

# THAILAND: MICE INDUSTRY REVIVING AFTER THE FLOODS



Thailand is one of those countries that often witness corporate gatherings, meetings and seminars throughout the year, these aside from the very healthy dose of conventions and office outings that are seen every year. As such it is obvious that MICE tourism and its entailing facilities are rich throughout the country.

MICE tourism (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) in Thailand is fast, rich and extremely busy. Thanks to the variety of MICE tourism and operations related programs, the people are extremely adept at carrying out any magnitude of an event.

In December 2011, the Thailand government launched a campaign for the promotion of Thailand as a MICE destination along with various local MICE leaders. This was done due to the recent flooding that caused lots of bad media publicity.

The campaign is set to be launched throughout March 2012 and will aim at repairing the image of Thailand as a MICE destination. The campaign is a three stage process with the first step looking towards attracting local media attention through seminars and events after which leaders will be invited to speak in order to boost the value of the country as a MICE destination.

Funds for the recovery from the losses incurred during the flooding which are in the tune of 3.32 billion Baht (€ 82 million) are also being injected systematically along with a 300% tax relief on all MICE expenditures. Also flights to Thailand can be currently booked for favorable prices.

Also, several programs are being launched for equipping MICE employees with the tools and the right kind of information to be ready to capture global markets. The main focus is still on European Markets while some others are also being considered.

Pattaya is considered to be the major player on the MICE market in the coming years because of its ability to attract a large scale of audience. It is currently raking in about 5 million MICE tourists per year which translates to about 45 billion Baht (€ 1.1 billion). The targeted figures are 7 million in tourists and 70 billion Baht (€ 1.7 billion) in revenue for the coming year. Given that the city is peppered richly with over 70,000 hotel rooms and facilities, Pattaya looks to be one of the major MICE destinations in Thailand.

MICE operators are also scaling up their operations in order to be able to attract and successfully cater to a larger number of visitors each year. The current MICE calendar for the country is completely full and extremely busy with companies from Banking to Transport and from Chemicals to Sporting goods coming in for seminars, exhibitions and conventions. Health and ecological conventions are seen as taking precedence this year. Everything from cardiology to veterinary medicine to toxic wastes is being covered.

On the whole, with billions of Baht being pumped in, local government support and massive programs and campaigns for the improvement of services and facilities, Thailand is set to regain its title of one of the most popular MICE destinations in the world.

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