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Green Capital Nijmegen - What is happening in the Netherlands?

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The Netherlands: excelling in culture and green

Each year the European Union awards two big prizes: that of European Cultural Capital and European Green Capital. Based on alphabetical allotment, the Netherlands and Malta could decide which of their cities would become Cultural Capital in 2018. Eventually, Malta chose Valletta and in the Netherlands the city of Leeuwarden took the spotlights. To win, Leeuwarden had to compete nationally with the cities of Maastricht and Eindhoven, but became first thanks to its innovative program with various activities in the framework of sustainability, integration and environment to challenge problems in the region.

In order to win the title of European Green Capital, each year twenty to thirty European cities enter the competition. The medium-sized Dutch city of Nijmegen (175,000 inhabitants) shone in the improving and making sustainable of the living environment. By now, the European Green Capital year in Nijmegen is in full swing and, among other events, various international congresses will be taking place there in 2018. During the congress Ports and the City, for instance, the European sector for the inland shipping signed, together with the Dutch minister Cora van Nieuwenhuizen, the 'Declaratie van Nijmegen'. With this declaration, the sector strives to reduce the CO₂-emission of the inland shipping activities by 20% by 2030. In Nijmegen alone, 300 to 500 ships sail by every day, which amounts to 100,000 not exactly clean vessels every year.

In my opinion, Nijmegen is typical for the Netherlands. Perhaps not the biggest player compared to its region, but that certainly does not mean that there are no great developments taking place here. Curious about what more wonderful things the Netherlands have to offer? Learn more about our achievements at stand E100 at IMEX Frankfurt!

Sofie Fest
Editor-in-chief
Sofie@vanmunstermedia.nl

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A great deal is happening in congressland at the moment. Now that the economy is booming, many organisations consider it time to start looking for a new venue for their congress. Where the traditional national congress market was focused on a fixed location, there is now room for new ideas and changes.

"Of course the concept of authenticity is far from new. But more than ever it is about 'real' contact and living 'truly'. People are pining for 'attention'."

Maarten Schram,
chairman IDEA, page 42.





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MVM Producties b.v.
Postbus 6684
6503 GD Nijmegen

Kerkenbos 12-24a
6546 BE Nijmegen
t: 024 - 3 738 505
f: 024 - 3 730 933

PUBLISHER:
Michael van Munster

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EDITOR IN CHIEF
Sofie Fest
sofie@vanmunstermedia.nl

EDITORS
Hans Hooft, Jessica Scheffer

ADDITIONAL CONTENT BY
Erik Werners, Maartje IJzerman, MCI Amsterdam
Eric Bakermans, Rutger Bremer

TRANSLATIONS
Hans Hooft

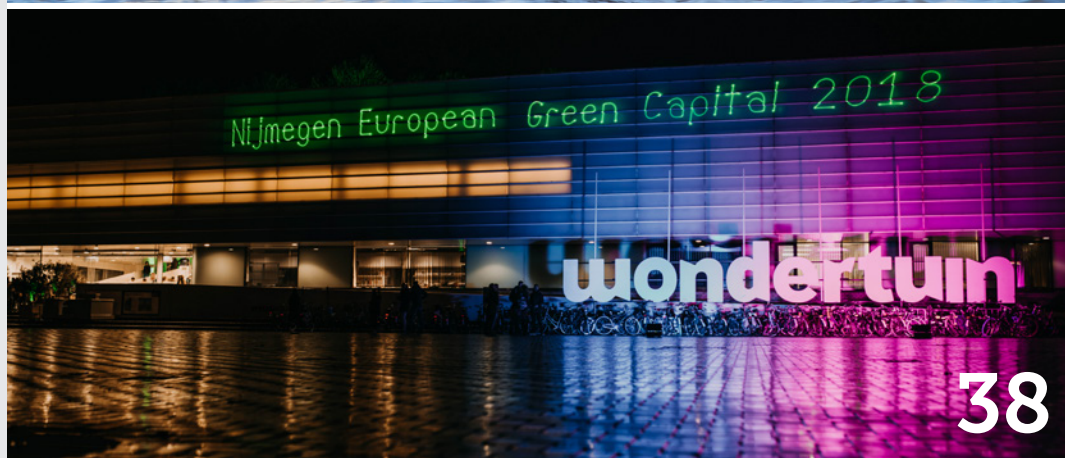
LAYOUT
Joost Franken, Jan-Willem Bouwman

PHOTOGRAPHY
Toerisme Utrecht, Holland-mediabank

COVER
In 2018 all eyes are on the northern Dutch province of Friesland (Fryslân in the local language) and its capital Leeuwarden. Friesland is known for its beautiful lakes and harbours.

ADVERTISEMENTS
Jordey de Joode:
jordey@vanmunstermedia.nl
Aysun Mahubessy-Saruhan
aysun@vanmunstermedia.nl

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38 Nijmegen European Green Capital 2018

In many Dutch cities, sustainability is actively endorsed. This year, the city of Nijmegen can even name itself European Green Capital 2018. As part of this theme year various events, projects and national and international congresses are organized in the city on the river Waal.

42 What is happening in the Netherlands?

Interaction, technology, corporate social responsibility: many factors have an impact on the way the MICE professional views his or her industry. The needs of the clients also change. Meeting International interviewed a number of Dutch players in the sector about the developments they expect within their specific fields.

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#LikeHolland

Conceiving a new destination campaign surely entails challenges. Obviously, it all starts with plotting a strategy. Describing weaknesses, strengths, opportunities & threats. What are the core values and where do you see yourself 3 years from now? Many of us have looked at a blinking cursor on screen and wrote... once upon a time...

And, last but not least; after completing a rather successful campaign you must try to avoid the new one from being quite similar.

Anyhow, we did it. At least, that is what I assume. As ever, we know examples of what to avoid and what to pursue. For it is one thing to market a country or a city as a business destination, but it is another thing yet to exceed expectations. Visitors of IMEX Frankfurt will be showered with a true avalanche of images and sounds. Exactly what will trigger planners to schedule a meeting with a random provider? What image of a destination prevails in the mind of the visitor? Taking a holiday to a particular destination may be enjoyable, but will it also be the perfect destination for your business event or a general or scientific conference? And still, it has an impact in the back of your mind. It is what we call subconscious action.

That is the reason why our new campaign does not feature standard images of empty conference rooms. We show images of the Netherlands that will definitely remind you of the Netherlands, but you may have to look twice. For #LikeHolland is about 'liking' something. And at the same time also about the way we do things in the Netherlands. 'Things like we do things in Holland'. As this country has over 17 million inhabitants and hosts the same number of visitors every year there are just as many ways to describe us.

In short, we have boundless opportunities to design a campaign. And yes, we aim for a smile, a question mark, and maybe even the odd frown on your face when you see what we will share with you. We are aware that we are not the one and only business destination of a kind, but we are unique in what we do - and in what we refrain from doing.

Eric Bakermans
Marketing Director Meetings & Conventions
NBTC Holland Marketing



Utrecht: congress city with green, healthy and smart innovations

Utrecht Convention Bureau works on the profiling of the Utrecht region as ideal congress destination. The knowledge city itself and its region offer the necessary facilities and inspiring, meaningful starting points for knowledge events.

For several years now, Utrecht has been profiling itself as the congress city where green, healthy and smart innovations take place. “The theme Healthy Urban Living comprises everything that has to do with living together long, healthy, vital, social and independent, in a clean, safe, nice, sustainable and economically thriving city”, says Monique André de la Porte, account manager at Utrecht Convention Bureau. “A good example is the Princess Máxima Center for paediatric oncology, where the focus is on the integral approach to children’s cancer”, Business Researcher Liza Verkroost adds. “At this location all clinical care, all clinical-scientific research and training courses present in the Netherlands is concentrated, and that makes it the third largest centre for paediatric oncology worldwi-

In 2018, among other events, the following international congresses take place:

- International Research Society on Spinal Deformities (IRSSD). June 14th-16th, at the University Hall Utrecht.
- VIV Europe 2018, World Expo of animal protein businesses from feed to food. June 20th-22th, at Jaarbeurs
- XXXVIII Sunbelt Conference. June 26 to July 1, at the Dom Square
- Fourteenth International Symposium on Human Chlamydial Infections (ISHCI). July 1st- 6th, Woudschoten in Zeist
- 6th European Veterinary Immunology Workshop (EVIW). September 5th-7th, Spoorwegmuseum.

de. On June 5 the new location next to the Wilhelmina Children’s Hospital will be opened. A bridge between both locations provides the Princess Máxima Center with a convenient way of using the hospital’s facili-



ties like children’s intensive care and the paediatric operating room complex.” An other important player is the Hubrecht Institute which focuses on developmental biology and stemcell research. Here, basic research is done on innovative treatment methodes for cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. The Hubrecht Institute as well as the Princess Máxima Center are located at the Utrecht Science Park which, with over 100 companies and institutions, is the largest Science Park in the Netherlands. Here, research and development

departments of companies work closely together with researchers of knowledge institutions in order to come to innovations in the area of healthier and sustainable living.

SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES

The Utrecht region is also in the vanguard of sustainable initiatives. Lately, for instance, much has been happening in the area behind the railway station and near the Jaarbeurs event complex. In March of this year, the first power-

Utrecht Region Pass

To make travelling to and in the Utrecht region more convenient, the Utrecht Region Pass was introduced recently. “This multifunctional pass for public transport enables the international business traveller to explore Utrecht and the rest of the Netherlands in a sustainable manner. Besides that it can be used to pay the entrance fee of a number of regional attractions”, Verkroost explains. “The pass can be ordered online, picked up at Schiphol Airport and the travelling can start. The big advantage is that you pay only for the rides you take and the attractions you visit. The pass is linked to your creditcard. As soon as you are on the plane back home you can in fact already draw up and submit a statement of expenses of your creditcard. With the Utrecht Region Pass it is easier to organize your congress in the Utrecht region – and get to know the region.”

pack in the Netherlands was placed there. This mega-battery is linked to 200 solar panels and 20 charging points for electric cars and has a capacity of nearly 1 MWh. With this mega-battery and other initiatives, Utrecht wants to disconnect all houses from natural gas facilities and





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About Utrecht Convention Bureau

Anyone who is planning to organize a knowledge event in and around Utrecht can count on the support of Utrecht Convention Bureau, which offers free of charge, independent and expert advice on the possibilities for congresses and social program options in Utrecht. Initiatives like Hotel Service Utrecht, a free online reservation service via which congress and event participants can easily and safely make reservations and pay for their hotel rooms, also make it easy to organize international meetings. Besides, from Schiphol Amsterdam Airport the city of Utrecht can be reached within half an hour by train or car, and price-wise the region has very favorable rates compared to many other European cities.

make all cars emission-free. An other sustainable initiative is The Green House, a circular pavillion functioning as a restaurant, meeting venue and meeting place. Verkroost: "In the construction, cladding was used that came from the former Knoop army barracks that lie next to the complex. Many interior elements of The Green House are placed on loan or supplied relating to use. The pavillion can be completely disassembled and will get a new use at an other location after fifteen years."

André de la Porte mentions as second example: "Something we are very much looking forward to is the arrival of the travelling exhibition Climate Planet on the Jaarbeursplein. Starting late this year in a large globe of 20 by 24 meter a film is presented showing the present state of the earth and the historic development of the climate. In the Globe events and meetings on the 'Global Goals' will also be taking place, an initiative of the UN for global sustainable development goals."

CONGRESSES IN THE REGIO

In the city of Utrecht more than enough locations can be found with a joint capacity of 2,000 hotel rooms. The province of the same name can supply another 2,000 rooms plus an extension of the wide choice of accommodations. André de la Porte: "Most of the organizers of inter-



national congresses prefer the compact city centre of Utrecht. But we notice that our partners in the natural wooded area of the Utrechtse Heuvelrug and in the somewhat smaller city of Amersfoort are more and more in demand. Some parties actually prefer a quiet, green environment. Guests who have used a location in the region are pleasantly surprised and like to come back. Besides, they also offer options for social programs in which you can combine the hustle and bustle of the city with the quiet of the nature in one

program. In the end it is all about sharing knowledge and networking, and this can be done in the city centre as well as in a rural setting."

Curious about the possibilities in the Utrecht region? More information can be found at www.utrechtconventionbureau.com. Or obtain information more personally at the Holland stand (E100) during IMEX 2018.

Let's make your event exceptional

We craft exceptional events with great partnerships, amazing food and inspiring surroundings. Above all, we aspire to create an atmosphere where everyone feels at home and can have an extraordinary encounter. We have been bringing people together for over 100 years; something which is now more relevant than ever. In a world that has become more and more digital, a personal handshake makes the difference. We believe, doing business is people's business. Meeting is looking each other in the eye. Celebrating is embracing each other. We are ready to make your event exceptional.



Meet Kris!

Kris is an Accountmanager at Jaarbeurs. You can meet her at IMEX at Holland Meeting Point, hall 8, E100 or visit jaarbeurs.nl/imex to see how she makes encounters extraordinary.

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Our venues will inspire you





Carlton President

Ready for the guest of the future

In its selection process of external locations the MICE industry is more and more inclined to opt for experience and a unique story. This trend was the basis for the new concept for Carlton President. Here, the guest can choose from various inspiring function rooms which all have their own atmosphere and function.

Photography Marcel Krijgsman

Since March of this year it is all about the Urban Nature concept at Carlton President. The hotel offers a lively, inspiring and dynamic environment, where guests can make the very best of their stay. "Thanks to the free, optimistic and lively vibe, in which there is a real and

About Carlton President

- 165 rooms
- Three brainstorm rooms
- Congress hall (256 m²)
- Five training & meeting rooms
- Official seats2meet location with several work stations
- Garden Brasserie
- Bar
- Leisure Centre with whirlpool, sauna, Turkish steam bath, solarium, fitness and pool/billiard
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- Own free parking lot, including charging stations for electric cars
- Bronze Green Key

meaningful attention to your needs, you can fully relax here and there is ample space for personal growth", says General Manager Bart Blikman. "Because of surprising combinations and concepts (for instance work vs. play, public vs. private, urban vs. nature, and in the fields of food

and tech) and an inspiring interior, the hotel becomes a very special place to stay, to talk about and to return to with pleasure." The hotel staff also play an important role in creating this environment. "If you enjoy your work, the guests will notice it and you create a positive atmosphere", says sales and Marketing Manager Vera de Haan. "Our employees are given a lot of opportunities for personal growth. That is one of the reasons why they are very receptive to subtle signals and can anticipate on these."

OWN IDENTITY

For every room were considered the function and the meetings which are organized there and what guests need to achieve their objectives. Blikman: "Here, you can create your own private discussion environment, away from your day-to-day surroundings but without having to travel very far. Urban and nature are also present in the hotel's various rooms and function rooms, in the food & beverage concept, and the colors and materials used, making for exciting and surprising combinations." "The three brainstorm rooms are individually focused on the purpose of the meeting and have their own dynamics", De Haan explains. "The Living is decorated as an open and accessible living room. You can sit down on the lounge sofa or in the rocking chair and use a large whiteboard to make notes of your ideas. When the room is not used, the glass door is open and then the space can be used as an

additional break-out room." Blikman: "At a specially designed oak table in the blue boardroom Ocean a team can conduct more elaborate discussions and use a 65-inch monitor with touchscreen function, video-conferencing facilities and digital flip-overs to share information online. In the Roots, on the other hand, you go back to basic, sitting around a round table. The walls are decorated with organic elements. The hooks serving as clothes pegs and the fourth wall with the grey graffiti offer the urban contrast.

The same playfulness can be found in the 16 by 16 meter square congress hall, unique thanks to the absence of pillars and a ceiling height of six meter. The front part of the hall is dominated by the colors blue and white, the part in the back is decorated in green and white. There are also nice accents in the shape of wall surfaces with dressed moss, the swings and the specially designed light fittings.

The decoration in the five training and meeting rooms was kept a bit less frivolous, with alternating blue and white surfaces on the walls.

BOOST

Equally much attention was paid to the break-out rooms in the hotel. De Haan explains: "All public spaces have all sorts of furniture like bar tables, cosy sit-down nooks, tables with stools and lounge sofas,

all spaces where the guests can have discussions in small groups. Besides these, in the Lounge by the brainstorm rooms we created a bright-red scrum room where you can discuss issues to come to a breakthrough." Just like the function rooms, the bedrooms' interiors also have playful contrasts. Around the bed, the colors green and blue ensure a quiet environment, whereas the other side of the rooms are decorated in more industrial elements.

INSPIRING ENVIRONMENT

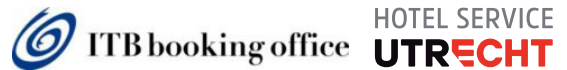
At the end of this year, the lobby, bar and restaurant will also reflect the Urban Nature concept. "The lobby will be a social meeting place with movable reception desks", says De Haan. "The restaurant with open kitchen, the bar and the conservatory will be one accessible space, where guests can choose a seat on the lounge sofas near the open fireplace, at the high tables with high chairs, or rather take a seat at the cosy bar." The restaurant's menu mainly has dishes that are light digestible, low in carbohydrate and vegetarian, prepared with fresh ingredients from local suppliers. "We are ready for the guest of the future. Here, players in the MICE market have all the opportunities to realize their objectives in an inspiring environment. We are more than happy to tell more about the possibilities."

www.carlton.nl/en/president-hotel-utrecht





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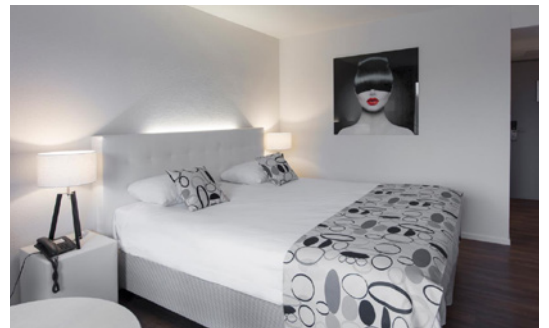


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Naturally Mitland

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The combination of 146 luxuriously furnished hotel rooms and 14 multifunctional meeting rooms – all enjoying natural daylight – makes Hotel Mitland a favoured location for meetings and conferences for up to 250 people. And with extensive facilities including a swimming pool with sauna, its own bowling alley and a restaurant with two terraces, the four-star hotel also offers everything you need for a perfectly relaxed stay. The meeting rooms feature comprehensive modern facilities, including state-of-the-art audiovisual

equipment. Some of them even have beautiful terraces with photogenic views over the peaceful waters of Fort De Bilt. What is more, at Hotel Mitland your stay is truly

Nestled in a picturesque city park on the outskirts of the historic city of Utrecht lies the luxurious Hotel Mitland.

green: thanks to a host of environmentally friendly initiatives the hotel has proudly held the coveted golden Green Key certificate – the premier eco label for the tourism sector – since 2012.

www.mitland.nl/en





Dokkum

Leeuwarden-Fryslân European Capital of Culture 2018

Surprising and exceeding expectations

In 2018 all eyes are on the northern Dutch province of Friesland (Fryslân in the local language) and its capital Leeuwarden. As part of the title European Capital of Culture various cultural productions, projects and events will be organized in Friesland this year. Thanks to this title, not only the leisure market has set its aim on Friesland: associations and corporations will also go north.

For this year the organization 'Culturele Hoofdstad van Europa Leeuwarden-Fryslân 2018 (LF2018)' has composed a program with over a hundred events, consisting of projects, productions and smaller initiatives in the fields of theater, music, dance, visual art, literature and film. These events will take place throughout the year and in the entire province. The main theme Leeuwarden has chosen is 'iepen mienskip', or open community. The

underlying idea is that society is changing and Friesland wants to show how this province handles these changes. By seizing the opportunities, by listening to new insights, by being flexible and by adapting itself without losing its identity, Friesland demonstrates its transition from 'mienskip' to an 'iepen mienskip' during the cultural year 2018.

PROGRAM

Apart from the sixty events and projects falling under the main program (including a large exhibition of Escher in the Fries Museum and the music theater show Lost in the Greenhouse performed in a greenhouse among the paprikas), there is also a special 'iepen mienskip' program with hundreds of events staged partly on their own initiative by private individuals and organizations. By means of these cultural events social issues like the impact of agriculture, sustainable energy, language and the European

Fries Museum



Leeuwarden



Union are touched on. The program FossilFry Fryslân includes various (partly already existing) activities pertaining alternatives for the use of fossil fuels. For instance a parade of futuristic, sustainable vehicles from all over the world will be held on the highway from the city of Drachten to Leeuwarden. In September a major energy congress will take place. The biggest challenge is the Elfwegentocht (Eleven roads journey) lasting two weeks during which all Frisians will make an effort to leave their fossil-fuel powered vehicles and instead use electric taxis and boats, Segways, greengas buses and e-bikes.

CULTURAL SETTING

The campaign Meet in Friesland, a joint effort by Merk Fryslân and LF2018 to promote Friesland as a corporate destination, has given the regional MICE market a serious stimulus. According to Jant van Dijk, director of Congres Bureau Friesland, various national and international congresses will be taking place in Friesland this year. The preliminary activities for these events were partly initiated thanks to the title European Capital of Culture. "The title has incited many industries and associations to put themselves forward for 2018. If, apart from a good bid you can also use this title

in the competition, associations are more quickly inclined to consider Friesland as a destination. Normally, each year Friesland manages to attract some international association congresses. This year, Friesland has clearly made its mark, because ten congresses lasting several days and each attended by more than 250 participants will be organized. These congresses include the CIRCOM congress (association of European regional broadcasting networks), ISASA (International Small Islands Studies Association) and the WTCAGA 2018 (World Trade Centers Association General Assembly). Apart from that, the effect of this positive imaging has a follow-up: even now, companies and institutions try to find the link between their congress or inspiration day, and the conferences that are a part of the LF2018 program, such as the monument congress, ISPA (International Society for the Performing Arts) and the European Water Tech Week. In January alone we have received several requests of congresses attended by more than one hundred persons. One of these is the Architects' Council of Europe."

To make sure that the congress participants really learn something about LF2018, Van Dijk tries to implement, wherever possible, parts of LF2018 in the program of these congresses. "The participants of the WTC congress partner program visit the Escher exhibition and the participants of the ISPA congress visit various LF2018 projects during a walking dinner. They also visit the



Oerol cultural festival. LF2018 is mentioned in all communication around the congresses.”

AWAKENING LANDSCAPE

Yvonne Hulleman, Campaign Manager Meetcentives with Merk Fryslân adds that it offers the opportunity to enhance the image the meeting and event planners have of Friesland. “They think of Friesland as a water sports province and like to combine their business meeting with a sailing trip, an excursion to the Wadden islands or a guided tour of the city center of Leeuwarden or the picturesque town of Sneek. Thanks to LF2018 and the extensive marketing campaign initiated by Meet in Friesland and LF2018, Leeuwarden is now full in the spotlights as cultural capital. During site visits we showed several meeting and event planners exceptional locations and unique activities that will be taking place as part of LF2018.

They can, for instance, take part in the program ‘Ontwakend Landschap’ (Awakening landscape), during which they dine together in the open air, attend a performance, sleep in tents and are awakened the following morning by a trumpet player, take a walk in the forest with the forester and then have breakfast together. The experience offered by the landscape is surprising and that appeals to the meeting planners. Apart from that, various events also include the themes water management (WaterCampus Leeuwarden and the Afsluitdijk), sustainable energy and dairy production (DairyCampus), about which the province can offer a great deal of knowledge. All this increases the intrinsic value of a meeting. Thanks to LF2018 we can add culture to this list of knowledge themes.”

A special Hospitality Desk was established for the growing number of corporate requests.



Harlingen



Opening LF2018



IJlst



The river Geeuw flows through the city of JIJst

This Desk helps meeting and event planners to link their meeting with a compatible LF2018 project and offers assistance in the quest for appropriate meeting and congress locations and hotels in the entire province of Friesland.

BOOST

The positive effects LF2018 has on the Frisian MICE market have not gone unnoticed by the partners of Congres Bureau Friesland. Van Dijk: "During the introductory period the stakeholders and MICE partners like the hotelsector already noticed how the region could profit from the congress market. In order to better facilitate this market, Friesland Convention Partners was established last year. This is a joint venture of Frisian entrepreneurs active in the MICE sector. We also get more and more tips from the parties involved

to approach certain organizations." Hulleman: "LF2018 causes a huge boost for the positioning of Leeuwarden and Friesland as city of culture. You notice that we are top of mind with the meeting and event planners. With the unique possibilities we offer we can really surprise them and exceed their expectations. The inhabitants, organizations and corporations are also enthusiastic and act more and more as ambassadors for their province."

More information on the MICE possibilities can be found at www.congresbureau friesland.nl and www.meetinfriesland.nl. The website www.friesland.nl/en/european-capital-of-culture offers all activities around Leeuwarden-Fryslân2018.





Héctor A. Venegas, Ingrid Rip and Karin Krogh among the attendees of the Meetovation Education

Meeting Design

Change your participants into committed ambassadors

Because the congress and event participants are becoming more and more critical and also able to acquire their information elsewhere, it is necessary to always take a critical look at the added value of a business meeting. Fortunately the relatively young MICE industry is not standing still. One of the developments is Meeting Design, which can help to make a meeting more effective and change your participants into committed ambassadors.

Meeting Design is a development from the past ten years that is growing in importance. "People more and more realize the importance of a professional approach. This is also intrinsic to the relatively young MICE trade that is constantly evolving", says Ingrid Rip, owner of training agency RREM and consultant for international (academic) association congresses. "As a certain subject gains more importance, this process functions as a flywheel and is accepted by more and more parties. A year ago, for instance, the focus was more on ROI. By now this is a given element. Meeting Design is a next step in the continuously advancing professionalization of the sector. Various parties have worked out and shaped the principles of Meeting Design, like EventCanvas, MindMeeting and Meetovation."

CREATIVE INTERPRETATION

Meeting Design focuses on the interpretation of the participant journey of a business meeting in order to let the stakeholders achieve their objectives, for instance realizing ROI, PR, networking or the gaining of knowledge and inspiration. Rip: "Ten years ago a congress was the only means of communication for the exchange of information.

But with the ever increasing digitization, a meeting with its only purpose the exchange of information, no longer constitutes an added value. It is much more about the mutual exchange of knowledge, the networking, the creating of interaction within the peer groups and not to be forgotten: the providing of an experience." A congress is therefore more than a room with a stage. By means of Meeting Design you can provide your meeting with a creative interpretation by, for instance, applying other forms of communication transfer. "Instead of the professor who speaks for one hour, you can also divide the participants into small groups, set them at round tables and let them exchange knowledge. It is more and more about the 'wisdom of crowds', the jointly elaborating on the present knowledge of the speaker as well as the participants. I also apply this principle during my training sessions. Together you know more, and you can help each other to come to new views."

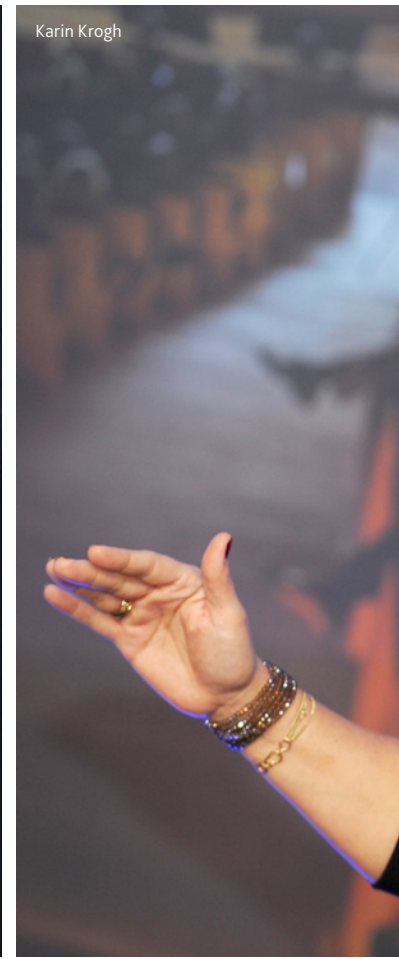
SCOUTING OUT POSSIBILITIES

According to Rip especially the corporate market has already gone far in scouting out and applying the possibilities of Meeting Design. "Nowadays, events have a fixed



Karin Krogh

Ingrid Rip has completed the Extended Meetovation Education



position within the marketing and communication strategy of companies. The business community has set itself a clear goal and adapts the marketing and communication to that goal. They realize that when the objectives of your client and the other stakeholders and the desired experience for the participants is the main objective, you organize a better event. The longer your event is remembered, the more successful it is in the longer term. And that means a better return on investment for the organizer as well as the participants. With national association congresses you see that Meeting Design is also making a slow but steady entry. By applying Meeting Design they can convince the new generation of trade professionals to participate in their congresses and events. In contrast with the generation that graduates in ten years' time and finds it necessary to be a member of a trade association, the new class of students is more and more critical about the added value of a membership. Just like the acceptance of ROI at the time, I expect that the positive experiences acquired with Meeting Design will ensure that eventually, it will become an element of the organization process."

DANISH DEVELOPMENT

Meetovation is an early development that incorporates Meeting Design. Years ago, Meetovation was developed by Visit Denmark to promote Denmark as a congress destination. The Danish MPI Chapter Leader Karin Krogh decided to further develop the principles and together with MPI Chapter Leader Héctor A. Venegas from Germany, they established the consulting and planning company engaging meetings. Besides consulting on Meeting Design and planning meetings and events, this company offers MICE professionals the opportunity to train themselves according to the principles of Meetovation. "The focus lies on the stakeholders, the organizing committee and the various target groups", Krogh explains. "When these aspects have been clearly identified and you have set a completely clear objective, then you can focus on the Meetovation principles. The meeting design concentrates on how a meeting can best be set up to create engaged participants. That creates success and ensures to achieve the objectives."

"The principles of Meetovation are Return on Investment, Local Inspiration,

Responsible Thinking, Creative Set-up and Active Involvement", Venegas adds. "Local Inspiration is about the benefits of the region which you can use, to support the objectives. But also the knowledge presented and the natural network which can enhance a business meeting. In the Netherlands, many destinations duly consider the present knowledge development and how this can enhance a congress. Responsible Thinking is about sustainability, and not only green alternatives are considered for the location and the catering, but also the provision of tools to realize an impact on a social level on the region. Active Involvement has to do with collaboration and interaction between the participants. Exchanging knowledge, ideas, creating experience and sharing it together. Too often people just sit down and listen to the presentation, passively." Krogh: "It is no longer a one-way process. If you have a congress attended by 300 doctors, and there is only one doctor or professor speaking, then that is a waste of 300 qualified brains. If they all have the opportunity to share their personal knowledge or experiences with each other, the end result of a meeting is far more successful. Then you



Héctor A. Venegas

have a good Return on Investment, learning-wise and motivation-wise. That is the idea behind Meetovation: when you involve them, engage them in the action, this is definitely an added value for the congress. They become happy and loyal participants who will become an ambassador for your organization, product or service.”

PRACTICAL MODELS

When you work with the five Meetovation principles with your meetings, conferences and events, then the participants become more engaged. This is an essential part of the Extended Meetovation Education.

Krogh: “We start with a webinar, two weeks before the workshop, to get to know each other before we actually start. Before the webinar, during the workshop days and after the education everyone has to do a survey, to find out on what level of knowledge they have. In addition to this they also have to fill out an online Everything DiSC® profile. DiSC behavior profiles is an analytical tool that is used to assess behavior like personality traits, behavioral traits or energy factors that characterizes our personality. It helps to recognize human diver-

sity, to understand our colleagues and how to communicate with them. This improves the relations – and on top of that, the sales.” Venegas adds: “Two weeks after the webinar we have a three-day training which is very intense, it goes on even during the evenings, because we have a lot of ground to cover. The training of course is also set up according to the Meetovation principles, so you learn while doing. During sessions we provide advice on your events that you are planning or supplying to and you will meetovate them. Then you can get your certificate.”

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Rip followed the Extended Meetovation Education and this year became the first certified Meetovator in the Netherlands. “The training goes beyond Meeting Design as such. For instance, the DiSC evaluation is an incredibly useful tool. How to get the right message across is quite often forgotten when talking to people and assessing. Because of its practicability, Meetovation is a good choice for my industry. Many MICE professionals have a hands-on mentality. But that can also be a problem. Many start

organizing, but forget the first rules about target groups and goals to be achieved. Also, the importance of personal development is underestimated. Our industry is still quite young, so there are a lot of innovations and new insights developing. We are changing to improve our profession, and these changes are happening very fast. You have to keep on innovating and adapting to new trends. But also realize that there is always more to learn and to develop.”

As committee chair of the MPI Academy, Rip likes to get the members (and non-members) to get acquainted with Meetovation. “I am responsible for the MPI training courses in the Netherlands, and I am discussing the possibility of getting the Meetovation Education over to the Netherlands. We see that the industry is working very hard to become more professional. Meetovation is one example of the innovative ideas that are being developed to increase this professionalism.” Krogh: “It would be wonderful if we could establish a way of working together, bringing Meetovation to the MPI education as well. We hope to become a part of their Academy.”



Unlocking new sources of revenue with digital marketing

Before the dawn of time associations were essential to establish relationships and bring together like-minded individuals. Memberships were the foundation of professional societies and trade organizations. In today's interconnected world, associations need to bring new ideas to the table to ensure success, growth and long-term financial sustainability.

Digital marketing is quintessential in this day and age. While many associations have already built their reputations and longstanding traditions, it is equally important to keep up with the trends and developments of the digital age in order to connect and bridge relationships with younger generations. As a result, association leaders are left combating pressing challenges; declining membership, remaining relevant and upholding their unique value proposi-

tion. Digital marketing not only increases the potential attendee pool exponentially but also utilizes e-commerce techniques to convert people into paying delegates. So, why are associations spending a significant amount of their allocated budget on a congress and less than 1% on digital marketing?

MARKETING AUTOMATION

Marketing entails positioning, branding, website design, search engine optimization, e-commerce optimization, engagement on social media and digital advertising. Ensuring that the right channels are chosen is a vital step every association has to take. Not one marketing channel overrules the other. Each have their advantages and disadvantages. Thus, utilizing a marketing automation tool will allow associations to gain access to multiple marketing channels.

Marketing automation will enable associations to not only generate personalized experiences for attendees, but also it will enable the organization to create entirely new ways to communicate with current and potential members. Being able to track engagement from emails, campaigns as well as monitoring trends help associations to fully comprehend the target audience and to better direct marketing for further growth potential. The data also gives insight into the potential delegate's readiness to submit an abstract or register, which allows the delivery of personalized and timely marketing messages that accelerate the decision-making process.

VISUAL, VISUAL, VISUAL

With this constant in-flow of information, how does an association attract individuals to attend their congress? What is your unique value proposition and how can you display this on your website?

The answers are in the visuals! What many associations often forget is to understand the importance of visuals when it comes to displaying content on their websites. Studies show that 65% of individuals are visual learners. Visuals are processed 60,000 times faster than text and your content is 50 times more likely to be higher on the search engine if the website

includes a video. Approximately, 50% of website traffic is generated through search engines alone. Optimizing the website for search engines is of course a simple and cost-effective way to ensure high web traffic rankings. Investing to improve website design and optimizing the time and quantity that individuals access and stay on the page will increase your SEO.

WHY NOT PACKAGE MARKETING?

So, why not combine all of the above into the ultimate marketing package? Case studies have proven that on average congresses increase registrations by 15% from the previous years through a devised marketing mix, consisting of website optimization, e-commerce, sign up forms and many more. The results encouraged sponsors to invest more in the congress. Google Adwords remarketing and market automation increased the website traffic by 20% and digital forms illustrated an increase of 8% from the database. Remember, it is never good to put all your eggs in one basket! Make sure to use a variety of marketing channels to optimize output.

WHAT COMES AFTER IT ALL ENDS?

Remember, digital marketing is a tool that should be used all year round! Even

MCI BENELUX (AMSTERDAM & BRUSSELS)

MCI is a global leading provider of strategic engagement and activation solutions in association, congress, meetings, and events industries since 1987. Through face-to-face, hybrid and digital experiences, we help associations and companies to strategically engage and activate their target audiences, building the dedicated online and offline communities they need to strengthen their brands and boost their performance.

when it is all over, the significance of post congress marketing is sometimes more important than pre- and during to extend its lifecycle. It is something that the attendees can look forward to in the future. A well-executed digital marketing investment plan change your association in ways that you could never imagine. So, why not start now? Why, wait?





What event planners have to say: use a survey!

We asked event organisers to share their experiences with surveys. They are often underestimated in event communication. A pity! This article will show how event planners Dirk Prijs (Association for Event Managers), Liezeth Blom (Stigro Food Group) and Marlies Rienks (Amsterdam Marketing) use the online survey to evaluate their events!

WHEN SHOULD ONE USE AN EVENT SURVEY?

Dirk: After every event! The results are very valuable to me, because we find out what our members experience.

Liezeth: Especially for external events. We also use Momice for internal events - for example when someone celebrates a jubilee. However, feedback is particularly important for external events, organised for business relations, with different purposes. We always ask our audience for feedback, in order to measure the objectives. Only then we know if we are doing the right things.

Marlies: After almost every meeting. Meetings initiated by the management with certain objectives, should always be measured with a post-event survey. Especially in the case of larger (more expensive) meetings, surveys are important to justify the costs.

"To me, the post-event survey is the most important part of the event. Feedback from my members is essential."

Dirk Prijs, Association for Event Managers

WHAT TYPE OF QUESTIONS DO YOU USE?

Dirk: NPS (Net Promoter Score)*, multiple choice questions and open questions. By including the NPS in every survey, I measure the enthusiasm of the visitors. This enables me to compare returning events and possibly adjust the content or design. Our team discusses whether or not to organise a similar event in the future, or perhaps in different format. It's the ideal way to observe trends at events that return annually.

Liezeth: Multiple choice questions, open questions and ranking questions (stars). We mainly use them to collect feedback on the content of the programme and the speakers.

Marlies: All of them! Because of the variety in the questions, there's a bigger chance that your respondents complete the event survey.

***You can determine your NPS with one single question, with a 0-10 scale: How likely is it that you would recommend this event to a friend or colleague?**

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO READ THE FEEDBACK?

Dirk: That really depends. Sometimes I love to read the feedback and sometimes it can be rather in your face, that can be challenging! When people are very critical, I try to find out why.

Liezeth: Illuminating! It helps us to organise better events in the future. I am always happy with the feedback I receive.

"Try to limit yourself to 5 questions: forget questions about catering and location - look into the content of the event."

Liezeth Blom, Sligro Food Group

"Intense feedback of our stakeholders is an important motivator to do even better next time."

**Marlies Rieks,
Amsterdam Marketing**

Marlies: Visitors complete the survey because they feel involved. So it's your responsibility to put this feedback to good use. The more feedback you get, the better you can do next time. So bring it on!

DO YOU HAVE TIPS FOR OTHER EVENT PLANNERS?

Marlies: Analyse the output critically: did you ask the right questions? Discuss the results with your colleagues, so you can filter out the most valuable information.

Dirk: Avoid using closed questions: try to formulate your questions differently so that you can gather more information with fewer questions. This helps you to keep the event survey relevant to your visitors.

Liezeth: Limit yourself to 5 questions: forget questions about catering and location - look into the content of the event.

CONCLUSION

Event organisers often focus on the invitation and registration process. However, evaluating an event with a survey is just as important. It is a powerful tool to measure event goals. Conducting a survey is not easy - it takes marketing skills to choose the right questions, communication skills to convince your attendees to complete it and organisational skills to use the data for your next steps. And yet, the response to your survey can be a real treasure!

Rutger Bremer is managing director of Momice. Professional event software to get the most out of your events. Any comments? Please send an email to rutger@momice.com.





Zoku abolishes traditional hotel room

Hotel, office and residence combined

After the successful launch of the now internationally operating chain of hotels citizenM in 2008, the Dutch concept developer Hans Meyer, together with Marc Jongerius, opened the first Zoku hotel in Amsterdam in June 2016. This hotel also has a specific target group: business travellers staying in our capital from one day to several months, and want more than just a hotel room. One weekend long, our editor joined the guests to find out what this innovating hotel concept was all about.

Zoku comes from the Japanese and means as much as family or tribe. The idea behind the Zoku concept is to combine work and stay in an optimally natural manner. Here, international guests are offered an attractive, social environment that stimulates them to communicate, get to know each other and learn from each other's experiences. These meetings take place in the Living Room on the sixth floor, where guests can check in

About Zoku

- Eight meeting and event rooms, capacity three to 175 persons
- Living Room with bar, flexwork stations and adjoining roof garden with terraces
- Living Kitchen for breakfast, lunch and dinner
- 133 Rooms (16 m²) and lofts (24-30 m²)
- Launderette, changing room, locker room
- Diverse offer of massages and beauty treatments at in-house treatment room from the Massage Ambulance.

themselves by means of an iPad. That Zoku is particularly popular with and aimed at expats and other foreign guests is obvious from the fact that we are welcomed in English by a hostess from Bulgaria. We also see several flexwor-

kers and self-employed entrepreneurs who, having obtained a membership, can use the facilities and work stations in the Living Room. In order to promote the contact between the various guests and the flexworkers, small-scale meetings are organized on a regular basis. Zoku also has various meeting and event rooms (see box). If the guest does not want to spend much time in his own room, the Living Room is the place to relax on comfortable sofas by the open fireplace. Several racks offer books and magazines. Additional amusement can be found in the Music Corner that has various musical instruments, and in the TV and Game Room. On this floor there are also meeting rooms available and places where you can work in a team. The bar offers coffee, tea, juices, sodas and sweet and tasty snacks.

COMPLETE ROOMS

The guest rooms are situated on the first up to the fifth floor. Guests who just want a place to sleep and work, can book a Zoku Room. The Zoku Lofts and the Zoku Lofts XL have a larger surface and are also equipped with a kitchen and a raised sleeping section. They have everything you need to reside and work, from a Nespresso

machine to a microwave oven, an induction hot plate, kitchen utensils and a refrigerator to a small work station supplied with a stapler, perforator and sellotape. Should you miss anything, then this can be obtained from the pantry in the hallway. Snacks and drinks, but also, for instance, tea bags and toothpaste can be had 24 hours a day in the (Almost) EverythingStore in the Living Room. The lay-out is efficient and offers various cupboards and other storage facilities. The living area is relatively spacious and there is also a lot of room at and around the kitchen table. The raised sleeping section, fitted with a king-size bed, can be reached via an extension ladder. Thanks to the white walls with the black accents, the atmosphere is rather neutral. The paintings can be exchanged near the elevator, where a number of racks offer several alternative works of art.

ROOF GARDEN

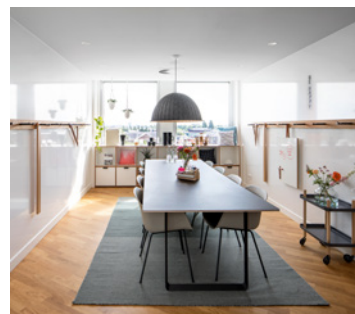
Because Zoku is located in the middle of the city centre at the Weesperstraat, in the evening we decide to take a tour of the city centre. When we return, we take a seat in the roof garden with a view of the inner city of Amsterdam. This roof garden is situated between the elevator and the Living

Room and consists of a glass hothouse construction that offers access to various mini terraces with chairs, hammocks and a picnic table. With subtle birdsong in the background this is the ideal way to end the evening.

BREAKFAST

After an excellent night's rest it is time for a refreshing shower. The shower section can be separated from the toilet and the wash basin by means of a sliding door. We next make our way to the Living Kitchen on the sixth floor for an extensive breakfast. Just like the in and out checking, breakfast, lunch and dinner can be ordered and paid for by means of an iPad. The kitchen has various warm dishes like waffles, pancakes and omeletts ready, completed with fresh rolls, several sorts of bread, sweet and hearty bread filling and yoghurt. After having checked out, we walk in the direction of the Rijksmuseum. Not only for expats, but also for guests who stay at Zoku for a shorter period, the hotel is an excellent basis for visiting Amsterdam.

www.livezoku.com





The importance of interaction

One indispensable ingredient in a lecture or presentation is interaction. Creating interaction with the audience is the perfect manner to retain their attention. By finding a balance between sending and receiving the audience will be more engaged and the presentation's message will be conveyed more effectively. With presentations in which only the sending plays the major role, the audience's attention will soon wander to other matters. So interaction is vital to an unforgettable presentation!

By incorporating interaction in the presentation you enable the audience to participate in various ways. You can make the audience feel involved. Because this way, they contribute to your presentation. But how do you create interaction?

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

You obviously want the subject of your presentation to be relevant, because that keeps an audience alert. Instead of asking a few people in the audience which subjects they find interesting, modern technology enables you to ask the entire audience the questions. The people can answer realtime which enables you to continue your presentation with information that interests them. The participation as well as the information play important roles in this form of interaction.

LET'S PLAY A GAME!

An other way to keep the audience enthusiastic is to include a quiz in the presentation. With this fun and intensive competition you retain the audience's attention. Because let's face it, if there is a prize to be won, it becomes more interesting! With a quiz you can ask many questions the audience has to answer, for instance via their own smartphones. With a realtime response list quizzing is not only fun, but also informative. The answers provide insight into the average knowledge level of the audience, and as speaker you can capitalise on this.

OPEN QUESTIONS

At the end of a meeting or presentation the audience usually has the opportunity to ask questions, but not everyone dares to. Nowadays there are handy tools with which you can ask the speaker a question by means of

your smartphone. Because this is done anonymously, probably more questions will be asked than without the use of this tool. As speaker you must therefore realise this and consider in advance whether you want to use a tool to facilitate this.

LET'S VOTE!

There is safety in numbers – and certainty! A quick and useful way to collect data and reveal trends is to let the audience vote. The speaker has a direct insight into the group's opinion. As speaker you stay in control, but show the audience that their opinion counts. You can consider it a realtime poll during the presentation.

To easily create interaction during an event, meeting or training, the Sprekershuys offers the tool Mentimeter. With this userfriendly presentation software you enable the interaction between the audience and the speaker. Mentimeter can be used in various manners. By means of the 'audience response system' the people have the possibility to voice their opinions. Mentimeter shows the results live while the audience cast their votes, simply by using their smartphones. The tool offers various forms of the interaction mentioned above. This increases the audience's enthusiasm and their involvement.

Interaction obviously is an important part, but a good presentation requires more. Professional speakers manage to convey the right message by means of the various techniques, positions and intonations. Speaking in public is a real art. No less than 75% of the people is anxious to speak before a group of people. So self-assurance is an important aspect of giving a successful presentation. The presentation must be solid: content, structure and a thorough preparation are essential!

The Sprekershuys is a modern and innovative speakers' agency where professional knowledge, transparency, personality and thinking along with the client are the basic values. The connectors of the Sprekershuys are in close contact with clients as well as 'huys' mates and regularly attend events where the 'huys' mates are booked.
Contact us via: info@sprekershuys.nl.



Time for change?

A great deal is happening in congressland at the moment. Now that the economy is booming, many organisations consider it time to start looking for a new venue for their congress. Where the traditional national congress market was focused on a fixed location, there is now room for new ideas and changes.

In spite of the fact that the congress market for associate congresses is less sensitive to economic situations, we now notice a distinct urge to change. From the congress organisers we learn that there are several reasons for the change of venue. Firstly, there is an enormous renewing offer which stimulates congress organisers to give more consideration to the choice. Is a congress in a traditional congress location still sufficiently innovative or are there opportunities to attract more participants or sponsors in case of a change of venue? Is the present location still active enough in what it can offer, or has time stood still there for several years? Are the rates charged still acceptable or is the year on year increase in the rates no longer competitive? These are all issues that should be reconsidered. Time for change!

GROWTH

The biggest risk for the congress organiser is that it attracts fewer participants or sponsors. In these economically favorable times it is easier to attract participants or

sponsors from other sectors. That is the main reason why the congress organiser has the courage to change. When sponsors or participants give up, it is now easier to replace them. This significantly reduces the financial risk for the organiser. Practice shows that at the moment, the numbers of participants increase and that sponsors, too, commit themselves easier to a congress as a partner.

ACCESSIBILITY

What, then is the perfect location for a congress? Every day we speak congress organisers and in a large number of cases the accessibility is the most important search criterion when looking for a new venue. Of course this depends on the target group: whether it is located near good public transport connections, or on the other hand can well be reached by car and there is sufficient parking space in the immediate vicinity of the venue. In my opinion it should not be the accessibility that has the topmost priority, but the professionalism, capacity and the link with the location's target group. A relation with the theme of the congress is also a very good

reason to opt for a specific location. If a location really contributes to the success of the congress, then the willingness to travel to this venue is greater. But what about the risk that the target group has the feeling that the venue is not exactly centrally located? Of course, that risk is possible, but if you go for the location's quality and a good intrinsic programme, the trip to that venue is of minor importance.

INSPIRATION

In selecting a new location, you should not think too much in limitations but make maximum use of what the venue has to offer. Even if the location is not fully compatible with the way the congress was organised year after year, a new venue will open up new ways of thinking. Can I improve on my congress? Can we work in alternative work forms, do we need a different number of subsessions or are the discussions less in class? Be creative. Take your workgroup to the location and walk around on the premises. Be inspired by the venue's elements and let yourself be informed about the possibilities. Now is the time to change!

Guest author Erik Werners is manager/owner of De Vergaderstoel. Under the label of Congres-Service.nl De Vergaderstoel organises congresses for trade unions and companies. De Vergaderstoel inspires, books and organises. The guest author can be contacted via erik@devergaderstoel.nl

Opening Nijmegen European Green Capital.
Odiza Photography

Nijmegen European Green Capital 2018

wondertuin

Nijmegen European Green Capital 2018

"Sustainability must also be fun"

In many Dutch cities, sustainability is actively endorsed. This year, the city of Nijmegen can even name itself European Green Capital 2018. As part of this theme year various events, projects and national and international congresses are organized in the city on the river Waal.

Each year, the European Union awards two big prizes. In 2018, the city of Leeuwarden in the province of Friesland may call itself European Cultural Capital, and the city of Nijmegen may bear the title of European Green Capital 2018. The latter award is a reward for cities excelling in improving and ma-

king sustainable of the living environment and which may serve as a source of inspiration for other cities. To win the prize, each year twenty to thirty European cities enter a competition. "In order to win the title, you must be able to prove that you are on the right track in the fields of twelve aspects, including energy savings and recycling", says project manager Pieter van Ree. "The jury also considers the city's ambitions and the way the candidates interpret the year." So far, the honor was granted to large cities like Stockholm, Hamburg, Copenhagen and Bristol. In 2019 the title will go to Oslo. "Especially German, Scandinavian and Dutch cities perform well in this election. Of old, these coun-

tries have a structured sustainability policy. Regarding size, (175,000 inhabitants) Nijmegen may seem a little out of place, but it won the award partly because of the fact that citizens and companies have started the green movement together. The role of the government is mainly a facilitating one."

EXCELLING

That Nijmegen is excelling in sustainability is shown, among other activities, by various remarkable initiatives. Van Ree mentions a few. "A very fine example of this is the first co-operative wind park in the Netherlands that has been supplying sustainable energy for over 7,000 households since 2016. The co-operation consists of more than 1,000 shareholders. Partly thanks to this wind park, 10% of the total energy consumption is provided by wind and sun. The local waste energy power station supplies electricity to 5,000 households and that will soon be increased to 14,000 houses. No less than 67% of all waste elements is recycled. Since 2008 the city has grown enormously with the expansion to the other side of the river Waal. And yet the city was able to achieve an energy saving of 18%. Mobility is also a great example. On average, the Nijmegen citizen has 1.4 bicycles and several facilities were realized for cycling traffic. For instance the various fast-cycling routes and cycling streets for which even special cycling bridges were constructed. Or the various free bicycle shelters above and under ground. All the city buses run on green gas. During this year, all these green initiatives will be placed in the spotlights so we are able to present our function as a role model in a proper manner."

EVENT CALENDER

The sustainability of Nijmegen is proved, among other initiatives, by means of 120 large and smaller events, varying from international congresses to festivals, durability cafes, lectures, a tree planting day and to special walking and cycling routes. "Sustainability must also be fun, that is why we chose to join in with the festivalization trend", says Van Ree. "During the three-day Wondertuin festival, with which the year was opened, more than 11,000 visitors could attend various performances in and around Museum Het Valkhof. Astronaut André





Kuipers, social entrepreneur Teun van der Keuken and writer Jan Terlouw, amongst others, were guest speakers. The year will be closed with a manifestation late December. Then, inhabitants of Nijmegen will be invited to clean up the city together. With this activity they can earn eco-coins which can be exchanged for, for instance, tickets to special shows." In 2018 Nijmegen also has all kinds of events that have a green edition and

also pay extra attention to sustainability. Examples of these are the Go Short Filmfestival, the well-known more-day walking event the Vierdaagse (Four Days Marches) and music events like the Vierdaagsefeesten and Music Meeting.

CONGRESSES

The calendar also includes a number of national and international congresses. "On 12 April the Ports and the City con-

BOOST FOR THE BUSINESS MARKET

For the congresses and events Nijmegen uses various locations in the city. Stadsschouwburg Nijmegen and Concertgebouw De Vereniging, Pathé CineMec Nijmegen, Van der Valk Hotel Nijmegen-Lent and the Stevens church are very usual venues for large receptions. But also used are the wellness hotel Sanadome, film house LUX, cultural centre De Lindenberg, the Schepenhuis in the town hall and the former industrial locations De Vasim and the Honig compound. Besides that, ACBN, organizer of the festivals around the Four Days Marches, has taken on part of the organization of activities. Convention Bureau Gelderland, part of RBT KAN, is also involved in the organization and responsible for the hospitality function. "Our role is to bring the right parties together", says director Herre Dijkema. "We also assist the congress organizers by means of advice and practical information like surveys of accommodations, locations and transport facilities." According to Dijkema the sustainability sector is a powerful niche and that is why the title is an excellent boost for the business market in Nijmegen and the positioning of Nijmegen on the theme of sustainability, circular economy and energy transition. "The province of Gelderland is an inspiring knowledge region in the area of energy and environmental technology and cleantech. Based on that identity the region has been popular for a long time for meetings with a green nature. Because Nijmegen has been elected European Green Capital 2018 we can – as very first in the Netherlands – bear this title for a year. This puts Gelderland in the international showcase of 'green' destinations. And we notice that in the requests."



Burgemeester Hubert Bruls bij de opening van Nijmegen European Green Capital. Odiza Photography



Tree planting day
Photography Bas Govaarts

gress took place. During this congress the European sector for the inland shipping signed, together with the Dutch minister Cora van Nieuwenhuizen, the 'Declaratie van Nijmegen'. With this declaration, the sector strives to reduce the CO₂-emission of the inland shipping activities by 20% by 2030. Other examples are the Circulaire Economie Festival, the Global Green Destination Days (more-day congress on sustainable tourism), the EcoProcura Congress for sustainable, circular and innovative purchasing, but also the IVN members' day." Besides the congresses, European awards will be presented during the Green Capital Week in June. "We then welcome several delegations from candidate cities that will present themselves to the jury. Apart from these, representatives from the European Union, the government and CEOs from various countries will be present. They will be taking part in a symposium and several study visits, among other activities."

PROFILING

The title of European Green Capital has put Nijmegen firmly on the international map. "It is a great way to profile yourself on a global scale. Reports from cities that were awarded the title before,

have proven that the title really has a huge long-term impact. More visitors and sometimes also new companies", says Van Ree. "Moreover, Nijmegen has performed even better than the other title holders, partly thanks to the efforts and engagement of local social organizations.

This year we can welcome various delegations, varying from the Dutch permanent Committee for Economic Affairs from the House of Representatives and the Environmental Committee from the European Parliament to governmental visits from Belgium, Germany, France and Poland. The international press also pays a great deal of attention to the initiatives taken in Nijmegen. "The Swiss as well as the Flemish television have recorded items for the news shows", says Van Ree, "And even the Financial daily newspaper from Brazil visited." But the efforts regarding sustainability will certainly not stop after this year. In 2019 Nijmegen must report to the European Union and after five years a review will be made on what the title has brought the city. Apart from that, the title is an excellent way of drawing the attention to the environment. On the eve of the Climate Conference of Katowice in December this year, the intention is that all former European Green Capitals will make a joint statement. "We are enormously proud that Nijmegen can be part of the sustainable vanguard of European cities. Our message is short but powerful: it is very well possible to reduce the ecological footprint."



Film house Lux



What is happening in the Netherlands?

Interaction, technology, corporate social responsibility: many factors have an impact on the way the MICE professional views his or her industry. The needs of the clients also change. Meeting International interviewed a number of Dutch players in the sector about the developments they expect within their specific fields.

Change in meeting design

"I see a – small but unmistakable – change in meeting design: clients take the program design more and more seriously. They implement it earlier in the process and – together with, for instance, the day chair – appropriate more time for it. In my opinion, next year meetings consist less of only speakers but focus more on really connecting with the participants. What we have been saying for years is now really starting to happen! The real 'buzz' takes place in Newropa: in the Balkan countries fresh, innovative experiments are conducted with new formats. Acting from the safe position of relative leeway they give their creativity free rein. It is wonderful to be allowed to work there."

Jan-Jaap In der Maur, Masters in Moderation

SHOW ORIGINALITY

"Where the meeting market is concerned, the pragmatic setup is more and more replaced by a location with a cosy and homely but authentic atmosphere. This is particularly the case for small groups of up to twenty persons. As soon as there are more logistic demands, the organizers revert to the large traditional venues. But these locations also have to show originality regarding their catering. Think fresh, healthy, low-carb, vegetarian, sustainable.

Looking at the congress market, the length of the congresses has been decreasing for years. One whole day is already long in a small country like the Netherlands. This implies that the knowledge transfer has to become more intense and compact. Interviews and debates are then stronger than lectures. The person travelling to a congress expects interaction instead of the traditional passively listening. This interaction must take place without the use of technology, no matter what technology devotees and suppliers want us to believe. The need for qualified day chairs and interviewers increases. At many congresses the independent presenter is still the only person who can ask a fee."

Ton Soons, quality label Vergaderhamers

Experiences, content and customizing

"Photo cabins are still very much in demand. To keep on surprising and enthuse people, more and more (innovative) variations on this concept pop up. I expect remarkable developments in combination with virtual reality (VR). Talking about VR: I can also see more and more applications of this technology, also in the event sector. For now, this happens mostly in the entertainment sector. The big step towards VR in the event industry will probably not be taken just yet, like attending an event live from home by means of VR goggles. I do think, however, that next year there will be more and more experiences and content (photos and videos) in combination with VR. More and more often I see products that can be customized and personalized. From cups with the visitor's first name to complete furniture, all in your own house style. Brands also apply this concept more and more often. For some products from popular brands you can customize your own version via online tools. As a company you can also purchase these in bulk. Finally, I notice that, fortunately, more and more attention is paid to the decoration and atmosphere. Considering that the budgets will increase somewhat next year, I also expect more creativity in this aspect."

Samira Salman, EventGoodies

NEED FOR 'OUT OF THE BOX' MEETING VENUES

"We clearly see a trend in the request for and need for 'out of the box' meeting venues. Or: 'if we do decide to have an external meeting, let it then be at somewhere special and not in function room 8 of the 20 in a standard hotel or business centre'. More and more often, our clients make a request for a modern, trendy, special and/or remarkable location so that this stimulates the creativity of the participants. Meeting at an external location must become a complete experience that is looked forward to and talked about afterwards. Apart from that there is a growing need for the so-called 'energizers': these are breaks in which the participants are offered a short activity in order to charge their batteries to prevent the well-known 'dip' (yawning, bored behavior, doodling, falling asleep completely during the meeting, et cetera). For instance yoga exercises, singing, mini-quiz, drum sessions et cetera. We like to meet this demand with our own new Music Meeting Lounge. This is not only an 'out of the box' location but we also offer energizers that make sure that our guests have a day they will never forget."

Marianne Kuiper, Efficient Hotel Partner

SHOW ADDED VALUE

"Because so much information can be found through the internet, the PCO of the future will have to be more concerned with proving his or her added value for the client. Content, especially new concepts and formats will be playing a more and more important role. Meeting design is therefore what it is all about, but mainly how together you create a congress or business event that meets all objectives and expectations for 2020, certainly also those of young congress attendees. Congresses and business events must be (more) relevant for them as well. Besides that, networking during congresses is still important, that can not be replaced by all social media. Because we are living in a rapidly changing society, congresses must follow those changes, so be innovating in all aspects and elements and because of this, more interesting for all target groups. An experienced PCO is up to speed with all trends and developments within the industry, on a technological level as well as in the field of, for instance, new food concepts and new venues and hotels. You can make the real difference by creating the added value for your client and especially by showing customer friendship. Because your client gives you the order, but he is also attending the congress."

**Jeannette van Namen,
JvN Congres Management**



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The event as medium with impact

"Of course the concept of authenticity is far from new. But more than ever it is about 'real' contact and living 'truly'. People are pining for 'attention'. And surprise: these three concepts are the basis of our profession. In an era where borders fade away, 'live' has an unprecedented momentum. Target groups become 'tribes' and are more difficult to capture and to reach, groundbreaking technological innovations have an ever-increasing impact, the various disciplines within the marcom domain fuse and country borders literally fade away. Reaching people, telling a story, engage in a dialogue, exchange experiences, teach them something or even initiate a transition. This is exactly, or rather only possible live. Of course carefully embedded in a campaign with several other media. The trend for 2018? The event as booster of PR, the event as catalyst of contact. The event generator of content. The event as medium with impact. In short, the trend is 'live!'"

Maarten Schram, IDEA

STRICTER PRIVACY LEGISLATION AND COMPUTERIZATION

"The new, stricter privacy legislation (GDPR) will have a huge impact on the way we will be organizing our event registration processes. Playtime is over! It is time to take a serious attitude towards personal data. We must thoroughly consider which data we ask for and how we can process and store these in a safe manner. Regarding computerization many companies are involved in an enormous digital transformation in which many hands-on processes are computerized and linked data becomes more easily accessible. These new methods make events more efficient and valuable. Besides that the role of events in the integrated marketing strategy is increasing. Events become smaller, more personal, more complex and more aimed at sharing knowledge and meeting new people. Finally the new legislation, the digital transformation and complexity of events will cause an enormous need for professional (and secure) software to be able to organize valuable events."

Rutger Bremer, Momice



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The Bonnefantenmuseum,
Il museo di Maastricht by Aldo Rossi

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Listen to the needs of your audience

"Events will be arranged in a different way. You already see this quite often: real plenary sessions without interaction are exchanged for interactive sessions. Guests more and more prefer workshops, training sessions, discussions and other interactive sessions. Speakers will mingle with the audience, which is also called democratising. This hugely increases the involvement of the audience. This involvement can also be brought into plenary sessions, thereby giving the whole event an interactive twist. This can be done by means of various software tools like Mentimeter. The Sprekershuys also uses this. By means of these tools you create interaction with the audience in a modern way and the content is adapted to the needs of the audience."

Maartje IJzerman, Het Sprekershuys

VIDEOS AS AN ADDITION

"Two things strike me increasingly. Firstly, people who submit a request by email expect a quick response. The reality, however, is a bit more complicated. In order to be able to offer a good tender, you need at least a good discussion (which can of course be done by phone). On the basis of more details that normally are not included in such an email, a supplier can make the offer far more made to measure. What actually is an exceptionally good addition and what you see more and more often, are videos of venues that give a very good idea of what can be done there. Of course, a live site inspection is always better, but this is a good alternative. Secondly, the importance of the sensory experience during an event is increasing: hearing, seeing, smelling, tasting, the experience is found in everything. One condition, however, is that it is in line with the theme so the desired objectives are achieved."

Ingrid Rip, bureau RREM

MORE, MORE AND MORE IN 2018

"Within the meeting and congress market we now notice a number of trends which will continue in 2018. We recognize the trends by their common element of more, more and more. More visitors attend meetings. Therefore it is important to set a clear objective in order to be able to ensure the visitors' adequate quality. Is there a noticeable growth, then take a close and critical look at your program. More and more congresses are getting quicker and offer shorter presentations and workshops in order to better get to the essence of the matter. Participants expect an added value for their money. By adding the right technological developments, more interaction can be achieved and therefore a better experience. Many organizations also have a bigger budget available. But this does not imply that the budget is limitless. The available funds are used more and more result-oriented in order to realize an optimal return on investment."

Erik Werners, De Vergaderstoel

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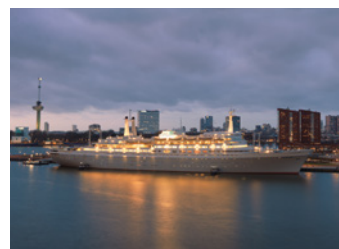
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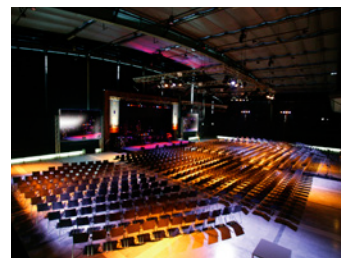
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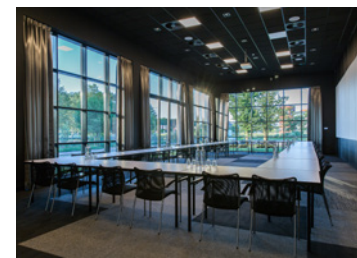
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EVENTS CALENDAR



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Each year, various events take place in the Netherlands. These events are often visited and appreciated by tourists on holiday, but for business guests they are equally worth while.

- **Tong Tong Fair** – May 24th till June 3th, **The Hague.** tongtongfair.nl/english
- **Holland Festival** – June 2th till June 24th, **Amsterdam.** www.hollandfestival.nl

- **Finish Volvo Ocean Race** – June 24th till **June 30th, The Hague.**

www.volvoceanrace.com

- **North Sea Jazz Festival** – July 13th till **July 15th, Rotterdam.**

www.northseajazz.com/en

- **Sneek Week** – August 3th till August 10th, **Friesland.** www.sneekweek.nl/sneekweek/english-information

- **World Port Days** – September 7st till **September 9th, Rotterdam.**

www.wereldhavendagen.nl/en

- **Amsterdam Dance Event** – October 17th till **October 21th, Amsterdam.**

www.amsterdam-dance-event.nl

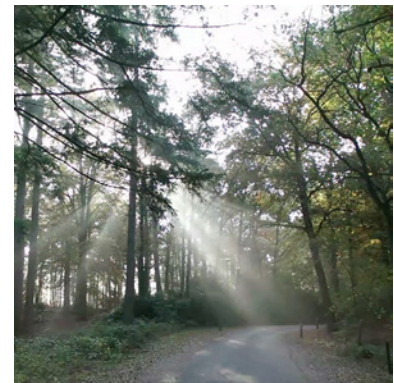
- **Dutch Design Week** – October 20th till **October 28th, Eindhoven.** www.ddw.nl/en

More Dutch events can be found at www.holland.com

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