

Media Release

BUSINESS EVENTS CASE STUDY – Prepared by Klara Vida, Communications Manager, Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre

Event:	ICCA Australia – Client/Supplier Business Workshop 2011, Gold Coast
Attendees:	14 ICCA members + 14 clients
Days:	3 days
Date:	20 - 23 November 2011
Budget:	Undisclosed

THE EVENT AND WHAT WE DID:

The ICCA Australia – Client/Supplier Business Workshop was a three day event which invited 14 ICCA Australia members and their association conference clients to experience the best of the Gold Coast within a tailor-made association business exchange environment.

A combined venture between the Gold Coast Convention Bureau (GCCB) and the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre (GCCEC), the event represented the Australian arm of the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA).

Fourteen ICCA Australia members from different venues and convention bureaus around Australia each invited a conference client to discuss their specific event requirements and promote their company and services to senior decision-makers actively looking for future destinations and venues.

Around the business exchange was a rich educational program featuring Creative Head Media's Alexandra Yeomans speaking on social media in today's business landscape, Bruce Sullivan from Red Hot Relationships who presented an inspirational and uplifting seminar on relationships, business and life, and law firm partner Mike Prior who addressed the more serious side of the industry - contracts, legalities and risks.

Facilitated by Elizabeth Rich, former CEO of the Business Events Council of Australia (BECA), the ICCA Australia – Client/Supplier Business Workshop initiated forum discussions on a

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variety of topics identified by participants which shared observations on trends, innovative ideas and overcoming challenges in today's meetings environment. Adding value and dimension to the event, some of the topics which shared new and creative perspectives were conference management issues, measuring intangible benefits of events, site selection and accommodation, corporate social responsibility and environmentally friendly venue initiatives.

The business workshop itself took place on the last day when suppliers met with clients in a trade show set-up to discuss specific meeting requirements, venues and destinations.

Showcasing the Gold Coast as a premier conference and meetings destination, the ICCA Australia – Client / Supplier Business Workshop invited guests to experience a number of iconic Gold Coast spots. Among them was Jupiters, the award winning hotel-casino complex, Seaworld where guests experienced the park's 'Penguin Encounter' and dolphin show, and McLaren's Landing on South Stradbroke Island where they enjoyed tropical island festivities under the stars. Delegates also took part in a corporate art class by Irena Kirpichnikova from the Byron Bay Art Studio (www.byronbayartstudio.com), a fun and uplifting artistic workshop which inspired creative thinking and team building.

Part of the success of any conference is the spectacular food which is always remembered long after the event has passed. GCCEC's award-winning kitchen served a selection of culinary delights at the gala dinner on the last night which included crispy skin salmon on crustaceans with kipfler and a kafier lime bisque, and roasted duck on cold cannon with grilled figs and watercress. Following the gala dinner delegates made their way across the foyer to the after party 'lounge', a relaxed and stylish Gold Coast setting overlooking the lit Broadbeach skyline.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS:

The challenge of the ICCA Australia – Client/Supplier Business Workshop was to facilitate a tailor-made association business exchange environment and educational program which delivered value to the delegates and showcased the Gold Coast as a business events destination. As part of the forum discussions facilitated by Elizabeth Rich, delegates were asked to provide topic ideas relevant to their roles and industry prior to the event to make the session as topical as possible. GCCEC and GCCB also wanted make the experience fun and memorable for delegates at the same time, working with local suppliers to incorporate an outstanding social program during the three day event which included dinner at exotic offsite locations, helicopter transfers, unique theming for the gala dinner at GCCEC on the final night and catering which showcased new and exciting menu options. Departing from traditional plated and buffet lunches, GCCEC's Kitchen opted for a tapas lunch which included scallop with kaffier and finger lime, herb crusted tuna with wakame and salmon roe, and chicken cucumber escabeche with beetroot olive oil sorbet. Delegates enjoyed the range of hot and cold selections, saying they liked the variety and 'not having to commit to one plate'.

OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS:

The objective of the ICCA Australia – Client/Supplier Business Workshop was to provide a tailor-made association business exchange environment for ICCA members to promote their company and services to senior decision-makers. Additionally the Gold Coast hosts wanted delegates to experience the best of the destination over the three day event.

Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre's General Manager Adrienne Readings said the program brought value to ICCA members and clients not only through business exchange but also by participating in forum discussions and openly exchanging ideas as related to the industry.

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“The ICCA Australia – Client/Supplier Business Workshop was not only a business networking event which provided a setting for members to showcase their venue and services, but also allowed both members and clients to build genuine relationships, creatively share ideas and really understand each other’s needs,” she said.

“I think the event was a tremendous success bringing tangible benefits to both the members and the clients, and building relationships that went well beyond a business level.

“GCCEC and GCCB are extremely proud to have partnered for the ICCA Australia Business Workshop on the Gold Coast which I’m sure will set the benchmark for future ICCA networking events.”

ICCA Asia Pacific Chairman Martin Winter said events such as this which bring clients, venues and destinations together are of enormous value.

“Even though we communicate on a regular basis there is nothing like having the opportunity to meet face to face to discuss the real issues which will determine where and how events will take place.

“I am sure that everyone who participated not only secured new business but also benefited greatly from this experience that ICCA has facilitated”.

ENDS

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