



Supply Chain Operations & Technologies
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The week of September 23-27 I was in Krakow, Poland as a speaker at the 12th annual International Congress on Internal Controls, Internal Audit, Fraud, and Anti-Corruption Issues sponsored by the Polish Institute for Internal Controls. The event was held at Krakow Academy University.

Of the dozen international presenters I was the only one from the USA. This gave me some notoriety – both good and bad: The United States was well-recognized for having caused the global financial crisis of several years ago as well as being a global leader in fraud. Conversely the USA is recognized as having the world's best anti-fraud investigators, both public and private sector.

My presentation was on my book topic, detecting and reducing supply chain fraud, and was targeted towards an audience of auditors and those responsible for internal controls.

It was a privilege to be selected to speak at this event and be among such experienced colleagues. Make no mistake that the other presenters – from the United Kingdom, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, United Arab Emirates, Lithuania, Canada, and Holland – are every bit as credentialed, practiced, and dedicated to their profession as any American counterpart could be. And the same should be said about the attendees who came from all across Poland from various public sector agencies and private sector industries: all committed professionals in the fight against fraud and corruption.

The speakers presented in either English or Polish, and just like the United Nations we all had (wireless) headphones and an experienced translator provided real-time English-Polish or Polish-English translation. Knowing this I slowed down my tempo and altered some of my jokes slightly to ensure they would translate more effectively. I had several Polish-speaking attendees tell me – in their best English – that they appreciated my slower rhythm which allowed the translator to more effectively convey my speech, humor included.

The city itself is clean, architecturally beautiful with a scenic river running through it, the cuisine delicious, and the people very friendly. I had two full days of sightseeing before the conference and enjoyed every moment, from exploring a 400-year-old salt mine to wandering about a castle built around the year 1300, onwards to the expansive Market Square district (which is reminiscent of Trafalgar Square in London sans the theaters), and touring the museum at Krakow University (which at 650 years old in 2014 is the second oldest university in Europe) where Nicolas Copernicus was once a student. Everywhere I went I was able to find someone who spoke English well or certainly well-enough to help me along my way. I even enjoyed lunch one day with a British ex-patriot now living in Krakow who is teaching English medical jargon to Polish medical students, because a stomach or "tummy" ache is not always in the same area of the body to the same person depending upon where he or she is from. Isn't it interesting what one learns when traveling about?

For more on the conference and some history on Krakow University:

http://www.pikw.pl/english-version,art_222.html

http://www.uj.edu.pl/en_GB/universytet/historia#uni_wspolczesny

Thank you.

Norman Katz, CFE, CFS, MOS



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