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CTW Asia-Pacific Corporate Travel World

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People development must stay

Talent training could be the answer to more efficient processes and operations

By Karen Yue

Changes in tourism and business events, as a result of the pandemic, have highlighted a crucial need for industry organisations to maintain investments in talent development so as to enable staff to adjust processes the right way forward.

Speaking at the keynote panel of IT&CM Asia and CTW Asia Pacific on November 16, Carina Bauer, CEO of IMEX Group, said “the pandemic has shown some skills gap in our industry” and pointed to capabilities in design thinking, user experience and engineering as being valuable in the MICE industry of the future.

She emphasised that courses should be carefully selected, and encouraged industry peers to consider online options which are abundant today and affordably priced.

Choe Peng Sum, CEO of Pan Pacific Hotels Group, said reskilling and retooling decisions must be strategic and lead to improved efficiencies.

He added that training today must also



Keynote speakers

aim to improve leadership. He explained that with good leadership, an environment of trust can be established in the workplace, which will improve inter-department communications and speed up work processes.

“In hard times like these, we shouldn’t have to go to work and feel like we have to constantly look over our shoulders (when getting our job done),” he remarked.

The Philippine Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) has set an example for the industry in terms of talent investment, said Arnold T Gonzales, acting deputy chief operating officer for marketing and promotions. The organisation has continued

with staff promotions and hiring despite the tourism and MICE crisis, and has maintained weekly online learning programmes for staff as well as tourism professionals.

TPB’s talent investments are joined by high level support, in the form of US\$2 million in government funding for training and subsidies for tour guides affected by the tourism freeze. Both TPB and the Department of Tourism have also conducted job fairs to aid displaced tourism workers.

Meanwhile, fellow panellist, Kaye Chon, dean of School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, said the tougher hiring landscape may cause new hospitality graduates to turn to other industries that hold these students in high regard for their interpersonal skills.

To remain an appealing employer, Chon said the industry must improve hiring conditions and groom indigenous and female leadership to give Asian students hope of a fulfilling career advancement.

ICCA’s gift for the future

ICCA’s conclusion of the 59th ICCA Congress, a blend of online and offline content delivered all over the world, has produced two valuable legacies that will benefit the meetings industry for a long time to come.

The hybrid Congress, delivered through six weeks of Global Hybrid Congress Experience across seven regional hubs worldwide from September 22 and the main event in Kaohsiung, Taiwan from November 1 to 3, has produced a blueprint for future association meetings.

The entire event comprised a series of online and in-person sessions in Kaohsiung and eight hubs, attracting 1,500 delegates, 280 associations, and featuring 220 speakers in 100 hours of content.

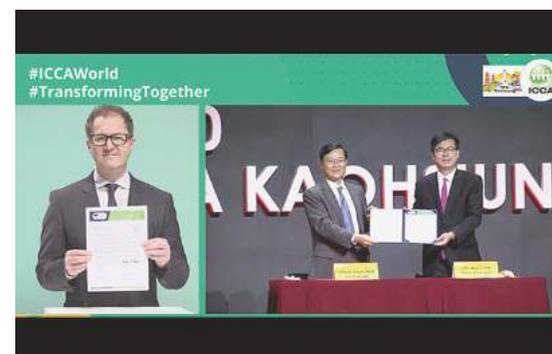
According to Ben Goedegebuure, enter-

prise vice president, global and industry, Maritz Global Events, all details in the preparation and execution of the Congress have been documented and will be made available to members for reference.

“There will be a huge amount of data and knowledge that can be shared,” Goedegebuure said.

At the same time, the Kaohsiung Protocol, which is the headline legacy achievement of the 2020 Congress, identifies major trends and key strategies to enable the meetings industry to thrive, now and into the future. It details Innovative Business Models, Shared Risk, Digital Restructure & Hybrid Events, and Enhanced Engagement & Value Strategies.

The crowdsourced framework was cre-



The Kaohsiung Protocol was launched at the 59th ICCA Congress

ated through original research with clients, allowing ICCA and its members to develop strategies specific to the most critical trends and sectors, explained Gregg Talley, ICCA treasurer and CEO of Talley Management Group. – **Karen Yue**

Powered from the top

Recognising that MICE is a catalyst to economic recovery and income generation, Thailand deploys high level policy support to the industry. By **Anne Somanas**

Six months post-lockdown and Thailand's domestic MICE market is alive and kicking again, buoyed by a flurry of incentives launched by the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) to stimulate the local events industry.

At the beginning of July, TCEB released a 20 million baht (US\$656,000) domestic MICE stimulus titled Meeting in Thailand is Safer. The stimulus offered 15,000 baht in grants for one-day events that lasted for a minimum of six hours, and 30,000 baht for events lasting at least 2D1N; both tiers requiring a minimum of 30 participants.

Puripan Bunnag, director of the president's office department at TCEB, said the stimulus has proven successful. As of end September, events organised with the help of the stimulus had generated more than 38 million baht.

"The initial stimulus has been used up, for events that will be hosted until the end of 2020. We are now in the process for applying for a second stimulus worth 100 million baht for the fiscal year 2021, which will include the existing two tiers and add in more perks for events of two nights or more that engage in activities with local communities," explained Puripan.

To this end, TCEB unveiled two new MICE Cities, Songkhla in the south and Nakhon Ratchasima in the north-east, at the Thailand MICE United event in September 2020.

This brings the number of Thailand's MICE cities to seven (Bangkok, Khon Kaen, Chiang Mai, Pattaya and Phuket). Many of the events taking advantage of the stimulus are being organised in these cities.

Aside from local physical events, TCEB has also made it a point to support virtual and hybrid events.

"We have a Thai webinar platform for virtual congresses and exhibitions that has been utilised by many local organisers to

host their exhibitions and conferences," he shared.

Puripan added that TCEB is now looking global, and is working on several ideas to appeal to foreign event organisers who could organise "virtual events with a hybrid component in conjunction with parties in Thailand".

TCEB has also continued to heavily promote its Thai MICE Connect: E-MICE Marketplace. This was done via a series of domestic roadshows in September and October to onboard more MICE professionals from all across Thailand and connect them to both domestic and international event organisers.

In addition, to promote venues that have implemented hygiene standards according to the new normal, TCEB has teamed up with Thailand Incentive and Convention Association to release a series of videos.

Entitled New Norm New MICE, and accessible through the Business Events Thailand Facebook page, the videos allow event professionals to virtually explore MICE venues such as IMPACT Muang Thong Thani that have meticulous health and safety practices in place, and products such as virtual teambuilding programme by Asia Ability.

While the global market is currently out of reach, is not forgotten.

According to TCEB president Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, the bureau is already in the process of lining up future MICE arrivals for next year, via a special arrangement between the Thai Foreign Ministry and four countries: China, Japan, Taiwan and South Korea.



Thailand is eager to bounce back from the challenges wrought by Covid-19; Bangkok's skyline pictured

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Keeping the magic going

Hong Kong is proving to be a fighter, pressing on with MICE hardware developments and support schemes that will rebuild planners' confidence and interest in the destination.

By Prudence Lui

Hong Kong Tourism Board



The sun may soon rise on Hong Kong's MICE industry again, thanks to travel bubbles and continued product developments

International travel and business events may have come to a standstill, but Hong Kong has been determined to keep moving – paying particular attention to enhancing her business events capacity and appeal.

Apart from subsidy schemes and marketing campaigns rolled out by the government and Hong Kong Tourism Board, business events players have pushed on with new hardware developments and upgrades to win over the hearts of event planners.

Hong Kong Disneyland Resort, a hit with the young and young at heart, is celebrating its 15th anniversary with the grand opening of the Castle of Dreams. Corporate groups can enjoy the new attraction and host a themed networking experience within. More magical offerings will come in late 2020.

Ocean Park, another popular attraction and unique venue, recently introduced a range of wellness activities, such as yoga, hiking and camping, to complement the resort experience and offer planners with more teambuilding options. Also available are CSR activities, animal encounters and behind-the-scenes tours. Event delegates are assured of memorable meals with varied dining offerings at Ocean Park.

Meanwhile, fun and fresh ideas are abundant in Hong Kong. According to David Simpson, co-founder and director of training and development with Team Building Asia, Kowloonbay International Trade & Exhibition Centre's The Wonderful World of Whimsy is an ideal place for team bonding. Modelled on a vintage amusement park, groups can bond over classic carnival games or network on the Circus Tram, a fully kitted out moving tram with three themed function rooms.

Simpson lauds the Circus Tram as a "perfect" product for networking and teambuilding activities on the move while bringing sights of Hong Kong to participants.

The Wonderful World of Whimsy also features "an amazing" Virtual Reality-enabled dynamic park, opined Simpson.

Meeting planners that need to stay connected with their international audience remotely can rely on Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), which has made sure to support clients with venues, technology and equipment suited for online/offline hybrid events.

Such capabilities have made HKCEC the venue of choice for several webinars since March this year despite the pandemic and resulting travel and event restrictions.

The massive venue has recently opened Atrium Chinese Restaurant, which features elegant interiors and private rooms that are ideal for corporate entertainment.

HKCEC's proactive stance has earned it advance bookings. At press time, 25 exhibitions and other corporate events and banquets have been confirmed at the venue for 4Q2020.

Besides online and hybrid event facilitation at venues, meeting planners are also assured of government support. Hong Kong has accelerated its digital development, which will favour new-age events. The city's major telecommunications providers have rolled out commercial 5G services while the government's Subsidy Scheme for Encouraging Early Deployment of 5G will foot half the bill for 5G technology deployment in approved projects. This has encouraged 5G adoption by venues. HKCEC, for one, is close to finalising its 5G infrastructure upgrade, with the full project coming to an end in 1Q2021.

The business outlook is promising, with Hong Kong and Singapore agreeing in October to establish a bilateral travel bubble that does not require travellers to serve quarantine or follow a controlled travel itinerary.

Macau keeps on moving

Constant industry outreach, sharp crisis management and a strong MICE track record will stand Macau in good stead for recovery. By **Prudence Lui**



From left: Against a pandemic backdrop, Macau delivered a successful trio of high profile trade events in October; Galaxy International Convention Center to come in 2021

Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) has been laying the groundwork for a return in business events, with much of its efforts placed on communication with industry partners, setting guidelines on epidemic prevention, improving, and supporting event organisers in their move towards digital, technology-driven events as online/offline hybrid events take root.

Since the early days of the pandemic and events disruption, IPIM has moved quickly to establish epidemic prevention measures for the business events industry and set up a 24-hour hotline for enquiries.

Recognising that maintaining communications with industry partners is critical in times of crisis, IPIM has been offering a listening ear to MICE practitioners to understand and resolve issues in a timely manner, as well as conducting numerous online training workshops that bring in consultants and industry experts to share tips on riding out the storm.

An IPIM spokesperson said these workshops have tackled a broad spectrum of topics, including hybrid events, Artificial Intelligence applications for business events, and crisis management.

Now, with greater control over the pandemic, Macau's business events industry is ready to transition to recovery. With this,

IPIM's areas of focus have shifted to, towards harnessing digital technologies to enable business events to adopt online/offline hybrid formats.

The 25th Macao International Trade and Investment Fair, Portuguese-Speaking Countries Products and Services Exhibition (Macao) 2020, and Macao Franchise Expo 2020 were held concurrently from October 22 to 24 in the same venue as hybrid events.

While much attention is now on hybrid event formats, the IPIM spokesperson emphasised that Macau is a destination that continues to be welcoming to face-to-face events, thanks to its safety and security.

"The meeting infrastructure here has the capacity and flexibility to cater for any event size or format, whether it is face-to-face or hybrid events," he added.

Macau's strength as a meetings destination is clearly appreciated, as Cooper Zhang, director of inbound department of CITS (Macau), has noted a sharper improvement in business events compared to leisure demand.

Zhang said: "Leisure traffic was below our expectations but business events have picked up well. For example, the 25th Macao International Trade and Investment Fair was staged successfully in this environment."

He is hopeful that new infrastructure emerging in Macau next year will provide more choices for event organisers, especially

those that have done repeat activities in the destination and desire novel alternatives.

Zhang's hopes may well be fulfilled, as Macau is working on keeping experiences fresh. Her accommodation offerings were updated with the September opening of the 259-room Holiday Inn Express Macau City and the October launch of the 289-key Four Seasons Hotel Macao.

Come 2021, Macau will add Galaxy International Convention Center, The Londoner Macao, Grand Lisboa Palace and The Lisboa to her expansive selection of event venues and world-class accommodation.

More than ever, event delegates meeting in Macau will discover that the destination is more than just a glitzy city that does not sleep. IPIM is weaving Macau's unique culture and lifestyle into new programmes. These include opportunities to bake traditional almond cookies or learn Macanese cooking; bond with team mates over calligraphy; partake in exhilarating activities such as bungee jump and skywalks; and go on treasure hunts or local night market excursions.

Another notable development that will aid access to Macau is the commencement of Starlux Airlines' inaugural Macao-Taipei route in January, offering three direct flights daily. But with the impact of the pandemic and travel restrictions, frequency has since been revised to once daily.

Evolving expectations

Face-to-face events are back, but complexity around decisions for post-lockdown gatherings means CVBs must now be an accessible information consolidator, discovers **Karen Yue**

Business event specialists in Asia-Pacific are starting to see a revival of face-to-face event interest, with some taking place before the end of the year.

Despite “massive amount of apprehension about groups and how big they can be”, Ian Cummings, global vice president, commercial, CWT Meetings & Events suggested that offline event interest was sparked by governments in certain countries that have allowed events to resume, subject to some health and safety restrictions.

Francis Cheong, co-founder and group CEO of Malaysia-based Aavii Worldwide, has delivered four offline events in September alone, since the government lifted its ban on face-to-face business gatherings.

He also told the *Daily* that multinational clients are now looking for overseas event alternatives “because it has been many months of business inactivity in Malaysia”.

“(However), clients are only looking at 2H2021 and are still very cautious with decisions,” Cheong added.

New selection criteria

With the return of RFPs, event planners have observed a different set of considerations when evaluating potential destinations and event vendors.

Unique activities, exciting venues and appealing attractions in a destination now sit lower on clients’ checklist, according to Petrina Goh, commercial director of CWT Meetings & Events in Singapore. The destination’s track record in coping with the Covid-19 outbreak, safety standards and availability of good hospitals are deemed more important today.

BCD Travel currently runs through a comprehensive set of questions, on behalf



of their clients, when deciding on a destination or supplier.

According to company spokesperson Agnes Heng, the checklist includes policies on surgical masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) for employees, guests and event attendees; updated capacity charts with social distancing measures in place; crisis management plan; and the availability of an infection mitigation coordinator onsite; among others.

And with event plans likely to be disrupted by sudden infection resurgence, event planners and their clients are also scrutinising attrition clauses, minimum spend requirements and cancellation or postponement policies.

CVBs as information consolidator

The current complexity around event decision-making, frequent changes to travel and activity restrictions, as well as differing health and safety regulations across destinations, have led event specialists to advise CVBs to be more informative.

Cummings said: “There are some CVBs that we are just not hearing from at all and therefore have no information on their destination. TCEB (Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau) is a great example (of an Asian CVB that is doing it right). I get three or four pop-ups a day on LinkedIn on TCEB initiatives, things that are happening in this industry, and updates on (Thai) airports and airlines particularly their routes and pricing, etc.”

He believes that CVBs should now act as communication hubs – an effective con-

solidator and disseminator of relevant information from various sources across the country.

Incentives to meet in the destination would also come in handy in influencing decisions, he added.

“We used to think that (destination) information overload for our clients isn’t great, but it is now better to have more information (as that can help improve clients’ perception of a destination),” opined Goh.

Goh added that in addition to looking to planners for advice, clients also turn to CVB websites in hopes of getting information on attraction reopenings, venue capacity limits, and new pricing structure of event products, especially if rates have been changed to accommodate social distancing requirements and capacity limits.

And if done right, CVBs could well sway clients’ decision with their messaging during this business crisis.

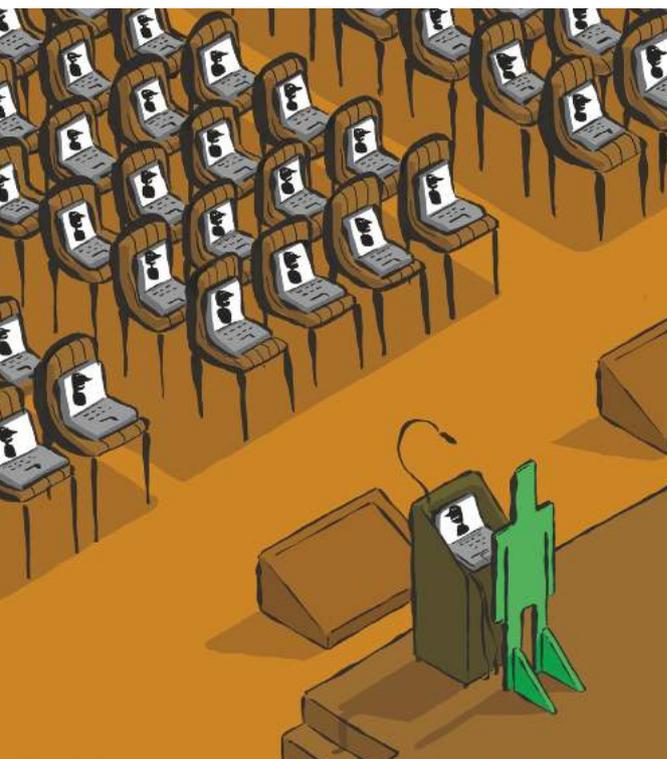
Cheong said: “CVBs will play an even more important role now than ever. They need to think differently about how to inspire travel intent during such unusual times. Their content for training and destination updates need to be revolutionised, such as by focusing on what can be done in the destination before and after a vaccine is available.

“CVBs can also work with national carriers to come up with special chartered flights to destinations that are remote yet exciting enough for eager but weary event attendees,” Cheong added. – **Additional reporting by Rachel AJ Lee**

Neuroscience to lead the way in digital event design

Taking events online attracts challenges such as weaker information retention and more sources of distraction.

Karen Yue finds out that a scientific approach can help improve engagement



Content and session structure can impact quality of attendee engagement during digital events

Organisers that have moved physical events to a digital platform are finding themselves faced with new challenges that can impact the quality of attendee engagement, observed MCI Group’s global learning & development director, Avinash Chandarana.

Speaking at the third edition of TTG Asia Media’s TTG Conversations webinar on July 8, Chandarana said that events making a digital shift cannot apply a “cut, copy and paste” approach to its structure and content.

While he agreed that online and offline events may share some “com-

mon denominators in meeting design”, digital events have to contend with their own set of challenges in maintaining quality engagement with the audience.

“Why is it that so many online conferences, meetings and seminars crash and burn? There are several reasons. First of all, there is low energy (among the audience). In the online space, audience click to join on a screen. There are no stimuli from the venue or people around them, or from the smells and sights of a physical environment,” he explained.

“Technical issues are also a big challenge, and by default, digital is not easy. The structure of the digital event, the content, and how presenters are adept in delivering content online makes a difference too.

“Distractions are another thing, which could come from other speakers who were not muted, from the participants multi-tasking (while sitting through a digital session), or from children and pets around the house,” he added.

Chandarana said that while one’s attention span at a physical event typically dropped off after 10 minutes, the same would be far shorter in an online space – at just three or four minutes, he opined.

As such, he suggested three things that planners should do, based on neuroscience principles, to improve the online experience for their attendees.

First, he recommended “slicing and dicing” content into “smaller pieces to make absorption more manageable and easier to integrate into long-term memory”.

“The magic number for breaking down information is three. When

you look at market communications, messages are broken down in threes – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle; and Nike’s Just Do it,” he explained.

Applying the three-part rule to online content, Chandarana suggested that a digital session could comprise an introduction, blended interaction, and finally a Q&A session – and no more than 25 minutes altogether.

Secondly, he recommended splitting content up over several days and to run each online session in short durations to improve content retrieval and recall over time.

“In neuroscience, we know that humans forget very quickly. To get around this, spread content retrieval and recall over time. Who’s to say you’ve got to do eight hours of content in a day?” he said, adding that several short sessions across many afternoons may be more beneficial to the audience.

“Ninety per cent of digital events that are happening right now are webinars,” he remarked, and said that content could also be delivered in the form of fireside chats, masterclasses, collaborative sessions, reflection sessions, lightning talks and virtual cocktails.

Chandarana also recommended appealing to attendees’ emotions through their content.

“Emotion trumps rational thinking. The way we choose our partner, who we vote for, and what we buy are driven by emotion, before we rationalise it (with facts). Can we create a positive emotional rush in the online world? Yes, we can, through multi-sensory experiences.

“There are many ways of doing that. One of that is to make storytelling part of your content, and the other is to use powerful visuals. Believe it or not, you can also create a sense of smell in the digital world. We can deliver food to attendees, or have them smell things around the house to invoke certain emotions.”

A matter of confidence

The Thai MICE industry has approached the travel and events crisis with a single objective – maintain confidence in the marketplace to set a strong foundation for recovery. TCEB president, Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, tells **Karen Yue** what has been done

Thailand was among the first few Asian MICE hubs to resume face-to-face business events during this pandemic. How is the resumption of these events progressing and what lessons has the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) learnt in paving the way for offline events in the new normal?

In times of crisis, maintaining high level of confidence is key and that is achievable only through strong collaboration. Thailand's MICE players have worked hard together toward one goal, which is to survive the situation of lacking inbound MICE traffic.

We have also been working closely with health authorities, especially the Ministry of Public Health, and partnering with MICE associations and suppliers in implementing hygiene and safety measures to resume operations in a step-by-step manner.

It is because of such unified approach, we have received full support from the government in introducing MICE stimulating measures and have experienced unexpected encouraging signs that Thai business, civil society and education sectors have turned the harsh situation into an opportunity for up-skilling, re-skilling, re-learning in preparation for the future of the new normal. The level of their demands for meetings has important implications for MICE business recovery as seen by the performance of our campaign to boost the domestic market.

Since the launch of our campaign in July till end-October, we have received 1,049



meetings applications seeking support with a combined of 62,555 delegates. Key sectors of the meetings include insurance, finance, pharmaceuticals, environmental management, human resources, sales and marketing and local governmental organisations.

It is also impressive to see that the meetings are located in very diverse locations, 50 city destinations across the country or more than half of all 77 provinces in Thailand, reflecting a wide distribution of benefits to people nationwide.

In addition, we have executed the COVID-19 Free Meetings project to enable MICE operators to secure resources necessary to establish health measures that can win confidence of prospective clients.

TCEB has stayed very visible and vocal throughout the pandemic and MICE crisis, with its frequent situational updates and news online as well as via its MICE COVID Info Centre website. How has this constant presence helped with Thailand's business events rebound?

We are always aware of the importance of communication with all concerned parties, which can hold us together and, thus, secure useful responses. We have positive feedback from stakeholders that (our information allows them to be) updated with the situation and stay abreast of clients' requirements. It is instrumental in creating a sense of belonging, evident in TCEB and MICE associations' co-developed MICE Hygiene Guideline which won the government's approval for MICE to fully resume since the middle of June. The breakthrough is followed by the launch of our new campaign, Ease-Up, which is now the support scheme with the largest number of participating partners.

The Ease-Up campaign targets MI sector and is a result of the collaboration between TCEB, which provides financial grants, and 64 MICE suppliers from 10 city destinations, which offer complimentary services and activities.

TCEB also organised the Thailand MICE United event in early September to stimulate the market, gathering industry players for business matching and to exchange views on driving the industry forward during hard times. The event was a resounding success, attracting over 6,000 delegates both offline and online.

What other efforts has TCEB taken to keep Thailand top of mind among the international buying

SPOTLIGHT

community, which no doubt has to continue to plan for future event pipeline?

Our initiatives to keep Thailand as a preferred destination have (been made possible) by the government's success in placing Thailand on a global map of countries with low (numbers of) infection. This, coupled with (the recognition that) Thailand is a top ranking country to start a business in 2020, according to the US News & World Report, has propelled us to devise preparatory measures to enable MICE as a business accelerator once international travel is permitted.

Towards that end (of stimulating business through business events), we have developed campaigns for all sub-sectors of MICE – EASE-UP for MI, Convene Plus for conventions, Re-Energizing Exhibition for tradeshows and Thailand Power-Up for mega events and festivals.

Some campaigns are a result of collaboration between TCEB and MICE suppliers (to make up for the) long absence of overseas (business events).

The campaigns are also responsive to the new normal conditions, which require events in Thailand to be safe and held in line with hygiene measures determined by the authorities. The events are also being organised on multi-platforms.

At the same time, we are taking this opportunity (to invest in) long-term development (by) educating local communities across the country on how to develop MICE products based on their culture and indigenous way of life. We believe this initiative will enhance Thailand's appeal and competitiveness as a destination of excellent experiences.

Let's talk about Thailand's intention to use MICE as a business accelerator. How will this be done and how is TCEB fulfilling this goal?

It has always been TCEB's philosophy to strengthen the role of MICE as one of the prime movers of national economic, social and educational development. We can do better during this time of hardship by engaging various associations to join MICE initiatives and activities.

We are working with stakeholders under EMTEX, an umbrella of government and private organisations to co-develop MICE opportunities, with a particular focus on creating new shows for five national strategic industries and in key regional areas, as well as to upgrade the profile of existing shows.



Thailand is rebuilding its MICE industry on a sound understanding of new safety and hygiene protocols

Our latest initiative is Log-In Event, a master plan to create and attract tradeshows in the logistics and infrastructure sectors. It will serve as a tool to propel the national mega development of the Eastern Economic Corridor (EEC), which has been undertaken to make advance industries a future growth engine of Thailand. Log-In Event has garnered strong support from various organisations interested in creating MICE events to attract investors.

Even as destinations struggle to rebuild business events, Thailand has moved on with the launch of two new designated MICE Cities – Nakhon Ratchasima and Songkhla – in September. Why now and why these two cities in particular?

MICE Cities has always been one of our key projects to boost local economy. Following the success of our pilot project to develop MICE cities in each region, comprising Bangkok, Pattaya, Khon Kaen, Chiang Mai and Phuket, many provincial governments have expressed interest in joining the project to upgrade the profile of their cities, bring in economic and social benefits, and ignite development in their areas.

Nakhon Ratchasima and Songkhla meet our criteria of selection. They have served as economic and education centre of the region, and are blessed with cultural and natural attractions with convenient access from Bangkok, plus the availability of modern accommodation and meeting facilities.

Nakhon Ratchasima, or Khorat in short, is the centre of agro-business and agricultural manufacturing industry for various

crops in the country's north-east. It is a notable location of ancient civilisation and geology; (it is home to) three universities, agro-tourism, and a fertile ecology and natural attraction which has earned the UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.

The city is also the gateway to the country's central, eastern coast and north-eastern regions. A high-speed rail line is being built to connect southern China with Thailand's north-eastern region, Bangkok and the EEC, and this will enhance the prominence of Khorat in the future.

Meanwhile, Songkhla, located on the Gulf of Thailand in the South, is the region's hub of fishery and rubber industries, the site of the region's first and oldest university, and a centre of border trade with international airport, international convention centre and accommodation. The city is also rich in history as a result of being an ancient trading seaport. It is a multicultural destination (that boasts) unique natural ecology and local way of life due to its location flanked by the ocean and the lake.

The city has defined itself as a multi-cultural MICE City where economic growth of the southern region is driven by border trade, service and investment.

We think it's a good timing as our target groups now have two more destination options for their meetings. We debuted these two cities during Thailand MICE United in early September.

Crisis notwithstanding, developing potential destinations into MICE Cities (remains) part of our long-term strategic plan to boost the economy in the regional areas beyond Bangkok and equip Thailand with more choices for clients.

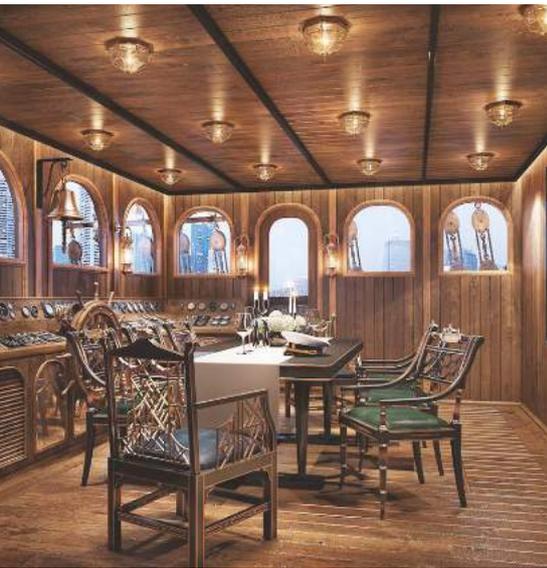
What advice do you have for Thailand's business events community that is working to pivot and ride out this storm?

Maintain confidence, work together and keep communicating (with the marketplace and each other) are the key components that will empower us to overcome hardships.

“ (We are devising) measures to enable MICE as a business accelerator once international travel is permitted.

Inspirations on the showfloor

Asia-Pacific continues to be an enticing region for events, as evident in IT&CMA's sellers line-up



BANGKOK MARRIOTT MARQUIS QUEEN'S PARK

Marriott Hotels & Resorts' first Marquis designated property in Asia has a new dining venue that is permanently docked at Asiatique Riverfront.

The Sirimahannop Ship is a replica of a Royal Thai Navy ship during the reign of King Rama V. As a unique venue, it enables guests to experience a bygone era as well as the beauty of Thai heritage.

The Sirimahannop Ship can accommodate up to 300 guests across two levels: 200 on the al fresco upper deck and 100 in the sheltered lower deck.

At the captain's invitation, passengers can open the hatch to a hidden rum bar and sip the sailor's "tot" – the daily allocation of alcohol once given to every seaman.

CONRAD MANILA

Located on the edge of Manila Bay, Conrad Manila's architecture is inspired by vessels plying the bay. It sits atop S'Maison, offering guests convenient access to a high-end retail podium. Makati CBD and Ninoy Aquino International Airport are 10 to 15 minutes away by car.

Ongoing promotions include: Meetings To Go, featuring the hotel's signature takeaway hotbox prepared by executive chef Daniel Patterson; and Rooms on You, Meetings on Us, where meetings are free with a minimum booking of 10 rooms.



COMEXPlanS

COMEXPlanS is a professional conference organiser and DMC based in Seoul, South Korea. It is able to inject smart technology to business events through its in-house tech studio that comes equipped with a full digital console system, high specification live video, virtual reality and streaming system equipment.

The company offers conference support with thorough pre-planning, reliable event management, and good onsite responsiveness.



GWANGJU TOURISM ORGANIZATION

As a UNESCO Triple Crown City (World Biosphere Reserve, World Geopark and World Natural Heritage), Gwangju Metropolitan City will be introduced at this year's IT&CMA as an up and coming MICE destination.

Although South Korea has the pandemic under control, the Safe City Gwangju Campaign is in place to provide hand sanitisers and disinfection support at meeting venues. As well, the Plus City Support will grant financial support for incentive groups calling at Seoul, Gwangju and Gangwon.



EVENTS TRAVEL ASIA

Events Travel Asia (ETA) specialises in high-end meetings, conferences, and incentives across Thailand and the region. Its track record spans diplomatic gatherings to creative themed events with a touch of Thai hospitality.

ETA believes in connecting cultures through elevated experiences. It engages the local community to bring events to fruition.

In light of new meeting and travel norms, ETA subscribes to attentive health and safety measures.

Look who's buying

Business event planners and corporate travel managers are ready to buy, and they want fresh ideas and new contacts



SLAWOMIR BLOCH
President,
Business Travel Club,
Poland

According to our client findings, we predict the resumption of incentive activities from 2H2021, and are looking at establishing contact with Asian venue suppliers. We would also like to tap on their expertise in providing updated destination information and support.



SHERMAINE TANG
Senior project executive,
Pacific Arena, Singapore

First, I hope to gain insights on the future of business events and hybrid meeting technologies at the mini roadshows. As well, I would like to meet new suppliers and operators, and check out their updates and current offers.

DHYSHERY HALILI
General manager, Dhysh Travel
and Tours, Philippines

Since we are unable to conduct physical inspections because of the pandemic, we look forward to meeting new travel suppliers such as hotels, DMCs and attractions at this virtual event. We are also looking forward to learning more about Covid-19 recovery strategies at the seminars and conferences.



MARCELA FOJTOVA
Reservation supervisor,
Worldwide Travel
Destination
Management, UK

This is my first IT&CMA and virtual event. I hope to learn about new trends in Asia and post-pandemic business prospects through the views of other attendees. I look forward to networking sessions to gain valuable contacts.



ALLROY AUGUSTINE COLLACO
Assistant secretary general,
Federation of Indian Chambers
of Commerce & Industry, India

A virtual setting affords the flexibility to curate our own experience in a single, or multi-track agenda. Personalised touchpoints such as chat box facilities enable us to connect with the community with ease, and at our own time. I am looking forward to gaining insights from keynote speakers, and networking sessions to connect with users and thought leaders in the industry.



HEIN THANT
Director,
Croton Travel, Myanmar

2020 signifies a new normal for the tourism industry, and stakeholders must learn to adapt fast. I am looking forward to connecting with industry peers and new partners for this exciting chapter, and garner possible leads for our incentive travel markets in Myanmar.

ANDREAS SORIN SUCIU
CEO,
Calatorescu, Romania

Attending IT&CMA is a good boost for our expansion into Asian markets. I am particularly keen on attending the themed knowledge sessions, as well as mini roadshows, to learn more about a destination from the brand host.

KYRA DIETEREN
Global travel manager,
FrieslandCampina Corporate
Centre, Netherlands

IT&CMA is a great starting point to get acquainted with local suppliers offering services for transient business travel. Some might already be in contact with our local office, so it would be meaningful to connect and discuss further opportunities. I am eager to learn more about innovations across Asia-Pacific, and maybe recommend them in our global programmes.



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Contact Us traveltradesales@ttgasia.com

Timetable of Events (GMT+8hrs)

16 November MONDAY	17 November TUESDAY	18 November WEDNESDAY	19 November THURSDAY	20 November FRIDAY
0000 - 2359hrs Virtual Exhibition				
0900 - 1800hrs Walk-In Meets (WM)				
	0900 - 1000hrs MICE Seminar 1 CTW Conference 1	0900 - 1000hrs MICE Seminar 2	0900 - 1000hrs MICE Seminar 3 CTW Conference 2	0900 - 1000hrs MICE Seminar 4
	1000 - 1225hrs Scheduled Meets (SM) 1 to 6	1000 - 1300hrs Mini Roadshow 2	1000 - 1225hrs Scheduled Meets (SM) 13 to 18	1000 - 1300hrs Mini Roadshow 4
	1230 - 1330hrs Lunch Break	1300 - 1400hrs Lunch Break	1230 - 1330hrs Lunch Break	1300 - 1400hrs Lunch Break
1500 - 1600hrs Keynote Address	1330 - 1400hrs Brand Showcase Presentation 3	1400 - 1430hrs Brand Showcase Presentation 5 Buyer Procurement Showcase 3	1330 - 1430hrs Travel Spark By TTG	1400 - 1430hrs Buyer Procurement Showcase 6
1600 - 1630hrs Brand Showcase Presentation 1	1400 - 1430hrs Brand Showcase Presentation 4 Buyer Procurement Showcase 2	1430 - 1500hrs Brand Showcase Presentation 6 Buyer Procurement Showcase 4	1400 - 1430hrs Buyer Procurement Showcase 5	1430 - 1500hrs Buyer Procurement Showcase 7
1630 - 1700hrs Brand Showcase Presentation 2 Buyer Procurement Showcase 1	1430 - 1730hrs Mini Roadshow 1 1500 - 1520hrs Future Leaders Forum	1500 - 1725hrs Scheduled Meets (SM) 7 to 12	1430 - 1730hrs Mini Roadshow 3	1500 - 1725hrs Scheduled Meets (SM) 19 to 24
1700 - 1730hrs Event Opening & Networking	1730 - 1800hrs Networking			

Brand Showcase Presentations

Featuring the latest highlights and developments by participating destination and corporate brands.

MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2020

1600 to 1630hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BRAND SHOWCASE PRESENTATION 1
Seoul Tourism Organization



1630 to 1700hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BRAND SHOWCASE PRESENTATION 2
Department of Information and Tourism, Taipei City Government



TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020

1330 to 1400hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BRAND SHOWCASE PRESENTATION 3
Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau



1400 to 1430hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BRAND SHOWCASE PRESENTATION 4
Yokohama Convention and Exhibition Bureau



WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2020

1400 to 1430hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BRAND SHOWCASE PRESENTATION 5
Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau



1430 to 1500hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BRAND SHOWCASE PRESENTATION 6
EventsAIR



Buyer Procurement Showcase **New**

MICE, Association and Corporate buyers share their procurement requirements.

MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2020

1630 to 1700hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BUYER PROCUREMENT SHOWCASE 1
Free Style, Netherlands



TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020

1400 to 1430hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BUYER PROCUREMENT SHOWCASE 2
8th Wave Events & Destinations, Singapore



WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2020

1400 to 1430hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BUYER PROCUREMENT SHOWCASE 3
Platinum Holiday Indonesia



1430 to 1500hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BUYER PROCUREMENT SHOWCASE 4
MAVP Travel & Tours, Philippines / United Travel Agencies and Operators Association



THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2020

1400 to 1430hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BUYER PROCUREMENT SHOWCASE 5
Kraft Travel Co., Ltd., Thailand



FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2020

1400 to 1430hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BUYER PROCUREMENT SHOWCASE 6
Nature Dream Travel, Nepal



1430 to 1500hrs (GMT+8hrs)
BUYER PROCUREMENT SHOWCASE 7
Vintage Travel Pvt Ltd And Vintage Tours Pvt Ltd, Zimbabwe

Mini Destination / Brand Roadshows **New**

An exclusive mini event dedicated to immersing with the destination, or brand host.

TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020

MINI ROADSHOW 1 | MEET TAIWAN
1430 to 1500hrs (GMT+8hrs)
MEET TAIWAN Opening Presentations and Welcome
1500 to 1640hrs (GMT+8hrs)
Come Meet Taiwan!
1640 to 1730hrs (GMT+8hrs)
Win With MEET TAIWAN: Games, Prizes and Giveaways



WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2020

MINI ROADSHOW 2 | Splendid Stays
Meet these featured hotel, resort and property exhibitors
1000 to 1300hrs (GMT+8hrs)



THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2020

MINI ROADSHOW 3 | Destination Insiders
Meet these featured tour company and DMC exhibitors
1430 to 1730hrs (GMT+8hrs)



FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2020

MINI ROADSHOW 4 | Unique Experiences
Meet these featured unique venue and travel service exhibitors
1000 to 1300hrs (GMT+8hrs)



Travel Spark By TTG

THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2020

1330 to 1430hrs (GMT+8hrs)
Indonesia: Ready for a new era of MICE
Indonesia has been paving the way for a business events recovery as the world awakens from the Covid-19 slumber, establishing health and safety protocols, plugging the critical role of business events in economic stimulation, and pushing on with destination developments. In this one-hour panel discussion, Indonesia's influential business events industry leaders will spill details on how the country is reviving its MICE industry and the many opportunities available to organisers to deliver an exciting and successful business event.

Daily Themed Networking Sessions

Hosted By Experience Partner

*Note:

To play Networking Game On and Face Swipe, be sure to have your smart phone or tablet ready with access to browser (Safari iOS and Chrome on Android). To play Breakout Bingo, download GO TEAM APP by Catalyst Global on your smart phone or tablet



MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2020 | 1700 to 1730hrs (GMT+8hrs)

Event Opening and Networking Game On: Know Your IT&CM Asia and CTW Asia-Pacific 2020

Kickstart your IT&CM Asia and CTW Asia-Pacific 2020 virtual networking experience with a competitive trivia quiz. Know your facts about this year's event and be among the event's first prize winners.



TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020 | 1730 to 1800hrs (GMT+8hrs)

THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2020 | 1730 to 1800hrs (GMT+8hrs)

Breakout Bingo

We're taking getting-to-know-your-peers to a whole new level, bingo style. Zip past the superficial greetings and discover fun nuggets of information and commonalities with both new and old friends. Get collaborative and start making memorable connections in this race to the finish.



WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2020 | 1730 to 1800hrs (GMT+8hrs)

FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2020 | 1730 to 1800hrs (GMT+8hrs)

Face Swipe

Birds of a feather pose together. Make good use of those selfie skills and put your best face forward in a simple game of shoot-vote-and-win. Meet, chat and snap in your virtual groups and make new connections while creating picture perfect moments.

*Delegates who access the session after 1730hrs will not be able to participate in the game.

Daily Themed Knowledge Sessions

MONDAY 16 NOVEMBER 2020 | 1500 to 1600hrs (GMT+8hrs)

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Investing in the industry's future

Business gurus have long advised that a company is only as good as its people. However, human resource cutbacks are all too common whenever economic woes threaten corporate performance. In manpower-heavy industries like that of hospitality and business events, how will savings on reskilling and upskilling today impact the quality of guest experience and event delivery into the future? And will the vulnerability of the hospitality and business events industries today cause a talent vacuum in the near future?

Moderator: **Karen Yue**, Group editor, TTG Travel Trade Publishing

Panelists: **Kaye Chon**, Dean and chair professor, School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University | **Maria Anthonette C. Velasco-Allones**, COO, Tourism Promotions Board, Philippines | **Choe Peng Sum**, CEO, Pan Pacific Hotels Group | **Carina Bauer**, CEO, IMEX Group

TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020 | 0900 to 1000hrs (GMT+8hrs)

MICE SEMINAR 1 HOSTED BY IAPCO (International Association of Professional Congress Organisers):

'Virtual Congresses': what works and what does not



Our presenters will look at successes and challenges in delivering virtual congresses and provide the audience with practical advice based on their own experiences.

Presenters: **Martin Boyle**, CEO, IAPCO | **Jason Yeh**, CEO, GIS Group | **Nicole Walker**, CEO, Arinex

CTW CONFERENCE 1: Ready for road

Green lanes for essential travel are starting up in Asia, which will allow companies to resume business-critical trips and contribute to economic recovery. How should corporate travel managers get ready for the resumption of travel activities? What processes must be in place now and what must be done to ensure their travellers are confident that they will remain in safe hands when travelling in a time of a pandemic?

Moderator: **Pulak Bhaumik**, Global category director, NTT Global Sourcing Inc., India

Panelists: **Benson Tang**, Executive director, Corporate Travel Community | **Jeannie Techasiriwan**, Special events assistant director, Amway, Thailand

TUESDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2020 | 1500 to 1520hrs (GMT+8hrs)

FUTURE LEADERS FORUM BY IMEX GROUP: Entering the meetings industry

Join budding students and seasoned MICE industry professionals in an open conversation about building a dream career in MICE, especially during these challenging times as future leaders are about to enter the workforce.



Panellists: **Dale Hudson**, Knowledge & events director, IMEX Group | **Rachel AJ Lee**, Assistant editor, TTGmice | **Vivienne Wong**, Managing director, Bizfield Groups

WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2020 | 0900 to 1000hrs (GMT+8hrs)

MICE SEMINAR 2 HOSTED BY SITE (Society for Incentive Travel Excellence):

Our Roadmap for Recovery: What incentive travel professionals can learn from ITII



Take a deep dive into the 2020 edition of Incentive Travel Industry Index (ITII). With over 2800 submissions from all over the world, ITII provides us with all the data we need to build a recovery plan for our businesses.

Presenters: **Pádraic Gilligan**, CMO, SITE | **El Kwang**, CEO, Untangled

THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2020 | 0900 to 1000hrs (GMT+8hrs)

MICE SEMINAR 3 HOSTED BY PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association):

Bringing Strategies to Life: Insights from PCMA's Business Events Compass



Business event stakeholders are increasingly challenged to stay current with an endless stream of datapoints and changing regulations, while at the same time taking decisive action to reshape their businesses and careers. Informed by critical data and new survey insights, understand the three major insights and its implication for business event stakeholders presented in PCMA's Business Events Compass. Learn from recent case study examples of how organisations have translated these insights to shape actionable strategies around participant engagement, reskilling, and business models.

Presenter: **Karen Bolinger**, Managing director APAC, PCMA

CTW CONFERENCE 2: Ready for take-off

The flight is a critical component in corporate travel, as travel can be disabled without air access. As the world begins to awaken from the Covid-19 slumber, how will the flying experience look like? And equally important, how will airport clearance flow with intense health and safety protocols in place?

Moderator: **Karen Yue**, Group editor, TTG Travel Trade Publishing

Panellists: **Sanjeev Kumar**, Vice president airports and borders, SITA | **Mark Briffa**, CEO, Air Partner | **Tunnasorn Kosanan**, Manager, sales management Bangkok metropolitan and vicinity department, Thai Airways International PCL

FRIDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2020 | 0900 to 1000hrs (GMT+8hrs)

MICE SEMINAR 4 HOSTED BY ICCA (International Congress and Convention Association): **Reimagining Events**



Without doubt, the pandemic is not going away soon. Therefore, the industry needs to collaborate and work together to move forward with its business activities. ICCA as the most global association has taken a bold step in deciding to organise its annual congress as planned. Let's learn how ICCA has transformed global events for the future.

Presenter: **Noor Ahmad Hamid**, Regional director Asia-Pacific, ICCA



Meet Exhibitors From Over 100 Booths Including



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3D2N Stay with Breakfast for 2 at Conrad Manila



2D1N Stay with Breakfast for 2 at Courtyard by Marriott Bangkok



2 Adult tickets for Indoor Observatory and Outdoor Rooftop by King Power Mahanakhon



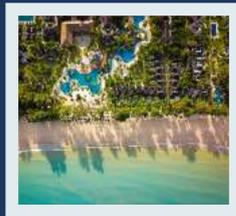
2D1N Stay at Mithi Resort and Spa



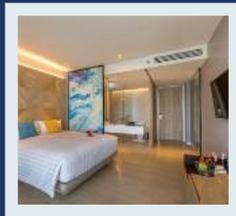
4D3N Stay with Breakfast and full Club Benefits for 2 at Ramada Plaza by Wyndham Bangkok Menam Riverside



Complimentary Recce in Bangkok or Phuket for 4 including 2D1N Stay at 5* category and return airport transfers in VIP car by Redfox Events



3D2N Stay including Full Board Plus made by ROBINSON for 2 at ROBINSON Club Khao Lak



3D2N Stay with Breakfast for 2 at The Nature Phuket

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