

# Norway adventure

A 'Viking Adventure' in Haugesund, an international sales conference for 500 at the Radisson Blu Plaza, Oslo, a European business meeting at the Sola Strand Hotel in Stavanger and a management meeting for 50 in Bergen were the event programme proposals presented by the four teams in the M&IT Norway Interactive Challenge.

It was a tense affair and not for the faint-hearted – making presentations on stage to their Norwegian hosts, a panel of judges including a corporate event organiser and a destination management company as well as their peers and competitors in a huge 5,000-seater auditorium!

They had only a few hours to prepare their presentations 'on the hoof' after returning to Oslo from completing the four programmes and the results were, in the words of Norway Convention Bureau's Convention Manager Bente Bratland Holm: "Amazing!"

She said: "I have never seen our country presented so well, I have never seen our destinations researched so carefully and packaged with such imagination. The presentations were brilliant!"

The competition was fierce and the participants produced Powerpoint and video presentations featuring programme itineraries with detailed budgets, researched from their two days on the ground. In the end it was the Haugesund team that scooped the top prize with a very creative event although only a few points separated the four teams.

The M&IT Norway Interactive Challenge was designed to introduce the UK's leading event agencies to four Norway destinations but without the same old tired 'fam trip' concept. The project required participants to work in teams to respond to detailed briefs for four different types of events in four different destinations. There was little time to relax

“Overall, a brilliant trip. Well done everyone!”

**Kerrie Thompson, Banks Sadler Ltd**

“Can I thank everyone connected with it for a brilliant and exceptional three days?”

**Andrew Batty, Creative Marketing Services**

“I thought this trip was fantastic. Thanks again!”

**Jennifer Rasdall, Zibrant**

“I have to say that Norway goes down as the best fam trip I have experienced in the last ten years.”

**Justine Lightly, In 2 Events Ltd**



Soaking up the sun in Stavanger (left to right) are: Nadine Shrourou, Grass Roots HBI; Andrew Batty, Creative Marketing Services; Justine Lightly, In 2 Events; Cathy Bonnard, freelance organiser; Heidi Nygard and Per Morton-Haar, from Stavanger



Left to right: Nicholas Haddavik, Haugesund Convention Bureau; Louise Davis, Eventscape; Mary O'Hagan, Vivace, and David McDougall, of Canon UK, launch their Viking Adventure in Haugesund



Bergen in the evening light



The Bergen team of Barrie Davies, Corporactive LLP; Jennifer Rasdall, Zibrant; Paul Lake, BI Worldwide, and Katie Tobin, Dazzling Events



Mary O'Hagan, of Vivace, Louise Davis, of Eventscape, and Nicholas Haddavik, Haugesund Convention Bureau, share a helicopter ride to the final night's presentation in Brunstad Conference Center

# scores with agencies

A fresh approach to an inspection visit didn't just work for the Norwegian hosts, it also scored highly amongst the agencies. Martin Lewis reports

and little time to prepare for the final presentation night in the massive Brunstad Conference Center in Tonsberg to which they were taken by helicopter from Oslo.

But it wasn't just Bente and the Norwegians who were pleased with the result of the event. The M&IT readers who took part rated it as one of the best they had ever experienced.

In the post event survey, for example, every one of the participants scored the concept of the event good to excellent and 94 per cent scored the delivery of the event very good or excellent. The local contribution and support was voted to be excellent by 87 per cent while 100 per cent rated the viability of the destination for UK groups good to excellent and 87 per cent rated their impression of Norway as good or excellent. Finally 87 per cent said it was as least as good as other trips they had experienced.

Barrie Davies of Corporactive said: "I thought the format was one of the highlights of the experience. Sure, we were made to work hard; but, the experience of working so closely with our Norwegian hosts, who matched and joined-in our team's input and work ethic to the presentation, was an outstanding and most rewarding feature. I have not been on a 'fam' trip before where the research and presentation resulting from the experience could, literally, be presented to a UK client almost immediately on our return! I returned home tired from the amount of time we had spent 'working' in Norway but with the satisfied feeling of not having wasted a moment of my time in doing so."

Nadine Shrourou of Grass Roots HBI said: "At first I was unsure of how this fam trip would work but I think it was a great concept to see and do as much as possible in our chosen destinations and having a presentation at the end added excitement, more knowledge and passion to learn more and sell the destination."

## The players

- Barrie Davies**, Corporactive LLP
- Jennifer Rasdall**, Zibrant Ltd
- Katie Tobin**, Dazzling Events
- Paul Lake**, P&MM
- David Hunter McDougall**, Canon UK
- Louise Davis**, Eventscape Limited
- Mary O'Hagan**, Vivace
- Alwyn Evans**, Events in Partnership Limited
- Amy-Jo Brown**, BI
- Kerrie Thompson**, Banks Sadler Ltd
- Michelle Burniston**, CWT Meetings and Events
- Robert Bailey**, Zibrant Ltd
- Andrew Batty**, Creative Marketing Services
- Cathy Jalal Bonnard**, Freelance
- Justine Lightly**, In 2 Events Limited
- Nadine Shrourou**, Grass Roots HBI

The trip was organised by Innovation Norway, Norway Convention Bureau and CAT Publications, publisher of M&IT.

**NORWAY CONVENTION BUREAU**

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