



Meeting Europe

Community News

NEW BUSINESS PLAN ANTICIPATES STRONG GROWTH IN EUROPE

A highlight at the upcoming PEC-E will be the announcement of details of a new business plan for MPI Europe. Designed to help implement the global *Pathways to Excellence* strategic plan, it aims to deliver unprecedented education and career development opportunities for members while taking the special European environment into account.

Following the launch last year of *Pathways to Excellence*, the European Council, headed by President Ann Holmes, CMM, was charged by the International Board of Directors (IBOD) to develop a strategy for Europe. The European Business Plan is a far-reaching document which focuses on the delivery of Pathways to Excellence in Europe. Having been accepted by the IBOD, it will be monitored and evaluated regularly by MPI staff and the European Council and updated as necessary.

Pathways to Excellence was produced by two strategic planning task forces formed in 2002 and comprises initiatives to ensure MPI's global industry leadership over the coming years. The European plan will complement this main strategy. "It has not been designed to create a stand-alone operation in Europe," explains Holmes. "It emphasises aspects which are particularly relevant for MPI's European development, recognising that the nature and impact of certain factors vary between North America and Europe and our industries are at different stages of development."

Enlargement of the European Union to 25 countries and integration and deregulation of the economy are seen as significant factors. "EU enlargement will strengthen Europe's position within the global meetings industry and represents a huge potential market for MPI," says Holmes. At the same time, the Council recognises that major investment will be needed and budgetary requirements are defined in the plan. But it makes clear that the robust nature of partnerships already begun and chapters already developed means that such investment is possible.

The plan is based on a projected 55% increase in income and 30% increase in membership by June 2006. To achieve this, major focus will be given to chapter recruitment and support, membership in new geographical areas and additional sources of revenue.

MPI Europe has a new website.
Find all the latest news on www.europe.mpiweb.org



Spring 2004 Issue n°9

5. 2004 PEC-EUROPE: MALT WHISKY INCENTIVE

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EUROPEAN PARTNERS



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

ANN HOLMES, CMM



Dear Colleagues,

So far, 2004 is proving to be a very busy new year and it's hard to believe that, by the time this newsletter is published, my year as President of the European Council will be entering its final quarter.

2003/4 has been a year of significant changes for MPI and I think we can expect that climate of change to continue throughout 2004/5.

Up to the end of last year, our attention in the European Council was focused on the European Business Plan. Seeking to give a European roadmap for implementing the global strategy, Pathways to Excellence, the plan was greeted with acclaim at the meeting of the International Board of Directors (IBOD) in San Antonio in January. Members of the council and staff have already begun the process of implementation.

Three new members will join the Council in July and I think they are guaranteed a challenging and exciting two years.

At the PEC North America, immediately following the meeting of the IBOD, there was a tangible sense of excitement and involvement as, more than ever before, local and international-level leaders came together. I found meeting with chapter presidents over breakfast, immediately before the IBOD meeting, especially informative, in particular being able to discover their reactions to proposed changes which would affect them.

I have no doubt that PEC-Europe will prove equally stimulating and look forward to meeting up with many of you there.

With all good wishes,

Ann Holmes, CMM
European Council President

MPI European Council

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Meeting Europe

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2004 PEC-EUROPE MALT WHISKY INCENTIVE

Count-down time already to the Professional Education Conference – Europe! Have you registered? The European Chapter that brings the highest percentage of its membership to Edinburgh wins a year's membership of the prestigious Scotch Malt Whisky Society and there's a wee bottle for each of its members who attends. Don't let your Chapter lose out. The PEC-E takes place at Edinburgh International Conference Centre, Scotland, March 26-28.

The opportunity for a taste of fine malt whisky isn't the only incentive attracting members to this year PEC-E. As usual, the big selling point is the education programme, designed to promote career development whatever your level. Prior qualification is needed to follow one of the two Executive tracks but there are plenty of general sessions and workshops to choose from where innovation is the byword. Don't miss keynote speaker Kjell A Nördstrom, author of Karaoke Capitalism, and the two new Personal Power presentations by communications expert Kevin Kelly and adventurer Yossi Ghinsberg.

The theme "A tradition of innovation" is also reflected in the lively social programme, culminating with a final fling in the Royal Museum of Scotland. And if you haven't ordered a kilt in the new MPI tartan especially for the occasion, ties for the men and pashminas for the ladies will be on sale in Edinburgh.

Golfers who have never played the game in its traditional home before have a huge treat in store. The MPI Foundation Golf Classic will be played out at St Andrews Bay Golf Resort & Spa on Monday, March 29. To book a place, log on to www.standrewsbay.com/mpl. Transfers from Edinburgh are included.

All European Chapters, except the UK, are eligible to win exclusive membership of the Scotch Malt Whisky Society in the 2004 PEC-E Chapter Challenge. The Edinburgh-based society has sister clubs in Europe, Australia, Japan, the US and London, giving ample opportunities for supping rare whiskies in relaxing surroundings. "How you use the membership is up to you, but you may decide to auction it to raise money for your own Chapter," says Carolyn Dow of the local organising committee. ●



Innovation from MPI Europe

To be announced during the PEC-E:

- The new European Business Plan
- The new MPI European Foundation
- New research projects from the Multicultural Initiative & Women's Leadership Initiative
- MPI's six European Partners
- The new France Chapter and Finland Chapter in Formation



MEET THE EUROPEAN PARTNERS

FIND OUT WHY THESE SIX FAR-SIGHTED COMPANIES ARE SUPPORTING MPI EUROPE AND ITS INITIATIVES.



Maarten Vanneste,
Abbit Meeting Support

Abbit Meeting Support

Abbit Meeting Support is focused on meetings and conferences, working for planners and travelling all over Europe with global clients. There are three main support fields within Abbit: Creative Productions, Technical Services and Technology Solutions. The committed in-house team offers a wide range of services, creating a quick and reliable one-stop shop. Abbit provides consistent quality by applying standards and norms and investing in the best equipment for meetings, trained staff and innovation.

Abbit has been a partner to MPI Europe for five years, providing support services for the PEC-E and leadership meetings. "MPI appreciates having one contact for all their creative technical and technological needs, such as the production and equipment for the opening show, AV for breakouts, office equipment, cyber café, video report, photography, etc," explains President/CEO Maarten Vanneste. "The consistency in quality and methods saves a lot of time and stress for the MPI team that plans the conference. In return, Abbit gets high quality exposure in front of its target audience."



Ian Dockrill, CMP, EIBTM

EIBTM

Established in 1988, EIBTM is the leading European-based event dedicated to the success of the global meetings and incentive industry. Organised annually by Reed Travel Exhibitions (RTE), EIBTM moves this year to Barcelona and will run from November 30 to December 2.

"For over a decade, EIBTM has provided a forum for MPI to grow in Europe," says Ian Dockrill, CMP, AHCIMA, RTE's Director, Global Industry Relations & Strategic Development, Meeting & Incentive Events. "Our partnership has also assisted in the growth of the PEC-Europe, which began as a post-conference to EIBTM in Geneva. Working with MPI, we are able to respond to industry research and stay current on the latest trends. We invest in the training and development of MPI's European leadership by sponsoring the European Chapter Presidents Forum, held in September, and are providing direct MPI membership support to new European meeting planners. Additionally, MPI supports the EIBTM Association Programme and the MPI Technology Village @EIBTM."



Ray Bloom, IMEX

IMEX

Building on the enormous success of the inaugural show, IMEX will hold its second edition in Frankfurt, May 12-14. Last year IMEX teamed up with the German Convention Bureau's Meetings made in Germany show to form a new worldwide exhibition for the international market. Exhibitor numbers have grown by over 20% this year and the hosted buyer programme significantly expanded, many of the 2,750 IMEX guests coming from long-haul destinations.

As leading sponsor of the newly created MPI European Foundation, IMEX has committed 100,000 EUR over a five-year period, starting with a contribution towards the Women's Leadership Study for Europe. Says IMEX Chairman Ray Bloom, "As a member of the MPI Foundation's Board of Trustees for six years, I am well aware of the good work it does and delighted that proceeds raised here from now on will be used to support the European meetings industry. Our Managing Director Paul Flackett was recently appointed an MPI Chancellor – one of only 12 worldwide. We are both firm believers in the power of our MPI relationship and sharing our knowledge with members."



Le MERIDIEN

Meenaz Lilani,
Le Méridien

Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts

Le Méridien has a current portfolio of 130 hotels in 56 countries and territories, offering over 33,000 luxury rooms throughout Europe, the Americas, Asia Pacific, the Middle East and Africa. Le Méridien's marketing network is further strengthened through its alliance with JAL-owned Nikko Hotels International, comprising 44 properties. The group has introduced a range of innovative products designed to appeal to both business and leisure guests, including the Art + Tech concept, a fusion of cutting-edge technology and ingenious artistry.

Le Méridien sees its relationship with MPI as a means to check the pulse of the meetings industry. "If MPI is noticing a trend, it's likely to be affecting the industry at large," says Meenaz Lilani, Vice President Sales, Europe & Africa. "MPI provides an opportunity for us to come together in a non-partisan atmosphere to discuss issues important to all of us." She also admires MPI's emphasis on education and promotion of the CMM programme. "We see it very much as an organisation to support, as it matches our own objectives to take a professional and forward-looking approach to the meetings segment."



Radisson SAS

Olivier Jacquin,
Rezidor SAS Hospitality

Radisson SAS Hotels & Resorts

Radisson SAS is one of the five brands in the portfolio of Rezidor SAS Hospitality, one of the world's fastest growing hospitality companies. Rezidor SAS is the sole franchisor in Europe, the Middle East and Africa for the Carlson Hospitality Worldwide brands: Radisson, Park Inn, Country Inn and Regent, as well as the new lifestyle hotel brand Cerruti. Rezidor SAS currently includes 210 hotels in operation and under development in 40 countries and aims to have 700 by 2012.

Radisson SAS Hotels & Resorts is making an unprecedented investment in the future of the European meeting industry by equipping over 1,500 of its employees with specialised MPI training. "Our partnership with MPI will allow us to deliver an outstanding service to our meeting planner clients and ensure that the strategic as well as the logistical goals of meetings are accomplished," explains Olivier Jacquin, Senior Vice President Sales at Rezidor SAS Hospitality. "By taking our professionalism to a new level, we will ultimately bring the meeting experience to a new level for guests."



STARWOOD
HOTELS & RESORTS WORLDWIDE, INC.

Kip Horton,
Starwood Hotels & Resorts
Worldwide, Inc

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc is one of the world's leading hotel and leisure companies, with more than 740 properties in more than 80 countries and 105,000 employees at its owned and managed properties. With internationally renowned brands, Starwood is a fully integrated owner, operator and franchisor of hotels and resorts, including St Regis, The Luxury Collection, Sheraton, Westin, Four Points by Sheraton and W brands.

A member of MPI since 1986, when he was at the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel in Canada, Kip Horton relocated to Brussels three years ago where he is Director of Sales for Europe, Africa and the Middle East. He says that wherever he has worked in the interim, he has remained involved with MPI, helping behind the scenes in small ways and encouraging others to join. Now in a position to do more, he sees Starwood's partnership with MPI Europe as a way of giving something back to the organisation. "There are so many good people you learn so much from the interaction," he says. "And I'm still learning!"

STILL BUILDING ON A VERY SUCCESSFUL RECORD

Formed in 1993, MPI Denmark has always maintained high standards in every aspect of chapter life.

President Elect Lise-Lotte Skovdal looks at past successes and future aspirations.

MPI Denmark is determined that the focus on quality seminars, member care and networking opportunities continues. With the highest retention rate in Europe, we have shown that we are already well on the way to achieving all three. We are very proud of the figures which prove that we are on the right track when it comes to arranging educational and social events for our members.

As well as aiming to deliver quality seminars, we try to guarantee a wide range of subjects that take into consideration the multiplicity of roles within our chapter.

We want to give members access to new knowledge and plenty of inspiration. We are very grateful for the support of our supplier members in hosting our events as it is important to introduce new places and new experiences to both planner and supplier members. We also make an effort to allow sufficient time for networking - that is often the "real" confer-

ence, where people get to know each other and new ideas are born.

An important tool for the Board in securing a constant high level in our seminars is the evaluation form sent out to all participants after each seminar. The response rate is never particularly high, but certainly sufficient to give a clear picture of our members' opinions. It is very important also to get their ideas and suggestions for future seminars.

We are currently looking at setting up an ambassador

scheme with the help of former Board members. The objective is not only to recruit more members and maintain a high retention rate, but also get these industry leaders involved in MPI's work. This way they would help to increase the influence of MPI and give weight to the value our organisation adds to the meetings industry. In December, we invited previous Board members to an



"An ambassador scheme would help increase the influence of MPI and give weight to the value our organisation adds to the meetings industry"

**[President Elect
Lise-Lotte Skovdal]**

informal discussion on how they could see themselves supporting the Board and the chapter. A lot of good ideas came out of that meeting. Among them was a suggestion to establish a structured network whereby more senior members take a newcomer under their wing, provide guidance when needed, act as individual personal hosts at seminars and generally feel obliged to make the new member feel welcome. ●





ART AND CULTURE SET THE SCENE FOR LEARNING

During the dark and cold winter months, MPI Denmark enjoyed three unique cultural, social and learning experiences.

On December 18, about 50 members enjoyed the chapter's annual Christmas brunch in the café above the showrooms of celebrated porcelain manufacturers Royal Copenhagen. The function was purely social and ended with a tour around the showroom. The display included five table tops created by Her Majesty the Queen of Denmark, an artist in her own right. The Queen had decorated the tables to fit the traditional Christmas and New Year dinners and banquets in her various castles and, of course, all featured settings from Royal Copenhagen.

On January 13, John Fraser was invited to present a lecture from the European Platinum Series: "Make your audience listen: use basic principles to improve results dramatically". About 40 members gathered in the conference centre of the Danish Design Centre for the seminar. Afterwards, the Design Centre hosted an informal cocktail reception. They also invited guests to take a closer look at the exhibition What's Next, a disturbing and fascinating journey through design products and art works that mimic the human body's shapes and functions - our looks, habits and means of communication.

Next stop for some 40 members was a visit on February 4 to the Arken Museum of Modern Art. Management consultant Leon Birdi of Birdi Copenhagen gave a lively lecture on CRM (customer relationship management) and sales in a busy working day. Questions continued well into the reception afterwards hosted by Arken's café. A rare treat was in store when the group was also invited to visit the newly opened exhibition Picasso – For All Times, which has caused in sensation in Denmark. The exhibition, which is still running, was organised by Arken in collaboration with Bernard Ruiz-Picasso and Images Modernes, Paris, and shows many fantastic pieces from the Modernist "enfant terrible". ●



*Intently listening audience
in the Danish Design Centre*



GERMAN MEMBERS ISSUE AN OPEN INVITATION TO COLLEAGUES AT IMEX

Frank Seifert reports on an active start to the year for MPI Germany and two pieces of good news for other MPI members.

We are pleased to announce that the main sections of the MPI Germany website are now also available in English. This is to enhance the information exchange with members worldwide and we encourage all our colleagues to visit the site, learn about our activities in Germany and open up channels of communication with our chapter.

We also feel we began a very good tradition at IMEX in Frankfurt last year by sponsoring a breakfast. All MPI members who are participating in IMEX this year, therefore, are invited for breakfast on May 13 at 08.30 hrs in the Maritim Hotel. Interested members should register on mpi-germany@mcon-mannheim.de.

On January 28, the MPI seminar "Project management" was held in Frankfurt. It included topics such as project factors, the project cycle and the responsibilities and skills of the project manager. Case studies linked practice to the theory. The first MEET MPI seminar on February 16 was about all aspects of food and beverage for meetings and was most

successful. Presentations by Daniel Michalski, Food & Beverage Director of the Hotel InterContinental in Berlin, on f & b planning for an event, and Oliver Wendel, Managing Director of the catering company Kofler & Company, who offered useful tips on the choice of event catering, were followed by long and lively discussion among the nearly 30 members and guests. Member Axica Kongress- und Tagungszentrum offered the centre as the venue and sponsored the organisation.

As sponsor of the exhibition "STB – Seminar & Meetings Exchange" on February 13 in Berlin, MPI Germany participated with a booth for membership development.

A collaboration with member m:con Mannheim, the MPI Congress College is the chapter's most important tool for continuing education. It combines e-learning with live seminars. All courses, in German only, are available on CD-Rom or can be downloaded from the internet. The authors, lecturers and tutors, all professionals, working in different areas of the meetings business, are available for students via email, telephone, fax or internet chat. A new course, "Basis of technical congress and event equipment" starts this month (March) to be followed by "Tax problems in the meetings business" in April. The third course in May will be "How to organise a project". ●



Members and guests at the f & b seminar at Axica Congress Centre



Oliver Wendel presenting his tips on event catering

NEW CHAPTER IN FORMATION

***f*enthusiasm is anything to go by, the latest European Chapter in Formation will have full chapter status very soon. But, hey, guys...don't let the ladies have it all their own way!**

Granted Chapter in Formation status in January, MPI Finland already has 32 members and hopes to achieve the 50 necessary for full chapter recognition within the year. They have made it this far thanks to the hard work of five energetic ladies who set up a task force in 2001. Anybody familiar with the efficiency and thoroughness of Finland's conference professionals will not be surprised by this. What is unusual, however, is that only two men have signed up – or is it so strange?

"The meetings industry is very much female dominated in Finland, but we hope to find more male members before too long," says Mimmu Mannermaa, President of the new Chapter in Formation. They have formed a Board of six and aim to recruit not only more men as soon as possible but more planner members in order to ensure a 50:50 supplier/planner balance.

Mannermaa has worked in the events business for 10 years, initially organising two major philatelic exhibitions before joining

Helsinki Fair Centre. Now turned client, she is Corporate Event Planner at SAP Finland, responsible for 50 to 60 events a year. She also sorts the logistical details to ensure full Finnish participation in overseas meetings of SAP, a global provider of e-business solutions.

She was introduced to MPI by some local suppliers three years ago. By then, Nina Lindfors of Radisson SAS, who now

lives in Italy, had set about involving like-minded professionals in the new chapter. Mannermaa gladly joined the group and has benefited from MPI activities, such as PEC-Europe, ever since.

Most educational sessions will be held in Helsinki, but they will try to visit other locations where members are based at least twice a year. "We also hope to cooperate closely with our peers in the three other Nordic Chapters," Mannermaa explains. "Our dream is to have an annual gathering of all Nordic members and possibly to meet more often, at least on Board level. We can certainly share best practices with regard to both chapter operations and the industry in general.

"MPI Finland will greatly benefit our industry," she continues. "The professional networking it promotes has a unique power, making us better planners and suppliers and improving business between us. I also believe we will increase general awareness of our profession and help members achieve better recognition of their role within their organisations."



"The meetings industry is very much female dominated in Finland, but we hope to find more male members before too long."

**[New President
Mimmu Mannermaa]**

Mimmu Mannermaa is Member of the Month.
Find out more about her on
www.mpiweb.org/chapters/europe/motm.asp



KEYNOTE FROM TERRI BREINING

Norwegian travel and meetings professionals met in Oslo in January for the annual travel exhibition and meeting exchange of the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIAI). Chapter President Elling Hamso reports.

Terri Breining, CMP, CMM, Chairwoman of the MPI Board, accepted our invitation to be keynote speaker at the HSMIAI event, speaking on "Defining the Power of Meetings in the 21st Century". She delivered her message with such skill and involvement as to leave no doubt about MPI's role in defining the future. She also joined our stand, doing a great job recruiting new members, and met Board members and guests during the evening awards dinner. HSMIAI draws more than 1,000 meeting planners and suppliers who meet on the exhibition floor in time slots pre-booked on the web.

Back in November, Corbin Ball delivered a one-day seminar to MPI Norway in Oslo. Known to most of us as the ultimate technology expert, he gave a presentation packed with practical and useful information on how to put technology to good use and improve the return on meetings. It's clear that, if we are to be the global network defining the future of our industry, we have to grasp the potential of technology.

Our chapter has set two ambitious goals: to have 250 mem-

bers by 2008 and host the PEC-E in Oslo the same year. Our first priority to attract more members is to provide good professional development opportunities at our monthly meetings. Platinum speaker Eric de Groot made an excellent contribution towards this end at our meeting in Oslo on February 3, speaking about "Extraordinary Programme Design". He took us entirely outside the box and made us think about meeting design involving attendees in ways that few have experienced before. Similarly, Tom Gundersen of the PR agency Kreab made us understand how the media may be used as an alternative marketing channel. Norwegians read more newspapers than anyone else in the world. No advertising message is more effective than the one endorsed by the journalist as editorial information, but you have to know how the mind of the journalist works to get him on your side.

We shall have to unleash the resources of many more members and put all our ideas into practice in order to provide more opportunities for professional development, networking and doing business with MPI members. ●



Terri Breining, CMP, CMM,
speaking at the HSMIAI
meeting exchange

"If you don't know how to handle the media, big opportunities could be lost"
[Tom Gundersen]





A MAJOR FIRST FOR EUROPE

At the PEC-NA in January, hundreds of members flocked to congratulate members of the UK Chapter on winning the Chapter of the Year (COTY) award.

The announcement came at the opening general session of the PEC-NA in San Antonio. The UK Chapter was awarded Chapter of the Year for chapters with more than 250 members. It was the first time a European Chapter had achieved such a result and the score of 358 points out of a possible 500 was higher than any other.

Immediate Past President Paul Kennedy, who coordinated the submission, says, "Critical to our success was that all our activities are carried out within the framework of the chapter's strategic plan which itself fully embraces Pathways to Excellence. I believe we were able to demonstrate effective performance in planning and execution in the five sections of COTY, namely:

- Administration (including finance and chapter management)
- Education
- Membership
- Marketing and Communication
- Special Projects

"In all these areas, we focused on our members and at the same time positioned the chapter as a national body in the UK meetings industry, sitting as equal alongside the long-established trade bodies. Other reasons for our strong application were teamwork and hard work, without which the best laid plans cannot work. I have no doubt that the commitment of the Board, of committees and of volunteers remains the single most important factor. To have this and a clear vision is a powerful combination."

Stimulating discussions

Back in the UK, the chapter's January event was held at Sadlers Wells Theatre, London. Business Psychologist Marie Mosley took the subject "Managing Changes and Transitions for the Future". Mosley achieves results by showing organisations how to identify and eliminate the natural human factors that inhibit effectiveness. "Her story telling technique was particularly interesting," says Angela Tupper of catering company Searcy's, who was invited to attend as a potential member. "One of the most effective ways of communication is to share information in story form."

The February Educational event centred around the subject of education and training, stimulating thoughts on how the meetings industry is developing "managers for tomorrow". The debate, at the London Marriott Hotel, Park Lane, was opened by Rob Davidson, Senior Lecturer in Business Travel & Tourism at the University of Westminster, London (he also compiled last year's EIBTM Industry Trends & Market Share Report). He said that over 150 different courses in the subject are available in UK universities, which came as a surprise to many of the audience.

Davidson was joined by Denise Harris of Training for Events and Brian Glendinning of the Events Sector Industry Training Organisation for a panel discussion chaired by Sally Greenhill of the Right Solution. One of the telling conclusions highlighted was the gulf between the courses offered across the UK university network and the lack of awareness business leaders have about the range of programmes on offer. Some serious debate followed on how MPI members, as industry leaders of today, can contribute to the continued efforts of the people involved in the development of education programmes for the meetings industry of tomorrow.

Also in February, the chapter hosted a "Crossing Borders"



Triumphant UK Chapter in San Antonio

event at International Confex at London's Earl's Court exhibition centre. President Carole McKellar, CMM welcomed Terri Breining, CMP, CMM, Chairwoman of the International Board of Directors of MPI, who introduced the findings of the MPI Future Watch 2004 study, and Ingrid Brown from the George P Johnson Company, who presented their latest research on UK event marketing trends. ●



Marie Mosley in story-telling mode



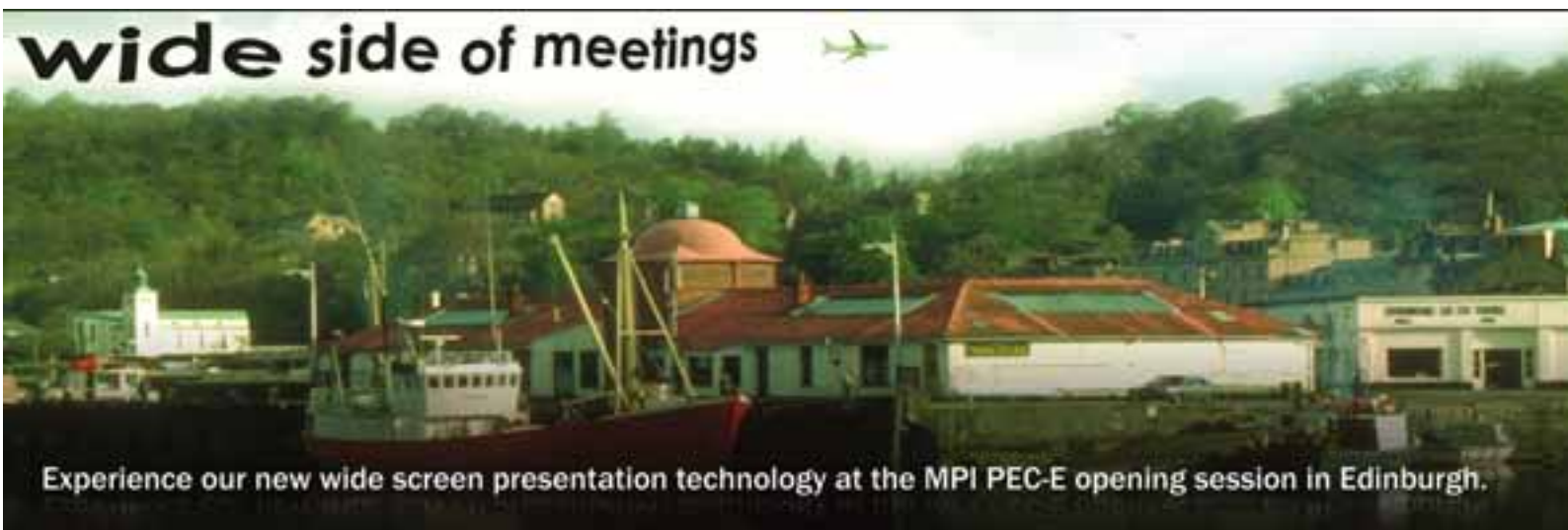
SPREADING THE WORKLOAD

MPI Netherlands is preparing a new structure. "In the meantime, we are looking for new Board members," says Fred Lam, chairman PR & IT.

In December and January, the Netherlands Board was working intensively on a restructuring programme in accordance with international standards. At the next Board retreat in July, the new structure will be officially implemented and, says Fred Lam, "We need new Board members to ensure that everything will be as it should be."

Last November, MPI organised the 2nd NL Conference in Mariënhof in Amersfoort. Over 150 participants (more than 75% of the Dutch membership) attended a series of very interesting workshops and praised Monique Opreij and her team for the excellent organisation.

The New Year reception was held in the Pathe Tuschinski film theatre in Amsterdam where President Angelique Lombarts welcomed a large number of members. After a review of 2003, she explained how, with the new structure, the workload will be better shared by Board members. Afterwards, Gregor Bak made a presentation on communication. The easiest way to communicate, he said, is by music and he demonstrated several examples of the synergy between music played on advertising commercials and one's personal feelings. ●



Experience our new wide screen presentation technology at the MPI PEC-E opening session in Edinburgh.



HUGE BOOST TO MEMBERSHIP

M *PI Sweden has secured finance from the government for the biggest student project the meetings industry has ever known.*

The Swedish Chapter has received 120,000 SEK (nearly 13,000 EUR) from Turistdelegationen, the Swedish government organisation for tourism, including meetings, which works alongside the tourist board. The chapter asked for the funding in order to give 400 last-year college and university students a first, free membership of MPI for a year. The news only came through at the end of February and the plan is to take some students to IMEX and possibly to the Edinburgh PEC-E. "We are very excited about this project," says Chapter President Carl Palmlund. "It will not only give us 400 new student members but will highlight the meetings industry in Sweden. Not least of all, we will be recognised in the media!" Palmlund has taken over as President six months earlier than planned because Ulf Hansen has moved to South Africa for a year. At the same time, Martin Theorin became the new President Elect. The Chapter has also launched a new website, www.mpisweden.org.

At the end of January, the ninth Scandinavian Hospitality, Incentive & Event Exhibition (SHIE) took place in Stockholm. MPI, which is an important SHIE partner, had its largest stand ever. "There were more than 6,250 visitors at the exhibition which was 19 per cent up on last year," says Palmlund. "We invited other European members to share the stand and will do the same again next year. I think this is a model for other chapters to follow. Hopefully next year we can invite a couple of hundred hosted buyers and MPI members to the show."

The Chapter held MPI Day during the exhibition, which included the annual meeting and six seminars which were attended by more than 300 people. SHIE also saw the inauguration of the first "Meeting Planner of the Year" award. The initiative comes from the magazine Meetings International whose editorial ethos is very close to that of MPI. The award, which includes one year's MPI membership, among other things, was presented to Sten Tornsten of the SEB bank. On March 11, the chapter was due to hold an important seminar on Corporate Social Responsibility, in conjunction with Radisson SAS Hotels & Resorts and the Mission Titicaco project. The focus was on the many aspects of social responsibility that companies have within the community. ●



*New President
Carl Palmlund*



SPOTLIGHT ON BOLZANO



*Pier Paolo Mariotti,
President Elect*

CMP certification, synergy between members, and marketing and promotion coordination

The Italy Chapter's activities continue in... Bolzano. Indeed, the Alto Adige's regional capital is the main character in the initiatives of these past few months, a protagonist worthy of the tireless assistance of President Elect Pier Paolo Mariotti (who is himself from Bolzano and is the coordinator of the l'Eurac Convention Center, about which you will read more shortly) and the fine resources of many local facilities.

Let's begin with the most recent session of the CMP. With classes geared towards those who already work in a conference facility, like a hotel attached to a convention center or a conference agency, and who have the intention of becoming professionally qualified as industry professionals, the recently concluded educational program at the Eurac Convention Center was designed to increase the knowledge and professional performance of those involved in organizing large events

and to increase professionalism by learning about methods and practices recognized internationally in the convention industry. English was required: classes were held exclusively in English in three of the eight sessions, as the certification examination is also in English.

Classes were set up according to the programme for preparing for CMP's international certification examination, which will be taken by Europeans between the end of April and May 12 in Frankfurt, Germany.

July meeting there, too

But the Bolzanian news does not end here. MPI Italy's Executive Council met in Milan on January 26 and decided to assign the XIII Annual Chapter Assembly—set for July 2-4—to the Eurac Convention Center in Bolzano as well. After Venice (2003), Parma (2002) and Trieste (2001), the South Tyrolean capital will now host this assembly. The Annual Chapter Assembly is one of the major events in the field of Italian conventions, a meeting that brings all the members of MPI's Italy Chapter together in one place. The organization has already confirmed the support of the city's five most prestigious hotels and a large list of public and private sponsors.

Other news



*Rossana Muolo, chair of
Education Committee*

At the same executive meeting, it was decided that a Board Retreat would be devoted to the functioning of the committees that were formed in Venice for the first time. These four committees are open to all members. The committees' respective duties are:

Sponsorship (Chair: Maja de' Simoni), with the task of finding the economic resources to produce educational and refresher programmes.

Education (Chair: Rossana Muolo), to create educational national programmes and enhance the reputation that MPI has already attained.

Membership (Chair: Massimo Melis), with the goal of increasing membership and creating a member care programme.

Marketing & Communication (Chair: Antonio Ducceschi), to ensure timely internal and external communications and maintain the MPI brand.

Cortevecchia, the site chosen for the meeting, is a magnificent farm holiday spot – although this term may be an oversimplification – in the Tuscan Maremma between Siena and Grosseto. Members were accommodated with great generosity and enthusiasm, thanks also to the good offices of Massimo Melis.

The 3-day meeting was held from March 12-14. Members arrived Friday afternoon or evening. Saturday was devoted entirely to the Board and Sunday morning was reserved for getting to know the region and its facilities in greater detail.

Finally, a Nominating Committee was formed, consisting of Gabriella Gentile (President), Aleksandra Dermitt de' Simoni, and Giuseppe Lepri. The new body will get together as soon as possible. Its objective is to develop a list of candidates to fill positions in the Executive Council (2004-2005 term). Offices to be filled are: President Elect, General Secretary, Treasurer, and four council members.

COMMITTING TIME, ENERGY AND EFFORT

As the first president of the brand new MPI France, Sophie Amsellem is now intent on laying building blocks for the future.

After considerable time and hard work, the new France Chapter was approved last October. Sophie Amsellem describes her feelings at the time. "When we were told that the International Board, meeting in Madrid, had voted to promote us to full chapter status, suddenly all our efforts were rewarded. We finally existed! Many different factors had evolved and converged to become the driving force for us to start building on the future."

She also welcomes the choice of Monaco for next year's PEC-Europe. "MPI France is already held in high regard by the French industry and the announcement was very auspicious for us. The event will be the launching platform for the rise of our chapter."

She finds that being president and an involved member of the huge MPI "family" helps her with her day to day work. Now a partner at leading production company, Le Public Système, she began her international career, armed with an MBA in international business, as a broker in dollar and interest rates for Shearson Lehman Brothers. Instead of improving her knowledge in the financial field, she quickly decided to market and promote a new investment fund. This was her first step into the world of communications.

In the early 90s she resigned to fulfil a long-held wish, and joined advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather. There she managed international clients such as Compaq and Fisher Price as well as many well known French brands. In 1998, before the soccer World Cup, she was offered a position with Le Public Système to supervise the international and VIP programmes. Since then, she has created DMC departments in Paris and Cannes and, in October 2002, became a partner running the whole travel department. Now she manages more than 20 employees and a turnover of 15 million euros.

Through her status within MPI, she enjoys the opportunity to talk to people she had never imagined she would meet

in her life. She says she's very grateful for that and willing, in return, to invest much of her time, energy and effort for MPI's benefit. The chapter already has more than 120 members and she's encouraging others from all over the country to join soon - "The PEC-E in Monaco is sure to be a huge incentive," she says hopefully. ●





HOT TOPICS IN BELGIUM

Successful series of educational meetings

MPI's Belgian Chapter has enjoyed a truly successful series of educational meetings with each one attended by a large number of members and non-members. Our educational programme has tackled a series of hot-industry topics and has shown how passionate the Belgian MICE industry is about them! The theme of the first topic was negotiating hotel contracts and attracted our highest turnout ever. This Platinum presentation investigated how to be a better negotiator and showed us some of the tricks of the trade in obtaining a better deal. It was attended by a great mix of industry professionals and students, planners and suppliers. Following this success, MPI Belgium looked into the use of exclusive contracts at venues and discussed the issue of tying (compulsory use of in-house service). This debate featured comments and opinions from key industry figures on this topic and provided an opportunity to link up with ICCA and some of the European Institutions based in Brussels. Moderated by Didier Scaillet, this topic has been taken up as a key congress theme and now features on the lecture programmes of MPI PEC-E and ICCA's AGM.



First-ever awards ceremony and charity fundraising evening

MPI Belgium has also held its first-ever awards ceremony and charity fundraising evening. Set in magnificent surroundings, the gala evening recognised the contributions of some key figures on the Belgian MICE market in three categories: Planner of the year (Fabienne Copey, EMIF), Supplier of the year (Hervé Bosquet, Brussels International) and Venue of the year (Sofitel Brussels Airport). In addition to this and much fun being had, MPI Belgium managed to raise EUR 2,137 on the night for its chosen beneficiary charity, Special Olympics Belgium as well as EUR 1,000 for the MPI Foundation.



"TRADING SPACES"

MPI FRANCE LAUNCH FIRST EUROPEAN CROSS BORDER EVENT



The MPI France & Swiss Chapter organized the first Cross Border Event with an open chapter conference on "Yield Management" during the International Bedouk Show at Paris Expo's Carrousel du Louvre on January 15, 2004, followed by a cocktail lunch offered by 'madame est servie'. The outstanding "fully booked" conference was presented by Olivier Derycke, Director of Revenu at Concorde Hotels Group, who provided innovative & quantitative tools to reach companies' objectives. This first Cross Border Event was initiated by the leaders of the European Chapters during PEC Berlin 2003 in an effort to trade global perspectives and engage creative approaches to increase MPI awareness across Europe. ●

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH

| | | |
|------------|-------|------------------------------------|
| MPI | 26-28 | PEC-Europe, Edinburgh, Scotland |
| MPI Norway | 30 | Risk Management, David Smith, Oslo |

APRIL

| | | |
|-----------------|-------|--|
| MPI Netherlands | 2 | Experience Communication, Kurhaus Hotel, The Hague |
| MPI Sweden | 15 | Review of business travel & meetings survey, Radisson |
| | | SAS Royal Viking Hotel, Stockholm |
| MPI Germany | 18-19 | Outdoor weekend, Motivation from Outdoor Activities, Bad Kissingen |
| MPI France | 26 | Yield management, Crowne Plaza, Geneva |
| MPI Norway | 27 | Return on Investment, Kari Felicia Nestande, Oslo |
| MPI Belgium | 27 | BE-Conference, Regus, Braine-l'Alleud |

MAY

| | | |
|-------------|----|---|
| MPI UK | 10 | Meetings with a Touch of Tobasco, Churchill International, |
| London | | |
| MPI Germany | 13 | MPI breakfast at IMEX, Frankfurt, open to all members |
| MPI Sweden | 19 | Introducing CMM to corporate business, Radisson SAS , Royal Viking Hotel, Stockholm |
| MPI Norway | 25 | Trends in the Meetings Industry, Elling Hamso, Oslo |

EIBTM HELPS GROW EUROPEAN MEMBERSHIP



As pledged last year, EIBTM has sponsored membership of MPI for 30 meeting planners from across Europe. This unprecedented step is part of the ongoing partnership between EIBTM and MPI Europe and their joint efforts over the years to strengthen MPI's presence in Europe.

EIBTM agreed to sponsor, over two consecutive years, three new planner memberships in each European country where there is an MPI chapter. Thirty planners have received their invitations this year and 30 more will be selected next year. The EIBTM support covers their enrolment fee and first-year membership fee. One of the first to accept EIBTM's generous offer was Eva Holm,

Manager Event & Conference for MyTravel Northern Europe, part of the huge MyTravel global leisure travel group. Based in Stockholm, Sweden, Holm is responsible for events in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands. "I am very honoured to be given one year's membership of MPI," she says. "It will give me the opportunity to learn more about the international meetings industry." Says Didier Scaillet, director of European operations and global development for MPI, "By encouraging new planner members to join MPI, there will be additional opportunities for suppliers seeking to conduct business with members of MPI's \$10.9 billion annual buying power network." ●

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