



MWC[™]
GSMA



a global
benchmark
for success

bnetwork is the
official accommodation partner
of MWC Barcelona

bnetwork

accommodation
specialist

MWC, a global benchmark for success

the Mobile World Congress (officially GSMA MWC Barcelona) is a key event in the telecommunications world. It is an annual must-attend meeting point for professionals, companies, and experts in the mobile telephony and telecommunications industry. MWC represents the combination of the world's largest exhibition for the mobile telephony industry and a congress where business leaders from mobile operators, vendors, and content providers from around the globe participate.

bnetwork has been the official accommodation management partner for MWC Barcelona since 2006, when the first edition of the congress was held in Barcelona. Since then, the organisation of the world's largest mobile connectivity event has relied on bnetwork to manage and coordinate the accommodation of participants from all over the world.

the congress has experienced exponential growth since its first edition. Currently, the figures have already surpassed pre-pandemic mobility rates, with 330 hotels and over 20,000 rooms (peak night) being managed. For this, bnetwork provides a team of 30 professionals with various professional profiles, all experienced and educated in the Tourism/Hospitality sector and proficient in English, the official language of the congress.



the combination of bnetwork's technological solution and professional team allows them to overcome the major challenges presented by MWC. Firstly, ensuring the transmission of massive, high-quality information to the hotels in an efficient and agile manner. There are days when bnetwork transmits more than 2,000 modifications in 24 hours

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through its database and online communication tools with hotels (hotelpartner). The event features the presence of more than 2,000 companies and attracts a volume of attendees that always exceeds 100,000, making agility and coordination essential for the most efficient possible accommodation solution for visitors.

commitment to quality

efficiency and professionalism are the fundamental commitments of bnetwork with GSMA and the city of Barcelona. A long-term agreement has been established within the framework of a global offer for the city, agreeing on key points that ensure the congress's sustainability over time. This commitment is made among the main stakeholders (institutions, hotels, organisers, exhibitors, and visitors) and the main agents involved in the event. In the case of hotels, they are committed to dedicating a minimum of 80% of the hotel's capacity to the official agency, at a long-term negotiated price, with a guarantee of a maximum progressive increase from one year to the next.

according to John Hoffman, CEO and Director for GSMA: "The MWC model is one where, very inclusively, we want to engage not only the mobile ecosystem but all of the verticals that make up the tangential components of bringing mobility, connectivity to the masses. That's both from a personal and consumer standpoint, but maybe more importantly to the broader ecosystem of technology. So, what bnetwork brings to us is the ability for us to rely on a partner to handle a very critical segment of our success. Our attendees, our exhibitors, our ecosystem come to Barcelona, and they want to be well taken care of. And the great thing about Barcelona is we have this vast array of wonderful hospitality, hotels, restaurateurs, and the like, the arts, gastronomy. But we need someone to curate that, to hold their hand, to make their experience memorable. And that's where bnetwork comes in, and they do a fabulous job of taking care of everyone, personalizing their care, and providing them the ability to enjoy their stay, not only at MWC but here in Barcelona."

achieving this level of excellence and success has been crucially dependent on managing and balancing the main players in the city of Barcelona. Starting with the GSMA organisation along with the Barcelona Convention Bureau (Turisme de Barcelona), the Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona, Fira de Barcelona, and the support of bnetwork as the official accommodation agency.

the involvement of key stakeholders is crucial. According to Constantí Serrallonga, the General Director of Fira de Barcelona, the success of the Mobile World Congress (MWC) relies heavily on the partnership between public and private sectors. "Undoubtedly, the leadership of GSMA, which organizes the Mobile World Congress, is pivotal but we all contribute to its success, each to the extent that we enable it. Since the event

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has been hosted in Barcelona, it has fostered the development of a business ecosystem within the tech sector. Numerous global tech businesses and renowned technology corporations have discovered Barcelona through this," he stated.

Christophe Tessmar, Director of the Barcelona Convention Bureau, noted, "Hosting the Congress in Barcelona has positioned the city as one of Europe's most significant startup hubs. The presence of the Congress is tremendously beneficial for Barcelona. Hotel bookings are crucial for the success of any congress and bnetwork undoubtedly plays a central role and is a key partner for the event. They understood the importance from the start and have developed an outstanding model that significantly contributes to the Congress's overall success in the city."

Manel Casals, General Manager of GHB, commented on the impact of events like MWC, saying, "It adds significant value to local technology companies by facilitating growth that would not be possible without such an event in Barcelona. It has enhanced the city's exposure, image, recognition, and appeal, making it a potential host for other high-profile events in the future."

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the contribution of bnetwork to the development of the congress centers on managing one of the most critical yet often overlooked aspects of such a large event. Said Ben Hassen, Chief Operating Officer of bnetwork, explained, "Accommodation might seem a minor detail within the overall organization, but it can become a significant issue if not managed correctly, especially given market pressures. Our in-house technology has evolved over the years to offer highly customized solutions, meeting the highest expectations of all participants at the Mobile World Congress. Our aim is to ensure the best booking conditions and rates, a goal we couldn't achieve without the strong support from the Hotel Association, Fira de Barcelona, and the Convention Bureau, who have been deeply involved right from the start. Their involvement is key to managing the accommodation aspect efficiently."

Mobile World Congress: a key event

the Mobile World Congress is a flagship event in the telecommunications world and has become the global benchmark for the sector. It is driven by four main pillars:

- **innovation and launches:** a stage to unveil the latest innovations, technologies, and products in mobile telephony. Major companies often use this event to announce new devices, mobile network technologies (such as 5G), and services.
- **networking and collaborations:** a valuable opportunity to establish contacts, collaborations, and strategic alliances within the industry. Numerous business deals and agreements are made during this event.
- **visibility and exposure:** for both established companies and new startups, MWC provides a global platform to showcase their products and services to an international audience and specialized media.
- **trends and conferences:** the congress includes conferences, panels, and discussions on emerging trends, challenges, and opportunities in the telecommunications world, keeping attendees informed about industry advancements and future directions.

in summary, MWC is a vital event that brings together industry leaders, fosters innovation, facilitates knowledge exchange, and promotes technological development in the telecom sector.

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a story of success

the first edition took place in 1987 to introduce the new GSM technology. However, it wasn't until 1990, in Rome, Italy, that it was held as the GSM World Congress, achieving global status. Over the years, the event moved through cities like Berlin, Lisbon, Athens, and Madrid (1995). Since 2008, it has been known as the Mobile World Congress.

starting in 2006, the congress has been held in Barcelona, moving from Cannes, where it had been hosted since 1996. The choice of Barcelona, with its capacity to host and organize large trade fairs, along with the 70s aesthetic of its pavilions and its industrial environment, convinced GSMA to continue the event there.

the 2008 edition attracted over 55,000 attendees and featured more than 230 leaders and speakers. In 2011, GSMA confirmed Barcelona as the permanent host city for MWC until at least 2018.

the 2020 edition, scheduled for February 24-27, was canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic. The following edition in 2021 saw around 20,000 attendees and approximately 100,000 daily online participants, with representatives from 165 countries and about a thousand exhibitors.

today, GSMA has expanded the MWC brand to three other trade shows: MWC Shanghai in China, MWC Las Vegas in the United States (formerly MWC Los Angeles), and, since 2022, MWC Africa in Kigali, Rwanda. Each of these locations has been chosen strategically to tap into regional markets and expand the global outreach of the mobile technology industry.