

MICE Travel Advisor

Volume: 11, Issue: January 2022

Centre of Attraction

Turkey

Cover Story

New York City

Lucrative MICE Business Venue

CONTENTS

04 Centre of Attraction

Türkiye has scenic beauty and iconic monuments which never fail to impress the audience and its own residents.



16 Spotlight On

Costa Rica Convention Center is an iconic property showcasing Costa Rican culture and meets the demand of business tourism to its visitors. Click here to know more about the prestigious property.



28 Cover Story

New York has enormous opportunity to flourish in meeting and event industry. Read this article to know more about the MICE industry in the country.

INTERVIEW ZONE	38
MICE BITES	44
MICE APPOINTMENTS	46
SHOW REVIEW	64
CALENDAR OF EVENTS	68

49 Venue Check

Tel Aviv is a popular destination for meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions. The city is noted as hosting important conferences and events. This article reveals how the city updates its business tourism industry.



56 Tech Talk

Voice technology has been gaining steady popularity in recent years, from smart speakers in homes to voice control in cars.



From the Editor's Desk

Dear Readers,

First of all, Happy New Year to all my dearest readers. This New Year brings in new opportunities to this industry and I am hopeful that this year will reboot meetings and event scenario globally, though Omicron variant is looming.

In this edition, we are highlighting US event industry with how the MICE market is working in New York and Costa Rica. This city is also a host destination to all major conventions, conferences and trade shows.

Here you can also read about Eurasian MICE destination, Turkey. Turkey is a stunning destination straddling Asia and Europe packed with numinous monuments and a plethora of empires. Also the presence of state-of-art meeting venues, Turkey acquires fame as a top-notch meeting destination.

In Asia, you can opt for Tel Aviv, because this Israeli city has the prime economy for its major hotels have special business - and other upmarket - clientele options, executive floors, and lounges, and most offer meeting space for small meetings and workshops.

Tech Talk reveals the next-gen voice technology adoption which grew mostly in 2020 due to its contactless appeal and now, as we move into the inoculation phase of the pandemic, brands are realising that consumers aren't willing to give up the convenience voice technology offers moving forward.

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Türkiye

*Ideal Venue for Global Event
Planners*





Republic of Turkey is a dazzling destination packed with mystical monuments and a plethora of empires. Its scenic beauty never fails to impress both domestic and international travellers.

All who visit this land will be wowed by its vibrant culture, famous food and illustrious history. At the same time, its diverse landscapes, from the sun-drenched Mediterranean to the mountainous steppe, are attractions by themselves.

Whether you talk about the Ottoman feats or the Byzantine glories, Türkiye is a destination worth exploring.

The Turkish MICE sector has prospered for many years due to its experience as a host country for international events. During the last 20 years, the Turkish MICE business has grown rapidly, and Istanbul has become a leader in international association meetings.

In the last two decades, over 1500 international meetings have been held in Istanbul, according to the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA). Therefore, Türkiye as a destination has been a top choice among several MICE travellers.



Popular Convention Cities

Türkiye has become a thriving place for hosting events, conferences and other meetings.





Istanbul

Istanbul is very much the heart of Türkiye. With its breathtaking views and mystical surroundings, the city has attracted travellers from around the world. Istanbul is considered ideal for its incentive experiences, corporate meetings, and events.

- » CNR World Trade Center in Yesilkoy
- » Feshane Fair Center in Eyup, Istanbul
- » Istanbul Congress Center in Harbiye
- » Istanbul Hilton Exhibition Center in Elmadag

©The Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau – ICVB

Antalya

The city of Antalya is a place where business and pleasure go hand in hand.

- » Antalya Cultural Center, Antalya
- » Glass Pyramid Sabanci Congress and Exhibition Center, Antalya
- » A.E.C. Antalya Expo Center, Antalya



Ankara

Ankara is the capital of Türkiye, with impeccable meeting facilities. A full range of international events can be held in Ankara, including exhibitions, meetings, congresses, shows and more. The ATO International Convention and Exhibition Center in Ankara is the most important congress and convention centre.



Izmir

The city has been famous for providing a 5-star deluxe international brand hotel, convention centres and dinner venues. Izmir has an abundance of festivals, exhibitions, fairs and conventions throughout the year, making it both an art and culture city.

Images Courtesy: branding.goturkiye.com/photos



Mersin

Mersin has tourism potential with great facilities and excellent exhibition centres. The most important centre here is the Mersin Congress and Exhibition Center.



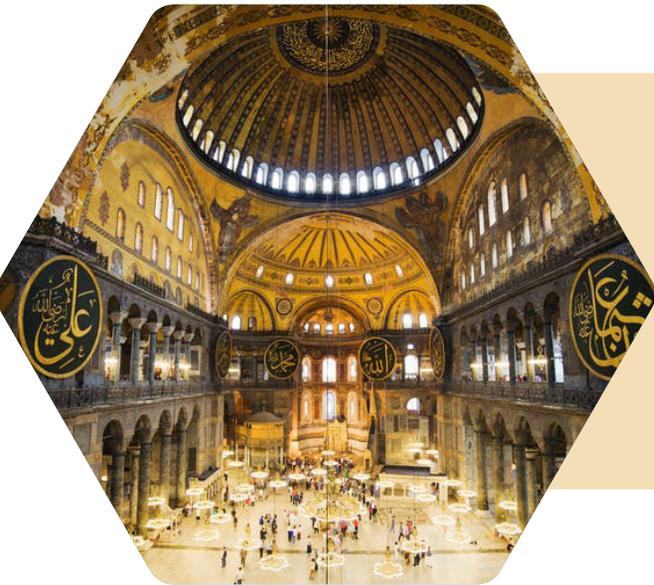


Bursa

Bursa allures global meeting delegates and event planners to organise their events, exhibitions, trade shows, conferences and meetings. Tuyap Bursa International Fair and Congress Center attracts global delegates with its flexible convention venues and top-notch hotels.



When you are in Türkiye, there is a myriad of things to explore. From captivating beaches to surreal history, Türkiye is home to excellent attractions.



Hagia Sophia Mosque

The mosque situated in Istanbul is one of its kinds. Its rich history and spectacular structure are among the most beautiful things to watch in Türkiye.

Ephesus

Ephesus is noteworthy for its colossal monuments and marble-columned streets; the ruin is not to be missed. It reeks of the life experience in the golden age of the Roman Empire.





Cappadocia

The rock valleys of Cappadocia are one of the best things to witness in Türkiye. If you wish to take an aerial view of the mystical city, the hot air balloon is one of the best things to do here.

Topkapi Palace

Located in Istanbul, the Topkapi Palace is the world of Sultans. The Sultans of the Ottoman Empire set up an empire here during 15th and 16th centuries, which stretched from Europe into the Middle East and Africa. The interiors provide an unforgettable glimpse into the Ottoman Empire's power base with their decadent tiling and lavish jewelled décor.



If you are wondering about a luxurious and comfortable stay in Türkiye, here are some best venues –



Caresse: It began in 2015 and since then, the Caresse, a Luxury Collection Resort & Spa, has been delivering the best quality services. It consists of 67 rooms, 9 suites and a villa with excellent facilities.

Kempinski Hotel:

Located amidst the cliff overlooking the pristine Barbaros Bay, the hotel is a luxurious choice for travellers. Its white architecture, alluring pool and other amenities will surely leave you spoilt for choice.



Four Seasons Hotel:

The Four Seasons Hotel is a 19th century palace turned into a hotel. Imagine the beauty and facilities that the hotel provides!

SPOTLIGHT ON

Costa Rica Convention Center

Experience Authentic Pura Vida Culture

One of the most prominent convention centres in Costa Rica is the Centro de Convenciones de Costa Rica (CRCC). The iconic property inspired by authentic pura vida Costa Rican culture hosts conferences, exhibitions and any other corporate events of national and international standard. CRCC is a development of Instituto Costarricense de Turismo (ICT) and the country's first convention centre to meet the demand of business tourism and offer unique experience to its visitors.





Located 8 Km. from the Juan Santamaria International Airport and about 10 Km. from downtown San Jose, the 10 hectare property offers a sustainable, modern and versatile space for MICE delegates and event planners. The convention centre sprawls over a built area of 15,600 sq m and is equipped with latest technology and a team of highly competent staff to make any event successful.



Out of the Ordinary

The oval shaped “Drum” is the most striking feature of the CRCC which represents the flora and fauna of the country.



With outstanding features, CRCC conveys the essence of Costa Rica such as:

- » Settling basins account for project sustainability.
- » Wood details, stone spheres, translucent windows, solar panels and other exclusive features reflect the eclectic architectural flair of the property.
- » The design of the building is inspired by pre-Columbian and post-Colonial architecture that have been customised to render a modern look without losing its originality.

Talamanca Room

The Talamanca room of the CRCC reflects a perfect harmony between design and architecture of the space. Its flexible space has a capacity to accommodate 4,000 people for events and congresses of various sizes. Thanks to the technology of a cylinder containing a dome, fiberglass and mirrors that magnifies natural light inside the main room.

Its tones reflect nature itself and intertwine around the space offering a unique visual experience.

The space dedicated for events and meetings is equipped with highly advanced audiovisual set up to meet the needs of clients.

A journey inside



Central Room

The sustainable and modern design of the Central Hall makes it ideal for organising events. Its total space with a capacity to host 1,360 guests is divided into 3 areas and at the same time acoustically isolates one room from another.



Guanacaste Room

The Guanacaste Room is inspired by the Guanacaste Mountain Range, the third largest in the country. This area consists of 3 rooms that can be unified to form a single area. The space is ideal for hosting corporate events or large-capacity executive meetings.



Wyndham San Jose Herradura Hotel & Convention Center

The 4-star hotel and convention centre is located 1.3 Km from the Costa Rica Convention Center. Along with its well-furnished spaces designed for accommodation and social events, the property features an in-house convention centre with a seating capacity of 1800 guests.

Country Inn & Suites by Radisson, San Jose Aeropuerto

Located about 0.3 Km to Costa Rica Convention Center, the 3.5-star property is a highly recommended place of accommodation for the business personnel. The thoughtful amenities and inviting ambiance of the property make it a great relaxing destination for the boarders.



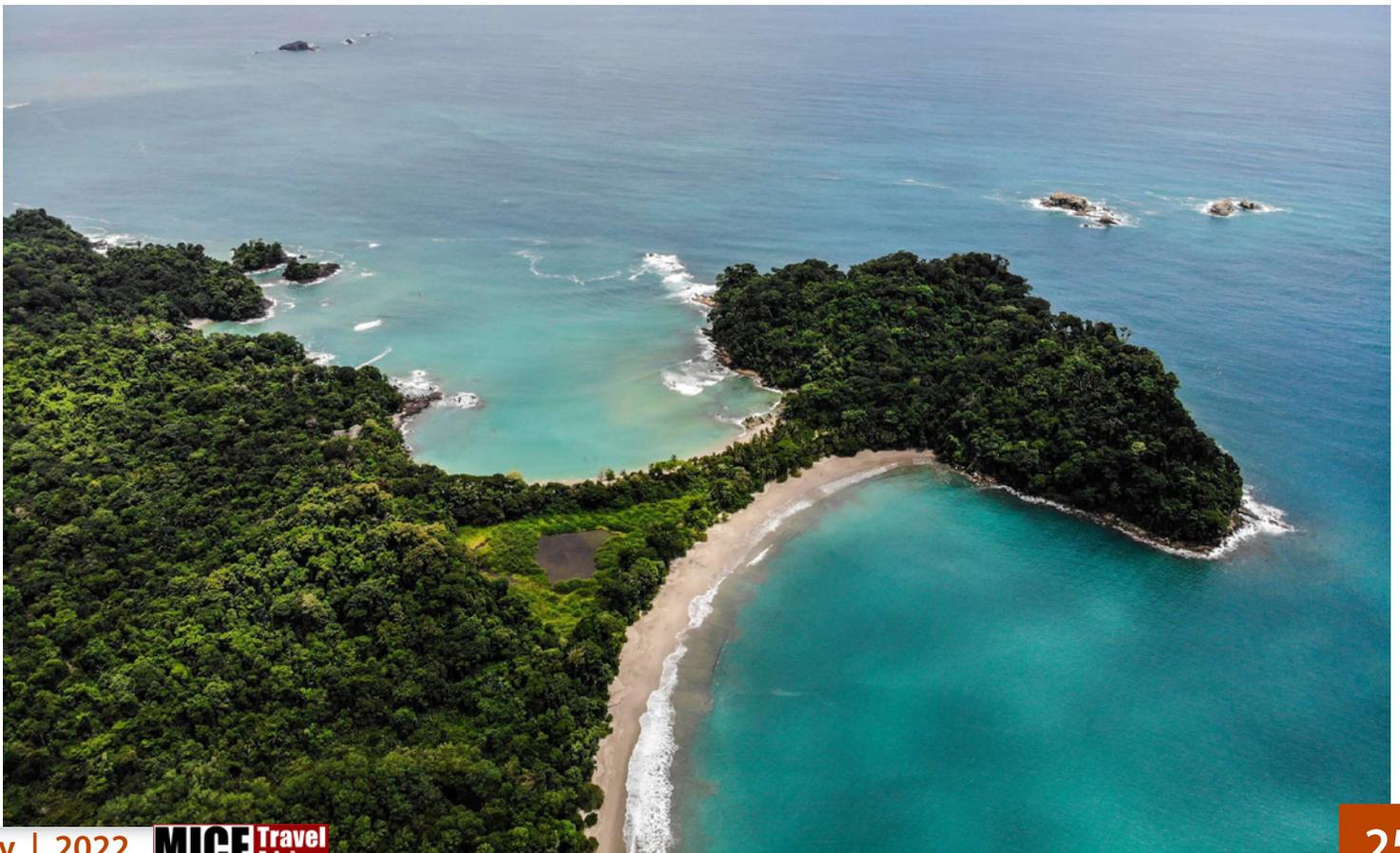


Parque Nacional Manuel Antonio

Scented with thick vegetation, the characteristic humidity of the region makes every traveller feel that this is the tropics. The Manuel Antonio Park, with its idyllic beaches, turquoise waters and rain-forested hills form one of the most picturesque bits of Costa Rica's tropical coast.

La Casa de Cariari Al Golf

La Casa's distance of 0.8 km from the CRCC and availability of high-end services make this property a favourite among common tourists and business-class delegates. It houses incredibly spacious rooms, an onsite picnic area, a golf course and a rear garden.





Hacienda El Viejo Wetland

National Museum of Costa Rica

Built in 1917, the heritage property was used as military barracks particularly during the Costa Rica Civil War. Its wide variety of other exhibits includes personal adornment objects, jewelleries, “mysterious stone spheres” and other relics.



Spreading over 5,000 acres wetland area, the private refuge was built with the sole aim of protecting the flora and fauna of the region. Nature lovers can unwind their stress and spend time in the bosom of nature.

Costa Rica is highly profitable incentive and meeting destination for promoting meeting among people of different cultures. With highly varied services, places of attractions and a plethora of attractions to experience, the naturally primed property is highly recommended to host green meetings.



New York City Lucrative MICE Business Venue

New York is one of the leading meetings' destinations in United States. Noted as second most populous city, New York has enormous economic growth rate in meetings industry. With canals, railroads, and highways, New York is a chief gateway to the west from the Middle Atlantic and New England states. With all, this city is a hub for travel to and from much of the country.





A Global Venue

New York City is a top global destination for international visitors, mostly from United Kingdom, Europe and China, drawn to its museums, entertainment, restaurants and commerce. This city

is also a host destination to all major conventions, conferences and trade shows, and major athletic events such as the New York City Marathon and the U.S. Open.

Steady Growth in Industry

The tourism and meetings & event industry has experienced a strong growth in its employment and wages in the decade preceding 2020. It is estimated, according to OSC, the tourism industry lost nearly a third of its employment in 2020. The visitors and their spending are not projected to reach pre-pandemic levels before 2025. The employment is unlikely to rebound fully before visitor spending.

To reboot the events and travel industry, NYC depends on vaccinations and reopening of the sector. The city is also must also developing a proactive strategy that cultivates and attracts international and business travellers to restore the MICE industry to robust health and return to a path of continuous and shared growth.

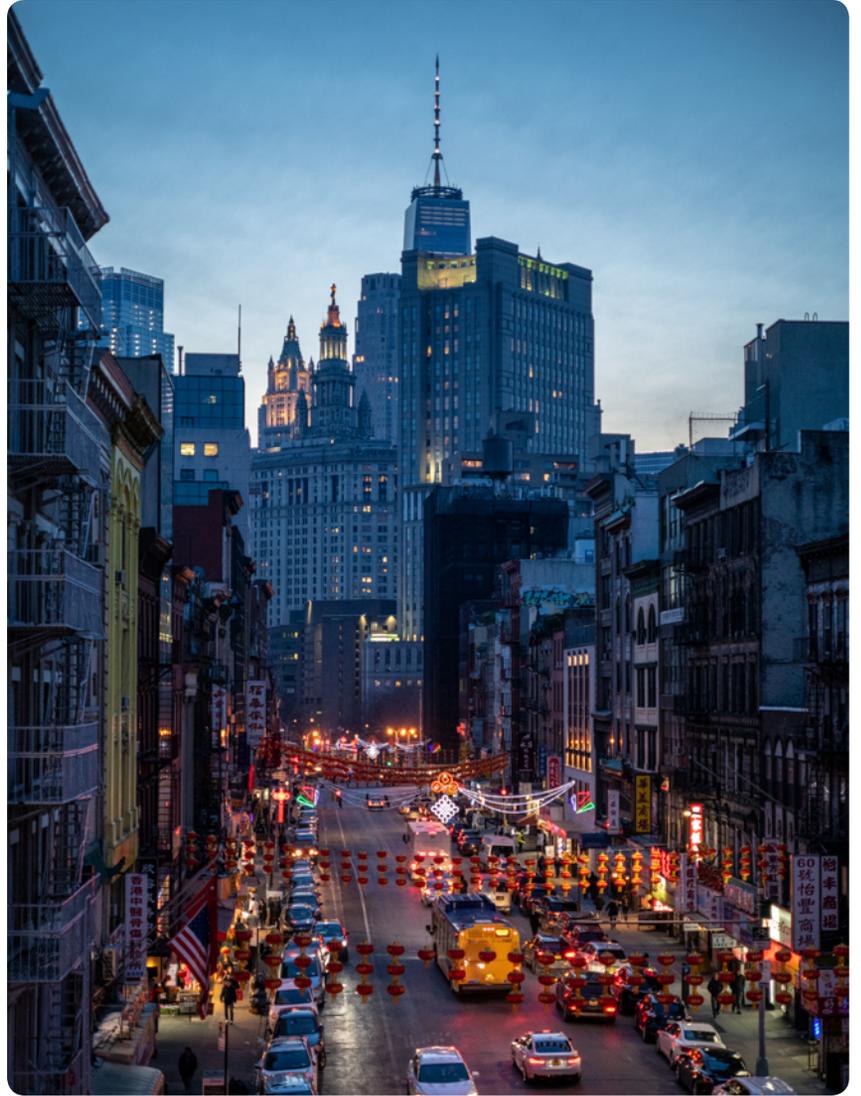


“

As with other destinations around the world, the pandemic has affected almost every factor of New York City's tourism and hospitality industry, and we saw visitation drop by two thirds in 2020. Since the beginning of the crisis, NYC & Company has been focused on supporting tourism businesses across the five boroughs, with the ultimate goal of safely bringing the industry back, along with the significant number of jobs and economic impact it generates".

*Fred Dixon, President & CEO
of NYC & Company*







“

As our current forecasts stand, we expect to welcome 57.9 million visitors in 2022. Following the wider restart of inbound international travel last month, we expect that international travel from 2021 to 2022 will triple in volume. While this crisis remains unpredictable and we can anticipate hurdles along the way, we are optimistic and look forward to welcoming the world back to NYC”.

Fred Dixon, President & CEO of NYC & Company.



“It’s Time for New York City”: Plan for Regrowth after COVID–19

NYC & Company, launched the first phase of “It’s Time for New York City,” with an unprecedented \$30 million tourism recovery campaign. It is being rolled out as restrictions are lifted, more people are vaccinated and as travel resumes in the United States and beyond.

The new investment is made possible through American Rescue Plan Act funds secured and awarded by U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer and Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“It’s Time for New York City” will run in three phases and will include

television, digital, outdoor media and partnerships. The initiative reminds visitors of the City’s unrivalled energy, excitement, and the abundance of life, endless experiences and resiliency that make NYC the most iconic destination in the world.

Designed to create urgency and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), “It’s Time for New York City” will be unveiled today during NYC & Company’s Board of Directors Meeting at the Javits Center. The announcement comes as New York City expects to welcome 36.1 million visitors this year—recapturing more than half of its record 66.6 million visitors in 2019.

Business Tourism Surge

Here the business travellers in New York City account for 20 percent of all visitors, and the annual growth in business travel had remained fairly steady prior to the pandemic. There are more than 80 percent of business travellers are domestic, and almost three out of four stay in a hotel, with

an average duration of about two days. The mix between transient and group travel (i.e., conferences, conventions) is fairly even.

The top three activities for domestic business visitors include dining, nightlife and museums.

Hotel Stays for Business Travellers

Now, the international business travellers are more likely to stay in a luxurious hotel and for a longer duration (nearly a week). A majority of international business travellers come to the New York City for temporary business, while more

than a third arrives for any world-class events or a large conferences or conventions.

The top three activities include shopping, sightseeing and museums.









Average Expenditure

The business travellers spend more on average than leisure visitors. The domestic business visitors (in United States) spend an average of \$860 per person, more than twice the spending of domestic leisure tourists. The international business travellers spend nearly \$2,000 per person, which is 30 percent more than international leisure travellers.



Travel for Business Meets

The meeting and convention delegate travel averaged about 6.2 million visitors; about half the number of business travellers, between 2016 and 2018. These business delegates attend any events and programmes at major hotels and other venues across the city. The international convention delegates spend 2.6 times more than their domestic counterparts.

Source: OSC

Images Source: <https://nycgo.barberstock.com/>



Fred Dixon

*President & CEO of
NYC & Company*

In an exclusive interview with MICE Travel Advisor, Fred Dixon, President & CEO of NYC & Company shares his opinion on the business tourism approach of NYC and Company to allure more MICE travellers to the city.

MICE Travel Advisor: Share with us about the role and contribution of NYC & Company in attracting more MICE travellers to the city.

Fred Dixon: NYC & Company is the official destination marketing organization and convention and visitors bureau for the City of New York, dedicated to maximizing travel and tourism opportunities throughout the five boroughs, building economic prosperity and spreading the positive image of New York City worldwide.

MICE Travel Advisor: Due to COVID-19, the tourism industry has seen a huge loss. What are the losses NYC & Company has incurred and how you are planning to reboot the MICE and leisure tourism in New York?

Fred Dixon: As with other destinations around the world, the pandemic has affected almost every factor of New York City's tourism and hospitality industry, and we saw visitation drop by two thirds in 2020. Since the beginning of the crisis, NYC & Company has been focused on supporting tourism businesses across the five boroughs, with the ultimate goal of safely bringing the industry back, along with the significant number of jobs and economic impact it generates.

In June of this year, NYC & Company launched *It's Time for New York City*, a new \$30 million global tourism recovery campaign -- the City's largest tourism promotion to date. This is a multi-phased effort consisting of television, digital, outdoor media and partnerships, which we have rolled out in stages, focusing first on regional and domestic markets, before now beginning to expand internationally after the resumption of foreign travel to the United States on November 8.



MICE Travel Advisor: What are the marketing strategies NYC & Company has taken to boost the meetings and event scenario?

Fred Dixon: As part of this larger recovery campaign, we recently launched *It's Time to Make it NYC*, our largest marketing and sales effort for the meetings and conventions industry, to tell meeting planners globally that New York City is open for business and ready to safely welcome face-to-face meetings and events. This came on the heels of the \$1.5 billion expansion of the Javits Convention Center, plus new developments and enhancements across infrastructure, hotels, attractions, venues and more. This summer, New York City introduced the Key to NYC programme, requiring proof of vaccination for most indoor venues, making the City one of the safest places to visit and do business from a public health perspective.



MICE Travel Advisor: For 2022 tourism season, how you are planning to attract the global travellers?

Fred Dixon: NYC & Company has already resumed our robust scope of work with international representative travel trade and public relations agencies in 13 global markets serving 19 regions, and we plan to be fully scaled up in 2022. At the same time, *It's Time for New York City* is rolling out in key visitor markets around the world. We also continue to engage the travel trade, meeting planners and media, to ensure NYC is top of mind for travellers and delegates globally.

MICE Travel Advisor: What are the countries, you are targeting for international travellers?

Fred Dixon: *It's Time for New York City* is currently running in the United Kingdom and will soon launch in Canada, Brazil, Mexico, core Western European markets and South Korea. We are also continuing with virtual and in-person sales missions and trade shows to top inbound markets.



MICE Travel Advisor: What planning you have taken to attract more UK travellers to your city?

Fred Dixon: As our number one source of international visitors to NYC, the UK is of critical importance to our recovery. *It's Time for New York City* advertisements are currently running in the market in partnership with our travel partner British Airways. On November 8, when the US borders reopened for international travel, we also worked together with BA on activations for their inaugural flight, including a press familiarization trip for 15 UK travel editors -- with the highlight being a celebratory event at the Empire State Building.

MICE Travel Advisor: Did you receive any government aid from US government to reenergize tourism business? If so, can you please explain?

Fred Dixon: As a 501(c) 6 organization, NYC & Company was grateful to secure relief funds through the federal Paycheck Protection Program. Further, the \$30 million investment for *It's Time for New York City* was made possible through American Rescue Plan Act funds secured and awarded by U.S. Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer and Mayor Bill de Blasio.

MICE Travel Advisor: Can you mention the statistics of the international tourist arrivals and spending in New York?

Fred Dixon: In 2019, New York City welcomed a record 66.6 million visitors to New York City, including 13.5 million international travellers, generating \$47.4 billion in total spending. It is worth noting that while the international market makes up just 20 percent of visitation to NYC, it represents about half of spending and half of hotel room nights.



MICE Travel Advisor: Please tell about the expectation in 2022 travel scenario and what is your opinion on it?

Fred Dixon: As our current forecasts stand, we expect to welcome 57.9 million visitors in 2022. Following the wider restart of inbound international travel last month, we expect that international travel from 2021 to 2022 will triple in volume. While this crisis remains unpredictable and we can anticipate hurdles along the way, we are optimistic and look forward to welcoming the world back to NYC.



Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company is stepping next for business diversification strategy

The Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company (ADNEC), part of ADQ, one of the region's largest holding companies, is taking the next step in its business diversification strategy with the strategic assets transfer of tourism business unit from Etihad Airways to ADNEC Group. Etihad Holidays will be acquired by Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Company (ADNEC) to expand their footprint in tourism. Etihad Holidays will integrate with Tourism 365, being the ADNEC tourism promotion business. The decision will further support the UAE's tourism sector, given ADNEC's extensive experience and capabilities across tourism industry.

Dublin reboots MICE industry by hosting large scale conferences

The World Organisation of Family Doctors (WONCA) congress will be held at The Convention Centre Dublin (The CCD) in September 2024.

This prestigious congress will bring together over 2,500 delegates from the fields of general practice, generating over €4 million towards the local economy.

The successful bid was prepared by the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP), in conjunction with The CCD and Fáilte Ireland and was submitted to the WONCA board in February 2020.

The decision on the selected host city was delayed due to COVID-19, with Dublin announced in October 2021. ICGP last hosted this conference in 1998 with members of WONCA Europe looking forward to returning to Dublin.





Terre Haute Convention Center sets a date for public grand opening

The new Terre Haute Convention Center sets a date for a public grand opening. On 9th April an opening is been scheduled. Tennille Wanner (General Manager) of the project said it is an opportunity for the public to see inside of the convention center and envision events that the space is able to host.

London events sector reports 231% increase

According to new data released by London & Partners' meetings and events benchmarking partner, Venue Performance, the number of events in London is increasing exponentially. The data shows London venues increased the number of events they ran by 231% in September 2021, compared with August 2021.

London hosted an average of 12.6 events per venue in September 2021, compared to an average of 3.81 in August 2021. It also shows that event planners are increasingly confirming forward bookings in London, revealing an average of 8.4 confirmed bookings per venue in September 2021 compared to 5.31 in July 2021, an increase of 58%.

Despite the pandemic, a range of new venue has opened across the capital in recent months. According to new research from the London Convention Bureau, 18 new hotels has opened in 2021 alone. The new hotels have added 2,509 new rooms to the city, representing a 1.4% increase. Thirty-two percent of these rooms are luxury 4- or 5-star options, while 34% are in the budget end of the market.



Nick Vournakis appointed EVP and Chief Customer Officer at CWT



Nick Vournakis has been appointed the EVP and Chief Customer Officer at CWT, the Business-to-Business-for-Employees (B2B4E) travel management platform.

Nick reports to Michelle McKinney Frymire, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CWT and serve as member of the company's Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

Derek Sharp appointed EVP and Chief Traveller Experience Officer at CWT



Derek Sharp has been appointed the EVP and Chief Traveler Experience Officer at CWT, the Business-to-Business-for-Employees (B2B4E) travel management platform.

Derek Sharp reports to Michelle McKinney Frymire, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of CWT and serve as members of the company's Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

Immediately prior to this appointment, Nick Vournakis was Managing Director, Global Customer Development, before which he was President, US Military & Government. He joined CWT in January 2000 and his other senior roles in the company have included responsibility for North American Air Solutions, and managing our Canadian operations.

Tourism Ireland appoints Helen McGorman as head of stakeholder engagement



Tourism Ireland has strengthened its senior team with the appointment of a new Northern Ireland head of stakeholder engagement.

Helen McGorman will take up the post immediately and be based at the organisation's office in Coleraine.

McGorman will work with colleagues at Tourism Northern Ireland, as well as other agencies, local authorities and group, to identify opportunities to rebuild overseas tourism to Northern Ireland.

Tel Aviv

A non-stop MICE City



A hub of impressive culture and commerce, Tel Aviv is the capital of Israel. The New York Times has named Tel Aviv as the Mediterranean Capital of Cool because of its savvy attitude and cultural activity. The city hosts a plethora of nightlife activities, cuisine, culture and liberalism. This is why Tel Aviv is also considered a city that never sleeps.

In 2003, Tel Aviv was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its unique Bauhaus-style architecture. When you are in this city, there are so many things you can explore.

Despite its greater reputation for commerce, culture and nightlife, Tel Aviv is also a great destination for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions. There are many venues available in Tel Aviv for conducting important markets and modern facilities are conveniently located in the centre of the city.

Tel Aviv's major hotels have special business - and other upmarket - clientele options, executive floors and lounges, and most of them offer meeting space for small meetings and workshops.

With Tel Aviv's status as Israel's main centre for commerce and business tourism, all of Tel Aviv's major properties offer these amenities and other services.



Top-Tier Convention Centres



Expo Tel Aviv, International Convention Centre



Regardless of its size or scope, every private and business challenge can be handled with flexibility, innovation and attentiveness at Expo Tel Aviv. This convention centre welcomes over 3 million visitors per year. The Expo Tel Aviv is the centre of endless possibilities and attractions. It is located at the heart of the city of Tel Aviv. Established in 1933, the total area expands up to 75 acres. Of this area, the exhibition area covers 15000 sq. m and the outdoor exhibition space covers 40000 sq m It is one of the best convention centres in the city.

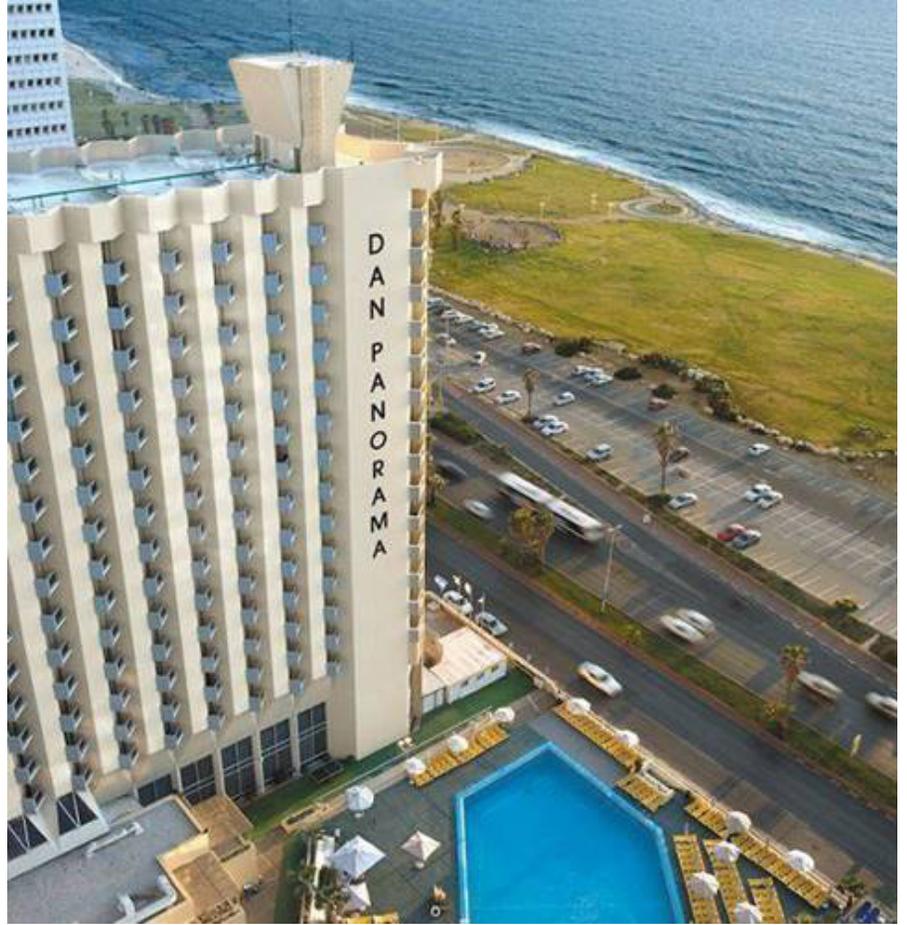


Dan Panorama Tel Aviv

With more than 20 years of experience organising conferences, conventions and private events, the Conference and Events Center at Dan Panorama Hotel Tel Aviv meets the highest standards of service and technical support.

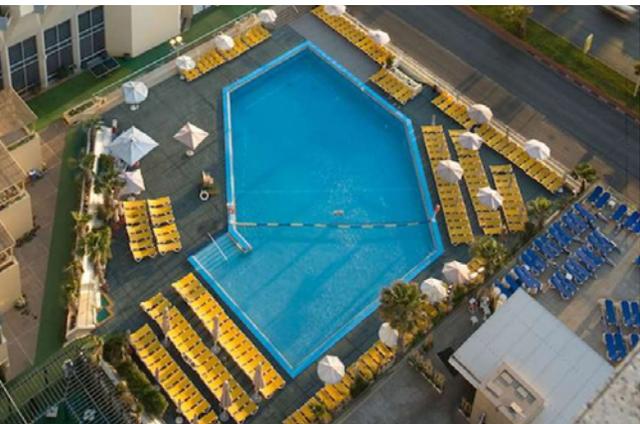
You can be sure to have an event that exceeds your expectations if you choose this convention centre in Tel Aviv. Dan Panorama Hotel Tel Aviv's Conference and Events Center hosts hundreds of business events, professional conventions and exhibitions each year.

Dan Panorama Tel Aviv has become a favourite destination for major businesses, prestigious organisations and professional bodies that continuously benefit from their professionalism, credibility and friendly attitude.



Avenue Convention and Events Centre

This convention centre has been ranked 6th in hosting events. It has built a great reputation for providing all kinds of support required for a successful event. It is also best suited for tradeshow. It is situated in Shoham, Israel. The Avenue Convention & Events Center is an excellent venue for large-scale conferences, meetings, press conferences and networking events.



Tel Aviv as the Cultural Centre

There is no shortage of theatres, dance centres or concert halls in the city. International musicians also conduct their live performances in Israel.

The cultural significance of the city can be understood by the various museums and galleries in the city. The world-famous **Tel Aviv Museum of Art** is renowned for its showcase of Israeli and International artists and talents. The museum takes pride in displaying the works of Picasso, Kandinsky, Archipenko, Henri Moore and more. The **Museum of History of Tel Aviv-Yafo** depicts the story of Tel Aviv that allows

one to delve into the history of the city.

New skyscrapers were built in Tel Aviv during the 1990s, making it a hi-tech mecca. A view of this vibrant, modern city can be obtained from the **Azrieli Center**, the tallest of these structures.

UNESCO awarded Tel Aviv the World Heritage status for its **White City** in 2003. The White City is an area around Rothschild Boulevard that consists of the world's largest collection of international Bauhaus and eclectically styled buildings.



Top Accommodations

Hotel Nordoy

This hotel has been a major landmark in the city for years. It is also one of the oldest operating hotels in the city, providing an exquisite stay.

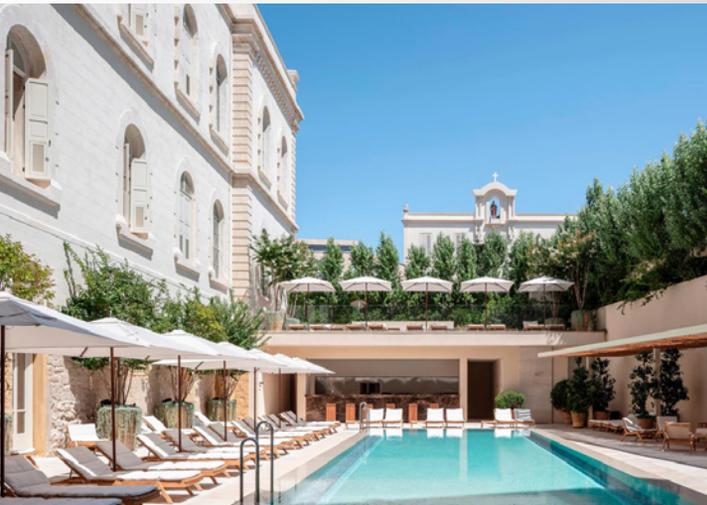
The Jaffa Hotel

The Jaffa Hotel was once a French-built pilgrim's hotel. The interior today reeks of the original Romanesque wing.

Brown TLV Urban Hotel

The Brown TLV Urban Hotel has an upbeat vibe that is a lot different from the other hotels. The interior exudes a retro décor that is sourced from the boutiques and flea markets.





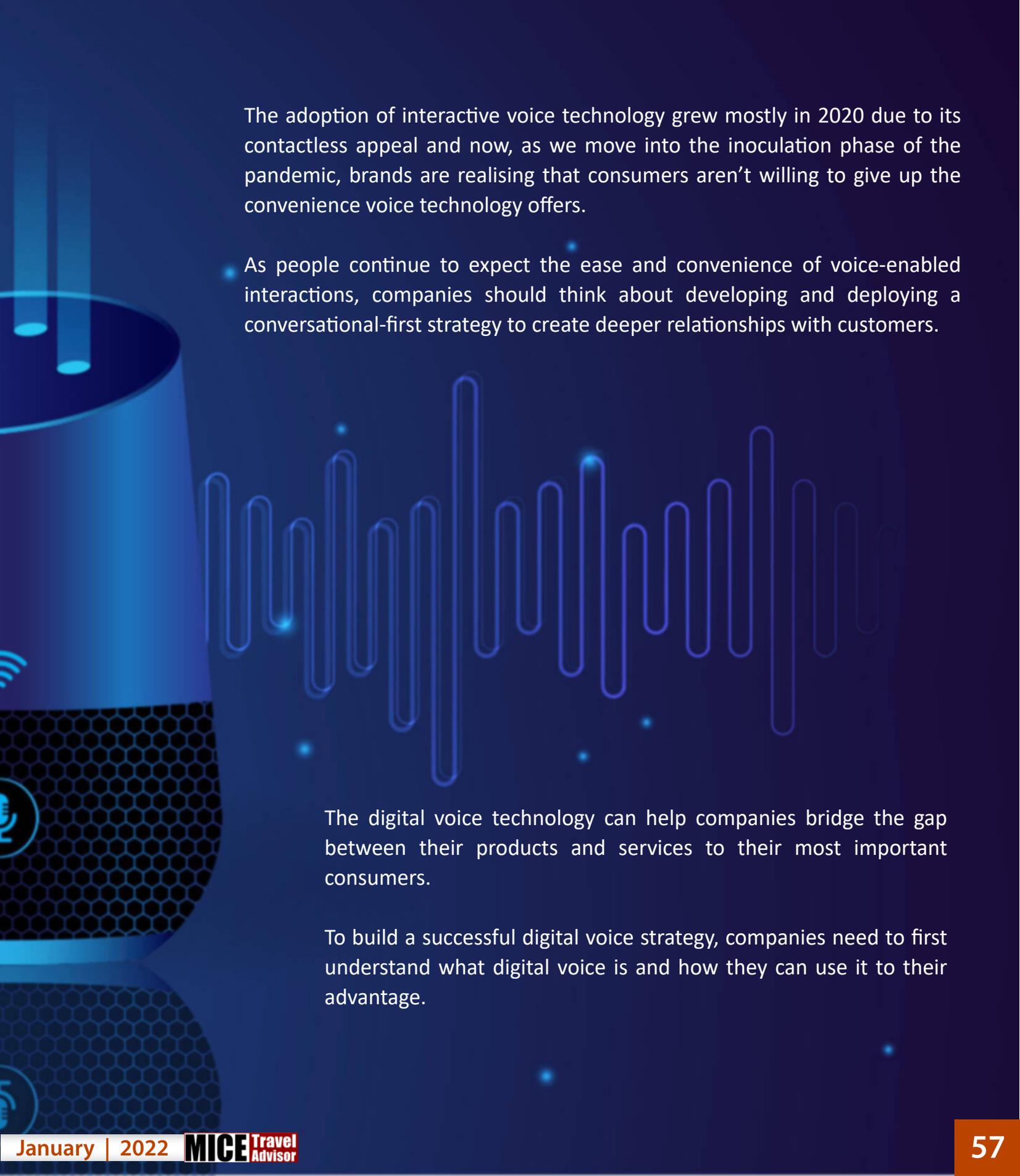
Apart from being such an enticing travel destination, Tel Aviv has made its name of being one of the best in the list of MICE travellers.

Next Gen Voice Technology



Voice technology has been gaining steady popularity in recent years, from smart speakers in homes to voice control in cars. The COVID-19 pandemic was a catalyst that skyrocketed voice technology's prominence, with almost 40 percent of the U.S. population using smart speakers last year. Now it has expanded to hotels, airlines and convention centres.





The adoption of interactive voice technology grew mostly in 2020 due to its contactless appeal and now, as we move into the inoculation phase of the pandemic, brands are realising that consumers aren't willing to give up the convenience voice technology offers.

As people continue to expect the ease and convenience of voice-enabled interactions, companies should think about developing and deploying a conversational-first strategy to create deeper relationships with customers.

The digital voice technology can help companies bridge the gap between their products and services to their most important consumers.

To build a successful digital voice strategy, companies need to first understand what digital voice is and how they can use it to their advantage.



What is Digital Voice?

With 61 percent of adults who already use a voice assistant reporting that they will use it more frequently in the future to complete tasks like making purchases or adding items to a shopping list, companies have a golden opportunity.

However, companies can go beyond the voice assistants built into smart speakers to create a unique voice that speaks of the company's brand and sets them apart from the uniform sound of an assistant's voice.

Custom digital voices can be deployed across different devices and touch-points to create a seamless experience across the entire consumer journey and increase brand recognition. Similar to visual branding collateral, the voice a brand leverages must be instantly identifiable,

engaging, memorable and consistent between devices and platforms. When consumers hear the same voice—no matter the device or platform—they trust the brand more and develop an emotional connection, which is key for brands as voice technology continues to grow.

To optimise digital voices, companies need to choose the right voice partner. Ideally, the company will choose a partner that guarantees data privacy, commits to quality assurance and uses the most effective technology available, so that the company can create the best experiences possible for consumers while guaranteeing their privacy.



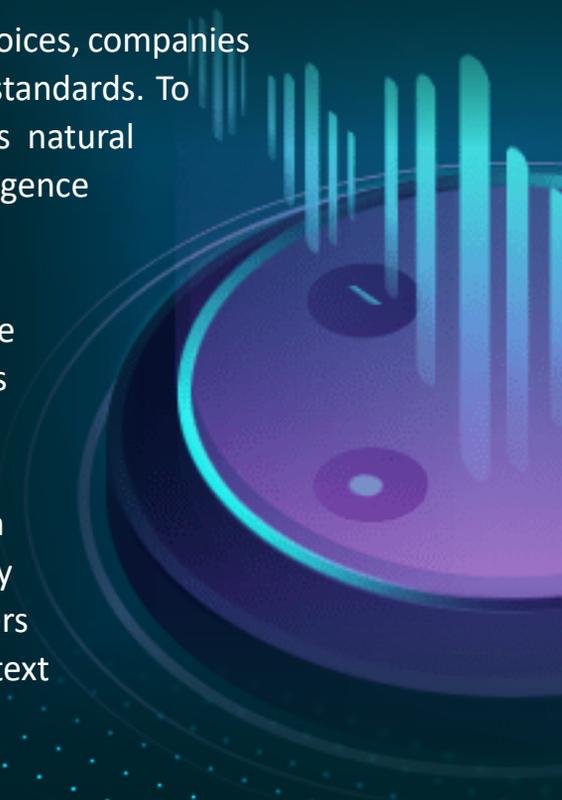
Digital Voice

Technology Powering Next-Gen Digital Voice

As consumers become accustomed to more natural-sounding voices, companies need to ensure that the voices they're deploying meet their standards. To be effective, companies should deploy technologies such as natural language understanding (NLU), conversational artificial intelligence (AI) and neural text-to-speech (TTS).

Together, these technologies enable voices to sound more humanlike, as opposed to the voices found in smart assistants today.

NLU, which enables machine reading comprehension, can be applied to tasks such as short-spoken commands or highly complex tasks like comprehending entire news articles. It powers conversational Artificial Intelligence to recognise speech and text inputs to translate their meanings across languages.





Combining these technologies with neural TTS, companies can produce synthesised speech from text that sounds like a human voice and can respond more appropriately to consumer grievances and questions.

For example, many automakers are embedding voice solutions into their GPS, navigation and telematics systems, which can be used for outbound communications between an automaker and the driver. If an automaker is trying to warn a driver about safety hazards, they can deploy a voice that is more sympathetic. However, if the

automaker is communicating a scheduled service reminder at a dealership, it wouldn't make sense to use the same voice as the safety hazard warning voice. Instead, the automaker could deploy a more upbeat voice when communicating the reminder. With the help of NLU, AI and TTS, automakers can deploy different voices depending on each consumer's situation.

With different voices at their disposal, companies can create better, more engaging experiences for consumers that increase loyalty and deepen consumer trust.



Up Levelling the Consumer Experience

While voice technology has been widely used to increase web accessibility for the visually impaired as well as in niche use cases like GPS devices for vehicles, companies across multiple industries, such as retail, travel and hospitality, are realising the benefits of the technology and are using it to provide superior, personalised customer experiences to interact with consumers by deploying different voices based on the consumer's unique situation.

Once the voice is created, the technology can be adjusted and scaled, so companies can modify scripts, maintain a consistent brand voice and add new ways to keep consumers engaged.

This way, companies don't have to depend on a voice actor's availability or health or cover their recording costs each time they want to make an adjustment to their custom voice. This allows them to deploy voice updates immediately as they are made.

Scalability

Scalability is crucial to deploying different voices given the different reasons consumers interact with voice technology. In the wellness industry, companies can encourage people to exercise, stay hydrated and take medication, all of which can be communicated in an upbeat and friendly tone.

The companies can also remind people to meditate, for which an upbeat tone may not work as well. Instead, the company can deploy a calming voice in different languages to help users get in the right mindset.

As voice technology grows more popular and people continue to demand ease of use and convenience, brands can work on creating a digital voice now to meet consumer preferences. By using digital voices that capture the unique brand persona, companies can better engage their most important customers, provide better customer service and offer superior experiences.



India International Travel Mart

Date:

26 – 28 November 2021

Place:

Deccan College Grounds,
Yerawada, India



IITM Tourism Fair Show concluded with grand success

As the tourism world slowly gets on recovery mode, we are pleased to announce our 4th event of the Calendar. The tree events were held in Chennai, Bengaluru & Mumbai on October 18-19, 2021, October 22-23, 2021 and 19-20 November 2021 respectively.

Those events saw a tremendous response from the travel trade fraternity. The pandemic has affected the tourism industry hugely and as the industry attempts to get back into business mode, we are happy to add value to the recovery of the tourism industry.

India's leading travel-media company Sphere Travelmedia & Exhibitions will organize the 'India International Travel Mart' (IITM) in Pune from the 26– 28 November 2021 at the Deccan College Grounds, Yerawada.

The 2 day expo was inaugurated by

- » Mr. VG Kelkar, Travel Agents Ass. Of Pune
- » Mr. Anand Tripathi, Rajasthan Tourism
- » Mr. Deepak Pujari, Travel Agents Assc of Pune,
- » Mr. Krishna Gopalan, SKAL India
- » Mr. Bahram Zadeh, Travel Agents Assc of India
- » MR. Rohit Hangal, Sphere Travelmedia

IITM is India's premier trade exhibition that brings travel, tourism, hospitality, leisure and other related industries under a roof. It is aimed at bringing the industry, face-to-face with the travel trade, corporate buyers and the end-customers. The event will see the participation of travel agents/tour operators, DMC, hotels and resorts, national tourism offices, technology platforms, online travel portals, etc.

It will be a proud moment for Sphere Travelmedia & Exhibitions as it completes twenty successful years of providing the travel–trade industry and discerning buyers an opportunity to do business.

With 150 participants from various travel-trade organizations and tourism boards from 20 Indian states, IITM will showcase a variety of spheres such as pilgrimages, adventures, culture and heritage, beaches, hills and many more.



Sphere TravelMedia Director Sanjay Hakhu that as they recover from the pandemic to get back into business mode, India has emerged as one of the most interesting and productive countries for the travel industry both for leisure and business travel. A combination of factors is responsible for the growth and demand of travel within India. The visitor profile is on a B2B & B2C format and will have over 15,000 visitors over three days.

Sphere Travel Media Director Rohit Hangal added that with the present ongoing recovery of tourism and with International Arrivals in India on a slower growth, India International Travel Mart' is the right event to provide an impetus to the Indian domestic tourism industry. The tourism stakeholders from the states of Karnataka, Rajasthan, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and many more destinations will be seen aggressively marketing their products.

Highlights

- » This year the event has than 20 Indian State tourism departments participating, making it one of the highlights of the travel industry in the country.
- » Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand are the Partner States
- » Himachal, Punjab, Goa, Jammu and Kashmir, Tamilnadu, Chhattisgarh and Chandigarh are the Focus States
- » Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are the Feature states
- » More than 100 travel organizations, hotels and resorts participated from all over India, making it one of the most diverse ranges of hospitality products in the country on display.
- » Supported by India Tourism, the event showcased diverse Tourism segments such as Pilgrimage Travel, Adventure, Cultural pursuits, shopping tours, etc.



- » Attractive discounts on offer for Spot Bookings.
- » Excellent options to explore the country during monsoons
- » Perfectly timed to target Winter Holidays
- » The Visitor Profile is on a B2B & B2C format.
- » Entry is free

The 'India International Travel Mart' provides an ideal 'marketing opportunity' and 'excellent backdrop' to enhance the participant's 'brand-equity' in the eyes of the discerning end consumer and the travel-trade.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2022

**TRAVEL
CONGRESS
2022**

January 11, 2022

Travel Congress
Online
travelcongress.nl/en



January 16-22, 2022

ASEAN Tourism Forum
Sihanoukville, Cambodia
atf2022cambodia.com/

(Fitur)

January 19-23, 2022

FITUR 2022
Madrid, Spain
ifema.es/en/fitur

matka
NORDIC TRAVEL FAIR

January 21-23, 2022

Matka Nordic Travel Fair
Messukeskus Helsinki, Finland
matka.messukeskus.com/?lang=en

CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2022



January 21-23, 2022

Pittsburgh Travel Showcase
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
pittsburghtravelshowcase.com



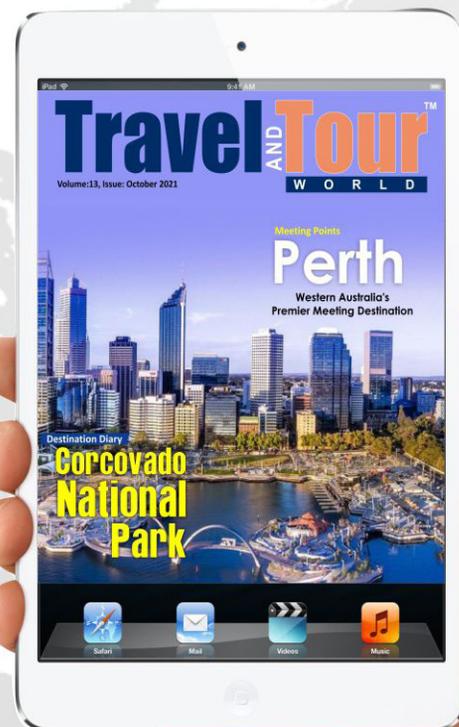
January 29, 2022

The YEG Travel Show
Edmonton Airport, Edmonton
edmontontravelshow.com



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