

TORONTO SETS NEW RECORD FOR NUMBER OF CITYWIDE CONFERENCES HOSTED IN 2018

Major new conference also announced for 2019

TORONTO, December 13, 2018 – Tourism Toronto and its meetings, conferences and events unit Business Events Toronto, announced today that 26 citywide conventions were held in 2018 – a new record for the number of citywide conventions held in a single year. The total tops the previous record of 18 citywide conferences set in 2017.

“The record number of citywide conferences speaks to Toronto’s place as the hub for innovation, technology, finance and business within Canada,” said Johanne Bélanger, President and CEO of Tourism Toronto. “Our team at Business Events Toronto taps into Toronto’s strength in these key economic sectors and uses the vibrancy of Canada’s Downtown to attract these major events to the region.”

Tourism Toronto defines a citywide convention or event as one that consumes 1,100 hotel rooms on peak night, a minimum of two hotels for delegates, and the use of a convention centre or event complex.

“Business events are a thriving and vital part of our tourism industry that contributes \$33 billion in direct spending in Canada, directly employs 229,000 people and \$19 billion of GDP,” said Heidi Welker, Chair of Meetings Means Business Canada. “Great things happen when people come together, whether in a meeting room, on a convention floor, or out experiencing a destination. Our industry within Canada and in Toronto excel at bringing people together in an exceptional way.”

Following the success of citywide conferences in 2018, the momentum continues into next year. Tourism Toronto is pleased to announce that [Jehovah’s Witnesses](#) will be hosting their 2019 international convention in Toronto, bringing an expected 45,000 delegates. That convention joins other meetings and events secured for 2019 including [MPI’s World Education Congress \(WEC\)](#) – the signature event for meeting professionals. WEC gives Toronto the opportunity to showcase itself to the professionals planning meetings, conferences and events across the globe.

Toronto as a Host Destination for Meetings, Conferences, Sports and Events

In 2018, Toronto was named Canada's top convention destination by [Cvent](#), and consistently ranks among the top five in North America. Toronto was also among the top-ranked destinations selected by meeting planners in the 2018 Watkins Report, which rates the most positive overall experience for major conventions in North America.

Toronto offers planners a destination that is open, diverse and safe - a city that blends the best of Canadian inclusiveness with iconic events, attractions, restaurants, culture and festivals. The region, as Canada’s Downtown, is home to North America’s second largest financial services centre, third largest technology sector and the country’s largest combined life-sciences sector, providing access to industry thought-leaders and businesses driving innovation in their field.

PRESS RELEASE



2018 Business Events Highlights:

The banner year for Business Events Toronto include direct service support for 1,025 events hosted in 2018 including citywide conferences. Those meetings represented 500,208 delegates and an economic spend of \$565 million.

Some of the key conferences, meetings and events that took place in 2018 included:

- NU SKIN China – May 2018 (4,000 delegates)
- Pediatric Academic Societies – May 2018 (9,100 delegates)
- VMWare – May 2018 (4,050 delegates)
- Rotary International Convention – June 2018 (24,000 delegates)
- Enterprise World 2018 – OpenText – July 2018 (4,000 delegates)
- Primerica Canadian Convention – July 2018 (7,000 delegates)
- 19th World Conference on Lung Cancer – September 2018 (7,500 delegates)
- Cyber Security Connect East (Palo Alto Networks) – September 2018 (3,515 delegates)
- Family Medicine Forum – November 2018 (3,000 delegates)

ABOUT TOURISM TORONTO

Business Events Toronto is the meetings, conferences and events unit of Tourism Toronto – the official destination marketing organization for the region, “Canada’s Downtown” – encompassing Toronto, Mississauga and Brampton. With sales and marketing programs in key markets around the world, Tourism Toronto promotes the Toronto region as a remarkable destination for tourists, convention delegates and business travelers. Tourism Toronto operates in partnership with the City of Toronto, the Greater Toronto Hotel Association and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. For more information please visit SeeTorontoNow.com and businesseventstoronto.com.

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