



Collaboration and networking at MIPIM

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Networking and collaboration are key to a successful MIPIM

MIPIM 2016: I don't recall Cannes ever being quite so wet, windy and cold. The weather is important to MIPIM as it does require a sense of well being in order to promote optimum networking, especially as so much of the hospitality is at beach restaurants and on board boats.

Even the best and most meticulously planned party is going to be difficult to enjoy if you arrive soaking wet having waded through the ankle deep puddles on the Croisette.

And, with your head down under an umbrella you have no idea, and little interest in, who you are walking past. For Reed Midem the conference organisers, perhaps more delegates will spend time in the exhibition halls but it is not easy navigating the warm, steamy surroundings with wet coats and umbrellas in hand.

This year I have discovered the ultimate networking tool. I had my portrait painted by the talented artist, architect Sandy Morrison as one of a series of commissions to raise money for charity.

So there started to appear photos of the said portrait as it was boxed up to come down to Cannes. I thought it was safely stowed but then it appeared to have been released from captivity.

It was soon developing a networking life of its own, featuring in tweets as it accompanied the London to Cannes MIPIM bound cyclists and sat quietly in the lounge with them at night.

So who is best at working MIPIM? Is it the older generation or the young disruptors?

I travelled down to Cannes with the legendary Harvey Soning of James Andrew International with whom I have collaborated on numerous networking events over the years. He is unbeatable and could teach us all about making the most of any social encounter, he has even been networking in the hotel spa, I hear.

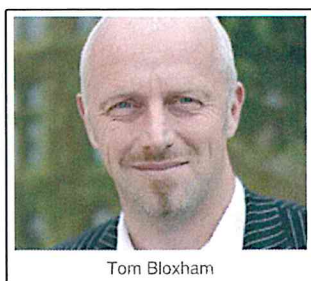
Impressively, he still manages to approach each MIPIM with huge and renewed enthusiasm. His longstanding collaboration with Coutts for their joint Thursday night MIPIM party still attracts all the entrepreneurs within a 50-mile radius of Cannes who come in search of new opportunities and the top-quality smoked salmon flown in from London.

I have also spent time this MIPIM with Ross Bailey and his AirBnB for retail AppearHere team who put pop-up units into retail centres and stations. Although relatively new to the property sector, they bring a breath of fresh air (and a more relaxed dress sense) to MIPIM.



Ross Bailey

It doesn't seem so long ago that Tom Bloxham was regarded as a young disruptor when he first came to MIPIM in open-toed sandals and outlandish hats to promote his new Manchester-based company. I will never forget introducing him to a contact who immediately assumed that, with a name like Urban Splash, he must build swimming pools.



Tom Bloxham

But in my view what all these top-class networkers have in common is a willingness to help others and to make introductions. If somebody goes out of their way to help you, the chances are you are going to want to reciprocate, and that, in essence, is what networking is all about. It certainly isn't about handing out your card and asking for work which seems to be the approach of many MIPIM delegates.

And as we launch our new 2016 Collaborators initiative with *Estates Gazette* and *U+I Group*, it has to be said that the best networking events are the collaborations – James Andrew International/Coutts and of course, our annual pre MIPIM party, this year in collaboration with New West End Company and UKTI's Regeneration Investment.

At MIPIM itself the word collaboration has been much in evidence. From Westminster, head of planning Robert Davis calling on London's new mayor to put politics aside and work with all the local authorities in a joined up approach to Berkeley Group's Tony Pidgley stressing the importance of public and private sector working together and the importance of collaboration and partnership.