

'Spring ABS' Spotlights Emerging Markets

A theme, schedule and venue have emerged for a new main-event conference that **Information Management Network** is developing.

The event is the product of a brainstorming effort that the **Euromoney** unit put forth as it sought to overhaul or replace the now-discontinued ABS West event that it produced in Phoenix each year, usually in early February. The result was something completely different: a gathering, dubbed Spring ABS, that veers away from ABS West's industry-wide approach in favor of an emerging-markets focus.

The new conference is scheduled for April 29-May 2 at the Lowes Miami Beach Hotel, in the trendy Art Deco neighborhood of Miami's South Beach district.

About 570 industry players have signed up so far — some before IMN even settled on a theme — and about 1,000 are expected to attend. IMN is predicting that about half of them will be non-U.S. issuers and investors, with players from Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and the Middle East heavily emphasized.

The company selected the Miami location with the foreign contingent in mind, as direct flights to the city are easy to come by from most places in the world. Conference attendees had often complained that ABS West's Phoenix venue was tough to access, frequently requiring connecting flights. Miami's restaurant scene, nightlife and beaches will also be a draw.

IMN advisory boards in the U.S. and Europe are putting together the conference agenda. That's also a change from ABS West, whose U.S.-heavy content made it the domain of planners in the States.

IMN decided to move the timing of the conference last year, following a steep decline in attendance at the decade-old ABS West that occurred as the **American Securitization Forum**



entrenched itself as the host of the most popular winter conference. The next ASF confab, scheduled for Jan. 28-31 in Las Vegas, is expected to attract 5,000 attendees. ❖