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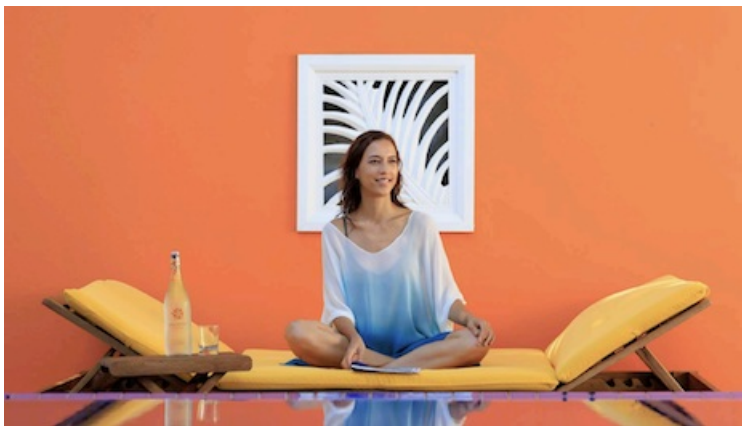
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TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Report: 5 trends that will define the future of meetings and events

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Experiences are being curated around the nourishment and wellness of participants, including the downtime agenda. Image credit: Accor, Globetrender

By STAFF REPORTS

The way wealthy consumers live, work, play and interact has been reshaped in the last few years, with the ripple effects of these changes seen vividly by those marketers who host meetings and events.

Hospitality giant Accor, owner of such hotel brands as Fairmont and Raffles, identified five trends in its Meeting Expectations: The Future of Meetings & Events' report. The study, conducted by British travel forecasting agency [Globetrender](#), delved into the forces shaping this sector and the strategies essential for growth in the coming years.

"The future of the meetings and events industry is a story of resilience, innovation and transformation," said Sophie Hulgard, chief sales officer for Accor, in the report.

Put simply, marketers organizing meetings and events have to embrace wellbeing, sustainability and experience, as well as the tech that can accelerate these changes.

Here are the five trends, per [Accor](#):

Softer productivity

"Work hard, play hard" is making way for a growing focus on well-being, flexibility, nutrition and time management to create a harmonious balance between life and productivity.

Experiences are being curated around the nourishment and wellness of participants, including the downtime agenda.

"Nobody wants to be pushed to their limits anymore," said Meenaz Diamond, Accor's senior vice president for meetings and events, in the report.

"There is a space for much softer productivity that still allows you to deliver, but to do it in your own time and in

your own way," she said.

Selling belonging

Despite the rise of digital, human connections are still essential for business.

Digital is powerful, face-to-face is valuable, per the report.

The coming years will see an increasing number of planners move beyond the idea that events are simply about getting people into a room together, instead considering how they can forge deeper connections between attendees, cementing relationships and encouraging repeat bookings.

As well as quantifiable return on investment, such as closing deals, companies also seek positive return on experience to reinforce a sense of belonging and deliver a valuable experience.

Designing experiences

The very definition of an event is being rethought in terms of structure, content and venue.

By creating experiences rather than simply providing meeting rooms, event organizers can help embed ideas, memories and different ways of thinking.

Green gatherings

Sustainability is now at the heart of meetings and events with a strong focus on reducing carbon emissions and waste.

For example, Accor's Event Carbon Reduction Charter for meetings and events covers a range of measures from recycling bins to food waste and temperature management.

Beyond emissions, sustainability also increasingly involves meaningful engagement with local communities and fostering environmentally friendly conversations, whether by recommending local transport or raising awareness of local culture and ecosystems.

"Authentic local discovery is a key part of building a sustainable event, engaging and supporting the local community and embracing sustainable discovery," Ms. Hulgard said.

Disruptive technology

As AI leaps forwards, it has the potential to transform the meetings and events sector through its capacity to instantly crunch data for example, finding the best date by analyzing the availability of participants, identifying great speakers and even writing invites and content.

How can marketers use data to offer immersive, interactive experiences?

"If used wisely, AI undeniably holds great value to offer all sorts of possibilities for next-gen meetings and events planners," the report said.

[Please click here to download the Accor-Globetrender report, Meeting Expectations: The Future of Meetings & Events'](#)

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