

AUSTRIA CONNECT

NORTH AMERICA 2021



THRIVING IN THE NEW NORMAL

December 9 -11, 2021 | Denver, Colorado

Welcome to the 14th edition of the **AUSTRIA CONNECT NORTH AMERICA**
- the largest conference for U.S. Newcomers and Executives of Austrian
Subsidiaries in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico

AUSTRIA CONNECT NORTH AMERICA 2021 THRIVING IN THE NEW NORMAL



Volker R. Ammann,
Los Angeles

Welcome to the 2021 Austria Connect North America!

The world has changed in unexpected and dramatic ways. The world economy has been disrupted, industries have been affected in unforeseen ways, and our lives have been turned upside down. Today, decision-making requires more skills than ever before. Many developments and technical advancements that once had been predicted for tomorrow, all of a sudden became reality yesterday. We are at the verge of the beginning of a new dawn for humanity and uncertainty has become our new normal. This year's Austria Connect North America will look at how we best position ourselves and our businesses in order to prevail and **thrive in the new normal**. What place could be better suited for this purpose than an innovative thriving tech, education and business hot spot in the midst of the Rocky Mountains – Denver, CO?



Daniel Zawarczynski
San Francisco

This year's topics include the increased importance of the circular economy, how disruptive technologies can change our world in a sustainable manner. We will look at new means of communication and interchange, and we will examine the new world order for supply chains.



Peter Hasslacher
New York

Innovation, creativity and the disruption of old habits and the "old normal" will all be key focus points of the 2021 Austria Connect North America.



Irene Lack-Hageneder
Washington, D.C.

Adapt & thrive!

The Austrian Trade Commissioners in the US, Canada, and Mexico



Gregor Postl
Toronto



Nella Hengstler,
Mexico City

Day 1 | Thursday, December 9

Newcomer Workshop & Reception

NEWCOMER WORKSHOP

2.40 pm

BUS DEPARTS FROM THE BROWN PALACE HOTEL TO WESTERN UNION HQ

NEWCOMERS USA 2021

WORKSHOP FOR NEW EXPORTERS AND INVESTORS*

Western Union Corporate Headquarters | 7001 E Belview Ave | Denver, CO 80237

Dress code: business casual (Please no pj's as this is not a Zoom-meeting but cameras will be rolling!)

3.00 – 3.05 pm

WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

- Volker R. AMMANN | Austrian Trade Commissioner Los Angeles



3.05 – 3.30 pm

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR “STARTING YOUR ENGINES” IN THE U.S.

- Gregor VOGRIN | Managing Partner, Syngroup Management Consulting LLC



This will be your “warm-up” session with Gregor, who will share his expertise on questions such as: Where to start and what to expect? What are the first do's and don'ts in the U.S.?

3.30 – 4.00 pm

LEGAL PITFALLS IN THE US

- Anton EMSENHUBER | Austrian Deputy Trade Commissioner, In-House Counsel



The US legal system is full of pitfalls for the unwary. Contracts can form unwittingly, contractual retentions of title do not work the way they do in Europe, and exports can result in foreign companies to become taxable in the U.S. How to avoid being sued in the US? When is it wise to set up a US subsidiary? How can exposure to product liability be minimized? Tony addresses these and many more questions so that the Austrian export manager can relax and focus on selling.

4.00 - 4.15 pm

COFFEE BREAK – TIME TO REFRESH AND REFLECT AND (OF COURSE) NETWORK

4.15 – 5.00 pm

LEARNING FROM SUCCESSFUL SUBSIDIARIES

Moderator & Panelists: TBA

Discussion with representatives from successful US subsidiaries of Austrian companies

Now – this is an exciting part! You will hear first-hand accounts from people who already went through all of this. You will learn their stories, their up's and down's, their hardships and highlights. They will tell you of the mistakes they made and sidesteps they had to take. This session is – each year again – the highlight of our newcomer session and one reason why we call it the “fast track” session.

5.00 – 5.05 pm

WRAP-UP AND CONCLUSION



- Peter HASSLACHER | Austrian Trade Commissioner New York

* In parallel sessions and workshops where you will be able to talk to the Austrian Trade Commissioners in Canada and Mexico or have a private conversation with one of our specialists in the lounge of the executive floor at Western Union HQ.

WELCOME RECEPTION

5.00 pm

BUS DEPARTS FROM THE BROWN PALACE HOTEL TO WESTERN UNION HQ

Dress code @ the reception: business casual

5.30 pm

CHECK-IN AND REGISTRATION

Please bear in mind that registration and check in might take longer than usual due to COVID protocol.

WELCOME RECEPTION

Western Union Corporate Headquarters | 7001 E Belleview Ave | Denver, CO 80237

This year's welcome reception is hosted by Hikmet ERSEK, Honorary Consul of the Republic of Austria, CEO & President Western Union and Dr. Nayantara Ghosh-Ersek, Honorary Vice Consul of the Republic of Austria.

6.00 – 6.15 pm

WELCOME REMARKS



- Hikmet ERSEK | Honorary Consul of the Republic of Austria | CEO & President of Western Union
- Volker R. AMMANN | Austrian Trade Commissioner Los Angeles

6.15 – 8.30 pm

COCKTAIL RECEPTION

This year's cocktail reception is not "black tie" – as we pay tribute to our surroundings in the midst of the Rockies. Nevertheless, our best Zoom-T-shirt should stay home as we expect cameras to role and VIPs in politics and business will meet and greet. Therefore, business casual will be "in".

9.00 pm

BUS DEPARTS TO THE BROWN PALACE HOTEL

Day 2 | Friday, December 10

Conference Day

AUSTRIA CONNECT NORTH AMERICA 2021

Dress code: business casual

McNichols Center | Civic Center Park, 144 W Colfax Ave | Denver, CO 80204

8.00 – 9.00 am

REGISTRATION & FULL BREAKFAST

9.00 – 9.30 am

OPENING REMARKS

- Volker R. AMMANN | Austrian Trade Commissioner
- Martin WEISS | Austrian Ambassador to the United States

9.30 – 10.30 am

BOUNDARY RIDERS – A NEW APPROACH TO INTRAPRENEURSHIP AND CORPORATE INNOVATION



- Ernesto SIROLLI | The Sirolli Institute

Ernesto Sirolli is the founder of the Sirolli Institute, an author and a highly sought after speaker. Ernesto is also a leading consultant in the field of economic development.

10.30 – 11.30 am

LET THERE BE CHANGE



The only constant is change...Leading change starts with a shift of the mindset, turns into code on the cloud and results into the smile of a customer.

- Shelly SWANBACK | President Product and Platform | Western Union

Shelly has been a member of the Western Union Executive Team since 2020. She is tasked with advancing Western Union's cross-border, cross-currency global platform. Prior to joining Western Union, Shelly served as Group Operating Officer for Accenture Digital.

11.30 – 12.30 pm

A DECARBONIZED ECONOMY BY 2050



- Dr. Martin KELLER | Laboratory Director at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory

Martin has served as director of the National Renewable Energy Laboratory since 2015. In this capacity, he has developed a three-pronged strategy for ENREL that has led to game-changing scientific outcomes.

12.30 – 1.30 pm

LUNCH BREAK AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITY

Lunch will be served buffet style between 12:00 and 2:00 pm.

1.30 – 2.30 pm

COURAGE AND COLLABORATION: THE ENORMOUS OPPORTUNITIES IN FIXING OUR BROKEN FOOD SYSTEM



- Robyn O'BRIEN | rePlant Capital

Robyn is the co-founder of rePlant Capital, a financial services firm that aims at transitioning farmland to regenerative and organic agriculture. Robyn is a trusted and sought after food industry advisor, strategist, and public speaker.

2.30 – 3.30 pm

KEEP GOING! – HOW U PICK YOURSELF UP AND SUCCEED

- Surprise guest | tba

Life is full of ups and downs - so we have been told numerous times. Were we prepared for 2020 and 21? – “Nope!” Let us hear and learn from the best in athletics and sports. Let`s hear what it means to lose it all and what it takes to pick yourself up again and, against all odds, win again. Lessons for business and life.

3.30 – 4.00 pm

WRAP-UP AND CONCLUSION

- Volker R. AMMANN | Austrian Trade Commissioner Los Angeles



END OF OFFICAL PROGRAM. PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE OPTIONAL WEEKEND AND LEISURE PROGRAM

5.00 pm

BUS DEPARTS FROM THE BROWN PALACE TO VAIL

5.00 – 7.00 pm

TRANSFER TO VAIL

7.00 – 9.00 pm

HOTEL CHECK-IN AND SOME WELL DESERVED DOWN TIME

9.30 – 10.30 pm

WELCOME COCKTAILS

Day 3 | Saturday, December 11

Fireside Chat & Leisure Day

8.00 – 3.00 pm

SPORTING AND LEISURE EVENTS

Please join us for a day packed with multidisciplinary talks and insights from some of the most exciting names in business and sports. On Saturday, there will be little to none of traditional and boring 'chalk and talk presentation'. Instead, we will actively practice this year's conference theme, do things a little different and find out first-hand how to prevail and thrive in uncertain times. You will hear from some of the greatest in sports how they fell and picked themselves up over and over again – only to emerge stronger than before.

Let me give you this one hint: skiing and snowboarding to say the least. And remember: we do things differently this year, i.e. we won't just show you a video. You will definitely need your winter gear. For those who don't fare well in the cold weather, Vail offers ample opportunity to gather and pick up on unfinished conversations and discussions from the previous days.

3.00 – 5.00 pm

RELAX & RECHARGE

5.00 pm

FIRESIDE CHAT WITH FORTUNE 500 CEO HIKMET ERSEK, CEO & PRESIDENT WESTERN UNION

- Hikmet ERSEK | CEO & President Western Union
- Karlheinz MUHR | Executive Vice Chairman of Global Corporate & Investment Banking, Bank of America Merrill Lynch

& more surprise guest speakers



... and this will conclude the

AUSTRIA CONNECT NORTH AMERICA 2021

Day 4 | Sunday, December 12

Departure Day

INDIVIDUAL DEPARTURES

Speakers in Alphabetical Order



Anton **Emsenhuber**

Austrian Deputy Trade Commissioner, Counsel

[Linkedin](#)

[Website](#)



Hikmet **Ersek**

Honorary Consul of the Republic of Austria, CEO & President of Western Union

[Linkedin](#)

[Website](#)



Dr. Martin **Keller**

Laboratory Director at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)

[Linkedin](#)

[Website](#)



Karlheinz **Muhr**

Executive Vice Chairman of Global Corporate & Investment Banking, Bank of America
Merrill Lynch

[Linkedin](#)



Robyn **O'Brien**

Founder rePlant Capital

[Website](#)



Ernesto **Sirolli**

Founder The Sirolli Institute

[Linkedin](#)

[Website](#)



Shelly **Swanback**
President, Product and Platform at Western Union

[Linkedin](#)

[Website](#)



Gregor **Vogrin**
Managing Partner, Syngroup Management Consulting LLC

[Linkedin](#)

[Website](#)



Martin **Weiss**
Austrian Ambassador to the United States

[Website](#)

REGISTRATION DEADLINE November 12, 2021

REGISTRATION LINK [Registration Link_Austria Connect North America 2021](#)

CONFERENCE FEE

- For US subsidiaries of Austrian WKO members: \$350
- Others, i.e. professional service providers, e.g. freight forwarders, tax advisors, consultants, law firms: \$480
- Please note that participation in the Thursday afternoon program (Workshop for Newcomers) will be billed separately (\$120)

The conference fee includes participation in the Thursday welcome reception, all conference sessions, coffee breaks, conference lunch, transfer to Vail and welcome cocktails in Vail.

Spouses and partners of full paying participants are invited to attend the Thursday welcome reception and the optional leisure program on Sunday; no additional fee will be charged. The conference fee does not include accommodation and travel expenses, nor any other expenses incurred.

RECEPTION AND CONFERENCE VENUE

Reception Venue:

Western Union Corporate Headquarter

7001 E Belleview Ave.

Denver, CO 80237

<https://corporate.westernunion.com/>

Conference Venue:

McNichols Civic Center Building

144 W. Colfax Ave.

Denver, Co 80202

<https://www.mcnicholsbuilding.com/>

HOTEL RECOMMENDATIONS

DENVER

The Brown Palace

321 17th Street

Denver, CO 80202

p. +1 303.297.3111

Price: \$179 + tax/per night

Cut-off date: November 18, 2021

www.brownpalace.com

[Austria Connect_Group Rate Reservation Link The Brown Palace](#)

Holiday Inn Express Denver Downtown

1715 Tremont Place

Denver, CO 80202

p. +1 303.296.0400

Price: \$119+tax/night

www.ihg.com/holidayinnexpress

[Austria Connect_Group Rate Reservation Link Holiday Inn Express](#)

VAIL

Marriott Resort Vail Mountain

715 West Lionshead Circle

Vail, CO 81657

p. +1 970.476.4444

Price: \$309+tax and fees/night

Cut-off date: November 19, 2021

www.marriott.com/vail-marriott-mountain-resort

[Austria Connect_Group Rate Reservation Link Marriott Mountain Resort](#)

SKI PASS AND SHUTTLE

To book your ski pass for Vail, please go to epicpass.com (Epic Day Pass starting at \$89+tax/person, promotional price valid until Oct. 14)

To book your shuttle from Vail to Denver, please go to [Vail Mountain Shuttle](#) (Fares starting at \$ 79+tax/person)

Ski Rentals

For ski and snowboard rentals, please refer to [Vail ski rentals](#).

TERMS & CONDITIONS, CANCELLATION

<https://www.advantageaustria.org/zentral/business-guide/conditions-of-participation-austria-connect.pdf>

COVID-19 SAFETY POLICY

The Austrian Trade Commission Los Angeles/Advantage Austria is committed to providing safe meeting environments and to ensuring the health and safety of all participants in this event. By registering for and attending Austria Connect North America 2021 in Denver, CO, attendees agree to comply with the health and safety protocols established by the Austrian Trade Commission/Advantage Austria to help prevent exposure to COVID-19 and ensure the safety of all event participants. All participants must provide proof of vaccination to enter the conference venue. PCR negative tests will not be accepted. We are actively monitoring health guidelines from the CDC and local health departments. Should state and/or local health guidelines change and/or mask mandates be issued, we reserve the right to cancel the event.

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