

# 48th ICCA Congress & Exhibition

Florence, Italy, 07-11 November 2009



## Why attend?

1. Strong, custom-designed education programme for senior industry practitioners.
2. Business opportunities for all delegates throughout the event programme.
3. Exceptional networking: high level and global in scope.
4. Experience ICCA's innovative use of technology.
5. Record attendance anticipated: 900-1,000 attendees from approx 70 countries currently projected (NB Previous record 812 from 65 countries).

## Who should attend?

1. CEO's, company owners and senior directors: meet, exchange information, and do business with your peers from around the world.
2. Middle managers in Sales & Marketing: groom your organisation's future leaders by exposing them to cutting-edge thinking and a better understanding of global competitive developments.
3. Multiple delegates from each member: there will be too much in the programme for one individual to absorb. Many member companies will be sending two or more delegates.
4. Members who have never previously attended: the Congress offers an excellent way to understand how to get the best Return on Investment ("ROI") from ICCA membership.
5. Potential members: members are encouraged to let ICCA Head Office know about contacts who would make suitable, high quality new members, and who could be invited to attend as Observers.

## Which budgets can be used to attend the Congress?

1. Marketing budget: delegates will have numerous business opportunities and will learn how to use ICCA's tools and services effectively.
2. Education budget: intensive peer-group knowledge exchange plus input from senior clients and outside experts provides far greater ROI than traditional training courses.
3. Membership budget: include Congress costs in your annual membership budget code so you are able to send at least one delegate each year.



## Education

This year's education programme promises to be the strongest ICCA has ever put together. The speakers will be a mix of experienced ICCA members, clients from both corporate and association meetings segments, and experts from outside the meetings industry whose advice on sales, marketing and leadership issues will give delegates unique, new perspectives on their personal business challenges. Sector-specific topics will run alongside general meetings industry topics, and will include a mixture of presentations, workshops, and discussion forums.

ICCA's education programme will as always offer global perspectives, with top level speakers drawn from all regions of the world. And since two-thirds of our delegates are traditionally CEO's, company owners, and senior directors, there will be a strong emphasis on strategic issues and the future direction of our industry. For the middle managers who participate there will also be a great line-up of sessions focusing on sales and marketing issues, the highlight of which will probably be the "ICCA Best Marketing Award" plenary session, where three exceptional case studies will be presented.

ICCA consciously avoids speakers who simply present their standard presentations, and also does not include "entertainment/motivational" speakers in the programme. The content is focused on business relevance and strategic thinking, and is intended to stimulate discussion and fresh ideas throughout the Congress and beyond.

Interactivity is a key objective of the education programme: delegates are strongly encouraged to share their experiences, knowledge and opinions, with almost no "top down only" presentations included in the programme.

## Business

The ICCA Congress is not just about high level education and exceptional networking. There are also opportunities for delegates to exchange detailed information about key international events they have recently hosted or helped to organise. More and more delegates are signing up for this "Business Exchange" option at the Congress, which allows them to return to their offices with literally dozens of potential business leads, or new and invaluable information about specific events which they are already in the process of trying to win for their company or destination. We will be using the new generation of the Spotme handheld electronic networking tool to assist delegates to identify and meet up with colleagues who hold information on events they are interested in. This process runs throughout the whole length of the event.

More and more ICCA members are doing business with one another, and the Congress offers the ideal environment to identify new potential partners, suppliers of services, or clients for your own products and services. Delegates will be interviewing overseas marketing representatives, organising user-group meetings, and testing market reactions to new products and services. Over two-thirds of our delegates have high level budget responsibility, and approximately a quarter will be meeting planning



specialists who offer access to both association and corporate clients and their events. ICCA aims to make the Congress a valuable business opportunity for each and every participant, since we understand and appreciate the investment in time and cash that attendance represents.

ICCA members based outside Europe may wish to consider taking advantage of their presence in Europe to conduct sales promotions in cities where major buyers are located (eg London, Paris, Brussels, etc), either solo or with country colleagues or fellow consortium members.

The international association meetings market segment is proving itself to be the most resilient segment, enabling destinations and companies which have targeted this business to cope, and in some cases to thrive, during the current turbulent economic environment. ICCA membership is the most cost-effective way to penetrate this market segment, and attendance at the Congress represents an intensive "Master Class" in how best to achieve this penetration. This is probably the most compelling business rationale for attendance for any ICCA members who are not yet fully exploiting this market segment.

### **Networking**

Ask any delegate to an ICCA Congress about what makes it unique, and the most common answer is sure to be that we deliver high level delegates (two thirds are CEO's,

company owners, or senior level directors) and a truly global audience (in 2008 we had delegates from 65 countries, with 70 anticipated in 2009).

We have invested heavily in technology (the new generation Spotme device), so that each delegate will find it easy to identify and get in touch with every attendee they wish to communicate with, and have continued our innovative Delegate Handbook which publishes delegates' photos in advance of the congress, enabling easier recognition and providing an excellent long-term resource for taking back to the office.

We will also be utilising the business social networking tool "LinkedIn" to create ICCA groups related to Congress topics, business exchange, and other areas of shared interest, and which will continue to add value long after the Congress is over.

The contacts ICCA members make at the Congress can play a powerful role in delegates' future personal career development, providing help and advice in solving problems, offering information on recently hosted international events, and exposing individuals to new business cultures and ways of overcoming business challenges.



## Social Responsibility

ICCA will continue to run its congress in an environmentally friendly manner. This year all venues are within walking distance of the hotels, so transfers will all be by foot, unless a delegate has mobility difficulties. Educational content will all be electronically available, delegate feedback will be collected electronically only, badges will be biodegradable, congress bags are both biodegradable and only available on request, and numerous other small incremental environmental initiatives are underway. However because of their high utility value, both the main congress programme and the delegate networking guide will continue to be printed.

This year the subject of our charitable focus will be the Meyer Foundation, a cutting-edge Florence hospital for sick children which also undertakes valuable outreach work in third world countries. The city tour will be a charitable activity, with proceeds going to the hospital, and donations will be made on behalf of all speakers instead of handing out traditional speaker gifts.



**Register here!**