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The JMIC Global Manifesto: More than Just Another Pronouncement

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“Oh, no, not another industry statement!”

Members of the meetings industry could be easily forgiven for that kind of reaction to the recent announcement by the Joint Meetings Industry (JMIC) of their global manifesto completed and distributed last week. Four months into the COVID-19 pandemic, and with little clear end in sight, we are awash in industry pronouncements and assertions, even though the route to recovery in this highly challenging situation remains unpredictable, to say the least.

But this one is a bit different. Here’s why;

First, it was created for a specific, practical purpose: to support discussions between local industry members and their respective government decision-makers by clarifying in the simplest but most comprehensive possible terms the benefits our industry can deliver in aid of overall economic recovery and renewal – an issue at the top of the agenda for governments everywhere. It is comprised of arguments to be made not just in aid of our own interests, but rather how we can stimulate the kind of re-activation that will meet the needs of others.

Secondly, it is based on extensive consultation, not just with industry leaders but other authorities outside the industry who had expert advice to offer as to how we can best deliver our messages in a way that would be most relevant to those decision makers. In other words, it offers both content and context for a successful communications effort at a local level where key decisions will actually be made.

Third, it comes after the major question in re-opening – how this can be achieved safely and with respect for the health and safety protocols now in place around the pandemic – has been addressed through the assembly and distribution of relevant guidance throughout the industry. This first step was absolutely necessary to avoid any appearance of self-interested complacency on our part through a failure to deal with the most important pre-requisite to the re-opening process before putting ourselves forward as a candidate for priority attention.

Fourth, it is an assembly of existing, well-tested arguments rather than a new invention based on speculation. We can supply research, expert opinion and documentation for every assertion made in the manifesto – something that is absolutely critical to supporting our credibility in one of the most important arguments we will ever have to make as an industry.

Finally, it incorporates advice on how best to deliver the message to target audiences. While we all realize that most key decisions will inevitably be made by local governments in response to local conditions, not all industry members – particularly those best positioned to influence the decision process and outcome –

have the kind of advocacy experience needed to engage in that way. By organizing arguments in a “deliverable” package – including supporting messages, graphics and advice in a form that can be adapted to local circumstances, we are hoping to empower those local industry members who in reality are best positioned to have an effect with resources that are at the same time the product of a global industry vision.

This is going to be a long and challenging road, and no one resource will provide everything we will need to navigate the twists and turns that lie ahead. But by starting from an agreed and globally consistent perspective, we will be better positioned to come across as consistent and credible by those we need to inspire as to what our industry can achieve in the recovery process and why we should be prioritized to do so.

The JMIC Global Manifesto and the COVID-19 Guide to Re-Opening, along with links to the related webinar and access to a wide range of other pandemic-related materials and resources are all freely available on the JMIC website www.themeetingsindustry.org.

ABOUT JMIC | The Joint Meetings Industry Council

JMIC is an organisation that represents the combined interests of some 18 international meetings industry associations and events. It has provided a forum for information exchange amongst industry groups for over 50 years and has recently become more engaged in the process of articulating and delivering industry messages to wider community and governmental audiences as well as developing better mechanisms for documenting and communicating the value of the industry in terms of economic, academic, professional and social advancement.

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