

PRESS RELEASE // FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Confucius say: A Clear Pond has no Fish, Is Transparency the Enemy of Profit?

At the recent IAPCO Seminar held during IMEX, IAPCO Council Member, Roslyn McLeod, MD, arinex pty ltd, Australia, tackled the challenging subject of transparency from the PCO perspective whilst Luc Maene, President ESAE and DG, International Fertilizer Association took the Association view.

Transparency has different meanings for different clients. Some want the assurance that all costs are included in the budget – no late surprises while others want all costs detailed in a budget and to understand who ends up with the money. McLeod boldly stated that “transparency starts with the client brief and is not just restricted to invoices and dollars. Full financial transparency is possible based on an accurate briefing and instead of fees the PCO can charge by the hour to cover expertise, resources overheads and profit. The misperception of transparency is the belief that there is an obligation to know every tiny detail whereas the real obligation is to obtain value for money. The client does not need to know how the PCO operates their business. The PCO has a right to make a profit in a fair and reasonable way for all parties.”

Most briefs are not transparent, do not convey an accurate picture of the requirements and there is simply not enough reality. Therefore the relationship with the PCO must be based on ethics because a collaborative effort is required to achieve the best solutions. It is the client’s responsibility to do a thorough selection process and select the PCO based on ‘value’ and ‘fit’ - not just price.

IAPCO promotes ethical values through its quality standards for PCOs.

Luc Maene advocated that it is most important that a code of conduct ensures ethical behaviour rather than micromanagement. The ‘P’ in *professional* is a necessity for both PCOs and Associations organising conferences. Associations need to maximise revenue and deliver service for their members at minimum cost but that must also take into account the ability for the PCO to make reasonable profit from the project.

Maene acknowledged that each party brings expertise and benefits to produce the end result. Problems in the past often make the client wary and want to drill down into detail. “Good Governance is essential and clients aim to achieve this by vigilant oversight of budget, but”, said Maene, “a degree of trust and understanding is required and importantly a positive chemistry between parties contributes to a strong and productive process”.

IAPCO President Philippe Fournier concluded the session by commenting on some of the key words he noted in the presentations, such as Trust, Truth, Communication, Chemistry as being a good resume of what transparency stands for.

[photo available from IAPCO Secretariat]

[copies of presentation and webcast available on <http://www.imex-frankfurt.com/seminarpresentations10.html>]

ABOUT IAPCO: Meeting Quality

The International Association of Professional Congress Organisers (IAPCO), a non-profit organisation founded in 1968, is THE professional association for professional organisers, meeting planners and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events. The Association is committed to raising standards of service among its members and other sectors of the meetings industry by means of continuing education and interaction with other professionals.

With more than 100 members in over 35 countries, IAPCO members provide consulting and organisational services for clients to the highest standard. IAPCO members organise every year in excess of 5600 meetings worldwide totaling over 2.11 million participants and more than 0.5 million square meters of exhibits, thus representing an economic impact of over 3.43 billion Euros.

IAPCO's Training Academy is recognized as one of the leading centres for education in congress organising; with the annual Wolfsberg seminar, many regional and national seminars around the world and in 2011, its new Masterclass. Education is part of IAPCO's goals.

IAPCO is committed to raising standards of service among its members and other sectors of the meetings industry. Today IAPCO membership offers a unique quality assurance, since entry into membership of IAPCO is by meeting strict criteria and by continuous quality assessment.

IAPCO also publishes a number of documents including a code of ethics, a dictionary of technical terms (900 definitions in 14 languages) and working guidelines. IAPCO is a member of the Joint Meetings Industry Council [JMIC] and the Convention Industry Council [CIC].

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