CELEBRATING OUR 100TH EDITION
The best business relationships start here, in one of Europe’s most exciting cities, providing all hygiene and safety standards.

Contact us for more information  l  hamburg-convention.com
CONTENTS

From our President & CEO 4
Destination - Japan 5
Destination - Rwanda 6
IAPCO Council 7
New Member 8
Destination - Dubai 9
Megatrends: Neuro Pricing and its Effects on the Events Industry 10
The Impacts of Social Media: Planning and Executing a Congress 12
Working with a Medical Association: the Case of Greek Rheumatology Society 14
The Value of Long-Term Client Relationships 16
Joining the Events Industry During a Pandemic? 20
A Young Professional’s Lessons Learnt 22
EDGE Lillehammer 22
Growing Together: Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi (Ccad), Nominated By MCI Middle East, Wins IAPCO Driving Excellence Client Award 24
Members’ News 25
Our partners 32

IAPCO News

On Point Articles

EDUCATION

DESTINATION PARTNERS

MEMBERS’ EVENTS AND NEWS
Read the full stories of our members’ news on the IAPCO Knowledge Hub

The PCO: published by IAPCO
Whilst every care is taken in the preparation and publishing of The PCO, the views expressed are not necessarily those of IAPCO or its members and no responsibility can be taken for articles, errors or comment.
Editor: Caroline Gutierrez / Design: jo-harrison.co.uk
The 100th edition of IAPCO’s ‘The PCO’ is solid proof of the strength of our community.

Within the global meetings industry, IAPCO provides a unique platform that enables knowledge sharing between members and industry peers. So what is the definition of ‘knowledge sharing’? A quick search and I found the following:

Knowledge sharing is an activity through which knowledge (namely, information, skills, or expertise) is exchanged among people, friends, peers, families, communities, or within or between organizations. It bridges the individual and organizational knowledge, improving the absorptive and innovation capacity and thus leading to sustained competitive advantage of companies as well as individuals.

This is precisely what we do as a community, and where ‘The PCO’ has become recognized as one our most important platforms that enable this sharing.

Thanks to all the magazine’s contributors. We couldn’t have done this without you.

On a different note, with the decrease in the number of Covid cases around the world and travel restriction lifting, we are delighted to be back at IMEX in Frankfurt – BIG TIME. Happy to share that we had a group of over 20 IAPCO hosted buyers from around the globe, a full program of EDGE@ seminars and engagement opportunities with our members, partners and industry peers.

It was great to see so many industry friends and IAPCO Members at the show and to share in both inspiring and interesting discussions.

Recruitment and retention is certainly top of mind for many in our industry, so IAPCO will be doing all we can to help our Members in this regards in the coming months. Watch this space…

Your, Ori
Japan Virtual Visit

There’s nothing quite like the alluring feeling of visiting Japan. Diverse and unique selections of meeting venues and cultural experiences show how Japan is an excellent destination for conferences and business meetings. In March 2022, Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) launched its enhanced virtual trip, “JAPAN VIRTUAL VISIT”, of 10 cities (Chiba, Fukuoka, Hiroshima, Kitakyushu, Nara, Okayama, Osaka, Otsu, Sendai, and Yokohama). Adding to four virtual visit videos, produced last year, six videos and the special website for all these virtual videos of 10 cities have been newly created.

Exploring Cities

The JAPAN VIRTUAL VISIT is a series of ten-minute long videos with local city experts hosting them just like a real study tour. Focusing on topics such as world-class conference facilities, excellent hotels, unique venues, technical visits and group excursions, as well as the local gastronomic delights of each area with a walking-eye-view shot, the videos provide an immersive experience, as if you are walking through the city. The special website provides a detailed overview of 10 cities, including a 360-degree view of venues alongside links to 10 virtual visit videos so that visitors could learn more about the cities or venues they are interested in.

One of the downsides of the pandemic was the loss of face-to-face interactions, but one of the unexpected achievements was the improvement of the virtual tools used for events. The JAPAN VIRTUAL VISIT is a very practical tool to develop a clear understanding of the destination and familiarize yourself with the country. This makes for a more enjoyable experience throughout your decision-making process.

The JNTO will be participating in IMEX Frankfurt 2022 from May 31st to June 2nd. This is one of the most important and largest trade exhibitions for meetings, conventions, and incentive travel. We are looking forward to seeing you in Frankfurt and hope to engage in conversations that reinforce our relationships and strengthen our connections. We must take advantage of every moment to appreciate the opportunities for in-person meetings.

Visit www.japanmeetings.org/virtualvisit
Meet in Remarkable Rwanda

Rwanda is pleased to welcome all delegates and participants to Kigali for a safe and productive CHOGM Rwanda 2022.

To find out about how you can be a part of this upcoming occasion, visit https://thecommonwealth.org/chogm
What is your history with the meetings industry?
It all goes back to 1988 when I started working in Taiwan Junior Chamber. With the job opportunity, I got to visit Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre in Darling Harbor, which was my first ever experience into the MICE industry. Three years later in 1991, I’ve founded my company GIS Group in Taipei with only 5 staff (now we have over 160 staff throughout Taiwan.) It has always been my mission to help enhancing the meeting industry and to bring more international meetings into Taiwan. Therefore, in 2016, I have released my first book The Driving Force Behind Destination Marketing, analyzing the secrets behind destinations bidding for international meetings.

How did you get to know IAPCO?
My first IAPCO training was back in Wolfsburg in 1992. That was long before I became an IAPCO member. In 2017, we’ve brought IAPCO EDGE Seminar to Taipei and hosted it for a total of three consecutive years with positive feedback.

What are you looking forward to as a Council member?
With my experience in the region, I love to bring more Asian perspective into future discussions with other councils. I also look forward to explore new possibilities of the PCO’s future together for the post pandemic world.

How do you see the future of our industry?
While the connection between people may stay the same, PCO’s responsibilities will be different according to a more diverse market. Therefore, it is important to redefine the role of PCO.

What do you enjoy doing when you’re not working?
I enjoy hiking and weight training. I’m planning to hike on the Central Mountain Range in Taiwan again this year. It is going to be a completion of my last hike trail there, as I broke my leg and was sent to the hospital via helicopter on my last day of hike journey there back in 1992.
Earlier this year, IAPCO welcomed a new member, MP International. We met with their CEO, Armillyah Jamil, to learn more about the company.

Could you tell us more about MP International?
MP started operating in 1987, as one of the pioneering PCO/PEOs in Singapore with the strong support of the Singapore Tourism Board in the 80s. MP or Meeting Planners when it first started, was primed to provide event management services to international associations looking at hosting their meetings in Singapore. Fast forward 30 years, MP has embodied more than a quarter century of event building, marketing, management and community activation experience in both Eastern and Western cultures, practices and business philosophies. Over the past ten years, we have evolved to provide more than event management services and have pivoted to develop an omni-channel approach towards community activation and engagement. MPI is part of Pico Group, a global group of agencies specialising in engaging people, creating experiences and activating brands for businesses, institutions and governments. As part of the Pico group, MPI has unlimited access to a wide network of industry contacts and resources. Pico Far East Holdings has been listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange since 1992. We currently have 60 staff members on the team.

What made you apply to join IAPCO and what are your expectations as a new member?
MP is proud to be a member of IAPCO, the leading association for professional conference organisers. Being an IAPCO member offers us the recognition of being part of the largest community of PCOs in the world, and the opportunity to network and learn from our peers, and hopefully to be able to contribute back to the association and the community as a whole.

We are looking to connect, network and potentially find collaboration opportunities with other member companies around the world.

What are the 3 things you are looking forward to in the next year?
• Return of more large scale in-person events
• Further relaxing of travel regulations in relation to COVID-19
• Further enhancement to our digitalization efforts

How is recovery going for you?
It has been an interesting and challenging journey navigating the business through these endemic times. As economies begin to recover and the event industry slowly but surely return with live and hybrid events, the modus operandi of those that were able to survive has changed dramatically. MP is no exception, while we have always explored omni-channel approaches and digitalization, the endemic had forced us to accelerate our rate of adoption to not just allow our business to pivot quickly but to address the new challenges of the current times.
Association leaders and thought leaders from around the world recently gathered in Dubai for the third edition of the Dubai Association Conference, with city leaders urging them to make the most of the opportunity to develop their operations and take advantage of the platform Dubai can provide trade and professional associations for growth and expanded reach.

Taking place at Dubai Exhibition Centre, located within the Expo 2020 Dubai site, under the theme of 'Associations and The New World: Resilience & Reinvention', the conference provided a platform for exploring how associations can adapt amid not just the aftermath and direct impact of the global pandemic, but shifting dynamics among the professions and industries they serve.

His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai’s Department of Economy and Tourism, said: “Dubai’s strong response since the outset of the pandemic has seen the city solidify its status as an economic and knowledge hub. And as associations explore how they can continue to remain relevant and support their members through professional development, networking, the sharing of best practices and engagement in policymaking, Dubai is committed to providing a platform from which they can thrive not just here and in the wider region, but on an international scale.”

With more than 200 attendees, the Dubai Association Conference once again featured a strong lineup of international and local speakers, including: Michelle I. Mason, President and CEO of the American Society of Association Executives; Marjorie Anderson, Founder, Community By Association; Jason Thompson, Professional Thinker, Copywriter and Speaker; Marc Mekki, Digital Innovator and UX & Design Thinking Expert; and Bo Kruger, Owner, Moving Minds.

Michelle I. Mason, President and CEO of the American Society of Association Executives, said: “Associations have always had the power to drive transformation in their respective fields and professions, and to achieve this it has been necessary to stay at the forefront of innovation, collaborative thinking and knowledge development.

“In the wake of the pandemic, associations are becoming even more forward-thinking and entrepreneurial in embracing their role as change agents. Opportunities to convene an international audience of association leaders, including the just-concluded Dubai Association Conference, will help accelerate the leadership role associations play in today's changing world.”

The conference was the flagship event of the Dubai Association Centre (DAC), which was established in 2014 to support and license regional and international associations in setting up an office or chapter in Dubai. DAC opened its state-of-the-art offices in One Central, DWTC in December 2019, providing a collaborative environment for registered associations.
Ageing will have an effect on technology, education, quality of life, income, and welfare. Can you imagine having personalised registration fees?

In the meetings industry, price points are often based on history and field benchmarks. Association leaders calculate costs, desired revenues, etc., and leave little choice to attendees. In this way, the registration often becomes a barrier to obtaining valuable knowledge for people from some locations and income levels, as we have well observed over the years. Associations usually combat this issue with the annual rotation of their events or creating smaller meetings in the different regions where their members are based.

New era, new tools

However, we are moving into a new era of events, with in-person, and virtual participation options, which offer different price points. We have observed in the past two years how the various delegate opinions continue to create tension, even in the form of free virtual events – a topic that we have tackled in the past.

The new era also offers new tools, which can serve us in figuring out the right price model for the different audience types. NeuroPricing™ estimates the optimal price for maximising profit for both new and existing products or services, using EEG (electroencephalogram).

As Neurensics, the company behind the tech says, “the optimal price can only be estimated directly from the consumer’s brain because it’s an automatic and often unconscious process.” The EEG measures where the brain gets naturally activated when the right product-price option is presented to the person. It removes thinking from the equation and offers the product or service for the right price that the specific individual values it at.

How would it work?

We all pay different prices for services like hotels or flights, for example. So why not offer event registrations at the best price-point for every individual? This will potentially result in more loyalty and satisfaction from the delegate, and the following year they can even value the registration at a higher price-point, as they have already reaped the benefits of being attendees.

A starting point, not involving the use of EEG on conference delegates, would be offering varying price points (e.g. 3 different ones) for each type of participation, where we ask delegates to choose from. To incentivise those with a higher income level to choose a higher price-point, the event planner...
can establish that an estimated amount their registration fee would go towards covering for delegates that are otherwise unable to fully afford it.

Having transparent and open communication on the registration options with participants would indeed fuel their trust and openness in the process.

Another possible step would be automating the process with an AI (artificial intelligence) that would analyse the perfect price point based on the delegate's past searches or purchases made from their computer, as well as historical data, and to show the best price fitting this person.

With time, the AI will learn to better match the price point and how the participant values the event, its program, and the overall experience that they expect to get. Consequently, the event planner can use the data to optimise their event in the areas that would bring unique value to their audience.

**In summary**

We may require technology to catch up to our needs as event planners and help us evaluate these price points without the complex EEG scans, but one thing is certain – the step forward is to personalise this aspect of our meetings, increasing the value of the conference and its potential to leave a legacy in everyone they reach.

---

Ori Lahav joined Kenes Group in 2013 as AVP Marketing, bringing more than 15 years of marketing experience to the management team. Ori’s expertise includes implementing marketing strategies, ATL/BTL, and leading digital campaigns in online/social media channels. He began his career in the communications industry, where he held marketing positions at Internet, voice, and mobile telecom providers. This was followed by a senior role in the automotive sector with a start-up that raised US$ 900M to manufacture electric cars. After 4 years at Kenes Group, Ori moved to manage the Client Accounts & Operations unit. At the beginning of 2017, Ori also became an IAPCO Council Member (IAPCO – the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers) and in 2020 he was announced President of the association. Lahav was recognised by event professionals in the Eventex Top 100 Most Influential People in the industry for two consecutive years. Ori holds a BA in Statistics from the University of Haifa and an MBA from the University of Derby, UK.
Whether it is Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or Twitter – social media has become a significant part of our daily lives. Not only do these platforms update us about current affairs, but in some instances they act as personal blogs or simply enable companies to gain valuable insights into their customer behavior. They even allow us to promote events – an important trait in the event business. At CPO HANSER SERVICE, we have discovered that to effectively promote congresses, a social media strategy has to be included.

Before getting started, it is important to identify the relevant target groups. These will determine the social media channels and content to be used. Due to the nature of our congresses, the target groups tend to vary significantly – we cater to medical professionals of all disciplines and ages. Our predefined persona templates enable us to determine our target groups’ interests and other requirements they may have.

The next step would be to define the appropriate channels. Factors that should be taken into consideration for this step are the type of medical profession and of course the age of our target group. Younger generations may be found on channels, such as Instagram, whereas an older target group may prefer to use Facebook. Over the years, networking platforms, such as LinkedIn, have seen a significant increase in popularity.

Each channel has different content requirements. Instagram is a preferred visual tool, whereas LinkedIn and Twitter can be used in a more professional context. Thus it is important to identify which content will be most appealing to the target groups. Regardless of whatever channel a company decides to use, it is important that it is regularly updated for current and potential followers. We provide our followers with an excellent content mix defined with the help of our content plan, which should ideally be made up of articles, white papers, videos and pictures. Due to the nature of our business, we utilize Facebook to promote events within our networks.

When planning our content, we put great emphasis on having a mix between organic and paid ads

When planning our content, we put great emphasis on having a mix between organic and paid ads. All campaigns run on paid ads and whenever possible, we use A/B testing to maximize the outcome. For our A/B testing we aim to use two unrelated pictures pertaining to the same topic with varied texts containing certain keywords. This enables us to see which campaign is most popular amongst our target group.
With the help of Google Analytics, we are able to manage our past and current campaigns. The tool not only shows us which campaigns have the highest reach and their popularity amongst our target groups, but it also shows us whether our budget is being implemented effectively. Based upon the data provided, our campaigns can be adjusted accordingly. Google Analytics enables us to plan and manage future campaigns and budgetary requirements.

Katrin Suchi, Director Sales and Marketing, has stated that “Ever since CPO HANSER SERVICE has started using Google Analytics, we have been able to create more effective campaigns that appeal to a larger target group”.

However, social media channels are of no use if the target group is unaware of them. To create awareness for the social media channels, CPO HANSER SERVICE uses the congress websites and monthly newsletters. Additionally, paid services, such as Google Ads, can be used.

Social media channels are of no use if the target group is unaware of them

We have discovered the power and benefits of using different social media channels. This powerful tool has enabled us to not only create awareness for our congresses, but to also increase our follower base, which can have many benefits. We look forward to seeing how social media will help our congresses grow in the near future.

Iman Leanora Gähwiler is Marketing Manager at CPO HANSER SERVICE and is responsible, among other things, for planning and implementing the conventions’ communications and social media strategy.

Iman is truly international: she is half Swiss and half Caribbean (Trinidad & Tobago), was born in Hong Kong and has spent time in the USA. Thus, she fits in perfectly with CPO’s global, intercultural fields of activity.
WORKING WITH A MEDICAL ASSOCIATION: THE CASE OF GREEK RHEUMATOLOGY SOCIETY

Author: Alkis Polyrakis

Our cooperation with ERE-EPERE has been a long and very rewarding journey, as not only do we assist doctors to get their message across and therefore enhance given care and treatment, but we also give the opportunity to patients to be actively involved and share their moving personal stories.

A Professional Congress Organizer can assist a medical association in numerous ways. Their cooperation is much more than just event management; it’s about helping them grow, enhancing both their inward and their outward communication channels, and increasing their academic standing and influence.

When CONVIN started working with the Greek Rheumatology Society & Professional Association of Rheumatologists (ERE-EPERE) nearly a decade ago, it was already an established and accomplished association, with Greek medical professionals contributing to the science and practice of rheumatology, participating in the American College of Rheumatology and the EULAR annual congresses, as well as in many educational postgraduate courses. First and foremost, what they needed was to get their message across, not only in their own ranks, but also to patients and the international scientific world. We therefore concentrated our efforts on three axes: Modernizing the tools at the association’s disposal, raising awareness for rheumatic diseases, and reinventing their scientific journal.

Although it is estimated that a quarter of the population of developed countries suffer from a rheumatic disease at some point of their lives, the majority of the public do not often realize that they need to consult a rheumatologist: that is why ERE-EPERE decided to launch a country-wide awareness campaign in association with patient organizations. Since 2014, we have raised awareness on rheumatic diseases by designing a modern online portal for the public, holding public events throughout the country, producing TV and radio spots in nationwide media plans, participating in several CSR activities, organizing press conferences, employing influencers to represent us in social media, recording patient testimonials, and in many more ways to list. We have cooperated with other medical professionals, such as the Greek Association of Physiotherapists, who published videos with specific advice for rheumatic disease patients. We had a rheumatologist visit distant islands in the Aegean Sea to provide medical care to patients. We’ve also been working closely with pharmaceutical
companies to ensure their continuous support and the project’s viability. We constantly monitor and evaluate the progress of our efforts via professional surveys. Eight years ago, the scientific journal of the Greek Rheumatology Society was a Greek printed edition with a limited readership. By employing a number of experienced editors in scientific publications, we completely reformed the edition in accordance with the most demanding international standards. The historic journal of Greek Rheumatology was renamed to Mediterranean Journal of Rheumatology, and became a digital edition; after a brief period of being bilingual, it began publishing strictly in English. The Editorial Board was enriched with renowned rheumatologists from Greece and abroad, and a modern publication portal was built for the purpose. Nowadays, the MJR is an established publication with a climbing rejection rate and thousands of readers, endorsed by 19 foreign associations and publications, and indexed in PubMed Central and Scopus. The Journal publishes four regular issues per year, as well as supplement issues, including Abstracts of Rheumatology Congresses, or thematic ones, such as a Special Issue on COVID-19.

Our cooperation with ERE-EPERE has been and continues to be a long and very rewarding journey, as not only do we assist doctors to get their message across and therefore enhance given care and treatment, but we also give the opportunity to patients to be actively involved and share their moving personal stories.

Alkis Polyrakis, BEng, MEng, is an electrical engineer specializing in telecommunications and IT. He has a long experience in editing scientific publications, in the fields of computing and engineering. He is a professional congress organizer who has managed conferences in all five continents. His skills also involve computer programming, focusing on artificial intelligence.
As the world emerges from the pandemic to meet in-person once again, there is no doubt an element of uncertainty remains. This is where a trusted, long-term relationship between a PCO and its client can really come to the fore.

For this 100th edition of The PCO, it is fitting that we caught up with Arinex, a leading Australian event management company of almost 50 years, to discuss the value of long-standing client relationships.

After two years of mostly hybrid and virtual event, leading Australian event management company Arinex recently put its on-the-ground event management expertise to use once again to deliver the 2022 National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC) Awards for Excellence.

Arinex Managing Director Nicole Walker said the 2022 NAWIC Awards for Excellence was the first in-person, stand-alone event the company had delivered since Covid restrictions were introduced.

“The NAWIC Awards meant so much to both Arinex and our client because not only did it mark a return to face-to-face events, but it was also 10 years since Arinex was first appointed to deliver the event,” Walker said.

“Over that time, Arinex has helped grow the awards from 500 to 1,200 delegates and we were thrilled to see this year’s numbers on par with the last pre-Covid event in 2019.”
The benefits are mutual

According to Walker, there are mutual benefits to a long-standing relationship like the one Arinex has with the NAWIC Awards organisers.

“When it came to planning the 2022 event, we could essentially pick up where we left off because trust and rapport had been built over 10 years,” she said.

“Arinex Senior Account Manager Leonie Ferris-Tonge has worked closely with NAWIC since we were first appointed to manage the event. She has become a true extension of the NAWIC team and has a complete understanding of what they want to achieve.

“Over the past decade, Leonie has developed a proven formula for success when it comes to the event format and logistics. This allows more time and energy to go towards new ideas that take the event to the next level with each year.

“In that regard, there are many time and cost savings that come with an established relationship compared to one where you are bidding for and managing an event for the first time.”

After a two-year hiatus, NAWIC once again challenged Arinex to deliver its awards night with fresh ideas and innovation, and to do so in a way that complied with evolving Covid restrictions.

“To a certain extent we were able to take a level of stress off our client’s shoulders. They knew our team would be on top of contingency planning and would be working closely with our suppliers and other third parties to ensure there was flexibility to make last-minute changes,” Walker said.

“Thankfully social distancing restrictions eased slightly a few days prior to the event, and we were able to incorporate a dance floor so that attendees could really let their hair down and celebrate properly for the first time in two years.”

The 2022 NAWIC Awards for Excellence also marked the first in-person event held at the International Convention Centre Sydney since the introduction of restrictions. Hosted by Australian television presenter, Johanna Griggs, the event featured Sceptron lighting installations, LED dancers and a live auction that raised over AU$35,000 for the NAWIC International Women’s Day Scholarship.
NAWIC New South Wales Chapter Awards Chair, Taleah Baird, described the long-standing relationship with Arinex as ‘an asset’.

“Arinex has grown with us over the past 10 years and has reached a point where they could run the event with their eyes closed. More importantly, they understand our objectives and strategic direction, which saved a lot of time when it came to approaching the event after a two-year break due to Covid restrictions,” Baird said.

“We knew we could trust Arinex to help us bring the NAWIC Awards for Excellence back in spectacular fashion, and the entire experience with the Arinex team exceeded our expectations.

“The feedback we receive from delegates gets more positive with every year and despite the complexities that came with delivering a Covid-safe event, we feel this was the best year yet.”
Adaptation the key to success

While the past two years held its challenges, it also provided opportunities for Arinex to further strengthen relationships with its clients.

“For many clients, moving their established conferences to a virtual format was understandably daunting. However, it allowed Arinex to provide a new level of service by helping them adapt and achieve their objectives in new and different ways,” Walker said.

One of those clients was the Concrete Institute of Australia who held its 30th Biennial National Conference virtually for the first time in 2021. Arinex will mark ten years managing the conference in 2023.

Speaking of the relationship with Arinex, Concrete Institute of Australia Chief Executive Officer, David Miller, said: “Arinex understands our organisation and our members, helping us refine our messaging to ensure clarity and meet expectations.

“IT is reassuring to work with a company that adapts in difficult situations and has provided technology solutions for global speaker engagement to ensure our event is a success.

“The professionalism and consistency of the Arinex team seamlessly integrate with our association to work as one united team.”

Putting the impact of the pandemic aside, the conferencing and business events world is one that will always be rapidly evolving and as such, PCOs are expected to constantly reach new standards of event management.

As Walker explains, it is important to never become complacent with any client, no matter how strong you believe the relationship is.

“Having operated for nearly 50 years, Arinex has fostered relationships by providing consistent high-level event management, adapting to challenges, being dedicated to continual improvement, coming to the table with new ideas and working with our clients as one team,” she said.

“We take this approach with clients both new and old, and that is what we believe will keep us in business for years to come.”
JOINING THE EVENTS INDUSTRY DURING A PANDEMIC? A YOUNG PROFESSIONAL’S LESSONS LEARNT

Author: Andrea Peycheva
Marketing Coordinator at Kenes Group

Entering the events industry as a young professional during a pandemic has been an unexpected and eye-opening experience that showed me that there are solutions even during the darkest of times. In many ways, I am happy I entered this industry precisely during a pandemic because it showed me what it means to do business during a crisis, to solve problems and to get creative even when you don’t necessarily want to. Besides, it is well-known that the best of progress very often comes during tough times.

LESSONS LEARNT

The power of being alone

I started my brand-new role at the height of lockdowns when everything was closed, and everyone was working home-office. My training was conducted completely online. At first, it seemed rather daunting having to learn about a completely new role remotely, listening only to explanations provided over Teams meetings and having nobody sitting directly next to me to turn to for help.

I realised the benefits of learning almost completely by myself with no direct help around. I could sit in the peace and quiet of my own home, being able to dive deep into my new tasks, without any distractions office environments usually cause. Being alone allowed me to digest the situation and the new knowledge I was acquiring much deeper and much more analytically. Later, this precise experience helped me build my confidence and made me a lot more secure in my job.

The power of technology

Before the pandemic, online events were somewhat an option, but rather overlooked and not taken too seriously. Putting together online events, however, became the norm and it opened my eyes to what technology can do for people and organisations.

The crisis showed me that it is possible to work successfully in unusual circumstances

The crisis showed me that it is possible to work successfully in unusual circumstances such as lockdowns and isolation if you are creative and hard-working. I started seeing technology
more as a partner that was there to help. For the first time, I saw clearly how the technology we enjoy nowadays empowers and opens new possibilities. I think it was an experience the industry needed to have to move forward.

**Event-ing online**

Another lesson I learnt well from joining the meetings industry during a pandemic was how an event is organised completely online. Now, I am grateful I got the chance to see how this works as I believe people will expect to see an online component at every event they are interested in from now on. I would dare to say that they might give up participating in an event altogether if there is no option at all to join online. I am glad I could see the creation process of virtual events.

**Adapting and making the best out of anything**

There is a popular saying that goes like this: “If life gives you lemons, make a lemonade”. And I couldn’t agree more. Perhaps the most important lesson I learnt is that instead of giving up when the going gets tough, furloughing staff or pausing your business altogether, you can turn the situation to your advantage and adapt to the new reality.

Adaptability might not be possible for all walks of life, but I think the events industry demonstrated a problem-solving approach.

**Overall...**

No one can tell exactly what the future holds but educated guesses can be made. The world is slowly exiting the pandemic now and physical events are cautiously coming back. I would say people will certainly expect options to attend online, have health safety guarantees when attending. Personally, as a young professional who joined this industry during such unprecedented times, I can’t wait to see the future lessons to be learnt. A lot will happen on many levels, and I believe the events industry will only continue to evolve and become more exciting and interesting.
This year’s EDGE theme of Resilience and Sustainability hit home when Covid restrictions caused the postponement of the IAPCO EDGE seminar from January to March. Undeterred, Anne Guri Sklet and her loyal team at Gyro Conference showed resilience, shifted gears and hosted the first ever ‘hybrid’ EDGE in the 45-year history of the IAPCO seminar.

A truly global event, EDGE Lillehammer attracted people from 16 countries, with an even mix of PCO’s Convention Bureau’s and Convention Centres, all collaborating to develop new skills and share knowledge whilst making connections for life.

EDGE took place in Lillehammer, Norway, a certified sustainable destination, reachable by train in 2 hours from Oslo airport. The lakeside ski-town has retained its Nordic charm with painted wooden shopfronts along the main street and an impressive view of the Lysgårdsbakkene Ski Jumping Arena where the 1994 Winter Olympics and the 2016 Winter Youth Olympics took place.

Three days of interactive sessions on Bidding, Hybrid Meetings, Sustainability and Mental Health were led by a dedicated team of EDGE faculty: Nicky McGrane, (CPI, Ireland), Mathias Posch (ICS, Singapore) and Sissi Lygnou (AFEA, Greece) with Sarah Markey-Hamm moderating late into the evening from her ICMS office in Melbourne.

Mixing business with pleasure, in-person attendees enjoyed a twilight visit to the Maihaugen open air museum where they strolled in the snow past historical homes dating back to the 13th Century and visited the 1930s house which was Queen Sonja’s childhood home before she married Crown Prince Harald. A torchlit procession back to a cozy wooden cottage at the Scandic Hotel for evening supper by the fire made for a memorable end to a fantastic day of peer-to-peer learning and knowledge share.

I had a lot of fun engaging with both online and in - person participants from diverse backgrounds

Nicky McGrane designed the EDGE programme and experimented with different elements to gauge what works well for an online audience. “I had a lot of fun engaging with both online and in - person participants from diverse backgrounds and I learned a lot from inspiring speakers as well as during the interactive sessions.” commented Shamsah Ali Al Ali who joined the sessions online from Dubai Tourism.
Key learnings were added to the Tree of Knowledge at the end of each day, but conversations carried on outside the classroom. Friendships were cemented over drinks and dinner at the EDGE party in the old Lillehammer Brewery at one of the town’s most popular restaurants, the 1847 Bryggerikjelleren.

Attending an IAPCO Edge Seminar is a unique experience; a place of learning and laughter where people let go of their fears and share life lessons with colleagues. It’s an opportunity to get under the skin of a destination and explore new ideas and connect with people from different backgrounds and life experiences.

So what are the ingredients that makes EDGE special? EDGE is Expert Dynamic Global Education combined with the magic that happens when people get together.

If you would like to register your interest to attend EDGE Geneva in January 2023, please email education@iapco.org

Photos and testimonials from Lillehammer can be viewed here. EDGE Lillehammer
They also adapted very well during the pandemic! They are a fully functional hospital that was used as a quarantine center during the peak days of the COVID bloom. Yet in that particularly challenging period, they successfully pivoted their education from face-to-face to digital platforms that grew beyond the borders of UAE, Middle East and attract audiences from Africa, Southeast Asia and the CIS region. They worked with MCI to build digital solutions and content that would address a wide spectrum of topics and audiences. The complexities of their requirements challenged us to adapt, innovate and create solutions that addressed their individual needs. We have grown together!

How does the Award make a difference?

We have been working with CCAD for 3 years, and this relationship is growing. Certainly, the award will strengthen the link we have with the client. The Award has also brought pride to the team, with recognition and sense of achievement for everyone involved. Besides it being celebratory moment, the award offers us an opportunity to showcase MCI’s versatility, resourcefulness and innovation as a team in managing complex requirements of the client. We can’t wait to celebrate with CCAD once the main lead is back from maternity leave.

In February, IAPCO attributed 3 Awards: our Hero Award, celebrating the accomplishment of an individual, went to Hannah Jarvis (see previous edition of the PCO). The Supplier Award went to Athens Convention Bureau, nominated by CONVIN. Finally, we celebrated clients. Today we find out more about Cleveland Clinic Abu Dhabi, our Client Award Winner.

GROWING TOGETHER: CLEVELAND CLINIC ABU DHABI (CCAD), NOMINATED BY MCI MIDDLE EAST, WINS IAPCO DRIVING EXCELLENCE CLIENT AWARD

Alexander John, from MCI Middle East, shares insights about the client he nominated for the Award:

We nominated CCAD as they are different from most of the accounts that we handle in our office. While their goal is to build a cohesive and inclusive world class health care brand, they have a unique focus on education and empowering their audiences.

They have a holistic and integrated approach to healthcare, i.e., inclusive of science as well as patient wellness. CCAD focuses on building a strong community of educated health care professionals who can support their patients and caregivers. Additionally, they work on community education, and empowering both men and women. They launched a unique Women in health Program to support all women in the country with pertinent women related topics.
MEMBERS’ NEWS

Member: AFEA
Country: Greece

The 1st half of 2022 finds AFEA team in the heat of preparation, organization and setup for the upcoming meetings. This year we have dedicated a major part of our work in the promotion for a more sustainable character for our meetings and we focus on the SDGs related to the conferences we organize. In particular Goals 1, 4, 5, 8, 10, 11.

BACK TO IN PERSON MEETINGS WITH THE UN SDGS, TOP OF THE AGENDA FOR AFEA!

• 9th Biennial Congress of the European Society of Endocrine Surgeons – ESES 2022
• Population Approach Group Europe - Page 2022
• Cospar2022 – 44th Scientific Assembly
• 5th FORTE Summer School 2022

Read more

NEW MANAGEMENT FOR ABBEY GROUP

The Management buyout (MBO) team of the Abbey Group are delighted to be embarking on an exciting new journey in taking the Abbey Group forward into this new era. Building on Abbey’s successful trading with their valued clients and supplier partners, the MBO team, the management and staff are looking forward to a bright future together. The MBO team are current directors of the Abbey Group and the completion of the full buy out from the original owners is part of a planned succession strategy.

We wish Jane, Marine, Brian and Patricia our best wishes.
The Japanese Society for Regenerative Medicine (JSRM) was founded only approx. 20 years ago, yet is one of the leading associations in Japan today due to the fact that regenerative medicine and stem-cell related research has become a hot domain both in Japan and worldwide.

The JSRM is a comprehensive regenerative medicine organization comprised of basic researchers, clinicians, and engineers from academia, industry, and government, as well as experts in ethics, regulation, and law. The JSRM not only promotes research, but also actively engages in activities such as policy advocacy.

The 21st Congress comprised a packed program, with 51 symposia (broadcast live and on-demand) highlighting cutting-edge outcomes from a broad range of concerned domains, as well as recommendations from industry bodies and government agencies. 6 experts from overseas also presented their latest findings. The congress organizer aspired to encourage debate among different fields toward contributing to the realization of future advanced regenerative therapy to achieve the rescue of many patients.

This year’s 21st Congress comprised a packed program, with 51 symposia (broadcast live and on-demand) highlighting cutting-edge outcomes from a broad range of concerned domains, as well as recommendations from industry bodies and government agencies. 6 experts from overseas also presented their latest findings. The congress organizer aspired to encourage debate among different fields toward contributing to the realization of future advanced regenerative therapy to achieve the rescue of many patients.

JSRM also co-hosted the ISSCR Tokyo International Symposium last fall, under the auspices of the International Society for Stem Cell Research [https://www.isscr.org/meetings-events/international-symposia/tokyo-2021-symposium](https://www.isscr.org/meetings-events/international-symposia/tokyo-2021-symposium)

Find out more about the challenges encountered and creativity displayed here.
With more than 3370 attendees, the 16th International Conference on Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s Diseases took place on March 15 – 20, simultaneously in Barcelona, Spain and virtually on VirtuOz.

This year’s AD/PD™ Conference marked the largest hybrid event carried out to date by Kenes Group, gathering 3,375 healthcare professionals from 67 countries - 1,956 delegates attending on-site at the CCIB – International Barcelona Convention Center, and 1,419 participants connected through the Kenes-developed congress online platform VirtuOz.

The AD/PD Conference

The Kenes Original Event AD/PD™ Conference 2022 marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of the AD/PD™ series of conferences. By merging with the AAT-AD/PD™ Advances in Alzheimer’s Therapies Focus Meeting, AD/PD™ is now transformed from a biannual into an annual meeting, with a continuing focus on the ADVANCES IN SCIENCE & THERAPY of Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s Diseases and related neurological disorders.

This year’s edition of the AD/PD™ Conference provided up to 42 points of CME/CPD accreditation to international medical and scientific professionals worldwide engaged in the neurodegeneration field, from basic scientists to clinical investigators, and from established leaders to young upcoming talents.

A large number of reports about the AD/PD™ 2022 have already been published, inter alia, by the Alzheimer’s Research, Video Journal of Dementia, BioSpace and more. Read more
MEMBERS’ NEWS

Women persevere and continue to demonstrate that when they lead, entire communities and the world as a whole are transformed. As the world continues to face urgent challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, inclusive and diverse feminist leadership is considered as a critical factor in long-term global development. Female leaders of today are tenacious and diverse. Women are making a difference in business all over the world & inspiring a brighter future.

The ‘International Women Summit’ aims to highlight women’s achievements and gathers women leaders from all over Egypt including, government, business sector, media, women associations, global official institutions and NGOs under one roof thereby facilitating unprecedented access to distinguished women leaders. The event was an important opportunity for local and regional women leaders to promote the exchange of best practices, knowledge on leadership, world civilizations and culture to have a world with peace and prosperity.

‘Within the framework of the international efforts as well as the country’s path to empower women and increase their engagement in the business life, many studies performed by relevant organizations concluded that women are more able to manage economic resources and achieve the best results as they invest in their families and surrounding society to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families’, said Dr. Ahmed El Shal – Expand Chairman.

And to commemorate the International Women’s Month, the 3rd edition of the “International Women’s Summit” was launched on March 26th with the participation of the “African Center for Women’s Health”, which is affiliated with the Egyptian Ministry of Health, as panelists discussed Presidential and Ministerial initiatives to support scientific research and raise awareness in the field of women’s health and development in Egypt and the Middle East.

EXPAND LAUNCHES THE 3RD EDITION OF THE ‘INTERNATIONAL WOMEN SUMMIT’

Member: ICOM
Country: Egypt
Female leaders of today are tenacious and diverse. Women are making a difference in business all over the world & inspiring a brighter future.

“For a developed community, pursuing women’s economic empowerment means enabling equal access to resources, knowledge, and economic prosperity for women and leveraging their talent, creativity, and determination for economic good”, said Walid Menessi – ICOM Group Chief Operating Officer.

This year’s event covered a wide range of new topics that were relevant to all sectors and industries in Egypt, whether private or public. Women’s Health in Egypt, the Future of Brand Strategy, Female Leadership in Economic Recovery, Gender Equality and Empowerment, The Quest for Sustainable and Inclusive Solutions, Accelerating Gender Balance, and other issues were discussed.
A group of dentists in collaboration with AIM Group founded a new scientific society to involve the largest number of professionals focusing on education, events and an integrated communication plan.

At the end of 2021 a group of dentists decided to establish a new scientific association dedicated to the area of dental prosthesis. Their charter values include inclusiveness, openness, and democratisation of the associative practice, with the aim of involving the largest number of professionals, including dental technicians, odontologists and university representatives (students and professors).

Thus, was born SIPRO, the Italian Society of Dental Prosthetics and Oral Rehabilitation, an important wager carried out by the 109 founding members, together with AIM Group which was involved in the management of the entire project from the earliest stages.

The scientific association intends to pay a great deal of attention to the education of its members, promote their active participation, and foster scientific research, thanks to the connection with universities.

The important cultural and educational program designed for 2022 is very indicative of their commitment. 42 training webinars are already scheduled, the first 6 open to all, then they are reserved only for members and are flanked by 4 NextGen events for young professionals broadcast on the Facebook channel as well as a course on online prosthetics.

A key moment in the association’s first year of life will be the Sipro 1st National Congress to be held in May, in Rome, which has the ambitious goal of gathering 500 people for its first edition.

Important objectives have also been set for membership which in 2022 expects to reach 300 ordinary members, in addition to the founders.

In support of these objectives, the communication plan defined with AIM Communication has a crucial role in making the new association known to the audience of potential members, bring new members and registrations to events. It includes the development of the website, the social media launch and management, the sending of a newsletter and some industry media partnership.

The AIM team is supporting the new scientific society in all areas: with Association Management services, administrative and fiscal management, in fund raising (essential for a budget to be built from scratch), for the organisation of the annual congress, the webinars and training events, for the communication campaign, with parameters set by shared growth plan for the next 5 years.

“Scientific Associations can play a crucial role in knowledge sharing and education for professional communities, especially during and after the pandemic. We took this opportunity and challenge with enthusiasm, glad to support the SIPRO founding members to launch the new association, connect a large number of dentists still not involved in other associations and to establish a well-know, recognised, active organisation in its field, leveraging all the vast and long experience we have in association management, event organisation and communication” comments Rosangela Quieti, managing director AIM Italy.
The European Hematology Association (EHA) was officially established in 1992 and is a global platform for excellence in hematology, focusing on blood, blood cells, and blood disorders such as leukemia, lymphoma, hemophilia, anemia, and thrombosis. EHA is the largest Europe-based organization connecting hematologists worldwide to support career development and research, harmonize hematology education, and advocate for hematologists and hematology.

EHA holds an annual congress to facilitate that mission and to connect hematologists worldwide.

In the beginning of March the European Hematology Association (EHA) announced to the conference and meeting community the outcome of its Core PCO Invitation To Tender (ITT). Its newly appointed partner for the next three Congress editions in 2023, 2024 and 2025 is Interplan:

Mr Rik Craenmehr, Head of Congress & Meetings of the European Hematology Association, said "After a stringent evaluation process, it came down to the organizational fit and the ability to evaluate and align the PCO’s capabilities, focus and approach to match those of EHA at the present. We need a strong convergence and balance between where the EHA Congress model is currently at, and where it aspires to be. INTERPLAN will play a crucial role in how we move forward in a very volatile and constantly transforming global landscape. We aim to learn, grow and advance together, with EHA at the forefront".

Dr Markus Preussner, Managing Director Interplan, said "At Interplan we are tremendously proud and honored to have been appointed by EHA as the new core PCO. Right from the start, our entire team was on fire for this project. We consider it as an exceptional opportunity to support one of the leading European congresses and we are convinced that EHA and Interplan are a perfect match with the common goal of a successful partnership."
DESTINATION PARTNERS

Long-term partners of IAPCO, each representing specific regions of the world

HOSTS, SERVICE PROVIDERS & CONVENTION CENTRES

Recognising convention centres and suppliers to the meetings industry who provide an insight into current trends, latest innovations, advice and tips and quality service.