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A New Year for Trade Shows! As everyone starts to review their calendars to plan for family vacations, business trips, and new travel, the industry is gearing up for another successful “year to remember” for all trade show attendees. I recently read an article from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority that reviewed upticks in Las Vegas visitation and convention attendance. It states: “Last year was a good one for Las Vegas, according to the Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority’s recently released 2016 Executive Summary.

Driven by strong demand in both the leisure and convention segments, the city experienced another record-breaking year for convention attendance and visitation. For the third year in a row, Las Vegas broke its visitation record, welcoming 42.9 million people to the destination, a 1.5% increase compared with 2015, while nearly 22,000 meetings attracted more than 6.3 million attendees to the city, a 7.1 percent increase compared to the year before. In addition, citywide hotel occupancy climbed to 89 percent, an increase of 1.4 percent compared with 2015.

Continued strength among large trade shows and notable increases in small to medium-sized conventions largely contributed to the sizable boost in event participation, with 2017 on track to be another strong year for trade shows and tourism, according to Chris Meyer, LVCVA vice president of global business sales. *‘Las Vegas is already demonstrating strength in the 2017 convention calendar year with the inclusion of large-scale shows like AHR Expo and CONEXPO-CON/AGG, which did not take place in the destination in 2016,’* Meyer said. He continued, *‘We anticipate steady growth in visitation and that’s because Las Vegas is not a destination that rests on its laurels. Our industry and resort partners are constantly evolving to meet the needs of our visitors and deliver on the business experience that is synonymous with our city’s reputation.’*

Last year also showed Las Vegas making great strides to maintain its more than two-decade-long reign as North America’s No. 1 trade show destination, most notably with the passage of Nevada legislation that paves the way for development of the [Las Vegas Convention Center District \(LVCCD\)](#).

The massive revamp and redesign project will add 600,000 square feet of exhibit space, new meeting rooms and other amenities, as well as the renovation of the entire LVCC property.

In January, the LVCVA celebrated the completion of phase one of the LVCCD campus with the unveiling of the Diamond Lot, a new 26-acre parking and outdoor exhibition space. *‘In recent years, our trade show customers have expressed a need for growth, evolution*

and innovation at the Las Vegas Convention Center, and our destination has taken aggressive action to accommodate those interests,’ Meyer said.

He continued, *‘The decision to move forward with the LVCCD demonstrated a great deal of community support and forward-thinking leadership in recognizing the far-reaching impact this project has on the future of Southern Nevada’s economy. The LVCCD truly represents more than just a project to benefit the convention center, it’s an investment for the entire industry and our destination.’*

The destination wasn’t alone in enjoying a strong 2016. Many large trade shows that call Las Vegas home boasted record-breaking attendance last year, including CES, InfoComm International, ISC West, SuperZoo, World of Concrete and RECon.”

To read the full LVCVA 2016 Executive Summary, go to: <http://www.lvcva.com/includes/content/images/media/docs/ES-Dec-2016.pdf>

As you can see from these excerpts, Las Vegas is booming and making many changes to make trade show attendees’ experience superior to anywhere else they may attend. I can only say the **WPMAEXPO** has the same goals in mind, and we are committed to Las Vegas since our beginning in 1953. WPMA is striving to give our attendees and Marketer and Associate members an experience they will not forget. This year was one of our best, with a great trade show, outstanding speaker line-up with a lot of take home information, and the best sponsors and attendees yet! We will see you February 19 – 21, 2019 at the Mirage Hotel and Event Center.

