



## PRESS RELEASE

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### IACC Leaders Among Meetings Trendsetters 2014

(NEW YORK, NY) -- September 2014 -- IACC CEO, Mark Cooper has announced that three of the association leaders have been named Meetings Trendsetters 2014, recognised as "movers and shakers who are propelling the meetings industry forward."

Cooper commented "Seeing three of IACC's members, on the 2014 Meetings Trendsetters list, makes IACC proud to be associated with these ambassadors of conference centres and the IACC Meetings Experience. Alex, Jacques and Joan are three individuals who champion conference centres around the globe and it is fitting that they are recognised in this way for their immense contributions to our industry".

**Alex Cabañas**, President & CEO of [Benchmark Hospitality International](#) currently sits on the IACC-Americas Board of Directors as Vice President. Alex has been actively involved with IACC since 2006 when he joined the Emerging Trends Committee and was elected to the Board of Directors in 2010 where he served as Co-Chair of the IACC 2.0 Task Force developing IACC's Roadmap for the Future and on the CEO Selection Committee.

During Alex's eight-year leadership tenure with Benchmark Hospitality, a company founded by his father Burt Cabañas in 1980 (who is also a charter member of IACC), the business has doubled in size, growing to 40 properties domestically and internationally. He also led the launch of Personal Luxury Resorts & Hotels and Benchmark Resorts & Hotels, two of the industry's newest brands.

Prior to joining Benchmark Hospitality, Alex Cabañas worked for The Boston Consulting Group, serving clients in a number of industries, including travel & tourism. He is a graduate of Harvard Business School.

**Jacques Horovitz** is President of [Chateauform](#) which specialises in conference centres and alternative learning environments. Within Chateauform', there are three brands. The residential property group, known as Chateauform' Seminar Houses, the residential campus property, known as Chateauform' Les Campus, and the non-residential properties known as Chateauform' City. The four members under the "City" brand located in Paris and Geneva will complement IACC's non-residential members in other major international cities such as London, New York, Tokyo and Sydney.

Specialising in conference centre meetings in decidedly un-conference-centre-like environments (think private chateaus and other relaxing venues) this Swiss company and its innovative leader may just transform the European meetings experience. At the recent IACC-Americas annual conference in Los Angeles, CA, Chateauform' participated in a ground-breaking workshop on Innovations in the Learning Experience and presented some views of radical meeting room design for the future.

**Joan Eisenstodt** is a long-time meetings industry consultant, trainer, and facilitator, and is Chief Strategist for [Eisenstodt Associates LLC](#) based in Washington, DC. Named a Meeting Trendsetter in the PLANNER category, Joan is "one of the most influential people in the industry and has served as the unofficial mentor to a constellation of meetings professionals, and possesses an encyclopedic knowledge of all things *meetings*."

Eisenstodt was the recipient of IACC's coveted Mel Hosansky Award for Distinguished Service in 2011, was inducted into the Convention Industry Council's Hall of Leaders, was recognised as an Educator by the PCMA Foundation for Lifetime Achievement and was the 2002 recipient of the Pyramid Award for sustained contributions to IACC education over many years.

Active in PCMA, MPI, ASAE, DMAI and other industry and non-industry organisations. Joan is widely recognised for her passion for lifelong learning, meeting preparation, risk anticipation and contingency planning, ethical and inclusivity practices and meeting excellence. An ardent champion of the conference centre concept, Eisenstodt holds the record for having facilitated, moderated or presented at a dozen annual conferences and other IACC events.

According to Tyler Davidson, Chief Content Director at Meetings Focus, the individuals identified in the inaugural edition of Meetings Trendsetters exemplify the meeting planners, educators and suppliers that shape the future of the meetings industry, from cutting-edge programs and organisational skills to fostering the most-effective learning environments and most-conducive facilities for meetings.

High-resolution images of Alex Cabanas (Benchmark Hospitality International), Jacques Horovitz (Chateauform'), and Joan Eisenstodt (Eisenstodt Associates, LLC) are attached.

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*The IACC Mission Statement: **The International Association of Conference Centres** is the thought leader on the meeting experience. IACC represents its members by defining and promoting the IACC Meeting Concept and providing learning opportunities.*

*The IACC Vision: "IACC is a community of passionate people and organisations delivering innovative and exceptional meeting experiences.*

*"Founded in 1981, the International Association of Conference Centres is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to promoting understanding and awareness of the conference centre industry and to giving member properties the tools necessary to provide an exceptional IACC meeting experience. Active members meet a set of stringent Quality Standards and agree to a Code of Ethics. Currently, the association includes approximately 400 members from the United States, Canada, Australia, Japan, Kenya, Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, England, Scotland, The Netherlands, Germany and the Philippines. For more information, visit the website at [www.iacconline.org](http://www.iacconline.org). "There are meetings and then there are IACC meetings."*