



JOINT MEETINGS INDUSTRY COUNCIL

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JMIC Conference Sets New Directions for Valuing Meetings

A cross section of industry leaders representing major international associations met with a group of professional and academic advisors at a conference organized by the Joint Meetings Industry Council at the Royal College of Physicians in London last week to review the state of industry value measurement and recommend steps required to advance the quality and content of the industry value statement it presents to government and the community.

"As an industry, we recognize the importance of being able to demonstrate real and relevant value to our respective governments and communities", said JMIC President Leigh Harry, Chief Executive of the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre. "It is also important that those values relate to the most urgent priorities of the day if we are to compete successfully for government attention with other industry sectors. The purpose of this gathering was to collectively determine if we are doing the best we can in this regard and what improvements might be achieved in terms of enhancing the quality, relevance and profile of our value proposition".

Along with industry leaders, participants included representatives of international associations and corporations, academics and consultants engaged with the industry, political advisors, as well as both industry and mainstream media. The purpose of this wide range of participation was to ensure that the value questions were addressed not only from an industry perspective but also through the eyes of those who represent both the major "users" of meetings and those with the skills required to both calculate and communicate the value proposition.

Over the course of two days, participants reviewed a range of both current and potential value estimation models, including both economic impact measures and those associated with meetings "outcomes". Amongst the major conclusions were that:

- The industry needs to advance a strong, consistent and defensible value proposition in order to compete successfully for government funding and policy attention;
- There is a need to link the industry value measurement process to current government and business priorities in order to demonstrate relevance;



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- Although meetings "outcomes" represent the real reason meetings and conventions are held, not enough attention has been paid to their value because they are not as easy to measure;
- The current wide variation in economic impact models, particularly at the local destination level, means data is often inconsistent and therefore less credible.

The Conference concluded with a workshop session in which participants collaborated on developing a series of recommendations as to how the industry could advance its value proposition in both the economic impact and value-added outcomes areas. Amongst the key recommendations were:

- To carry out inventory / comparative analysis of existing valuation models and develop a means for achieving greater consistency amongst these;
- To encourage the development of local applications for economic impact models in order to generate better data for use in individual communities;
- To create a protocol for assembling value-added "output" values with emphasis on the use of case studies and examples to illustrate major areas of benefit;
- To identify key audiences along with their priority information requirements and develop a communications "tool kit" to assist in this process, and
- To encourage event owners to assume a more active role in measuring and communicating value.

"We achieved what we wanted for this conference, which was to get a broad-based assessment of current value-measurement methods and to identify the steps that should be taken to make them more effective and compelling to our key audiences", said Harry. "Now we need to use this information to move forward in a coordinated way on advancing the global proposition while we are supporting local industry representatives to tell their own story as effectively as possible, and this is the challenge JMIC and its member organizations will now address".

The Joint Meetings Industry Council:

The Joint Meetings Industry Council was established in 1978 as a vehicle for creating a forum for the exchange of information and perspectives amongst international associations engaged in various aspects of the Meetings Industry. It is now engaged in the process of building better communications and linkages amongst member organizations and advancing industry profile and value perceptions.



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JMIC members include:

AACVB (the Asian Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus);
AIPC (the International Association of Congress Centres);
COCAL (the Latin American Confederation of PCO and Related Companies);
DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International);
ECM (European Cities Marketing);
EFAPCO (the European Federation of Associations of Professional Congress Organizers);
EVVC (the European Association of Event Centres);
IAPCO (the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers);
ICCA (the International Congress and Convention Association);
MPI (Meeting Professionals International);
PCMA (the Professional Convention Association Management Association);
SITE (the Society of Incentive & Travel Executives) and
UFI (the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry).
It is also supported by the CIC (Convention Industry Council).