

MEET IN 
IRELAND

The A-Z of MICE in Ireland

Everything you wanted to
know but were afraid to ask



Fáilte Ireland

National Tourism Development Authority

MEETINGS · INCENTIVES · CONFERENCES · EVENT/EXHIBITION

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Message from the Head of Business Tourism and Events

The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events/Exhibitions (MICE) sector is a significant contributor to the Irish economy and one that continues to grow from strength to strength. In 2015, it was worth €669m to Ireland and business tourists continue to be the highest spenders of any tourist to our shores. Our mission in Fáilte Ireland is to attract as many business tourists as we possibly can to Ireland and we hope that this guide will help you do the same.

Ireland offers high service levels and the quality of our accommodation and food, coupled with the friendliest people in the world, guarantee an experience like no other. As a destination, we also offer the assurance of safety, security and a proven track record in delivering remarkable Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events/Exhibitions (MICE). For a small country, we consistently out-perform on the world stage and we attribute this to the “Team Ireland” approach that our industry is so invested in.

This essential guide to the MICE Industry in Ireland provides you with a clear and concise resource to understand how, when and where to seek the support of Fáilte Ireland in the three key areas of bidding, marketing and leveraging international meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions/events. There are many ways you can connect with us from the numerous overseas trade shows we run in conjunction with Tourism Ireland, to the market research and insights that we can make available to you. In short, we are here to help you grow your business in this area in any way we can and the entire team is at your disposal in order to do so.

I look forward to working with you to build an even stronger MICE industry for Ireland.

Miriam Kennedy

Head of Business Tourism & Events, Fáilte Ireland

Meet in Ireland Team

Meet in Ireland is responsible for identifying, bidding for and winning international Meetings, Incentives Conferences and Event/Exhibition (MICE) for Ireland. The Meet in Ireland Brand, is the official MICE brand for the island of Ireland. Our MICE Supports Programme offers a full range of complimentary practical and financial supports.

Head of Business Tourism & Events



Miriam Kennedy
Mob: +353 86 7726640
Miriam.Kennedy@failteireland.ie

International Association Conferences



Letitia Wade
Tel: +353 91537751
Letitia.Wade@failteireland.ie



Neasa Ni Dhomhnaill
Tel: +353 1 8847169
Neasa.NiDhomhnaill@failteireland.ie



Susan Kelly
Tel: +353 1 8847152
Susan.Kelly@failteireland.ie

Business Tourism Manager



Ciara Gallagher
Tel: +353 1 8847125
Ciara.Gallagher@failteireland.ie

Meetings & Incentive Travel



Mary Collins
Tel: +353 1 8847225
Mary.Collins@failteireland.ie



Roisin Gaffney
Tel: +353 1 8847754
Roisin.Gaffney@failteireland.ie

Business Development



Jenny Finegan
Tel: +353 1 8847137
Jenny.Finegan@failteireland.ie



Karen O'Sullivan
Tel: +353 1 8847151
Karen.OSullivan@failteireland.ie

MICE supports



Geraldine Jeffers
Tel: +353 429339748
Geraldine.Jeffers@failteireland.ie



Catherine Killaly
Tel: +353 1 8847117
Catherine.Killaly@failteireland.ie

International Meet in Ireland Team

Head of Co-operative Marketing



Ciaran Doherty
cdoherty@tourismireland.com

Belgium



Danielle Neyts
Tel: +32 (0)2 643 2121
dneys@tourismireland.com

France



Caroline Phelan
Tel: +33 61 2806716
CPhelan@tourismireland.com

The Nordics



Rikke Aagard Petersen
Tel: +45 33 17 7233
rpetersen@tourismireland.com

Canada



Jonathan Sargeant
Tel: +1 416 925 6368 ext 6202
jsargeant@tourismireland.com

Germany



Aoife O'Loingsigh
Tel: +49 173 6623500
aoloingsigh@tourismireland.com

USA



Marie McKown
Tel: +1 748 3415083
mmckown@tourismireland.com

Europe



Orla Kraft
Tel: +49 173 3170531
ocraft@tourismireland.com

Great Britain



Joyce McElroy
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7518 0800
jmcelroy@tourismireland.com

Meet the Business Tourism Working Group

In Fáilte Ireland we believe that we are a stronger team by our partnership with our industry. We believe in meaningful engagement and a healthy public/private relationship that pushes performance on both sides and benefits both sectors. The Business Tourism Working Group was set up in order to provide a formal platform for engagement between industry practitioners and the Fáilte Ireland Business Tourism & Events Team. The ITOA, IHF, AIPCO, Venues, Universities and Regional Convention Bureaux are all represented and meet a minimum of four times a year to discuss and work through opportunities and challenges for the business tourism industry in Ireland. If you have an idea or challenge that you would like an industry opinion on, your business tourism working group representative can table it for discussion and action. Below are a list of your industry representatives.



cork CONVENTION BUREAU



Dublin City Council
Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath



2017 List of Business Tourism Working Group Members

Sector	Representative	Company
Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers (AIPCO)	Jean Evans	MCI Ireland
Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers (AIPCO)	Patricia McColgan	Abbey Conference and Events
Convention Bureaux	Karen Brosnahan	Shannon Region Conference & Sports Bureau
Convention Bureaux	Seamus Heaney	Cork Convention Bureau
Convention Bureaux	Sam Johnston	Dublin Convention Bureau
Convention Bureaux	Conor Hennigan	Kerry Convention Bureau
Dublin City Council	Peter Finnegan	Dublin City Council
Fáilte Ireland	Miriam Kennedy	Fáilte Ireland
Fáilte Ireland	Ciara Gallagher	Fáilte Ireland
Irish Hotels Federation	Breffni Ingerton	INEC, Gleneagle & The Brehon
Irish Hotels Federation	Fergal O'Connell	Fitzwilliam Hotel
Irish Hotels Federation	David Monks	Tifco Hotels Ireland
Irish Hotels Federation	Patrice Lennon	Dalata Hotel Group
Incoming Tour Operators Association – Ireland (ITOA)	Derek Wallace	Wallace Travel Group
Incoming Tour Operators Association – Ireland (ITOA)	Ronan Flood	Advantage Group
Incoming Tour Operators Association – Ireland (ITOA)	Sue Uda	A Touch of Ireland
Tourism Ireland	Ciaran Doherty	Tourism Ireland
Universities	John O'Rourke	On Campus
Venues	Adrienne Clarke	The Convention Centre, Dublin
Venues	Michele Griffin	RDS

Quality Mark for Business Tourism

To ensure excellence in standards, Fáilte Ireland also acts in a regulatory capacity setting fair criteria for products and services to be included on approved lists.

Fáilte Ireland approved Destination Management Companies

1. A Touch Of Ireland
2. Adams & Butler
3. Advantage ICO
4. Aspects of Ireland
5. Business & Events Management Limited
t/a BEM Ireland
6. Custom Ireland
7. Eirebus Limited
8. Event Partners
9. Green Light Events
10. Irish Horizons
11. Joe O'Reilly Ireland Group
12. Limerick Travel Limited
13. Moloney & Kelly
14. Odyssey International
15. Ovation Ireland
16. Premier Travel
17. Wallace Travel Group

Fáilte Ireland approved Professional Conference Organisers

1. Abbey Conference & Events
2. Advantage PCO
3. Conference Connections
4. Conference Organisers
5. Conference Partners
6. eventplus
7. Go West
8. Happening
9. ICC Concepts/Limerick Travel
10. Irish Horizons
11. Keynote PCO
12. MCI
13. Meeting Point International



ITOA Incoming Tour Operators Association (ITOA)

The Incoming Tour Operators Association Ireland (ITOA) consists of over 30 leading companies that operate incoming travel and tours to the island of Ireland. Our members package and promote various elements of the Irish tourism product for marketing overseas and provide value-add professional services that require expert knowledge, marketing know-how and excellent project management. For more information about ITOA visit www.itoa-ireland.com



The Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers (AIPCO)

The Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers (AIPCO) is a non-profit organisation founded in 1999 and is the premier professional association for conference organisers in Ireland. AIPCO is committed to maintaining high standards of service among its members and other sectors of the meetings industry, by means of continuing education and interaction with other professionals. AIPCO works closely with Fáilte Ireland and the Regional Convention Bureaux, in developing Ireland into an international conference hub. For more information about AIPCO visit www.aipco.ie

Regional Convention Bureaux

The Regional Convention Bureaux work in partnership with the Meet in Ireland Team. These are our regional experts and they will partner with buyers every step of the way.

The four Convention Bureaux in Dublin, Cork, Kerry and Shannon are responsible for promoting business tourism in their own regions. The role of the Convention Bureaux is to raise the profile of the city/region as a business tourism destination, generate leads and business for destination through research, sales and marketing activity, unify the marketing efforts of suppliers operating in the region, act as one-stop-shop to destination for buyers/clients, harness city support, provide conference support packages and build delegate attendance at confirmed conferences. Their key services include:

- ▶ Introduction to Destination Management Companies (DMC) and Professional Conference Organisers (PCO)
- ▶ Assistance with bids for international events, conferences and meetings
- ▶ Co-ordination and support of site inspections
- ▶ Liaising with local authorities

Dublin Convention Bureau

Fáilte Ireland, Áras Fáilte, 88-95 Amiens Street, Dublin 1

Tel. (01) 8847 271

Email: info@dublinconventionbureau.com

Website: www.dublinconventionbureau.com

Cork Convention Bureau

Albert Quay House, Albert Quay, Cork City, Co. Cork

Tel. (021) 431 8036

Email: info@corkconventionbureau.com

Website: www.corkconventionbureau.com

Kerry Convention Bureau

Level 2, Tourist Information Office, Beech St, Killarney, Kerry

Tel. (064) 663 7928

Email: sales@kerryconventionbureau.com

Website: www.kerryconventionbureau.com

Shannon Region Conference and Sports Bureau

Fáilte Ireland, 2nd Floor, The Granary, Michael Street, Limerick

Tel: +353 61 403824

Email: karen@conferenceandsportsbureau.com

Web: www.conferenceandsportsbureau.com

Marketing Groups

Meet in Galway, c/o Go West

Furbo Hill, Furbo, Co. Galway

Tel: (091) 577 109

Email: info@meetingalway.ie

Website: www.meetingalway.ie

What's all this about MICE?



Business Tourism or MICE?

There is no universally agreed term to describe the business tourism industry and different destinations call it different names.

MICE, an acronym meaning Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events/Exhibitions is widely used in Asia and Europe but often disliked in North America and Australia where the term 'Business Tourism Events', is used. The UK prefers, The 'Meetings Industry'.

While at Fáilte Ireland we use the term Business Tourism, we also use MICE as it specifically denotes the totality of an industry that is not just meetings and conferences but also incentive travel experiences and exhibitions.

Whatever you call it, MICE is one of the fastest growing segments of the Irish tourism industry. It is one of the key niches that we are investing in because it generates a high return while having great seasonality and regionality opportunities. This means business tourists spend more money than leisure visitors, tend to travel in the off-peak and shoulder season and often choose locations outside of Dublin.

List of commonly used MICE industry terms

Every industry has its own terms, acronyms and buzz words which, to the uninitiated, can be both confusing and intimidating. Here's a non-exhaustive list of terms you need to know if you plan on becoming active in the MICE sector.

MICE

The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events/Exhibitions (MICE) sector includes activities based on the organisation, promotion, sales and delivery of meetings and events; products and services that include corporate, association and government meetings, corporate incentives, seminars, congresses, conferences, conventions events, exhibitions and fairs.

We held the British & Irish Ombudsman Association annual conference in Dublin in 2016. The marketing support given by Fáilte Ireland helped to keep costs and, in turn, the conference fee down, which contributed to the high number of delegates travelling from the UK for the event. Fáilte Ireland also contacted hotels on our behalf and channelled proposals to us. We selected one of the hotels proposed by them. It was a beautiful venue, we felt well very looked after by the staff, the event ran smoothly and we have had excellent feedback from delegates.

Donal Galligan, Director of the British & Irish Ombudsman Association

DMO

A Destination Marketing Organisation promotes the development and marketing of a destination, focusing on convention sales, tourism marketing and services.

DMC – Destination Management Company

A professional services company, possessing extensive local knowledge, expertise and resources, specializing in the design and implementation of events, activities, tours, transportation and programme logistics.

PCO – Professional Conference Organiser

This is a company that specialises in the management of conferences. The company acts as a consultant to the organising committee or headquarter organisation, enacting its decisions and assisting to fulfil their objectives, whilst utilising the experience and knowledge it has gained over many years in organising events.

1. What's all this about MICE?

Both Karen and Geradline at Shannon Region Conference & Sports Bureau and Fáilte Ireland are the consummate professionals when it comes to supporting the organisation of a prestigious event such as this. Over the year that it took to plan this meeting, Karen and Geraldine were on hand to offer sound advice and honest feedback when needed, and made the whole experience of "Meet in Ireland" an extremely positive one. Thank you, Fáilte Ireland – without the support of Meet in Ireland, we would not have been able to offer our delegates the wide variety of Irish experiences that we did, and all of our delegates expressed their wishes to return to Ireland!

Jean McCarthy, University of Limerick

Incentive

Incentive travel is a global management tool that uses an exceptional travel experience to motivate and/or recognise participants for increased levels of performance in support of organisational goals.

Incentive Suppliers

Suppliers are the tourism industry trade who supply the services as part of the incentive trip e.g. airline carrier, coach operator, hotel, restaurant and conference venues. The Ireland-based DMC could be described as the corporate or agency buyer's guardian angel, who breathes life into the vision for the trip that the buyer might have. Ireland based DMCs are all approved by Fáilte Ireland, so buyers can be sure of reliability. No matter how big or small the group is they can save time, money and the occasional headache!

Incentive Participants

Participants or qualifiers are usually the company's own staff (often their sales staff as sales objectives are easy to set and measure), or their top customers. They can also be sales agents, distributors or retailers. An increasing number

bring spouses with them and sometimes, even children on a trip. Many are also repeat winners increasing the need for new and more original programmes from the destination.

Conference

Participatory meeting designed for discussion, learning, fact-finding, problem solving and consultation.

Congress

Regular coming together on a representational basis of several hundreds – or even thousands – of individuals belonging to a single professional, cultural, religious or other group.

Events/Exhibitions

Events/Exhibitions at which products and services are displayed. Fáilte Ireland do not actively target this sector as generally, international attendance numbers can not be influenced.

Conference Ambassador

This is a term Fáilte Ireland uses to refer to an individual who is more often than not based in Ireland and is a member of an association holding a meeting, assembly, congress, convention or conference, that could be held in Ireland. Conference Ambassadors are often academics, researchers or doctors but can also be corporate executives. Fáilte Ireland offers these individuals a full suite of supports, both practical and financial to help them bring the event in question to Ireland.

A Lead

A lead is the first milestone on the sales journey. In its most tangible form it is a speculative enquiry on email, phone or in person from a bona fide buyer who has MICE business that could potentially be placed in Ireland. A lead must be followed up and nurtured so that the sales journey can proceed to the next milestone, a site inspection or an RFP.

RFP

RFP is a three letter acronym that means "Request for Proposal". It is the term used in the MICE industry for the document that a buyer sends to the destination suppliers

when requesting their proposal for services. A good RFP will provide information regarding programme length and dates, participant demographics – age range and profile, gender ratio, known preferences etc., data on where the programme in question has been held previously and, if the programme is a large association conference, detailed records around uptake of accommodation, booking patterns etc.

Sometimes prior to issuing an RFP, a client may release an RFI. This stands for “Request for Information”. It is more speculative and general and usually a DMO, DMC or PCO (depending to whom it is issued), will send in response, their feasibility presentation. A ‘capability presentation’ is a destination or company presentation that highlights technical capabilities – it is not an aspirational marketing piece!

Fam Trip

A familiarisation trip (“fam trip” for short), is an immersive, hands-on destination experience that allows buyers ‘test drive’ the destination and thoroughly evaluate it as a potential location for their own meetings, incentives, conferences and events, or those of their clients. It is usually a fully hosted programme, with all expenses including air, accommodation, meals and activities covered by the sponsor. The sponsor of the fam trip may be the destination marketing organisation, Fáilte Ireland or one of the convention bureaux, the airline, the accommodation supplier or the in-coming agent (DMC or PCO) or, indeed, some combination of these working in partnership together.

Site Inspection

A site inspection is like a fam trip except that it is arranged and programmed around a specific brief or piece of business and therefore only test drives destination products and services that fit that specific brief. Thus a site inspection for a 100 person UK incentive will not visit a convention centre or a boutique hotel with only 50 rooms. Depending on the complexity of the programme, there may be more than one site inspection prior to actual programme delivery. Unless it has been specifically included as “complimentary” in the programme contract, it is becoming more the norm to charge out of pocket expenses (but not time) for site inspections.

Fáilte Ireland’s Conference Ambassador Programme

Fáilte Ireland’s International Conferences Team recognises the value of this business for Ireland, and, as such, manages a very successful Conference Ambassador Programme. Our remit is to research, identify, motivate, support and mentor our conference ambassadors, members of Irish associations/chapters, as they bid for and host international conferences. We work with them from the initial invitation or bid, right up to the conference itself along with our strategic partners, Fáilte Ireland approved professional conference organisers and regional convention bureaux around the country. We contribute towards the financial costs and offer practical support for the entire process. In summary, we provide the following support to potential conference organisers or ambassadors:

Bid Documentation Preparation and Presentation

One of the criteria for destination selection for association conferences can be financial support. Fáilte Ireland offers financial funding to eligible conferences to assist with the preparation and the travel involved in bidding for an international conference. We also have a collection of resources available including sample bid document templates, image libraries, videos and sample presentations for the pitch. If appropriate we often organise governmental and regional letters of invitation to support these bid documents.

Site Inspection Hosting

A crucial element in the decision making process, we can financially support and co-ordinate site visits to Ireland for the international association contacts and the committee members/decision makers on the location of these events, covering meeting facilities, hotels, social options and attractions.

Programme Enhancement Fund

Once the conference is confirmed, we can provide a financial contribution towards the marketing/operations of the conference to encourage strong delegate turnout – usually this is calculated at approximately €10 per international delegate up to 1000 delegates, and €20 per delegate for delegates above 1000+. However, funding is at the discretion of Fáilte Ireland.

How does Team Ireland target MICE?



Business Tourism is big business for Ireland. In 2015, it was worth €669m to the Irish economy, this reflects a 35% increase since 2011. It accounts for 16% of overseas tourism spend in Ireland and is one of the highest yield sectors in tourism. Promotable business has accelerated at an even faster pace, growing 52% in the last five years. Each Business Tourism delegate is worth an average €1,500 per visit. This is almost three times that of the leisure tourist.

Fáilte Ireland's Meet in Ireland Team works in partnership with Tourism Ireland to develop Ireland's full potential as a business tourism destination. With an international remit, our focus is to encourage and support both Irish and international businesses to host their international association conferences, corporate meetings and incentive trips in Ireland.

'Meet in Ireland' is the global MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events/Exhibitions) brand for the Island of Ireland. It comprises of three tourism authorities: Fáilte Ireland, Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland, who work in partnership to promote Ireland as a leading conference and meetings destination. The Meet in Ireland Team is active in our target markets of Great Britain, United States, France, Germany and Belgium (due to the high volume of international associations headquartered there).

The Meet in Ireland Team takes a primary role in researching and identifying organisations that have the potential to bring their conferences/corporate meetings/incentive trips to Ireland.

Meet in Ireland's business development activities focus on the very early stages of winning an event for Ireland, where we identify, research and develop a business opportunity to the stage where it is ready to handover to the convention bureaux or our trade partners to convert into business won.

Three main Meet in Ireland activities in 2016 were:

- ▶ To provide numerous platforms for Ireland's MICE industry to connect with buyers in order to generate solid business leads

- ▶ Through our MICE supports programme, Fáilte Ireland offers a full range of practical and financial supports to help industry convert business opportunities to business wins
- ▶ Regionality is a key focus for 2017, Fáilte Ireland offers industry weighted supports to ensure a much greater dispersion of business to regional Ireland

So what's the meeting planners' criteria for selecting a Business Tourism/MICE destination?

Unlike leisure visitors who make individual choices of the destinations they visit, MICE visitors have no choice as the decision is made for them by their company or professional association. This choice too, is made in accordance with strict criteria which usually include some combination of the following:





Access – for MICE buyers the destination must be well connected by air, land and sea but particularly by air.

Infrastructure – MICE buyers require a broad range of accommodation types including high-end 5 star hotels to university style accommodation. They also favour destinations with dedicated convention centres and rapid transportation links between airport and city centre.

MICE Infrastructure – MICE buyers expect expert DMO services and a well connected local community of agencies, active in international MICE associations such as, ICCA, SITE and MPI.

Value – MICE buyers aren't focused on finding cheap destinations, but they have a keen radar for value for money.

Financial Support – MICE buyers, particularly when it comes to large city-wide conventions, expect a destination to provide financial support or in-kind support to be offered particularly at the bidding stage. They often ask for access to prestigious period public buildings.

Safety – along with security, safety is becoming more important today than ever before to MICE buyers.

Appeal – this is often the most important criteria, certainly the most subjective and usually the most difficult to influence. This is connected inextricably with "brand Ireland".

Below are some of the characteristics of our MICE Delegates

The M in MICE: Corporate Meetings

Corporate meetings are conferences, meetings, kick-off road shows, training sessions or seminars organised and staged by companies as part of their marketing, training, motivational or communication outreach. They can vary in scope, size and duration, according to the objective they seek to achieve.

Companies may organise internal conferences for their staff (sales and marketing meetings, training seminars, regional meetings, board meetings etc.) or, external meetings for dealers, agents, clients or shareholders (combination of meeting and product launch, presentation of new advertising campaign, explanation of recent merger or an AGM etc.)

Bigger companies with large numbers of employees may have to fly team members to the meeting from many different locations around the globe and so their destination requirements will include multiple airport transfers, perhaps a shuttle service to and from different hotels. Large meetings like this share much in common with association conferences.

Corporate meetings are usually very sensitive around branding. In some cases, the corporate logo is proudly and publically displayed but in others it is not used at all as the corporation doesn't want to draw any public attention to its meeting. When dealing with corporate meetings, it's vitally important to ask about this matter early in the process so as to avoid embarrassment.

M MEETINGS

- ▶ Delegates worth €1,500
- ▶ Corporates
- ▶ 20% of the delegates confirmed for 2015 came from the US

I INCENTIVE

- ▶ Delegates worth €1,350
- ▶ Like dual programmes – town and country locations
- ▶ Incentive business confirmed for Ireland grew by 76% from 2014-2015
- ▶ US – Biggest source market

C CONFERENCES

- ▶ Delegates worth €1,500
- ▶ Majority of delegates attending conferences are male and over 45 years of age
- ▶ On average, delegates stayed 4.9 nights
- ▶ 44% of delegates come from mainland Europe
- ▶ Technology sector delegates had the largest out of pocket spend

E EXHIBITIONS/EVENTS

- ▶ Ireland hosts many types of exhibitions both large and small
- ▶ 11% of business events visitors surveyed said they were here for an exhibition

The main characteristics of corporate meetings are:

- ▶ Participation is often compulsory
- ▶ Companies can make their own choices over destinations and do not have to meet members wishes
- ▶ Easier decision making process
- ▶ Promotion of destination where the meeting is taking place is less important
- ▶ Shorter lead times – usually less than 12 months
- ▶ Average corporate meeting is shorter and smaller than association meetings
- ▶ Manager usually has final responsibility in the organisation of the meeting
- ▶ Organiser is more familiar with the target groups
- ▶ Higher budgets particularly for catering and room decoration
- ▶ Accounts are centrally settled i.e. company covers all costs

2. How does Team Ireland target MICE?

- ▶ No registration fee
- ▶ High repeat business and suppliers are therefore unwilling to share information
- ▶ Corporates often do not want to see their meeting published
- ▶ Corporate meetings are more easily affected by recession and political changes
- ▶ Corporates frequently book direct into hotels and venues, particularly from the UK Market

The I in MICE: Incentive Travel

While corporate meetings usually aim to inform or educate participants, incentive travel is used to motivate and inspire them. Incentive travel is described by the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence (SITE) as "...a powerful business tool to reward and unlock human potential to achieve corporate objectives."

Therefore, incentive travel is about reward and recognition – rewarding team members with an extraordinary travel experience for delivering outstanding results, recognising these high achievers before their peers and publically validating their achievements.

For incentive programmes, the "appeal" of the destination (see previous section) is crucial as an all-expenses-paid VIP trip to this destination, is the prize or the reward awaiting the qualifiers (those who exceed the targets set for qualification for the trip). Unless the destination is truly attractive and appealing, it will not trigger the emotional reaction necessary to motivate the employee to qualify for the trip.

The objectives of an incentive travel programmes can include

- ▶ Increase overall company sales
- ▶ Build company morale and loyalty
- ▶ Increase market share
- ▶ Encourage teamwork and better customer service

A number of IEEE conferences have been held at the University of Limerick in Limerick between 2011 and 2016. Ireland was an outstanding success. Limerick hosted close to 600 delegates from 42 countries. We had fantastic sponsors such as the Shannon Region Conference and Sports Bureau, Fáilte Ireland and Science Foundation Ireland that really helped make this conference such a success. It allowed us to provide unique social dinner excursions to Thomand Park as well as Knappogue Castle and Bunratty Castle, giving our attendees an authentic experience of the local culture. We received countless comments about how much the attendees enjoyed their overall experience in Limerick and how welcoming and hospitable all of the locals were. We were truly grateful to have the chance to hold IEEE Conferences in Limerick and we will advocate for other groups we work with to bring their conferences to Limerick in the future!

Chris Dyer, Conference Catalysts, LLC

Incentive travel is used as a motivational tool across many industry sectors but is very popular amongst the following:

- ▶ Financial and Insurance
- ▶ Automotive
- ▶ Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG)
- ▶ Direct Selling Companies (sometimes known as Network Marketing)

Ireland has a particularly strong reputation as an "incentive" destination in the financial and insurance sectors in the United States. This sector alone generates a significant percentage of our total incentive revenues.

Who is involved in Incentive Travel?

The Incentive travel sector is difficult to map as the supply chain has many moving parts and it's often difficult to identify, precisely, who the decision maker is. Within the sector, many practitioners are uncomfortable with the terms "incentive" and "travel" as "incentive", in some countries, has negative connotations and "travel" suggests that the organiser might be a travel agent as opposed to the specialist professional that he or she is.

Here's a short "who's who?" in the incentive travel supply chain:

Buyers

There are two levels of "buyer." The corporate buyer is often called the "end user" while the incentive house or agency buyer is often known as the "third party" or "intermediary".

- (a) Corporate buyers are often the marketing manager or the travel manager in the corporation but in large multinational corporations it might be a dedicated meeting or incentive planner. As corporate incentive programmes almost always allow the qualifier to travel with a guest, the corporate decision maker often travels with a spouse when considering the destination selection. The spouse often plays a role in destination selection.
- (b) Specialist incentive houses are often hired by the corporate end user to organise and plan the incentive programme. Usually, the relationship between the corporate end user and the incentive house is very strong as incentive houses are appointed to operate the programme for multiple years. The incentive house often shortlists a small number of destinations and pitches them to the end user.

Incentive Houses

Incentive houses are specialists that work with corporations on business goals and objectives and then design incentive programmes that reward employees for achieving and exceeding these goals. The rewards are usually multi-level with the top achievers qualifying for an all-expenses-paid, trip of a lifetime. Maritz, BCD Meetings & Events and Aimia are 3 of the bigger "incentive houses" in the US.

Sometimes, a corporation may choose not to engage in the creative internal marketing and the complex monthly tracking of performance that an incentive house will conduct on their behalf. Instead, they may choose to hire a travel agent or a PR agency to run their incentive trip. Specialists would consider this to be a "company trip" as it is not properly designed or managed in the way that officially measured incentive or motivational campaigns are.

The C in MICE: Conferences

Trade and/or professional associations play an important role in MICE as their raison d'être involves staging regular meetings and events for their members. Associations vary in size and membership. They can be national, regional (international, European etc.) or international in scope but all use meetings as a key means of communication with and among their members.

The congresses (also known as general assemblies, conventions, symposiums, conferences etc.) alternate between destinations within their region or continent (for regional e.g. European associations), or world (international associations), and on a fixed rotation or by invitation basis. In the case of the latter, more often than not, a local/national representative or association has to bid for the event to take place in their country. These representatives are called Conference Ambassadors.

Specialised research helps destinations determine the so-called next open date (the next free date for which a decision on the location has not yet been taken), the exact bidding process, and the national host who would most likely be in a position to extend the invitation. The lead-in time can be very long: e.g. if the conference is quadrennial, an eight to twelve year gap between bidding for and actually staging the event is not unusual.

Cork Convention Bureau is an excellent service and made the whole process so much easier – your help and knowledge were invaluable! The venue search was exhaustive and we're very happy that the final choice is the right one for us.

Suzanne, Irish Thoracic Society

In value terms the most important targets for any destination are the large congresses, ranging from 1,000 to 15,000 + delegates. In Ireland we target conferences between 100 and 6,000 delegates. Conference delegate expenditure is much higher than that of leisure visitors (average €1,500 per delegate) and often feature pre and post congress tours for participants and accompanying persons, which make them even more valuable to their chosen destination.

Some conferences attract lucrative sponsorship, particularly in the medical or pharmaceutical field, and these events usually have valuable commercial exhibitions attached. It is the norm for these conferences to charge each attending delegate a registration fee to attend, these can range from €200 to €2,000 per delegate, but average at approximately €350. These registration fees, along with income from sponsorship and exhibition activity, finance the conference.

Many international association conferences engage a local PCO (Professional Conference Organiser) to manage the entire process, from supporting the local host (or "conference ambassador") in their bid, right through to managing the logistical effort for the entire event. Fáilte Ireland works with a panel of approved PCOs in Ireland, and as they are responsible for placing significant international events business in venues around Ireland, they have excellent up-to-date product knowledge on the available business tourism infrastructure nationally, particularly around new products or services that come on stream.

The main characteristics of an international association conference are:

- ▶ Long lead in time
- ▶ Decision made through bidding process
- ▶ Usually dependent on a local host committee invitation or "bid"
- ▶ Individual delegates decide whether to attend
- ▶ Normally organised through a Professional Conference Organiser or AMC (Association Management Company)
- ▶ Accommodation booked directly by individual delegates or in block through a PCO
- ▶ Little immediate repeat business as conferences rotates

Thanks to Meet in Galway's strong support and co-operation, the Cartoon Forum proved to be a remarkable event. Your professionalism, precision and attention to details as well as your in-depth knowledge and contacts in the country were all key factors in the organisation and the resulting success. Our delegates truly enjoyed their stay in the charming town of Galway, where they found excellent working conditions and opportunities to meet people from the world of animation at a European level. No doubt they will keep this edition of the Forum in their memories for a long time.

Corinne Jenart, Director, Cartoon, European Association of Animation Film

- ▶ Usually held off-season or shoulder season except for Academic Conferences
- ▶ Usually 4-5 days duration
- ▶ Average attendance 300 delegates
- ▶ Social programme includes evening events, such as welcome receptions/gala banquets
- ▶ Less vulnerable to economic, political or security issues
- ▶ Promotion of the event at preceding conferences important to boost attendees
- ▶ Pre and post conference tours as part of social programme

The best way to approach associations is through research of both their headquarters (the majority of truly international associations are based in Europe and many in Brussels in particular) and the national association or local chapter representative (i.e. the potential Irish conference ambassador who may bid for this conference). This invariably requires considerable long term investment with a dedicated researcher and database along with membership of one of the specialised associations such as ICCA (International Conventions and Congresses Association) or UIA (Union of International Associations), which do provide association data and conference calendars.

ICCA

The International Conventions and Conferences Association, more commonly known as ICCA, publishes an annual index of countries and cities based on the number of international conferences hosted there and on the total number of delegates who attend these conferences. It captured data from 12,076 rotating international association meetings that took place worldwide in 2015.

The ICCA Association Database now includes 20,000 regularly occurring meeting series, 220,000 meeting editions and 11,500 international associations. Most importantly, the ICCA data highlights some great news for Ireland. Fáilte Ireland's Business Tourism Team use the ICCA database to research potential association conferences fit for Ireland.



€1,500 Value of
Conference Delegate.

€1,150 Value of
Corporate Delegate.

€1,350 Value of
Incentive Delegate.

€669m Business
Tourism Revenue (€mn) to
Ireland. It accounts for
16% of overseas tourism
spend in Ireland.

Five Mainland European
countries account for about
half of promotable business
tourism from the region

Germany 16,000
France 12,000
Spain 10,000
Italy 5,000
Netherlands 4,000

20,000
jobs
generated



Source Markets for Business delegates (2015)

Britain	Mainland Europe	North America	Long Haul
48%	37%	9%	6%

**Britain accounts for almost
half of overall business tourism.**



Mainland Europe is more
important for promotable
business tourists followed
closely by Britain.

**45 International Business
Tourism sales platforms.**



12 Familiarisation Trips



600 Opportunities to connect with key international buyers.



Ireland ranked 19 in **Europe** in ICCA rankings.



Ireland ranked 32 **worldwide** in ICCA rankings.

The residual 19% is relatively evenly split between North American and other Long Haul markets.



On average, international delegates stayed about **4.9 days** in Ireland.



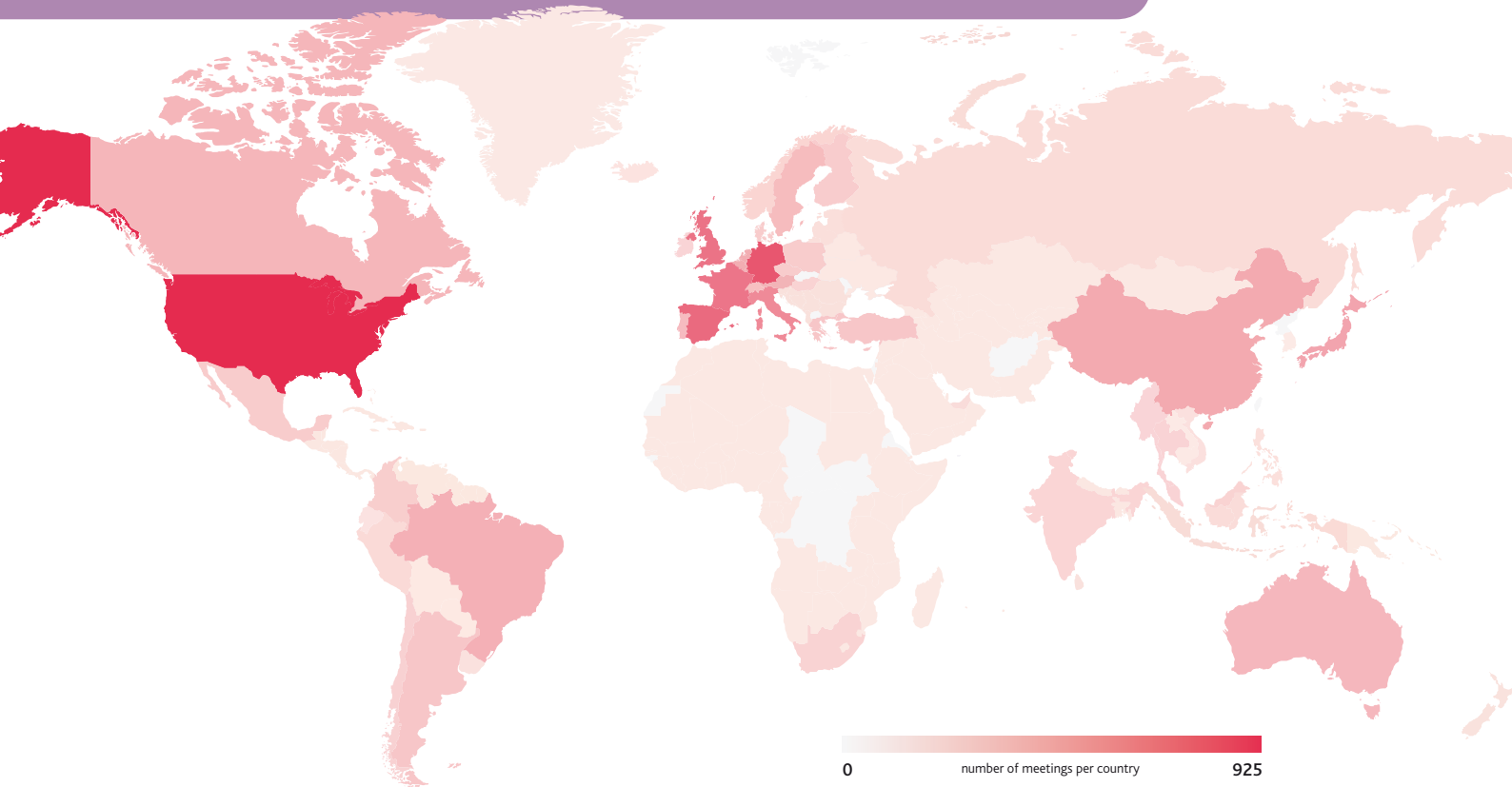
Corporate conferences/ meetings and association conferences, account for over **200,000** overseas tourists to Ireland.



The majority of international delegates (**79%**) either travel alone or with business associates. Of the **21%** who travel with a personal party, most are with their spouse/partner.



2. How does Team Ireland target MICE?



Number of meetings per country in 2015 ICCA Global Ranking

Rank	Country	No of Meetings
1	USA	925
2	Germany	667
3	United Kingdom	582
4	Spain	572
5	France	522

Rank	Country	No of Meetings
6	Italy	504
7	Japan	355
8	China-PR	333
9	Netherlands	333
10	Canada	308
11	Brazil	292

Rank	Country	No of Meetings
12	Portugal	278
13	Republic of Korea	267
14	Austria	258
15	Australia	247
16	Belgium	216

Rank	Country	No of Meetings
17	Sweden	216
18	Turkey	211
19	Denmark	204
20	Switzerland	194
26	Ireland	125

Top line news for Ireland in ICCAs 2015 Report:

- ▶ Dublin is back in the top 20 cities worldwide – ranked at No. 18 – this represents a jump of 6 places from 24th in 2014 (with 97 intl association conferences)
- ▶ Dublin ranked 14th in European rankings (up 3 places from 17th in 2014)
- ▶ Ireland ranked No. 32 worldwide (125 conferences) – up 5 places from 37th in 2014
- ▶ Ireland ranked 19th in European rankings (up 1 place from 20th in 2014)
- ▶ Our regional cities Galway and Cork both featured for the first time in the ICCA rankings and Limerick featured for the first time in three years



2015 country & city rankings

Europe Ranking: Number of Meetings

Rank	Country	No of Meetings
1	Germany	667
2	United Kingdom	582
3	Spain	572
4	France	522
5	Italy	504
6	Netherlands	333
7	Portugal	278
8	Austria	258
9	Belgium	216
10	Sweden	216
11	Turkey	211
12	Denmark	204
13	Switzerland	194
14	Poland	193
15	Czech Republic	154
16	Greece	152
17	Norway	144
18	Finland	141
19	Ireland	125
20	Hungary	112

2015 ICCA City Rankings

Europe Ranking: Number of Meetings

Rank	City	No of Meetings
1	Berlin	195
2	Paris	186
3	Barcelona	180
4	Vienna	178
5	London	171
6	Madrid	171
7	Istanbul	148
8	Lisbon	145
9	Copenhagen	138
10	Prague	123
11	Amsterdam	120
12	Brussels	117
13	Rome	99
14	Dublin	97
15	Budapest	95
16	Milan	93
17	Stockholm	89
18	Athens	87
19	Helsinki	71
20	Edinburgh	67

Rank	City	No of Meetings
21	Oslo	63
22	Munich	62
23	Warsaw	62
24	Porto	60
25	Zurich	58
26	Cracow	54
27	Glasgow	54
28	Belgrade	52
29	Riga	52
30	Bucharest	47
31	Tallinn	47
32	Geneva	45
33	Rotterdam	45
34	Florence	43
35	Ljubljana	41
36	Zagreb	41
37	Hamburg	37
38	Nice	36
39	Lyon-St. Etienne	35

There was a vast array of requirements for this conference. It is safe to say that every single element of the week-long conference was affected in a positive way by the staff at the Killarney Convention Centre. Contributions from senior management, technical staff and hospitality staff made the conference one of the best ever for WASBE members. The Killarney conference is still held up as the perfect conference to which all others, past and future will be measured by.

Fergus O'Carroll, World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE)

Why get involved in MICE

The MICE sector is one of the most sought after lucrative market segments amongst DMOs in the world today, because its revenue, seasonality and regionality profile, is almost perfect – high spending visitors who travel in the shoulder season and visit regions. It's also more sustainable than leisure tourism, as higher revenues are generated by fewer visitors. For these reasons, more and more DMOs and their destinations are proactively targeting the sector and the competition amongst destinations has never been as strong.

Ireland has traditionally performed well in MICE, usually punching way above its weight when compared with other countries of a similar population. Emotional connections to Ireland via ancestry have certainly helped us in this regard, particularly for incentives from the important US market. Likewise, assisted by infrastructural investment over the past 20 years, particularly the building of The Convention Centre Dublin (CCD), the corporate and association meeting/congress sector has grown strongly.

The E in MICE – Events/Exhibitions

The term "Events/Exhibitions" is a catch-all term that can, conceivably, include all the other elements of MICE (meetings, conferences and incentive travel experiences are, by definition, events too). Some DMOs even refer to MICE as 'Business Events' and, increasingly, on social media, the hashtag #eventprofs is used to attract attention to social posts from the widest possible spectrum of MICE professionals.

For our purposes here events/exhibitions is used to describe any Business to Business or Business to Consumer activity that brings together 10-100,000 people around a particular topic or theme. Events/Exhibitions can be open or closed, public or private thus, the term extends to exhibitions, concerts, sporting fixtures and festivals.

An aerial photograph of a rugged coastline. The foreground shows dark, rocky cliffs meeting the ocean, with white foam from waves crashing against the base. The middle ground features a large, grassy headland that slopes down to the sea. In the background, a wide bay or fjord is visible, surrounded by more land and distant mountains under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds.

Are you
MICE ready?

Are you in the MICE marketplace?

While MICE is a niche sector within the broad tourism marketplace, not all tourism businesses are relevant to the MICE market. It is also true to say, however, that many non-tourism related businesses are very relevant to MICE. To give an example of each: MICE visitors generally don't use hotel accommodation of less than 3 stars (in fact it's usually 4 and 5 star properties) and audio visual/production companies – generally not seen as tourist products – play a vital role for MICE.

Relevant to all MICE sectors

- ▶ Airlines with group booking capabilities
- ▶ Specialist destination based agencies – DMCs, PCOs, event management companies, ground handlers, tour guiding agencies
- ▶ Accommodation providers in the 3, 4 and 5 star categories with suitable meeting space
- ▶ Transport companies offering private hire of motor coaches, limousines, cars
- ▶ Visitor attractions who offer spaces for hire
- ▶ Mid-upscale restaurants with group dining facilities
- ▶ Catering companies
- ▶ Rental companies specialising in event equipment
- ▶ Entertainment venues – pubs with Irish music etc.
- ▶ AV companies
- ▶ Design and print companies
- ▶ Photographers, videographers
- ▶ All types of venues who can manage groups
- ▶ Venues that can offer gala dinner space
- ▶ Located within 45 mins drive from an international airport

Relevant to corporate meetings

- ▶ VIP services at airports including private plane handling
- ▶ Specialist destination based agencies – DMCs, event management companies, production companies, tour guiding agencies, experiential marketing companies, speakers' bureaux
- ▶ Accommodation providers – 4 and 5 star categories but also haven and hideaway accommodation providers to host board of director events
- ▶ Transport companies offering private hire of motor coaches, limousines, cars
- ▶ Visitor attractions that can host drinks receptions, dinners etc.
- ▶ Mid-upscale restaurants with group dining facilities
- ▶ Catering companies
- ▶ Rental companies specialising in event equipment
- ▶ Entertainment venues – pubs with Irish music etc.
- ▶ Photographers, videographers
- ▶ Agencies specialising in meetings design and social media for meetings
- ▶ Design and print companies
- ▶ Companies specialising in corporate gifts
- ▶ All types of venues with meeting space

Relevant to incentives

- ▶ Airlines with group booking capabilities
- ▶ Specialist destination based agencies – DMCs, event management companies, tour guiding agencies, team building companies
- ▶ Accommodation providers in the 4 and 5 star categories
- ▶ Transport companies offering private hire of motor coaches, limousines, cars, vintage vehicles, boats, yachts, trains, helicopters etc., where the transport experience can be privatised and branded
- ▶ Visitor attractions available for after-hours visits, behind-the-scenes visits, "meet-the-curator" encounters

3. Are you MICE ready?

- ▶ Venues/accommodation/activity providers that offer something unique/different to what is available in other countries
- ▶ Upscale restaurants with group dining facilities particularly Chef's Table etc.
- ▶ Catering companies
- ▶ Rental companies specialising in event equipment but with excellent stock of seating, linens, cutlery etc.
- ▶ Entertainment venues – pubs with Irish music etc.
- ▶ All type of venues but particularly private, exclusive, heritage venues
- ▶ Photographers, videographers
- ▶ Design and print companies
- ▶ Companies specialising in corporate gifts

Relevant to conferences

- ▶ Airlines with group booking capabilities
- ▶ Specialist destination based agencies – PCOs, event management companies, production companies, exhibition companies
- ▶ Accommodation providers in the 3, 4 and 5 star categories but also outside of this category if the conference attendees come from a wide demographic
- ▶ Transport companies offering private hire of motor coaches, limousines, cars
- ▶ Visitor attractions
- ▶ Mid-upscale restaurants with group dining facilities
- ▶ Catering companies
- ▶ Rental companies specialising in event equipment but with excellent stock of seating, linens, cutlery etc.
- ▶ Entertainment venues – pubs with Irish music etc.
- ▶ Photographers, videographers
- ▶ Design and print companies
- ▶ Companies specialising in corporate gifts
- ▶ Companies specialising in registration systems for conferences
- ▶ All type of venues but particularly large scale congress and convention centres

Relevant to events/exhibitions

- ▶ Airlines with group booking capabilities
- ▶ Specialist destination based agencies – event management companies (see definitions below), production companies, security companies
- ▶ Accommodation providers in the 3, 4 and 5 star categories but also outside of this category if the conference attendees come from a wide demographic
- ▶ Transport companies offering private hire of motor coaches, limousines, cars
- ▶ Visitor attractions
- ▶ Catering companies
- ▶ Rental companies specialising in event equipment but with excellent stock of seating, linens, cutlery etc.
- ▶ Entertainment venues – pubs with Irish music etc.
- ▶ Photographers, videographers
- ▶ Design and print companies
- ▶ Companies specialising in corporate gifts
- ▶ Companies specialising in registration or ticketing systems
- ▶ All type of venues but particularly large scale congress and convention centres
- ▶ Apparel companies

List of MICE associations

Every industry has its trade or professional associations that regulate, educate and represent that industry and the MICE industry is no different. When selecting a destination, MICE buyers often check the membership lists of key MICE associations, to understand who the local players are. More perhaps than any other tourism sector, members of the MICE community tend to network with each other in and through these professional associations. Some have local chapters (SITE Ireland is particularly strong, for example), some have regional structures (ICCA is UKI) and some are only international (FICP).

If you consider yourself a MICE professional in Ireland then it's vitally important that you join one or more of the associations listed here:

ABPCO – Association of British Professional Conference Organisers	www.abpc.org	ISES – International Special Events Society	www.ises.com
ADMEI – Association of Destination Management Executives International	www.adme.org	ITIC – Irish Tourist Industry Confederation	www.itic.ie
AIPC – International Association of Convention Centres	www.aipc.org	ITOA – Incoming Tour Operators Association Ireland	www.itoa-ireland.com
AIPCO – Association of Irish Professional Conference Organisers	www.aipco.ie	JMIC – Joint Meetings Industry Council	www.themeetingsindustry.org
ASAE – The American Society of Association Executives	www.asaecenter.org	MIA – Meeting Industry Association	www.mia-uk.org
CIC – The Convention Liaison Council	www.conventionindustry.org	MPI – Meeting Professionals International	www.mpiweb.org
Cocal – Federación de Entidades Organizadoras de Congresos y Afines de América Latina	cocal.org	OPW – Office of Public Works	www.opw.ie
DMAI – Destination Marketing Association International	www.destinationmarketing.org	PCMA – Professional Convention Management Association	www.pcma.org
ECM – European Cities Marketing	www.europecitiesmarketing.org	RAI – Restaurants Associations of Ireland	www.rai.ie
EFAPCO – European Federation of the Associations of PCO	www.efapco.eu	SITE – Society for Incentive Travel Excellence	www.siteglobal.com
FICP – Financial & Insurance Conference Planners	www.ficpnet.com	UIA – Union of International Associations	www.uia.org
GMIC – Green Meeting Industry Council	www.gmicglobal.org		
IACC – International Association of Conference Centres	www.iacconline.org		
IAPCO – International Association of Professional Congress Organisers	www.iapco.org		
ICCA – International Congress and Convention Association	www.iccaworld.com		
IHF – Irish Hotels Federation	www.ihf.ie		

Certifications

Many of the associations and societies listed above offer a professional certification of competence. In some cases having this designation can play a huge role in being selected by a MICE buyer as their partner in the destination.

CITE/CIS	Certified Incentive Travel Executive (SITE)
CMM	Certified Meeting Manager (MPI)
CMP	Certified Meeting Planner (CIC)
DMCP	Destination Management Certified Professional (ADMEI)

What does Meet in Ireland do for MICE?





MICE Trade support provided by Meet in Ireland

Meet in Ireland provides an extensive range of services to the MICE industry in Ireland that includes, but is not limited to, marketing support, regulatory services, business and financial supports, education and training. From 2016 onwards, all of these services can be accessed through the brand new trade partner portal designed to provide a one-stop-shop experience for all interactions between Fáilte Ireland and Irish trade partners – further details may be found below.

Marketing support

Under the Meet in Ireland brand, we provide many marketing opportunities for Irish MICE trade partners to connect with international buyers in order to generate solid business leads. (A “lead” being an indication from a client that they have immediate business for Ireland).

Overseas Business Tourism trade shows

Fáilte Ireland’s Business Tourism Team, in conjunction with Tourism Ireland, co-ordinates and participates in international trade shows, networking events, familiarisation trips, workshops and trade briefings every year. We promote Ireland as a world class business tourism destination at these events under the Meet in Ireland banner, demonstrating the ‘Team Ireland’ approach to deliver exceptional business events.

We participate in approximately 60 international events each year including three of the largest international trade fairs dedicated to MICE (IMEX Frankfurt, America and IBTM World Barcelona), where up to 34 of our trade partners can be accommodated on the Ireland stand at each show. These opportunities for trade are heavily subsidised and provide key opportunities to meet meeting planners, corporate agencies and incentive houses.

As participation in these overseas shows is always over-subscribed, Fáilte Ireland uses criteria as outlined below; as a guideline to select trade partners:

- ▶ Ensure there is relevant product mix i.e. one DMC, one hotel, one venue, one convention bureau, one marketing group, one activity, one university etc.
- ▶ Ensure there is regional representation paying particular attention to products on the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland’s Ancient East and Dublin
- ▶ Ensure the product is suitable for the show e.g. 5* only for high end/luxury shows etc. DMCs active in market. Supplier is MICE ready
- ▶ Only Fáilte Ireland approved DMCs and PCOs can attend
- ▶ Ensure priority is given to Fáilte Ireland Country-List approved DMCs for relevant market i.e. German DMC Country List for German shows etc.
- ▶ Ensure access will not be an issue, i.e. proximity to local airport and available direct access routes into that market

For shows that are oversubscribed and, as a final guideline and differentiator, we apply the first come, first served principle. All of our overseas business tourism promotions are moving from www.meetinirelandpromotions.com to the new Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal www.tradeportal.failteireland.ie.

To receive notifications of the relevant international tradeshow you must first sign up to the portal.

Fáilte Ireland’s new Trade Partner Portal

Fáilte Ireland’s One-Stop-Shop is finally here! A new Fáilte Ireland trade partner portal, designed to provide tourism businesses and trade partners with a one-stop-shop for all interactions with Fáilte Ireland is now available. Trade partners will be able to manage account information to ensure that the most accurate and up-to-date contact details are available at all times.

Checklist for a trade show

Attending international trade shows like IBTM World (Barcelona) or IMEX (Frankfurt and America), is an excellent way to launch your product or service for the MICE marketplace. Here's a useful check list to help you prepare for these shows:

Preparing for a business tourism show

1. How to choose the trade show that's right for you

- Develop a marketing and promotional plan.
- Research the show and identify your key markets.
- Identify trade and consumer shows that match your client profile
- Decide on which show complements your promotion plan.
- Make contact with the Meet in Ireland Team for further advice.
- Ensure the selected shows you choose are within your promotional budget.
- Think outside the box! Don't always assume the large shows are the right ones for you.

2. The Dos...

- Once you have decided on the show, preparing well in advance is crucial. Communicate your intention to attend the show as far in advance as possible by updating all official profile information.
- Make payment immediately to secure your place and ensure you are included in the official show literature.
- Compile a database prior to the show for networking.
- Bring lots of business cards, small corporate gifts with an Irish touch, spare USBs with your company presentation. Keep brochures and bulky items to a minimum.
- Book a hotel close to show location to avoid lengthy and expensive taxi rides. Some larger shows provide official shuttle buses to and from the event.
- Plan sales calls and meetings around attendance at shows. This can give added value to the cost



of travelling overseas. Before planning sales calls, for before or after a show, check with a few key customers in advance to see if this is appropriate. If it is a big show there will be a lot of suppliers trying to get appointments and some companies put a limit on the number of people they will see. Obviously, the earlier you do this the better. Bear in mind you can organise sales calls in other locations outside the immediate show catchment area i.e. when going to Chicago prearrange days in New York or Minneapolis.

- Make an appointment to meet the Tourism Ireland office and airline/ferry rep in the area in advance. Their local and up-to-date knowledge is invaluable and could be critical to the success of your attendance at the show.
- Send an experienced staff member as you will be meeting your best potential customers. A staff member who can speak the language of the market from which most attendees come is also an added advantage.
- Make sure you access wifi to ensure a speedy follow-up process with a potential customer and avoid large phone bills.
- Get to the show on time on day one particularly.
- Get the show catalogue and see what colour coding system is used for attendees – buyers, press, agents etc.
- Check listing of exhibitors as some may be buyers. Try and make appointments with them at their stands on the first morning or invite them to your stand during the show.

- Network with fellow exhibitors when they are free as they may have opportunities to see your product too.
- During quieter periods visit other stands and carry out a competitor analysis – collect brochures – useful for ideas to see what's new or different to help with future planning.
- Write up your follow-up/contact sheets each day in order to ensure that you retain all of the information from each contact. Process any enquiries or requests for information ASAP via your office.
- Be pro-active in talking to attendees. Don't wait until the client approaches you on the stand – you are there to sell so make contact with as many visitors as possible.
- Attend hospitality/networking events outside of the show hours. Great for generating new leads.
- Most important of all, wear comfortable shoes and clothes – exhibition halls can be very warm and standing all day is easier with the right footwear!

3. *The Don'ts...*

- Don't use the same profile description for every show. All shows are different and your description should highlight the service/product most appropriate to the market. 50 words minimum is required for most show profile books.
- Don't forget to attend pre-show Meet in Ireland briefings.
- Don't spend time talking to people you already know. Go outside your comfort zone.
- Don't turn up late – leave sufficient time to get to the show particularly on day one.
- Don't leave until the show is over. You never know when a customer arrives.
- Don't overstay your allocated appointment time.
- Don't disappear off the stand without informing the Meet in Ireland Team or leave a contact number.

Having over 600 delegates from about 40 countries for a week was a large undertaking. We had tremendous feedback both during the conference and afterwards in letters and emails. Delegates clearly appreciated the scientific presentations but also remarked on the excellent tours and the banquet with those unforgettable Riverdancers

Dr Angela Savage, Chairperson, European Carbohydrate Symposium

- If a customer approaches you and you are unable to help them with their enquiry because your product does not suit, don't send them away; pass them on to one of your fellow exhibitors or the Meet in Ireland representative.
- Don't forget adaptors/charges for all your communication tools.
- Don't leave show follow-up any longer than a week from returning to the office – there is a danger you might not complete this all important task within the required timeframe and thus lose valuable contacts.
- Don't send a blanket impersonal communication – it is a waste of time and can annoy potential clients.

4. *Show Follow-Up*

- Complete post show surveys speedily and honestly. Failure to complete these surveys will result in you forfeiting your space at future shows.
- Don't forget to use the Fáilte Ireland financial and practical supports as a hook.
- Prioritise your contacts and personalise your responses.
- Send a follow-up communication to appointments that did not materialise and schedule tele-sales calls thereafter.
- Make sure you receive the master show attendee listing to update your database and include them on relevant future mailings.
- Don't forget to tell us if you win a piece of business following the show. We love to celebrate your success!

I would like to put on record my sincere thanks to the Shannon Region Conference and Sports Bureau for all your help and support for the National Air Carrier Association (NACA) Board of Directors meeting held in Dromoland Castle on the 9th of September... It was the first time since NACA was founded, that they have held their board meeting outside of the US so we wanted to ensure a warm "Irish Welcome". The Directors are all either CEO's or key airline executives and representatives from a number of airlines attended the board meeting in Dromoland Castle. It was a very high profile aviation meeting.

Joe Buckley, Aviation Ambassador, Shannon Airport

Fáilte Ireland familiarisation trip opportunities

Familiarisation or Fam Trips are designed to move key international buyers from consideration to conversion. Fáilte Ireland co-ordinates and supports the ground activities and itineraries for overseas groups while the recruitment of qualified buyers is managed by the Tourism Ireland market offices. This is all co-ordinated under the Meet in Ireland Brand. In October 2015, Fáilte Ireland brought in over 110 international meeting planners to Dublin and the Wild Atlantic Way on a familiarisation trip and an intensive one day workshop where meeting planners got face to face with Ireland's business tourism industry. It was a hugely successful event where 91% of those international meeting planners who participated on the familiarisation trip have said they would bring business to Ireland as a result. To build on the success of this event, in September 2016 and as part of Connect16, Fáilte Ireland brought in 70 international meeting planners to experience Ireland's world class business tourism product in Dublin, Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East.

How to conduct a winning familiarisation trip/ site inspection

If you want advice on running a successful fam trip/site inspection for your next client, come in and visit the team or get a copy of our checklist for successful site inspections.

Financial supports

Through our MICE Supports Programme Fáilte Ireland offer a full range of practical and financial supports to help convert business opportunities to business wins.

DMC/PCO Originating MICE FAM Trip Fund

Fáilte Ireland support destination management companies (DMCs) and professional conference organisers (PCOs) who organise their own familiarisation trips (FAMs) aimed at international corporate meeting planners, incentive travel planners and/or association conference planners.

Fáilte Ireland will also support DMCs/PCOs who organise a fam trip for international meeting planners and their top corporate clients (max of 3) who have propensity to bring business to Ireland in the short to medium term.



Get behind the Meet in Ireland brand





Get behind the Meet in Ireland Brand

The 'Meet in Ireland' brand represents the entire Irish MICE industry, 'Team Ireland.' Our brand embodies Ireland as offering both invigorating and deeply immersive MICE experiences. It has a major influence on where buyers choose to bring their meeting and also needs to reach out and strike an emotional chord with their delegates.

If you want to get behind the brand, understanding and incorporating the essence of the brand will help align your business with the Meet in Ireland brand and set you apart from the competition.

Brand Proposition

Engage. Energise. Excel.

Engage

Meetings, incentives, conferences and events in Ireland are deeply immersive, facilitating spontaneous connections, new perspectives, and rich communal exchange.

Energise

Your teams and delegates are motivated and invigorated by MICE in Ireland. Giving them the energy and fortitude they need to take on new challenges and pioneer new approaches to solutions.

Excel

Team Ireland goes above and beyond to ensure your event is a resounding success so that you can relax and enjoy (and your delegates can too!). Delegates and employees leave feeling awakened, exhilarated and inspired to achieve more.



Brand Role

The Meet in Ireland brand is used to market and promote all meetings, incentives, conferences and events/exhibitions (MICE) for the Island of Ireland.

Brand Positioning Statement

Ireland's immersive landscape, welcoming people, and innovative culture ensure that MICE held in Ireland are intrinsically invigorating and collectively immersive, inviting delegates to engage, energise and excel.

Get digital

www.meetinireland.com



The official website for the Meet in Ireland brand is www.meetinireland.com. Be sure to have your business listed and up-to-date on this site.

The vision for the new site

Create a dynamic and engaging best in class business tourism website for the island of Ireland, which will result in a credible source of information and support to potential business tourism customers and deliver lead generation from our target markets, whilst reinforcing Ireland as a world class business tourism destination.

Social media for Business Tourism

Our social media programme for Meet in Ireland, focuses on stimulating conversations about Ireland, primarily through two key platforms LinkedIn and Twitter.

Tips for telling your story on social media

Twitter

- ▶ Tag #MakeltIreland
- ▶ Keep text in tweets short (this makes adding our message to retweets easier)
- ▶ Always note location of image
- ▶ Review what we've tweeted before on the channels noted above and see what has performed well engagement wise. Is your image/content of a similar quality?
- ▶ Keep the landscape or location the focus, not individuals. Selfies do not perform well
- ▶ Videos from Vimeo and YouTube perform well on Twitter
- ▶ Industry and non-consumer focused tweets should be shared with @Failte_Ireland
- ▶ **Twitter is good for:** Trends/landscapes/pubs/literary quotes/news of internationally relevant awards

Thank you Meet in Galway for all the wonderful organising for the Galway conference. It was an honour to be invited and to be part of it. You were most welcoming of the 'stranger from far across the seas'.

Dr Frank Brennan, Consultant in Palliative Medicine, Calvary Hospital, Sydney, Australia

Get behind #MakeltIreland

Following on from the success of the social media engagement during the #MeetInIreland2015 superfam we created a hashtag, #MakeltIreland, to be used for all activity associated with the MICE industry in Ireland. This hashtag helps us to categorise tweets related to MICE in Ireland, which makes it easier for followers to find content related to the industry.

We use this hashtag for all our bids, fam trips, site inspections and international tradeshows and all our activity this year. So go on, get on-board and make sure your clients #MakeltIreland.

List yourself on Cvent

Meet in Ireland have invested in the Cvent platform to drive new business opportunities to the regions through our regional convention bureaux.

Cvent is a leading event management technology company that offers software solutions to event planners for online event registration, venue selection, event management, mobile apps for events, e-mail marketing and web surveys.

They also provide venues with an integrated platform, enabling properties to increase group business demand, through targeted advertising and improve conversion through proprietary demand management and business intelligence solutions.

Cvent solutions optimise the entire event management value chain and have enabled clients around the world to manage more than a million meetings and events.

All Meet in Ireland opportunities generated through our promotional partnership with Cvent, are pushed out to regional convention bureaux partners through Cvent. If you are not listed on Cvent you will not get the opportunity to respond.

The logo for Cvent, featuring the word "cvent" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "c" is blue, and the rest of the letters are black.

Fáilte Ireland trade portal

You can find the trade portal Login on the official Fáilte Ireland Website. www.tradeportal.failteireland.ie.

What will I be able to do in the new portal?

The new portal (which you will access with one single username and password) will allow you to:

- ▶ Request to attend, manage and pay online for your participation at all business tourism overseas trade shows
- ▶ Access a full range of Fáilte Ireland supports
- ▶ Register for our quality assurance framework (renewal of your accommodation)
- ▶ Attend a range of useful webinars. The Business Supports webinars are a series of short online discussions aimed at tourism businesses to give you an insight in to the many digital, sales and revenue practices and trends you should be adopting in your business

What do I do now?

You will have already received an invitation to register for the portal. Now it is your responsibility to make sure your company profile is up-to-date and you will have access to all the Fáilte Ireland services you already use... you might even find a few new ones too.



Ireland: The perfect MICE destination



Getting Here

The island of Ireland is extremely well connected with high direct connectivity to North America, Europe and the Middle East. Onward connections to Asia and Latin America via European hubs like London, Paris, Amsterdam and Madrid mean that no major city or country is more than two plane rides away.



Are you ready – sales pitch ready?

It takes time to establish and position your product in the international market and achieve a successful level of international sales. Your marketing strategies should be well-planned and incorporate a variety of activities that target the international MICE buyer. Part and parcel of this is your sales pitch – to make sure your pitch is on brand we have created a MICE Toolkit.

Irish Trade MICE Toolkit

Toolkit media library contains all sorts of customisable assets:

- ▶ Destination PowerPoint presentations
- ▶ Access to our Ireland image/video gallery
- ▶ Downloadable infographics and fact sheets
- ▶ Logos
- ▶ Maps

Fáilte Ireland provides robust business supports.

Learn from a wide range of resources to help your tourism business reach its full potential. Our business supports include management tools, how-to guides and funding information, as well as sector-specific advice. Check out all our business supports online www.failteireland.ie/Supports

How do I distribute my product with Meeting and Incentive Planners?

Meeting and incentive planners can provide your business with access to the corporate traveller attending a business related event.



Top Tips for connecting with meeting and incentive planners:

- ▶ Offer a variety of itineraries that include unique and diverse experiences around your business
- ▶ Ensure the Irish destination management companies (DMCs) and professional conference organisers (PCOs) that handle business and incentive travel are familiar with your product
- ▶ Suggest interesting ways to package your product together with other experiences
- ▶ Participate in cooperative marketing activities organised by Meet in Ireland and your local regional convention bureau (RCB)
- ▶ Join your local Convention Bureau
- ▶ Ensure you are listed on relevant online meeting planner sites such as Cvent.

Fáilte Ireland's Extend Your Stay Programme on the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and Dublin – A Breath of Fresh Air

Fáilte Ireland's 'Extend your Stay' offers pre, during and post destination support to ensure that all delegates who are interested in adding on leisure time to the conference have everything they need.

- ▶ Access to Ireland's Content Pool – www.irelandscontentpool.com online gallery of promotional Ireland images and videos
- ▶ Promotional luggage tags
- ▶ Destination maps

And if you run out of conversation – here's a couple of conversation starters

When compared with destinations like France or Italy, Singapore or New York, our competition can seem daunting. However, we often out-perform destinations that are better equipped technically and that's often due to our "soft power" quotient, i.e., our ability to connect with buyers on a human level and win their trust by the power of this connection.

When discussing Ireland with potential buyers here is a list of cool and unusual MICE things you can do in Ireland that often help to seal the deal:

- ▶ Propose a two centre incentive trip to Ireland for US buyers that flies into Dublin and out of Shannon – that way qualifiers experience the buzz of the city and the tranquillity of the countryside
- ▶ Organise a home hosted evening for US incentive qualifiers where instead of a restaurant or a hotel dining room they experience some authentic Irish hospitality
- ▶ Do a private DART charter and take your corporate meeting group from city centre to Bray, enjoying spectacular coastal scenery en route
- ▶ Highlight how exceptionally well connected Ireland is to the UK, the EU and the US and how this makes Ireland the perfect location for global meetings

From the moment we arrived in Cork, the traditional band and arrival drinks, to our fantastic hosts at Cork Convention Bureau, Steve & Evelyn, the incredible hospitality from everyone we met all made the whole weekend amazing. We couldn't have asked for anymore. Cork in general has some amazing venues for events that honestly I wasn't expecting. Thanks again.

Ryan Morris Grass Roots Group

- ▶ Underline how Dublin and Shannon are pre-clearance zones for travel to and from the US and how convenient and time saving this is
- ▶ Stress the short transfer time between Dublin and Belfast and explain how a Dublin based event can easily and efficiently extend to Belfast too
- ▶ For large incentive travel groups highlight how many 5 star hotels are located within sight or walking distance of each other in Dublin
- ▶ Underline the super-short transfer time from airport to downtown hotels in Dublin, Shannon, Cork and Belfast
- ▶ Highlight how cities in Ireland are on a human scale and retain a village-like atmosphere
- ▶ Talk about Ireland's creative output in the arts, in music, in new technologies
- ▶ Say how 50% of the population of Ireland's capital is under 25, making Dublin Europe's youngest capital by far
- ▶ English speaking
- ▶ Eurozone
- ▶ Safe/Neutral country
- ▶ We have the longest coastal touring route in the world called the Wild Atlantic Way
- ▶ Tombs older than the pyramids on Ireland's Ancient East
- ▶ Uniquely Irish experiences

Selling Ireland's big brands for Business Tourism: Ireland's Ancient East, Wild Atlantic Way and Dublin – A Breath of Fresh Air

We are unrivalled in Ireland when it comes to what we have to offer: breath-taking natural beauty; rich heritage; cool culture; awesome adventure activities; world class music; the famous Irish pub and wholesome, untainted artisan food.

To stimulate innovation and improve international competitiveness, Fáilte Ireland launched three highly compelling brands, Ireland's Ancient East, Wild Atlantic Way and Dublin. It is well recognised that it's easier to sell Ireland for MICE in the international market place where our leisure brands are already well known. Selling your product or services with a combination of the ethos of the brands, will inevitably work to your advantage.

Brand Architecture – Brand Ireland

There is significant research which shows that certain experiences offer the greatest appeal to international visitors. These are identified below as the five pillars of Tourism Brand Ireland, our unique international tourism identity.

These pillars or experience components are identified as having the potential to set Ireland apart from its competitors.

- ▶ Vibe of the City – fresh, exciting and stimulating experiences and attractions in a lively atmosphere
- ▶ Living Historical Stories – interesting and informative experiences and attractions in urban and rural areas
- ▶ Connecting with the People of Ireland – immersing themselves in Irish culture
- ▶ Awakening the Senses – stimulating and profound experiences within natural and unspoiled landscapes
- ▶ Getting Active in Nature – revitalising and energising experiences and activities in the spectacular outdoors

Fáilte Ireland has developed a number of core propositions capable of delivering on these experiential pillars for target consumer segments and markets. It should be noted that whilst all of the propositions are relatively new, some, such as the Wild Atlantic Way, are more established than others and therefore all are at different stages of development.



Wild Atlantic Way – Meet on Ireland's Wild Side

The Wild Atlantic Way is Ireland's first long-distance touring route, stretching along the spectacular Atlantic coast from Donegal to West Cork. It provides a breath-taking journey of discovery within six regions. The allocation of €8m towards the project in Budget 2014 allowed for the provision of signage and the start of the enhancement of 181 discovery points, including 15 signature discovery points, along its epic 2,500km route. The most memorable meetings and incentives always have a touch of wildness about them.

Brand Proposition

"Where the wild Irish land and seascapes meet – the world's longest defined coastal touring route"

The Wild Atlantic Way destination brand was developed with a specific objective to be a unifying proposition for the West Coast of Ireland. People want to experience an off the beaten track experience that genuinely immerses them in multiple ways so that they feel stimulated, energised and uplifted.

Three overarching themes have been identified to guide the future development of the Wild Atlantic Way:

- ▶ Spirit of Adventure (Adventure)
- ▶ Life Shaped by the Atlantic (Culture)
- ▶ Where Land and Sea Collide (Landscape and Seascape)



Ireland's Ancient East – Story Telling, Story Selling

Ireland's Ancient East – Ireland's Ancient East is where our 'newest oldest products' are brought to life for groups of all sizes. In this lush, green landscape, over 5,000 years of history lie buried within the verdant meadows, bustling towns and rugged stone monuments. Each landmark has its stories to tell, as indeed do the locals, who delight in telling tales that are rich in famous battles and magic rituals.

Brand Proposition

Ireland's Ancient East offers a personal experience of 5,000 years of Europe's history. Your journey of discovery in this relaxing, off the beaten track, lush beautiful landscape, that attracted warring settlers for millennia, will be made illuminating by stories from the best story tellers in the world.

The overarching theme for Ireland's Ancient East focuses on:

- ▶ 5,000 years of European history, lush green landscapes and stories, told by the best storytellers in the world

Breath of Fresh Air Hit Refresh



Brand Proposition

This new brand seeks to reflect Dublin's unique position as a vibrant, cool and hip capital city bursting with a variety of surprising experiences – with sea and mountains on its doorstep. The tagline 'Dublin – A Breath of Fresh Air' has been developed to communicate this message.

The objective for Dublin is to enhance the overall visitor experience and uniquely position the city and surrounding bay and mountains by offering memorable experiences via four key market-focused themes:

- ▶ City of Wit and Words
- ▶ Living Bay
- ▶ Dublin Stories, Hidden and Untold
- ▶ Extraordinary Days and Happening Nights

Unearth experiences outside the top ten and encourage visitor flow outside the city

Developing and Improving Our Visitor Experiences

The visitor experience is king and it is now widely acknowledged that it is no longer sufficient to sell a tourism product – a memorable experience must also be provided. It is the job of the tourism sector to create the conditions for these experiences to happen consistently and to a very high quality.

In order to achieve this it is important to understand the four components that almost every tourism experience can be broken down into:

1. Product – must be authentic
2. Service – must be high quality
3. Story – must be distinctive
4. Narration – must have unique character

These components have to be delivered seamlessly and to a high quality in order to create a memorable experience for the visitor.



Did You Know...

Finally – It's always good to mix in a few of our unique and quirky facts about Ireland to the conversation:

- ▶ **10 million pints of Guinness are produced in Dublin every day!** You can smell the hops from many places in the city and that's because at Dublin's Guinness Storehouse, the traditional stout beer is made in huge quantities for the fine folk who like to enjoy a pint of Guinness or what's also known as a 'meal in a cup'
- ▶ **The Newgrange passage tomb in County Meath was constructed around 3200 BC,** making it more than 600 years older than the Giza Pyramids in Egypt and 1,000 years older than Stonehenge
- ▶ **Dublin has the largest walled park in Europe** Dublin may be a small city but we've the largest enclosed city park in Europe. At 1,750 acres, Dublin's Phoenix Park, is five times the size of London's Hyde Park and double the size of New York's Central Park. Phoenix Park is also home to Dublin Zoo, wild roaming deer and offers the best Segway tours and concerts. It's so popular even the Irish President lives there in Áras an Úachtaráin while the stunning Farmleigh House runs tours and hosts a variety of events all year round
- ▶ **Ireland is the only country in the world that has a musical instrument – the harp – as its national symbol.** The oldest known harp in existence is housed in Trinity College, Dublin. It dates back to at least 1300
- ▶ **Ireland is the third largest island in Europe** and the twentieth largest in the world
- ▶ **Dubliners are pedal pushers** Dublin city has over 120 miles of cycle tracks, and Dublin's Bike Scheme has 450 bikes for public use and 40 bike stations around the city. Dublin is more accessible than most cities – you can cycle from one side of Dublin city to another in half an hour!
- ▶ **St Valentine is buried in a Dublin church** Forget Paris, Dublin is the city of love: we have our own Romeo and his name is St Valentine. The remains of this patron saint lie in Dublin's Whitefriar Street Church, and many make the journey to visit him
- ▶ The first Irish Constitution was signed at Dublin's **Shelbourne Hotel**
- ▶ The longest place name in Ireland is **Muckanaghederdauhaulia**, in County Galway
- ▶ **Handel's Messiah was first performed in Dublin** On 13 April 1742, Handel's Messiah, one of the most famous musical pieces in the world, premiered to 700 people in the area now known as Temple Bar. Every year, Fishamble Street – first made by the Vikings to connect with the River Liffey – is filled with the sounds of choirs as they perform excerpts from Handel's Messiah
- ▶ **James Joyce** once described Guinness stout as "the wine of Ireland"
- ▶ **Shannon Airport** became the world's first duty-free airport in 1947, and we've been buying tax-free liquor and perfume ever since
- ▶ **A Dubliner designed the Oscar award statue** Most know that the roaring lion in the clip at the start of MGM films was born and reared in Dublin Zoo. But lesser known is the fact that the designer of the infamous Oscar award in 1928 was Dublin-born Cedric Gibbons
- ▶ **One can get across Dublin without passing a pub** In Ulysses, James Joyce mused that "a good puzzle would be to cross Dublin without passing a pub". And now you can! The Joyce riddle has been solved by tech buff Rory McCann, who developed an algorithm to plot a route from one canal to another without hitting a Dublin pub

Final checklist: Your ultimate list of key considerations

It can be a daunting decision to enter into, or target more international business for your tourism product.

So when is a tourism business considered 'international ready?'

Tick all of the following on the checklist and you will be ready to not only welcome international MICE visitors, but also maximise international MICE business opportunities for your organisation.

- Is your business already well established in the domestic market with a network of diverse distribution partners, Irish PCOs, DMCs etc?
- Can you identify your unique selling points and also align this with particular target markets?
- Can you provide a consistent quality of service, product/experience?
- Do you have booking mechanisms in place for groups coming from the international markets?
- Do you keep in regular contact with your local DMCs and PCOs, both locally and overseas?
- Do you invest in relationship building with your distribution partners, whether that is through trade shows, sales missions, sales calls or networking events?
- Do you understand online distribution channels, both B2B and B2C?
- Do you understand where consumers can source information about your product and invest appropriately in digital marketing?
- Do you have appropriate collateral materials for your clients, both through the distribution networks and for the buyers themselves, that is informative, targeted and carries the essence of the Meet in Ireland Brand?
- Have you researched international markets to establish where your product fits?
- Do you understand culturally-influenced needs of specific international markets?
- Are you willing to invest in fam programmes both for trade and media, to showcase your product/experience accordingly?
- Do you have an active quality assurance programme, an official tourism body rating or accreditation?
- Do you work collaboratively with those in your region to maximise the marketing and sales opportunities that working together can provide?
- Are you prepared to work cooperatively with Meet in Ireland and your local regional convention bureau?
- Have you become a member of your local regional convention bureau?
- Are you listed on the Meet in Ireland website?
- Are you a registered user of the new Fáilte Ireland Trade Portal?
- Are you aware of all the Fáilte Ireland practical and financial supports that can help your business?

The Meet in Ireland Team are here to help in any way we can.

Tel: 01 8847134

Email: info@meetinireland.com



Meet in Ireland,
Áras Fáilte,
88-95 Amiens Street,
D01 WR86,
Ireland

Tel: 01 8847134
Email: info@meetinireland.com
Web: www.MeetinIreland.com