

MICE

Travel Advisor

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Image Courtesy @ Cape Town International Convention Centre



Spotlight On

CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

Centre of Attraction

HONG KONG

GLAMOROUS MICE DESTINATION IN ASIA

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04. VENUE CHECK Taiwan's third most populous city, **Kaohsiung** has developed into one of the top MICE destinations in the country over the years. The city is home to some ideal convention venues and also offers interesting tourism delights beyond work. Considered to be a country with one of the most successful efforts to fight against the COVID-19 outbreak, this Taiwanese city can be considered as one of the safest MICE destinations of the post-pandemic world.

17. COVER STORY Most of the **convention centers are preparing to re-open** their doors to welcome domestic and international events in post-COVID-19 time. Read this article to know more about convention centers that are reopening from this month.

26. CENTRE OF ATTRACTION Known as world's most prominent Asian MICE destination, **Hong Kong** offers world-class convention centres and luxury accommodations. Read this article to know how this business city serves as the hottest MICE destination, even after COVID-19 outbreak.

36. TECH TALK For most of the international conventions, events, exhibitions or conferences, the audio needs are going to be integrated into what's known as a **"sound reinforcement system"**. Read this article to know about the digital age sound systems.

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From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

After months of struggling with the deadly coronavirus pandemic and observing nationwide closures, the world has started to take the first steps towards a gradual reopening. Similar to various other sectors of tourism, the MICE industry also came to a standstill due to the pandemic. However, MICE tourism venues have also started to resume operations slowly.

Read our **Cover Story** to know about some of the world class convention centres that are set to reopen this month and learn about their plans to get back to business while adhering to various safety and hygiene protocols.

Take a look at our **Spotlight On** to witness how the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) turned itself into the "Hospital of Hope" to serve as a temporary hospital for COVID-19 patients. Also, read an exclusive interview with T.Taubie Motlhabane, CEO, CTICC as she discusses the process of transforming the convention centre into a hospital.

In this edition, our **Centre of Attraction** highlights Hong Kong, one of most popular MICE destinations in Asia and its successful battle against the coronavirus crisis. Also read, our conversation with Ms Monica Lee-Muller, Managing Director, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (Management) Limited as she underlines the COVID-secure preventive measures undertaken by the convention centre.

Another country that has been outstanding in its efforts to fight the COVID-19 pandemic is Taiwan. Our **Venue Check** throws light on the third largest Taiwanese city, Kaohsiung that shows immense MICE potential and can be considered as one of the safest destinations to arrange meetings, events and conferences in the wake of the pandemic.

Lastly, read our **Tech Talk** to learn about some of the latest sound reinforcement systems used in conference centres as sound systems plays an important role in every event. Know more about how the traditional audio and video systems handled by AV departments have gradually become a part of Information Technology (IT).

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KAOHSIUNG

Taiwan's third-largest city with immense MICE potential



The third most populous city in Taiwan, Kaohsiung is a special municipality that was founded back in the 17th century. The city initially stood as a small trading village with few inhabitants but gradually grew into one of the most recognised economic and political centre in southern Taiwan. With the privilege of being a highly convenient and well-connected city alongside the advent of various conference, meeting and event venues, the city has begun showing immense potential for MICE tourism over the past few years.

However, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has harshly impacted the MICE industry all across the globe. Countries all around the world have been constantly fighting against the challenges posed by the deadly virus. Today, Taiwan stands as one such country that has been outstanding in its efforts to fight the coronavirus crisis. Besides having one of the least active cases in the world at present, the country has also successfully curbed the spread of new COVID-19 infections.

Businesses across the globe have already started to resume activities and are looking forward to safe destinations for travel. Therefore, once travel restrictions are completely lifted and the situation gets better, Kaohsiung can be considered as one of the most ideal and safest MICE tourism destination in the post-pandemic world.

IDEAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE VENUES

Considered to be one of the best convention centres in the city as well as the country, the construction of the building was planned by the Kaohsiung City Government back in 1991. Established in 2000 as the Kaohsiung Business Exhibition Center, it was later transformed into the International Convention Center Kaohsiung in 2012 with major renovations. The newly re-built centre has incorporated ten more conference rooms to the previous six and has 26 conference and meeting rooms at present. It can host meetings for up to 600 people at a time. The centre also provides high-quality audio-visual equipment required for any meeting or convention. In addition, it has a 2800 sq. m. exhibition hall on the first floor that can accommodate nearly 148 standard booths. The centre also offers its own catering services and comes with 200 tables for banquet-style dining.

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTER KAOHSIUNG



KAOHSIUNG BUSINESS CONVENTION CENTER

Located in the popular area of Qianzhen District in Kaohsiung City, the Kaohsiung Business Convention Center is an ideal venue to organise various business activities like meetings, conferences and events. The centre is an amalgamation of multiple small and innovative spaces that stand under the same roof. The well-decorated main event hall is perfect for banquets, events and parties. There are several adjoining classroom-styled halls and rooms of variable sizes suitable for meetings, conferences, trainings, lectures and presentations. There is also an additional meeting room specifically designed for business meetings and conferences. The centre also has an intimate business centre for personalised and confidential meetings as well as its own business office with comfortable and separate office spaces for participants. All rooms and halls are equipped with high-end technical support necessary for meetings and business events. It also comes with its own studio ideal for corporate shootings and recordings.





Recognised as one of Asia's dynamic MICE venues, the exhibition centre is Taiwan's first multifunctional waterfront venue for exhibitions, meetings, international conventions and conferences, events, concerts, banquets as well as outdoor events. The centre has a total indoor and outdoor exhibition space of 25,000 m² and a large variety of conference or meeting rooms that can accommodate anywhere between 20 to 2000 guests. The grand hall is the largest conference centre in the building that can host 2000 participants. It is accompanied by the remaining halls and conference rooms of different sizes. The South Hall with 9100 m² space and the North Hall with an area of 8800 m² form a large exhibition and event space. The additional outdoor space extends from the interiors to the waterfront plaza on Kaohsiung harbour. The space can allow extra booths on the outside and give an event a creative touch. The multi-purpose venue is ideal for hosting a conglomeration of multiple events and has the capacity of holding up to 4000 people at one time.

KAOHSIUNG EXHIBITION CENTER

GRAND HI-LAI HOTEL

Situated at a convenient location and just 11-minutes walk away from the Central Park Metro Station, the Grand Hi-Lai Hotel is one of the finest convention hotels in the city. The property features multiple standard and executive guestrooms as well as a variety of grand deluxe suites. It serves as an ideal venue for business and leisure travellers looking for exquisite stay options at the heart of the city. The hotel also offers various small meeting rooms as well as large international convention venues that can hold nearly 1000 people together. The conference centres and event halls can host both business and private events from meetings and conferences to banquets and parties.





TAKE A STROLL AROUND THE LOTUS POND

Take a look at the Lotus Pond to witness a beautifully created tourist venue. Marvel at the sight of numerous floating lotus plants on the artificial lake and the surrounding Dragon and Pagoda temples. One can also pay a visit to the iconic Spring and Autumn Pavilions, situated on the lake itself.

ENJOY SHOPPING AT LIUHE NIGHT MARKET

The city of Kaohsiung is also known for its famous night markets. One such popular market is the Liuhe Night Market situated in the Sinsing District of the city. One can enjoy the bustling market scene, relish street foods and shop a variety of items like handicrafts, clothing, cameras and seafood from this market.

VISIT THE RENOWNED LOVE RIVER

One of the most popular tourist attractions in the city, the Love River serves as a symbol of cultural significance to the people of Kaohsiung and contributes largely to its tourism economy. The river offers love boats, duck boats and gondola rides to visitors and allows them to enjoy the scenic cityscape. The Love River Park also runs along the riverbanks and operates cafes and night markets. One can also enjoy the views of some key city structures from the river viewpoint.



MICE BITES

PRIDE HOTELS LAUNCHES CO-WORKING AND CORPORATE SPACES FOR WORKING PROFESSIONALS

The Pride Group of Hotels introduced Co-Working & Corporate Spaces, the alternate office space for working professionals. The service features individual workspace, co-working spaces, corporate space, meeting suites and studio office. It is designed specifically to cater to the needs of an organization or an individual, who wants to kick-start their businesses in a safe and reliable environment. This business centre facility from Pride Hotels provides its guests with move-in ready

to use workspaces with workstations, private desk, conference rooms and the amenities of a traditional office. These spaces are tailored for individual's small teams, startups, SMEs & corporate and can be booked by the guests according to their desired work time period. All the arrangements are done keeping in mind the needs of the guest and thus creating an office environment where they can work without any hindrance.



DARWIN CONVENTION CENTRE WON NATIONAL FINALIST FOR THE MEETINGS & EVENTS AUSTRALIA INDUSTRY AWARDS

The Darwin Convention Centre was announced NT winner and National Finalist for the Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) Industry Awards in the category of 'Event Venue – Capacity more than 1,500' at the MEALIVE 2019 Industry Awards. The MEA Industry Awards recognise excellence and best business practice in the Meetings & Events Industry. Finalists were assessed across a range of business criteria and the year in review, including their impact on the meetings and events industry as a whole. Peter Savoff, General Manager, Darwin Convention Centre General Manager said that they are very proud of the Darwin Convention Centre's achievements in 2019, with delegate attendance exceeding expectations for many events. They are looking forward to welcoming their clients back to the Darwin Convention Centre to continue to deliver world-class events with outstanding dining and exceptional service. Savoff continued that winning this award can be attributed to their brilliant team – the heartbeat of the Centre.



SAXTON SPEAKERS RECOGNISED AS MICE INDUSTRY LEADER

Saxton Speakers, Australia's leading professional speakers' bureau, was recognised at the 2019 Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) Awards held on Friday 29 May, taking out the National Speakers, Entertainers and Team Builders Award in the inaugural year for this award category. Saxton also took home the Victorian State Award for Saxton Engage, the influencer marketing arm of the business. Saxton Engage, launched in 2019, transforms the way Speakers are engaged. Its aim is to create memorable brand experiences by elevating partnership and influencer marketing strategies to drive visibility, enhance customer loyalty and deliver authentic engagement helping clients turn up their brand. As the business events industry evolves in the post-COVID-19 environment, innovation will be paramount to success, with Saxton leading the way with industry-leading initiatives.

KUALA LUMPUR FIRMLY IN THE TOP 10 BUSINESS EVENTS DESTINATIONS IN ASIA

The Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (the Centre) is proud to have contributed to the 91 international association meetings held in Kuala Lumpur last year, which helped the city record its best ranking in seven years, achieving seventh position, up three spots, in the Asia and Oceania region in the ICCA (International Convention & Conference Association) Statistics Report 2019 and 22nd position in the world, up 12 places from 2018. The several high-profile international medical meetings, which were held at the Centre last year, attracted over 3,500 participants and delivered RM24.3 million in economic impact to Malaysia. Some of these included the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists Annual Scientific Meeting (ANZCA ASM) 2019; Urological Association of Asia Congress (UAA) 2019; Asia-Pacific Federation of Coloproctology Congress (APFCP) 2019; Soroptimist International Convention 2019; and Asia Pacific Congress of Interventional Oncology (APCIO) 2019.



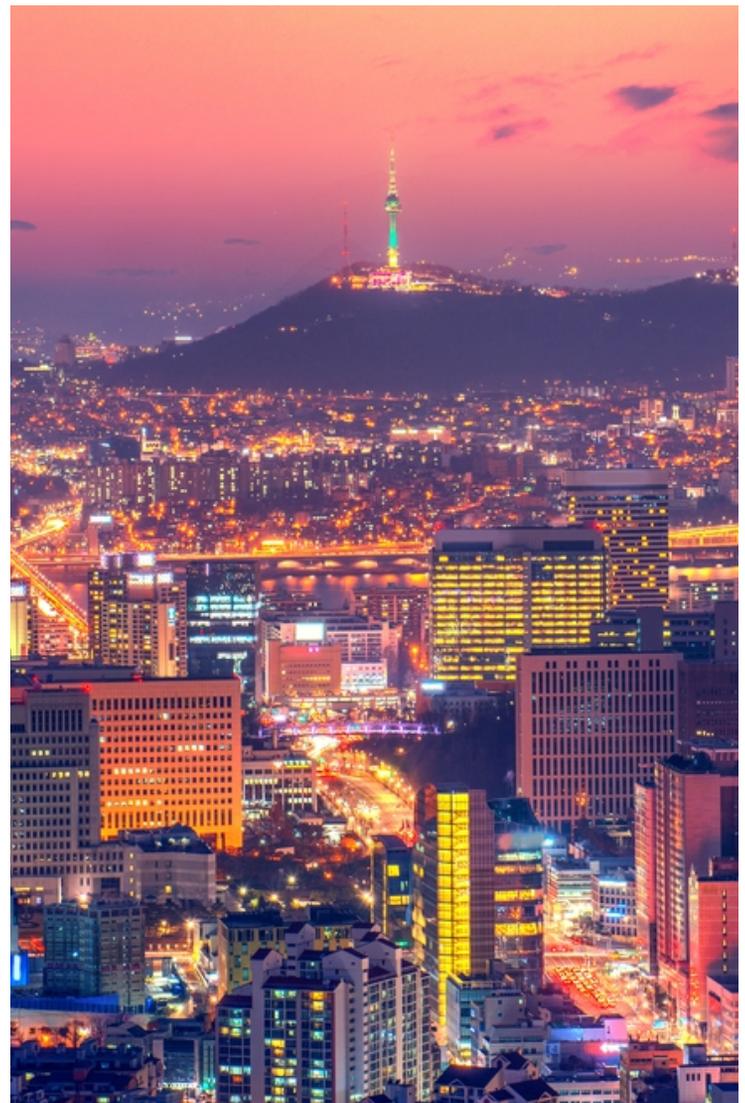
SEOUL CONVENTION BUREAU: WALKING TOWARDS NEW NORMAL MICE INDUSTRY

Seoul, a metropolitan city with the population of approximately 10 million people, entered a new phase of countermeasures against the COVID-19 titled “Distancing in Everyday Life.” The residents are expected to continuously follow the guidelines of personal hygiene routines such as washing hands, wearing facial masks, and keeping a minimum of 1-meter distance from others. Drive-Through Screening Centers are still on operation fully as well as the Walk-Through ones.

Seoul City is in the process of forming a collaborating hospital system with vicinity governments to control the number of patients overfilling hospitals in a certain area. These measures appear to prepare the city to defend itself for fighting the smaller battles more quickly and effectively on a long-term base.

The Seoul Convention Bureau (SCB) also brought in safety measures to its support program, PLUS SEOUL for MICE participants. Meetings will be resumed in post-COVID sooner or later and mutual agreement had led to the birth of “New Norm.” SCB expects the keywords would be hygiene and safety in MICE industry where face-to-face is one of the fundamental elements. Newly added PLUS SEOUL support options are Infection-free Zone and Reassuring Package. International conferences and exhibitions will be able to organize their events in the Infection-free Zone and keep it sanitized for the days while hosting the event in Seoul. The Reassuring Package provides comfort and care

services from the arrival of the participants till the departures, starting for the international conference participants first. It includes assistance services for translation and interpretation, emergency medical situations, reservation and more. The assistance will be offered in person where it is necessary whereas most of the services are to be offered over the phone.



PATA AND FEEDSFLOOR ENTERS ORGANISATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

PATA announced a new organisational partnership with FeedsFloor which is a digital platform that enables clients to create and manage various event-related mobile and/or web applications as well as related support and hosting services.

PATA CEO Dr. Mario Hardy said that the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the travel and tourism industry to adapt, adjust and innovate in the so-called 'new normal'. As a membership association, their primary

activity is to assist members in expanding their networks, establish new relationships and consolidate existing business partnerships. While physical events will always remain an important activity for the Association, the partnership with FeedsFloor will assist us in providing a virtual platform for our members and industry colleagues to learn, network, and trade as we deal with the current situation.





HONG KONG CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

IS READY TO WELCOME EVENTS IN POST COVID-19 TIME

The Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre is all set to welcome global events back to Hong Kong in post COVID-19 time. To host a successful event, this convention centre has taken safety precautions with strict hygiene protocols. It is necessary to restore the economic condition of Hong Kong in post COVID-19 time through the launch of event and meetings' industry. With a series of precautionary measures has already taken place to avoid coronavirus, the

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) welcomed the city's first exhibition since the COVID-19 pandemic that spread last November from Wuhan, China. The 98th Hong Kong Wedding Fair, a three-day local consumer exhibition rescheduled from February, was held successfully during 22-24 May, attracting soon-to-weds and couples for wedding products and services.

CONVENTION CENTRES

Cover Story

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Re-open For Business Meetings

Most of the convention centres and exhibition grounds are preparing to re-open their doors to welcome domestic and international events in post COVID-19 time. Convention bureaus and exhibition centres along with governments have prepared strict hygiene and safety protocols to fight against the deadly coronavirus pandemic that has spread throughout the world. This global pandemic turned our world into a necropolis and we are learning now how to stay safe and secure.

Now most of the convention centres are running out of money as most of the events, seminars, conventions and exhibitions in these four months are either cancelled or postponed or gone virtual. To combat the financial crisis, some of the world-class convention centres are opening from this July or the coming months by providing a safe, hygienic, controlled and most secured environment to meet client's business event requirements.



OUR PICKS

Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre *Malaysia*

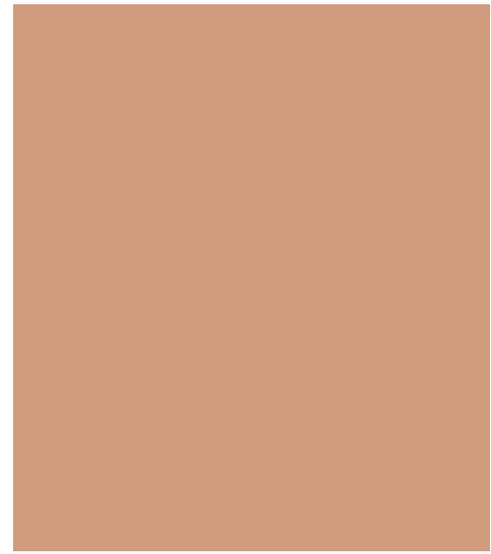
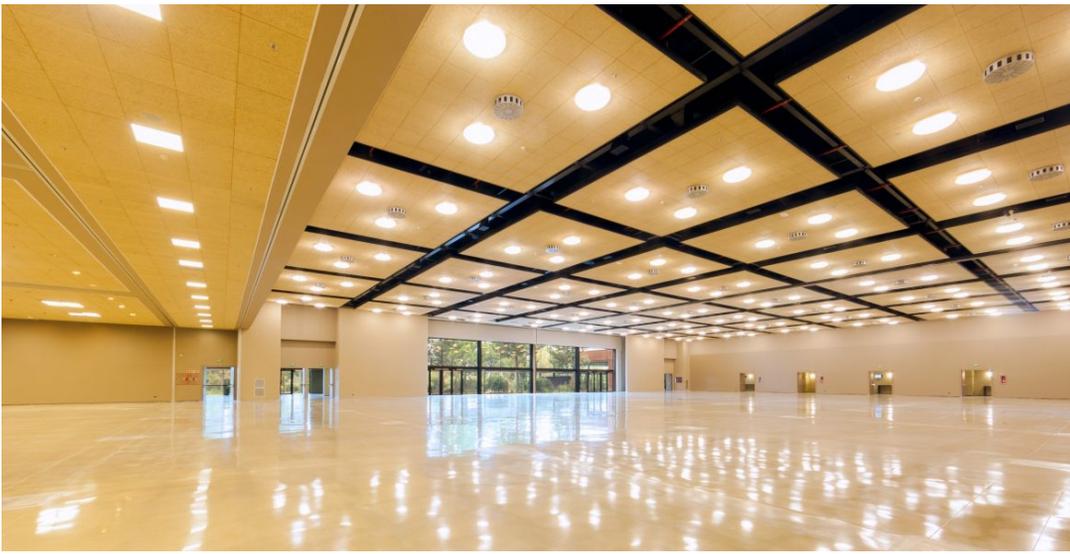
Recognising the critical role health, safety and hygiene will play in the 'new normal' for most of the major business events, conferences and meetings moving forward, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre has put in place rigorous Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which include controlled access points for attendees with temperature checks, declaration forms and encouragement to guests to use hand sanitiser and masks. Other measures include capacity controls and new event set ups and layouts to enable social distancing measures; enhanced plans for controlling movement around the venue, queue management and F&B provision; increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting in all spaces; new protocols to reduce touch-points, including contactless transactions; air quality control measures; and monitoring systems.

Image courtesy: @ Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre



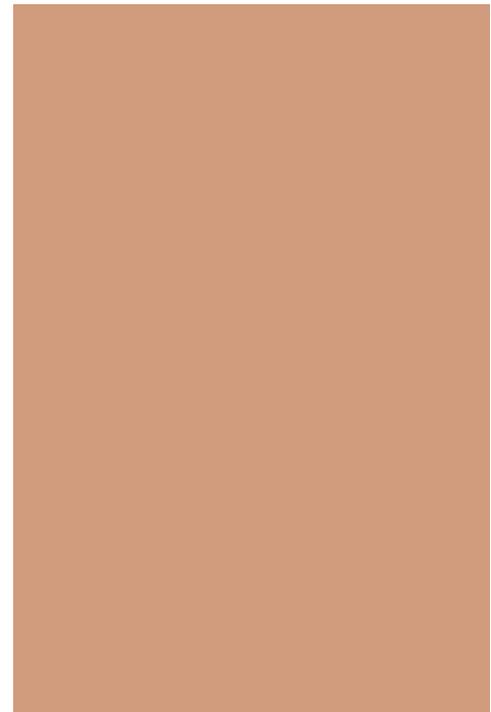
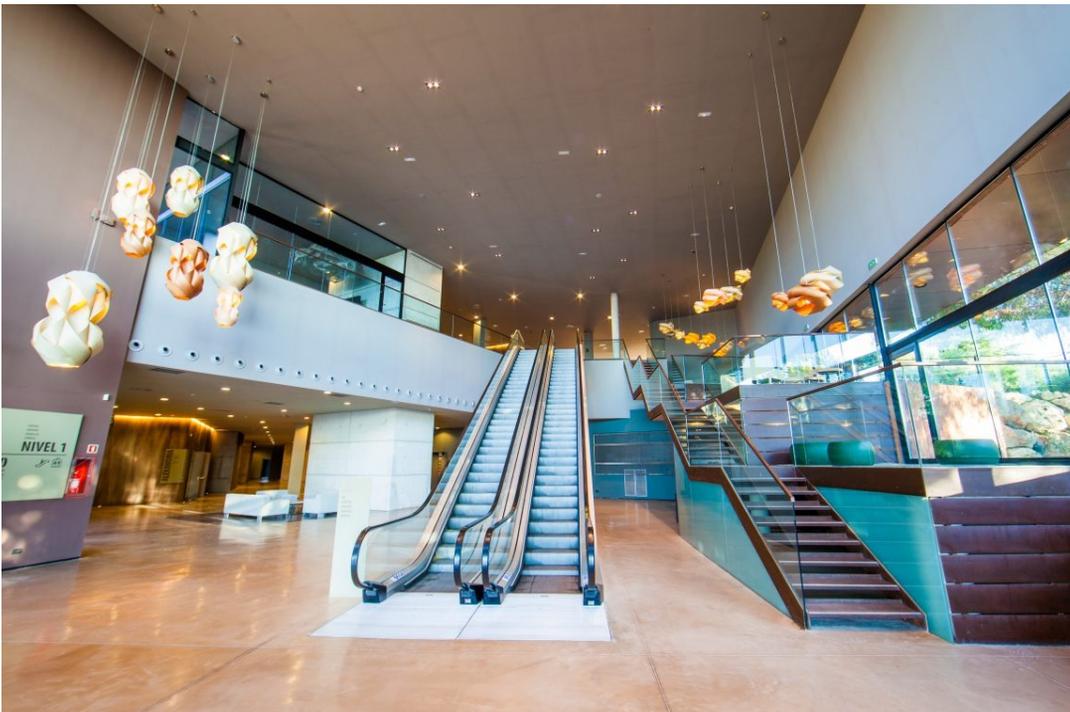
Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre has proactively refined its comprehensive venue Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in line with Malaysian Government requirements, to deliver a controlled and regulated environment to protect and provide reassurance to employees, guests and attendees. As part of this, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre has prepared its venue operations team and created product offerings to accommodate flexible terms, more adaptable spaces and meeting design plans and capacities to satisfy all required protocols.





PortAventura Convention Centre *Spain*

This is Spain's most promising exhibition centre organizing hundreds of events every year. PortAventura Convention Centre is reopening its doors on July 8 after several months of lockdown. In the period of its closure, the PortAventura Business & Events team worked together to redefine its common strategy, establish new procedures and adapt to the demands of the MICE sector's new reality.





Cavendish Venues *U.K.*

Cavendish Conference Centre is located alongside Oxford Circus and Cavendish Square. It has a long established reputation for customer service, hospitality and superb conference facilities. The Cavendish has been voted the Best Conference Venue Customer Service in many official and private conferences. After three months of unprecedented lockdown, Cavendish is going to reopen its services in July by maintaining proper hygiene standards.





RAI Amsterdam Convention Centre *Netherlands*

RAI Amsterdam Convention and Exhibition Complex is going to reopen for trial events, its management says, while closely following all guidelines regarding social distancing. The convention centre authorities say that it is ready to test the various ways that visitors and exhibitors can be safely brought together this summer. The management of RAI Amsterdam Convention and Exhibition Complex confirmed that it has a detailed roadmap that will help the convention centre get back to business safely. The visitors will be asked to register in advance, which will facilitate a clear picture of the expected number of people and ensure that the convention centre can provide them with information about the safety protocols and any additional behavioural rules.



Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre, *Australia*

This is Australia's one of the most preeminent conference and events spaces. Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) announces plans to reopen. The authority of GCCEC says it has received approval from the Gold Coast Public Health Unit to operate under its coronavirus-safe plan. As such, the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) can potentially host more than 4,500 visitors per day based on the one person per 4 sq.m. rule. The arena of this convention centre can normally accommodate up to 6,000 people but now has a COVID-safe capacity of between 1,500 and 3,000 people. The venue's COVID 19-safe plan covers all areas of operation including cleaning, hygiene and social distancing.



MICE APPOINTMENTS



JANICE TAN APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF SALES AND MARKETING AT VAKKARU MALDIVES

Janice Tan has been appointed Director of Sales and Marketing at Vakkaru Maldives. She comes with nearly two decades of experience in the luxury hospitality industry. Besides her recognised work in Beijing and Singapore, she is also known for having key roles at some of Maldives' leading resorts.



DIVERSITY TRAVEL APPOINTED RUSS FERGUSON AS SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

Diversity Travel has appointed Russ Ferguson as Senior Vice President of its North American business. Russ Ferguson has held more than a few leadership roles across a career spanning 24 years in the travel industry including Travelbag and North America Travel Service. He most recently spent almost a decade with Key Travel in the USA and will lead Diversity Travel's client partnerships in the Americas.



JONATHAN DANIELS APPOINTED CEO AND PORT DIRECTOR AT PORT EVERGLADES

Jonathan Daniels has been appointed as the new CEO and Port Director at Port Everglades. The announcement was recently made by Broward County Administrator Bertha Henry. Broward's diverse seaport is a global gateway for cargo, cruise and petroleum. As informed by the port itself, it is currently undergoing a \$1.6 billion port expansion effort. Daniels comes with years of vast experience in the cruise and maritime industry. Before joining Port Everglades he was serving as the Executive Director at the Port of Gulfport, Mississippi where he has been working since 2013. As a part of his job he led a \$570 million restoration and expansion project in Gulfport.

HONG KONG

GLAMOROUS MICE DESTINATION IN ASIA



Hong Kong is noted for its great outdoors and recreational activities. But this city has MICE opportunities too. Hong Kong is Asia's most popular international financial hub, 26 MICE Travel Advisor

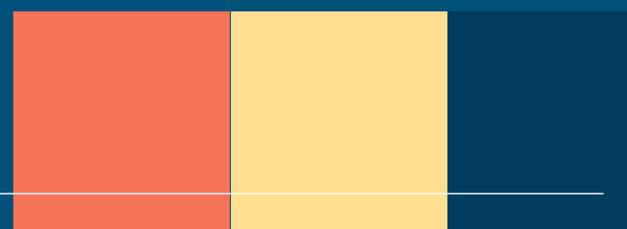
business centre, shopping paradise and luxury tourist destination.

Hong Kong allures global millennials for its own legal and judicial systems (including a proprietary



IMAGE COURTESY: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC)

police force), district organisations (with no political power) and public servants, broadly based on the British common law model.



AMPLE MICE OPPORTUNITIES

Hong Kong has always prepared for exceptional experiences, regardless of whether the global tourists are coming for business or pleasure. The city has its own charm and sophistication, combined with its cultural diversity and cosmopolitan lifestyle.

The beauty of the city is also unparalleled, with its unspoiled natural parkland and spectacular scenery. For millennials, in particular, the city lures with modern and exotic attractions. For hosting internationally acclaimed meetings and events, Hong Kong remains as one of the leading MICE destinations in the world and the top MICE destination in Asia.

Hong Kong is known for integrating hospitality, expediency and professionalism in its business. It has world-class infrastructure, state-of-the-art venues, superb accommodations and well-organised transportation systems. The city has a robust economy, high-tech ultra modern facilities, safe streets, an international mindset and a vibrant culture.



WORLD-CLASS MEETING FACILITIES

Hong Kong opens its doors to global business travellers with stunning venues that are easily accessible from the airport and across the town. It has enormous selection of convention and exhibition venues and hotels are capable of accommodating MICE events and visitors in world-class comfort.

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC)



Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) is one of the two major convention and exhibition venues in Hong Kong. Located in Wan Chai North, Hong Kong Island, this convention centre is connected to nearby hotels and commercial buildings by covered walkways. After the second expansion in the year 2009, which increased the total rentable space to 91,500 sq.m., HKCEC has created one of the world's most imposing, proficient and functional meeting and exhibition venues.



AsiaWorld-Expo

Opened in 2005, AsiaWorld-Expo is one of the world-class venues in the city. It offers over 70,000 sq.m. of spaces for exhibitions, trade shows, conferences, concerts and entertainment events. Jointly owned by Hong Kong SAR Government and Airport Authority Hong Kong, this exhibition space is the one and only venue to accommodate a full range of events from small, intimate functions to mega-conferences of over 10,000 delegates.

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Royal Garden

Situated in Hong Kong, the Royal Garden hosts various international events and exhibition like International Academic of Science Technology Engineering and Management, Pacific Conferences, International Association of Engineers, Institute of Research Engineers and Doctors, Industrial Electronics and Electrical Engineers Forum and more.



Exploring Hong Kong

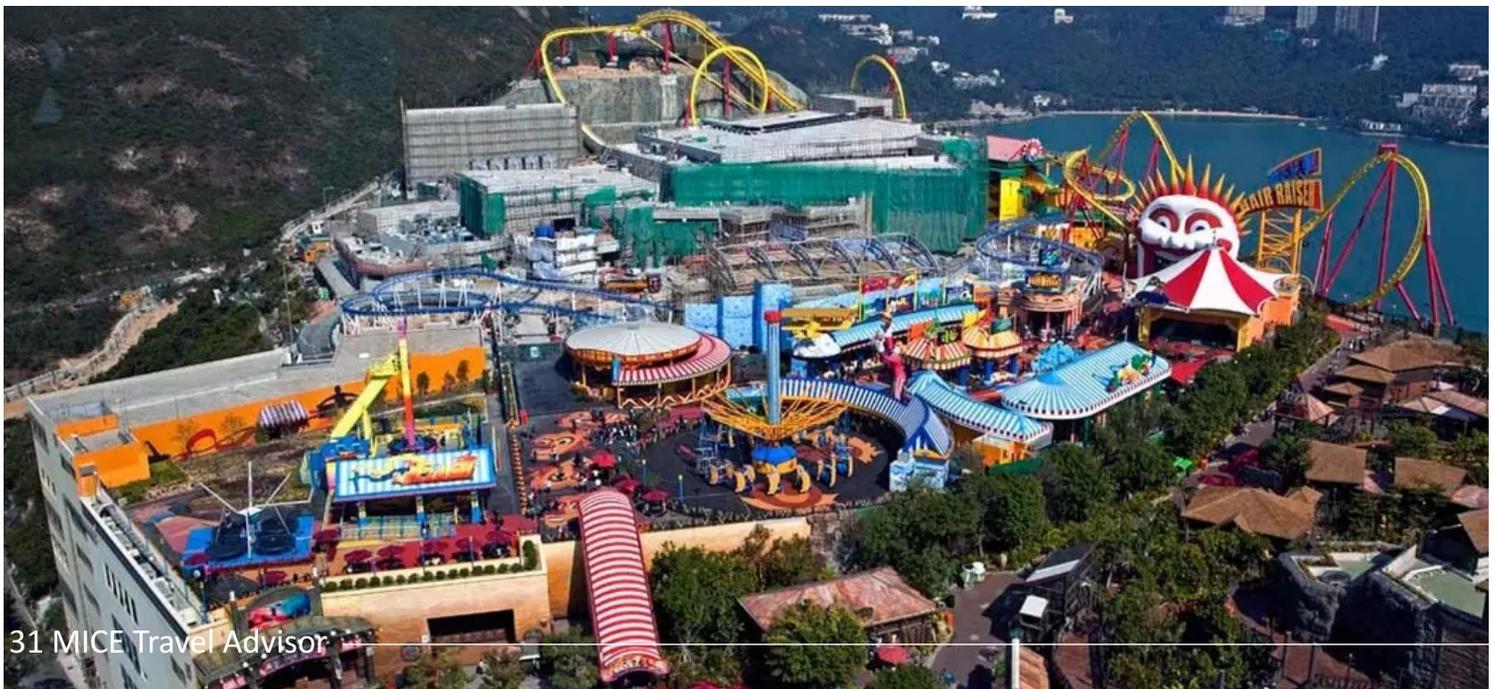
Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park

One of Hong Kong's first official marine parks, Hoi Ha Wan Marine Park is located north of Sai Kung Peninsula and is a popular destination for kayakers, snorkellers and even scuba divers vying for glimpses of its marine life, which includes 60 varieties of coral and 120 species of coral fish. Those keen to explore this magical underwater world can rent snorkelling gear from Wan Hoi Store in Hoi Ha village. Dive into the crystal clear waters to discover a rainbow of brain coral, mangroves, jellyfish, sponges, sea urchins and more. Alternatively, paddle your way around the mangrove-laden waters in a kayak.



Ocean Park

Hong Kong's most premium theme park, Ocean Park has been offering thrills and spills to the people of Hong Kong for nearly 40 years. From pandas and incredible jellyfish to the 4G inverted loops of the Hair Raiser rollercoaster, Ocean Park's mix of animals and action-packed rides is a winning combination.





Yan Chau Tong Marine Park

Set by cascading hills and protected from the ocean on four sides, Yan Chau Tong Marine Park is known for its temperate microclimate and calm seas. It is fittingly called the Double Haven. Situated on the northeast coast of Plover Cove Country Park, Yan Chau Tong's lush mangroves and seagrass bed attract an abundance of marine life, as well as visitors who flock to enjoy the area's geological wonders and picturesque hiking trails.



10,000 Buddha's Temple

It's hard to pick a single Hong Kong temple. So many of them are impressive for their own reasons, but the nine-story pagoda and nearly 12,000 miniature Buddha statues make the 10,000 Buddhas temple in the New Territories worth the trip.

Hong Kong has world-class infrastructure which lays the groundwork for smooth and efficient MICE events. Even after deadly COVID-19 outbreak, most of the hotels, convention centres and tourism body itself are working hard to maintain social distancing. The sophisticated and reliable infrastructure makes the city run like clockwork, while the transport system is one of the most advanced and well-connected systems in the world.



Ms. Monica Lee-Müller, Managing Director of Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (Management) Limited, in an exclusive interview with MICE Travel Advisor speaks about how Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (Management) Limited (“HML”) has undertaken a series of preventive measures at Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) to host international events in post COVID-19 time.

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: What are the preventive measures to ensure a safe, hygienic and comfortable environment for exhibitors and visitors you have undertaken to host events in post COVID-19 time?

MONICA LEE-MÜLLER: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (Management) Limited (“HML”) has implemented a series of preventative measures at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC). The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“HKSAR”) Government has implemented social distancing regulations in response to COVID-19 or

deadly coronavirus prevention. Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (Management) Limited (“HML”) worked closely with the organiser for proactively introducing stringent preventative measures and communicated to exhibitors and visitors through diverse channels in preparation for the 98th Hong Kong Wedding Fair. For example, no food consumption was allowed inside the exhibition hall, social distance was applied for queuing at ticketing counters, aisles of some major booths.

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (Management) Limited (“HML”) has adopted measures in the HKCEC's restaurants to comply with current Government regulations. Customers are advised to maintain social distance while waiting to be seated and their body temperature is screened before entering the restaurant.

FACE TO FACE

Face masks are mandatory except when consuming food or beverage. Each table can accommodate not more than 8 patrons and are set apart with at least 1.5m in between, or separated by partitions. Food is served with cover.

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: What are the marketing strategies taken by Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (Management) Limited to secure more international and domestic events in post COVID-19 time?

MONICA LEE-MÜLLER: Throughout the last few months, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (Management) Limited (“HML”) has continued to communicate with our local and international customers and stakeholders on the latest situation, addressing their needs and concerns. As much as possible, we have extended flexibility for rescheduling their events. With the success of the Wedding Fair, we shared our experience to assure customers that we are indeed ready and confident to welcome their events back to the HKCEC. Photos and videos have been sent to our customer database and via traditional and social media platforms to demonstrate HML's strength and professional services and hygiene measures. The experience at the Wedding Fair is shared with other exhibition organisers for consideration at their own events.

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: What are the major upcoming events in post COVID19 time?

MONICA LEE-MÜLLER: There are the vast majority of exhibitions in the Hong Kong Convention and

Exhibition Centre (HKCEC), which are recurrent and well established in the business calendar of the respective industries. Despite of the recent challenges, these international and national events are staying with Hong Kong and the HKCEC.

HML will continue to monitor development of the pandemic and implement preventive measures in cooperation with individual event organisers, following guidelines from HKSAR Government's Department of Health and advice from international industry such as UFI – The Global Association of the Exhibition Industry to make continuous improvements.

The 98th Hong Kong Wedding Fair was well attended. The 99th version of the event will be held on 12-14 June 2020.

There are many other events lined up afterwards. Some of them were previously scheduled at their original time slots. For example, the annual Hong Kong Book Fair, along with Hong Kong Sports and Leisure Expo and other associated events, will take place as planned during 15 to 21 July, taking up almost the entire HKCEC.

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: Have you received any assistance from the government to boost the event industry?

MONICA LEE-MÜLLER: The Hong Kong, officially the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China Government (HKSAR) has a series of relief measures for different industries, employers, employees and the general public. For the MICE exhibition and convention industry, an allocation of over HK\$1,020 million (US\$130 million)

will be injected to subsidise exhibition and convention organisers and participants, in order to reinvigorate Hong Kong's reputation as the event capital of Asia.

Although not directly benefiting from the scheme, HML appreciates the financial support from the HKSAR Government, which serves as a timely relief measure for the industry that has been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It recognises the significant contribution of the exhibition and convention industry to the economy of Hong Kong. We believe that organisers of exhibitions and international conferences will benefit and events can resume normal soon.

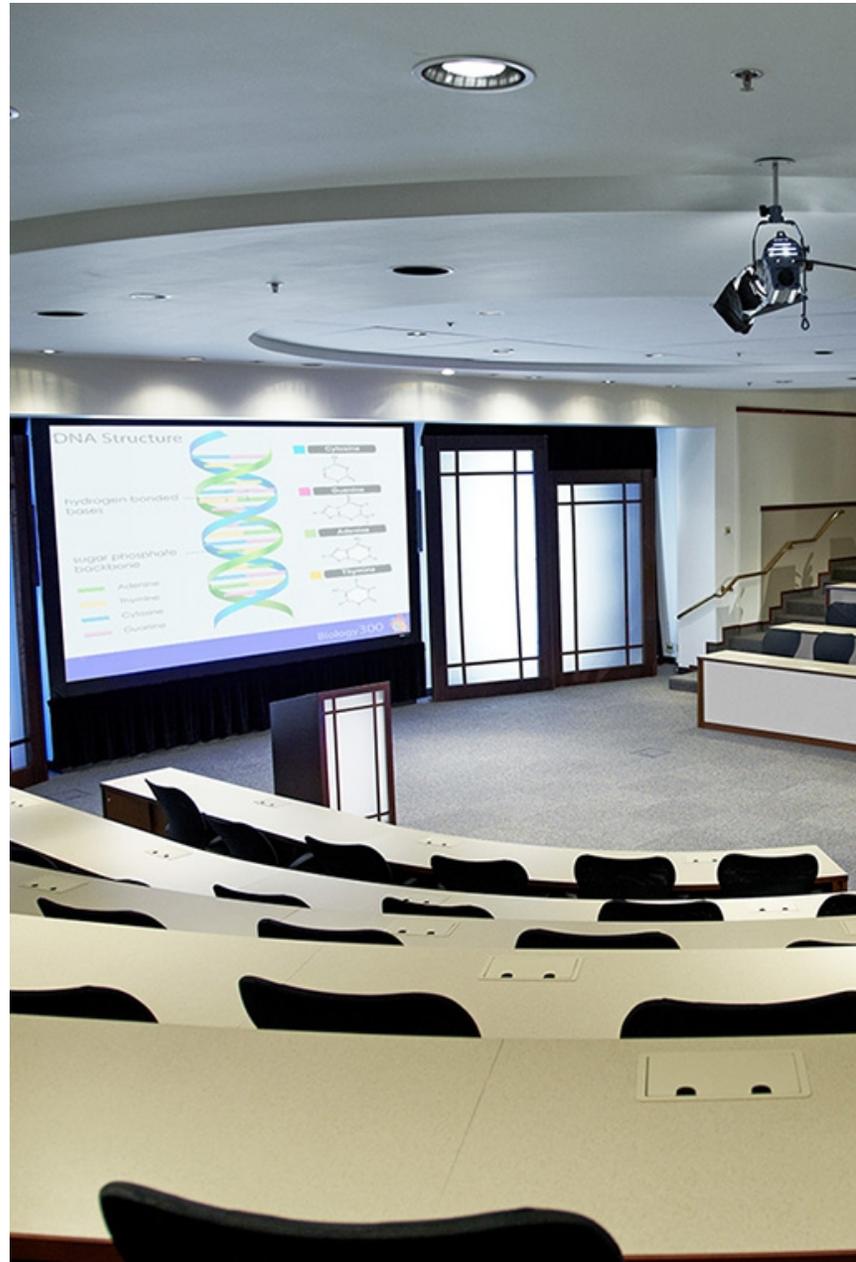
MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: What are the infrastructural developments Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) covered?

MONICA LEE-MÜLLER: HML kicked off the US\$128 million HKCEC Five-Year Advancement Project in mid-2019 to demonstrate our confidence on the long term growth of the industry and business at the HKCEC. The Project comprising infrastructure and technology upgrade has proceeded according to plan without interruption. Upon completion of the entire Project in early 2024, HML will provide an even more comfortable, efficient and safer environment for all HKCEC users.

SOUND REINFORCEMENT SYSTEM IN CONFERENCE CENTRES

Sound matters for any event, whether it is a conference, exhibition or any cultural event. The audio clarity and quality affect everything from how well an audience can dance to a song to how well a speaker can be heard. Now, audio plays a key role in every kind of event, so investing in a good sound system is essential for delivering truly memorable and engaging experiences.

For most of the international conventions, events, exhibitions or conferences, the audio needs are going to be integrated in what's known as a "sound reinforcement system".



This is the collective term for the assortment of speakers and other equipments that serve to amplify and distribute sound to a live audience. Regardless of the pattern of the sound reinforcement system, here's a primer on the main components and how they fit into the overall audio experience.

Traditionally, setting up and operating audio and video systems in an organisational environment was handled by a dedicated A/V department, but today in many



companies these responsibilities have now been migrated to become part of Information Technology (IT). Thus, along with managing computers and associated software and hardware, many IT managers are now charged with delivering audio across a wide range of their organization's activities. But many IT professionals lack the knowledge to confidently handle the audio aspects of corporate communications.

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Ultra High Audio Mixers

The audio mixers are used to “mix” tracks, either recorded or live, by manipulating volume levels, sending feeds or dynamically adjusting. The Audio mixers come in digital and analog forms. An analog mixer can vary in the number of available inputs and also requires external processing whereas a digital mixer can offer more inputs on board processing and can save settings for instant recalls.

High Quality Microphones

The microphones come in three basic types that affect the direction they pick up sound. Unidirectional microphones are ideal for vocals or small instrumentals, bidirectional mics are great for dialogs between two people and omni-directional microphones have a wide range that let them capture all the audio on a stage for things like choirs or big instrumentals. There is also headset and lapel microphones that leave the hands free and are perfect for performer or anyone who prefer not to hold a microphone.

Digital Speakers

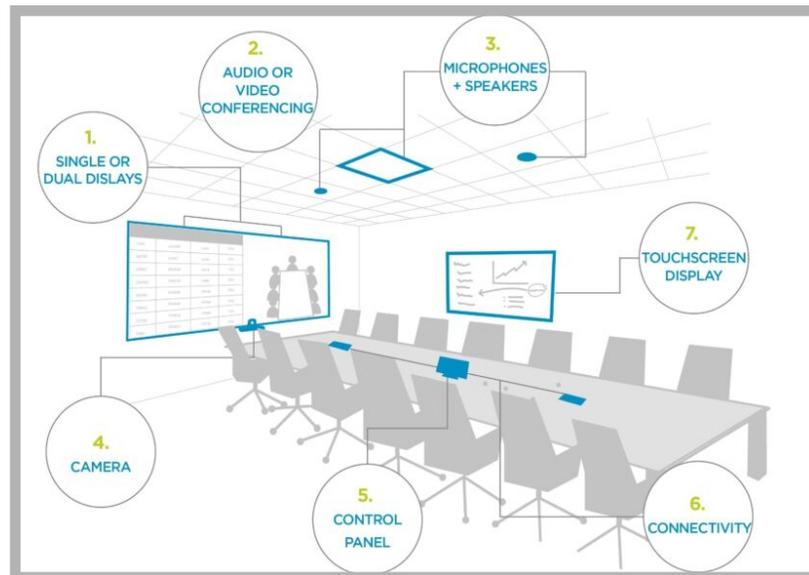
Digital speakers come in active and passive forms. The active speakers have built-in amplifiers so there is less setup involved but passive speakers use amplifiers and can be used in a larger variety of configurations. The exact type of speaker you need for an event will depend on the type of sound, shape and size of the venue and the size and position of the audience.

Outboard Amplifiers

An outboard amplifier powers and sends signal to passive speakers. This enables sound to be produced and transmitted. Generally speaking, you gain a lot more head when you use amplifiers.

Strong Cables

The cables bring the rest of the audio reinforcement system together. They are used to transmit power and sound from microphones to mixers to speakers and to anything else you employ during an event.



Monitor Systems

Standing on stage in the middle of a performance makes things sound very different than when you are out in the audience. Monitors, such as in-ear systems or stage wedges, solve this issue by letting performers hear how each other sounds.

Signal Processors

Any added effects are known as signal processing. This includes effects like delay, reverb, compression, limiting and graphic or parametric EQ. Signal processors are handy devices for boosting the quality of sound and come in different forms depending on whether you are working with live or pre-recorded audio.



Spotlight On



CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

South Africa's leading convention centre turns into “Hospital of Hope”

Recognised as one of the greatest convention centres in South Africa, the Cape Town International Convention Centre is located in the heart of Cape Town. With more than 17 years of experience in organising events, meetings, conferences and exhibitions, the convention centre stands as premier MICE tourism venue in South Africa. Ever since the inception of the convention centre, it has largely contributed to the region of Cape Town and has served as the key driving force behind its business travel and event industry.

However, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has harshly impacted the MICE tourism industry of Cape Town as well as the region as a whole. In midst of the global crisis, the Cape Town International Convention Centre has once again stepped up to work towards the benefit of the region by volunteering to serve as a temporary hospital for coronavirus patients. The pandemic has put immense pressure on Cape Town's healthcare system similar to the rest of the world but the use of the convention centre as a hospital contributed to alleviate the burden and allowed authorities to provide care to those in need.



Image Courtesy @ Cape Town International Convention Centre

A look at the venue

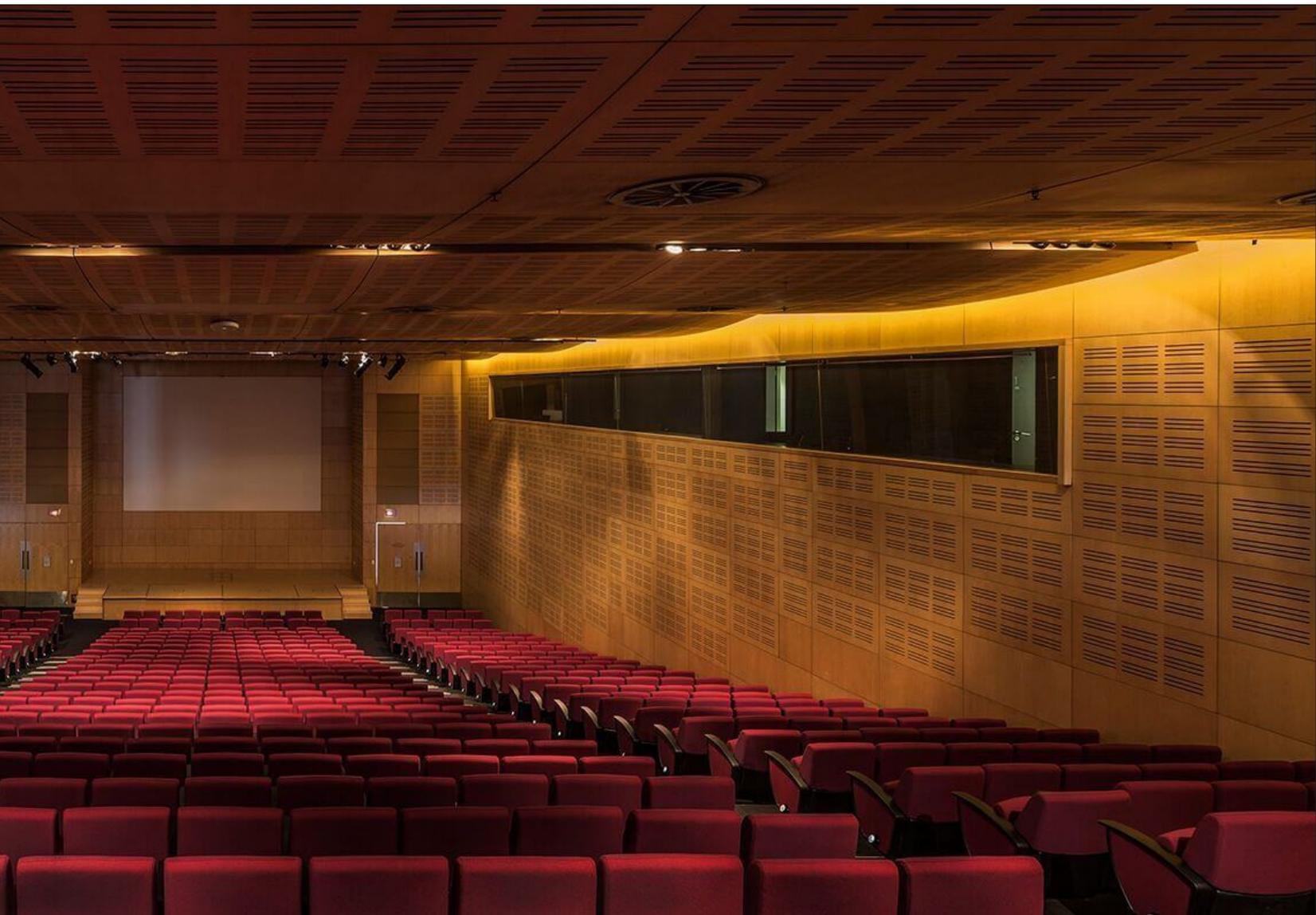
The Cape Town International Convention Centre has a total area of 140 855 sq.m. and consists of two event complexes, CTICC 1 and CTICC 2. The two buildings are connected through a long and spacious Skybridge. CTICC 1 offers an 11,200 sq.m. exhibition and trade show space that can be further divided into conference, meeting or banquet halls. It also has two large auditoriums that can host up to 1500 and 620 guests, respectively. The centre also has a grand ballroom that can be divided into two by soundproof partitioning. In addition, there is also a separate boardroom and meeting room. Due to its grand success, the centre was further expanded and CTICC 2 was included in the premises. The second complex also offers large event spaces as well as multiple halls to organise meetings and conferences. It also has separate rooftop or terrace area that can be used by guests to unwind amidst business activities. The centre also has its own cafeteria, marshalling area and multiple parking spaces.



Transforming into the “Hospital of Hope”

The decision

It was towards the end of April that the Western Cape Cabinet decided that Cape Town International Convention Centre would be transformed into a temporary hospital for housing COVID-19 patients. Premier Alan Wilde officially announced that the centre will have 800 beds in its premises to house the patients. The decision came at a time when the pandemic was at its peak in the region and the authorities predicted a shortage of around 1000 beds in the province.



The agreement

Soon after the arrival of the decision, an agreement was made between the Western Cape Government and the convention centre. According to the agreement, the CTICC 1 complex can be used as a temporary hospital up to September 7, 2020. As a part of its efforts to fight the challenges posed by the coronavirus outbreak, the convention centre has waived off the hire cost of the venue. This would include the construction of the temporary infrastructure and the operating and catering costs. The convention centre is also providing security that would be augmented by the City of Cape Town. It is also agreed to present the inter-mediate care beds to cater to patients with milder clinical signs and in need of hospitalisation and treatment. However, the centre would not take the responsibility of patients with severe clinical symptoms and those who require intensive care treatment.

The popular MICE tourism venue took approximately four weeks to undergo a metamorphosis and radically transformed into a hospital. A team consisting of 40 members tirelessly worked on various areas including health technology, staffing, infrastructure, IT and engineering. The convention centre underwent four different phases – namely, planning and designing, construction and commissioning, ward fitting and testing and ultimately a “go live” phase that showcased the phased activation of beds.

The process



The facilities

The centre accommodated 862 hospital beds and other equipment include an apparatus to administer oxygen, physiotherapy areas, a digital X-ray machine as well as an on-site medical pharmacy. Four of the CTICC 1 halls alongside the service yard have been modelled into a four-ward facility. Around 900 healthcare staff has been assigned at the venue and separate staff showers have been placed on a different floor. All staff can shower and change directly before accessing the exit and leaving the venue. Each bed has been numbered and is connected to a completely paperless system for monitoring. A rainbow themed artwork, drawn by children has been hung above every bed to spread the message of hope and positivity among patients. A food elevator has been allotted to carry meals for patients from the kitchens. In addition, a specialised waste management system has also been added to diminish various medical wastes. The convention centre is also providing WiFi facilities in order to allow patients to stay connected with near ones.



The way ahead

With a constant rise in the number of COVID-19 cases in the region, Cape Town has braced itself to face the peak of infections in the first week of July. The agreement between the convention centre and government is open for extension on a monthly basis until the end of the year depending on the situation. The “Hospital of Hope” has already welcomed its first set of its patients in the first week of June. Inclusion of additional beds is also likely to be activated in a phased manner in order to make the entire hospital completely operational. All patients would continue to stay at the hospital until they are fully recovered and totally ready to go home. The convention centre would stand strong against the threat of the coronavirus pandemic and continue to serve as a place for healing, hope and recovery to many.

INTERVIEW ZONE



T.TAUBIE MOTLHABANE
CEO, CTICC

As the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) transformed into 'Hospital of Hope' amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, T.Taubie Motlhabane, CEO, CTICC spoke to MICE Travel Advisor, on the process of transformation, the contribution and the future of the convention centre. Read the full interview here:

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: How did the idea of transforming Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) into “Hospital of Hope” come along?

T.Taubie Motlhabane: It was during a discussion with Rashid Toefy, a former chief executive officer of the CTICC, at a COVID-19 response committee meeting, when the idea of using the CTICC to help curb the pandemic was mooted. We spoke about how we, as an industry that has been stopped from hosting events, could help to get us over this pandemic more quickly. Similar spaces around the world have been repurposed as either quarantine facilities or field hospitals. With its expansive halls, the CTICC lends itself to being used as a hospital.

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: Tell us something about the impact of COVID-19 pandemic in Cape Town's MICE industry.

T.Taubie Motlhabane: Travel and tourism have been severely affected since borders were closed and mass gatherings were restricted, halting the MICE industry for the foreseeable future. The trickle-down effect of the postponement or cancellation of events has impacted hotels, restaurants, transportation, all other formal or informal trade and jobs dependent on tourism and

the events industry. While business travel for local South Africans has reopened within the country, mass gatherings are still on hold. This uncertainty will impact the local and international economy. The CTICC's impact on local tourism income is considerable, with events generating an additional 566 057 room nights in the Western Cape in 2019. It has hosted numerous congresses, major trade fairs, exhibitions and festivals since its doors opened in 2003, and it is recognised as a leading events venue in Africa. More than 90 international events had been confirmed until mid 2027.

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: What are the steps undertaken by CTICC authorities to combat the difficulties caused by the coronavirus pandemic?

T.Taubie Motlhabane: Our halls and meeting rooms have not stood empty during the epidemic. The CTICC exists to serve the communities of the Western Cape. We felt it was very necessary to do our part to help alleviate suffering in our region. Besides the 'Hospital of Hope' in CTICC 1, we also turned part of CTICC 2 into a storage facility for medical equipment and handed over one of our exhibition halls and satellite kitchens to non-profit feeding scheme or soup kitchen, 'Ladles of Love', which required space to safely prepare food, and store supplies.

In its 2019 Annual Report, the CTICC said it would “continue to provide an inspiring platform for people to connect, share and collaborate around ideas”. A few months later, the CTICC has been able to honour its triple-bottom line approach of people, planet, and profit (in that order) by providing a place of healing for those recovering from COVID-19. The CTICC has waived the cost of venue hire, offering it to the Western Cape Provincial Government for its use as a medical facility. The temporary infrastructure build, operating and catering costs for the initial hire period is approximately R47 million. The agreement is for the hospital to remain in place until September 2020, with the option to extend on a month-to-month basis until the end of the year. The CTICC's food and beverage team, in consultation with the Department of Health and with strict adherence to healthy dietary guidelines, is also preparing meals for patients. It has been a huge learning curve for us, and a great opportunity to expand our skills and knowledge to do things differently. The CTICC's elevators have been converted into “dummy waiters” to move patient meals, packaged in disposable cartons, from the kitchens below the hospital to the wards.

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MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: What were the challenges faced by CTICC during the process of transformation into a hospital for COVID-19 patients?
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T.Taubie Motlhabane: To transform CTICC 1's four exhibition halls and the marshalling yard in just

four weeks was a major undertaking by more than 100 people from various service providers contracted by the Western Cape's departments of Public Works and Health. Starting in early May, the hospital was built in four phases: planning and design, construction and commissioning, ward fitting and testing, and activation of the 862 beds. The CTICC was not directly involved in the construction of the hospital. We just provided support services.

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MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: How does CTICC plan to reopen as a convention centre once the trying times are over?
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T.Taubie Motlhabane: We will adhere to all prescribed protocols, but we have much in place already, having implemented the guidelines of the World Health Organisation, Department of Health and National Institute for Communicable Diseases at the beginning of the spread of the pandemic in South Africa. We have put in internal SOPs, signage and developed collateral for the education of clients.

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MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: Considered to be one of South Africa's premier meetings and events venue, what does the future look like for CTICC and Cape Town's MICE industry as a whole?
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T.Taubie Motlhabane: The immediate future for CTICC is one where we will have to adapt to a new way of doing business like the whole world is doing at present. Recovery will be slow, but we will get there eventually, albeit under a new normal. We have been fortunate that most of our clients have opted to postpone their 2020 events to the following years.

So although the impact of COVID-19 has been harsh, the recovery is promising. We find that our clients are optimistic about the future and that events will continue face to face as soon as government regulations allow. Our sales and events teams are hard at work (remotely), securing our forward bookings with new events for the future.

We anticipate that at first, we will see a decrease in delegate numbers due to people's natural fear of travel and gathering. Understanding this natural apprehension, the MICE industry in South Africa (and most of the African continent), has implemented health and hygiene safety protocols to ensure that our facilities are safe and ready to do business. One of the other immediate future demand is the increase of virtual and hybrid meetings for the foreseeable future.

For now, the CTICC's main focus is on supporting the operation of Africa's largest coronavirus treatment facility. We are grateful to be a part of the solution and we have to get this (pandemic) behind us so that we can get back to hosting events..

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: We are aware that CTICC 1 has been transformed into a hospital. Meanwhile, will CTICC 2 continue to perform as an events and meetings venue?

T.Taubie Motlhabane: We will only open for conferences when the country reaches Level 1 (we are currently on Level 3). Until then, we will continue to follow the guidelines and restrictions

in place. However, with regards to CTICC 2, soon after events were stopped, the CTICC teamed up with the Ladles of Love feeding scheme to provide more than 1500 square meters of space – comprising an exhibition hall and kitchen - as temporary headquarters for the soup kitchen. The non-profit organisation provides over 5000 meals a day to Cape Town's most vulnerable. Our halls were not being used, and we thought we could maybe help in a small way. We were honored to be approached to help.

MICE TRAVEL ADVISOR: Once the pandemic finally comes to an end in the near future and CTICC starts performing as a convention centre once again, will there be any special measures or protocols to maintain safety and security of visitors and associates?

T.Taubie Motlhabane: The CTICC has also put various measures in place to ensure the health and safety of delegates attending events at our facility, and we will continue to investigate and update sustainable protocols. These measures will include stringent cleaning services, especially of hard surfaces in high-traffic areas, screening at access points, and isolation rooms should they be needed, as well as online registration of all visitors. The CTICC may also consider appointing an occupational health nurse to be permanently on-site. We are confident that when the time comes, we will welcome back clients, delegates, service providers and staff to a CTICC where they will be safe, and feel safe.

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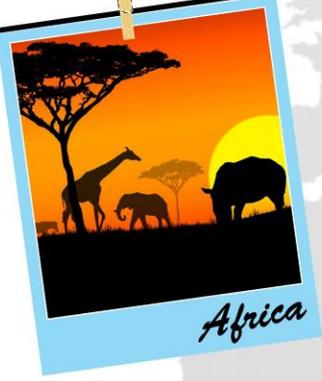
Egypt



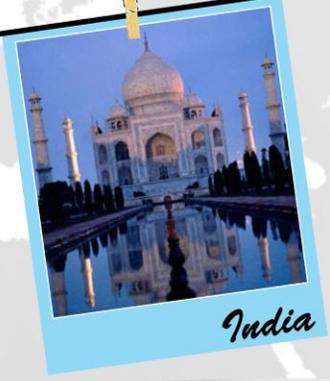
Brazil



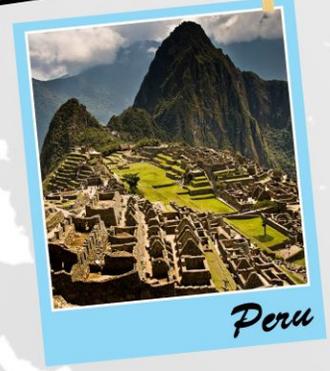
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