

HONG KONG

GAINING CONSIDERABLE MOMENTUM IN THE MICE INDUSTRY

BY GREGORY CURLEY

A growing number of businesses today are employing new measures to motivate staff and improve productivity. Despite remarkable digital and technological advancements within the last decade, the use of off-site work environments—a method deeply rooted in traditional business principles—is widely held to encourage human interaction and face-to-face encounters.



Nowhere is this more prevalent than in Hong Kong. Blessed with astonishing diversity and a favorable subtropical climate, Hong Kong is universally recognized as one of the safest cities in the world. Nestled in the hub of the world's fastest-growing economies, it is fast becoming one of Asia's premier destinations for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE).

"Hong Kong is well known for its world-class facilities and infrastructure, supported by superb accessibility and the free, open and transparent nature of its business environment," says Mr. Daniel Cheung, Chairman of the Hong Kong Exhibition & Convention Industry

Association. "In spite of increasing competition from the neighboring Pearl River Delta and the wider Asia-Pacific region, Hong Kong remains strong as Asia's Trade Fair Capital."

Hong Kong's greatest advantage is that it remains a strategic sourcing hub in the Asia-Pacific region, bringing together regional and international buyers and quality exhibitors interested in the Chinese Mainland. It is also the main route used by Chinese companies to access global markets.

Overnight MICE arrivals to Hong Kong reached 920,000 in the first eight months of 2011, a year-on-year increase of 12.1%. Throughout this period, 45.4% of overnight MICE arrivals to Hong Kong came from Mainland China, a 19.4% increase over the same period last year. In comparison, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) reported a 16.2% year-on-year leap in overall arrivals in the first eight months of 2011. Stable economic conditions in the region—especially in Mainland China—and the appreciation of major currencies against the Hong Kong dollar are contributing to Hong Kong's appeal as a choice MICE destination.

The impressive Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) remains one of the world's best venues for exhibitions and world-class events. Upon completion of its HK\$1.4 billion expansion project in 2009, the award-winning HKCEC now offers 91,500 square meters of rentable space. Having hosted 1,235 events to date, including 116 exhibitions, with many expanding in size, HKCEC achieved a record

event attendance of nearly 6 million visitors during the fiscal year 2010–2011.

Hong Kong's AsiaWorld-Expo (AWE) is further proof of the city's clout in the industry. AWE houses over 70,000 square meters of rentable space and is conveniently located adjacent to Hong Kong International Airport. Since opening just five years ago, the venue has promoted a staggering HK\$54.2 billion in expenditure from a series of successful international trade fairs, including Cartes in Asia, Asian Aerospace, Vitafoods Asia, and the Hong Kong Jewellery & Gem Fair, the number one event



of its kind. All signify AWE's emergence as a world-renowned platform for international exhibitions. After successfully hosting the 2011 Asian Aerospace International Expo & Congress, it will host the event again in 2013.

Offering state-of-the-art facilities, a predominantly English-speaking business environment and visa-free access for seven to 180 days, Hong Kong is the preferred choice of venue for most businesses to host a variety of international events. ■



HONG KONG

Asia's Trade Fair Capital

**Effective Sourcing
Excellent Services
Exceptional Exhibition Venues**

Home to over 90 world-leading international trade fairs, Hong Kong is Asia's most vibrant exhibition hub, right at the doorway to the Chinese mainland and the meeting point of east and west. It offers the perfect mix of commercial and cosmopolitan attractions, and a wealth of international exhibitors and buyers. No wonder, an increasing number of event organisers choose Hong Kong as their preferred destination in Asia.

For more information on upcoming trade fairs in Hong Kong, please visit www.exhibitions.org.hk


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