versus less knowledgeable. And seeing gifts and talents, they've never seen before.
42. Lean into your fears. Commit to what frightens you. Life's way too short to play small.
43. The secret to genius is doing less. Developing a monomaniacal focus on being brilliant at one thing is the key to mastery. You're smart, so you know that the person who tries to get great at many things ends up mediocre at all of them, no?
44. The moment you think you're a virtuoso, you've lost your virtuosity. The best always think like a beginner. And they know that nothing fails like success.
45. Be decent and kind and loving. In the end, you'll have wished you were.
46. Never lose the sparkle in your eyes and your sense of wonder about the things most people take for granted. Leadership, business and life are awesome. Don't miss the simple rewards of standing for world-class. (Note: there are two types of income: external (money and title) and internal (pride in doing great work and pursuing mastery). The ordinary chase the first. The exceptional want the last.)
47. Do your part. Be the leader you wish the people around you would be. As **Mother Teresa** said: "If each of us would sweep our own doorstep, the whole world would be clean."

I hope these insights on the true meaning of leadership help you multiply your productivity, amplify your genius and magnify your impact on the world.

Our tiny planet needs more true leaders, pure producers and everyday heroes. Just like you.



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

I Have a Feeling WE'RE NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE

THESE DAYS our present is often referred to as the *new normal*. Since the pandemic we've had hybrid meetings arrive alongside face-to-face meetings like a new cousin from the country – in a best-case scenario making online meetings a bit more fun, if the production is professional enough. And while the technology itself has been around for years, the pandemic suddenly and effectively kicked us a bit further into the future. Ready or not.

Now, we face a world where old rules no longer apply, and where we obviously need to look at things in new ways. One such way, of trying to help perhaps increasingly lost or disoriented meeting participants, is to learn what *lateral thinking* is. Lateral thinking means to use an untraditional approach to an issue that may provide unexpected or straightforward solutions to complex problems. The concept was introduced by **Edward de Bono** in his book *The Use of Lateral Thinking* as early as 1967.

In contrast with traditional problem solving, where you directly address the problem at hand, lateral thinking requires you to instead spend time thinking about different ways of viewing the problem. Only after that do you get into the actual work of finding solutions. Non-linear problem solving is often referred to

as *obliquity*, the concept of reaching a goal without aiming directly for it.

There's a latin saying – *Speramus meliora, Resurget cineribus* – which translates to: 'We hope for better things, It will rise from the ashes.' By walking through smouldering ruins we may discover puzzle pieces allowing us to create something new.

But have we really gone through such a significant change that we can claim to be rising from the ashes? That is certainly debatable. Financially, there is little doubt that we have, as the business events industry has indeed been hit hard. But can the congress part of the industry really stay significantly reduced over several years' time? Do we simply not have to have personal meetings between researchers and thinkers to keep up the pace of development and innovation?

All forms of scientific and cultural research at universities deals with in-depth studies and the deepening of knowledge. Specialists keep digging deeper and deeper. But the outside world's knowledge and understanding is not increasing at the same rate as the specialists'. We are not only in need of people who are digging deeper. We are also very much in need of people who are connecting all the deep excavators by building horizontal tunnels. And that is just what's

happening when people meet at congresses and events. We need to meet each other in person, form personal connections, and to sustain a lasting exchange of knowledge and ideas.

The title of this column is taken from a famous line in the film *The Wizard of Oz*, which according to researchers at the University of Turin, Italy is the world's most referenced film. In a black and white rural Kansas, a tornado sweeps farm girl Dorothy (played by **Judy Garland**) and her dog Toto away from the life they know, bringing them to the magical land of Oz. At the moment they step onto unfamiliar ground, the 1939 film (the first mainstream release in colour) changes from black and white to bursting Technicolor, underlining the chasmic shift in surroundings. A bewildered Dorothy cautiously takes this strange landscape in, then says to her companion: "Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore."

Every time the playing field radically changes, in everything from music and culture to politics and business, people keep referring to this pivotal scene of movie magic. And I think it's safe to say that pretty much everyone in the global business events industry would have to agree that we are definitely not in Kansas anymore.

Bring your smile.

We'll do the same

For more about meeting in The Netherlands see holland.com/meetings



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The Hague is known as the city of peace and justice, but it is also one of the greenest cities in Europe, boasting lots of nature throughout the city. Moreover, it is the political capital of the Netherlands, many international organisations have their seats in the Hague, and it is the only large Dutch city by the sea. In my job as International Sales Manager at The Hague Convention Bureau I promote this great city with many different facets.

At The Hague Convention Bureau we work in various clusters, key sectors that are embedded in the DNA of The Hague: Cyber Security, Legal & Policy, IT & Tech, Impact, Renewable Energy and Peace & Justice. As each of us has our own focus areas and local network of stakeholders, we give clients access to the knowledge infrastructure of the city, enhancing the potential of an event. The Hague is a city where public and private institutions collaborate well. I am fascinated by that collaboration, it surprised me how willing people are to help

each other out. I work with many stakeholders in the city, such as Innovation Quarter, the universities of Leiden and Delft, right up to city hall and the ministries. Before I prepare a bidbook for a client, various parties have contributed to it which is great to witness.

The right spot for every event

The city has three interesting areas to contribute to the theme of your event. We distinguish the city centre zone, the international zone, and the coastal zone. The city centre comprises modern buildings and facilities but also historic premises. You will reach the sea within 15 minutes by bicycle, and the beach stretches for 11 kilometres. Halfway from the city centre to the sea you enter the international zone. This is where you will find the embassies, the UN International Criminal Court, and the Peace Palace. All three zones host their own venues. But you may also focus on the distinctive features of The Hague by hosting a meeting in the international zone and a party on the beach.



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