

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****MPI CSR Research Report Cuts Clutter, Delivers Direction**

Initial Findings by Leeds Metropolitan University Focus on Trends, Business Value

Oct. 10, 2011 – Las Vegas, NV – During Smart Monday at IMEX America, Meeting Professionals International (MPI) delivered initial findings of Phase 1 of a three-year study on industry corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices that will provide guidance to meeting professionals on benchmarks and effective practices to consider in their event design. The comprehensive study, commissioned by MPI, creates an unprecedented global view of industry CSR by surveying the opinions of organizational leaders and exploring implementation practices of top venues, suppliers and consumers as well as aggregating critical information from hundreds of existing studies and white papers on CSR.

“CSR continues to be a focus of successful organizations and we must take the industry conversation beyond basic green efforts and into comprehensive planning and action,” said Bruce MacMillan, MPI president and CEO reiterating one of the four new rules of engagement discussed at the 2011 World Education Congress. “With these results, professionals are equipped to enact change based on the characteristics of their specific organization, impacting economic, social and environmental progress in their communities.”

The Oct. 10 session led by Leeds Metropolitan University researcher James Musgrave was sponsored by MPI as the strategic partner and premier education provider of the inaugural IMEX America. Musgrave, a senior lecturer at the University, released the major findings in his presentation which included

- third-party CSR accreditation is a growing trend;
- transparency and verifiability of CSR are increasingly important;
- lack of a clear definition of CSR causes fragmented implementation;
- meeting industry can help demonstrate commitment through “experiential CSR.”

In a review of more than 200 expert articles, case studies and websites academic researchers from the UK Centre for Events Management at Leeds Metropolitan University, The International Centre for Responsible Tourism and the Centre for Hospitality found a very fragmented definition of CSR, resulting in various methods of implementation globally. Regulatory codes of practice vary regionally with up to 300 different codes, adding to the clutter surrounding industry CSR. This creates an opportunity where industry rather than legislative organizations shape the CSR agenda.

The research suggests that for overarching best practice and to remove barriers to implementation, businesses and professionals should avoid a one-size-fits-all approach when considering resource allocation and tying CSR initiatives to business drivers. Utilizing this report enables meeting and event professionals to learn and determine whether their organization should employ a shareholder, stakeholder or societal approach to CSR based on their own CSR drivers. The research also outlines clearly three areas of implementation practices for all elements of social responsibility, and breaks them into “must”, “should” and “can” opportunities.

Phase two of the research includes in depth interviews and surveys, which will involve responses from all levels of experience and various industries. Data collected will be further analyzed and presented as a final report at the World Education Congress in St. Louis in July 2012. The process will continue for the remainder of the contracted three-year initiative.

“These indicative findings give an insight into the complexity of CSR, with the research happening right now worldwide, we will be able to see what industry pioneers consider will be the drivers, values and importance of CSR in the present and future,” said Musgrave.

There are plans for more sustainability implementation tools based on the research findings, MPI already has available a number of resource documents, programs and tools through a generous investment from the Intercontinental Hotels Group (IHG). Currently, the Sustainable Event Measurement Tool (SEMT) is open to all suppliers and planners, where the aggregate data is used to benchmark progress in industry sustainability efforts. In addition to the SEMT, three new case studies bring insight from leading organizations on the implementation of sustainability practice will be released later this month. Access reports, the SEMT and more on the CSR Portal of [mpiweb.org](http://mpiweb.org).

-end-

**Editors' Notes:**

- MPI is a signatory to the [UN Global Compact](http://www.un.org/globalcompact) and annually reports on its Corporate Social Responsibility practices and its educational efforts related to all aspects of CSR
- MPI will release three CSR Case Studies in October 2011 profiling Coca Cola, Intel and Old Trafford best practices.
- MPI's World Education Congress in 2011 debut the Global Reporting Initiative report
- MPI held the first live event compliant with British Standard 8901 in 2007 at its annual European Conference, every MPI event since then has complied with BS8901.
- MPI is actively represented on APEX/ASTM, GRI and ISO standards development committees
- MPI's online corporate social responsibility portal at [mpiweb.org](http://mpiweb.org) provides on demand access to case studies, CSR advocate communities, industry advancement updates, tools, webinars, articles and research findings.

**About MPI:** Meeting Professionals International (MPI), the meeting and event industry's largest and most vibrant global community, helps our members thrive by providing human connections to knowledge and ideas, relationships, and marketplaces. MPI membership is comprised of more than 23,000 members belonging to 71 chapters and clubs worldwide. For additional information, visit [mpiweb.org](http://mpiweb.org).

**About Leeds Metropolitan University:**

- Leeds Metropolitan University has 30,000 students and 3,000 staff.
- The University has achieved its best ever Research Assessment Exercise results. Sports-Related Studies is in the top 6 institutions in the country with research rated at the highest levels of 4\* and 3\*.
- Leeds Met has been rated the top university in the UK for its language support, accommodation quality and learning spaces in the 2010 Autumn Wave of the International Student Barometer and sixth in the world for the quality of its lectures.
- The University's award-winning learning environments include Broadcasting Place, voted the best tall building in the world in 2010 by the Chicago-based Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH) and also winner of the 2010 Leeds Architecture Awards New Building category, the iconic Rose Bowl building, awarded Best Commercial Property Development in the 2009 Yorkshire Property Awards and the pioneering Carnegie Village student accommodation.

**About IHG:** InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) [LON:IHG, NYSE:IHG (ADRs)] is the world's largest hotel group by number of rooms. IHG owns, manages, leases or franchises, through various subsidiaries, over 4,400 hotels and more than 645,000 guest rooms in 100 countries and territories around the world. The Group owns a portfolio of well recognized and respected hotel brands including InterContinental® Hotels & Resorts, Hotel Indigo®, Crowne Plaza® Hotels & Resorts, Holiday Inn® Hotels and Resorts, Holiday Inn Express®, Staybridge Suites® and Candlewood Suites® and also manages the world's largest hotel loyalty program, Priority Club® Rewards with 48 million members worldwide.

IHG has 1,400 hotels in its development pipeline, which will create 140,000 jobs worldwide over the next few years.

InterContinental Hotels Group PLC is the Group's holding company and is incorporated in Great Britain and registered in England and Wales.

IHG offers information and online reservations for all its hotel brands at [www.ihg.com](http://www.ihg.com) and information for the Priority Club Rewards program at [www.priorityclub.com](http://www.priorityclub.com). For the latest news from IHG, visit our online Press Office at [www.ihg.com/media](http://www.ihg.com/media)