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Bid for an international meeting: A guide for Taiwanese associations

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Running Head: BID FOR AN INTERNATIONAL MEETING

Bid for an International Meeting
A Guide for Taiwanese Associations

by

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A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
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Part One

Introduction

The meeting and exhibition industry is commonly referred to the MICE industry because it pertains to meetings, incentives, conventions, and exhibitions. Ancient eastern and medieval European countries were familiar with the practice of conducting meetings centuries ago. However, those meetings were most commonly designed to address the aftermath of war. During the seventeenth century, the Peace of Westphalia, a series of treaties, concluded the Thirty Years War and created a precedent that through large-scale meeting; significantly international problems among countries could be resolved. Until the early nineteenth century, international meetings between countries were popular. The scopes and topics of discussion also expanded. Eventually, such meetings became a normal component of international relations (Dai, 2007).

The MICE industry has been developed in Europe and the United States for at least 100 years. In 1896, Detroit journalist Milton established the world's first convention and visitor's bureau in Detroit. It was designed to vitalize the local economy and to encourage the public to hold meetings in Detroit. Since then, international organizations were established in various places, influencing the development of the modern conventions and exhibitions. In terms of distribution, Europe and the United States are among the most popular locations for meetings. European countries share about half of the market in the world and the biggest meeting hosting country is the United States. The rankings of ICCA (International Congress and Conference Association) show that in 2009, the United States held 595 international meetings and ranked first internationally (Vleeming, 2009).

One way to have an international meeting is to place a bid for the opportunity. According to the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers (IAPCO, 2004),

“a bid is defined as an invitation to hold an international congress in your country (p. 1).” Due to the trend of globalization in recent years, various community organizations, academic institutions, and even cities and countries are optimistic about the benefits that international meetings can provide. Therefore, they generally have positive attitudes toward bidding.

Purpose

Taiwan is a leader provider of information technology industry, medical research, or technology innovator in traditional industries. Thus, many domestic academic and professional associations currently focus on the topic of holding international meetings in Taiwan. The primary purpose of this paper is to help local non-profit associations to understand how to develop a proposal to bid for an international meeting so that they can prepare appropriate and persuasive bidding documents. Not all associations have the budgets to hire a professional congress organizer (PCO). Therefore, within such limited budgets, this paper seeks to help these associations learn how to create additional points for their bid documents. It will not only enhance the international statuses of local organizations, but also contribute to the development of Taiwanese industries.

The information contained in the paper can also help to promote Taiwan’s status. In recent years, through the efforts of the Taiwan government, the domestic meeting environment continues to improve and to grow more popular. In addition, Taiwan boasts of a unique culture, fine cuisine, and sightseeing opportunities. It is the author’s hope that more foreigners will regard Taiwan as a priority meeting destination.

Justification

Hosting a meeting “brings enormous benefits to the host’s professional community, city, and country. These benefits start years before the meeting is actually held (IAPCO, 2004, p. 1).”

It is not merely a country's economic showcase; its degree of development is an important indicator of its international status. In addition, the MICE industry possesses diverse characteristics and can promote tourism and similar economic benefits. Thus, countries across the globe have invested many resources to develop this new industry. Due to the recent global financial crisis, however, most markets formerly occupied by the United States and Europe have gradually been taken by Asian countries. For example, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, and China have invested large amounts of funds, resources, and manpower to build facilities to hold meetings. These countries have also developed preferred subsidization methods and established better environments for the MICE industry. These are the steps that Asian countries have taken to attract international meetings and exhibitions. Thus, they also drive the development of related industries like tourism and enhance their international images as locations of prosperity and progress.

Glossary

Bid - an invitation to hold an international congress in your country (IAPCO, 2004).

Conference - participatory meeting designed for discussion, fact-finding, problem solving and consultation. As compared with a congress, a conference is normally smaller in scale and more select in character - features which tend to facilitate the exchange of information. The term "conference" carries no special connotation as to frequency. Though not inherently limited in time, conferences are usually of limited duration with specific objectives (IAPCO, 2000).

Congress - 1) The regular coming together of large groups of individuals, generally to discuss a particular subject. Congresses will often last several days and have several simultaneous sessions. The length of time between congresses is usually established in advance of the

implementation stage, and can be either pluri-annual or annual. Most international or world congresses are of the former type while national congresses are more frequently held annually. 2) Meeting of an association of delegates or representatives from constituent organizations. 3) European term for convention (APEX Industry Glossary, Convention Industry Council Web site).

Meeting - general term indicating the coming together of a number of people in one place, to confer or carry out a particular activity. Frequency: can be on an ad hoc basis or according to a set pattern, as for instance annual general meetings, committee meetings, etc (IAPCO, 2000).

PCO (Professional Congress Organizers) - A PCO is a company, which specializes in the management of congress. The company will act as a consultant to the organizing committee, enacting its decision whilst utilizing the experience and knowledge it has gained over many years in organizing event (IAPCO, 2004)

Part Two

Introduction

The primary purpose of this section is to provide a more in-depth understanding of the terms and information relevant to international meetings. Thus, this section will address issues and literature related to international meetings through a literature review and data collected from international meetings.

This section is divided into five parts, beginning with the definition of an international meeting. The next two parts discuss why international meetings are held, as well as their benefits and—more specifically—the development of the Asian international meeting market. Then, the key criteria and steps that affect whether one association wins or fails in its bid to host a meeting will be presented. The last part of the section provides the SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat) analysis of Taiwan’s environment for international meetings.

Literature Review

Definition of international meetings. People gather at meetings to discuss topics that they have in common, professionally or otherwise. Some meeting topics may be significant enough to impact other countries, thus attracting both domestic and international participants. Under this context, international meetings were created. The Union of International Associations (UIA), founded in 1907, and the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA), founded in 1962, were established under this demand and became two of the most representative international meeting associations in the world.

There is no unified definition for the international meetings. CIC only defines the term international event as “an event that draws a national and international audience. Typically 15% or more of attendees reside outside of the host country (APEX Industry Glossary, CIC Web site.)

The following definitions are those put forth by the UIA and ICCA, as well as the definition proposed by the government of Taiwan.

- UIA
 - Minimum number of participants: 300;
 - Minimum percentage of foreigners: 40%;
 - Minimum number of nationalities: 5;
 - Minimum duration: 3 days.

- ICCA
 - Be organized on a regular basis (one-time events are not included);
 - Rotate between at least 3 different countries;
 - Be attended by at least 50 participants (Rogers, 2008, p. 10 &14).

- Taiwan
 - Minimum number of participants: 100;
 - Minimum percentage/number of foreigners: 30% or 50 people;
 - Minimum number of nationalities: 3. (Taiwan MICE Project Office, 2009)

Benefits of international meetings. The MICE industry combines not only production, processing, and manufacturing as secondary industries, but also marketing, catering, and tourism as tertiary industries. The characteristics of the MICE industry are a combination of those of the manufacturing industry and the service industry. Thus, it has come to be known as the “2.5” industry. The MICE industry contributes to the development of related industries, and its huge economic benefits make it a leading industry (Bureau of Foreign Trade, Taiwan, 2009).

According to the Convention Industry Council’s (CIC) 2004 Economic Impact Study, at the peak time of economy, the MEEC (meetings, expositions, events, and conventions) industry, along

with the associated travel incentives, generated \$122.31 billion in direct spending, making it the twenty-ninth largest contributor to the gross national product of the United States (Fenich, 2008, p. 18). Even after the economic crisis, according to the statistics conducted by Taiwan MICE office, just for Taiwan, the MICE industry generated NT\$25.74 billion (approximately US\$0.78 billion) in 2008 (Dong, 2010, p. 16).

In addition, the MICE industry has multiplier effects. Researchers usually use input-output model to describe the economic impact of meetings and conventions. Kim, Park, and Lee (2010) combined studies of Burgan and Mules (1992), Crompton, Lee, and Shuster (2001), Crompton and McKay (1994), Gelan (2003), Lee & Taylor (2005), Tyrrell and Johnston (2001), Felsenstein and Freeman (1998), Johnson and Sullivan (1993), Taylor, Fletcher, and Clabaugh (1993), Wagner (1997), Braun (1992), Kim and Chon (2009), Kim et al (2003), Mistilis and Dwyer (1999), and Kim and Chon (2009) and gave us the “concept for estimating the economic impact of the convention industry (see Figure 1).” Kim et al. found out there are “four major sources of expenditure: expenditure by the convention host to hold a conference, expenditure by the exhibition host, expenditure by exhibitors, and expenditure by foreign delegates,” and key concept of the I-O model is “multiplier effect (p. 47-48).” Based on Vanhove’s research (2005), Kim et al. said the following:

There are three types of effect. Direct impact is the first-round effect of visitor spending, and the impact of this injection of new seed money causes a ripple effect that has an indirect impact and an induced impact. Indirect impact includes the ripple effect of additional rounds of re-circulating the initial tourists’ expenditures. Induced impact shows a further ripple effect caused by employees of impacted businesses spending some of their salaries and wages in other businesses in the local area or country. The multiplier

effect is produced through different types of multipliers, including output, employment, income, value added tax, and imports (2010, p. 48).

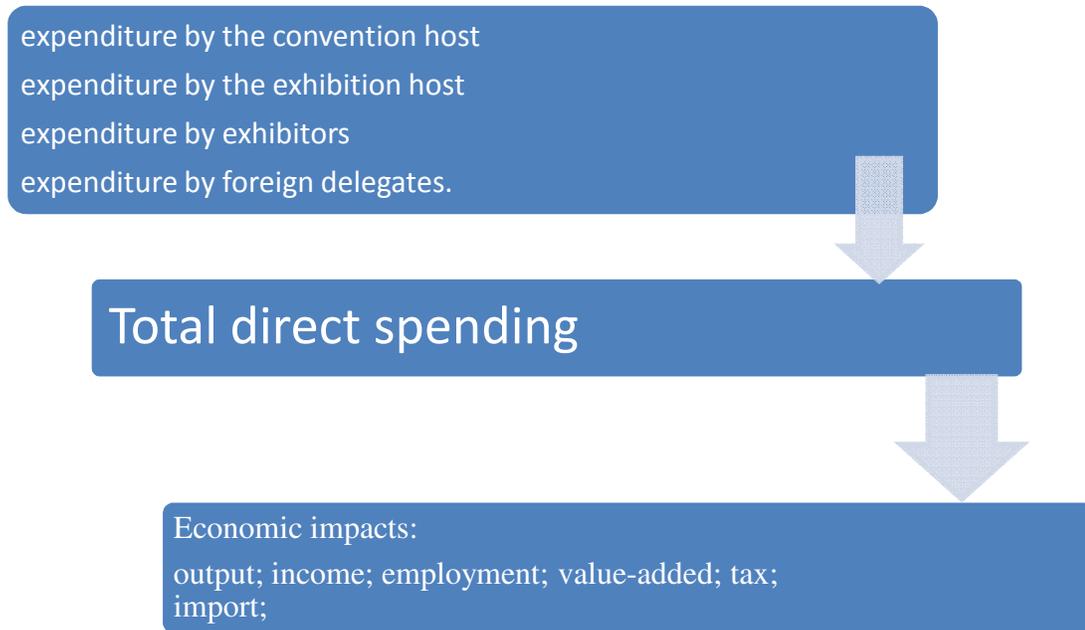


Figure 1. Conceptualization of estimating the economic impact of a mega-convention. Adapted from “Predicted Economic Impact Analysis of a Mega-Convention Using Multiplier Effects,” by S. S. Kim, J. Y. Park, and J. Lee, 2010, *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism*, 11: 1, p. 47.

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Converted the above model into numbers, the report of Department of Investment Services, MOEA, Taiwan shows each dollar spent in the MICE industry can bring back seven to ten dollars to whole economy (2008.)

Besides significant economic benefits, the meeting industry can also promote other interests. From the reports of many countries’ convention bureaus and practical experience, Ye Tai Min (1999) believes that the meeting industry offers the following concrete benefits to host cities:

1. Economy

- a. Participants in the meeting all have special expertise. Their incomes are also relatively high so their consumption habits are far greater than those of the typical tourist.
 - b. The development of the meeting industry can improve the level of relevant industries and raise the living standard. By hosting international meetings, the requirements of meeting attendees can also stimulate the industry to meet international standards.
 - c. Increase the employment rate.
2. Politics
- a. Through publicity by domestic and international media, meetings can improve the international status and reputation of the city.
 - b. With foreign visitors, the city can improve its communication processes with international locations.
 - c. Meetings can stimulate city planning and building infrastructure to make the host city truly international.
3. Science and Technology: International meetings are the best channel through which to gain new knowledge. Holding international meetings will enable the city to grasp the latest information in the world.

Rogers (2008) argued that there are a number of significant extra benefits that can make conferences particularly attractive to potential hosts:

1. Great Profitability. Holding meetings needs to have high quality and high cost services.

People who attend a meeting tend to spend more than other visitors. Thus, it is a high profit market. According to the International Passenger Survey of 2005, conference visitors to the United Kingdom from overseas spent an average of £ 164 per day, compared with an average of £ 57 per day for all categories of visitors.

2. All-Year-Round Activity. Although spring and autumn are the peak seasons of the year for conferences, there are a lot of meetings held in other times.
3. Future Inward Investment. Previous attendees might return to the host destination as leisure visitors. They often come back for vacations or breaks with their friends and families.
4. Professional Development. Maple (2006), as president of the International Association of Congress Centers (AIPC) and general manager of the Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Center, contends that large events like conventions are designed to bring the best in any given field together in an environment where information can be shared and progress identified.
5. Green Tourism. Conferences have fewer negative impacts on the environment than mass leisure tourism.
6. Improved Quality of Life. Conferences play an important role in enhancing the overall quality of life in a community.

In conclusion, if a country or a city can successfully win the bid to host an international meeting, it can promote other domestic industries. In addition, the market consumption of the meeting industry is strong, which can increase economic and trade income, as well as employment opportunities. International meetings can also help to improve city visibility and promote its national image. For local industries, international meetings can enhance knowledge and encourage communication with international counterparts.

The MICE industry in Asia. In terms of quality and quantity, the United States and European countries have been major markets for international meetings for a long time. In recent years, however, Asian countries have constructed many international convention centers. With the rapid development of Asian markets, both ICCA and UIA have agreed that the future holds

great development potential for Asia (Wu, 2005).

Hu (2009) discusses strong economic growth trends observed in the Asia-Pacific region. Especially due to the emergence of factories in China, Asia will become the fastest growing area for the MICE industry in the world. Research shows that the MICE industry in China increased by 805% from 1999 to 2003. In addition, China is expected to overtake Germany and the United States in 2010 as the world’s largest convention and exhibition center (Kay, 2005).

According to the 2008 ICCA statistics, the top five countries that host the greatest number of international meetings are the United States, Germany, Spain, France, and the United Kingdom. Within Asia, the top five locations are Japan, China, South Korea, Singapore, and Thailand. As for the top five cities that host international meetings are Paris, Vienna, Barcelona, Singapore, and Berlin. The top five cities in Asia are Singapore, Seoul, Beijing, Bangkok, and Tokyo. Compared 2005 with 2008, the number and percentage of top ten countries in Europe and America (both North and South America) only increase one and 0.03%; while the number and percentage of the top ten countries in Asia increase 87 and 8%. As for the top ten cities, the number and percentage of top ten countries in Europe and America increase 70 and 7.3%; while the number and percentage of the top ten countries in Asia decrease 14 and 2% (see Table 1 & 2).

Table 1

ICCA Rankings. Number of international Association Meetings Per Country 2005,2008

Rank	Country	2005	2008	Percentage
1	United States	603	507	-15.9%
2	Germany	389	402	3.3%
3	Spain	346	347	0.3%
4	France	347	334	-0.9%
5	United Kingdom	363	322	-11.3%

6	Italy	299	296	-1.0%
7	Brazil	171	254	32.7%
8	Japan	218	247	13.3%
9	Canada	178	231	29.8%
10	Netherland	236	227	-3.8%
11	China	219	223	1.8%
12	Austria	183	196	7.1%
16	South Korea	132	169	28.0%
21	Singapore	128	118	-7.8%
29	Thailand	97	95	-2.0%
30	India	100	92	-8%
32	Malaysia	62	87	40.3%
35	Taiwan	66	79	19.7%
44	Philippines	30	35	16.7%
46	Indonesia	39	33	-15.4%

Adapted from "Statistic Report: the International Association Meeting Market 1999-2008," by ICCA, 2009, p.16-18. Copyright 2009 by ICCA.

Table 2

ICCA Rankings. Number of International Association Meetings Per City 2005, 2008.

Rank	City	2005	2008	Percentage
1	Paris	127	139	9.4%
1	Vienna	139	139	--
3	Barcelona	133	136	2.3%
4	Singapore	128	118	-7.8%
5	Berlin	103	100	-2.9%
6	Budapest	96	95	-1.0%

7	Amsterdam	95	87	-8.4%
7	Stockholm	72	87	20.8%
9	Seoul	83	84	1.2%
10	Lisbon	80	83	3.8%
11	Copenhagen	79	82	3.8%
12	Sao Paulo	29	75	158.6%
14	Beijing	95	73	-23.2%
18	Bangkok	68	71	5.9%
19	Tokyo	63	68	7.9%
21	Hong Kong	94	66	-29.8%
27	Kuala Lumpur	48	61	27.1%
28	Shanghai	51	57	11.8%
32	Taipei	54	52	-3.7%
50	Busan	10	28	180.0%

Adapted from “Statistic Report: the International Association Meeting Market 1999-2008,” by ICCA, 2009, p.16-18. Copyright 2009 by ICCA.

In the context of the international meeting market, ICCA statistics show that “from 2003 to 2007, the percentage of meetings organized in Europe dropped each year, from 58.0% in 2003 to 55.1% in 2007. In 2008 Europe’s market share increased by 0.3% to 55.4%. Asia & Middle East and North America are 2nd and 3rd with relatively stable market shares of respectively 18.6% and 11.4%. Latin America’s market share was 9.2% in 2008, which is the highest of the past 10 years. Australia’s market share was 3%., and Africa’s 2.5% (ICCA, 2009, p. 15-16).”

Jiang (2007) also collected international meetings market share information from a UIA survey conducted from 1996 to 2005. These data show that Asia was in third place as most popular meeting destination for ten years, second only to Europe and America. Europe and the

United States possess large market share because more than half of the meeting organizations' headquarters are located in these two regions (Lee, 2003). However, in the report conducted by UIA in 2008, it shows the total number of conventions held in 2008 was 11,085, including Europe (52.7%), Asia (21.7%), America (17.8%), Africa (4.7%), and Oceania (3.1%) (Korea Tourism Organization, 2008). Asia has overtaken America as the second. Therefore, Asia is a strong competitor in the international meeting industry.

Criteria for bid and decision making. The majority of the respondents were required to present a bid to host the conference in a particular locality, mostly at a previous conference where either the delegates vote on the best presentation or the executive council decides (Comas & Moscardo, 2005).

IAPCO (2004) outlines the following steps for completing a bid:

- a. Form a bid team or organizing committee
- b. Analyze the bid criteria
- c. Undertake background research and prepare a profile of the congress
- d. Compile a SWOT analysis for the bid
- e. Select city/venue
- f. Expand the project plan
- g. Prepare a bid budget and confirm funding
- h. Prepare a congress budget and confirm availability of an appropriate level of seed funding
- i. Enlist the support of other appropriate parties
- j. Confirm bid components
- k. Design the logo for the bid
- l. Produce the bid documents

- m. Plan any presentations to be made and prepare any supporting audio-visual material
- n. Organize a display stand (if appropriate)
- o. Organize hospitality to be provided in conjunction with the bid
- p. Organize promotional items to give away
- q. Organize logistics associated with the bid
- r. Rehearse the presentation
- s. Make the bid
- t. If any further information is required by the bid panel, prepare and submit it
- u. If required, host a site inspection

Crouch and Ritchie (1998) developed a descriptive model to explain the variables involved in the site selection process. They identified a number of factors that are considered during the site selection process. They also created a conceptual model based on the literature (see Figure 2), which represents the basic decision process of site selection (Comas & Moscardo , 2005). We can find out in this model that the main factors of site selection include accessibility, local support, extra-conference opportunities, accommodation facilities, meeting facilities, information, site environment, and so on. Antecedent conditions are other elements which need to be considered and cannot be ignored. Those elements include the nature of the association, member characteristics, executive characteristics, past experience, association policies, environmental conditions, and convention objectives (Crouch & Ritchie, 1998, p. 49-69).

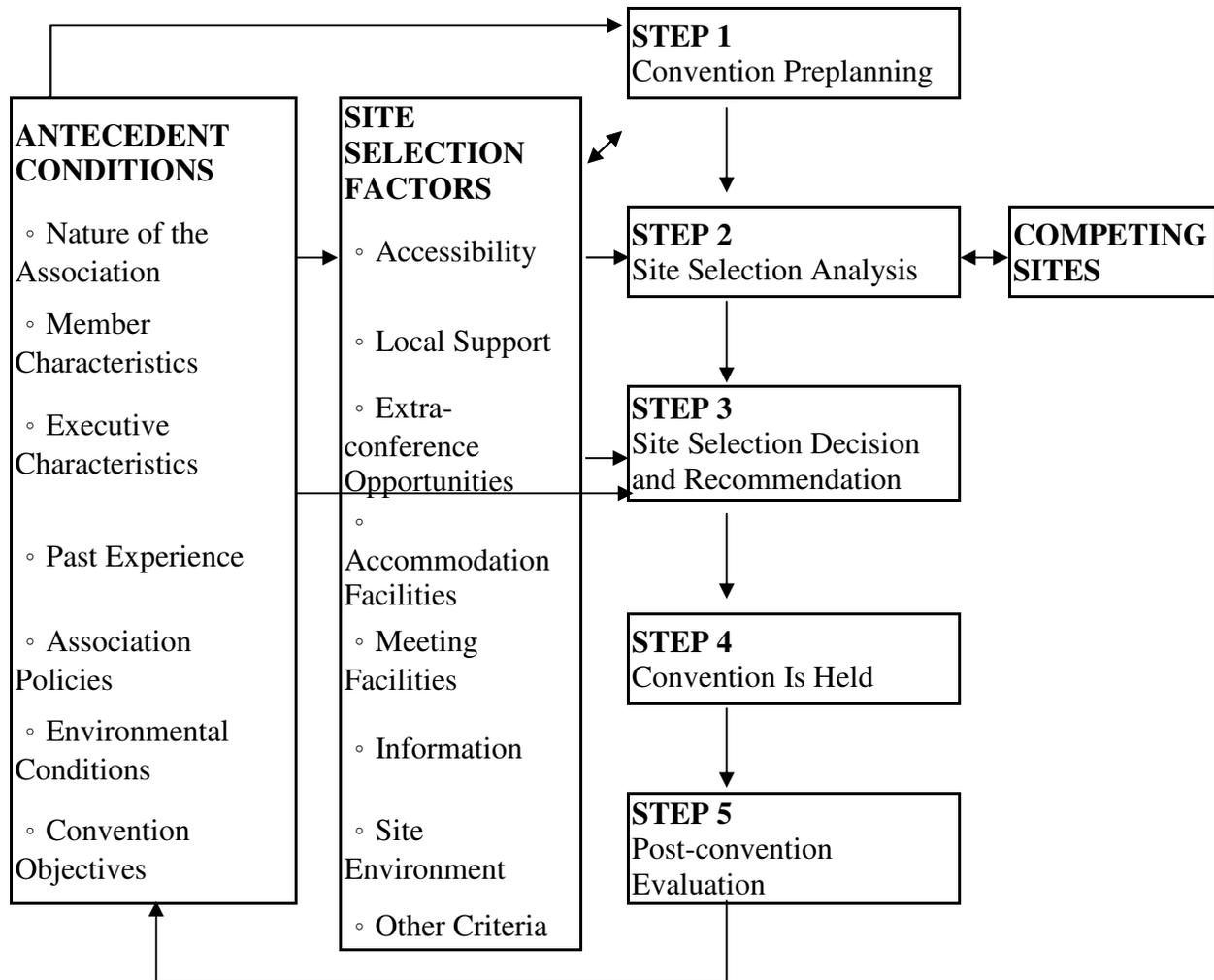


Figure 2. A General Conceptual Model of the Conference Site Selection Process. Adapted from “Convention site selection research: A review, conceptual model, and propositional framework,” by Crouch, G. I., and Ritchie, J. R. B, 1998, *Journal of Convention and Exhibition Management*, 1(1), 49-69. Copyright 1998 by Haworth Press Inc.

IAPCO notes that aspects below must be considered:

- Locations of past congresses, confirmed venues for future congresses and the frequency of the congress.
- Established rotation between continents or countries.
- Next open year.

- Existence of an official tender document.
- Requested presence, involvement and support of the related national industry as well as Local Authorities.
- Accessibility of the host country for those nationalities which commonly attend the congress and general infrastructure and logistics.
- Ideal dates taking into consideration dates of similar congresses to be held in the same period.
- Availability of congress facilities and hotels for the proposed dates.
- Congress budget.
- Place and dates for the presentation of bid.
- Decision making process relating to future congress destinations, e.g. who has voting rights, what is the voting procedure, what is the scoring system, what aspects are more important than others.

Dipietro, Breiter, Rompf, and Godlewska generalized studies by Comas and Moscardo (2005), Taylor and Shortland-Webb (2003), Chacko and Fenich (2000), Crouch and Ritchie (1998), Oppermann and Chon (1997), and Oppermann (1996), finding the “seven factors most frequently identified as site selection criteria: accessibility, availability of facility, quality of service, affordability, destination image, attractions/entertainment, and safety/security (2008, p. 261).”

Based on these factors, Dipietro et al. (2008) conducted a survey to identify the most important criteria, according to meeting planners, and any differences between meeting planners and exhibition planners. The criteria include accessibility by air, ease of accessibility by roads, choice of restaurants, variety of nightlife, number of first-class hotel rooms, brand name hotels,

amount of dedicated exhibit space, image as a desirable place to visit, reputation of hosting successful events, safety and security, support services for events, overall cost, and perceived value for money. The meeting planner samples are chosen from Meeting Professionals International (MPI) and the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA). According to the survey results, “the top five criteria for the MPI members were perceived value for the money, overall cost, reputation for hosting successful events, desirable destination image, and support services for events. The top five criteria for PCMA members were support services for events, overall cost, perceived value for money, safety and security, and reputation for hosting successful events (Dipietro et al, 2008, p. 266-268).”

SWOT analysis of Taiwan’s international meeting environment. The following lists present the advantages and disadvantages of Taiwan’s meeting environment in order to understand this location’s strengths and weaknesses as a host.

Strengths

1. Many industries in Taiwan are well renowned internationally.
2. The new convention and exhibition centers and hotels built in Taichung, Tainan, and Kaohsiung meet international standards, such as safety and cleanliness.
3. The international professional exhibitions attract numerous international buyers.
4. Taiwan’s layout provides easy access to convention and exhibition venues.
5. After joining the WTO, communication between Taiwan and international countries has become more frequent.
6. Safety and security conditions of Taiwan are good. Residents are hospitable and friendly.
7. Taiwan has rich natural and tourism resources, and the tourism environment is safe.
8. Taiwan has a geographical advantage as a major transportation hub in Asia.

9. Taiwan features many distinctive customs, cultural characteristics, and foods.
10. Taiwan can easily accommodate the use of scientific and technological information. It is one of Asia's leaders in supporting high-tech industries.
11. Taiwan has plenty of high-quality and high-tech talent.
12. It is recognized by the international community that Taiwan possesses extensive and strong exhibition experience.
13. Taiwan shares the same culture and language with China, which is an advantage when approaching the Greater Chinese economy.
14. Taiwan's non-governmental organizations actively participate in international organizations and activities.

Weaknesses

1. Industries in Taiwan have gradually begun to expand and moved to other countries, reducing the size of domestic MICE industry.
2. The convention and exhibition space is insufficient seriously.
3. Compared to neighboring Asian countries, the costs of accommodation and catering are relatively high.
4. The government is only slowly investing in Taiwan's MICE industry. Administrative resources are insufficient, as well as the number of professional MICE aides and staffs members.
5. Taiwan's diplomacy strength is weak, as few countries have visa reciprocity with Taiwan.
6. China's policies still influence Taiwan's economic and trade activities.
7. Taiwan lacks international marketing talent and must also strengthen its international image.

8. The number of qualified personnel in the MICE industry is insufficient, and the whole industry has not attained the necessary level of economic success.
9. The English signposts throughout Taiwan are not clearly written..
10. Plans for celebrations and culture activities are not enough to encourage foreigners to participate in them.
11. Public facilities such as museums are not flexible for use for international conferences and exhibitions.

Opportunities

1. The globe has an optimistic view of the development of Taiwan's hi-tech industry, so it can host relevant meetings and exhibitions.
2. After attracting international enterprises to come to Taiwan, it can elevate and promote the quality of the MICE industry and related services.
3. With hi-tech equipment, Taiwan can provide video conferences and exhibitions.
4. Local associations' participation in the international organizations helps Taiwan's bid s to host international meetings.
5. The government is gradually granting more attention to the MICE industry.
6. Communication between Taiwan and China has become more frequent. Business opportunities in the MICE industry are thus increasing.
7. Under globalization, Taiwan's economic and trade activities have increased rapidly.
8. Since joining the WTO, many markets have opened in Taiwan and its volume of trade has risen, thus increasing the demands upon the MICE industry.
9. The Asian MICE market expands every day.

Threats

1. China is known across the world as home to many factories. Thus, all industries in China support the strength of its MICE industry and threaten neighboring countries. Furthermore, the exhibition scale of China expands each year.
2. Few countries maintain diplomatic ties with Taiwan. Its visa procedures are cumbersome and will negatively affect the participation of international companies.
3. Taiwan is near Asian-Pacific countries that are all actively developing their domestic MICE industries.
4. After joining the WTO, foreign MICE companies entered the Taiwanese market. Competitiveness became internationalization.
5. The conflict between Taiwan and China hinders development.

(Hu, 2009; Huang, 2007; Ho, 2008; Tsai, 2005; Yang, 2005; Ye, 1999; Zhaung, 2005)

Summary

The MICE industry has expanded vigorously during the last ten years, stimulating economic growth and developing relevant industries. The impacts of the MICE industry are tremendous. It provides more subtle benefits, such as promoting a host city's international status, expanding the tourism industry, and enhancing information exchange. In addition, the global MICE industry has gradually moved eastward, shifting from the original emphasis only on Europe to both Europe and Asia. If Taiwan can take advantage of this trend to develop and design bid documents that focus on bid criteria, the probability of winning an international meeting can greatly improve.

Part Three

Introduction

From the previous section, it is apparent that a host city or country would greatly benefit from the MICE industry. Now, cities and countries contend for international meetings through the bidding process. It can be summarized from the literature review that the factors that influence this process include the internal and external conditions of an association, government cooperation, influences of the relevant industries, political factors, culture and tourism, software and hardware facilities, security, and so on. The following discussion combines these factors and considers Taiwan's advantages in order to create bidding documents that Taiwanese organizations can use to bid for international meetings.

Results and Recommendations

If Taiwanese associations seek to bid successfully for international meetings, they must increase participation in international organizations and attain a better understanding of each meeting's details. Secondly, they must more fully recognize the advantage of Taiwan. Finally, these organizations must become familiar with the resources at their disposal.

First step: Understand the background.

Understanding the meeting background is the most basic step when preparing to bid for an international meeting. The bidder must obtain as much information as possible about the meeting background and associated culture in order to succeed. IAPCO (2004) suggests that associations should pay attention to past congresses, target audiences, meeting theme, program overview, and additional unique features. Lin and Yeh (2010) propose that associations understand the host background, the decision-making process, and meeting needs. Bidding

organizations that demonstrate these understand will receive a request for proposal (RFP) by the international organization seeking to conduct the meeting.

In terms of background, the bidder should know the frequency of the meetings, where they are usually held, for how many days, which dates are preferred, the prospective number of participants, international organization structure, and so on. Regarding demand, the bidding organization must be aware of prospective venues, hotels, transportation methods, security, food and beverage options, etc. Furthermore, associations must determine the following for the use of meeting rooms: quantity, number of tables and chairs and their arrangement, poster space, whether this meeting combines exhibitions, audio-visual equipment, and so on. For accommodation, associations should identify the type of rooms needed, the quantity of rooms, number of people, transportation options, and whether food and beverage are included with accommodation. Finally, the bidding organization must identify potential social activities for meeting participants, security control, emergency medical contacts, and so on.

Second step: Overview of Taiwan.

Geography. The total land area of Taiwan is approximately 36,000 square kilometers (14,400 square miles). Taiwan is narrow at both north and south side, which makes it look like a leaf. It is located in the southeastern Asia. On its east side is the Pacific Ocean and west side is the Taiwan Strait. Japan is on the north of Taiwan and Philippines is on the south. Taiwan is within 3500 kilometers of all major cities in Asia and also at the center of the Asia-Pacific region, which gives it easy access to Southeast Asia, Japan and mainland China. This outstanding geographic location makes Taiwan an ideal MICE destination for the Asia-Pacific region.

Climate. Taiwan's tropical, sub-tropical, and temperate climates clearly distinguish the

seasons. The mean monthly temperature is from 15°C to 20°C in the winter and approximately 28°C in the summer.

Culture. Taiwanese culture is genuinely sophisticated. The combination of Hakka, Taiwanese, aborigine, and mainland Chinese cultures has contributed to the richness of Taiwan's diverse heritage. The religions, architecture, language, living habits, or foods of Taiwan are all noteworthy. This diversity is exemplified in its residents as well. Taiwan has a population of 23 million people. As various ethnic groups are well integrated, differences that initially separated inhabitants of different provinces have gradually disappeared. This characteristic also makes Taiwan quite welcoming to foreigners.

Food. Food arguably best exemplifies Taiwan's culture diversity. Taiwan offers a broad range of restaurants and fast food options. In addition to specialty cuisines unique to various parts of mainland China, such as Zhejiang, Hunan, Guangdong, Yunnan, Shanghai, Beijing, and Sichuan, local Taiwanese restaurants offer unique delicacies also.

Nature. When the Portuguese came upon Taiwan during the sixteen century, they called it Formosa, which means "beautiful island," due to its verdant beauty. To protect Taiwan's nature environment and culture site, the government has established eight national parks and 13 national scenic areas.

Transportation. Taiwan has two international airports: Taoyuan International Airport, located about 40kilometers from Taipei City, and Kaohsiung International Airport. These airports offer direct flights to and from most major cities, enabling passengers to reach Taiwan from anywhere in the world. According to the statistics from the Taiwan MICE Office (2009), these airports offer more than two hundred flights from 56 major cities.

Taiwan has a wonderful network of railway system. There are four major lines: the

western, eastern, northern, and southern lines. It is extremely convenient for passengers. Passengers can select among various choices: economy, Fuxing, Juguang, and Ziqiang.

Taiwan High Speed Rail joined to the traffic system in 2007. It is located on the west side of Taiwan and only takes two hours to travel from north to south. Visitors now can visit Kaohsiung and Taipei city in one day and save lots of time. There are eight stations are in operation: Taipei, Banqiao, Taoyuan, Hsinchu, Taichung, Chiayi, Tainan and Zuoying (Kaohsiung).

In the two biggest cities, Taipei and Kaohsiung, they have the mass rapid transit systems (MRT). Both MRT systems are working together with the city buses, which ensure the most convenient transportation environment for visitors. Taking taxi is another simple and convenient method. There are many taxis not only in those two biggest cities, but also in other cities in Taiwan.

Festivals. Festivals are celebratory events and quite significant to Chinese culture. The main festivals that taken place in Taiwan include Chinese New Year, Lantern Festival, Dragon Boat Festival, Zhongyuan Festival, and Mid-Autumn Festival.

Shopping. Shopping is convenient in Taiwan. Compared with other countries in Asia, the price is relative reasonable. Supermarkets, shopping malls and department stores are integral components of modern Taiwan. Many convenient stores are open 24 hours, 7 days a week. Given the numbers of shopping centers and large mega-malls located around the island, visitors would require more than a day to explore all of them fully.

Travel. Though Taiwan is a small island, it has special geologic structures that cannot be ignored. It also has wonderful views whether in the mountains or the coasts. Not to mention the rich culture characteristics it has. Above all make Taiwan have the most unique tourism

environment.

Industrial excellence. Taiwan is now at the forefront of research and development in all kinds of industries ranging from information and communication technology (ICT) through to biotechnology and power-sports products. It produces many high tech products that are typically first or second in terms of global market shares. Taiwan’s industries are highly integrated; ranking in first place for cluster development by the WEF (World Economic Forum) in its “2008 Global Competitiveness Report”.

Third step: MICE resources in Taiwan

Government. Government plays an important role in the development of the MICE industry and the bidding process. When bidding, if an association can show documents of governmental support, this may impress the international organization that seeks a meeting location. In general, the government can offer the following support:

- a. Sign and issue supporting letter
- b. Combine related industries
- c. Ask overseas offices to promo or lobby the bid
- d. Offer relevant documents and gifts
- e. Assist with visa processing

Hosting an international meeting requires a great deal of funding. Thus, some governments (as follows) offer financial subsidies for local associations to support their bids.

Table 3

Governments That Offer Subsidies for Holding International Meetings

Name of Government	Subsidy Method	Website
Bureau of Foreign	Approach for applying grants to promote trade	http://www.abss.com.t

Trade, Ministry of Economic Affairs	and business	w/absnews02/h04.htm
Taiwan MICE Office (Taiwan MICE Advancement Program)	<p>This MICE program is sponsored by the Bureau of Foreign Trade, MOEA and divided into four projects.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall implementation project 2. International Marketing and Promotions Project 3. Training and Certification Project 4. International Meetings Hosting Project <p>Under this program, the MICE office establishes principles for applying for grants to host international meetings and exhibitions. For international meetings, the maximum amount that can be subsidized is NT\$2,800,000 (approximately US\$85,000).</p>	http://meettaiwan.com/project/project_counseling.action?menuId=S001_01_06
Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications	Provide travel journey and pre and post conference tours.	http://eng.taiwan.net.tw/
Bureau of International Culture and Educational Relations, Ministry of Education	Establish principles of subsidizing the domestic cultural and educational organization to host international meetings.	http://www.edu.tw/bicer/law_regulation.aspx?law_regulation_sn=1934&pages=2&site_content_sn=6246

<p>NGO International Affairs Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</p>	<p>Establish principles of subsidizing non-governmental organizations to engage in international exchanges and activities. When holding an international meeting in Taiwan, the organization can apply for subsidies in amount that are less than half the total expenses.</p>	<p>http://www.taiwanngo.tw/more.asp?id=3591&subjectid=3736</p>
<p>Department of Health, Executive Yuan</p>	<p>1. Principles for subsidizing organizations to participate in or to host international affairs. The maximum subsidy amount is NT\$1,000,000 (approximately US\$30,300).</p> <p>2. Principles for subsidizing organizations to host academic meetings related to the medical and health science and technology. The maximum subsidy amount is NT\$1,500,000 (approximately US\$45,000).</p>	<p>http://www.doh.gov.tw/CHT2006/DM/SEARCH_RESULT.aspx</p> <p>http://www.doh.gov.tw/CHT2006/DM/DM2_p01.aspx?class_no=96&now_fod_list_no=4109&level_no=1&doc_no=53896</p>
<p>Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health, Executive Yuan</p>	<p>Principles for subsidizing organizations to host academic meetings relating to food, medicine, cosmetics and bio-technology. The maximum subsidy amount is NT\$1,000,000 (approximately US\$30,300).</p>	<p>http://dohlaw.doh.gov.tw/Chi/FLAW/FLAWDAT01.asp?lsid=FL054012</p>
<p>The Council for Economic Planning and Development, Executive Yuan</p>	<p>Principles for using national development funds to subsidize non-government organizations and personnel.</p>	<p>http://www.cepd.gov.tw/m1.aspx?sNo=0012369</p>
<p>National Science Council</p>	<p>Principles for subsidizing organizations to host academic meetings.</p>	<p>http://www.nsc.gov.tw/int/ct.asp?xItem=792</p>

Email: wcchen@nsc.gov.tw

9&ctNode=1213

Department of Information and Tourism, Taipei City	Sponsors international meetings, exhibitions and incentive travels. The government can provide tickets for transportation and attractions.	http://www.tpedoit.taipei.gov.tw/MP_112001.html
Economic Development Bureau, Kaohsiung City	Principles for subsidizing organizations to host MICE activities in Kaohsiung. For international meetings, the maximum subsidy amount is NT\$800,000 (approximately US\$24,000). For other international events, the maximum subsidy amount is NT\$300,000 (approximately US\$9,000).	http://borkcgcg.gov.tw/style/front001/bexfront.php

MICE Associations. Relevant companies in the MICE industry will join the MICE association. The following table lists existing MICE associations in all parts of Taiwan. While holding international meetings, the host requires a lot of information. These MICE associations cannot help the host to acquire such information and also guarantee the reputation and security of their members.

Table 4

MICE Associations in Taiwan

Associations	Website/Contact information
Taiwan Exhibition and Convention Association	http://www.texco.org.tw/index.asp
Taiwan External Trade Development Council	http://www.taitra.org.tw
Taiwan Convention & Exhibition Association	http://www.taiwanconvention.org.tw
Taiwan MICE Institute	meet@mail.leader.edu.tw
Tainan Convention & Exhibition Development Association	http://www.singing168.com.tw/hotel/front/bin/ptlist.phtml?Category=110192
I Lan International Convention & Exhibition	sang.rila@msa.hinet.net

Association

Kaohsiung Convention & Exhibition Association kcea168@yahoo.com.tw

Kaohsiung Global MICE Association <http://www.kgma.org.tw>

Kaohsiung World Trade Exhibition&Convention Association <http://www.weca.org.tw/>

Schools. According to the Department of Statistics of the Ministry of Education, Taiwan has 52 public universities and 112 private universities, colleges, or institutes of technology. The detailed list can found at the Ministry of Education’s web site, located at http://www.edu.tw/statistics/content.aspx?site_content_sn=8868. Every university usually offers assistance and subsidies to host international meetings. The responsible offices at each school are slightly different, but they are usually the office of international affairs, office of international cooperation, office of research and development, or the office of international affairs and exchange.

Venues. The following table includes some of the main convention and exhibition centers located in Taiwan.

Table 5

Main Convention and Exhibition Centers in Taiwan

Venue	Website	Details
Nangang Exhibition Hall	http://www.twtcnangang.com.tw/	2,467 standard booths Space: 45,360 square meters
Taipei World Trade Center Hall 1	http://www.twtc.org.tw/index.asp	1,550 standard booths
Taipei International Convention Center	http://www.ticc.com.tw/index.aspx?lang=zh-tw	14 function rooms Seating of Plenary hall: 3,100

		Seating of Banquet hall: 1,200
Taipei Arena	http://www.taipeiarena.com.tw/	Seating: 13,500
World Trade Center Taichung	http://www.wtctxg.org.tw/	247 standard booths Multi-function meeting rooms
Kaohsiung Business Exhibition Center	http://www.kbec.com.tw/	Space: 7,716 square meter Functions: ideally for trade shows and meetings
Kaohsiung World Games Stadium	http://www.worldgames2009.tw/	Capacity: 55,000 people 1st solar energy stadium

Adapted from “Taiwan, Your Preferred Meeting Destination” by Taiwan MICE Office, 2009.

Administrators at other locations can consult the Taiwan MICE Office Web site at meettaiwan.com. It subdivides venues as meeting places, exhibition places, and other locations. The meeting places include various types of convention centers and conference halls. Other special locations are museums and similar institutions.

Airlines. The primary airlines serving Taiwan are China Airline (<http://www.china-airlines.com/ch/index.htm>) and Eva Air (<http://www.evaair.com/html/b2c/chinese/>). As of June 30, 2010, China Airline offers 92 courses to 29 different countries. In 2010, Eva Air also expanded to over 40 cities in Asia, Australia, Europe and the United States. Other airlines flying to Taiwan are Malaysia Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Trans Asia Airways, Hong Kong Express, Delta, Vietnam Airlines, Air Asia X, All Nippon Airways, Singapore Airlines, Shanghai Airlines, Japan Airlines, KLM.com, Thai AirAsia, American Airlines, China Southern, Sichuan Airlines, China Eastern, Garuda Indonesia, Shandong Airlines, United Airlines, Xiamen Airlines, Qantas, Air China, Shenzhen Airlines, Philippine Airlines, Korean Air, Air Macau, Air Asia, Continental

Airlines, Alitalia, Jetstar Asia, US Airways, Asiana Airlines, Lufthansa, Uni Air, Cebu Pacific, Swedline Express, Dragonair/Hong Kong Dragon Airlines, Hainan Airlines, Czech Airlines, Thai Airways, and Mandarin Airlines.

Hotels. Taiwan offers many types of accommodation for visitors. According to the classification of the Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications, these types can be divided into four categories: international tourist class, tourist class, budget hotel, and B&B. For more information, bidding hosts can consult the Tourism Bureau Web site at <http://admin.taiwan.net.tw/indexc.asp>. The average room rate for a 5-star hotel is up to 150 U.S. dollars, depending on the time of year. For a 4-star hotel, the room rate can range from 110 to 180 U.S. dollars. The room rates for business hotels range from 60 to 100 U.S. dollars.

The following table includes some hotel reservation systems that are suitable for Taiwan residents and also foreign visitors.

Table 6

Hotel Reservation Systems in Taiwan

Name of System	Website
ABC Travel	http://www.abctravel.com.tw/
Ezfly	http://www.ezfly.com/
Ezhotel	http://www.ezhotel.com.tw/
Hihotel	http://www.hihotel.com.tw/
Tiptop Hotelpak	http://tiptop-hotelpak.com/
Taiwan Resort Hotel Association	http://www.rma-taiwan.com.tw/
Eztravel	http://www.eztravel.com.tw/
Hotel News	http://www.hotelnews.com.tw/
Emmm	http://emmm.tw/

Transportation. As mentioned above, Taiwan offers many transportation methods to visitors. Table 8 provides more information about this.

Table 7

Public Transportation in Taiwan

Name of Transportation	Website
High Speed Rail	http://www.thsrc.com.tw/tc/?lc=tc
Taiwan Railway	http://www.railway.gov.tw/index/index.aspx
Metro Taipei	http://www.trtc.com.tw/MP_122031.html
Kaohsiung Rapid Transit	http://www.krtco.com.tw/en/e-index.aspx

The Institute of Transportation, MOTC, offers information regarding public transportation and urban buses as well. Details can be found on the Institute of Transportation Web site, located at <http://e-trans.iot.gov.tw/query/ePlan/e-Provider.jsp#bus>.

Travel Agencies. In Taiwan, travel companies can be divided into four categories: class A, class B, synthesis, and from abroad. Class A businesses sell domestic and international tickets, arrange accommodations for domestic and international travel, food and beverage, and so on. Class B businesses sell only domestic tickets, arrange domestic accommodations, and food and beverage. More details can be accessed at the Tourism Bureau Web site at <http://taiwan.net.tw/m1.aspx?sNo=0000148&t=11>.

Others. Other issues are relevant to hosting international meetings such as PCO/PEO, food and beverage, decoration services, and translation. Besides looking up the lists of those MICE associations, the information can also be found at Taiwan MICE office Web site.

Conclusion

The development of the MICE industry and the number of international meetings hosted are indicators of whether a country or city is prosperous. Governments around the world are

currently paying attention to international meetings due to the economic advantages they offer, in addition to other benefits. The latter can be reflected in politics, society, culture, science and technology, and other components of a country. In order to attract international meetings, many countries have established specialized agencies like convention and tourism bureaus to organize their resources.

Winning a bid to host an international meeting is challenging. In addition to government efforts, local non-government organizations must also strengthen their relations with international organizations. Furthermore, local associations must fully understand the demands of international organization and combine their resources to meet those needs. Together with a positive attitude, local associations may succeed in bidding for international meetings.

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