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the **INBOUND** business magazine
M!CEtalk
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NEWS



Accor is collaborating with Microsoft to launch ALL CONNECT, a new hybrid meetings concept, which will enable guests to adapt to the new ways of working.

ADNEC, Expo Tel Aviv sign MoU

Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC) and Expo Tel Aviv, announced that they have signed a MoU where they will partner towards fostering further collaboration and cooperation in the regional business tourism sector. The MoU will forge a relationship between the leading exhibition centres, enhancing their respective new business pipelines.



Gujarat Tourism has developed Kevadia and it is one of the best upcoming M!CE facilities in the country. The city has everything – all amenities and great connectivity



Ginger signs two new hotels in Kochi

Ginger has signed two new hotels in Kochi – at Kochi Airport and Kalamassery commercial hub, respectively. The 100-room Ginger Kochi will be located on the Karaid Airport road, just outside Cochin International Airport (CIA). This hotel will address the demand from the airport, M!CE from the CIA Convention Centre and the surrounding industrial areas.

The Fern opens at Kevadia & Junagadh in Gujarat

The Fern Hotels & Resorts has opened two new properties at Kevadia (Statue of Unity) and Junagadh in Gujarat. The Fern Sardar Sarovar Resort is a 250-room hotel offering a state-of-the-art banquet hall. The Fern Leo Resort & Club, Junagadh, is an upscale 105-room hotel offering conferencing & banqueting facilities.



SpiceJet's Delhi-Jaisalmer flight resumes



Through the united efforts of the travel trade and hoteliers of Jaisalmer, SpiceJet's Delhi-Jaisalmer flight was reinstated soon after its cancellation and a new lease of life was given to tourism in the desert city. Sharing his view, **Kartik Gaggar**, CEO & Founder, Rajasthan Studio, says, "We sorely needed this flight into Jaisalmer, which offers something unique to tourists – the sand dunes. It is also a very popular wedding destination."



HKTb receives additional funding to step up promotions

Dr YK Pang, Chairman of the HKTb, has welcomed the additional funding for the HKTb announced in the 2021/22 Budget. The additional funding will focus on ongoing works, short-term strategies & medium-to-long-term strategies. Ongoing works will be aimed at enhancing the subsidy schemes and sponsoring trade members' participation in trade events to speed up business recovery; and organising and supporting mega events.



Al Jawaher Convention Centre ready to host events in Sharjah

Al Jawaher Reception and Convention Centre (JRCC) has announced that it is open for business again after weathering the unprecedented challenges presented by 2020, utilising the downtime for maintenance and refurbishment work that has served to enhance its world-class amenities. "JRCC is now fully equipped to host safe events, and we are ready to deliver on the expectations of our clients whose satisfaction, safety and well-being remain our top priority. We aim to seize opportunities and maintain robust growth in the long run by hosting key national and international events and offer best-in-class catering services that will contribute to boosting Sharjah's position as a leading destination for conferences and business tourism," said **Hanan Al Mahmoud**, CEO of JRCC.

Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels launches Zone Connect

Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels has launched Zone Connect under its Zone by The Park portfolio. The brand has been launched with four Zone Connect hotels in Coimbatore, Goa, Port Blair & Tirupati. The hotels are slated to open in the first half of 2021. Zone Connect Coimbatore will have 55 rooms, an all-day dining, bar and a banquet.



RAKTDA partners with SCAT Airlines

The strategic partnership will see the Emirate welcome commercial flights from eight cities in Kazakhstan starting from March 2021. **Raki Phillips**, Chief Executive Officer of RAKTDA, commented, "Our partnership with SCAT Airlines is a key milestone in Ras Al Khaimah's tourism strategy"



IHG opens Holiday Inn Chandigarh Zirakpur

IHG Hotels & Resorts has launched Holiday Inn Chandigarh Zirakpur in association with ABC Sites. The 131-key hotel is located on Chandigarh-Ambala highway. **Sudeep Jain**, MD, IHG, South West Asia, says, "The addition of Holiday Inn Chandigarh Zirakpur to our brand portfolio will cater to the demand for quality accommodation and M!CE requirements in the city."

Restarting M!CE differently

Post-COVID the M!CE industry has been forced to rethink and reimagine the way events are done

Charmaine Fernz

The last year presented every industry with a challenge to think out of the box with circumstances it presented, the M!CE industry was no different. Moving ahead on a rather optimistic note, the year 2021 is pointing industries to the light at the end of the tunnel showing hope of revival. Analysing current situations, the best quote

that comes to mind is none other than Walt Disney's: "Get a good idea and stay with it. Dog it, and work at it until it's done right." This is the current mantra for M!CE companies who are looking to survive come what may. As **Sushil Shamlal Wadhwa**, Founder and CMD, Platinum World Group, explains, "The M!CE landscape has changed quite drastically post-

COVID. Corporates are very sensitive to any such global events, and have paused all M!CE-related activities, to avoid any risk. This means that these are probably the most challenging times we will see in our lifetime as far as pressure on our business is concerned. Pre-COVID our industry was cruising at a high altitude. However, all this came to a halt with the economic slowdown in 2019. This was further impacted with the pandemic, which was a knock-out punch to the industry worldwide. Looking into the future, we are optimistic based on the

global forecast, which states that the M!CE industry recovery will begin from 2022 & flourish from 2023. So, it is undoubtedly going to be 'Survival of the Fittest'. With this in mind, our mantra for now is Survive, Revive and then Thrive when the time is right."

The sentiments of uncertainty are not restricted to just a particular country but has had a global impact. Expressing his view from an international perspective, **Vishal Bhatia**, Country Manager – India, Visit Britain, says, "As the global response to

QUICK BYTE The role of event companies has now evolved into almost film production capabilities



COVID-19 pandemic continues, the public's health and safety remains the UK Government's priority. At VisitBritain, we are continually planning for recovery. By necessity this needs to be flexible to respond as travel recovers in stages globally and as advisories and restrictions can be lifted. The UK is finding innovative ways to connect and do business, creatively reimagining the future of events and using virtual tours & technology solutions, further enhancing its impressive offering."

Parul Thakur, Senior Area Director Sales and Distribution, South Asia, Marriott International, says, "M!CE events are still to return in their full glory of pre-COVID times. What we see today as post-COVID are still smaller formats. Events have become hybrid in the post-COVID era. As hotels we have pivoted our efforts in bringing technology to the forefront to meet the needs of the hybrid meetings we see today. Our distribution strength across the globe gives us the advantage to conduct hybrid events combined with small teams assembling together at one hotel venue for their celebrations and connections."

POST-PANDEMIC SCENARIO

Changing times require a constant innovation in order to sustain. This



G B Srithar

The resumption of M!CE events in Singapore has been done in a careful and calibrated manner



Vishal Bhatia

Rural & coastal destinations are seeing increased demand to host some of the leading global events

is especially true for the M!CE industry which has had to adapt to new norms post the pandemic and make it a success. As **G B Srithar**, Regional Director (India, Middle East and South Asia), Singapore Tourism Board, explains, "COVID-19 has certainly pushed the fast-forward button and accelerated digital transformation and adoption across the world. The resumption of M!CE events in Singapore has been done in a careful and calibrated manner, with limits on the size and capacity of events to ensure safety of on-site participants and allow for wider interactions through virtual platforms. To do so, STB has established the Safe Business Events framework to guide the industry on how to implement Safe Management Measures to meet a set of health and safety outcomes."

Thakur adds, "The biggest factor being considered today is the level of preparedness and readiness from the hotel to work with the current cleanliness and hygiene standards laid out. Hotels who have been able to instil confidence in the customers on their hygiene and sanitation protocols have seen repeat customers conducting their meetings and events."

Physical events are now being christened into hybrid events in order to adhere to the new norms. Wadhwa explains, "Now, there are more virtual events and a combination of physical and digital which is being promoted as phygital or hybrid events. Here, the key presenters are live at a single location with their smaller focused audience group and the rest of the audience joins in through a video conferencing

platform. Getting the audience right on virtual events is very important while also ensuring that the target audience logs in, is a challenge for many companies. Content creation is another important aspect. There is a lot of AR (Augmented Reality) and VR (Virtual Reality) being used actively for such phygital/hybrid events. It would be interesting to note that the role of event companies has now evolved into almost film production capabilities."

On the international front, it has been no different as Bhatia asserts, "In the UK, a multitude of leading venues have reimagined their offering, giving planners access to advanced technology solutions to ensure their future events can achieve greater reach and engagement. Another factor is destination choice. Planners are willing to be more flexible when it comes to their criteria when selecting locations for their future events. Rural and coastal destinations are seeing increased demand to host some of the world's leading international conferences and events. For example, Cornwall will host the 2021 G7 Summit, in June, bringing together international leaders from across the world."

DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

With events going hybrid, companies now have a bigger challenge in terms of innovation. Prior to COVID-19, there was a lot of emphasis on the experiential factor. Has the emphasis changed? Wadhwa explains saying, "We have always been an experiential company focusing on 'Experiences beyond the Extraordinary'. Many of our unique events have been





at the most iconic, historic destinations and venues around the world.”

One can certainly say that the sky is the limit for M!CE events and that would go for imagination as well. Srithar states how Singapore has done things differently adding, “With innovation being key, last year, we had transformed the International Dental Exhibition and Meeting (IDEM) event from a physical trade show and conference into a fully virtual event. It had attracted close to 4,000 participants, with over 300 exhibiting brands from over 50 countries, demonstrating how virtual engagements can augment face-to-face events safely and effectively.

Leading the way with rigorous protocols and innovative solutions for the end-to-end visitor journey, TravelRevive was the first pilot tradeshow to trial the newly developed ‘hybrid event’ tradeshow prototype for safe business events, safe itineraries,

and digital enablers in Singapore.” Thakur adds, “Marriott’s Portfolio in South Asia spoils customers with choicest venues that can accommodate from small & intimate events to large format conferences. Our hotels like the JW Aerocity, St Regis Mumbai and Ritz Carlton Bengaluru have played hosts to heads of state visits and parliamentary delegations in the past while our hotels like W Goa, Westin Pushkar and the Sheraton Chennai Resort & Spa are the preferred choice for customers looking at Exclusive Buy out Weddings.

Hotels like the Renaissance Mumbai, Sheraton Whitefield Bengaluru and JW Pune have hosted large medical and educational conferences with capacities over 3,000-4,000 delegates as well. In the current post-COVID era, our hotels continue to innovate and craft their offerings to the need of customers. We have successfully hosted virtual hybrid weddings as well as

OUT OF THE BOX

Thinking differently is being considered the new mantra for many a company. The same sentiment has and will be witnessed by M!CE players too. However, interestingly companies in a bid to do things differently have gone bizarre in their requests.

Wadhwa explains from his point of view, “We once did an event just for two nights in USA and due to flight timings, we barely had one and a half day to really plan the programme. The final plan included experiencing Miami from air, sea and land all in a matter of four hours. This plan included chartering helicopters for a joy flight over the city, a yacht cruise to experience the city from sea and then classic vintage cars to enjoy the city in style by road.”

virtual conferences with the culinary experience delivered to the delegate residences via our Marriott on Wheels initiative.”

THE TECHNOLOGY TAKE-OVER

Technological advancements in the M!CE industry was a focus but the pandemic practically made every industry dependent on technology to survive and this industry was no different. As Srithar states, “Our M!CE industry has been agile and resilient during this period, transforming business models and event formats, adopting digital solutions and virtual engagements to augment face-to-face events. Marina Bay Sands Singapore had launched a hybrid event broadcast studio with hologram functionalities at its Sands Expo and Convention Centre. Their state-of-the-art Hybrid Broadcast Studio at Sands Expo and Convention Centre saw the rolling out of the Mixed Reality (MR) capabilities. The MR technology is set to

enlarge the studio's hybrid tech toolbox, empowering event planners to transform their events through show-stunning presentations. It integrates the virtual and physical worlds to create an immersive and interactive presentation. MR technology allows presenters to have a more meaningful interaction with digital data and the environment, bringing presentations to life through hyper-realistic visuals."

Reiterating similar sentiments, Bhatia explains, "Being able to take a live event and bring it online has allowed the industry to become more inclusive, giving planners the opportunity to engage with a more diverse audience. Another way technology is playing a key role in the future of events is shown through HESUK initiative where core English cities have united to offer a collaborative service."

This new way of working has provided a single point of contact for event organisers who are looking to restructure national and regional conferences and has brought together some of England's leading cities to work together. Overall, the advancement of technology in the events industry has given planners and their delegates a choice in how they attend events."

Expressing a practical point of view, Wadhwa states that companies will realise the cost savings technological advancements bring; companies will take only the top achievers for trips abroad in time to come, while medium achievers will join in virtually. The ability to seamlessly find the right balance between technology and on-ground events will be the key in the future.



Sushil Shamlal Wadhwa



Global forecast states that the M!CE industry recovery will begin from 2022 and flourish from 2023



Parul Thakur



M!CE events are still to return in their full glory of pre-COVID times. What we see today are smaller formats



QUICK BYTE Destinations are partnering to offer a well-rounded experience within one event

THE WAY AHEAD

The M!CE industry as per experts is very gradually moving to normalcy but despite challenges, there will be trends that will rule in this year. Srithar states his view saying, "Destination partnerships is the in-thing as destinations are partnering to offer a well-rounded experience that can showcase an array of venues and locations all within one event."

Sustainability will also be key as there is a much higher demand for live events to make sustainably focused decisions that benefit both delegates and the host destination. We will also continue to see destinations and venues invest in their digital offering. And finally, as the world slowly moves towards recovery from lockdown, interest in outdoor venues has never been greater. Venues and destinations are adapting to this demand to offer luxury experiences that are both unique and COVID-secure in outdoor settings."

Sharing similar thoughts and trends Wadhwa highlights social media influencers' involvement in digital amplification of on-ground events to a larger audience. Of course, everyone will be masking up and using sanitisers for a couple of years at least.

Srithar sharing his opinion concludes by saying that digitisation, flexibility of venue spaces as well as health and safety protocols will be event planners' key priorities. It has been observed that various alternative meeting formats that allow people to meet and interact remotely have emerged. Innovation and technology will play an important role, to futureproof our industry and be ready for the new normal in 2021. Today, consumers use screens and live virtual experiences more than ever, and that's how the M!CE space would likely be redefined – a consumer-centric offering that is digital-enabled and data-empowered.

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HK tapping M!CE trends

HKTB has strengthened its partner relationships to keep the destination top-of-mind when outbound travel from India begins again, says **Puneet Kumar**, Director, SA & ME, HKTB

Hazel Jain



Puneet Kumar



Safety & hygiene standards, direct flights rate much higher as the critical M&I destination selection criteria



How is HK as a M!CE destination for Indian corporates?

India has long been a key strategic short-haul market for Hong Kong; way back in 2014, Hong Kong was among the first few overseas M!CE destinations that created a dedicated recognition programme, 'Top Agent Awards Programme (TAAP)', to acknowledge the contribution of M!CE agents in India. The response has been very encouraging, the number of participating agencies have grown manifold over the years.

Is HK looking to promote itself as a M!CE destination for the Indian market?

To me, a great destination for incentive travel from India should offer great connectivity, top standard in hygiene, unique experiences and great

cuisine options, which Hong Kong offers. All through the lockdown imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, we remained connected with our corporate and travel trade stakeholders, updating them about the Hong Kong Government's hygiene measures. We have leveraged on this window to sustain our partner relationships, educating and engaging them to keep the destination top-of-mind when the outbound travel is at pause mode.

The HKTB has launched 360 Hong Kong Moments, a series of virtual-reality (VR) adventure. This allows our partners to embark on a journey across Hong Kong's surprisingly easy-to-access green territory, fully immersing in the sensations

of the city's scenes without leaving their homes.

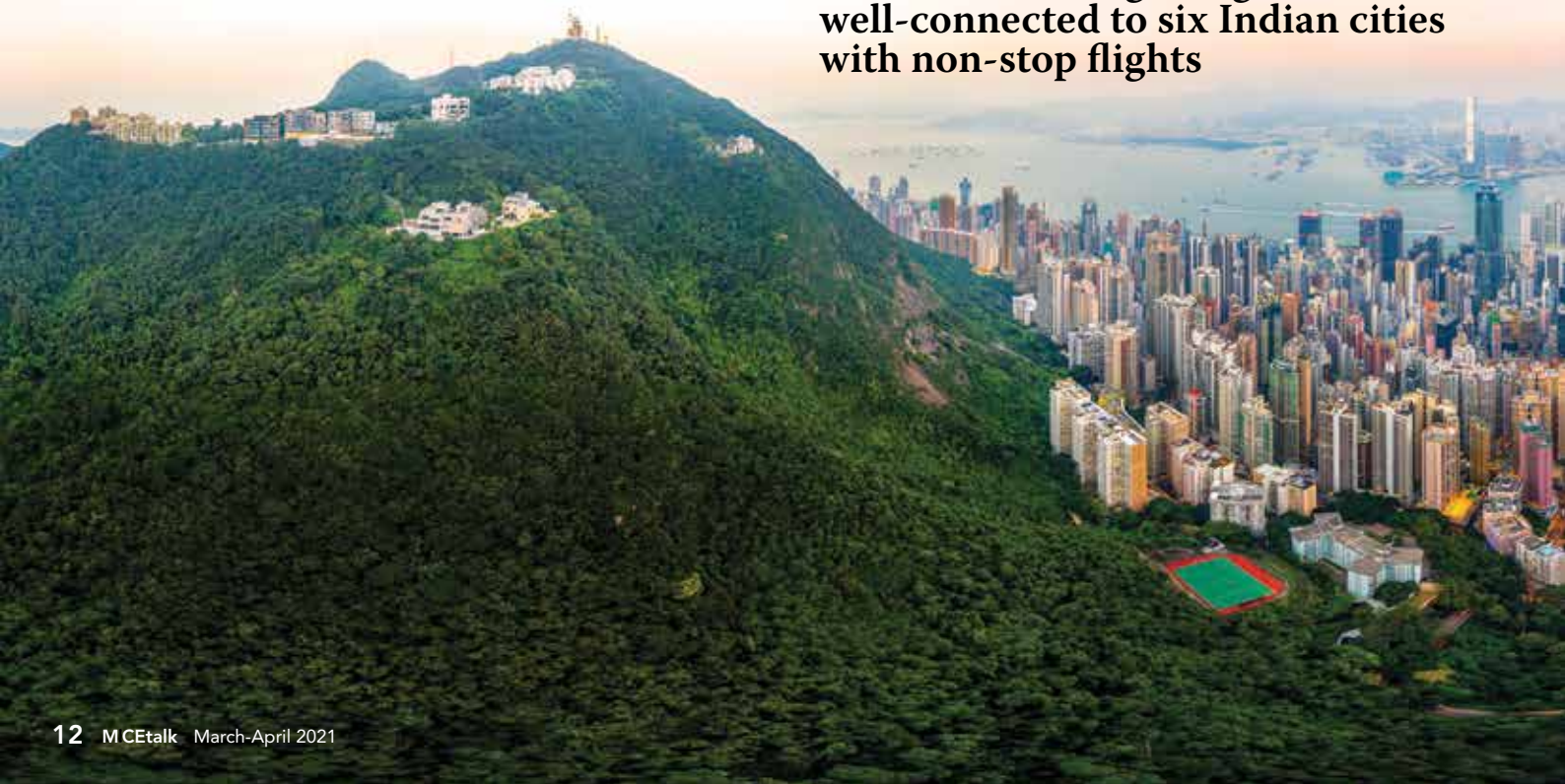
What are some of the new incentive ideas HKTB has curated for M!CE recovery?

In anticipation of the resumption of travel, the team has been developing new themed itineraries that answer the emerging trend of experiential, wellness and interest-based travel, such as CSR and wellness. Many new inspirational ideas and refreshed experiences are curated to enrich corporate Meetings & Incentive (M&I) groups' itineraries, and to encourage them rediscover Hong Kong with a new lens.

Do you have a tactical campaign for M&I?

The Meetings & Exhibitions Hong Kong (MEHK), the

QUICK BYTE Hong Kong is well-connected to six Indian cities with non-stop flights



M!CE division of the Hong Kong Tourism Board is committed to welcome back Indian M&I groups to Hong Kong. Along with our Hong Kong industry partners, we will be curating exclusive offers and incentives under the MeetON@HongKong campaign to make it a rewarding experience for the visiting corporate delegates.

The programme will further be enhanced with additional offers from hotels, free ticket from airline, attractions and more.

What about trade partnerships?

We will also be collaborating with our travel trade partners in India, who are focused on the M!CE segment. MEHK will be working with their teams to create compelling offers for their corporate customers, supporting their outreach initiatives for lead generation and assisting them during their planning process.

Moreover, representatives from trade associations, universities and chambers of commerce were invited to become Hong Kong Convention Ambassadors under the new programme to promote Hong Kong as a convention destination.

How do you think the M!CE travel landscape will change now?

Most Indian corporates now prefer short-haul destinations. Some of them plan to operate a series of smaller groups vis-a-vis a single large group. Hong Kong Tourism Board will have a new scheme in response to this latest trend. Safety & hygiene standards and availability of direct flights rate much higher as the critical M&I destination selection criteria.

Corporate decision-makers in India are also open to introduce new elements and experiences for their M&I groups — these include outdoor venues, team-building activities, cultural experiences, nature trails besides exploring fresh options of organising their gala dinner at eclectic locations, so Hong Kong has been developing tactical programmes and curating new ideas to tap the latest M&I trends.

And what do your interactions with the Indian corporates reveal?

Majority of the corporate customers are planning to rollout their incentive schemes gradually starting from the first half of 2021, aided by the successful



M!CE VENUES

- **Seaside or floating venues** – Perfect for gala dinners, corporate gatherings and welcome drinks that combine mouth-watering cuisine with a spectacular backdrop, the iconic Victoria Harbour.
- **Sky-high venues** – Hong Kong is home to a wealth of top-notch restaurants that offer astonishing views from multiple breathtaking angles.
- **Luxury heritage venues** – heritage sites offer exquisite contemporary cuisines in a stunning heritage building

rollout of the vaccine drive in India. It has helped to bring back the travel confidence, the corporates plan to gradually resume their incentive travel movements in Q3-Q4 of 2021. The virtual (or hybrid) event formats, and domestic destinations are only a short-term measure. They cannot substitute for the aspiration associated with an international travel experience, especially for incentive travel.

Hong Kong ranks high amongst the preferred incentive destinations with its proven track record, effective handling of the pandemic and addressing the potential compliance concerns in terms of health, hygiene and safety.



‘From **fear** to caution’

Thomas Cook India conducted its first M!CE roadshow in Mumbai recently, no doubt prompted by their corporate clients’ desire to return to normalcy

Hazel Jain

In a bold initiative, Thomas Cook India conducted a roadshow dedicated to M!CE for its corporate clients at the Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel.

Madhavan Menon, Chairman and MD, Thomas Cook India, says, "We have reached an inflection point where we are able to move

from fear to caution. I have always been very hopeful of the M!CE segment in India. The disruption took us to zero but now we are seeing a bounce back.

Companies have already done trips and some are already planning M!CE trips this year. Within India I can see corporates wanting to go back to normal."

The event included a panel discussion, a motivational session by actor Ashish Vidyarthi and table top meetings. Various Marriott properties in India were part of the event along with Tourism New Zealand.

Sharing the intention behind this event, **Rajeev Kale**, President & Country Head – Holidays, MICE,

Visa, Thomas Cook (India) says, "The M!CE business requires a human element and so we decided to organise this event in order to engage our partners. We had corporate clients from the western region – from Pune, Ahmedabad, and of course Mumbai. We also had a few key clients from Delhi who were represented by their Mumbai office."

What the corporates say



Dr Satish Wagh
Chairman and MD
Supriya Lifesciences



Corporates do want to come back to normal & restart M!CE trips. While we don't have anything on the cards as of now, we will plan something soon. I am eager to start travelling for M!CE events in India and abroad



Nikhil Chopra
CEO, JB Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals



With the doctor community, who are our external stakeholders, we will soon look at conducting small offsite meetings or conferences with around 30-40 pax. It is a slow process, but people are now ready to connect face-to-face



Nitin Khanna
Head (Retail Businesses & Mktg), ICICI Lombard



We have not initiated full-fledged M!CE events yet but we have done small local events in Mumbai. Generally events start around May-June & we are looking forward to conducting a few M!CE events this summer



Navin Tewari
MD & CEO
Capital Foods



We are ready to conduct M!CE – no one is going to tell us, okay – now it is safe to do events. There is no one day which will make it safe for M!CE, it is a slow process & it is us who will have to decide whether we want to restart M!CE or not



The second edition of the Gulf Travel Show to be held on March 31 and April 1, 2021, will offer ample opportunities for enhancing relationships and building connections.

Shehara Rizly



GTS 2021, a brand-new digital experience

At the second edition of the Gulf Travel Show (GTS), some of the key travel, tourism and hospitality experts from across the Middle East will share their insights on the industry through one-on-one sessions as well as panel discussions.

Also, at the virtual event, experts will share their predictions and research findings to ensure building the confidence of the travellers.

At GTS 2021, a brand-new digital experience awaits you with a platform which depicts a real live event, with state-of-the-art tech.

As you enter the event, you will be transported to the venue with a very easy to manage menu that enables you to really enjoy the event without any hassles.

The hosted buyers will have the opportunity to earn

points while visiting each booth and also increase their chances of making connections.

The first edition of GTS was held in November last year. It saw 40 plus exhibitors, 6,000 one-to-one meetings, and 2,500 visitors from 59 countries which included travel agents, tour operators, tourism boards, airlines, hotels, travel management companies and international agencies. At the two-day event, participants got the opportunity to network extensively and also learn about the trends in the industry.



The Gulf Travel Show with its proprietary exhibition software will help you recover, rebuild and reimagine relationships and products.

The first edition which concluded with great success was an affirmation of the need of the hour for the travel fraternity to ensure they maintain their connections and proactively search for new connections and/or partners that will help them grow their business, help them grow their brand and build long-term profitable business connections.



QUICK BYTE GTS will help you recover, rebuild & reimagine relationships & products

Commenting on the relevance of the Gulf Travel Show, **HE Khalid Jasim Al Midfa**, Chairman, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority, says, "The Gulf Travel Show redefines the way we promote travel and tourism, providing a platform to showcase how we are building on what we achieved during the COVID-19, and planning for a stronger future post COVID-19.

Such shows and events are crucial to communicate Sharjah's tourism story and showcase our tourism assets to the local, regional and international markets." Midfa goes on to add, "Through innovative solutions, the Gulf Travel Show connects exhibitors and buyers worldwide under one virtual show to present their unique brands. It also offers an opportunity for direct access to target markets, including one-on-one video meetings."

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Building business relationships

Every business relationship is unique in its own way and certainly requires a very customised approach, no matter what the books say

Charmaine Fernz



The most talked about quote pertaining to business is none other than the one by Warren Buffet that states, “It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.” This is exactly the reason we at M!CEtalk have decided to decipher the real psychology behind building the right business relationship. It is even more necessary in today’s time in a post-COVID phase when relationships are more focussed on virtual platforms rather than one-on-one meetings. So the question that arises is what are the essential ingredients that make up a right business relationship?

Vinay Malhotra, Regional Group COO – South Asia, Middle East & North Africa and Americas, VFS Global, explains, “Fundamentally, lasting business relationships have their foundations in ethical dealings, transparency, regular information sharing and connect, and attention to feedback, irrespective of the sector. Over the last 20 years, VFS Global has grown its business from serving one client govt in India, to 64 client governments in 143 countries.

We attribute our strong relationships with our clients to the trust we have built among them through ethical practices, seamless services in all our offerings, transparency in our functionalities, our understanding of managing visa application processes, local expertise of the laws of the land we operate in, and last but not least, our future-ready technological innovations through the years that allow us to sustain and maintain customer service at its best.”



Vinay Malhotra



Maintaining a symbiotic relationship, while being ethical, would be the common intent that should run through various scenarios



Pippa Williamson



Focus on adding value, building trust and a true partnership. A relationship that isn’t mutually beneficial, will not last long



QUICK BYTE Every relationship must be built upon a sense of trust and partnership

Sharing her global view, **Pippa Williamson** – Senior Vice President, Head of Sales and Distribution of Shangri-La Group asserts that, “Having the right quality of business relationships is an asset to any organisation, that doesn’t usually sit on the balance sheet. A growing network is important, but every relationship must be built upon a sense of trust and partnership. At Shangri-La, we believe our core values of humility, respect, courtesy, helpfulness and selflessness gives us the sincerity we need, as we continue to develop long-lasting business models with our partners around the world.”

A recent report by the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants states that the COVID-19 crisis has raised very pertinent questions that businesses never thought of – How do you connect with customers who cannot or will not step out? How do you manage a team that you can no longer just walk up to? How do you set stakeholder expectations in a landscape of variables? And lots more. But as unprecedented as it is, it’ll put the business world through the same test as all previous crises —the test of business relationships.

THE TECHNIQUES

Just like any relationship, a business relationship is built over time with the efforts of more than just an individual, rather it is a team effort. However, it is a fact that nothing is set in stone. Sharing his point of

view, Malhotra says, “Of course, there may be widely different considerations in play for a B2C-focused company, as opposed to a B2B one, for instance. But maintaining a symbiotic relationship, while being flexible and ethical, would be the common intent that should ideally run through various scenarios. For VFS Global, which works with client governments across the globe, understanding and strictly adhering to visa regulations and guidelines defined by client governments, as well as the directives of local governments in the location of operations, is key.

We also lay strong emphasis on constant communication with our clients, which further strengthens their faith in us. For instance, throughout the lockdown periods of the pandemic, and well after, we regularly communicated any updates with our clients, be it border closures, operational restarts, industry sentiments, and changes in our business offerings and plans for the year.”

“Additionally, being a customer-facing industry, collecting and implementing feedback from customers is of equal importance to us. We do the same for clients as well, so we are continually learning from feedback and improving our service offerings,” he shares.

Giving it the human touch, Williamson feels that relationship building is ultimately about working with people. While each industry may have its own style – a sincere, respectful approach usually brings a certain sense of gravity to interpersonal connections. Understanding customers is a very important part of this process. The technique is

not different for hospitality, however the relationships with people is amplified as it is the core of our business.

THE TECHNOLOGY FACTOR

It would be important to understand the role of technology in today's scenario of hybrid meetings. This brings up a very pertinent question: would advancement of technology replace the human factor? The answer lies in Malhotra's response who says, "Technology plays a key role in enhancing service delivery, and this has proved more true than ever last year, when business models needed to be amended to suit unique requirements of the post-pandemic world. VFS Global, as a company has continually invested in technology-based service innovations and this leverage has helped us remain industry leaders in the space over the last 20 years."

For Shangri-La as a group, it is no different as Williamson shares, "Well, every organisation today counts on technology and this has been accelerated over the past 12 months. CRM software does give an advantage, but it really is about having the right information, ethically collected – which can help forge a real connection with a future or existing business partner. Using video/calling technology, has made it easier to share best practices within organisations. With an agile culture, skill-sets can be quickly transferred. Many of our sellers now use social media effectively, to stay in touch and share curated information with their customers."

However, companies need to be aware of certain



QUICK BYTE Trust, respect, adaptability, foresight & drive are vital for a lasting relationship

pitfalls that may arise while building or progressing a relationship. As Williamson explains, "There's plenty of noise out there, and it is easy to get lost in the detail. Our approach is really to keep it simple. Focus on adding value, building trust and a true partnership. A business relationship that isn't mutually beneficial, will not last very long. At Shangri-La, our core values are a healthy reminder, that we are a peoples' business at heart."

IN A NUTSHELL

Every business relationship is unique in its own way and certainly requires a very customised approach, no matter what the books say. Malhotra explains his view saying, "In a dynamic marketplace, every day can present different challenges and it is important to be agile enough to adapt to these scenarios in a mutually beneficial manner. In a dynamic industry, it is important to remain agile and listen closely to customer feedback to ensure services and innovations are flexible enough to adhere to evolving requirements in visa service. Nonetheless, it is important to understand that maintaining trust through ethical practices, customer centricity and excellence, openness to feedback, local expertise and constant innovation are the five key attributes to maintaining a sustainable business relationship."

Concluding in the words of Williamson, there are the five key factors – trust, respect, adaptability, foresight and drive.

‘A flawless **M!CE** tour’

Customer insights and data obtained via sustained corporate engagement and the SOTC M!CE Survey revealed that 25% of its corporates were open to international travel

MT Bureau

Despite the challenges of the COVID era, SOTC Travel has begun the year with a significant win – the successful delivery of an international M!CE group in January 2021. This noteworthy achievement involved a large movement of 750 delegates to Dubai. The SOTC M!CE Team had spent the lockdown period meaningfully – to reimagine its M!CE business. Customer insights and data obtained via sustained corporate engagement and the SOTC MICE Survey revealed that 25 per cent of its corporates were open to international travel. To leverage this potential and build corporate confidence in travel, SOTC M!CE focused on products-services innovation that included its meticulous Assured Safe Travel Program in partnership with Apollo Clinics.



SD Nandakumar

HIGHLIGHTS

- Exclusive charter flights were operated
- Accommodation at JW Marriott Marquis, the second tallest hotel in the world
- Engaging experience at IMG & Aqua venture at Atlantis – The Palm, etc.
- A special gala-event at a luxury desert camp
- Carefully designed sightseeing with safety measures



For the 750 member M!CE movement, great care was taken in both planning and on-ground management of the group, with an unerring focus on hygiene, safety and excitement at every step of the journey with support from DTCM. Desert Adventures Tourism, the global office for UAE & Oman incoming – facilitated the offering of a wide range of high-quality products and services and ensured seamless operations.

SD Nandakumar, President & Country Head, B2B & Foreign Exchange, SOTC Travel, said, “I am proud of this exceptional achievement by SOTC M!CE – organising a flawless M!CE tour for 750 delegates during the COVID

era – speaks volumes of the unstinted efforts in planning and delivery. All precautions and safety measures were followed as per local regulations in Dubai.

The turnaround was inspirational and kudos to each member of Team SOTC M!CE – contactless pre-tour operations for the group were completed within seven days from the day of confirmation. SOTC Team ensured a seamless movement of delegates to Dubai and back.”

He added, “The massive Dubai Group was a game changer in many ways, and we will continue to push boundaries as we ensure excellence in delivery from our exceptional people at SOTC M!CE.”

QUICK BYTE Contactless pre-tour operations for the group were completed within seven days



Together, the next destination?

A recent survey from IHG Hotels & Resorts reveals how much people are longing for human connection, to be with their loved ones, and to make new memories

Between January 5 and 8 2021, IHG surveyed 2,000 people in the US, 2,000 in the UK and 2,000 in Australia to gauge travel sentiment into the new year. The survey reveals how much people are longing for human connection, to be with their loved ones, and to make new memories.

Close to 60 per cent of survey respondents said they cancelled up to four trips (leisure and business) last year. More than half the travellers surveyed said they have now rebooked cancelled trips or plan to rebook them, with family holidays and visiting loved ones topping travel wish lists for 2021.

And while the pandemic isn't over, the rollout of vaccines is igniting hope and optimism, as respondents across all age groups, 18 to 55+, say spending time with family and friends is a primary motivator for travel this year.

WHEN THE WORLD OPENS...

- One in five respondents said they plan to make up for the lack of travel in 2020 by going on more trips than they typically plan for when it is safe to do so.
- One in five people overall said they hope to travel to a place on their bucket list in 2021, with that

being true for one in three travellers aged 18 to 24.

- Speaking of younger travellers, this age group was five times as likely to say that volunteering for a community in need was a primary motivator for travel.
- When it comes to what respondents travelling for work miss the most, one in three said it was 'sleeping in a comfy hotel bed' and one in four said 'room service.'

BUSINESS TRAVEL

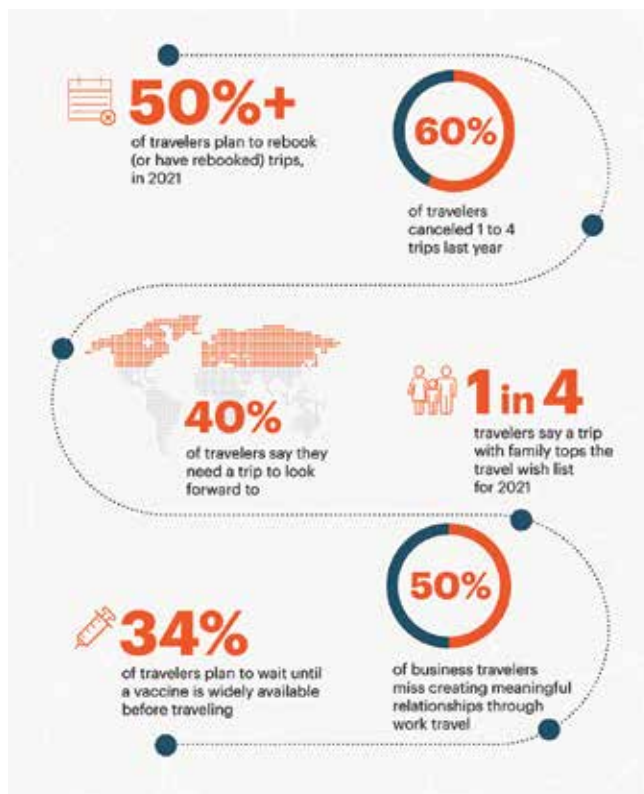
- One in three workers globally stated the lack of business travel in 2020 demotivated them.
- 40 % of those who travel for business said they miss face-to-face meetings.
- More than half of respondents said business travel allows them to create meaningful relationships

- Nearly 45 per cent shared that business travel improves their working mood and makes them more motivated.
- Over a third of all those surveyed, including 50 per cent of those aged 55 and older, said the COVID-19 vaccine being easily and widely available is when they want to start to travel again.

Commenting on the survey results, **James Britchford**, VP Commercial IMEA, IHG Hotels & Resorts, said, "It's often said that travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer, and our survey results prove that people are hungry for those rich experiences again. But the world has changed, and travel decisions must be made more thoughtfully.

As we look ahead, we've all had a lot of time to think about what travel means to us, what trips are most important, and how we want to reconnect with loved ones.

So, whether it's that longed-for family beach vacation, a weekend getaway with friends, your first in-person business meeting, or a special anniversary trip – our family of 16 brands is ready to help open up the world when the time is right; and welcome travellers back with confidence, as we embark on the next chapter of travel."



QUICK BYTE One in 5 respondents said they plan to make up for the lack of travel in 2020



MICE Engage 2021

Corporates can re-ignite their M!CE plans by networking with travel suppliers at the one and only MICE Engage 2021 virtual show hosted by JTB India on April 28, 2021

Hazel Jain

In view of the missed M!CE travel opportunities last year, 2021-2022 is expected to throw up myriad new options for this segment. With the gradual return of live events combined with hybrid methods, corporate customers worldwide will no doubt search for newer and safer ways to conduct their M!CE travel. Catering to this latent demand, **JTB India** will organise a unique B2C virtual platform dedicated to M!CE travel slated to be held on April 28, 2021.

This event will see participation from interesting and varied exhibitors such as international tourism boards, and global hotel chains apart from cruise lines and international and domestic airlines. Corporates can register for this event as buyers free of cost and take advantage of this networking opportunity. With M!CE travel from India slowly gaining momentum, corporates are invited to participate in **MICE Engage 2021** in

order to take advantage of its wide corporate network. **MICE Engage 2021** will offer corporates a chance to connect with various tourism service providers that can cater to all M!CE requirements. A new world order calls for new beginnings, and **MICE**



Corporates will get a chance to connect with tourism service providers catering to all M!CE requirements



Perfect moments, always

QUICK BYTE The event will help corporates budget for their M!CE trips in this financial year

Engage 2021 can help meet new M!CE requirements. This event will also help corporates budget for their M!CE trips in this financial year.

The disruption caused by the pandemic took us from 100 to zero. But the industry is now seeing a bounce back with companies who have either already done M!CE trips or are already planning M!CE trips this year. Studies show that corporate clients within India want to go back to normal, but safely keeping all COVID-19 protocols in place.

All M!CE travel essentially boils down to employee engagement, which means that the content of every M!CE travel – whether it is an incentive, a conference or an executive-level meeting – is very crucial. Therefore, what teams do within that is very important because

every single activity whether it is a dinner, a speaker or a talk show is towards building engagement.

Many corporates are exploring new destinations and new experiences as a response to COVID-19. The virtual event **MICE Engage 2021** will allow corporates to meet decision-makers from the travel sector via one-on-one, pre-scheduled meetings, with the option of doing video calls through the platform. Buyers can learn about new brands, new destinations, and travel products that have entered the travel market and explore M!CE opportunities for their teams.

This event is poised to give M!CE travel in India a shot in the arm. Business events of the future are slated to be multi-sensory, authentic and experiential. And this virtual platform will provide corporates an opportunity to explore just that.

To know more about this, contact your JTB Sales Manager or write to us at sales1@jtb-india.com

Hybrid is the way to go

Anmol Zutshi, GM, Ashok Events, ITDC, shares their experience of organising Bharat Parv virtually and why he thinks that hybrid events would be the way forward

Nisha Verma

Ashok Events is the division of India Tourism Development Corporation, which handles events on behalf of various government bodies, ministries and PSUs. Anmol Zutshi informs, "We provide logistic support in terms of branding, audio-visual photography and other collaterals of handling an event. We are also the executing agency for handling events, with an MoU with MOT, which is our administrative ministry. Under that purview, we have been handling and executing mega events like Bharat Parv or Paryatan Parv for the MOT."

ORGANISING BHARAT PARV VIRTUALLY

He shares, "This year because of the COVID protocols, the 7th Bharat Parv was held virtually from January 26-31, with the theme Dekho Apna Desh, Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (pairing of states) and Atmanirbhar Bharat. Even on the virtual platform, we had the pavilions for states and MOT, where people could enter and view the videos of various states showcasing their tourism products, handloom products, handicrafts, cuisines, cultural performances, etc. MOT had three stalls, including Dekho Apna Desh, Statue of Unity, and Incredible India.

EMBRACING TECH

When asked about handling the technological aspect of a virtual event, Zutshi



QUICK BYTE Even on the virtual platform, we had the pavilions for states & the Ministry of Tourism



Anmol Zutshi

With the new restrictions, there would be a happy mix of virtual and physical events

explains, "Even earlier for physical events and other technological aspects, we had our own empanelled agencies for delivering things like branding, audio-visual photography, conferences as well as event and manpower requirement registration. In this case also, we have been doing hybrid events for a long time. There is a part, which is physical and then for the virtual, web and other aspects, we already have in place the tech support with our service providers. It was of course scaled up and started happening more due to the restrictions during COVID-19 times. The platform was made with our technical team and with our service providers."

HYBRID EVENTS WILL INCREASE

However, he believes that while it's comfortable to attend a virtual event, face-to-face is important for human beings. "On a virtual platform, it becomes slightly impersonal. However, people have got used to it. It's not a great challenge, but we feel as a hospitality company that physical events are costlier for clients and mean more revenues for us. The virtual event reduces that aspect of earning revenues as we do for a physical format. Hence, that is a new challenge. We always look forward to having physical events, since we are hospitality professionals. With the times having hybrid events is a new scope, and such events will increase. With the new restrictions, there would be a happy mix of virtual and physical events," adds Zutshi.

Innovative events

In these trying times, Singapore continues to stand as a premier business events destination connecting the world to Asia, says **Beverly Au Yong**, Area Director, ME, STB

While COVID-19 has altered the events landscape, the fundamentals that have made Singapore successful – our vibrant business environment, outstanding infrastructure and future-ready workforce – remain unchanged.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

As international business travel resumes, you can trust that Singapore will safeguard the well-being of visiting delegates and staff. We remain committed to upholding the highest standards of health and safety and to giving all our visitors peace of mind when they come to the Lion City. Hotels, restaurants, exhibition halls and other establishments have adopted new safe management measures, such as social distancing and heightened cleaning of premises to ensure reduced public health risk. Beyond these, the Singapore Government also launched SG Clean, a national mark of excellence for cleanliness, hygiene, and infection control.

FORWARD-LOOKING CONCEPTS FOR EVENTS

Singapore's events industry is also implementing unique solutions to meet the emerging demands of a new era of business travel. Local companies are reinventing themselves – from enhancing digital offerings to developing forward-looking concepts for hybrid and virtual events. For example, in June 2020, homegrown event organiser Web in

Travel (WiT) engaged more than 750 tourism business leaders to discuss the future of the industry in a global virtual summit. The recently concluded TravelRevive was Asia Pacific's first international travel tradeshow that was held in Singapore.

Leading the way with rigorous protocols and innovative solutions for the

Action (AfA) on enabling safe and innovative visitor experiences. With close to 1,000 attendees on-site, the pilot hybrid event brought to life Singapore's vision for safe, trusted and innovative business events.

With this mindset of continuous innovation, it is no wonder that Singapore was recently named the world's most competitive



Beverly Au Yong



QUICK BYTE Singapore was recently named the world's most competitive economy

end-to-end visitor journey, TravelRevive was the first pilot tradeshow to trial the newly developed 'hybrid event' tradeshow prototype for safe business events, safe itineraries, and digital enablers in Singapore.

This is part of a public-private collaboration under the Emerging Stronger Taskforce's Singapore Together Alliance for

economy for the second consecutive year (IMD World Competitiveness Ranking, 2020). Singapore is where great minds converge, connect and create the future of business.

(The article has been written by Beverly Au Yong, Area Director, Middle East, Singapore Tourism Board, the views expressed are the author's personal views)



TravelRevive brought to life Singapore's vision for safe, trusted and innovative business events



Reviving ME tourism

This year ATM's theme of 'A new dawn for travel and tourism' has never been more relevant nor important, says Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market

MT Bureau

Arabian Travel Market 2021 will be held from May 16-19 at the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), focusing on the recovery of Middle East tourism. "This year's theme of 'A new dawn for travel and tourism' has never been more relevant nor important – this message of recovery will be integrated into all of the show verticals and planned activities. The week-long festival of events is dedicated to travel professionals from all over world, to collaborate and shape the recovery of the Middle East travel industry, through exhibitions, conferences, breakfast briefings, awards, product launches and networking events," says **Danielle Curtis**, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market.

Now in its 28th year and working in collaboration with DWTC and Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM), ATM 2021 will play an integral role in Arabian Travel Week. "Essentially, Arabian Travel Week will provide a pivotal platform for the region's travel and tourism industry, whether participating in-person at the events or virtually, over the course of 10 days – it will put a spotlight on Dubai, the UAE, GCC and of course the wider MENA region's tourism sector," shares Curtis.

"There will be a whole host of in-person seminars



Danielle Curtis

technology experts lined up for the Travel Forward Theatre. Other notable features of Arabian Travel Week and in-person at ATM include ILTM Arabia 2021, buyer forums with networking dedicated to key source markets including Saudi Arabia, India and China, a hotel summit, the responsible tourism programme

online attendees from 140 countries. "It is imperative that we include a virtual element to Arabian Travel Week because many industry professionals from around the world may not be able to attend the in-person event for 2021. Indeed, it would also be impossible for us, at this moment in time, to even begin to speculate on how



QUICK BYTE Arabian Travel Week will put a spotlight on Dubai, the UAE, GCC & MENA region

on ATM's show floor specifically designed to support, inspire and innovate all travel and tourism professionals, looking at the latest trends in technology, sustainability and profiling the next generation of global travellers," said Curtis.

There will also be an array of high-profile keynote speakers and world-class

and the International Tourism & Investment Conference (ITIC) summit. To complement the four-day in-person show, for the first time, a new hybrid format will mean a virtual ATM running a week after to reach a wider audience than ever before. ATM Virtual, which made its debut last year, proved to be a resounding success, attracting 12,000

effective the vaccine rollout will be and subsequently when governments around the world will start to withdraw their travel restrictions," said Curtis.

ATM Virtual will feature comprehensive webinars, live conference sessions, roundtables, speed networking events, virtual digital influencers' speed networking session, one-to-one meetings, destination briefings, as well as facilitating new connections and offering a wide range of online business opportunities.

A sustainable choice

Hybrid solutions reduce the carbon footprint without completely eliminating human connection, says Tim Cordon, Area Senior VP, ME & Africa, Radisson Hotel Group

MT Bureau

Whilst the future of meetings is yet to be written, it will likely include a combination of live and virtual meetings frequently combined in the same event. The past year has forced many companies to explore work from home options, relying heavily on Wi-Fi, streaming, and an increased demand for hybrid meetings. By curating intimate events in local areas with hybrid functions, that not only require less to no travel and are safer for attendees, it allows companies to reduce environmental impact at the same time.

“The demand for hybrid meetings has increased exponentially over the past months and we are pleased to be able to meet the requirements of our guests and partners within the new norm. Hybrid solutions are not only convenient, but also provide a great opportunity for any organisation to progress its sustainability mission, as the carbon footprint is greatly reduced without completely eliminating true human connection”, says **Tim Cordon**, Area Senior Vice President ME & Africa, Radisson Hotel Group.

Looking towards the future of events, recent studies predict that small domestic meetings are expected to come back earliest, whereas large conferences will see a much later recovery beyond 2021 or will become hybrid in the future. According



Tim Cordon

Hybrid solutions provide a great opportunity for any organisation to progress its sustainability mission

to the Post COVID-19 Event Outlook Report, an overwhelming 93% of organisers plan to invest in virtual events moving forward and a whopping 76% of planners executed a virtual event in 2020. Looking at numbers, it's not unusual for virtual events to capture 6x–8x the number of registrations



Caroline Thissen

Organisations need to find the hybrid model that works best for their attendees, budgets, and ROI

compared to the equivalent event. Additionally, both attendees and planners were pleasantly surprised by attendance rates and engagement levels in virtual events. With that in mind, many believe that virtual events are likely to stay, as they create a powerful way to build engagement with audiences everywhere.

Whilst physical events will come back in future, they probably won't supplant virtual events; rather they'll exist alongside them.

Caroline Thissen, Area Senior Director Sales & Revenue Optimization, ME & Africa, Radisson Hotel Group, says, “We believe it will be very important for hotels to provide flexibility and offer solutions for both hybrid and physical events. Generally, we see that the virtual meeting elements can be a revenue source and also provide a new space for sponsor exposure in a more digital and creative way. That said, hybrid meetings will most likely appear in various forms as organisations have different requirements and need to find the model that works best for their attendees, budgets, and ROI. With that in mind we have been busy ensuring that our teams know how to master these foundational elements and have the right hybrid meeting technology to meet the needs of our clients and guests.”



Engaging employees virtually

The Wanderers was agile enough to quickly move from real to virtual during the pandemic

Hazel Jain

When employee engagement started to take a whole new meaning altogether during the pandemic, The Wanderers, that was a big player in the M!CE segment, quickly made the move from real to virtual.

Abhik Dutta, Director, The Wanderers and Colour Purple Event, says, “The first thing that we did in April-May 2020 when we realised it was going to be a long road to recovery, was to figure what is it that event companies do for clients and how we can offer that virtually. It all boils down to employee engagement. This means that your content is very important. What we do within that conference or the incentive is very important because every single activity whether it is



Abhik Dutta

a dinner, a speaker or a talk show is towards building an engagement.” With this understanding, Dutta and his team completely pivoted and came up with their own 10-12 virtual activities for corporates. These include

team-building activities such as treasure hunts to assimilating new joiners into the company culture. “We have done it for more than 20 companies so far including Unilever’s global Dove team, JP Morgan Chase, and Asus. Many of them have come back to us again and again because they felt we managed to engage their employees in a fantastic way through nail-biting activities with teams,” Dutta adds.

Another advantage of going virtual, Dutta explains is that earlier, his team couldn’t approach countries out of India as it didn’t make

sense. “But we realised it was possible to do that in the virtual space. So we approached Olam Singapore which was around 500-600 pax. If this was a physical event we wouldn’t even have reached out to them in the first place. So far we have handled a small group of 20 up to 250 pax virtually,” Dutta adds.

The company has now started social media messaging, advising corporate clients to start budgeting for their M!CE trips which could be later this year. “This is what all tourism bodies and M!CE agencies should be concentrating on right now since this is the corporate budgeting season – telling decision-makers and influencers to budget for a trip in 2021-22,” Dutta advises.

QUICK BYTE So far we have handled a small group of 20 up to 250 pax virtually

RETAINING SINGAPORE'S POSITION AS A LEADING MICE HUB

Singapore's MICE sector has adapted quickly in response to the repercussions brought about by Covid-19 pandemic. The industry has rallied together with close private-public collaboration to innovate and put in place several initiatives and frameworks to guide the recovery of the MICE sector. We take a look at some of the key milestones and progress that Singapore has made since the onset of Covid-19.



Jun 2020



International Dental Exhibition & Meeting – A fully virtual event involving close to 4,000 participants and more than 300 exhibiting brands from more than 50 countries.

22 Jul 2020

Safe Business Event Risk Management Framework developed for business events of up to **50 attendees**.

Aug/Sep 2020



APACMed, a hybrid event successfully piloted under the Safe Business Event Risk Management Framework.

Aug 2020

Singapore won the rights to host the following events:



• **110th Lions Club International Conventions** in 2028. The event is expected to attract around 20,000 foreign delegates.



• **Worldchefs Congress & Expo** in 2024. The event is expected to attract around 700 foreign delegates.

1 Oct 2020

Singapore Tourism Board started to accept applications for organisers to pilot MICE events of up to **250 attendees** from 1 Oct 2020.

8 Oct 2020

Singapore Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers launched the **Event Industry Resilience Roadmap** with the support of Singapore Tourism Board and Enterprise Singapore which will focus on:

- establishing best-in-class standards for new event safety measures,
- creating agile business models with a focus on digital capabilities and
- developing pathways for professional development in the post-Covid-19 world.

26-30 Oct 2020



The 13th **Singapore International Energy Week** was successfully piloted in a hybrid format and saw up to 250 participants onsite, attracting more than 30 Ministers and 300 speakers globally, and over 20,000 online viewers from over 80 countries.

18 Nov 2020

Inbound Travel Insurance coverage for Covid-19 related costs incurred in Singapore were made available by 3 insurance companies: AIG Asia Pacific Insurance Pte Ltd., Chubb Insurance Singapore Limited and HL Assurance Pte Ltd.

25-26 Nov 2020



TravelRevive was Asia Pacific's first international travel trade show to take place physically during Covid-19 involving 1,000 attendees with 65 foreign delegates from more than 14 countries.

15 Dec 2020

Connect@Singapore initiative was announced. A **Segregated Travel Lane** will facilitate business travelers from all countries on short-term stays (up to 14 days) to conduct business within dedicated facilities and subject to prevailing safe management measures and routine medical checks.

28 Dec 2020

Phase 3 of safe re-opening of "A Safe Nation" commenced on 28 December 2020.

11-15 Jan 2021



PCMA partnered with the Singapore Tourism Board to create a Global Broadcast Center for Convening Leaders located at the Marina Bay Sands in Singapore.

3-4 Mar 2021



A 2-day **Singapore MICE Virtual Tradeshow** to connect with up to 40 leading suppliers including convention centres, hotels, unique meeting venues, destination management companies and tour operators in Singapore.



Movements



Aisha Faiz
Chief Operating Officer
Sun Siyam, Maldives

Sun Siyam has appointed Aisha Faiz as Chief Operating Officer for its group of companies. Faiz has over two decades of experience in Finance and Business. She was a key member in creating the beginning of Sun Siyam as a travel agency in 1990. After venturing far for academics, culture and global exposure, she is now proud to be back to her roots to Sun Siyam. Faiz will play a key role in supporting the business growth and development strategies.



Katrin Herz
Multi Property GM
Marriott, Abu Dhabi

Marriott Hotel Downtown and Marriott Executive Apartments Downtown Abu Dhabi announced the appointment of Katrin Herz as the new Multi Property General Manager. With over 20 years of luxury hotel experience, Herz is all set to spearhead the team at the dynamic business hotel located in the heart of the capital city of Abu Dhabi. Herz worked her way up the ranks to lend her skills in key managerial positions. Most recently she served as GM of the Al Bustan Palace, a Ritz Carlton Hotel, Muscat (Oman), from 2015 until 2020.



Sharad Puri
Cluster General Manager
Sheraton Grand Bengaluru

Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel & Convention Center and Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park has appointed Sharad Puri as the new Cluster General Manager. An industry veteran with an exemplary track record, Puri brings with him an amalgamation of knowledge, experience and learning of over 25 years in the luxury hotels business. In his new role, Puri will oversee the complete operations and management of the hotels.



Nikita Ramchandani
General Manager
JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu

The flagship property of JW Marriott hotels in India has appointed Nikita Ramchandani, as the first lady General Manager to lead the iconic hotel in the Maximum City. Ramchandani has previously led the Operations discipline for the 135-hotels Marriott International portfolio as Senior Area Director of Operations. In her new role, Ramchandani envisions a stellar roadmap for the hotel's positioning within the hospitality landscape.



Anthony Costa
Regional President
Caesars Bluewaters Dubai

Caesars Bluewaters Dubai has appointed Anthony Costa as Regional President. A luxury hotel professional with over 25 years' experience driving financial performance, brand experience and talent engagement for the world's leading operators including the Jumeirah Group, Mandarin Oriental and Four Seasons, Costa combines expertise in hotel operations and a depth of understanding in luxury brand-building with a consummate ability to drive growth.



Reema Wadajkar
Director of Events
Hyatt Regency Pune

Hyatt Regency Pune Hotel & Residences has appointed Reema Wadajkar as Director of Events. Wadajkar brings with her over 12 years of experience in the hospitality industry, specialising in weddings. She has worked for the Oberoi Group, Taj Hotels, Accor, Marriott and Hilton in India. In her new role, Wadajkar will be overseeing key sectors including business development, brand building, contract management, key account management, crisis management and client servicing.



Khaled Amer
Head, Sales and Marketing
Wyndham Dubai Deira

Heading up Sales and Marketing for both Wyndham Dubai Deira and Super 8 by Wyndham Dubai Deira, is Khaled Amer who brings with him over 24 years of professional experience in the hospitality industry. As such he oversees the business development, sales function, and all new projects and strategies for the two hotels. Ghaith Adnan, a marketing professional with over seven years of hospitality, and F&B marketing experience handles day-to-day marketing activities.

Form IV

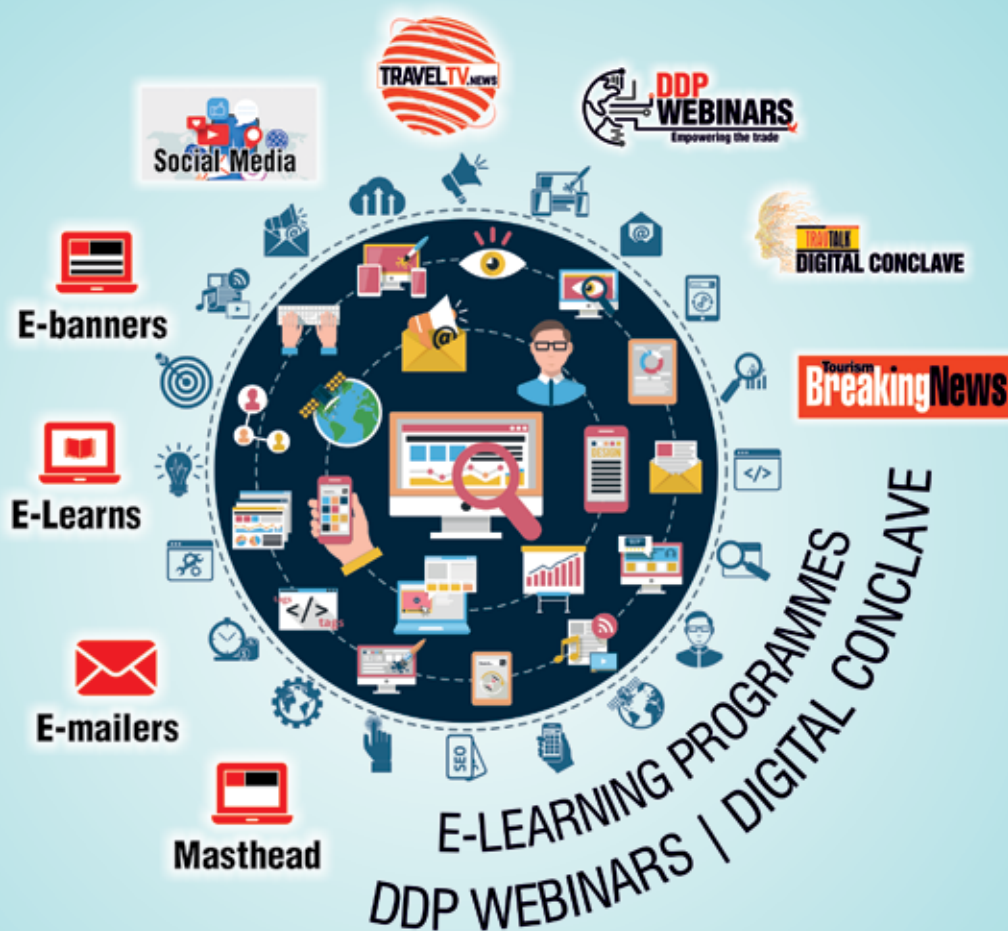
Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper MICEtalk to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February

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| 6. Name and address of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one percent of the total capital | : SanJeet,
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I, SanJeet, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
Date : 01/03/2021

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