

Press Release: Thursday 6th December 2018

Senior Executives and Industry Experts Attend ConnectTalk Rome to Discuss Pressing Industry Issues

Event sponsored by Turespaña Tackles Overtourism and Addresses Ways to build a better-connected journey for Travellers

Last week saw a number of senior Executives and industry experts travel to Rome to attend ConnectTalk Rome to meet and discuss a number of pressing industry issues including Overtourism and finding ways to build a better-connected journey for luxury travellers.

The one-day event supported by Turespaña and hosted in Rocco Forte Hotel de Russie took place in the form of open-floor panel discussions followed by networking opportunities, the 'Connections Way' before concluding with a drinks reception at the hotel.

The first panel hosted by Head of Strategic Marketing for Airlines for Amadeus IT Group: "How to build a better-connected journey for travellers", discussed ways in which the industry can collaborate to better service travellers throughout their journey.

The key themes from this panel discussion were:

- The complex relationship between breaching regulations and providing a tailor made travel experience because only data that reflects certain criteria can now be used and you can also no longer store data for longer than five years
- We are all creating data all of the time, but the consumer should always be ultimately the one that benefits and the correct use of data can enable a more personalised marketing approach for customers
- Social media and it's role in delivering a better-connected journey for travellers

The second panel discussion tackling "Overtourism" comprised Jorge Rubio Navarro, Head of Turespaña Italy, who shared insight into how Spain is tackling overtourism, Mauro Bernardin, Owner and Managing Director of All Star Agency, Michela Talatino, Director of BEON's Italy Office and Rose Dykins, journalist for Connections,

who shared feedback from the overtourism session that took place at Connections Luxury earlier on in the year.

After a 25-minute panel discussion, moderated by David Benitez, Head of Business Development MICE for Connections, an interactive roundtable discussion session took place, inviting buyers to discuss their ideas around how to manage overtourism.

The key outcomes from this panel discussion were:

- Meeting, event and incentive buyers emphasised that honest communication with DMCs about the busyness of popular locations is essential. It's also important to know how crowded destinations are at different points throughout the year – and whether what they experience during a site visit is a true reflection of how crowded a destination will be during an event several months later.
- Buyers shared their strategies for hosting events and incentives in destinations that experience overtourism – such as finding ways to spread delegates out within a city, or host events in interesting destinations outside the city centre. Some suggested considering "secondary cities" over tourist hotspots, as this allows for more exclusive use of venues and spaces.
- Overtourism has been a hot topic this year, with Spanish cities being among the most active in the backlash. Jorge Rubio, director of Turespaña, shared the nation's strategies for tackling overtourism – mentioning Palma's ban on holiday private rentals, and Barcelona's ban on segway tours. He also described how Spain is focusing its marketing efforts on attracting the right kind of traveller, taking a "quality over quantity" approach, and targeting culturally-minded travellers who spend more and engage more with Spain's art, history and cuisine.

For more information about Connections, visit www.weareconnections.com

To view images of the event, click [here](#).

-Ends-

Issued by:

Pamela Badham
FOUR PR & Marketing
T: 07825 567808
E: Pamela@four-pr.com

Note to editors:

About Connections:

Connections is the global networking and event organiser exclusively for senior executives and experts in specific sectors such as Luxury, Wellness, Adventure and Meetings as well as destination led events, bespoke to specific countries.

They bring a selected number of handpicked leaders from the industry together to do business and to discuss the trends and challenges facing the marketplace. Decision makers meet through memorable experiences that lead to meaningful and long-lasting business relationships.

The buyers attending are senior decision makers representing the finest global agencies and operators in their field. Our programme inspires and educates buyers, which equips them to enhance their client's experiences and build on their bottom line.

The suppliers are only the best companies around the globe; these include hotels, DMCs and destinations.