



Press Release

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Intelligent cities, internet plumbing and big data: Well Met the venue for Intelligent Cities conference

Rohut Talwar, a top global futurist was amongst the speakers at the Intelligent Cities conference this week, an event that explored how technology will make the cities of the future smarter and better to live in. The conference, organised by **Next Gen Events** took place at Well Met's flagship venue, The Rose Bowl on 19 June.

Over 175 delegates attended seminars delivered by a range of technology businesses including IBM, EE, and Cisco. The agenda included 4G in the UK, health innovation, growing Local SME ecosystems in the smart city and innovation in the information society. Delegates made the most of Well Met's super-fast broadband, interacting with the conference simultaneously through twitter.

The keynote speech was delivered by Dr Adam Beaumont, Managing Director of aql on the topic of digital innovation. Dr Beaumont discussed aql's investment plans to build a £43 million data centre in Leeds whose aim is to improve connectivity between ISP and content providers such as social networks or Web TV. This investment means that Leeds is in a position to become the "best digital city outside of London".

Kate Davis, Head of Business Development for Well Met Conferencing, said:

"The Rose Bowl was a suitably hi-tech space for such a technologically aware audience. We already have state of the art AV and advanced digital solutions such as free, superfast wifi, as well as twitter feed projections, live streaming and crowd sourcing, so were able to meet delegates' digital expectations. Technology is playing an ever greater role in the conference and events industry and though we already have great facilities, the news that Leeds is to become a super connected city is great for events at Well Met Conferencing. With ultra-fast broadband and full Wi-Fi coverage in the city centre Leeds will gain a reputation as a digitally advanced place to do business."

Lurene Joseph, Chief Executive of Leeds and Partners, who hosted the event with support from Leeds City Council, said:

"The Intelligent Cities conference enabled us to provide a platform for a more dynamic creative sector and encourage inward investment which can accelerate the digital transformation occurring within the city. The availability of ultra-fast connectivity within the city is a major attraction as we demonstrate that we are digitally enabled for businesses and the conference allowed engagement with the stakeholders delivering information and services to support future economic growth within the region across key sectors such as health innovation, financial and professional services and the wider economy."

For further details about Well Met's Conferencing facilities please contact the conference team at Leeds Metropolitan University on 0113 812 8555 or email conferences@leedsmet.ac.uk.

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Notes to Editors:

- Well Met Conferencing is the conference office for Leeds Metropolitan University.
- Leeds Metropolitan University is the first University to achieve the Gold Accredited in Meetings status awarded by the Meetings Industry Association.
- Centrally located, Leeds is just two hours 20 minutes from London by train, and just one hour on the new BA flights from Heathrow to Leeds Bradford Airport.
- 2013 sees the opening of two new landmarks for Leeds – new retail and leisure destination, Trinity, and the 13,500 capacity Leeds Arena.
- In 2011 Leeds Metropolitan University accommodation Carnegie Village was awarded 3* by the AA and in 2012
- At the M&IT awards 2012 and 2013 Well Met was a finalist for the 'Best Academic Venue' category
- At the 2011 Leeds Hotels & Venues Association Awards Well Met Conferencing was awarded Winner of 'Bright Idea'; Winner of 'Leeds, Live it Love it' for Carnegie Village and Highly Commended for 'Exceptional Customer Service'.
- Leeds Metropolitan University venue The Rose Bowl was awarded 'Best New Business Venue' in 2010 at the Yorkshire Business Insider Awards.
- Leeds Metropolitan University has more than 27,000 students and around 3,000 staff.
- The Vice Chancellor of Leeds Metropolitan University is Professor Susan Price, the Chancellor is Sir Bob Murray CBE and the Chair of the Board is Lord Woolmer of Leeds.
- Leeds Metropolitan's heritage can be traced back to the founding of the Mechanics Institute in Leeds in 1824.

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