

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2021

TTGmice

Asia-Pacific's intelligent business events resource

Uncover hidden gems in rural Tokyo

Switzerland dangles evergreen charms

New structures for associations



Changes for the better

Tough lessons during the transition from in-person to hybrid events have laid the foundation for a brighter future for business gatherings, where attendees can join in from anywhere and benefit from enhanced engagement



PEOPLE

Catch up: Lucky Morimoto

The chairman of Japan-based Event Services is clear about his events calling, and says ideating interesting events sparks personal joy

When did you first start doing business events?

I started my career as a travel agent, handling both inbound and outbound. I then became the vice president of the incentive travel department – where I worked for many years – before I became interested in producing corporate events worldwide. I left the company and founded Event Services, my own company, in 1981.

How has Japan's business industry changed from when you started out?

The word 'incentive' was not widely known at that time. Over the years, I have produced a lot of incentive events worldwide for our clients. Japan's business event industry has grown tremendously, although almost all the business events for 2020 were either cancelled or postponed.



What do you love or dislike about your job?

Confucius said "One who knows is no match for one who likes. One who likes is no match for one who enjoys." I believe that people who genuinely like what they do for a living always perform better in their jobs. In my case, I completely enjoy doing events and have no dislikes, believe it or not!

Could you share a memorable milestone in your career?

I remember my first two incentive events that I organised in Canada for AFLAC Japan (a life insurance company). I did two events for them – a Canada-themed award dinner in Gard and another Canada-themed gala dinner in Vancouver. I long remember them because those were the first two events I produced overseas, and they went very well. AFLAC also became our loyal client for more than 20 years.

What do your family and friends think of your job?

They say I am made to be an event planner as they know I am always looking for something interesting, something that makes people happy, and something that motivates people.

How do you think 2021 will pan out for the events industry?

2020 was a very difficult year for the MICE industry here in Japan. I am hoping 2021 will be a little better. I trust corporate buyers will continue to use incentive travel as their effective sales motivational tools for their companies.

Tell us something most people don't know.

I am a 2nd dan (grade) aikido black belt holder. I have also been scuba diving for almost 40 years, and have been to places like the Bahamas, Hawaii, and Micronesia. Being able to stay underwater for nearly an hour is a very unique experience! I also did hang gliding before, and I am now interested to fly a helicopter. – Rachel AJ Lee