

Going Global – Strategies for Navigating International Waters



Learner Outcomes:

- Identify what you need to consider in planning International meetings
- Locate valuable resources and partners to help navigate through international challenges in different regions of the world
- Discover how to select international destinations and maximize opportunities in program development by incorporating local culture, history and cuisine



Why International?

New Opportunities for Associations

- Globalization
- Member growth
- International mandates
- Global Influence
- Educational opportunities
- Member outreach
- Member care



Some things to think about before you start:

- **Research:** conduct full research into the destination (including culture, business protocol etc) and the “need to know before you go”?
- **Be specific, be flexible and assume nothing:** make sure you know and communicate what you want, what you need and where you can be flexible – and then be prepared to compromise.
- **Know your boundaries:** make sure that you know what your “lowest” expectation is and understand that everything might be achievable the way you know it
- **Find the right partners:** utilize local knowledge

Things to Consider

1. Site selection – research, research and more research

- Where to go for information
 - US Government/agencies
 - National Convention & Visitor Bureaus
 - Professional associations
 - ICCA – www.iccaworld.com
 - PCMA – www.pcma.org
 - MPI – www.mpiweb.org
 - CIC – www.conventionindustry.org
 - DMAI – www.destinationmarketing.org
 - EFCT – www.efct.com
 - IAPCO - www.iapco.org
 - SITE – www.site-intl.org
 - International venue directories :
 - www.conworld.net
 - www.bedouk.com
 - www.meetpie.com
 - Industry colleagues – talk to others who have planned in this destination before, ask for referral if you don't know of anyone

- Industry events and tradeshow
 - IMEX - www.imex-frankfurt.com
 - EIBTM – www.eibtm.com
 - MPI – www.mpiweb.org
- Other helpful websites
 - <http://www.world-calendar.com> -A calendar with an overview of holidays in over 75 countries
 - <http://www.timeanddate.com> - This website contains a world clock and an overview of time zones, calendars and countdowns to certain dates.
 - <http://www.xe.com> - An easy to use currency conversion site.
 - <http://kropla.com/electric2.htm> - Information on the electrical systems in use in most countries of the world.
 - <http://www.lonelyplanet.com> - Travel guides on destinations all over the world.
 - <http://www.worldweather.org> - World weather information service.
 - <http://www.airlinequality.com> - Airline and airport quality ranking.
 - <http://www.world-airport-codes.com> - The place to find airport codes, abbreviations and other airport information.
 - <http://www.maporama.com> - Detailed maps of all locations in the world.
 - <http://babelfish.altavista.com> - Online translation services.
 - <http://www.who.int/ith/en/> - International travel and health information of the World Health Organization.
 - <http://www.masta.org/> - Travel health information.
 - <http://www.travel-advice.net> - All sorts of useful travel advice.
- Make sure there is local association support and/or relevance to your field or industry sector
 - Involve your local chapter in the planning process
 - Is your industry strongly supported in this region of the world?
- Check for local holidays, celebrations, peak travel periods & peak seasons
- Check for annual events and/or festivals and other events taking place during your meeting that could impact you
- Political considerations and projections
- Financial considerations
- Destination Appeal
 - Political and economic stability
 - Safety and security
 - Climate
 - Accessibility
 - Visa requirements

2. Business Partners



- Use a PCO or DMC who can bring local knowledge
- Use the local tourist authorities (CVB's)
- Facility and hotel representatives
- Customs brokers
- Focus on building relationships with your new local suppliers

3. Financial Considerations

- Travel costs
- Currency fluctuations
- Event costs
- Travel costs
- Meeting space and service costs
- Fundraising limitations or opportunities
- Time (may take longer to plan)
- On site staffing and suppliers
- Shipping and customs
- Taxes (are any reclaimable?)

4. Negotiations

What is negotiable? It will not be the same as negotiating in North America

- Meeting space
- Hotels
- Transportation
- AV
- Staff rates
- Food and beverage

- Assess negotiation protocol and discuss issues openly so that negotiations are not bogged down by misunderstandings or different ways of expression
- Currencies & exchange rates – what currency are you negotiating and paying in?
- Contracts and contract law – what law will preside if there are disputes?
 - Letters of agreement
 - International arbitration
 - Force majeure (liability)
- Language – what language will be used for all contracts and negotiations?

5. Program Development

- Involve local committees to insure relevance of content
- Incorporate local content using speakers, entertainment, historical and cultural venues
- Consider local mealtimes, siestas and other cultural considerations
- Consider time zones and jet lag of delegates



6. Logistics

- Seek definitions
 - Terminology varies from country to country (see CIC International Manual)
- Do you need translation?
- Compatibility of AV and technical equipment
- International shipping
- Customs
- Taxes
- Hotel size and range
- Transportation
- Immigration and Visa's

7. Communications with Delegates, Speakers and Exhibitors (You cannot over communicate)



- Passports and visa's
- Climate and weather
- Currency
- Power and electrical
- Destination and travel information
- Cultural and dress considerations

Case Study #1

Planning an International Congress & Exhibition

You are the conference management team for the American Society for Alternative Energy and your society has just been given an international mandate. Your Society is in the process of changing its name to the International Society for Alternative Energy and to recognize this new global direction, you have been tasked in planning the first International Congress in 2011 for this newly named society.

While there is no real history for this new global conference, based on the success of your US meeting you are anticipating 2000-3000 and 250-300 exhibitors and are aiming to hold the event in March or April 2011.

You have been asked to pick any destination, outside the United States to host this congress but the goal of this event is to launch the International leadership of the Society in the field and dispel the American-centric focus.

You will be asked to present your recommendation to your Board of Directors and must be prepared to discuss and answer the following:

1. Pick a destination and give a compelling explanation of why this destination is the ideal location for the 1st International Congress of the ISAE.
2. What are 2 opportunities this destination would bring to the meeting
3. What are 2 challenges this destination may bring that your board should be aware of.
4. Who would you involve in your planning process to help overcome these challenges?

Tip: You are presenting to your CEO, president and Board of Directors. Keep your presentation high level and strategic but demonstrate you have done your due diligence.

Notes:

Case Study #2

Planning an International Summit

You are the conference management team for the American Economic Association. Your Association has its annual meeting in North America every fall but your board has given the direction to take a global leadership role in addressing the concerns about the world economic crisis. You and your team have been tasked with planning a special International Economic Summit in June 2009.

While there is no real history for this first time conference you are anticipating 600-800 delegates and are aiming to hold the event in June/July 2009. There will be no major exhibit component, only a few sponsor displays.

You have been asked to pick any destination, outside the United States to host this meeting. The goal of this event is to bring together economists, educators, economic policy leaders who are working to develop strategies to stabilize the world economy. It is important to pick a location that is central for delegates to attend and will provide an impactful backdrop to highlight the economic challenges and solutions. Generating awareness of this issue and your Association's leadership is an overriding objective of the meeting.

You will be asked to present your recommendation to your Board of Directors and must be prepared to discuss and answer the following:

1. Pick a destination and give a compelling explanation of why this destination is the ideal location for AEA's first Global Economic Summit.
2. What are 2 opportunities this destination would bring to the meeting?
3. What are 2 challenges this destination may bring that your board should be aware of?
4. Who would you involve in your planning process to help overcome these challenges?

Tip: You are presenting to your CEO, president and Board of Directors. Keep your presentation high level and strategic but demonstrate you have done your due diligence.

Notes:



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