

# 25 years of business tourism

THE PALAIS DES CONGRÈS DE MONTRÉAL (CONVENTION CENTRE) IS CELEBRATING 25 YEARS WORKING AT THE HEART OF AN INDUSTRY THAT ATTRACTS HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF VISITORS TO MONTRÉAL EVERY YEAR FROM AROUND THE WORLD. TO MARK THIS 25TH ANNIVERSARY, THE PALAIS DES CONGRÈS AND TOURISME MONTRÉAL WILL BE HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF BUSINESS TOURISM TO THE MONTRÉAL ECONOMY, ALONG WITH ITS SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM OVERALL, AN INDUSTRY FACING SERIOUS CHALLENGES.



© Tourisme Montréal, Stéphan Poulin

► **The all too often** underestimated tourism industry makes an appreciable contribution to the economy of the city. In 2007, more than 55,000 jobs were sustained by the Montréal tourism industry. Some 7.4 million visitors stayed in Montréal for 24 hours or more that year, generating an estimated \$2.4 billion in spinoff benefits. Although final 2008 numbers are not yet in, there is every indication that the results for this year will be on the same order of magnitude.

Business tourism alone, including business conventions and meetings, generates more than 30% of tourism industry spinoffs. According to 2007 data, 300,000 men and women from around the globe attended a convention or business meeting in Montréal during that year, paying for close to 800,000 nights of accommodation in Montréal hotels. It is estimated that in good times and bad Montréal business tourism sustains more than 18,000 direct jobs.

However, vying for the attention of convention organizers is no mean feat. Every year, Tourisme Montréal and the Palais des congrès expend considerable effort on promotional campaigns to entice convention organizers and representatives of international associations. Strong sales teams based in Montréal, Washington D.C., Chicago and Paris work hard year round drumming up business in major North American and European cities. And although still in the exploratory stage, campaigns targeting the Asian market are in the works for coming years.

Clearly, there are still many challenges. The Montréal business tourism industry has been marked by a declining U.S. clientele who will soon need a passport to visit Canada, and now has to contend with the global economic crisis. The emergence of new destinations, some of which have massive financial means, is another of the major challenges Montréal will face in the years to come.

To meet these challenges, the Palais and Tourisme Montréal have joined forces to invite the Montréal community to work with them and bring new life to Montréal's business tourism industry. ◀

## Economic spinoffs totalling \$4.1 billion

► **A public institution** with a commercial vocation, the Palais des congrès de Montréal plays a major role in the tourism industry, generating significant economic and knowledge spinoffs for Québec and contributing to Montréal's ongoing international reputation as a first-class destination.

The Palais' mission is to attract and host conventions, consumer/trade shows, conferences, meetings and other special events. To fulfil that mission, it works closely with partners that range from businesspeople and members of the tourism community, to universities and research centres from the public and private sectors.

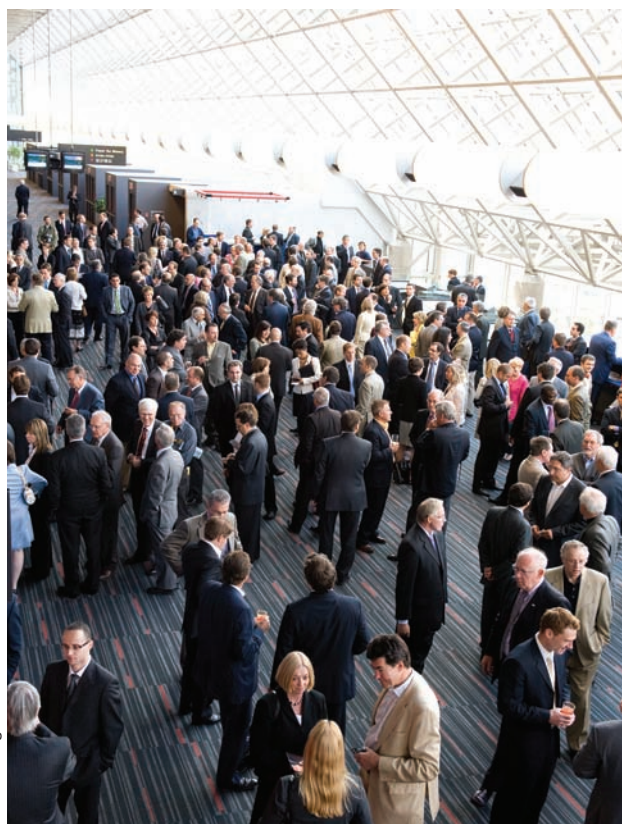
The Palais redefined the convention centre when it opened in 1983. It has since garnered a reputation for

excellence, professionalism, service of the highest order and a unique set of infrastructures.

Today more than ever, it is contributing to the economic boom of Montréal by providing clients from here and abroad a venue that actively promotes the synergy of ideas and the exchange of knowledge. ◀

### A snapshot of the Palais' 25 years

- 4,339 events in total
- 12.6 million visitors
- \$4.1 billion in economic spinoffs
- 3.7 million room nights in Montréal hotels



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# Behind the colours...

## history unfolds everyday

Both a place for high level international meetings and a symbol of Québec creativity gracing the Montréal cityscape, the Palais des congrès de Montréal has enjoyed a unique 25-year history shaped by global market forces, spurred by challenges, reenergized by new facilities, supported by valuable partners, and rewarded with notable successes.

Over the last quarter century, the city block bordered by Viger, Saint-Urbain, Saint-Antoine and De Bleury Streets has provided the setting for a remarkable story. The Palais stands where the business district meets Old Montréal. It has helped stage important summit meetings since it opened and has witnessed history in the making. This is an honour the entire city proudly shares in.

## 25 years of conventions, 25 years of exchanges

Major world issues have been debated at the Palais, like AIDS and global warming. In 25 years, it has been home to some of the finest hours in the history of humanity.

From 1983 to 2008, the Palais hosted 1,017 conventions and their 2.4 million visitors, generating 3.5 million room nights in Montréal hotels and \$2.8 billion in economic spinoffs.

The convention industry is the embodiment of an industry on the move. Montréal faces fierce competition from newly emerging host cities and the staple European destinations. Also, it must grapple with and adapt to situations it cannot control, e.g.



© Bob Fisher



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a general climate of uncertainty, the strength of the Canadian dollar, a drop in the overall number of international events, new trends in the industry, etc. In 25 years, both the city and its convention centre have managed to grow and succeed, mostly as a result of the community's and their partners' relentless support and promotion of Montréal all over the world.

Montréal enjoys an international reputation, it is widely recognized as a hub of excellence in various sectors such as life sciences, and is also home to several major international organizations. This alone makes the Palais an attractive destination. But the venue also offers a set of unique infrastructures ideally located in the heart of the city's downtown, near hotels, as well as a range of topnotch professional services that have helped nurture its trademark renown over the years.

## 25 years of consumer and trade shows, 25 years of discoveries

From rare stamps and fast cars to being transported to the Arabian Nights, the list of products exhibited at the Palais over 25 years is virtually endless.

The constant flow of new innovations has attracted both industry people and the Montréal public at large. Since 1983, 8 million visitors descended on the Palais to attend 949 consumer and trade shows, creating \$1.2 billion in economic spinoffs for the city.

Originally perceived exclusively as a venue for high level international meetings, today Montréalers can claim to know their convention centre inside out, especially since the expansion in 2002 converted the Palais into a see-through building that welcomes the city in, easily accessible by foot or public transit.

Major public events also mean large crowds. Palais show openings are always inviting and exciting, but never at the expense of professionalism and security.



© Marc Cramer

## 25 years of meetings and special events, 25 years of celebrations

The Palais is always an appropriate venue, for business and pleasure. Whether celebrating excellence or sheltering ice storm victims like in 1998, the Palais is there whenever the need arises!



© Bob Fisher



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© Palais des congrès de Montréal

The diversity of the events held at the Palais is a reflection of Québec society as a whole. From sporting accomplishments and academic achievements, to business meetings and cultural gatherings, excellence has been enjoying centre stage for 25 years at the Palais in the form of 2,373 meetings and special events that attracted 2.2 million visitors.

In essence, the Palais mirrors society. It is where excellence and success are both recognized and held in the highest regard.

For more on the history of the Palais, visit our online retrospective at [www.congresmtl.com/25years](http://www.congresmtl.com/25years). ◀



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# Montréal, a city of knowledge creation and innovation

► **Montréal, which ranks 1st in Canada** and 2nd in North America for hosting international conferences, has it all when it comes to attracting delegates. Its exceptional international character, diversity, vitality, creativity and lifestyle figure prominently among its main assets as a convention destination.

The second largest francophone city in the world, where some 80 nationalities live side by side, Montréal is home to more than 60 international associations. Many of these associations, including the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Air Transport Association (IATA) and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), opted to set up their head offices in Montréal's Quartier international, a district showcasing exceptional urban design that has garnered prestigious international recognition.

Moreover, Montréal has many renowned institutions that are actively involved in expanding the city's international reputation as a convention destination. With its 11 universities, including four internationally recognized institutions of higher learning, and about 200 advanced research centres, Montréal is not only the top Canadian city for university research but also one of the most important knowledge and innovation centres in North America.

On the strength of its know-how, Montréal has over time become an international centre of excellence in many leading edge sectors of the economy. Many aerospace, life sciences, information and communications technologies, engineering and agri-food companies are now recognized as world leaders in their respective areas.

Montréal's international presence is also felt in the arts, culture and sport. The city hosts prestigious international events and festivals that every year attract hundreds of thousands of visitors. It is also blessed with enormous creative entities, such as the Cirque du Soleil, whose reputation goes well beyond our borders. Named a UNESCO City of Design in 2006, after Buenos Aires and Berlin, Montréal recently joined the ranks of the newly formed World Good Food Cities Network, which was created to promote the gastronomic offerings of many large cities throughout the world.

As an avant-garde cultural, knowledge and innovation centre with an international reputation, a city where people cultivate their lifestyle with passion, Montréal in the words of many convention-goers visiting the city is a prime destination for those looking for a stimulating environment that is unique in its class. ◀



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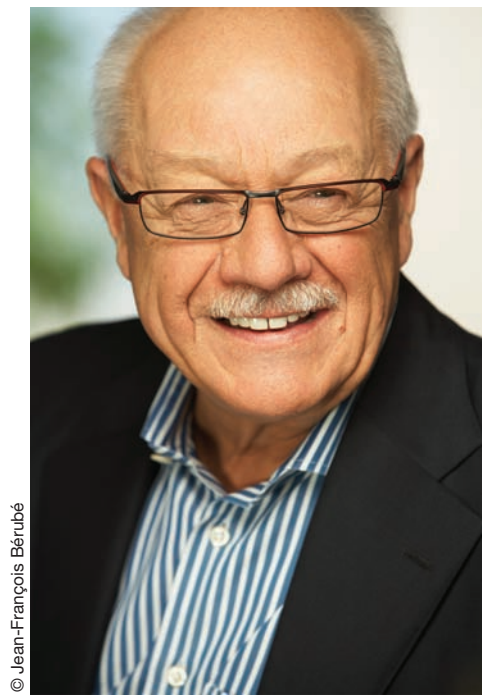


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© Restaurant Europa





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Interview with Charles Lapointe, President and CEO of Tourisme Montréal

# Tourisme Montréal and business tourism

INTERVIEW BY ANDRÉ DÉSIRONT

### What is Tourisme Montréal doing to stimulate business tourism?

To attract business conventions and meetings to Montréal, we are focusing on associations and corporations, specifically developing personal relationships with their senior managers. I spend 40% of my time working on building these relationships. Our Executive Vice President John Dunn as well as Luc Charbonneau Director Sales and Marketing, Business Market supervise a team of about 30 who do nothing but that. We have offices in Paris, Chicago and Washington where the large associations that organize conventions are headquartered and we arrange information tours of Montréal for decision makers within corporations and associations. In partnership with the Palais des congrès, we have set up Team Montréal, which includes managers from Montréal's large hotels and the companies that specialize in organizing events. We use all the means at our disposal to stimulate demand, because although business tourism accounts for only a third of visiting tourists, it generates between 35% to 40% of the roughly \$2.3 billion Montréal generates in tourism revenue.

### How will you go about stimulating demand in these times of economic turbulence?

In 2009, we will be investing a total of \$1.8 million in convention assistance. Tourisme Montréal and the Palais des congrès will contribute \$500,000 each to another fund that will be used to help us put together the best possible bids for conventions. Tourisme Montréal will continue deploying the Domino Effect program designed to stimulate community involvement in developing business tourism in Montréal.

### What great successes has Tourisme Montréal had in hosting conventions?

The Meeting Professionals International convention brought 3,700 delegates to the city in 2007 and definitely put Montréal on the map among people who have a lot of decision-making power. Also, there was the Climate Change Conference, with 10,000 delegates visiting the city at various times over a three-week period in December 2005. And finally the Liberal Party convention in 2006 attracted more than 7,300 delegates over four days.

### What would be a large convention for you?

A large convention would involve 2,000 or more delegates. The Palais des congrès can accommodate up to 15,000 delegates. Most conventions have an exhibition component. In Montréal, we have a maximum of 200,000 square feet of exhibition space at the Palais des congrès and more than 134,000 square feet in meeting and banquet rooms. However, many associations need even more space.

### What arguments do you use to persuade organizers to hold their conventions in Montréal?

For the Americans, the European cachet of the city is a major asset. We promote our warm and passionate nature, along with our historical and cultural heritage. What Europeans find appealing is the vitality and warmth of Montrealers. Also, the proximity of services and meeting areas all within walking distance is another major selling point for the city. Montréal's proximity to the US is also an advantage with Europeans. ◀

Interview with Paul Saint-Jacques

# The Palais at the heart of Montréal's international district

INTERVIEW BY ANDRÉ DÉSIRONT

▶ **The expansion work** performed between 2000 and 2002 doubled the Palais des congrès de Montréal's floor area. Before the expansion, the Palais would welcome anywhere from 445,000 to 510,000 convention and meeting participants a year. That number has topped the 600,000 mark since 2003.

Paul Saint-Jacques has been the Palais' President and CEO for the last 9 years. As he prepares to step down, he notes that doubling the Palais's size from 753,000 to 1.4 million square feet has meant being able to host larger events, and most importantly, several events at once. "Conventions are generally booked three to five years in advance," says Mr. Saint-Jacques. "Before the expansion, we would hesitate before saying yes to a 1,500-delegate event five years in advance because it entailed risking losing a bigger event somewhere down the line. And the expansion made it possible to host conventions that included a trade show component as well."

In addition, the expansion transformed a building people often compared to a bunker into a see-through glass venue that caught the attention of Montréalers, while bringing the convention centre and the city closer together. Now Montréal-based organizations are among those hosting business events at the Palais.

The expansion also helped trigger the redevelopment of the city's international district. "We did not want to invest \$200 million to build an outstanding building only to be surrounded by huge parking lots, so we convinced the city's administration to revitalize the area," resumes Mr. Saint-Jacques. Today, you can find the famous picture of a multi-coloured glass clad Palais facing the beautiful Jean-Paul-Riopelle public square in several international publications.



Shoot Studio

Covering the expressway that runs just underneath, the "new" Palais anchored the makeover of a district that now bridges the downtown area and Old Montréal. The new CHUM university hospital centre is going to be built nearby, and it will undoubtedly usher in the dawn of a new healthcare district and become its nerve centre. "More than half of our events stem from the fields of healthcare and life sciences, so we share some affinities with the CHUM and their work. We feel the Palais can play the same catalytic and cornerstone role for the impending healthcare district as it did for the business district," predicts Mr. Saint-Jacques.

Nevertheless, to remain Canada's top host city for international conventions, Montréal must continue to be active. "Vancouver is expanding its convention centre, and Ottawa is building a new centre," warns the Palais' President and CEO, adding "the key to sustaining Montréal's success is to keep moving forward!" ◀

# A new environment for Montréal business tourism

▶ **The Montréal business tourism environment** has seen remarkable growth in recent years. Major urban development and infrastructure improvement projects are under way while an incredible hotel boom is radically changing the supply of tourist accommodation in the greater metropolitan area.

One project worthy of note is the vast expansion and modernization program at the Montréal Pierre Elliot Trudeau International Airport. The first phase of this program, that aims to increase terminal capacity and the level of passenger service, ran from 2000 to 2006 and cost \$716 million before inflation. Subsequent phases of this expansion and modernization program are currently under way.

Montréal's Quartier international inaugurated in 2004 is yet another outstanding accomplishment. This new growth centre is key to developing Montréal's international reach and was created with almost \$1 billion in private and public funding. Tucked in between the city's business district and Old Montréal, the Quartier international showcases exceptional urban design while offering convention-goers numerous attractions and cultural activities.

Moreover, the Montréal tourism industry has seen marked growth in recent years in the number of available hotel rooms. From 2007 to 2009, slightly more than 2,000 rooms will have been added to the supply of tourist accommodation in Montréal.

While this is all good news, the projects and achievements also raise expectations that the tourism industry and its community partners will need to meet in the coming years. Many people however are delighted with these projects and are ready to face the challenge. ◀

From a meetings perspective, luxurious accommodations, state-of-the-art convention facilities and world-renowned international cuisine all contribute to a city unlike any other in North America. Perhaps that's the reason why Montréal plays host to an average of 300 major events per year.

*The Meeting Professional, April 2007*

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PALAIS DES CONGRÈS DE MONTRÉAL

There are some neighbours  
we wouldn't change for anything...

Congratulations to  
Palais des congrès  
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its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary!

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25  
The Palais turns 25

"Thanks to the Palais des congrès, Montréal is now the leading destination in Canada for international conventions, and second in North America.

I join all Montrealers in offering the Palais and all those who have worked to make it so successful our warmest wishes on its 25th anniversary!"

Gérald Tremblay  
Mayor of Montréal

Montréal





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© Hôtel St-Paul, Jean Blais photographe

“There was excellent co-operation and partnership between the Convention Centre, Tourisme Montréal, hotels and various suppliers. To organize such a conference, we need everyone to be on-side and they were.”  
*Pierre Lamoureux, Conference Manager (NRC)  
 International Committee on Space Research  
 38th Scientific Assembly and Associated Events - COSPAR, July 2008-12-10*

“What I liked most was the co-operation with Tourisme Montréal and the different suppliers we used. I am a one-person office and I needed support to organise such a large and complex conference. Overall, I found that I received lots of help and support from everyone in Montréal.”  
*Gerry Hensen, Executive Administrator  
 Community and Hospital Infection Control Association – CHICA Canada, June 2008*



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# 25 YEARS WORKING TOGETHER

In celebration of their 25 years of partnership, the Palais des congrès and Tourisme Montréal have issued a pressing appeal to academics, researchers and business people to get actively involved in enhancing Montréal’s business tourism sector. Initiatives, such as the recently launched Domino Effect program and an action plan for the Ambassador’s Club, have been put in place to get key community players involved in developing this sector that is so vital Montréal’s economy and standing on the national and international stage.

## The Domino Effect

Tourisme Montréal has been tirelessly pursuing the objective of stimulating the community’s commitment to revitalize Montréal’s business tourism sector which ranks 6th among the top 10 leading industries in Québec. As a result, the organization recently launched the Domino Effect, a new program that encourages key players in the university, scientific and business communities to use their influence, with the support of Tourisme Montréal managers’ expertise, to promote the hosting of business conferences and meetings in Montréal.

To jump-start the Domino Effect, key players have been invited to identify meetings in their organization’s agenda that could potentially take place in Montréal. Once this has been done, the next step is to have them designate contacts within their networks who could play a leading role in selecting Montréal for a future meeting or annual conference.

Tourisme Montréal has, for its part, committed to providing services to those interested in triggering the Domino Effect within their organization. These services are all free of charge and include a team of seasoned managers, a comprehensive promotional and organizational assistance kit, various material resources and other services to ensure the success of the proposed event.

## Ambassadors’ Club

In line with this spirit of co-operation, the Palais des congrès de Montréal founded the Ambassadors’ Club in 1985. The Ambassadors’ Club welcomes academics, researchers and business people, namely a broad range of public figures, who have one thing in common: they have complemented their regular professional activities by playing an instrumental role in bringing one or more major events to the Convention Centre, thereby generating considerable economic benefits for Montréal and the whole of Québec.

The core of the Ambassadors’ Club’s strategy is to encourage decision makers to promote Montréal and the Convention Centre and to participate actively in selection committees and in positioning the destination and site. This strategy has worked, as borne out by the 13th World Congress of Gastroenterology, which was held in Montréal in 2005. This prestigious event, which was held in Montréal thanks to the influence of a member of the Ambassadors’ Club, brought more than 6,000 delegates from around the world to Montréal.

The Ambassadors’ Club, which now welcomes more than 200 men and women, recently implemented an action plan that includes recruiting new members. One of the objec-

tives of this action plan is to ensure that potential ambassadors know that they will be able to rely on a well-organized support structure. Members, in fact, often say that, over the years, the Ambassadors’ Club has evolved into a veritable support network for those interested in organizing international conferences.

“Contributing to the preparation and management of a major international event requires a significant amount of time and effort. However, the investment pays off in many ways, notably, in enhanced visibility, peer recognition, positive spin-offs for your organization or university, and enhanced international presence for your work environment and for Montréal.”  
*Dr. Jacques Corcos, Head of the Urology Department, Sir Morimer B. Davis Jewish General Hospital in Montréal and president of the Ambassadors’ Club.*

To learn more about the Ambassador’s Club, visit the Website at:  
[www.congresmtl.com](http://www.congresmtl.com)

## Team Montréal

Fostering co-operation within the industry is yet another major objective pursued by Tourisme Montréal. With that in mind, the organization launched Team Montréal in 1998, a coalition of tourism industry leaders with a mission to provide meeting and convention organizers with integrated services that meet their specific needs under highly competitive conditions.

Team Montréal includes institutional and corporate players, along with representatives from convention centres, hotels and service businesses. In 2008, Team Montréal undertook seven business missions in 13 cities in the United States, Canada and Europe. Team Montréal met with convention managers and planners from about 90 organizations to promote Montréal as a host city. Team Montréal’s 2008 missions represent a potential 260,000 room nights for the city’s hotels.

These adeptly planned and skilfully executed missions, which include major solicitation campaigns and are supported by innovative advertising and publicity events, are a key factor in Tourisme Montréal’s strategies for generating significant economic benefits. ◀

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE DOMINO EFFECT?**

The Domino Effect is a new program developed by Tourisme Montréal to encourage professionals working in the scientific, technological, academic and business communities to use their influence to promote the hosting of business conferences and meetings in Montréal.

To find out more, please contact Yasmina Abderrahman at [domino\\_effect@tourisme-montreal.com](mailto:domino_effect@tourisme-montreal.com) or 514 844-4467 or visit [www.dominomontreal.com](http://www.dominomontreal.com)



# Tourisme Montréal's turnkey solutions



► **Giving Montréal** a competitive edge by providing convention planners with turnkey solutions is a key component of Tourisme Montréal's strategy. That is why the Montréal tourism organisation provides convention organizers with a range of novel tools and services to increase convention attendance, a key issue for ensuring the success of the event.

Convention planners can rely on support from Tourisme Montréal managers in the Montréal, Washington, Chicago and Paris offices. Backed by strong teams, Tourisme Montréal managers are well positioned to secure the best possible quotes from suppliers, and track down meeting venues, exhibition space and hotel rooms for preliminary budgeting purposes. They also provide

sound advice and recommendations as regards funding, both public and private.

Tourisme Montréal has acquired a high performance Web-based event management system. This leading edge system that is completely secure provides convention organizers with access to real time reports on convention attendance rates, around the clock, and from anywhere in the world. It also gives delegates access to a straightforward personalized reservation system that is always up and running.

In addition to this leading edge technology, Tourisme Montréal has also developed a variety of promotional tools such as videos, Web banners, print advertisements and brochures on Montréal. Event organizers can use these to promote their events and the destination's various attractions, and thereby boost attendance.

Along the same lines, Tourisme Montréal has set up a major plan for welcoming convention delegates. Included in this plan are a warm reception area at the Pierre Elliott Trudeau Airport, a spectacular poster advertising strategy deployed in various areas of the city, and appealing promotions for Montréal stores, restaurants and attractions.

Given the appeal of a truly unique North American destination along with the quality of the city's convention centre facilities and hotel accommodations, Tourisme Montréal's support program for convention planners can make all the difference between a run-of-the mill event and an incredibly memorable one. ◀

## Aéroports de Montréal salutes the Palais des congrès de Montréal!

► **As an important gateway** for business tourists, and especially for international convention delegates, Montréal–Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport contributes in a major way to making Montréal an extremely popular destination.

Since 2000, Aéroports de Montréal (ADM) has invested nearly \$1.5 billion in Montréal–Trudeau's infrastructures and facilities. The terminal, which has been expanded and modernized from end to end, now

meets the industry's highest standards. Montréal–Trudeau was, among other things, the first North American airport to welcome an Airbus A-380, with some 500 passengers on board.

In 2009, the addition of another important element — the new transborder departures sector — will complete the terminal's transformation. Passengers heading for the United States will be able to check in and clear U.S. customs more efficiently, in a larger and more user-friendly space where walking distance to the boarding gates will be significantly reduced.

A new hotel located within the terminal building, built right above the transborder departures sector, will also open for business next year. This member of the Marriott chain, featuring 275 first-class rooms, will provide passengers transiting through Montréal–Trudeau with yet another valued-added service.

With the aim of simplifying and accelerating departure formalities, Montréal–Trudeau has also introduced the latest self-service check-in technologies, including mobile check-in. And following a successful trial conducted with the Palais des congrès de Montréal, we are also able to install remote check-in kiosks during conventions and major events.

Finally, in co-operation with its government and metropolitan partners, ADM is working hard to improve land access to the airport. Direct access roads between Highway 20 and the airport will be built first as part of the Dorval Interchange redevelopment project, on which work has just begun. The project for an express railway shuttle service linking Montréal–Trudeau and downtown Montréal is also on track.

All of these enhancements are contributing to the competitiveness of the Palais des congrès de Montréal, an institution that Montréalers can be proud of and that has played a fundamental role in our city for the past quarter of a century.

We wish the Palais des congrès de Montréal the best of success going forward! ◀

### MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

## 25th anniversary of the Palais des congrès de Montréal

Since it opened in 1983, the Palais des Congrès de Montréal has been instrumental in enhancing the reputation of the city of Montréal and the province of Québec all over the world. Over 25 years, the Palais has welcomed 12.6 million visitors, representing 4.1 billion dollars worth of economic spin-offs.

As Minister responsible for this publicly-owned corporation, I would like to highlight the exemplary work of the people who contributed to building the institution's reputation. I applaud the devotion and energy of the administrators of the Palais des congrès and their predecessors, of the Ambassadors' Club, as well as of everyone who contributed directly or indirectly to the success of this flagship of our tourism industry.

Enjoy the celebrations !

NICOLE MÉNARD

Minister of Tourism  
Minister responsible for the Montérégie region



## The Palais magicians

If the Palais walls could talk, oh the stories they would tell!

Like the day hordes of strollers holding hungry babies took over the Palais service elevators for the 2008 Breastfeeding Challenge, or the July week when the Palais esplanade was transformed into a seeing-eye dog park during the Vision 2008 conference on low vision...

No two days are alike at the Palais. The reason is simple: we go with the flow of the events we host.

"Our event planning managers are like orchestra conductors. They have to adapt to and interpret whatever music score they are given so the end performance matches the clients' wishes," explains Director of Production Éline Legault. This requires immense creativity, and listening power.

"We work very closely with our clients every step of the event planning process, from the initial briefing until after the event," specifies the Palais' Director of Marketing and Communications, Christine Loriaux. "The average seniority of our staff is 17 years, so we can safely say they know what they're doing! Our experience and expertise help clients make the most of their events. In addition to being strategically located in the heart of Montréal, the Palais is also a trendsetter in terms of service quality, and we intend to continue to move forward! We will keep listening actively to our clients and stay in lockstep with the latest developments in order to provide them with event planning products and services that will stimulate their interest," says

Mrs. Loriaux. She adds: "Even after 25 years, and 4,339 events, we still strive to do better for the thousands more to come."

At the Palais, creativity also means being adaptable, especially when it comes to food. "Our Capital Traiteur catering service devised a menu for people who have difficulty chewing, during an international conference on augmentative and alternative communication. For the Otakuthon anime convention, they prepared sushi, dango dumplings and pearl tea, instead of the traditional pizza, smoked meat and soft drinks!" adds Mrs. Legault.

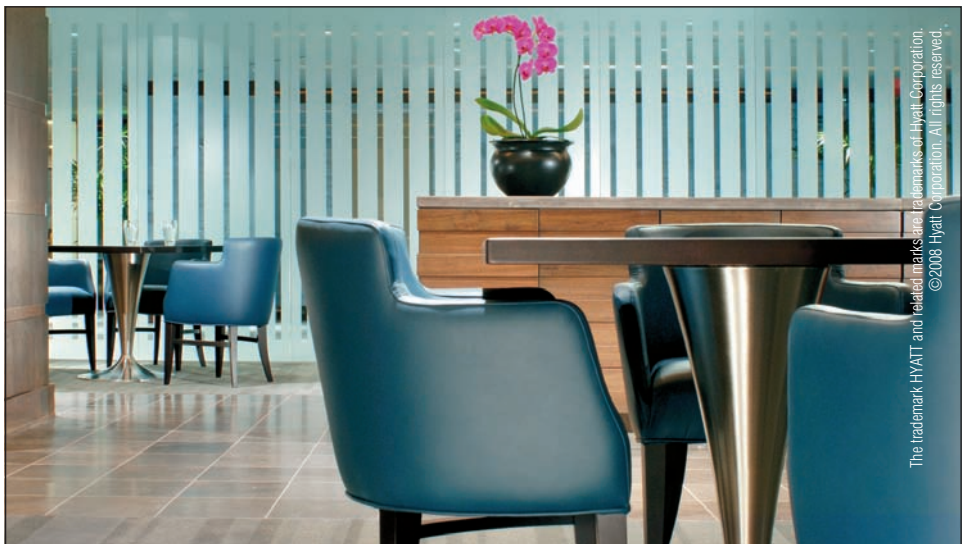
Of course, the Palais delivers the full range of professional services you would expect from a convention centre of this level, but it is often the "little extras" that make the difference.

"What people like about us is that we are proactive and grasp their needs. This enables us to create the best possible conditions in which to hold their events," continues Mrs. Legault. "We know how to adapt our venues and services to the specific requirements of each client, size notwithstanding. Our clients can count on the same degree of attention regardless of the scope of their event. Our employees live by the high quality standards we have established." ◀

To contact the Palais magicians, log on to [congresmtl.com](http://congresmtl.com).

"Palais employees can handle any situation, bar none. They form an extraordinary team, available 24-7. They made our objectives their own and helped us achieve them."

Dr Denis Forest, Director, Journées dentaires internationales du Québec



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Congratulations on your 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.





# Montréal, both unique and diverse

► **With its bustling atmosphere** and skyscrapers, its huge shopping centres, its immense green spaces and other public spaces. Montréal is definitely a North American city. But what makes it shine, what sets it apart from other convention destinations in the country—even the continent—is its unique European character.

The city's vibrant Latin side. Its “live and let live” mentality. The ease and energy with which it greets people. The desire to please, share, take risks and assert itself. These Montréal values constitute its legacy, its signature, its brand, and are the envy of many cities.

Its fine cuisine, 5 to 7 happy hours with friends, small boutique shops, 300 km of cycle paths running across the island, “bring your own wine” restaurants, shady terraces and internationally renowned festivals cannot be found anywhere else.

The result is a city of contrasts where you can flit from a gourmet restaurant in the heart of the paved streets of Old Montréal to an electrifying evening at the SAT, leave a downtown office after work and slip into snowshoes on Mount Royal fifteen minutes later, take in some rock'n roll at three downtown museums and then make your way to the Plateau to eat a hot bagel fresh from the oven. Or you can listen to a Port Symphony in the dead of winter then become immersed in the muggy tropical forest at the Biodôme.

These cherished attributes are what make Montréal the favourite destination of the international business community. Visitors especially appreciate the city's bustling downtown core and the many services within walking distance of major hotels and meeting places.

Montrealers are proud of their city. Proud of its rich historical, architectural and cultural heritage, and especially proud to see Montréal blossom on the international



© Roger Proulx

scene thanks to the creativity of hometown people. You only need think of the chefs and their insatiable appetite to find new sensations for the palate, or the fashion designers who have made the “Made in Montréal” label the pride of Montrealers on the red carpets and at concert premieres.

This pride is also conveyed through the hospitality and warm reception reserved for visitors, whether joy-seeking tourists or business people.

Montréal enjoys undeniable assets to ensure it retains its preferred position as a convention destination. All it needs is to continue being itself and carry on promoting what makes it so special in the eyes of the world: its unique yet diverse society. ◀

## FAVOURITE COLOUR? GREEN!



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### The Palais went green many years ago.

When it expanded in 2000-2002, environmental measures were factored in designed to reduce energy consumption. Three years later, the Palais became one of the first convention centres in Canada to be BOMA BEST certified (formerly Go Green).

“The Palais’ environmental performance has continued unabated ever since, even surpassing environmental requirements, making it a true leader in terms of eco-responsibility,” declares the Building Manager Mario Poirier.

In 2008, the Palais consumed nearly 4 million kWh less, i.e. three times what is required to be certified by Hydro-Québec’s Energy Savers’ Circle.

The Palais is also actively involved in the local tourism industry’s green committee started by Tourisme Montréal. This concerted effort by the tourism community, which includes most notably hotels, transportation and in-

formation centres, is aimed at developing an action plan to help curb the environmental footprint of tourism activities that will hold businesses accountable individually and collectively.

Finally, 10% of the events held at the Palais in 2007-2008 included some form of ecoresponsible practices. “There are different ways of holding an event and also protecting the environment,” resumes Mr. Poirier. “It

is important that we recognize each green act, whatever it is. That is the approach we take when guiding clients along the ecoresponsible thinking process, providing green solutions they can pick and choose à la carte based on how far they are able to go.” ◀

*Our Organizing a Green Event planner’s guide is available on our website at [www.congresmtl.com/environnement](http://www.congresmtl.com/environnement)*

### MONTRÉAL SETS A COURSE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The world’s first major city to sign the National Geographic Society’s Geotourism Charter, Montréal proudly supports tourism that values the geographic nature of a destination, its environment, culture, aesthetic character, heritage and the wellbeing of its inhabitants.

Also, Tourisme Montréal and the Palais recently jointly launched a community kindness program that will promote the reuse of materials not used during some conventions or shows. As a result, three Montréal charitable organizations will benefit from unused stationery items, delegate bags and promotional items.



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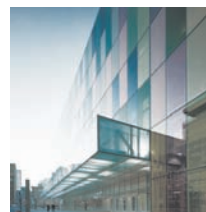
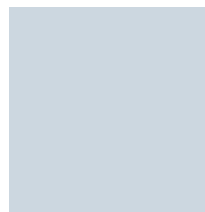
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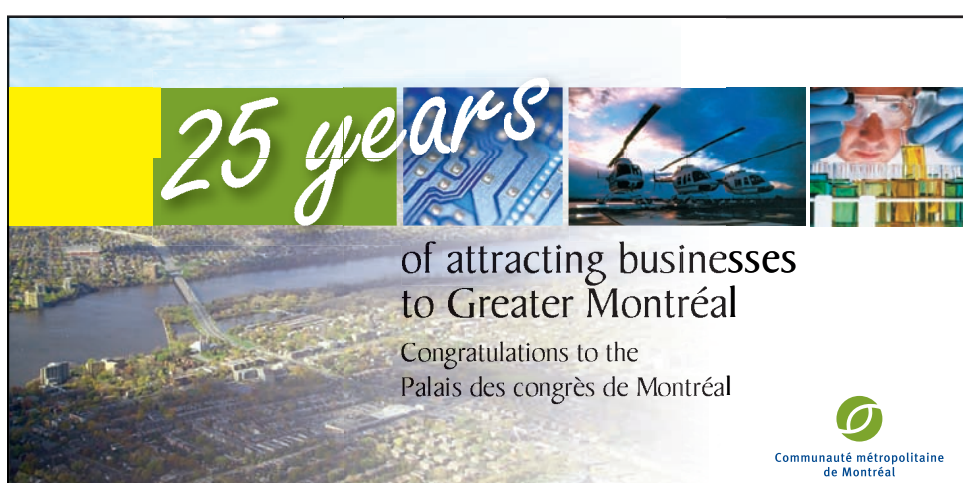
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➤ **Let's raise  
an energetic  
cheer  
for the Palais  
des congrès  
de Montréal**

We salute the enterprising spirit and vision of managers at the Palais des congrès de Montréal. They made the most of Gaz Métro’s various energy efficiency programs. The modifications made to the ventilation system have helped reduce demand for heating and thus decreased the consumption of natural gas. Welcome to the circle of blue entrepreneurs — business people who have caught the flame!

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