

31st August 2010

IMEX Politicians Forum

Summary

The message repeated more than any other at this year's Politicians Forum at IMEX 2010 in Frankfurt was that meetings are integral to the economic development process. Recognising events in this way benefits national and local governments and the people they serve. The rewards are much more than financial – the real value of meetings is what they achieve for the delegates, the organisation and the wider community.

Topics covered included:

- 'Meetings and conventions as strategic tools for economic development': Rod Cameron, Criterion Communication Inc, Vancouver, Canada, and director of international development for AIPC, examined the meetings industry's three key roles within a community: economic impact; business development; professional development.
- 'The Miracle of Seoul': Samuel Koo, President and CEO, Seoul Tourism Organisation (STO), offered an overview of Seoul's recent development as an international destination.
- 'The rich legacy of hosting the Olympics': Hein Verbruggen, President, SportAccord, and Honorary Member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), talked about how hosting an Olympic event enriches a destination and enables economic and social benefits to be realised.
- 'A very savvy politician': Leigh Harry, JMIC President and CEO of Melbourne Convention Centre, Australia, discussed the importance of getting support and buy-in for events from local governments.
- 'Major events on the conference calendar': Olivier Lépine, Chairman, Convention Division, ECM and Director of Biarritz Tourism, France, explained how European Cities Marketing (ECM) brings together the convention bureaux and tourist boards of 100 European cities to progress and evolve the industry.
- 'Working together in an increasingly competitive market': Edgar Hirt, President AIPC and Managing Director, Congress Centre Hamburg, Germany, argued for more co-operation between the meetings industry and governments.
- 'Quite a celebration!': Régis Labeaume, Mayor of Quebec City, Canada, remembered a year's worth of events to celebrate the founding of the French-Canadian settlement.
- 'The power of advocacy': The Hon Bruce Baird AM, Chairman, Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF), Australia, talked about how best to approach events planning and political lobbying based on his experience as a member of parliament and as the Minister for Sydney's 2000 Olympics bid.
- 'Using a conference to help brand a city': Svend Olling, Head of Department, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark, went through the execution of Denmark's plans when hosting the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, building a lasting legacy for political change and setting a new precedent for corporate social responsibility in meetings.
- 'New lobbying club': Thierry Baudier, Director, Club France – Teere de Tourisme, France on influencing legislators and other public officials to encourage the development of tourism.

For further details of the Forum's findings, please see the full report.

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