

PRESS RELEASE

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Information in, promotion out?

The 4th annual meeting of **ECM Chief Executives of Capital Cities**, Monday 6th December, 2010

Tourism chiefs from capital cities met in Copenhagen earlier this week to discuss market prospects and the ways in which the activities of city tourist offices and convention bureau might be expected to change in the decade ahead.

After the 'blip' in demand that characterised the 2008 and 2009 years, 2010 has seen promising signs of recovery. Though there will be no repeat of the double digit growth rates experienced by many cities in the 1990-2007 period, a robust view was taken that the volume of city tourism will expand by some 5% into 2011, and that throughout the next decade cities will continue to be the dominant geographical focus of business and leisure tourism. Major market opportunities existed domestically as well as internationally, especially in China, India and South America.

Anders Nissen, CEO of Pandox, one of the Europe's largest hotel property owners, looked at which cities were the best investment prospects, while the head of the Paris Tourism Convention Bureau, Paul Roll, foresaw that the marketing of city tourist offices and convention bureaux would change dramatically, predicting in the next decade the death of conventional promotional activities. Promotion, he suggested, was on the way out, and information was back in.



The 4th European Meeting of Chief Executives of Capital Cities

Olle Zetterberg, CEO of Stockholm Business Region emphasised the importance of city branding and the need to exploit synergies between marketing to attract visitors and that targeting students, inward investors and occupiers of property.

Key topics of plenary discussion were the challenges presented by the Chinese market, social media, mobile communications, public expenditure cutbacks, and competition from third-party booking agencies.

As for next year, the Chief Executives of Capital Cities decide to keep the exclusive meeting of CEOs of capital cities in December, and to widen it to non capital cities with a one additional seminar-track at ECM summer meeting.

**ECM (European Cities Marketing) is the leading European association of city tourism offices and convention bureaux, representing 120 members across 100 major cities in 32 countries. Its aim is to improve the performance and maintain the competitiveness of its members through the exchange of best practice and information.*

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