

EXPERTS IN DYNAMIC GLOBAL EDUCATION – THE EDGE PROGRAMME IN TAIPEI

An important mission for IAPCO (the International Association for Professional Congress Organisers) has always been the raising of the quality of service delivered by conference organisers around the world. “It’s our aim to promote quality standards amongst PCOs worldwide,” commented Jan Tonkin, President of IAPCO and EDGE Taipei speaker, “and hand-in-hand with that goes education.”



Two years ago, IAPCO introduced EDGE seminars, providing accessible education worldwide. In Taipei last month it was the IAPCO 3-day EDGE Seminar which dominated local training. “What makes an IAPCO seminar unique is the people that educate you are people who organise conferences and run their own businesses. So it’s not professional speakers; it’s not people who are only do speaking engagements”, said Mathias Posch, Vice President of IAPCO and EDGE Taipei speaker, sharing how the EDGE seminar stands out from other education programmes offered by the industry.

IAPCO member in Taiwan, GIS Group, is in complete agreement with IAPCO’s direction. Jason Yeh, CEO of GIS Group, explained why he initiated bringing an EDGE Seminar to Taipei: “Whilst it is definitely our responsibility to promote our destination, it is just as important to bring people from the industry to learn about quality service delivery and its value.” The

seminar, as with all EDGE seminars, was open to all in the MICE industry, be they PCOs or meeting planners, organizations or associations, convention bureaux, conference venues, DMCs and AMCs.

“To constantly improve we should learn from others’ great examples. It is very important to interact and exchange ideas with other professionals in the industry, yet another reason why GIS Group brought the IAPCO EDGE Seminar to Taiwan.”

But it takes strategic marketing to bring together such a highly targeted group, a task, which GIS took on with enthusiasm. Throughout their years of experience in the meeting industry, GIS Group has developed great relationships with different parties in the market, and these connections were put to maximum use to promote the seminar. EDGE seminars are limited in size and appropriate to the immediate market. Therefore promotion in each destination, for each seminar, differs according to the marketplace. In the case of EDGE Taipei, personalised invitations were sent by GIS Group, targeting key contacts in the various sectors of the industry. Each of these invitations included video conversations with key faculty members Jan Tonkin and Mathias Posch. Furthermore, IAPCO and GIS Group, from their booth at IT&CM China, promoted IAPCO’s educational programmes with alacrity, with more than 200 visitors visiting the booth resulting in personal contact and, ultimately, registrations to the seminar.

“Typically learning in the conference and events world has been ‘on the job’” concluded Jan Tonkin.

“While this is certainly important, it can be limited in smaller companies to the knowledge that exists within the team whereas participating in training programmes taps into a wider pool of expertise, particularly exploring the merits of new trends and discussing the pros and cons of systems and technology tools. It has been heartening to see the initiatives being taken by our members, convention bureaux and other industry bodies to promote debate about best practice, provide training programmes (both face to face and online) and run mentoring programmes for their young professionals. EDGE Taipei was one such seminar.”



This article was provided by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers, author GIS Group, Taiwan.

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