

KONGRES

6 How to brand a nation?

Citizens need to believe in a nation brand

Davor Bruketa

12 Vincent van Wulfen

PCO is the conductor of the symphony orchestra

Daniela Kos

42 Kongres travelogue:

Ljubljana, Zagreb, Beograd

Gorazd Čad



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CROATIAN HOTELIERS AND AGENTS ON CONGRESS YEAR 2012 & 2013

1. How successful was meetings & events segment in 2012 compared to 2011 in your company?

2. What are your expectations for the next year? Do you already have confirmed some important meetings and events?



Vlatka Folo,
MICE manager
Maistra

1: In 2011 Maistra presented the new Hotel Lone to the market and we are very proud and satisfied how the new product performed in its first business year. Lone represents the flagship of Maistra's congress offer and it's the first Croatian hotel included in the international collection of the world-renowned brand Design Hotels AG. Together with three other hotels (hotel Monte Mulini - part of the Leading Hotels of the World, hotel Eden and hotel Park), combining their rich and modern conference facilities, it builds the Cap Aureo Conference Centre, one of the leading congress centres in the region. Beside choosing between different hotel types and categories, event organizers can be sure their delegates will enjoy every minute of their stay thanks to the abundant selection of hotel facilities in Cap Aureo. Of course one of the most important USPs is its location in one of the most attractive destinations on the Mediterranean, the town of Rovinj. Furthermore thanks to continuous

promotion of yet another major MICE location, Adris Convention and Business Center (former tobacco factory), which each year attracts an increasing number of events, this year so far we held over 110 different types of events which resulted in increased revenues of 10% compared to a year before.

2: Contracting for 2013 has started last year in February and is still going on. Besides the already contracted conferences for 2013 in the field of medicine, media and telecommunications we are very proud to have confirmed events for 2014 and 2015 as well. Keeping in mind our business strategy gives a great importance to meetings industry we are investing huge efforts through our specialized MICE department and our international sales network to reach further revenue growth in the MICE segment in 2013 especially from the foreign markets.



Giorgio Cadum,
Member of the
Board for Sales &
Marketing
Liburnia Riviera
Hotels

1: The MICE segment of sales, in comparison with other channels of sales, primarily direct sales and in comparison with the year 2001, did not make a significant step forward. The basic reason for this is that here is still a crisis in the congress industry, or in looking for favourable arrangements and shortening the number of days of holding seminars, meetings and congresses by the organizers. However, when comparing the offer of other congress destinations which this year marked a significant growth – and this is primarily Dubrovnik, Rovinj and Umag – I would have to say that Opatija, as a congress destination, has definitely lost the race against other

destinations and it is illusory to expect a growth in the MICE segment over a short period of time.

2: In LRH for the year 2013 there is an expected growth of income in the MICE segment of sales through a larger number of smaller or shorter meetings dispersed and mainly distributed before and after the tourist season. For now we have confirmed the already traditional meetings, however, their realization will depend primarily on the financial situation of each individual participant, or company, which will be ready to continue to invest in its employees by ensuring them their participation on congresses, seminars and meetings.



Ivan Rudolf Gajić,
Director of Sales &
Marketing
Sheraton Zagreb
Hotel

1: Overall, I would have to say that it was a good year for us, we managed to convert a lot of potential accounts and business into actualized one, which resulted in a number of business events for the Sheraton Zagreb. It was a challenging year, indeed, but for the entire industry and even further - for the entire economy. The unpopular term "recession" really made an impact on the entire global economy, and I am proud to say, that now, at the end of this challenging year, we see some positive trends for 2013. In short, it was not easy - but we made it.

2: We expect, according to fore coming business, that is already confirmed, an even better 2013. We have already several confirmed important events and I can say, looking at 2013, we will see more business compared to, for example,

2011. There is a trend as well in a number of city-wide large events which will convert Zagreb into an important landmark on the MICE map of SEE region. MICE segment is a very challenging one, companies tend to cut costs in this area firstly, especially in the Incentive and Events part. So I wasn't surprised when I saw a relevant report that stated that the segment of city break (leisure) trips in the region is growing. Because of that fact and just in spite that, I am proud to say that my team at Sheraton Zagreb Hotel managed to beat the odds, and managed to increase number of MICE events for our hotel for 2013, compared to previous years.



Perica Andrić,
Director Of Sales
& Revenue
Radisson BLU Resort
& Spa Dubrovnik
Sun Gardens

1: This year we have experienced our strongest year to date within the MICE sector with growth of 25% up on 2011. We have hosted over 90 different meetings, conferences and events of all sizes and from a variety of different industries. Furthermore, the diverse nature of international conferences in 2012 has contributed to our ever growing nationality mix in the resort with guests from over 145 different countries. Our extensive range of resort amenities and multifunctional and flexible meeting space has contributed to our continued growth in this segment and is quickly positioning Dubrovnik Sun Gardens as one of Europe's leading MICE venues and destinations. The continued growth in popularity of Croatia and specifically Dubrovnik as a new and exciting destination which is also easily accessible from most gateways in Europe is also a major contributor to our success this year.

2: Dubrovnik continues to be one of Europe's fastest growing tourism destinations and has benefitted from better than forecasted growth in 2012. Such exposure and popularity is also contributing to the awareness for Dubrovnik as a MICE destination especially with resorts such as Dubrovnik Sun Gardens which are able to accommodate small, medium and large events all set within a "destination resort" on the Adriatic. Industry experts forecast a continued pace of growth in 2013 and with demand exceeding supply particularly for MICE venues in the region, this bodes well for hoteliers able to offer a flexible and dynamic offering. Enquiries and confirmations are already building well for 2013 and we are confident that we shall continue to see continued growth from this segment for 2013 and beyond.



Daniel Marušić,
Director
DT Croatia, DMC

1: DT Croatia had a very good average year, what we think is a good base for continuing our plans and keeping our position as the real DMC leader in Croatia for international events. This year we received some great national business awards, and we opened our third croatian office - in Zagreb! We also have made investments in our internal system and in more education for our teams.

2: 2013 will be a challenging but also a very exciting year, new trends and new players coming. Buyers will be demanding higher value at a reasonable price. Croatia enters EU and more business will be focusing to happen here. The role of a local DMC, such as we are, DT Croatia, stable, professional, experienced,

located where and when needed; will be crucial for event planners who want their event to be excellent from the start till the end. Many have recognized DT as their DMC partner in Croatia so we are very satisfied with the confirmed business at this stage.



Daria Pappo,
Director 361°, PCO

1: 1. Both years have been good in comparison. In 2011 we had more meetings however in 2012 we organized the EACMFS Congress which gathered 1400 participants and took up most of our time. In our business however large international congresses are agreed upon from 1 to 6 years in advance as was the case with the EACMFS Congress

2: Today, the competition in our business is much larger than before so it is crucial to maintain the level of services keeping in mind the importance of technology development. Clients often come at the last minute so we expect more requests for smaller meetings. For the year 2013 we have several confirmed congresses, smaller meetings and some public events that we have been developing.