

CHALLENGES WE FACE IN 2018

AIPC president **Aloysius Arlando** – who is also CEO of Singex – told members of the AIPC (International Association of Convention Centres) that organisers and delegates are demanding constant innovation and adaptation

2017 was a good year with growth patterns since the financial crisis of 2008 continuing to exceed even growth rates in global GDP. It's also a time of many challenges, and here's what the conference and event industry may expect in the year ahead:

1) The need to generate increasing levels of flexibility in all areas – This ranges from spaces and technologies to services and event management, and will continue to dominate our environment. There will also be the need to further enhance and diversify revenues to satisfy owner expectations and support needed new investment in our facilities.

2) Digitalisation – We also face new challenges in responding to the increasing importance of digitalisation in the global economy in order to be seen as relevant to marketers and organisers. After all, they have many other options to choose from as to how they engage with their members and customers.

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3) Talent quest – We are also increasingly challenged to compete with other sectors for the people we need to deliver service excellence. This challenge needs to be met with increased training and retention measures as well as an effort to position our industry as a desirable career path relative to others competing for the same talent.

4) Economic role – We need to further drive the proposition that convention centres are broadly impactful economic engines whose real function is to support overall economic and community development agendas in their respective cities and countries.

Only with this kind of recognition will we be able to get the kind of support we need to prevail in an increasingly intense marketplace. This will be demanding for many, however, it is a far more realistic picture of our true role.

5) Staying relevant – AIPC is constantly researching industry needs and conditions and creating corresponding programming in response, as this is the only way for an organisation to remain relevant in a fast-changing environment. However, our greatest strength – one that has shown its value over our entire history –



Aloysius Arlando is AIPC president and CEO of Singex

is the knowledge, insights and experience of our members, so efficient vehicles for facilitating information exchange and collective problem-solving is also a big factor. Another strength is AIPC's devotion to issues and opportunities associated with international convention centres. We will have to maintain this focus to ensure clarity of purpose.

6) Knowing your clients – The industry will require an even greater level of partnership between centres and their clients in order to optimise the delegate experience. This means we need to know in more detail our clients' needs and opportunities and have the ability to actively and creatively support them in addressing these. That in turn requires a greater investment in joint activities and programming with the broader meetings and events community. ●