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Conference of the Americas celebrates brisk growth

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Nearly 1,000 retail real estate executives have gathered for the Conference of the Americas, being held this year in Brazil, which boasts the region's fastest-growing economy. Just one month ago Brazil reported a better-than-expected 8% GDP growth rate for the second quarter. The International Monetary Fund estimates the world's ninth-largest economy will achieve a 7.1% growth rate for the entire year. The mall industry accounts for 2% of Brazil's GDP, according to the Brazilian Association of Shopping Centers (ABRASCE), which is co-sponsoring the event.

Besides some expected vigorous deal-making among delegates, the meeting's presenters will cover such topics as the industry's economic prospects in the coming year, creating mall brands, Generation Z shoppers, retail and online social networks, and the opportunities presented to Brazil by its hosting of the world's two major international sports events - the 2014 World Soccer Cup and the 2016 Olympic Games.

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