

Chapter 2 Infrastructure for MICE

2.1 Components of MICE

What are the components of MICE Tourism.

The MICE Industry can be broken down into four big groups. Those groups sum up what the meetings industry is and, in general, have a similar overall purpose. Still, they have slight differences among themselves.

1. Meetings

- Business meetings could be anything from director-only board, annual general meetings to a training seminar. Basically, any group of people gathering in a common location, for a common reason, is a type of meeting. Other examples include: strategic planning, shareholders meeting, management meetings, etc.

2. Incentives

- Incentives are a way to motivate or reward associates, dealers or any employee of a company, according to their previous performance or as a way to build teamwork. As the context of travel varies, they can count with advisory of local convention bureaus of the targeted destinations. According to a survey done by The Incentive Search Foundation, Incentive Travel is a fundamental corporate culture builder. Some results about its effect include: 54% of respondent corporate buyers reported that they budget for it increased from 2017 to 2018. Resort retreats, annual summits and familiarization tours or even a day trip are common examples. Therefore, both the hospitality industry, as well as the tourism industry benefit directly from this kind of event.

3. Conferencing

- Corporate conferences usually gather a group of people by profession or personal interest in a specific field, looking for information exchange and discussion about a certain topic. These conventions require complex planning and itinerary organization well in advance. They differ from meetings mainly because of scale. A corporate or government conference / convention can have hundreds of participatory meetings happening simultaneously inside it as part of a program. Annual gatherings of industry associations and organizations are a big component of this sector.

4. Exhibitions

- Exhibitions are also known for their extensive planning. They usually are highly produced trade shows that bring products to their audience. Financial, Pharma, Beauty, Insurance, High-tech and other lead industries populate the largest exhibition centres with senior executives. They could be either businesses selling to other businesses (B2B) or straight to the final consumer (B2C). Larger fairs, despite having a clear target, might combine both modalities in the mix.

As MICE event has a limited duration, it can boost the economy of a whole city, country or region. Major international congresses exponentially increase hotel occupation and service consumption of local services. Thus, MICE events are considered one of the main solutions for the seasonality of destinations. There are so many opportunities in the meetings industry, that it might even become the main economic activity of a country.

Besides, one needs to go out there and explore. MICE travellers are often keen to try a *stay-cation*. That means, after attending to a corporate event, visitors and participants can dedicate some time to get to know more about the place and its attractions.

Tourism or Events Industry?

Firstly, buyers of MICE travellers usually are professional associations or corporations. Looking at that, it's easy to understand that MICE is a strong and inseparable intersection of the Tourism and Events industry. Large groups always travelled on business.

Secondly, in modern times, DMO's (Destination Marketing Organizations) and DMC's (Destination Management Companies) proved the power of MICE tourism. Through the last decades, they generated long-term economic growth and development to their destinations. Look at Singapore, for instance. It is continuously cited in the 1st position of Meeting City ranking of Union of International Associations (UIA). It's calculated that over 800 conventions take place in the city-state every year. In other words, that represents 8.5% of all the top international events in the planet.

In conclusion, MICE business model thrive by keeping up to date with corporate and entrepreneur tendencies. And that also includes selecting appealing destinations. For instance: cities like London, Paris, Orlando, Florida (FL) and Chicago, Illinois (IL) are ready to hold over 200 corporate conferences every year.

If we talk about Europe, research reports say that the beautiful and charming cities of Germany, for instance, generate an annual turnover of 290 billion Euros. In Spain, it generated 178 billion Euros in 2018, representing 14, and 6% of the country's GDP. It's an incredible growth rate that brought Spain to the Top 10 tourism market economies in the world, with China, Japan, Hong Kong, USA, France, Italy, India, Germany and United Kingdom. So it means that the events segment is bringing development, money and structure to these venues, businesses, governments, etc.

After all, we can say the meeting and the tourism industries are walking entirely hand-in-hand. They ignite and model each other in a cycle that, when successful, can transform places. Because of that, businesses are increasingly incorporating experiences to their marketing strategy

2.2 Planning for MICE



Setting Objectives

- Objectives are the basis of Planning Process
- Objectives should be Clear, Concise, and Measurable.
- Objectives drive Program Planning Focus on attendees
- What will be their Return on Investment (ROI)?

Factors involved

- Who is the Group?
- Why are they here?
- What is the Objective of MICE?
 - Education
 - Networking
 - Conduct Business

Impacts virtually all of MICE components for decision making

- Site selection
- Food & Beverage
- Transportation
- Room Layout and Set-Up
- Program Content
- Education
- Networking
- Conduct Business

- **Venues**

Amidst the multiple challenges of planning an event, one crucial factor that can directly impact the event's successful implementation is the venue. When choosing a venue, one should consider multiple factors beyond the venue size and cost. There are various aspects that need to be taken into account.

1. Size of event

It is important to balance the size of the venue with the size of your audience. Bigger is not necessarily better, but you should cater for adequate space so attendees have enough room to stretch, mingle and breathe. Conversely, if your event is of a smaller scale (under 100 pax), you might want to avoid overwhelming your guests by holding it in a cavernous venue. Select a cosy venue for an intimate and comfortable gathering where attendees can easily connect and network with each other.

2. Location and budget

The venue's location can determine whether your event attracts a good turnout. Before confirming your event venue, ensure that it is well-connected to the public transportation network (bus, rail, taxi) and that it has ample parking spaces. Additionally, depending on the nature of your event, you may want to check out the venue's proximity to amenities such as accommodation, dining options and recreational facilities as these could affect how delegates perceive the desirability of your event.

Venue rental will likely be the single biggest overhead cost, especially if it is an upscale facility. Venue prices tend to vary depending on demand so do try to schedule your event during a low season to save cost. Being flexible on your event dates can also be a great negotiating tool, as certain days of the week tend to cost less.

3. Type of event

It is important to ensure that the ambience and décor of the venue matches the desired mood and theme of your event. If you are organising a gala dinner, you will have a different set of requirements than if you were planning for an expo or a casual networking session. For example : Singapore provides a wide array of venue options that are suitable for events ranging from formal conferences (e.g. Sands Expo® and Convention Centre, Resorts World™ Convention Centre) and board meetings to gala dinners (e.g. Gardens by the Bay, beaches on Sentosa

island, and casual networking sessions (e.g. Night Safari, Universal Studios Singapore®). You can also select from a range of unique venues such as the luxury tall ship Royal Albatross, Sands Skypark®, S.E.A. Aquarium™ as well as museums such as ArtScience Museum™ and National Gallery Singapore.

4. Facilities and equipment

Select a meeting venue that has the facilities you require for your event such as technical capabilities, wheelchair access and food catering. Whether it is a simple slideshow presentation or an elaborate immersive audio-visual experience, ensure that the venue can accommodate your needs. Additionally, do enquire if the venue provides charging stations for mobile devices and Wi-Fi services for your attendees as these are essential to providing a good experience for your delegates.

MICE Centre offers a wide range of high-tech audio-visual services, including new holographic projection technology to create an immersive event experience and on-site technical support. It also offers free high-speed Wi-Fi services across the complex. Event planners may allow third-party approved suppliers to offer additional services such as simultaneous translation, 3D projections, special lighting and a wide range of audio-visual services for events held in its premises.

5. Choose a sustainable venue

Venues have a big role to play in contributing to the carbon cost of an event. By choosing one with strong sustainability policies, it will be easier for you to implement sustainable initiatives during the event. Implementing smart and sustainable practices not only minimises cost, conserves energy and reduces waste, but it also enhances your event's reputation and branding.

You can also consider hotels with green meeting packages available from the local tourism website

Remember: Determining a site is typically a group decision

In addition to the above

- Location of majority of attendees
- Cost for planner and attendees
- Mode of travel and/or Parking
- Speaker Arrangements
- MICE Specification
- Current Trends

- System Lighting
- Membership and non-member base within the proposed destination or location
- Possibility of getting local speakers and Venue; availability
- Strength of local committee
- Sponsors
- Price; cost of renting venues
- Strength of the industry related to the topic of conventions or exhibitions

- **Transport**

Once the travellers/delegate arrive at the airport, they can be connected via the local transport system. This includes transportation from:

1. Airport to hotel
2. Hotel to MICE event venues-
venues to various site visiting spots
hotel to different attractions
hotel to client's office
hotel to central business district
3. Hotel to airport
4. Cities offering different vehicles of public
5. Transportation enhance the travel experience.
6. Local public transport include
 - water-ferries, boats
 - Land - limousines, taxis, buses, shuttle-buses, trains, trams, cable cars

You may have to plan a day- by-day; post-conference tour for the attendees to experience your city and include

1. Draw the route on the map by linking different attractions
2. List out the number that represents the different attractions
3. Plan out the time required for each point of interest

A venue located downtown or in urban areas may have little concern with linkage to transportation routes as convenience and coverage by transportation systems especially public transportation in urban areas is usually well-developed. Countries with better transportation accessibility, therefore, can be at an advantage over less developed countries.

- **Accomodation**

Business tourists have high requirements compared with other groups and this applies to both the type of expected service and its quality. Business visitors mainly decide to stay one or more days in relation to a specific event in a given city. Due to limited time, it is vital for such clients to be provided with comfortable accommodation, access to a restaurant and proximity to the place of the meeting, the railway station or the airport. These kinds of amenity and high quality service are the most appreciated. A business visitor spends from 10% to 45% more than a tourist arriving for health or recreational purposes. Business tourists are also the only group whose expenses in 2012 increased relative to the previous year. Due to the fact that the meeting is the direct motive, transport accessibility and the proximity of hotels is extremely crucial. Alternatively, a scheduled shuttle service could be provided at a nominal cost or the cost should be taken into consideration at the planning stage or sponsored as courtesy from a supplier.

Since, MICE is not a seasonal business it has to be planned the entire year round. In this regard, accommodation becomes a very important criterion. MICE tourists usually prefer accommodation setups near their meeting/conference/exhibition venues. Further these accommodation units have to be equipped to handle their business requirements. In the sense they have to be able to meet the needs of the guest. Things like Fax machines, laptop provisions, internet connections, telex etc. need to be there for this kind of a guest. Further, the staff has to understand the requirements of these travellers. Resorts and convention centres specializing in MICE infact provide special training to their staff for handling these business travellers and their equipment like beamers, projectors both movie and overhead, etc. Any Mega event requires years of planning and construction activity. For example, when the Asian Games were held in New Delhi quite a few star category hotels, restaurants and flyovers, etc. were constructed. Infact, a full Asiad Village Complex was constructed for the purpose.

- **Other support services**

Other supporting facilities are secondary considerations that organizers take into account when selecting venues These

facilities are essential as they it can complement organizer plans and services provided to attendees.

Loading Area

For large events especially exhibitions, sufficient loading areas is a huge plus for organizers when choosing a venue Standardized loading docks must have the exact height as the containers to simplify the process of moving containers in and out with forklifts

Interpretation system

Imagine an international convention with attendees coming from different countries, interpretation system can ensure their understanding simultaneously when the program is running Simultaneous interpretation usually requires experts who can interpret content from the source language to the target languages as fast as possible leaving the context unchanged.

Translators

Many MICE events are international which includes attendees and guest speakers from all over the world Translators are required at many MICE events to ensure a full understanding of all information gets to attendees from every nation Interpreter in MICE events, especially conventions, include simultaneous interpreters who are experts who can interpret content from the source language to the target languages as fast as possible leaving the context unchanged.

Safety and Security System

Safety and security issue is another important factor when organizers choose hosting venues. Venues with appropriate and effective safety and security measures is important for MICE events especially for ones with important figures attending since these people usually require utmost protection.

Waste Management System

Waste, water management and garbage management systems can add value to services venues can provide as well as support green meeting initiatives

To ensure the smoothness of the event is through insuring over other possible risks. In most cases, venues usually insure against these risks

Cancellations: With insurance, venues operator can hedge themselves against these risk. Venues will be compensated for cancelations upon previously agreed reasons of cancelations.

Attendees' welfare: In case of accidents within venues on attendees, venue operators are usually liable to those damages on the attendees.

Buildings: In case of unexpected incidents that cause damages on any part of the building, insurance can be an effective tool to compensate for the damages. Insurance is not mandatory for any venue operators, though having insurance can ensure venues over numerous risks

Equipment Rental Company MICE events often consists of a myriad of details that should not be overlooked as they often provide that final touch that can both compliment and complete an event. This also applies to the wide array of equipment needed at an event including speakers, stage props, lighting & audio control, matching curtains & carpet and specific furniture

Cleaning Company

At the end of each day of or at the end of each event, the space utilized needs to be tidied up and ready for the next day or the next event

Catering Company

Catering services are an essential factor to complete a MICE event. Catering companies can manage serving large numbers of snacks, meals and beverages efficiently and at a standardized quality

Logistics Company

Organizers usually require external specialized service providers that can provide logistic services with a high level of expertise. Logistics includes transporting exhibits to be used in exhibitions from their origin countries to the destinations and transporting attendees from one place to another. This must also be managed under time and budget constraints, restrictions and tedious customs and immigration processes.

Tour Guides

Tour guides are most essential in the incentive travel sector. With their specific knowledge about the local area, they can provide services to MICE travellers by taking them to local attractions and by providing necessary assistance along with cultural and historical information.

Professional Event Registration Company

MICE events commonly involve substantial numbers of people attending from across the globe. To minimize complications in the registration process for attendees and VIP guests, organizers often employ an external provider to handle registration as they can provide an efficient service based on expertise, software and technology designed to support registration in an organized and simplify manner. Commercial Bank Services performed by commercial banks that serve the MICE industry are currency exchange service and letter of credit (LC). In addition, commercial banks can act as facilitators for any transactions made in the MICE events among buyers, sellers and attendees.

Credit Card Company

Online transactions have been receiving greater popularity and often used regularly in the recent days. Professional registration companies together with credit card companies are usually collaborate to provide this option of payment for attendees. Transaction on-site, especially in exhibitions, can also be done using credit card apart from wiring the money internationally which credit card companies in collaboration with exhibitors can facilitate this service for attendees.

Ministry of Tourism

Directly promotes and supports tourism, recreation sectors. Their policy also guides the way the MICE industry is directed and promoted keeping in mind the close link between MICE industry and tourism.

Through marketing and promotional campaigns, awareness created among tourists that can also be leveraged by the MICE industry especially for the corporate meetings and incentive travel sectors