



HOSTED BUYER PROGRAMME FOR ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

Advice for international association executives to help you organise quality meetings and business opportunities at meetings industry tradeshow

Partner of:



Shaping the future and value of international association meetings

ICCA - the International Congress and Convention Association - is the global community and knowledge hub for the international association meetings industry.

ICCA is the global association leader for the international meetings industry. Since its establishment in 1963, ICCA specialises in the **international association meetings** sector, offering unrivalled data, education, communication channels, and business development and networking opportunities.

ICCA's founders were a small, visionary group of travel agency friends based on 4 continents who saw the potential of internationally rotating medical association meetings. They set up systems to share information about these meetings and to introduce their clients to trustworthy contacts in countries where they might not know any local contacts. These principles of **sharing knowledge** and **building trust** between suppliers and international associations continue to be the foundation stones of ICCA today.

ICCA represents the world's top destinations and most experienced suppliers specialised in handling, transporting and accommodating international meetings and events, and comprises of [over 1,100 member companies and organisations in almost 100 countries and territories worldwide.](#)

As of 2020 ICCA encompasses all major stakeholders in the world of association meetings, by opening its doors to associations with the launch of the "ICCA Association Community", offering education, connections, tools and resources to associations to organise more effective meetings.

This guide is part of a series of publications specifically designed for the international association community to assist them running more efficient and effective meetings.

Join the ICCA Association Community:

To serve the associations in a more efficient way, ICCA has launched the ICCA Association Community - a unique platform providing Association Executives with access to ICCA services and benefits:

-ICCA Meetings Intelligence tools, including Association Meetings Database, Destination Comparison tool and Big Data Search.

-Education and networking opportunities at the ICCA events

-ICCA's publications and reports

To be able to join the ICCA Association Community, your meeting must rotate between at least 3 countries, must occur on a regular basis and must attract a minimum of 50 participants.

If you would like to join the ICCA Association Community please visit the ICCA website www.associations.iccaworld.org.

For more information on the ICCA Association Community and ICCA products available for Association Executives please contact: Ksenija Polla, CMP, Director Association Relations at ksenija.p@iccaworld.org.

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1. Introduction

More and more meetings industry tradeshows are recognising the importance of the international association meetings sector, and are working hard to attract more association participants. This guide has been produced by ICCA to help international associations decide which shows to attend, how to get the best out of attending, and to showcase the educational and peer-to-peer networking opportunities that are available in addition to the standard exhibitor-visitor appointments to discuss potential future congress destinations or services.

ICCA has been specialising in the international association meetings sector for over 50 years, and acts as connector between our members – the world’s leading meetings service suppliers and destinations – and the thousands of international associations whose congresses we track and share information about. Thanks to this role of mediator ICCA has created this simple guide to provide an unbiased overview of some of the main meetings industry tradeshows.

Most of the important international meetings industry tradeshows around the world are organised by ICCA member companies, and these are the events that make up this listing. Information on other meetings-related tradeshows can be found on the ICCA website.

2. Global and regional tradeshows

There are numerous tradeshows organised every year and it can be difficult to navigate this maze of events. But do not let the vast amount of events stop you from attending.

It is important to understand that tradeshows are a great way of finding the right destination for your next meeting and establishing many contacts within a short period of time.

As long as you are aware which tradeshow offers what and you plan your agenda accordingly, attending a tradeshow can make the planning of your next meeting easier.

There are three global meetings industry tradeshows - **ibtm® world** (The Global Meetings & Events Expo) held traditionally at the end of November/beginning of December in Barcelona, Spain, **IMEX** (The worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings and events) usually held every May in Frankfurt,

Germany and **IMEX America** (America’s worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings and events) usually held in the first half of October in Las Vegas, USA.

All three tradeshows are global in terms of exhibitors and visitors, and offer a comprehensive education programme, hosted buyer programme (a detailed explanation of what this entails is given on page 7) and numerous networking opportunities with peers and exhibitors.

While global tradeshows are extremely valuable to get a general idea on what the benefits of a particular destination are, the regional tradeshows offer you a greater variety of suppliers from a specific destination where you will be able to meet various partners for your meeting from one particular region.

The number of regional tradeshows is growing yearly, the following regional trade-shows are organised by ICCA members and have a proven track record:

- **AIME** - The Asia-Pacific Meetings & Incentives Expo (AIME) is one of the most prestigious exhibitions for the meetings and incentives industry in the Asia-Pacific region. Held annually at the Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre in Australia, in February, provides a platform for the premier meetings and incentives destinations and products to be showcased under one roof.
- **ACE of MICE** - Aimed to be one of the greatest gatherings of Turkish and Global M.I.C.E. sector, ACE of M.I.C.E. Exhibition is usually held at the Istanbul Convention Center in March and organised by the Tourism Media Group.
- **CONVENE** - is a 2-day business to business event for the meetings industry for the countries of the Baltic, traditionally taking place in February of each year. It is an annual international show case for the regional meetings industry and accelerates the interest in, and demand for, holding meetings, incentives and conferences in the region. With a strong focus on education and knowledge, CONVENE aims to equip the buyer and supplier communities with the tools to create more effective meetings and events.
- **CONVENTA** – this regional meetings and incentive tradeshow taking place in Ljubljana, Slovenia showcases South-East European destinations as well as emerging destinations of New Europe. The event usually takes place in January of each year.

- **FIEXPO Latin America** - is an international show of the market meetings and incentives aimed at promoting this industry's infrastructure and services in South and Central America, the Caribbean and Mexico. The event is traditionally held in June of each year. FIEXPO holds the designation of "ICCA Association Relations Partner – Latin America" and is working with the support of ICCA to engage with the international association community in Latin America and provide educational programmes on regional Latin American association meetings.
- **ibtm africa** - ibtm africa is where meetings, events and incentives industry decision makers meet for business adventures across Africa. This show is part of the Reed Exhibitions ibtm events portfolio and takes place in April.
- **ibtm america** - ibtm america is where meetings, events and incentives industry decision makers meet for global business adventures. Bringing you a fresh new format with 100% mutually matched, one-to-one meetings, the exclusive community experience unites the industry's top suppliers with elite meeting and event planners who do business in America and globally. This show is part of the Reed Exhibitions ibtm events portfolio and takes place in June.
- **ibtm arabia** - is where conferences, events and incentives industry decision makers meet for global business adventures. Formerly GIBTM, ibtm arabia brings you a fresh new format with one-to-one meetings and an exclusive closed community experience for up to 200 exhibitors and up to 200 buyers who do business in Arabia and takes place in February of each year.
- **ibtm china** – also known as The China Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition (CIBTM) takes place in August/September of each year in Beijing, China-P.R. As part of the Reed Travel Exhibitions ibtm events portfolio, the show is the premier event in the industry, providing international exhibitors with a gateway to meet with Chinese buyers and expand business into China.
- **ibtm india** - ibtm india is where meetings, events and incentives industry decision makers meet for international business adventures. Elite meeting planners and buyers will join exhibitors for a unique opportunity to hold one-to-one meetings and access quality education and networking events. This show is part of the Reed Exhibitions ibtm events portfolio.
- **ibtm latin america** – ibtm latin America is the leading MICE exhibition in Mexico and Latin America and the latest edition to the ibtm events global portfolio, which is part of Reed Travel Exhibitions. Taking place at Centro Banamex in Mexico City, ibtm latin America is the leading specialist MICE industry event connecting Mexico and Latin America to the world and takes place in September.
- **Meetings Africa** – is taking place in Johannesburg in February of each year and represents the marketing platform for Africa's business tourism industry.
- **The Meetings Show** - is the premier event for the UK inbound and outbound meetings industry. Organised by meeting professionals for meeting professionals it is focused around a large exhibition, networking opportunities and professional education. The hosted buyer programme – the largest in the UK – attracts buyers from the corporate, association, agency and public sectors.

3. ICCA endorsed and supported tradeshow:

3.1. ICCA endorsed shows

ICCA endorsed shows are events with a truly global relevance, both in terms of their exhibitor mix and buyer profiles, which we strongly recommend all ICCA members participate in. ICCA operates a strong business partnership with such shows, including numerous promotional and educational activities, and is actively involved in boosting the attendance of international association buyers. Only the ICCA Board can designate this status.

ICCA endorses the following tradeshow:

- **ibtm® world** - Barcelona, Spain
www.ibtmworld.com
- **IMEX** - Frankfurt, Germany
www.imex-frankfurt.com
- **IMEX America** – Las Vegas, USA
www.imexamerica.com

3.2. ICCA supported shows

ICCA supported shows are major meetings industry events which contain a strong international dimension, and with whom ICCA has set up a multi-year collaborative agreement to enable ICCA members to get the best out of exhibiting at or attending as a hosted buyer. ICCA members should pay particular attention to the focus of the show and the mix of buyers who attend, since there will typically be a strong regional pattern.

The following tradeshows are ICCA supported shows:

- AIME – Melbourne, Australia
www.aime.com.au
- FIEXPO Latin America
www.fiexpolatinoamerica.com/en
- IT&CM China – Shanghai, China PR
<http://itcmchina.com>
- ibtm China – Beijing, China-P.R.
www.cibtm.com
- IT&CM Asia – Bangkok, Thailand
www.itcma.com
- Meetings Africa – Johannesburg, South Africa
www.meetingsafrica.co.za
- The Meetings Show – London, UK
www.themeetingsshow.com

4. Hosted buyer status: what is a hosted buyer, how to apply and benefits

If you are an International Association Executive and have been involved in the organisation of any of your association's meetings or you are a decision maker of where your future meetings will take place, you probably receive numerous invitations to attend meetings industry tradeshows.

You must be wondering why at certain times of the year your inbox is overflowing with such invitations? You probably must also be wondering, what a Hosted buyer is, why you should accept an invitation and what is in it for you?

While each meetings industry tradeshow has specific conditions and benefits within its Hosted Buyer Programme most of them will have the following in common:

A Hosted Buyer will have an obligation to meet a certain number of exhibitors; the number varies by tradeshow (more details under 7. Appointments, on the next page)

Here are the key benefits for participating in a hosted buyer tradeshow:

- Opportunity to bring potential buyers (international or regional associations) together with (international or regional) meeting suppliers to do business.
- Opportunity to find the right destination for your next meeting and establishing many contacts within a short period of time
- Opportunity to attend educational sessions which will help you stay up to date with the latest trends when it comes to organising your meeting
- Opportunity to network with peers and exhibitors
- In return for your active participation, travel and accommodation are either fully or partially paid for by the tradeshow organiser.

5. Educational opportunities

Besides the business element of tradeshows many also offer educational content, which will help you in keeping up-to-date with the latest trends and technology when it comes to organising your association meeting.

During tradeshow days have a look to see if there are any sessions available which will enhance your association's meeting experience.

Here are a few educational events preceding tradeshows:

ICCA Association Expert Seminar

The ICCA Association Expert Seminar (AES) is a unique opportunity to learn how to negotiate with, and understand the objectives of suppliers, and it enables suppliers to understand your objectives and business cultures, when organising your meetings. The Seminar traditionally takes place the weekend before IMEX in Frankfurt in May of each year and comprises of 25 association executives and 40-45 ICCA member suppliers. This is a very interactive programme providing a neutral platform to discuss common challenges and solutions when it comes to organising international association meetings.

Association programmes at IMEX and IMEX America

The day before IMEX in Frankfurt and IMEX America open, there is an event designed exclusively for association executives – Association Day in Frankfurt and Association Focus in America, attended by between 200-300 association executives from up to 40 countries each year. This education opportunity is open to all levels of association executives registered to attend IMEX as either hosted buyers or buyer visitors. This event is co-delivered by ICCA, PCMA and ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership.

Educational opportunities at ibtm world

The ICCA Iberian Chapter traditionally organises a seminar for Spanish speaking associations, additionally Reed Exhibitions, the organiser of ibtm world, is the main sponsor of the education programme at the ICCA Congress. More information on this event is available under 10. ICCA hosted events for associations, on the following page.

6. Networking opportunities

As is the case for each face-to-face meeting, the networking element during tradeshows is in-valuable and can result in life-long contacts with destinations, venues, friends and business associates. To enhance and emphasise the networking element many tradeshows add special evenings dedicated to networking.

IMEX & IMEX America - Association Evening

This enjoyable event is a time to socialise with your peers and an array of global suppliers – an invaluable way to kick-start your IMEX in Frankfurt and IMEX America experience. After a day of learning and connecting at Association Day, buyers continue networking at the Association Evening. Association Evening is the unofficial opening party for IMEX and an event hosted all association planners, plus exhibitors who are members of one of the organising associations (ICCA, AIPC, IAEE, DMAI, IAPCO, ESAE, PCMA, ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership) and association executives.

Personal Connections at ibtm® world

This is a special networking event taking place on the 1st day of the show (Tuesday) on the show floor and brings together Association executives and ICCA member suppliers for a quick informal get-together to continue discussions started during the day, make connections to follow up over the next few days and rewind from a hard day's work. This event is open only to association executives and ICCA member exhibitors who have pre-registered.

7. Appointments

Once you have decided to attend a tradeshow, have gone through the approval process and arranged all your travel and accommodation, then the online Diary opens. What are the steps?!

Here are some tips on how to navigate the maze:

a) If you are attending with a specific group you might also have obligations with your host or group leader, whether it is group presentations or social functions. Be sure to know these before you commit to other events!

b) Be aware of your minimum number of appointments and obligations which are different for each show. You can easily check the minimum number with your host or the tradeshow organiser.

c) Usually the total number can be a combination of individual appointments, group presentations and/or stand presentations. The number can vary per tradeshow, but usually is around 7/8 per day.

d) Appointments last around 30 minutes, but ensure to keep it to 25 minutes to allow sufficient time to get from point A to point B

e) Once the online scheduling opens, act fast to ensure you get the appointment with the exhibitor of your choice at the time that is convenient for you. The quicker you are the better your chances.

f) Plan your appointments with the exhibitor map in front of you so that adjacent appointments can take place in close proximity. This avoids you having to run from one end of the tradeshow hall to the other.

g) Schedule some time to rest, eat and make notes

h) Look at the education sessions, networking and other activities and see if you can fit these in with your business appointments. Note that some take place before the tradeshow floor has opened!

8. Data protection

Data protection regulations are changing on a daily basis and becoming stricter. There are no internationally accepted data protection practices in place yet, while the EU and US have rigorous rules, some other regions might be more lenient. However what meetings tradeshow organisers in general make available for their "hosted buyers" are the following options:

a) Meetings tradeshows in general will offer you the possibility to opt out to receive any future promotion from the tradeshow (after the event that you have registered for)

b) Meetings tradeshows will also offer you the possibility to opt out of receiving third party information

These preferences are usually part of the registration process and most offer a special hosted buyer portal where you can adjust these preferences at a later stage.

Many meetings tradeshows will set up a separate email inbox for you within your portal where you can manage the communication related to that particular tradeshow, rather than have come through to your own email inbox.

9. Working with ICCA to get the most out of the tradeshows you attend

Although ICCA is not present at all meetings industry tradeshows, we are always happy to provide advice on which show to attend depending on your specific needs. We can also help you identify ICCA members who you would like to meet with and assist you in making appointments.

In order to provide a safe environment for you to exchange private views with other associations on destinations or suppliers you are planning to meet or have met at a tradeshow, ICCA has designed the ICCA Association Portal – a platform for Association Executives only. For more information on the ICCA Association Portal please visit: www.associations.iccaworld.com

10. ICCA hosted events for associations

As part of ICCA's new strategy of engaging more with association executives, ICCA offers various opportunities for associations to join the following ICCA events:

a) Client/Supplier Business Workshops

ICCA organises 2-3 day Client/Supplier Business Workshops for its Sector Venue and Destination Marketing members. Similar workshops are also held regionally in Latin America, North America,

Asia Pacific and Africa. These business to business networking events bring together a maximum of 15 association executives per workshop to meet face-to-face with ICCA venue or destination marketing members to discuss potential future business opportunities. The workshops are designed in a way to encourage business during the discussion sessions and to further enhance the networking between association executives and suppliers during social networking events. Association executives are fully hosted to attend the workshops by the ICCA members who invite them. For more information regarding this business opportunity please contact Claire Jackson (claire.j@iccaworld.org).

b) Association Meetings Programme (AMP)

The AMP is the successor to ICCA's Research, Sales and Marketing Programme (RSMP), which ran annually between 2007 and 2015. RSMP was a supplier-only event, held exclusively in Europe. AMP is designed as an event for both international association executives and ICCA members, in support of ICCA's new strategic plan, which includes the objective of creating more opportunities for face-to-face interaction between the association community and ICCA member suppliers. ICCA hosts up to 20 international association executives to attend this unique educational event for association meetings.

c) ICCA Congress

The ICCA Congress is our top educational event of the year. The education programme is custom-designed every year to meet the interest of ICCA's global mix of senior level delegates with lots of choice within every timeslot of the programme. The programme features a mix of speakers including top corporate and association meetings clients, expert business speakers from outside the meetings industry, and of course a selection of some of the most experienced ICCA members. Our speakers are drawn from all regions of the world, matching the global mix and interests of our delegates. ICCA is planning to host up to 30 international association executives in 2016 to attend this high quality educational event, with the expected increase of numbers in future years, as the education programme evolves to become more and more relevant for international association executives.

ICCA Association Resource Publications:

1

Working with airlines and ground transport operators

This publication is produced as a practical educational guide which gives ideas and advice to international association meeting planners and decision makers how to deal effectively with the airline and ground transport industry in the 21st century.

3

Contracting with Major Congress & Convention Venues

This guide will be of value to a range of people and organisations working in or within the meetings industry, in particular:

- Clients dealing with major venues for the first
- New venues
- Students in industry-related courses

5

Bidding and Decision-making

This publication holds a set of guidelines and check-lists that help evaluate and improve the methodology used to decide on future international meetings destinations.

7

Crisis Management

This publication provides structured solutions to crisis and emergency situations by allocating and utilising effective resources to ensure minimal impact to people, reputation and assets.

9

Hosted Buyer Programme

This publication provides advice for international association executives to help them organise quality meetings and business opportunities at meetings industry tradeshows.

2

Negotiating with hotels

Most guides on the subject of negotiating concern themselves with the corporate market. This is a simple guide to assist the international association buyer to speak the same "business language" as the hotel sales representative, and to obtain a fair deal that reflects the importance and value of their event.

4

Working with Convention Bureaux

The Convention Bureaux in ICCA membership represent the most internationally focused and experienced destinations worldwide. From providing strategic advice to the organisers of citywide conventions to finding that special historic venue for an exclusive Board of Directors dinner, you'll find their expertises hard to beat.

6

Working with Meetings Management Companies

The main purposes of this publication is to clearly elaborate the differences between AMCs, PCOs, DMCs, and other agencies dealing with association meetings.

8

ROI Handbook

A very handy publication that helps you evaluate your personal Return on Investment from attending an international association meeting easily and collectively.

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