

You say Tomotae - I say Tomato!

*By Pat Durocher**

Approximately 6,000 languages exist in the world today, yet only 240 of these are used by 96% of the world population and 90 % are not represented on the Internet. English is considered the business language...or is it?! As international meetings continue to increase, the importance of understanding the language that is spoken and replied to becomes vital. Despite the amount of information we have, there is a natural tendency to sort through information based on our own experiences. A meeting planner requests room rates, and the reply comes back quoting DDR; a European is surprised when coffee is served with dessert instead of after. How do you ask for what you want? Is it "stands" or "booths", "chips" or "fries", "breakout room" or "syndicate room", "porter" or "bellman", "appetizer" or "starter", "craic" or "crack" – the list goes on and on (and on). Just a few months ago, while doing a presentation in Mexico City it seemed to come as a surprise to the audience when I suggested that the hoteliers respond to the "buyers" language in terms of deliverables, turnaround time, expectations, and pricing.

The point? Understand your audience, make sure you are speaking the same language when you request information for an international meeting and take advantage of "local" resources where applicable - it could save you time and money while ensuring the experience meets the participants expectations !

-Ends-

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