



JOINT MEETINGS INDUSTRY COUNCIL

Founded 1978

The Joint Meetings Industry Council (JMIC) is an organisation that represents the combined interests of 15 international meetings industry associations. 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 the value of the industry.

Specifically, JMIC's objectives are: 1. To maintain a forum for the exchange of information and expertise among organisations that represent the various sectors of the meetings industry. 2. To support and carry out activities that promote the profile of the meetings industry as a distinct and important part of the global economy. 3. To provide a collective voice for the industry in areas of overall industry interface. 4. To formally recognise the achievements of individuals who have successfully advanced the positioning and professionalism of the industry on an international basis.

The active member associations who comprise JMIC today are • AACVB, the Asian Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus • AIPC, the International Association of Convention Centres • ASAE, the American Society of Association Executives • Cocal, the Latin American Confederation of PCO and Related Companies • DMAI, Destination Marketing Association International • ECM, European Cities Marketing • EVVC, 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 Management Association • SISO, the Society of Independent Show Organizers • SITE, Society for Incentive Travel Excellence • UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry • UIA, the Union of International Associations

Contact

Rod Cameron – Executive Director
Joint Meetings Industry Council
E: jmic@themeetingsindustry.org
W: www.themeetingsindustry.org

WHAT'S IN A NAME? QUITE A BIT, ACTUALLY!

In recent years, the meetings industry has made a lot of progress toward changing its value proposition to something more consistent with what it actually delivers to the global economy and well-being of communities. Essentially, this is a shift from the previous view of the work we do as being only a tourism product – where value is measured by incremental visitor spending – to one based on the importance of what events actually accomplish, from knowledge enhancement and transfer to innovation, professional development, academic progress and the advancement of economic prospects and livability world-wide.

This was not an easy task, even within the industry itself. Old perceptions and administrative arrangements are highly resistant to change. But finally we can confidently say that there are few in today's industry that do not recognise this new value

revenues arise from events. But largely it is a product of our own inability to tell our story effectively where it matters.

In this respect, one factor looms above all others; we still cannot agree on a common name and definition that would demonstrate the scope of the industry to those struggling to understand what it is. If we cannot agree on our own definition, how can we expect others to see our collective strength?

To this day, we are variously known in different parts of the world as the meetings industry, the business events industry, business tourism, meetings and conventions and even the incomprehensible term "MICE". Within these definitions are meetings, conferences, congresses, conventions, trade shows, exhibitions, events and any number of components that further challenge the outsider to even make an intelligent guess as to the full scope of what we do.

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proposition as a most important measure of the industry – with the tourism-related benefits still the most welcome other side of the coin.

However, this is still not the case with much of the outside world, even including the governments, communities and organisations that most benefit from what we do. There remains a perception vacuum that exists largely because of our failure to explain our proposition widely and convincingly enough to counter many decades of traditional thinking.

To some extent this is a result of resistance from those who benefit from having the meetings sector characterised as an exclusive part of tourism and hospitality interests – where the priority is on how many hotel rooms, restaurant meals and transportation

In fairness, we are in fact a complex industry with a broad mix of activities – but so are many other sectors. What seems unique to this industry is a vigorous defence of our differences rather than a recognition of the strength to be had in highlighting our commonalities. As understandable as this may be for historical reasons, it needs to be seen for what it is – a huge limitation to our ability to ever be understood, let alone recognised, for the breadth of the role we play in global growth and development.

This is the next major challenge for the industry. Let's hope there will be a time when all can collaborate in achieving the power of recognition – even if it means a few individual concessions along the way.



Kai Hattendorf
President
JMIC