

December 2015/January 2016

TTGmice

Asia-Pacific's intelligent business events resource

Taiwan carves
a Muslim niche

Business events
find happiness in Fiji

Macau ups the fun factor
for spouse programmes



Celebrating our people

Creativity, attention to detail and hospitality are crucial ingredients that determine if the business event rocks or not. These can only be achieved with a human touch, and we are shining the spotlight on the people behind the scenes



TTG Asia
MOBILE APP
OF THE YEAR 2015
(Merit)
MPAS Awards

TTG Asia
TRADE MEDIA
OF THE YEAR 2015
MPAS Awards

TTGmice
TRAVEL JOURNALISM
BUSINESS ARTICLE
2014, 2013, 2011 & 2009
PATA Gold Awards



GET MORE — out of — YOUR MEETINGS

We understand that your role as an event and meeting planner is constantly evolving - not only do you aim to sell great experiences, you desire to create stories and bring them to life.

That is *why* at Worldhotels, each of our 450 hotels prides itself on its authenticity and being one of a kind, offering you and your clients tailor-made solutions. From now to 15 February 2016, you can win a return flight to Vietnam for two when you book your event at any Worldhotels. Other treats include room stays within Vietnam and a bonus 10,000 Peakpoints worth EUR 250.

Reap more perks from us. For details and terms of participation, visit worldhotels.com/mice-rewards

WORLD
EVENTS

450 hotels. 250 destinations. 65 countries.
worldhotels.com

WORLDHOTELS
where discovery starts

EDITORIAL**Karen Yue**

Group Editor (karen.yue@ttgasia.com)

Xinyi Liang-PholsenaDeputy Editor, TTG Asia & TTG India
(liang.xinyi@ttgasia.com)**Dannon Har**Assistant Editor, TTG Asia Online
(dannon.har@ttgasia.com)**Paige Lee Pei Qi**Assistant Editor, Singapore
(lee.peiqi@ttgasia.com)**S Puvaneswary**Editor, Malaysia/Brunei
(puvanes@ttgasia.com)**Mimi Hudoyo**

Editor, Indonesia (jdmfasia@cbn.net.id)

Rachel AJ Lee

Sub Editor (rachel.lee@ttgasia.com)

Oliver Slow, Sid DharthaMyanmar
(oslow99@gmail.com,
siddhartha.ttgasia@gmail.com)**Prudence Lui**Hong Kong/Greater China
(prului@yahoo.com)**Caroline Boey**China & Special Projects
(caroline.boey@ttgasia.com)**Julian Ryall**Japan
(jryall2@hotmail.com)**Rosa Ocampo**

The Philippines (rosa.ocampo@gmail.com)

Rohit KaulIndia
(rohitkaul23@gmail.com)**Feizal Samath**Sri Lanka/Maldives
(feizalsam@gmail.com)**Redmond Sia, Goh Meng Yong**

Creative Designers

Nadra Iwani

Editorial Intern

Lina Tan

Editorial Assistant

SALES & MARKETING**Michael Chow**Group Publisher
(michael.chow@ttgasia.com)**Jonathan Yap**Senior Business Manager
(jonathan.yap@ttgasia.com)**Stephanie So**Business Manager
(Hong Kong, stephanie.so@ttgasia.com)**Sammi Wu**Business Manager
(sammi.wu@ttgasia.com)**Cheryl Tan**Corporate Marketing Manager
(cheryl.tan@ttgasia.com)**Stephanie Toh**Senior Marketing Executive
(stephanie.toh@ttgasia.com)**Cheryl Lim**Advertisement Administration
manager (cheryl.lim@ttgasia.com)**Carol Cheng**Asst Manager Administration
& Marketing (Hong Kong, carol.cheng@
ttgasia.com)**PUBLISHING SERVICES****Tony Yeo**

Division Manager

Kristy Lim

Publishing Services Executive

Lynn Lim

Web Executive

Katherine Leong

Circulation Executive

OFFICES**Singapore**TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd, 1 Science Park
Road, #04-07 The Capricorn, Singapore
Science Park II, Singapore 117528

Tel: +65 6395 7575, fax: +65 6536 0896,

email: contact@ttgasia.com

Hong Kong

TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd, Unit 3003, 30/F,

Office Tower Convention Plaza,

1 Harbour Road, Wanchai, Hong Kong

Tel: +852 2237 7888, fax: +852 2237 7227

TTG ASIA MEDIA PTE LTD**Darren Ng**

Managing Director

Raini HamdiSenior Editor
(raini.hamdi@ttgasia.com)**Karen Yue**
Group Editor

The real engine driving this business

One of my favourite modern quotes came from business magnate Richard Branson: "If you look after your staff, they'll look after your customers. It's that simple."

In the business of events, the not-so-secret to success lies in the people making and executing the plans. Creative features that differentiate your event from others, attentive service that impresses your delegates, and careful scrutiny of logistical details – just to name a few important aspects of any event – cannot be delivered by machines and programmes. So, Branson's quote rings especially true for MICE companies and practitioners whose business is only as good as their people.

Several months ago, while interviewing Li Lei, director of Starwood Sales Organisation Shanghai, for *TTGmice's* career inspiration column, I saw a different side of the hospitality giant. The heart it has for its staff is as large as its portfolio of properties. Li, who built his decade-long hospitality career with Starwood from the position of management trainee, expressed pride in the company's commitment to growing its staff through training and opportunities for advancement. Staff loyalty is strong in Starwood, Li had said, and they are all eager to do their best for the company.

Li isn't the first to point out that a successful company is one that makes an effort to chart staff's career progression and invests time in upgrading its employees' skills. Team managers today who lead the new generation of staff (meet some of them in our cover special this issue, *Celebrating our people*) have identified training, a healthy remuneration and staff engagement activities as necessary ingredients for a loyal and well performing team.

Besides discussing how the emergence of millennial bosses and clients is changing the MICE landscape, *Celebrating our people* also takes on a lighter note by checking out how the people behind the MICE scene are hoping to spend their free time (what free time, some of you must be asking!) this year end and by giving you a peek into lives of the people producing this magazine.

We hope you will enjoy this final issue of 2015.

Happy holidays and see you next year!



TTGmice, endorsed by the Asian Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, is published by TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd, and is mailed free-of-charge on written request to readers Asia-wide who meet a set of predetermined terms and conditions. Annual airmail subscription charges are US\$70 (Asia) and US\$90 (elsewhere). All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission of the publisher.

MCI (P) 117/08/2015, KDN
PPS1140/09/2012(022844), ISSN 0218-849X
Printed by Times Printers Pte Ltd
16 Tuas Avenue 5, Singapore 639340.



Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/TTGmice



Follow us at @TTGmice



Get your weekly news update at www.ttg mice.com



16



24



36



50

COVER STORY

24 Celebrating our people

Creativity, attention to detail and hospitality are crucial ingredients that determine if a business event rocks or not. These can only be achieved with a human touch, and in this year-end special TTGmice shines the spotlight on the people behind the scenes

COUNTRY REPORTS

36 Fun for the whole family

Macau's varied integrated resorts and attractions ensure accompanying persons of business event participants are never bored. By Prudence Lui

38 Carving a Muslim niche

Taiwan is making numerous adjustments in an effort to woo more Muslim MICE groups, reports Paige Lee Pei Qi

42 Outlook a box of chocolates

The trade's reaction to Malaysia's MICE business is a mixed bag due to her prevailing economic instability, writes S Puvaneswary

44 The islands where MICE finds happiness

A dedicated convention bureau is now in place to take Fiji's growing MICE market to the next level, writes Rebecca Elliott

TTGmice

www.ttgmice.com

DEPARTMENTS

- 1 To our readers
- 3 Marketplace
- 6 Talk of the trade
- 9 Client files
- 10 In focus
- 16 Case studies
- 47 People
- 49 Over coffee with...
- 50 Gallery



We love



A tantalising retreat

Does the name Lintong sound familiar? Great if the Terra Cotta Warriors came to mind, but give yourself a firm pat on the back if you had guessed it was where the Tang Dynasty Emperor Xuanzong and his famous Concubine Yang used to go for their indulgent baths.

And since October 31, 2015, the county in Xi'an, China is also home to Angsana Hot Spring Xi'an Lintong, a sprawling and luxurious facility that boasts more outdoor hot spring pools than one could possibly experience in a single day.

All 25 outdoor hot spring pools are fed with natural hot spring waters piped down from Lishan Mountain.

Landscaped pools are the most fascinating, as their waters are infused with different herbs and tea – pine for Purifying pools; lavender for

Renewal; Shang Nan Quan Ming Tea for Balancing. However, we think that the real crowd-pleaser would be the Yang Gui Fei pool, tucked away in a serene part of the hot spring paradise and beckoning visitors with its secret concoction that promises to revitalise one's beauty.

There are also six Couple Pools offering flower infusions, five tranquil Forest Pools and a Family Pool that comes with a hydrojet therapy pool and a kid's pool.

Angsana Hot Spring Xi'an Lintong also offers 12 private cabanas for hire – four Deluxe ones that can accommodate four to six guests each and eight Superior ones for two guests each. These feature a private outdoor hot spring pool, spa treatment bed(s), a relaxation area, dressing area and en-suite bathroom.

Even more facilities are available in the

indoor complex: separate onsens for ladies and gentlemen, a large heated indoor pool, a Foot Lounge for rejuvenating foot rubs, a Hot Stone Lounge that warms the body and promotes blood circulation, the signature hydrothermal facility, Spring Forest by Angsana, which marries European spa features with Asian wellness philosophy, and rooms where a range of body treatments are offered.

Operated by the award-winning Angsana Spa chain, visitors are assured of outstanding wellness treatments and exquisite service.

Angsana Hot Spring Xi'an Lintong makes a perfect leisure add-on to any business events held at the 400-key Angsana Xi'an Lintong hotel next door – although meeting delegates will need to set aside time to explore and truly enjoy the varied facilities there!

Second Sofitel in Singapore ready for guests



Singapore's second Sofitel property has opened on Sentosa island, armed with 211 rooms and suites, four villas, more than 1,300m² of MICE facilities, four dining options (including Kwee Zeen pictured here) and what is said to be the world's largest So SPA facility.

Sofitel Singapore Sentosa Resort & Spa spots a bold and elegant design that integrates the surrounding nature within the hotel's various buildings, and boasts more than 27 acres of tropical woodlands, offering guests a sense of relaxed sophistication and urban resort living.

Offering a rich option for event planners, the hotel's revamped Conference Centre houses two ballrooms, 15 pillarless meeting rooms, outdoor verandas and a bridal suite. All meeting rooms are illuminated with natural light and stretch out to the outdoor lawn, making them ideal venues for corporate brainstorming sessions, teambuilding, leadership training and cocktail receptions.

The hotel is also collaborating with DirectStreams, a long-standing technology partner of Sofitel, to offer the latest fully-connected innovative lifestyle technology through DirectStreams' LG Smart TV Guest solution, providing guests with the best technology experience to meet the needs of a diverse audience.

Shangri-La dons VR headsets as part of global sales strategy

Hailed as the latest game-changing innovation in the video games and movie industries, virtual reality (VR) headsets have now entered the travel trade in a big way as Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts began the use of Samsung Gear VR across its 17 global sales offices.

According to a media statement, over a quarter of Shangri-La's 94 properties already have 360-degree videos available for viewing on the headsets, with a full roll-out expected in 2016.

These devices, powered by VR technology company Oculus, are used primarily as promotional and education tools, allowing travel agents, meeting planners and potential clients the ability to virtually experience Shangri-La properties worldwide.

"Shangri-La is investing significantly in technology and the future of travel content, which is why we are embracing virtual reality on this scale," said Steven Taylor, chief marketing officer of Shangri-La International Hotel Management.

"Travel experts play a critical role in their fields and the traveller's decision-making process. This is why our first VR efforts are focused on them," added Taylor.



"Their clients depend on them to ensure holidays, business trips and meetings are enjoyable and effective. Shangri-La's VR experiences will enhance their knowledge about our hotels and their ability to sell with confidence to their clients."

Those who have their own Oculus-compatible VR headset can also download and view the 360-degree videos from Shangri-La's website.

Luxury expeditions down the Mekong River

Aqua Expeditions has unveiled "highly competitive" charter buy out rates in Asia-Pacific for its *Aqua Mekong*, a small luxury cruise on the Mekong River, in response to a surge in demand for private vessel hire.

Charter buy out guests are accommodated in 20 design suites on both the first and second deck of the *Aqua Mekong*, all of which feature panoramic views of the Mekong River through floor-to-ceiling windows. *Aqua Mekong* is equipped with a multimedia room that can be adapted into a boardroom style, Wi-Fi enabled, function room.

Guests will be hosted by an exclusive staff to guest ratio of 1:1 throughout their stay.

To make the most of an *Aqua Mekong* experience, guests are encouraged to enjoy the onboard facilities and riverbed activities. Exclusive to the Mekong River, *Aqua Mekong* owns a private fleet of four aluminum launch boats to transport guests on kayaking and biking excursions – ideal for teambuilding exercises. Onboard, guests can indulge in a treatment at the spa, relax with a movie in the private screening room (indoor and outdoor available) or unwind in the infinity plunge pool.

Aqua Mekong departs weekly from either Saigon, Siem Reap or Phnom Penh and itineraries are available for three, four and seven nights at charter rates from US\$91,530 for a three-night package for up to 30 pax. Rates include transfers to and from boat, twice daily excursions, all meals and selected alcoholic beverages.

Francesco Galli Zugaro, CEO and Founder of Aqua Expeditions, said: "The launch of our highly competitive rates will entice regional MICE operators and key international MICE organisations to the undiscovered beauty of the Mekong."

Apxara wants to kidnap corporate bosses

Malaysian conference organiser and team activity specialist is planning to kidnap corporate bosses – all in the name of fun.

Its new half-day teambuilding activity, Rush Hour, is a cat-and-mouse game that requires a team to piece together a puzzle and work against time with the ultimate goal of finding and rescuing their leader who has been kidnapped by some rogues. At the end, teams will be shown all the rights and wrongs that they have made along their way, and the "villains" will be revealed.

The activity magnifies the importance of team synergy, increases problem-solving skills and builds deeper relations among members.

Rush Hour can be done anywhere in and outside of Malaysia, and is suitable for group sizes of 50 to 300 people. Contact ivanlim@apxara.com.



HOT DEALS

Sofitel Bangkok Sukhumvit

The *Gourmet Small-Business Getaway* package offers groups of 15 to 50 pax a four-day/three-night stay at Sofitel Bangkok Sukhumvit's Luxury Club Millésime Room, including Thai- or French-themed coffee breaks and preferred pricing on spa treatments, food and beverage.

It is accompanied by an array of activities throughout the stay such as art appreciation cocktail hour with the hotel's S Gallery curator, a 90-minute wine and cheese pairing session with chef Jerome Deconinck, creative cocktails selection on L'Appart's terrace, as well as a day-long off-site excursion.

Package is priced at 42,190 baht (US\$1,635) net per person and is valid till March 2016.

Email h5213-si20@sofitel.com.



Taj Tashi Thimpu

The hotel located at the heart of Thimpu Valley in Bhutan is offering a conference package featuring the use of a conference hall between 09.00 and 18.00 on the days of stay, buffet breakfast, lunch and dinner at a designated venue, and 10 per cent off spa treatments.

The package is priced at 12,000 rupees (US\$180) per room night for single occupancy and 14,000 rupees for double, including taxes.

Guests can enjoy complimentary basic Wi-Fi, although premium access requires a nominal fee.

The offer is valid for bookings with at least 15 rooms, for stays in December 2015 as well as January and February next year.

Email tajtashi.thimphu@tajhotels.com for reservations.

CORRECTION – Oops! A wrong photo was placed with the meeting package listing for Regal Kowloon Hotel in TTGmice November. This is how the hotel's gorgeous Business Suite really looks:





Noku Roxy opens its doors in Kyoto

Roxy-Pacific Holdings has opened its first upscale boutique hotel, Noku Roxy, in Kyoto, Japan.

Located near the Kyoto Imperial Palace, key tourists spots and popular local restaurants, Noku Roxy features 81 rooms across six floors, with the upper floors offering scenic views of the Kyoto Imperial Garden.

The rooms, which range from 20m² to 51m² each, are furnished with the finest Kyoto craftsmanship and artwork, as well as a complimentary minibar filled with a range of local snacks and beverages.

Room prices start from JPY20,000 (US\$163).

Plaza Premium Group, China Eastern Airlines creates co-branded lounge

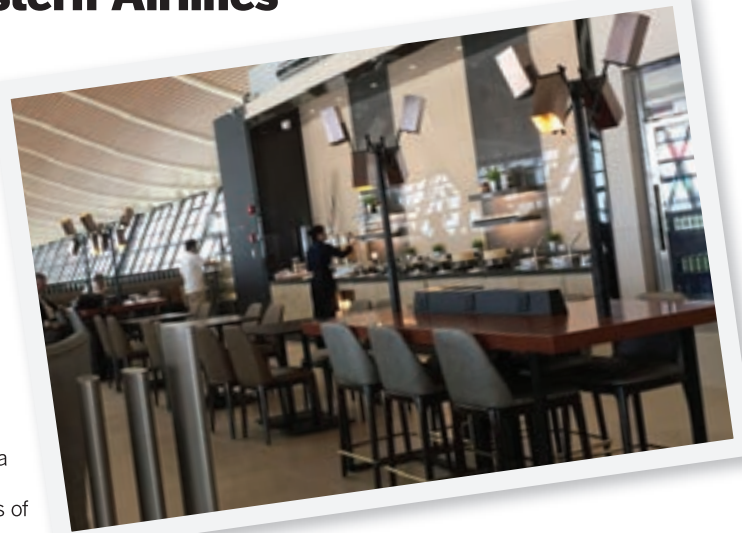
Plaza Premium Group and China Eastern Airlines Corporation (CEA) has joined hands to operate what is said to be the world's first co-branded airport lounge in Shanghai Pudong International Airport's Terminal 2.

Launched on November 2 and named No.77 China Eastern Plaza Premium Lounge, the facility sits near Gate 77 and can be accessed by all travellers.

Offering a 180-degree view of the airport runway, the new lounge measures over 1,800m² and provides nearly 500 seats. Facilities include a leisure area, all-day Chinese and Western style buffet, bar, five Internet workstations, a nursing room, three shower rooms, a relaxation area, a smoking room as well as complimentary Wi-Fi.

Song Hoi-see, founder and CEO of Plaza Premium Group, said the co-branded lounge was the result of a strategic partnership between the group and CEA.

Tang Bing, director and vice president of CEA and party member of China Eastern Air Holding Company, remarked that the lounge is the first market-oriented flagship airport lounge of CEA, specifically designed for passengers of its airline partners.



PHG opens another hotel in Singapore

Park Hotel Group (PHG) has opened its fourth hotel in Singapore. The 442-room Park Hotel Alexandra, located in the southwestern part of Singapore, is also the first hotel for Chip Eng Seng Corporation, a Singapore-listed group whose business spans construction and property development and investment.

Park Hotel Alexandra is well-positioned to accommodate business and leisure, local and international travellers, being just 10 minutes to Orchard Road and Sentosa, and 30 minutes to

Changi International Airport.

The hotel has six room types: Superior Room, Deluxe Room, Premier Room, Crystal Club Room, Executive Suite and Park Suite; the Crystal Club Lounge which commands stunning views of the city skyline; and three concept F&B outlets, among facilities.

Meanwhile, PHG is geared for another opening before the year is out, the Park Hotel Nusa Dua Bali. Its first hotel outside Asia, Park Hotel Adelaide, will open in 2018.



Air China offers nonstop service on Chengdu-Paris route



© Airbus S.A.S 2015 - photo by master films A. Tchakovski

Air China has commenced nonstop service from Chengdu to Paris since December 12, 2015, using an Airbus 330-200 aircraft.

The service is offered every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, departing from Chengdu at 01.30 and arriving in Paris at 06.20. Return flights leave the French capital at 12.15 and land in Chengdu at 06.00 the following day.

Business Class seats can be turned into full-flat beds.

The service to Paris is Air China's fifth European destination from Chengdu following Amsterdam, Frankfurt, London and Moscow.

Four cities join forces to facilitate associations gatherings

By Paige Lee Pei Qi

Four leading convention hubs in Dubai, Washington DC, Singapore and Brussels have announced the launch of a new Global Association Hubs Partnership.

Developed by the Dubai Association Centre, Destination DC, Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau and visit.brussels, the partnership aims to assist international associations grow and better serve their overseas members by using respective partner cities as regional conduits to extend their efforts around the world.

This initiative will also help reduce barriers, and facilitate

the activities of international associations seeking to work across different cultures.

Hervé Bosquet, who is with the meeting tourism team at visit.brussels and is director of Brussels Convention Bureau,



Bosquet: development beneficial to both associations and partner destinations

said: "International associations are constantly looking to establish a strong base in key regions around the world in order to offer value and customised services to their membership.

"By leveraging this new partnership, international associations now have the opportunity to roll out global strategies and take advantage of local opportunities in key partner countries in a manner that is simple,

well-coordinated and highly convenient."

Jeannie Lim, executive director, exhibitions & conferences and conventions & meetings, Singapore Tourism Board, said: "For Singapore, this partnership is especially timely as the association landscape in Asia is still developing.

"Through this partnership, we can learn from associations in the other partner cities. At the same time, international associations in the region can leverage Singapore as a base for their business events and activities."

The Union of International Associations noted that the initiative's four partner cities are the leading bases for association headquarters and regional offices in their respective geographical areas.

AFECA grows membership, considers more activities in 2016

The Asian Federation of Exhibition and Convention Associations (AFECA) has seen its membership expand in the past year to include more representatives from Myanmar, Japan and Hong Kong, allowing members to benefit from a greater pool of experts who can share trade knowledge.

Speaking to *TTGmice* during the AFECA Forum on November 12 in Kuala Lumpur, Walter Yeh, AFECA president, said: "AFECA was set up 10 years ago to promote the industry of conventions, exhibitions, meetings and events, and it has been growing its membership. We now have 28 association members. This has enabled us to strengthen our ability to exchange business knowledge, and we will be doing more activities in the coming years to facilitate such intelligence sharing."

The association also has 98 regular and affiliate member companies from 17 countries, and nine advisory council members from eight countries.

Yeh said AFECA intends to make the AFECA Awards and AFECA Asia MICE Youth Challenge annual affairs, although the decision to host a second edition of the AEC+ Expo is now pending, subject to trade feedback on the inaugural show which ran from November 11 to 13.

"We may even enhance the AFECA Asia MICE Youth Challenge next year by (opening the) competition... to MICE professionals," Yeh revealed.

"Going forward, AFECA will be even more active and will look for other opportunities for our members to engage one another," he added. – **Karen Yue**

AMEX projects moderate price increments for the year ahead

The *American Express Global Business Travel Forecast 2016* has predicted modest gains in air, hotel and ground transportation prices next year, as a slowly-improving global economy and stronger demand outpace increases in supply.

The global airline industry will benefit from favourable industry conditions in North America and tempered growth in Asia as well as heightened demand that offsets by similar growth in capacity. Global hotel performance is also projected to improve moderately in 2016, as limited increases in inventory fail to keep pace with the growing global appetite for travel. Ground transportation rates are expected to remain relatively flat as overcapacity, strong competition and a continued focus on ancillary fees persist globally.

"While we expect modest increases in global travel prices heading into 2016, travel managers are operating in an era of new challenges and evolving disrupters," said Caroline Strachan, vice president, consulting, American Express Global Business Travel.

"In addition to handling tasks such as measurement and

compliance, new factors such as the sharing economy and mobile booking channels are becoming increasingly popular for business travellers. In order to thrive in this digital era, travel managers need to be aware of and dynamically adapt to these forces across a variety of geographies," she added.

APAC Airfare Forecast		
Airfare Forecast Type	Business Class	Economy Class
Domestic	1 % to 2.8 %	2 % to 3.5 %
International	0.6 % to 2.6 %	1 % to 2.7 %
Intra-APAC	0 % to 2 %	0.5 % to 2 %

APAC Hotel Forecast	
Airfare Forecast Type	Business Class
Domestic	1 % to 2.8 %
International	0.6 % to 2.6 %
Intra-APAC	0 % to 2 %

Source: American Express Global Business Travel Forecast 2016



Adelaide desires more health, medical conferences

By Rebecca Elliott

The Adelaide Convention Bureau is making moves to lure major health and medical association conferences to the city's Riverbank Precinct which is being redeveloped with several new medical infrastructure on site.

The Royal Adelaide Hospital, the University of Adelaide Clinical Health School

South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute



and the University of South Australia Health Innovation Building (home to the Centre for Cancer Biology) are all set to open in 2016. These are in addition to the A\$350 million (US\$252 million) upgrade of the Adelaide Convention Centre, due for completion in 2017.

These developments will accompany the South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI), which opened in 2013, to make up what Adelaide Convention Bureau's CEO, Damien Kitto, is touting as the "Southern Hemisphere's largest health and biomedical precinct".

Kitto said the Bureau is already working with SAHMRI to successfully identify opportunities to bring health, science and medical conventions to the city.

He said: "The material and research emanating from SAHMRI is being noted globally so that certainly assists our efforts to bring events to Adelaide. We're working with key personnel at the top level of their respective fields to identify the opportunities."

International conferences secured for Adelaide include the Multinational Association of Supportive Care in Cancer/International Society of Oral Oncology International Symposium on Supportive Care in Cancer in June 2016 for 1,500 delegates, and the 9th Asia-Oceania Conference on Obesity in October 2017 for 800 delegates.

{ In brief }

Qatar Business Events brand unveiled

Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA) has launched a sub-brand titled Qatar Business Events to consolidate the image and promotional efforts of MICE stakeholders in highlighting the destination's facilities and attractions. QTA hopes to triple the number of MICE tourists by 2030, contributing at least half the country's revenue from tourism spending. There has been a significant increase in the business events sector between 2013 and 2015, where growth in exhibitions in particular averaged 35 per cent. It is expected to grow by a further five per cent next year, with already 58 events scheduled.

HRG, Harpers Travel join forces

Malaysian travel firm, Harpers Travel, has partnered with HRG to provide a dedicated Meetings, Groups and Events service for the latter's clients.

Harpers Travel now trades as HRG Meetings, Groups and Events Malaysia, and is lead by David Low, general manager of Harpers Travel.

HRG continues its relationship with HRG Malaysia (TravelBiz) which will provide all other corporate travel services to Malaysia based organisations.

German ProWein to launch Asian edition

The first ProWine ASIA 2016, which will be held alongside FHA2016 next April, has so far secured participation from 17 countries and regions, all keen on tapping the growing market opportunities in the region which is expected to see an annual growth of seven million prospective drinkers and a 13 per cent rise in spending.

Organised by Singapore Exhibition Services in partnership with Messe Dusseldorf Asia, the event in Singapore is modelled on the global wine and spirits trade fair, ProWein, organised by Messe Düsseldorf in Germany and launched in 1994.

Powerful personalities help raise Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore's MICE profile

Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore's recent hosting of special events and power personalities such as Indian prime minister Narendra Modi, Chinese president Xi Jinping and Taiwanese president Ma Ying-jeou, has drawn the interest of both travellers and business event planners.

Christopher Kang, director of sales and marketing, told *TTGmice* that the historical meeting between political leaders Xi and Ma on November 7 had, in particular, resulted in "overwhelming interest" from Chinese and Taiwanese travellers who were eager to stay at the hotel, see the room where the meeting was held and taste the dinner menu that was presented to the two heads of state.

To feed the demand, the hotel has developed a special package that includes a stay in the hotel's luxurious Valley Wing, dinner

at Shang Palace featuring special dishes themed around the momentous meeting of Xi and Ma, and a tour of the hotel including a visit to the State Room where the meeting was held.

Although Kang did not provide take-up rates for this package, he said general bookings from China tripled after the hotel went on Ctrip on November 19 to share interesting stories behind the hospitality arrangements made for the political meeting.

"The event turned out to be such a huge marketing boost for the hotel, generating lots of media coverage and consumer interest," Kang remarked, adding that the "Ma-Xi meeting also raised interest among Chinese planners who wanted to host their next event at the very hotel where the two presidents had their reunion".

China is among the hotel's top three



The State Room often hosts government representatives and delegates

source markets – the others being the US and the UK. To grow business from China, Kang's team had in 2015 worked with the Singapore Tourism Board on some marketing initiatives. In May it hosted a MICE fam for 35 top buyers from China-based MNCs with the tourism board, Singapore Airlines and Changi Airport Group. – **Karen Yue**



Gold Coast baits sports events with new grant



By Rebecca Elliott

A funding programme aimed at rallying local support for bids on sporting conferences ahead of the 2018 Commonwealth Games has been rolled out by the Gold Coast Business Events.

Manager of Business Events, Shannon Thwaites, said introducing the *Gold Coast Business Events Future Bid Leaders Grant* was part of the CVB's strategy to increase sports focused business events.

"It provides opportunities for locals affiliated with international Asia-Pacific conferences to apply to work with us to bring their conferences to the Gold Coast," she said.

Successful applicants linked to a professional sporting association or corporation will receive A\$2,500 (US\$1,778) to attend a national conference or A\$5,000 to attend an interna-

tional conference with the goal of bringing that event back to the Gold Coast.

The Gold Coast has already demonstrated its sporting prowess with Badminton Australia announcing on Saturday the Queensland city's successful bid to host the Badminton World Federation (BWF) Sudirman Cup in 2017 in conjunction with the BWF Annual General Meeting, fending off competition from Scotland.

Meanwhile, the city is undergoing extensive redevelopment in the lead up to the Commonwealth Games, which to date includes a new G:Link light rail system; a makeover of shopping mecca, Pacific Fair, which upon completion in 2016 will feature two full-line department stores, 400 specialty stores and an indoor/outdoor entertainment precinct; and upgrade of the Gold Coast Airport.

Angsana, Xi'an showcases MICE capability through own events

Angsana Xi'an Lintong has conducted several public events, from symphony concerts to festival celebrations, to raise its profile and showcase its event capability to MICE planners.

Since its opening in October 2014, the 400-key luxury hotel in the Lintong district of Xi'an, China has hosted a poolside Valentine's Day party, a Mid-Autumn celebration and a symphony orchestra concert for 300 guests in celebration of China's National Day.

The events were marketed as a room and/or dinner package.

General manager, Jerry Mong, told *TTGmice* that the events were an effective way of demonstrating the hotel's MICE ability. "Our hotel sits on a large piece of land (with) many beautiful open spaces. Our internal events utilise these spaces and they show the variety of activities that can be done here," he said, adding that the events were captured on film which are used as part of the hotel's marketing activities.

Besides a ballroom for up to 800 guests and seven meeting rooms with spacious foyers, Angsana Xi'an Lintong also offers several outdoor venues such as landscaped gardens, indoor and outdoor pool decks, and a courtyard that can accommodate up to 1,000 pax for welcome receptions, gala dinners and teambuilding games.

The hotel, whose architecture and layout are a modern interpretation of a Tang Dynasty court, was also the venue of the 2015 Banyan Tree General Manager Operation Review, an event in July for 200 general managers and directors of sales and marketing from the company's properties worldwide. The delegation was welcomed by a royal procession executed by 200 actors dressed in ancient garb and armed with props.

"We planned that opening ceremony on our own, and it is proof that the hotel can facilitate strong welcome receptions for our clients," Mong remarked. – **Karen Yue**



AIME 2016 draws strong exhibitors

The 24th annual Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) has unveiled its latest list of confirmed exhibitors which includes Business Events Tasmania, Perth Convention Bureau, Hotel Grand Chancellor Surfers Paradise, Silversea Cruises, Grace Hotel Sydney, View Hotels, the Turkish Ministry of Culture & Tourism, etouches and the Korea Tourism Organisation.

Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau, the latest Global Partner for worldwide ibtm events including AIME, will also be showcasing the destination's MICE offerings.

Recognised as the largest international event of its kind in Australia, AIME unites a community of over 4,000 suppliers, and meetings and events planners at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre. Exhibiting at AIME 2016, according to the event's spokesperson, offers the opportunity to connect with top-level decision makers, be inspired by the Knowledge Program, develop one's network at the social functions and generate sales leads.

Exhibition spaces can be secured through AIME's website www.aime.com.au, as can applications for hosted buyer status.

AIME 2016 will take place on February 23 and 24.

{ 2015 Calendar }

**January
18-25**

ASEAN Tourism Forum,
Manila, Philippines

**January
29-31**

South Asia Travel &
Tourism Event,
Delhi, India

**February
9-11**

IBTM Arabia,
Abu Dhabi, UAE

**February
23-24**

AIME,
Melbourne,
Australia



Building teams for community good

BANGKOK A gathering of teambuilding experts from around the world in Bangkok last October resulted in four days of fun with a strong corporate social responsibility (CSR) spin.

The inaugural Catalyst Global Conference 2015, organised by teambuilding experts Catalyst Global, ran with the theme, *2020 Vision – Developing a shared strategy as a network*, and featured several new CSR focused products by the organiser.

Conference participants – 70 team builders from over 30 countries – got to construct bicycles in *Building A Dream*, construct and decorate toys which were then presented to a local children's charity in *Toy Factory*, construct and play mini-golf from canned and non-perishable goods in *Hole in One*, and go on

a lively rocking horse race, with proceeds from the latter two activities going to a local charity.

Explaining the focus on CSR, head of marketing, Esther Daniel, told *TTGmice* that the concept was a key component of the company's *2020 Vision*.

"Recent research shows that more than half of Asia-Pacific consumers donate to charity. These findings lend support to the conference's CSR theme and (our) connection with social enterprise B1G1: Business for Good. B1G1 makes it easy for businesses booking Catalyst Global products anywhere in the world to give easily to more than 600 high impact projects worldwide through committing a percentage of every sale," Daniel said.

"Following this lead we



wanted to develop more products which are CSR focused and use the conference as a platform for introducing them."

She added that many Catalyst Global network partners are already heavily involved in charity efforts, such as Team Building Asia which works with UNHCR, The UN Refugee Agency.

Besides showcasing its new community-conscious programmes, Catalyst Global also used the conference to share with participants practical knowledge on selecting the right charities that will effect direct impact on the community and on getting client companies to buy into the objectives of the products.

– **Prudence Lui**

Speedy thrills as reward for Amway Taiwan's top achievers

AUSTRALIA Some 150 members of Amway Taiwan's Diamond Club will enjoy a bespoke programme on the final day of the Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne next March, in what will be the first major international incentive group to be hosted at the sporting event.

Speaking exclusively to *TTGmice*, the Australian Grand Prix Corporation's business development

manager, Darian Misko, said the concept had been a couple of years in the making.

"An enquiry was made a couple of years ago and at our event in 2015, we hosted a familiarisation for four people from Amway. They fell in love with it," Misko said.

"We've had a number of groups that have booked MotoGP tickets, but from an F1 point of view, this is the first of its kind," he added.

Working in partnership with Australian Tours Management, the Grand Prix Corporation has customised a programme for Amway Taiwan, which includes an exclusive Amway-branded suite in the Paddock Club, a behind-the-scenes tour of the event, pit lane walks, photo opportunities and co-branded merchandise.

– **Rebecca Elliott**



Osteoporosis society picks OCEC for two meetings

OMAN The Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre (OCEC) has been awarded host city status for the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) Regionals – Fourth Middle East & Africa Osteoporosis Meeting in 2017 and the Sixth IOF Regionals in 2021.

According to Judy Stenmark, IOF CEO, the OCEC had been a distinctive choice for the IOF for a number of reasons.

She said: "The IOF Regionals Middle East and Africa Osteoporosis Meeting is a key event in the calendar for the bone, muscle and joint community. It is the leading educational and research forum for osteoporosis and related diseases in the region and we are committed to delivering the highest quality scientific content, as well as optimising the overall delegate experience. The venue plays a central role in the success of the meeting and the OCEC



Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre

provides exceptional facilities. It is also backed by an experienced team that understands the specific needs of congresses such as ours."

She added that Oman as a destination also instilled confidence in the organisers. "It is a central and well-connected location for our delegates, has a growing reputation as a medical hub and, of course, it is a wonderful country to visit," she elaborated.

IOF Regionals Fourth Middle East & Africa Osteoporosis Meeting will be held on December 7-9, 2017. It is expected to attract more than 1,000 delegates.

A tough courtship still

Sponsorships are even harder to come by these days, but associations will see greater success by having innovative activities and investing time and effort in building a relationship with sponsors, writes **S Puvaneswary**



The tough economic environment today and a greater focus on measuring and achieving return on investment have made securing sponsorships an even steeper challenge for many associations. Some are lamenting that it is harder to obtain support today than during the last global financial crisis.

Manoj Verman, president of the Indian National Group of International Society for Rock Mechanics, has observed how event sponsorship is losing its appeal among companies.

"There are other avenues of marketing that are opening up, created by the Internet," said Verman.

And as conferences evolve to become more web-based and traditional ones see a reduction in live attendance, Verman predicts that courting sponsors will become even more arduous.

Tiani Bradilovic, Melbourne-based conference and event organiser with the Association of Corporate Counsel, said: "Organisations have tighter budgets and they are now demanding more for less. They want us to work for them and bring business to their doorstep whereas our arrangement was to give them access to our members. While they value what we can offer them, they are not prepared to pay for it."

Speaking from experience, Philippine Council for the Advancement of Association Executives (PCAEE) president and CEO, Octavio Peralta, said new associations such as his, find it even more difficult to get sponsors as compared with established associations.

He said: "We have to build our credibility first and then look for sponsors that match our objectives."

PCAEE's inaugural 2015 Associa-

tion Executive Summit in Manila on December 3 and 4 last year was fortunate to have received support from the Philippine Tourism Promotions Board and the Philippine International Convention Center. The former provided grants for PCAEE to hold events while the latter provided the venue.

Sponsors are also becoming more selective of the events they wish to sponsor, remarked Jose Camblor, project manager at Meeting Planner System in Spain. He shared that most sponsors want to par-

ticipate in congresses because they seek brand recognition and brand recall, but decline other activities.

Gracie Geikie, director/ principal consultant of Planet Borneo Group of companies based in Sarawak, noted that animal welfare projects tend to get less attention from sponsors.

She elaborated: "Seeking grants and sponsorships for SSPCA (the Sarawak Society For The Prevention Of Cruelty To Animals) can be difficult because most organisations have budget only for corporate social responsibility programmes which are people related."

To overcome this obstacle, Geikie used her experience in planning conferences and events to devise out-of-the-box solutions to raise funds for a SSPCA shelter and a proposed new animal village.

"While we still and will always need corporate sponsors, the strategy of creating public events such as a half-marathon, a fun race and a music festival has helped open some doors. It produced a new platform for organisations to support the events, which indirectly supported our cause," she said.

SSPCA has so far organised the WAG Music Festival, a concert featuring musicians from around the world who chose to perform for free, and the third Animazing Race which welcomed more than 1,000 runners.

But the one event that truly helped



"The best type of partnership would be one where the sponsor has a stake in the event and can help to design activities around it, in order to promote their products and services effectively."

Noor Ahmad Hamid

Regional director for Asia Pacific International Congress and Convention Association



After facing difficulties in obtaining corporate sponsorship, the Sarawak Society For The Prevention of Cruelty To Animals got creative and launched WAG Music Festival 2014 to raise funds and spread its message

SSPCA achieve its objectives and “opened the eyes of several hundred delegates” who stepped up to be ambassadors for its cause, was the Asia for Animals Conference which the organisation had successfully bid for.

Describing the conference as both a challenge and reward for SSPCA, Geikie said it was the first animal and animal welfare conference ever to be held in Malaysia. It took place over a week in October 2015.

Besides considering innovative ways to draw grants and support, association experts recommend investing time and effort to build a relationship with potential and existing sponsors.

Simon Pryor, CEO of the Mathematical Association of Victoria, said it takes time to get a new sponsor, thus associations should build a relationship with sponsors and treat them as their long term “partners”.

He also advised associations to im-

plement a sponsorship policy that looks at the type of sponsors they wish to court for their events. While it is easy to identify sponsors that are a good fit, associations should also target sponsors that seem incongruent as there are companies that will want to come onboard merely to be identified with other big name brands.

International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) regional director for Asia Pacific, Noor Ahmad Hamid, underscored the importance of keeping existing sponsors happy and urged associations to find ways to offer added exposure and value to sponsors.

He said: “The best type of partnership would be one where the sponsor has a stake in the event and can help to design activities around it, in order to promote their products and services effectively. In this regard, the association would need to have the flexibility to customise the event based on the sponsors’ input.”

Peralta agrees, saying: “It makes more sense to work for a long-term relationship with sponsors and come out with packages, such as a one-year partnership, rather than getting sponsors for individual events.”

TTGassociations

THE INTELLIGENT RESOURCE TO ASSOCIATION MEETINGS IN ASIA-PACIFIC



Be inspired and armed with all the knowledge you need for your next association meeting with this quarterly publication.

January | April | July | October



SCAN TO SUBSCRIBE
www.ttgassociations.com

For advertising enquiries, please contact:
Stephanie So | stephanie.so@ttgasia.com | (852) 2237 7252

SINGAPORE

The place for
unforgettable
business
experiences

The 2015 Singapore Experience Awards salute the best of the best in the Business Travel and Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conventions and Exhibitions (MICE) industry

Singapore is Asia's premier business events city. As the established regional destination for business meetings and experiences, the city is Asia's thought-leader on providing platforms for future solutions and exchange capital for international buyers and sellers.

That's borne out by the 2015 Singapore Experience Awards, which recognise the best of the best in MICE industry events. Winners stood out for the innovative and interesting experiences they created to enhance the overall MICE experiences for their delegates.

For the eight awards, entries were evaluated on their delivery of a holistic visitor experience in both content and service, keeping in mind that a great quality experience goes beyond price differentiation and event delivery and takes into account the unique requirements of MICE delegates.

"It's extremely encouraging that we continue to see so many remarkable experiences delivered by our award finalists and recipients year after year," Singapore Tourism Board Chief Executive Mr Lionel Yeo said at a gala awards event. "By honouring their contributions, we celebrate their achievements and recognise that memorable experiences are the cornerstone of Singapore's appeal as a compelling destination. I hope their dedication and winning efforts will be an inspiration to others."



2015 recipients of the Singapore Experience Awards (MICE). Missing from photo: MCI Group Asia Pacific Pte Ltd.



SINGAPORE EXPERIENCE AWARDS Raising the bar for MICE

Now in its seventh year, the Singapore Experience Awards recognise and celebrate outstanding individuals and organisations in Singapore's tourism sector who have made an impact in providing extraordinary experiences.

Nominated by the public and tourism professionals and judged by industry leaders, the awards are spearheaded by the Singapore Tourism Board to recognise those who provide extraordinary tourism experiences as part of the week-long travel and tourism festival, TravelRave.

The awards celebrate the stories behind how organisations went about crafting and launching exceptional experiences, and serve as an inspiration for the entire industry to continue on a growth journey to increasingly compelling and distinctive experiences.

THE 2015 RECIPIENTS - MICE

ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE ORGANISER OF THE YEAR
MCI Group Asia Pacific Pte Ltd: *International Symposium on Pediatric Neuro-Oncology 2014*

MEETING/INCENTIVE ORGANISER OF THE YEAR
Tour East Singapore (1996) Pte Ltd: *Telstra GES LKO 2014*

BUSINESS EVENT VENUE OF THE YEAR
PARKROYAL on Pickering; Marina Bay Sands

BUSINESS EVENT SERVICE PROVIDER OF THE YEAR
Kingsmen Exhibits Pte Ltd: *BNP Paribas WTA Finals Singapore presented by SC Global*

TRADE CONFERENCE ORGANISER OF THE YEAR
SingEx Exhibition Ventures: *Internet of Things Asia 2014*

EXHIBITION ORGANISER OF THE YEAR
HRM Asia Pte Ltd: *HR Summit 2014*

BEST BUSINESS EVENT CHAMPION
Mr Sing Mong Kee

★ MCI Group Asia Pacific Pte Ltd

THE ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE ORGANISER OF THE YEAR

The Association Conference Organiser of the Year award recognises an organiser who has demonstrated excellence in organising and delivering a quality association conference.

This year's winner is MCI Group Asia Pacific Pte Ltd for the International Symposium on Pediatric Neuro-Oncology 2014, held from 28 June 2014 – 2 July 2014 at Suntec City Exhibition and Convention Centre.

The families of infants and children with paediatric brain tumours face deep feelings of frustration and uncertainty. At the ISPNO, they were able to meet with world-leading researchers and doctors to discuss the latest discoveries and potential treatments for pediatric neuro-oncology patients.

Connecting families whose children are diagnosed with cancer with over 800 experts from around the world — mostly from the oncology, neurosurgery and radiation oncology fields — was one of the conference's remarkable achievements. Families also welcomed the opportunity to meet others facing similar challenges and to share information, knowledge and resources.



Vincent Yap (Left)
Assistant Director,
Institutional Division;
and **David Goh**,
Regional Managing
Director



An al fresco-style welcome reception at Royal Palm restaurant and a gala dinner at the Gardens by the Bay Flower Dome were designed by MCI to provide a networking platform for participants to meet and mingle in tranquil and picturesque settings.

The conference was held in Asia's leading medical hub to encourage practitioners from developing countries to attend.

Other finalists for the award: Chinese and Oriental Languages Information Processing Society (COLIPS) for 15th Annual Conference of International Speech Communication Association (INTERSPEECH 2014) and the Singapore Lam Ann Association for the 12th World Lam Ann Convention 2014.

★ Tour East Singapore (1996) Pte Ltd

THE MEETING/INCENTIVE ORGANISER OF THE YEAR

The Meeting/Incentive Organiser of the Year award recognises a meeting/incentive organiser who has demonstrated excellence in organising and delivering quality meetings or incentive events for organisations.

This year's winner is Tour East Singapore (1996) Pte Ltd, for organising Telstra GES LKO 2014 from 05 – 10 July 2014 at Marina Bay Sands Singapore.

The gathering of Telstra's 1,200 sales and marketing executives worldwide was the firm's first meeting outside of Australia, and was awarded to Singapore despite a strong competition with Hong Kong. The strength of Singapore was the capacity, meeting facilities and location of the Marina Bay Sands.

Tour East Singapore's challenge was to showcase Singapore as a Global City with the facilities, skills, creativity and innovation to entertain and impress the large number of delegates, and it has to be different from what they can do in an Australian City.

For a gala dinner themed "Global with a dash of Haji Lane" at Marina Bay Sands, delegates were taken on a global trail of food and entertainment that included traditional



Margaret Soh
Director of Sales
Tour East Singapore
(1996) Pte Ltd



Singaporean cuisine and Malay delicacies that can found at Haji Lane.

Another evening involved an offsite "Dive into Singapore" dine-around programme, for which delegates were transported to the tranquil setting of Dempsey Hill to dine at 10 restaurants

that were bought out for the evening by the organizer. The evening featured a choice of international cuisines in a relaxing Singaporean ambience.

Satisfied guests left Singapore with a greater appreciation of Singapore's capacity, friendliness, and facilities.

Other finalists for the award: Safe2Travel Pte Ltd for AIA Premier DM Convention 2014, and Singexpress Travel Pte Ltd for Bidvest Management Conference 2014.

★ SingEx Exhibition Ventures

THE TRADE CONFERENCE ORGANISER OF THE YEAR



The Trade Conference Organiser of the Year award recognises a Professional Event Organiser who has demonstrated excellence in organising and delivering a quality trade conference.

This year's award went to SingEx Exhibition Ventures for the event Internet of Things Asia 2014.

The inaugural Internet of Things Asia trade event was the first dedicated conference and exhibition in Asia to address the enormous potential of the IoT revolution.

To demonstrate in real time the potential of IoT technologies during the event, MAX Atria @ Singapore EXPO, the chosen venue for IoT Asia, served as a test bed site for IoT deployment.

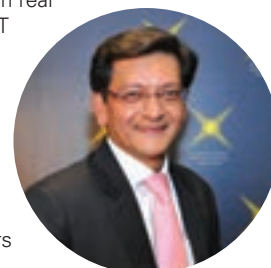
IoT-based sensors dispatched cleaners to washrooms with high ammonia levels; alerted taxi cab drivers where long queues were developing; and reported to motorists about available carpark spaces.

Onsite TV screens showed attendees how the whole process was managed and deployed.

In addition, QR codes on attendee badges and a mobile app helped delegates to navigate the event.

IoT Asia was the first event in the region to focus on bringing IoT technology to end-businesses, governments and society, and to chart the future for IoT in Asia by accurately anticipating the needs and concerns of the rapidly evolving industry.

Other finalists for the award: Branded Ltd. for All That Matters 2014 and EmTech Singapore 2014, hosted by MIT Technology Review magazine and Koelnmesse Pte Ltd.



Aloysius Arlando
Chief Executive Officer
SingEx Holdings

★ **Kingsmen Exhibits Pte Ltd**

THE BUSINESS EVENT SERVICE PROVIDER OF THE YEAR

The Business Event Service Provider of the Year award recognises a service provider that has demonstrated excellence in their delivery and dedication to the MICE industry.

This year's award went to Kingsmen Exhibits Pte Ltd, for the event BNP Paribas WTA Finals Singapore presented by SC Global, 17 – 26 October 2014, at the Singapore Sports Hub.

Tennis anyone?

The answer was an enthusiastic “Yes!” when the prestigious season finale of the Women's Tennis Association tournament made its first foray into Southeast Asia in its 44 year history.

But a lot had to happen – and fast – before the first serve. Kingsmen transformed an ordinary parking lot into a stunning, glass-fronted Racquet Club, working round the clock to design, conduct site inspections, procure materials, obtain permits, and complete the build within a tight timeline of four months.

In addition, Kingsmen worked to accommodate an expanded 10-day schedule that featured not only the best WTA stars battling to be crowned champion, but also WTA Rising Star and Legends events, daily fan festivals, a business conference, industry forums, music events and an exciting VIP experience.



“The successful execution of the Racquet Club, hospitality suites, players' lounge, and WTA Fan Zone were definitely the highlights because we delivered a unique and engaging experience for tennis fans,” said Charlene Sng, Kingsmen's Manager, Corporate Communications. “In the end, our client's success is our success, and we were thrilled that the event was well-received by fans and the public.”



Anthony Chong
Managing Director
Kingsmen Exhibits Pte Ltd

Other finalists for the award: Kingsmen Exhibits Pte Ltd for Art Stage Singapore 2014 and Pico Art International for Singapore Garden Festival 2014.

★ **Mr Sing Mong Kee**

BEST BUSINESS EVENT CHAMPION



Mr Sing Mong Kee, former president of the Intelligent Transport Society of Singapore (ITSS), was named Best Business Event Champion for his role as a MICE ambassador, tirelessly championing and eventually securing the rights for Singapore to host the Intelligent Transport

Systems World Congress (ITSWC) 2019. The ITSWC 2019 is a best-in-class congress that is expected to attract 5,000 foreign delegates.

Singapore is a natural to host the Intelligent Transport Systems World Congress 2019, an international event that serves as a platform for government transport agencies, industry players and academic and research institutions to discuss and showcase the latest global ITS products, technological achievements and trends. The conference typically draws around 5,000 participants worldwide.

As a smart city, a wired and a sensed city, Singapore leverages the latest available technology to point the way to the transportation future. When urban planners talk about cities of the future – that is, how big, functional urban communities will ideally operate 50 or 100 years from now – they frequently point to Singapore and its transportation systems.

Singapore's know-how will be showcased and on display at the ITS World Congress.

But getting the ITS World Congress to choose Singapore as host of its 26th ITS World Congress took some convincing. For that, thanks are owed to Mr Sing Mong Kee.

Mr Sing worked closely with the Ministry of Transport in rallying various stakeholders such as International Enterprise Singapore and STB to develop a joint bid for the Intelligent Transport Systems World Congress 2019.

Mr Sing had worked on the two preceding unsuccessful Singapore bids to host the ITS World Congress, and was determined to secure the ITS World Congress 2019 for Singapore.

To ensure the successful outcome of Singapore's bid, Mr Sing made lobbying trips to other ITS chapters in Japan, Australia and New Zealand, gaining support for Singapore within the Asia-Pacific region. He showcased Singapore's commitment and hospitality by hosting the Singapore Night reception during the ITS World Congress in Tokyo (2013) and Detroit (2014), as well as the Asia-Pacific ITS Forum in Auckland (2014).

As part of ITSS, he profiled Singapore's ITS capabilities internationally through participating in and exhibiting at multiple platforms, such as the ITS World Congress, the Asia-Pacific ITS Forum, the Singapore ITS Summit and the Smart Mobility Forum in Singapore.

★ PARKROYAL on Pickering

★ Marina Bay Sands

THE BUSINESS EVENT VENUE OF THE YEAR



PARKROYAL on Pickering.



Marina Bay Sands.

The Business Event Venue of the Year award recognizes a business event venue that has elevated the standards of world-class MICE facilities in Singapore.

Two recipients were named in this year's competition: PARKROYAL on Pickering, a PARKROYAL Collection hotel, and Marina Bay Sands.

PARKROYAL on Pickering hosted the 20th Century Fox crew and main cast of spy action movie Agent 47, the first major Hollywood studio film to be shot in Singapore, for six weeks with a commitment of more than 1,000 room nights.

The entire 14th floor of the hotel was converted into a mini production base for the FOX team in April and May 2014.

Key scenes of the movie were filmed in Executive Suites while other lead-in category rooms were converted into meeting spaces, make-up studios and hospitality suites. At a cast party held at the Presidential Suite prior to the crew's

departure, guests were treated to an action-packed display of ice carvings featuring the movie logo, revolver-themed canapes and cocktails inspired by movie memorabilia.

MARINA BAY SANDS won for its operational excellence as a venue and for its green certification.

Marina Bay Sands is the first MICE facility in the region to obtain the ISO 20101 Sustainable Events Management certification. As a leader in the hospitality industry, its business is conducted in a sustainable way and plays an integral role in helping meeting planners achieve their green goals.

Sands ECO360° integrates the company's best practices, technologies and methodologies in the area of sustainability across all properties. It consists of four priorities: Green Building, Environmentally Responsible Operations, Green Meetings, and Sustainability Education and Outreach.

Other finalist for the award: Resorts World at Sentosa Pte Ltd.



Tina Sim
General Manager
PARKROYAL on Pickering



Benny Zin
Chief Operating Officer
Marina Bay Sands

★ HRM Asia Pte Ltd

THE EXHIBITION ORGANISER OF THE YEAR



The Exhibition Organiser of the Year award recognises a Professional Exhibitor Organisation that has demonstrated excellence in organising and delivering quality exhibitions.

This year's award went to HRM Asia Pte Ltd for the event HR Summit 2014.

Picture yourself on a "Dessert Safari." Instead of locating coffee and treats at a typical lunch area, the Dessert Safari encouraged attendees to explore strategically positioned stations integrated throughout the convention hall.

The novel catering solution provided delegates and exhibitors more platforms to network and engage, and was just one of many engagement strategies behind Asia's biggest gathering of people management professionals.

A new venue layout at Suntec Convention Centre enabled some 4,100 visitors to have easy access to a majority of activities across one floor. HRM Asia offered five conference streams on different HR topics and the flexibility for delegates to attend their preferred sessions. Registration packs with name badges sent out ahead of the event allowed delegates a "fast track experience" upon their arrival by skipping registration.

To facilitate delegates' learning process, an illustrator was engaged to do a live mind mapping drawing, creating a visual illustration and summary of a key speaker's learning points. By helping speakers and delegates to connect and network, the event was truly a marketplace for HR ideas – with great desserts.

Other finalists for the award: Singapore Yacht Events Pte Ltd for Singapore Yacht Show and Tax Free World Association (TFWA) for TFWA Asia Pacific Exhibition and Conference 2014.



Emma Dean
Events Director
HRM Asia Pte Ltd



For more information on the Singapore Experience Awards, visit
www.singaporeexperience.com

Going all out to impress

W Taipei and Roxy outdo themselves for their third summer collaboration by harnessing celebrity power and stunning visuals. By **Samuel Ng** and **Nadra Iwani BME**

Event brief

W Taipei has been welcoming summer with its signature Shock Wave Summer Party for the past two years, an event that precedes a series of pool parties held every Sunday and one that is rolled out in partnership with Roxy, a global brand renowned for its surfwear and board-sport products.

The summer festival was due for its third edition in May 2015 and the luxury hotel needed to develop a concept that would continue to impress its guests.

Challenges

W Taipei knew it had to outdo itself for the 2015 edition and at the same time meet Roxy's show requirements.

Wet weather concerns were also on the minds of the organiser, as the party was to be held outdoors.

Additionally, as pool operations had to be halted during the set up of the event for four days, W Taipei had to be ready for potential complaints from hotel guests who were being inconvenienced.

Solutions

To raise the bar on the 2015 edition, the hotel featured an opening act by the hotel's very own music curator Sona Eyambe, a music genius who had toured the world with popular DJs Derrick Cator and Mark Farina and spun for parties hosted by luxury labels such as Louis Vuitton.

To bring an even more energetic vibe to the party, W Taipei built a million-dollar concert-standard stage on the WET Deck by the pool, which came with a giant backdrop that spelt 'WOW', a massive 250-inch LED screen and a crystal runway, revealed Julian Lin, the hotel's assistant e-marketing manager.

Fellow organiser, Roxy, chose to up the entertainment ante by having Chio Tian Folk Drums



Event

Shock Wave Summer Party and
Roxy 25th Anniversary Fashion
Show

Venue

W Taipei's WET Deck and
WET Bar

Date

May 29, 2015

Number of attendees

300



& Arts Group as the curtain-raiser and held a fashion parade featuring world surfing champion Kelia Moniz, global brand ambassador Monyca Eleogram and 20 celebrities and models to showcase its summer bikini collection.

To spread Roxy's brand message "#ROXY-Ready to explore Taiwan", finger food was served on specially designed surfboards while Taiwan's representative dessert – pineapple pie – was featured on the menu to give off a summer vibe.

To guard against wet weather, the hotel installed a large tarpaulin over the WET Desk and a drainage system. It also conducted a traditional ceremony to pray for good weather.

To prepare its guests for the party, the hotel posted closure notices on its website and online travel agency sites, and issued advisories to

its guests via reservation confirmation emails and pre-arrival emails. The same notices were placed on premises too.

The hotel was also prepared to transfer guests to its sister hotel Le Méridien Taipei should they insist on swimming during the affected days.

Key takeaways

Lin discovered that the presence of "many celebrity-like models with huge influence on social media" at the event allowed the hotel to benefit from publicity generated by Roxy's VIPs and media.

"For an instance, the welcome amenities we prepared for the Japanese models and bloggers created an enormous social media impact for our hotel," he noted.

"W Taipei is devoted to promoting local culture and local design, and that is identical to Roxy's brand value. Through Shock Wave Party and W Taipei's customised and flexible service, we...successfully promoted Roxy's 25th anniversary brand spirit (in Taipei)."

Aurora Jang, brand manager, Roxy and Quiksilver



Exploring different angles

Looking at various solutions to tackle challenges is how Dongyue Group, with Taiwan Tour's support, ensures its annual meeting runs smoothly.

By **Prudence Lui**

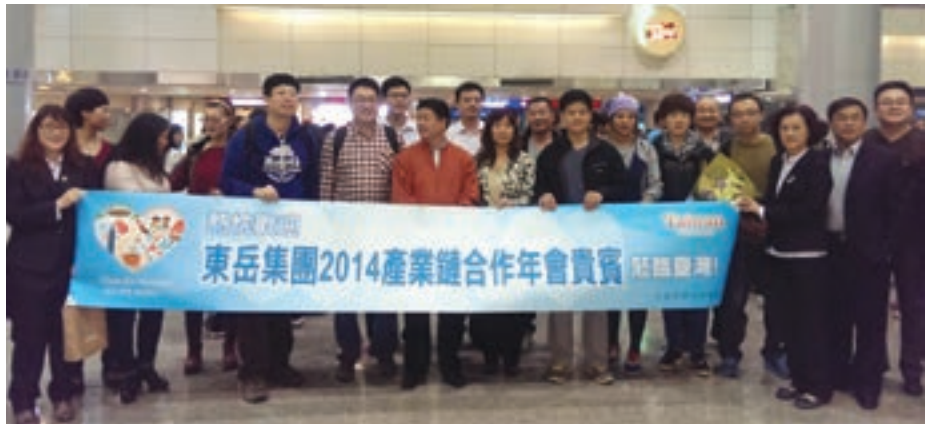
Event brief

Dongyue Group is one of China's top companies for fluoride and silicon products. Every year, it searches for an appealing place to launch new products, check out recent technology, and exchange ideas with clients.

In 2013, Taiwan was picked and five months prior to the event, Taiwan Tour signed the contract to help organise the conference, distributor meetings and post-conference tours. Taiwan Tour also arranged for a visit to Formosa Plastics Group's complex in Mailiao for a business exchange.

Challenges

Out of a total 544 attendees, about 70 per cent of the delegates were Chinese who came from more than 400 major China enterprises.



According to Taiwan Tour's vice general manager, Angel Lin, one challenge was the visa application, as there were some limitations for Chinese when it came to entering Taiwan (not all cities in China were eligible for Taiwan's FIT visa application). About 25 per cent of delegates were affected by this. Moreover, Dongyue booked hotel rooms late, hence there was a shortage of about 200 rooms.

Solutions

Taiwan Tour connected Dongyue with Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA) which solved their problems with immigration and customs for such a large group. Dongyue also explored various ways to tackle the visa issue, such as applying for a business visa instead.

To resolve the room shortage problem, Taiwan Tour gave its own 200-room hotel allotment (a set number of rooms that the agency contracts from a hotel) to Dongyue.

Meet Taiwan also offered assistance such as venue re-searching and providing complimentary souvenirs for delegates.

Key takeaways

Taiwan Tour recommended a site visit to the leading Formosa Plastics Group Complex which had positive feedback. It is vital to

Event

Dongyue Group Annual Meeting of Industrial Chain Cooperation 2014

Organiser

Taiwan Tour Ltd

Venue

Taipei International Convention Center

Date

November 17-21, 2013

Number of participants

544 representatives from more than 400 major China enterprises and 30 other countries

pick a corporate which possesses similar scale of operation and ranking in order to promote exchange. The factory visit also showed mainland MICE groups that apart from sightseeing, Taiwan had more to offer such as business exchanges with local industry players.

The level of expertise in planning and executing the event helped Taiwan Tour bag a silver award in the Corporate Meeting and Incentive Travel category at the Taiwan MICE Awards 2014.



"When we asked for help, TAITRA eagerly extended assistance and offered every delegate a souvenir. Also, the visit to the petrochemical plant was a fruitful one as it showcased the secret of success and vision behind the enterprise. It was an eye-opening trip to see how modern management increased productivity while maintaining an environment that is clean, tidy, safe and green. These are some best practices our staff can learn and draw examples from."

Lee Yu Wen, secretary, Dongyue Group



Keeping competition fresh

Organisers of a new junior culinary competition employ creativity, technology and supplier support to keep ingredients fresh for contestants. By **Nadra Iwani BME**

Event brief

The idea behind the Malaysia Junior Tiger Cup culinary team challenge was formulated by Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre's executive chef, Richmond Lim, who desired a platform to develop the talent of aspiring young chefs.

It took a year for the centre and the Malaysian Association of Hotels to conceptualise and plan the Malaysia Junior Tiger Cup, before it was inaugurated at Culinaire Malaysia 2015, a culinary challenge held in conjunction with the 13th Malaysia International Exhibition of Food, Drinks, Hotel, Restaurant & Foodservice Equipment, Supplies, Services & Related Technology (commonly known as FHM 2015).

The Malaysia Junior Tiger Cup saw 12 teams of five young chefs and chefs-to-be create three modern cuisine dishes – an appetiser, a main course and a dessert item.

According to Lim, the inaugural competition attracted strong interest, with participants from Malaysia, Taiwan, South Korea, Indonesia, Hong Kong, the UAE, Thailand and Singapore.

Challenges

Like any culinary competition, sourcing for and providing fresh quality ingredients to the participants were of utmost importance. The organisers were particularly concerned about the storage of ingredients for the Mystery Box challenge. Additionally, due to the large number of participants, the centre expected a high wastage of ingredients.

Lim explained: "The Mystery Box challenge was the most unusual element of the

Event

Malaysia Junior Tiger Cup 2015

Organisers

Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre and Malaysian Association of Hotels

Venue

Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre

Date

September 29 to October 2, 2015

Number of participants

12 teams of five chefs

event as teams had to catch live eels and cook them as part of their dish. We needed a plan to ensure the eels were safely stored and kept secret from the competitors."

Another challenge for the organisers came in the form of the event layout, which unexpectedly proved to be an inconvenience for both the judges and the audience. The judges had difficulties moving around the event area while the audience were unable to get a direct view of the competition happenings.

Solutions

To ensure that the ingredients remained fresh for participants to use in their cooking, the centre worked closely with suppliers to select top quality produce and followed a

delivery timeline. The centre also utilised its technologically-advanced kitchens to store the items.

Food wastage was minimised by using a cabinet trolley refrigerated container system that was invented for the competition. The system enabled ingredients not used during the competition to be stored and later recycled for other purposes, such as in the preparation of committee meals. The same system was also used in Culinaire Malaysia 2015, which resulted in a 60 per cent decrease in food waste collected in 2015 compared with Culinaire Malaysia 2013.

As for the eels in the Mystery Box challenge, they were placed in a tank equipped with an oxygen pump.

The layout problem was, unfortunately, without a solution. Lim commented: "This is an area which will need to be addressed at the next edition, perhaps by having a raised viewing platform for spectators or a 'live' feed projected onto big screens."

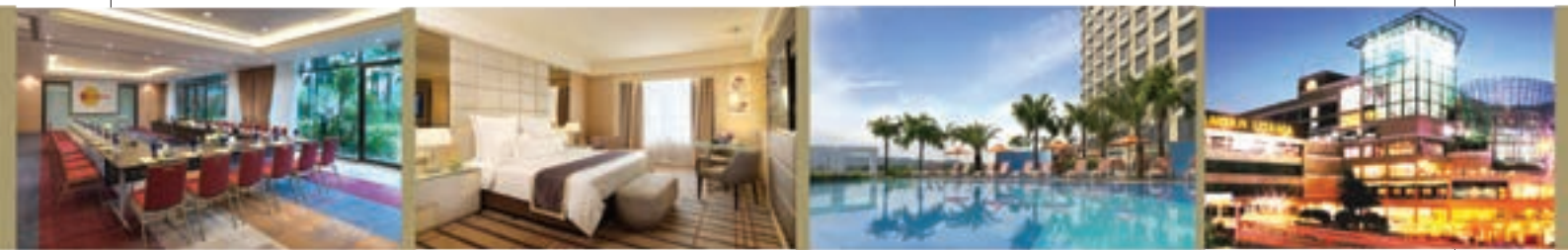
Key takeaways

Emphasising on the importance of early preparations to minimise challenges and avoid setbacks during the event, Lim said: "To cope with the organisational and coordination challenges, groundwork started almost one year in advance. Of course, having an experienced team on the job helps!

In addition to the numerous teleconferences and meetings with the organisers, internally we had countless inter-departmental meetings to go over all the different aspects."



Meeting facilities,
recognised by the world.



At the 5-star One World Hotel, you can expect ample space, luxuriously appointed with spectacular chandeliers and state-of-the-art facilities including simultaneous interpretation system, live feed facility and mood lighting with variable colour setting and free Wi-Fi. However, what makes corporate functions here extra special is the opportunity to put fun back into functions.

Anything's possible in One World. To add some excitement to your next event, speak to our Conventions and Events team today at 03-7712 2289 or email cne@oneworldhotel.com.my



Find us on



WORLDHOTELS
deluxe

www.oneworldhotel.com.my

first avenue, bandar utama city centre, 47800 petaling jaya, selangor, malaysia. toll free domestic: 1300 88 7888 toll free international: 1800 88 7888
tel: 603 7681 1111 fax: 603 7681 1188 email: enquiry@oneworldhotel.com.my website: www.oneworldhotel.com.my

Malaysia
LIKE NEVER
BEFORE
Discover a whole
new side of Malaysia

Year of Festivals
2015
MALAYSIA Truly Asia
Endless Celebrations

Indulge in cultural luxury IN GEORGETOWN EXPLORE LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Centuries-old Craftsmanship
Experience a UNESCO World Heritage Site | Gastronomic Adventures
Designed exclusively to enrich your high achievers.

Uncover other exciting
experiences:

**SAIL BEYOND
THE HORIZON**
LANGKAWI
PARTY LIKE NEVER BEFORE

EXPLORE THE
URBAN JUNGLE
in Kuala Lumpur
SHOP LIKE NEVER BEFORE

**ROAR IN THE
Mighty
Jungle**
IN KUCHING
UNWIND LIKE NEVER BEFORE

**FEEL THE PULSE
OF NATURE**
in Kota Kinabalu
Escape Like Never Before

Grab awesome deals & get extra rewards with **Malaysia Twin Deal X**

f MyCEB

t @MyCEB

MyCEB

in MyCEB

For enquiries, please contact:

Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (868264-K)

Suite 22.3, Level 22, Menara IMC
8 Jalan Sultan Ismail
50250 Kuala Lumpur
Malaysia

T +603 2034 2090
F +603 2034 2091
mycebci@myceb.com.my
www.myceb.com.my

**Malaysia
Convention
& Exhibition
Bureau**

Experience MALAYSIA LIKE NEVER BEFORE

A LUXURIOUS DOSE OF CULTURE AT MALAYSIA'S HERITAGE CITY, GEORGE TOWN, PENANG

With its charming colonial townscapes, majestic architectural buildings, ornate sacred temples and mosques, colourful multi-ethnic cultural heritage, happening art scene, exquisite gastronomical delights and recognition as "Top 10 best city to visit in the world" by The Guardian in 2014, George Town cordially invites you to "Indulge in Cultural Luxury and Explore Like Never Before". This characterful island capital city of Penang is all set to become an enriching host that will hit all the right notes for corporate meeting and incentive travels.

Centuries old craftsmanship at your fingertips. Heritage and traditions go hand in hand and not taken lightly in this part of Malaysia, which is one of the main reasons George Town earned its UNESCO World Heritage site status. Trishaw is the best way to go unravelling heritage trails. Encounter street art at almost every other corner, be amazed by the enchanting allure of the city's colonial past and centuries' old traditional craftsmanship. Along the journey, take up a challenge of weaving a pair of dainty pair Nyonya beaded slippers, or practice patience and steadiness by making traditional "Bakul Siah", or lacquered baskets, both unique heritage of the Peranakan culture. Witness how master artisans meticulously hand-craft enchantingly fragrant sandalwood joss sticks that 'cleanses the soul', colourful Chinese paper lanterns and intricate dough figurines. Unleash creative juices and grab the rare chance of being personally guided by these vanishing experts!



Penang Street Art

Relive the Bygone Era. If appreciating George Town's majestic architectural landmarks conjures nostalgia, then stay right in the epicentre of this awe-inspiring city! Grandeur is an understatement when it comes to checking in to any of the delicately restored historical buildings such as the opulent Eastern & Oriental Hotel. Currently trending in popularity are artistically refurbished yet rustically sophisticated boutique hotels. Check out Cheong Fatt Tze 'Blue' Mansion, Seven Terraces, Macalister Mansion 1881 Chong Tian Cultural Hotel, just to name a few. Either way, staying in any of these legacies is a perfect setting to relive city's glorious bygone era.

Pulsating culinary heartbeat. There is no such thing as going hungry in Penang, Malaysia's food capital among locals. Be spoiled for choice at Gurney Drive, an alfresco dining gastronomic hotspot of Malay, Indian, Chinese and Nyonya delights. Must-tries are Char Koay Teow (fried rice noodles), Assam Laksa (rice noodle soup), Mee Udang (Prawn noodles), Nasi Kandar (Mixed rice), Cendol (sweet icy desert) and the list goes on! From humble yet delicious hawkers' fare to sophisticated sky dining, it is no surprise that George Town was named Lonely Planet's "Top Culinary Spot for 2014"!



Assam Laksa

A feast for the senses, in a league of its own, George Town, Penang will certainly be a one-of-a-kind experiential canvas for corporate meetings and incentives, exclusively designed to enrich. Now there are all the more reasons to discover a whole new side of Malaysia like never before.

Be sure to also check out "Malaysia Twin Deal X" to enjoy awesome privileges and rewards on top these not-to-be missed excitements.

Uncover more at www.likeneverbefore.my

For enquiries, please contact:

Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (668264-K)
Suite 22.3, Level 22, Menara IMC
8 Jalan Sultan Ismail
50250 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
T +603 2034 2090
F +603 2034 2091
mycebc@myceb.com.my
www.myceb.com.my

**An Official
ITB Asia 2015
Late Night Function**

Singapore, 22 October 2015

Over 600 ITB delegates and invited guests had the privilege of experiencing the first event held in The South Beach's Grand Ballroom. Co-hosted by TTG Asia Media and The South Beach, the event marks the official opening of the Lifestyle & Luxury Hotel of Design's Grand Ballroom. To complete the welcome ceremony, the hotel's General Manager Jan Büttgen, South Beach Development's former CEO Aloysius Lee and TTG Asia Media's Managing Director Darren Ng delivered an opening address and inaugurated the Grand Ballroom. With gourmet food and drinks, music and entertainment by celebrated artists under the Forest of Lights, the night was one of the main highlights for many ITB Asia delegates and guests as they seamlessly blend work and play together in this Imaginative Social Space that integrates heritage buildings with ultra-modern ecological architecture.

CO-HOSTED BY



THE SOUTH BEACH SHOWCASE



Tik of Deevana Patong Resort & Spa, Olivier and Jan of Groupon, Chosika Kaewsiriwan of APK Group and Rai of PhuketBestGroup.



The party's co-hosts: Jan Büttgen of The South Beach, Darren Ng, Xinyi Liang-Pholsena, Raini Hamdi, Michael Chow of TTG Asia Media and Aloysius Lee of Millennium & Copthorne Hotels and Resorts.



Francesca Pezzutto of Pro-Meet Agency, Phil Maney of Southern Breeze and Anastasiya Gerasimova of Conrad Dubai.



Jeroen Duiker and Fernando Lonergan of BCD Meetings & Event with Todd W. Arthur of HRS (middle).

V.S. Abdul Riaz M. Vineet A. Bashir

Michael Henry V. Moonsa Red La

Pankaj Kenny



Kelvin Tan from Fairmont, Maria Yarych of JTB, Melanni Quiambao of Studio M, Jessie Chen of JC Travel and Fiona Zhuang of Marina Bay Sands.



Dulkareem of Creative Tours & Travel, Sunshi of OTOAI, Himanshu Patil of Kesari, Gopal of Representation World and Ameer Ahmed of Chennai Metro Travel.



Al Chow of TTG Travel Trade Publishing, Michael Waltz of Gecko Incentives & Events, Yuhang of Virgo Virgin and Ambrose Bittner of Northern Journeys.



Raheja of RezLive.com, Irene Seng and Goh of Forever Travel Service.



Opening Speech by Jan Büttgen, General Manager of The South Beach as he unveiled the Grand Ballroom.



The South Beach Grand Ballroom

Additional information and advance reservations for the Grand Ballroom can be found through thesouthbeach.com.sg or catering@thesouthbeach.com.sg

Celebrating our people

As the year draws to a close, *TTGmice* shines the spotlight on the people who make business events happen and hear from them how the growing population of working Gen Y'ers are shifting things

Young chiefs in the house

More millennials are taking over the reins of event companies and bringing with them new ways of managing people. *TTGmice* talks to some of these young bosses



ALEXANDER WONG, 33, left full-time employment with an advertising and events company to establish his own business in January 2015.

This led to the birth of Asia MICE Production (AMP) in Kuala Lumpur, a full-fledged meetings, incentives, conference and events production house with a strong regional network, serving both local and overseas clients.

Taking on a modest job title of operations director, Wong runs a team of eight full-time staff and, depending on the size and complexity of an event, capable and experienced part-timers.

He prefers to be seen as being part of the team instead of the boss, and describes himself as a detailed person. However, he is not one who micro-manages.

"I encourage teammates to show their creativity and communication skills in organising an event and securing new projects," he said.

"I believe in keeping the team motivated and working together and this is not always easy. We organise sports activities and social events over weekends to keep the team spirit high and to strengthen the bond between colleagues."

So as not to "offend or demotivate any of the younger team members", Wong deals with conflicting ideas and differing perceptions in a sensitive manner.

Wong believes AMP had fared above expectations in the first year of operations. He expressed gratitude to "clients who believe in our services even though we are a young company".

"One of the lessons I have learnt being in the travel industry is the power of networking and relationships. I would not have risked leaving full-time employment to start my own business this year if I did not have strong business contacts who said they would support me in my new venture. And indeed they have done so," he added. – **S Puvaneswary**



ANDREW KOH, at just 30 years old, leads Singapore-based Events Architects as managing director and has handled a variety of events,

from the opening of Unilever's Four Acres Singapore global leadership development centre to Harley-Davidson Asia Pacific's regional media launch.

Koh works with a team of 12 which comprises a mix of event veterans and



newbloods in their 20s.

"In people management, there can never be a one-size-fits-all policy to please everyone. The right or necessary policy might not be the most popular one. While the top-down communication process is extremely vital to keep everyone aligned to the goals and vision of the company, convincing everyone to sing the same tune is very difficult," Koh said.

Acknowledging that every staff has a different personality and a different style of working, Koh said it was necessary to "adapt to these (differences) so that the person can perform better".

Offering an example, Koh said a teammate who isn't a morning person and who works better at night, is allowed a different work schedule.

"At Events Architects we are result driven rather than process driven," he remarked. – **Paige Lee Pei Qi**



ANDREW HIEBL,

the 38-year-old executive director/secretary of the Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB), believes

that two-way communication is crucial to successfully managing a team.

"Being able to provide a clear understanding of expectations, as well as a regular and honest feedback circuit can avoid many people management issues," Hiebl said.

"It is also important to recognise that mistakes happen, but should not be repeated. We should celebrate failure, and learn from it."

Hiebl's team is not the conventional meaning of the term. While he has just two staff members, AACB's structure extends his team to 12 Board directors and a membership of 16 convention bureaux across Australia.

He said managing a Board effectively relies on a strong relationship between the executive director/CEO and chair/president.

"I have been fortunate to have had a good working relationship with my presidents since joining AACB over three years ago. The best way that I can support the president and board is by ensuring that the agenda remains focused on our strategic direction. It is also good practice to provide industry updates that challenge, threaten or support the Board's thinking, making them strategically aware and able



Asia MICE Production's Alexander Wong (in red sneakers) does not like to be seen as the boss, prefers to work alongside his staff

to make critical decisions," he elaborated.

And while resources for a small industry association may be limited, Hiebl said success can be achieved by working smarter.

"A clear plan is integral, combined with the concept of clever collaboration. A focus for AACB over the next 12 months and beyond will be to collaborate with the broader business events community in order to distribute consistent key messages – uniting the industry and influencing political decision makers." – **Rebecca Elliott**



At 22, **KEVIN JEMEL HINAHON** is

seen as the rising star in Intas Destination Management Inc in the Philippines.

He takes on the roles of marketing manager and manager of MICE since June last year, after rising through the ranks from the humble position of reservation officer. Throughout his time with Intas, Hinahon had moved from operations to marketing and MICE.

But Hinahon's contribution to Intas began even when he was still a student of tourism management – he had churned out some projects for the DMC then.

That Intas has a bevy of 13 millennials in its MICE, group and adventure, and leisure divisions – many of whom are Hinahon's college classmates and batch mates – which makes managing less

daunting. They speak the same language and are friends.

Yet these common grounds can also pose a challenge for Hinahon in managing his team.

"Sometimes it's difficult to implement policies....because we're all friends and of the same age," he admitted.

Thankfully, everyone is professional, he added.

The newcomer said he is happy with his performance so far. "We're doing better now, we're getting more MICE projects and the field offers a lot of room for personal and professional growth," he remarked.

One big lesson he has learnt is that he "cannot please everyone". And how does he cope with it? "I guess I have to believe in my gut instinct and have the skills to read people in general," he replied. –

Rosa Ocampo



The young **MUHAM-MAD REZA ABDUL-LAH**, 33,

was born into the business of events management. In 2009

he took over the reins of Royalindo Convention International from his parents, Iqbal Allan Abdullah and Evita Nursanty, who founded the company in 1989. His parents had stepped down after becoming members of parliament.

Besides being the president director of

Year-end special

Royalindo Convention International, Reza is also CEO of Royalindo Group, which comprises nine subsidiary companies with some 200 staff.

"Retaining good staff and finding the right people, especially for middle-management positions, are my biggest challenges," Reza told *TTGmice*.

"The event management business in Indonesia has been growing so fast in the last decade or so, in line with the country's economic growth. This has triggered the mushrooming of MICE organisers, and those backed by huge capital investment are able to lure talents over with high salaries," he said.

To retain his staff, Reza offers opportunities for skill improvements, dishes out job incentives and focuses on communication and engagement.

What Reza has on his side is his youth as well as the general youthfulness of his staff. "My staff have told me that the one good thing about the company is that most of us – from the frontliners to the management personnel – are young, which makes communication easier," he shared.

"Therefore I have been cutting down communication barriers. Everyone contributes to the company's well-being, so everyone – whether an office boy or a manager – should be able to voice his or her thoughts and ideas to the management, without having to go through a hierarchy," he said.

To encourage open discussions, Reza's office has a glass door which allows anyone to look in and drop in at anytime.

When asked to grade himself as a people manager, Reza offered a seven, with 10 being the perfect score.

"I've learnt that the recruitment process is key to finding the right person for the position. The perfect resumé and job interview may not lead to a great performance at work," he said. "So we've started to change our recruitment policies. We are now hiring new recruits on a six-month contract before deciding to terminate or convert them to permanent positions."

Going forward, Reza intends to fill more important positions in the company from within, by motivating staff towards healthy competition. – **Mimi Hudoyo**



SUYASH GUPTA, 27, takes on the role of project lead in AgraWalks, a business vertical of Agra-based Travel Bureau and one that is owned by his family.

He told *TTGmice* that he seeks to be fair in his management of people while remaining result-oriented, and believes that

it is important to empower and encourage his teammates to make decisions.

AgraWalks has enjoyed much success. It received a TripAdvisor award and was featured in *Lonely Planet's* India Guide.

Gupta said: "A leader is only as successful as the team he leads. While some of his decisions might not achieve the desired outcome, they still present great learning opportunities. When teammates have autonomy, they tend to develop a sense of ownership and belonging to the firm, which does wonders for their motivation."

His personal challenge is to keep learning and growing as an individual and also to strike a balance between understanding and demanding as far as his team is concerned.

"As I continue to learn from everyone around me, I only wish to be able to do justice to the legacy I have been given and build the legacy I would like to leave," he added.

Gupta, who believes that self-evaluation is tricky, gives himself a score of seven out of 10 for his performance as a team leader this year.

"Some of the biggest lessons for me this year have been that one needs to keep innovating to sustain growth and that investment in technology is the key to success in the future. Last but not least, empowering and remunerating your team will act as a catalyst for growth," he concluded. – **Rohit Kaul**

What keeps a young team happy?

An attractive pay packet and opportunities to upgrade one's skills are what will keep a young team happy, concluded Beijing-based Linda Wang who leads Destination Asia, China as managing director.



Linda Wang (middle row, fourth from left) knows how to keep her young staff happy

Wang, who turns 40 in February, leads a team of close to 70 staff located in the Chinese capital, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Guilin.

According to Wang, who has 17 years of industry experience, the average age of her staff is around 30, while she is the second or third oldest in the company.

Set up 10 years ago, the nine directors in Destination Asia have between eight to 10 years of industry experience.

Wang said paying experienced staff one of the highest salaries in the business has paid off, resulted in staff loyalty and stability. However, 2015 saw the departure of a few staff, not due to competitive reasons but because of health and personal issues.

Personal coaching and training, and empowering new staff to run programmes by themselves have also helped keep attrition rates in the young team low, she added.

"In winter when it is low season, the company organises training for the various teams. On a group level, team leaders have the chance to go to our group headquarters in Bangkok for training too."

"We have very few fresh graduates but because bookings for 2016 are looking very positive, we intend to launch an internship programme," she revealed. – **Caroline Boey**



A new-gen kind of place

Event planners let **TTGmice** in on the destinations that are tickling the fancy of their millennial clients

Bangkok because it is rich in culture and nightlife, and has excellent and affordable hotels with good service. There are always new and trendy restaurants opening in this vibrant city. Furthermore, Thailand has good air connections which makes it an excellent destination to hold conferences for delegates coming from different parts of the world.

Laura Carbone
Sales director,
Cantore Viaggi,
Genova, Italy



Europe is loved by my financial and pharmaceutical clients in China, especially for incentives. They are open to all parts of Europe, although France, Spain, Italy and Germany are most popular. Every country has a different history and culture, and offer fabulous food and shopping.

South-east Asia has the potential to attract small groups of up to 100 pax if we able to come up with interesting topical itineraries."

Ally Lai
Managing director,
i Life China



Bangkok because it is very easy to get around and the people are very friendly. The destination is inexpensive with many meeting facilities and hotels that satisfy various budgets. It is also a fashionable city with many shopping and dining choices.

Uta Hornischer
CEO, Horya MICE,
Switzerland



Korea and especially Jeju island is very appealing because it feels like a paradise and it has grown to be very famous because of all the Korean drama. The Chinese especially like to be in somewhere that is well-known and fashionable to be in.

Li Haijiao
Account manager,
Comfort MICE
Service Beijing



Singapore because of its good air connectivity and there is also a large supply of hotels. It is a very convenient destination which is easy to go around from place to place. It is also very safe so delegates are more confident to meet there.

Jun Onchanh
General manager,
Trust Lao Travel



Singapore, for many reasons: it is a safe destination, it offers good accessibility, there are plenty hotels and meeting facilities, and currency-wise, Singapore and Australia are almost on par.

Grace Ng
Executive director, Powell Consultants/executive PA
director, Conference & Events, Gordon Wells & Co
Solicitors, Australia



Making younger clients say 'Like'

As Gen X delegates make room for Gen Y'ers who are younger and more tech-savvy, **Raini Hamdi** asks four veterans in this round-table how they are adapting to the changing landscape

What latest event and communications technology did you employ this year to present events in a compelling way to this generation?

Oscar Cerezales (OC): Today more than 20 per cent of our revenues come from technologically driven solutions applied to events. We understand that engagement of the younger generation is the key. I'd say it's all about increasing attendee expectations; being average is not enough and status quo is out.

Hence we are using a good number of technologies including audiovisual solutions (i.e. 3D mapping), mobile solutions (i.e. tablet/phone apps focused on community engagement), O2O2O solutions (offline to online to offline) and so on.

Bob Guy (BG): Clearly the smartphone app as a category is the 'hands down' winner when it comes to communications technology that has impacted the meetings and events industry in a compelling way. It is not just one app but a whole phalanx of them! TripAdvisor, hotel chain apps providing instant confirmations, concierge style consultations, spa reservations, meeting delivery apps, where to dine, where to go for drinks, advice in real time (Foursquare, Yelp and others) – you name it and they

are right there for the asking. It is simply astonishing what is available and more are arriving daily.

Laurent Kuenzl (LK): Visualisation is more important than ever. Who has time to read lengthy texts? Images speak more than words and we try to emphasise those as much as possible. Technology that supports this is at the forefront.

Sumate Sudasna (SS): Short video clips have been and are still the most preferred media. We have been using video clips to present activities long before the HD era and are still using them to grab attention effectively. Hopefully, they will lead to further enquiries.

What do you think of new meeting products that came out this year, such as Marriott's Meetings Re-Imagined and Carlson Rezidor's Experience Meetings? Do they make you jump to change suppliers?

OC: I like the way they create, test and position such products. At the end of the day, it's all about the client experience. The whole value chain (hotels, F&B companies, agencies, convention centres, convention bureaus, etc) has new offerings and a relevant number of new products are being introduced every year. I see products like the ones mentioned as an evolution rather than a revolution. Great products but not necessarily forcing supplier changes.

BG: These services are sometimes a rebranding of what already exists, but (they) can also be a completely new approach to meetings management in the hotel or (venue) environment. It is a good thing whenever service is enhanced for both the planner and user, in particular those initiatives that positively impact the individual attendee. I have seen new and improved coffee/tea breaks and apps for both planners and attendees. They are all welcomed!

Now all we need is a 'hotel agreement re-imagined' where the terms and conditions are meant to be read by meeting planners and are much easier to live with!

LK: Convenience, simplicity, speed and creativity are the name of the game, and any technology or product which supports these is a winning technology. I don't want to highlight any meeting





Clockwise from left: Oscar Cerezales, COO Asia-Pacific, MCI Group; Sumate Sudasna, managing director, CDM - Conference & Destination Management; Bob Guy, managing director-Singapore & Malaysia, Destination Asia; Laurent Kuenzle, CEO, Asian Trails

product or hotel software in particular, but if it is not easy to use and does not come with detailed information, it will not be effective.

SS: Hotel meeting products are full of great ideas but are geared towards the corporate audience with direct procurement practice. If they are trade-beneficial we can certainly co-market them.

Which new product impressed you the most this year and why?

OC: Those that impressed me the most are technological in nature – iBeacons-RFID solutions, wearable technologies, augmented reality, crowdshaping, analytics, etc – and new market approaches such as those undertaken by CVBs in Singapore, Sydney and Melbourne to increase the economic impact (of business events).

BG: For me it is the transformation of the tablet (in my case, an iPad) from being a nice-to-have product to a can't-do-without essential business tool. I can now truly travel and work almost anywhere, even

for a few minutes, and that has made me more productive and more responsive to my colleagues. I expect the emergence of the iPad Pro will allow me to sever my ties permanently with my laptop.

LK: In the context of wooing younger clients, particularly those from Asia, I'm impressed by products that use mobile technology and software that can be used in teambuilding. It's interesting to see that many of these new products are from the leisure travel segment and are being adapted to MICE requirements.

SS: I'm impressed by event apps that have become widely used. Some are quite extensive. Events that are destined to be successful will owe some of their glory to apps, especially the interactive ones as they can capture attention, invite participation and create value to attendees who are expecting more from events.

How did you change the way you operate this year to make meetings more engaging for younger clients?

OC: We always organise internal (our team) and external (our customers) event design sessions where we analyse the value capturing and the value creation for our customer's customer. Our methodology follows three pillars: pre-during-post, online-offline, and socio-demographics.

BG: Through encouraging and training colleagues to be more attentive to customers, younger or otherwise, by listening to what is being said and interpreting what is desired for meetings and events.

LK: We have created more authentic and sustainable experiences in the small to medium budget range, with a flexible approach to the client's requirements. We have created teambuilding products that are integrated with technology. We are looking into more interactive approaches to meetings with themed elements. We are doing quite a bit of work with several suppliers including hotels, in order to make coffee breaks more interesting, more healthy and more fun.

SS: Business events respond to client objectives and are generally managed by experienced professionals. The younger generation of staff may be assistants or apprentices, not quite on the influencing or decision-making level. This business demands a high level of professionalism and planners (of the younger generation) might not yet be fully proficient in managing flawless events.

The ideal situation is that the bright new generation (of planners) embrace detail-oriented practices from experi-

enced colleagues and integrate that with technology for an effective, productive outcome.

And finally, how did the overall market evolve this year?

OC: It has been positive for both the association and corporate markets. There are more and more B2B and B2C corporate events due to an increase in marketing budgets. The association market (consistently contributes) number of congresses, delegates and sponsors. Events as a strategy, channel and platform for corporates and associations are a validated medium today.

BG: The world seems to be in a constant state of turmoil – or more kindly, in a constant and rapid change – with new developments emerging each week. In any week there can be volcanic eruptions, airport or city-wide demonstrations, regional haze or a dramatic shift in exchange rates, preferences, etc.

Yet, the meeting and incentive market does not seem to be much affected. For better or for worse, this is the new normal and we must be prepared to react. This means that there is constant change and the need to occasionally remake or re-think work that has just been completed. This places additional burden on an already overworked staff but can also mean new opportunities.

LK: The trend of shorter lead times, smaller group sizes and smaller budgets has continued. Everyone wants creativity, outside-the-box experiences, but the ones who are willing to pay for all that are in limited numbers.

Authentic and sustainable experiences are in demand. Project managers try to source more services directly with suppliers, cutting out the DMC. The more established the destination/products are, the easier the direct procurement becomes since almost anything is available online.

As traditional markets are looking for new destinations in Asia, traditional destinations need to reinvent themselves.

Many destinations in Asia continue to offer excellent value for money but safety or the perception of safety continues to be a key decision-making factor when choosing the destination.

SS: Events are booked closer to actual dates, and cost-effective planning is still a driver. Emerging markets are hasty and low-cost driven, compared with poised, mature markets.

The new task has been to explain the difference between true DMCs and those in disguise.

It's free time, people!



Batik is both fashion and passion for me. If I were given

three days of

"me time", I would go hunting for batik *lawas*, old batik cloths to add to my collection and find new ones to wear. (Such places) can be anywhere across the coastal areas of Java to Madura and Bali.

I especially love old batik because of the craftsmanship. Old ones feature more intricate motifs and meaningful designs.

I would also spend time with batik experts and learn all I can from them.

Riyanthi Handayani

President Director, Bali Nusa Dua Convention Center, Indonesia

I would hire a boat and go fishing for three days with a friend who shares the same interest. Rather than talk, we would enjoy nature. It doesn't matter if I catch a fish or not, it is the preparation for the journey that is important. And after I have caught a fish, I would release it back into the sea.

Zulkefli Sharif

CEO, Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau

I would do things I don't normally get to do because of my hectic schedule, such as catching up on my reading and connecting with friends, relatives and former colleagues. I would also spend time gardening and cooking.

Chew Chang Guan

General manager, Sarawak Convention Bureau, Malaysia



I would seek out a gorgeous beach with crystal-clear waters and enjoy three days of peace and privacy, and I would read.

Diane Chen

Deputy general manager, Shenyang New World Expo, China

“If given three days to spend by yourself (absolutely no work, no spouse/partner, no family/pet obligations, no emails!), how would you spend it?”

I would spend the time on an island in Yangcheng Lake where its fresh water crabs are famous.

I would just enjoy the sunshine, clear sky and clean air, eat lots of organic food from the farmers' fields, and be contented to be isolated from the busy city life for a few days.

James Zheng

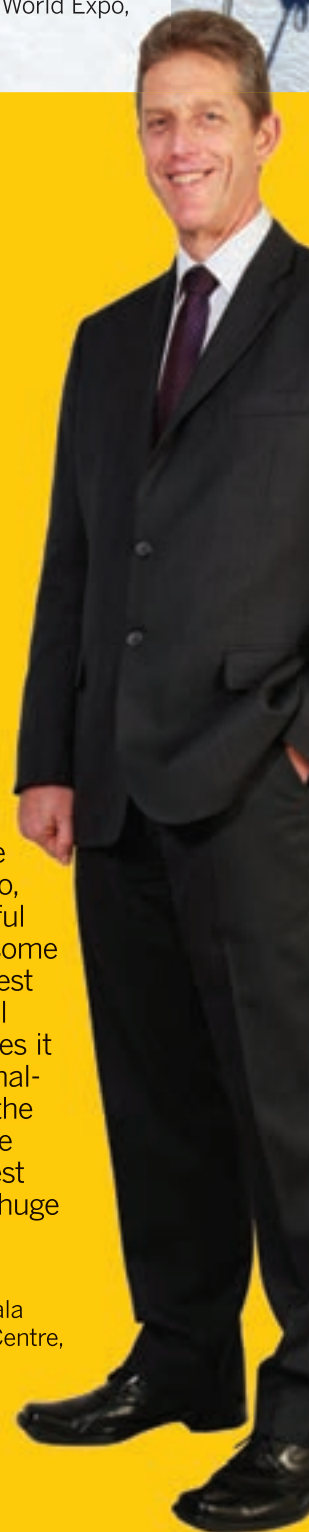
Director-China, Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board China Office and Los Angeles World Airports, China



I would go to the finals of the World Surf League (WSL) in Teahupoo, Tahiti. This beautiful location features some of the world's largest and most powerful waves, which makes it one of the most challenging events of the WSL and awesome to watch as the best surfers tackle the huge swells.

Alan Pryor

General manager, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, Malaysia





This is a rare chance and I would like to travel. But I don't want to be travelling all by myself.

Dexter Deyto

Vice president and general manager, SMX Convention Center Manila, Philippines



This would be a moment for me to go deeper into myself – understand who I am and the real characteristics. Hence it would be an ideal time to meditate and reflect on the real purpose of life, and happiness.

Dileep Mudadeniya

Vice President, brand marketing at Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, Sri Lanka

I would probably be on a remote island and my friends would have left on the last flight without me.

I would start the day with breakfast and a swim. I always travel with a book or two, so I could catch up on my reading. Being a scuba enthusiast, I would then go for my first of many dives. The evening would mean finding a place with good music to have a sundowner and swap stories with the locals.

Paper and pen would always be on hand to jot down ideas and thoughts that I could then pursue when I return to the connected world.

Being disconnected does not sound too bad!

Arun Madhok

CEO, Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre



"If I had the luxury of time, it would be something very simple. After long days in the office, I'd be more than happy to just enjoy the Gold Coast sunshine at one of our beautiful beaches or resorts. I've got a dozen books I'd love to finally get around to reading...preferably with a cocktail or two and my favourite music playing in the background."

Anna Case

Director, Gold Coast Business Events, Australia



The break of dawn is the best time to enjoy Singapore's outdoors. I'd like to run the new East Coast Park extension that skirts the Marina Bay, Singapore Botanic Gardens and MacRitchie Reservoir.

The best time to visit one of our diverse neighbourhoods is from late morning to early afternoon. Shops are just starting the day and the local community is getting into its daily rhythm. Balestier, Little India, Katong and Pulau Ubin come to mind.

To escape the harsh afternoon sun, take a nap or go for a spa.

Once refreshed, it's time to consume some culture. I am partial to the Singapore Art Museum, National Museum and Singapore Pinacothèque de Paris. I'm excited about the new National Gallery. The independent art space DECK at Prinsep Street is great for photography buffs. I will also want to check out performing arts at the Victoria Theatre & Concert Hall and The Esplanade.

Finally, great supper and nightcap options abound in Singapore.

Can I have more than three days, please?

Lionel Yeo

Chief executive, Singapore Tourism Board



Meet the TTG family

Here are five things about the people who put together stories you see in our print and online



KAREN YUE

GROUP EDITOR

• **Who's in your family?** Two adorable boys – one my age and another who has just turned one in early December • **Your ideal vacation?** A month with my family in a cool and quiet countryside that has been painted in the rich colours of autumn • **What are you reading right now?** *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields* by Wendy Lower. • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** I chew

my fingernails when I'm thinking • **Most people don't know that you...** sold chicken rice in a small neighbourhood shop throughout 2005, just for the experience. It was exhausting, but so satisfying when you work for yourself



RAINI HAMDİ

SENIOR EDITOR

• **Who's in your family?** Kurt, Hatta, Tamara, Chanel, Vanessa (and their spouses), Luis and Luna • **Your ideal vacation?** Hiking with

Kurt in the Alps • **What are you reading right now?** *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Drinking more than I should at social functions • **Most people don't know that you...** have a 28-year-old son



XINYI LIANG-PHOLSENA

DEPUTY EDITOR, TTG ASIA & TTG INDIA

• **Who's in your family?** My husband and our baby girl • **Your**

ideal vacation? A road trip with my family, filled with good conversation in the car, numerous food stops and gorgeous scenery along the way • **What are you reading right now?** *Love, Life, and Elephants: An African Love Story* by Daphne Sheldrick • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Reading my iPad in the dark • **Most people don't know that you...** were the interpreter for Thai action star Tony Jaa during his *Tom Yum Goong* movie promotion in Singapore



MIMI HUDOYO

EDITOR, INDONESIA

• **Who's in your family?** My two sisters, one in-law, and five wonderful nieces and nephews • **Your ideal vacation?** I spend so much time travelling for work, so my ideal "vacation" is to stay at home where I can try out new recipes in



Part of the editorial team on the last day of ITB Asia 2015, obviously high from the adrenaline rush of producing the show dailies



my kitchen, do some gardening, have a traditional massage (yes, I can call a masseuse home), or just to laze around watching movies • **What are you reading right now?** *The Rise of Majapahit*, a novel based on the history of three ancient kingdoms of Singosari, Kediri and Majapahit by an Indonesian young novelist Setyo Wardoyo • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Snacking when under stress (this usually comes when I'm on deadlines) • **Most people don't know that you...** like talking to the plants in my garden



S PUVANESWARY

EDITOR, MALAYSIA

• **Who's in your family?** I'd say my dog is more 'family' than the humans I live with • **Your ideal vacation?** A quiet beach vacation • **What are you reading right now?** Mende Nazer's autobiography called *Slave* • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** I sleep too much • **Most people don't know that you...** would love to be an entrepreneur



PAIGE LEE PEI QI

ASSISTANT EDITOR, SINGAPORE

• **Who's in your family?** Many ladies (three sisters, my mum) and the only male exception – my dad • **Your ideal vacation?** A spa retreat far away from the frenetic city's hustle and bustle • **What**



The team from the Singapore headquarters celebrates another year of having survived deadlines together

are you reading right now? On top of the Bible, I am in the midst of a psychological thriller by Paula Hawkins, *The Girl on the Train*. • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Social media. The longest I've steered clear of it was one month, when I challenged myself to a social media fast • **Most people don't know that you...** used to wait for Santa Claus when the clock struck 12, and still wishes that he exists.



ROSA OCAMPO

CORRESPONDENT, PHILIPPINES

• **Who's in your family?** My siblings, nephews and nieces, a few grandchildren, friends, and friends of friends who camp at home perennially • **Your ideal vacation?** Catching up with friends anywhere in the world • **What are you reading right now?** *Where God was Born* by Bruce Feiler • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Caffeine addiction and sleeping too much • **Most people don't know that...** I can catch a falling star

PRUDENCE LUI

CORRESPONDENT, HONG KONG

• **Who's in your family?** My hubby



and a 13-year old daughter • **Your ideal vacation?** Enjoying food and wine in the Pacific Alliance of South America • **What are you reading right now?** *The First Aid Manual* by Hong Kong St John Ambulance for renewing my first aider qualification • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Turn my radio on before going to bed • **Most people don't know that you...** love Chinese musical instruments and play erhu in my leisure time for fun



CAROLINE BOEY

SENIOR CORRESPONDENT, CHINA & SPECIAL PROJECTS

• **Who's in your family?** My 81-year-old mum, older brother,

sister-in-law, two nieces, a nephew and their respective spouses and boyfriend • **Your ideal vacation?** To discover a new place or revisit a favourite where I can still work up a good sweat, spend time with family and friends, watch my favourite TV series, cook and bake • **What are you reading right now?** *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** I used to complete people's sentences but I think I may have been cured • **Most people don't know that you...** I practise trying to hold my breath for more than 40 seconds. My yoga instructor says it is good for living longer. He can do so many things I cannot, so I guess he must be right.



ROHIT KAUL

CORRESPONDENT, NEW DELHI

• **Who's in your family?** Parents, wife, a daughter and a son • **Your ideal vacation?** A quiet beach destination with my family • **What are you reading right now?** *How to Keep Your Woman Happy: A Manual for Men* • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** I thought a while, but

Year-end special

I don't have any bad habit. I am a saint. • **Most people don't know that you...** I never spoke to any girl in my school. I was too shy



FEIZAL SAMATH
CORRESPONDENT, SRI LANKA/
MALDIVES

• **Who's in your family?** My wife, son, daughter, fish and a dog who gives me hell but is adorable to the rest of the family, ha! • **Your ideal vacation?** Three days in a beach resort or tea country, British colonial holiday bungalow with the phone off the hook and to hell with writing! • **What are you reading right now?** Climate change series on *National Geographic* magazine

• **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Nothing really. If there is a will, there is a way • **Most people don't know that you...** have raised millions of rupees for children's charities for the past 30 years



REDMOND SIA
CREATIVE DESIGNER

• **Who's in your family?** Mum, dad, brother, sister-in-law and Patchy (Jack Russell Terrier) • **Your ideal vacation?** Sunny places • **What are you reading right now?** Comics • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Eating too much • **Most people don't know you...** love snacks with garlic chilli



GOH MENG YONG
CREATIVE DESIGNER

• **Who's in your family?** My wife, my three-year-old daughter, my one-year-old son, my mother, a brother and a sister • **Your ideal vacation?** Any part of Japan for two weeks • **What are you reading right now?** *The Dalai Lama's Book of Wisdom*, which I got during a stopover in Thailand • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** Binge watching on Netflix • **Most people don't know you...** write with my right hand and draw with my left hand

LINA TAN
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

• **Who's in your family?** Steven



(husband), Victoria (daughter), Gabriel (son) and Buddy (family dog) • **Your ideal vacation?** Travel to any part of the world for shopping and pigging out with my family • **What are you reading right now?** The Bible, reading the stories and trying to figure the meaning behind each story • **A bad habit you cannot kick?** None that I can think of • **Most people don't know you...** like to be left alone at times!
(Editor's note: Lina's like a mother to the editorial team, especially when we travel together to trade-shows for Show Daily projects. We are always clingy and needy, and she's always frustrated with us. We love you, Lina, and will never leave you alone!)

Say hello to the newbies

The editorial family has grown this year! Our four newbies reveal what they love most about their job and the industry

DANNON HAR
ASSISTANT EDITOR, ONLINE

Since hopping aboard the TTG supersonic jet plane on July 13 this year, there has been little time to reflect until now, when I got tasked to jot this personal piece. The ride is best described as being aboard a luxury cruise ship going full speed against river rapids, where every sightseeing opportunity is an excuse to Tweet and Instagram for #TTGAsia. Social media shenanigans aside, my first love and mind remains fixated on increasing the inbound traffic of TTG's online properties. Speaking of which, time to check-in on how the new websites are developing...



RACHEL AJ LEE
SUB EDITOR

I joined the TTG family on July 13, 2015 and it has been a rollercoaster ride. Coming from a lifestyle background, adjusting to "harder" trade news is kind of like walking into a chiller after a dip in a hot onsen. But I get to discover the world through overseas trade shows and have a hand in producing show dailies, and expand my editing and writing portfolio, all of which makes the switch pretty eye-opening.



JULIAN RYALL
CORRESPONDENT, JAPAN

My first contribution to TTG was in January – and I confess it has been a steep learning curve since day one. I'd previously written travel stories, but never covered travel as an industry. My second confession is that it's addictive and I consider myself fortunate to be writing about a sector that is dedicated to helping people have a good time in some of the most exotic and beautiful places in the world. What can possibly be bad about that?



REBECCA ELLIOTT
CORRESPONDENT, AUSTRALIA

I filed my first story for TTG in April and was over the moon when I became the official Australian Correspondent in July. I love exploring and uncovering the latest news, innovations and opinions from the industry in Australia and then sharing them with TTG readers. The industry is thriving down under, which means there's always a good story to be told.



Now Open



Experience MACAU'S MOVIE MAGIC

Studio City Macau has opened with a theme never before seen on such a scale — it's entertainment, business events and leisure packaged for a larger-than-life MICE experience!

Developed by Melco Crown Entertainment, the US\$3.2 billion Studio City Macau brings a touch of Hollywood glamour to Macau. It is one of the most anticipated openings in the Special Administrative Region in recent years, where the steady infrastructural development has made Macau one of Asia's most attractive destinations for MICE.

The grand opening on October 27, 2015 introduced the world to Studio City's wide array of MICE facilities and services, and its world-class offerings in dining, shopping and entertainment.

EVENT SPACES

There are more than 4,000 sqm of indoor event space with flexible configurations here. MICE planners have a wide range of options to plan anything from an intimate banquet to a conference with customised themes.

The Grand Ballroom, at 1,820 sqm, can be divided into three separate ballrooms with a banquet capacity of 1,600 people or a cocktail reception for over 1,900 people.

Eight salons provide meeting and breakout spaces with extensive pre-function areas.

Outdoors facilities are also available at the Studio City Event Garden. Opening to the tropical-themed pool deck and right next to The Grand Ballroom, it is suitable for parties, team-building activities and cocktails or desserts under the stars.

THEME EVENTS

There is no other venue more suitable to stage a



glamorous Hollywood-themed event than Studio City Macau. MICE organisers can truly roll out the red carpet with the support of Studio City's professional team. Dazzling stage design, special-effects lighting and full banqueting services will create a

memorable experience. How about a "Hollywood Awards Night"?

Other themes include "It's Showtime!", where guests can travel back in time to the Roaring Twenties. Let Studio City help you re-create your own "Great Gatsby" event complete with champagne

towers, lavish chandeliers and big band music.

By incorporating Studio City's "Batman Dark Flight" 4D simulation ride, planners can design a Batman-themed gala dinner by converting The Grand Ballroom into a stately billionaire's mansion.

Other themes include "Chinese Dynasty" with a Forbidden City that is scalable for both small or large groups, and "Chamber of Shaolin" featuring Shaolin Kung Fu performances and Chinese delicacies.

MICE PACKAGES

Studio City has already launched its comprehensive corporate meeting packages. Full-day and half-day packages include use of venue, coffee and tea breaks, lunch, equipment, welcome packs and free Wi-Fi access.

Corporate dinner packages are available with Chinese or Western menus.

These packages can be customised to include other entertainment options or use of Studio City facilities. ■



Themed gala at Grand Ballroom: "It's Showtime!"



World's first Batman 4D simulation ride: Batman Dark Flight

Exclusive Ideas for MICE



■ **Studio City Hotel:** 1,600 Art Deco-style rooms at the Celebrity Tower and the Star Tower with services and amenities that let guests "live like a star".

■ **Studio City Event Center:** A 5,000-seat multipurpose venue with state-of-the-art technical support for live theatre, concerts and sports events.

■ **Golden Reel:** The world's highest figure-8 ferris wheel rises some 130 meters high. MICE groups can reserve any of the 17 "Steampunk"-themed cabins for special events.

■ **Batman Dark Flight:** The world's first Batman 4D simulation ride. Fly through Gotham City, following Batman as he brings super-villains to justice.

■ **The Boulevard at Studio City:** A unique 35,000-sqm mall offering some of the world's most coveted brands like Bulgari and Valentino.

■ **The House of Magic:** Created by Franz Harary, this three-theatre complex brings you the world's best interactive magic experience every night.

■ **Pacha Macau:** Enjoy Ibiza-style parties with the world's biggest nightclub name. This is Pacha's first outlet in Greater China.

For more information

Tel: Sales Team, (853) 8865 8888
Email: salesenquiry@melco-crown.com
Website: studiocity-macau.com



Event facilities at Studio City Macau include a Grand Ballroom, nine Salons, extensive pre-function space and an event garden

Fun for the whole family

Macau's varied integrated resorts and attractions ensure accompanying persons of business event participants are never bored. By **Prudence Lui**

Macau's popularity among vacationers, thanks to its variety of hotel accommodation, attractions, activities and dining options, plays in its favour when meeting and incentive planners are considering the destination for programmes involving accompanying families and partners.

Planners *TTGmice* spoke to said Macau has plenty to offer to people of all ages and of both genders.

Accompanying spouses can play a round of golf, take up cooking classes, retreat to a spa or enjoy a fine meal, while families with children can go on on a cultural walking tour and learn about the destination's history.

Macau also has a rich variety of Michelin-star restaurants, and a gourmet meal there costs less than

"It's always good to have something new in Macau so that we can provide different experiences for our delegates and accompanying persons."

Katerina Tam

AJ Hackett Macau Tower International Conference Consultants (ICC) director

the same in Hong Kong, according to Lily Agonoy, managing director of BCD Travel in Hong Kong.

Agonoy described Macau as an "ideal destination for incentives" because of the availability of many venues for large groups and adequate facilities for spouse and children.

She pointed out that Studio City Macau and Broadway Macau, in particular, are hottest now, as they are fresh options, having only opened this year.

"(They) have varied recreational and dining facilities to woo attendees (and encourage them to) bring their family," she added.

Studio City Macau, which officially opened on October 27, has been promoting its non-gaming elements to woo MICE groups with spouse programmes. While solemn meetings are taking place at one of Studio City Macau's many event facilities, accompanying spouses with young children can spend the day at the world's first four-dimensional *Batman Dark Flight*, a simulation ride that enables the audience to 'fly' behind Batman and see how he defeats Gotham City's villains; exploring the 3,700m² Fun Zone, an indoor play centre equipped with interactive play areas; being entertained by magicians at the House of Magic; and going on a ride on Asia's tallest ferris wheel – the Golden Reel – which towers 130m above Cotai.

Broadway Macau, opened in May, also features well in spouse programmes. It houses a five-star hotel with 320 rooms and suites, Macau's hawker-style street market, live entertainment, retail outlets, and more.

Existing attractions in Macau are also keeping their offerings fresh for incentive groups. For example, AJ Hackett Macau Tower, which specialises in adventurous fun such as bungy jumps, sky jumps, gravity-defying walks along the outer perimeter of the tower 233m up in the air, and daring climbs up the tower's vertical ladders, has plans to extend the height of its climbing wall from 32m to 46m in the future. The climbing wall is reserved for private groups on weekdays.

AJ Hackett Macau Tower International Conference Consultants (ICC) director, Katerina Tam, said: "It's always good to have something new in Macau so that we can provide different experiences for our delegates and accompanying persons."

In late October, ICC offered optional tours for accompanying persons of the 4th Scientific Meeting of the Asian Federation of Osteoporosis Societies-cum-16th Regional Osteoporosis Conference. Operated by Cotai Travel, the two tour options featured cultural, heritage and sight-seeing elements.



{ Talking numbers } { Spotlight }

**54.3**

The percentage of meetings and conferences held in Macau in 2Q2015 with 10 to 49 participants, forming the majority size of events

**424**

The number of MICE events in 1H2015. They had 654,162 participants, a 19.6 per cent decline in attendance year-on-year

In a sophisticated space

The St. Regis Macao's elegant Astor Ballroom and 11 breakout meeting rooms opened on December 17, 2015, injecting even more venue options into the destination's stock. The smaller function spaces can accommodate groups of 10 guests while the Astor Ballroom can take up to 750 guests.

For larger MICE groups, the luxury hotel can join forces with its neighbour, the Sheraton Macao Hotel, and offer a combined venue for events with up to 5,000 guests.

The pool deck on the eighth floor makes a refreshing venue for cocktail receptions with 400 guests.

The hotel is also able to arm event planners with a full suite of technology tools such as web-based event planning solutions, e-proposals, e-menus and meeting apps.

A spokesman with The St. Regis Macao told *TTGmice*: "It is one of the few hotels in the city to offer stunning views through floor-to-ceiling windows in the meeting rooms."

He added the hotel's "key source markets for MICE will be luxury lifestyle brands and global companies that plan board meetings, trainings, offsite events, product launches and media events".

Since its opening, most of the hotel's MICE business has been from multinational firms although several weddings are also lined up into 2016.

To get planners well acquainted with the hotel's MICE capabilities, an introductory offer is now available, with



rates starting from MOP2,288 (US\$287) per person. The offer is valid for bookings made by July 10, 2016 and for stays until December 30, 2016 (Sundays to Thursdays only). A minimum stay of two nights is required for bookings of 10 rooms and more. Package perks include complimentary private group transfers on arrival at the ferry terminal or airport; a complimentary one-hour welcome cocktail session when booked with a dinner event or full-day meeting; two suite upgrades for every 15 rooms booked; one complimentary room for every 25 rooms booked; and double SPG Pro Points.

{ Insider }



Pick up cooking skills at Grand Coloane Resort Macau

Bruno Simoes, executive director of smallWORLD Experience, suggests three unique teambuilding activities in the city

Culinary and carving challenge

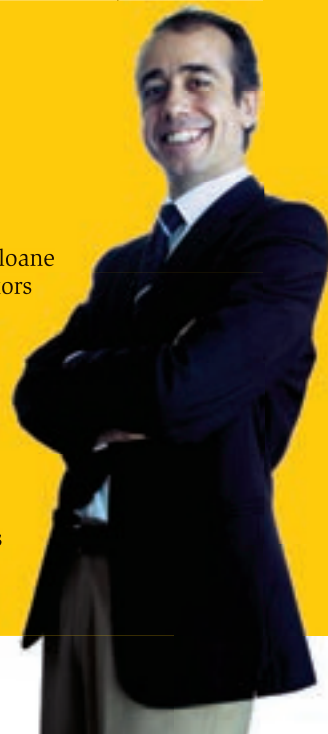
A big part of Macau heritage and traditions is its food. This activity in Grand Coloane Resort Macau, done under the watchful eye of a professional chef, will give visitors the pleasure of experiencing the art and flavours of the local cuisine.

Sky drumming

Drumming at 233m above ground is one-of-a-kind experience in Macau! This will be an amazing teambuilding experience. Guests who are afraid of heights will play from the inside of the Macau Tower.

iDiscover Macau

This activity is a combination of a treasure hunt and amazing race, where teams use a tablet to solve challenges and obtain instructions – a good way to sightsee Macau's heritage landmarks while having a fun time.





More facilities in Taiwan are being Halal-certified, including the National Palace Museum and Taipei 101 (pictured above)

Carving a Muslim niche

The Chinese destination is making numerous adjustments in an effort to woo more Muslim MICE groups, reports **Paige Lee Pei Qi**

Agrowing interest in Muslim-majority source markets has emerged among Taiwan's business event players, as overall visitor numbers from these markets rise.

According to Taiwan Tourism Bureau's director-general David Hsieh, arrivals from these markets rose 12.5 per cent year-on-year, achieving 180,000 travellers. However, the composition of Muslim business travellers remains a small one, noted Thomas Tsou, secretary general, Taiwan Convention & Exhibition Association, who added that Malaysia and

Indonesia are the current top two Muslim markets for Taiwan.

Tsou said this segment of travellers requires halal restaurants and Muslim-friendly facilities, and if Taiwan intends to court this niche, it needs to "meet these basic food and accommodation requirements".

Hence, the Chinese destination has awarded 24 travel-related businesses and facilities a Halal certification in May this year, a move that is expected to boost its MICE appeal among Muslims.

Today, Taiwan has a total of 70 Halal-certified event venues, includ-

ing the National Palace Museum and Taipei 101 as well as hotels and restaurants in tourism hotspots like Alishan National Scenic Area in Chiayi County and Sun Moon Lake in Nantou County.

The certified restaurants and hotels offer a wide range of cuisines, from Indian and Thai to Turkish and Egyptian, according to Taiwan Tourism Bureau which has been working with Taipei-based Chinese Muslims Association over the past few years to establish the certification.

A local hotel which is favoured

Marriott opens Taipei's largest integrated destination complex

The first Marriott hotel in Taiwan offers the full package for business events

Taipei has been abuzz with the Taipei Marriott Hotel's opening on September 28. If you are planning a meeting or conference in Taipei, this is the venue that offers quality and convenience: excellent meeting venues and services, sumptuous accommodation and unique activities that let delegates explore this great city with maximum convenience.

Taipei Marriott Hotel, the brand's first in Taiwan, is a five-star 320-room luxury hotel. It is part of an integrated complex that includes a shopping mall, restaurants and a full-service convention centre.

The complex is located in Dazhi district, along the north bank of Keelung River, just 20 minutes from Songshan International Airport and 7 minutes' walk to Jiannin MRT station.



Convention Centre

MICE planners have much to cheer about with the opening of this state-of-the-art convention centre. It is the largest facility of its kind in Taipei, with up to 3,000 sqm of flexible, multi-functional spaces suitable for business events of all types and sizes.

The local team is able to help planners incorporate the latest audio-visual innovations into their events, arrange gourmet catering and plan out all the details.

MICE planners can book and plan using Marriott's "Meetings Imagined" website and Red Coat Direct, Marriott's hotel meeting app.

Beyond the routine

Planners can also take advantage of Marriott's specially curated offsite teambuilding activities. These include hiking to Jiannin Shan; biking along Meiti River; Kayaking in the Boa, cooking classes, rock climbing and even a trip to Taipei Children's Amusement Park. It's now so easy for guests to explore and enjoy the city in a way that only locals know how!

There are also delightful touches that reflect Marriott Taipei Hotel's special appeal. For business meetings, coffee breaks can be customised to a healthier menu according to the colours of the rainbow. For instance, "Very Berry Tuesday" features foods from the purple spectrum such as wild berry danishes and cherry oatmeal cookies, and "Shining Orange Thursday" features Vitamin C-rich yellow- and orange-coloured foods such as apricot danishes and salmon croissants. It's one of the creative ideas that will inspire a successful meeting at Taipei Marriott Hotel.

Taipei Marriott Hotel is part of an integrated complex that includes high-end shopping and dining facilities and a full-service, state-of-the-art convention centre.

MON

TUE

WED

THU

FRI

Colourful
Coffee Breaks



From "Yellow Khaki Monday" to "Crazy Black Friday", Marriott Taipei's colour-based coffee breaks present a healthier menu full of bite-size delights.

Destination: Taiwan



Taipei Main Station boasts a Muslim prayer room

by Muslim MICE groups is the Regent Taipei. Besides having a Muslim-friendly restaurant, the hotel also welcomes Muslim travellers with a special accommodation package that includes guestrooms with a prayer rug, a compass, a Quran, Salat schedules and bathrooms furnished with bidets.

Michael B Gaehler, general manager of Regent Taipei, told *TTCmice* that Muslim guests have grown “around five to seven per cent since we started this initiative”.

The majority of the hotel’s Muslim guests hail from the Middle East and South-east Asian countries such as Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia.



“We have observed an increase in Muslim guests by around five to seven per cent since we started this initiative.”

Michael B Gaehler
General manager, Regent Taipei

Gaehler said: “We keep enhancing (our property) to ensure every Muslim visitor feels at home when staying with us.”

Taiwanese event planners are doing their part to make Muslim event delegates feel welcome too.

Stacey Yang, sales director of TW MICE Event & DMC, said special arrangements would be made to cater to the dietary requirements of Muslim delegates, either through the venue’s kitchen or from another that is Halal-certified.

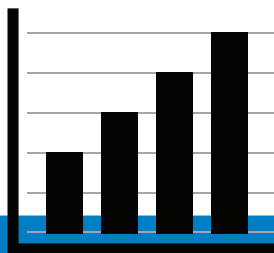
Tourist attractions are also jumping on the bandwagon by coming up with Muslim-friendly facilities. According to Hsieh, all of Taiwan’s 13 national scenic areas under its administration are now ready for Muslim visitors.

“Of note, a Muslim prayer room opened in January at the Taipei Main Station, the first in a domestic public transportation hub,” he remarked proudly.

Yang said: “The increasing number of Muslim-friendly facilities in Taiwan sends a positive signal to the Muslim community that we are ready to welcome them and this will make them more interested in the destination.”

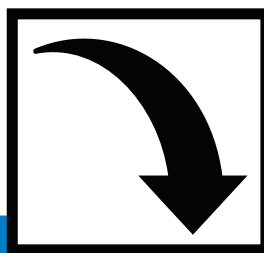
Taiwan is now ranked as the 10th best destination for Muslim travellers outside the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation member states, according to the recent Global Muslim Travel Index.

{ Talking numbers }



145

The number of conventions and meetings held in Taiwan last year, up from 122 in 2013. The country is ranked fourth in Asia by ICCA



846,116

The number of MICE visitors to Taiwan in 2014, a year-on-year dip of 15.8 per cent



41

The percentage of visitors from China between January and June this year, a year-on-year increase of 4.3 per cent



{ Spotlight }

Giant in the capital city

Since September 2015, Taipei city landscape has been adorned with a massive integrated complex that comprises a 320-room five-star hotel, luxury apartments, a convention centre and a shopping mall.

Taipei Marriott Hotel, as the giant complex is known, boasts the largest state-of-the-art convention centre in Taipei. The eight-storey building features 3,000m² of flexible multifunctional spaces which can be used for small breakout sessions to large-scale conferences and conventions.

The most iconic venue throughout the centre is the 1,260m² grand ballroom on the fifth floor, which is currently the largest pillarless ballroom in Taiwan's international star-hotel category.

These spaces also come with the latest audiovisual innovations and access to gourmet catering and expert event planning.

The hotel's other selling point is its location – it sits on the north bank of the Keelung River and within the Taiwanese capital city's new commercial hub. Guests enjoy great accessibility from the hotel, as it is just a 10-minute drive to Songshan International Airport.



Henry Lee, COO for Marriott International, Greater China, said: "Our close proximity to important landmarks, gorgeous settings and modern facilities make the property the ideal choice for business travellers and vacationers who want a high-end experience and easy access to commerce, culture and recreation."

The property is supported by Mar-

riott's signature Meetings Imagined website which aims to reinvent how meetings are planned, by making them more visual, social and purposeful. This online platform provides expert tips and the latest meeting and event trends, and inspires planners with a variety of ideas from ice breakers to food and music. – **Paige Lee Pei Qi**



The grand ballroom's pillarless layout allows guests unblocked views

{ Insider }

Elaine Chin, director of sales and marketing, Marriott Taipei, recommends three things to do in Taipei

Eat your way around town

Taipei is home to one of Asia's most exciting places to have cheap and tasty street food. Food stands are available on nearly every corner of the street, and in night markets. Taiwanese-style seafood, such as grilled squid and oyster omelettes, is a must-try for those visiting the capital for the first time.

Get in touch with nature

Visit the Shei-Pa National Park, located south of the capital.

This is a region filled with magnificent mountains – within the park, there are 51 peaks over 3,000m high. It is a mostly wild and undeveloped area, with a range of wildlife that includes many rare and endemic species.

A day trip out

Organise a day trip to Jiufen. This small town has quaint streets, teahouses and stunning views of the Pacific Ocean. Although the town does not have any hotels, there are several charming guesthouses for groups who opt to stay for a night.



Hillside teahouses in Jiufen



paulwong@kwar123net.com

Destination: Malaysia

Malaysia has dropped in terms of popularity when it comes to groups seeking MICE destinations

Outlook a box of chocolates

The trade's reaction to Malaysia's MICE business is a mixed bag due to her prevailing economic instability, reports **S Puvaneswary**

Malaysia is currently reeling under the combined onslaught of a depreciating currency and sluggish economy.

On the MICE front, there are signs that the sector from China could benefit from the market turmoil. On the other hand, the recent reduction of seats between Kuala Lumpur and Delhi is hampering growth, while the strong Singapore dollar is driving MICE business elsewhere.

Operators in Malaysia handling

the Chinese market are seeing strong bookings for 2016, driven by improved air links from China and visa exemptions for Chinese groups of 20 pax and more from October 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016.

Air China has also resumed four times weekly services between Beijing and Kuala Lumpur since October 25, complementing the daily services of Malaysia Airlines and AirAsia X. China Southern Airlines has also commenced thrice weekly services from Guangzhou to Kota Kinabalu

since December 1.

Li Haijiao, account manager of Beijing-based Comfort MICE Service, said: "Better direct air accessibility and visa waiver for groups will definitely help to promote (Malaysia)."

Chinese MICE groups are showing a stronger interest in Malaysia thanks to the competitive prices, observed Winnie Ng, deputy general manager of Kuala Lumpur-based Pearl Holiday Travel & Tour.

She said: "With good rates and promotions from five-star hotels in the capital, many (Chinese MICE) are opting for five-star properties. We have a confirmed a booking of between 1,500 to 1,800 pax from a multilevel marketing company from China for May 2016, and another for 3,300 pax in July 2016."

However, all is not as rosy for operators handling the Indian MICE market. Malaysia Airlines' decision to halve frequencies of air services between Kuala Lumpur and Delhi since September 1 has resulted in a loss of MICE business to Malaysia, sources told *TTGmice*.

Suneet Goenka, group managing director of Red Apple Travel in Kuala Lumpur, declared the reduced frequencies "a disaster".

He elaborated: "It is going to be difficult to get MICE business from the northern part of India where corporate companies place great value on connectivity and pricing."

Goenka revealed that some Indian companies have already removed Malaysia from their list of preferred destinations. He also warned that reduced capacity would lead to higher airfares on the India-Malaysia sector.

Also impacted by Malaysia Airlines' service reduction is Hidden Asia Travel & Tours in Kuala Lumpur. Its managing director, Nanda Kumar, said: "Many corporate companies in India want their staff to arrive on the same day. Due to this, we have lost a number of potential MICE businesses to other destinations."

However, Rajendra Dhumma, director of Classic Travels & Tours, downplayed the effect. He said that the weakened ringgit is enough to keep Indian clients interested in Malaysia as it makes the country "an even more attractive destination".

"Many companies in India have also cut spending and will opt to send employees on (cheaper) airlines like Malindo Air," he added.

Amit Singla, managing director of Scotch & Water Innovations based in Bangalore, disagreed.



He said: "Organisers who can pay for scheduled carriers will want a direct connection for their MICE groups. The suspension of the morning flight departures from Delhi to Kuala Lumpur will also affect onward connections for business travellers from India."

Elsewhere, despite the Singapore dollar gaining strength against the ringgit, Malaysia appears less desirable as a destination for Singapore MICE groups, with specialists reporting slower business events bookings.

R.A. Jits Travel & Tours managing director, Harminderjit Singh, said the strong Singapore dollar and good flight connections out of Singapore have led corporate clients to look for destinations further afield, and many are opting for Thailand.

Similarly, Raaj Navaratnaa, general manager at New Asia Holiday Tours & Travel based in Johor Bahru, has received many enquiries from incentive clients in Singapore considering destinations such as Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam.

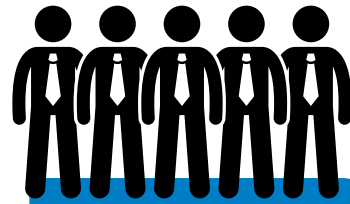
Its inbound business from Singapore on the other hand had dropped by 30 per cent, a situation that was further aggravated by the haze in August, September and October and the 'red shirt' rally in Kuala Lumpur in September.

Navaratnaa remarked: "We had a big meeting group of 600 pax from Singapore, who had planned to have their meeting in Kuala Lumpur end of September, cancel because of the rally. They went to Thailand instead."

Navaratnaa added that the main challenge for Malaysia is that there are no new impressive product offerings to provide repeat clients with new experiences.

"Twentieth Century Fox World Malaysia in Resorts World Genting and Movie Animation Park Studios in Perak, both of which will open in 2016, will definitely help because corporate clients from Singapore tend to bring their families along, especially if the trip coincides with public and school holidays."

{ Talking numbers }



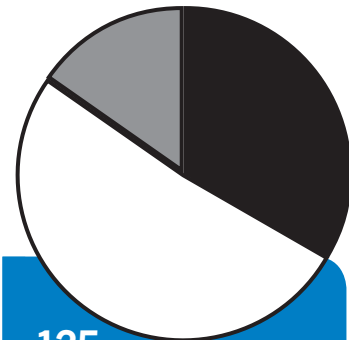
6,000

The number of top achievers from Perfect China who visited Malaysia in July 2015 for the company's incentive trip. It was the largest business events group to be supported by the national CVB that year



60

The number of events that came to Malaysia under the *Malaysia Twin Deal X* programme as of September 2015, bringing with them some 22,360 participants and resulting in an economic impact of RM329 million (US\$76.1 million)



125

The number of business events in Malaysia from January to August 2015. They comprised 42 association conferences, 64 corporate incentive groups and 19 trade exhibitions

{ Insider }

Anthony Wong, group managing director of Asian Overland Services Tourism & Hospitality Group, suggests three places to visit while in Malaysia

Nothing fishy about this place

Aquaria KLCC, a world-class aquarium that showcases marine life and small animals from around the world is located at Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre complex. It gives visitors a chance to get up close with marine life without getting wet. The venue is an interesting place to hold corporate cocktails, product launches and press events before or after the main event at the convention centre.

Watch a Kadazan musical

When in Sabah, do make it a point to watch a live theatre performance called *Sininggazanak*, shown twice daily at J Borneo Native Village. The musical is the only live performance in Sabah showcasing the indigenous Kadazan tribe. There are twice daily performances at 09.30 and 13.30.

Cycling state of mind

Go on a cycling tour in Penang. Get some exercise while you take in the scenic view of paddy fields, villages – complete with cows and goats – and a mangrove forest in Balik Pulau. After an hour, the guide will take a short break at Kuala Sungai Burong, a nice and quiet place to relax. There, a simple local picnic basket awaits you. After lunch, take a leisurely stroll along the riverbank lined with coconut trees.





The South Pacific archipelago of more than 300 islands is becoming a larger blip on the radar of MICE organisers

The islands where MICE finds happiness

A dedicated convention bureau is now in place to take the country's growing MICE market to the next level, writes **Rebecca Elliott**

After many years of political instability, Fiji is undergoing somewhat of a renaissance, with tourism and the MICE sector coming out on top.

According to Fiji's inbound operators, 2015 has been the best year they've had to date in terms MICE business. And with the advent of the Fiji Convention Bureau this year, there's no sign of the South Pacific destination slowing down.

At the helm of the bureau is director of events, Sally Cooper, who has

been with Tourism Fiji since 2013. Prior to this, she spent more than 10 years working with an inbound operator on conferences, incentives and events in the country.

Speaking exclusively to *TTGmice* at the Pacific Area Incentives & Conferences Expo (PAICE) in Auckland in November, Cooper explained that with more than 500 convention bureaus worldwide, it was time Fiji had a much stronger voice in the MICE market.

"Most of the service providers

had been driving the market, the inbound tour operators, as well as the large properties that can accommodate large conferences," she said.

"Tourism Fiji always represented the market, but we didn't have a dedicated person that actually managed this side of it."

Cooper said following the democratic election in September 2014 there had been a great "boom" in investment with the likes of AccorHotels and Starwood building new properties, coupled with

{ Talking numbers }

**25**

The amount of service tax one has to pay in Fiji from January 1, 2016, up from 20 per cent previously

**1,200**

The number of guests that can be packed into the new Denarau Island Convention Center for a cocktail reception. The venue, part of Sheraton Fiji Resort, opened in 2014

organisations having the confidence to bring their corporate programmes back to Fiji.

"There's a lot of positive growth and much of it is focused on the conference and incentive market, so we have to be there to drive it and fill those hotels."

The bureau is funded by Tourism Fiji and prides itself on being a "neutral and unbiased" information portal. It represents the entire destination rather than a membership base.

Cooper said: "We're presenting multiple options to professional conference organisers and they're getting the option to choose something that caters entirely to their programmes, their group, their individual needs rather than just hearing about the bigger players that have the marketing dollars to represent themselves internationally."

Also speaking to *TTGmice* at PAICE, director of sales and marketing of the Sofitel Fiji Beach Resort and Spa, Michael Bell, said the new Fiji Convention Bureau was working

very well for the hotel.

"We've seen a 30 per cent lift in conference business from last year to this year," he said.

"When you look at shows like this you know you're not just competing with other hotels in Fiji, but also with other destinations around the world, and I think it's important that we have a professional body that understands the MICE market."

Cooper said Asia was one of the bureau's focus markets going into 2016. Early in the new year, they're expecting a number of charter flights from China – mainland Chinese visitors don't require a visa to visit Fiji. While in April, Fiji Airways will begin twice-weekly direct flights between Singapore and Nadi International Airport.

"The biggest attraction for the Asian market is the people of Fiji. It's a very friendly, laid-back and warm culture. When people come to Fiji they're welcomed as if they're coming back home, they're family, not visitors to the country, and I feel that has a great deal of appeal."

"When you look at shows like (PAICE) you know you're not just competing with other hotels in Fiji, but also with other destinations around the world, and I think it's important that we have a professional body that understands the MICE market."

Michael Bell

Director of sales and marketing
Sofitel Fiji Beach Resort and Spa



Building a culture of giving back benefits both participants and the local community



{ Insider }

Tony Whitton, managing director of Rosie Holidays, proposes three Fijian must-dos

For the benefit of others

Make a connection with the Fijian community, whether through a corporate social responsibility event or through some of the wonderful interactive Fijian village experiences Rosie Holidays can offer.

Be marooned for a day

Take over a deserted island for the day for an exclusive "Fiji Postcard" island experience. This can either be fully indulgent with beach cabanas and massages, or action-packed with jet skis and snorkelling safaris.

A night of merrymaking

Experience one of our dinner events – fabulously formal or a fun Fijian theme. The event can be on a beach under stars or in the jungle next to a cascading waterfall and be complemented by uniquely Fijian entertainment. Think marching bands, traditional dance troupes and a Pacific fire show extravaganza.

{ Spotlight }

A dignified dame's lofty ambitions

Affectionately referred to as the 'grand old lady' of the Pacific, The Grand Pacific Hotel, located in Fiji's capital of Suva, is the newest five-star hotel to open in the country.

With a history dating back to 1908, the original building, which once hosted Queen Elizabeth II, closed its doors in 1990.

In 2011, its resurrection was announced in a joint venture between Fiji National Provident Fund, Papua New Guinea Superannuation Fund and Lamana Development PNG. The Fiji National Trust was an advisor to the project to ensure the new build remained true to its colonial heritage.

The property reopened in May 2014 and is blessed with beach frontage. The hotel features 103 rooms across four room types, and 10 suites including six, one-of-a-kind designs. In addition, it offers 1,250m² of function space across six rooms. The biggest space is the Britannia Ballroom, the largest pillarless ballroom in Suva, which can cater for up to 420 people for banquet dinners or 500 cocktail-style.

Gordon Rigamoto, director of sales and marketing, said: "The hotel is currently rated Best Hotel in Suva on TripAdvisor and Expedia ratings.

The property has great potential for sole use or buyout for medium to large programmes that want a true Fijian experience."

Since opening, the hotel has hosted high calibre international events like the African Caribbean Pacific-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, as well as regional conferences such as the Pacific Island Development Forum.

Facilities in the hotel include three res-

taurants, two bars and the Swiss Bakery, which holds the record of the longest Swiss roll ever baked. There is also a business centre, day spa, swim and fitness centre, a tour desk and free Wi-Fi.

Rigamoto said the hotel has received more enquiries from Asia for MICE events.

As such, he said: "We plan to explore opportunities in Asia, mainly in Hong Kong due to the direct flight access to Fiji. China, South Korea and Singapore are also markets that we are looking to target in 2016."

The Grand Pacific Hotel Fiji





{ Hot moves }



Garth Simmons

Cetin Sekercioglu

After 21 years with Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts, during which he rose from F&B director to executive vice president, Sekercioglu has moved on to join Millennium & Copthorne International as president-Asia.

Garth Simmons

AccorHotels has chosen Simmons to replace Gerard Guillouet as the new COO in Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. Simmons has been with the company since 2007 and has more than 30 years of experience in the hospitality industry.



Janet McNab

Janet McNab

Starwood Hotels & Resorts has made McNab managing director of Sheraton Macau Hotel, Cotai Central and St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central. Prior to this, McNab was the area general manager of Starwood Hotels & Resorts in South Thailand and general manager of The Westin Siray Bay Resort & Spa.

Jorgen Christensen

Christensen is now general manager of Marco Polo Changzhou, bringing with him more than 25 years of hospitality experience with



Jorgen Christensen

major hotel brands like Accor, Shangri-La and Langham.

Manish Puri

Six Senses Qing Cheng Mountain has appointed Puri as its new general manager. Puri started his career with Six Senses in 2008, and has more than 23 years of hospitality experience under his belt.

Selina Chavry

Chavry has been promoted to global managing director of Pacific World as Herve Joseph-Antoine becomes chairman of the global DMC. She was previously the regional



Manish Puri

director, Asia for Pacific World.

Shane Pateman

Pateman is now managing director of Cordis Hong Kong. He was last general manager of Eaton, Hong Kong.

Shaun Campbell

Formerly the general manager of Cordis, Hong Kong, Campbell is now managing director of The Langham, Hong Kong. He replaces Bob van den Oord who has moved on to London to take on the same role at The Langham, London.

Sherona Shng

Shng, who was hotel



Tane Picken

manager at The Langham, Hong Kong, has been promoted to the position of general manager for Eaton, Hong Kong.

Tane Picken

Picken has been appointed hotel manager of the Golden Sands Resort, Penang by Shangri-La. With over 14 years of experience across the world, Picken was most recently resident manager at Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort & Spa, Singapore.

Zubin Karkaria

Karkaria has replaced Peter Meier as CEO of Kuoni Group.

{ Career inspiration }

Sammi Cheng

Director of exhibition, Uniplan Hong Kong

What led you to a career with Uniplan Hong Kong?

Prior to Uniplan, I worked in visual merchandising and event production, specialising in seasonal and festive decoration. I joined the company's exhibition team in 2006 through a referral by a colleague.

What do you do on a daily basis?

I oversee sales activities of the exhibition team and ensure that the team achieves sales targets. I also lead the team in delivering spectacular projects. I constantly monitor and improve work procedures to raise efficiency and

effectiveness across the team. Most importantly though, I focus on creating an environment for my teammates to thrive and be motivated towards personal growth.

What is your greatest career achievement so far in this role?

I have been with Uniplan for nine years and the company recognises the tremendous contributions I've made. My latest and greatest achievement is having exceeded my sales target by 13 per cent and, at the same time, attained a business

growth of 50 per cent over a span of two years.

What advice would you give to someone looking to join the exhibitions business?

It is important to know that new challenges constantly arise. Hence, problem solving and communication skills are essential. Attention to detail is critical too in this dynamic industry. Other skills that are advantageous to this industry are proficiency in multiple languages and great presentation skills.



IMEX

Frankfurt



**19–21
April 2016**



“We came. We saw.
We conquered
our To Do list.”

Why is doing business at **IMEX** so enjoyable?

You see a lot of smiling faces at IMEX, the well-loved event at the heart of the meetings industry. The explanations for this are simple:

1. Being able to meet with destinations, venues and suppliers means that event planners can get so much work done, it saves them weeks of time – a liberating feeling!
2. Spending time with like-minded people is a heartening experience. Meeting up with contacts old and new bonds business friendships and feels good.
3. The aisles are oozing with information, creativity, culture and innovation, so everybody goes home buzzing with exciting ideas they can't wait to share.

Come to IMEX in Frankfurt on 19-21 April 2016, and go home with a smile.

IMEX. Who knew business could be such fun?



imex-frankfurt.com

Call: +44 (0)1273 227311

Email: info@imexexhibitions.com

Tweet: [@imex_group](https://twitter.com/imex_group)



The worldwide exhibition for incentive
travel, meetings and events.

GCB
Meetings made in Germany
■ ■ ■ Member European Travel



Lufthansa
Official Airline

DB **BAHN**

“INSPIRATION ON EVERY CORNER”



Nigel Gaunt

Caroline Boey speaks with the president of the new Incentive, Conference & Event Society (ICESAP) who is on a mission, after 35 years of being in the business, to embrace customers and professionalise the industry

What made you form ICESAP?

Having enjoyed success in the industry and with the companies I set up (The Forum Organization in 1980 and The MINT Organization in 2000, the latter with offices in Australia, Asia and the Middle East) I felt it was important to give back to the industry.

Until ICESAP was formed, there was no Asia-Pacific body to raise the profile of the IC&E (incentive, conference and event) sector of tourism.

It was estimated in 2014 that the IC&E sector was valued at over US\$120 billion across Asia-Pacific's economies, excluding the Americas. Furthermore, 80 per cent of this amount came from within Asia-Pacific.

Despite the scale, there has been no IC&E peak body, only national entities representing only incentive, conference or event – but not all three. Being by nature a cross-border industry, there needs to be a consistent approach in key areas such as industry standards, education and accreditation.

This sector has become an increasingly important part of tourism in Asia-Pacific. According to the Global Business Travel Association in 2014, business travel to IC&E related activities exceeded 50 per cent of total business travel that year.

The rise in incentive programmes, corporate meetings, conferences and events is therefore driving increased spend in tourism across the region and adds weight to the need for ICESAP to exist.

How is ICESAP different from other professional bodies?

ICESAP is the only body that represents the three components of incentive, conference and event. It is a customer-centric professional body aimed at lifting standards with an Asia-Pacific approach.

ICESAP is unique among professional bodies in that it has corporate members as its peak member category. Today, they make up approximately 35 per cent of the 350-plus total members.

These members are corporate buyers like Tupperware who might send several thousand people to a destination like Macau. They may also include those who achieved their targets on an incentive programme and conference attendees.

What is ICESAP doing to raise professional standards?

ICESAP has formed a joint-venture partnership with William Angliss Institute, part of William Angliss Australia, to offer education programmes and other forms of professional development.

The education programmes will start in December 2015 with a six-part online introductory course and followed by intermediate courses in 2016. The majority of course content will be delivered online and in late-2017, ICESAP will also offer a degree course in IC&E management.

ICESAP is further committed to growing the IC&E sector by implementing an accreditation scheme for the intermediary agency businesses operating in the sector across Asia-Pacific.

Why is accreditation so important?

The IC&E sector is uniquely different compared to other travel industry sectors. It requires a different set of skills, significant back-office systems and diverse talents in participant management, staging, AV and production, creative concepts, catering, speaker programme development and many other specific skills not found elsewhere in the travel industry.

Growth in Asia-Pacific has exceeded all other regions, driven mainly by economies such as China and India, but also by a shift in corporate marketing dollars away from advertising to below-the-line activities including IC&E projects.

In launching the Intermediary Agency Accreditation Scheme in 2016, ICESAP will further enhance the reputation of our industry and build long-term sus-

tainability. Without it, the agency role is under threat from disintermediation.

To be able to sustain growth, the IC&E sector needs to professionalise its own sector, especially when the IC&E offering has now become part of the marketing mix for many corporations.

The sharing economy with businesses such as Airbnb can be a major disruptor and the customer may bypass the agency. But the professional and upskilled agency will be able to continue to play an important role in coordinating all the different elements of IC&E programmes.

To ensure standards, accredited companies must abide by a code of conduct, demonstrate financial security and participate in a guarantee fund to “de-risk” customers and suppliers. Although accreditation cannot be mandated, the scheme will be made attractive and be a game changer for the industry.

ICESAP turns two in January 2016. Is there anything you are particularly proud of?

JMIC, the Joint Industry Meetings Council, invited ICESAP to be a member in August. Apart from the Asian Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus, ICESAP is the first Asia-Pacific body to be a JMIC member.



Recognising the best

The second **rAWr Awards**, held in Kuala Lumpur on November 12, celebrated Malaysia's best business events and specialists. Organised by the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) and the Malaysia Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers, the gala event was graced by prominent personalities including Mas Ermieyati Samsudin, deputy minister of tourism and culture (bottom, sixth from left) and Zulkefli Hj Sharif, MyCEB CEO (bottom, fourth from left)



An Asian focus

The three-day **AEC + Expo 2015** in Kuala Lumpur from November 11-13 brought Asian MICE players together to explore business avenues and key issues, challenge new bloods, and reward top achievers in the industry





Masters of fun

Singapore-based M.I.C.E Matters sure knows how to throw a great party! Its **A Groovy Kind of Xmas 2015** party on December 11 gathered industry friends and brought them back in time for a psychedelic evening of music, dance and awesome brews



TTGmice
Asia Pacific's leading meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions resource

What's next?

How will the business events industry fare in the year 2016? *TTGmice* finds out in the February/March issue, with inputs from industry thought leaders and trade specialists. The issue will also take you on a journey to Hong Kong, Japan, Thailand and Fiji to clue you in on what's brewing in these destinations.

Bringing the nation's association professionals together

The Association Executives' Summit III, organised by the Philippine Council for the Advancement of Association Executives (PCAA) on December 3 and 4, drew 120 delegates who discussed membership management and governance issues under the theme, *Compass to Excellence*



The PCAA's next annual summit will be held at PICC on November 23-24, 2016.
For more information, visit <http://www.pcaa.org>



GROW YOUR BUSINESS

The Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) is the leading business events and meetings exhibition in the Asia-Pacific region. It's where 4,500 suppliers and buyers unite for two powerful days of business, knowledge and networking.

Join us at the **Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre** on the **23-24 February 2016**.

For more information about attending as a Hosted Buyer visit www.aime.com.au/hosted-buyers

AIME is owned by

AIME is organised by

AIME is part of

ibtm events global partner



Organised by  **Reed Exhibitions**® ibtm events is a registered trademark of Reed Exhibitions Limited.

ibtm events and Reed Travel Exhibitions are owned and protected by Elsevier Properties SA and Reed Exhibitions Limited uses such trademarks under license.

KOREA IS THE INCENTIVE

RAFTING — INJE-GUN

KOREAN HOUSE — SEOUL

TEMPLE STAY — YEONGCHEON-SI

WINE TUNNEL — CHEONGDO-GUN

WINTER TRIP — SANGJU-SI

PUNGHUDAN TROOP — ANSEONG-SI

KIMCHI FESTIVAL — SEOUL

HERBAL MEDICINE SHOP — JEONJU-SI

ARMYMA, CINEMA CENTER — BUSAN



TO FREE YOUR IMAGINATION

HALLYU TOUR / HALLYU EXPERIENCE / HALLYU
DRAMA FILMING LOCATION / K-FOOD EXPERIENCE /
K-CULTURE EXPERIENCE

TO BOOST YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

LEISURE SPORTS / ACTIVITIES / TEAMWORK
BUILDING / RECREATION MISSIONS / COOPERATION

TO BRIGHTEN YOUR MOOD

LUXURY PARTY / HOTEL PARTY / WEDDING PARTY /
CRUISE PARTY / TRADITIONAL PARTY / EXOTIC
PARTY / WATER AND SNOW PARTY / AQUARIUM
PARTY

TO ENERGIZE YOUR MIND AND BODY

MEDICAL TOUR / BEAUTY EXPERIENCE /
INDUSTRIAL TOUR

TO EXPAND YOUR CULTURAL HORIZONS

NATURAL DYE EXPERIENCE / FISHING AND
FARMING VILLAGE EXPERIENCE / FESTIVAL
EXPERIENCE / MENTAL CULTURE EXPERIENCE /
HEALTHY CULTURE EXPERIENCE / TRADITIONAL
MUSIC EXPERIENCE / CRAFT EXPERIENCE /
TRADITIONAL ART EXPERIENCE / NON-VERBAL
PERFORMANCE / KOREAN MUSICAL / MUSIC AND
ART FANTASY

