

September 2016

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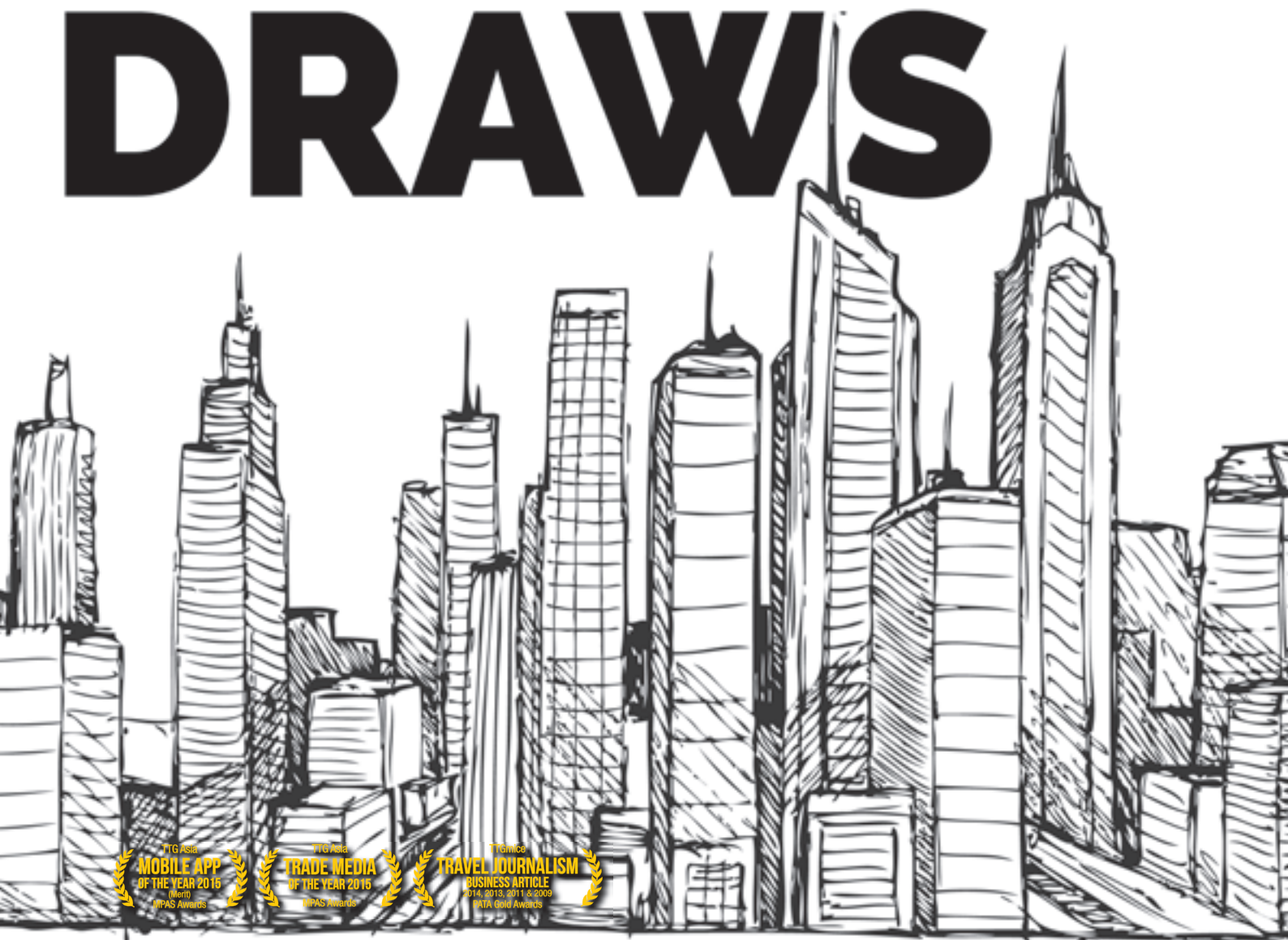
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Group Editor

Keep up that housekeeping

Arriving home through the then new Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 3 several years ago, I overheard a lady behind me coo: "What a beautiful airport this is."

Her less enthusiastic companion replied: "It is only beautiful because it is new. Give it a few more years and it won't be that nice anymore."

She was wrong, of course. Singapore Changi Airport is in a constant state of upgrading – yet, work is often done discreetly, like a lady going about her beauty regime in the privacy of her boudoir, and hardly ever inconveniencing travellers coming through.

Singapore Changi Airport knows the importance of staying fresh and meeting the ever increasing expectations of global travellers.

Not too long after that encounter, news broke on the construction of Jewel Changi Airport – a massive destination with retail facilities, a hotel and airport facilities – and the expansion of Terminal 1.

Along the way, the airport is always adding new things for travellers to see and do, such as the recent interactive artistic installations across all three terminals.

Regular housekeeping is not only needed by tourism facilities, but by destinations too. This is especially important because there is an increasing number of cities worldwide that are stepping up efforts to court business events, and existing ones need to show why they still matter. And one good way to stay on the minds of travellers and planners is to always have something fresh and new to show and talk about.

For this issue's cover feature, *Big city draws* (page 14-22), we have compiled an update on what Asia-Pacific's main cities for business events are up to on the hardware front. We hope you will find it useful in your planning.



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) 165/08/2013, KDN
PPS1140/09/2012(022844), ISSN 0218-849X
Printed by Times Printers Pte Ltd
16 Tuas Avenue 5, Singapore 639340

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Asia-Pacific's top MICE cities are always evolving, with new and refreshed infrastructure to give events a new flavour and for delegates, a more fascinating experience

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Everything's coming up roses for Philippine MICE, with high profile event wins in the bag, stronger tourism push by a new tourism chief and an ISO-certified TPB. Rosa Ocampo reports

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Macau may be challenged to meet demand for themed corporate events, but it is not looking about to fold, Prudence Lui writes

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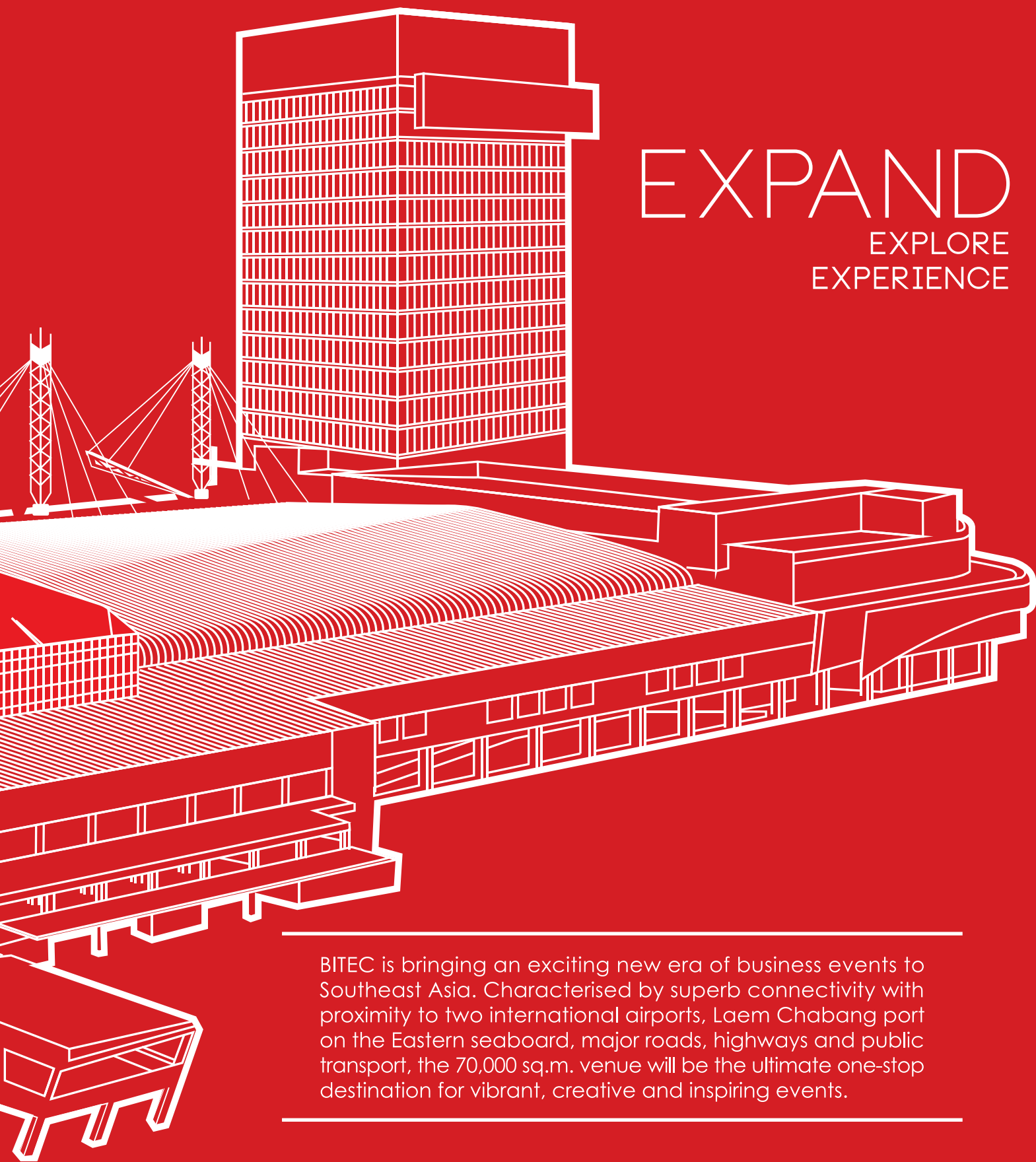
Penang's newly formed CVB has hit the ground running, building marketing materials and an experienced team to raise the destination's status as a MICE city. S Puvaneswary reports

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Kaleidoscope therapy

The recently-opened Hotel Indigo Singapore Katong is reflective of the Joo Chiat neighbourhood it stands in. The Peranakan (Straits-born Chinese) design is evident upon entering the 131-room property, where the feature wall behind the reception comprises a collage of intricate Peranakan ceramic patterns.

Designed by renowned architects Ong & Ong, and multidisciplinary architectural

practice Eco.id, each 30m² guestroom sports a mural that depicts the laid-back lifestyle of the neighbourhood, juxtaposed with brightly-coloured Peranakan-inspired furniture pieces.

Each room also mirrors the structure and flow of a condensed Peranakan home, taking guests from the living room to the bedroom and through to the bathroom.

Facilities include the 24-hour Fitness Centre, the rooftop infinity pool, two meeting rooms and the all-day dining restaurant, Baba Chews Bar and Eatery.

Part of InterContinental Hotels Group's stable, no two Hotel Indigo hotels around the globe are alike as they have been designed to reflect the local culture and history of the neighbourhood through its design and F&B.

Plaza Premium debuts in Taiwan in a big way

The Plaza Premium Group has made its first foray into Taiwan with the opening of four airport lounges at Taoyuan International Airport.

Located at the departure terminals in Terminal 1 and Terminal 2, the new lounges – decked out with a timber and trees theme – span over 2,500m² and can comfortably seat 600 in total.

Facilities include the brand's signature honeycomb seating, hot showers, private resting suites, VIP rooms, meeting rooms, along with the availability of electrical outlets, international TV channels, newspapers and magazines, and complimentary Wi-Fi. There will also be hot food available, freshly prepared at live-cooking stations.

The company has also sponsored two Travellers Experience Zones, one in each terminal, to allow travellers to experience various lounge facilities.

At the opening ceremony in July, Song Hoi-see, founder and CEO of the group, said: "Plaza Premium Lounge in Taipei is the first project of our group in Taiwan. We have invested a lot in Taipei by introducing four cutting-edge Plaza Premium Lounges to facilitate travellers departing from, transiting through and arriving at Taipei."

The basic lounge package in either terminal starts from NT\$1,300 (US\$40.50) for two hours.



New corporate travel tools promise to help cut costs

Carlson Wagonlit Travel's (CWT) Solutions Group has introduced four new proprietary products to help corporate travel managers cut costs and engage their travellers in new ways.

The new products help companies reduce non-compliant spending, reclaim surcharges on corporate car rentals, analyse traveller data and provide ground transportation options.

According to CWT research, travel managers don't have visibility over nearly a third of a company's travel and expense (T&E) spend because it isn't consolidated in a single data set. With the new solution, CWT hopes to give them better control of expense management.

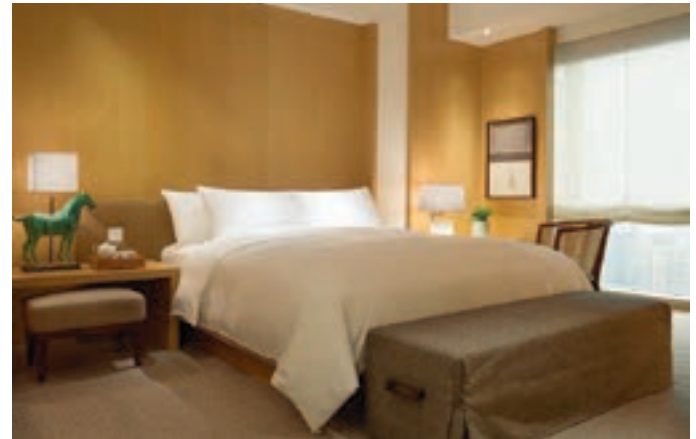
Christophe Renard, vice president of CWT Solutions Group Worldwide explained: "Our T&E platform automatically consolidates all data sources, including from the travel management company, from credit card spend, and third party suppliers. We use that information to provide an immediate view of all non-compliant spending.

"We can also reconstruct the total cost of each trip. Travel managers can then have an accurate view of all spending, compliant and non-compliant, enabling them to adjust their policy as necessary, or make sure it is better communicated internally."

He continued: "Our new traveller segmentation platform segments travellers' behaviour using key data including demographics, seniority and travel frequency information. It means travel managers can tailor their communication to each traveller, encouraging those travellers to comply with the policy. The end result is greater savings and a reduced overall travel spend."

And on helping corporates save on car rental surcharge, Renard said CWT Solutions Group "shares the recovered costs" with clients and gives them "the bulk of the savings".

CWT's new solution also gives travel managers the means to guide their travellers to the most appropriate form of transport.



Grand Hyatt lands in China's province of culinary arts

The first Hyatt-branded property in China's Sichuan province has opened, offering 390 keys, seven F&B establishments, an advanced fitness centre with a full range of modern gym equipment and an indoor heated swimming pool.

A dream for business event planners, Grand Hyatt Chengdu features over 3,000m² of event space including a 712m² ballroom, a 1,350m² outdoor terrace and Residences, a cluster of private meeting rooms measuring between 81m² and 311m².

The hotel is located on floors 10 to 39 of Chicony Square and is a 30-minute drive from Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport.



A princely new addition in Tokyo

The Luxury Collection Hotels & Resorts, part of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, has opened The Prince Gallery Tokyo Kioicho, a Luxury Collection Hotel, marking Starwood's first-ever luxury hotel in Japan's capital. It is part of mixed-use development Tokyo Garden Terrace Kioicho, which comprises commercial, residential, retail and entertainment spaces. Haneda and Narita airports are 45 and 90 minutes away by road, respectively. The hotel features 250 rooms and suites, four F&B venues, an indoor pool, as well as a spa, gym and business centre.


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HOT DEALS

JW Marriott Hotel Shanghai at Tomorrow Square

The hotel has unveiled its latest meeting package with a focus on well-being. The Well-being Meeting Package incorporates a revitalising workout, organic cuisine, and a body-and-mind soothing activity for meeting delegates to help them meet better.

Priced at RMB680 (US\$102; excluding a 15 per cent surcharge), the offer is available for groups with a minimum of 10 people who book the use of meeting facilities. The group will avail the following benefits: one hour of fun exercise prior to the start of the meeting; healthy meeting-inspired coffee breaks; 15-minute shoulder massage during the meeting break; customised organic lunch; and a one-month gym membership card for every RMB8,000 spent in each meeting.

Visit the hotel's website to submit an online RFP.

Langkawi International Convention Centre

The venue has recently enhanced its half- and full-day meeting packages.

Half- or full-day meeting packages, complete with lunch and tea break are priced at RM160 nett (US\$40) and RM180 nett per person respectively. Both packages come with complimentary use of an LCD projector and

screen, a flipchart and/or whiteboard and two microphones from a choice of wired, wireless, lapel or table microphones. Conference stationery, mints and bottled water are also provided throughout the meeting duration. For additional meeting rooms, a discounted rental charge will be applicable.

For clients who wish to add dinner to the package, there will be a choice of buffet or set menu starting at RM180 nett per person.

Moreover, LICC is offering complimentary return transfer pickups for any confirmed clients whose guests are staying at hotels, excluding the neighbouring Westin Langkawi Resort and Spa. LICC delegates will also be able to enjoy 30 per cent discount for any spa treatment and 20 per cent discount for beverages during events.

Valid till December 31, 2017.

Email info@licclangkawi.com.



Langkawi International Convention Centre



Hotel Indigo Singapore Katong

IHG Singapore

Meeting planners can enjoy more rewards when they hold their meetings with IHG Singapore's portfolio of eight hotels, including the new Hotel Indigo Singapore Katong and Holiday Inn Express Singapore Katong.

These perks include: double IHG Business Rewards points which can be redeemed for room nights and more at over 5,000 hotels worldwide, and five per cent off the total group meeting expenses with a minimum spend of US\$1,000.

This is valid for qualified groups, events and meetings booked by September 30, 2016, for stays until December 31, 2016. A minimum booking of 10 rooms is required, while the minimum spend varies with group size, space requirements and dates requested.

Email 1800MEETING@ihg.com or visit emtg.ihg.com to submit an online RFP.

Crowne Plaza Changi Airport unveils new Jewel Wing

Crowne Plaza Changi Airport, part of InterContinental Hotels Group, has added a new 10-storey extension to the property.

The hotel, the only one located outside the transit area of Changi Airport, now has a 563-key inventory, an increase of over 75 per cent from its original 320 rooms. All 243 rooms at the new Jewel Wing are Business Rooms in King (28m²) or Twin (38m²) configuration.

Rooms cater well for business travellers, with amenities such as an ergonomic work station, complimentary Wi-Fi, wireless printing

of documents, and a Handy smartphone for free unlimited local and international calls to 11 countries.

General manager Sunshine Wong told *TTGmice* he hopes to continue reaching out to one essential group – the MNCs.

He said: "There is definitely one segment of the MICE business that we're looking for, which is all the multinationals based in Singapore. We also believe that this hotel can be positioned as a hub, meaning regional MNCs can have their meeting here for two, three days

and off they go. That's what we're targeting and we've been quite successful in going after that segment."

Jewel Wing welcomed its first guests on August 1. The new wing is named as such as it will overlook the Jewel Changi Airport retail complex once the building is completed in 2019.

The property expansion is also coming ahead of the airport's Terminal 4 opening slated for 2017. Crowne Plaza Changi Airport first opened in 2008.

Hertz perks now available to Le Club AccorHotels members

AccorHotels and Hertz have entered into a partnership that will boost the former's loyalty programme, Le Club AccorHotels, with several special car rental offers available worldwide.

Members of the programme, which covers properties across a multitude of AccorHotels brands such as Sofitel, Pullman, Novotel, Mercure and ibis, stand to enjoy a 10 per cent discount on prepaid and non-prepaid Hertz Classic retail rates worldwide; one additional driver at no extra cost; complimentary one-car-class upgrades, depending on the Le Club AccorHotels member tier; and access to a delivery and collection service (according to Hertz terms and conditions), among many others.

The partner agreement runs until March 2019.





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Meeting venues must keep up with the times: PCMA

By Paige Lee Pei Qi

Conference venues are urged to be flexible and adapt to the evolving needs of today's clients in the meetings and events industry.

According to PCMA's president and CEO Deborah Sexton, clients are moving away from individualism and towards "tribal communities of like-minded, passionate individuals".

Sexton said: "As tribes grow in popularity, the planning, execution and evaluation of meetings will have to adapt in a way that fosters and leverages communities to heighten the experience."

"Venues are impacted in a big way, and they have to support these pop-up communities by creating places within their venues that can change and create community environments quickly and efficiently, which is different from the past."



Donaghy: venues must be flexible

Geoff Donaghy who is both chief executive of the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) and president of the International Association of Convention Centres, acknowledged the need for such "adaptive environments".

Donaghy told *TTGmice*: "Some venues may be ready for such changes while for some that will take more time because generally venues will have hardware limitations like the ceilings and walls."

"However, we know that to keep up with the competition, venues need to be flexible and ready for changes, so we have been innovative with our new design at the ICC Sydney."

Donaghy explained that conferences of today are no longer contained in the main convention hall but in many smaller breakout rooms.

He illustrated: "In the old model, we

may have to provide five (break-out) rooms for 200 delegates, but now it is about providing 200 spaces with furniture and coffee for five delegates in each area."

However, Michelle W Jones, director for convention and meeting services with the International Parking Institute, based in the US, pointed out that the need to provide a unique environment that is conducive for meetings today must be balanced with the cost of doing so.

"There had been times when we wanted to have a creative space with certain types of furniture to encourage better interaction among our delegates, but realised that most venues do not have anything more than the standard tables, chairs and white table cloths. To be creative meant we would have to spend a lot more money to engage an independent furniture provider, and we were not ready for that," Jones explained. – *Additional reporting by Karen Yue*

Asia's transacted trade fair space continues on growth path

Net space sold at Asian trade fairs jumped by 5.6 per cent to almost 19.7 million square metres in 2015, according to figures released in an annual UFI report.

The largest market is China, where 56 per cent or 11.19 million square metres of total space was sold. This is five and a half times the space sold in Asia's second largest market, Japan (2.05 million square metres).

The China market grew 7.1 per cent, while India posted strongest growth at 7.8 per cent.

In addition, South-east Asia continued to record considerable growth as the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam grew

by between 7.2 and 7.8 per cent last year – well above the regional average of 5.6 per cent.

Elsewhere in Asia, net space sold in South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan expanded by 3.7, 3.2, 2.2 and 1.2 per cent respectively.

By the end of 2016, Asia's venue capacity is expected to exceed 7.8 million square metres – while number of venues would likely reach 207, more than double the 100 venues in operation in 2004. Of this gross indoor capacity, China would account for over 70 per cent with 5.5 million square metres floor space and 108 venues.

Second convention centre coming up in Nagoya city

Work is under way on a new 60,000m² convention facility adjacent to Chubu Centrair International Airport in Nagoya.

The project is scheduled to open in the autumn of 2019, according to Masahide Akita, assistant director of the Aichi Prefectural Government's Exhibitions Site Section.

Nagoya already has a major convention and exhibitions facility, the Portmesse International Exhibition Hall, in the harbour district and the local government hopes the new conventions space will complement that site.

Akita told *TTGmice*: "We believe that the convenient location – just a five-minute walk from the airport – will be attractive to (event) organisers."

The new venue will have six halls, each 10,000m². A new hotel will be built next door, slated for completion in 2020.

Akita added that the local government hopes Nagoya and the prefecture of Aichi – located between Tokyo and Osaka – can emerge as a unique alternative destination for conventions and exhibitions. – **Julian Ryall**

{ 2016 Calendar }

**September
7-8**

IBTM China,
Beijing
China

**September
7-8**

Asian MICE Forum
Taipei, Taiwan

**September
7-9**

PATA Travel Mart
Jakarta, Indonesia

**September
27-29**

IT&CM Asia
Bangkok
Thailand

Association events to downsize, go niche: MCI

By Paige Lee Pei Qi

While the number of events globally will continue to grow dramatically by 75 per cent year-on-year, the average size of these events will be halved, predicted MCI Group COO for Asia-Pacific, Oscar Cerezales at the Singapore MICE Forum in July.

"There is nothing wrong with that because events are becoming more market- and niche-driven, (which has implications on) the traditional business model," he added.

Speaking to *TTGmice* in an interview, Cerezales explained: "One of the reasons for the growth in smaller events is the diversity of people present in an event, (which makes it) hard to meet their exact needs."

Attendance for each event has to be

controlled in order for content to be "compelling" and "cohesive", he continued.

Cerezales forecasted that associations, which traditionally hold events for up to thousands, will go on to do smaller events.

He explained: "Associations need new revenue channels and they need to test new events. When you test, you will start small."

In light of this trend which he said is "already happening", he cautioned the industry to "be prepared with the right business model".

Anticipating the rise of small events, Cerezales said: "There would perhaps be (the need) for more technology and more outsourcing, and for (organisers) to relook at services we are doing today that are not adding value."



Cerezales: go niche

APAC associations gain from PCMA, SECB scholarship

Twenty association executives from around Asia-Pacific have benefitted from the inaugural PCMA Asia-Pacific Scholarship which funded their trip to Singapore in July for the PCMA Meetings Forum.

Created by the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) and the Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau (SECB), the scholarship also earned funding support from Tourism New Zealand, Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau, Korea Tourism Organization.

Usa Thisyakorn, president of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society of Thailand and congress chair of the 8th Asian Congress of Pediatric Infectious Disease 2016, was one of the scholarship recipients. She said the scholarship provided her with a "valuable learning experience" at the Forum.

"The discussions here are in-depth and the perspectives are global – not something association executives can easily access in Thailand," she said. – **Karen Yue**



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A recent analysis by hotel portal HRS, which examined the booking behaviour of business travellers over the past 5 years, shows that same-day hotel bookings are on average 23 percent cheaper than overnight stays booked far in advance. The analysis also showed that the majority of business travellers tend to book their hotel accommodation up to 2 weeks in advance, giving up on substantial savings for the security of room availability. Thanks to HRS's mobile app technology, business travellers are now able to only book their hotel accommodation on the same day they need it. Using map functionality with GPS positioning, the HRS app allows them to immediately find a suitable hotel nearby, thus enjoying the best of both worlds.

"Mobile is the current trend and it will define the future of the travel industry. We are constantly enhancing our apps and adding additional services so that we can continually offer guests new experiences."

– HRS CEO Tobias Ragge

Currently installed on over 20 million devices, the HRS app also allows customers to check in to participating hotels via their mobile phone, store preferences or requirements for their stay in their profile, and automatically share this information with staff. There are also plans to make mobile payment possible during check out. Hotels that already offer HRS's 'Smarthotel' services will be indicated in the app.

HRS - Global Hotel Solutions

HRS provides end-to-end hotel management solutions to more than 3,000 businesses globally. As well as providing professional hotel procurement services and negotiating special rates with hotels, HRS optimises the cashless and paperless payment of hotel stays, whilst offering automated invoice processing. HRS also provides solutions for meeting and group bookings through a standardised online booking tool.

The continuously expanding group of companies has over 1,600 employees in 26 offices worldwide, among them Shanghai, Tokyo, Singapore, Paris, London, Mumbai, São Paulo and New York. The HRS Group's headquarters are located in Cologne.

Expanded BITEC targets lifestyle events

By Michael Sanderson

In an effort to capitalise on the six billion baht (US\$170 million) expansion due for completion in November, the Bangkok International Trade and Exhibition Centre (BITEC) is seeking to secure major international concerts and theatre shows.

Set to become one of the largest venues in Asia – almost doubling in size to boast 70,000m² of event space – managing director, Panittha Buri, said BITEC would continue to be an industry leader for international trade exhibitions, consumer fairs and conventions.



Panittha: going for bigger productions

Along with three new event halls, BITEC will add 12 meeting rooms, three convention halls, retail and dining areas, an outdoor concert area and a mixed-use office building to its existing facilities. It will also boast greater transport links with a direct connection to Bangkok's skytrain network, a terminal for 31 coaches and a helipad.

However, its growth strategy is “geared towards the lifestyle and entertainment sector such as concerts, live entertainment and theatre productions”.

“This was one of the driving factors to create EH 100 – our new lifestyle event

hall with a 25m-high ceiling. The height allows for greater possibilities in terms of staging and backdrops as well as light and sound shows,” Panittha said.

Panittha said that once Phase II was complete, BITEC would be able to accommodate 40,000 people at a time. The expansion will be ready in time for Grand Metalex 2016, which will use all 10 event halls.

“Our organisers will be able to deliver bigger events, not only in terms of space, but also in terms of profile and exposure,” she said. “There will be opportunities to deliver multiple concurrent events – different events held at the same time, but separated by halls.”

Pan Pacific brand sets foot in Beijing, eyes more first-tier presence

Pan Pacific Hotels Group (PPHG) has finally planted a flag in the Chinese capital, following years of operations in second- and third-tier cities in China, specifically Suzhou, Tianjin, Xiamen and Ningbo.

Pan Pacific Beijing, the newest hotel to rise in Xicheng District come 1H2017, will feature 223 spacious rooms and suites, comprehensive event venues including a ballroom with a double volume ceiling, an exclusive club lounge offering views that extend to the Forbidden City, recreational facilities and a selection of dining outlets including the brand's signature Hai Tien Lo Chinese restaurant and Keyaki Japanese restaurant.

PPHG's CEO Bernold Schroeder, told *TTGmice* that the group has “always wanted to bring the Pan Pacific brand to Beijing”.

Although Beijing is already home to several international hotel brands, Schroeder is confident that the upscale property will succeed in standing out from the crowd.

He said: “While the majority of international hotels have traditionally been located on the eastern part of the city, Pan Pacific Beijing is one of the few located to the west of Tiananmen Square towards the Beijing Financial Street, where government and corporate financial institutions congregate.

“It takes just 10 minutes to walk from our hotel to reach some of the world's largest banks. Chang'an Avenue links our hotel to Tiananmen Square and

puts us within a 2.5km walking radius to Beijing's historical and cultural monuments, so we've really got the best of both worlds.”

He also believes that Pan Pacific Beijing's F&B offerings will put the hotel in good stead among the competition.

PPHG's entry into Beijing also signals the company's intention to expand the Pan Pacific brand into other first-tier Chinese cities.

Schroeder pointed out that location is key in the group's search for a suitable destination to dive into, and the plan is to build “a network of hotels in key gateway cities”.

“Should a gem of a location like what Pan Pacific Beijing has were to show up in Shanghai, one of China's financial centres and an international gateway city in its own right, we will be excited to explore it further,” he said, adding that future openings will be a mix of hotel, serviced suites, and hybrids, the current types of properties Pan Pacific now has in China.

– Karen Yue



Schroeder: location is key

{ In brief }

Philippines gets bigger tourism budget

The Philippines' Department of Tourism has secured a substantial budget increment this year, up 44 per cent from the 2015 budget of 2.5 billion pesos (US\$53 million) to 3.61 billion pesos for 2016. The country's newly-appointed tourism secretary Wanda Teo has vowed to efficiently utilise the resources given to her for the promotion and development of the country's tourism industry. No details have been revealed as to how the budget is to be allocated, but Teo added that information on activities and transactions of the tourism ministry can be accessed from its soon-to-relaunch website.

Sentosa set for revivification

The Sentosa Development Corporation (SDC) is inviting potential investors to explore the possibility of building and operating a nature-based adventure attraction at Imbiah Lookout, where a 9,420m² forested area on a slope stretching to Siloso Beach is located, as well as a 2,760m² site that is currently home to the flying trapeze and Trapizza restaurant at Siloso Beach Walk, run by Shangri-La's Rasa Sentosa Resort and Spa. There is no timeline confirmed yet for the development of the two sites.

Face-to-face meetings still in demand

Despite the proliferation of technology that makes it easier for companies to communicate internationally, an Egencia study revealed that a majority of corporates still find in-person meetings more effective and productive.

Travellers in Australia, Canada, China, India, the UK and the US made a stronger endorsement for face-to-face meetings on average, at 90 per cent, higher than the global average of 86 per cent. Meanwhile, 91 per cent of travellers who are vice presidents and above indicated a preference for in-person meetings.

Sixty-seven per cent of respondents said they would be less successful in their role if they did not travel to meet their potential clients and customers.

IES to conduct three major events in 2017



World Engineers Summit 2015 drew high profile attendees

By Karen Yue

SINGAPORE The Institution of Engineers, Singapore (IES) will have a “busy year” ahead in 2017, with three key industry events on its calendar.

Veron Poh, IES project manager who is responsible for the association’s meetings and events, said the line-up included the International Applied Engineering Economics Conference in June at Marina Bay Sands, the 3rd World Engineers Summit in July at Suntec Singapore, and ASPECT, a railway engineering related conference done with the Institution of Railway Signal Engineers (UK) in November.

The World Engineers Summit is IES’ flagship event, and the 2017 edition will take on a stronger academic slant, with a focus on a low carbon future and sustainable development, to attract a larger foreign audience.

Poh said the Summit aims to attract more than 1,000 attendees – similar to its first two editions in 2013 and 2015 – but with 60 per cent of delegates hailing from overseas.

In 2015, the Summit drew 80 per cent locals and only 20 per cent foreign delegates.

In addition to these three major events, IES also works with similar associations overseas, such as the Institution of Chemical Engineers in the UK, for joint events in Singapore, and organises smaller member gatherings and training programmes.

“With the number of events we do growing this quickly, I will need more hands on deck and hope to grow my team to cope with all the activities next year,” Poh said, adding that she is currently supported by two other staff.

Global musculoskeletal physiotherapists to head to Melbourne

MELBOURNE The world’s leading musculoskeletal physiotherapists have chosen Melbourne as the place to exchange knowledge, share research and celebrate innovation within the neuromusculoskeletal physiotherapy sector.

The 2020 Meeting of the International Federation of Orthopaedic Manipulative Physical Therapists (IFOMPT 2020) will take place in October 2020 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) secured the meeting which will generate A\$5.5 million (US\$4.2 million) for Victoria, and attract 1,300 delegates.

Annalie Basson, president of IFOMPT said both her colleagues and her were looking forward to the event.

“Australian physios are considered among the very best in the world, in terms of research, clinical practice and global leadership. IFOMPT will promote international excellence and unity in clinical and academic standards for musculoskeletal physiotherapists,” she added.

The win for Melbourne and Victoria appears to be a natural one, as physiotherapy is a highly regarded profession in the state, making it the ideal host city for the meeting, while Melbourne is home to the Australian Physiotherapy Association, Australia’s peak body for physiotherapists, according to Karen Bolinger, MCB’s CEO.

Commenting on the win, minister for tourism and major events, John Eren, said the IFOMPT 2020 would present another welcome boost to Victoria’s visitor economy as “staging the big international conferences provides valuable returns for all Victorians”.

IPSA takes its congress to Brisbane for the first time

BRISBANE International Political Science Association (IPSA) World Congress will head to Australia in July 2018 for the first time since its inception in 1950 in Zurich, Switzerland.

Brisbane has been selected to host the six-day event, which is expected to attract 3,000 political science scholars and bring about an economic value of more than A\$10 million (US\$7.6 million) to the city.

Professor Kath Gelber, deputy head, School of International Studies at the University of Queensland, and former president of the Australian Political Studies



Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

Association – the national host organisation for the 2018 Brisbane Congress – said the IPSA World Congress, which will be the 25th edition and a milestone for the

international association, will provide a global platform to showcase the world leading research currently being conducted by political science, governance, public policy and international relations scholars in Australia, including at the University of Queensland and Griffith University.

These two universities, along with the Australian National University and the University of Sydney, are foundation sponsors of the congress.

IPSA World Congress will be held at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre.

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OPENING
SEPTEMBER 13
2016
.....

Welcome to **THE PARISIAN MACAO**

Opening on September 13, 2016, The Parisian Macao will complete the stellar offering of meeting and exhibition facilities at Sands® Resorts Cotai Strip Macao (Sands Resorts). Inspired by the famed City of Light, the new integrated resort offers premium accommodation, sumptuous gastronomy, fantastic shopping and exciting entertainment. It's all-new and all-ready to take your business events to amazing new heights!

Let's meet at the Eiffel Tower! French flair and finesse comes to the fore at Macao's newest integrated resort The Parisian Macao. Plan an event here and let your delegates revel in the magnificent settings, superb facilities and chic French-themed offerings.

Part of Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao, The Parisian Macao completes the group's extraordinary offerings for international meetings and events. Backed by an experienced team of professionals who are no stranger to hosting international events, The Parisian Macao will be the new venue where planners can truly exercise their imagination and turn their ideas into a most memorable event for delegates.

Designed for meetings and events

Having 3,000 rooms and suites designed with contemporary French flair under one roof is an impressive benefit in itself but The Parisian Macao supports that with an equally remarkable 5,200 sqm of meeting space.

This includes a grand ballroom, five meeting rooms, two boardrooms and an outdoor event space. They are suitable for everything from an intimate dinner to a plenary session.

The Parisian Ballroom's 8-metre high ceiling offers event planners the creative opportunity to create an impactful set-up. The spacious and flexible ballroom can be reconfigured to accommodate groups of various sizes. It is capable of seating up to 2,600 people banquet-style.

The entire resort recalls the architectural grandeur of Paris. With more than 20 replicas of Parisian landmarks located throughout the resort, possibilities abound for teambuilding activities such as a French-themed treasure hunt. The Rotunda, which is the main lobby, is a replica of the Grand Stairway at The Opera National de Paris. At its centre is a fountain inspired by the famous Fontaines de la Concorde.

Other venues include the eye-catching half-scale Eiffel Tower — a new landmark in Cotai — and the grand 1,200-seat state-of-the-art The Parisian Theatre.



The Pool Deck and Aqua World is an impressive outdoor event space for up to 530 guests.



Place Vendôme at Shoppes at Parisian.

The pool deck and Aqua World — with its striking airship and water features — is a breath of fresh air for planners looking for something worth talking about. These spaces are supported by services such as catering and entertainment.

French-style entertainment, such as cabaret acts and mimes from the resort's resident "Streetmosphere" troupe, will give each event an unmistakable French flavour.

The convention and exhibition operations team at The Parisian Macao is very experienced and has the capabilities to manage groups of any size up to 12,000. It offers support and advice in everything from logistics to catering to decoration. The banqueting, entertainment and technical teams will ensure every event at every location throughout the resort is well managed from the beginning to the end.

Shopping paradise

It is always more than just business and work at The Parisian Macao. Delegates can enjoy a leisure experience unlike any other at Shoppes at Parisian, which replicates the streetscapes and atmosphere of five famous districts in Paris: Avenue des Champs-Élysées, Galerie Vivienne, Rue du Faubourg Saint Honoré, Avenue Montaigne and Place Vendôme.

Here, 150 boutiques offer shoppers a taste of the latest in everything from designer fashion to electronics. Providing entertainment to shoppers are live performances of some of Paris' most iconic cameos such as the legendary style of The Parisian Streetmosphere street artists.

Dining extravaganza

Event delegates are in for a treat. The Parisian Macao's banqueting team is able to design a customised menu to suit the occasion and preferences of any international group. From breakfast to tea breaks to a multi-course banquet, a planner can work out the details



With an 8-metre high ceiling, The Parisian Ballroom accommodates up to 2,600 guests.

with the local team to ensure every meal is a special experience for delegates.

Other than customised menus, choices abound at almost 20 restaurants, cafés and bars found throughout The Parisian Macao. Delegates may choose anything from fine dining to buffet to a quick bite. Whether it is French, Asian or Indian cuisine, a wide array of options is always available.

Explore the entire Sands Resorts

The Parisian Macao is part of Sands Resorts, the operator of seven international hotel brands in the area. They include The Venetian® Macao; Four Seasons Hotel Macao, Cotai Strip®; Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel, Cotai Central; Conrad® Macao, Cotai Central; Holiday Inn® Macao Cotai Central and The St Regis Macao, Cotai Central.

Sands Resorts itself boasts 850 duty-free shops and 125 restaurants, giving guests even more options in dining and leisure activities. A direct undercover walkway connects The Parisian Macao to Cotai Expo and The Venetian Macao.

Collectively, Sands Resorts offers 13,000 rooms in every price category and more than 150,000 sqm of meeting and exhibition space. All these hotels and their facilities are connected, giving delegates unrivalled convenience and planners so much less to worry about transportation, accommodation, dining and leisure activities. ■



The Rotunda —the resort's impressive main lobby — recalls the classical grandeur of the Opera National de Paris.



FAST FACTS

- Part of Sands Resorts, operator of seven hotel brands in Cotai.
- Meeting space: 5,200 sqm. This brings the total meeting and event space at Sands Resorts to more than 150,000 sqm
- The Parisian Ballroom (8-metre high, 3,400 sqm, 2,600 guests) is a combination of three Junior Ballrooms with more than 50 possible configurations
- Five meeting rooms for medium-sized meetings
- Two boardrooms for executive meetings
- Outdoor event spaces for lunches, dinners or receptions for up to 530 guests
- The Parisian Theatre (1,200 seats) for plenary sessions or entertainment
- Direct undercover walkway to Cotai Expo and meeting spaces at The Venetian® Macao

MEETING PACKAGES

For the latest promotions, visit: parisianmacao.com or call Tel: 853-2882 8800

The Parisian Macao

Estrada do Istmo, Lote 3, Cotai Strip, Macao SAR
T: 853-2882 8800
E: sales@sands.com.mo

BIG CITY



Asia-Pacific's top MICE cities are always evolving, with new and refreshed infrastructure to give events a new flavour and for delegates, a more fascinating experience. *TTGmice* finds out what have emerged in the past year

BANGKOK *by Michael Sanderson*

Thailand's capital city is poised to take advantage of growth in the MICE sector as recovery continues, with several new properties putting the focus firmly on business travellers and the events market.

Avani Riverside Bangkok is the first new hotel to open on the Chao Phraya river in several years, and features some of the city's largest meeting and event facilities. The Grand Ballroom alone spans 4,500m² and can accommodate up to 1,500 people. There are 11 other meeting and event spaces.

The global flagship for the Minor Group hotel brand, the Avani Riverside has been in a soft opening phase and is due to start full operation this month. It is also expected to exploit connections to the adjacent Anantara sister hotel and the Riverside mall.

A surprising recent entry to the MICE sector came from Mövenpick, whose presence in Thailand until now has been confined to beachside luxury resorts. Its five-star hotel on Sukhumvit Soi 15 features three conference/meeting spaces as well as facilities for business travellers.

Bill Barnett, managing director of hospi-

tal consultancy C9 Hotelworks, praised the work of the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau for helping to revive the MICE sector over the past 18 months.

"I think this year we've seen a defined return of the MICE segment and I think that's important," Barnett said.

He added that while the Tourism Authority of Thailand had "made the right noises", it was the TCEB campaign that was an example of "what government's doing right".

He believes that the government's partnership with the private sector is paying off.

Looking forward, Bangkok will soon see the result of BITEC Phase II, a doubling of the 20-year-old conference centre which will bring the total exhibition space to 70,000m², moves to renovate and update the Queen Sirikit National Convention Center after two decades of indecision, and upcoming hotels that should appeal to business travellers.

What's coming up?

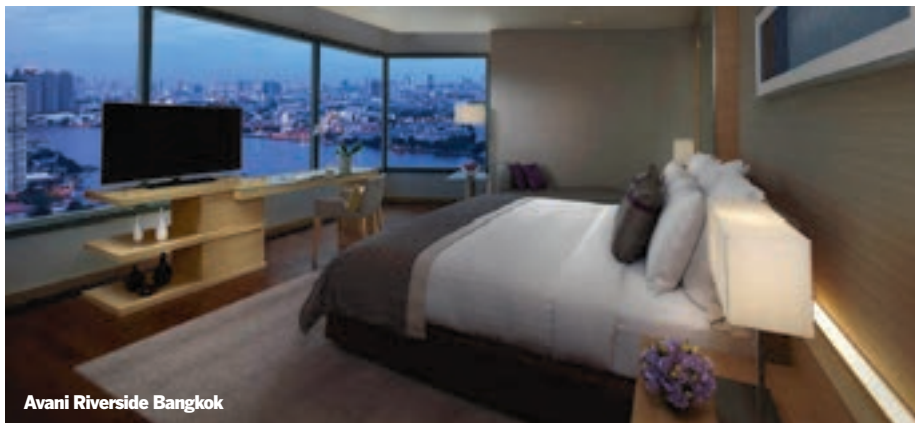
Park Hyatt Bangkok: October 2016

Mercure Bangkok Sukhumvit 11: December 2016

BITEC Phase II: 4Q2016

Waldorf Astoria Bangkok: 2017

Hyatt Regency Bangkok: 4Q2017



Avani Riverside Bangkok



BEIJING *by Prudence Lui and Caroline Boey*

Although Beijing has not seen much changes to its convention centre inventory since the opening of the China National Convention Center in 2009, it is quite the opposite with the hotel landscape.

The Chinese capital continues to see an expansion of its hotel inventory, with the opening of the 300-room InterContinental Sanlitun this year and the 438-room NUO Hotel in 2015.

InterContinental Sanlitun is the only large, international five-star hotel in Sanlitun, Beijing's most popular shopping and nightlife district that is also adjacent to embassy and CBD areas. The hotel is expected to fill a major gap in terms of what's available for MICE groups, according to Kaci McAllister, deputy general manager Destination Asia (China). The hotel has 1,500m² of meeting space.

The flagship of a Chinese luxury brand, NUO Hotel's concept is "modern Ming Dynasty" and everything from the priceless artwork to the architecture to the furniture reflects this, McAllister said, adding that feedback from clients has been outstanding.

Located near the 798 Art District in between the CBD and the airport, it is ideal for accessing the Wangjing business zone and Beijing's north-east embassy area.

The hotel offers 2,500m² of function space iseven F&B outlets.

And as new properties emerge, existing ones are keeping themselves up to date



with refurbishments. Peninsula Beijing, for instance, unveiled a new look in June 2016. It slashed its 525 rooms to just 230 spacious suites. China World Hotel, too, had presented refreshed rooms and meeting spaces in April.

Beijing has also welcomed new activities for corporate groups. Travel company Faces of China recently rolled out helicopter tours and yoga tours that run for one to three days.

What's coming up?

Mandarin Oriental Wangfujing, Beijing: 2017
Beijing Marriott Changping Theme Park: 2017
Bulgari Hotel Beijing: 2017



HONG KONG *by Prudence Lui*

The Hong Kong Sport Institute (HKSI) Redevelopment Phase 3 was launched in early 2015, and its facilities are expected to boost Hong Kong's appeal as a destination for corporate teambuilding programmes and sports events.

HKSI will house a 1,400-seat lecture theater, four fully-equipped meeting and activity rooms, restaurants and a 74-key

accommodation facility, as well as indoor and outdoor sports facilities built to international standards.

A Hong Kong Tourism Board spokesperson told *TTGmice* that several new venues will be launched in 2016 and 2017, and they will "enrich the city's venues portfolio and lure different kinds of conferences and meetings to Hong Kong".

Several hotels opening this year and the next will feature event spaces.

The 545-key Kerry Hotel, scheduled to open in December 2016, will offer the destination's largest event facility in a hotel. It will house a Grand Ballroom that can seat a 1,030-pax banquet and 17 flexible meeting rooms for 30 to 660 guests, plus indoor and outdoor event spaces.

Hong Kong Disneyland Resort's 750-room Disney Explorers Lodge, opening next year, will provide themed settings for memorable events. Rival attraction, Ocean Park, will also debut its first hotel – a Marriott brand, no less – come 2017.

There is a spate of hotel renovations too. New World Millennium Hong Kong Hotel



New World Millennium
Hong Kong Hotel



Hong Kong Sport
Institute's lecture theater

has unveiled refurbished rooms, event venues and other public spaces this summer, while Courtyard by Marriott Hong Kong Sha Tin has transformed 12 rooms on the 30th floor into a collection of meeting suites and the LEVELthirty Lounge & Bar.

What's coming up?

Hong Kong Ocean Park Marriott Hotel: 2017
iclub To Kwa Wan Hotel: 2017
Rosewood Hong Kong: 2017

JAKARTA *by Mimi Hudoyo*

Jakarta's transformation into a cosmopolitan city that will meet the growing demands of business events today is in progress.

Last year, Greater Jakarta welcomed the opening of the country's newest and largest convention and exhibition centre. The Indonesia Convention and Exhibition (ICE) in BSD City, a satellite city in Tangerang, houses a 50,000m² exhibition hall, a 50,000m² outdoor exhibition area, a 4,000m² convention hall and 33 meeting rooms. Hotels, a golf course and shopping malls are springing up around ICE, bringing more life to the industrial and manufactur-

ing hub that Tangerang currently is.

Meanwhile, luxury properties with sizable meeting and event venues have popped up last year in the city centre.

The 173-room Raffles Jakarta opened in 2015 with a 2,500m² ballroom, three meeting rooms with capacity for up to 80 people, a boardroom and a library.

The 350-room Fairmont Hotel also made its debut last year, adding event facilities for up to 500 people to the city's inventory.

Joining the high-end block this year are Four Seasons Jakarta and Westin Jakarta. Both come with extensive function spaces.

Increased competition among hotels for

business events has driven existing properties to spruce up their hardware.

The 994-key Hotel Mulia Senayan recently revamped its event venues on the fifth floor, two medium size function rooms in the Business Centre and the Gerbera Room on the mezzanine floor.

Grand Hyatt Jakarta last year launched The Residence ONFIVE. Located on level five and overlooking a lagoon-shaped swimming pool and Balinese gardens, The Residence ONFIVE is a residential-style facility that features four meeting rooms with natural daylight, a communal area with a show kitchen where coffee breaks and meals are freshly prepared, a living room, two multipurpose cabanas, a patio and three terraces with panoramic views of Jakarta, especially at sunset.

Event planners desiring a non-hotel venue can consider the new Teras Dharmawangsa Restaurant by Plataran. The four-storey, trendy restaurant in the up-market Darmawangsa Square City Walk, South Jakarta boasts a different concept for each floor and serves Indonesian and Asian cuisine. The top floor is available for private event hire and can accommodate 30 to 40 guests.

What's coming up?

Aloft Jakarta Kebon Jeruk: 2017



Westin Jakarta

KUALA LUMPUR *by S Puvaneswary*

New event venues and accommodation have come into operations in Kuala Lumpur.

UOA Hospitality had in May expanded its Connexion Conference and Event Centre (CCEC) at Bangsar South City, adding 4,645m² of event space to its existing collection. New to the venue include two new ballrooms, 11 function rooms and a banquet hall. With these, CCEC now offers 18,580m² of event space.

Anita Khoo, UOA Hospitality's head of hospitality, said the bigger CCEC has allowed the company to expand its clientele to include regional business from Asia-Pacific and international congresses for up to 2,000 delegates.

CCEC recently hosted the Hubei Administration of Press from China with 24 exhibitors and 24th Congress of The Obstetrical & Gynaecological Society of Malaysia meeting in June.

Accommodation support for events held at CCEC comes in the form of VE Hotel & Residence, a four-star property that soft opened in May with 126 rooms. When fully opened in 4Q2016, it will offer 337 rooms and 90 fully-furnished serviced residences.

Elsewhere in the city, The St Regis Kuala Lumpur made waves in the local tourism sector when it opened in May as the latest luxury property in Kuala Lumpur. It also stands out for having the largest standard guestrooms in the city at 63m² and a grand ballroom that offers a 270-degree immersive multi-sensory LED digital canvas wall which is made up of 47 LED screen panels.

Ally Bhoonee, executive director of World Avenues, said: "This new luxury brand has improved the image of the city and makes it easier to promote Kuala Lumpur as an upmarket destination to high-end Middle Eastern travellers."

Faced with new competition, 19-year-old The Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Kuala Lumpur underwent its first major makeover and relaunched in April with brighter, fresher and a modern look and feel through



The Ritz-Carlton Hotel



Connexion Conference and Event Centre

plush fabrics, clever lighting, luxurious marble and stylish accessories.

The hotel's director of sales and marketing, Yannick Mauchle, said the renovations are to "keep up with the times and to make the property memorable to guests with a Wow effect".

What remains is The Ritz-Carlton Hotel's signature butler service which is available to all guests, regardless of their room type.

Another new hotel with MICE capability is the Pullman Kuala Lumpur City Centre Hotel and Residences, which opened in August 2015. Suitable for meetings, the hotel has a large, pillarless ballroom for 800 people in a theatre setting, and nine function rooms with natural lighting. Residential meetings can be supported by the hotel's 445 rooms and 157 fully furnished apartments.

What's coming up?

Setia City Convention Centre expansion: November 2016

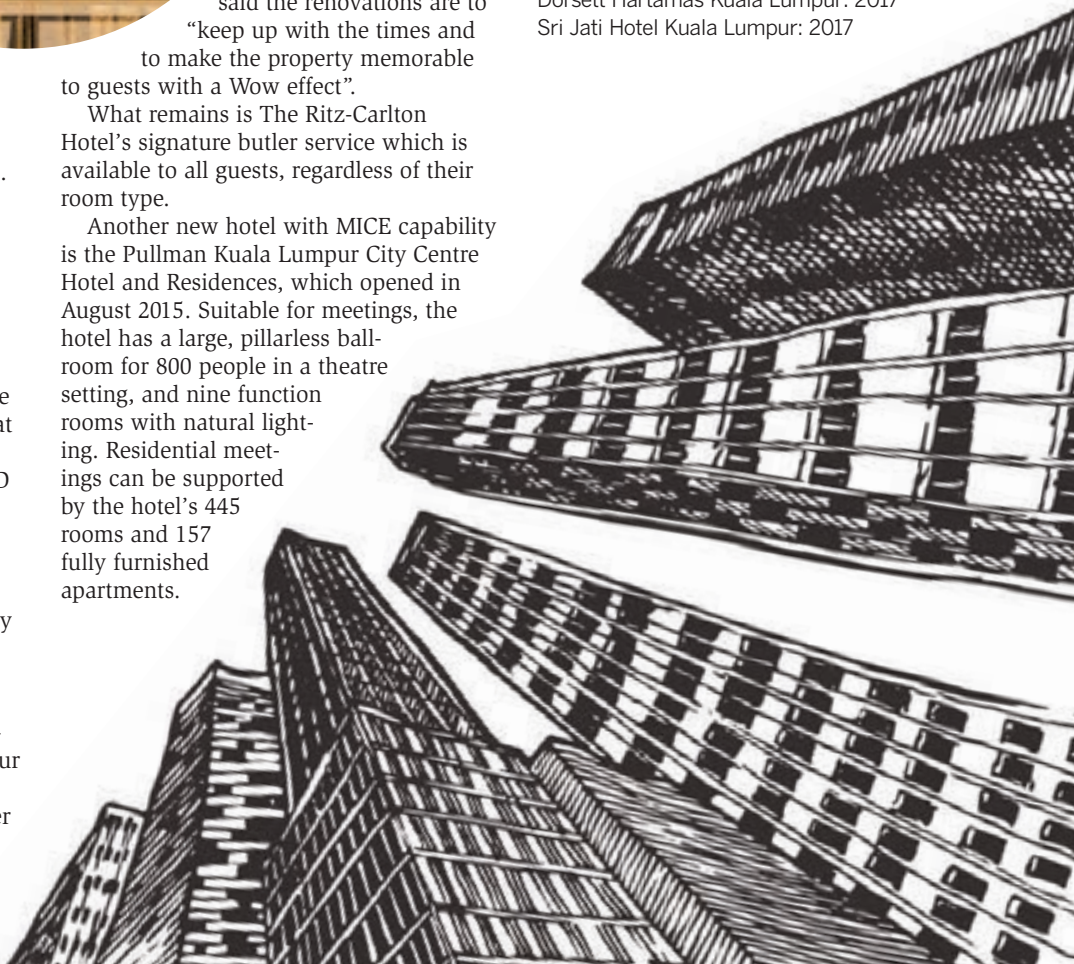
W Hotel Kuala Lumpur: 1Q2017

Pavilion Banyan Tree Signatures Kuala Lumpur: 1Q2017

Royale Pavilion Hotel Kuala Lumpur: 2017

Dorsett Hartamas Kuala Lumpur: 2017

Sri Jati Hotel Kuala Lumpur: 2017





MANILA *by Rosa Ocampo*

Manila is fast-catching up with its South-east Asian neighbours in ramping up its MICE infrastructure. The past two years have seen the rise of some of the most modern and luxurious hardware in the city's skyline.

The indomitable star is the Marriott Grand Ballroom (MGB) at Resorts World Manila which raises the bar for luxury, quality and technology in local convention centres. The metro's fourth convention centre, MGB was launched in 2015 with a maximum capacity of over 5,000 pax; Sky Fold technology for seamlessly

dividing spaces; light-sound-technical effects that can change into hundreds of hues. It also its own restaurants, not catered like the rest of convention centres in Manila.

Entering the marketplace last year too was City of Dreams Manila. The integrated resort boasts three hotels – Crown Towers, Hyatt and Nobu – and a collection of event venues including the Grand Ballroom for up to 800 pax and two world-class night-clubs, Pangaea and Chaos.

One-year-old Makati Diamond Residences provides 418 full serviced apartments and event venues for up to 400 pax in its function rooms, boardrooms and banquet areas.

Shangri-La at The Fort opened its gilded doors early this year, providing 576 keys with a minimum size of 45m², 97 residences, Grand Ballroom for up to 1,200 pax, junior ballroom for up to 715 pax, and 19 flexible multifunction rooms.

Also making its debut early this year is Araneta Novotel in Quezon City, boasting 401 keys and several event venues: grand ballroom for up to

1,100 pax, seven meeting spaces, outdoor events garden, Premiere Lounge, and executive sky lounge with a full view of the metropolis.

A unique venue on offer in Manila is KidZania, an 8,000m² indoor play city for kids which turned a year-old this year. When the attraction shuts its doors to the young ones after regular hours, it is transformed into a fun venue for product launches, teambuilding games, special corporate parties, and more.

Another fun attraction that is available for corporate hire is DreamPlay by DreamWorks, an interactive educational theme park in City of Dreams Manila. It has a dedicated schedule for MICE delegates and can accommodate a maximum of 1,200 pax. It is perfect for teambuilding programmes, meetings, workshops, focus groups and product launches.

What's coming up?

Marriott Manila's expansion: September 2016

Okada Manila: 4Q2016

Conrad Manila's full opening: 4Q2016

Grand Hyatt Manila: 1Q2017

Marriott Grand Ballroom



DreamPlay by DreamWorks



MELBOURNE *by Rebecca Elliott*

The Glasshouse



According to Melbourne Convention Bureau's CEO, Karen Bolinger, Melbourne has led the way in infrastructure development in Australia as far as business events is concerned and will continue to do so.

Some may say that's a bold statement, given Sydney will be home to a

brand new convention centre in a matter of months, but the statistics speak for themselves. Bolinger said that over 2016 and 2017, seven new hotels will open in Melbourne, increasing room capacity in the city by seven per cent.

One such hotel that opened earlier in the year is the 89-room Peppers Dock-

lands, the first five-star hotel in the Docklands. While it doesn't have any meeting facilities of its own, it is adjacent to the multipurpose venue Etihad Stadium and within walking distance of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, which recently commenced its 20,000m² expansion, due for completion in 2018.

In terms of events spaces, Melbourne's sporting precinct continues to expand with the opening of The Glasshouse last October. Overlooking Olympic Park and operated by The Big Group, the venue features floor-to-ceiling windows as its name suggests, capacity for 1,000 guests cocktail-style and 500 seated, and a 150-seat auditorium.

And new to the city's retail scene is St. Collins Lane, an upscale shopping destination with luxury international brands filing in to take up residency by the day.

What's coming up?

Hyatt Place Melbourne: early 2017

Four Points by Sheraton Melbourne Docklands: March 2017

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre expansion: early 2018

OSAKA *by Julian Ryall*

Event space that is open, airy and yet still in the heart of Japan's second busiest city is at a premium, so the Osaka Convention and Tourism Bureau was delighted when the Garden Oriental Osaka decided to reopen as a venue.

Originally opened in 1959 as an official residence for prime ministers and other high-ranking visitors to Osaka, Garden Oriental Osaka sits amid parkland that is awash with cherry blossoms in spring and overlooks one of the city's waterways and the National Mint on one side and Osaka Castle on the other.

The Western-style structure designed by Kenzo Takekoshi is listed as a historic building, as are the surrounding 13,000m² of Japanese gardens. As an added touch, a traditional tea house stands alongside one of the nearby ponds.

The entire facility underwent major renovations and now boasts an expansive rooftop area that is accessible for events. Other venues here include a ballroom for 120 people in a theatre configuration, two event rooms and a garden pavilion, while the lawns are ideal for summer parties.

A more recent addition to the city's MICE options is the Geihinkan, the Osaka Government Guest House which was originally built to host delegates attending the APEC Forum in 1995, on the grounds of Osaka Castle.

Since end-April 2016, Geihinkan has been made available to special receptions and parties. Its Nishi-no-Maru Teien Garden is renown. As the most impressive area of the castle, it houses more than 600 cherry trees, no fewer than 1,270 of the early-blooming plum trees, a tea house and a private tea plantation.

Even though the building is new, the copper-sheeted roof, antique supporting pillars and extensive use of traditional lacquer give it the appearance of being hundreds of years old.

Convention and meetings at the facility are organised by Kyoto-based Value Management Co., which operates a number of unique venues across Japan.

Garden Oriental Osaka



What's coming up?

Conrad Osaka: Summer 2017

Hotel Keihan Yodobashi: Summer 2017

Candeco Hotel: June 2017

SEOUL *by Karen Yue*

Seoul's tourism infrastructure development has been lively in the past year. Already a growing darling destination in Asia for leisure travel and business events, the South Korean capital is set to charm event planners further with new hotels, attractions with venue hire opportunities, and shopping centres that have emerged in 2015 and so far this year.

Three business traveller-centric hotels have opened in Seoul. They are Lotte City Hotel Myeongdong, a premium property with 430 keys, a meeting room for up to 12 people, an all-day buffet restaurant and other facilities; Shilla Stay Gwanghwamun, a stylish hotel with 339 luxuriously appointed guestrooms, four function rooms for up to 80 people and a buffet-style eatery, among others; and Courtyard By Marriott Seoul Namdaemun, which offers modern guestrooms with views of either the city skyline or Seoul Tower, seven meeting spaces, two dining outlets and other facilities.

New design focused hotels have also emerged in the marketplace, such as L7 Myeongdong which spots Korean design

touches throughout the property as well as chic venues for gatherings such as a rooftop bar and a lounge/bar on the third floor.

Also new to Seoul is Hotel Cappuccino, a minimalist-chic 141-key property with three function rooms for eight to 30 people in a classroom configuration, a 100-pax rooftop terrace with views of Gangnam's cityscape, and work stations in the lobby, among other facilities.

Meanwhile, much attention in recent times has been paid to Lotte World Tower, said to be one of the tallest skyscraper in the world, standing 555m high with 123 floors. Opening progressively, Lotte World Tower's tenants that are in operations today include a movie theater, aquarium, restaurants and Hard Rock Café Seoul which welcomes private event hires for up to 350 people seated or 550 people standing. When it is fully com-



Hotel Cappuccino



Hard Rock Café Seoul

pleted by end of this year, Lotte World Tower will also house a hotel, private office space, an observation deck, concert hall and more.

Seoul's shopping attractions have also been expanded with SM Duty Free in Insadong (opened February 2016), HDC Shilla Duty Free in Hyundai I'Park Mall, Yongsan (March 2016) and Galleria Duty Free 63 in Yeongdeungpo (July 2016).

What's coming up?

Seoul Station 7017 Project: 2017



SHANGHAI

by Caroline Boeey

Both large and intimate meeting spaces have opened in Shanghai and more are on the way, giving event planners fresh options in the Chinese gateway city.

Opened on June 16 to long lines of visitors, Shanghai Disney Resort is also gaining favour among event planners. Local DMC Bespoke Shanghai reports that clients which have used the Shanghai Disneyland Hotel gave it high marks for living up to expectations and for being efficient. The resort's state-of-the-art conference centre houses the Cinderella Ballroom, Rose Garden, Dreams Meeting Room and Crown Room hospitality suite.

Shanghai Tower, another new city icon, is opening in phases this year from April. Bespoke Shanghai has started looking at using its 119th floor observation deck for corporate dinners and events, capitalising on its floor-to-ceiling windows and 360° views of the Lujiazui CBD in Pudong.

Michael Assef, director, corporate meetings & events, Destination Asia (China), added the 128-storey and 632m high Shanghai Tower, is not only the new symbol of modern Shanghai but is the hottest venue in Asia to hold an event with a panoramic view over the Shanghai megalopolis.

Currently open to VIPs with special access, Shanghai Tower offers the most breathtaking views and some of the best facilities in Shanghai. The Shanghai Tower Grand Ballroom has over 2,000m² of pillar-free space and high-tech meeting facilities including a 100m² built-in LED screen. The 1,200m² Shanghai Tower Garden Ballroom is semi-arc shaped with a 33m² LED screen and a terrace garden.

Yet another high-end hotel that has come online in Shanghai is Wanda Reign on the Bund, which promises high-tech amenities, a diversity of fine dining options, and spectacular views of the Bund, Huangpu River and Pudong skyline. Opened in June, the hotel offers 193 guestrooms including 14 suites and 1,100m² of meeting venues. An exclusive meeting director offers 24-hour service to ensure events run flawlessly.

Jin Jiang International Hotel's Shanghai Tower J-Hotel, touted as the world's highest luxury hotel in the world, is likely to open in 2H2016.

For event planners seeking a non-hotel venue, Lost Heaven Silk Road will satisfy. Part of the group that created Lost Heaven and Coconut

Paradise, this restaurant occupies a one-time electronics factory at 758 Julu Lu and draws its interior décor inspiration from the cave paintings and temples of Dunhuang, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It spans two floors and can seat 330 people. Silk Road cuisine, a blend of styles from western China, central Asia, India and the Middle East, take centre stage here.

What's coming up?

W Shanghai-The Bund: January 2017

Bulgari Shanghai: 2017



SINGAPORE

by Paige Lee Pei Qi

Beyond the traditional convention facilities, Singapore has been brandishing compelling new facilities to transport meetings into an unorthodox setting.

The latest such unique venue is the Secret Life of Trees, a new event area carved out in Gardens by the Bay. Launched in July, the Secret Life of Trees boasts unrivalled views of the Supertree Grove and is ideal for private events with up to 120 pax

in a standing cocktail setting.

Barely a year old, The South Beach hotel has drawn plenty of interest among event planners with its extravagant ballroom. The space has a high ceiling which is adorned with a Forest of Lights – a 11,520-light installation – which brings about a dreamy ambience. It seats 370 guests banquet-style, and another 50 on the mezzanine level which overlooks the entire ballroom below.

In June, however, the visual stunner – a

creation of Philippe Starck – announced its rebranding to JW Marriott Hotel Singapore South Beach. The 634-room hotel will undergo a refurbishment to make it a fit with the JW Marriott brand.

While these are happening, traditional meeting facilities are taking steps to keep up with Singapore's changing MICE landscape.

Suntec Singapore Convention and Exhibition Centre, for instance, unveiled new projection equipment and technology in June. The Panorama105, one of the two products that form the new ImmersiveAV Suite, is a wide-format projection screen spanning up to 105m by 5m and powered by high-end 20,000 lumen projectors.

Completing the suite, The Float3D uses holographic projection technology to present still images with a depth of field. Suspended at 4.5m above ground, the display could become the illuminated centrepiece in an event.

What's coming up?

The Sofitel Singapore City Centre: 2H2016

InterContinental Robertson Quay: 2H2016

The Patina, Capitol Singapore: 2Q2016



SYDNEY *by Rebecca Elliott*

While much of the attention has been focused on the highly anticipated opening of the International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney this coming December, there has been a number of significant openings in the Harbour city in recent times.

Four Points by Sheraton Sydney,

Darling Harbour unveiled 3,700m² of conference space in June, comprising of 21 meeting and breakout rooms, two pillar-less ballrooms with capacity for 1,800 pax, theatre-style and an open air rooftop bar for outdoor events. Later this year, the hotel will welcome its first guests to its new 25-storey tower with 222 keys, taking

the hotel's total room inventory to 892.

Further change is in store for the hotel too; come November 30 it will be rebranded to Hyatt Regency Sydney.

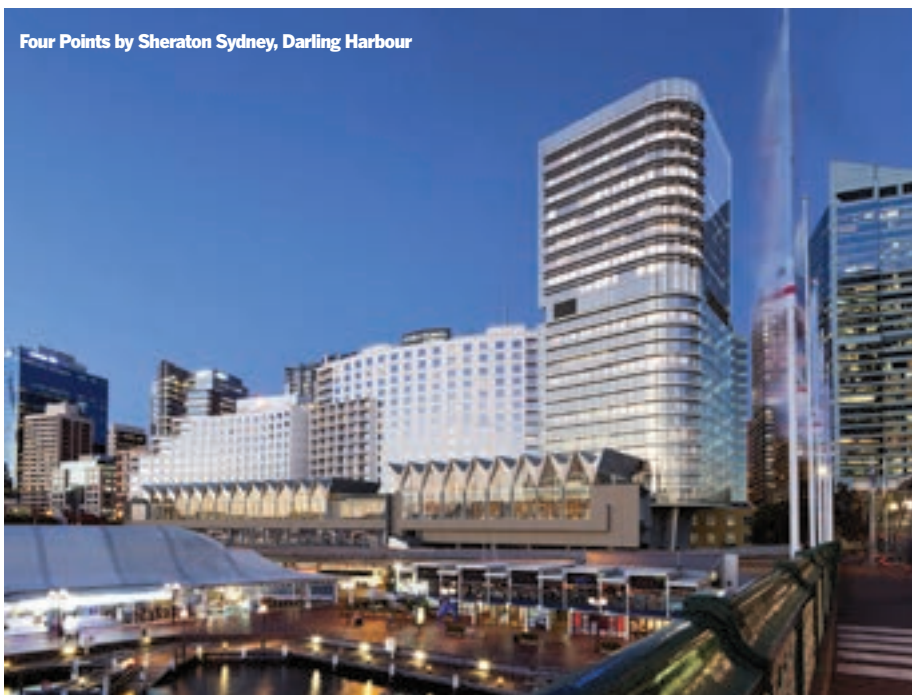
AccorHotels added Australia's 14th Pullman property to its portfolio in June with the opening of Pullman Sydney Airport. The 229-room hotel features an Executive Club Lounge and conference space for up to 280 delegates.

Barangaroo, located on the north-western tip of the city centre, continues its AU\$6 billion-plus (US\$4.5 billion) transformation, and as of September 2015, is home to an expansive event space that has quite literally been carved into the ground. With capacity for 5,000 guests, the venue is as long as the Sydney Cricket Ground and is set against the backdrop of an imposing sandstone wall, a nod to the area's maritime history.

Once home to the Sydney Water Board headquarters, the five-star Primus Hotel Sydney opened its doors in December 2015. Self-proclaimed as one of Sydney's "finest examples of art deco glamour", the hotel features 172 rooms and suites, meeting space for up to 290 delegates and a New York-style rooftop event space for 100 people.

What's coming up?

Sofitel Sydney Darling Harbour: November 2017



Four Points by Sheraton Sydney, Darling Harbour

TAIPEI *by Prudence Lui*

Taipei has seen a wave of new international hotel openings between 2015 and 2016, both in the high-end and mid-tier categories.

In December last year, Courtyard Taipei and Aloft Taipei Zhongshan welcomed their first guests. Both hotels are equipped with event spaces; Courtyard Taipei has five meeting rooms while Aloft Taipei Zhongshan has one.

But it was the Taipei Marriott Hotel opening last year that hogged local industry headlines, as it is home to the city's largest pillar-less ballroom. The 3,000m² venue can host a 2,000-pax banquet.

Meanwhile, two convention centres in Taipei have invested in upgrading works.

Taipei International Convention Centre renovated its North Lounge and South Lounge, and released an upgraded app in April that boasts new, useful functions such as a 3D virtual tour and a seat searcher for the plenary hall.

TWTC Nangang's expansion is pro-

gressing towards a completion in 2018.

The venue is already more accessible now, thanks to the new Nangang Station which opened in July. Sitting on the Taiwan High Speed Rail line, event delegates can now get to TWTC Nangang directly from Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport.

What's coming up?

TWTC Nangang's expansion: 2018



Aloft Taipei Zhongshan



Taipei Marriott Hotel

A rose garden for MICE

Everything's coming up roses for Philippine MICE, with high profile event wins in the bag, stronger tourism push by a new tourism chief and an ISO-certified TPB. **Rosa Ocampo** reports

Major changes looming on the Philippine business events tourism horizon bode well for this small but fast-growing sector.

Foremost is the need to “reinvent” the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) – the Tourism Department’s marketing arm – as local governments bond with the private sector in taking the initiative to create the equivalent of their own convention bureaus and promote their own business events campaigns instead of relying on TPB.

This trend in northern Luzon, Cebu, Davao and other parts of the country will help spread business events out of Manila to other local destinations, according to TPB COO Domingo Ramon Enerio III.

As well, it will enable TPB to engage more in international activities without precluding the need to reach out to Philippine destinations requiring its guidance.

“Now is the golden opportunity for the destinations to be responsible for their own marketing. This is a welcome thing. We can create more noise with more players,” Enerio told *TTGmice*.

“MICE has become a byword for the industry,” he added.

Charting the state of Philippine MICE, Enerio shared that 2015 targets were achieved with about 200 MICE-assisted events held in the country. This year’s target is to increase that by 10 per cent.

While the Philippines still doesn’t get big events of 5,000 pax or more, it is however getting its fair share of smaller events with 500 to 3,000 pax.

“And we have been able to organize a few ourselves,” said Enerio, pointing to the Asia Premium Travel Mart which is now on its second year as well as other travel trade shows for both consumers and businesses.

Katrina Cruz, American Express Transnational’s team leader for meetings and events, agreed that Philippine MICE is growing as the country



Tappasan Phurisanmit/Shutterstock



soft_light/Shutterstock



View Apart/Shutterstock

gains marketing traction abroad. Cruz is also satisfied with the direction the TPB is taking.

Another change concerns the country’s MICE campaign – *Fun Works* – which is aligned with the *It’s More Fun in the Philippines* overall tourism campaign.

While *Fun Works* highlights the Philippines as being easier for work and ideal for fun and productive

meetings, Enerio said it requires more explanation as it is sometimes misinterpreted as the name of a theme park, like DreamWorks.

There are also comments that a MICE campaign should be serious, since it deals with businesses.

However, the trade is generally supportive of reviewing the effectiveness of *Fun Works*. One of them, Khristinne Araneta, market-

Clockwise from above: Malate Church, Manila; snorkelling in Cebu; colourful jeepneys

Destination: Philippines

ing manager of Cebu-based Green Earth Tours and Travel, said that even with the criticisms, MICE prospects are bullish as there are now more hotels and events venues not only in Manila but in up and coming destinations such as Cebu and Davao.

Indeed, one of the thrusts of new tourism secretary, Wanda Tulfo Teo, is to develop new tourist destinations and activities. Teo is also conferring with other government



“Now is the golden opportunity for the destinations to be responsible for their own marketing. This is a welcome thing. We can create more noise with more players.”

Domingo Ramon Enerio III
COO, Tourism Promotions Board

agencies to build and improve infrastructures including airports, roads and rail networks linking destinations all over the Philippines.

Another positive change is ICCA's approval of the Philippines' appeal to consolidate metro Manila as one geographical location instead of separating Manila from nearby cities like Pasay and Parangue.

A bigger geographical coverage for Manila enables the Philippines and the metro to improve their standing in ICCA's country and city rankings.

Enerio sees 2016 as a good year for MICE due to a number of event wins by local organisations and associations. Also this year, Manila hosted the ASEAN Tourism Forum, Madrid Fusion for the second time, and the World Street Food Congress for the first time.

And the country isn't just attracting solemn business events. The Cobra Energy Drink Ironman triathlon which Cebu has been hosting the past three years, is now an Asia Pacific Championship. Close to 3,000 athletes from 43 countries – the biggest triathlon event in the Philippines – came to race in August this year.

A bonus this year for the local MICE trade, Enerio said, is that TPB has become ISO certified after passing the auditing stages conducted by Certification International Philippines Inc, an affiliate of Swindon-based Certification International UK, covering the design, development and provision of Philippine tourism marketing and promotion services.

{ Developments to watch }

1 There may be winds of change in the Philippine MICE sector, and the trade is waiting to see what plans new tourism secretary, Wanda Tulfo Teo, has for growing this industry. They want to know whether Teo, a seasoned travel agent, will maintain the status quo or implement new policies and direction.

2 The delicate political relationship between China and the Philippines, made even more tenuous by the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague rejecting China's claims over the disputed islands in the South China Sea, has a bearing on MICE from China. As of press time, several chartered flights from China to Kalibo (Boracay) and Cebu – an indispensable lifeline for bringing in Chinese incentive groups – were cancelled, something that happened repeatedly in the past few years each time there is a geographical tussle between the two governments.

3 The private sector is reducing its dependence on the Tourism Promotions Board and becoming more proactive in bidding for international events. It is even spending its own resources to mount its own events like the Asia Premium Travel Mart as well as inbound, travel consumer and B2B travel shows.

{ Talking numbers }

13

The position the Philippines take in ICCA's latest Asia-Pacific and Middle East country ranking for 2015, having hosted 57 association meetings

2,200

The number of participants at the ASEAN Tourism Forum hosted by Manila in January, one of the country's major events this year

106.61 billion pesos

The amount, equivalent to US\$2.3 billion, that the Philippines made in tourist receipts from January to May 2016, up 13.5 per cent from the same period in 2015



{ **Review central** }

The Henry Manila

By Rosa Ocampo

The Henry Manila isn't your typical cookie-cutter hotel, and therein lies its charm. It occupies several stately post-World War II houses in a spacious tree-lined compound in the heart of Manila which have been repurposed into a comfortable accommodation that evokes nostalgia and old world charm.

Rooms While all 34 spacious suites sport modern vintage design, each has a unique interior. Community sustainability considerations were taken in decorating and furnishing the rooms – non-profit, urban poor, women's groups and the like provide many of the furnishings, linens, curtains, rugs, napkin dispenser and trash can (made from recycled paper) and toiletries. Coffee and snacks supplied are made in the Philippines.

MICE facilities The entire hotel can be reserved for a group of up to 100 people. Old world, Spanish era or Old Manila theme come naturally with the ambience. The huge garden can be



spruced up for al fresco events such as a themed dinner with music, theater and other forms of entertainment. The gated compound offers privacy and exclusivity.

Planners can also choose to use The Library meeting room.

Other facilities There is a small restaurant in the hotel that can provide catering for group events and small garden pool. Wi-Fi connection is available in all rooms, and a shuttle service is provided

to nearby malls.

Hotel guests can browse and shop in the showroom of furniture and interior designer Eric Paras, the atelier of couturier Jojie Lloren, and Albert Avellana's art gallery, which are all in the building.

Room count 34 suites

Star rating 4

Contact reservations.manila@thehenryhotel.com

Flame Restaurant

By Rosa Ocampo



Opened in June, Discovery Primea Hotel and Residences' Flame Restaurant is fast creating a name for good food and ambience, thanks to the tandem of David Pardo de Ayala, the hotel's general manager who is also an award-winning chef and executive chef Luis Chikiamco who was trained and had worked in France.

Concept Flame offers unforgettable dining experiences by serving modern European food with Asian flavours.

Located on the 16th floor of the hotel and enclosed in glass, the restaurant offers a sweeping view of Makati skyline and is therefore best experienced at night.

A marble-top open kitchen surrounds the restaurant and there's an area called The Hub, akin to a bar for those who enjoy meeting and conversing with other diners.

Being a foie gras fanatic, I find the pan-seared delicacy creamy and up to my standards. After all, it came from the French Rougie duck, one of the best in the world.

The appetizer *quezo de bola* and *hamon* (edam cheese and ham) – traditional Christmas fares on Filipino tables – was served with great panache and with twists such as cheese foam and asparagus. It's comforting and surprising, transporting me back to Christmas at home.

MICE application Flame can be hired entirely for events with up to 80 pax, and offers two private rooms that can each can seat 20 guests.

Event planners may order off the menu or work with the chef to design one that reflects both Flame's cuisine and guest preferences. Rates vary depending on the day of the week; lunch or dinner; duration of event.

Service The staff are well-trained, attentive but not cloying. Service is fast and efficient.

Operation hours Monday-Sunday; 11.30-14.30 / 18.00-22.00

Contact dp.rsvn@discovery.com.ph



THE MICE MAGNET IN MACAO

Macao's acumen of diversification into non-gaming industries is drawing more and more events from the meetings, conventions and exhibitions sector, contributing as well to the city's overall economic development. The Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) helps the sector and is determined to facilitate its continuous development.

IPIM – SOURCE OF MICE SUPPORT

As Macao's key agency for meetings, conventions and exhibitions, IPIM is tasked to enhance the sector's professionalism and expertise, develop the city's MICE brand, and carry out a strong worldwide

promotional plan for pushing Macao as the ideal destination for MICE.

For instance, IPIM is in charge of a series of enhanced subvention programmes that is more accommodating of the sector's needs, including ***The Convention & Exhibition Stimulation Programme and the International Meeting and Trade Fair Support Programme***.

IPIM also organises Macao's presence at international MICE tradeshows, and assists local entities bidding for international events to Macao, such as providing them membership fee support for joining their affiliated regional or international association.

Without doubt, the city's ever-expanding range of product offerings and capacity for hosting large-scale events play a key role, and will continue to bear significance under the leadership of IPIM.



Bungee Jump at the Macao Tower



Sheraton Macao Grand Ballroom



Ballroom of The St. Regis Macao, Cotai Central

MACAO HELPS IEEE 802 RECORD PHENOMENAL ATTENDANCE

Evident of the effectiveness of IPIM's One-Stop Service for MICE Bidding and Support in Macao, as well as the relentless development of Macao's meetings, conventions and exhibitions sector, is the successful organisation and record-breaking participation rate of the IEEE 802 Plenary Session in Macao from 13 to 18 March 2016. This ICCA-recognised high technology conference of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers is held three times a year in different cities. Macao's appeal helped this event gather a phenomenal 700 industry professionals from around the world to share insights on wireless network technology and other technological innovations.

Mr Jon Rosdahl, Executive Secretary of the Organising Committee of IEEE 802 Plenary Session, said that the committee decided to bring the event back to Asia – Singapore was the only Asian country the event was held in before Macao – because of the rapid development of the wireless network technology as well as the increasing number of members in Asia. The committee decided Macao was the obvious choice given the city's world-class MICE facilities, with meetings, dining and shopping all under one roof and convenient transportation keeping costs at a reasonable level. He added that Macao also enticed as a leisure and tourism centre, with its rich east-meets-west cultural background.

Ms Dawn Slykhouse, President of the meeting planner Face to Face Events Inc, agreed as well that the city's convention and exhibition facilities concentrated in one area had helped the event save a considerable amount of travelling time and costs, thereby giving Macao an advantage over neighbouring cities. She added that the local residents' warm and generous hospitality too created a memorable experience for all the attendees.

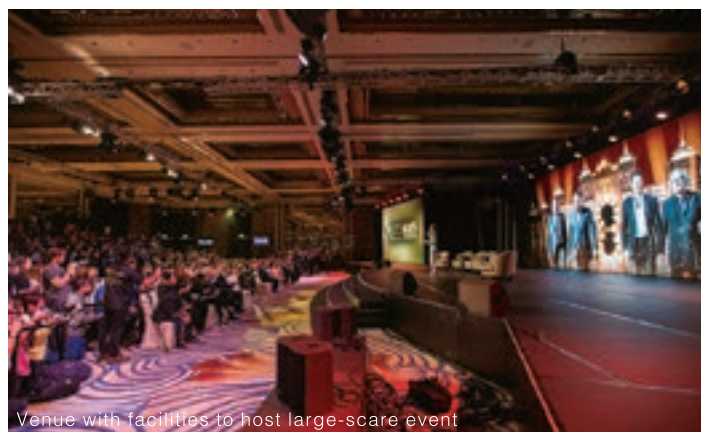
Furthermore, Mr Bruno Simões, Managing Director of local company DOC DMC Macau that assisted in the organisation of the IEEE 802 Plenary Session, said that he believes the city is well equipped with modern facilities to hold conventions and exhibitions. He suggested that the SAR Government open some of the city's World Heritage sites as venues to accommodate different events so as to incorporate Macao's historical characteristics into the events. He believes doing that, along with streamlined and flexible application procedures, will in turn contribute to the local community, enabling it to reap the benefits of a thriving convention and exhibition industry.



Organising Committee of the IEEE 802 Plenary Session Executive Secretary Jon Rosdahl

PEARL RIVER DELTA DEVELOPMENTS PAINT POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Both Mr Rosdahl and Ms Slykhouse agreed that while IPIM's One-Stop Service does effectively help organisers and planners better prepare for their events, provide useful MICE information and allow events to be run seamlessly. For future development, Macao's accessibility nevertheless needs to be improved with more direct international flights to the city. However, they are upbeat and opined that construction of the much-anticipated Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge would enhance accessibility and create new business opportunities for the MICE industry.



Venue with facilities to host large-scale event



Face to Face Events Inc President Dawn Slykhouse, IEEE 802's meeting planner.

MORE EVENTS TO LOOK FORWARD TO

IPIM's strong support to local entities bidding for international events to Macao, together with the subvention programmes that grant subsidies for a wide range of event expenses, has helped the city welcome countless events of all sizes.

After a busy first half year of 2016, the table below shows the events lined up for the second half and up to 2018 (correct as at press time).

EVENT	NO. OF PAX	YEAR
Asia Pacific Conference on Giftedness 2016	600	Jul 2016
11 th Worldwide Chinese Life Insurance Congress 2016 & International Dragon Awards	6,000	Aug 2016
NU Skin Star Academy Meeting	7,000	Sep 2016
28 th East Asian Insurance Congress	2,500	Oct 2016
SIGGRAPH Asia	7,000	Dec 2016
Jeunesse Global Greater China Conference	10,000	Dec 2016
China Expo Forum for International Cooperation	600	2017
39 th Asia Pacific Dental Congress	3,000	2017
International Cartilage Repair Society World Congress	800	2018

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Contact: (853) 8798 9292

Website: www.ipim.gov.mo



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MACAO TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROMOTION INSTITUTE

Fantasy turns reality

Macau may be challenged to meet demand for themed corporate events, but it is not looking about to fold, **Prudence Lui** writes



New hotels reflect an aspiration to transform Macau beyond being just a gaming destination; Studio City (pictured), boasts several event venues on top of offering themed gala events

With there being tight restrictions on the use of government-owned unique sites in the territory, hotels and venues in Macau are increasingly having to cater to demand for corporate themed events.

Studio City, for example, has developed a forte in such events. It offers various conceptual venues such as the Event Garden, French Garden, Golden Reel and Pacha Macau. Its signature Hollywood themed dinner has been popular, as well as its Great Gatsby gala dinner – which involves a roaring twenties band, dance performers and themed décor and photo booths.

The resort recently organised the *Hollywood Glamorous* dinner for 2,000 participants at the multipur-

pose Studio City Event Center.

Grand Hyatt Macau is another property that has created parties based on themes, including *Modern and Chic*, *Opulence Ball*, *Shanghai 1930s* and *Pool Party*.

“The Dai Pai Dong-themed coffee break we recently introduced allows our clients to have a taste of local comfort foods while having a meeting. (Instead of giving delegates) a traditional coffee break, we invite a tea master to brew traditional ‘silk stocking’ milk tea, which is then served with Macau handmade egg rolls or a variety of street foods,” general manager, Paul Kwok, said.

On the appeal of themed events today, Grand Hyatt noted that participants are interested in their storytelling aspect and dynamicity, and want

to broadcast these experiences via social media.

Kwok further pointed out that a key (motivation) of international MICE planners is to allow participants to explore local culture and experience something different from the normal setup. Companies almost always look for a theme for their welcome or farewell gala dinner to leave lasting memories for their participants, he continued.

Adding to that, MCI’s managing director for Macau, Peter Hassall, said: “The days of large themed events seemed to have disappeared for the moment, with clients opting for more of a small touch of décor with entertainment or to experience an off-site meal somewhere that reflects the destination in a restaurant



澳門 · 盛會之都

MACAO

MEGA Events City

Macao has come of age as Asia's leading destination for large scale meetings and events, infrastructure, catering for the smallest to the very largest of business events.

With over 180,000 m² of meeting space, 32,000 hotel rooms all within a compact 30 km² and convenient access to 2 international airports.

Macao is a most convenient choice for your next meeting or event no matter what the size.

Destination: Macau

if the group is not too large.”

A Studio City spokesman said: “Demand is positive, especially from international attendees. We are also seeing more requests from China and Hong Kong.”

However, hosting a themed event can be daunting for some clients, as there are difficulties in amassing resources such as venue, creative manpower, time and hefty investments, opined Kwok.

Fortunately, this is looking set to improve, with Hassall pointing out that the city’s events hardware is evolving in a good way.

“With properties (keen on) changing the perception of Macau as just a gambling destination, the design of new buildings and renovations of existing properties are providing more choices for groups.”

Specifically, he pointed out that The Parisian Macao will spark interest throughout Asia-Pacific and on its

own could see good business given the size and style of the property.

The Parisian Macao boasts a total area of 5,200m² of meeting space catering to various uses, including a teambuilding event for 20 participants or a gala dinner for up to 2,600 guests.

A spokesman from the resort told *TTGmice*: “MICE groups can also enjoy views from the observation decks at levels seven and 37 of The Parisian Macao’s half-size recreation of the Eiffel Tower. Every evening there will be a lighting ceremony when the tower lights (up).”

He added that for Paris-themed activities, the Parisian Streetmosphere offers live street performances that recreate some of the French capital’s most famous cultural and historical cameos. Performers range from high-kicking cancan dancers, to caricaturists and mimes to French cabaret singers.

Clockwise below:
Macau Peninsula’s
glittering structures;
traditional incense
coils burning in
A-Ma Temple;
artist’s impression
of The Parisian
Macao



{ Talking numbers }

21

Macau’s standing in the 2015 ICCA Asia-Pacific rankings, up 38 places from 2012, where it was in 59th place

108

The percentage growth in Macau’s exhibition space from 94,000m² to 197,000m² in the past five years

909

The number of conferences hosted in Macau in 2015, according to data from Macao’s Statistics and Census Service. Of this, 540 were corporate meetings, 173 were conferences or organisation/association meetings, 57 were major conference, and 78 were exhibitions

{ Developments to watch }

1

The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge is now under construction. When complete, it will shorten travel time for travellers. Those driving from Hong Kong to Macau, for example, would only take 30 minutes, making Macau a convenient add-on for business event programmes in Hong Kong.



2

The number of hotel rooms is expected to increase to 50,000 in the next few years, which will substantially boost Macau’s capacity for business events and provide more choices for event planners.

3

The four-storey north extension of the Macau International Airport passenger terminal building is slated to complete in 2Q2017. It will add 14,000m² of floor space and increase the designated passenger capacity from six million to around 7.5 to 7.8 million persons.

{ Review central }

Planet J By Prudence Lui

Planet J is the city's first theme park emphasising a live-action-role-play theme. Located at Sands Cotai Central, it offers an indoor venue filled with action and fun for groups of up to 2,000 people.

Concept Designed to feature eight zones and over 200 game installations, the 9,290m² park breaks free from traditional theme park concepts. Visitors embark on a live-action challenge as they take an electronic "Magic Scroll" connecting to all games. Based on levels of challenge, they are tasked with rescuing the magic kingdom using their intelligence and skills. To enhance the experience and stimulate the senses, sound effects, special lighting, and theatrical smoke and fog effects are deployed.

MICE application Event planners may leverage this unique venue to organise teambuilding challenges and private parties. For instance, team challenges

are set with team tasks based on over 100 existing quests at various levels of difficulty. This fosters team spirit, with the solving of each quest requiring 20-30 minutes of cooperative action. Game searching (observation, search and find), battle (motion control fight against evil creatures), characters (story-telling, interactive) to physical (physical interactive, instant reaction).

The venue is also suitable for corporate buyout for events such as private parties and award ceremonies. Rental hire can be calculated based on an hourly basis.

The park offers custom programmes on a case-by-case basis with discounts and gifts included.

Optional components can be arranged for, such as a welcome by mascot, photo ops, or even dancing with cosplayers. There is also a bazaar set-up sporting a mini flea market concept offering snack food, handicraft and street performances.



Service Cosplayers and staff stroll around the site, greeting guests and readily offering immediate assistance and advice. MICE planners are advised to book three months in advance.

Contact dilysleung@planetj.com
Operation hours 12:00-21:00 (Monday to Friday) / 11:00-21:00 (Weekend and public holidays)

Pacha Macau By Prudence Lui



Opened on the first level of Studio City in January this year, the 278.7m² Pacha Macau is the first mega Ibiza-style nightclub in the region.

Concept Originating from the beach town of Sitges, Portugal in 1967, the Pacha brand has evolved with changing trends and brought new ideas to the nightlife scene over the years.

As the first North American-operated nightclub and the largest single-space nightclub in Macau, Pacha Macau is designed for up to 2,500 people, with a

92.9m² dance floor, four KTV VIP Suites and an outdoor patio. DJ and dancer performances are available upon request.

MICE application For out-of-the-box meetings, event planners can use Pacha as a general session space for up to 450 people with four separate private breakout rooms each with capacity for 25.

It is also suitable for after-event parties, casual dinners or even catered barbecue events in fine weather.

Private parties and cocktails for about 850 or buffet dinners for about 380 with

live entertainment and themed parties can be catered for.

For corporate buyout, Pacha has a minimum charge of HK\$50,000 (US\$6,444) or more depending on group size and requirements, and this can be achieved with F&B consumption.

The standard entertainment package includes DJ and dancer hire as well as audiovisual systems, while optional hire of emcees and live bands can be arranged upon request.

The El Cielo outdoor lounge connected to Pacha is ideal for networking events in its six cabanas with approximately 120 seats. Cocktail tables can also be made available. The venue is connected to the pool area of Studio City, which clients can choose to integrate into their events.

Service Attentive and friendly service started right from the entrance. Although I was there for a cocktail event in the main bar area, staff entertained my request for a brief site inspection.

Contact pacha@sc-macau.com
Operation hours 18.00-05.00 (Wednesday to Saturday) / 16.00-03.00 (Sunday)



Clockwise from above: Kapitan Keling Mosque; traditional street food in Penang; Cheong Fatt Tze Mansion; colourful rickshaw in George Town

In strong standing

Penang's newly formed CVB has hit the ground running, building marketing materials and an experienced team to raise the destination's status as a MICE city. **S Puvaneswary** reports

Business events have always been an important source of tourism revenue for Penang, but it is only recently that the MICE courtship got far more serious with the establishment of a dedicated convention and exhibition bureau early this year.

Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau (PCEB), a state bureau led by Ashwin Gunasekeran, quickly put in motion its game plan, which included publishing destination marketing materials by April. The *Destination Experience Brochure* and the *Penang MICE Guide 2016-2017* are part of PCEB's exercise to position and promote Penang as the preferred MICE destination in the region.

The *Destination Experience Brochure* showcases Penang's rich culture, heritage, colonial, nature and

artistic aspects while highlighting the diverse conventional and unique venues for events. Complementing that is the *Penang MICE Guide 2016-2017*, a detailed listing of over 50 venues across the state, ranging from luxurious hotels and grand convention centres to distinctive venues that capture the contemporary cosmopolitan and cultural heritage aspects of Penang.

PCEB also launched a three-year brand campaign, *Experiences Unfiltered*. Ashwin explained: "It is meant to add value to a meeting or incentive by drawing on the island's unique heritage, local gastronomy, multiracial festivals, vibrant music and arts scene, and fusion of old and new buildings which offer a myriad unique venues for delegates to sample."

With collaterals, a brand campaign, sales and marketing team and support staff in place, the bureau has taken off on a marketing blitz at key MICE tradeshows such as IMEX in Frankfurt, IT&CM Asia in Bangkok and IBTM in Barcelona.

Ashwin said: "Penang is comfortable handling group sizes of up to 15,000 which incidentally was also the number of attendees at the largest MICE group to Penang this year."

This mega event was organised by QNET, an Asian direct selling company. Held from May 3 to 7 at the Subterranean Penang International Convention and Exhibition Centre (SPICE) Arena, V-Malaysia 2016 was attended by 15,000 distributors from all over the world.

Another major MICE win for Penang this year was the inaugural



WTM Connect Asia, a travel trade event in May. Organised by Reed Travel Exhibitions with support from the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau and Penang Global Tourism, WTM Connect Asia saw a gathering of 70 hosted buyers from 25 countries, as well as 50 exhibitors, some from as far as Iceland, Peru and Italy.

Though this was a leisure show, Ashwin said the event generated “some good leads” for MICE which are being followed up on for conversions in 2017 and 2018.

“It was also a good opportunity for us to show agents all the new tourism products in Penang that can enhance the delegate experience. Familiarisation tours organised by Penang Global Tourism included the very popular heritage walking tour in George Town; a food trail to try some of Penang’s best local food; Hills and Temple tours that included iconic sites, Kek Lok Si Temple and the new tourism product on Penang Hill known as The Habitat Penang Hill; and Penang Garden tour took visitors to Entopia, a butterfly conservatory.”

Commenting on Penang’s devel-

opment, Saini Vermeulen, executive director of Within Earth Holidays, said: “Penang has always been a popular MICE destination with all markets. Now with a bureau in place, and staffed with experienced people who understand the business and the needs of players, it makes it easier to get support when organising MICE events.”

“It also makes it easier for us to market Penang to our overseas clients as they know there is a dedicated bureau to provide support.”

Ally Bhoonee, executive director of World Avenues, agrees. He commented: “With PCEB, the state is in a better position to bid for international events and to compete with neighbouring islands such as Phuket which offers similar products – beach, shopping and food.”

“Penang is comfortable handling group sizes of up to 15,000 which incidentally was also the number of attendees at the largest MICE group to Penang this year.”

Ashwin Gunasekeran

CEO, Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau





Rampelcom/shutterstock

{ Talking numbers }

91

The number of weekly flights between Penang and Singapore, the highest number of flights to Penang from any single city

7,000

The average spend in ringgit – equivalent to US\$1,769 – by business travellers to Penang. Leisure tourist spend only RM2,000 in the state

17,165

The number of hotel rooms in Penang, represented by 197 registered hotels. The state government estimates a five to 10 per cent increase come 2017

{ Developments to watch }

1 The Subterranean Penang International Convention and Exhibition Centre (SPICE) will revolutionise Penang's standing as a MICE destination when it opens in 1Q2017. It is capable of supporting large conventions with as many as 8,000 people in its 4,546m² Grand Ballroom located at the subterranean floor. This space is joined by two VIP serviced rooms and 13 smaller function rooms, both on the lower and ground floors. The rooftop is a 2.8-hectare "green lung" which is capable of hosting outdoor events. SPICE will be the first purpose-built convention venue in the Malaysian destination.

2 Joining Penang's ongoing hardware transformation is the revitalisation of Komtar, Penang's tallest building with 68 floors and the world's sixth tallest building. The project, undertaken by Only World Group, is scheduled to be completed in October 2016.

Business event planners will benefit from the addition of a large pillarless ballroom capable of accommodating 1,200 guests; a VIP holding room; Grand Imperial Chinese restaurant which can seat 500 guests and another 15 each

in 10 private dining rooms; two levels of club floors which house private dining, meeting, recreation and entertainment facilities; a rooftop bar for up to 500 people; an observation deck that provides a stunning panoramic view of Penang; and 1,394m² of events space.

For entertainment, there will be the Jurassic Research Centre indoor theme park where visitors can play palaeontologists for a day, as well as a 7D theatre resembling a submarine and a boutique aquarium showcasing tropical sea life.

3 In early 2016, the Penang state government had approved a project to reclaim 53 hectares of land. The masterplan involves building a waterfront promenade, seafront dining facilities, a man-made 400m long sandy beach area with a pier walk, landscaped water gardens and a skate park. This complete project is known as Gurney Wharf, and it will be an iconic destination in Penang when work is complete in 2018. Gurney Wharf will complement Gurney Drive's renowned street food offerings at night and provide additional recreational facilities to MICE delegates looking for authentic experiences.



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{ Review central }

G Hotel Gurney By S Puvaneswary

This eight-year-old property recently underwent its first major renovations to a tune of RM35 million (US\$8.5 million). Works completed in February 2016 and the result is an ultra chic property with good hardware and software.

Rooms Before renovations, the walls of guestrooms were painted but bare. Today, they sport a beautiful wallpaper and have wood panellings. Furniture has also been upgraded for greater comfort. For example, the work chair is a back-friendly Herman Miller designer piece.

My executive suite on the topmost floor on level 18 granted me bird's-eye view of Gurney Drive and the sea beyond, plus spectacular sunrise in the mornings.

Environmentally conscious guests will appreciate the provision of Appelles bath products, which are paraben free, against animal testing and use biodegradable packaging.

MICE facilities Meeting spaces are all located on the first and second floors. After renovations, five new function spaces were added on level one, bringing the total number of function rooms in the hotel to 11. I like how all function rooms came with large windows to let in natural light.

Planners who require more break-out rooms for their event can supplement their needs with five function rooms at sister property G Hotel Kelawai, which is within walking distance. A buggy service is provided to shuttle guests between the two hotels.

The main ballroom at G Hotel Gurney can seat 500 people for a banquet and be divided into two for smaller gatherings. This venue's investment in quality Bose sound systems has resulted in crisp, clear sounds during an event hosted here.

Other facilities A dedicated private check-in counter can be arranged for group check-in.



There are three stylish dining areas, a 24 hour gym, an infinity pool, a spa, a hair salon, a business centre and an executive lounge that offers exclusive guests breakfast service and evening cocktails from 18.00 to 20.00 daily.

Room count 312
Star rating 5
Contact g4u@ghotel.com.my

The Habitat Penang Hill By S Puvaneswary



The Habitat Penang Hill, a 10-minute stroll from the top station of Penang Hill, opened in January. The owner and management company, Flagstaff Holdings, invested RM32 million (US\$7.8 million) to transform this four-hectare site into a new tourism product for Penang. Works included refurbishing a stable that can take events with up to 60 people inside or 80 in the briefing area, building a tree-tops walk, and installing zip lines along a 1.6km nature trail. These are surrounded by a 130 million-year-old rainforest which is gazetted and protected since 1911.

Concept This eco-tourism attraction puts an interesting spin on nature trails by

placing many educational and interpretive signage on the rainforest's flora and fauna and supports it with a complimentary guided tour led by an in-house naturalist who gives participants a peek into the various species of birds, insects, small creatures and plant life that thrive there. Participants may even spot a ratufa bicolour squirrel.

The latest attraction is the Curtis Crest Treetop Walk which opened in August. There are multiple viewing platforms and participants can walk along the Canopy Walk bridges that span approximately 230m in length. While the Canopy Walk offers spectacular views across the Straits of Malacca to Kedah State, it is the views from Curtis Crest that will take

one's breathe away. The latter is the highest viewing platform in Penang and promises spectacular 360-degree views of Penang. On a clear day, the islands of Langkawi can be sighted in the distance.

MICE application The Habitat Penang Hill makes a good pre/post tour option for groups attending conferences and meetings in town, as it is only a 20-minute drive from George Town to Bukit Bendera station where visitors will then take a five to eight-minute funicular train ride.

The nature trail is mostly shaded and the pathway is wheelchair friendly even during wet weather, thanks to the use of a pervious concrete material known as LaFarge hydro-media.

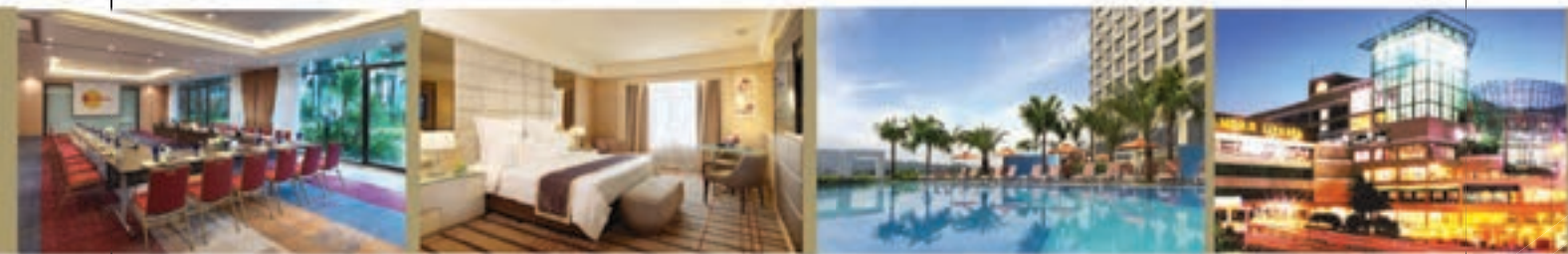
MICE groups will have more to do from this month on, with the launch of Canopy Discovery Tour which is perfect for teambuilding. Participants have to conquer low and high ropes and climb trees.

Service I was impressed with the naturalist guide's depth of knowledge. Time flew past even though the nature walk was a slow tour with many stops.

Contact inquiry@thehabitat.my
Operation hours 10.00 to 18.00



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Teambuilding fun in the Sun(way)

The solidarity displayed during TTG Asia Media's teambuilding was mirrored in the organising of the trip by Penang's travel industry players, writes **S Puvaneswary**

Event brief

The staff at TTG Asia Media Singapore office recently went to Penang Island for teambuilding.

Shirley Tan, senior business manager at TTG Asia Media had approached Ben Ho, general manager at both Sunway Hotel Georgetown and Sunway Hotel Seberang Jaya in May, who had agreed to put an itinerary together and provide hosting for the group.

The hotel coordinated activities on the ground and liaised with Penang State Tourism Development & Culture, Penang Global Tourism and Penang Convention and Exhibition Bureau to sponsor some meals.

Sunway Hotel Georgetown also sought sponsorship from double decker tour bus company, Penang Hop-On Hop-Off for a unique mode of transportation while skilled guides from Penang Tourist Guides Association offered their services and various product owners in Penang showcased their unique offerings.

Challenges

Ho said one main challenge was to get the buy-in from various sponsors.

Another was to keep everyone in the loop to ensure a seamless flow, and that they were

Event
TTG Teambuilding Event

Organiser
Sunway Hotel Georgetown

Venue
Sunway Hotel Georgetown
and Penang Island

Date
July 3-5, 2016

Number of participants
38 people

aware of last minute changes in the itinerary.

One such instance of a last minute hiccup involved a sponsor pulling out, leaving the Sunway team to find a quick yet unique replacement for entertainment and a meal.

Solutions

Ho received support from TTG's office in Singapore, which provided information on the various publications and its readership to facilitate

the sponsorship deals. It also helped that Ho personally knew key tourism players in Penang in both the public and private sectors, making it easier to approach them for sponsorship.

To ensure the programme ran smoothly, both internal and external communications and coordination were vital to keep everyone abreast with the latest developments and changes in the itinerary.

Sunway Hotel Georgetown also engaged an experienced company, Metro Bike, to organise a half-day Georgetown Heritage treasure hunt to forge team spirit while also showcasing the local culture and street food that Penang is famous for. During the activity, participants had hands-on experience of making roti canai, pulling tea and tying a garland.

Key takeaways

Ho recalled that the chief success of the event was having contacts and partners in the tourism industry who were willing to collaborate.

He said: "So many people chipped in and made this event possible as they believed in the importance of promoting Penang as a destination and what we can offer tourists or MICE (delegates), rather than promoting individual products."

"Everything was great, well-organised and executed – from the amazing race/treasure hunt at the heritage area, to the delicious Peranakan lunches and the sightseeing at the various attractions. Our entire group had a wonderful time."

Joanna Ng, human resource manager, TTG Asia Media

An arduous ascent to the summit

Choosing to host an ecotourism conference at the remote Mount Mulu National Park comes with challenges – but also great merits, writes **S Puvaneswary**

Event brief

The Mount Mulu National Park, located in the remote northeast of Sarawak, was selected as the venue for the sixth edition of the World Ecotourism Conference. The park is one of Malaysia's two UNESCO World Heritage Sites under the nature category, the other being the Mount Kinabalu Park in Sabah.

Conference convenor, Lee Choon Loong who is also president/CEO of Discoverymice and regional vice president (Asia-Pacific), UNWTO Affiliates Board, hoped this would spur tourism to Mulu National Park, where arrivals have remained stagnant at 18,000 per annum, and also to Mount Kinabalu Park, which was hit by a major earthquake in June 2015.

Since its inception in 2009, the World Ecotourism Conference has always been jointly held with the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). The aim is to discuss policies and trends that weigh on sustainable tourism development and practices, nature and culture conservation, community development and responsible tourism.

Challenges

The MASWings flight scheduled to connect the organisers and bulk of the participants from Miri to Mulu was cancelled due to an engine fault. The next scheduled flight available was departs the following morning. This was especially disappointing as the participants had been eager to join the Sarawak tourism minister, Abang Abdul Rahman Zohari Abang Openg, at a welcome gala dinner at Mulu Marriott Resort and Spa that evening.

Having no Internet access and limited voice communication services at the venue brought further disruptions. "We could not access our internet-based information systems – only Celcom subscribers could use their mobiles with limited internet and event speakers could not access their presentation videos.

"There were other surprises," recalled Lee, who said the lack of email access prevented them from finding out about last minute sign-ups or back-outs.

And on the technical tour involving exploring four showcaves at Mount Mulu National Park, he said: "The entire excursion was an arduous 11 hours. The well-being of all participants



Event

6th World Ecotourism Conference & 1st Malaysia Ecotourism Summit

Organisers

Ministry of Tourism and Culture of Malaysia; Tourism Malaysia; Malaysian Ecotourism Association; Asia Pacific Ecotourism Society; Discoverymice; UNWTO

Venue

Mulu Marriott Resort & Spa and Mt Mulu National Park in Sarawak

Date

January 27-30, 2016

Number of participants

100 guests



which then arranged for another

aircraft to fly the group to Mulu. The opening ceremony proceeded on schedule.

Luckily, there were no rain showers on the day of the technical visit to Mulu Caves and guests had a wonderful time.

Key takeaways

On hindsight, Lee said it would have been wiser to fly participants to Mulu in batches.

He further opined it is critical to seek the support of the local government when organising a conference in a remote destination, as the government would have the necessary power and "machinery" to address any challenges along the way.

Lee also advises participants with international connections to allow a one-day buffer, so they would not miss their flight connections in the event of any delays or cancellations.

depended very much on their level of fitness and good weather," Lee said.

Solutions

As soon as Lee heard about the flight cancellation, he called a state government officer to explain the situation. The civil servant in turn contacted the management of MASWings

"Accessibility to remote but idyllic places is definitely a challenge for these kind of events. However, I personally think that challenges could somehow be surmounted as these places do increase the conference's appeal in addition to (providing) networking opportunities at policy and business levels."

Sara Salsini, general manager, Asian Trails Malaysia

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Marco Baccanti

The chief executive of Health Industries South Australia tells **Karen Yue** why the Adelaide BioMed City can lead the city to MICE success

Why does the development of the Adelaide BioMed City precinct matter to the city's business events sector?

Adelaide has recently improved its status as an attractive city for the biomedical sector. This is a consequence of an important government strategy (to diversify) local economic development (and) an understanding that knowledge intensive sectors (are more sustainable).

(To build a successful biomedical sector) we need an infrastructure that will achieve critical mass (by bringing) about a combination of academic and clinical research, academic training, therapy for patients and business activities, etc.

This is what the Adelaide BioMed City will do. It is an investment of A\$3.6 billion (US\$2.7 billion), which for the first time, gives us functions of the full value chain, starting from research at SAHMRI (South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute) and other new buildings that are under construction now.

(It gives us) what we need to raise Adelaide's global visibility. When it comes to organising a global convention, people prefer to go to a place that is (well known)

and now Adelaide is that place.

The government also established Health Industries South Australia which courts global companies that are keen to have operations in Adelaide or in South Australia for...research, clinical trials and commercial activities in Australia and the rest of Asia-Pacific, with Adelaide as the headquarters.

Adelaide scored 45 medical conventions that will be held between 2015 and 2016. Did Health Industries South Australia have a hand in that?

We were involved, in some cases, by approaching the local community of scientists and entrepreneurs. Health Industries South Australia started 1.5 years ago and the first six months was spent contacting and creating awareness among the local community about the opportunities to invest in the city.

Part of our message was this: if you intend to conduct events for your community of companies, researchers and scientists etc, now is the time to do it in Adelaide. For many, it seems like a novel thing. Even people in leadership positions did not think of Adelaide as an attractive place for conventions. That perception has changed.

How is the Adelaide BioMed City different from other biomedical cities?

This industry is multi-disciplinary. In the past, a city will have a big hospital with some clinical research facility inside, a big university and another research centre – and they are not well connected. This is a problem because research today is no longer vertically specialised. Some of the biggest innovations today are generated by interconnections in different vertical expertise, when scientists and researchers from different disciplines come together and share knowledge.

From the infrastructure point of view, the future must drive maximum permeability between different silos. When you put all the buildings together, people will start meeting, talking and innovating.

Around the world you will find cities with far larger critical mass, but they are not located together as they are here in the Adelaide BioMed City.

What parallels are there between Adelaide BioMed City and Dubai Biotechnology City, where you once led as executive director?

They are very different environment and ecosystems. Adelaide has a strong expertise in research, while Dubai is attractive because of its position as a hub for companies looking to expand their commercial operations in the region.

The one important thing in common is that they are both city-states. For our industry which is highly regulated, this is a big advantage because investors coming into this type of environment enjoy the proximity to government leaders and the opportunity to discuss their growth strategy with the minister. This is the case in Adelaide, but not the rest of Australia.

Let's do another comparison. Dubai is luring global associations over to open offices there for regional growth. That has resulted in a spike in association meetings in Dubai. Is Health Industries South Australia doing the same?

Yes, this is something that may happen here. Organisations that are based in Europe or the US are now wanting to grow in Asia-Pacific. In the past, they had only the option of Singapore where they can established their headquarters. Now, they have options in Australia – not just Adelaide. Being European or American, companies will feel at home in Australia because the language, culture, infrastructure, education system and legislation are the same.

But why Adelaide specifically? Before, associations looking to expand through a presence in Australia would think of Sydney and maybe Melbourne. Now, because of the Adelaide BioMed City and actions to create a critical mass (in biosciences), Adelaide is in the club of attractive cities.

And they will discover that Adelaide is far more cost-effective than Sydney for instance. Real estate is 40 to 50 per cent cheaper than Sydney, which means great savings for associations looking to rent or purchase office space. Salary in Adelaide is 30 per cent lower than in Sydney for the same type of talent but people here have a stronger purchasing power.

My answer to you is that this is already happening, we are already seeing major associations in Europe and the US channelling their resources to Adelaide for the establishment of future headquarters.

Read more about the Adelaide BioMed City at <http://www.healthindustries.sa.gov.au/adelaides-life-sciences/adelaide-biomed-city>



{ Hot moves }



Bastian Breuer

Bastian Breuer

Marco Polo Hotels has appointed Breuer as group director of restaurants, bars and events. His most recent position was EAM of F&B for The Ritz Carlton Macau, where he was part of the pre-opening team.

Christopher Bong

Bong now leads Sunway Putra Hotel Kuala Lumpur as general manager. He was last general manager for the Fraser Residence Sudirman Jakarta.



Christopher Bong

Dinah-Louise Marrs

Swiss-Belhotel International has named Marrs as general manager for the launch of Swiss-Belhotel Brisbane. She has a distinguished 20-year career that saw her holding key positions in the hospitality industry in Australia and Thailand.

Horst Walther-Jones

Walther-Jones is now general manager of Mövenpick Resort & Spa Jimbaran Bali. He joins from Mövenpick Hotel Jumeirah Beach Residences.



Dinah-Louise Marrs

JB Son

Reed Exhibitions has named Son country general manager of South Korea, based in Seoul. He brings with him nearly two decades of high-level experience in South Korea's pharmaceutical industry at MSD and Novartis.

Phanuphan Buasuang

Onyx Hospitality Group has appointed Phanuphan general manager of Amari Hua Hin. He was most recently general manager of



JB Son

Siam Paragon shopping complex in Bangkok.

Theodore Lau

American Express Global Business Travel has picked Lau to be its vice president and general manager, ASEAN. Lau joins from Dentsu Aegis Media where he was CFO, South-east Asia.

Thomas Schwall

Schwall is now general manager of The St Regis Langkawi. He brings a wealth of hospitality industry experience to the position and joins after



Theodore Lau

completing a four-year tenure in New Caledonia, where he opened the Sheraton Deva Golf & Spa Resort as general manager.

Vivi Kusumawaty

Kusumawaty has joined Furama RiverFront as director of sales. She has 11 years of hospitality industry experience across renowned establishments like Far East Hospitality, Grand Park Orchard and most recently, Riverview Hotel Singapore.

{ Career inspiration }

Byron Formeloza

Assistant manager of banquet operations, Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre

How did you find your way into the MICE industry?

It was all by chance. When I was studying in Laguna, Philippines where I am from, I took part in a recruitment drive and was among the few selected to become an intern with Suntec Singapore. I later returned as a full-time waiter after completing my studies.

The F&B industry has been a large part of my career. I was only nine years old when I began working in the kitchen of a fast food restaurant in the Philippines to pay for my school fees. I've never left the industry since.

What do you love most about your job?

Every event brings about different challenges and I'm always learning and experiencing something new. Being on the frontline means I get to meet and talk to new people, which is something I really enjoy. While that's not always possible because of our constant flow of events, I try my best to build a meaningful relationship with clients.

When they return and remember me, some even by name, I feel heartened that I've left them with a good impression of our venue and their overall event experience.



What is your one most memorable job-related incident?

It was during a client's dinner and dance when one of our part-time waiters accidentally spilt a drink on a guest's clothes. When I was informed, I quickly approached the guest to apologise for the incident. To make sure she was fully appeased, I offered to accompany her to a retail outlet to purchase a new set of clothes before sending her dirty clothes for washing. Thankfully, the guest was very pleased with the simple gesture. These incidents are inevitable, so we have to do our best in our service recovery.

What advice would you give to someone looking to come into MICE industry?

Throughout my career, I've been fortunate enough to have great mentors guiding me along the way. In this industry where everything moves so quickly, the best way to learn is probably on the job itself. Anything can happen and you know there is always a lesson to learn.

A meeting of great minds

The annual **PCMA Meetings Forum Singapore**, hosted by the Professional Convention Management Association and the Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau, in July tackled hot topics in association management and provided association executives in attendance invaluable advice and insights.





Imagining future success

The sixth **Singapore MICE Forum**, which took place in July, was themed **Re-Imagine** to emphasise the importance of opening the mind when it comes to creating events. Participants challenged and inspired each other to return to the drawing board to re-create fresh ideas for the industry.



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What's next?

What makes a company strong? It's people, of course! In the next issue of *TTGmice* we seek out new and exciting activities across Asia-Pacific that will get your staff together to build stronger bonds. Also, come with us to Thailand, Singapore and Hong Kong to find out how MICE business is faring.



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BUYER 买家

The event was very successful. I met potential suppliers who gave detailed explanations about their products and I gained updated knowledge about their offerings.
 PT. Multi Holiday, Indonesia
 Rudy Techrisna Satyadi, Managing Director

这个展会给我们搭建一个很好的平台。这个平台有很多我们需要的供应商, 也非常适合我这一块业务的发展。
 深圳新景界国际会议展览有限公司
 吴立辉, 会议文化交流中心主管

EXHIBITOR 展商

It was the first time that we participated at IT&CM China and I felt that the 3-day event was organised efficiently. I interacted with many professional Chinese and International buyers and media and look forward to developing my relationship with them in the future.
 Daimaru Matsuzakaya Department Store, Japan
 Li Meng Ying, Project Manager

眼见为实。作为本次开幕典礼及欢迎晚宴的主办方, 我们借此机会邀请有影响力的业内人士前来参观我们的酒店, 以及我们举办这种活动的的能力。所以我相信这次合作会给我们带来巨大的惠宜。
 上海宝华万豪酒店, 中国
 Johnnie Chen, 驻店经理



Buyers 买家 | Exhibitors 展商 | Media 媒体
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