

EMIF: to be or not to be....remains the question!

March 17 – 18 Tour & Taxis, Brussels was the setting for the latest edition of EMIF, the European Meetings Industry Fair.

Regardless of what its detractors may say, let's start by stating that Belgium needs a trade fair for the Meetings & Incentives Industry. Many will agree with me that EMIF fulfills a role in our industry that has its importance in the grander scheme of things. Was it a success? Maybe not if you look at the published visitor figures (2518 visitors) which show a small decrease versus last year. However, having walked the aisles for two days and having spoken to a great many exhibitors, most were actually pleased with the quality of the visitors and many even spoke about having gotten more than one request for proposal. Now that is something we did not hear too often last year so from a point of view of quality contacts it seems the 2010 edition was an improvement on last year.

There are always those who say they will not come back next year and then there are those that have come back...who is right? Time will tell but at least EMIF – for the time being – seems to be going on although the rumors of the sale of the concept were strife and did nothing to improve the mood of the organizers.

Well, the dates for next year have been announced – March 15/16 2011 – . Whoever takes over the fair needs to further think at the concept. The addition of the new Facts on Acts Pavilion on the second day was a good idea and brought some extra visitors in, but I fear that it is still a matter of improved communication and contacts with the corporate world that lies at the bottom of improving the visitors' numbers.

In any case, congrats to the organizers for a very lively and fun VIP evening, over 700 people attended and there was some serious networking going on there!

See you next year at EMIF!!