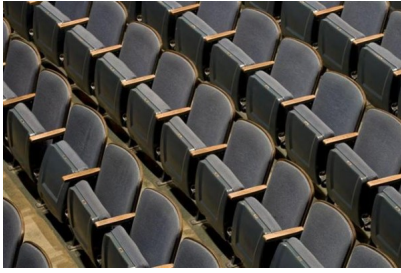


GREEN MICE ON THE RISE



World Travel Mart (WTM).

Since environmental concerns of many customers rise, numerous enterprises adapt “green” practices in their field of activity – including the MICE sector (Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions). Many of the world event providers are trying to be more environmentally friendly. Among them are e.g. the Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME), Germany’s IMEX or the

Every single event generates incredible amount of trash. There are numerous plastic name badges, disposable water bottles, plastic utensils, printed brochures and handouts, plastic pens, mouse pads and magnets that after the event end up in a landfill. For years, the price of an event was a question, not its environmental impact. Problem with “green” events is that they are often more expensive.

These days, however, growing number of convention planners include the green thinking in their plans. After the Al Gore's movie, people began to be even more environmentally conscious. The companies that specialize in organizing green events look for the least environmentally harmful alternatives. There is a focus on recycling and the planners also tend to limit the waste. They prefer electronics handouts to the paper ones and compostable cups to the plastic ones. They also often use locally grown and organic food and the leftovers are given to the local kitchens. The meeting rooms, hotels and restaurants are also often in walking distance so that the visitors are not any burden for the traffic.

There are different approaches to the environment in different parts of the world. In the US only 16 per cent of meeting planners see environmental concerns as one of the top three external factors affecting their work. In Europe and Canada, on the other hand, it is 30 per cent. Extreme environmentalists think the MICE sector should stop at all. According to them, the thousand-mile trips should be replaced by phone or video conferencing. This is, however, not likely to happen any time soon because people still prefer to meet face-to-face.

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