

# TFWA cancels social events and puts emphasis on business networking for Cannes



In a follow up to an announcement made earlier this week regarding changes in the TFWA World Exhibition & Conference, Alain Maingreud, President Tax Free World Association, held a press briefing today to address the many unknowns facing the upcoming show.

“Given this exceptional situation and the fact that 2020 will be a very tough year for all of our members, and partners, it was obvious that the show could not go on in its current format and priorities have changed,” shared Maingreud.

Earlier this week, TFWA shared revisions made to the pricing, format and structure of the TFWA World Exhibition & Conference, to be held in Cannes on September 28 - October 2.

This includes:

- Per- square metrerental charges to exhibitors will be decreased by 30%
- Registration will be free for all delegates, whatever their sector of business
- The full program will be reviewed and will be more business-focused
- Hotel rates will be significantly reduced; full details to follow shortly
- Rates for other services are under review

In addition to above, all social events will be cancelled on Sunday as the event will officially kick off on the Monday September 28, followed by the opening cocktail the same night.

“We still feel networking is an essential element of the visit to TFWA [Cannes] and a much better way to facilitate business discussions during the week. Of course, we will focus more this year on business oriented activities. We still think we need a social part in the program. We are still considering various events through the week and still working on the program,” said Maingreud.

## Buyers and Exhibitors

Based on feedback received from members, Maingraud also addressed several steps to move forward. Objectives to move forward included:

- The event must go on despite difficult circumstances
- Limit the cost to exhibitors
- Encourage maximum attendance from trade visitors
- Focus the event agenda on business oriented activities

He explained: “On the visitor side, registration will be free for all trade visitors. As you may know, pre registration is free for red badges, buyer and landlords, but the other categories, such as agents, distributors and others are usually paid but this year will be free for everybody, whatever the category.”

“In terms of the exhibitors, there will be a significant discount on the price. Badges for team members will be free without any limitation.”

Maingraud pointed out there has been some exhibitors cancelling, but not more than usual at this time last year. Naturally, people are watching to see how this situation develops. “We are monitoring the situation on a day-to-day basis. We talk to all of the exhibitors; we announced the measures this week to help the exhibitors. We will have a clearer picture in a couple of week’s time,” stated Maingraud.

TFWA does not have the exact number of registrants at this time as they are still talking to exhibitors.

Maingraud mentioned that the i.Lab would be moved inside the Palais des Festivals this year; however the general format of the event would not be changed.

## **Health and Safety**

The exhibition and conference will have attendees visiting from different parts of the world, attending the event held in close quarters. Many are questioning what efforts are being made to uphold health and safety measures for those attending.

“We work very closely with the City of Cannes. The city has allotted a number of preventative measures, and that limits the risk of spreading the virus. These include additional cleaning, comprehensive disinfection programs, additional medical staff and others. The city has been very active on the health front. We will take any necessary measure to make sure the show can go ahead in the right conditions,” assured Maingraud.

## **Moving Ahead**

The association is monitoring the global situation on a daily basis as the situation is ever evolving. They are working with registrants and offering flexibility on cancellations

Maingraud highlights that the situation has to be monitored daily stressed the importance of being very reactive to ensure the right decision is made at the right time.

The TFWA World Exhibition & Conference event is not only where business is done, but where friendships are made Maingraud concluded. “We do not expect to set another record like we did last year given the difficult circumstances and given the other event. The opportunity to meet and plan recovery is essential.”