

2024 World Trade Centers Association (WTCA) Member Forum Advances Global Trade and Collaboration to Navigate the Ever-Changing Business Landscape

Category: Business

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[World Trade Centers Association \(WTCA\)](#), an international trade organization connecting more than 300 World Trade Center (WTC) locations in nearly 100 countries, held its [2024 WTCA Member Forum](#) from October 27-29 in New York City. The three-day event attracted nearly 145 attendees, including 45 first-time attendees, who gathered to participate from nearly 80 unique WTC businesses representing 26 countries and territories around the world. Under the theme **"PIONEER the Global Network: Pathways for Innovation, Opportunity, Networking, Empowerment, Excellence, and Resilience,"** this year's event brought

together WTCA members for panel discussions and presentations, providing essential tools to navigate the ever-changing global business landscape. Sessions delved into emerging trends in global business, along with best practices and collaborative opportunities across markets, offering actionable insights to help members strengthen their roles locally and elevate WTCA's global influence.



Attendees at the 2024 WTCA Member Forum held in New York City October 27-29, 2024

Highlights from this year's Member Forum included presentations on the impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI), such as *"AI in Global Trade: A Fireside Chat on Navigating the Future of International Business"* and *"Transform Your WTC Business with AI,"* both of which explored AI's transformative potential in global trade and business growth at all scales. The event also featured discussions on bridging generational divides, empowering female leaders, building resilient communities and leveraging data. It concluded with the WTCA North America Regional Meeting, uniting members to advance WTCA's regional goals.

"The annual Member Forum is really a key event that keeps us all together as a network and as a family. It is always

*interesting to learn from each of the WTC businesses – about what they are doing in their local regions and how it impacts the association,” said **John E. Drew, WTCA Chair, Board of Directors.** “WTCA is highly adaptable, as shown by the diversity of new member businesses in our network, and this year’s event focused on the fantastic new and diverse business models, ideas and services being offered across the association. As we celebrate WTCA’s 55th anniversary this year, I couldn’t be more thrilled to see how this association continues to grow and adapt to the evolving needs of various industries and shifting economies in the years to come.”*

The “**Road to 500**” initiative, WTCA’s strategic vision focused on expanding its global Membership to 500 WTC locations over the next decade, was a central focus of discussions at this year’s event. A key session, “**The Road to 500: WTC Free Trade Zones,**” highlighted the far-reaching expansion of Free Trade Zones and Special Economic Zones globally, and how WTCA is actively developing partnerships with these trade zone entities in support of its membership goal. The Association also welcomed eight new WTCA Members including WTC AMTZ, WTC Future City, WTC Hinzawadi, WTC Jeju, WTC Osaka, WTC Pittsburgh, WTC Sarajevo and WTC Tokyo, in which several presented their new projects that aim to boost economic development within their regions through the power of the global WTCA network.

Attendees also took time to celebrate the achievements of members that became WTCA accredited over the past year, including WTC Chennai, WTC Cyprus, WTC Kuala Lumpur, WTC Monterrey, WTC Montevideo, WTC Suzhou, WTC Taipei, WTC Trieste and WTC Twente. These members underwent the rigorous WTCA Accreditation program that provides formal validation of a WTC business’ commitment to excellence within the network and beyond.

The 2024 WTCA Member Forum also marked the official countdown to the highly anticipated [55th Annual WTCA Global Business](#)

[Forum \(GBF\)](#), which will be hosted April 6-9, 2025 by WTC Marseille Provence in Marseille, France. The 2025 WTCA GBF theme, “**Gateway to the Mediterranean**,” highlights the region’s pivotal role in connecting global trade and innovation, with a focus on strategic access to Southern Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. Attendees will explore new markets, participate in exclusive sessions, and forge partnerships while leveraging WTCA’s global network to drive business growth.

“The 2024 Member Forum was a remarkable success in reconnecting with fellow colleagues, fostering new partnerships and discovering business opportunities amongst our members,” said **Crystal Edn, WTCA Executive Director of Member Services**. *“We were proud to highlight the achievements of our members over the past year, showcasing the incredible impact they have both within their communities and on the international stage. As we look forward to gathering in Marseille, France for the upcoming GBF, we are excited to see how these collaborations will continue to evolve and drive new business opportunities for organizations our global network serves.”*

