

Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre Reaches Milestone!

This June saw the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC) celebrate five years at the top of the business events industry. The statistics are stacking up for Australia's largest regional convention centre with over 1,500 events attracting over 1,193,724 guests to the property and serving over 1 million meals from the award-winning kitchens of the 21st Century.

The strength of the numbers has justified the 40 million dollar extension completed in January 2009. With over 124,000 man hours, 1,550 m³ of concrete poured 375 tonnes of structural steel erected and 7,000 litres of paint, Australia's largest regional convention centre now boasts an extra two exhibition halls, a registration office, three meeting rooms and three new kitchens. The centre can now accommodate a banquet for over 3,500 diners, conventions up to 6,000 delegates and exhibition space for up to 500 booths.

Boasting an impressive line up of concerts and special events throughout the past five years, GCCEC has rocked to the tunes of Jamiroquai, Stevie Nicks, Missy Higgins, The Presets, Silverchair, Pink, Powderfinger, 50 Cent and Human Nature to name just a few. Local visitors have also enjoyed the Australian Motorcycle Expo, the Gold Coast Bulletin Home Show and the celebration of high school formals and university graduations. The centre has come alight with colour for the Australian Fashion Design Awards, Breakfast with Jane Fonda, a night with Jerry Lewis and the Billy Connolly Tour 'Too Old To Die Young'. Heading into the third season hosting the Gold Coast Blaze Basketball team, and multiple appearances from the Professional Bull Riding Challenge, and World Rodeo Championships the centre has developed a reputation as a strong sporting venue.

Conventions, incentives and meetings continue to be the core business for the GCCEC with over 981 events held since opening, predominantly corporate and association conferences averaging two and a half days in length and attracting over 157,438 delegates over five years.

Internally, the GCCEC has recorded great success over its life of operation winning 19 industry state and national awards including the hotly contested and premier accolade for industry management practice and outstanding performance in the Australian meetings and business events industry MEA* awarded the best Meeting Venue More than 500 Delegates three years in a row (2005, 2006, and 2007) this achievement resulted in MEA inducting the centre into the prestigious MEA Hall of Fame.

Restaurant and Catering awards ** cannot be forgotten. In 2005 the Kitchens of the 21st Century celebrated being awarded the Restaurant and Catering Australia Best Function/Convention Centre Catering of the year, an award never achieved by another convention centre in their first year of operation. The centre has also been awarded the title of Gold Coast Caterer of the Year three times in five years.

June 29th's 5th birthday celebrations included 48 team members being recognised for five years service at the GCCEC. General Manager, Adrienne Readings said the retention rate for staff is a key success to the business with the majority of senior management celebrating five years at the centre.

Readings went on to say her motivated team was driven by the philosophy to deliver above expectation and work in partnership with clients to achieve success.

“If we can’t produce a good product then we won’t do it. Everything we do at GCCEC is for the event experience,” said Adrienne.

“We are proud of our success over the past five years, but there’s always room for more. We continually look for new ways to deliver on service, present a creative dish, or provide new technology that will contribute towards an event. It’s our job to make our clients look good,” she said.

New initiatives on the calendar for the GCCEC include the upgrade of the company website incorporating a new cutting edge virtual tour and comprehensive event calendar. The technologically savvy website will be an interactive and comprehensive shop-front for the Centre assisting clients and visitors with venue specifications, ticket purchasing facilities and online quotes.

The GCCEC events calendar for the 2009/2010 financial year is firming up rapidly and in response the centre has conducted two recruitment drives thus far in 2009. Among the confirmed conferences and exhibitions are the 12th International Dental Congress on Modern Pain Control in October, the Australasian Oseointegration Society Conference 2009 in November and the 17th World Transplant Games in August – this event is dedicated to creating awareness of and encouraging organ donation globally.

* MEA – Meetings and Events Australia, member organisation

** Restaurants and Caterers Australia, member organisation

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