

SHOWCASING THE WORLD OF EXHIBITIONS

# exhibition

July 2021 Vol 8 Issue 12

Voice of Asia's Exhibition & Convention Industry

## SHOWCASE

Exclusive Media Partner From India



### EXHIBITION LOGISTICS & IELA

A Detailed Overview

### INTO THE FUTURE

PM Modi Inaugurates  
'Rudraksh' Convention Centre In Varanasi

### FUTURE READY

First Transit - Oriented  
Development Complex In Vietnam

### GEARING UP

Maldives Ready To Welcome Tourists

*"First things first: human health and safety are the top priorities. IELA worked quickly to create guidelines to prevent COVID during on-site operations and all of us individually implemented procedures within our own offices and the venues where we work."*

**GUIDO FORNELLI**

Chairperson, International Exhibition Logistics  
Association (IELA)

# In this issue:



## Pg. 06-07 World Map

6-7 Headlines From Across The World

## Pg. 08-09 Industry In Pictures From The World Of Social Media

## Pg. 10-11 Quick Bytes

10 GSSE To Be Held At JIO World Centre

11 Exhibition Centres To Reopen In India

## Pg. 13-17 News Buzz

13 Messe Frankfurt India Announces New Dates For Screen Print India New Delhi And Mumbai Hybrid Editions

15 New Dates Announced For Labelexpo India 2022

16 PM Modi Visits Varanasi On July 15 For Inauguration Of 'Rudraksh' Convention Centre

17 PCIL India To Take Place At Jio World Centre, Mumbai

## Pg. 20-41 Interviews

20-21 In Conversation With Huynh Dinh Thai Linh, ED, World Trade Center, Binh Duong, New City

22-26 In Conversation With Thoyyib Mohamed, MD, MMPRC About Maldives Tourism

27-28 Exhibition Showcase Talks To Sumate Sudasna, President Of Thailand Incentive and Convention Association

30-38 Exclusive Conversation Guido Fornelli, Chairperson, International Exhibition Logistics Association (IELA)

39-42 In Conversation With Sudhir Dhavan, CEO, RE Rogers India

43-44 Exhibition Showcase Talks To Uttam Gupta, President, BIG Logistics India

45-46 Exhibition Showcase Talks To Anamitra Mukherjee, General Manager, Head Fairs Events and Special Logistics at DB Schenker India

## Pg. 47-48 Insights

In The Face Of The Current Covid-19 Pandemic, Edward Liu, MD Of CEMS Singapore Shares His Views On The MICE Industry In Singapore And Asia

## Pg. 49 People Matter

## Pg. 50 Event Tech

## Pg. 51 Sustainability

## Pg. 52-54 MICE Watch

## Pg. 55 Report

## Pg. 56-57 Partnership

## Pg. 58-61 Global News

# Trade Shows, Logistics And IELA : A Brief Overview



**L**ogistics is generally the detailed organization and implementation of a complex operation. In a general business sense, logistics is the management of the flow of things between the point of origin and the point of consumption to meet the requirements of customers or corporations. The resources managed in logistics may include tangible goods such as materials, equipment, and supplies, as well as food and other consumable items. The logistics teams while executing the task of large-scale events are not just accustomed to mastering everyday industry challenges such as just-in-time delivery, efficient resource management, and coordinating a vast team of movers and players.

They're also experts at responding to the conundrums that make every show and event a distinctive experience. Organizing materials for a trade show is about more than delivering shipments from one place to another. Even the most straightforward exhibitor packages contain complexities that might elude an exhibitor's own marketing and logistics teams. A specialist in trade show logistics, however, knows where the potential minefields might lie. Due diligence is an essential part of an staff's responsibility when it comes to delivering goods. Without performing this task, you open yourself to massive amounts of liability. You also run the risk of alienating customers. Some event site managers may refuse to handle packages that don't meet specifications.

That means the materials might never make it to the exhibit hall.

Compliance is especially critical at international shows, where specifications change dramatically from country to country, and a panoply of legal and cultural issues come into play. One such example is countries with Islamic traditions, will want to ensure that no culturally offensive images—bottles of liquor, or disrespectful depictions of the Koran—are displayed. Exhibitors should allow plenty of time for this process, because missing the deadline could nullify all the preparation associated with an international show. Another tricky logistics issue centers around customs compliance in different countries.

Logistics teams need to be scrupulously attentive to each government's rules and processes. Any problems with documentation may mean that, even if a company's materials make it into the country, they may not make it back out—in time for another event, or at all. For exhibitors who need these materials at another show, this can be especially problematic. The evolution of technology is pushing the boundaries and changing how the world does business. Today, we're accustomed to everything being online and right at our fingertips for immediate access. The increasingly high-tech world of global exhibition logistics is keeping the industry on its toes.

Shorter access windows and the need to be more economical than ever with time onsite at venues means that quality of service is as important, if not more so, than initial project costs.

In an interview to Exhibition Showcase, Guido Fornelli, Chairperson, IELA said, "Technology will play a very important role in the 'new now', not only to create new event concepts, but also to create, a safer more efficient and sustainable environment on-site. I'm sure a lot of complex but also smaller digital applications will arise which will dramatically change logistics activity in the years to come, thanks to what we can now implement with AI and IoT."

#### **IELA - International Exhibition Logistics Association**

IELA is a worldwide trade association dedicated to enhancing the professionalism of the transportation logistics and freight handling segments of the exhibition & event industry. The organization's strict entry requirements focusing on exhibition & event expertise assure the highest level of quality service. Its members are recognized as the industry leaders and niche providers in their own communities or regions as well as around the globe. IELA, with the mission to support and look after its members worldwide is taking all

possible measures to overcome challenges that have posed by the pandemic Covid-19. IELA believes, in the face of unpredictable consequences, a strong network is more important than ever before. Thus, it encourages industry people to share their concern to IELA member when it is affected by postponements or cancellations. The association is supporting its members with its combined strengths and working together to diminish the negative economic impacts for exhibitors and organisers.

IELA has recently announced Faces of IELA Awards to highlight the biggest asset of member companies - their employees. The idea is to highlight the talent of the industry and it's dedicated individuals. The 36th IELA Congress sessions, which took place online from 29 June - 1 July 2021, followed the themes of the association's 'Back to business programme', and took the perspective of 'A beginner's mind', with on-demand access to all sessions and additional content material extended to 31 July.

Patrick Rejaud, President & CEO, World Exhibition Logistics, in an interview with Exhibition Showcase has shared his experience and how he had overcome the jolt posed by pandemic.

He said, "We have tried to live by Churchill's 'never let a good crisis go to waste' and have taken advantage of the situation: we have maintained our storage activity, have developed exports of real goods to our customers (we can also handle dangerous goods) and have coordinated the logistics of private demos in France and abroad with ongoing multiple-country regional tours in the Middle East and Africa. Also, we have introduced the idea of pop-up showrooms in our warehouse; made an institutional video; developed new sales & marketing tools and kicked off WEL's ISO 20121 certification.

Patrick further talks about some of the biggest post-COVID challenges for the logistics business and upcoming trends that would influence the exhibition logistics industry. He said, "We will stay true to our vision whereby our clients are front and center. We will maintain our quality-of-service catering to the specific needs of every client, which sets us apart from our competitors and well-known big groups and adapt our sales and marketing resources accordingly. We think fully virtual events will struggle to work, but we remain open to the new hybrid possibilities that these new technologies will bring to the market. But we think the industry will get back to the basics: face-to-face meetings."



IELA's founding father Hansruedi Brauchli passed away recently. IELA, one of his "kids", will never ever forget him (1st one from left in sitting posture). This photo was taken at a IELA Board meeting that was held in New Delhi in 2004.



**Ravinder Sethi, Chairman & MD, RE Rogers India, Chairman, IELA Committee, Past Chairman, IELA Board of Management**

*"IELA is no doubt one of the foremost global industry associations in today's date. In the pandemic months, it rose to the occasion in providing a critical information flow for its members, while also infusing much needed confidence building measures for them. As a company, we have been one of IELA's strongest supporters in the last twenty years, both in financial and strategic manpower support. As a country, we have a very strong presence with eight members. This, in turn, confirms the importance of India as a very prominent exhibition destination. In these challenging times, cooperation in our industry's entire ecosystem is the need of the hour - IELA is at the forefront of this endeavor."*



**HS Bedi, CEO, PS Bedi Logistics, Immediate Past Chairman, IELA**

*"We provide integrated logistics solutions to diverse industries through our pan India operations including warehouses, transportation & distribution. While the pandemic impacted global events industry, our events industry team seamlessly moved into our other operations and contributed immensely especially our charter operations. We have executed 14 charters for pharma industry in last 7 months alone. We expect a much increased activity of industrial projects in coming months especially within the technology industry. And events industry will bounce back as different countries start opening up. All in all, we remain aggressive and optimistic."*



**Patrick Rejaud  
President & CEO, World  
Exhibition Logistics**

*"During these difficult times, we have been resilient and sought to implement new processes and offerings. This period made us stronger and we are now looking forward to working with our partners from all around the world and support them with their exhibition logistics when coming to France."*



**Cleopatra A. Tomic  
Entertainment Division Manager,  
Masterpiece International**



**Carley Jones  
Trade Show Division Manager,  
Masterpiece International**

*"Masterpiece International was built upon the ideal that all clients deserve incomparable & personalized service. Founded in 1989 as an arts and antiques freight forwarder and Customs broker, we have since expanded into several niche divisions and depts including Entertainment, Trade Show, Marine, Biomedical, etc. Masterpiece International's divisions continue to grow in 2021. The Trade Show Division under the leadership of Carley Jones has expanded its reach into more domestic trade shows and commodity markets. Most recently being appointed official for SEMA, NAMM, and FABTECH. The Entertainment Division under the direction of Cleopatra Tomic has become a strong leader in the realm of tv and film shipping. With Carley and Cleopatra's collective and valued skills and a combined 20+ years in the business, we look forward to future continued growth and success. IELA has helped to further expand our reach and connect with agents worldwide that have proven valuable. IELA's functions have given us an advantage that allows us to market our ever-growing services. These types of logistical events, keep us all connected in an ever-expanding and diverse world, and gives us a leading edge. Our association with IELA has allowed us to formulate ideas and stay closely intertwined to create dynamic agent relations worldwide. Most recently, we have further developed our software technologies to stay connected in a virtual world. We have created our new Artwise database which allows our clients several advantages as they are able to access their shipment details through the webapp. Together through technology and our partnerships with IELA, we hope to continue growing and to make an impact in our industry."*

# New Board To Head Up IELA Strategy In The New Now

**2021 IELA General Assembly election results: 1 re-elected and 3 new exhibition logistics leaders join the IELA Board of Management, Greg Keh and Ravinder Sethi have been re-elected as Members of the Committee**

**I**n its efforts to be well equipped for the future, IELA welcomes new leaders joining top decision-making positions. The Association greets new members on the IELA Board of Management (BOM) and IELA Committee

## IELA 2021-2022 Board of Management:

The newly-formed IELA 2021-2022 BOM welcomes 3 new faces this year for a 2-year term and Sandi Trotter, Business Development Director TWI Canada, Canada as re-elected Board Member. The following individuals are all recognised leaders in the exhibition logistics industry and already involved in the association's activities:

- Sudhir Dhavan, CEO, R.E. Rogers India Pvt. Ltd.,
- India David Palomo, Project Manager, Suomen Messulogiistiikka Oy, Finland
- Bas Wiendels, Director, Valverde B.V., Netherlands

As newly-elected members, their longstanding industry experience and innovative visions are anticipated with enthusiasm as IELA

steers towards the future.

BOM Members remaining for one more year are:

- Guido Fornelli, Managing Director - Expotrans S.p.A., Italy
- Matthias Dornscheidt, Vice President Global Fairs & Exhibitions chenker Deutschland AG, Germany
- Alexandra Erdmann, CEO - Swiss Expo Logistics Ltd., Switzerland
- Daniel Mithran, Director - JIM Project & Expo Logistics (M) Sdn.Bhd, Malaysia
- Jacqui NEL, Director - EF-GSM South Africa, South Africa
- Christoph Rauch, Managing Director - BTG Messe-Spedition GmbH, Germany

After the announcement of the results, the IELA Chairman Guido Fornelli stated:

"I'm honoured to be the Chairman of our Association and look forward to starting work with the newly elected Board. It is amazing to see that distance didn't dampen, but even increased, our enthusiasm for involvement and

participation in IELA life during the last months. The Digital Assembly and e-mail vote are definitely an experience of a new kind this year. I strongly hope we'll not need to repeat it in the future!!! It is indeed so sad that we did not get the chance to meet in person as usual and had to shift to our interesting Zoom meetings. Let's hope we can step into a new now next year and resume the work we love and which we handle so successfully. I can assure you that myself, the IELA Board and the Secretariat are impatient to continue with project development and to deliver the value we all need to overcome the Pandemic with new ideas, new tools and new platforms for the new era!"

## The 2021-2022 IELA COMMITTEE:

During the General Assembly, Greg Keh, COO of TWI Group Inc., USA and Ravinder Sethi, Managing Director of R.E. Rogers India Pvt. Ltd., India were re-elected as Committee Member, joining to form the 2021-2022 IELA Committee together with Lena Ericson (former Widman), Managing Director, On-Site Exhibitions AB, Sweden.



## Post Show Report

# 2021 IELA CONGRESS “A BEGINNER’S MIND”

*This year 348 delegates from 48 countries registered for the online congress*



**T**he 36th IELA Congress took place online from June 29th to July 1st 2021 and explored the perspective of A BEGINNER'S MIND. The online platform for re-connecting, accessing the on-demand area to all sessions & additional content material plus networking opportunities was extended by 30 days to the new deadline of July 31st.

The congress format was constructed to encourage free movement between flows throughout the day, in order to address the online challenge which was intensified during the period of pandemic: THINK, BREAKFAST BRAINS, STREAM and now WORK LAB and THE EXTRA-MILE areas. This year's concept took a step further with JOY-EMPOWER and THRIVE to energize delegates during the breaks, using interlude design to help members to remain connected, focussed and fresh although in front of a screen

several hours per day. The 36th IELA Congress is part of the IELA BACK TO BUSINESS programme. It was organised free of charge for all IELA Members and registered 348 delegates from 48 countries over the three days. This event is a mix of socializing, sharing knowledge, networking and strengthening business relationships among members. It is divided into 4 parts: Networking platform also prior to June 29th, the on-demand area pre-congress, the 3 day live Congress and the 30 day post event period until July 31st to continue networking and select sessions in the on-demand area.



As to the focus of the event, Elizabeth Niehaus, IELA Executive Officer explains "Why A BEGINNERS MIND? We need to shift our "old" perspective and open our minds,

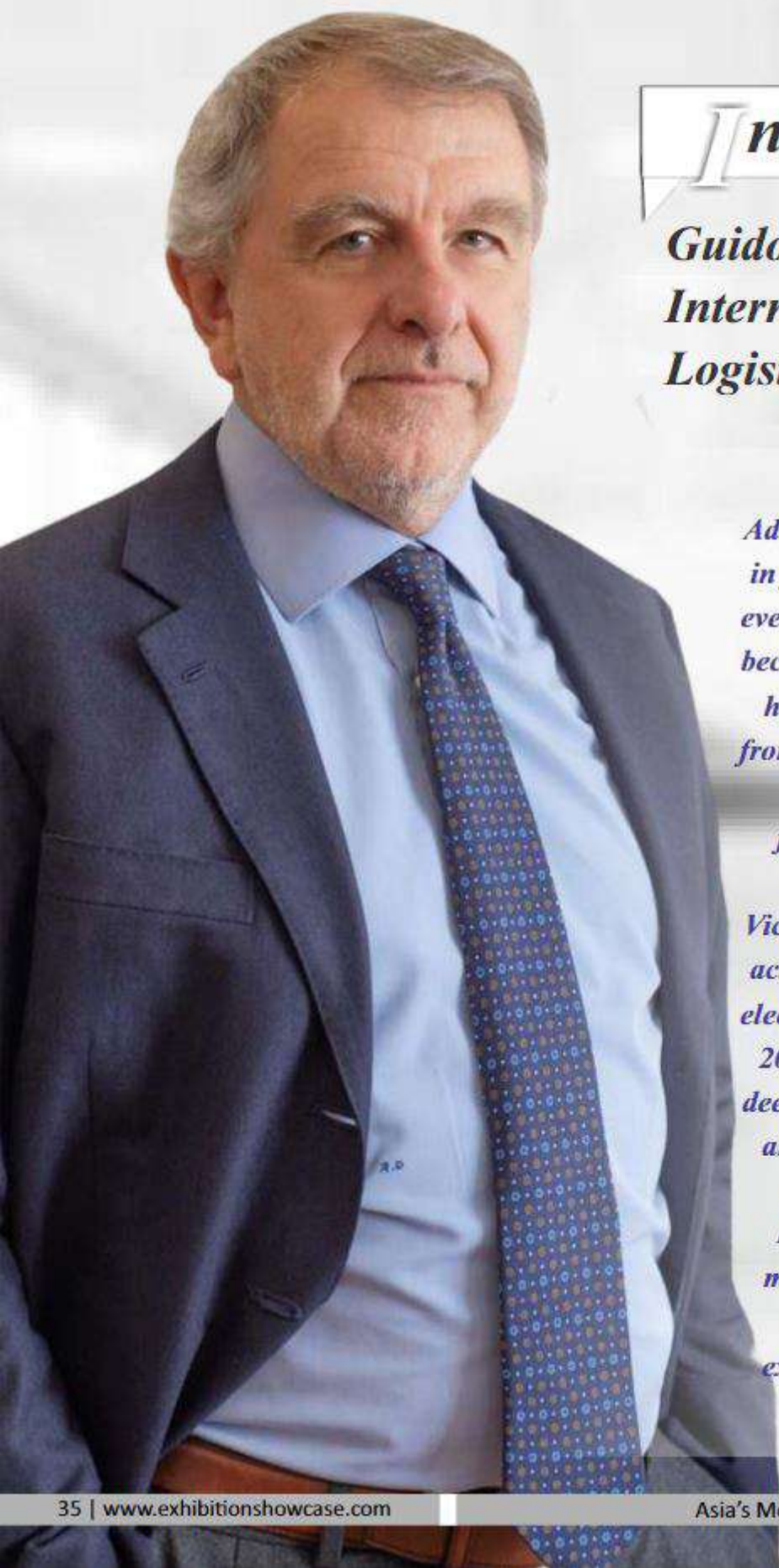
allowing ourselves to identify new territories with curiosity and open hearts. In this spirit, the online format gives our members areas and topics to explore to gain insights, obtain foresight and learn how to adjust course and reshape our future".

IELA Chairperson Guido confirms: "A Beginner's Mind is the only state of mind we need in order to face the NEW NOW. This means that we have to adapt and be more efficient. This Congress will look at new and disruptive actions to help us to reshape our future with the professional ethos of continuous improvement and life-long learning. In this spirit, this Congress will accompany all IELA members in building new outlooks, new paths to re-invent ourselves, thus harnessing new business opportunities".



Sandi Trotter, IELA Vice Chair & 36th Congress MC adds: "The last 18 months have been a time of

learning and a time to focus on the strength of our companies and our association. As we get back to business, it has never been more important to be an IELA member and benefit from all IELA has to offer. This IELA Congress is a MUST-ATTEND-EVENT, 100% funded by the association. The coming months will be tough, We still have a lot of hard work to do, but together, united, we can and will succeed".



## *In conversation with* **Guido Fornelli, Chairperson, International Exhibition Logistics Association (IELA)**

*Guido owns a degree in Business Administration and based his entire career in freight forwarding and exhibitions and events logistics within Expotrans, where he became Managing Director in 2005. Under his leadership, the Company has grown from 2 to 6 branches in Italy and 1 office in Moscow becoming official freight forwarder and handling contractor at Fiera Milano, Rimini Fiera, Fiera di Vicenza and Crocus Expo. He has been an active participant of IELA since 1992 and elected Member of the Board of IELA from 2003 to 2008. Meanwhile, he has always deeply supported the Association's life also as a member or chairperson of different working committees. His Specialties: International business, Organization, marketing, problem solving and logistic solutions. His valuable insights on exhibition industry and role of IELA in post covid era :*

**ES.** Please introduce us to your organisation, its legacy and the services that you provide.

**Guido Fornelli.** Expotrans is a 30 year old Italian freight forwarder with core businesses in shipments and logistics for exhibitions, congresses, live events and fine arts movements - in a few words, everything about time critical deliveries. Our mission is to provide excellence as a standard for our services offered to customers. For this reason our efforts are always oriented towards accurately training our staff and finding hi-tech solutions for event logistics. We offer our clients all-in services from collection to delivery of goods to the event location, wherever necessary. We can provide every kind of service related to shipments and logistics: packing, insurance, booking of transportation, communication with our international Partners in the arrival Country, etc.

We are an official freight forwarder and logistics operator in some of the most important exhibition grounds in Italy (Fiera Milano, Rimini Fiera, Fiera di Vicenza and Fiere di Parma). Expotrans is naturally devoted to internationality: in 2008 we opened our branch in Moscow and within a few years, we have become the official freight forwarder at Crocus Expo. Expotrans Singapore is the latest newly-born company we established at the end of 2020 together with Priscilla Leong, who is a well-known professional of our industry, with a strong focus on digital applications development in the exhibition logistic industry.

**ES.** Please tell us about the major shows that you have handled.

**Guido Fornelli.** Expotrans before the pandemic was used



IELA Operations Summit 2018 Training event for Operations Staff

to work on approx 1.000 shows yearly both as on-site agent in Italy and abroad, mainly carrying all "Made in Italy" products. It's difficult to rank the most important ones. I would say for me as an individual it has been particularly exciting to handle all the Telecom Shows in Geneva during the 90's, later the big machinery shows in Milan such as EMO, ITMA, Plast IpackIma and last but not least the "classic" aerospace most well-known events Farnborough and Paris Air show.

**ES.** Can you relate one incidence where you or your team handled crisis situation on the site of an event successfully?

**Guido Fornelli.** Working on the largest exhibition grounds and having thirty years of experience, we have developed a great ability to predict and avoid problems. Of course, this capability is not always sufficient to avoid critical situations. Just to mention one of the latest examples, we had many problems, just like all freight forwarders around the world, when a cargo ship ran aground in the Suez Canal in late March 2021, creating chain delays for all waiting vessels.

To get the goods of one of our customers who had to exhibit at the Xiamen Stone Fair to arrive on time, we removed the container already introduced in the port (which had therefore already undergone the export customs formalities), brought it to our warehouse and booked and boarded it on a last-minute flight to Xiamen. It was great teamwork and a great effort. We were rewarded by the satisfaction of the customer who managed to successfully participate in the exhibition.



IELA WINTER SEMINAR 2017 training event from newbies

**ES.** How has been your association with IELA and what role do you see for the association in the global exhibition industry?

**Guido Fornelli.** We started our company business in 1990 and joined IELA immediately in 1992. If I look at our company development, IELA has been for sure one of the crucial factors for our company growth along our 30 year history. It has been the platform where we have built all our strongest business relationships and where even today we share best practices with our partners and have the possibility to remain updated about our segment trends as well as those in the exhibition industry.

I'm sure IELA will continue playing a significant role in the future event industry as well as among major international associations.

**ES.** What are your comments on the IELA Congress and IELA events held annually?

**Guido Fornelli.** This year we tried really hard to come back to a physical congress but, as in most of the cases for events, we had to go digital. From the beginning of the pandemic, our secretariat has been incredibly efficient in supporting us to develop digital events to keep the spirit of

our members and partners high as well as continuing training activity. I must admit that even if I'm not a strong supporter of digital events, I was personally very happy about all our event results, particularly our congress which remains the strongest business platform for the exhibition logistic industry and today is attracting lots of personalities to discuss trends in the whole event industry.

This makes us particularly proud of the work we have been doing for so many years now to build bridges with all the other players in the industry.

**ES.** What according to you will be the top trends of the industry in upcoming one year?

**Guido Fornelli.** In short how to combine what we learned in terms of digital applications to events, a strong attention to the possibility of creating more attractive shows through efficiency, modularity and sustainability. Last but not least, making exhibitors feel the exhibition area is the safest place to be by introducing new solutions and very strict protocols.

**ES.** What have been the learnings from this global pandemic?

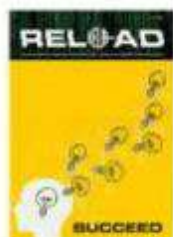


IELA CONGRESS 2019 Venice Host Dinner



11 WEEKS – 24 LIVE SESSIONS – 48.350 MINUTES

# HEIGHTENING RESILIENCE

**RELOAD** – The **INCUBATOR** for the **NEW NOW**


**Guido Fornelli.** The COVID-19 pandemic completely caught us and the entire exhibition industry by surprise. It was (and still is) a long period for questioning, reasoning and studying strategies. We have learned not to take anything for granted and to try to predict even the unpredictable. We also had the proof that our members' commitment to quality over the years has helped in maintaining contacts with our customers even during the worst period of the pandemic. It was natural that they considered new solutions together with their clients for the restart of exhibitions.

**ES.** How have you evolved your services to suit the new normal?

**Guido Fornelli.** First things first: human health and safety are the top priorities. IELA worked quickly to create guidelines to prevent COVID during on-site operations and all of us individually implemented procedures within our own offices and the venues where we work.

**ES.** What is your view on the role of technology in our industry?

**Guido Fornelli.** Technology will play a very important role in the "new now", not only to create new event concepts, but also to create, as I stated earlier, a safer more efficient and sustainable environment on-site. I'm sure a lot of complex but also smaller digital applications will arise

which will dramatically change logistics activity in the years to come, thanks to what we can now implement with AI and IoT.

**ES.** What would be your message to the industry?

**Guido Fornelli.** Quoting Elizabeth Niehaus, the IELA unstoppable Executive Officer, the exhibition and event industry is a truly global industry made of resilient, creative and strong people. The Human Factor is the answer to all new threats. The Exhibition Industry showed a great sense of awareness, building bridges between the different actors on stage. I think we are going in the right direction by creating alliances within the industry. This will make us stronger in the future! Let's remain confident. We are already receiving positive feedback that physical exhibitions will be back to play a central role in pushing the global economy.



## *In Conversation With Sudhir Dhavan, CEO, RE Rogers India*



**ES.** You have been in the industry for over 24 years. Please shed some light on your journey from heading the sales and operations teams to CEO of R.E Rogers India?

**Sudhir Dhavan.** The foundation for any career begins in the corridors of academia. I am a Science graduate with a BSc degree from the University of Pune followed by post-graduation in Business Management. I have passed Customs First Category Exam for G-Card in 1997 and hold the 'Customs Pass.' Specific to the MICE field; I have an Exhibition Management Degree from UFI and a Certified Exhibition Management Degree from IAEE.

My journey in the events and exhibition industry commenced in 1996, which is precisely 25 years ago, so this is actually my silver jubilee year career-wise. Starting out in this Industry as a Sales Executive, the first show site I witnessed and you could describe as 'cut my teeth on' was that of F&B tech'1996 in Mumbai. Since that 'debut' event, I worked on many shows, held on myriad sites. I learned about the intricacies of exhibition logistics during International and domestic shows while traveling to show sites spread across the globe. My stint at R. E. Rogers India commenced in May 2010 when I joined the firm as "Country Head -Sales and Marketing". Three years later, I was designated "Country Head - Sales & Operations". In year 2018, I was elevated to CEO of the company. Over the years spent in this industry and especially those at R. E. Rogers India, I have gained immense skills in Marketing Management, Negotiation, Budgeting, Event Planning, and Market Planning.

Networking and connecting with people, establishing and maintaining relationships is very important in this industry and I have been very particular while interacting with Organisers, Exhibitors, Venue Authorities, and other stakeholders, ensuring that I reach out to them to the best of my ability. While my journey in the events and exhibitions industry has been thoroughly enjoyable right from beginning, I must highlight the fact that working under the leadership of Mr. Ravinder Sethi was an altogether different experience. Though his training processes are most difficult and challenging, this phase will always be extremely close to my heart. I am now doubly sure that leadership makes a difference to the growth of an organisation and to the individual working for the organisation as well.



**ES.** Can you give us a brief overview of R.E. Rogers India?

**Sudhir Dhavan.** R.E. Rogers India (RERI) is the market leader and provider of value added logistics solutions to the Exhibition, Defence, Sports Entertainment Industries and Free Trade Zone Services. RERI is an ISO 9001-2015, ISO 14001-2015, ISO 20121-2012, OHSAS 18001- 2007, ISO - 20121, AEO-LO certified company. It has handled more than 150 events a year till February 2020; with one exception - Aero India 2021 during pandemic probably the first International Trade show in the world. Incorporated in 1986, the company has its own infrastructure, including a fleet of equipment, machinery, vehicles and warehouses, in all strategic locations in India. The company works for almost all major organizers in India, and it is also empanelled with the TIPO, as well as other major venues in India. RERI is a member of leading industry associations including UFI, IAEE, IEIA, IEIA, AFECA, IATA, etc.

The business strategy that was modified while adapting to the 'new normal' during the pandemic has expanded our business in supply chain verticals.

**ES.** Can you tell us a bit about your work in this industry that led to you winning the FACES OF IEIA AWARDS 2020?

**Sudhir Dhavan.** To begin with, the award was a great initiative as we have no core business on due to the pandemic. During such a time, one who contributed to his organisation and industry - of course, with the help of team members -

deserved to be awarded as Face of IEIA' 2020.

When there was a global hit with zero exhibitions, RE Rogers was no exception. Our immediate action plan was to 1) Ensure the health and safety of our colleagues and loved ones 2) Enhance alternate revenue streams from other verticals since 90% of our revenues had come to a halt; and 3) Master the art of Work from Home (WFH). First things first, we formed a Core Group to implement our action plans. I was given the task to spearhead it. The end result today, is a story of survival to success. I would want to underline that though I spearheaded the Core Group, I could only succeed with the strong support of the entire Rogers Family. A special mention must be made of Sushil Upadhyay, our COO, Manoj Kumar, our Defence head, Mrs. Kiran Sethi who was both a professional and spiritual guide, and of course, Mr. Ravinder Sethi who was the ROCK behind us.

As everyone is aware, we have always been very strong supporters of IEIA. In these pandemic times also, we decided to do more. I therefore took on the Chair of Education and Training Working Group. Our results of the last year and our future plans speak for themselves. Here also, I could only succeed with the strong support of my colleagues. A special mention of my Vice Chair Ute, our 'go-to-persons' Alexandra, Elizabeth, Ludvine, and Yannis, who were there for me 24/7; and lastly our dear Chairman Guido, for his guidance and moral support. So for me, if I am the "Face of IEIA," then my Rogers Family & IEIA colleagues are the key pillars.

**ES.** How has R.E. Rogers managed in bringing back the business on track? How has the crisis situation post the pandemic shake up your thinking and upgraded your impact for extraordinary success?





**Sudhir Dhavan.** The mission was to immediately convert our team of exhibition logistic specialists to other verticals. Alternate revenue streams were needed, which in turn, would ensure a healthy financial company post pandemic. The challenges were how to generate revenue streams from general freight logistics rarely used before the lockdown and how to earn a profit margin when every general freight customer was also facing a financial crunch.

- Impact for Extraordinary Success consists of following plans and action
- Exhibitions are bound to reopen and our footprints have to remain in the industry
- Compile a new data list on clients, vendors, agents, and business resources.
- Form new business alliances in India with "Competitors" to "Survive through Co-operation."
- Coordinate with Indian and overseas exhibition organizers for their customers' business during pandemic times.
- Snitiate a 'Recovery Drive' to collect old and difficult receivables

**ES:** How has the IEIA helped you overcome the crisis?

**Sudhir Dhavan.** During the pandemic, post March

'2020, IEIA had come out with lot of good initiatives like IEIA RELOAD, which was like a recovery programme of ideas for the future, spreading the fighting spirit to empower IEIA members to succeed in the 'new normal,' anticipating and rebounding by limiting losses and boosting strengths in profitable service areas followed by 'Get future ready,' 'Together Strong,' 'Tail Wind' and our usual programmes of Operations Summit'2020 and Winter Seminar'2021. These programmes really helped in connecting with right approaches and they provided a lot of networking opportunities as well. So here's a big 'Thank You' to IEIA, for conceptualising such good initiatives.

**ES:** What challenges do you face while executing your role as CEO of R. E. Rogers India? What are the SOPs that you follow to perform?



**Sudhir Dhavan.** I have a greater responsibility to lead the company and channelize the organisation's foothold in the industry by using all my past experience and expertise in the exhibition logistics management. When I had started out in my role as CEO, the very first challenge I took up was vigorous trainings for staff members at all levels, where it was important to boost confidence, enhance knowledge, and to ensure that everyone understands the concept of multi-tasking. Also important, was identifying those which need the right kind of support. The second challenge was to find out people with the right potential in operations and improve them so that they could be promoted to be independent and ensure in-houses clearances.

Next challenge was to convert our team of exhibition logistics specialist to other verticals. Then, we had to create alternate revenue streams, especially post March '2020. It was important to promote solution-based verticals to clients, which will give multiple benefits to organisers as well as clients.

**ES.** On a personal note, we are curious to know what keeps you busy when you are away from work?

**Sudhir Dhavan.** I have always enjoyed connecting with industry colleagues when I am away from work and that is right from the beginning itself. Many of them are my mentors today and it has really been great learning from them. Apart from this, I liked to spend time with my family members. My hobby is related to music, where I have interactions with age-old friends for a long time.

**ES.** What piece of advice you like to give to industry people to get success in life?

**Sudhir Dhavan.** If somebody wants to get into this industry, they have to first do their homework well and only then take the final decision. They can also participate in various academic programmes from UFI and IAEE for more knowledge. Newcomers should do their research on various aspects of events and exhibitions, not only about logistics. The mantra to get success in life is to be lenient, always ready to learn and be consistent in chasing what needs to be achieved.

**ES.** What is your USP? How are you different from other companies in the same space?

**Sudhir Dhavan.** Our USP is mainly our team. We call it the RER family, whose members are our strength and we look up to them as our extended arms to reach out to the customer's needs. Their contribution, unconditional support and 'ready to face challenges'

nature is always encouraging and has led to best result approaches. The competition within our industry in India is really tough. Every day, to be a leader in this industry, you need to change your strategy, have patience enough to study your competitors' movements, keep track of the technology and new trends, etc. We really need to make continuous improvement in our efforts to give our customers a 'variety service'.

**ES.** What do you foresee in the logistics sector in the next few years? What would be the top 3 trends of the industry?

**Sudhir Dhavan.** Based on observations and analysis, I envisage that technology-based operations will be seen more effectively post COVID-19. Online documentation with various government authorities has made a lot of difference as compared to the manual submissions, including government audits. Water transport development will be the key to cut down bigger transit and be popular as one of the sustainable modes of transport. Skilled workers will be in demand. Moreover, training to make workers skilled will be recognised to a greater extent. In-house services will be more in demand rather than subcontracting, as customers would like to have a single point of contact.



## *Exhibition Showcase Talks To Uttam Gupta, President, BIG Logistics India*

**ES.** Please introduce us to your organisation, its legacy and the accomplishments in your journey?

**Uttam Gupta.** At BIG LOGISTICS INDIA, our target is to provide all exhibition and event related services under single roof for all air, sea and road shipments. The services include - Freight forwarding, Customs Clearance, On-site and off-site warehousing, Transportation, on-site handling of all kinds of cargo, unpacking and re-packing. We have a core group of 37 members who head various departments, and cover regions throughout the world.

We take pride in the fact that all the core group members, having an experience of more than 20 years, have been together even longer than the history of our brand, and are

still growing strong together, carrying forward our values and mission. It remains important for our organization that the success of our business goes hand-in-hand with the development of our colleagues, and the growth of our valued partner agents/clients throughout the world. Our USP is that we fulfill our financial, quality of services and time bound commitments that we make to our partners under any circumstances, and at any cost.

This has been our success formula which has helped us to establish our brand with all the major organizers and partner agents throughout the world. Having company owned offices in all metro cities, along with Government of India approved Customs Broker license gives us the additional stability and strength that we need to handle exhibitions of all volumes and nature across all major and minor venues in India. You can leave your worries far behind once your cargo is in our hands, for we very well understand the needs and demands of exhibitors throughout the world!

**ES.** Please tell us about the major shows that you have handled?

**Uttam Gupta.** INDEF shows (the latest one being INDEF Bangladesh 2020), IESS shows (latest one being IESS Chennai 2019), all editions of Cphi-Pmec India, Garment Technology Expo, Renewable Energy Shows, Hannover Messe, SATTE, FI India, Concrete India, INDEX, INNOPROM, OSH, Pharmalytica, INDIA BIG 7, Pharma Pro&Pack, Asia Pharma Expo, Auto Shows, Engineering Machinery Shows, Defense Shows.

**ES.** Can you relate one incidence where you or your team handled crisis situation on the site of an event successfully?

**Uttam Gupta.** Being Exhibition Logistics Agents, such situations are aplenty in our line of work. However, one such situation in which we take personal pride in the Bahrain International Show of 2014. We received special request from DRDO (Defense Research and Development Organization), to handle their exhibits under returnable basis in an extremely short time frame. The whole project was done in direct coordination with the Government of India & India's Defense departments, with daily updates. We received an official appreciation letter from the then Joint-Director of DRDO for the professional and efficient way in which the project was completed.





**ES.** How has been your association with IEIA and what role do you see for the association in the global exhibition industry?

**Uttam Gupta.** Though short, but our association with IEIA has been extremely fulfilling, both emotionally and professionally. It is platform not just for networking and finding quality partners throughout the world, but also a great place to make friends with people having varied cultures, but having similar areas of interests. It helps us to understand the world better, and in making it a better place to live. IEIA plays a pivotal role in the global exhibition industry. Be it organizing seminars, events or keynote speakers, it is one platform which helps us in keeping updated with whatever is happening throughout the world in the exhibition industry, and also acts a mouth for the complete international body comprising of the Logistics Agents in the exhibition world. Above all, it generates trust, which is must in our line of work. Working with an IEIA member means working with a partner on whom you can rely with your eyes closes.

**ES.** What are your comments on the IEIA Congress and IEIA events held annually?

**Uttam Gupta.** IEIA's Congress, and other annual events, act as a great place to meet people with whom we already work, or want to work, on prestigious projects. It helps in attaching a face to the email-ids with whom we communicate on numerous mails. It helps us to know more about our partner friends, in addition to work. Apart from this, there are huge learnings which come out of these events, especially the Winter Seminars and the Operations Summits - which includes various details on Customs practices in different countries.

**ES.** What according to you will be the top trends in the exhibition logistics industry in upcoming one year?

**Uttam Gupta.** There can only be one answer to this - HYBRID EVENTS. Though we believe none of the members of IEIA would want to digest this fact, but it is

already a reality. On the positive side, it can act as a push for our industry, and give a much-needed thrust to exhibitions. Hybrid events are better than no events at all. Once the industry gathers confidence, we can make some efforts to get back to physical exhibitions (which is already happening in some regions). hybrid events might just be the catalyst which we need.

**ES.** How have you evolved your services to suit the new normal?

**Uttam Gupta.** Yes, and no. As a company, we have tried to never dilute our services. Though this has been an unprecedented situation, but there has been instance in the past (on a much smaller scales) which affect exhibitions. We have held on to our core set of skills and services through thick and thin. However, as has been the need of our fellow countrymen during the COVID era, we have been open to work on permanent import and export of medical and other essential items. It is a matter of giving back to our nation in the need of hour.

**ES.** What are your upcoming events in pipeline?

**Uttam Gupta.** The answer to this question would be very short for most of the logistics agents in the Indian subcontinent, as the situation here is still complicated. Though markets in the west, some parts of Europe, China and the Middle-east have eased, but it remains to be seen how smooth it would be for an Indian participant to travel to these regions. One of the major and realistic projects to which we are looking forward is Cphi-Pmec India 2021.

**ES.** Any message for the exhibition logistics community?

**Uttam Gupta.** There is not much that can be said, as everyone in the logistics fraternity is already giving their best shot to survive, and to win over this situation. But as always, it remains of paramount importance to stick together, support each other, in order to be together strong. This seems to be the only way to defeat this pandemic.

## Exhibition Showcase Talks To Anamitra Mukherjee, General Manager, Head Fairs Events and Special Logistics at DB Schenker India



**ES.** Please introduce us to your organization, its legacy and the major accomplishments to your organization's credit.

**Anamitra Mukherjee.** At DB Schenker in India, we offer a complete range of International Air and Ocean Freight, Land Transportation, Contract Logistics, Fairs & Exhibitions, and global supply chain solutions from a single source. We have around 35 offices and over 51 warehouses covering more than 3.1 million sq. ft. of warehousing space. We serve our customers with end-to-end logistics solutions across the world. India is a priority market for DB Schenker globally and as part of its commitment, the company is aggressively focusing on developing local logistics capabilities to simplify supply chain processes for customers across various verticals like automotive, healthcare, automotive, retail & consumer, industrial, electronics and aerospace. DB Schenker in India has a customer base of 1800+ across these sectors. We are the logistics partner of FIPO, BIEC, TNTPO, CH, FIGSI etc. We were also awarded 2nd prize in the IEIA SPARK 2021 contest and certified as a Great Place to Work.

**ES.** Please tell us about the major shows that you have handled in India.

**Anamitra Mukherjee.** We are providing customized

solutions for all kinds of outbound exhibitions for Indian exporters & exhibitors catering to various sectors and verticals. DB Schenker in India has been handling various exhibitions events in the past like EXCON, STONA, Auto Expo Component, IILF etc. Over 100 exhibitions & events have been handled by us in the last five years as an official freight handling agent in India.

**ES.** Can you relate one incidence where you or your team handled crisis situation on the site of an event successfully?

**Anamitra Mukherjee.** Exhibition logistics is a time-bound service and at the same time, we need to ensure health and safety standards for all parties involved. There have been various events in the past but one such was EXCON 2019, which was one of our great experiences in India, especially to manage heavy lifting and placement of some exhibits during late evening for some days. It is always a pleasure to deliver expectations despite a crisis and see the happy faces of customers.

**ES.** How has been your association with IEIA and what role do you see for the association in the global exhibition industry?

**Anamitra Mukherjee.** DB Schenker's exhibition division globally is a part of IEIA for decades and our teams are fully involved in various initiatives taken by IEIA to provide a best-in-class experience for organizers, venues, and exhibitors. IEIA is also working on the health and safety standards for a long time apart from and encouraging digital solutions and taking the exhibition industry in the right direction during these pandemic times.

**ES.** What are your comments on the IEIA Congress and IEIA events held annually?

**Anamitra Mukherjee.** It is a great platform to meet industry colleagues, competitors and our IEIA partners. During IEIA's yearly congress and partnering events, different working groups also share their initiatives and experience to align with the global exhibition logistics community and understand new initiatives and technologies.

**ES.** What according to you will be the top trends in the exhibition logistics industry in upcoming one year?



**Anamitra Mukherjee.** We strongly believe that physical exhibitions will come back soon. While coming back the digital solutions to optimize resource allocation as well as to enhance customer experience will play a key role. We at DB Schenker in India are ready with such solutions and platforms and the same is being used across our global organization as well with positive feedback.

**ES. How have you evolved your services to suit the new normal?**

**Anamitra Mukherjee.** To keep the supply chain resilient during the pandemic, we at DB Schenker in India have introduced initiatives across products like Air freight, Ocean Freight & Warehousing. Apart from these we are also focusing on Exhibition Logistics, Clearance under BG / FTWZ / ATA Carnet, Freight insurance, Digital Site Management Platforms, Land Bridge and Industrial packing services at exhibition/event onsite. While managing this we are also imparting training on Health & Safety, First Aids etc. for all site management staff. We started with our Global Flight operations in early 2020 to overcome capacity shortages and peak demand from varied industries during the global outbreak of the COVID-19 crisis.

We are now strengthening our charter services and expansion of Global Flight operations which will be vital for us. Post introducing weekly charters connecting India to Frankfurt and Atlanta (FRA-BOM-FRA-ATL), Chennai to Munich and Chicago (MUC-MAA-MUC-ORD), we plan to launch our 3rd direct flight services in 2021 as well. Further,

as the pandemic has moved the logistics companies to get ready for a digitally connected and integrated supply chain, we have strengthened our digital offerings for customers in India with solutions like connect 4 air and ocean, e-schenker etc. We are also ready with our new site management digital platform for logistics and freight movements, which in turn will be implemented soon. The undertaken initiatives are a strategic move to maintain the strong supply chain in these unprecedented times which further demonstrates the benefit to customers as well as the industry.

**ES. What are your upcoming events in pipeline?**

**Anamitra Mukherjee.** In these pandemic times, the most important for DB Schenker in India is the readiness in terms of training of manpower to handle onsite "new normal situation" and overall awareness within team and service partners for which we are committed already. There are many upcoming events for which we are working but our key focus will remain on shows like upcoming IREE, STONA, PLASTINDIA etc. apart from exhibitions in BIEC, FIPO, BEC, NEC, HITEX, TNTPO etc.

**ES. Any message for the exhibition logistics community?**

**Anamitra Mukherjee.** We are focusing on our team members, their professional development, and trainings etc. as they are our biggest assets and ambassadors for our industry. Secondly, we all must focus on our suppliers, they are equally important for our ecosystem and we need to take care of them as well - in terms of regular training, awareness, and new normal SOPs.