

U.S. CONVENTION CENTERS CONTINUE TO GET BIGGER



Despite convention tourism declining in the US, the government continues to make the centers bigger. The projects are mainly viewed as investments into the image of the cities.

The 'bigger is better' attitude to life is not applicable to every situation yet it certainly makes a good description of the current attitude in the USA towards the building of convention centers.

A number of projects have recently been established on American soil to build meeting halls, conference rooms and convention hotels of which Americans should be proud. The problem is that the demand for such impressive structures and the need for such projects are in decline.

To state an example: the Indianapolis Convention Center has doubled its meeting space within the last year and is now capable of entertaining twice as many business people as before. It has jumped from 32nd position in the league of the largest American convention centers to the 16th position.

On a similar note, the Pennsylvania Convention Centre in Philadelphia has recently splashed out \$786 million on a huge extension, making its new size 2.2 million square feet.

Opposition to such projects has arisen due to the fact that there is less demand for such locations in the America of today. The argument for them is that it is not only about the potentially improved revenue of hotels and restaurants but the image they create for the cities involved.

Convention centers give the impression of a city being a business hub which is well off and to be taken seriously. Similarly, business tourists do have a tendency to spend more cash, especially if it is not coming out of their own pockets.

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