

CURRENT

MAGAZINE

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DALLAS/FORT WORTH
CHAPTER



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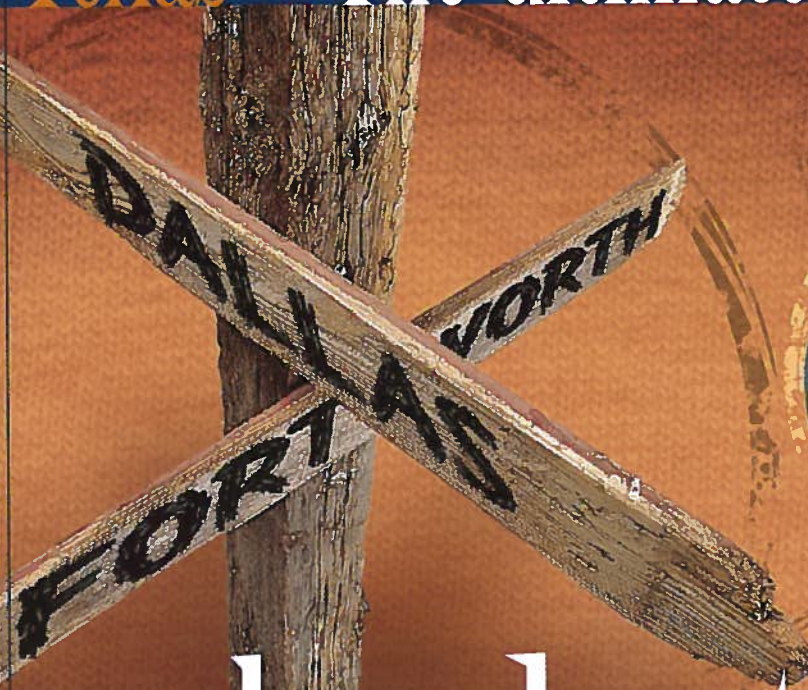
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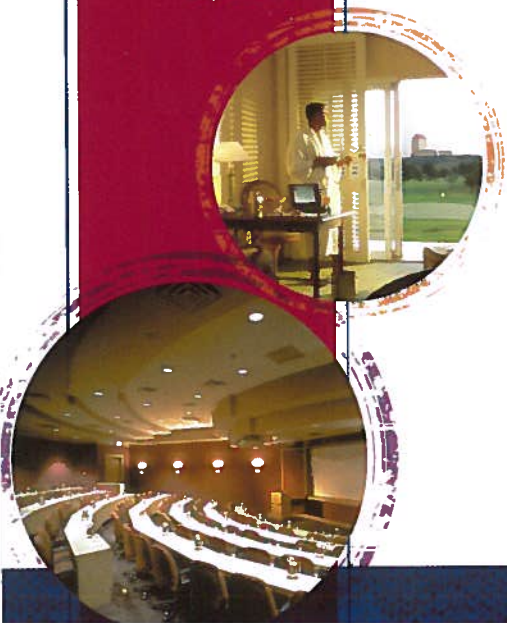
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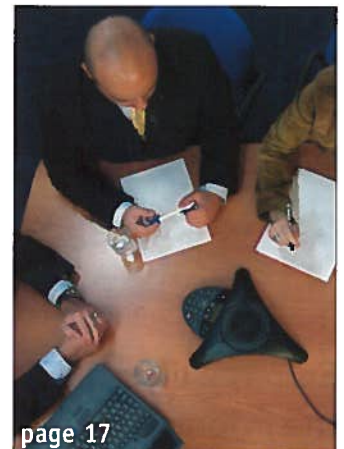
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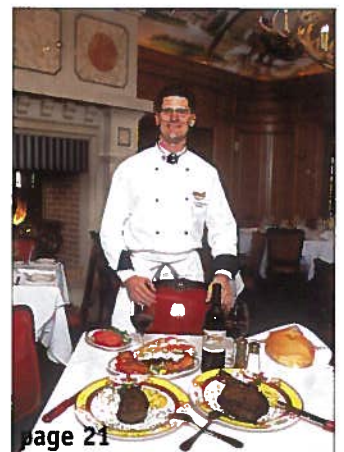
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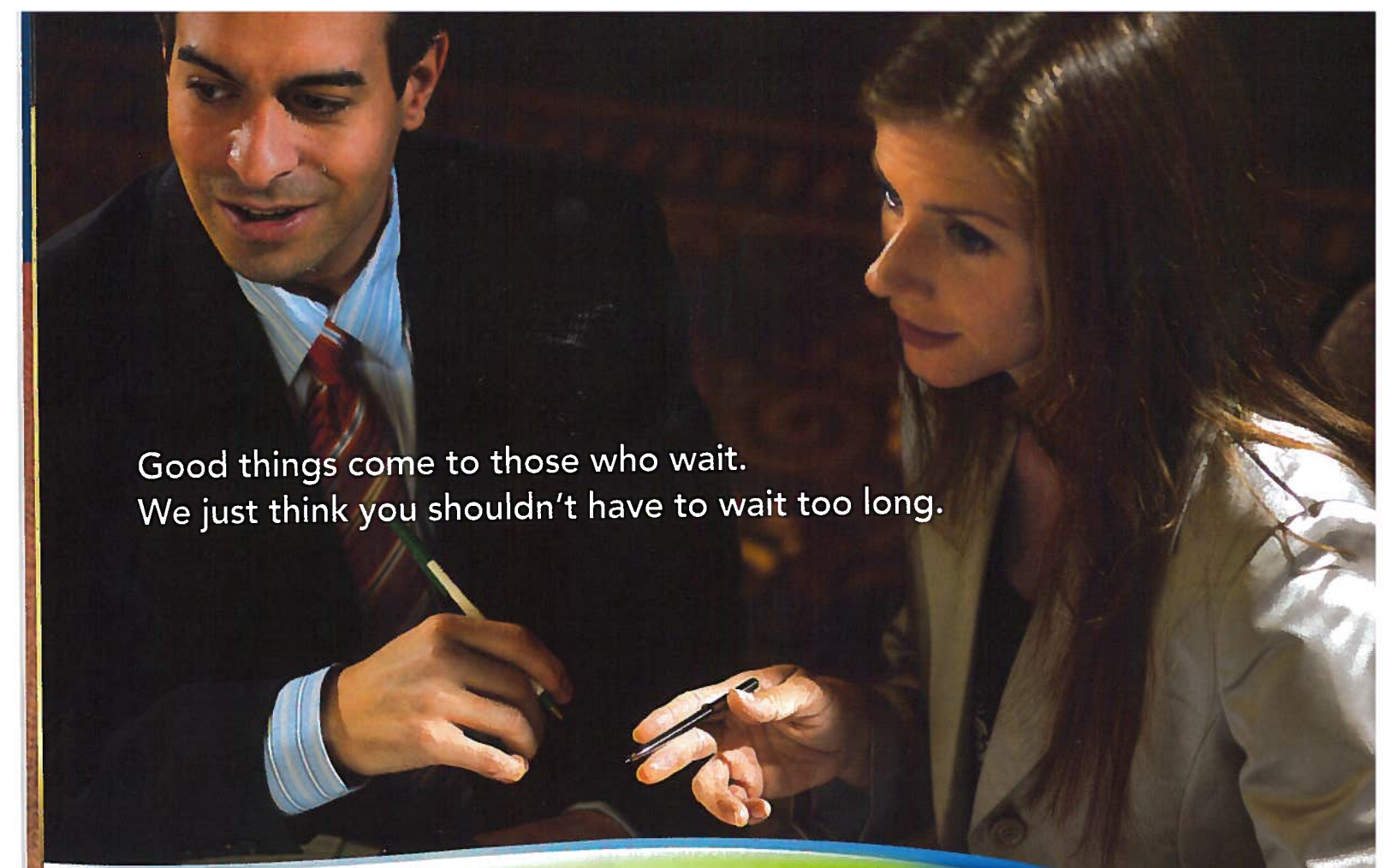
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By Carol Benavidez, CMP
HelmsBriscoe

Collectively,
our success
will place
the Dallas/
Fort Worth
Chapter as
the PREMIER
CHAPTER
within MPI
across the
globe.



Leading the Way to Success

As your 2008-2009 Chapter President, it is so exciting to experience first-hand the enthusiasm and creative energy surrounding the Executive Board. I know we will reach all of our personal and professional goals; obtaining new business connections and friendships as we interact and exchange ideas.

Collectively, our success will place the Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter as the PREMIER CHAPTER within MPI across the globe.

So far, our monthly All Committee meetings have resulted in incredible feedback regarding increased communication. Representing each committee of every department at this meeting results in quicker decisions and accomplishments. You can make a difference by attending this monthly meeting. We encourage all new members to get involved and learn more about the Chapter volunteer needs.

Did you know our Board of Directors is rotating at each monthly meeting to give the closing remarks so you can get to know them better?

LEADERSHIP

The Leadership committees through VP Jesh Batra and Director Lawana Gladney, Ph.D. have been working hard with their committee chairs to take leadership skills to the next level. One of their plans is to connect local hospitality industry leaders to further strengthen the Dallas/Fort Worth Chapter in the community. In addition, our annual awards gala at the end of the term will be enhanced with additional recognition categories.

Did you know you can apply for the Mentor program as either a coach or a protégé? As a seasoned leader, you can make a difference by influencing someone starting out in the industry.

MEMBERSHIP

Our surveys provide us with feedback from our members about our networking events. VP Carrie Elder, CMP and Director Timothy Arnold have included interactive activities to allow for instant connections at future events. In addition, every new member attending orientation is connected with a "buddy" to ensure individual introductions at each monthly meeting.

Did you know you can sponsor an Annual Student Membership for only \$40 a year? In addition, there will be more opportunities to sponsor a student to attend an upcoming monthly meeting.

FINANCE

If you are interested in learning more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact VP Dvorah Evans, CMP and Director Matthew Massengale, DMCP, CMP. Under their direction, our Chapter is financially stable and giving us more opportunities to give back to our members and to the community.

Did you know we are making a difference in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex by our members contributing to the Chapter Charity Relations Committee's choice of Charity each month?

COMMUNICATIONS

Our Communications Department is being proactive in stepping up the Chapter's visibility through several publications including a mention in the Dallas Business Journal and an article in

the Fort Worth Star Telegram. Public Relations and Marketing, lead by VP Paula Bruton, CMP and Director Melissa Mihelich, continue to update us through our bi-monthly magazine, *Current* and our website, www.mpidfw.org.

Did you know you can purchase a Member Enhanced listing to showcase your business and company for increased exposure?

EDUCATION/EVENTS

When asked if they could step out of the box when producing monthly programs and educational events, VP Kim Reynolds, CMP, CMM and Director Sandi Galloway have ensured we will continue to

enjoy and learn from different meeting experiences that are presented while at the same time being educated on specific meeting topics.

Did you know in lieu of buying a plaque or thank-you gift for our monthly speaker, sponsor and venue, we are donating \$50 each to a charity of their choice in their name?

Leading the road to success is an honor and pleasure, especially being surrounded by a team of volunteers willing and able to take us to the next level. With President Elect Jason Ware and Immediate Past President Nancey Hernandez, CMP we will continue to work together to benefit the

entire membership. Please visit the website at www.mpidfw.org to stay connected through the Events Calendar and departmental sites.

You can only grow if you challenge yourself.

Sincerely,



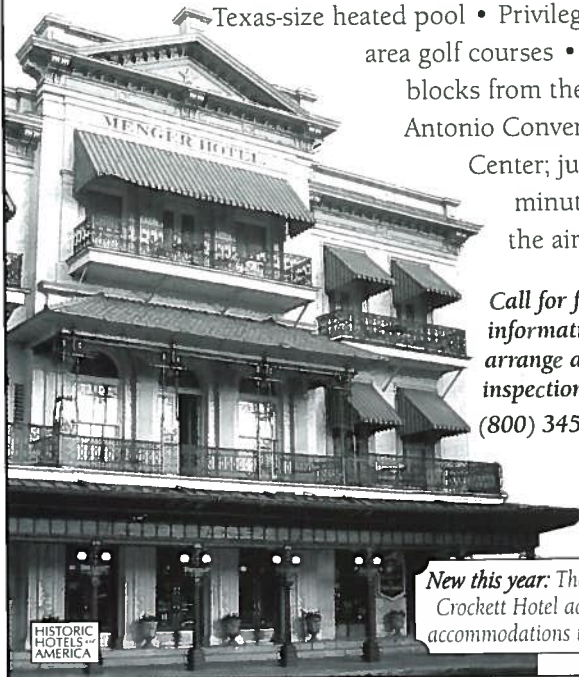
Carol Benavidez, CMP
MPI D/FW Chapter President

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crocketthotel.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



NOVEMBER 20

November Monthly Meeting

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Austin Ranch
2009 Anderson Gibson Road
Grapevine, TX 76051

DECEMBER 11

All Chapter Committee Meeting

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Addison Conference Centre
15650 Addison Road
Addison, TX 75001

DECEMBER 13

Love for Kids Holiday Event: Volunteers Needed

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Circle R Ranch
5901 Cross Timbers Road
Flower Mound, TX 75022

DECEMBER 18

Holiday Casino Night & Silent Auction

4:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Union Station
400 S. Houston Street
Dallas, TX 75202

JANUARY 15

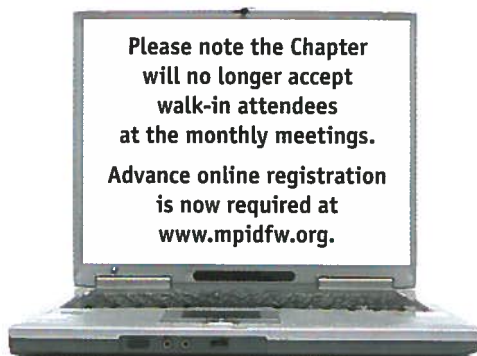
All Chapter Committee Meeting

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Addison Conference Centre
15650 Addison Road
Addison, TX 75001

JANUARY 22

January Monthly Meeting

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Location to be determined



Love for Kids Holiday Party at Circle R Ranch

When: Saturday, Dec. 13
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Where: 5901 Cross Timbers Road
Flower Mound, TX 75022

Contact: Steven G. Foster, CMP
Circle R Ranch,
stevenfoster@circlerranch.org



Love For Kids (www.lfk.cc) is holding the largest holiday party for disadvantaged children in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, and MPI D/FW needs a strong showing of volunteers to make this Holiday Season a special one!

This year, MPI D/FW hopes to make its biggest volunteer impact ever – challenging 100 chapter members to commit their time to this event. Toys donated at the annual Margarita Society Ball will be distributed to every child at this event.

Volunteers are needed from 8 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and a volunteer lunch will be provided.

Magazine COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Gleneagles Country Club

Naomi Aguirre
Assistant Editor
Medco Health Solutions

Sandie Fouke
Society Editor
Trece, The Club & Villa O

Lisé Lang
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Dave Fleming
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Jennifer Haisten, CMP
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Matthew Massengale, CMP, DCMP
Celanese Corporation

Allen Shahan
Holiday Inn SELECT

Interested in becoming a staff writer for *Current*?
E-mail editor@mpidfw.org for more information.



I am CMP

Tony Cummins, CMP
THE MEETING DEPARTMENT LLC
Dallas, Texas

As an independent planner, I have to be the CEO, the hourly associate and everything in between, but family time is one of my highest priorities.

CMP designees represent the top 12 percent of all meeting planners who plan meetings, conventions and events throughout the United States and around the world. Currently, 12,549 professionals in 35 countries and territories across the globe have the advanced training and experience required to be called a Certified Meeting Professional (CMP). Working with a CMP assures the client that they are aligning with a true professional.

DALLAS/FORT WORTH
CHAPTER

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

To learn more about obtaining your Certified Meeting Professional designation contact www.conventionindustry.org.

SCENE

Dallas/Fort Worth MPI Chapter Snapshots



D/FW Chapter Members in Las Vegas at WEC.



Board members/cheerleaders Kim Reynolds, CMP, CMM, Melissa Mihelich and Carrie Elder, CMP, at the August Meeting.



We are proud of the Chapter members who volunteered at North Texas Food Bank in October.



September Monthly Program Committee.



Bus tour of the new Dallas Cowboys Stadium.



Making new friends at III Forks Networking Event.



Drum Cafe energized members at the monthly meeting.

City Talk is a spotlight on the new developments and upcoming events in our Chapter's cities, brought to you by your local Convention and Visitors Bureaus.

Upcoming Developments: City of Richardson



A night view of the city of Richardson.

In a world that has become vastly automated, Richardson has found its place as a unique and sophisticated suburb featuring award-winning family festivals, nationally ranked championship golf courses, 30 beautiful parks, more than 40 miles of hike and bike trails and world-class entertainment.

Known nationally as the Telecom Corridor® and home to more than 500 high-tech and telecommunications companies, Richardson has the benefit of being able to offer one-on-one, small-town customer service and warm Texas hospitality, while still offering the appeal, advantages and entertainment of the D/FW Metroplex.

The goals of the Richardson Convention and Visitors Services department, led by newly appointed Director Geoff Wright, are to ensure the highest standards of customer service, to grow partnerships with the hotel community and form lasting relationships with citizens and visitors. Previously, Wright managed the Richardson Civic Center for seven years and has more than 14 years of experience in customer and community-related services.

Under his direction, the Civic Center increased revenues and flourished with a more diverse clientele.

The versatility of Richardson's hotel and meeting spaces and variety of locations makes it an ideal place for planning events.

- 14 hotel/motels offering a total of 2,179 hotel rooms
- Four full-service properties
- Meeting space ranging from 3,389 to 30,000 square feet
- Hotels/motels conveniently located along U.S. 75 (Central Expressway)
- Four Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) Light Rail stations within city limits

Additional venues and space available throughout the city include the Richardson Civic Center, with 13,800 square feet of meeting space; the Charles W. Eisemann Center for Performing Arts and Corporate Presentations, featuring the



Richardson Convention and Visitors Services Department Director Geoff Wright.

1,550 seat Hill Performance Hall; a smaller 350-seat Countrywide Theatre and the 3,000-square-foot Countrywide Hall, and the Richardson Women's Club featuring a 2,000-square-foot Clubhouse and the 2,200-square-foot Founders Hall.

The Richardson Convention and Visitor Services mission is to promote, enhance and support the hospitality, tourism, sports and meeting industries for the City of Richardson.



Children playing in Richardson fountain.

TECHNOLOGY TIDBITS

WWW – World Wide Website Watch

By Jennifer Haisten, CMP

As a self-taught Internet addict since the late '80s – wow, I think I just dated myself, nonetheless – I find it personally gratifying when I find those superb websites, where at the click of a button I have a wealth of information in which I can experience for myself and or pass on to others. Some of this information is pertinent to my everyday professional life and some, well, let's just say is not so pertinent to my everyday professional life, but worthy of sharing with others because it's just downright fun!

Listed below are just a few of my favorite sites I thought I would share with you. Some I've learned of through industry blogs, others I've stumbled across, and many I use in my day to day activities on the WWW! I've listed them in subsections, USEFUL, NEWSWORTHY, JUST FOR FUN and E-COMMERCE. I hope you can enjoy one or two of them.

Please note that I am in no way affiliated with any of these sites and I am not at all compensated for mentioning them. Whether you look at these sites on a recreational basis or find something of use for your daily activities, Enjoy!

USEFUL:

www.timeanddate.com

This site includes information that is time and date related, such as yearly and monthly calendars, countdown counters and the world clock and much more.

www.seatguru.com

Information on airline seats and in-flight amenities featuring the best seat, legroom, and recline information.

www.wunderground.com

Weather forecasts for the US and the WORLD with a fast, easy to use interface. Includes weather maps, graphics and radar images.



www.gridskipper.com

The urban travel guide. Weblog about major cities around the world.

www.pando.com

Use your existing email address to send and receive large files. Pando bypasses email attachment limits and is absolutely free.

NEWSWORTHY:

www.charitynavigator.org

For responsible philanthropic giving. Charity Navigator, America's largest independent charity evaluator, provides free financial evaluations of America's charities.

www.getnetwise.org

A public service brought by internet industry corporations and public interest organizations to help ensure that families have safe, constructive, net surfing experience. Keeping our kids safe on the internet!

JUST FOR FUN:

www.bored.com

Links to the most fun and interesting sites on the Internet. When you have nothing better to do, right?

www.slacker.com

Slacker Personal Radio is the easiest way to create free radio stations. Listen anywhere to free personalized internet radio stations playing your favorite genres and keeping track of your favorites.

www.recipezaar.com

Browse or search thousands of rated recipes, each with nutritional information. Post a recipe and get free nutritional analysis of the dish. Create your own cookbook with your favorite recipes. Yes, it's free!

E-COMMERCE:

www.drugstore.com

This site understands that people buying shampoo and deodorant are simply crossing things off their to-do list and want to move quickly. It has armed the site with a feature called "QuickClick" which lets you buy one thing after another, a click at a time.

www.mysimon.com

This site is helpful; it shows you products and prices from more than 1,500 online merchants. Simon is not so handsome but he is at least smart enough to give people who are looking for camcorders and frying pans different ways to frame their product search. ▀

The Practice of STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

**Moving Ahead to Purchasing: Who Is On Your Team?
How Long Should The Purchasing Process Take?
How Do You Keep to Your Deadlines?**



Simply understanding what a Strategic Meetings Management Program (SMMP) means to your organization is not enough. You must develop a qualified team to execute the search and selection, empower this team to make the decision, and keep a reasonable timeline.

Everyone knows implementing an SMMP is a long process. What will set you apart is understanding how long it should take and why. By managing to the organizational and project goals, you will control a successful implementation.

Currently, most SMMPs start with a solution for a perceived problem instead of an organizational objective. This sets up an environment where the vendors must guess what is needed, while organizational teams — some with ulterior motives — conduct internal discovery searches. Compound that with a project leader who may be unaware of the complexity and time required to implement the process of communicating to an executive team, with visions of quick turn, million-dollar bottom line returns, and you have a recipe for disaster.

There Is a Better Way to Structure This Process:

1. Gather a task force of people who understand the workings of SMMP.
2. Start with internal discovery – understand as much as possible about what is being spent, how and by whom.
3. Start with a project objective built off of a major organizational objective.
4. Engage executives at the right time in the process.
5. Bring qualified vendors to the table for an open discussion that begins with your primary objectives and planned savings targets.

Starting with the qualified team, determine how many members are appropriate. Securing a team of no more than five to seven people who understand the process and can fit the task types below will minimize the time devoted to purchasing a program. The team should be charged with identifying the objectives, securing the supporting data, researching the current processes and teams to determine feasibility, reaching out to appropriate vendors in an RFI and/or RFP, and have sole responsibility to select the best vendor(s) to support the organizational objectives.



By Kate Demarest Lastinger, CMP, CMM
Metaphrasis Group

The Task Types Are:

1. **Thinker:** 1-2 people per team
2. **Analyzer:** 2-4 people per team
3. **Compass:** 1 per team

The first position is the Thinker. This is the person or persons who usually start the ball rolling. They should be somewhat involved in the current meetings process and have a clear understanding of the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Thinkers are charismatic and will help to ease the way with internal stakeholders. The pitfalls to watch with a Thinker are keeping their focus on the plan and reining in their enthusiasm for a final answer. The Thinker is an important member of the team and should always be internal to the organization.



MEETINGS



Next is the Analyzer position. The Analyzers are responsible for gathering raw organizational and industry data and evaluating it for a variety of outcomes. It is critical that this position be filled with someone who is guided by fact. These team members cannot be biased to particular outcomes, as the data produced will guide the final decision. When variables arise, an Analyzer will be able to quickly and concisely articulate how it affects the outcome of primary objectives. Analyzers can be either internal or external to the organization.

The final position is the Compass. The Compass will need to manage the project to the primary objective. A Compass must have the ability to work with the Analyzer to read the data and keep the project on track and to work with the Thinker to integrate practical implementation that works within the existing culture. The Compass is the leader of the team. When working with vendors or executives, the ability to provide concise plans with timelines and financial targets in a direct approach with a high altitude viewpoint will work well to drive clarity and secure funding succinctly. The Compass should usually be external to the organization.

Engaging Analyzers and a Compass external to the organization will achieve a more non-biased solution. Now you know who should comprise your team, but what about the other internal planners? While it is tempting to invite stakeholders into this process, do yourself a favor and don't. The main obstacle to the success of an SMMP is too many opinions. Stakeholders are critical to the success of any SMMP and should have access to the Thinkers. The stakeholders are typically involved in the tactical day-to-day planning of meetings and events. Keeping the organization's meetings and events on par is a most important task during this time. To ensure stakeholder needs and objectives are considered, host an initial Q&A session with the team. Share project objectives, and allow for any concerns to be vetted. It is critical that the team prioritize concerns and sideline those that are not critical. It is important to note that a result of this meeting could be a modification of project objectives. Regular progress updates should be provided to the stakeholders via the Thinker(s). The

next active participation by Stakeholders in the process should be training.

Once the final project objectives are determined and the RFP is complete, it is the right time to engage executives. The Compass should set a meeting with the appropriate executive(s) to secure a green light for the project. The team should provide a concise presentation on the objectives, current state, desired state and expected financial outcomes. Details should be provided only as specifically requested. Providing too much information can derail this project that has been so carefully constructed. Keep the presentation simple, and ask for exactly what you need to move forward. Commit to a date and report back to your executive(s) with final recommendations from the selected vendor and estimated financials.

To comply with Sarbanes Oxley (and industry best practices) you should, at a minimum, have three vendors respond to an RFP (Request for Proposal). To determine qualified vendors, you may need to conduct an RFI (Request for Information). Both the RFI and RFP processes may need to be facilitated through a Procurement department. They typically own an organization's formal bid process, and now is the time to engage them. You will most likely need to provide

continued on page 16

Editor's Note: This is the second in a comprehensive, two-part series exploring how to create a meeting consolidation plan which works for both planners and suppliers alike.



continued from page 15

Procurement with RFI/RFP documents that are specific to this project. Suggest that a procurement agent act as your touch point during the RFI and RFP process. This will provide the team with a buffer and keep the process secure. It is important to establish with Procurement what the team's qualifications are for selecting the right vendor(s) for the organization. The best team interface for Procurement will be your Analyzers. They have quick access to your data and can most easily interact on a factual informational level.

With clear objectives and an idea of what type of SMMP best fits your organizational needs and culture, identifying the right vendors to include in your RFP should be a relatively easy task. By inviting a limited number of qualified vendors to your table, you will streamline the decision process. The focus of your time and energy will need to be on deciphering the solutions provided. This will not be an easy task. It will take the skills of your entire team to weigh the features and benefits to come up with the best solution.

A target timeline from RFI to signed contract should be approximately six months. The plan to the right fits this timeframe, allowing for some lag time between tasks.

With clear objectives and an idea of what type of SMMP best fits your organizational needs and culture, identifying the right vendors to include in your Request for Proposal should be a relatively easy task.

Target RFI Timeline

1. Send RFI to all selected vendors.
2. Two weeks for a response to be received.
3. Two weeks to review responses and select vendors who will move on to the RFP stage.
4. At this time, any vendor not selected to participate in the RFP should be notified in writing via your procurement agent — it is possible that all vendors responding to the RFI could move to the RFP stage.
5. Send RFP to all selected vendors.
6. Two to four weeks for a response — based on the complexity of the RFP.
7. Allow deadline for vendors to pose questions and points of clarification — this should be facilitated through your procurement agent. All questions should be structured to mask any identifying information, and all questions should be provided, with answers, on a single document to all vendors at the same time.
8. Two weeks to review proposals received by the deadline.
9. Three days allocated for the team to confer on the various proposals and set priorities within the offerings provided.
10. Solicit feedback/questions from stakeholders via Thinkers.
11. Invite selected vendors to present proposals to the team within one month — when scheduling these presentations, be sure to clarify the strengths and weaknesses of the written proposal, so that the presentation will bring greater clarity to the team.
12. Following the presentations, allocate two to three days to discuss all points from the proposals and presentations to determine which vendor(s) best fit the primary objectives.
13. Call for contract to the selected vendor — any vendors responding to the RFP who would not be considered should be notified in writing by your procurement agent. Vendors who are not selected but may be called back pending contract negotiations with the selected vendor should not be notified at this time.
14. Thirty to 45 days for the contracting process — once a satisfactory contract has been reached and signed, you may have your procurement agent notify the remaining vendors who were not selected.

Congratulations! Your team is activated, and you are on your way to purchasing a valuable SMMP. The next article will deal with ensuring that your objectives are met, and the selected vendor(s) exceed your expectations. By working from the start in a purposeful way, you have paved the road to success. ▀



Man vs. Office:

Surviving Inside the Corporate Jungle



By Dave Fleming

At a pre-assigned time, the participants gather in a conference room and sit around the table, staring into the SuperPhone. No one makes eye contact — that is strictly forbidden.

How do we get anything done at work? I'm baffled. Because we confront so many distractions each day that have NOTHING to do with work, but they require so much of our time. We waste time in the break room, in the bathroom, at meetings, traveling, battling office machinery, and battling each other (to name a few).

So, I set out on a mission to research and deeply understand these workplace challenges. In each issue of *Current*, I will provide my perspective on a new topic, complete with tips to help YOU be more productive at work.

**This month's topic:
The Conference Call.**

How did business possibly get done before the advent of the conference call?

Today, it's impossible to do business without them. At many companies, these calls cannot be conducted without a triangular shaped **SuperPhone**. At a pre-assigned time, the participants gather in a conference room and sit around the table, staring into the **SuperPhone**. No one makes eye contact — that is strictly forbidden. Everyone is lured into the hypnotic powers of the **SuperPhone**.

Every conference call follows the same agenda. First it's roll call. Who could it be, who is on the call today? Then, we wait five minutes for everyone to get on the phone. Then five more. And do you think we can sit there in silence? Nope. We must start up some small talk. And the number one small talk topic on a conference call is the weather. There is a 100 percent guarantee



that you will get the five day forecast for every metropolitan area represented on the call. Some even

offer vivid color-coded descriptions of the Doppler radar.

They never start on time. Ever. They have horrendous hold music. There is ALWAYS someone complaining that they cannot hear. Someone who is multi-tasking should have used the mute button. Someone always has a HARD STOP (what, pray tell, would a soft stop be?) so we cannot finish what we started and therefore we must schedule another conference call to pick up where the last one left off.

But, they do all have a little built-in game. This happens when someone gets on the call after it actually started. Because we hear that little BEE BEEP, and then the race is on. And the race is on to see who can say three words faster than anyone else: who just joined? Suddenly, people from every corner of the conference call start yelling: WHO JUST

JOINED? WHO JUST JOINED? WHO JUST JOINED? Who joined the call, seven minutes late? It's like they are keeping score, it's unbelievable.

So, how do you overcome these conference call obstacles?

Here are 4 survival tips:

1 If you are the call leader, send out an agenda in advance. This will keep everyone on time, and keep things moving (plus it will give attendees something to do: they can color in all of the capital Os if a portion of the call starts to drag).

2 Start on time and maintain a reputation of starting on time. And don't rehash the first 5 minutes of the call for the people who get on the call late, wearing out the participants who were prompt, and simply wasting time.

3 Make sure that you use a triangular shaped **SuperPhone**. Conference calls on the typical boxy speaker phone are a waste of time — not

a soul can hear. Then, you have to watch your co-workers defy all laws of acceptable hygiene and speak one millimeter away from the phone because they think that will help. It doesn't, they actually end up sounding like Charlie Brown's teacher to people on the other end of the line.

4 Do a brief recap of the call at the end (and commit to sending out the meeting notes via e-mail within 24 hours). While a beating (typing meeting notes is about as much fun as filling out expense reports), these notes are a critical historical document on a project.

Follow these steps, and the office jungle will be a lot less imposing. ▸

Dave Fleming of *Man vs. Office* is a corporate jungle survival expert. He has survived over 18 years inside the corporate jungle and currently speaks and entertains on productivity and humor in the workplace. Dave can be reached at 214-718-3121, www.manvsoffice.com or dave@manversusoffice.com

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Planner Spotlight

LeeAnn Norton
of Bowling Proprietors'
Association of America, Inc.



Q. How long have you been working for Bowling Proprietors' Association of America, Inc.?

A. 11 years.

Q. What is your position?

A. Director of Meetings & Events.

Q. What are your job responsibilities?

A. Overall planning and management of bowling industry events for BPAA, USBC (United States Bowling Congress), as well as many other State Bowling Associations and Industry Organizations.

Q. What is the most rewarding aspect of your position?

A. I get to meet and deal with incredible people every day.

Q. List an accomplishment you are most proud of in your industry:

A. Bringing our annual convention up to be the premier industry event it is today. Because of the success of International Bowl Expom, we are now managing numerous other regional shows and I am asked by "like" organizations how we did it.

Q. What is one interesting fact about yourself that no one may know about you?

A. I love to read any type of motivational and inspirational book.

Q. What is the last book you read?

'The Power of Now' by Eckard Tolle.

Q. Where is your favorite destination (vacation spot) to get away from it all?

A. Cabo San Lucas – Las Ventannas.

Q. WHAT PICTURE OR ARTIFACT DO YOU HAVE ON YOUR DESK?

A. A METAL AND JEWELLED ELEPHANT.



Q. Do you have a mentor or someone you admire?

A. My parents – they gave me my foundation and work ethic, and are always there for me and support me in everything I do.

Q. What is your favorite meal?

A. Wine, cheese and fruit.

Q. What is your favorite pastime or hobby?

A. Anything outdoors – I love the sun.

Q. If you had to TIVO a show, what would it be?

A. I always TIVO Oprah when Dr. Oz is on it.

Q. Who is your favorite singer?

A. Toby Keith.

Q. What is your best all time memory?

A. That one's easy – meeting the love of my life! ▶

Supplier Spotlight

David Pennachetti of Wine Guru Services, LLC



Q. How long have you been working for Wine Guru Services, LLC?

A. 1 1/2 years.

Q. What is your position?

A. President & Founder.

Q. What are your job responsibilities?

A. Hospitality industry beverage consulting, wine tasting events, training programs and marketing promotions.

Q. What is one interesting fact about yourself that no one may know about you?

A. I teach a hospitality management course at Collin County Community College.

Q. What is the last book you read?

A. Bacchus & Me: Adventures in the Wine Cellar, by Jay McInerney.

Q. Where is your favorite destination to get away from it all?

A. Tuscany for the culture, food & wine.

Q. WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING ASPECT OF YOUR POSITION?

A. HELPING MAKE WINE APPROACHABLE THROUGH EDUCATION AND TASTING.

Q. Favorite Meal?

A. Pasta with meat sauce.

Q. What is your favorite pastime?

A. Construction volunteer for Dallas Area Habitat For Humanity.

Q. If you had to TIVO a show – what would it be?

A. *The Office*.



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What's Cooking with Chef Chris Vogeli of III Forks



By Matthew Massengale, DMCP, CMP



Join us as we turn over a new leaf. Welcome to *Off the Vine*, the hottest place to come for the latest trends in food and beverage, cool tips from great local chefs and the latest news from the culinary world. *Off the Vine* is proudly sponsored by The Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau.



Chris Vogeli was born and raised in the food service business in Dallas. The Vogeli family is of Swiss descent and has been in the industry for generations. He grew up with an aunt and uncle that owned a restaurant in Fort Worth, family friends that owned a bakery and a father that was an Executive Chef. Working with his father in kitchens from the age of 12, Chris was destined for a culinary future. After graduating with honors from the culinary program at El Centro College in Dallas, Chef Vogeli refined his skills and knowledge in Switzerland. He cooked aside and learned from some of the world's top chefs at the Dolder Grand Hotel in Zurich, the Suveretta House in St. Moritz and the Hotel Rose See Garden in Locarno.

After three years in Switzerland, Chef Vogeli returned to the United States to continue his culinary adventure at Gibbs Station, Baby Routh, Routh Street Café



Chef Chris Vogeli.



and the Riviera. While at the Riviera, the Marriott Corporation approached Chef Vogeli and offered him the Corporate Chef position at the JCPenney headquarters.

During the 1990s Chef Vogeli competed in many regional and international competitions. He and his team competed in an international banqueting competition in 1994, 1995, 1996 and 1997, and brought home the international title the



very important item is a very HOT grill. Using these three key items in the right combination will create delicious steaks that will keep your guests coming back for more.

OTV: Would you like to share your favorite hors d'oeuvres recipe?

Chef Vogeli: The following is a recipe for our famous III Forks Crab Cakes with Remoulade Sauce (see box).

For More Information

For more information on Chef Chris Vogeli and III Forks please visit www.3forks.com or 17776 Dallas Parkway, Dallas, TX 75287 - 972.267.1776.

last three years. This is a feat that no American team had ever achieved in the 40 years of this competition. Chef has also received many awards for seafood, beef and mystery challenges.

Through his long career in the culinary industry, Chef Vogeli built many long lasting relationships. One of these, a relationship with Dale F. Wamstad, aka "Del Frisco," proved to be very rewarding. In 1998, Chef and Dale joined forces and opened III Forks Restaurant, specializing in gourmet steaks and seafood. Two years later, Chef Vogeli, Gene Street and CRO, Inc. partnered to expand the III Forks brand and create the international acclaim it holds today.

Off The Vine: Chef Vogeli, Thank you for taking the time to share your culinary insight with us. Can you share with us what you feel is currently "HOT" in food and beverage?

Chef Vogeli: Independent growers and producers supplying products to their region through Farm to Restaurant direct selling.

OTV: Do you have a culinary tip or trick that you would like to share?

Chef Vogeli: I am constantly asked the secret to cooking great steaks at home. To cook a great steak, the home chef needs three key items. The first item is well marbled quality beef. The second item is a simple seasoning. In the restaurant, we use Kosher salt and coarse grind black pepper. There is no need to over season your meat. The third and

III FORKS' CRAB CAKES WITH REMOULADE SAUCE

CRAB CAKE INGREDIENTS:

3 oz. butter
 1 bunch green onions, cleaned and sliced
 ¼ cup celery, diced
 1 clove garlic, chopped
 ½ tsp. celery salt
 ½ tsp. white pepper
 Pinch cayenne pepper
 1 large egg, lightly beaten
 ½ tsp. dry mustard
 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
 1 tbs. chopped parsley
 ½ cup mayonnaise
 1 lb. lump crabmeat, picked clean
 1/3 cup Saltine crackers, crumbled

REMOULADE INGREDIENTS:

¼ tsp. paprika
 1 tsp. salad oil
 1 cup mayonnaise
 ½ cup Creole mustard
 1 tbs. horseradish
 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
 3 shakes Tabasco sauce
 Juice 1 lemon
 1 stalk celery, finely chopped
 1 Tbs. capers
 1 tsp. garlic powder
 ¼ tsp. white pepper
 1 tsp. salt
 1 tbs. parsley, chopped

CRAB CAKES METHOD:

Heat a sauté pan over medium high heat. Sweat the green onions, celery and garlic in the butter until tender. Add the seasonings, salt and both peppers. Remove from the heat and allow to cool. In a mixing bowl, combine the egg, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, parsley and mayonnaise. Add the cooked vegetables and stir. Add the crabmeat and crackers and fold into the mixture. Mix lightly to not break up the crabmeat. Form into cakes and refrigerate until ready to serve. Dust each cake lightly with flour and sauté in vegetable oil over medium high heat until golden brown. Serve hot.

REMOULADE SAUCE METHOD:

In a small dish, combine paprika and salad oil and allow it to sit for 10 minutes. In another mixing bowl, combine the remaining ingredients and mix well. Stir in the paprika oil for cover. Refrigerate for several hours before serving.

Chef Vogeli has had a long and adventurous culinary path and is proud to share his epicurean masterpieces with all whom visit III Forks. Come to III Forks and share his passion.

Make a World of Difference

No – it's not just a trend! Yes! CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility – is the new movement! Have you heard the latest buzz? Our MPI D/FW Chapter has formed a new CSR Committee and we are about to take sustainability and social responsibility to an all-new level for our members. Come be a part of this new movement and join the new CSR Committee. Help to raise the profile of CSR by educating our members and helping them make an impact within our meetings and event community, within our member lives and for our members' future. It's more than just being "green." Join this team and be prepared to make a difference – to our members and to the world.

Step 1 Contact Neva Lamb neva@ah-awardpro.com or Tara Judd at tjudd@unitedwaydallas.com to join the new CSR Committee or obtain more information.

Step 2 Check out the new CSR Group Space blog on the MPI International website. This is a great place to get involved – talk, share best practices, ask questions and brainstorm ideas.

Step 3 Lead by example, encouraging and supporting others to adopt social and environmental initiatives themselves.

You Must be the Change You Wish to See in the World."
– Mahatma Gandhi



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