

A destination full of promise

Meeting and event planners are realising Cambodia's potential. *Kate Nicholson* reports

Corporate planners have typically shied away from taking a risk on emerging destinations such as Cambodia. But that is changing, and quickly.

Wayne Buckinghamshire, regional vice-president, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia, Starwood Hotels & Resorts says: "Cambodia is the destination most companies are curious about now and, while Asia's thriving modern cities offer the best service and product value globally, it's Cambodia's old-world Indochine charm that seems to send a luring chant to MICE organisers."

The jewel of Cambodia is undoubtedly Angkor Wat and international five-star brands are entering the market, helping to cater to demand.

The recent establishment of the Mekong Tourism Office (MTO) has set the stage for long-term and sustainable development of the conference, exhibition and incentive industries in Cambodia.



Angkor Wat is Cambodia's biggest attraction for regional incentive groups

In October, the Angkor International Tourism Exchange (AITEK 2007) drew company representatives from 30 countries.

FUTURE FORECAST

According to the new tourism minister, Thong Khon, the meetings and incentives

industry has the potential for growth but major improvements to infrastructure need to be made.

The tourism chief also says Cambodia is equipped with hotels that can handle small to medium-sized groups, but desperately needs bigger meeting venues. ■

Future outlook is optimistic

New facilities are transforming Taiwan's exhibition market. *Kate Nicholson* reports

Within two generations, the small island of Taiwan has developed from a backwater into the world's 12th-largest trading economy.

Last September saw back-to-back events. The second Asian MICE Leaders Forum (AMLF), organised by the Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA), overlapped with day one of the first MICE Opportunities in APEC Economies seminar organised by the Bureau of Foreign Trade. Both were held at the Taipei International Convention Centre (TICC).

The 10th Asian Congress of Nutrition in September drew 3,000 delegates and the 21st Congress of the International Society of Biomechanics in July saw 1,200 attendees.

FUTURE FORECAST

According to UFI statistics, Taiwan ranks eighth in Asia for exhibition space. That ranking will improve when the Taipei World Trade Centre Nangang Exhibition Hall



Record breaker...Taipei 101

(TWTC Nangang) opens at the beginning of next year. Senior figures from both TICC and TAITRA say new exhibition facilities will give the convention and exhibition markets a boost.

TWTC Nangang will have room for 2,465 standard-size booths, and a total of



Incentives...traditional options

46,175 sqm, which is double the current space at the TWTC Exhibition Hall.

The new facility is expected to create export opportunities and add fresh dynamism to Taiwan's trade shows.

TWTC Nangang is now in the spotlight of the global exhibition community. ■