

## Result of expert survey: Requirements on changing destination - future challenges faced by successful destination marketing.

### Europe's destinations need to think further

Austria I International, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015: Competition between destinations is getting tougher. The world is changing. This is nothing new in itself, but it means that destinations need to quickly rethink and think further. It is no longer enough to answer questions with traditional answers and offer an attractive environment. The managers of international associations expect more, because their members are putting increasingly high demands on them. What is it that makes the key difference? What reasons will be decisive for choosing destinations in future?

Henrik von Arnold, expert in Destination-Marketing at ENITED Business Events, has asked the Managing Directors of six leading international associations with their headquarters in Europe. The expert, himself Managing Director for Stockholm and Gothenburg as destinations, has an intense focus on future requirements in Destination Marketing. Together with Ivo Franschitz, Managing Director of ENITED Business Events, he today advises Convention Bureaus and destinations. The central results of his survey in autumn 2015 are here, as well as experts' tips for overcoming increasing challenges.

#### Less money, higher demands and more difficult framework conditions

Financing is increasingly difficult to find for associations. The acquisition of sponsors requires high levels of manpower and new solutions. The situation is also made more difficult by stricter compliance regulations and higher member demands. Von Arnold comments: "Investors and members both have higher expectations. What counts is the professional benefit, with the "cosy factor" consistently losing importance. Convention Bureaus and destinations should take account of this and, for example, include their local networks or proactively create new contacts if these are not in place already."

#### Time constraints and financial limitations

Some interviewed partners are also noticing a trend that potential participants have consistently less time and financial resource. They attend one top event each year. This means internal competitions between meeting suppliers. Arnold: "It's about offering the target group added value. The destinations can score points here. They need to offer solutions for their clients' current problems, instead of continuing to offer cost estimates with a "cosy" program. Franschitz adds: "In future, those who see the world through their clients' eyes will be successful." This is equally true in the agency business. And they need to do more, namely offer solutions for future challenges and problems that their clients may not even have recognised yet, instead of fulfilling current needs that are already in place."

## European destinations are facing customers travelling overseas

The globalisation that has been increasing for many years across all areas also leads to increased competition between the continents. Looking beyond European borders shows that international organisations are increasingly holding their meetings in other regions of the world, such as Asia. The reasons for this are diverse. European destinations are therefore under increasing pressure.

## Digitisation will have consequences

The effects that increasing digitisation, live-streaming etc. will have on the meeting world cannot yet be estimated concretely. It is not yet the case that personal participation has been replaced with the use of new media. The duration of events is not yet under discussion. Von Arnold comments: “There has been no impact to date. I do not believe, though, that we will have to wait long for this. Particularly when it comes to the aspects of increasing time constraints and the cost factor for participants. But we’ll see.”

## What organisations and associations want, and expect for the future

Associations absolutely expect even more support and tailored solutions. Just offering accommodation, good infrastructure and conference centres as well as an attractive leisure program will not be enough in future. Destinations that already have networked thinking and action will also be successful in future. It will become more difficult for destinations to assert themselves. On the other hand, they also have greater opportunities to overtake successful competitors, who have not yet started their rethinking process. Franschitz refers to the most recent workshop that he held together with von Arnold in Baku on this subject. “It was exciting to see how knowledge is absorbed there. There is a sense of plenty of potential, great commitment and hunger for success. Henrik von Arnold and I are convinced that things will become more difficult for some successful destinations in Europe.” Von Arnold adds: “Tailored destination marketing will become increasingly difficult in the next few years. Destinations need to position themselves uniquely and also specialise if they want to take on a leading role in future.”

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## On Henrik von Arnold \*\*\* Ivo Franschitz \*\*\* Destination Marketing

Henrik von Arnold has been very successful in the role of Manager and Leader of the Convention Bureau in Gothenburg and Stockholm for more than 15 years. In 2007, he focused his attention on advising destinations. Since 2014, he has been a cooperative partner of ENITED Business Events. ENITED Managing Director Ivo Franschitz and Henrik von Arnold offer concepts and workshops in tailored marketing for destinations. The experts’ particular USP is that they know both worlds. Von Arnold from the perspective of destinations, and Franschitz from the perspective of international associations, for which he has designed and implemented large-scale events throughout Europe for more than 17 years.



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