

Agenda

✱ "Teach Me How to Meeting" Highlights - Page 14





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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

The events and meetings industry by nature is a social environment. As meeting planners, we depend upon other individuals from different companies and venues to help us plan the best meeting possible for our clients. Relationship building and networking go hand-in-hand with the social environment.

I am always thrilled to work with an individual I have worked with in the past to further build our relationship. It's definitely easier to work with someone who knows your quirks, working personality and communication style. Building professional relationships is something we are all a part of on a daily basis. MPI and MPI-WI Chapter promote this relationship building, which is one of the main reasons I am involved with MPI.

I am able to create and build relationships through work and through my volunteer activities. It's fun to realize you work with someone that is an MPI-WI Chapter member and you're not only able to foster your relationship through work, but in a shared personal interest as well. It is important to recognize the great business relationships built through this organization. There are many different vendors offering a wide variety of services to the event and meeting world.

The first issue of the year focuses on the Supplier Showcase. The education articles we have included should help planners work more effectively with suppliers. Whether you as a planner are unsure of the best way to work with a convention and visitor's bureau, or you just want to learn more about our industry, this issue helps shed light on the supplier's world with which planners are not too familiar, but should be.

As you begin your year of 2012, add a New Year's resolution for work. Thinking about relationships and networking built through MPI-WI Chapter and various other facets of your job, question what can planners and suppliers do to improve and build stronger relationships throughout the industry. Keeping these things in mind will guarantee the best possible outcome and service for our clients and companies.

Happy 2012, and I hope everyone has a great year! 🌐

Margaret



*Margaret Trotter
Editor, Agenda
Meetings Manager
Executive Director, Inc.*

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

SHOW ME THE MONEY

2012 has begun!!! With the start of a new year, many go through the ritual of setting goals and checking off accomplishments. In Wisconsin, being inspired to do this when the snow and cold winter winds are blowing is no easy task. Yet, with horns blowing and balloons falling at the stroke of midnight, we all promise devoutly to accomplish great things.

For MPI supplier members, January brings new sales goals that are higher than the feats of the prior year. For MPI planner members, it means finding ways to execute meetings with smaller budgets, less time, and higher expectations. In that way, all our members are facing similar stress and would benefit from someone or something to help them accomplish these daunting tasks. Does that remind you of the song "No Roads Left?"

*Standing alone with no direction
How did I fall so far behind?
Why am I searching for perfection?
Knowing it's something I won't find*

MPI provides you the direction and is the road map to your success! Begin by taking part in the stimulating and relevant education available to you. The MPI-WI Chapter offers monthly educational programming that is rich and varied for all professional levels. Just take a look at this line-up of coming events:

- "Very Big Hotel & Convention Center vs. International Bratwurst Consultants Association" Mock Trial
- Strategic Meetings Management (SMM)
- Meeting Risk and Contingencies: Planners and Suppliers Plan Together™
- May's keynote by Laura Schwartz, the White House Director of Events for the Clinton Administration

At the International level, members can engage in dynamic education at one of

their annual meetings. The European Meetings & Events Conference was held January 29-31 in Budapest, Hungary. Closer to home is the annual World Education Congress (WEC) being held July 28-31 in St. Louis, MO. From my experience attending WEC, the knowledge gained was invaluable. Over the three days, WEC offers more than 100 educational sessions and networking to build business relationships with thousands of your peers from around the world.

Another route navigates you to a wealth of knowledge available on the Chapter and International websites. If you haven't visited the sites lately, I would encourage you to do so. (The Chapter website is www.mpiwi.org and International is www.mpiweb.org) Make a stop to update your personal data and preferences before moving on to key features including One+ articles and discussion boards or one of the live webinars at "Professional Development on Demand." Need to stay in touch with industry trends? Go to the "Business Barometer Report" giving details on how current business conditions continue to improve, despite deep concerns about the viability of the global economy.

All those things sound great, but you might say "show me the money to do this." The good news is that members have multiple financial resources available through MPI. MPI-WI Chapter sponsors a member grant to help pay for membership dues; registration fees for Chapter or International events; or professional development activities, including CMP or CMM exam and study materials. This can also be used to pay for the CMP Prep Days to be held in May.

For students, the Chapter recognizes the need to support individuals pursuing careers in the meetings industry, and offers the Kristin Bjurstrom Krueger

Scholarship. Submissions for both the member grant and student scholarship are due in June, and updates are on the chapter website under "Professional Development."

The MPI Foundation offers funds in three areas, including college education funding; general leadership education or academic funding; and funding specifically for leadership, career and educational opportunities offered exclusively by MPI itself. There are four deadlines per year for the MPI Foundation scholarships: March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31.

Planners should also investigate the HelmsBriscoe Meeting Planner Membership Scholarship and Disney Destinations Membership Scholarship Programs that pay for MPI membership dues.

Finally, there are those MPI members looking for an industry job or seeking to fill an industry position. The MPI-WI Chapter Job Board and International's Job Connection is where MPI members turn to find their next opportunity, and is the premier place for employers seeking the most qualified event professionals.

Lily Tomlin once said, "The road to success is always under construction." I'd like to suggest that you can be more prepared for those detours when you make MPI part of your success plan.

Best wishes for an extraordinary 2012. 🌐



*Susan Kainz
2011-2012
MPI-WI President
Global Account Executive
with ConferenceDirect*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: EXECUTIVE CHEF RYAN NACKERS MENOMINEE CASINO RESORT



Chef Ryan Nackers grew up in North East Wisconsin, also known as the Fox Valley Area. Since he was young he had an interest in cooking and eating. With a passion for taste, he decided to turn that into a career. At the age of fourteen, Chef Ryan worked in his

first kitchen. He worked for one week as a dishwasher at the University of Oshkosh for the EAA Fly-In, one of the biggest in the world. There he worked two shifts a day doing dishes and carving meat. Chef Ryan has been in kitchens ever since. He has been cooking for eleven years and received his Associates Degree in Culinary Arts from the Fox Valley Technical College. Chef was a supervisor of a kitchen in the Fox Valley Area. While working there the restaurant received several

awards for the best fare. He also took third place in the Wisconsin Cheese Festival for best cheese cake. That competition was filmed and aired by The Food Network. Chef Ryan was the Executive Chef of Main Event Steak House in the Valley where he was judged by food critiques and then appeared on television, cooking one of his signature dishes.

Since 2008, Chef Ryan has been the Chef at The Menominee Casino Resort. In 2010, they earned third place by Midwest Gaming for Best Casual Restaurant, and in 2011 they received second place for Best Casual Restaurant. Chef Ryan is also the author of the website www.kitchen2counter.com. The website is about anything from the kitchen to the counter. As he is known to his kitchen staff as Chef or Chef Ryan, at home he is daddy. Chef Ryan and his wife Heidi have two young girls—two and a half year old Savannah and four month old Maya. In Chef's spare time, if he can find it, he enjoys spending time with his family traveling and camping. He also likes to golf and still enjoys dining out frequently at area restaurants. 🌐

CHIPOTLE ROASTED PORK LOIN WITH ROASTED RED PEPPER HOT SAUCE



Pork loin	1 loin
Ground chipotle	2 Tbsp
Season salt	1tsp

Rub pork with the ground chipotle peppers. Let rest for two hours. Season pork with your favorite season salt then, roast pork at 350 degrees until the internal temperature reaches 160 degrees.

Roasted Red Pepper Hot Sauce

Roasted red peppers	1 Can
Butter	2 Tbsp
Garlic "minced"	1 Tbsp
Basil fresh	1 tsp
Red onion "diced"	1
Clam stock	1 C.
Lemon juice	¼ C.
Cream	1/3 C.
Sherry	3 Tbsp
Tabasco	6 drops
Salt	To taste
Pepper	To taste

- Put butter in pot and get it hot
- Puree peppers, garlic, and Basil
- Sauté onion in butter and add sherry, puree, and stock and reduce 1/3.
- Add cream and reduce a by 1/3 again.



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IMEX: A WISCONSIN CHAPTER MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE

By: Nicole Radabaugh

On October, I was fortunate enough to attend the inaugural IMEX America tradeshow in Las Vegas. My first impression was travel overload - if you like to travel and explore new places you'll love this show! It was a great opportunity to meet new contacts and learn more about the hottest trends and destinations in the meeting and incentive industry.

During the event, I participated in the hosted buyers program and was hosted by MPI. Even though it was a first-time endeavor, I felt this hosted program was thoughtfully laid out and executed well. Each hosted buyer was required to make a minimum of four 30-minute individual appointments per day and you were assigned two group appointments each day as well. The group appointments were nice because each day I met with 12-15 other attendees (who were also hosted by MPI) and we attended presentations at different booths together. I liked these group appointments particularly because you got to see the same people for a few days in a row to build camaraderie and it allowed me to thank the MPI representative who accompanied our group. Plus, because the group appointments were assigned for us I learned more about places (Argentina; Croatia; Seoul, Korea) I may not have stopped to talk with on my own.

The hosted buyers program also included daily access to the hosted buyers lounge as well as hotel accommodations, round-trip airport transfers and airfare reimbursement. Those hosted by MPI were lucky enough to stay at the Palazzo, which is directly connected to the Sands Expo Center. Thank you MPI for your fantastic partnership with IMEX America and securing these incredible sleeping rooms.



Some of the hosted buyer sponsors gave small gifts to their participants or hosted dinners/private receptions and some sponsors required their attendees to stay a certain number of nights. (MPI let you choose how many nights your scheduled allowed). MPI hosted over 100 qualified buyers in 2011 and I look forward to the opportunity of applying for the program again in 2012.

There were a number of education programs available daily during the show and the day before the show opened there was an entire day dedicated to education called "Smart Monday". I attended the keynote general sessions sponsored by MPI on Wednesday and Thursday. Despite an "early" 8:00 a.m. start in Las Vegas, I found these sessions to be fun and engaging with great take-aways. There was also the "Learning Curve" area on the tradeshow floor that hosted educational sessions throughout the show hours. I attended several sessions here on topics including social networking and the new CMP designation rules.

Overall, I thought the online individual appointment system was easy to use. The suppliers I spoke to were not as impressed as they could not invite specific attendees to a specific appointment time, they had to rely on us to find them and set the date/time. IMEX America did offer the option for suppliers to send out mass emails about themselves and to invite planners to make appointments. However, I would recommend that is not an op-

tion in the future. I received hundreds of emails a day and stopped counting when it got over 1,500. I'm hopeful this portion will be revamped for 2012. Eventually, I made my appointments by directly going out into the directory of the appointment system (sortable by supplier name, type, and destination) and found the suppliers I knew I wanted to meet with.

We all know face-to-face meetings provide valuable connections and opportunities for partnership and I found this to be especially true during the show as I met new friends and expanded my knowledge base. My favorite take-away was that now I have an updated "rolodex" of resources to turn to if I need an expert on a specific topic or destination. Although the days out of the office can be hard to justify at times, I know what I gained from attending IMEX America will only help me better support my clients and industry partners going forward.

In the end, the overall feeling of the show was excited and optimistic. The attendees and suppliers were rejuvenated to have a new marketplace to meet in and it was evident the industry's downturn is back on the upswing. I heard more than one supplier talk about making their booth bigger next year. The event got rave reviews and was supremely organized. We all understand there are bumps in the road for first-time events, but overall I think the IMEX America team and their strategic partners have a successful and fast-growing show on their hands. Mark your calendars now because IMEX America 2012 will be something you won't want to miss! 



*Nicole Radabaugh,
Account Services
Manager, Fox Premier
Meetings & Incentives*

CODES OF CONDUCT REQUIRE NEW REVENUE SOURCES, CREATIVE COST-CUTTING

Contributed by Lynn Golabowski, ConferenceDirect

These are indeed economically challenging times for events like the BMT Tandem Meetings.

Compliance with Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) codes that govern interactions within the health care community has led to reduced corporate support of meetings. No longer can the combined annual meetings of the Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research (CIBMTR) and the American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (ASBMT) offer sponsor opportunities for giveaway items like branded registration bags, lanyards and pens. These used to contribute to meeting revenue but are now considered gifts that may influence physician purchases.

Then there are the largest line items in its meeting P&Ls — food and beverage, audiovisual, and speaker honoraria and travel. Even as the economy recovers, these are “scrutinized continuously,” explained D’Etta Waldoch, CMP, BMT Tandem Meetings manager and CIBMTR associate director for international programs.

Adopting best practices in a number of operating areas, however, is paying off big-time.

TRANSPARENCY. Hardest hit by the ACCME and PhRMA codes have been the Tandem Meetings’ meal-time satellite symposia, which were initially managed in-house. Then they were bid out for several years to medical education companies that represented individual pharmaceutical companies. Subsequently, they were bid out to a single company that managed logistics for the pharmaceutical supporters of between eight and 10 symposia. Now, the breakfast and luncheon symposia are again managed in-house. The reason: better scientific oversight and enhanced efficiency.

The request-for-proposal process for acquiring well-defined symposia has also changed greatly. Initially, pharma-

ceutical companies would approach the meetings’ organizers with ideas for topics and speakers they were willing to support. Over time, decisions about educational content were carefully separated from financial support both in fact and appearance, in compliance with tightening CME rules and guidelines and to better meet the needs of participants. Today, BMT Tandem Meetings transparently and uniformly determines the design, planning, execution and outcomes assessment for every corporate-supported symposium.

MAKE IT PAY. Without the levels of corporate support enjoyed in the past, hosted receptions and dinners have given way to purchased and ticketed

Meetings Profile: Medical College of Wisconsin

BMT Tandem Meetings, held every February, is the largest continuing medical education (CME) event sponsored by the Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW). It combines annual meetings of the Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research (CIBMTR), based in Milwaukee and Minneapolis, and the American Society for Blood and Marrow Transplantation (ASBMT), headquartered in Arlington Heights, Ill.

Who attends: *The event is North America’s largest international gathering of blood and marrow transplant clinicians, investigators and allied health professionals. Approximately 2,500 attendees from 40 countries represent a 60 percent overlap between CIBMTR and ASBMT membership.*

Where and when: *The meetings are held every February in warm-weather locations in the United States.*

The program: *Five days of plenary and concurrent scientific sessions, workshops and symposia, presenting cutting-edge progress in basic science, translational research, clinical investigation, and adult and pediatric patient care. Eight parallel conferences of specialized sessions draw transplant nurses, clinical research professionals/data managers, BMT pharmacists, BMT center administrators and advanced practice professionals. So far, attendance and registration income have remained fairly consistent. The meeting rotates regionally, so those who may not attend one year due to travel expense have the benefit of returning when the meeting is closer to home.*

events. Although BMT Tandem Meetings strives to minimize the financial burden on attendees, in order to help defray expenses and to meet budget requirements “we have had to start assessing nominal charges for abstract submissions and some of the courses offered,” Waldoch explained.

THINK “WEEK.” Audiovisual rentals are negotiated by the week rather than the day, with a close eye kept on tech time. Physicians are more concerned with data-bearing screens than faces of presenters, so pricey specialty items such as I-MAG projection are used less. “Again, we start by cutting in areas where no one seems to notice,” said Waldoch. “This ensures that the overall impact on the quality of the conference is not compromised.”

GET “OUT.” Always looking for new approaches to collaborative meeting management, CIBMTR and ASBMT meeting staff has outsourced many tasks formerly performed internally.

Housing management, conference registration, exhibit and audio visual management are all handled by industry experts who have joined the “Tandem family” over the years. “We’ve become sort of a traveling road show,” Waldoch said with a smile. Group communication during planning stages is easily achieved through e-mail and conference calls.

STREAMLINE. The cumbersome task of speaker management is much more streamlined with online posting of CME forms, audiovisual recording waivers and speaker logistics that include a task list to complete. Until recently, completed forms were faxed or e-mailed back to the conference office and entered manually into a database. The new system can track outstanding items and send automatic reminders, lifting the burden of follow-up reminders and “bad cop” issues from staff members.

“Heaven help us if we ever have to go back to snail mail!” she noted.

IMPROVE EFFICIENCY. Waldoch and her colleagues are reviewing software packages for interactive agenda postings, which provide the ability for attendees to create personalized schedules; automated speaker management for 300-plus invited faculty; logistics and meeting room scheduling that can be shared and managed by planning staff and vendors in multiple locations; and mobile opportunities.

“UNBLOCK” THE BLOCK. “I am amazed at how many seasoned meeting professionals overlook the importance of continuously updating and monitoring their hotel contracts and housing blocks,” Waldoch admitted. The ConferenceDirect team she has worked with since 2003 negotiates national hotel and convention center contracts and manages housing blocks for the BMT Tandem Meetings. They walk a “delicate balance,” she added, to meet ever-changing needs of domestic and international attendees. “As room block and hotel pricing strategies inevitably shift from year to year, we are more at ease with our partner’s contracting capability, thanks to its ‘industrial strength’ resources database.”

And they appreciate their partner’s innovative ideas, like the one launched prior to the February 2011 meeting in Hawaii.

Because of the size of the blocks, housing contracts had been negotiated five years earlier. While housing is tracked carefully after each meeting, it is nearly impossible to predict the state of the future economy on prebooked meetings.

“The most recent recession required a proactive strategy to make sure our room blocks filled, since there is such a large variety of out-of-the-block hous-

ing in Honolulu,” Waldoch explained. “We came up with the idea of a ‘pre-sale’ in July before housing ‘officially’ opened in August.”

Tied into tight restrictions on refunds and changes, the contracted hotels offered bonus packages ranging from room amenities to upgrades. As a result, one-third of the overall block was filled in two weeks. “While it was a lot of extra work (double!) for our ConferenceDirect partners, it gave a real kick start to the pace of housing and registration,” she enthused.

GET GREEN. The BMT Tandem Meetings saved \$60,000 the first year it cut bottled water from its banquet event orders (BEOs). Instead, it made use of water towers throughout the venue. The organization also gained significant savings when it cut coffee from the afternoon breaks, and virtually no one noticed it enough to complain (or even comment in the postconference evaluations).

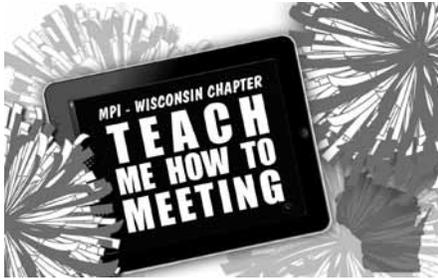
FORGET PRINTED MATERIAL. The event almost exclusively uses web postings for agenda and handouts; e-mail broadcast notices about updates, online housing and registration; online abstract submission; electronic program for evaluations; and ready-to-print CME transcripts. “We must have saved a few million trees, now that our attendees know where to look online for meeting information rather than their local post box,” Waldoch said.

Detailed information about the BMT Tandem Meetings is continuously updated on the CIBMTR (www.cibmtr.org) and ASBMT (www.asbmt.org) websites. 

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MPI-WI CHAPTER FALL EDUCATION DAY 2011: “TEACH ME HOW TO MEETING”

By: *Melissa Amado*



It's safe to say that Fall Education Day lived up to its title after hearing an NSA speaker say this was

the best MPI-WI Chapter event she has been to in six years. The event had a BIG RED theme to reflect our statewide dedication to our Wisconsin Badgers and promised to be the best meeting industry-related education, marketplace connections and networking opportunities. In actuality, the event did more than simply teach us how to meeting, as it brought together more than 195 planners, suppliers, speakers and students for an unforgettable MPI-WI Chapter education event and tradeshow at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison.

Jesse Sherman of JC XFitness provided attendees with an early morning session on getting active, getting fit, and achieving a healthy lifestyle during conference and meetings.

Attendees got their first dose of red and white at the Welcome Reception on Wednesday evening. From a mashed potato bar to cream puffs for dessert, attendees spent Wednesday evening enjoying great Wisconsin food, connecting with old colleagues, as well as making introductions to new friends.

Bright and early at 7:30 on Thursday, registration opened at the Alliant Energy Center. The program began with a warm welcome from our Chapter President,



Susan Kainz. Keynote speaker, Kristin Charles, PhD., then captivated the audience by challenging us to think differently – both divergent and convergent and how to find a balance between creativity and critical thinking. With effective use of props and interactive activities, attendees explored their creative minds in order to see the possibilities that are “outside the box.”

After a short break, attendees headed to their first breakout. The AM Flashpoint session drew close to 80 attendees who were excited to see the fast-paced format of having four different NSA-WI speakers talk for 12 to 15 minutes each. Matt Booth taught us about the

value of having a positive attitude, while Joanne Cantor presented her solutions for preventing information overload in the demanding technological world that we live in. Jim Morrison then shared his Do's and Don'ts about how to become a great public speaker and Chris Clark-Epstein concluded the flashpoint session, teaching us how planners and speakers can work together to create return on attendance. Just down the hall, Amanda Gource, CMP, LEED, AP led attendees through a session to help them understand what items can and should be measured in a green event and how to demonstrate a business case for sustainable initiatives. Julie



be entered to win the grand prize of four Badger basketball tickets and a night's stay at the Madison Concourse Hotel. If they weren't walking around the marketplace, they were enjoying desserts in the center of the room or hanging out in the lounge with colleagues on the CORT furniture. From both exhibitor and attendee perspectives, the tradeshow seemed to be a hit! (Even Bucky and Maynard the Mallard stopped by to see what the buzz was all about.)

Peterman, CMP moderated the third morning breakout, which featured a candid panel discussion among three veteran planners – Terri Smid, CMP, Candace Walker, CMP, CMM, and Vicki Schmitz. They gave tips and tricks on how to get ahead of your competitors.

The afternoon breakouts featured another great line-up of speakers. Amanda Gourge was welcomed back in the afternoon to lead an advanced session about Strategic Corporate Social Responsibility, while Ed Scannell took attendees through an interactive session to flick on your green light of innovation. The PM Flashpoint followed the same format, with four different NSA-WI speakers and topics. Patty Hendrickson energized the room with the topic of making a difference and moving from simply participating to fully engaging. Rob Bell took attendees through an awakening experience where they learned how to provide “Make ‘em say WOW!” customer service. Competitive triathlete, Wendy Naarup then pushed attendees to believe that great is always an option,

After the wealth of information presented, attendees took a well deserved break for lunch before the tradeshow opened for business. The tradeshow floor was buzzing in the afternoon with the ongoing filming of "I Am MPI", the bag toss at the Wisconsin Dells Visitors & Convention Bureau, and the spinning prize wheel at the Radisson Booth. Attendees were encouraged to visit as many booths as possible to receive stickers on their play card in order to win prizes and

even in the face of adversity. To conclude the flashpoint session, Larry Cockerel presented three keys that open the door to more effective team leadership, team building and winning with people.

Speakers and attendees alike had a fantastic time at the event and no one left empty-handed. Even if you didn't



leave with the grand-prize Badger tickets in hand, everyone walked away with new connections, friendships, knowledge and direction.

I would like to thank my fellow team members for their hard work over the last few months to make this event a success. I feel very fortunate to have worked with such a talented and experienced group of meeting professionals so early in my planning career.

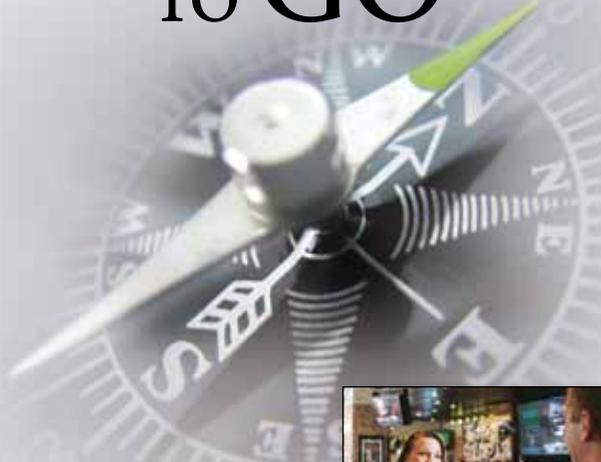
Happy New Year to all, and best of luck in 2012! 🌐



Melissa Amado



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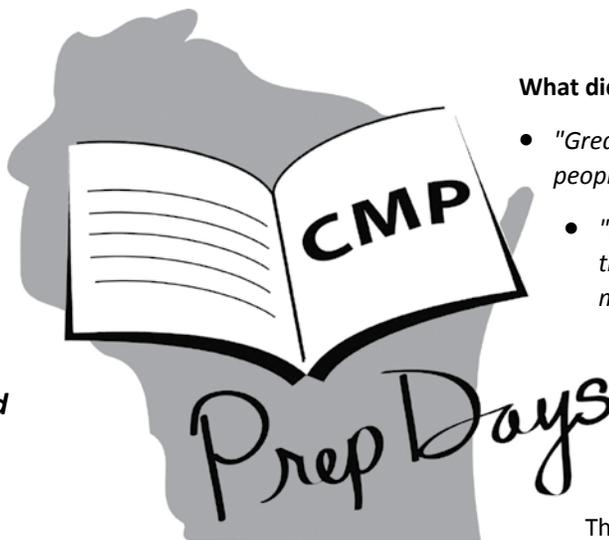
MeetInTheDells.com

2011 CMP PREP DAYS A SUCCESS!

It started as a few short conversations in early 2011. It turned into CMP Prep Days, presented by MPI-Wisconsin and Madison College, a formal two-day intensive course to prepare participants for the CMP Exam.

Months of planning, review and work went into creating PowerPoint slides, quizzes, review activities and handouts for the participants.

Experienced professionals who currently hold their CMP designations reviewed 23 modules ranging from Audio/Visual to Virtual Events to test and reinforce the identified body of knowledge that is the CMP.



and supply companies, meeting planners and association staff. An intimate group setting provided opportunities to ask questions in a safe environment; learn from experienced professionals; get up and even do a little dancing around. Other activities to help rein-

What did the attendees have to say?

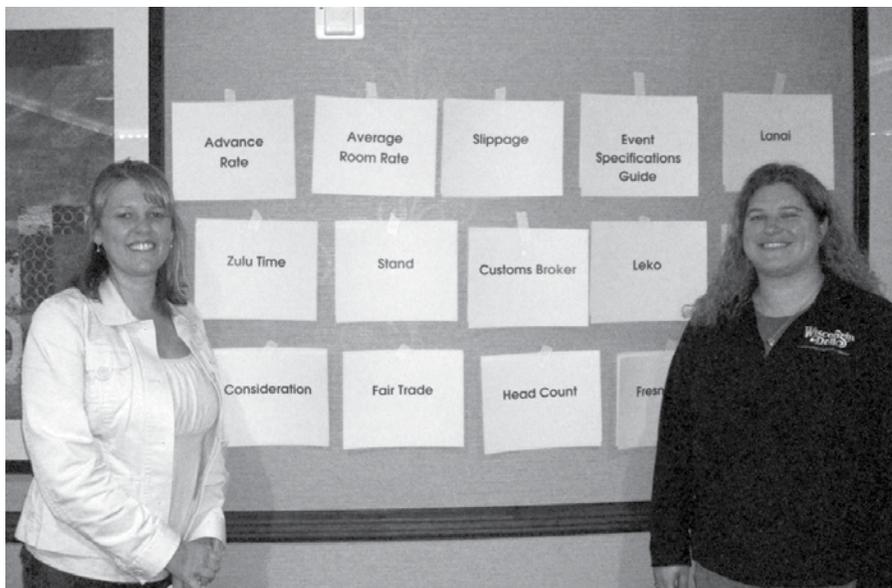
- "Great session design with a variety of people, formats and teaching styles."
- "Loved the hands-on activities and the opportunities to get up and move around!"
- "Excellent setting and flow of the program."
- "Appreciated the knowledgeable instructors!"

Thank you to our dedicated chapter members who helped make this event possible:

The Planning Team—Jennifer Mell, CMP and Vicky Zacharias, CMP

The Facilitators—Jodi Goldbeck, CMP, Alison Huber, CMP, Carmen Smalley, CMP and Janet Sperstad, CMP

The Host—Courtyard by Marriott Madison West and the North Central Group



Five meeting professionals gathered in Middleton in mid-November to start their journey towards obtaining their CMP. They come from a wide range of experience and backgrounds – hotel convention services staff, industry sales

force the vigorous content included Jeopardy, Memory, quizzes and crossword puzzles. Top all that off with a mock test to get the feel for the real thing and you have two full days of fun, camaraderie and learning!

Watch mpiwi.org for details

The next CMP Prep Days is in late-Spring 2012. For more information on the CMP Exam, see conventionindustry.org.

And a HUGE congratulations to the participants. Your dedication to our profession and your openness to trying new things are what make the meetings industry and the MPI-Wisconsin Chapter wonderful. Be proud of your accomplishment. Be proud MPI-WI, there are five future CMPs among us! 🌐

LEVERAGING RESOURCES THAT CVBS CAN PROVIDE

By Tifani Jones

In today's meeting planning environment there is a wide cross-section of generations and experience levels that represent the industry. If you are a veteran meeting professional, chances are you have worked with a convention & visitors bureau (CVB) at one point. Are you brand new to the industry? You have likely heard about CVBs in a class or at a conference educational session. We know what a CVB is, but we are often confused by what a CVB does.

DEFINITION OF A CVB: *According to Destination Marketing Association International, destination marketing organizations (DMOs), often called convention and visitor bureaus, are not-for-profit organizations charged with representing a specific destination and helping the long-term development of communities through a travel and tourism strategy. DMOs are usually membership organizations bringing together businesses that rely on tourism and meetings for revenue.*

To help understand what a CVB can do for you, let's start with a definition. According to Destination Marketing Association International, destination marketing organizations (DMOs), often called convention and visitor bureaus, are not-for-profit organizations charged with representing a specific destination and helping the long-term development of communities through a travel and tourism strategy. DMOs are usually membership organizations bringing together businesses that rely on tourism and meetings for revenue.

The simple answer, CVBs exist to provide a quality experience for planners, visitors and member partners. Common complimentary services provided to the

meeting professional include request for proposal assistance, pre-event promotion assistance, and often times, on-site conference services. With the current economic conditions a CVB that provides complimentary name badges or a conference mailing could make a big difference to your budget.

Recently while discussing the role of a CVB in conference planning, a few topics surfaced that are worth sharing. When asked, what is the one piece of advice she would offer a new meeting profes-

sional, Janine Wachter, CMP, Director of Convention and Event Services at the Greater Madison CVB stated, "Details truly do make a big difference. The more information that a planner can provide to us about some of the specific needs about the event, the better."

For veteran planners, there are often misconceptions of a CVB. Ann Shea, Convention Sales Manager at the Greater Madison CVB offered this explanation. "The most common misconception I have come across is that many planners believe CVBs are working solely on behalf of their partners. When, in fact, this is not the case. What guides us first and foremost are the needs of our groups. We keep the

planner's best interest at the top of our list," she said.

"There are even some CVBs that are able to offer financial assistance to conferences that are coming to the destination for the first time," added Lindsey Parker, Sales Coordinator at the Wisconsin Dells VCB. Lindsey assists planners with completing the Wisconsin Dells Destination Grant application and helps them navigate through the required paperwork.

Whether you are a meeting professional or member partner, the advice is the same. Reach out to CVBs, ask questions and share your needs and objectives. The common goal for all is to produce highly successful events. 🌐



Tifani Jones is the Director of Sales, Wisconsin Dells Visitor and Convention Bureau

WHO'S IN THE NEWS

Changes & Accomplishments

Congratulations to **The Osthoff Resort** and **Aspira Spa**. Aspira Spa was recently featured in *Spa Magazine* as one of the top nine spas in the Midwest!

We have two new CMP's among us on Wisconsin!
Kudos to:

Bridget Mergen, CMP

International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans
Brookfield, WI

Liz Schabowski, CMP

Technical Enterprises, Inc.
Franklin, WI

More of our members may be working with **Carmen Smalley, CMP**. Carmen recently began selling meeting space for all nine of North Central Group's properties. A long time member, we are excited to have Carmen to work with again! 🌐

MPI-WI CHAPTER



Community Outreach

*by Regan Pirchot, Sales Manager,
Wausau/Central Wisconsin CVB*

Wausau's October 20 MPI-WI Chapter education meeting benefited The Neighbors' Place, a Wausau food pantry. The host property Jefferson Street Inn, City Grill and attending MPI-WI Chapter members contributed nearly a van full of much needed food supplies to the pantry. Like many regions of the state, food product inventory is unusually low as a result of increased demand. Please remember your local food and clothing facilities when selecting organizations to donate to.

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Elkhart Lake, WI

Congratulations!

To the recipients of the MPI-WI Member Grant!

Congratulations to Michelle Eggert, CMP, Tina Jacobson, CMP, Jillian Schroeder and Janet Sperstad, CMP for being the recipients of the MPI-WI Member Grant!

(CMP) or Certified Meetings Management (CMM) exam, study courses or books. Each of the award recipients will receive \$125 to use toward their chapter membership activities or professional development!

The MPI-WI Member Grant is an annual award of \$500 given out to use on chapter dues, MPI chapter events or conferences, and for professional development such as the Certified Meetings Professional

Watch for the next available opportunity to apply for the MPI-WI Member Grant or Scholarship award! 

I am extremely fortunate to have been chosen as one of the four MPI-WI Member Grant Recipients in 2011. While the guidelines of the Grant identify that the funds may be used for MPI Membership dues, registration fees for MPI Conference or monthly chapter events, professional development activities such as the CMP or CMM exam – I believe this Grant will best serve me in offsetting the costs for registration fees for Wisconsin Chapter events.

I firmly believe it is the involvement in the Wisconsin Chapter of MPI has provided the foundation and skill development to enhance my businesses growth. Both with clients I have had the pleasure of meeting through my membership with the Wisconsin Chapter while attending monthly meetings and while serving with the professionals on the Board of Directors, the skills I have learned have been a far greater benefit than I could have imagined..

Each contribution by the membership helps the MPI Wisconsin Chapter be positioned as a premier association in the state dedicated to the growth, development, and success of event and meeting professionals. The best practices shared and relationships built enhance every member's business opportunities within the chapter.

I can't recommend active involvement in the Wisconsin Chapter of MPI highly enough!

Michelle Eggert, CMP

*Thank
you!*

STUDENT PROFILE: JERHONDA V. MCCRAY



Place of Employment: (Non-Profit Org)
World Outreach & (For Profit) Aristocrat
Events

Job Title: World Outreach- Operations &
Planning Manager Aristocrat Events- Event
Planner

What drew you to the meetings industry? My first taste of event planning was over 20 years ago, while working at Adelman Travel as a travel consultant. I was asked to work on an American Camping Association group, that group led to another and another. Five years later, I was managing American Express Travel at Harley Davidson with ten travel consultants and five meeting planners.

Tell us about your college program: I attended Ask Mr. Foster Travel, my career took off from there and I never had an opportunity to stop and attend college. Today I'm enrolled at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in their Political Science program.

Teams or projects that you have worked on for MPI or would like to be involved with: Very new to MPI and not aware of all the programs you have, but I'm willing to lend my support and expertise.

Tell us about your family: I have three male children, 23 year old (Married), 16 year old and 10 year old.

Where were you born? Cleveland, Ohio

Where do you currently live? Milwaukee, WI

Favorite Pastimes: Watching all Jane Austen films

Favorite Musical Group: Singer- Norah Jones and Ella Fitzgerald

Person you admire most and why: My 86 year old grandmother, Sadie D. Monroe, who was married with five children. Her husband abandoned her while the kids were young. Sadie successfully raised those children without any public assistance. She worked as a nurse in a mental hospital for over 30 years. I hope to one day have the strength and genuine love that my Grandmother has for people and family.

If I won the lottery I would: Host a massive food relief event and give out food boxes to feed over 20,000 people over the Thanksgiving Holiday.

Words to live by: Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts (Winston Churchill).

Special personal accomplishments: Winner of 2006 Women Putting Their Stamp on Milwaukee

MPI Brings NEW RULES OF ENGAGEMENT to Vegas with Smart Monday, Member Engagement

IMEX America initial reviews are in, and the business conducted and connections made in Las Vegas brought international meeting professionals together during the three-day trade show and exhibition for what many attendees call a resounding success. As strategic partner and premier education provider, MPI delivered on the new rules of engagement. What began in Orlando during WEC 2011 was front and center in Las Vegas.

The MPI experience began on Smart Monday, with a slate of professional development focused on successful adaptation, creativity and relevancy in today's business environment.

Hosted buyers attendees were at the day-long exploration of how to meet differently, where the new rules of engagement came to life:

- **Courage to Act, Innovate and Inspire to Make a Difference:** The opening session from Cheryl Cran, CSP led the call for attendees to employ strategies for embracing change in the industry and use it across generations.
- **Proving Value and Performance:** Mary Boone and an expert panel of professionals discussing the intersection of budgeting, tech, learning formats and more as it relates to executing the best events for both attendees and clients.
- **Embracing Technology to Enrich Connections:** MPI delivered on future trends in technology and integrating virtual events into a meeting portfolio.
- **Positive Effects Economically, Socially and Environmentally:** The initial findings of Phase 1 of the Leeds Metropolitan global CSR study debuted.

The MPI team is already thinking about what to deliver to members and attendees at IMEX America 2012; will you be there? 

SUPPLIER PROFILE: JODY SACIA



Place of Employment:
Francesca's al Lago Restaurant

Job Title: Event Coordinator

How long in the meetings industry? Six years (with previous employer- Maui Jim Sunglasses)

How long in MPI? Brand new

Tell a bit about your company and/or current position: Francesca's al Lago is located right on the Capitol Square. We offer simple rustic Italian cuisine in a casually sophisticated atmosphere. My responsibility as the event coordinator is to accommodate parties of 10-200 that are looking to host their event with us. I enjoy helping make their dining experience effortless and memorable.

Tell us about your family: I have a twin sister, older sister, younger sister & brother.

Where do you currently live? Madison,WI

Where were you born? Peoria,IL

Favorite Pastimes: Tailgating, bonfires, running, and wine

Favorite Musical Group: I like almost everything but big fan of Zac Brown Band right now.

Person you admire most and why: My mom, she had five kids in five years and did an amazing job!!

Dream Vacation: Anywhere warm.

If I won the lottery I would: Pay off all my bills and then help my family with theirs.

Words to live by: When life gives you lemons, paint them gold!

Special personal accomplishments: Married 11-11-11

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Datebook:

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2012



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FEBRUARY

9

February Education Strategic Meetings Management

Menominee Casino Resort
Keshena

MARCH

15

March Education Meet Like A Mouse: Apply Theme Park Methodology

Hyatt Regency Milwaukee
Milwaukee

APRIL

12

April Education Risky Business: Planners and Suppliers Plan Together for Contingencies©

Radisson Paper Valley
Keshena

MAY

10

Spring Education Day

Hilton Milwaukee
Milwaukee