

CASE STUDY

23RD WORLD'S POULTRY CONGRESS (WPC 2008)	
TYPE OF EVENT: International Association Conference	DATE OF EVENT: June 30 – July 4 2008
EVENT DESTINATION: Brisbane, Queensland, Australia	EVENT VENUE: Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC)
ORGANISER/HOST: World's Poultry Science Association, Australian Branch	PCO/AGENCY: Event Planners Australia
ACTUAL ATTENDANCE: 2,670 participants from 82 countries attended the Congress. This attendance exceeded the previous event held in Istanbul in 2004 (approx 1000 delegates) as well as the event held Montreal in 2000 (approx 2000 delegates).	

PROFILE/OBJECTIVE OF CONFERENCE:

Held every four years, these congresses are the peak global poultry science and technology forums involving researchers, poultry industry personnel, government regulators, suppliers and poultry producers. The forums facilitate international information exchange of science and technology and provide a global perspective.

REASONS FOR DESTINATION/VENUE SELECTION:

Brisbane's selection was based on 15 criteria which included conference and exhibition facilities, international access, the accessibility and cost of accommodation, transport, traffic and climate, with all members of the assessment committee independently giving Brisbane the highest total score. Brisbane won the right to host the Congress against competing destinations, Glasgow and Salvador.

LOCATION/VENUE/ACCOMMODATION INFRASTRUCTURE:

- A congress venue of significant size and flexibility was required as the program incorporated five individual associations' programs into one cohesive scientific and technical congress program. It included 16 keynote plenary session speakers, 500 oral presentations (100 from invited speakers) in 16 concurrent symposia sessions each day and more than 400 poster presentations.
- Delegates were accommodated at a range of hotels and apartments all within walking distance of the very centrally-located convention venue. Organisers advised that the venue was very easy to navigate and being so close to all accommodation, ensured that there were no transport issues.

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EVENT TRIUMPHS:

- The cultural opening ceremony was a major highpoint, with delegates continuing to talk about it in the days that followed. The opening ceremony featured the Voices of Birralee Choir, a renowned Queensland teenage youth choir presenting a selection of uniquely Australian songs. The ceremony also included a “Welcome to Country’ by the traditional landowners and an indigenous dance performance and fire-making display.
- This was the first time that a concurrent industry exhibition was organised in conjunction with this congress. With 216 exhibitors from 19 countries, it was the largest poultry trade exhibition ever held in Australia. Including poultry producers in this particular congress enabled it to have an industry as well as scientific focus, making sponsorship and exhibitor targets more achievable.
- A comprehensive selection of tours and optional dinners enabled delegates to obtain a true taste of the Brisbane and Australian culture and lifestyle. These included cruising on the Brisbane River, dining at Mt Coot-tha overlooking the city-lights, an evening at the Australian Outback Spectacular Show and day tours to the Sunshine Coast, the Gold Coast, the SE Queensland Hinterland, wineries and Australian fauna parks. A total of 256 individual places were booked on tours over the four days and the three optional dinners collectively attracted nearly 500 participants.

SPECIAL TOUCHES:

- Congress banners were displayed at Brisbane Airport and provided a clear welcome to delegates the moment they arrived.
- The local convention bureau, Brisbane Marketing, provided a tour information booth in the convention centre foyer to facilitate bookings for a wide range of popular day tours.
- Volunteer staff from the local poultry industry and universities provided directions and assistance to delegates throughout the congress, with some volunteers’ multi-lingual capabilities a great asset.
- An Australian Opal Company had a booth within the exhibition from which delegates could purchase quality souvenirs and gifts. This was ideal for delegates unable to take any extra time for shopping.
- Sponsors and exhibitors were presented with a specially engraved boomerang as a thank-you gift.

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- On the final evening of the congress, the Congress Chairman invited more than 80 VIPs and special guests to his classic “Queenslander-style” residence in Brisbane for a special function, providing the international visitors with an authentic and memorable Queensland experience.

EVENT CHALLENGES

Many potential delegates were from developing countries, necessitating an effective fund-raising program to support their attendance.

Solution:

A successful strategy to encourage a higher level of industry sponsorship and support was applied, in conjunction with a dedicated fund-raising drive by the congress organiser, Event Planners. The end result was a record delegate attendance from developing countries.

QUOTES/FEEDBACK:

The Organisers:

The success of the Congress according to Congress Chairman, Dr Bob Pym, was due to a combination of factors including ‘a superb facility in BCEC’. He also advised that ‘The contribution to the success of the Congress by Event Planners, in pulling this incredibly complex meeting together, cannot be overstated.’

The Delegates:

“...everything was perfect, the scientific papers were of a very high standard and the exhibition impressed us all. The opening ceremony with the cultural show was simply excellent.”

Professor Ruveyde Akbay, President of World’s Poultry Science Association (Turkey).

“...the IT, venue and the food were all way above average and of course the programming was amazing.” **Dr Claire Weeks, University of Bristol, UK**

“The venue in Brisbane was splendid. I cannot think of a congress which has gone so smoothly from an organisational point of view.” **Dr Colin Fisher (UK)**

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