



TALKING NUMBERS

662 The financial equivalent, in US dollars, of the 6.9 hours of actual time lost per business trip on average, says a study by CWT Solutions Group.

79 The amount of stress, out of 100, that business travellers experience when baggage is lost or delayed. Lost luggage is the top stress factor on CWT Solutions Group's Travel Stress Index. In contrast, taking a taxi is only a 34 in stress.

HOT LEADS

Seeking Chinese luxury hotels

Russia-based Classic Travel general director, Elena Grigorieva, is looking for new luxury hotels in China and wants to explore new products in cities like Hainan, as beach holidays are popular among Russians. She would also like to network with trade partners. Email: classic-travel@mail.ru

Wanted: new incentive ideas

Poland-based Carlsberg Group's senior buyer, Rafal Mielczarek, is keen to hear about new incentive ideas and understand more with regard to the China market, especially Beijing and Shanghai. Reach Mielczarek with your incentive possibilities at rafal.mielczarek@carlsberg.pl

Catch yourself in action at ITCM China. Visit our photo gallery at www.ttgasia.com

Longhaul demand holds strong

By S Puvaneswary

THE global economic crisis in Europe and the US has done little to affect longhaul MICE travel to China, say longhaul buyers at IT&CM China.

Rois Travels Italy general manager, Claudia Palombo, said she had seen a 15 per cent year-on-year rise in outbound to China this year, crediting the China National Tourism Administration's increased promotions and advertising efforts in Italy.

She said: "More incentive groups are looking at China as rates are reasonable. Thailand and Malaysia are our biggest Asian destinations, but both are mature and self-selling. China has the biggest growth of all our destinations in Asia. China is on everyone's lips."

Budapest-based Delta Travel

Group's director, Gabor Lukacs, said incentives to China has soared 25 per cent year-on-year for his company. Regular airline promotions to China by Aeroflot, Qatar Airways and other Middle Eastern airlines have been fuelling demand for the destination.

This year, Lukacs has six confirmed groups to China and predicted that 2013 would also prove fruitful in terms of incentives. The country is the second largest Asian destination for Delta Travel Group after Thailand.

At the same time, Air Safety Equipment US president and CEO, S Rajan, said demand from New York and New Jersey for China had jumped seven per cent year-on-year.

Anticipating a further three to

five per cent growth this year, he said: "The strong Chinese economy has attracted a lot of local corporates to China and this is mainly to Shanghai, Hangzhou and Beijing for incentives."



Rajan: China draws corporates

"South Korea has lost value due to the political situation with North Korea. We recently had a private aircraft suppliers meeting switch their destination from South Korea to Shanghai. That meeting comprised 90 delegates," he added.

Paris-based Sport Incentive Conventions International's managing director, Mircea Anitas, also reported a 15 per cent year-on-year increase in incentives and leisure travel to Greater China, mainly to Hong Kong, Shanghai and Macau.

"It is more difficult to present and to promote secondary cities in China to clients due to accessibility issues. You will have to connect from the main cities via another local airline, which leads to longer travel time. As it is, we spend two days travelling (between main and secondary cities) and three nights in the destination."

This year, the company anticipates similar, strong growth in the incentives segment to China.

French companies have been affected by the economic crisis and many have therefore reduced their travel budgets, scaling down on accommodation from five-star to four-star hotels.

"It is not easy to negotiate rates with hotels in Hong Kong. It is easier to do so with hoteliers in Shanghai," he observed.

Holding the future of MICE in their hands



This year's IT&CM China was off to a shining start on Wednesday night at the Kerry Hotel Pudong, where the show's official opening ceremony was held. The event was graced by a host of glitterati from the MICE and travel industries.

Chinese outbound to Phil on the rebound

TRAFFIC from China to the Philippines is on the path of recovery, having grown 40 per cent year-on-year as of mid-April, according to Kelly Jiao, marketing manager from Philippines Tourism Office, Shanghai.

She said: "There is more confidence in the market now... We have registered strong recovery since last October, and it has been continuously growing."

Jiao said the rebound was complemented with improved air links. Starting end April, Spring Airlines will launch daily flights from Shanghai to Manila, adding to services by Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific and Zest Air on this route.

Direct charter flights from Shanghai and Hangzhou to Boracay, which currently stands at 16 per week, will increase to 18 by June, added Jiao.

Furthermore, the recent surge in the number of five-star hotels like Fairmont, Raffles and the Solaire Resort and Casino with 500 rooms and a 18,500m² gaming space in Manila will ramp up the city's appeal as a "modern convention venue", said Baby Landan, senior project officer, MICE and business development unit, the Philippine Department of Tourism (DoT).

The DoT will also look at growing the number of DoT-accredited hotels in Manila and Boracay from the current 28 and 27 respectively, Landan added. — Lee Pei Qi

Reforms to spark competition between associations

By Lee Pei Qi

THE recent liberalisation of the registration processes for Chinese associations by the government is likely to transform the outlook for the industry when a key measure kicks in year-end.

The reformation of registration is the first of various measures to be rolled out progressively in the coming years.

Liu Youqian, CEO of Federation of China Trade Associations & Chambers of Commerce, explained: "Associations can now register without pre-approval and each industry will be able to register more than one trade association."

Currently, associations must first be "ordained" by a government authority to be established in China, noted Florence Chua, managing director of MCI China.

Chua predicted: "The process for registration will become much smoother and each industry will benefit with more associations under them."

Liu said there were over 460,000 associations in China across all industries as of end-2012, and expected the number to rise with the relaxation of association registration ruling. "We can look forward to more associations activities, especially in the meetings aspect."

"The livelihood of a person



Liu: manpower still a challenge

is dependent on his health and exercise. Likewise for an association, its life depends on holding meetings to kickstart its activities." He added that each association usually holds at least five to six meetings every year.

Liu also pointed out: "With more associations coming in, each of them will have to (raise their standards) and perform better than the rest."

Chua agrees, saying: "Competition would boost the quality of all associations and, at the same

time, weed out those that may not be truly relevant."

More quality products and knowledge would be rolled out as associations try to generate revenue and one-up each other.

However, the road ahead would by no means be a smooth one. Liu said: "We need high-calibre talent and while there may be some in Beijing and Shanghai, there aren't too many in other Chinese cities."

Chua said that while there were presently no specialised courses or university courses in China dedicated to MICE education, the situation was likely to change in the future, to the benefit of the industry.

Rise of Chinese-friendly payment modes facilitates travel spend

By Xinyi Liang-Pholsena

DRIVEN by the immense potential presented by a burgeoning Chinese outbound market, hotels and banks are increasingly rolling out a slew of Chinese-friendly payment methods to spur Chinese travel spending abroad.

Livia Ang, regional segment lead, T&E, global commercial products, MasterCard Worldwide, said: "We have debuted the frequent business traveller card in China in 4Q2012. This programme was tailor-made for the Chinese market and is one of the instruments launched to facilitate Chinese travel overseas."

China's first travel prepaid card was also launched in January this year – an initiative by Transforex HK, China Media Network (CMN) and MasterCard, said Cao Xufeng, vice president of global travel

(China), CMN.

"This card works like a traveller's cheque, which is targeted at Chinese outbound travellers and can be used at over 37 million merchant points worldwide."

Foreign hospitality players have also devised ways to help Chinese travellers settle their transactions with greater ease.

Dusit International is partnering the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) to dangle promotions and discounts for ICBC cardholders at its 14 participating properties worldwide.

Since early this year, Paresa Phuket has been accepting UnionPay cards. Said the resort's general manager, Scot Toon: "(This service) will make organisers' jobs easier and assist MICE events or groups in mak-

ing payment and for those little extras that they want to pay for at the end of their stay at Paresa.

"There is no need to organise cash in advance to take with them or to try and find a credit card that would be accepted."

Nonetheless, the entrenched consumer habits of Chinese business and leisure travellers have posed challenges outside China.

Dwidayatour Indonesia's vice president corporate travel, Donna E Nisononi, told the *Daily*: "A significant portion of our business transactions with Chinese companies are still conducted via fund transfers, resulting in a longer time for pay settlement. Credit cards will reduce such problems."

Guangdong Peace Travel's MICE supervisor, Emma Yantong Chen, also pointed out that Chinese corporate travellers

are often hesitant to swipe their credit cards due to card surcharges and their perceived dent on value.

As Chinese travellers are known for their tendency to carry huge amounts of cash on vacation, they often become a target for thieves abroad, according to Bernard O Schroeder, CEO, Jin Jiang International Hotel Management Company.

CMN's Cao said: "We hope to change the Chinese consumer's behaviour eventually, from a cash- to a credit card-oriented one. That way, Chinese travellers no longer need to bring thick wads of cash on their overseas trips."

With growth of business travel spend averaging at 15.5 per cent from 2000 to 2012, China is on its way to become the world's largest business travel market as early as 2015, according to projections by GBTA.



Ang: easing Chinese travel and spend

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S Puvanewary Editor, Malaysia/Brunei
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Redmond Sia, Nur Ashikin Creative Designers
Lina Tan Editorial Assistant

TTG CHINA

Penny Chang Chief Editor
Josephine Lee TTG China Online Editor
Jessie Liu, Yvonne Chang, Nadia Chung Reporters

CONTRIBUTORS

Prudence Lui, Rohit Kaul, Hong Xu, Shekhar Niyogi

SALES & MARKETING

Michael Chow Group Publisher
Chimmy Tsui Publisher
Katherine Ng Associate Publisher
Marisa Chen Senior Business Managers
Karen Cheung Business Manager
Coco Liu Senior Account Manager
Emily Zhang Account Manager
Cheryl Tan Corporate Marketing Manager
Carol Cheng Assistant Marketing & Administration Manager
Cheryl Lim Advertisement Administration Manager
Tan Ee Hiang Marketing Executive

PUBLISHING SERVICES

Tony Yeo Division Manager
Nancy Lee Desktop Publishing Executive
Carol Wong Senior Circulation Executive

TTG ASIA MEDIA

Darren Ng Managing Director
Raini Hamdi Senior Editor

墨尔本商务活动周 展示价值十亿澳元的商务活动产业

作为展示价值十亿澳元的商务活动产业的主要活动之一，澳大利亚首届商务活动周近日由澳大利亚资源、能源和旅游部长马丁·福格森以及墨尔本市长罗伯特·道尔在墨尔本正式启动。首届商务活动周由墨尔本会议局(MCB)发起举办，活动期间将有五十多场活动相继举行，其中就包括亚太区奖励及会议旅游展(AIME)。作为南半球会议及奖励产业的首要活动以及本届商务活动周的重头戏，今年已经是第21届亚太奖励及会议旅游展(AIME)。为期两天的亚太奖励及会议旅游展吸引了来自31个国家的750多家参展商以及500多名买家前来进行业务洽谈。

在2010/11年至2014/15年这五年时间里，由墨尔本会议局吸引的商务活动预计会为维多利亚州带来8.746亿澳元的直接费用支出并为维多利亚州生产总值做出16亿澳元的贡献。商务活动产业是一个默默无闻的贡献产业，这一点是毋庸置疑的。该产业不仅能够带来经济财富和出口机会，还有助于创造就业岗位，鼓励研究和创新，并且提升对科学家、学者以及相关从业人士成就及能力的全球意识。

墨尔本是澳大利亚由国际大会及会议协会认可的会议及大会首选举办城市。未来两年时间里，墨尔本将相继举办七场世界范围内规模最大且最富盛名的医学会议，其中就包括第二十二届世界糖尿病大会以及世界艾滋病大会。两场大会将分别于今年12月和2014年举办，参会人数分别为1.25万和1.4万人。

墨尔本贵宾特惠计划(Melbourne Values You)系列三

墨尔本的美食佳肴和野外探险不过是诸多顶级活动中的冰山一角，这里有数之不尽的精彩体验，时时刻刻充满新奇，令人欢欣激动。“墨尔本贵宾特惠计划”——墨尔本会议局旨在推出一系列优惠活动，让您的墨尔本旅游预订和行程规划更加便捷随心、经济实惠。特惠适用于企业会议和奖励旅游项目：

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广告专辑

IN BRIEF

Kuching airport opens pay-in lounge

Hong Kong-based Plaza Premium Lounge, which operates pay-in lounges at airports around the world, has opened a facility in Kuching International Airport. Located in the domestic terminal, the lounge offers a rest stop for travellers and a selection of popular Malaysian dishes.

Mactan welcomes a Best Western

Best Western International has opened the 58-key mid-scale Best Western Cebu Sand Bar Resort on Mactan island, the Philippines. It has three meeting rooms and a ballroom.

Indian planners look to China in their hunt for new experiences

CLIENTS' desire for new destinations and experiences are pushing Indian MICE planners to explore China's tourism treasure trove.

Director of Magical Holidays, Reena Chopra, one of the 12 Indian buyers at IT&CM China – the largest contingent of international buyers from a single country this year – is visiting the show for the first time. She said clients have been travelling to destinations such as Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore for the past few years and were now requesting "somewhere refreshing".

She said: "We want to look at new destinations and China is on the top of our list because it is somewhere most of our clients have not been to before and the country is suitable for programmes that combine leisure and business. The infrastructure in China is good and reliable, and there are many sightseeing spots."

Aiming to bring three to four groups of at least 50 delegates each into China next year, Chopra said: "Besides the big cities like Shanghai and Beijing, I want to look at opportunities in Hainan too, because Indians love beaches."

Similarly, KSM Hotel Connections

India CEO, K B Mahanta, noted that more than 20 per cent of his clients were now requesting different destinations.

He said China's rich history and culture were unique selling points valued by Indian clients.

Gaurav Travels chief executive, Rajeev Sabharwal, was keen on China too, saying that the country's "developed infrastructure makes it an ideal destination for business events".

However, he pointed out that language differences made communication a challenge for Indian visitors to China.

While Ashwani Gupta, managing partner of Dove Travels India, who has been bringing small corporate groups to Beijing and Shanghai for the past two years, shares the same concern, he told the *Daily* that improvements were taking place.

"Most public signboards are in English now, and there are more English-speakers in the travel industry," Gupta said.

He suggested the establishment of a toll-free helpline for English-speaking visitors in China to make the destination more accessible for overseas visitors.

– Lee Pei Qi



Sabharwal: ideal for business events

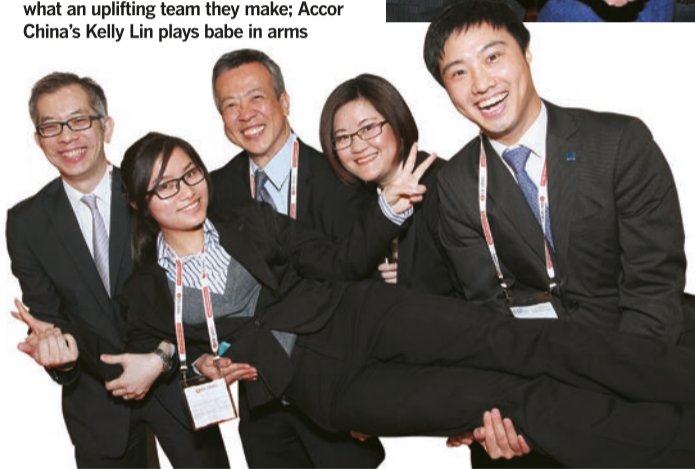
Ready, get set, let's talk shop!

IT&CM China delegates show they are ready for a fruitful day from the get-go. Photos by **Patrick Tan**

Dove Travels India's Ashwani Gupta, Magical Holidays India's Reena Chopra, Paryatan Holidays India's Gajesh Girdhar, Rave Tours & Travels India's Rajat Sawhney, ABS Holiday India's Sachin Bansal, Travstar Holiday & Destinations India's Pankaj Nagpal and Gaurav Travels India's Rajeev Sabharwal



Sofitel Luxury Hotels Shenyang Lido's Ricky Tang, Accor China's Bobby Ong and Sophie Fei Sun, and Novotel Nanjing East Suninf Galaxy's Robin Wang show what an uplifting team they make; Accor China's Kelly Lin plays babe in arms



Xiamen Duoxipengcheng Conference Exhibition's Ke Hong Zhong, ACTFU Hotel China's Austin, Fliport Hotel Xiamen Software Park's Frida Xie, Ri Dong Garden Hotel Xiamen's Roy and Fliport Garden Hotel Xiamen's Eric Lin



Tangla Hotel Shenzhen's Cherry Xu, Tangla Hotels and Resorts International China's Judith Los Banos, Tangla Hotel Tianjin's Fintan O'Doherty and Michael Fang, and Tangla Hotel Beijing's Wilton Wu



Seoul Tourism Organization's Diane Kim, Stephen Kwak, Maureen O'Crowley and Jin-Hyeok Park

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此优惠适用于参加活动的酒店。团体/活动/会议合同必须在2013年4月1日至2013年6月30日之间签订，并须在2013年8月31日前完成入住且支付款项方为有效。免费住宿兑换视澳门喜来登金沙城中心酒店空房情况而定。需遵守限制兑换日期规定。需提前预订。除了标准喜达屋优先会议策划者的积分外，喜达屋优先会议金卡与白金卡会议策划者最多可获得 10,000 点精英级别 Starpoints 奖励积分。幸运抽奖规则：无需预订。此活动向居住于中国大陆地区的喜达屋会议筹备者开放，且截至2013年3月31日。参与者需年满或超过18岁。此活动从新加坡当地时间2013年3月1日零时开始至2013年6月30日结束。符合条件的至少 10,000 美元的会议/活动预订，可获得一次抽奖机会。符合条件的收入指喜达屋优先会议策划者符合条件的收入。本奖的获得者将于2013年10月中旬揭晓。以上条款及适用条件可能发生变化，恕不另行通知。如需了解最新的条款及适用条件，敬请浏览starwoodmeetings.com/triptoparis。喜达屋酒店及度假村集团赞助。©2013 喜达屋酒店及度假村国际集团保留所有权利。雅乐轩、福朋、艾美、喜来登、瑞吉、豪华精选、W 酒店和威斯汀是喜达屋酒店及度假村国际集团或其附属机构的商标。

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Secondary cities soar on the wings of good air links

By S Puvaneswary

INTERNATIONAL incentive buyers are seeing a rising demand for programmes that twin key Chinese cities with second-tier ones as a result of affordable airfares and good air links.

Shanghai China International Travel Service deputy director, sales & marketing department inbound center, Andy Ou, said: "Asian companies tend to be more price sensitive, thus many are willing to combine key cities with secondary destinations and do not mind travelling on low-cost carriers (LCCs) to save on the air component. Quality of the land programme is more important to these clients, many of whom are small and medium-sized firms that are rewarding top staff."

Colombo-based Jetwing Events general manager, Nalin Ariyaratne, said he saw a year-on-year increase of 10 per cent



Ashwani: incentive demand up for Sanya, Chengdu

for dual destinations for meetings and incentive groups from Sri Lanka. The programme usually kicks off in Shanghai

or Beijing as SriLankan Airlines flies direct to both cities, and then continues onward to secondary cities such as Xi'an, Kunming and Hangzhou on domestic LCCs.

Even companies organising top-level incentives are embracing local LCCs for dual-city programmes, according to Ariyaratne, who added that secondary cities are also very attractive due to a growing selection of new hotels that lure clients with "good deals and offers".

Shanghai CYTS Tours Corporation MICE Center assistant,

Shiny Shi, observed a five per cent year-on-year increase in incentive groups from Singapore and South Korea that favoured dual-city programmes featuring Xiamen, Xi'an and Sanya.

Shi said LCCs such as Spring Airlines would attract companies on a budget but most clients still preferred to fly full-fledged airlines for greater comfort.

"Clients can take advantage of attractive discounts that most airlines dish out to groups that make bookings at least 30 days in advance," she said.

Also witnessing stronger interest in secondary cities is Amritsar-based Dove Travels managing partner, Ashwani Gupta. While China's first-tier cities were still most favoured by his clients due to the availability of direct air access, incentive bookings to Sanya and Chengdu had risen by 20-30 per cent year-on-year.

Macau hoteliers brace for a challenging year ahead

A HOTEL glut that has outpaced arrivals, an austerity drive led by the Chinese government as well as rising regional competition has impinged on Macau's room rates and inbound MICE traffic.

Penny Yiu, assistant director of sales, The Westin Resort Macau, said: "We had strong business from China in 2012, but since the government's budget cut, we have seen a drop of some 20 per cent in MICE enquiries. Furthermore, regional competition is intensifying, as Chinese MICE groups with bigger budgets now prefer other cities in South-east Asia."

"Chinese MICE groups with a few hundred to 1,000 pax were common last year. But since early this year, the number of such large groups (from government and private sectors) has dropped," said Fanny Ho, general manager, APlus PR & Advertising, which handles business and consumer shows. "In fact, we have not had any Chinese groups this year, with only a potential group that may come in May."

Adding to the strain is the

January opening of the 2,067-room Earth Tower at Sands Cotai Central.

Yiu revealed: "The (surge in room count) has created a price war in Macau. Many hotels, not just ours, have seen room rates drop from four to three digits."

Best Western Hotel Taipa Macau has also seen rates going south. Director of sales, Fang Lei, however, remains positive. She said: "Rates were too high previously and that scared many visitors away. The current or lower rates will be more sustainable in the long run."

But the strong competition among hotels is benefiting buyers. Johnny Choi, director of sales, Estoril Tours Travel Agency, said he now enjoys cheaper five-star rooms and more perks bundled with hotel packages.

But Macanese hoteliers are not unduly worried, as the overall Chinese outbound segment is still booming.

Lei said the novelty of Macau's casinos would still lure the Chinese. — Xinyi Liang-Pholsena

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Bright hopes for the future



The sixth IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum gathered 57 students from Shanghai Institute of Foreign Trade, East China Normal University and Shanghai Second Polytechnic University. During the full-day programme on Thursday, the students were treated to sessions led by MICE industry professionals such as ICCA's Martin Sirk, Marketing Challenges International's Michel Couturier and IMEX Group's Miguel Neves, all designed to offer them a peek into the vibrant business events industry. — Hannah Koh

LA spreads its wings to Shanghai

THE Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board (LATCB) is devoting more attention to the Chinese market, having just launched its second Chinese office in Shanghai after Beijing.

China was Los Angeles' top international source market in 2012, with the 500,000 arrivals to the city accounting for one-third of Chinese visitors to the US.

Ernest Wooden Jr, president and CEO, LATCB president, said: "The Chinese middle-class is growing rapidly, and Chinese travellers are expected to reach 100 million by 2020, so we want to be on the ground early."

Wooden revealed that Chinese arrivals five to 10 years ago had been mostly dominated by business travellers, but the

profile of the Chinese visitor was now shifting towards MICE and FIT.

To woo MICE travellers, the board is keen to "develop its B2B networks in China through attending tradeshows like IT&CM China".

LATCB aims to grow Chinese arrivals by 10-12 per cent in the next two years and has plans for an office in Guangzhou.

According to LATCB chief marketing officer, Don Skeoch, route development between China and Los Angeles is "in the works", including direct flights to secondary cities in China. Los Angeles is currently linked to China by six direct flights – two from Beijing, three from Shanghai and one from Guangzhou. — Xinyi Liang-Pholsena



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Snapshots

A fascinating showcase

The best of Asia's MICE sellers heat up the show floor with vibrant smiles and booths. Photos by **Patrick Tan**

Philippine Tourism Office China's Kelly Jiao, Tourism Promotions Board Philippines' Baby Landan and Annie Balboa



Hong Kong Disneyland's Queenie Fok, IBC Corporate Travel Russia's Anastasiya Ivasyuk and The Walt Disney Company (Shanghai)'s Fran Ma

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Jin Jiang International Hotel Singapore's Fabian Seet, Jin Jiang International Hotel China's Rita Fu, Julia Zhu and Cynthia Ding, Jin Jiang Towers Shanghai's Shirley Xue, Jin Jiang International China's Stephanie Shu and Cinn Tan, Jianguo Hotel Shanghai's Tony Jiang and Hua Ting Hotel & Towers China's Jane Zhang



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TIANJIN



More international hotels call Tianjin home

Two major international hotel brands will open in Tianjin this year, offering international event planners more accommodation and venue options in the Chinese city.

Following previous openings in metropolises such as Bangkok, Seoul and Shanghai, Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts will unveil Banyan Tree Tianjin Riverside in 3Q2013.

Located on the east bank of the Hai River in the former Austrian Concession, the 159-suite hotel will offer a diverse variety

of dining options, ranging from traditional Cantonese fare to grilled seafood and meat specialties, as well as the first Banyan Tree Spa in northern China.

Joining this luxury property in 2013 will be the 330-room Pan Pacific Tianjin, forming part of The Esplanade, a mixed-use development comprising residential apartments, a retail mall and an office tower. Event planners can look forward to an executive lounge, a business centre and several meeting and function spaces.

Last year, Tianjin's former German Concession welcomed the debut of the Hotel Indigo Tianjin Haihe.

Nestled within a village-style cluster of 11 villas overlooking a central courtyard, the boutique hotel pays homage to traditional German architecture with its red-brick facade and ornate cupolas, while its 96 rooms are outfitted in three styles – Old Cinema, Maritime Riverfront and European Flair. Facilities include a beer house and an all-day café.

BEIJING

First Rosewood in Asia paves way for expansion

Rosewood Hotels & Resorts (RWH) has unveiled plans to launch the 279-room Rosewood Beijing in summer 2013, which will spearhead the brand's expansion in Asia. Designed by Melbourne-based Bar Studio, the hotel is located in the Chaoyang District.

While Rosewood Beijing will exemplify the brand's trademark of 'A Sense of Place', it would also introduce "a design direction and operational philosophy that we feel express an evolved and enhanced understanding of contemporary travellers' tastes", according to Sonia Cheng, RWH chairman.

"Rosewood Beijing will point the way forward for Rosewood and it's fair to say that it

represents an evolved direction for the brand and is key to its expansion plans. This is the first 'new direction' Rosewood hotel, in one of the most sophisticated and competitive markets in the world. This hotel will act as a shop window to introduce the Rosewood brand to a very discriminating market, including potential guests for ultra-luxury Rosewood hotels internationally and also for our future Asia properties," Cheng said.

Cheng's target is for 10 Rosewood hotels in operation or in development in Asia by 2017, and to also grow Rosewood in new international markets, doubling its current portfolio within the same timeframe. – **Raini Hamdi**

HAINAN

Raffles Hainan sweeps into Clearwater Bay

Raffles Hotels & Resorts is eyeing a slice of the booming tourism pie in China's Hainan province and will leverage its serene location on Clearwater Bay to set it apart from the competition.

Clearwater Bay, touted as Hainan's new tourism hotspot, lies on the island's south-east coast and spans 600km². Developed by Hong Kong's Agile Property Holdings, there will be a total of six international hotel brands in the area, with Raffles Hainan being among the first to debut. There will also be three 18-hole golf courses, a shopping mall, a 200-berth marina and a water sports hub.

Featuring 299 guestrooms and 32 villas, Raffles Hainan marks the group's second property in China after Raffles Beijing Hotel. It also aims to set a new precedent for high-level meetings and events in Hainan with its 790m² ballroom, seven meeting rooms, a VIP meeting room and boardroom.

Although a 40-minute drive from Sanya Phoenix International Airport, Raffles Hainan's general manager, Herbert Laubichler-Pichler, said this would be its "winning factor" in luring travellers away from Hainan's popular seaside tourist city Sanya, which is becoming increasingly crowded.

In 2011, over 30 million tourists flooded Hainan, with the bulk arriving from China.

"(Clearwater Bay) is something new and...we aim to use this novelty factor as our competitive advantage," Laubichler-Pichler added.

He also revealed that the hotel would focus on attracting Chinese visitors before moving on to target the rest of Asia, including Singapore and South Korea. – **Lee Pei Qi**



Raffles Hainan boasts a suite of venues for business events

SICHUAN

A hot pot of international hotel brands

As western China develops, many international hospitality groups are now ramping up their presence in Chengdu, one of the fastest-growing cities in the country.

Last September, Dorsett Hospitality International opened Dorsett Grand Chengdu, offering 556 rooms and suites, eight meeting rooms and a 700m² pillar-free multifunctional hall. Located at the historical Luoma Market area of Chengdu, the hotel has the Metro Line 1 and 4 at its doorstep, offering guests easy access to the rest of the city.

Wyndham Hotel Group will strengthen its presence in China with the opening of Ramada Plaza Chengdu West this year. Situated in Xingfu Town, the 293-room hotel is part of a large-scale commercial complex, and will feature a fitness centre, eight meeting rooms and three restaurants.

Located along Renmin Nan Road, Ascott Raffles City Chengdu will form part of the Raffles City Chengdu integrated development – comprising serviced residences, offices, luxury apartments and a shopping mall – when it opens this year with a total of 296 studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments. Come 2014, Ascott will also open Ascott Financial City Chengdu and its first Citadines-branded serviced residence, Citadines South Chengdu, in the destination.

In the same year, Chengdu will also see the opening of the 242-room Radisson Blu Chengdu East in Media Plaza, a mixed-use development within the SC Tower, the tallest building in western China, and the 426-key Fairmont Chengdu within the Palm Springs International City in Tianfu New Town. The latter will be connected to the International Convention and Exhibition Center via an underground linkway.

The 320-room Mandarin Oriental is slated to open in 2015, forming part of a luxury mixed-used development by the riverfront. Plans are also in place to debut the 300-room Waldorf Astoria Chengdu in the Tianfu New Area in 2016.



Artist's impression of the future Fairmont Chengdu

YUNNAN

Go wild over mushrooms

Blessed with a mild climate and unique terrain, Yunnan is the heart of truffle country in southern China with its incredible variety of edible mushrooms. These include popular types such as monkey's head, old man's head and sheep's stomach mushrooms – names inspired by their appearances.

For an introduction to the world of fungi, tuck into a local mushroom hotpot, visit Wild Mushroom Gourmet Festival in Nanhua County, or go on a mushroom picking trip with veteran guide Ebenezer (www.synotrip.com/ebenezer) between May and September, when rains fall abundantly.



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Lure of sun, sand and sea

Islands are loved by holidaymakers, but they are just as alluring for event planners who are looking to escape familiar cities for a change. **Karen Yue, S Puvaneswary, Xinyi Liang-Pholsena** and **Mimi Hudoyo** spotlight a few islands in Asia that are red hot for corporate events

Langkawi, Malaysia

It is hot because the cluster of 99 islands tantalises with fascinating legends and a good selection of four- and five-star accommodation, idyllic beaches, village experiences and duty-free shopping. The latest hotel in Langkawi to open is Seri Chenang Resort & Spa Langkawi, a Malay-themed boutique resort of six villas which was launched last August.

Event planners also have a variety of unique venues to choose from, such as the 100-pax Panorama Langkawi, which offers various facilities such as SkyCab and SkyBridge at the foothills of the Mat Chinchang Mountain Langkawi; The Cliff Restaurant & Bar which charms with views of the Andaman Sea; Laman Padi, a facility that introduces visitors to the art of rice cultivation; and the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club, which can host events with 120 guests.

Organisers of large-scale events are supported by the Langkawi International Exhibition Centre, which sits close to the Langkawi International Airport.

It is good for all types of events.

Recent events held here include a three-day conference, incentive and teambuilding for 60 delegates of an Indian financial company, managed by Luxury Tours Malaysia, as well as a group of 120 delegates from France who spent seven nights on the island. Langkawi also hosts the biennial Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition.

Get there by air from Kuala Lumpur, Subang, Penang and Singapore. Flights to Langkawi are serviced by Malaysia Airlines, AirAsia, Firefly and Berjaya Air. Firefly and AirAsia provide direct daily flights between Penang and Langkawi, while SilkAir provides four weekly services between Singapore and Langkawi.



Seri Chenang Resort & Spa Langkawi

Sentosa, Singapore

It is hot because the resort island has undergone a successful metamorphosis in recent years, giving it fresher attractions, new hotels such as Mövenpick Heritage Hotel Sentosa, and a sprawling integrated resort in the form of Resorts World Sentosa (RWS), which houses six hotels and resorts, a convention centre, Universal Studios Singapore theme park, quality shopping and dining



Resorts World Sentosa, Singapore

establishments, and a casino.

Beyond RWS, other hotels on the island are also equipped with meeting and conference rooms, business centres and restaurants that are suitable for private dining events.

Event organisers can also contact the island's Corporate Events Team (<http://mice.sentosa.com.sg> or call (65) 6736-8672) for teambuilding ideas and programmes, or to rent one of the many outdoor venues on the island.

It is good for all types of events.

Recent events held here include the 2012 Asia-Pacific Symposium on Electromagnetic Compatibility & Technical Exhibition on EMC, RF/Microwave Measurement & Instrumentation from May 21-24, an Asia Oceania Geosciences Society-led conference and exhibition from August 13-17, and the 14th Electronics Packaging Technology Conference from December 5-7. All three were held at the Resorts World Convention Centre.

Get there through Singapore Changi Airport, which is served by more than 100 international airlines flying from some 220 cities in about 60 countries worldwide. Sentosa is about 30 minutes by car from the airport.

Bintan, Indonesia

It is hot because two integrated development projects – Lagoi Bay and Treasure Bay – are underway to sharpen the tourism allure of the island. Lagoi Bay will feature the Lagoi Bay Mall, Alila Villas Bintan and Swiss-Belhotel Lagoi Bay, among others. Treasure Bay, due to be completed in 2015, will feature a resort, a cluster of serviced villas, a wedding hall and an underwater 300-seat banquet hall extending from the resort into a man-made lagoon, as well as a collection of retail, F&B and entertainment outlets.

Meanwhile, Nirwana Gardens has completed its Nirwana Resort Centre, which provides facilities for entertainment, recreation and corporate meetings. It houses The Plaza which has capacity for up to 2,400 guests; Happy Valley, where visitors can enjoy elephant shows and participate in horse riding, archery, rifle shooting, trampoline, and skirmish laser and paintball battles; as well as a fitness centre, a food court, a

shopping arcade and a sports bar.

A further improvement in the island's MICE offering comes in the form of Banyan Tree Group's partnership with Quest to offer teambuilding programmes, from adrenaline-fuelled adventures to passionate CSR projects.

It is good for all types of events, and the island can be twinned with Singapore.

Recent events held here include an Australian IT company's senior executive meeting for 10 people, and an underwriters conference for 66 pax – both were held in Angsana Bintan. The island also hosts the Bintan Triathlon every May, which is attended by more than 1,000 participants every year. **Get there** via Singapore, where a regular ferry service, operated by Bintan Resorts Ferries, plies between Singapore's Tanah Merah Ferry Terminal and Bintan's Bandar Bentan Telani Ferry Terminal. The trip takes about 45 minutes.

Domestic flights from Jakarta connect to Bintan's Raja Haji Fisabilillah International Airport in Tanjung Pinang, or Hang Nadim International Airport in Batam, where passengers can take a 35-minute speedboat to Bandar Bentan Telani Ferry Terminal, Bintan.

Chartered boat arrangements are available too. From Malaysia, ferry services connect Stulang Laut International Ferry Terminal in Johor to Bintan's Tanjung Pinang.



Teambuilding at Bintan Lagoon Resort

Bali, Indonesia

It is hot because its Ngurah Rai International Airport is being expanded and is expected to be ready in time for the 2013 APEC Summit in October. With a total capacity of 25 million passengers – more than double the existing 12 million capacity – the new airport will ease the air access limitation the island's tourism players now face. Furthermore, the soon-to-come Benoa-Nusa Dua toll road and the Dewa Ruci underpass will ease traffic congestion in Bali.

On the hotel front, Bali welcomed Best Western Kuta Villa, The Mulia Bali and a refreshed The Legian Bali.

It is good for all types of events.

Recent events held here include the World Psychiatric Association Regional Meeting from September 13-15 and the



The Legian Bali

2nd Annual International Conference on Education & e-Learning from September 17-18.

Get there by air from the region such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Korea, Japan and Australia. Both full-service and low-cost carriers fly into Bali's Ngurah Rai International Airport. Bali is also well connected to Jakarta's Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, and other domestic Indonesian destinations.

Sun Island, Shanghai, China

It is hot because it is refreshingly different from busy Shanghai. Once known as Mao Island, the destination has a history that dates back to the Tang Dynasty. Today, Sun Island houses Sun Island Resorts, an integrated wellness resort which offers 453 guestrooms, a conference centre with a ballroom and 15 other banquet halls and meeting rooms, four restaurants that serves up nutritious dishes made with fresh produce from Mahota Farm on the ecological island of Chong Ming, and an 18-hole golf course.

The resort adopts ecological and green meetings practices. For instance, menus are printed on cardboard boxes, lampshades are made from beer bottles and event attendee numbers are closely monitored to prevent food wastage.

Among the many activities in which guests can participate include creating art pieces from recycled materials at the Riverside Workshop.

It is good for corporate retreats and meetings, especially those with CSR elements.

Recent events held here include the Mahota Symposium, which discussed sustainable business, agriculture and lifestyle, from September 7-9.

Get there by car from Shanghai city or Pudong International Airport. The ride takes about 50 minutes.

Koh Samui, Thailand

It is hot because it is constantly enhanced with new debuts despite being the darling of Asia's incentive scene for a long time. Some of Koh Samui's latest MICE offerings include the 79-key



InterContinental Samui Baan Taling Ngam Resort, whose event spaces include the 115m² Taling Ngam function room, seven outdoor pools and a beachfront lawn that can accommodate up to 300 pax for cocktail receptions.

It is good for high-end corporate teambuilding and incentives.

Recent events held there include a fire-themed beach party for InterContinental Hotels Group's corporate team, who was treated to pyrotechnics and performances from fire dancers and drummers at the new InterContinental Samui Baan Taling Ngam Resort.

Get there by Samui International Airport, which has direct flights from Bangkok as well as regional cities like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Koh Naka Yai, Phuket, Thailand

It is hot because the arrival of The Naka Island, Phuket has made Koh Naka Yai a destination for event planners looking to escape Phuket's crowded beaches. At the 67-villa resort, corporate functions can be held at the 163m² multipurpose hilltop pavilion overlooking the Andaman Sea or the 2,500m² Royal Horizon Pool Villa Suite that accommodates 15 guests for boardroom-style meetings.

Delegates can wrap up meetings with snorkeling excursions on long-tailed boats and squid-fishing trips on kayaks, or higher on the exclusivity factor, sunset cocktail cruises on private yachts and helicopter rides over the karst-studded Phang Nga Bay.

It is good for corporate retreats and meetings, accompanied by plenty of day trip options.

Recent events held here include meetings by two corporate firms from Singapore.

Get there via a 25-minute drive from the Phuket International Airport to the Ao Po Pier, followed by a five-minute speedboat ride to the resort.

Phuket, Thailand

It is hot because it is well-developed for tourism and has a spectrum of leisure and MICE facilities, alongside a variety of hotels and resorts to suit different budgets. The island is home to many international hotel brands such as Swissotel, The Westin, Mövenpick, and Crowne Plaza.

The Laguna Phuket integrated resort, a popular one-stop destination for corporate meetings and incentives, recently started mapping out hardware improvements that will boost its leisure appeal. Last August, as part of its 25th anniversary celebrations, it

unveiled a new design concept for an integrated development on a parcel of land overlooking one of its west-facing beachfront lagoons, between the Laguna Beach Resort and Dusit Thani Laguna Phuket. It will feature a hotel, luxury condominiums, a water park and space for up to 1,000 shops and restaurants.

It is good for all types of events including teambuilding, as Laguna Phuket

is supported by Quest, a specialist in adventure-based teambuilding programmes.

Recent events held here include a 15,000-pax Amway China incentive seminar that was held at Laguna Phuket from April 15 to May 15 last year. The island also hosts several public events every year, such as the Laguna Phuket International Marathon, the

Laguna Phuket Tri-Fest and the Phuket International Blues Rock Festival.

Get there by air from Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Hong Kong, Penang and Singapore. THAI Airways has numerous daily flights servicing the Bangkok-Phuket route, while other airlines such as SilkAir, Malaysia Airlines, AirAsia, Tiger Airways and Dragonair connect Phuket with regional airports.



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Chinese MICE muscles up

Several mega incentives have been making a beeline for the attractive kingdom. By **Xinyi Liang-Pholsena**

As China muscles up to become Thailand's top source market with a record 2.7 million arrivals in 2012, the inbound Chinese MICE segment has grown in leaps and bounds too.

According to data from Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau (TCEB), 63,955 MICE travellers from China visited Thailand last year, just behind the top-ranked India with 74,951 visitors and ahead of Singapore, Japan and Malaysia respectively.

Thongchai Sridama, TCEB's acting president, said: "For the international market, we aim to develop the potential of second-tier cities in these countries. In China we have expanded from our traditional major markets of Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou to the fast-growing economic hub of Guangdong."

Major Chinese incentives that Thailand scored in recent times include the 10,000-pax Pro-Health China group in November 2012, a 3,500-pax group from Nu Skin in April 2013 and a 6,000-pax Perfect China group in June 2013, according to a TCEB spokesperson.

Furthermore, the 15,000-pax Amway China Leadership Seminar hosted at Laguna Phuket last year has raised the destination's



Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre at CentralWorld

allure for Chinese MICE groups, said Debbie Dionysius, assistant vice president of destination marketing, Laguna Phuket.

She added: "Our hotels had already experienced growing interest from Chinese businesses in Laguna Phuket as a MICE venue, but the Amway China event, which successfully combined all our varied resources, proved to be a springboard for new Chinese MICE business across our hotel portfolio."

Flexibility is key to accommodating Chinese groups, which typically range between 600 and 900 delegates, pointed out

Robert Maurer-Loeffler, general manager, Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre at CentralWorld.

He said: "Lead times (for Chinese MICE groups) are usually very short, generally from one to six months, and it can therefore be difficult to accommodate large-scale groups. We will offer alternative dates or rooms at a sister hotel in town should the preferred date not be changeable."

Meanwhile, smaller destinations like Pattaya may have the upper hand when it comes to hosting big Chinese groups,

opined Dassana Wang Wen Heng, sales manager, Asia (leisure & MICE), Royal Cliff Hotels Group.

"Bangkok may be more accessible as it enjoys direct air links from China, but its traffic jams continue to be a perennial concern for event planners handling Chinese MICE groups of large sizes. In comparison, Pattaya's smaller geographical size and shorter distance between attractions, as well as the proximity of Pattaya Exhibition and Convention Hall to our hotels, are our assets."

Wang added: "The groups that we handle are usually quite big too, for example, a 600-pax group from Natricia China in December, a 1,000-pax group from Mundipharma China and a 600-pax group from GSK China in January."

"Although we recorded a dip in Chinese MICE business in 2012 – partly due to the flood crisis in 2011 – the market has quickly rebounded in the latter half of 2012. We have been seeing growths of 10-20 per cent annually in Chinese MICE business for the past few years, and this year we foresee even stronger growth – about 50 per cent."

Also expecting thriving Chinese MICE business with a 10-15 per cent growth this year

is Kritidech Srabua, founder and CEO of Phuket-based Oriental Events, which handled 12 Chinese MICE events last year.

But catering to a rising Chinese MICE segment is not without its challenges too, Kritidech remarked. "We cannot sell directly to the corporate buyers. All Chinese MICE business goes through local Chinese (consultants) or events companies due to payment problems at the Chinese end. We are actively seeking more Chinese (consultants) through trade shows in China to secure a larger proportion of the business."

Meanwhile, other DMCs specialising in Chinese inbound MICE are casting an eye on the more lucrative high-end segment. "We will sharpen our focus on first-tier cities like Shanghai and Beijing to attract the high-end MICE travellers, who have bigger budgets and greater spending power as compared to their counterparts from the second- and third-tier cities," said Kinkid Mok, project director of Bangkok-based CCT Express.

Centara Grand & Bangkok Convention Centre at CentralWorld has rolled out Chinese-oriented initiatives, such as a shopping concierge who helps Chinese-speaking delegates in their last-minute shopping. ■

SPOTLIGHT

Chiang Mai's new star



CMICE is said to be the largest venue of its kind in Thailand and South-east Asia

Chiang Mai's MICE appeal is expected to rise several notches when the Chiang Mai International Convention and Exhibition Centre (CMICE) opens its doors in May. Built with a 2.5 billion baht (US\$84 million) budget, the centre is the first all-purpose MICE facility in northern Thailand.

CMICE has received recognition from the Global Association of Exhibition Industry (UFI) as one of Thailand's nine convention and exhibition centres of international standards. With a total area of 521,600m² and usable space of 60,000m², it is said to be the biggest convention and exhibition centre in Thailand

and South-east Asia.

The 12m-high exhibition hall can be transformed into three exhibition venues and two convention halls, or combined with the 3,400m² Ratchaphruek Convention Hall to form 11,340m² of event space, good for 10,000 pax. Four outdoor areas offer a combined space of 7,400m².

There are four function rooms with seating capacity of 60 to 100, an 80-pax seminar room and 29 meeting rooms that can accommodate 100 to 700 pax.

Other facilities include Wi-Fi access, a business centre, a prayer room for Muslims, a food centre, restaurants, VIP rooms and convenience stores.

NEED TO KNOW

On the petal trails

Founded by Thai premier floral artist Sakul Intakul in August 2012, the 1,800m² museum is nestled within a century-old teak mansion surrounded by flower-dotted gardens in Bangkok's Dusit district. The museum houses objets d'art and artifacts showcasing the floral cultures from across Asia. Cocktail receptions for 100 pax can be held in the garden, while cultural shows can be put up for smaller groups of 20 to 30 pax. Exclusive tours and private workshops can be arranged.



Impactful new spaces

Bangkok's IMPACT Muang Thong Thani recently invested US\$27 million to launch 30 new Sapphire meeting rooms, bringing the total number of breakout rooms at the destination to 52.

Two new banquet halls add another 5,710m² of function space to the existing 3,500m² Royal Jubilee Ballroom and 2,000m² Grand Diamond Ballroom, providing more choices for gala banquets.



Chinese connections

China's Juneyao Airlines commenced daily Shanghai (Pudong)-Bangkok flights on January 16, with plans to ramp up the frequency to twice-daily pending slot availability at Suvarnabhumi Airport. Thailand is the first international destination of the Shanghai-based carrier, whose inaugural Shanghai-Phuket route began in November 2012 before upgraded into a daily service on December 9.

Paresa opens door to China UnionPay

China UnionPay cards are now accepted at Paresa, a 49-key luxury resort on Phuket's Kamala Beach. Scot Toon, the resort's general manager, said: "We see China UnionPay as an essential offering. It will make organisers' jobs easier and assist MICE events/groups in making payment and for those little extras that they want to pay for at the end of their stay at Paresa."

MICE bureau backs Chinese events

The Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has rolled out a special *Mega Events...Sustainable Challenge* campaign to boost the country's MICE industry.

Open to all Chinese business travellers, the scheme offers support of up to one million baht (US\$33,000) for groups with at least 1,000 overseas delegates and staying for a minimum of consecutive nights in Thailand.

In addition, the Chinese organisation must contract with a local Thai event organiser to manage the event, hold its event at a certified green venue or include a Corporate Social Responsibility activity in the programme.

The campaign will run until September 30, 2013, and the offer is subject to prior approval by TCEB.

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公务需求呈现疲软 机票价格保持高性价比

【本报综合报道】随着春节假期的临近,广州一北京航线机票价格出现波动。业内人士表示,11、12月是传统旺季,公务需求疲软,机票价格保持高性价比。同时,航空业也面临来自高铁的竞争压力。

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Steady climb in Chinese MICE

Malaysia Twin Deal, culture similarities and proximity are credited for the boom, writes **S Puvaneswary**

Tourist arrivals from China into Malaysia rose from 1.25 million in 2011 to 1.55 million last year. At the same time, inbound MICE specialists in the country had also reported growth in corporate events.

Reliance Conventions & Events general manager, Fu Kei Cheong, told the *Daily* that the company saw a 50 per cent growth in incentive business from China last year, as sales staff and companies were able to meet their targets.

Fu said: "Companies in China were hit by the global recession that started in 2008, but in the last two years, many companies had come out of the rut."

Fu believes that the year ahead looks good, adding that the company's participation in roadshows organised by the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau to Guangzhou, Beijing and Shanghai last September had yielded good business leads. Six incentive groups from Guangzhou have been confirmed and are slated to take place this year and the next.

To further business growth out of China, Reliance Conventions & Events will continue to make sales calls through its joint



Genting International Convention Centre, within the Resorts World Genting integrated resort, hosted several Chinese events in 2012

venture office in Shanghai.

Columbia Leisure assistant sales director, Alex Chee, said the company saw a 20 per cent increase in incentives and meetings last year, mostly from Shanghai and Beijing. He anticipates a doubling of business this year, based on strong enquiries and the fact that the company is intensifying its efforts to market in China.

Resorts World Genting up in the Malaysian highlands is another beneficiary of the burgeoning Chinese MICE market. It hosted several large groups from China in 2012, such as Abbott China (1,200 pax),

Winalite International (2,500 people) and the Fourth World Kuo Shu Championship Tournament (2,000 people). As a result, the integrated resort recorded eight to 10 per cent year-on-year growth in Chinese MICE business last year.

Andrew Leong, Resorts World Genting sales & marketing manager, expects further growth in 2013. Supporting this projection will be a series of efforts to target high-end MICE planners in China, as well as continued partnerships with major local tour operators who are strong in the Chinese MICE market.

According to Leong, the Chi-

nese MICE market makes up 25 to 30 per cent of the company's total business.

There has also been encouraging growth in Chinese corporate demand for convention space.

Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre's general manager, Peter Brokenshire, said response from China-based companies was encouraging in 2012. This year, the centre is exhibiting at IT&CM China to further build brand presence and product awareness in China.

Meanwhile, the centre has tweaked its software to make Chinese event delegates feel more at home. It has employed

Mandarin-speaking staff and put a full Chinese kitchen in place to accommodate Chinese-specific dining requirements.

Malaysia's MICE sellers enjoy overarching support from the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB), which also recognises China as an important source market for the country's business travel and incentive industry.

According to MyCEB CEO, Zulkefli Sharif, Malaysia is popular with Chinese event organisers because of the short flight from China, cultural similarities and value-for-money options.

In late-2012, the bureau published a new brochure, *Malaysia – Asia like Never Before*, for the Chinese business travel and incentive market. The brochure focuses on Theme Events & Experiences, Teambuilding, Corporate Social Responsibility and Unique Venues, providing creative ideas for each category.

Along with the new brochure, MyCEB updated its Malaysia Twin Deal Programme with more value adds for meeting and incentive groups from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Events must be held in Malaysia by December 31, 2013. ■

SPOTLIGHT

Temple in the clouds

Chin Swee Caves Temple at the foothills of Resorts World Genting can make a unique offsite events venue.

Marketed by Resorts World Genting, the temple offers event planners a spacious outdoor Sky Terrace, which comes with magnificent views of the mountain and rainforest. The terrace sits on the 13th floor of the temple, some 1,402m above sea level.

There are also two covered meeting rooms on level six, which can be combined to accommodate up to 100 delegates in theatre setting.

A menu comprising vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes, as well as both alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages is offered. Alcoholic drinks can be consumed on the Sky Terrace.

With temperatures a cool

21-23°C year-round, Chin Swee Caves Temple is also a refreshing change from humid outdoor venues elsewhere in Malaysia.

Chin Swee Caves Temple is a 45-minute drive from Kuala Lumpur city. Upon arrival at the temple's lobby, guests can head up in fast bubble lifts.

Coaches can also drive up to the doorstep of Sky Terrace and drop off passengers.

The entire temple is built with conveniences for disabled visitors.

Resorts World Genting sales & marketing manager, Andrew Leong, said: "(The temple's spaces) will appeal to Chinese MICE buyers looking for an offsite venue to host a dinner event, while the temple itself will attract delegates of Buddhist and Taoist faith."



NEED TO KNOW

Perks for the Chinese

The Malaysia Convention and Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) offers value-added support for meeting and incentive groups from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan under its *Malaysia Twin Deal Programme*. Perks vary according to group size, and may include a complimentary cultural performance and fast-track immigration clearance. Email MyCEB at sales@myceb.com.my.



Discover Borneo by steam train

Delegates attending an event in Sabah should head outdoors and explore the destination by steam train. Hop on the North Borneo Railway's British Vulcan steam locomotive, which was built in 1954 and is now fully compliant with modern safety standards. Refurbished to recreate the nostalgic romance of the British North Borneo era, the train runs every Wednesday and Saturday from Tanjung Aru to Papar. Event organisers can charter the train for theme parties or host their functions at Tanjung Aru railway station. Email nbrinfo@suteraharbour.com.my.

More access from China

AirAsia X introduced six weekly direct flights between Shanghai and Kuala Lumpur (KL) in February this year and will raise its Chengdu-KL service to six a week, up from five, from May 1. The latter will be made a daily service from July 1.

The low-cost, long-haul carrier will also beef up its current daily flights to Taipei to 10 a week from May 1, and raise that further to double daily from July 1.

Heritage stays

The Rice Miller Hotel & Residences will open this December within Penang's George Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It will feature 46 guestrooms, 21 residence suites, four restaurants, two bars, a fitness centre, an infinity pool and a spa.

The five-star property also houses The Godown event centre, which comprises two large meeting spaces that can each host a 250-pax conference.

Safari adventures

Bukit Gambang Resort City (BGRC) in Pahang will debut a 55-hectare Safari Park in 2Q2013. The park will comprise several zones such as Night Safari, Bear Mountain, Simba Hill and Wild Savannah. It is supported by a dedicated MICE centre that houses 10 meeting rooms and a pillarless grand ballroom that can accommodate a 3,100-pax banquet.



KLIA2 opening in June

The new KLIA2 terminal will allow seamless connectivity between low-cost and full-service carriers when it opens on June 28 this year. Located 1.5km away from KLIA, a rail extension is put in place to link up both airports.

KLIA2 terminal will have 60 gates, 80 aerobridges and a retail space of 32,000m² to accommodate 225 retail outlets. It is designed to handle 30 million passengers a year, with the provision to expand to 45 million.

China shines on for Lion City

The tourism bureau is leveraging on high profile business events to boost Chinese footfalls. By **Karen Yue**

Singapore welcomed 978,189 visitors from China between January and June last year, up 29.1 per cent over the same period in 2011.

Although full year figures are not ready at press time, Edward Chew, regional director, Greater China, Singapore Tourism Board (STB), said: "Singapore has consistently enjoyed strong visitor arrivals from China and they have been the second largest market in-bound market for Singapore since 2004."

China is regarded an important market for Singapore's business events industry. In 2011, more than 20 per cent of Chinese visitors had come to Singapore for business or MICE purposes.

Chew believes that the city-state's "comprehensive calendar of business events" has helped to boost overall business arrivals, including those from China.



Mega trade shows such as Food&Hotel Asia help to boost business arrivals to Singapore

Some 104 new events were held in Singapore last year, on top of several established ones such as Singapore Airshow, International Furniture Festival Singapore, Food&Hotel Asia, CommunicAsia and Broadcast Asia.

He said: "A strong calendar of events held throughout the year helps to keep the Chinese audience engaged with Singapore – these include a line-up of signature leisure and business

events which continue to attract both first time and repeat visitors."

Rex Loh, The Ritz-Carlton, Millenia Singapore's director of sales and marketing, who noticed a rise in business events from China at the luxury hotel, credited Singapore's "sound infrastructure, cleanliness and increasing tourist attractions", as well as language similarities for winning over the hearts of

Chinese clients.

"Brand awareness (of the hotel) is another driving factor. Guest touchpoints such as our reservations platforms and team now offer Mandarin language capabilities, and a (stronger) presence on various distribution channels and e-platforms has helped too," said Loh.

He observed that Chinese event planners paid great attention to details. "From arrival to departure, everything is planned to seamless perfection. Some of the unique requirements we have received include a dedicated Mandarin operator line to handle guests' requests and Chinese language instructions and information in the guestrooms for delegates' easy reference.

"We foresee tremendous potential (in the Chinese business event segment) over the next three years," he added.

To continue to attract Chinese

business events and corporate travellers to Singapore, STB will maintain its focus on developing quality business events with industry partners and further build key capabilities through training and R&D programmes to enhance industry competitiveness.

STB will also keep up its *New Discoveries* campaign in China, which was launched in December 2011 to focus on customised offerings to address the differentiated needs of consumers.

Chew said: "The campaign has been successful for us and we will continue to evolve and deepen the campaign to reach various cities in China."

He added: "China has always been an important market to STB. Moving forward, Singapore will expand beyond the cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, and move into other (Chinese) cities." ■

SPOTLIGHT

Into a garden wonderland

Gardens by the Bay, a horticultural attraction that opened on June 29 last year, is turning out to be a darling of many public and private event organisers.

Darren Oh, assistant director (business) of the attraction, said: "We find ourselves having to limit the number of events here to three a week, so as not to overload our operations team."

And eager clients are willing to change the date of their events to match space availability.

Gardens by the Bay's largest event space, The Meadow, with standing capacity for 30,000 people, has been booked for family day carnivals, sports

events and concerts. Silver Leaf, another outdoor space that is surrounded by towering Supertrees, has hosted corporate cocktails and banquets. Demand for the indoor Flower Field Hall within the iconic Flower Dome is strong too, with many clients choosing to feature a tour of the chilly conservatory, which replicates the cool-dry climate of Mediterranean regions, with their banquet or award ceremony.

Event organisers who rent the Flower Field Hall for functions with at least 300 guests can purchase entrance tickets to the Flower Dome at a discounted rate of S\$10 per pax.

NEED TO KNOW

Egyptian mysteries in the city

Secrets of the Egyptian burial practices and mummification process will be revealed in technologically-advanced detail in *Mummy: Secrets of the Tomb* at ArtScience Museum exhibition at Marina Bay Sands. Debuting on April 27, the exhibition will feature a groundbreaking 3D film capturing the "virtual unwrapping" of a mummy, more than 100 artifacts and six mummies.

Stay in a garden hotel

Parkroyal on Pickering, Singapore opened on January to much interest from business event planners.

Marketed as a hotel-in-a-garden and boasting lush landscaping, the 367-key hotel offers event planners two ballrooms, two conference rooms, two boardrooms and a poolside terrace. Other facilities include a luxurious executive lounge and an all-day dining restaurant.

Explore the local food culture

Food Playground, a stylish cooking studio located in a traditional shophouse on Craig Road, introduces visitors to Singapore's food culture through a tour of a local market and a fun hands-on culinary class.

The kitchen, which can accommodate 16 participants comfortably, is equipped with top-of-the-range cooking implements.

Placed in pairs, participants will learn how to whip up local dishes and build a tighter relationship with one another at the same time.

That way to Sesame Street

Incentive delegates who have never quite grown out of Sesame Street can join in the fun at Universal Studios Singapore.

The theme park debuted the world's first immersive Sesame Street-themed indoor park ride on March 1. Also newly launched is a Sesame Street Character Breakfast at Loui's NY Pizza Parlor.

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Vital source across the border

Attention will be paid to growing the meeting and incentive segments from China, writes **Prudence Lui**

Hong Kong's MICE sector had a rosy 2012, according to figures provided by the country's tourism board.

Some 1.6 million MICE visitors descended on Hong Kong last year, up 2.8 per cent over 2011's figures. MICE arrivals from China grew 8.5 per cent to 730,000, accounting for 45 per cent of overall traffic.

Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) general manager of MICE and Cruise, Kenneth Wong, told the *Daily*: "That growth rate was just as we had expected due to (a rise in) short-haul meetings."

CTS MICE also had a good year in 2012, reporting double-digit growth in the sector last year. The company's general manager, George Kai, observed that the majority of MICE traffic from China were for trade promotions and exhibitions that were jointly organised by teams from China and Hong Kong.

"Despite the Chinese government's move to tighten travel budgets for officials, I believe that business this year would



Grand Hyatt Hong Kong aims to raise quality to retain guest loyalty

not fare worse than last year because of China's strong economy and there is still the need for business promotions abroad," said Kai, adding that that business travellers, however, may trade down hotel choices, from five-star to four, in order to save money.

Fuelling Kai's optimistic outlook for 2013 is also the emergence of new MICE source markets such as Inner Mongolia and Western China.

John Girard, vice president of development and area general manager-Hong Kong for Regal Hotels International, noted strong pick-up in business events from China, particularly in the form of incentives and educational events, and expressed confidence in the new year. While he admitted that the road ahead would be littered with pricing challenges and competition from within and beyond Hong Kong, he pointed out that

the company's understanding of the Chinese MICE market would allow it to do well in 2013.

According to Grand Hyatt Hong Kong's director of sales and marketing, Cecilia Lo, more than half of the company's MICE business from China are from repeat clients or referrals. Attendance ranges in size, from 30 to 700 delegates.

Lo said: "Our challenge is to retain guests loyalty as the market is highly competitive and choices are plentiful. Chinese MICE buyers appreciate quality products and services, and our experience and reputation in the Chinese MICE market assure clients of a successful event."

"We are positive about the (prospects of the) incentive and exhibition segments in 2013. We will continue to acquire new business from the mainland and our neighbouring cities. At the same time, we shall evaluate our own standards to ensure we consistently meet clients' expectations."

To keep business event experiences fresh for clients, Grand Hyatt Hong Kong is introducing wine tasting sessions to meeting

groups, with the aim of injecting educational fun into the meeting programme. Offered as part of a meeting package, the activity is led by in-house wine ambassadors.

Meanwhile, a wider scale effort to attract more Chinese business events to Hong Kong in 2013 will come from HKTB.

Wong said: "In 2013, we will continue to focus on China as it is a vital market. With a (bigger) marketing budget, we'll enhance the meeting and incentive segments, particularly from the medical, pharmaceutical, IT, personal selling and insurance sectors. We expect similar growth this year."

He added that more would be done to incentivise MICE specialists "as they play a key role in the (destination) selling process".

HKTB now has a larger MICE team which takes care of the northern and eastern Chinese markets. Attention is also paid to the southern Chinese market, which Wong believes hold great potential for meetings on cruises and conventions. ■

SPOTLIGHT

Discover a tranquil hotel

Lantau Island will have a new gem to boast of when Auberge Discovery Bay Hong Kong opens its door this month.

The 261-key hotel will appeal to business event planners with its tranquil location in a cove in Discovery Bay. The scenic surroundings may inspire new ideas in attendees of seminars, conferences and meetings.

Auberge Discovery Bay Hong Kong offers a variety of event spaces. The pillarfree Grand Azure ballroom measures 700m² and comes with an adjoining terrace. There are also seven multipurpose function rooms, ranging in size from 32m² to 350m².

There are plenty of outdoor venues to choose from as well, such as the outdoor patio that adjoins the hotel's all-day dining restaurant Café bord de Mer. The patio can take 200 guests and is ideal for cocktails and buffets. Other alfresco options include the Marine Terrace, the Chapel Piazza and the High Tide Pool Deck.

Corporate gatherings over a picnic can be held on Sam Pak Beach.

Event planners will also be



Auberge Discovery Bay Hong Kong

supported by a mix of leisure facilities such as a sea-worthy European tall ship that can be chartered for cocktail cruises or on-board teambuilding exercises, and the reputable Spa Botanica, which comes with 10 private treatment rooms.

NEED TO KNOW

Bet on high achievements

Team Building Asia has launched a new teambuilding idea, *You Bet You Can*, based on challenges that can only be achieved through coordinated teamwork.

Risk and reward is an integral part of the game, as teams view category clips to assess the criteria and bet on their own performance. If all aspects of the criteria are achieved within a set time, teams can double their bet. But if they fail, they will not only lose time and effort spent on planning, but also their original bet.

The 180-minute activity is suitable for both indoor or outdoor locations with group sizes of 24 to 480 people.



Share a great meal

Located on Wyndham Street, Sal Curioso is the second restaurant creation of husband-and-wife duo Chris Woodyard and Bronwyn Cheung of Woolly Pig Concepts.

Inspired by Latin-American food-sharing concept, Sal Curioso is the perfect venue for dining events that aim to bring guests much closer together.

Its spacious interior can accommodate 100 guests in the main dining area, 30 in the bar and lounge area, and 10 on the terrace.

New conference space

The Peninsula Hong Kong has opened a new Conference Centre on its sixth floor. Hankow I and II can accommodate 100 pax in a theatre set-up and 30 for round-table and boardroom gatherings. The two conference rooms are equipped with facilities such as high-definition video conferencing and projection.



AsiaWorld-Expo expands inventory

Following the success of Runway 11, a refurbished venue that offers 4,400m² of column-free space, AsiaWorld-Expo has debuted Runway Suites. The latter is a collection of up to 10 rooms, each capable of seating between 80 and 200 people in a theatre set-up.

All rooms are fully carpeted, sound-proofed and equipped with audio-visual technologies. It is ideal for large conferences which require break-out sessions and separate meeting spaces.



More air access into Hong Kong

Cathay Pacific has announced a fifth daily return flight between its Hong Kong hub and London Heathrow, scheduled to debut on June 27 this year. It will be served by a Boeing 777-300ER aircraft. The Hong Kong flag carrier also plans to gain additional frequencies from London and New York City in 2013.

Meanwhile, Dragonair launched a daily service from China's Wenzhou in January.

Chinese MICE on the radar

Distance, limited direct flight access and cost pose obstacles for Indonesia, writes **Mimi Hudoyo**

Some 618,223 visitors from China arrived in Indonesia last year, with 30 per cent of them expected to be business travellers.

To the Indonesian Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, China's MICE sector is a very new market for the destination.

Director of MICE and special interest tourism marketing, Rizki Handayani, said: "We have just started to get small meetings and incentive groups (from China), and most are for Bali."

Some hotels in the popular island told the *Daily* that they had indeed received a number of corporate groups from China.

Sheraton Bali Kuta Resort, which is popular with Chinese holidaymakers, has had several Chinese incentive groups.

William Santoso, director of sales and marketing with Nusa Dua Beach Hotel & Spa, said:



Nusa Dua Beach Hotel & Spa

"MICE business from China was minimal in 2011 but it doubled in 2012, giving us on average of one Chinese (event) every month. We are very interested in... increasing our market share (of this segment)."

Santoso added that the hotel had so far secured three MICE groups from China for 2013, and identified Chinese clan gatherings as an important segment.

Chinese clans are not just

heading to Bali. This year some 5,000 members of the Hakka community will gather in Jakarta, while 3,000 to 5,000 Hainanese will convene in Medan, North Sumatra in 2H2013.

The ministry recognises the growth potential of China as a tourism source market, and has set a target of one million arrivals for 2013. Handayani said: "That means we need to cultivate business from different segments such as leisure and special interest tourism which includes diving and MICE."

To court Chinese incentives and conferences, the ministry is working with its Visit Indonesia Tourism Offices (VITOs) in China and Garuda Indonesia. The collaboration resulted in the first-ever "MICE gathering" in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou last year, with corporate buyers invited as guests, said Handayani.

"We are proposing to do that

again this year," she said, adding that such gatherings help to bring attention to Indonesia.

"We are competing with Hong Kong, Japan and Thailand for the Chinese market, and these destinations are seen as offering greater value for money when compared to, say, Bali," Handayani said.

Santoso agreed, saying: "Bali is quite far and too costly for Chinese companies to consider as a MICE destination. The lack of scheduled commercial flights between China and Bali adds to the industry's challenge."

Handayani acknowledges the air access limitation, and said that with greater MICE demand for Indonesia, airlines would be motivated to boost capacity.

"My director general of marketing is talking to Garuda (and other airlines) to increase capacity (on the China-Indonesia route)," Handayani revealed. ■

SPOTLIGHT

Go sailing

Komodo Island is gaining popularity among travellers, and not all the credit is going to the native Komodo dragon. Visitors can take a cruise along the coastline of Komodo Island and to the surrounding islands.

Plataran Komodo, which offers these cruises, has a fleet of four traditional ships called Phinisi. They have been modified for luxurious comfort. The four ships can take 15 to 35 passengers, or six to 12 pax for live-aboard arrangements.



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Strutting their stuff

Patrick Tan finds the IT&CM China show floor abuzz with activity as the tradeshow gets fully underway



Gloria Hotels & Resorts' Willie Ooi (centre, front), flanked by Jiarun Gloria Grand Hotel Jiuhuashan's Andrew Wong and Xiandai Gloria Grand Hotel Changsha's Peter Stolley, leads the team at IT&CM China 2013



Millennium Hotels and Resorts China's Sarah Tian, Millennium Hotels and Resorts Hong Kong's Lawrence Yip, Millennium Hotels and Resorts China's Jackson Yuan and Lyman Chow, Millennium & Copthorne International Singapore's Catherine Foo and Millennium Hotels and Resorts China's Rebecca Cui



Air Safety Equipment US' Captain S Rajan, Star Cruises Travel Agency (Shanghai)'s Stella Ma Li Da and Nicole Zheng



ICTS China's Zhou Xiang and Las Vegas Sands China's Connie Gao



Grand Hyatt Macau's Vanessa Chow



Eaton Hotels China's Ricky Li, The Langham Hong Kong's James Chow, The Langham Xintiandi, Shanghai's Phil Cen, Langham Place Mongkok, Hong Kong's Nicolas Chan and The Langham Shenzhen's Karen Sun



Venetian Marketing Services China's Michelle Li



Mövenpick Resort & Spa Karon Beach Phuket's Ai Lin Wong



The Westin Wuhan Wuchang's Harry Tan, W Taipei's Alex Chen, W Hong Kong's Priscilla Hui, Sheraton Huzhou Hot Spring Resort's Peter Pan, Sheraton Guiyang Hotel's Michelle Li and Starwood Sales Organization Shanghai's Rachel Huang



TTG Asia Media's Emily Zhang and Chimmy Tsui, Melbourne Convention Bureau China's Jenny Yang and TTG Asia Media's Coco Liu

Hong Kong

香港会奖焦点：大屿山、愉景湾和新邮轮码头

■张广文=采访报道

展望未来，香港旅行社业者将锁定积极推广的香港会奖目的地，包括大屿山、愉景湾和新邮轮码头等。其中，预计今年六月启动的新邮轮码头，可望成为一个新地标性建筑。

针对即将启用的香港新邮轮码头，业者除了可藉此发展邮轮旅游及会奖旅游外，其也认为在没有船舶停留在码头内时，码头的大行李室可以被用做MICE场地，如小型舞台表演场地或展览厅。同时，码头高层和屋顶不但能看到非常壮观的风景，也是一个很好的MICE场地。

再者，活力旅游有限公司企业发展总监韦荣恩认为，大屿山是未来香港最具有发展MICE市场潜力的地方，能够一次满足旅客



↑拥有国际级设施的启德邮轮码头，将于今年年中启用。

多种需求，特别适合大型会议的举行。大屿山综合了亚洲国际博览馆、东荟城、小型高尔夫球场，以及五个五星级国际品牌酒店，包括两间在香港迪士尼乐园的酒店、香港诺富特东荟城酒店、香港富豪机场酒店、香港天际万豪酒店等。愉景湾酒店开幕后，旅客更可以在愉景湾酒店的宴会厅中举行活动，还可以享受27洞高尔夫球场、三个非常适合团队建设的沙滩、适合60人进行团队建设

的济民号帆船(The Bounty)、体验往来迪士尼乐园的30人观光船(Discovery Seafari)、愉景湾的众多露天餐厅，以及附近的坪洲等。有兴趣的旅客还可以去体验昂平360缆车，并观赏大佛。

只是，现在最重要的是，要改变中国旅客的刻板印象，也就是认为靠近机场的大屿山很远，其实乘坐快速列车从机场到市区也仅20几分钟而已，非常方便。

此外，旅行社目前为了满足新

加坡、泰国等学生团队的不同需求，已安排过足球比赛、股票市场、老人养老院等行程，未来旅行社也希望对中国学生推广历史、语言、演讲、艺术课程等产品和各式亲子互动计划。

愉景湾日趋成熟

事实上，香港愉景湾正致力于将自己打造成为一个新的MICE目的地。除了2013年将有运动主题和度假风格的愉景湾酒店加入之外，目前愉景湾许多新项目皆已纷纷落成，同时，当地也开始宣传其固定举办的大型活动，邀请居民与游客一同参与。

香港愉景湾度假区副市务总监何志如介绍道，近期愉景湾新的项目就是可容纳30人的观光船Discovery Seafari，其大片玻璃设

计使旅客可以在船内观赏海景，租船的团体也可在其中举办海上晚宴或乘船游览附近海域。目前愉景湾码头装修工程也已大致完成。而2013年除了将有新酒店开幕之外，愉景湾的海滨白色教堂也将会正式开放。未来愉景湾还将提供当地爬山指南，提供旅客各个不同步道的介绍，包括各自自然步道不同的接待能力与特色。

目前愉景湾已经接待过许多从香港迪士尼乐园码头而来的团体，也有旅客选择从梅窝、坪洲包下观光船来玩。

海陆活动应有尽有

何志如接着指出，其实，愉景湾很适合放松，不但有三大沙滩，包括大白湾、二白湾和三白湾，同时，还拥有四个会所，分别为海澄

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<p>北京千禧大酒店 Grand Millennium Beijing</p> <p>酒店位于北京商业中心国贸，拥有521间客房及12间宴会/会议厅。 The premier 5-star hotel is located in the CBD of Beijing. Featuring 521 guestrooms and 12 conference/event facilities.</p>	<p>上海千禧海韵大酒店 Millennium Hongqiao Hotel Shanghai</p> <p>酒店位于上海虹桥古北地区，拥有368间客房及12间宴会/会议厅。 The hotel is located in the Hongqiao Area. Featuring 368 guestrooms and 12 conference/event facilities.</p>	<p>成都新东方千禧大酒店 Millennium Hotel Chengdu</p> <p>酒店位于城南繁华地区，设有359间客房及8间宴会/会议厅。 Centrally located in the sophisticated urban district. Featuring 359 rooms and 8 conference/event facilities.</p>	<p>无锡千禧大酒店 Millennium Hotel Wuxi</p> <p>酒店位于无锡新区中心，拥有308间客房及8间宴会/会议厅。 Located within the bustling Wuxi New Development Zone set among landscaped gardens. Featuring 308 rooms and 6 conference/event facilities.</p>	<p>厦门海景千禧大酒店 Millennium Harbourview Hotel Xiamen</p> <p>厦门第一家国际酒店，位于商业及购物中心，拥有352间客房及7间宴会/会议厅。 Located in the major shopping and business center. Featuring 352 guestrooms and 7 conference/event facilities.</p>	<p>青岛国敦大酒店 Cophorne Hotel Qingdao</p> <p>酒店位于青岛中央商务区，拥有455间客房及8间宴会/会议厅。 Located in the heart of the CBD of Qingdao. Featuring 455 guestrooms and 8 conference/event facilities.</p>	<p>台中日月千禧酒店 Millennium Yee Hotel Taichung</p> <p>酒店位于台中经济中心，拥有237间客房及6间宴会/会议厅。 Located in the center of Taichung's industrial zone. Featuring 237 guestrooms and 6 conference/event facilities.</p>
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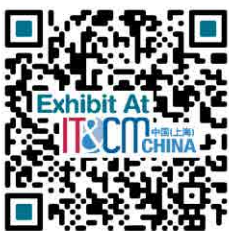


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湖畔会所、愉景湾康乐会、愉景湾高尔夫球会，以及愉景湾游艇会，可提供团队训练、运动、聚会与会议功能。到访者可以体验郊外远足、高尔夫球、海上观光、沙滩踏浪、水疗护理等，可以说海陆活动多姿多彩；而且旅客还可以登上愉景湾的观景台，从高处俯瞰美景。

愉景湾像是一个自己的城市，有自己的警察局、邮局、交通工

具等，而且当地拥有很多极具特色的场地，适合公司团体举办各式私人派对、运动比赛、体能训练和团队建设活动，包括可容纳60人的The Bounty，也就是香港独一无二的欧洲高桅古典帆船；还有香港第一个私人会所、27洞高尔夫球场、香港第一个人造400米沙滩、香港最大的海滨餐饮场地D' Deck。

而可接待100位客人的海滨白

教堂，在婚礼当日也提供乘坐马车抵达婚礼场地的服务。邻近景点还有大澳渔村、香港迪士尼乐园、昂坪360、东荟城名店仓等。

企业团队到了愉景湾，光是在沙滩上就可以玩游戏和水上活动，还可以在夜晚透过蜡烛展示公司标志，以及可以体验香港最浪漫的私人沙滩。同时，企业可以在超过20种餐厅选择的海滨户

外场地D' Deck，包下个别或多个餐厅，一边看180°环回海景、一边享用国际美食，即便团队人数达1,500位也没问题。在特定时间到访的旅客，还可以参与当地嘉年华，聆听爵士音乐活动与欣赏户外木板走道表演。

愉景湾还提供众多活动让到访者有机会参与。星期天到访者，可以参观露天市场，把玩当地手工艺品、食物，体验此设计师艺

术家的展台。而每年举办的「沙滩猎蛋奇兵+香港最大滨FUN天地」活动，从3月就开放登记，活动中小朋友能够开心的掘蛋，家人也能一同享乐。

整体来看，韦荣恩认为香港市场发展很好，增长稳定，酒店业的生意也不错，高星级酒店很受中国旅客欢迎，近期还有很多中国团队来香港的高端酒店举办金融行业会议。

Convention

■ 锺韵 = 采访报道

ICCA 2013年第52届年会 11月上海登场

由国际大会与会议协会 (ICCA) 主办、上海市旅游局承办的ICCA 2013年第52届年会，将于2013年11月2日~6日在上海举办。

据了解，这次年会预计将有约70个国家和地区的会员参加。其中，来自亚洲的会员约占40%，中国会员约150名。年会将于上海国际会议中心举办，同期则在世博中心和上海展览中心等不

同场地举办社交活动。

为顺利举办ICCA 2013全球年会，提前为年会热身，加强会议旅游产业的交流和培训、分享国际与国内会议旅游产业的现状与发展趋势，上海市旅游局先后联合了杭州市旅游委和北京市旅游委，于2011、2012年连续两年举办了中国上海会议旅游产业发展论坛。

去年9月11日在北京国家会议中心举行的ICCA中国委员会第二届

年会上，ICCA 2013全球年会组委会正式成立。组委会的成立是中国会议与旅游行业以ICCA 2013年会的举办为契机，积极参与国际交流合作，展示中国会议服务业整体实力的新尝试。目前，年会的各项筹备工作正顺利开展。

上海市旅游局国际旅游促进处副调研员陈平介绍，目前中国有35个ICCA会员。经外交部批准，上海市旅游局于2001年正式加入该组

织；ICCA每年在上海举办的培训会和交流会，为上海的会展行业起到积极的推动作用。

1963年成立至今，ICCA举办过50届全球年会。其中约60%的举办地在欧洲；在亚洲，ICCA则分别在斯里兰卡、泰国、印度、菲律宾、土耳其、印尼、日本、香港、韩国及台湾等地共举办过13次年会。

2013年将是ICCA年会首次在中国内地举办，预计会有800~1,000名全球会议服务行业的专业人士参加。这些专业人士主要来自各个国家和地区的会议中心、各地会议局或旅游部门，以及DMC或PCO等为会议提供服务的专业人士。

20年一次的机会

ICCA首席执行官Martin Sirk强调，根据ICCA的年会举办地轮换模式，至少20年之内，年会不会再到中国举办。因此，今年在上海举办的年会是中国会议旅游界人士事业生涯中，站在国际聚光灯下千载难逢的机会。

「十年前，中国没有能力承办ICCA大会。今天，我有100%的信心，上海会把它办得有声有色。这是中国展现创意、专业、思想领导力，并让全球会员一窥中国这个活跃市场现况的绝佳机会。」

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Sanya

三亚藉文化活动 提升整体旅游层次

■刘欣怡·张广文=采访报道

2013年春节十大海滨旅游城市出炉，三亚仍是居首，传统的冬季避寒胜地三亚今年依然是游客的首选。事实上在国际旅游岛的优势政策推动下，三亚持续努力开辟新局，且积极发展会奖旅游之形象与实力，国际品牌酒店甚至积极圈地发展，不落人后。

根据统计资料显示，2012年三亚接待过夜游客人数1,103万人次，同比增长8%；实现旅游总收入190亿元，同比增长9.7%。2013年全市旅游预期目标为旅游接待过夜游客增长8%，并将致力文化活动以提升旅游形象。

酒店业者指出，在整体增长的大局下，国内市场增幅远超国外市场，主要是三亚政府加大了对宣传的力度，借助博鳌亚洲论坛，大打休闲三亚的牌子，加之海南建省20周年，三亚借机提升文化内涵形象等诸多方面的努力，这些活动为三亚创造了媒体聚焦的效应。

此外，三亚政府锐意创新的营销模式使旅游方面取得了长足的进展。从三亚市旅游委获悉，今年三亚将以营销多元化为重点，精耕细作，采用多种手段和方式深化宣传推广效果，继续加大力度拓展海外客源市场，以走出去、请进来的方式，向欧洲、美洲、



提供·开维三亚海棠湾凯宾斯基酒店

澳洲、亚洲等地广为推荐三亚旅游。

据了解，三亚作为中国最重要的旅游城市之一，未来将加强三亚的文化建设，培育演艺市场，将继续举办像LOHO新春嘉年华中「千手观音」、「张大千纪念展」、「交响音乐会」、「俄罗斯马戏」等喜闻乐见的活动。其实，三亚本地也有很多历史悠久的文化遗产，可将三亚文化旅游的品质提升到更高层次。

吸引国际客源 不应「单打独斗」

不过，如何吸引更多国际游客一直是三亚的课题。事实上有业者建议，三亚要吸引长途国际客源不应该以单一目的地为目标，也就是说，三亚不能只主打自己而已，因为单独的三亚难以吸引长途国际客源，应该将三亚放在国际旅客来中国的行程中，以最后一站去推，才容易成功。

三亚旅游饭店协会会长、金茂三亚丽思卡尔顿酒店总经理谷杰

(Michel L. Goget) 解释，一般而言，旅客都是以时间和成本来决定自己的旅游目的地，要飞十几个小时才能到三亚的欧洲旅客，还有要飞二十几个小时才能到三亚的美国旅客，附近就分别有非洲、杜拜以及加勒比海等海边可以去，很难受到单一三亚旅游目的地的吸引。外国旅客来中国，就是想要体验中国、看看不一样的事物，包括北京的万里长城、西安的兵马俑、上海的外滩，还有丽江、西藏等，因此三亚要争取长途国际客源，策略应该要聚焦于成为国际旅客离开中国前的最后一站，搭配中国传统目的地的行程，让国际旅客可以在跑完如此多城市之后，来三亚度假放松、打打高尔夫球，然后再回国。

另就短途国际市场来看，虽然成本不会较低，但是只要能够解决物流、开发直航，让旅客来到三亚的时间变短，便能争取到短途国际客源。例如，现在日本到普吉岛只要3小时，去巴厘岛也很方便，要来三亚必须从上海或香港中转才能到，时间上就需要两倍左右，故三亚难以争取到日本旅客。但是未来只要开通了东京到三亚的直航，情况就会立刻改善。又例如，莫斯科和三亚有包机往返，虽然坐飞机也要10小时，但是直航的方便仍能带来更多俄罗斯

旅客。

简单说，营销一个目的地必须要现实，要旅客花更多的时间和更多的钱来三亚度假是不可能的。

会展业须突破软实力不足

再者，三亚会展产业的发展一直朝国际化迈进，但目前面临的困难，除了大型基础设施不足外，人才有限更是限制三亚会议产业发展的阻力所在。此外，三亚市区整体的环境发展相较于其他东南亚会奖旅游目的地仍有差距，包括当地服务意识、文化沉淀等方面仍不足，也是造成三亚会展整体发展仍未臻成熟的因素。

业者表示，在三亚本地，会展相关行业的人才相当缺乏，会展活动的专业公司包括摄影、策划、广告、搭建以及材料供应商等都远不及一线城市的数量与质量，许多曾经在三亚举办的大型活动，其活动相关所需的设备仍须从大城市调配使用。此外，众所皆知，会奖旅游的策划创意往往是赢得项目的关键，可这方面的人才大多集中在北京、上海等大城市，大城市往往更先取得会展有关的最新技术或活动点子，对会展产业人才来说，更愿意留在大城市，如有活动到海南举办，海南本地会展公司往往只获

取个别分包项目。

对此，业者提出三点建议：

1. 三亚应侧重举办高规格大型会议

在三亚会展业如何定位的问题上，相比展览，三亚更应侧重于举办高规格、有国际影响力的大型会议活动，同时应该借鉴外国发展会议中心的优秀经验，充分利用会议中心帮助酒店吸引客源的功能，同时在会展业发展中应注重创新，提升会展魅力。

2. 三亚应注重会展人才培养

三亚会展业发展关键在于会展专业人才的培养，以此为会展业发展提供有力的智力支援。建议三亚政府部门通过扶持当地高校的会展专业建设，着重培养一批熟悉国际会展惯例、精于会展市场开拓、善于管理和组织会展的专业人才队伍。

此外，大力发展会展业除了要得到政府部门的支援，还需吸引有实力的企业进行资金支持，以此扩大会展规模和档次。

3. 三亚应尽快健全会展管理机构

下一步，三亚发展会展业需要尽快健全会展管理机构，如成立会展行业协会，专职管理组织会议展览活动，进一步规范会展市场，并在培养专业会展人才的同时也要增加语种人才的培养力度，提升会展服务品质。

Resort

度假区能否通过会奖市场的考验？

■锺韵=采访报道

理想的度假区是在与主要客源市场之间有便捷交通的偏远郊区，经由人为建造一个封闭的独立世界；这个世界里具有完整的餐饮、住宿和娱乐解决方案，足以吸引一般度假或企业客人在2到3天内没有转移阵地的念头，并享受一次移世独立的度假氛围。这是中国市场开始发展度假区之际，就必须先建立的观念，否则无以应对挑战，尤其是会奖市场的考验。

「度假区」概念刚在中国萌芽就有投资者拿着重金打造的度假区大门，以渐进的方式企图让度假区的建设阶段和市场形成气候的脚步一致。或许度假区的运营和配套真能和市场同步成熟，但是起步阶段迎接的客人不是小白

鼠；得过且过的心态、对细节的忽视，都可能导致负面口碑的传播，损害市场发展。

试想，客人花2天以上的时间专为放松或从事户外运动等活动来到没有其他城市资源的郊区景点，必然会对这项时间与金钱投资的回报有基本的期待。因此，业者面对以下挑战，不能掉以轻心。

1. 封闭环境：曾任国际邮轮酒店业务部高级副总裁的业者说道，邮轮有点像被水包围的大型酒店，客人一旦进去就不能出去做别的活动了。因此，邮轮必须有大量的娱乐选择，防止客人无聊。

度假区有类似的封闭特质，因此要考虑的问题包括：首先，客人滑雪、做户外运动和Spa之后，如

何排遣剩下的时间？其次，客人一般以群为单位；群里不想滑雪、运动或做Spa的客人如何待得下去？再次，季节性强的景区（比如以滑雪作主打的度假区）如何缩小淡旺季差？

投客所好、多样、丰富的娱乐活动是度假区吸引客人的固定公式。以北京某乐园为例，其以邮轮经验为范本，将设置室内游泳池、主题游乐场、儿童托管服务、独立的酒吧、餐厅和零售商场等；并聘专为全球度假目的地提供音乐等娱乐解决方案的制作公司任娱乐总监，满足客人要求。同样开业不久的万达长白山国际旅游度假区目前则有商业步行街、影城和剧院等项目。

单就购物这一项而言，商品种类、品牌、价格是否符合目标市

场的需求都很重要。首先值得注意的是种类。比如民生用品，如果酒店客房提供厨具，度假区却无食材贩售，厨房形同虚设。此外，由于环境封闭，个人卫生用品、御寒衣物、运动用品都是重要的商品种类。其次是品牌 and 价格，这和机场购物环境类似：无论餐饮或商品，应注重目标市场的品牌认同及能接受的商品价格，不应让客人有「上了贼船」的感受。

2. 基础配套设施：停车位够不够？滑雪季时，街道是否有人不断铲雪、防止结冰？客人在度假区除了走路和打车，还有什麼交通选择？滑雪等器材和教练的租聘流程是否合理、有效率？

如果无法保障客人安全、无法

承诺客人不需耗费长时间等待、无法满足客人的交通和停车等基础需求，即使开通动车、增加航班，度假区也难吸引客人回头。

3. 人力资源：服务业的成败最终取决于服务。关键的人才问题解决不了，硬体达再高的标准也枉然。偏远地区服务人才的数量、文化层次、国际化水平和服务意识都待提升，而成熟地区调过来的人才成本又比当地要高；招聘、培训之外，保留培训好的员工也是业者面临的人才资源难题。

娱乐选择再多、再丰富，久了也千篇一律；「共同体、职业规划」的说服效果也没有一定保证。因此，令人头疼的度假区人才问题，还需业者发挥更多的创意和诚意来解决。

Shanghai

上海会展奖励旅游专业委员会 推标准化

■刘欣怡=采访报道

为促进上海会议服务业务规范化、专业化发展,推动上海国际商务会议旅游目的地建设,在2013中国(上海)会议与旅游产业发展论坛期间,上海市旅游标准化技术委员会成立了第一个专业委员会——**会展奖励旅游专业委员会**,委员成员由来自高校会展专业、著名公司、会议场所及会议服务机构等专业人士组成,委员会将承担相关会议标准的制定与执行,以期提升上海的会奖服务品质。

委员会对会议服务机构的考核标准将采取达标制和采取分等订级模式,其首先对上海250多家能够承担会议的服务机构按标准进行分级规范,希望这些单位通过标准后,能按照标准程式为主办方提供会议服务。对达标者,政府会在网站上进行公示与宣传,并向会议方推荐。政府也将提供相关产业政策的专项资金、出境会议扶持政策予以奖励;而会议主办方也能轻易从各分级的会议服务机构中轻易筛选出符合自己



上海市旅游局副局长沈山州为会展奖励旅游专业委员会成立揭牌。

所需的单位。

产业发展特征

上海市旅游局政策法规处副处长朱国建指出,上海的会议服务发展至今,基本已形成一个产业链,并有几个明显特征:

第一、承接会议的数量不断增加。2010年能够称得上为国际会议的数量仅有17个,发展至今,每年在上海举办的各类大型会议将近千个。如何在提升会议数量的同时,亦能规范会议的素质,是当前会议发展重要课题。

第二、专业会议服务机构及种类不断增加。如何向会议主办方推荐上海

较成熟的会议服务机构,以及如何让会议主办方按照市场选择适合自身的会议规模和会议层次要求的会展公司,就必须对上海会奖旅游标准提出相应的规范要求。

第三、会议作为一项产业,近几年虽不断迅速发展,但是对会议的管理、规范、相关法律等标准却是空白的,因此对于相关法条的呼籲标准也越来越高。上海旅游业本身是现代服务业中一个重要产业,目前占到整个现代服务业中的13.8%,上海市政府并将旅游业定位为国民经济的战略性支柱产业,也就是一个需要扶持发展的未来产业。而会展业正是其中重要发展的项目。

鉴于此发展背景,朱国建进一步表示,上海市旅游局与上海市会展中心共同提出了关于会议产业相关制定标准与规范,最终成立第一个会展奖励旅游专业委员会,共同扶持并促进会议产业发展。在起草过程当中也征集了超过60多家会展公司的意见,并参考当今

国际会议发展中的潮流问题,上海市会议服务标准最终为系列标准,首先出台的是对会议服务机构标准,对承担会议的主办方提出相应规范,下一步即将出台的是对会议协力厂商的标准规范。

高质量会议增长有限

上海中旅国际旅行社总经理郑蓓则表示,要打造一个著名旅游城市,有个非常重要的指标就是要将城市建设为商务会奖旅游目的地,上海去年也提出此概念。虽然每年在上海举办的国际会议数量持续增加,但也可看到,目前高质量的国际协会会议数量并未强劲增长,可能原因包括中国签证问题、相关会议硬件配套问题等,但更重要的原因有三点:

第一,很多大型国际会议在中国只有审批部门而没有主管部门,行业内也缺乏规范与自律;

第二,很多时候会议与展览的概念是被混淆的,其实会议与展览是两个完全不同的行业;

第三,目前中国相关专业化的

人才等软件配套服务仍缺乏。因此,作为提供会展服务的旅行社来说,在市场经营中业者相当需要行业的管理和指导,随着会议标准的出台,对全行业的发展也将起到一个正向推进作用。

据了解,为规范上海会议服务市场,促进上海会议服务业规范化及专业化发展,由上海市旅游局制定的《会议经营与服务规范第一部份:会议服务机构》,已于2012年9月20日正式发布实施,此为国内首个会议服务行业地方性标准,是一次开创性探索,具有里程碑的意义,该标准的推广将进一步推动上海会议服务行业,加强自力规范服务,提升品质,有利于上海加快建设国际商务会议旅游目的地的发展。

对此,上海在十二五规划中也提出了关于上海未来会议发展空间布局规划,以延安路高架串起从虹桥机场一路向东延伸到浦东国际机场为中心轴,在中心轴的围绕下全市形成十二个会议服务片区。

Beijing

■刘欣怡=采访报道

北京会议旅游将围绕高端资源发展

在中国(上海)会议与旅游产业发展论坛上,北京市旅游委发布了一系列关于北京最新会议及旅游产业发展的新举措,重点将围绕发掘及推广北京高端旅游资源。

2012年北京除了加快脚步在转变其旅游发展方式,助推北京建设为国际一流旅游城市,在国际会议市场方面亦有重大推进。根据2012年国际大会与会议协会(ICCA)发布的国际会

议城市排名中显示,北京2011年共举办110个国际会议,位居世界排名第十位,排名较前年上升两位,亦居中国城市中首位,在亚太地区的排名从2010年的第四位晋升到第二位,仅次于新加坡,创下

历史新高。这也标志着北京已跻身于国际会议旅游之都的行列。**北京市旅游发展委员会主任鲁**



北京市旅游发展委员会主任鲁勇。

勇表示,2013年北京会议与高端旅游将围绕以发掘北京高端旅游资源及推广北京高端旅游资源,全面优化与开展相关工作,拟制作一套北京高端旅游与会议资源的宣传影片,内容涵盖北京高端旅游资源的会奖、会所、会议及休闲等各主要项目推荐,成为整合高端资源的重要载体。

此外,北京还将**创建一套高端资源的数据统计体系**,以作为高端旅游与会议产业的参考依据,并

建立一套权威统计系统,在北京高端旅游与会议产业内逐步推广实施,以做到进一步引领国内高端旅游与会议产业发展方向。

根据现阶段情况,北京今年还将**修订完善高端旅游政策**,其中北京市会奖旅游奖励资金管理方法及奖励方式可不局限于资金,研究推出人才培养推进的优先优惠政策、免费组织优质会奖买家赴国内外的相关会奖展会等办法;将建立北京高端旅游产业指导体系,通过发布排行榜的方式树立行业风向标。

再者,北京市旅委亦将**重点打造三个品牌会奖活动**,包括北京高端旅游暨会议产业联盟夏季峰

会、中国北京国际商务及会奖旅游展会以及北京高端会议与旅游产业年度盛典,通过政府引导、市场运作、企业参与及媒体推介相结合的方式,办好高端旅游品牌活动,培育以商务、会议、会奖、会展、修学、中医等主题高端旅游活动,持续提升北京高端旅游品牌;加强与国际高端旅游组织合作,有效利用国际专业平台推介北京高端旅游;探索建立会议、会展、会奖、会所、修学旅游的经济与社会评价统计体系,研究设立高端旅游行业监管标准,高起点规范高端旅游市场。

Training

协会专业执行人员能力迈向国际化

■钟韵=采访报道

协会专业执行人员能力培训课程于IT&CM China 2013首日举行,由加拿大协会执行学会与澳大利亚协会执行学会联合授课。培训课程内容包含会员制度、人力资源管理、产品与服务的市场营销等各个层面的协会运作与管理基础知识。其中,人力资源管理及市场营销为协会管理者须相当重视的部分,也是迈向国际化



课程讲师澳大利亚协会执行协会(AuSAE)首席执行官/专业学习和认证顾问Simon Pryor。

的基础之一。

课程讲师 澳大利亚协会执行协会 (AuSAE)

首席执行官/专业学习和认证顾问Simon Pryor介绍,越来越多企业即协会开始意识到,无论盈利或非盈利机构,运营顺利的基础都是良好的人力资源管理。因此,协会管理者必须了解如何管理

会员和志愿者,让员工明白其于协会内部所扮演的角色,以提高工作绩效;有效的协会人力资源管理系统能将个人需求与商业需求相结合,促进员工、志愿者与协会管理层之间直接的合作。

市场营销方面,Simon Pryor说道,尽管协会管理者多对某一目标充满信心、理想与热情,这并不代表协会就没有制定良好营销策略的必要。毕竟,好的营销计划

能帮助协会留住老会员并吸引更多新会员加入,让影响力不断扩大。从课程中,学员了解到如何确保营销策略能够接触到会员与非会员中的目标人群;评估市场细分作为战略营销组成部分的重要性;理解有效营销计划的构成要素;并分析协会对战略营销的采用程度。

他也提醒,市场营销存有陷阱,比如市场调研不足、计划不够

全面、计划与财政预算不同步等;协会管理者应注意避免。

参与了协会专业执行人员能力培训课程的学员纷纷表示,国内与西方的协会制度存在许多差异,国际规则目前很难完全应用在国内协会的管理上。但是,许多迹象显示,国内协会已逐步朝与国际接轨的方向迈进,而此课程所提供的国际视野及实用技能为其进程提供了一定的说明。



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