



Connecting professionals around the world

International Practice Group, is an international network of independent firms, with a Secretariat, which meets clients' needs for legal, taxation and accountancy services throughout the world

Torino - a report on our most recent conference

Updates:

- Upcoming Bristol conference
- Website update
- Recruitment update

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On Friday 8 and Saturday 9 May 2009, the IPG held their Spring 2009 conference in the beautiful city of Torino, Italy.

This was a very important conference for the group. It was our first meeting since the merger of IPG and Picatrex. Therefore the success of the conference in mixing the new members was paramount. The membership rose to the occasion and attendance at the conference was a record turnout. We had 72 delegates representing 46 member firms present. Together with our hosts and the spouses of some of the members this came to slightly over 100 participants. It was felt by the Management Committee that the event was a total success. On behalf of all members the Management Committee express their gratitude for the efforts of Francesca Falbo and her colleagues from the law firm Comba e Associati in organising the conference.

The conference attendees assembled on the evening of Thursday 7 May 2009 at a local restaurant, the Arcano Matto, in the centre of the city. During the course of a typical Italian meal we were treated to a welcoming speech by Francesca and an excellent performance of opera and show tunes by Yana Kris, Joe Guyton and Marcelo Molina .

The delegates met again the following morning for the start of the official conference programme. We were greeted by Francesca and a brief introduction was made

by her and her colleague Emiliano Riba into the background and services provided by our hosts Comba e Associati.

We then had an interesting presentation by a guest speaker Marion Schiffner of the Before Group. Marion specialises in cross-cultural training to assist global organisations work effectively across different cultures. Following this we had a presentation by Dario Giordano of C5,6 Technology who explained how and why a US biotech company came to invest in the Torino-Milano area of Italy, highlighting the economic benefits and the academic skill-sets in the area. This was followed by a presentation by Paola Elia Morris, Executive Manager of the Invest in Torino Piemonte, Piemonte Agency, who deals with in-bound corporate investment into the region.

Finally in the morning we had a presentation by Martin Forster and Daniel Schwab of Banque Louis SA. Banque Louis SA is a new private bank based in Switzerland. They have very kindly agreed to be a sponsor for the IPG for the next three years. All members welcomed their involvement.

After lunch the delegates split into discussion groups and went away to brainstorm on the future of IPG and the development of the Group as a tool for the benefit of members. Each group then presented their thoughts and an interesting summary was presented for circ-

ulation. The Management Committee and all members will study this and start to implement the key areas in order to make the group as useful for members as possible.

The group then broke up and returned for the evening Gala Dinner in the Golden Palace Hotel.

The Saturday morning was taken up by the official members' meeting. Official minutes will be circulated, but highlights included Willem Smit reporting on the marketing team's attendance at the Vancouver American Bar Association conference to promote IPG as a group and seek potential new members; the new website was presented by Richard Meagher; the next conference in Bristol, UK was previewed by Charlie Thomson and finally we had excellent presentations by new potential members to the group (more of which later).

After lunch, delegates enjoyed a tour to the Reggia di Venaria Reale Royal Palace, a historical site that has been declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO.

The evening rounded off with a dinner at Ristorante La Vignassa, just outside Torino.

We look forward to seeing everybody at the next conference.

We would like to thank the partners and staff of Comba e Associati for their excellent hospitality in hosting the IPG Conference.



WWW.IPGNETWORK.ORG

The IPG Website is “on air” Your assistance is required to make it a success!

Screenshots of the website



*We trust you are
happy with the new
website*

*Please help us to
ensure your
information is
correct!*



Wim Lukaart; acon.avm

Wim is the member of the management committee responsible for PR and marketing. Wim is managing director of the consultants division of acon.avm (Holland)(acon.avm)

The management committee is proud to announce that the new website is now live! Although there are still some matters which will be resolved the overall design of the website looks professional.

We thank Rahul Chadha, Richard Meagher and Michel Mall for the large amount of work put in. It has been a major effort to arrive at this result! Chapeau!

The matters which are to be resolved mainly relate to the graphical animation (“the globe”) and the members search mechanism. As many of you will have noticed there could be some improvements. We are busy with that.

As the former Picatrex member responsible for their website I shall try to solve these problems a.s.a.p. I am pleased that Lionel Vest, a partner of Michel Mall, is willing to help me. Currently we are having discussions with the developers in India and we are considering solutions to overcome these matters.

How can you help?

- Please proof check your individual profiles and other information as shown in the

current pages and feed back to the secretariat.

- Please supply us, via the secretariat, with links to important websites in your country. This could be e.g. the National Tax Service, the local Chamber of Commerce, the Company Registrar, etc.
- Ensure that on your own website a proper link is provided to the IPG website.
- Please supply us with testimonials by you as a member or by one of your clients which is positive about the co-operation via our network.
- Please supply us with articles (PDF or link) which will be useful to publish on our website.
- Please give us your feedback as to the general design and functionality of the website via the secretariat.

What can you expect?

Forums

To stimulate communication between the members, forums will be created and maintained in the near future. We would be

obliged to receive your comments as to the nature and specific wishes with respect to these forums.

Multiple logins

We shall create the possibility for multiple logins for your staff. Please send us your wishes via the secretariat.

Passwords

Currently we are evaluating the procedures with respect to passwords and the editorial rights to change individual profiles.

With your help the website will become a professional tool to sell the benefits of the Group to potential members. Furthermore it can be helpful to attract potential national and international business to our network!

IPG Marbella Conference - October 2008

We apologise, but due to the lack of a winter newsletter we have not been able to report in full on the Marbella conference.

However, our thanks go to Rafael Berdaguer of Rafael Berdaguer Abogados for his excellent work.

The conference gave all members a chance to experience Marbella and understand the history of the development of the area and its current position in the Spanish real estate market.

As well as some excellent hospitality and the option for a sail on a catamaran on the Saturday

afternoon, the members present were able to debate the important topic of the proposed merger with Picatrex.

The Management Committee extend their thanks to Rafael and his team for the hard work.

Merger IPG and Picatrex International

Background and synergy

Picatrex began as an organisation of accountants, lawyers and tax professionals across Europe.

It was originally started in 1990 by a group of Swiss accountants and trust professionals. The founder and original president Jean-Claude Andrey is still actively involved. The organisation grew gradually over the years until by 2007 it had 22 members.

The organisation has had some success in referring work between members over the years and works on the strong principles of trust and professionalism between its members. The way members were originally recruited was by personal recommendation.

The era of much more universal communication has meant that organisations such as Picatrex and IPG had to grow to service the requirements of their members. In addition as they get bigger they need to have an established and organised Secretariat.

This led to considering merging the organisations with each other. In conducting the analysis both groups were looking for an organisation which had similar values and outlooks. It should be noted that the groups

had a few common members so they were able to vouch for the good combination.

The other key attribute that was noted was that in the merging of the two memberships there were very few locations within which there would be a geographical conflict and the combined organisation would have a much stronger coverage.

Furthermore it was noted that Picatrex International had mainly accounting practices. The major part of the members are accountants or tax professionals. The number of legal advisers was limited. This contrasted with the strong legal background to the IPG Group. By merging the two organisations the possibility arose to create a very strong network in which all qualities were represented.

After getting to know both organisations the Management Committee of IPG and the board of Picatrex sat together to discuss the possibilities and to investigate whether the two organisations could join without too many problems.

These discussions were led by Friedhelm Gruber who acted as "linking pin".

The conclusion was that the

merger of both organisations would give nothing but advantages. Of course there were some merger related obstacles which were covered by good co-operation. These were related to membership fees and how we should merge financially. From the board of Picatrex, Charlie Thomson and Wim Lukaart were asked to join the Management Committee of the merged IPG.

The Conference at Torino was the first opportunity to work together and both parties were very happy in how similar the two organisations are and how seamlessly we have been able to merge together.

In October 2009 the next conference will take place in Bristol. Charlie Thomson will be host. We sincerely hope that this gives another opportunity to increase the value of our network. Getting to know each other is the first step!



Picatrex and IPG merges into a strong network of professionals with a large coverage



The IPG membership became more interesting after the merger with Picatrex. In Bristol we get the chance to know each other better!

IPG Bristol Conference - 15-17 October 2009

The Management Committee is delighted to announce that the next conference will be held in **Bristol, UK** where Bishop Fleming will be our host. Charlie Thomson, partner, invites us to an interesting British event! The draft program is as follows:

October 15: Golf tournament (Celtic Manor) and dinner at the Marriott Hotel.

October 16: A short introduction to Bristol and a day based around group workshops.

October 17: IPG members meeting followed by an afternoon tour of Isambard Kingdom Brunel's ship the [SS Great Britain](#).

Look for info on the website to be published at the end of June!



IPG - Recruitment update....

Growing the IPG – how members can assist the recruitment team

As always, our recruitment team, Michel Mall and Willem Smit, have done an excellent job in recruiting new members. The referrals to the recruitment team still come for the most part from the recommendations of existing member firms. New members and potential members at the recent conference are listed in the box below.

As you have all seen, the referral by another member firm of a possible applicant is a very strong way for us to recruit but it is not enough now. Willem Smit stated, "the time has passed that IPG had to rely on contacts of members to get new members. The best way forward to put IPG on the world map is to attend meetings, where many lawyers, accountants, tax advisers and other professionals gathered. IPG has now over 70 member firms, strongly based in Europe with bridgeheads in America, Asia and

Oceania. IPG has to expand further. A presence as strong as in Europe, is of vital importance to IPG in the remaining four continents. We owe it to our name. We are not *European Practice Group*".

This statement of Willem Smit reveals the white spots on the map of IPG. "The goal for the future must be to expand beyond the "borders" of the European continent. IPG should not only have some bridgeheads on the other continents, but also gain a strong foothold there."

That's why the Management Committee (MC) has undertaken an initiative to attend the American Bar Association (ABA) conference in Vancouver in April 2009, which was proposed by Richard Meagher. Our MC members, Willem Smit and Arpad Szarka together with the Secretariat Joern Segelhorst recently travelled to Canada to promote IPG and to recruit candidates.

The ABA Conference was very well attended by nearly 1,400 members from around the globe. The business law section of the ABA has most of the USA firms with thousands of lawyers with international businesses and contacts. The platform of the ABA conference was an excellent tool to get more USA members on board with IPG. The recruitment team will be following up the contacts made.

As always Members are encouraged to speak to Michel Mall, Willem Smit or our Secretariat Joern Segelhorst and Hiacenta Leutert Klages directly, if they have met or worked with any firms they consider might be interested in joining IPG. If you can recommend any regional meetings such as the ABA conference then we would be pleased to attend and promote IPG.



Michel Mall (above) and Willem Smit, our recruitment team on the Management Committee



Recruitment is rapidly moving forward to attract new members to the IPG and expand our reach into new territory

New Members

Malin, Bergquist & Company, LLP - is one of the largest certified public accounting and business advisory firms in Western Pennsylvania with offices in Pittsburgh, Erie and Greensburg, USA. The contact person for enquiries is:

Jeffrey T. Deane; email: jdeane@malinbergquist.com;
web: www.malinbergquist.com.

The contact was sent to IPG by Babst, Calland, Clementsand Zon- Mir from Pittsburgh.

First Accountancy-Audit-Financial, Tax & Legal Consulting.

The firm offers a complete service in accounting, fiscal and legal advice, which is based in Antwerp, Belgium. The contact person for enquiries is:

Jan Van Gils; email: jvangils@firstadvisers.com;
web: www.firstadvisers.com.

This contact was made through Wim Lukaart from Accon AVM, Netherlands.

Potential Members

BMSP Boryczko Malinowska Świątkowski i Partnerzy, a firm of lawyers based in Warsaw, Poland. The contact person for enquiries is:

Ewa Boryczko; email: ewa.boryczko@bmsp.com.pl;
web: www.bmsp.com.pl.

Initial contact was made and given by Dr. Wolfgang Nockelmann from Aderhold Rechtsanwaltsgesellschaft GmbH P.C., Germany

The contact details for the Chairman and Secretariat of the group are shown at the bottom of this page, but detailed below is a list of contact details and areas of responsibility for the Management Committee:

Name	Firm	Telephone number	Email address	Responsibilities
Arpad Szarka	Szarka Attorneys	+49 30 890 680 30	szarka@ipgnetwork.org szarka@szarka.de	Conference
Charlie Thomson	Bishop Fleming	+44 1752 262 611	charlie.thomson@ipgnetwork.org cthomson@bishopfleming.co.uk	Co Chairman
Friedhelm Gruber	Senat AG	+423 237 43 43	friedhelm.gruber@ipgnetwork.org friedhelm.gruber@senat-ag.com	Co Chairman
Graham Wallace	Barnes Roffe LLP	+41 20 8988 6100	graham.wallace@ipgnetwork.org g.wallace@barnesroffe.com	Vice Chairman, Finance
Michel Mall	Cabinet d'avocats Mall	+33 390 20 81 83	michel.mall@ipgnetwork.org michel.mall@adaris.com	Recruitment
Rahul Chadha	Chadha & Co.	+91 11 4163 9294	rahul.chadha@ipgnetwork.org rchadha@chadha-co.com	Website
Willem Smit	Hoens & Souren	+31 79 342 02 50	willem.smit@ipgnetwork.org Smit@hslaw.nl	Recruitment
Wim Lukaart	Accon AVM	+31 76 578 57 20	wim.lukaart@ipgnetwork.org WLukaart@acconavm.nl	Marketing, Website, Newsletter

Wedding bells

We congratulate our Secretariat Hiacenta Leutert on her recent marriage. On 29 April 2009 she wed Mr Gregor Klages in Zürich. We wish them all the very best in their married life.

Wedding bells (again)

In addition, we also are pleased to congratulate Rene van den Outenaar of Molade Trust Management BV on his marriage to Carina Braun on 20 June 2009. Again we wish them every happiness together.

Ben W. G. P. Meijs of Thuis & Partners Advocaten has asked us to announce that his firm have opened a Maastricht office. Please refer to his firm's website for details www.thuispartners.nl

And finally - Newsletter distribution

Finally, we would ask that you pass this newsletter on to all members of your firm who could usefully be aware of IPG. If you wish to supply the Secretariat with a general email address which acts as a distribution list for your firm then we would encourage you to do so. This way each firm can keep their internal distribution list up to date and the Secretariat can send newsletters, etc. to the widest possible number of people. If you have any questions please contact Hiacenta Leutert.

If you have any matters you would like including in the newsletter then please let the Secretariat know.

Addresses: **Office of the Chairman:**
Friedhelm GRUBER
Bergstrasse 10, Box 550, 9490 Vaduz, Principality of Liechtenstein

or **International Practice Group – Secretariat in Vaduz**
Hiacenta LEUTERT
Bergstrasse 10, Box 550, 9490 Vaduz, Principality of Liechtenstein
Tel : + 423.237.44.28 Fax : + 423.237.44.29
Email : secretariat@ipgnetwork.org
Website : www.ipgnetwork.org

International Practice Group – Secretariat in Zurich
Klausstrasse 19, Postfach 712, 8034 Zurich, Switzerland

