

BEHIND THE HEADLINES



IFEA's *Event Insider* weekly global news recap has proven to be our most popular and highly read on-line information source since we started it in 2009, sixteen years ago. For a fascinating journey through the evolution of our industry during those years, readers can still access every past issue by clicking on the 'Past Issues' link at the bottom of each issue.

We are sometimes asked how we choose the global stories that we use and the answer to that is a webinar unto itself. But recognizing that interest, I thought that I would use my President's Letter to take you for a look 'Behind the Headlines.'

The primary purpose of the *Event Insider*, as with other IFEA programs, is to be educational and informative; to provide a valuable resource that allows our readers be aware of, and prepared for, possible trends and issues, threats and opportunities, that are being experienced by their global peers; to be exposed to new programs and ideas; to simply learn about a unique or interesting event from other cultural or global regions (our photo gallery and/or video connected stories are a great place to find new ideas, or simply

to be awed and motivated by all that our shared global industry provides to the world); and to be aware of what the global media is covering (and our audiences are reading) about our industry. The more we are connected, the more we grow our professional abilities to represent, grow and protect our own events and communities.

Research for a single edition of the *IFEA Event Insider* can take 4-6 hours. Articles must be researched, read completely, and vetted for inclusion. We look for coverage that, where possible, includes facts and information (i.e., economic impact, attendance estimates, ticket sales, funding dollars provided, etc.), or examples of how a situation/program may have been managed, addressed, or provided. Not to judge, but to allow everyone to compare and learn from real situations. And while there is a never-ending plethora of articles about the remarkable things that you all are doing – date and entertainment announcements; the naming of royalty; a local schedule of events, routes, parking; etc.; these do not typically provide the educational value of other stories.

Some weeks there is more news than we can handle. In others, it truly is a 'slow news' week. Because we try and cover every niche (festivals, fairs, theme parks, parades, airshows, sporting events, music festivals, community events, cultural events; art events; large national or international events like the Olympics; et al.) and global region of our industry, as well as industry-specific impact areas (sponsorship and funding; risk management; financial and environmental sustainability, city support and services, volunteers, et al.) sometimes the news is unexpectedly weighted in a specific direction, depending upon what is happening in the world.

Often times we, like many of you, feel like there is an overwhelming amount of 'negative' news. In other weeks, it may feel like everything is sugar-coated. Either way, we will always include any current national and/or international news that is being covered by the major news outlets

around the world. As one IFEA member commented: "If you don't understand the good, the bad and the ugly, you cannot respond from a fully informed position."

With larger coverage stories, we do our best to provide a balanced and complete picture (through the inclusion of 'Related Stories' or coverage by different sources) of what others – your sponsors, cities, volunteers, staff, local media, et.al. – are being exposed to and, in many cases, reacting and responding to. In some stories you will notice that the IFEA is often contacted and quoted by the media as a global industry resource and, in those cases, we try to provide both a realistic, yet positive and forward-looking image of our common industry.

Together with our publication partners at Multiview, we set out some guidelines that we do our best to always follow, as we research and present a multitude of news sources. These include, but are not limited to:

- News stories must be current and have appeared within the week since our last edition of the *Event Insider*. 'Related Stories' may be older, if they help to bring the readers up to date on a current and developing story.
- Stories should be selected more for their educational value vs. their promotional value.
- We will always provide complete location information in the headlines, so as not to assume that everyone knows all world cities, countries, and regions.
- News sources must be vetted to be credible sources. We will not typically use any personal blogs or newsletter sources. We will sometimes use 'Opinion' articles, if we feel that the point is important and honestly reflective of a current trend or issue, and if it appears in a credible source publication.
- We will never (purposely) use stories that have a 'paywall' or 'firewall' that requires payment, a subscription, or the providing of personal information to access the story. In some cases, this may preclude our own access to stories

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from your local market. In these cases, if you are able to access an article that you think we should include, you may take a screen shot of that story and send it to us in a .pdf format.

- All global regions should be represented in each issue, as applicable news is available. With that noted, interestingly, some global regions do a much better job of giving coverage to festivals and events on a regular basis.
- For stories with a larger impact, we will look for follow-up stories in the weeks ahead, to provide readers with a continuing insight into ongoing details and coverage.
- An important starting source for article research are the equivalent publications produced by our 'Association Alliance' industry partners, as they use ours as well.
- We will include coverage of IFEA Award recipients, often with the intent of sharing examples of how your peers are leveraging those honors with their cities, sponsors, et al.

As we research and provide coverage to all of our members and readers, we also use the news internally, to help us determine important topics and sources to include as part of our future IFEA Convention sessions; webinar presentations; 'ie' magazine articles; and to continually update our professional training curriculum.

Many of you have submitted articles and stories to us that you feel others should be aware of. We appreciate that extra set of professional eyes and welcome your input. If you have an article that you would like to forward to us, please send it to schmader@ifea.com and we will consider it, using all of the above criteria. If you have a regular system for dissemination of your own media releases, please add the IFEA to your media list.

We wish you all, and our global industry peers, only good news and headlines of your success!