



The Informed Meetings Exchange (INMEX) Launches With the Support of Over 100 Organizations

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More than 100 subscribers representing approximately \$200 million in annual direct hotel expenditures formally announce the creation of the Informed Meetings Exchange (INMEX). INMEX is an organization that researches, analyzes and distributes information about the global hospitality industry to subscribers. INMEX is a clearinghouse of information, services and best practices for consumers in the meetings market. At its launch on June 28, INMEX subscribers already represent some of the largest and most highly-respected associations and organizations in the LGBT, African-American, Latino, Academic, non-profit and labor communities.

"We can't take for granted the power of our organizations' dollars in the hospitality industry, and how those dollars affect communities of color in a very concrete way," said Julian Bond, Chairman of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. "We want to ensure that our money is spent in a way that is consistent with our organizational values and priorities. INMEX will allow all of our organizations to be more informed consumers before we book our next meetings and conventions. By giving us concrete information on potential labor disputes, strikes, boycotts or upcoming negotiations, our organizations are kept in the loop. As a result, our meetings and conventions will have a higher likelihood of success."

"As a civil rights organization committed to equality and justice, we are excited about the opportunity INMEX provides," said Matt Foreman, Executive Director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "The LGBT community spends billions of dollars every year in the hospitality industry. With INMEX, we are going to be able to make more informed choices about which hotel companies we chose to do business with. Additionally, by joining INMEX with so many key national organizations - many of which conduct several meetings a year, we can exchange ideas and suggestions on best practices and our experiences with different hotels and cities."

Cecilia Munoz, Vice President of the National Council of La Raza, agrees that the impact of their organization's meetings conventions dollars makes them a key consumer in the hospitality industry. "We have approximately 20,000 people participate in our annual conference each year. That translates into millions in economic impact to a destination city. Most of the people that make our conventions successful are the men and women who clean our rooms, serve our food and prepare our meals. We have to make sure that they are getting a fair share of our meeting dollars, as well as safe workplaces and respect. And that's the beauty of INMEX; this is a service that provides us key information about how the hotel industry treats its workers and its customers, so that we can make responsible business decisions that affect our members in a positive way."

John Wilhelm, President of the Hospitality Division of UNITE HERE, which is the Union that helped launch INMEX, sees this as an opportunity to speak to a broad audience about issues that are important to the industry in a unique and meaningful way. "The organizations here represent the most lucrative, consistent and highly sought after customer segment in the hospitality industry. The largest global hotel corporations, like Hilton for instance, rely on meeting and convention business from groups like these for approximately one-third of their annual revenue. INMEX is a useful tool for all organizations to ensure they have the most accurate information about the hotel industry before they book meetings and events."

"The hotel industry has realized record profits in the last few years, and I think our groups are beginning to understand that global hotel corporations rely on our groups' business to sustain those profits," said John Stephens, Executive Director of the American Studies Association and Board Chair of INMEX. "Subscribers will use INMEX to help them make more informed decisions about where and how they spend their highly coveted meetings and conventions dollars. With this type of transparency and

information exchange, all of us can ensure that the dollars we spend have a positive impact on hotel workers lives and the communities they live in."