

TTGassociations
TRAVEL TRADE MEDIA
OF THE YEAR 2017
MPAS Awards

TTGassociations
JOURNALISM EXCELLENCE
PRINT & ONLINE
2016
Anak Sarawak Award



16

GUIDE TO
Destination
support



20

DESTINATIONS
Hong Kong
and Thailand

Travel matters

Elected into the presidency of the Federation of ASEAN Travel Associations when the future of travel and tourism was bright, Tan Kok Liang soon finds himself tackling the world's biggest travel freeze and one that has brought his industry to its knees

TTG associations

July 2020
MCI (P) 004/05/2020

IT&CMA and CTW Asia Pacific Goes Virtual

16 to 20 November 2020



Register Your Interest Now
Participation Details Will Be
Released In August



www.itcma.com | www.corporatetravelworld.com/apac

Save The Dates For Our Physical Event In 2021: 28 to 30 September

Organised By



Host Country and Strategic Partner



Supported By



Official Airline



Official Venue



Partner Event



Technology Sponsor



Experience Partner



Industry Partners



Endorsing and Supporting Associations



Official Media



Media Affiliates



EDITORIAL**Karen Yue** Group Editor
(karen.yue@ttgasia.com)**S Puvaneswary** Editor, Malaysia/Brunei
(puvanes@ttgasia.com)**Mimi Hudoyo** Editor, Indonesia
(idmfasia@cbn.net.id)**Rachel AJ Lee** Assistant Editor,
TTGmice, TTGassociations
(rachel.lee@ttgasia.com)**Therese Tan**
Assistant Editor, TTG Content Lab
(therese.tan@ttgasia.com)**Pamela Chow**
Reporter (pamela.chow@ttgasia.com)**Cheryl Ong, Angela Teo** Sub Editors
(cheryl.ong@ttgasia.com)
(angela.teo@ttgasia.com)**Adelaine Ng** Australia
(adelaineng.abc@gmail.com)**Marissa Carruthers**
Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam
(maris.carruthers@gmail.com)**Caroline Boey** China & Special Projects
(caroline.boey@ttgasia.com)**Prudence Lui** Hong Kong/Greater China
(prului@yahoo.com)**Rohit Kaul** India (rohitkaul23@gmail.com)**Tiara Maharani, Kurniawan Ulung** Indonesia
(tiaraul13@gmail.com)**Alezkurniawan** (alezkurniawan@gmail.com)**Kathryn Wortley** Japan
(kathrynwortley@gmail.com)**Rosa Ocampo** The Philippines
(rosa.ocampo@gmail.com)**Feizal Samath** Sri Lanka/Maldives
(feizalsamath@gmail.com)**Redmond Sia, Goh Meng Yong**
Creative Designers**Lina Tan** Editorial Assistant**SALES & MARKETING****Pierre Quek**
Publisher and Head Integrated Solutions
(pierre.quek@ttgasia.com)**Chimmy Tsui**
Publisher and Head Integrated Solutions
(China) (chimmy.tsui@ttgasia.com)**Jonathan Yap** Senior Business Manager
(jonathan.yap@ttgasia.com)**Shirley Tan** Senior Business Manager
(shirley.tan@ttgasia.com)**Seth Leow** Business Manager
(seth.leow@ttgasia.com)**Cheryl Tan** Corporate Marketing Manager
(cheryl.tan@ttgasia.com)**Jade Ye** Marketing Executive
(jade.ye@ttgasia.com)**Delia Ng** Digital Marketing Strategist
(delia.ng@ttgasia.com)**Cheryl Lim**
Advertisement Administration Manager
(cheryl.lim@ttgasia.com)**Carol Cheng**
Manager Administration & Marketing
(Hong Kong, carol.cheng@ttgasia.com)**PUBLISHING SERVICES****Jonathan Wan**
Head, Operational Support Services
Kun Swee Qi Publishing Services Executive
Nur Hazirah Web Executive
Katherine Leong Circulation Executive**TTG ASIA MEDIA PTE LTD****Darren Ng** Managing Director**OFFICES****Singapore**TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd,
1 Science Park Road, #04-07 The Capricorn,
Singapore Science Park II, Singapore 117528
Tel: +65 6395 7575, fax: +65 6536 0896,
email: traveltradesales@ttgasia.com**Hong Kong**TTG Asia Media Pte Ltd, 8/F, E168,
166-168 Des Voeux Road Central,
Sheung Wan, Hong Kong
Tel: +852 2237 7288, fax: +852 2237 7227

Thriving online

If there was ever a song written about the people that were forced to master the ways of digital events during this pandemic, I think it would start off like this: *At first I was afraid, I was petrified.*

At the early onset of the pandemic, few of us would have imagined how disruptive it would be to our life and the way we interacted.

Whereas we once thought we had a choice of waiting out the outbreak and resulting travel restrictions, and that maybe upcoming meetings would still be able to take place as planned – perhaps with only a slight delay – we now know how naive we were.

In February, there was still some hesitation about moving physical events online. How do we even get started? How much would it cost? So many unknowns, so much could go wrong.

But once there was no longer a choice – because AGMs must take place, members still expect to be engaged, advocacy works must continue, etc – the first digital step has to be taken.

Here at TTG Asia Media, while we aren't an association, we faced the same uncertainty when we decided we must venture online to keep engaging our community as face-to-face trade events dissolved against

travel and mass gathering bans. In the lead up to our first TTG Conversations online panel, I was afraid, I was petrified. Online events were new territory for me and my colleagues at the TTG Events business unit who provided the technical support.

Truly, the first step is always the hardest. Once we started, we learnt through our mistakes and got inspired by others. Now, we cannot deny how useful online events have been in our business strategy. It allowed us to maintain our presence, expand our reach, deepen our engagement with industry peers and partners despite not being able to be with them physically, and – this is important – expand our personal capabilities.

At the time of writing this, TTG Events has just concluded its first Virtual IT&CM China and CTW China – 2.5 days of knowledge conferences, destination and product showcases, and business meetings built for Chinese buyers looking to take their meetings and business travel around the world.

The team will go on to do a virtual Asia-Pacific edition later this year.

For those that have taken the first digital step like we did, congratulations! We can get used to this familiar ground and make the most of it until travel and face-to-face meetings are possible again.

Now, how does the song end?



Karen Yue
Group Editor

PROFILE

13

Travel matters

Elected into the presidency of the Federation of ASEAN Travel Associations when the future of travel and tourism was bright, Tan soon finds himself tackling the world's biggest travel freeze and one that has brought his industry to its knees. By [S Puvaneswary](#)



GUIDE TO

16

Destination support

Convention bureaus often dish out a range of assistance and subsidies to make it easier for associations to convene in their destination. *TTGassociations* reporters sniff out what's available now



DESTINATIONS



Hong Kong // Rising on home grounds

HKTB has thrown its support behind grooming local association activities, believing that they will revive the city's meetings scene, writes [Prudence Lui](#)



Thailand // Building up for recovery

International face-to-face association meetings will take time to return, but the Thai CVB has initiated a number of programmes now that will establish a strong foundation for safe and fruitful conventions in the future. By [Anne Somanas](#)

DEPARTMENTS

3 To our readers

6 News

10 Talking point

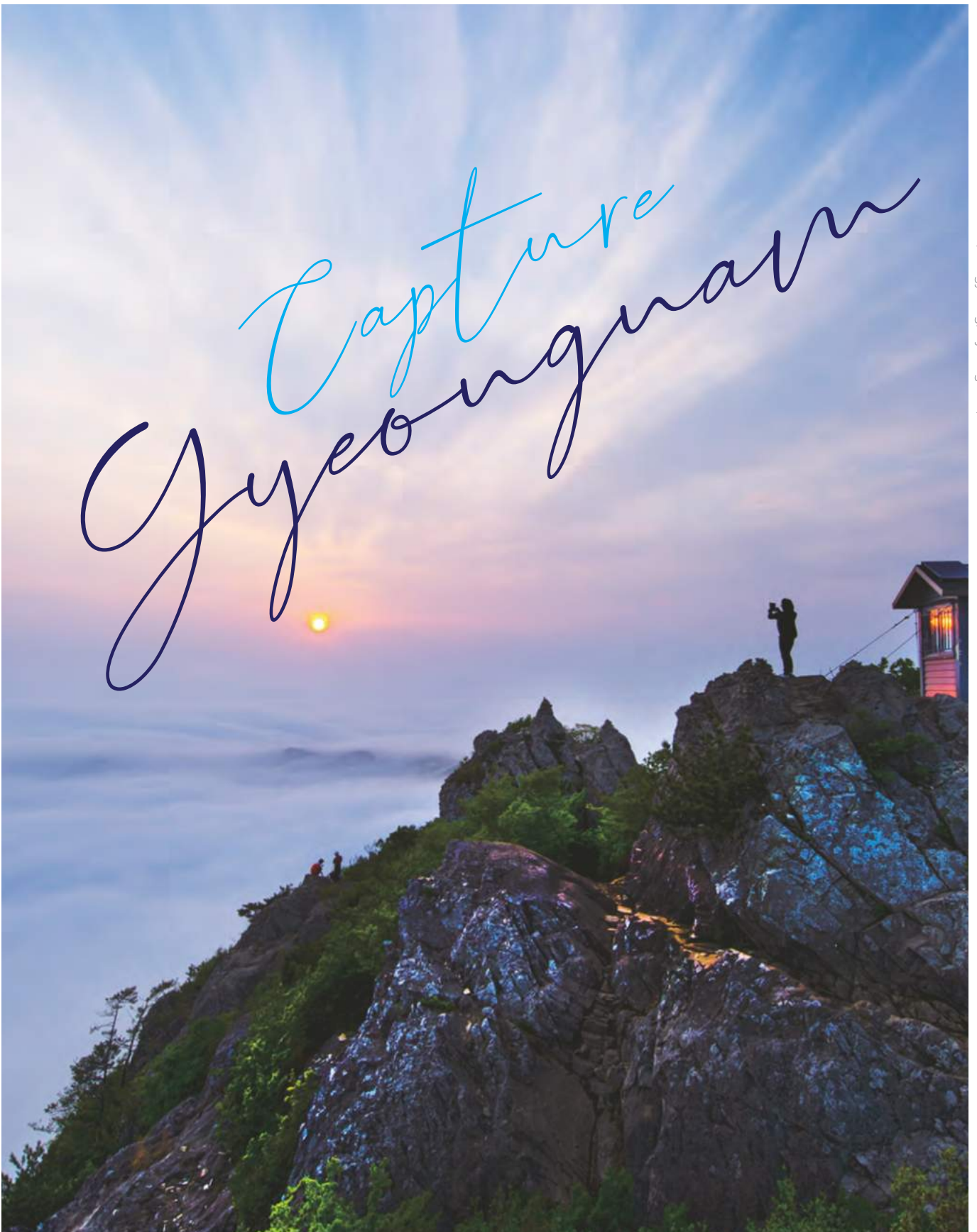
24 Case studies

4 Contents

8 On the shelves

19 How to

Capture Gyeongnam



WHO updates its guidelines for mass gatherings



helia/shutterstock

associated with the event, to assess the likelihood that the event may contribute to the spread of the virus and that the health services capacity may be exceeded by such spread.

And third, the ability to implement actions that can reduce the risks associated with the event in the planning, operational and post-event phases.

Recommended actions for each of these steps are fleshed out the document, which is accessible online for free.

In addition, WHO has developed tools that assign a numerical score to each risk factor and control measure, thus allowing for the calculation of a resulting overall risk score, which corresponds to a defined risk category and to a recommendation for the event.

However, WHO emphasised in the guidance document that it does not have the mandate to enforce any restriction, modification, postponement or cancellation of a mass event, or to authorise that the event may proceed. It recognises that it can only play an advisory role in the safe conduct of events.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has revised its guidance document, *Key planning recommendations for mass gatherings in the context of Covid-19*, on May 29, to reflect recent new knowledge on the pandemic.

In the guidance document, WHO acknowledged both the risk of transmission posed by mass gatherings as well as the extensive political, cultural, social and economic benefits such events could bring to people and countries.

As such, it urges authorities to “assess the importance and necessity of an event and consider the option that it may take place, provided all associated public health risks are adequately addressed and mitigated”.

A three-step risk assessment exercise for mass gatherings is recommended.

First, the host country’s existing regulations on public health and social measures to control the spread of the virus.

Second, evaluation of risk factors

Covid-19 safety protocol published for exhibition logistics workers

{ **Bureau brief** }

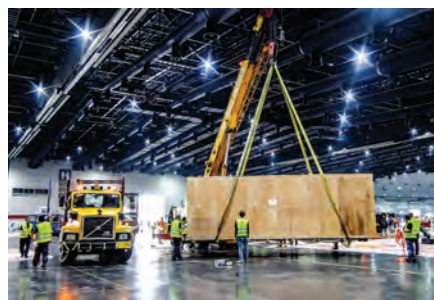
The International Exhibition Logistics Association (IELA) has released a step-by-step practical guide and safety recommendations for the exhibition logistics industry during the current pandemic.

Entitled IELA On-Site Covid-19 Protocol, the guide recommends the measures and behaviour to adopt in an on-site work situation specific to the exhibition logistics environment, as economies restart around the world.

This protocol covers a wide spectrum of daily working functions and results from the work put in by IELA’s Standards & Customs Working Group (S&C WG).

Keeping in mind the safety of logistics teams and all those present on show sites, this document highlights various aspects to be addressed from basic hygiene matters to more complicated delivery situations, where close collaboration and interaction is unavoidable among on-site workers, but where social distancing now has to be ranked as the top priority.

By applying this protocol, IELA Members will be positioned ready, even before the actual opening of events, making



Workers setting up exhibition sites need health and safety guidance during pandemic

sure that the exhibits and stand material arrive safely and punctually at show sites and booths. It is therefore imperative that working teams follow these guidelines to ensure the success and safety of events.

David Palomo, chairman of the IELA S&C WG, said in a statement that the guide will help the industry to face the pandemic now, “as well as be forewarned and informed of future difficult situations at all times”.

The IELA Covid-19 Protocol is available online in the IELA Member Zone and on the Organiser & Exhibitor Portals on www.iela.org.

Adelaide leads meeting recovery

Team Adelaide, convened by the Adelaide Convention Bureau, has developed a Covid-19 economic recovery end-to-end marketing campaign. The SA FE campaign markets an Adelaide South Australia promise of exemplary health and safety standards and procedures as freedoms return. The campaign also promises that the sector and its stakeholders will do everything in their power to ensure that meeting delegates will be in the safest possible environment, and take care of them from arrival to departure.

Malaysia green lights small events

The Malaysian government has approved the organisation of meetings, workshops and conventions, capped at 250 people, starting from July 1, 2020. These business activities must be carried out in Malaysia’s green zones, and with strict adherence to standard operating procedures. The Ministry of Health Malaysia defines green zones as districts with no active Covid-19 cases. Aside from a capacity cap, the venue also has to be large enough to allow social distancing measures.

Western Australian lifts capacity limits

The Western Australian State Government has removed all venue capacity limits since July 18, as the state moves further down its Covid-19 recovery roadmap and towards restarting the business events industry.

Business travel association accused of bad governance

By Caroline Boey

Asian corporate travel managers and former members of the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) – and its previous iteration National Business Travel Association (NBTA) – indicate that stronger corporate governance is needed to get the association back on track.

This and more were brought to light during the recent exposé on GBTA's hostile working environment and the management style of CEO Scott Solombrino. A whistleblower's email, signed by "current & former GBTA Staff" and sent to *Business Travel News* in early June, had pointed to a number of ongoing and specific incidents some described as racist, divisive, and derogatory comments aimed at female staff. The whistleblower also accused Solombrino of enjoying luxurious hotel stays and expensive meals, while denying primary expense reimbursements to GBTA staff.

A buyer who received his corporate travel expert certification from NBTA commented that board members' meeting only once or twice a year would not be scrutinising the association's operations.

"As a not-for-profit organisation with board members who are volunteers, corporate governance was probably not as strong as it should be," he said, adding that budget cuts resulting in GBTA's departure from Asia in late-2019 and its US-centric research and White Papers offered Asian members less value.

Another corporate travel manager, whose GBTA membership lapsed five years ago, observed: "As a not-for-profit association, GBTA became commercial and less relevant for what I wanted, whereas ACTE (Association of Corporate Travel Executives) was more beneficial."

The travel manager added that GBTA's

annual conventions in the past were "a useful platform for Asian hospitality companies trying to reach US buyers and they could get up to 100 RFPs".

On the allegations, former GBTA board member Paul Tilstone, commented: "The challenge here is that the issue goes beyond the communications we have witnessed in the press, so any response from the board solely with regards to the CEO is unlikely to satisfy the deeper challenges it faces with industry sentiment."



Iconic Beasley/Shutterstock

Tilstone, who is the managing partner of UK-based travel and meetings management company, Festive Road, added: "The CEO allegations require strong corrective measures but additionally the whole GBTA construct needs change. A not-for-profit driven by profit will continue to make mistakes and be driven by the wrong outcomes."

"Naturally, every supplier needs to consider its own position based on its own values. From our point of view, before the email, we were already uncomfortable with various GBTA positions so Festive Road withdrew from the convention back in February (pre-Covid-19) as soon as GBTA applied surcharges to exhibitors to pay for the opening reception.

"It wasn't the cost of the surcharge, but the principle. And it's this overall attitude that concerns a number of the members," Tilstone elaborated.

Paris and the US take top spots in ICCA's 2019 rankings

The French capital has, for the second year in a row, led ICCA's recently published 2019 city rankings, based on the number of meetings held last year, while the US has topped the country charts.

Paris hosted 237 meetings in 2019, while second and third runner-ups Lisbon and Berlin welcomed 190 and 176 respectively.

Asian presence in the top 20 city rankings is provided by Singapore at seventh place; Tokyo in 10th spot; Bangkok in 13th; Seoul in 15th; and Taipei in 19th.

Sydney barely makes it onto the city rankings, holding 20th spot, with 93 meetings.

On the country charts, France, Spain and the UK occupy the top five positions, with the US leading the line-up. Asian presence comes in the form of China in seventh place; Japan in eighth place; and South Korea in 13th spot.

However, when destination performance is assessed by the estimated total number of participants, a different set of rankings emerges.

Barcelona and the US lead the city and country rankings by attendance respectively. Meetings in Barcelona last year saw 157,000 delegates, while those in the US recorded 357,000 delegates.

The study finds that June, September and October are the most popular months for association meetings. Medical science (17 per cent), technology (15 per cent) and science (13 per cent) are the three most popular international association meeting topics.

In 2019, the average total expenditure on all meetings in the ICCA Association Database was almost US\$11 billion – excluding spin-off investments and economic development.

Busan secures marine waste conference for 2022

Busan has won the bid to host the 7th International Marine Waste Conference, an international conference hosted by the United Nations Environment Program dealing with the global issue of international marine waste policy.

Over 700 international experts – marine waste researchers, policy officials and NGOs – from 50 countries and re-

gions are expected to gather at the Busan Exhibition and Convention Center, tentatively scheduled for September 2022.

Over a period of five days, industry experts will discuss the current situation, problems and effective countermeasures for marine waste worldwide. Presentations will cover topics that include the prevention of microplastics, collaboration

in the private sector, effective implementation of laws-regulations-policies, alongside 170 poster presentations.

This is the first time that the conference, held irregularly under the auspices of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), is being held in a country other than the US.



IT&CM Asia
Incentive Travel & Conventions, Meetings

CTW
Asia-Pacific
Corporate Travel World



IT&CM Asia and CTW Asia Pacific Goes Virtual

**16 to 20
November 2020**



**Register
Your Interest
Now**

Participation Details Will
Be Released In August

Save The Dates For Our
Physical Event In 2021
28 to 30 September



Asia-Pacific's Only Doublebill Event
in MICE and Corporate Travel
www.itcma.com | www.corporateworld.com/apac



ICC Sydney readies for hybrid event future

International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) has created a new hybrid on-site and virtual event solution that will allow clients to host more than 300 people at the venue in accordance with strict social distancing measures, while enabling live streaming to an unlimited number of remote attendees.

Following the outbreak of Covid-19, ICC Sydney's successful virtual events service has seen the venue host multiple world-class events. These included the Meetings and Events Australia 2019 National Awards, Stand Tall 2020 – Australia's largest youth event which was streamed to more than

40,000 students, and a raft of community and government events.

ICC Sydney will make the new Hybrid Event Solutions an ongoing suite of products available to its clients, reflecting the seamless merging of technology with live experiences needed for the current and post-pandemic era.

To deliver the dual model, ICC Sydney has applied cutting edge technology into its new hybrid spaces, including projection screens, entertainment lighting and PA systems. This set up will allow both attendees in the rooms and guests located remotely to have the same high quality event experience.

Pico+ and Migu partner up to advance virtual events capability

Pico Far East Holdings has formed a strategic alliance with China Mobile's Migu Video Technology in response to the rapid growth in the online virtual events and exhibitions trend.

The alliance aims to create online virtual events and exhibitions and other innovative platforms, by joining Pico+'s expertise in exhibitions and event marketing, with Migu's focus in content production and immersive experiences.

The partnership will cover three spectrums: Online and virtual exhibitions and platforms; VR content channels on mobile phones, TVs and VR headsets; and VR e-commerce and online new economy.

Online and virtual exhibitions and platforms will benefit association summits with an exhibition component, as they facilitate new formats such as cloud-based forums, exhibitions, signing ceremonies and trading.

The alliance will also create an "online VR virtual exhibition centre" for China Mobile's "Cloud VR" service, creating a social feast in the VR world.

As well, Pico+'s 360-degree virtual exhibitions and virtual conference experiences will be powered by Migu's capabilities in video content distribution across three



Cloud-based forums as well as virtual exhibitions and trading are now possible

major channels – mobile phones, TVs and VR headsets. The alliance will create VR content channels and unique panoramic content for users, incorporating and operating features such as cloud exhibitions, cloud forums and more.

Finally, the alliance will combine the expertise of Pico+ in 360-degree 3D VR display technology with Migu's resources in e-commerce merchandising. This will ultimately help convert "footfall" from cloud exhibitions into online consumption. The resulting virtual commerce, or V-commerce, platforms tap the potential of new economy created by VR and online services.

Pacifico Yokohama North opens for business



Pacifico Yokohama convention complex in the port city of Yokohama, Japan has opened the doors to its new wing, the Pacifico Yokohama North.

The highlight of Pacifico Yokohama North is its 6,337m² multipurpose hall, said to be the one of the largest in the country. It can host 5,948 people in theatre-style or 3,600 pax in classroom-style.

Within Pacifico Yokohama North are also 42 meeting rooms, which can house between 56 and 240 pax in a theatre-seating plan.

The new North wing is directly connected to the complex's multipurpose Annex Hall, as well as the column-free Exhibition Hall, through an outdoor pedestrian deck.

Catering can be arranged with the 594-key InterContinental Yokohama Grand – conveniently housed within the complex – and the nearby, 603-key Yokohama Royal Park Hotel. Both hotels have the resources and expertise to host banquets for a sizeable number of guests, and are able to cater to unique dietary requirements, including religious restrictions.

Alternatively, the complex offers many restaurants that serve a wide range of cuisines, including Italian, modern Chinese, as well as Yokohama-style French fare.

A short drive from Pacifico Yokohama will also bring delegates to the city's celebrated attractions, including the historic Yokohama Red Brick Warehouses, from which delegates can enjoy the scenery of Yokohama Bay, as well as the Cup Noodles Museum.

New Alma Resort brings convention capability to Vietnam's Cam Ranh

New luxury resort, Alma, has opened on Vietnam's Cam Ranh, a peninsula on Vietnam's south-central coast, bringing with it a host of facilities that enable conferences and social functions to be conducted under one roof.

Available for event planners' pickings are the 400-seater outdoor Alma Amphitheatre; the Alma Convention Centre with its 300-pax ballroom and selection of meeting rooms; and a 70-seat cinema that can be bought out for keynote or award presentations.

Accommodation options include suites – housed inland – and three-bedroom pavilions complete with a private swimming pool. There are 196 pavilions and 384 suites altogether on property.

For recreation, event delegates can seek out the gym and yoga room; art gallery; 18-hole putting green; Le Spa with 13 treatment rooms; 12 pools cascading down to the beach which include a 75-metre beachfront pool for laps and an adults-only pool; a 6,000m² Splash Water Park; a Science Museum; an outdoor archery range; and more.

There are 14 F&B options ranging from an Italian restaurant to a local seafood option; and includes several bars.

Alma's blend of business and leisure facilities provides a warm welcome to conference attendees hoping to travel with their family for an extended leisure retreat.



A superior room at Far East Village Hotel Ariake

Far East's Village brand arrives in Japan

Singapore-based Far East Hospitality has taken over the management of the Village Hotel Ariake Tokyo and rebranded it as the Far East Village Hotel Ariake.

The 306-key hotel is located in Koto City, the eastern part of Tokyo, and is currently targeting the domestic business community that utilises Tokyo Big Sight – the largest convention and exhibition centre in Japan. A free shuttle to Tokyo Big Sight is provided as part hotel amenities.

Guestrooms are fitted with the latest technology such as AI speakers that allow guests to make multilingual voice commands. Facilities on-site include a coin-operated launderette, vending facilities, and a restaurant.

To minimise contact, Far East Village Hotel Ariake offers self-serve kiosks for check-in and check-out, and contactless payment solutions.

Village Hotel Ariake Tokyo was the first hotel under the Village brand to expand its presence outside of Singapore.

Meliá debuts in Thailand

Spanish hotel group Meliá Hotels International has opened Meliá Koh Samui, its first hotel in Thailand.

The beachfront resort offers 159 rooms and 41 suites, suitable for associations looking to connect with members away from the city.

There are seven multifunction rooms, a ballroom for up to 200 guests, and beachfront spaces which have hosted gala dinners for 500 guests.

To unwind, guests can retreat to two outdoor pools, including one that loops like a river through the resort's gardens.

The hotel also houses the Gallery, a non-profit social enterprise of art and design gift shops under the aegis of the Asset World Foundation for Charity. Profits support further artistic endeavours, as well as preserve and promote local culture and areas in need.



Park Hyatt adds meeting options in Suzhou



The Park Hyatt brand has opened an outpost in Suzhou, eastern China, located near Jinji Lake in the heart of Suzhou Industrial Park.

The hotel features five function venues spread over 2,400m², with options suitable for intimate gatherings of 12 guests as well as larger events with up to 900 attendees.

With 178 rooms and suites, ranging from 50m² to 173m² in size, the hotel can support residential meeting groups.

Facilities on-site include a pool, fitness centre, spa with six treatment rooms, as well as three F&B venues – Xizhou Hall serving locally-inspired fare; the Living Room for light refreshments and tipples; and Apartment 208 which specialises in prime steak and sustainable seafood.

Online lifeline

The online space has become the favourite meeting room for many associations that need to maintain engagement with members and the public, but risks of webinar fatigue need to be addressed, writes **Karen Yue**

Associations that once had an array of face-to-face engagement tools at their disposal – conferences, meetings, training workshops, social functions, community volunteerism programmes – prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, have found themselves restricted to just online formats due to travel restrictions and event capacity limitations in many destinations.

However, for some association chiefs, this predicament has turned out to be a blessing in disguise, as moving communications and engagement online has resulted in richer exchanges with an expanded audience.

Prior to the pandemic, the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS) had never ventured online with its member activities. It followed the traditional route of face-to-face

workshops and conferences, newsletters and emails.

Today, SPS conducts one or two member-facing special interest online events every month to maintain engagement and exchange, and has started a topical series for the public on social media platforms to address psychological issues arising from the pandemic and lockdown.

Going online has also allowed SPS to avoid having to restrict its events only to days when rental rates were lower and space was available, said president Cherie Chan.

Another benefit of the digital event shift, according to Chan, is her team's new confidence in running online events.

Carlin Lee, SPS vice-president, shared that the team is now deliberating whether or not to convert the society's annual research conference into an online edition, with multiple breakout rooms to facilitate in-depth topical discussions.

International Congress and Convention Association's (ICCA) regular Business Exchange, which once brought in small numbers of participants, has seen "huge interest" since going online, revealed Noor Ahmad Hamid, regional director Asia Pacific.

The online shift also brings additional revenue-generating potential, opined Octavio Peralta, secretary general of the Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific, and the president & CEO of the Philippine Council for the Advancement of Association Executives (PCAAE).

"The pricing model for a webinar will not be comparable to a face-to-face seminar

because the organisational cost is different, but that is not to say that a webinar will not make money. I believe associations now have the capacity to expand its reach beyond their members. There is also an opportunity for a recurring revenue in webinars as they can be recorded, repurposed and re-marketed in the future as an on-demand resource," said Peralta.

He shared that PCAA's webinar offering strategy is two-fold – information-sharing webinars are free to the public to raise visibility and attract potential sponsors while unique content and certificate-granting webinars attract a registration fee.

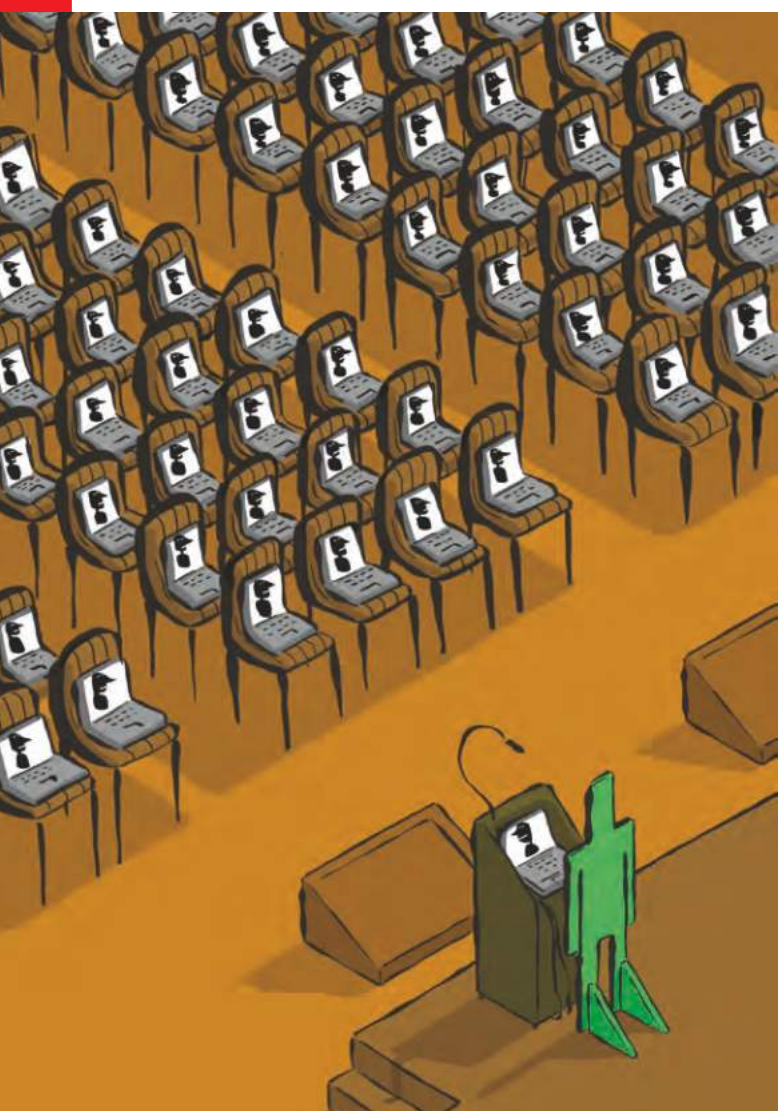
Something old, something new

Long before online and hybrid events were necessitated by travel and event restrictions, the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) created Convening Leaders Live, an annual hybrid event that brought in strong online and offline attendance from around the world. It also maintained a digital strategy at a time when few other associations saw the need for one.

Since the onset of the pandemic, PCMA has intensified its online activities. Engagement with the board and members are more frequent through online means such as e-direct mails, Zoom meetings and focus groups, webinars and a bi-weekly Covid Recovery Dashboard survey. PCMA reports a 64 per cent year-on-year spike in website traffic through June, with over 300,000 views of its Covid-19 content alone.

The Covid Recovery Dashboard survey has proven to be "incredibly popular", said Karen Bolinger, PCMA's managing director for Asia-Pacific, attracting about 1,000 responses each time.

Online trainings and meetings are not new to ICCA too, as these virtual options are held to encourage wider attendance by its global membership, revealed Noor. But he told *TTGassociations* that the organisation has never "gone to the extent of moving



am Lay (UM): Instagram.com/oddysequential/jm

all events to virtual or hybrid (platforms)”.

“With this pandemic and since travel is not possible, all activities have gone virtual. For example, our annual Association Meetings Programme (June 29-30) was completely virtual,” Noor remarked, but added that as destinations begin to reopen for domestic travel, his organisation has been able to get some hybrid events off the ground.

“For example, the ICCA Congress in Kaohsiung this November and ICCA Asia Pacific Summit in Yokohama this December will be hybrid events,” he added.

Battling fatigue

ICCA now hosts an average of four to five virtual meetings and webinars each month, excluding training programmes. The schedule was a lot busier in the beginning of the global travel freeze, with “quite a number of webinars” conducted for the various regions and sectors of its membership.

“However, as we are coming into webinar fatigue, we decided to only organise one if it is necessary. Online trainings are an exception – they have gone up dramatically because most members are investing this (downtime) into training and learning,” explained Noor.

Declaring that “webinars are one of the best options and means for associations

to stay connected with our boards and members” and that their benefits will ensure they became “part of a growing portfolio of standard service offerings to members, even after this pandemic”, Peralta said webinar fatigue would only set in when the attendee experience and content are “mediocre”.

Peralta pointed out that associations looking to engage with their audience online are not limited to just webinars.

“There are at least five different online event concepts – webinars; webinar plus interaction; content and connect, which are networking opportunities; online summit or conference; and virtual exhibition,” he explained.

Peralta added that providing “exceptional experiences through differentiation and diversity of these online offerings at varied levels or types of events” is key to maintaining member interest and participation.

Over at PCMA, online engagement is kept high with constant content evolution. It has introduced shorter, more

intimate gatherings of audience segments to add specific value and to ensure attention is captured and maintained.

Some of the new online content are Chat & Learns, where an expert presents a specific topic with more Q&A time; and a one-day digital Brain Date event that allows audiences to connect in small groups or one-on-one about a specific topic.

“It is these member-only forum sessions that have been immensely popular and have given people the chance to communicate and stay engaged during this time,” said Bolinger.

SPS too, has learnt to keep its online content “bite-size”, each no more than an hour long, and to make them as conversational as possible so that attendees would remain engaged and awake.

Fitting in traditional media

Despite the heavier reliance on online media for association communications, Mathilde Gabriel, account manager of Chab Lab, an agency specialising in digital

events and strategic marketing, believes there is still a future for traditional media, such as printed or electronic newsletters and journals.

Gabriel said that these media help to maintain contact with members in between digital events and are better for targeting a wider audience.

Lee too, believes that traditional media will not be phased out post-lockdown, “as our members enjoy reading” about the latest findings and issues relating to the field of psychology.

Late-2019, SPS revived the *Singapore Psychologist*, a quarterly flagship magazine geared towards education and public awareness around specific issues, such as depression and anxiety. The publication is expected to continue to be a valuable resource for its members and the public.

What needs to change with these passive media is the form of content they convey. Gabriel suggested that a short video clip could be embedded in an e-newsletter to help it stand out from other emails in the inbox.

Get smarter online

Mathilde Gabriel, account manager of Chab Lab, the digital events and marketing division of Chab Events, lays out some tips on keeping web events hot and interesting

Invest in building up a storyline. Quality content is a result of time and intelligent effort spent. Focus on identifying your event's narrative and make it brisk and gripping; coordinate a rehearsal with the speakers or even invest in training for them.

Cap it at 60 minutes. With distractions all around, participants tend to lose interest if a webinar lasts much longer.

Make time for inclusivity and engagement. Interaction during online meetings has gone from nice-to-have to absolutely-must-have. This ranges from a simple icebreaker to an occasional pulse-checking poll to an open Q&A at the end.

Don't skip the entertainment. An impressive opening and closing entertainment is as important as the core content delivered in a web conference. Consider visually-strong ideas such as sand art, live art painting, an impactful video as the opening or motivational one for the closing, or mentalists or online magicians.



“While there might be a growing sense of webinar fatigue, (online events are) still the most accessible and practical solution for professionals. The need to connect, adapt, grow, learn and perform our jobs hasn't stopped, so these platforms are key to keep people doing what we do best – helping people to connect.”

Karen Bolinger

Managing director, Asia Pacific, PCMA

Collaboration leads the way

Associations representing the beleaguered business events industry are coming together to emerge sooner on the other side of the crisis, writes **Lauren Arena**



As countries cautiously begin to reopen borders, business events associations in South-east Asia have come together to spur the recovery of the region's meetings and events sector.

Sharing protocols for the safe reopening of events, exchanging advocacy tactics, and building resilience in South-east Asia is the focus of ongoing talks between trade associations in Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

"A rising tide lifts all boats," said Aloysius Arlando, president of the Singapore Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers (SACEOS), which is leading the charge to strengthen regional cooperation.

"A strong industry fraternity exists within South-east Asia, but the domestic situation in each market differs considerably."

Arlando added that SACEOS is working with local government agencies to define a safe operating environment, and guide Singapore's industry towards a safe transition.

"We are sharing our plans with our South-east Asian neighbours, including learnings from our recent advocacy efforts, to ensure we remain

resilient and emerge stronger in a post-Covid world," he added.

SACEOS also spearheaded the Asia Community Building Pledge, which was signed in 2019 by the Thailand Incentive and Convention Association (TICA), Thai Exhibition Association, Malaysian Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers (MACEOS), Philippine Association of Convention/Exhibition Organizers and Suppliers (PACEOS), and Indonesian Exhibition Companies Association.

TICA president, Sumate Sudasna, said collaboration between trade association leaders has been fruitful, with talks of a regional travel bubble underway.

"We have pledged to maintain communication through the crisis and have indeed learnt from each other," Sumate said.

"I believe South-east Asia can definitely work together to emphasise our connectivity and complementary attributes, and to be recognised as a safe and hospitable region for (business events)."

Sharing knowledge is the first step towards regional recovery, but hurdles to effective cooperation remain.

Octavio B Peralta, founder

and CEO of the Philippine Council of Associations and Association Executives (PCAAE), said collaborative efforts similar to the recent agreement between the Business Events Council of Australia (BECA) and Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) will prove difficult as the pandemic has affected South-east Asian countries in different ways.

In early-June, BECA and CINZ agreed to work together to facilitate maximum economic, trade and investment benefits for both countries, in order to emerge strongly from the crisis.

"Factors like government policies on health protocols,

immigration rules, the opening of the economy, as well as incentive support for the MICE industry, differ from country to country," Peralta said.

"In the Philippines, for example, business and association events will be largely organised and held locally to rebuild confidence, before attracting international events."

Malaysia is also taking an 'inside-out' approach. The Business Events Council of Malaysia is working with government and industry to support a Let's Meet Locally campaign, which will include a second phase, Let's Meet Tomorrow, to help revive regional market demand.

MACEOS, meanwhile, is collaborating with local associations to standardise event protocols and contact tracing across Malaysia, while sharing best practice with regional neighbours.

"Each and every respective country needs to address control measures and public confidence first, and thereafter, cross-border initiatives can be taken," remarked MACEOS president Vincent Lim.

"Overall, strong government support is needed to revive the industry beyond (the establishment of) a travel bubble," he added.



Arlando: sharing plans for greater good

**Tan Kok Liang**

Travel matters

Elected into the presidency of the Federation of ASEAN Travel Associations when the future of travel and tourism was bright, Tan soon finds himself tackling the world's biggest travel freeze and one that has brought his industry to its knees. By **S Puvaneswary**

Would you have expected a travel and tourism industry crisis of this scale?

We were all optimistic that this year and 2021 were going to be great for travel and tourism within the South-east Asian region.

At the ASEAN Tourism Forum in January this year, FATA (Federation of ASEAN Travel Associations) members were making plans for ITB Berlin in March. This is one of the most important travel tradeshows in Europe, as it provides a big opportunity for members to further develop the European travel market in their respective countries.

As I was packing my bags and getting ready for the long flight to Berlin, I received a message from the organiser that the show had been abruptly cancelled due to the rapid spread of the coronavirus. In the weeks ahead, countries around the world started locking down their borders.

I have been involved in the travel industry since 1990 and I have experienced many crises that affected travel demand, such as the Gulf War, the global financial crisis, SARS, global recession and natural disasters. But none of those were of this magnitude and had such dire impact on the travel sector where the entire chain – aviation, hotels, cruises, theme parks and travel agencies – has been impacted all over the world.

The sector will take at least a year to recover, and boosting travel confidence is among the greatest challenges FATA faces this year.

Do you see this crisis as a real test of the value of FATA as a professional association?

Yes, I do. FATA is the umbrella body for national travel associations in South-east Asia. The combined number of travel agents under FATA is over 7,700.

As an association, this crisis has made us harmonise our strategies in dealing with challenges and working in solidarity with our members. Let me give you an example. There were a lot of airline cancellations during the pandemic. The airlines, in general, issued travel vouchers instead of cash refunds. Customers who purchased airline seats from (travel agents) were unhappy because they wanted their money back, rather than a voucher which has little or no value should (the airline) be liquidated.

Thus, we approached the International Air Transport Association in April to compel the airlines to process refunds in compliance with the rule of law. There has been no positive response but we will continue to pursue the matter.

While we remain sympathetic to the multiple challenges faced by airlines during this crisis, the position taken by airlines could stifle forward bookings and consumer confidence, (affect) travel patterns, and spur unnecessary lawsuits.

Other issues that FATA worked on include lobbying governments within South-east Asia to put pressure on banks and leasing companies to provide loan moratoriums to travel operators, and to come up with economic stimulus packages and financial assistance that benefit the region's travel industry.

Our members, and FATA, have also collectively urged the regional governments to start opening the borders first to help restart tourism.

Why South-east Asia first?

South-east Asia has a population of over 622 million, thus the potential of intra-South-east-Asian tourism is comparable with that of European, Chinese, Indians or Americans travelling within their borders.

Ensuring that the travel and tourism industry here is the first to recover would mean instant activation of a wide-range of related micro-economies. The impact from the growth of tourism in South-east Asia will create curiosity and branding opportunities in international markets that will in turn develop an interest to visit the region.

Travellers are also inclined to travel closer to home as they are also concerned about future lockdowns (resulting from) new waves in the absence of a vaccine. The pandemic has left millions of travellers stranded all over the world, and memories are still fresh for many.

What are the most common concerns

that FATA members have now?

With zero revenue as early as March and ongoing weak travel demand, members are worried if they will be able to sustain their operations until the industry fully recovers, and this I estimate, will occur sometime in 1Q2021.

Being able to sustain and pay staff salaries and office rentals as well as service business loans are major concerns of our members. Liquidity is another major concern as financial institutions see the tourism industry as high risk and are reluctant to give out loans.

Tourism companies also face angry customers and litigation as customers demand refunds for tour packages but the money is held by airlines, hotels and overseas operators.



"I DON'T WANT TO BE A PRESIDENT FOR NAMESAKE AND YET HAVE EVERYONE ELSE TO DO THE JOB. THAT IS JUST NOT MY STYLE."

The new normal calls for our members, who are already burdened financially, to further invest in health and safety protocols and this may require office renovations, digitalisation of operations, and purchase of personal protective equipment.

Prolonging border closures will not help to improve the dire situation of our members; that will do more harm. Travel agents and tour operators who depend on foreign tourists or who handle outbound markets have seen their businesses adversely affected. Some have stopped operating for good.

If borders remain closed for much longer, I foresee many more businesses shutting down and the industry will be left with only globally-owned companies and a few national players.

Are FATA members turning to technology to improve efficiency?

The push towards digital had already begun before the pandemic.

For instance, there was significant use of digital marketing and promotions. Face-to-face meetings at travel shows where buyers met with sellers were basically publicity exercises to firm up business contracts.

However, travel restrictions during the pandemic have led to an acceleration in the adoption of technology. Communicating and networking digitally via video platforms has become an accepted norm, whereas in the past, it was an alternative means.

I anticipate the use of technology will become more prevalent in the way businesses and networking are conducted moving forward.

How will travel and tourism change as a result of the pandemic?

The most pressing issue now is to work on standardising health and safety protocols so that it is in line with the World Health Organization's standards.

Members are also advised to minimise contact points, and FATA has encouraged them to go digital and issue QR codes and e-vouchers to their customers instead. Members are also devising tour itineraries that emphasise social distancing, such as visiting less-crowded areas.

FATA has cancelled its annual convention this year due to the pandemic. What opportunities will there be for members to raise issues without the convention?

The FATA Convention was scheduled to be held in Phnom Penh in July. Instead of holding a physical convention, we held an online forum on June 19 with the theme, Way forward for tourism in ASEAN.

This was broadcasted live through the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents' (MATTA) Facebook page, with panellists from South-east Asia's national tourist organisations sharing recovery plans. FATA members also shared how intra-regional travel will change in the new normal and what various travel agent associations in South-east Asia were doing to rebuild travel confidence.

Does FATA have plans to work with counterparts in other parts of the world, for example, the European Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations (ECTAA)?

The various member associations that make up FATA already work independently with various global partners. One of our objectives now is to consolidate and leverage this global network towards the benefit of South-east Asia.

For example, MATTA's membership

and working relationship with ECTAA has already opened up collaboration opportunities with FATA. This bond between regional associations will strengthen the tourism industries on both sides of the globe.

Let's move on to you. You are a chartered accountant by training. What lured you into the travel industry?

I love to travel and meet people. I am more a people person than a numbers man.

Having said that, my training as a chartered accountant has been useful as I keep a firm eye on the books.

I was involved in the travel industry since 1990 as (my home town) Sabah is a tourism destination. In 2005, business affiliates urged me to set up an inbound travel agency that could provide reliable and trustworthy service. I felt then that the timing was right to strike out on my own, as the tourism industry in Sabah was booming at the time.

I also saw that I could help the industry by providing direct employment opportunities to the locals.

We took care of our customers by placing safety and security as our priorities. Over the years, the business grew and I was able to expand, while never forgetting our core values which included fair pricing, practising responsible tourism, providing quick responses to our partners and customers, and always innovating our products in order to stay ahead of the competition.

There is a saying, the more you give, the more you receive. In 2017, you became MATTA's president. How has the association helped you grow as an individual?

I was the chairman of MATTA Sabah chapter for four years, and MATTA inbound vice president for another four years before being elected as MATTA president in 2017.

Association work is not for the weak as we are consistently criticised by peers who happen to be business owners, and in a sense, our competitors too.

MATTA does not have regulatory powers but members expect us to perform "miracles" for their benefit. If we are not driven by passion to help the industry, office bearers will end up feeling dejected.

Over the years, association work has helped me to become more open-minded, to be quick to listen, slow to speak and most importantly, control my emotions. It has helped me build communi-



Firm devotion to the profession

Tan Kok Liang was elected FATA president in early January, during a meeting held at the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2020 in Brunei Darussalam. He is also the president of the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA).

As MATTA president, Tan has instituted several key initiatives to further drive inbound tourism to Malaysia. This includes setting up a Malaysia-based online booking engine to ensure members' business interests are protected, and initiating aggressive overseas promotions to China, India, Europe and South-east Asia.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, Tan has been lobbying the Malaysian government to reassess the situation for gradual easing of border restrictions to allow foreign tourists to enter the country, renewing his efforts when Malaysia entered the recovery phase of the Movement Control Order in June.

Tan is also the owner and director of Borneo Trails Tours & Travel, an inbound tour operator based in Sabah that has been awarded several awards and accolades from both Tourism Malaysia and Sabah Tourism. He also operates an eco lodge, Borneo Nature Lodge, in Sabah.

In 2018, he received a Best Tourism Industry Leader award from the Tourism Promotion Organisation, in recognition of his contribution to the development of the tourism industry in Asia-Pacific.

cation skills and be more responsible for my actions.

In a way, MATTA has also helped me to gain the necessary qualities I needed to take on this more demanding role as FATA president.

MATTA has helped very much in your personal growth.

Yes, as well as growing my social network. However, protecting the association's interests always comes first.

There is no business or financial benefit from being an office bearer. On the contrary, if we are not careful, our own businesses will be affected due to over-involvement in association work. It is a myth that one will get more business

from being active in an association.

For a business to be successful, it needs to be reputable and have a trustworthy business set up and management. Also, with competition from members, who are always keeping a hawk's eye on you, how will there be an opportunity to abuse one's position?

You have a reputation with the media for always being prompt with replies to pressing deadlines, no matter how busy you are. What is your secret, juggling between your many responsibilities?

There is no secret, it is sheer hard work. I put in around 15 hours of work daily, and I prioritise schedules that are important and urgent. I have also made personal sacrifices along the way. I don't want to be a president for namesake and yet have everyone else to do the job. That is just not my style.

"PROTECTING THE ASSOCIATION'S INTEREST ALWAYS COMES FIRST."

Destination support

Convention bureaus often dish out a range of assistance and subsidies to make it easier for associations to convene in their destination.

TTGassociations reporters sniff out what's available now

Sydney is a popular meeting destination in Australia

Australia

By *Adelaine Ng*

Tourism Australia's main avenue of support for international associations is through its A\$12 million (US\$8.5 million) Bid Fund Program (BFP).

Offered through Business Events Australia, the programme provides financial support at the critical bidding stage where Australia is pitted against international competitors for the right to host the business event.

Eligibility requirements for the programme were relaxed late last year so that associations with a minimum of 400 international delegates can apply.

Matched funding levels from applicants were also dropped from A\$100,000 to A\$50,000, and can be used to include costs such as accommodation, venue hire and transport.

The BFP does not subsidise administrative, logistics or marketing costs for international bids, such as overseas travel for client meetings or marketing materials. Applications must be for event travel up to December 30, 2024 but submissions need to be made by June 30, 2021.

New support is also offered to domestic association events through a Business Events Boost Program, which funds projects that have the potential to influence local decision-makers or convert new domestic business events.

Some state bureaus are also preparing to announce their own support programmes to encourage the return of association meetings.

Japan

By *Kathryn Wortley*

Prefectures and cities in Japan have developed a varied list of association support efforts.

In Osaka, the city's Convention & Tourism Bureau and city government have halved the usage fee of Osaka International Convention Center, the third-largest exhibition space in the country and the largest outside Tokyo, for events

Ricky Balasio/Shutterstock



From above: The prominent dome of Osaka-jō Hall, a multipurpose venue in the Japanese city; the serene Bongseunsa Buddhist temple in Seoul makes a good post-meeting social addition

held within this financial year (to take place by March 31, 2021).

Associations can also book Osaka-Jo Hall – a multipurpose hall near Osaka Castle that can seat 16,000 pax – under the same conditions.

These moves are designed to reduce the financial burden on organisers who now face the challenge of introducing Covid-19-prevention measures at events, according to Osaka's mayor Ichiro Matsui.

Over in Kagoshima, the Convention Visitors Bureau is teaming up with Kagoshima City on a publicity campaign this year to showcase the prefecture's capabilities for associations. A website to showcase local F&B venues suited for hosting associations is also planned.

Not to be outdone, Yokohama and Tokyo are developing subvention measures to attract associations within fiscal 2020.



TRAVEL TAKE PHOTOS/Shutterstock

South Korea

By Juyoung Lee

The Korea Tourism Organization offers the Korea MICE Support Program for associations that are looking to meet in the country. Events that qualify for support must have either considered or confirmed South Korea as a meetings destination between July 1 and Decem-

ber 31 this year, or have cancelled or postponed their meetings – scheduled to happen before June 30, 2021 – due to the pandemic.

Organisers can access a variety of benefits, such as visa facilitation; customised support package based on the group's needs; a welcome ceremony at the airport; discounted or complimentary air tickets and accommodation; and discounts and rebates on venue rentals.

The programme is supported by regional business events bureaus that pump in more discount packages.

Meanwhile, meeting participants will benefit from perks that promise to enhance the destination experience, such as souvenirs; fast-tracked immigration; complimentary tourism and cultural experiences such as entry into Korean folk villages, K-pop themed parks, trekking, and dining in Michelin-star restaurants.

Malaysia

By S Puvaneswary

Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) has unveiled a two-part *Meet in Malaysia* campaign.

Aimed at the domestic market, the *Let's Meet Locally* campaign offers a complimentary full-day city tour with an English-speaking guide, for a minimum group size of 30. The group must also stay a minimum of two nights at a participating campaign partner hotel.

For larger groups of at least 60, staying for two nights or more at a campaign partner hotel, dinner sponsorship will be thrown in. For 150 participants and more, a sponsorship of a full-day meeting

package at a campaign partner hotel is possible.

Meanwhile, under the *Let's Meet Tomorrow* campaign, MyCEB will provide a full-day meeting package for groups that convene at a campaign partner venue for two days or more. Qualifying events must also have a minimum of 120 delegates, of which at least 10 per cent are international participants.

The *Meet in Malaysia* campaign runs until end of 2021, and is currently supported by 56 hotels and nine venues.

Meanwhile, Penang state and its Convention & Exhibition Bureau (PCEB) has created a *Privilege Penang 2021-2023*, applicable to domestic meetings. Available from next year until 2023, the programme supports events taking place from 2023 and beyond.

In the pre-bidding stage, support will be provided in the form of fully-hosted site inspections in Penang for decision makers; return air tickets to Penang; hosted accommodation; ground transportation; and admission tickets, if required.

Support for the bid presentation includes customised souvenirs, bid papers, a slide presentation, website hosting and collaboration with the national airline, Malaysia Airlines, or any other related airline for complimentary or subsidised tickets.

Once the bid has been won, PCEB will host two committee meetings of up to 10 people, and a press conference prior to the event. Organisers can also choose to have their event listed on PCEB's social media channels or access a co-hosting technology service.

During the event itself, PCEB provides value-added support for group sizes ranging from 20 to 500 people.

Singapore

By Pamela Chow

Since the onset of Covid-19, the Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau has been working closely with business events stakeholders to support international and local associations.

Efforts include facilitating the postponement of their events by securing new dates with venues, and marketing and publicity support.

Most recently in July, STB has developed the Safe Business Event Risk Management Framework for business events of up to 50 attendees, based on strict safe management measures. Created in consultation with industry stakeholders and aligned with international best practices, the framework reflects the lessons learnt and observations made over the past few months.

The framework will enable STB to facilitate a safe resumption of business events in the coming months.

STB will trial this framework with two pilot events – the 2020 IEEE International Conference on Computational Electromagnetics (August 24 to 26, 2020) and the Asia Pacific MedTech Virtual Forum 2020 (September 24, 2020) – before gradually scaling up to other events and event organisers.

Further, to help Singapore's business events industry emerge stronger from the crisis, STB and Enterprise Singapore are collaborating with the Singapore Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers to formulate an Industry Resilience Roadmap with the goal of establishing best-in-class standards for new event safety measures, creating agile business models with a focus on digital capabilities, and developing pathways for professional development in the post-pandemic world.



From top: The historical Pinang Peranakan Mansion in Penang, Malaysia lends a cultural touch to association meetings; Sands Expo and Convention Centre in Singapore has 120,000m² of event space

Rethinking a postponed event

Lara Burnes of Melbourne & Olympic Parks provides six tips on how planners can constructively reschedule events during these unprecedented times



As we move into these unprecedented times, supporting businesses and industry has become more important than ever. With the weeks and months that lie ahead, there will be a lot of uncertainty – but what's for sure, is that we'll all be tested on how we work together and embrace opportunity.

Here are some ideas on rescheduling events to ultimately support and keep the industry afloat.

1. Contact your event partner, even if you don't know what the future holds.

Venues, suppliers and partners are all having it tough, just like you. While you might not know if you can reschedule your event, or if your event at a later date is going to be impacted, contact your partner to discuss your options.

Weigh up the possible scenarios – and begin to problem-solve together.

2. Keep moving.

Detail a new timeline, even if only rough. We must remember that venues will re-open and events will happen again soon. With this in mind, begin to map out new timelines, even if only rough. It's important to keep on top of key dates and update your event partners accordingly.

To avoid congestion when everything is back to normal again, don't be afraid to begin locking in dates. While there are still many unknowns, confirming sooner than later will ensure that you have your top pick for your next event.

3. Be flexible, prepare for the what-if.

Once life returns to normal, demand will be high for venues and event resources – this means dates and availability may be limited and you might not get your first, or second, choice on dates. Use this time to prepare for the what if, and be flexible.

Remember, dates can change. It's the experience your event offers that will be unique to your brand and the point-of-difference. Think about the busy and quieter periods of your industry and the 12-month calendar. You may even find some of your later choices in date pique interest of customers and drive a larger audience attendance.

4. Get planning.

Your event might not be happening next week or month, but that doesn't mean you can't continue to refine the experience to make it the best event yet.

Ultimately, while it might not feel like business as usual, venues are

here and available to continue planning as normal. Most businesses are operating remotely, with the benefit of having the time to really invest on your event. Use this downtime as an opportunity to brainstorm how to make your event the best one yet.

5. Think differently and embrace change.

When we emerge from this, the world will have changed and we will have adapted along the way. Embrace the changes and think about how you can incorporate them into your event.

Some of your attendees may not be able to travel due to budgets, health or simply because travel won't be a priority for their business. Work with your event partners on ways to enhance your event experience, such as working with a charity partner, local suppliers, or incorporating the digital space into your event with a live stream.

6. Be empathetic and kind.

We're all in this together. People may be slower at getting back to you than usual or battling personal and professional challenges on different fronts.

Be empathetic and be kind, and remember that our actions now will shape our industry's future.

Lara Burnes is the general manager of premier events and experiences at Melbourne & Olympic Parks. Currently she is driving the newest venue Centrepiece at Melbourne Park, scheduled to open late-2021. No stranger to the events space, Burnes has over a decade's worth of experience, her most recent role a business development manager with Pan Pacific Hotels Group in Perth.

Rising on home grounds

HKTB has thrown its support behind grooming local association activities, believing that they will revive the city's meetings scene, writes **Prudence Lui**



Hong Kong (pictured) has a campaign and war chest to help her win new association meetings

Despite being hit by a double whammy of ongoing social unrest and the Covid-19 pandemic, Hong Kong was among the first few destinations in Asia to resume business event activities.

This can be attributed to the city's containment and handling of the outbreak in 1H2020. Despite a second wave making landfall in July, officials were swift to impose the strictest-ever Covid-19 measures.

The wheels have not stopped turning for the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB). A spokesperson shared that it is still ensuring communication lines are open, and they continue to engage with both local and regional partners.

The spokesperson noted: "We believe that Hong Kong-based associations will be one of the key drivers that will lead the return of meetings and conventions, so we are working closely with them, and are providing all required support, starting from the bidding stage."

This support is part of a war chest worth an estimated HK\$88 million (US\$11.4 million) to promote business events in the 2020/2021 financial year, according to the HKTB spokesperson.

In addition, HKTB's *MeetON@HongKong* campaign, which targets event organisers, planners, trade associations and corporations both locally and globally, has earned the backing of some 80 hotels.

To ensure the destination stays top of mind, HKTB is tapping onto the local business events community's network to bring together leaders from universities, chambers of commerce as well as profes-

sional and trade associations in the city to serve as ambassadors under the new HK MICE Champion Club.

A spokesperson for the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) agreed that the recovery of meetings will start with domestic associations looking to engage local members, adding that the venue has received "some booking enquiries for meetings recently".

To help associations that were affected by the travel and event restrictions, the HKCEC management exercised flexibility in rescheduling events. That support has now evolved to include stepping up preventive measures to welcome back events, and ensure a safe, hygienic and comfortable environment for participants.

Director of International Conference Consultants, Katerina Tam, told *TTGassociations* that "Hong Kong's meeting industry is ready to welcome international meetings as soon as travel restrictions and quarantine requirements are lifted".

While meetings managed by International Conference Consultants were cancelled or postponed at the early onset of the pandemic, clients are now ready to resume events. "For the latter half of the year, we will be organising hybrid meetings where local participants join physically while overseas delegates attend virtually," she said.

Indeed, the pandemic has helped to fast-track associations' use of digital technology in their meetings, seminars and continuing professional development (CPD) activities.

Virginia Choi, managing director of

Tamty McGill Consultant International, which provides training solutions, said the bulk of training is now done online, particularly on Zoom.

Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS) was among the few local associations to adopt a digital event format.

Board of Professional Development chairman, Jeffrey Wong Ching-hang, explained that the move was "urgent", as the association's peak for CPD activities was in the third and fourth quarters of the year, with 50 to 60 events on schedule.

"Therefore, we encouraged all six divisions to adopt an online format (as early as) February. With funding support from our HKIS office, most events were able to make the online switch. Hence, we were not adversely affected and managed to stay on track with our CPD schedule."

Wong observed that online CPD activities allowed more "participation with flexibility" but they lacked the interaction opportunities possible only with face-to-face formats.

Face-to-face meetings by HKIS have been shelved for now, and Wong hopes to resume them soon at the institute's training centre.

He envisions smaller physical meetings when they resume and a hybrid format will be the way to go because some form of face-to-face social functions must be maintained to facilitate networking, which is needed for members to "win business".

As much as HKIS desires a resumption of some offline activities, it remains cautious about doing so. A large-scale CPD event that is jointly organised with other professional associations, and due to hap-

{ Pre/Post }

**Ngong Ping 360**

Ngong Ping 360 has launched small group travel and private tours through its subsidiary, 360 Holidays. The tours feature Lantau Island's diverse natural landscape, bringing in hiking, nature and health elements.

One tour starts on the Ngong Ping Cable Car – from where stunning views of Ngong Ping and the Big Buddha can be had – followed by a visit to the historic Tai O fishing village to find out what Hong Kong in the past was like.

Lamma Fisherfolks' Village

Situated on Lamma Island, the 1,858m² floating exhibition area is the only venue in Hong Kong that preserves the local fisherfolk culture and history of the fishing industry.

Participants can discover what life was like on the island, through various exhibits and activities such as hook-less fishing, traditional net fishing, cocktail mixing with preserved salted tangerine, or even Hakka tea pudding class, in just half a day.

Groups can be split up to participate in different activities simultaneously.

Sideline programmes like hiking and cultural tours at So Kwu Wan are also offered, while in the summer, guests can try their hand at dragonboat paddling.

Geopark Wonders Walk

Sharp Island in Hong Kong – a UNESCO Global Geopark – is a long and narrow south-north island located a stone's throw from Sai Kung Town Centre.

A three-hour tour, led by a certified EcoGuide, will take visitors on a hike around the island to look at various kinds of igneous rocks, such as volcanic breccia, quartz monzonite and rhyolite. Visitors will also see evidence of a huge ancient caldera – it is believed that around 140 million years ago a volcano was located in Sai Kung – and walk across a tombolo (a sand bar) to another smaller island.

The tour is available all year round, with summer being an ideal season for stunning photography.

Wan Chai Ghost and Food Tour

This three-hour guided tour appeals to participants who enjoy all things supernatural. Tours begin in Wanchai District – the best neighbourhood to showcase Hong Kong elaborate rituals that local Chinese perform to feed, pacify, entertain, and bribe the ghosts. To provide a sensory experience, the tour includes a tasting of five local treats, some of which are favoured offerings for deities and ghosts.

Monopoly Dreams

Opened in 2019, Monopoly Dreams at Peak Galleria is the world's first Monopoly-themed attraction. Sprawled over 1,850m² of indoor and outdoor space, features include augmented reality, hologram and 4D interactive game technology. The attraction has expanded its scope, and now hopes to provide business visitors with a highly immersive experience.

**Hong Kong Local Craft Beer Tour**

Held every Saturday, the tour highlights Hong Kong's local craft beer scene. During the four-hour tour, participants can meet with brewers to uncover their secrets and learn about the city's craft beer movement, as well as enjoy beer-paired local food tastings. Additionally, the trip includes a visit to The Mills, a revitalisation project transforming an industrial building into a business incubator, experiential retail and a non-profit cultural institution.

pen before the end of 2020, has been put on hold.

According to HKTb, as of May 2020, about 70 events have been postponed or cancelled, with a total of 370,000 visitors affected.

As such, HKTb has also made shifts online, such as by helping to organise online business matching platforms for visitor source markets.

Although very few physical events went ahead in 1H2020, several new association meeting wins during the same

period have provided a clear indication that event intentions remain strong and Hong Kong is still a popular destination choice.

The new wins include the Asia Sports Technology Conference 2020 or 2021 – to be held for the first time in the Greater China region; International Congress of Asia Academy of Preventive Dentistry 2022 – a first win for Hong Kong; 2022 International Airline Transport Association World Cargo Symposium – a first win as well; and the inaugural Wiki Finance EXPO Asia 2020.

{ **Need to know** }**1 Variety of event formats**

Hong Kong has a well-established digital infrastructure enabling it to swiftly respond to the new normal. Recently, Meeting and Exhibition Hong Kong held an online business matching platform for over 80 trade partners to talk with potential clients.

2 Zeroing in on health and wellness

More CSR- and wellness-focused ideas have surfaced in Hong Kong to enable meaningful social activities during meetings. For instance, attendees can form a squad to perform a Hong Kong-style dragon dance to raise funds for a select charity.

3 A new level of cleanliness

Event venues have been taking proactive steps to ensure higher cleanliness and hygiene standard. For instance, AsiaWorld-Expo deploys intelligent sterilisation robots and a three-in-one disinfection installation.



“Live social functions continue to be important as the surveying industry requires networking to win business.”

Jeffrey Wong Ching-hang

Chairman, Board of Professional Development,
Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

Building up for recovery

International face-to-face association meetings will take time to return, but the Thai CVB has initiated a number of programmes now that will establish a strong foundation for safe and fruitful conventions in the future. By **Anne Somanas**



Patani Studio/Shutterstock

Bangkok is starting to stir again with face-to-face meetings as the government lifts lockdown measures

In 2019, ICCA placed the Thai capital city of Bangkok in 13th spot on its ranking of top 20 cities for association meetings. The city hosted 124 association meetings, whose visitors made up 26 per cent of Thailand's arriving business events visitors that year.

However, Thailand's good fortune in business events did not carry forward into 2020, as the world came face to face with the Covid-19 pandemic which has decimated the events industry.

According to Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, president of the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), among 122 TCEB-supported events, 36 were cancelled while 86 were postponed, representing a minimum of around 25 to 30 per cent decline in government-supported events.

International association meetings took the brunt of the blow.

According to Loy Joon How, general

manager of Impact Exhibitions Management Co., all association meetings scheduled to take place or planned at IMPACT's convention centre were either cancelled or postponed due to imposed travel restrictions and border closures.

Thailand-based associations responded to the lockdown by taking their meetings online.

"During the early days of the outbreak, we held our monthly board meetings via Zoom, as well as our meetings with other associations or authorities, and some of the meetings were hybrid," recalled Pornthip Hirunkate, vice president of the Association of Thai Travel Agents (ATTA).

For the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) Thailand chapter, the pandemic was instrumental in catalysing the creation of compelling online content.

"Our five-session SITE Talk series was very well received. We will contin-

ue to host more (sessions)," said Max Boontawee Jantasuwana, founding CEO of Events Travel Asia and president of the SITE Thailand chapter.

The SITE Talk series were co-funded by TCEB.

Face-to-face meetings have started to resume as Thailand emerges from its lockdown. SITE Thailand and ATTA both hosted their AGMs in July, as required by the law.

While ATTA's AGM had approximately 400 to 500 members in attendance, its monthly meeting in June had a smaller crowd of just 200, instead of the usual 300 to 350 attendees.

Pornthip shared that the reduced capacity was in response to social distancing needs. ATTA also ensured reduced physical contact at the meetings, with breakout sessions removed and meal service limited to only seated servings.

She said: "As one of the industry's leaders, we have to set an example for our members on how to conduct a meeting under the current situation, and to follow all the rules and regulations laid out by the Ministry of Public Health."

The bulk of face-to-face meetings now are domestic gatherings, and industry specialists expect international meetings to take a much longer time to return due to Thailand's strict border controls.

"At this point of time, despite the gradual lifting of lockdown measures, travel restrictions and border closures are still in force. As such, (international) association meetings are unlikely to resume any time soon," Loy stated.

TCEB has been especially hard at work. The past few months have seen implementation of the TCEB Covid-19 Information Center to help keep event organisers up to date; the MICE Venue Hygiene campaign to certify venues; and TCEB's Virtual Meeting Space to support local and international organisers in bringing their events online.

TCEB has also



launched over US\$650,000 worth of grants through its I M PEOPLE FOCUSED and EASE UP financial support programmes for event organisers in preparation for when international meetings are able to return.

The latter programme offers up to five million baht (US\$158,843) in grants for meetings with a minimum of 40 delegates and at least two nights' stay in Thailand. Each qualified event stands to enjoy a financial subsidy of up to 1,500 baht per pax, up to a maximum of 300,000 baht per event.

Associations looking to convene in Bangkok will also have peace of mind, knowing that venues will support them should their meeting be disrupted.

"As a venue, the first order of the day is working with the affected associations to reschedule and sort out possible alternative dates. We provide them with the required contingency plan guidance, and help them to re-plan their meetings in accordance with the government's policies and guidelines on social distancing, safety, hygiene, and medical protocols," said Loy.

He added that IMPACT is now collaborating with various technology vendors to offer technology solutions such as virtual and hybrid meetings, event live-streaming, delegate registrations, as well as contact tracing and attendee density tracking.

"We are also giving associations turn-key technology solutions to ensure that their meetings are held successfully under the new normal requirements and formats," he said.

Max is confident that association events will resume in whichever form that works best "because we need to support our members and stay connected".

However, he predicts that the meeting format will alter post-lockdown. "(Meeting) size will be considerably smaller and (be) more exclusive to drive the interest and attention of the audience or prospects to join," he said.

"As one of the industry's leaders, we have to set an example for our members on how to conduct a meeting under the current situation, and to follow all the rules and regulations laid out by the Ministry of Public Health."

Pornthip Hirunkate

Vice president,
Association of Thai Travel Agents

{ Pre/Post }



SuriyanChandra AT Ayutthaya

SuriyanChandra AT Ayutthaya's cruises are a category on their own, wooing visitors with vintage-themed boat rides down the Chao Phraya in neighboring Ayutthaya, just an hour from Bangkok.

The restaurant has six meticulously restored golden teakwood rice barges that can accommodate eight to 15 people each, or a total of 70. The seatings on the boats take in social distancing requirements. There are also overnight cruise options as well as a la carte dine-in options at the restaurant.

Local Aroi

The Local Aroi fine dining experience by Local Alike is a co-collaboration between Bangkok chefs and chefs from local communities around Thailand. It hopes to inspire visitors to travel to communities in other regions of Thailand by tantalising them with delicious, high-end meals styled after beloved home recipes.

The eight-course meals are hosted in private local community venues, suitable for groups of 20 or less. Guests will get to listen to local chefs share about their personal stories, inspirations and hometown heritage.



Vana Nava Water Jungle

Vana Nava Water Jungle waterpark in Hua Hin, part of an integrated resort that comprises Holiday Inn Vana Nava, has launched a virtual reality (VR) slide, said to be the first in Asia. Using VR technology from the US, VR glasses transform the journey on a foam board down the waterslide into a 360-degree virtual world adventure in Galaxy, Jungle and Snow themes, with intriguing and exciting stories created in collaboration with VR experts from Ballast. Perfect for a post-meeting adrenaline rush.



Phuket Fantasy Island tour

Travel social enterprise HiveSters has created the Phuket Fantasy Island tour that plays up the destination's Peranakan heritage and fascinating Sino-Portuguese architecture. Visitors can choose from Route 1 – Phuket Old Town Community, where they can visit Thaihua Museum, enjoy cooking Phuket's famous Hok-kian noodle dish, and visit the legendary blacksmith shop Tai ZunAun; or Route 2 – Koh Lone Community, where they can learn to fish like locals and make their own souvenir Batik crafts. Each activity is suitable for 12 pax with social distancing, but larger groups can rotate among activities.



A virtual leap

The International Society for Professional Innovation Management has just 11 weeks to switch its conference in Berlin onto an online platform, something it has never done before. By **Karen Yue**

Event brief

The annual ISIPM Innovation Conference, scheduled for Berlin from June 7 to 20 this year, was rudely disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic that put a freeze on global travel and led governments to ban gatherings and events.

While the organiser, International Society for Professional Innovation Management (ISIPM), was confident in late-February of proceeding with plans to host its “largest ever conference” in Berlin, it soon became clear that a physical gathering would be challenging when people were being confined to their homes.

A badly impacted conference in Bangkok from March 1-4, where only half of registered delegates turned up, brought home the decision to convert ISIPM Innovation Conference into a virtual event.

Challenges

ISIPM executive director, Iain Bitran, recalled that there were only 11 weeks to plan and deliver the association's first virtual conference.

“It is worth remembering that a conference is usually a couple of years in the planning, and this time our community chose to come together in an entirely new way in under three months,” remarked Bitran.

And with the virtual format being new to everyone – with Bitran admitting that “we had no idea really how we were going to do this” – the entire process was a challenge.

Solutions

“We learnt in Bangkok that pre-recorded presentations did not go down too well so we took the decision to do the conference live, if possible,” said Bitran.

The team researched several web content

platforms, and eventually chose Zoom for its functions and cost.

It also chose to utilise the desktop version of its existing conference app, Eventsential, provided by RD Mobile. While this required participants to register for the app separately in order to access the links to the 203 separate Zoom sessions on the virtual conference, Bitran said they “managed this very well”.

To run the event, the team relied on their personal laptops and established a ‘production room’ on Bitran’s dining table at home.

“Each laptop was assigned a Zoom account which was, in turn, assigned to a series of ‘meeting rooms’. We controlled all sessions from one physical location and relied on a facilitator and technical support person to run the sessions virtually,” shared Bitran.

A dry run was conducted a week to the actual event, abiding by actual time slots.

“Had we not done this, the conference would have been a disaster as we learnt so much about how to run the conference (as well as) the difference between a Zoom Meeting and Zoom Webinar,” he said.

The dry run also allowed presenters to meet each other ahead of time, leading to “cohesive and engaging sessions during the actual conference”.

For an impactful opening and closing, especially in the absence of real human presence, the ISIPM team called on 72 members from 20 countries to produce a moving musical montage. Each member was assigned to belt out a line from the lyrics of Queen’s *We Are the Champions* and have that moment captured on video.

The submissions were compiled over four weeks. Bitran then sewed them up into a complete song, led in by a Star Wars-inspired introduction.

“I wanted something upbeat and positive, and felt that by achieving all this (the move to virtual format), we were all champions,” he told *TTGassociations*.

The virtual conference was a success, noted Bitran, who pointed to a collection of presentations and contributions from 400 people over the four days, and, at times, up to 17 parallel sessions involving 630 people from 53 countries.

“Everything was delivered live without a safety net, with little past experience and under the constraints of confinement and significant stress for many,” he concluded.

Key takeaways

“The ISIPM team is proud of our community coming together in this time of crisis. Proud that we all chose to accept the challenges, take risks and step forward. Standing by with the message of ‘sorry, see you next year’ was not an option,” stated Bitran.

“Crisis always requires action, dedication and acceptance of new ways of doing things.”

In pivoting to a virtual format, Bitran discovered to his delight that it was easier to commit high-level speakers “who were willing to give up 30 minutes of their time to present virtually”, as they did not need to fly and be in a destination for days.

Event

The XXXI ISIPM Innovation Conference

Organiser

The International Society for Professional Innovation Management

Date

June 7 to 10, 2020

Number of participants

630 from 53 countries

Challenges

The ISIPM team has never done a virtual conference, and they had less than three months to pull it off

Navigating the digital shift

Unable to convene in person, the Singapore Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers moves its AGM online – the first in its history. By **Lauren Arena**

Event brief

When Singapore's coronavirus lockdown, dubbed as the "circuit breaker", was announced in April 2020, it put a brake on all live events and public gatherings.

What ensued was a tsunami of online meeting requests, WebEx calls and webinar invitations, as the business events industry hastened its pivot to the virtual world – and the Singapore Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers (SACEOS) was no exception.

The SACEOS secretariat worked in record time, cutting through red tape, to host its annual general meeting (AGM) online in June – a first for the 40-year-old professional association.

Challenges

Like all pioneers, SACEOS hit a few bumps on the road to digital transformation.

It needed to select a suitable technology provider in an impartial manner, enable safe and secure e-voting, and ensure transparency in meeting proceedings, among other considerations in holding its first virtual AGM.

The SACEOS AGM provides one of the few opportunities for members to voice their concerns, engage directly with the executive committee, and – most importantly – cast votes to affect leadership and constitutional change.

Protecting members' voting rights was thus a key priority for the secretariat, and finding a tech provider that integrated e-voting, file sharing and live webcast functionality – all within budget – was no mean feat.

Cybersecurity was also high on the agenda to ensure votes could be properly validated and internal auditors could have video access to the meeting to observe proceedings.

"Navigating the virtual meeting space right now is a minefield," SACEOS president, Aloysius Arlando, said. "We know from our members that many event professionals struggle to stitch together multiple technology providers behind scenes to meet client needs. For small teams, this isn't always feasible."

Solutions

Engaging a panel of internal auditors, made up of members of the executive committee and its legal counsel, helped the secretariat conduct its due diligence in selecting a technology provider. This entailed an extensive evaluation of five different vendors, followed by a blind vote and unanimous decision to work with board management software specialist Azeus Convene.

The same panel of auditors observed the



voting framework before and during the meeting to ensure compliance.

Together with Azeus Convene, SACEOS created a customised platform that lived up to its goals of transparency and inclusion, and met the government's code of conduct for AGMs held amid the "elevated safe distancing period".

"We employed a rigorous evaluation process when selecting a technology provider to ensure the platform was secure and allowed our meeting to remain compliant with the governing laws for societies in Singapore," Arlando recalled.

The result was a pioneering virtual model that allowed members to securely submit proxy votes and questions ahead of time.

During the meeting, members were also invited to submit questions via a chat function or to dial-in with a voice call.

Azeus Convene sales and marketing manager, Kevin Yoo Seunghee, said SACEOS was one of the first trade associations in Singapore to convene a virtual AGM.

"SACEOS took a very forward-thinking approach to the Covid-19 crisis and came to us looking to co-create a digital solution that provided a secure environment, but was also user-friendly," he said.

"Working with SACEOS gave us insight into the unique needs and challenges of associations, especially during this difficult time. The experience has also allowed our business to expand and created a number of new leads (among members who were inspired to adopt the solution for their own clients)."

While the AGM ran into a few technical difficulties, those were deftly handled by the association's honorary secretary.

Ongoing housekeeping reminders helped acquaint members with the virtual platform, though several senior members needed additional help to navigate the digital tools.

Key takeaways

It is resoundingly clear that stakeholders in Singapore's business events industry will need to sharpen their digital event know-how in a post-lockdown, post-pandemic world. Moving forward, Arlando said the association will soon offer training to members on how to embed digital capabilities, and will seek to introduce pre-event tutorials ahead of each virtual meeting to help attendees familiarise themselves with the chosen platform.

Event
SACEOS 40th Annual
General Meeting

Organiser
SACEOS

Venue
Online

Event date
June 9, 2020

Number of participants
More than 100



The Resource For Buyers Of **Premium** **Travel And Luxury** Meetings in Asia-Pacific

**CALL OF
THE WILD**

10,672 Print Copies
Across Asia Pacific

70,000 Digital Copies
Globally



ttgasialuxury.com



DIGITAL

TTG | *Publishing*
Travel Trade



TTG ASIA

[LUXURY]

for buyers of premium travel and luxury meetings

FURTHER AND DEEPER
Further East returns for a second edition,
bringing with it new luxury travel ideas and
hot issues to pay rapt attention to

READY FOR MARRIAGE
Thailand is beckoning LGBT+ travellers to get
hitched on her shores

A CHANGE DRIVER
Hiro Miyatake wants to unite Japan's top-end
travel specialists

To advertise, contact traveltradesales@ttgasia.com or +65 6395 7575