



## PRESS RELEASE

**Date:** May 11, 2007      **Contacts:** Anna Hawley      713/853-8287  
Peter Radowick      713/853-8077  
Ted Bowen      713/853-8051

### **Art Zehnder Named Director of Sales At George R. Brown Convention Center**

HOUSTON, Texas – The George R. Brown Convention Center has named Arthur C. Zehnder, CMP, LES, as director of sales for the George R. Brown Convention Center.

In addition, veteran meeting planner Renee Martinez, CMP, has been named national sales manager responsible for GRB corporate accounts.



“In hiring Art Zehnder, we have added an individual with outstanding sales skills and meeting experience,” said Luther Villagomez, general manager of the GRB. “Art comes to us from Aramark, our food and beverage provider, so he has a great working relationship with our clients, our staff, and fully understands our mission.

“He’ll be able to hit the ground running in generating new business for us and delivering great service to our clients,” Villagomez added.

In July 2005, Zehnder was named Aramark’s director of sales and marketing for the GRB and venues in Houston’s downtown Theater District. In that time, food and beverage revenues have increased while also improving the delivery and quality of service. Zehnder’s previous stops in the hospitality industry have included the Hilton Post Oak and Hyatt Regency, both here in Houston, as well as major hotels

*Celebrating 20<sup>years</sup> Show Business*  
1987-2007



in Nashville, Pittsburgh, Albuquerque and Traverse City, Mich. He has also won numerous industry awards.

As the new sales director, Zehnder succeeds Bobby Balsam, who earlier this year was named director of the newly created Event and Guest Services Division at the GRB. In his new role, Art Zehnder Named Director of Sales At George R. Brown Convention Center - page 2

Balsam is responsible for the total guest experience in the building. Among numerous tasks, he will address concierge service, client amenities, retail outlets, the Explore Houston visitors center, and ticket operations. He will also work closely with GRB service partners to ensure seamless customer service.

Martinez, a native Texan, comes to the GRB with a wide range of experience in the meeting industry, primarily in corporate event planning and hotel sales, including three years as corporate group sales manager at Hilton Houston Post Oak (formerly Doubletree).

Zehnder and Martinez assume their new roles during a year in which the George R. Brown Convention Center celebrates its 20th anniversary. A yearlong series of promotions and activities is under way, culminating with a client event this fall.

*At 1.85 million gross square feet, the downtown GRB now ranks among the 10 largest convention centers in America. A part of the City of Houston Convention & Entertainment Facilities Department, the building features 1.2 million square feet of exhibition, meeting and registration space, seven exhibit halls and 117 meetings rooms. For more information, call 1-800-427-4697 or visit [www.houstonconventionctr.com](http://www.houstonconventionctr.com).*

###

*Celebrating 20<sup>years</sup> of Show Business*  
1987-2007