



APRIL 2014

PUBLISHERS NOTE

Dear Reader!

The latest statistics covering the Middle East region provided by both - ICCA and GIBTM – demonstrate that the highest meetings market growth rates are in the Middle East. It is more than enough reason to present some of the findings.

This month, we would like to present two interesting additions to an incentive program. Step back in time with a Downton Abbey highlight to your program in the UK or Ireland. Or how about a stopover in fascinating Dubai on the way to Africa safari or a cruise? Possible 2/3 day programs? See the information in the right column and contact Barbara Shapiro - Barbara@globalsiteinspections.com.

We are approaching one of the busiest times of the year, month after month features an important international MICE exhibition all over the world. Where will you go?

- The African Travel Week will be held from April 28-May 3
- And just 2 weeks later, we're heading to IMEX Frankfurt, May 20-22.
- Have you already scheduled your Hosted Buyer visit to MITM Euromed June 11-13 in Cadiz, Spain? See the information in the right column!
- Are you planning for Hong Kong? ITE & MICE might provide very valuable insights.

So many choices, so little time!

Need a North American Convention Centre for an Event between now and 2020? Why not look at Ottawa? A Rate Freeze promotion guarantees 2014 rates until end of 2020. See the information below!

Do you think your colleagues and co-workers are interested in this newsletter? Click here to forward the NEWSFLASH.

Best regards

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MIDDLE EAST: THE FASTEST GROWING INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS MARKET

The Middle East is the fastest growing international association meetings market in the world according to an International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) study which was revealed recently.

Martin Sirk, CEO of ICCA said: "The Middle East joined the Information Revolution more recently than most regions, so it is not surprising to see some of the world's fastest growth rates here, now that excellent meetings infrastructure has been developed, governments have created knowledge strategies to underpin their economic development agendas. We are confident that the region will enjoy even greater international meetings activity in the future, based on these underlying fundamentals."

"The number of meetings in the Middle East has even grown even quicker than in other regions, it has more than tripled over the last decade. With improved facilities, more flight connections and in some cases reduced visa requirements and the Expo 2020 only six years away, the growth potential for the region's MICE sector is exceptional." said GIBTM Exhibition Manager Lois Hall.

The inaugural **Middle East MICE Buyers Report** published by GIBTM reveals further details about the multitude of planners orientation: Almost all planners organize meetings in their home country, but 77% also organize events in other parts of the Middle East. Furthermore almost 70% also use European destinations with France, Spain, Austria, Italy and Turkey being the most popular countries. 50% of the planners have also held events in Asia with Malaysia, Thailand, India and Sri Lanka being most popular.

An interesting finding is that Middle East buyers are more quality and service conscious than price conscious. Most important are:

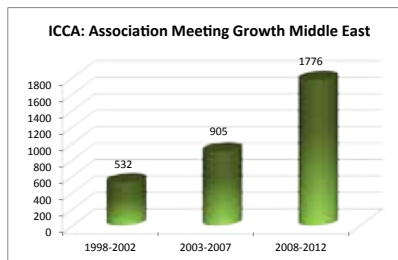
- 61% ease of access
- 52% Safety and security
- 52% professionalism of staff
- 48% price ranked only in fourth place

Also, professionalism of travel partners is a key topic. Least helpful behaviours of venue staff are:

- 61% venue changes not communicated
- 58% slow staff response
- 58% high staff turnover
- 55% inflexibility in price negotiation

Both questions clearly reveal that price only ranks in fourth position.

www.iccaworld.com - www.gibtm.com



IN THIS EDITION

MIDDLE EAST: THE FASTEST GROWING INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS MARKET

AFRICA TRAVEL WEEK

CANADA – OTTAWA CONVENTION CENTRE FREEZES 2014 SPACE RATE UNTIL 2020

GERMAN CONVENTION BUREAU (GCB) PROMOTES GREEN MEETINGS @ IMEX

JAPAN - KYOTO VENUE UPDATE: NIJO CASTLE & ROHM THEATRE KYOTO

RIGHT COLUMN

INCENTIVE PROGRAMS: SMALL CHANGES - BIG IMPACT

DELTA AIR LINE LAUNCHES WI-FI INTERNET ON INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS

JAMAICA VISA WAIVER FOR CHINESE CITIZENS

SHANGRI-LA HOTELS AND RESORTS OFFER PRESS READER SERVICE GROUP-WIDE

FREE WI-FI INTERNET IN ALL PALLADIUM BRAND HOTELS FROM SUMMER 2014

UK, NORTHERN IRELAND - BALLYGALLY CASTLE RE-OPENING ON APRIL 6, 2014

HOSTED BUYER EVENTS

Spain, Cadiz: MITM Euromed Hosted Buyer Event

As previously reported, the 18th edition of MITM Euromed, Meetings and Incentive Travel Market, will take place this year in Cadiz, Spain, from June 11th to 13th. It is sponsored by the Provincial Council of Cadiz and its' Convention Bureau. MITM Euromed offers two days of business appointments between exhibitors and buyers, mostly from European countries. These meetings are complemented with an exclusive social program, where all participants will enjoy the wonders of Cadiz. The program includes one welcome reception with dinner, one working lunch, 3 coffee breaks and one closing ceremony with dinner and entertainment. After the fair, hosted buyers and press will enjoy the 2 outstanding post-tours of the province of Cadiz, visiting its wonderful beaches, Natural Parks, charming villages... Participants will surely discover the essence of Andalusia.

The organizers affirm that this trade show system works: "Participants find a comfortable atmosphere to do business, where quality stands over quantity, making of MITM a real success". MITM asks each and every participant to evaluate the fair after its completion. The results are notarized to prove they are trustworthy. To date, a large number of requests from buyers from all over the world have been received to participate in MITM. As spaces are limited, buyers need to pass a selection and qualification process to be able to participate. Every year, MITM rejects an average of nearly 30 percent of requests from buyers.

[See more details!](#)





Empire Hotel Hong Kong · Wan Chai

STAY AND MEET FREE

Close to the Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre and business districts in Hong Kong, the Empire Hotel Hong Kong · Wan Chai is a popular accommodation choice for business travelers all over the world to connect, interact and transact. The hotel is also within walking distance of a colourful array of nightlife entertainments and shopping options.

With our new Stay and Meet Free package, clients who book accommodation to the value of HK\$35,000 can enjoy a complimentary half-day meeting for up to 15 persons during their stay. Offer valid until 31 October, 2014, first-come-first-served. Other MICE packages can be custom-made to each client's taste, budget and needs.

For enquiries, please contact Angeline Wong, Group Senior Business Development Manager on +852 3692 2163 / 2134 or email: angelinewong@empirehotelsandresorts.com
www.empirehotelsandresorts.com



AFRICA TRAVEL WEEK

Thebe Reed Exhibitions, a joint venture between Reed Exhibitions and Thebe Tourism Group, presents the first Africa Travel Week — taking place in Cape Town from April 28 - May 3 — bringing hundreds of fully hosted travel buyers from 40 countries focused on placing travel business within Africa. WTM Africa, ILTM Africa and IBTM Africa combine to form Africa Travel Week.

Rigorously pre-qualified buyers — inbound and outbound travel professionals, tour operators, luxury travel organisers, meeting planners, association buyers, event organisers and incentives specialists - are hosted across all events. Buyers will meet with suppliers of their choice at each of the events and are expected to complete some 12,000 pre-scheduled, targeted business meetings.

Thebe Reed provides travel and 4* or 5* accommodation, as well as onsite education sessions and thought provoking, topical keynote sessions. Exhibitors will not only benefit from full business diaries during the events, but they will also be able to network socially with buyers at many additional functions throughout Africa Travel Week. These networking events will take place at some of Cape Town's most prestigious venues, all of whom will benefit from the inbound business of Africa Travel Week itself.

Africa Travel Week will also play host to the world's media with some of the top Travel Editors from China, USA, UK, South America, Germany, India, Brazil, and Japan as well as more than 50 of Africa's travel media also attending.

Individual show dates within the Africa Travel Week are:

- ILTM Africa: April 28th – 30th
- IBTM Africa: April 28th – 30th
- WTM Africa: May 2nd – 3rd

www.africatravelseweek.com

KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE - MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE

The Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre is a purpose-built convention and exhibition facility strategically located in the Kuala Lumpur City Centre overlooking the iconic PETRONAS Twin Towers and the 50-acre KLCC Park.

Spanning over 7.3 acres, the five levels venue encompassing a total 22,659 sqm/ 243,898 sq ft of flexible function space consists of two auditoria (seating 3,000 and 500 respectively), 12,310 sqm/ 132,503 sq ft of Exhibition Halls including a 2,600 sqm/ 27,986 sq ft standalone marquee, a Grand Ballroom which seats 2,000 diners, Banquet Hall for 500, Conference Hall for 1,800 and 20 other meeting rooms.

Boasting the latest in wireless, 3G telecommunications and digital audio-visual facilities, the venue comes with a list of impressive features plus a 51-strong culinary brigade meeting the needs of all types of events.

www.klccconventioncentre.com



INCENTIVE PROGRAMS:

SMALL CHANGES - BIG IMPACT

Occasionally a small change or addition to an incentive program can have a big impact on the experience for the clients. The addition of a 2-3 day program for the super-achiever, or the CEO, delivers more than value added, it delivers that WOW factor. For instance:

Middle East - United Arab Emirates- Dubai

Dubai – with the continued expansion of Emirates routes globally, a stop-over in Dubai on the way to an African Safari or an India Experience, or a Cruise beginning is easy. Plan an unforgettable 2/3 day luxury program including Rolls Royce, Seaplane tour, exclusive desert dinner under the stars on magic carpets with skirted tables and candles. Select Jumeirah's Zabeel Saray, or Madinat Dar Al Masyaf, or One and Only The Palm, or The Oberoi, where service- is-an-art-form.. All presented by 4 Corners Events DMC.

Europe - United Kingdom- England

Downton Abbey – Love the Series? Live the Series! Tucked into a program to UK, Ireland or Scotland, or even as the entire incentive program- experience the life you see in the series. Dress the role you want, Lord, Lady or butler. Dine in the London town house, visit Highclere, stay at the castle in Kent, or Scotland, talk to people both aristocrats and servants who have lived that life. Private access and behind the scenes experiences unique to that era and those locations. Programs from 3-10 days, tailored to any special interest of the times.

Contact Barbara Shapiro- Global Travel Resources/Global Site Inspections, to begin planning a Small Change and make a Big Impact on your clients next incentive program.

Email Barbara@globalsiteinspections.com



AIRLINE NEWS

Delta launches inflight Wi-Fi Internet access on international flights

Delta has provided Wi-Fi to customers traveling on its mainline aircraft within the United States for more than five years. Now, the first customers on flight 283 from Los Angeles to Tokyo and flight 295 from Atlanta to Tokyo may enjoy global connectivity on the airlines international services. By mid-2014 all of Delta's 747-400 aircraft will have Wi-Fi installed. The completion of installing Wi-Fi services on the entire international fleet is scheduled for end of 2015. Rates for internet access start for laptop users as USD 14.00 for 1 hour or USD 24.95 for connectivity throughout the entire flight. Mobile user rates are USD 8.00/1 hour or USD 14.95 for access throughout the entire flight.

[See more details!](#)

CANADA — OTTAWA CONVENTION CENTRE FREEZES 2014 SPACE RATE UNTIL 2020

Ottawa Tourism and Ottawa Convention Centre (OCC) guarantee the 2014 convention space rental rates for new events booked before December 31, 2014 and taking place at OCC before December 31, 2020, if confirmed with a signed contract and a deposit received by OCC before December 31, 2014. Multiple bookings of one company or organization are permitted.

Noel Buckley, President and CEO of Ottawa Tourism said *"We're aggressively targeting meeting planners with this deal. Budgets are tighter than ever and having a secure rental rate gives enormous peace of mind to planners who are being asked to do more with less."*

"Ottawa Convention Centre is committed to exceeding our clients' expectations. The Great Rate Freeze is intended to make our destination as easy to do business with as possible, by removing all space rate uncertainty for the next 6 years. Our goal is to provide meeting planners with every opportunity to bring their conventions and delegates to Canada's capital." said Patrick Kelly, President and CEO of OCC.

www.ottawaconventioncentre.com

GERMAN CONVENTION BUREAU (GCB) PROMOTES GREEN MEETINGS @ IMEX

After winning the "Green Exhibitor Award" at IMEX in Frankfurt last year, this year's planned focus is again a ultra-green showcase.

Germany and the German Convention Bureau – pioneer in green meetings – have developed and implemented a range of sustainable provisions supporting the green approach. Those include for example using USBs to reduce paper usage, green catering focusing on fresh, local, seasonal ingredients combined with fair trade tea and coffee from organic farming. Implemented production and/or logistic processes focus on energy efficiency, waste reduction through the elimination of small package volumes and individually packaged goods and servings as well as waste recycling.

The more than 200 exhibitors on the German country stand – the largest at IMEX – are requested to take advantage of travelling by train. The German railway company Deutsche Bahn has implemented CO² responsible sustainability programs for its trains and public transportation.

www.gcb.de/en

JAPAN - KYOTO VENUE UPDATE: NIJO CASTLE & ROHM THEATRE KYOTO

Kyoto Convention Bureau announced attractive venue developments: the 400 year old UNESCO World Heritage site **Nijo Castle** is soon available for MICE use and ROHM Theatre Kyoto, formerly called Kyoto Kaikan Hall, will reopen in January 2016 following a renovation project.

Meetings and Events in the extraordinary Nijo Castle, built in 1602 are coordinated by the official DMC The J Team and enable organisers to create very unique and memorable conferences and events.

"Kyoto is home to more UNESCO World Heritage sites than any other city in the world. We are incredibly lucky that so many of these historic venues are willing to open their doors to the meetings and events industry, allowing business visitors from around the world to enjoy their unique offering. Nijo Castle is a truly unusual space, it will allow organisers to think creatively as they develop events following the Castle's opening later this year." stated James Widgren, Kyoto Convention Bureau's international marketing co-ordinator.

As of January 2016, **ROHM Theatre Kyoto** will be available for medium to large scale conferences and meetings. Options are:

- The Main Hall, maximum 2001 persons
- A South Hall that maximum 715 persons
- The new North Hall for a maximum 200 persons
- Two other small meeting rooms
- Park Plaza, an area focusing on cultural and artistic projects and also available as a venue for receptions and conventions.

As part of the redevelopment the ROHM Theatre Kyoto will be reborn as a repository of culture, functioning as a theatre for opera, ballet, musicals, and plays as well as traditional Japanese performing arts while simultaneously meeting the needs of the MICE market.

www.hellokcb.or.jp/eng

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS UPDATE

Jamaica: visa waiver for Chinese citizens

The Jamaican minister of tourism and entertainment, the Hon. Dr. Wykeham McNeill announced in a press briefing that a conditional visa waiver for Chinese citizens was decided by the cabinet. The visa waiver will be implemented in a couple of weeks when the diplomatic details are worked out and implemented. McNeill said "In our efforts to ease the difficulties experienced while harnessing the market potential, Cabinet has approved the conditional waiver of visa requirements for nationals of the People's Republic of China who travel to Jamaica for tourism purposes for 30 days or less..."

Previously Jamaica eased visa requirements for citizens of Colombia, Panama and Venezuela as well as for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Russia, Slovakia and the Ukraine which has boosted the countries tourism sector.

[See more details!](#)

DIGITAL WORLD

Hong Kong: Shangri-La Hotels And Resorts To Be First Global Hotel Brand To Offer PressReader Service Group-Wide

On March 29 Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts started to replace approximately two million complimentary print newspapers distributed annually to guests with environmentally-friendly digital editions. Through a partnership with the digital newspaper and magazine service "PressReader", guests of Shangri-La and Kerry Hotels and Resorts will have unlimited, complimentary access to more than 2,000 local, regional and international publications from 100 countries in 60 languages. After the group's success in being the first to launch complimentary Internet access, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts are now the first to provide complimentary unlimited, regional and international electronic newspapers and magazines. Guests simply connect with their devices and may download their favorite publications.

The hotel will continue to offer printed editions of select newspapers on request.

[See more details!](#)

Worldwide: Free Wi-Fi in all Palladium Brand Hotels starting this summer

Palladium Hotel Group (PHG) announced free Wi-Fi Internet access as of this summer throughout the entire brand, resulting from positive feedback on the offered free Wi-Fi service at the PHG's Ushuaia Ibiza Beach Hotel property. Wi-Fi roll-out starts at the Grand Palladium Riviera Maya complex in April, and will be implemented at all Grand Palladium and Royal Suites resort throughout Brazil, the Caribbean and Mexico, and the majority of the brands properties in Spain this year. Guests will view a short questionnaire about their expectations towards the hotels in their internet browser when accessing the Groups Wi-Fi network. Once answered, free Wi-Fi access is granted for every Palladium Group Hotel Property. The research results will be used to further improve services provided by Palladium Hotel Group.

[See more details!](#)

HOTEL OPENINGS

UK, Northern Ireland: Ballygally Castle refurbishment completed re-opening on April 6, 2014

After it's full refurbishment, Ballygally Castle, located on the stunning Causeway Coastal Route, reopens its doors providing 18 new '5 star coastal view' bedrooms including six family rooms making it one of the largest hotels on the Causeway Coastal Route with 54 bedrooms.

The brand new Kintyre Ballroom accommodates up to 250 persons offering stunning views over the castle gardens and the incredibly beautiful coastline all up to the Mull of Kintyre.

"I am delighted to see the refurbishment of Ballygally Castle nearing its completion and am pleased to announce that we are well on track for the re-opening on Sunday 6th April 2014. Ballygally Castle is a very location at the foot of the Causeway Coastal Route and with this £3 million refurbishment, it is our aim to give people even more reason to visit this beautiful part of Northern Ireland." Said Sir William Hastings, Chairman of Hastings Hotels.

Capacities are theatre 400, U-shape 80, classroom 160, dining 200. Meeting packages available starting from 12 persons.

[See more details!](#)