



**AUGUST 2017**

## PUBLISHERS NOTE

Dear Reader!

Hopefully you are spending a beautiful summer – or winter – depending on your region on the planet. In this edition of NEWSFLASH, it's my pleasure to introduce what is happening at my doorsteps – the conference centre in construction in the city of Metz in the beautiful Departement de la Moselle in France. Metz Congres Robert Schuman will open its doors on September 1, 2018 and I went to see the construction for you! I warmly recommend it to you as it's really hard to find a brand-new conference centre straight in the historic centre of a town and next to the TGV station! Please see the article. We will continue to introduce our beautiful homeland to you during the next months in both – NEWSFLASH and MICE:destination. But we also look beyond our region.

### HOSTED BUYER EVENTS

MITM Americas & Cultourfair will take place from 14 to 17 November in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and we're looking to World MICE Day in Qingdao, China. Have you already applied to the hosted buyer programme? And did you apply for its' award programme? Please see the details in the related articles!

### CONFERENCE CENTERS

In the Czech Republic Prague Convention Centre has received a makeover of its technical infrastructure – a great success not only for the centre, but also for the environment! In Australia, Cairns Convention Centre is waiting for its major renovation project to start in April 2018.

The second part of 'Future Meetings Space' project from German Convention Bureau will be sponsored by PCMA – and PCMA has also announced Pittsburgh and San Francisco as Destinations for Convening Leaders in 2019 and 2020.

The Ritz-Carlton goes to Sea – with three 149-suite vessels for up to 298 persons scheduled to sail from the fourth quarter of 2019 on. And the vessels are available for private charter.

Did you see the last Air Travellers' Traffic Barometer? Long haul arrivals are on the rise in Europe. Lastly, in the Americas ibtm america and ibtm latin america are announced to merge and continue in the format and at the location of ibtm latin america – in Mexico City.

As always, you're invited to share this edition of NEWSFLASH with your colleagues.

Best regards

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## WORLD MICE DAY GOLD CAMEL AWARD YEAR 2017

The organizing committee of World MICE Day 2017 Qingdao, China will coordinate with international meeting industry authority to select the Gold Camel Awards (Including Hotels, Convention and Exhibition Centers, Cities, Technology Providers, PCOs, Construction Suppliers, DMCs, Organizations and Individuals). Gold Camel Award is to encourage the people with outstanding performance in MICE industry and representatives from innovative corporates, therefore leading the direction of the whole industry, gradually becoming an industrial award and benchmark. At the meantime, Gold Camel Award is devoted to meeting the standard of Top level award, like "The Luban Prize for Construction Project" in domestic construction industry and "The Magnolia Award" in the film industry, etc., making positive impact on the development of MICE culture.

### IN THIS EDITION

#### LEFT COLUMN

**WORLD MICE DAY GOLD CAMEL AWARD YEAR 2017**

**HOSTED BUYER EVENT: MITM AMERICAS & CULTOURFAIR 2017 – SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

**FRANCE – METZ CONGRES ROBERT SCHUMAN: NEW CONVENTION CENTRE TO OPEN IN SEPTEMBER 2018**

**AUSTRALIA: CAIRNS CONVENTION CENTRE SECURES \$176M UPGRADE AND EXPANSION**

**CZECH REPUBLIC, PRAGUE: RESPECT FOR ENVIRONMENT PAYS OFF**

**EUROPE: LONG HAUL TRAVELLERS PROPELLED INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS ON FIRST QUARTER OF 2017**

**USA: CONVENING LEADERS DESTINATIONS ANNOUNCED: 2019 PITTSBURGH, PA – 2020 SAN FRANCISCO, CA**

**IBTM EVENTS ANNOUNCES MERGER TO CREATE IBTM AMERICAS**

#### RIGHT COLUMN

**INNOVATION, WHITE SPACE CULTURE AND PURPOSEFUL MEETINGS – JUST SOME OF THE THEMES IN IMEX AMERICA'S WIDE-RANGING EDUCATION PROGRAM THIS YEAR**

**"FUTURE MEETING SPACE" PROJECT BY GERMAN CONVENTION BUREAU: SECOND PHASE FUNDED BY PCMA EDUCATION FOUNDATION**  
**THE RITZ-CARLTON TAKES TO THE SEA – FIRST LUXURY HOTEL BRAND TO OFFER BESPOKE YACHT EXPERIENCES**

**INNOVATION, WHITE SPACE CULTURE AND PURPOSEFUL MEETINGS – JUST SOME OF THE THEMES IN IMEX AMERICA'S WIDE-RANGING EDUCATION PROGRAM THIS YEAR**

New insights into innovation, "white space culture" and purposeful meetings are among the striking themes that feature in the wide-ranging education program at IMEX America 2017, taking

## CUP AND CERTIFICATE:

The camel used to be the transport Ambassador on the ancient Silk Road and now on the Gobi desert. The award named “golden camel”, which also means the spirit of perseverance and fortitude. In addition to the cup, the award winner will also receive an honorary certificate stating the name, date, award, and honor of the winner and explanation.

## MGC AWARD CATEGORIES

1. Conference Pioneer Award
2. Heroine of MICE Industry Award
3. Outstanding Conference Entrepreneur Award
4. Silk Road Beauty Award
5. MICE Planner Award
6. Newsmaker of MICE Award
7. MICE Public Welfare Award
8. Most Beautiful MICE Destination Award
9. Intelligent Conference Venue Award
10. Outstanding Convention Hotels Awards
11. Outstanding PCO Award
12. Best Creative Design Award
13. Rising Star of MICE Service Award
14. International Conference Brand Award
15. “The Belt and Road” Friendship Award
16. The Best MICE Innovative Technology Award
17. The Most Influential MICE Media Award
18. Outstanding MICE College Award

## SPECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

Qingdao Meeting Ambassador

## HOW TO APPLY

The application is open to all organizations and individuals of the MICE industry and the award is free of charge. Please complete the application and send to [cici@bitlifesciences.com](mailto:cici@bitlifesciences.com), or complete the application form on the World MICE Day website [www.worldmiceday.com/cn/default.asp](http://www.worldmiceday.com/cn/default.asp)

In case of questions please contact Ms. Cici Gao, [cici@bitlifesciences.com](mailto:cici@bitlifesciences.com) or +86-411-84799609 ext 827

After receiving the application form, the organizing committee will review its integrity, and availability. The professionals will judge score and providing expert advice, and then the committee will calculate the weighting average score of each organization or individual to select the award winner.

Application period: 1ST July to 30th August

Voting period: 1st August to 15th October

The award ceremony will take place during World MICE day on the 25th of October

[www.worldmiceday.com](http://www.worldmiceday.com)

## HOSTED BUYER EVENT: MITM AMERICAS & CULTOURFAIR 2017 – SANTO DOMINGO, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

14 – 17 NOVEMBER 2017 AT THE HOTEL EMBAJADOR, SANTO DOMINGO

The preparations for the 21st edition of MITM Americas & 7th de CULTOURFAIR are in full swing! The international trade show pioneer MITM Events is ramping up for the next edition of its successful B2B event in the Americas and the Caribbean. Up to date more than 400 hosted buyer applications from 59 countries have been received and only highest-level buyers have been approved to participate.

*La Asociación de Hoteles de Santo Domingo (AHSD) and el Ministerio de Turismo de República Dominicana* will be hosting the 21st edition of MITM AMERICAS & 7th CULTOURFAIR in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

place in Las Vegas from October 10-12.

The program for four days of free first-class education is now live. It gives details of the 180-plus engaging education sessions covering 10 very different tracks that will provide outstanding learning opportunities - and valuable clock hours - for the thousands of industry professionals at the show.

The schedule reveals sessions to suit highly experienced senior professionals looking for new ideas and to update their knowledge as well as for those relatively new to the industry. It is not only wide ranging but also eye-opening with intriguing session titles such as; Fishbowl: solutions to what's keeping you up at night, Neuroscaping™-applying science to improve event ROI and Cyber safety - is your head in the cloud?

## REVELATIONS ABOUT PURPOSEFUL MEETINGS

It all begins on the Monday before the show opens. Monday October 9 is Smart Monday, powered by MPI and supported by other association partners, and the day starts with fascinating revelations when Janet Sperstad presents industry research on Purposeful meetings - driving deeper meaning and insights during the opening keynote.

This is the first of more than 30 inspiring sessions during a day dedicated to learning that includes a packed program created for everyone in the industry. There are also special education programs for senior association executives - the new Association Leaders Forum - and the Executive Meeting Forum for meetings strategists working in the corporate sector, as well as the ever popular PCMA Business School.

Wider perspectives on Purposeful Meetings, the IMEX Talking Point for 2017, emerge from the program throughout the week with Understand why you don't understand - and be understood, Make a movement - the hierarchy of human gatherings and many more.

go to top ↴

## LEARN ABOUT WHITE SPACE CULTURE

The IMEX trade show and business appointments get fully underway on Tuesday after Juliet Funt's morning keynote - Activity is not productivity. This delves into the relatively new sphere of white space culture and introduces new thinking on increasing creativity, productivity and engagement.

Recognising the influence of the economic and political trends in the world, former White House director of economic policy Todd Buchholz will be sharing his knowledge and views in his morning keynote on Wednesday:

MITM & CULTOURFAIR are pioneer trade fairs in the B2B concept in the Americas, the Caribbean and Europe, addressing exclusively professionals of cultural travel and in the meetings industry. For this event, a few hosted buyer spaces remain available for different destinations and interested exhibitors should contact the organizer without delay to participate in this highly successful event.

Throughout 23 years GSAR Marketing has contributed to the consolidation of numerous destinations in the MICE & Cultural sectors with its three specialized trade shows. Hosted buyers are carefully selected through a rigorous quality control process and only buyers with high business potential are approved. The efficiency during the event is assured, pre-established appointments have a 99.9% attendance rate and buyers and exhibitors may conduct up to 50 meetings during the show hours and the official networking program.

Find more information on [www.mitmevents.com/mitm-ame-cul-2017-en.html](http://www.mitmevents.com/mitm-ame-cul-2017-en.html)

go to top 

## Attend World MICE Day 2017 as a Hosted Buyer!

October 25-27, 2017 - Qingdao, China

150+ exhibitors  
400+ hosted buyers  
2,000+ trade visitors

### Educational Streams

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 1 Main Conference | 2 Concurrent Forums                    |
| 3 Education       | 4 Career & Business Development Events |
| 5 Exhibition      | 6 Social & Culture Events              |

World MICE Day 2017 provides organizers of events - in China and International - with a professional business and networking platform. Stay up-to-date with the latest development of the MICE Industry in China. Buyers and suppliers alike may forge long lasting relationships to driving business forward!

The extensive educational streams are designed for delegates of all experience levels to broaden their professional know-how and network with potential partners.

[Join in WMD-2017, find your best partner here!](#)

### WMD-2017 Hosted Buyer Benefits include:

- » Economy class return flights provided\*
- » 3 Nights Accommodation\*
- » Coach Transfers: from and to the airport, hotel and venue
- » Personalized Appointment Schedule with exhibitors
- » Online Diary - make and accept exhibitor appointments prior to WMD
- » Access to all Social Events
- » Qingdao City Experience showcasing attractions, venues, infrastructure and event services
- » Exclusive Hosted Buyer Lounge access

\* except for local buyers

Detailed information and application on [www.worldmiceday.com](http://www.worldmiceday.com)

Prosperity ahead – or not?

**PLENTY OF INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION**  
Innovation and inventive approaches to ongoing challenges are prominent throughout the week, with innovation tours twice a day and sessions such as Building a culture of innovation in your in-house team and Innovate or die – revitalization strategies for your events before culminating in Thursday morning's keynote by Brent Bushnell, From relatable to down the rabbit hole. Win with surprise and delight.

The importance and influence of technology in the industry guarantees it a place in the program. New technology for impactful, decisive meetings, 'sing augmented reality to enhance participants' experiences, and Using event tech to manage teams like a boss are among more than 40 tech sessions and tours to help buyers gain a better grasp of the latest technology developments.

From technology and business skills to health and well-being, and sustainability, the key topics in the industry today will all be illuminated by expert speakers, thought-provoking presentations, workshops and campfires at the Inspiration Hub, now located in Hall G next to the show's popular Food Court.

[www.imexamerica.com](http://www.imexamerica.com)

go to top 



## FRANCE - METZ CONGRES ROBERT SCHUMAN: NEW CONVENTION CENTRE TO OPEN IN SEPTEMBER 2018

The historic city of Metz is located about 70 km / 44 mi or 40 driving minutes from cities of Saarbrücken, Germany and Luxembourg and approximately 82 TVG-minutes from Paris in the beautiful Moselle region bordering Germany and Luxembourg.

Next to the most beautiful train station in France and facing the Pompidou-Metz Center the city's new highlight is currently in the stage of advanced construction. Early next year, the construction will be finished and the interior will be finished followed by an extensive testing and training period.

From September 2018 on, delegates will arrive conveniently by TGV and regular train to reach the convention centre within 2 minutes of easy strolling. Organized bus shuttles from the airports in Metz (40 minutes), Luxembourg (1 hour) or Saarbrücken (1:20 hours) arrive directly in front of the centre designed by renowned architect Jean Michel Wilmette.

## “FUTURE MEETING SPACE” PROJECT BY GERMAN CONVENTION BUREAU: SECOND PHASE FUNDED BY PCMA EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The GCB German Convention Bureau is pleased to announce that the Education Foundation of the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) is funding the second phase of the “Future Meeting Space” research project, a cooperation between the GCB, the European Association of Event Centres (EVVC) and the Institute for Industrial Engineering of the

## CENTRE FEATURES

- ✓ 1,200-seat auditorium with balcony and a modular design to allow for 800 or 600 seats: the only facility of its kind in the region. The auditorium spreads over 3 levels offering excellent stage lighting, high-quality sound system in Line Array technology, high-power HD projector and a 14-metre screen and heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC).
- ✓ 16 meeting rooms, seating 25 to 400 are fully furnished and equipped with audio-visual devices and automated room management with control panel. Rooms offer ceiling lights and natural daylight, sound system with microphone, video display and HVAC
- ✓ Exhibition area of 3,440 sqm / 37.028 sq. ft. in customisable layout will hold up to 210 stands offering a ceiling-mounted sound system, HVAC
- ✓ Dynamic interior video display network with more than 20 screens
- ✓ 17 meeting rooms with capacities from 25 to 400 seats:
  - ◆ 4 x 25-seat rooms
  - ◆ 7 x 50-seat rooms including 4 connecting to give 2 x 100-seat rooms
  - ◆ 1 x 50-seat room connecting with 1 x 100-seat room to give a single 150-seat room
  - ◆ 2 x 100-seat rooms
  - ◆ 3 x 200-seat rooms including 2 connecting to give a single 400-seat room.
- ✓ Catering capacity for gala events of up to 1,200 persons.

The centre is managed by GL events. Please contact Michel Coqué, Managing Director, [michel.coque@metz-expo.com](mailto:michel.coque@metz-expo.com) or Fabrice Perl, Sales and Events Director, [fperl@gl-events.com](mailto:fperl@gl-events.com).

Congres Metz – Metz Convention Bureau: [www.congres-metz.com/en/](http://www.congres-metz.com/en/)  
GL Events: [www.gl-events-venues.com/new-congress-centre-of-metz-france](http://www.gl-events-venues.com/new-congress-centre-of-metz-france)

go to top ↴

## AUSTRALIA: CAIRNS CONVENTION CENTRE SECURES \$176M UPGRADE AND EXPANSION

The \$176 million expansion includes refurbishment of the existing centre plus the addition of new exhibition space and meeting rooms. The government predicts the expansion and upgrade will have major economic benefits for Cairns, including an additional \$30 million of economic benefit for the regional economy each year, greater investment in Tropical North Queensland, 20,000 extra visitors annually and job creation.

Ross Steele, General Manager, Cairns Convention Centre, said, *“We welcome the announcement made in the recent budget. The continued commitment by the State Government will allow the Cairns Convention Centre to grow in line with the aspirations of the city, with new hotels, new aquarium and continued strong investment in the city heart, it really is an exciting time in Cairns.”*

*“We look forward to progressing our plans for construction which is expected to commence following the Commonwealth Games basketball preliminaries which will be held at the Centre in April 2018.”*

[businesseventscairns.org.au](http://businesseventscairns.org.au)

go to top ↴

## CZECH REPUBLIC, PRAGUE: RESPECT FOR ENVIRONMENT PAYS OFF

The Prague Congress Centre was perceived by the public as a giant who devours an endless amount of energy. But it is not true. Sustainable development and energy saving are clear priorities of the current centre.

Following the extensive reconstruction of Prague Congress Centre's technical infrastructure launched in 2016 and finished in spring 2017 the centre shows approximately 30% savings on energy cost compared to 2013. The centre's infrastructure reconstruction includes heating and cooling, ventilation and lighting. Planned savings of 21.9 million Czech Crowns are exceeded significantly. Therefore, the investment of 126 million Czech Crowns will amortize earlier than initially promised.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN PRACTICE?

The planned, sophisticated energy saving measures are combined with state of the art energy management technologies to ensure comfortable living environment in all halls, offices and

Fraunhofer Association (IAO) - Europe's largest application-oriented research organisation.

In June 2016, the research findings of the first phase of the project resulted in an “Innovation Catalogue” and six “Future Meeting Scenarios” which mirror the current developments in the meetings industry. Building on these findings, the innovation network developed the “Future Meeting Room” - a practical example which helps both meeting planners and suppliers to meet future needs and requirements of meeting participants. Results of the first phase of the research project can be found here: [future-meeting-space.de/?lang=en](http://future-meeting-space.de/?lang=en)

The second phase of the project, initiated this spring, will build on the results gained from phase one and investigate how different elements of meeting methodology and technology affect the success factors of events such as user acceptance, knowledge sharing, learning progress and experience value for different types of participants. By August 2018, the Future Meeting Space project will deliver specific, hands-on recommendations for all in the business events industry to create successful future events given the ever-changing meetings landscape.

*“The Future Meeting Space project is critical to helping organisations better engage their event participants. The PCMA Education Foundation is a perfect addition to the innovation alliance team as we build upon phase one of the project,”* says GCB Managing Director Matthias Schultze.

Meredith Rollins, Executive Director of the PCMA Education Foundation, adds: *“We're glad to be partnering with the German Convention Bureau's innovation alliance to define how participants will engage with future meeting design. Education is key to success for our industry and this research projects tackles an issue that will shape our industry today and for the future.”*

[future-meeting-space.de/?lang=en](http://future-meeting-space.de/?lang=en)



corridors with the lowest energy consumption and a maximum utilization of waste energy. In the technical centre, a sophisticated monitoring and intelligent management system is controlled by experienced technicians.

To optimize the conditions in all available facilities and corridors the planned occupation of halls and spaces; current and forecasted weather conditions; the individual spaces' geographical orientation; the concentration of atmospheric carbon dioxide; are considered to optimize temperatures and air quality.

In return, the system manages the temperature and ventilation of every individual space combining the effect of delegate body heat with all factors above to create the best possible and most productive conditions exactly when needed according to the organizers event plan. These conditions are maintained throughout the event using temperature and carbon dioxide sensors to manage ventilation of filtered – and thus dust and allergen-free air – heated or cooled down to best support the planned event schedule.

Prague Conference Centre also saves at the partly self-produced electricity due to the new, modern LED lighting with controlled dimming in the basement's corridors and garages. The dimly set illumination increases automatically when sensors detect movements of persons or cars.

### CONGRESS CENTRE OF THE FUTURE

With its modernization Prague Congress Centre makes an important step to secure its place among the leading facilities in the coming years and to host highly productive events while optimizing its sustainable footprint.

“We are not indifferent to what we leave behind. We are a place where people are educated, they gain new knowledge and information and aim at valuable goals. Of course, we want to contribute to this. We want to be environmentally friendly, socially responsible, we want to promote good things to the same extent as we strive to provide our clients with the best conditions, safety and comfort while organizing their meetings.” says Lenka Žlebková, Sales and Marketing Director.

[www.kcp.cz](http://www.kcp.cz)

go to top 

## EUROPE: LONG HAUL TRAVELLERS PROPELLED INTERNATIONAL

### ARRIVALS ON FIRST QUARTER OF 2017

The latest results from the Air Travellers' Traffic Barometer\* produced by European Cities Marketing and ForwardKeys highlight the persistence of recovery for International arrivals in Europe on Q1 2017, marked by the return of positive performance by all subcontinents and very good progression by long haul travellers.

### NUMBER OF LONG HAUL TRAVELLERS INCREASED BY 8.3% IN Q1 2017 COMPARED TO Q1 2016

Total International arrivals in Europe grew by 3.5%. This is especially due to the healthy North American market increasing its number of passengers by 6.7% when comparing the same period in 2016. The US market is taking advantage of the USD vs Euro and GBP exchange rate. Asia & Oceania increased their number of passengers, pushed by Chinese, Japanese and Indian markets. Central & South America showed a considerable improvement thanks to Brazil, Argentina and Colombia markets which represents almost 70% of the region.

Meanwhile, Intra European flows (which account for 60% of the total arrivals in Europe) remained at the same level as the previous year. But signs of a growth recovery have been observed. North America shows itself as the healthiest and steadiest market. Africa and Asia & Oceania confirm their improvement, after the drop observed during Q4 2015 and Q1 2016 that affected all of Europe because of the fear of terrorist attacks.

### HIGH INCREASE OF BOOKINGS FOR Q2 2017 COMPARED TO Q2 2016

The booking situation shows a significant increase in the number of arrivals in Europe for Q2 2017, most likely due to the shift in Easter holidays occurring in April in 2017 instead of March in 2016. That event is reflected in the bigger share of North America going from 16% in the Q1 2017 to 26% in the bookings for Q2. Central & South America keep on picking up strongly. Meanwhile Middle East went up, reaching 14.7% when compared with same period last year.

## MICE destination

Looking for destination features? Please check the list below and download your required edition with one simple click on the link! And yes of course, you are welcome to pass a copy on to your colleagues too!

AFRICA	EDITION
Ethiopia	<a href="#">3:2016</a>
Ethiopia	<a href="#">5:2015</a>
Indian Ocean: The Maldives, Maurice, Seychelles	<a href="#">5:2015</a>
Mauritius	<a href="#">1:2017</a>

ASIA-PACIFIC	
Asia - On Promotion: Singapore and Thailand	<a href="#">1:2016</a>
Australia	<a href="#">1:2016</a>
Hong Kong	<a href="#">4:2015</a>
Malaysia	<a href="#">3:2016</a>
The Philippines	<a href="#">2:2015</a>
Philippine Incentives	<a href="#">3:2015</a>
The Philippines	<a href="#">2:2016</a>

THE CARIBBEAN	
Anguilla	<a href="#">3:2015</a>
Jamaica	<a href="#">1:2015</a>
Saint Lucia	<a href="#">4:2015</a>

MIDDLE EAST	
UAE, Dubai	<a href="#">1:2016</a>

EUROPE	
Malta	<a href="#">3:2016</a>
Madrid	<a href="#">2:2015</a>
Stuttgart, Germany	<a href="#">4:2016</a>

NORTH AMERICA	
USA - Greater Fort Lauderdale & Broward County Update	<a href="#">3:2015</a>

go to top 

## THE RITZ-CARLTON TAKES TO THE SEA - FIRST LUXURY HOTEL BRAND TO OFFER BESPOKE YACHT EXPERIENCES

Setting Sail in 2019, Custom-Built Luxury Yachts to Bring the Iconic Ritz-Carlton Service and Style to Unique and Distinguished Destinations Around the World

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company - part of Marriott International - announced its entry into luxury yachting and cruises - bringing the award-winning luxury hotel brand's service and timeless style to sea. Created by The Ritz-

## TOP 10 DESTINATIONS REGARDING BOOKINGS FOR Q2 2017 ARE INCREASING STEADILY

Every European city in the Top 10 destinations for long haul travellers in volume, except Istanbul, is expected to rise with double digit growth for Q2 2017, as result of the shift in Easter holidays and the troublesome Q2 2016 where terrorism dramatically affected the most important destinations in Europe. German destinations fell in the ranking, with Munich disappearing from the top 10 in favour of Lisbon.

Southern destinations such as Lisbon and Madrid confirm their good performances. London, besides being the preferred European destination, shows fantastic growth for Q2 2017. This is probably due to a better currency exchange ratio.

All ECM members have exclusive access to the complete European Cities Marketing-ForwardKeys Air Travellers' Traffic Barometer with all the graphs and analysis.

<http://europeancitiesmarketing.com>

go to top 

## USA: CONVENING LEADERS DESTINATIONS ANNOUNCED: 2019 PITTSBURGH, PA – 2020 SAN FRANCISCO, CA

The Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) announced today the destinations hosting their annual 2019 and 2020 Convening Leaders event. Convening Leaders, held each January, is the definitive event for the business events industry and continues to grow attendance and exceed audience expectations. More than 4,200 professionals participate in three days of educational collaboration and orchestrated networking. The event has grown more than 30% in the last nine years by making face-to-face business event innovation the cornerstone of the program.

In 2019 PCMA will host Convening Leaders in Pittsburgh, PA, known as "City of Bridges," located at confluence of the Allegheny, Monongahela and recognized for its 400+ bridges and breath-taking vistas. The destination once known as "The Steel City" has transformed into a technology lightening rod with companies such as Google, Apple, Bosch, Facebook, Uber, Nokia, Autodesk, and IBM among the 1,600 technology firms generating \$20.7 billion in annual payrolls and generous local intellectual capital.

Located in Downtown Pittsburgh, the David L. Lawrence Convention Center blends space, functionality, and flexibility with cutting-edge technology and promises to create an unforgettable Convening Leaders experience. Pittsburgh is home to 68 colleges and universities, including research and development leaders Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh. PCMA will tap into these cerebral resources to bring risks, new ideas and innovation to Convening Leaders' content. You just might get a chance to take a spin in a driverless Uber!

In 2020, San Francisco, CA, will host PCMA's Convening Leaders annual event. A mosaic of colorful, distinctive neighborhoods, San Francisco is a city of life-changing technology, trend-setting cuisine and famous postcard views. Within this seven-by-seven-mile metropolis attendees will discover ethnic enclaves such as the Mission District and the leafy glades of the Presidio and Golden Gate Park. Over the years, this supremely tolerant city has set the bar and welcomed a diverse collective both culturally and intellectually.

San Francisco is a renowned magnet for meetings of all sizes, from self-contained meetings based at one hotel to citywides utilizing multiple properties and the Moscone Center. Just blocks from Union Square, San Francisco's Moscone Center is about as central as it gets. It's walking distance to hotels, restaurants, museums, attractions, public transit and more. In 2020 the center will showcase their recent expansion of more than 170,000 gross square feet of flexible meeting space, including a 50,000-square-foot ballroom.

Convening Leaders 2018 will be held in Nashville, TN, at the acclaimed Music City Center. Registration for the event opens this year in late August at [conveningleaders.org](http://conveningleaders.org).

go to top 

## IBTM EVENTS ANNOUNCES MERGER TO CREATE IBTM AMERICAS

ibtm events announced that ibtm latin America and ibtm america will merge in 2018 to ibtm americas. The event will take place in Mexico City from 5-6 September 2018 and will adopt ibtm latin america's exhibition format which is open to trade visitors and media.

Carlton and maritime experts Douglas Prothero and Lars Clasen, in collaboration with funds managed by [Oaktree Capital Management](#), The Ritz-Carlton will provide luxury hospitality service under a long-term operating agreement. 'The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection' venture represents a unique foray into the cruise industry for a luxury hotel operator. The first of three lavish cruising yachts in this series is scheduled to take to sea in the fourth quarter of 2019, and distinguishes Marriott International as the only provider of luxury accommodations both on land and at sea.

Itineraries are being developed with an intent to combine the lifestyle of The Ritz-Carlton's luxury resorts and the casual freedom of a yachting vacation. Calling at intimate and signature destinations alike, voyages will range from seven to ten days. The first ship will cruise a wide variety of destinations depending on the season, including the Mediterranean, Northern Europe, the Caribbean and Latin America. Due to the intimate size of the vessel, the yacht will call at unique locations typically not accessible to large cruise ships, from Capri and Portofino to St. Barths and the old town of Cartagena. With a relaxed pace, that includes both overnight and daytime ports of call, guests will be offered a uniquely curated destination experience.

The specially designed small capacity vessel will measure 190-meters, accommodate up to 298 passengers, and feature 149 suites, each with its own private balcony. The yacht will also feature two 138 square-meter lavish duplex penthouse suites, with modern craftsmanship and interior finishes jointly designed by The Ritz-Carlton and leading cruise ship design firm, [Tillberg Design of Sweden](#). The onboard experience will reflect the sublime comfort and unparalleled level of individualized guest service for which the iconic Ritz-Carlton brand is recognized; a first in the cruise industry.

Throughout the journey, guests will indulge in a cruising style that is unparalleled in the ultra-luxury cruise and private yachting sectors. The Ritz-Carlton yachts will feature a restaurant by Sven Elverfeld of Aqua, the three Michelin-starred restaurant at The Ritz-Carlton, Wolfsburg; a signature Ritz-Carlton Spa; and a Panorama Lounge and wine bar, offering a wide variety of on-board entertainment. Additionally, the yacht will offer one-of-a-kind curated destination journeys through collaborations with local chefs, musicians and artists, allowing guests to experience the locations in unique and experiential ways, both

The merge comes after the exponential growth of ibtm latin america; in 2016 the event saw a significant increase in international exhibitors – up 100%, with the event set to grow by over 40% in 2017.

The expanded ibtm americas will see an increase in Hosted Buyers from North America of 800%, and continues attracting senior level decision makers from Latin, Central and South America. Currently ibtm latin america attracts 12% of its exhibiting companies from North America and this will continue to increase as the new show expands and develops.

The wider portfolio remains unchanged following the merger.

- » Flagship show ibtm world continues to be held annually in Barcelona, with the landmark 30th edition of the event taking place this year from 28-30 November.
- » ibtm china 2017 takes place from 23-24 August, in Beijing
- » ibtm arabia will take place 5-7 February 2018 in Abu Dhabi (closed door pod format 1:1 hosted buyer:exhibitor ratio)
- » ibtm africa from 19-20 April 2018 in Cape Town (conference/educational programme during Africa Travel Week – registration fee ZAR250; no hosted buyer programme)
- » ibtm events will produce its final edition of AIME 2018, from 20-21 February, in conjunction with Melbourne Convention Bureau.

[www.ibtmevents.com](http://www.ibtmevents.com)

onboard and ashore. Reservations will open in May 2018. The ships of The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection are also available for private charter.

More information on [www.ritzcarlton.com/en/yachts](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/yachts).

go to top 