



December 2017

All Occasions Group Reaches New Heights

All Occasions Group (AOG) has been lauded locally, nationally and internationally for its management of the 68th International Astronautical Congress (IAC17) held 26-29 September at the Adelaide Convention Centre. At 4479 delegates, it was not only the largest congress to be held in Adelaide, but also one of the largest ever IAC's in history. From the sheer size of the event and its complexities, the intense global attention and 'rock star' like excitement surrounding Elon Musk's appearance to the buzz around the announcement of Australia's new Space Agency made during the opening presentation – IAC17 put All Occasions Group into a new stratosphere of event management.



Upon winning a fiercely contended international tender process in 2015, the size and multi-faceted nature of the event meant we hit the ground running. AOG's role was extensive and challenging. The five-day core congress alone comprised an exceptionally detailed program including eight plenary sessions, three highlight lectures, two breaking news updates and approximately 200 technical sessions - with up to twenty running at any given time.

In addition to the congress itself, dozens of associated social and business events were held before, during and after - all with individual billing points. Furthermore, the IAC17 exhibition not only served to be a showpiece for delegates, it also served as an educational offering for 700 school children which was certainly a new aspect to managing a congress for AOG.

Delegate numbers swelling from 2500 to almost double this in the four weeks prior to commencement presented another challenge for AOG with the sheer logistics around catering, printing of program books and supplies of merchandise / satchels etc. This last minute increase in numbers required intense monitoring and communication between all parties and thankfully our mandate to always maintain great relationships with our partners and suppliers proved beneficial - we thank them for their support.

Beyond the congress itself and with around 50% of delegates originating from overseas, demand for pre and post touring options was high. AOG's in house travel agent compiled a series of tours to South Australia's most iconic destinations. From half and full day trips to experiences lasting several days, these excursions included destinations such as the Barossa Valley, McLaren Vale, Kangaroo Island, Hahndorf, Cleland Wildlife Park and Adelaide Central Market. All were extremely well patronised with many selling out and suppliers increasing the number of trips on offer each day. Pre promotion on the IAC17 website and an onsite travel desk saw some \$1.2m spent on pre and post travel.



When all is said and done, the most important outcome is for the client to be happy. Brett Biddington, IAC17 CEO sums up AOG's relationship and role in this sensational event.

"IAC17 was the largest event ever undertaken by AOG. The IAC is complex, with many stakeholders and moving parts. AOG mastered these complexities superbly. The absolute success of the Congress was founded on the trust and sense of teamwork that developed between the LOC and AOG - notably between myself and (All Occasions Group, Managing Director) Anne-Marie(Quinn). Such missteps and miscalculations as were made (and we made some), when recognised, were remediated and we moved ahead. Anne-Marie has a gift for recruiting excellent staff members who work exceptionally well as a team because of the culture she has fostered inside AOG. That the AOG team simply carried on during the Congress in Anne-Marie's absence due to illness, is compelling evidence of the quality of the AOG staff, as individuals and as a team - awesome to observe and humbling to be a part of. IAC17 stretched all of us personally and organisationally. We rose to the challenge and delivered a stunning event. To every single AOG employee, please accept my heartfelt thanks and congratulations. You stand tall as fine people and a fine team!! As the Congress recedes into our memories, and we all move to other projects, I will always value our friendship and will also miss you all!"

Anne-Marie Quinn has the last word on IAC17 "Over the course of its 19 year history, AOG has managed conferences across the globe in some incredible destinations, but nothing has compared to being the official PCO for IAC17 and I thank the congress management for giving AOG the opportunity to be involved in such an incredible history-making event. Finally, the adage that an organisation is only as strong as its people was proven without doubt during this entire experience and I cannot stress how proud I am of my team".

President's Award - PCO Association

We are very pleased to receive the inaugural 'President's Award' from the Professional Conference Organisers Association.

This award is in recognition of excellence in event management and an outstanding contribution to business events.

It was awarded to AOG for the delivery of the 68th International Astronautical Congress in September 2017.

A huge congratulations to the AOG team.



Office Christmas Closure

As we draw to the end of another year and look forward to all that 2018 has to bring, we take this opportunity to wish you, your family and colleagues a very happy and relaxing holiday season.

The AOG Office will be closed from midday on Thursday 21st December 2017 and will reopen on Monday 15th January 2018.



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