

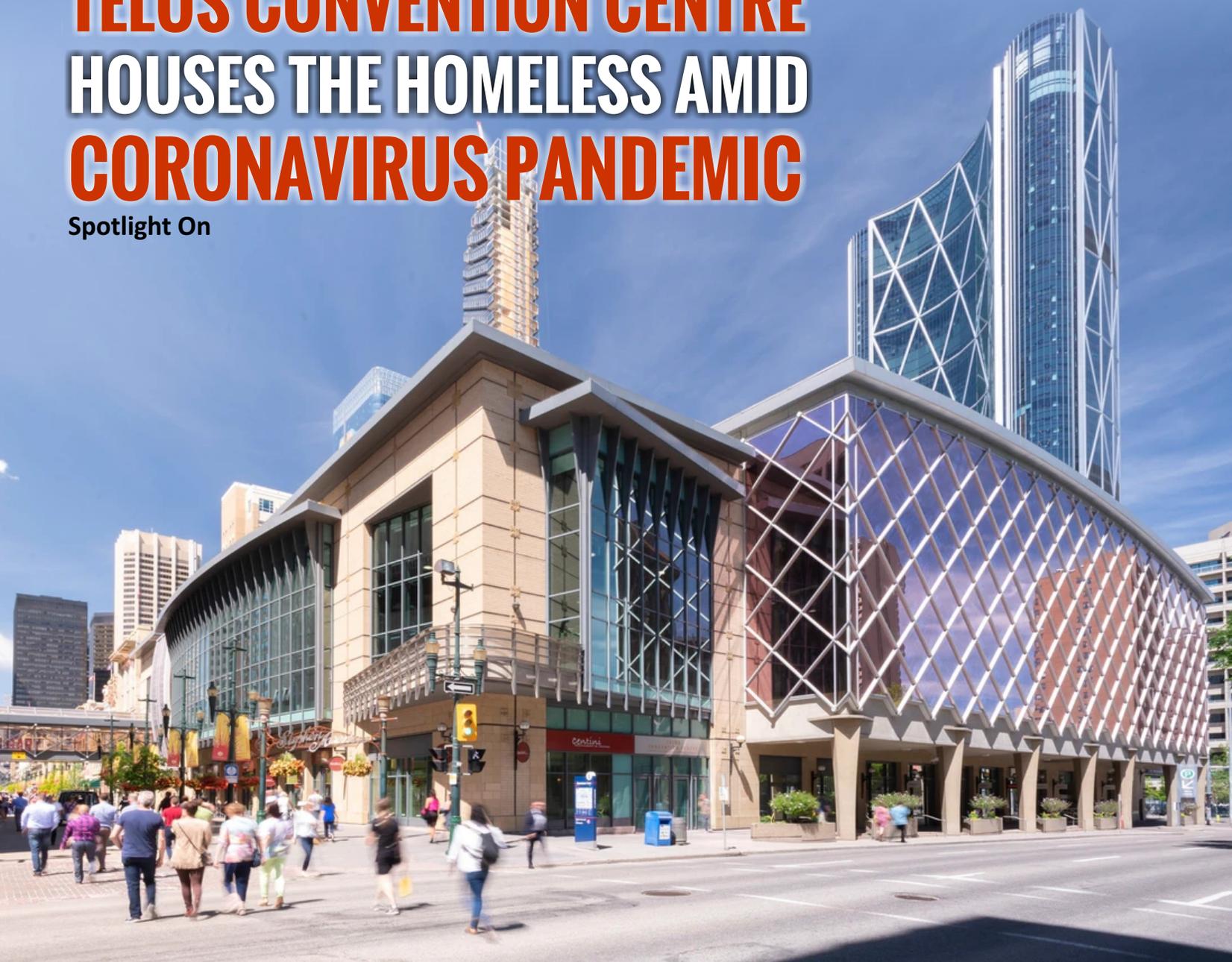
# MICE

# Travel Advisor

Volume: 9, Issue: May 2020

## TELUS CONVENTION CENTRE HOUSES THE HOMELESS AMID CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

Spotlight On



10. Dushanbe



04. MICE BITES

06. MICE APPOINTMENTS

**07. CENTRE OF ATTRACTION:** The COVID-19 pandemic will inevitably change the nature of the **meetings industry**. From **virtual events** to safety measures, industry professionals are now looking forward to recover and re-establish the sector in various ways. Read on to know the 'new normal' for the meetings industry, in a post-pandemic world.

**10. VENUE CHECK:** Tajikistan's capital city, **Dushanbe**, is known for its rich history. Over the years the region has also developed its MICE industry and is home to some of the best convention centres and hotels in the country. Presently, it is also one of few destinations in the world with no reported coronavirus cases.

**18. COVER STORY:** The events industry across the globe has been largely disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic. Meanwhile, event organisers are relying on digital medium and undertaking numerous methods to keep the industry afloat. Take a look at this piece to learn about the ways through which **event organisers are planning to sustain** amid the global crisis.

22. TELUS Convention Centre



**22. SPOTLIGHT ON:** The **TELUS Convention Centre** in Calgary has turned into a temporary shelter to house the homeless amid the global pandemic. The meetings venue is considered to be a leader in sustainability and consists of some of the most innovative meeting spaces.

26. Project Management Tools



**26. TECH TALK:** In a time when most companies across the world have resorted to embrace work from home, **Project Management Tools** is playing a significant role to help professionals manage businesses and projects from the comfort of their own home.

# From the Editor's Desk

## Dear Readers,

In the wake of coronavirus crisis, the events and meeting industry is the hardest hit. It has permanently changed the industry's basic needs. Now the event industry is leading to virtual automation or cancellation.

Will virtual events be the "new normal"? Unquestionably, the MICE industry is extremely resilient, and our human needs to interact and exchange information face-to-face will need recovery time.

In this issue, we are focusing on the changing trends of the meeting industry in post-COVID-19 times. Read our **Cover Story** and **Centre of Attraction** to know how the industry will re-launch and sustain with the new way of marketing, communications, and sustainability planning.

Throughout the world, companies have undertaken the work-from-home model. **Tech-It** is highlighting some of the basic tools which you can use while you are working from home. Understand how the online project management tools are helping to organise and execute the plans in bringing the entire team together from their own homes.

As the whole world grapples with this deadly pandemic, there are still a handful of countries that are reporting zero cases caused by the novel coronavirus. One such country is Tajikistan. Our **Venue Check** explains how Tajikistan's historic capital city Dushanbe is offering to host meetings and conventions with its top-class convention centers and luxurious hotels.

TELUS Convention Centre has opened as a shelter for homeless people in Calgary, a city in the western Canadian province of Alberta. The authorities are supporting these homeless people with full responsibility and following all health and safety protocols. Our **Spotlight On** is on TELUS Convention Centre and its contribution in Canadian MICE industry.

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# MICE BITES

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## **PATA predicts Asia Pacific visitor numbers likely to reduce by 32% in 2020**

Taking into account the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, the volume of arrivals in 2020 is now expected to reduce to fewer than 500 million this year. Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) forecast reveals the most likely scenario for international visitor arrivals into and across Asia Pacific in 2020 is that visitor numbers are likely to reduce by 32% year-on-year. This will take the visitor volume back to levels last seen in 2012 and the growth is expected to resume in 2021, returning to forecast levels by 2023.



## **Questex announced the cancellation of IHIF 2020**

Due to the continuing impact of the coronavirus outbreak, Questex has announced the cancellation of IHIF 2020. The organisers had initially hoped to stage the Berlin-based event in May, but this is now seen as untenable considering the global health crisis.



## Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre reschedules 66 events in latter half of 2020

Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre has been consistently communicating and working closely with clients to reschedule a large number of meetings and events that have been impacted by the current coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. As a result, they have so far successfully rescheduled 66 events into the latter half of 2020. The team of Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre have been utilising all their vast experience to rearrange its calendar and apply as much flexibility and empathy to accommodate the large number of events which have been affected.

## Arabian Travel Market to be held in May 2021

After the cancellation Arabian Travel Market in 2020, the event is set to return next year. Initially the tradeshow was postponed until June and organisers have now bowed to the inevitable in the wake of the coronavirus or COVID-19 pandemic. A statement mentioned that -In light of the changing global situation relating to the Covid-19 virus, we have continued to monitor the impact it is having not just on our industry, but on society in general.

05 MICE Travel Advisor



# MICE APPOINTMENTS

## **NEW ALMA RESORT APPOINTS HERBERT LAUBICHLER-PICHLER AS GENERAL MANAGER**

Austrian-born Herbert Laubichler-Pichler has taken charge of the opening of the 196-pavilion and 384-suite resort overlooking Long Beach, on Vietnam's Cam Ranh peninsula, with 14 food and beverage outlets and a cascade of 12 beachfront swimming pools. Laubichler-Pichler's work in Vietnam goes back almost 14 years and includes management of some of the country's most acclaimed properties including Anam that also fronts Long Beach, Ho Chi Minh City's Reverie Saigon and Nam Hai in Danang.



## **PARK INN BY RADISSON, DUBAI MOTOR CITY APPOINTS NEW REVENUE MANAGER**

Park Inn by Radisson, Dubai Motor City, has welcomed Erika Gudauskaite as its new revenue manager. Erika Gudauskaite started her career with Radisson Hotel Group in 2013 as Front Office Receptionist at Radisson Blu Hotel, Klaipeda, Lithuania and moved to Dubai and Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Media City in 2016 June as Assistant reservations manager and was later promoted to Reservations and M&E manager.



## **AMERICAN EXPRESS GLOBAL BUSINESS TRAVEL NAMES MICHAEL QUALANTONE AS CHIEF REVENUE OFFICER**

American Express Global Business Travel (GBT) announced the promotion of Michael Qualantone to Chief Revenue Officer, reporting directly to CEO Paul Abbott. Qualantone most recently held the role of EVP, Global Supplier Relations, leading both the supplier relations and meetings & events teams.



# MEETINGS IN TIMES OF DISRUPTION: What will be the new normal post COVID-19?

No one ever thought that the Coronavirus pandemic would force organisers to cancel events and many events would stream live on digital media.

Virtual events have now replaced face-to-face meetings and are now an important part of a well-rounded meeting strategy considering the safety, comfort and productivity of the session.

But after the lockdown is lifted will the events operate differently or will the meetings resume in the traditional format?

Event organisers need to have a crisis communication plan in hand so that they can easily reach out to the stakeholders through multiple channels and share uniform and consistent

information.

For planning and execution of any event, risk assessment and emergency preparedness should be included. Attendees should receive safety tips like the messages of frequent hand-washing, respiratory hygiene, when to seek medical care, etc. via social media, online videos, etc.

There should be insurance schemes to protect the planners of large events from cancellations etc.

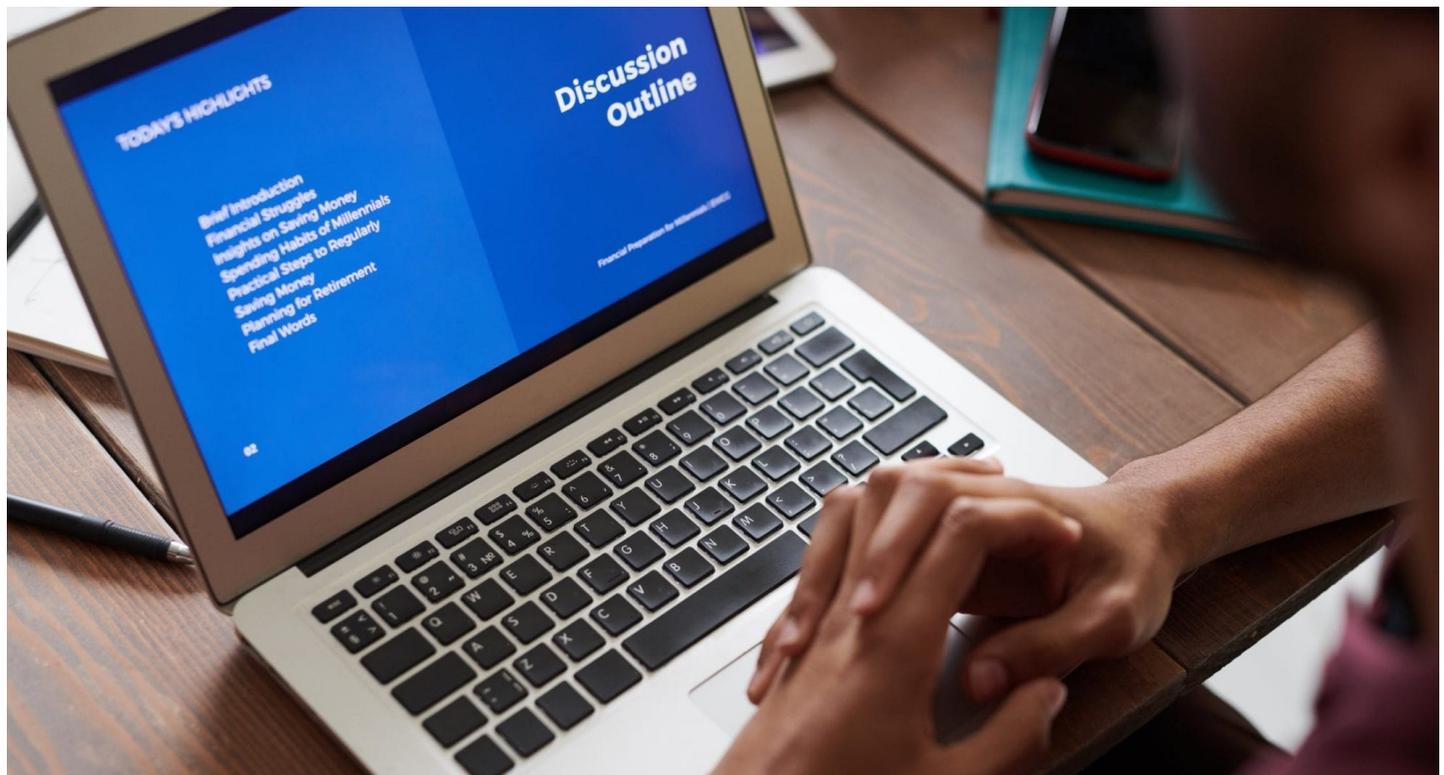
COVID-19 will change meetings in the short-term as temperatures will be recorded as and when the participants arrive. Air hugs and elbow bumps may be the greeting of choice.

Meetings should be livestreamed for attendees who are still not comfortable to resume travel. A flexible cancellation and attrition policy can be expected and all collateral and marketing materials might go digital. There will also be a requirement for larger venues to accommodate seating of delegates in cases of actual meeting so that social distancing norm is complied with.

Industry professionals will discuss what conditions will allow for the successful re-launch of the industry. Concerns like what steps should be taken to make attendees comfortable enough to move on with the aversions to large gatherings that has risen from this pandemic.

## CHANGES IN THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY

- It will start with a focus on conferences to support the values of sustainability, environment-friendliness, health and wellness.
- Registration of attendees is likely to move online so that the concerns of physical distancing is addressed.
- Demonstrated accountability by venues to show dedication to cleanliness and sanitation will be the need of the hour.
- Attendees should be comfortable with travelling for business purpose.
- A doctor at site may be the norm for smaller symposiums or seminars.





Most of the organisers and attendees are taking a stock of the situation and their expectations keep on changing day by day. Some are extremely positive about the rebound of the business event industry as they believe there will be a pent-up demand to meet face to face once the pandemic gets over.

However, the other half expects that there will be decrease in the number of events post the COVID-19 crisis as many will still be concerned about close contacts and prefer not to travel.

But organisers will for sure proactively innovate ways for meetings to adapt post the aftermath which will shift this period of uncertainty into imagination and innovation!



VENUE CHECK

# DUSHANBE

## *Tajikistan's historical capital showing MICE potential*

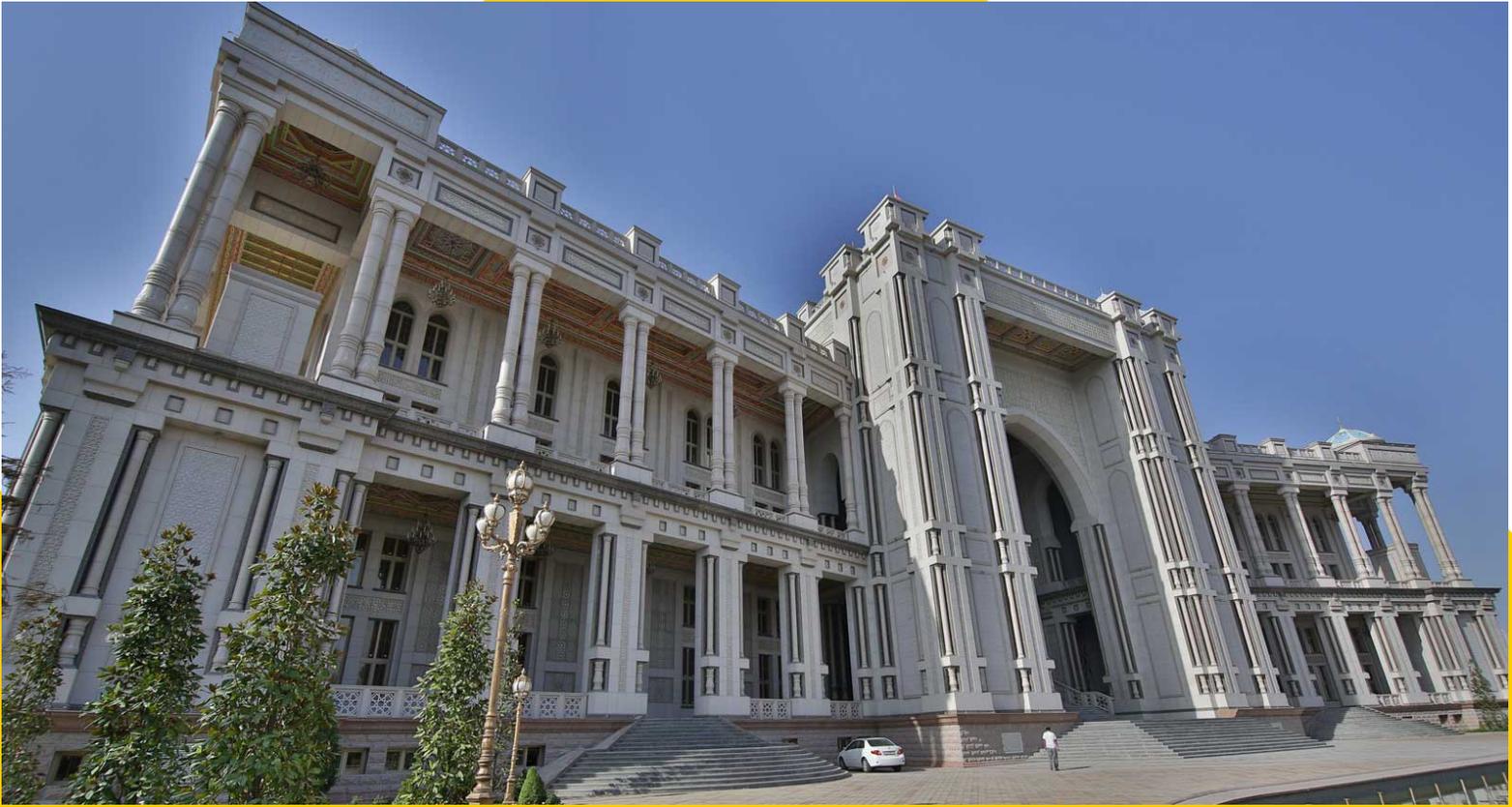
The largest city and capital of Tajikistan, Dushanbe is situated at the confluence of the Varzob and the Kofarnihon Rivers. Initially established as a village, the region was proclaimed as the capital of the Tajik Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic under the power of the Bolsheviks. Over the years, the city began developing at a rapid pace. The population increased as thousands of people relocated or migrated to the city.

As a part of its developmental process, Dushanbe became home to some of the most important buildings and monuments in Tajikistan. A majority of such properties now function as important conference centres and convention hotels.

In light of the coronavirus pandemic, numerous events, conferences, meetings, exhibitions and anything of similar nature have been cancelled across the globe. However, the post-pandemic phase will involve organising cancelled or postponed events. With various businesses resuming their operations, people will be on a lookout for event and conference venues in destinations with the least risk of COVID-19.

Tajikistan stands as one of the very few corona-free countries in the world today. Therefore, Dushanbe with its conference centres and convention hotels coupled with some interesting tourist places can be an ideal venue for MICE tourism in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.





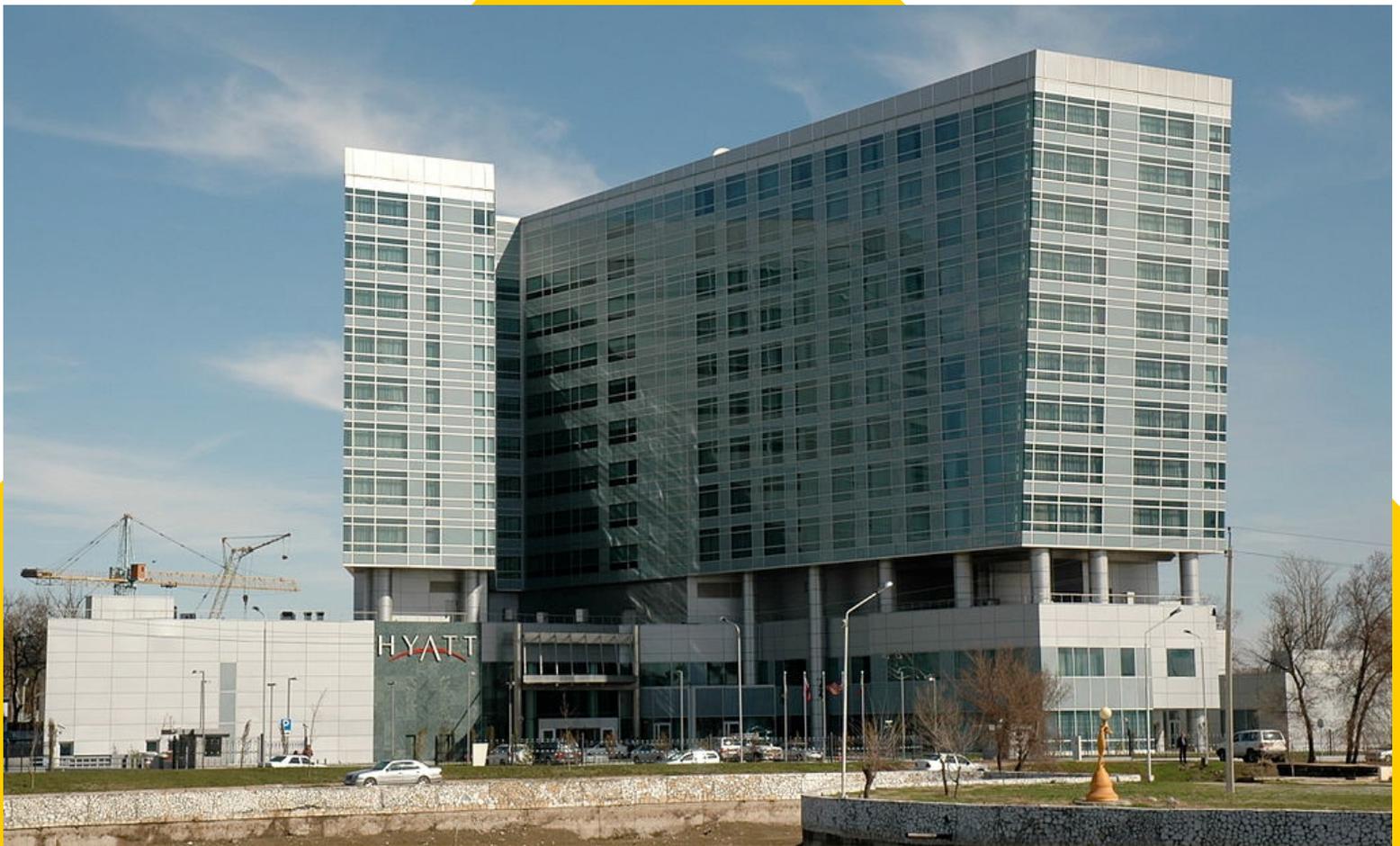
## *Kokhi Navruz Centre*

Considered to be one of the most magnificent constructions in the city, the Kokhi Navruz Centre or Navruz Palace is the epitome of luxury and grandeur. Initially planned to be the biggest tea house in Central Asia, the building later turned into a museum of *Tajiki* art and craft. It now stands as a cultural destination, an entertainment hub as well as a convention venue. The total area of the building is around 35,000 sq. m. The whole complex encapsulates approximately four hectares of land and consists of gardens, pavilions and fountains. The building offers 15 meetings rooms that can accommodate nearly 3200 guests at the same time. It is ideally suited to organise ceremonial meetings, exhibitions, presentations, conferences, banquets and corporate parties. The centre is also known for its extravagant halls that serve as both tourist venues as well as business and event spaces. The complex also provides an abundance of leisurely activities that can be ideal for business travellers to unwind after a busy day at work.



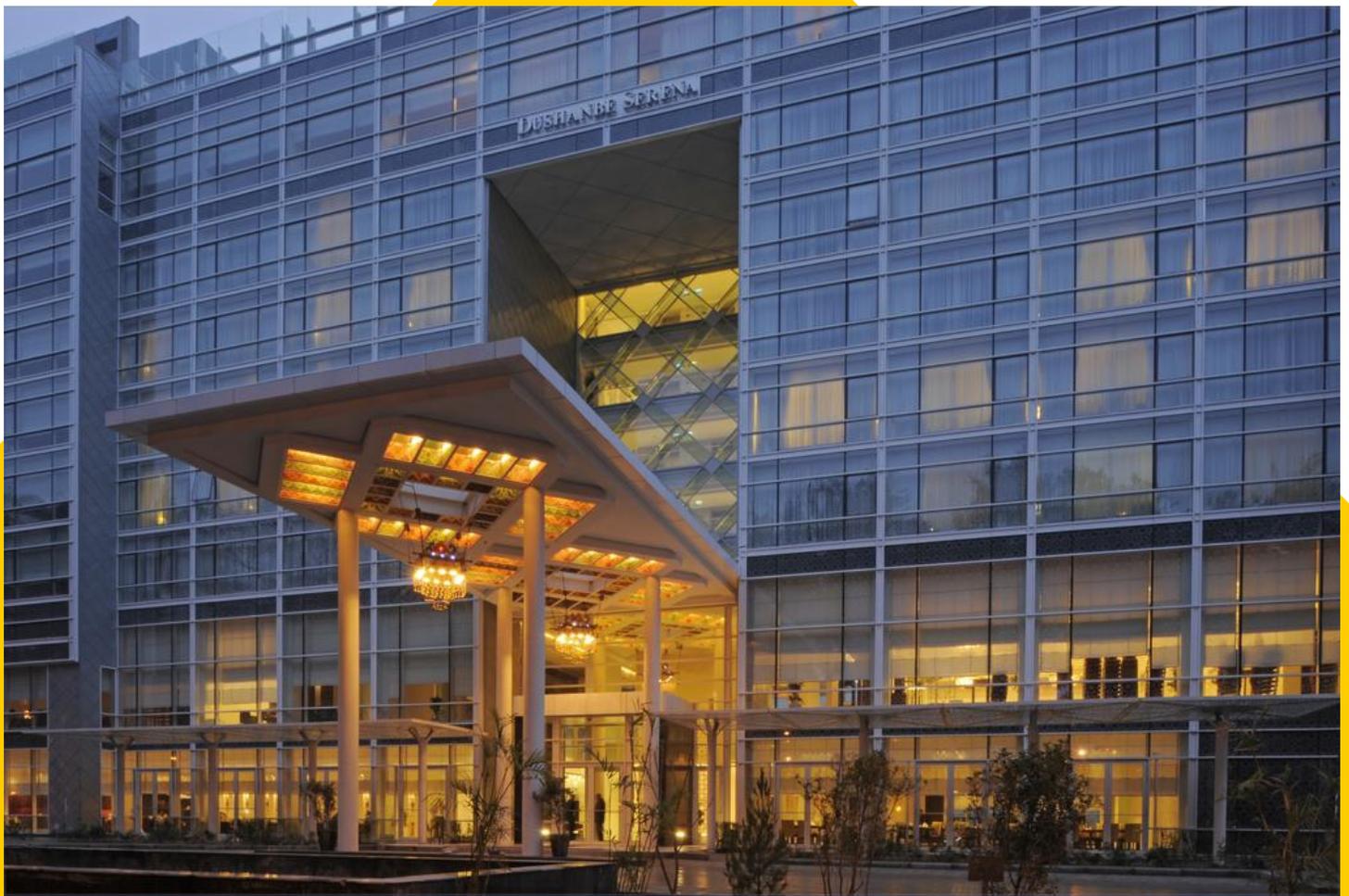
## *Ismaili Centre Dushanbe*

The Ismaili Centre Dushanbe is one of the six similar centres in the world. Established by Aga Khan IV, the centre functions as a place of worship but is also capable of hosting social, cultural and professional events. An amalgamation of classic history and contemporary structure, the building integrates old methodologies and new economic realities. It is equipped to host grand exhibitions, conferences, conventions, concerts and recitals. It also features a multi-purpose space, amphitheatre, a resource centre and classrooms that can host both leisurely activities and professional events. The centre has been home to many important conferences in Tajikistan and has welcomed eminent visitors over the years.



## *Hyatt Regency Dushanbe*

Recognised for its world class hospitality, Hyatt Regency Dushanbe is one of the key convention hotels in the city. With an approximate 1,500 sq. m. of meeting space, (sq.m) the hotel is capable of hosting small meetings as well as large conferences. The property offers seven meeting rooms and two boardrooms with adequate natural lighting and high-speed internet. It also provides business centre access and is equipped with modern meeting facilities and state-of-the-art audio-visual equipment. The hotel is capable of hosting both private and business events ranging from meetings, conventions, seminars, conferences, large business gatherings as well as banquets, weddings and receptions for up to 400 guests. In addition, the hotel provides a professional meeting and catering team and organising event of any size.



## *Dushanbe Serena Hotel*

One of the most prominent five-star accommodation venues in the city, the Dushanbe Serena Hotel also specialises in providing an incredible collection of striking meeting venues. The convention spaces in the hotel are crafted with modern design and iconic Tajik architecture. Today, the hotel stands as one of the country's premium event venues. It can host a range of events like international conferences, executive seminars, meetings, trainings and product presentations. The hotels offers four sophisticated meeting rooms with world-class business support. It also has a lavish ballroom ideal for hosting large gatherings. In addition, there is a unique outdoor garden that can host big events and accommodate up to 500 guests. It also provides full catering services, on-site event planning and assistance for team-building or other leisurely activities.

# Some exploration post work

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## *Take a stroll around the Rudaki Park*

Located at the heart of Dushanbe, the Rudaki Park presents an amazing collection of flora and beautiful natural landscapes. Walk along the winding pathways to relish the beauty of the flower gardens, the lakes, fountains and a canopy of trees above. One can also enjoy striking views of some of Dushanbe's historic monuments and buildings like the Presidential Palace and National Library. The park is also home to the iconic Rudaki statue and the giant Tajikistan flagpole.

## *Enjoy a day at Delfin Aquapark*

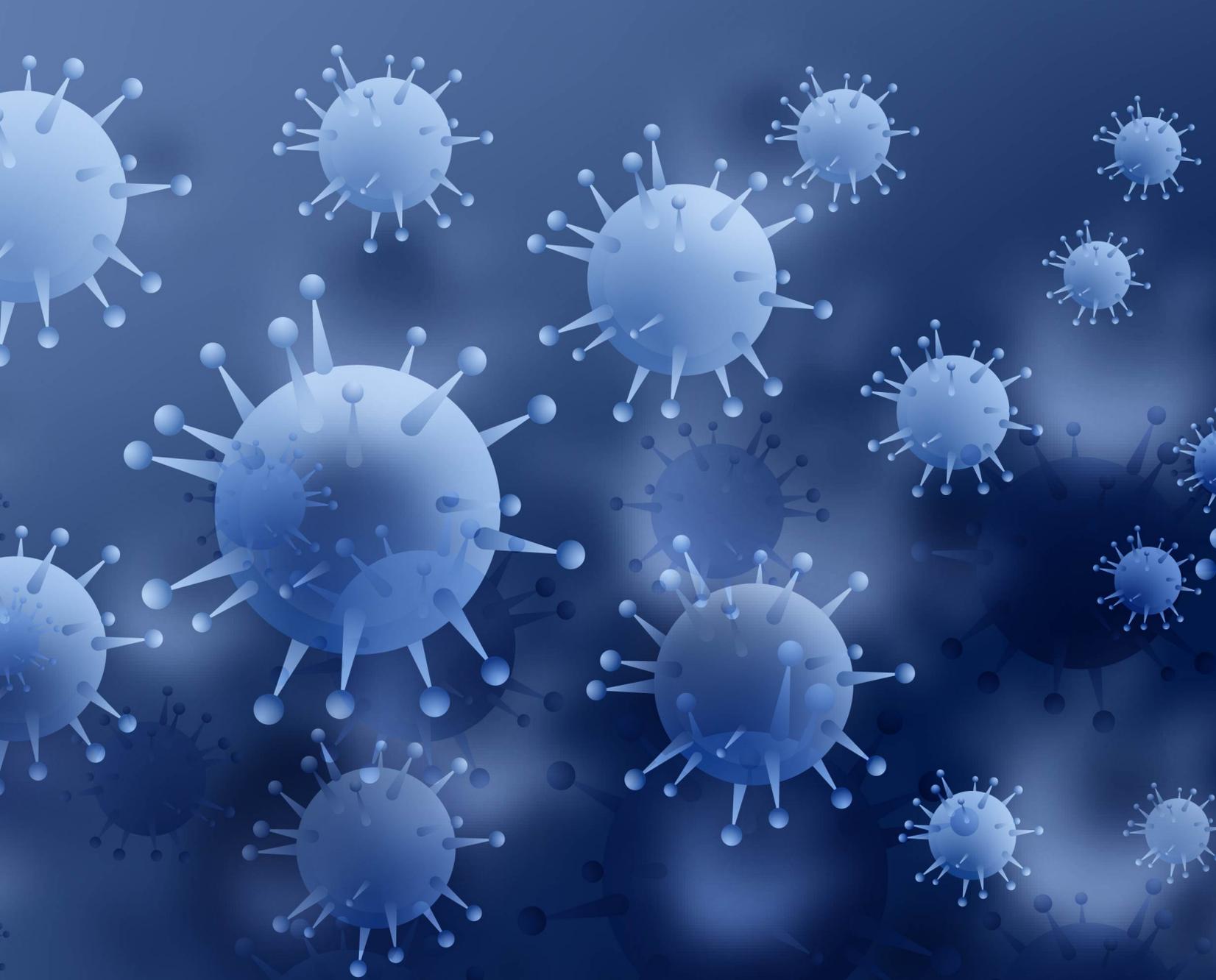
One can enjoy a swim at Delfin Aquapark, experience some water adventures on the rides or simply relax on the sun loungers. It also has its own bar and offers affordable food services.



## *Visit the National Museum of Tajikistan*



Learn about Tajikistan's rich history, culture and art by paying a visit to the National Museum of Tajikistan. The museum presents historical artefacts through four grand exhibitions that showcase four different periods of Tajiki history. It takes one on a detailed journey of ancient Tajikistan, gradually transitioning into contemporary times. The museum also presents geological displays and exhibits of nature.



# EVENTS INDUSTRY

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## SUSTAINING AMID COVID-19 CRISIS

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*The global pandemic of COVID-19 is certainly changing the event, meeting and exhibition industry. The MICE industry was the first to be affected by coronavirus. Now most of the major industry conferences, tradeshows and exhibitions are cancelled or postponed.*

*In this scenario, most of the events are now turning online. Most of the event organisers are preparing its virtual platform to organise a successful conference. In this article, we will discuss how event planners around the world will sustain in post COVID-19 time.*

## Event Insurance

The cost of cancelling or postponing an event can total millions of dollars or more. The event cancellation insurance is to protect the expenses and revenues of the events against the risk of unforeseen circumstances beyond the event planner's control. The protection generally includes the cost of cancellation, relocation, postponement or abandonment of events under any circumstances. There are some insurance policies which are written to include only specific risks like terrorism, natural disaster and extreme weather; while other policies are more general and offer broader “all-cause” and “all-risk” coverage. Now in this wake of coronavirus, insurance of any events or conferences is extremely necessary.

## Attendees' Safety

While organising an event, the first and foremost thing to think is about the safety of all attendees and delegates. Even after the situation is brought in control, the event organisers have to sure that the attendees are safe by providing them with high standard safety kits like sanitizers, masks and hand wash. Also it is necessary to maintain social distancing, to book extra rooms for quarantine facilities near the venue.

## Crisis Management Team

In this situation, it is necessary to set up a crisis management team. As there is no vaccine against coronavirus, prevention is the only way to keep safe. Setting up an experienced crisis response team will help the event organisers to control the current situation and its impact on the event business. It is also necessary to include seasoned members from various quick response teams to exclusively focus on the emergent situation.



## Timely Refund

It is the responsibility of an event organiser to refund the airline or hotel ticket amount to the attendees in accordance with the refund policy. This will help solidify the mutual trust. Now it is required to maintain flexible refund policy, where event organisers can have a liaison with country's embassy, visa offices and government's liaison officers to inform the attendees.

## Communication with attendees

It is the responsibility of every event organizer to maintain a good relation and have close communication with the attendees. The PR of the event organizer can help to officially announce and inform all registered attendees by sending emails and posting on social media regarding the cancellation/postponing of an event. It also helps to keep them updated about the probable rescheduling of the event.

## Channelising Cash

Maintaining regular and proper cash flow is vital for any business in these times of uncertainties. It is an obvious fact that you can no longer organize events in this period. You can also cut down your operational costs and marketing budget and move the amount to activities that can help sustain your business in the long run.

## Building Brand Awareness

It is the time to be creative. Be creative and utilize this time to create content to increase the brand awareness and promotion. It is necessary to keep the clients updated and engage them with potential prospects, so that they will remember you after the crisis has passed and things become normal again.





## TELUS CONVENTION CENTRE HOUSES THE HOMELESS AMID CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

In an attempt to house the most vulnerable population of Alberta during the Covid-19 pandemic, two largest cities in Alberta have opened shelters for homeless people in their main convention centres. This is a thoughtful move to ensure physical distancing among those staying there.

Tables and beds were set up as temporary shelter for the homeless at the TELUS Convention Centre in Calgary on April 1, 2020. Over the weekend, it started a trail run and provided food and shelter for 50 people. It intends to add another 250 since it believes that the homeless population is at the greatest health risk.



# TELUS CONVENTION CENTRE



## A look at Calgary TELUS Convention Centre

The convention centre connects Calgary with the global community by creating opportunities. This prime meeting place is known for bringing communities and businesses together to share knowledge, innovate, learn and grow. It maximises the economic benefits to the city of Calgary by operating in an efficient and market-competitive manner.

## A leader in sustainability

Its facilities are easily available to the guests like parking facilities and Guests Service Desk. The Calgary TELUS Convention Centre is committed to sustainability for more than 25 years. It is the first building in Alberta to be certified by the Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA) Go Green. It focuses on five key areas — resource consumption, waste reduction and recycling, building material, interior environment and tenant awareness.

BGE Service & Supply Ltd presented National Air Filtration Association (NAFA) Clean Air Award to the centre in 2018-2019 for improving the quality of the centre's indoor air. Guests can enjoy eco-friendly facilities as the centre runs extensive recycling and reduction programmes. There are low flow water fixtures, solar panels and renewable green power.

## Innovative Meeting Spaces

There are more than 122,000 sq.ft of convention space, making it ideal for exhibitions. The events are handled by devoted managers. An award-winning culinary team prepares customised food. One can also avail the latest audio/visual digital technology which makes it a world-class facility.

At the north side of the TELUS building is a private and modern retreat, the Main Level Boardroom for intimate meetings. Situated next to the skywalk in the South Building is the Upper Select Boardroom which looks over the city streets and has the latest teleconferencing capabilities which are ideal for innovation. The Ideation Centre is ideal for private board meetings, workshops and concurrent sessions and it has unique break-out rooms with flexible spaces. The lobby space is good as a pre-function space.

Colab is another meeting space ideal for strategy sessions and is flexible to hold gatherings of different sizes. It is well-equipped with comfortable seating and latest multimedia.

Managing events are frictionless and easy here with updated technology and the connectivity to different parts of the city is excellent. The specialty rooms and diverse event spaces can accommodate 10 to 4,000 people for events of any size. For a more innovative approach, one can head to the Glen patio or the skywalk overlooking the bustling Stephen Avenue.





## **Blooming businesses**

Year after year it is known to facilitate and host events which adds vibrancy to the city's core. It has made an exceptional economic impact on the city considering the fact that visitors spend money on transportation, accommodation, food and beverage, shopping and sightseeing.

It provides opportunities for collaboration through meaningful relationships with prospective partners. Calgary is Canada's uncontested oil and gas capital, an epi-centre for 4% of international oil and gas production and 15% of worldwide energy deal flows.

Guests can be assured of a unique experience and a successful event at the Calgary TELUS Convention Centre.

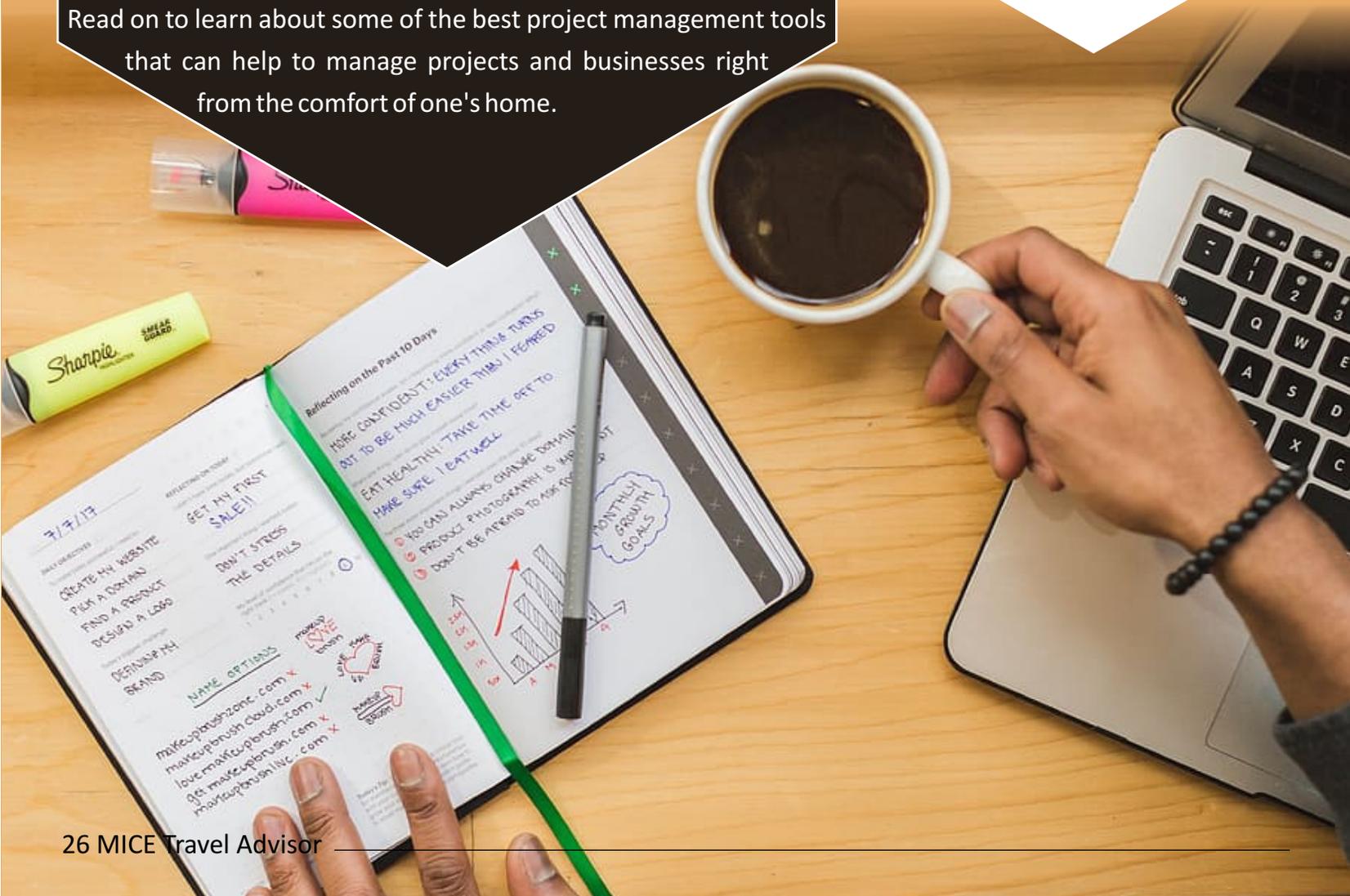
## TECH TALK

It has been months since the COVID-19 pandemic has taken the world by storm. The coronavirus outbreak has compelled governments around the world to enforce nationwide lockdowns and non-essential travel restrictions. This has resulted in more than half of the working individuals receiving work from home orders. Numerous companies and businesses across the globe have now undertaken the work-from-home model.

However, this work-from-home process has increased the demand of online project management tools. These tools not only help in planning, organisation and execution but also in bringing the entire team together from their own respective places.

Read on to learn about some of the best project management tools that can help to manage projects and businesses right from the comfort of one's home.

# PROJECT MANAGEMENT TOOLS



## TRELLO

This tool helps to manage and organise projects through boards, cards and lists. One can launch his/her business by simply adding a to-do-list that will be segregated into things that have been done and those that have to be done. Information can be updated using attachments, due dates and comments directly into the Trello card. The board can be managed with a combination of texts, images, emojis or files. Trello can be started free but a simple premium connection allows one to collaborate with co-workers. It also has a built-in automation, the robot Butler that helps to remove the tedious tasks from the list for the entire team. It also allows one to integrate all the apps a team already use directly into the workflow.

## STUDIOCLOUD

It is the ultimate one-stop business and company management solution. The software enables one to handle his or her business anytime and anywhere. Its features include client management, scheduling tasks, bookkeeping, creating invoices, making forms, facilitating eSignatures, lead generation, employee management as well as project management. It can create marketing campaign and automatically send them to the target audience. It even allows online booking and can integrate credit card processing. It can also send automated and personalised texts and emails. The software can be customised according to one's own requirement and is perfectly suited for single, dual and multiple employee usage.

## ASANA

It is the perfect work management platform to bring team members together irrespective of their current location. This is a fine solution to work in a team framework, irrespective of the geographical location of the members. Asana allows seamless allocation and compartmentalisation of tasks within the team. Tasks can be planned and structured with priorities and deadlines. The transparent dashboard enables all members to monitor a particular task through every phase of its progression. Every team member can track the workflow in real-time while staying focused on their goals, projects and tasks anytime and from any place.

The visual project plan allows everyone to be updated about all changes and steps. This eliminates any confusion or miscommunication in the work process. Nearly 15 members can access this tool free of cost. However, it also has more advanced business, premium and enterprise versions that can be availed with a monthly payment.



## PROOFHUB

This online project management platform brings all necessary features required for smooth running of business under one roof. It is packed with features a team require to plan, organise, execute, collaborate and deliver projects in the easiest and fastest way. It allows one to create discussion topics and mention necessary people to bring a certain matter directly to notice. It notifies members immediately after a task is assigned. The Kanban boards divides and allot works to respective members and the Gantt chart feature provides a clear timeline view to visualise the projects.



## BASECAMP

If you are planning to transform your team into a remote work framework, this toolkit is the ideal platform. Basecamp helps to organise every essential thing related to work in one place and is capable of bringing the entire team together even if they are miles apart. It allows one to break up their work into separate projects. These projects consist of people, discussions, schedules, deadlines, task details, documents and important dates, among others. The message board is like a digital meeting room where everyone can pitch in their ideas, post announcements and updates as well as receive feedback on a certain topic. It provides automatic check-ins to create recurring questions and a group to casually engage with members of the team.



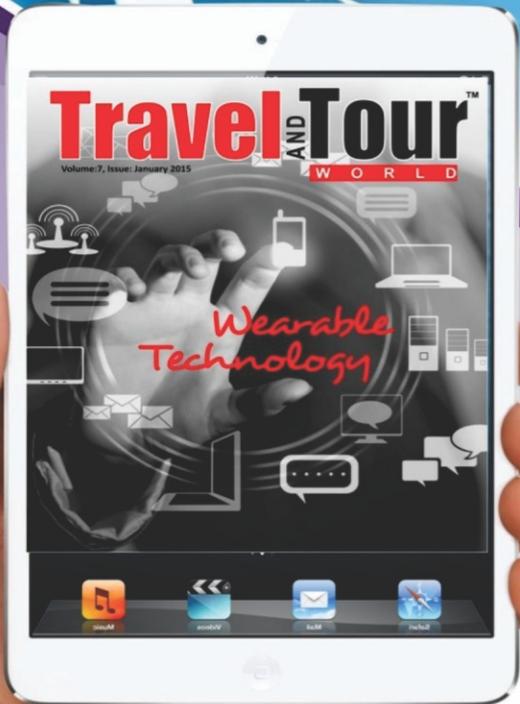
## THE PROS

- Enables seamless working with a team despite being scattered at different places
- Maintains proper schedules and deadlines
- Keeps everything organised in one particular place
- Manages time effectively
- Enables remote working

## THE CONS

- Risk of crashing or any other technical hindrance
- Chances of difficulty or complexity in accessibility or interface
- High cost investment
- Possibilities of distraction





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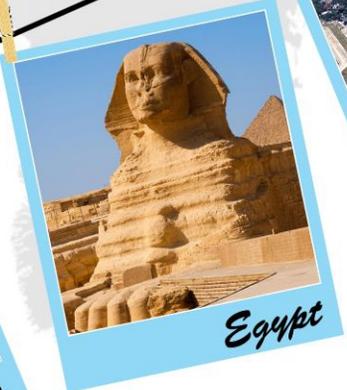
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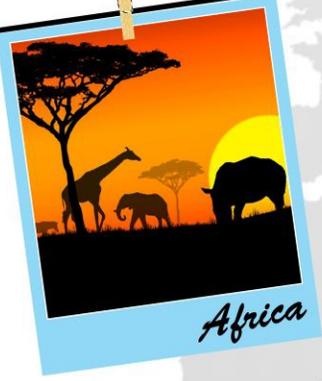
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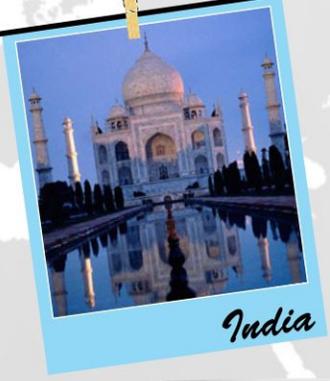
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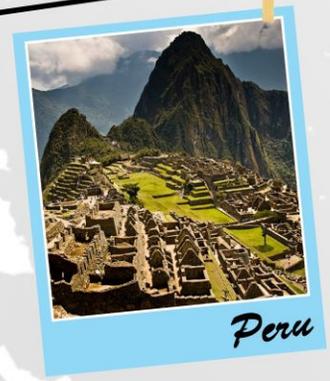
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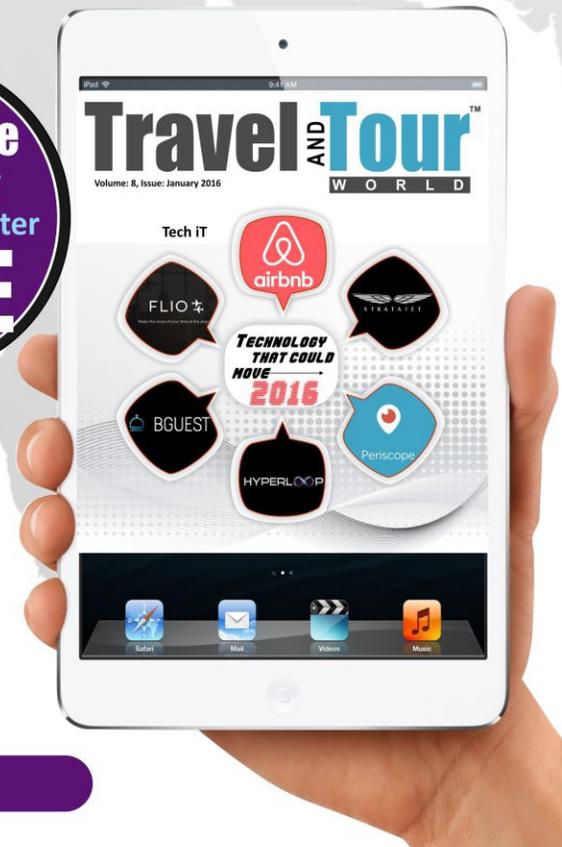
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