

FORUM

NOV/DEC19 V103 N9

INFORMING & INSPIRING
ASSOCIATION
PROFESSIONALS SINCE 1916

Safe Space

Creating an
inclusive meeting
environment
for your attendees



16

Meet the 2019
Forty Under 40®
Award Winners

34

Learn How to
Add or Expand
On Your
Event App

46

Increase
Attendee
Participation
With Real-Time
Engagement

HOSTING A GREAT CONVENTION

• A SERIES OF HELPFUL TIPS •

No. 5

Denver, Colorado

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT IN DENVER.

With airfares 20% lower than the national average, direct flights to more than 200 worldwide destinations and a direct train to downtown, it's easy to see why both *The Wall Street Journal* and Skytrax named Denver International Airport (DEN) the #1 airport in the U.S. DEN makes it easy and affordable for your attendees to get where they need to be.

Explore Denver at CONVENTIONSELEVATED.COM





DOMESTIC
FARES NEARLY
20% BELOW
U.S. AVERAGE



NONSTOP
FLIGHTS TO 25
INTERNATIONAL
CITIES



EASY,
AFFORDABLE
TRAIN TO
DOWNTOWN



Photograph provided courtesy of Denver International Airport.

*Thank You +
Congratulations!*



**MONAE
REDMOND**

Manager of Member Care



**ADRIANN
MURAWSKI**

Director of Government Affairs

TWO CHICAGO ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® STAFF NAMED TO

FORTY UNDER 40

BY ASSOCIATION FORUM & USAE



ChicagoREALTOR.com | 312.803.4900

Contents

Follow Us



28

34

16 IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Meet the 2019 Forty Under 40® Winners

Join Association Forum and USAE in congratulating the latest recipients of the Forty Under 40® awards. These individuals are the brightest and most accomplished of young association professionals, and are all deserving of the prestigious honor.

28 BIG PICTURE, ASSOCIATION FOCUS

Safe Space

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are a set of standards that any industry should look to adopt. However, there are challenges along the way that association professionals need to overcome in order to ensure safe environments for each and every attendee. What are the best ways to seamlessly implement these practices? And more specifically, how can this be done in the fast-paced and hectic environment of an event or meeting?

34 CASE IN POINT

The All-Important App

Connections and experiences are two of the biggest reasons that association professionals attend conferences. Organizers are constantly looking for new and better ways to capture the attention of attendees, and solutions may come from new and improved app technologies. Having an app that allows conference-goers to easily navigate and prioritize their schedules and the events or speaking engagements they'd like to attend allows for a more positive experience for all involved. Conference app experts and association professionals with experience offer 12 tips for meeting organizers on the best ways to add an app to their event lineup and how to improve on attendee engagement in the future.



40 ASK THE EXPERT

Meeting in the Lap of Luxury

Many look at meetings from the eyes of an attendee, but few see beyond that scope to the other side. Venue executives and staff are doing all they can to ensure a smooth and enjoyable meeting experience for both attendees and organizers. *FORUM* spoke to Michael Dominguez, the new CEO of Associated Luxury Hotels International, about how association professionals can get the most out of their meetings or events, along with what's in store for the meeting industry in the future.

46 ASK AROUND

Elevating Your Audience's Voice

Meeting professionals are always looking for innovative ways to increase interaction and engagement at events. Conferences i/o co-founder John Pytel has developed an app that changes the way that audiences are able to ask questions and give feedback, all while maximizing the ability to learn and retain information. He spoke with *FORUM* to convey the app's benefits and discuss how organizers and presenters can make the most of their events.

Departments

- 8 Letter from the CEO
- 50 Above & Beyond
- 52 Advertisers Index
- 64 News to Use

Columns

- 12 Law Review

News and Resources

- 60 Education Calendar

Digital Edition

Access this issue's digital edition at associationforum.org/forum.





SPACIOUS

SPECTACULAR

©LMN 2018

THE SUMMIT BUILDING, OPENING SPRING 2022 Summit features expansive meeting spaces. A place that will soon be home to a jaw-dropping atmosphere designed to foster mindfulness and creativity. Book your next event here or at Arch, our existing building on Pike Street. Learn more at visitseattle.org/conventioncenter

VISIT
seattle

 Washington State
Convention Center

Meet My Team



Antitrust Concerns?

Paul Olszowka counsels nonprofits on all aspects of antitrust and competition laws.

Join Paula Goedert and Paul Olszowka at Barnes & Thornburg LLP.

paula.goedert@btlaw.com
paul.olszowka@btlaw.com

312.214.5660



Uncommon Value

btlaw.com

FORUM

INFORMING & INSPIRING ASSOCIATION
PROFESSIONALS SINCE 1916

ASSOCIATION
FORUM®

NOV/DEC19
V103 N9

Publisher
Michelle Mason, FASAE, CAE
mason@associationforum.org

Content + Publications Manager
Dan Shea
shea@associationforum.org

Publication Management
GLC
glcdeliverers.com



ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

Director, Business Services
Phyllis Scott
312.924.7033
scott@associationforum.org

Marketing Strategist
Brittany Thompson
800.369.6220, ext. 3452
bthompson@naylor.com

FORUM (ISSN 1056-0092) is published bimonthly, with combined January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October and November/December issues by Association Forum, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606. Periodical postage paid at Chicago, Illinois, and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to FORUM, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606. Subscription rate for members is \$15, which is included with dues.

Copyright © 2019 by Association Forum. All rights reserved. Statements of fact and opinion are the responsibility of the authors alone and do not imply an opinion on the part of the officers or members.

FORUM's mission is to serve as an innovative resource that anticipates the needs of the association management profession.

Editorial Contributions. You are invited to share your expertise and perspective. Article ideas and manuscripts should, whenever possible, reflect real and specific experiences. Before writing, please contact Association Forum at 312.924.7031 for the **FORUM** Editorial Requirements & Guidelines, or obtain them at www.associationforum.org. **FORUM** reserves the right to edit all articles.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2019-20

Chair
Mitchell Dvorak, MS, CAE
Executive Director
International Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

Chair-Elect
Geoffrey Brown, CAE
Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Personal Financial Advisors

Secretary-Treasurer
Paul Pomerantz, FASAE, CAE
Chief Executive Officer
American Society of Anesthesiologists

Immediate Past Chair
Lynne Thomas Gordon, CAE
Chief Executive Officer
American Association of Orthodontists

Directors
Marc Anderson
Chief Operating Officer
Choose Chicago

Loretta DeLuca, FASAE
CEO
DelCor Technology Solutions

Denise Froemming, CAE, CPA, MBA
CEO/EVP
Institute of Real Estate Management

Gregory Heidrich
Executive Director
Society of Actuaries

Brad Kent, CTA
Senior Vice President/Chief Sales & Services Officer
Visit Dallas

Bob Moore, MA, CAE
Executive Director
American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians

Kimberly Mosley, CAE, CPE
President
American Specialty Toy Retailing Association

Carol Pape, CAE
Chief Operating Officer
Association of Professional Chaplains

Matt Sanderson
President & CEO
SmithBucklin

President and CEO
Michelle Mason,
FASAE, CAE
Association Forum

Legal Counsel
Jed Mandel, J.D.
Chicago Law Partners LLC

FORUM EDITORIAL WORKING GROUP, 2019-20

Working Group Chair
Teresa Brinati

Vice Chair
Amy Thomasson

Board of Directors Liaison
Denise Froemming

Staff Liaison
Dan Shea

Members
Hanna Aronovich
Alexandra Campbell
Michele Campbell, CAE, RP
Jennifer Clark
Marilyn Mages, CAE
Matt Michiko
Brooke Morris-Chott, MPS
Mike Norbut
Lynn Pehanich
Dave Siehoff, CPA
Evan Summers
Lauren Swanson
Candice Warltier
Nathalie Williams

10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60606

Phone: 312.924.7000
Email: shea@associationforum.org
Web: www.associationforum.org



FRM-001



Cleveland®

WORK WITH US.

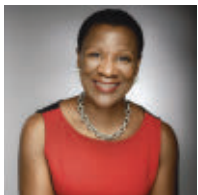
In Cleveland, we work hard, but believe all that hard work should be rewarded. Maybe that's why meetings here include plenty of options to get down to business after you're done with business. It's time you meet a walkable and vibrant city that makes a living at having a good time.

Learn more at

THISCLEVELAND.COM/MEETINGS

People. Processes. Systems.

At Forum Forward 2019, held in June, attendees heard from Wilson Tang, VP of Innovation at Freeman, about how emerging technologies are changing the way people interact with organizations. Artificial intelligence (AI), the internet of things, automation and all matter of new innovations are becoming the norm during the Fourth Industrial Revolution.



Michelle Mason,
FASAE, CAE
President & CEO
Association Forum


A major challenge that associations are facing is the battle for the attention of our members—not only from direct competitors and the growing assortment of education resources available online, but also from the massive amounts of outreach, communications and advertisements present in an individual's inbox, social media channels and across the internet.

As new technologies such as AI and virtual reality grow in accessibility and popularity, they are accompanied by rising expectations from consumers that these technologies will be present in their daily lives. Your organization may not compete directly with leading retail/tech companies, but when a member makes a purchase on Amazon immediately before they visit your website to register for a course, the comparison is drawn in their mind. They are being trained to expect a certain level of user experience, and that expectation is continuously being elevated based on all previous digital interactions they've had with any business.

Associations may not have the budgets or staff knowledge to replicate the consumer experience of a trillion dollar company, but we can ensure that our processes and systems are aligned with our members' needs and

expectations, and that our staff is trained to keep those processes and systems up-to-date.

At Association Forum, we are in the opening gambit of a full digital transformation. We've analyzed our systems and our processes in pursuit of a cohesive optimization of the way we interface with technology—both internally and externally. We are engaging the services of technology consultants to assess our current state and advise on our roadmap to the future. Our staff has created a visualization of the myriad software products that we use, analyzing the way these products and processes connect, and in many cases, do not connect.

What is the end result of our digital transformation? While we may not yet know the direct, tangible outcomes, we know that this journey will improve the way our members receive the content and resources that make them—and their organizations—successful. We are approaching this digital transformation by keeping in mind the three core elements that will guide our success: people, processes and systems. By concentrating on those factors, in that order, we will be able to achieve accelerated organizational agility, the most important byproduct of which will be a smoother experience for our members. 

Michelle Mason

As part of our efforts to provide a Welcoming Environment™ for our members, we are providing a copy of our Core Values translated into Simplified Chinese by **Interpro Translation Solutions, Inc.**

Be A Welcoming Environment

We are a welcoming environment that actively seeks to enhance the larger community by recognizing the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. We will make everyone who interacts with us feel welcomed, represented, engaged, inspired and empowered.

Embrace Innovation and Quality

We love to try new ideas and seek inspiration from inside and outside the association community—we value improvements big and small. Experimenting with breakthroughs is encouraged and celebrated; however, we know when to pull the plug. We aim to continuously improve.

Have Fun and Stay Positive

It's a fact that you generally spend more time with your co-workers than you do with your own family. We strive to make our work environment one that is fun, positive and an overall great place to work.

Open and Honest Communication and Teamwork

You don't know what you don't know! Effective communication is key. We shall cultivate an environment where we speak openly, honestly and with the goal of building a better team. Candor is constructively embraced. We will work collaboratively to deliver value to members.

Accountability—Own It

We hold each other accountable and expect people to respectfully ask questions and raise concerns. Because work requires interdependent teams and collaboration, we will trust and depend on each other to be responsive and to deliver value and quality services to stakeholders.

Win with Integrity

We operate ethically, contributing our time, talents and know-how to advance our communities where we work and live. We commit to growing our association in ways that benefit the environment and society.

我们致力于为成员提供 Welcoming Environment™ (友好环境)，作为实现该目标的方式之一，我们在此提供由 **Interpro Translation Solutions, Inc.** 所译的我们的核心价值观（简体中文版）。

提供友好环境

作为提供友好环境的社区，我们认同“整体大于部分之和”这一理念，积极寻求扩大社区规模和影响力的方法。与我们互动交流的每一个人都会受到欢迎和鼓舞，可以真正融入社区，全面提升自己，并找到归属感。

欢迎创新和高质量

我们乐于尝试新想法、寻求新灵感，无论它们来自社区内外；我们也珍惜每一次改进机会，无论机会大小。我们鼓励开创性的试验并乐见其成；但同时我们也深知何时应该采取制止措施。我们希望能够持续改进。

享受乐趣，积极进取

通常情况下，您与同事共处的时间会大于陪伴家人的时间。因此，我们致力于打造一个有趣、积极、整体环境良好的工作空间。

开放、诚实的沟通与合作

知之为知之，不知为不知，交流学习才能获得新知！所以，有效沟通非常重要。我们应该创造一个可以开放、诚实交流的工作环境，并将打造更好的团队作为目标。因此，我们积极欢迎坦率的交流。我们将紧密合作，为成员创造价值。

负有责任感

我们共同负有责任，并希望人们能够以尊重我们的方式提出问题 and 顾虑。团队互助与合作对工作而言不可或缺，我们彼此信赖和依靠，从而能够快速做出反应，并向利益相关者交付有价值和高品质的服务。

用诚信赢得尊重

我们诚信经营，致力于通过自身工作、人才和专业技能来推动所在社区的发展。我们承诺在协会发展壮大的同时造福环境与社会。



HOME TO GREAT MEETINGS

CHOOSE CHICAGO ALONG WITH OUR PARTNER HOTELS, AND UNITED AIRLINES, IS EXCITED TO BRING YOU THE 2019 GREAT MEETINGS PROMOTION!



If you book a **new group meeting totaling 250 or more room nights** through your Choose Chicago sales representative at a Choose Chicago partner hotel during a need-time in 2019, 2020, or 2021* **you are eligible to receive one of the following awards** (per program booked):

- **25,000 United MileagePlus® Award Miles**
- **\$500 Visa gift card**
- **\$500 Lettuce Entertain You gift card**

Choose Chicago's Great Meetings 2019 promotion will be in effect from April 1 to November 30, 2019. All contracts must be executed by November 30, 2019.

*To view the terms and conditions for Great Meetings 2019 and applicable dates for the program, please contact your Choose Chicago sales representative or visit choosechicago.com/greatmeetings

CHOOSE
CHICAGO

UNITED 

This Law Review was written by Jed R. Mandel, a founding member of Chicago Law Partners, LLC. CLP serves as the Association Forum's general counsel.



Risky Business

Q: What are some of the risks common to all not-for-profits?

A: As we wind down the year and get ready to turn the corner on the start of a new decade, it is always a good idea to identify key areas where not-for-profit organizations—irrespective of their purpose, structure or operations—might face potential risk. Identifying and understanding areas of risk are the first steps to managing those risks successfully.

Finances, and related issues, are one of the key areas of potential risk for any not-for-profit. It is essential that the voluntary and paid leadership understand their revenue model, expenses, and reserves (including the adequacy of their liquid/cash assets) and assure themselves that their organization is financially sustainable. In addition, not-for-profits also should take steps to minimize their potential exposure to fraud. Experience shows that not-for-profits too frequently seem to lack a full appreciation of their risk of fraud, whether it is perpetrated by someone inside the organization (e.g., an employee submitting multiple expenses for the same amounts) or outside the organization (e.g., a vendor that bills for services not provided).

Unfortunately, the “trusting” nature of not-for-profit leaders and members can result in a sense that their staff is above suspicion. Most often, that is true, but it is not universally so. Thus, organizations should proceed on a “trust, but verify,” not a “blind trust,” basis. To minimize the likelihood of fraud, all not-for-profits, whether large or small, should have effective fraud controls in place and adopt appropriate policies and procedures.

Another area of risk for organizations typically is their lack of succession planning—whether it be for key paid staff or, on a more regular and frequent basis, for volunteer leaders. With respect to the volunteers, the potential problems stem from inadequate leadership development, recruitment and training. Organizations must always work to make sure that they are providing broad-based and meaningful training for their volunteers, and that there is an adequate pool of future leaders waiting in the wings. For the paid staff, the risks often arise from inadequate planning and a lack of appreciation of the problems associated with an unplanned succession. If an organization has a long-standing, elderly CEO, they likely are thinking (and, hopefully, planning) for succession. But, all too

often, organizations with younger and healthy CEOs don't recognize and plan for the possibility of their sudden departure. They should.

Yet one more area of potential risk that, anecdotally, appears to be getting more attention (which is a good thing) is in the area of governance. It is essential that well run and managed not-for-profits review every aspect of their governance and assure that they reflect “best” practices. Such a review can involve everything from (i) assuring that their bylaws are up to date, reflect the realities of their day-to-day operations and practices, and are in compliance with state law, to (ii) following good conflict of interest disclosure practices and managing those conflicts, and (iii) to understanding the roles of the board, the CEO and the staff. As a general rule, organizations should adopt and enforce a suite of good governance/risk management policies, including those addressing antitrust, finances, employment practices, whistleblower protection, use of intellectual property, records retention and more.

Generally, it is important to bear in mind that having adequate policies in place to identify potential crises and how best to respond to them will do much to manage and mitigate risks. For example, not-for-profits should know what to do if a fire destroys their offices or if their server or telephone system goes down. Similarly, they should know how to respond if a disaster, natural or otherwise, prevents or disrupts their annual meeting. Each organization is different and should identify both the general type of disasters that might occur and those that are unique to them. For every scenario, they should have plans in place in case X, Y or Z happens. Organizations shouldn't be naïve about their crisis planning. They will not have the luxury of choosing the kind of disaster they will have to manage.

No organization can avoid all risks, and they should not expect to be able to do so. What they should do is consider the risks applicable to every organization, along with those unique to them; adopt and implement policies and procedures that provide guidance on how to proceed under ordinary operating conditions and respond in the event of a crisis; and, under all circumstances, stay alert to potential problems. While not all risks can be avoided, many can be mitigated if the organization recognizes the problem early and takes swift and appropriate responsive action. ☐

The answers provided here should not be construed as legal advice or a legal opinion. Consult a lawyer concerning your specific situation or legal questions.

Synchronicities

ANAHEIM | SAN ANTONIO | BALTIMORE

3 Premier Destinations. 1 Meeting Solution.

3 DESTINATIONS CONNECTED FOR YOUR SUCCESS.

Synchronicities unites three premier destinations to give meeting professionals consistent service, customized engagement, booking incentives and an opportunity to maximize ROI. We're committed to making your meetings successful as well as memorable.

LET'S SYNC UP: [SYNCHRONICITIES.US](https://synchronicities.us)

ANAHEIM, CA



SAN ANTONIO, TX



BALTIMORE, MD





A MEETING IN BOURBON CITY WOULD MAKE YOU THE TOAST OF THE TOWN

From world-class facilities to one-of-a-kind experiences, Louisville has everything you need to make your next meeting a big success. See why *Smart Meetings* calls Louisville "One of 11 Cities on the Rise You Can't Pass Up." Visit [GoToLouisville.com/Meet](https://gotolouisville.com/Meet)



@gotolouisville | #bourboncity | #urbanbourbontrail



2019 FORTY UNDER 40® WINNERS

Association Forum and USAE weekly newspaper are pleased to congratulate the association community's 40 most accomplished professionals under the age of 40 for 2019. These association and nonprofit professionals demonstrate high potential for continued success in leadership roles and exhibit a strong commitment to the association management and nonprofit industries. We congratulate the winners for their professional accomplishments, commitment to the industry, leadership skills and potential!

S'Neta Benefield

Director, State Association Management & Membership National Association of Professional Insurance Agents

Jillian Rose Bernas, MPP, MEd

International Relations Manager American Association of Neurological Surgeons

Emily Besser

Manager of Advocacy and Practice Affairs American Society for Dermatologic Surgery Association

Karin Best

Director American Osteopathic Association

Abigail Booth, MPA, CNP

Executive Director ACES: The Society for Editing

Kellie Braband

Account Executive Bostrom

Stefan Ryan Bradham, CAE

Senior Director, Marketing and Communications American Health Lawyers Association

Jennifer Brydges

Account Executive AMPED Association Management

Angie Claypool, CAE

Senior Manager, Chapter Relations Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society

Sean M. Dolan, CAE

Director of Business Operations & Deputy General Counsel Association for Supply Chain Management

Kimberly Eskew, MBA, CAE

Executive Director SmithBucklin

Ethan Gray, CAE

Associate Division Director Talley Management Group

Kamilah Greene

Senior Director, Annual Meeting American College of Rheumatology

Emily Harris, MBA

Marketing Manager Association of Nutrition & Foodservice Professionals

Alanna Kaiser, MPH

Manager, Education Society of Surgical Oncology

Stephen Legault, MSW

Director of Knowledge, Learning & Assessment American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians

Matt Mantione, CAE

Vice President of Membership Transportation Intermediaries Association

Christina Martin, PharmD, MS

Director, New Practitioners Forum American Society of Health-System Pharmacists

Jennifer Martin, MBA

Executive Director New York School Nutrition Association

Adriann Murawski, MPA
Director, Government Affairs
National Association of
REALTORS®

Delia Murphy, PMP
Account Executive
Kellen Company

**Sarah Anne Murphy,
CAE, MNA**
Manager, Membership
Development
Academy of General Dentistry

Patrick Murray
Sr. Marketing Specialist
(ASHRM)
American Hospital
Association

Alexa Newman
Portfolio Director, Event
Services
SmithBucklin

Hazel Oreluk, MA, CADS
Research Director
American Orthopaedic Foot
& Ankle Society

Jonathan Paine, CAE
Executive Director
SmithBucklin

Alexis Redmond, JD, MA
Director, Career Management
Resources
American Speech-Language-
Hearing Association

Monae Redmond, MBA
Manager of Member Care
Chicago Association of
REALTORS®

Lauren Riley
Communications Manager
American Academy of
Orthopaedic Surgeons

Bradley Rysz, CAE, MBA
Director of Marketing &
Communications
Association of Nutrition &
Foodservice Professionals

Kathleen Schroeder
Director of Professional
Membership
Association for Supply Chain
Management

Kirk Stelsel, CAE
Director of Communication &
Public Affairs
National Precast Concrete
Association

Annie Storey, CAE, MS
Sr. Manager, Chapter and
District Relations
American Academy of
Pediatrics

Melissa Swartz, CAE
Senior Manager, Volunteer
Engagement
Information Systems Audit
and Control Association

Bridget Terrones
Senior Manager, Integrated
Marketing
Institute of Real Estate
Management

Garet Turner, CMP, CAE
Chief Development Officer
American Society of
Association Executives

Steve Van Hout
Executive Director
American Academy of Sleep
Medicine

Jessica Weglarz, MBA
Director of Operations
National Association for
Healthcare Quality

James Weinland, CAE
Vice President, Membership
Services
MCI USA

Sara Wood, MBA, CAE
Account Executive
MSP, Inc.

➤ **ADDED INSIGHT**
FORUM conducted
interviews with all Forty
Under 40 winners.
Check out their
responses in the **2019**
Holiday Showcase
Program Guide.

Premier Sponsors:



Title Sponsors:



ASCM CONGRATULATES

Sean Dolan and Kathleen Schroeder on being
selected as 2019 Forty Under 40 Award Honorees




Sean M. Dolan
Director of Business
Operations & Deputy
General Counsel



Kathleen Schroeder
Director of Professional
Membership



associationforum.org/fortyunder40

An aerial photograph of the Charlotte skyline. On the left, the Bank of America Corporate Center (a tall, tiered skyscraper) and the U.S. Bank Tower (a tall, slender skyscraper) are prominent. The background shows a hazy horizon. The foreground shows a dense urban area with various buildings and greenery. A semi-transparent white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing text.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

MEET IN CHARLOTTE

\$115 MILLION CONVENTION CENTER
EXPANSION UNDERWAY

The 16th largest city in the nation, Charlotte's a breeze to access from most major cities, and it's a cinch to navigate once you're here. With a compact, walkable downtown called Uptown by locals, the Queen City is home to diverse attractions, professional sporting venues, innovative culinary offerings and thousands of hotel rooms, making Charlotte a premier destination for planners who aim to impress.



CHARLOTTE CONVENTION CENTER RENDERING

With one of the top 10 busiest airports in the world — American Airlines’ second largest hub — Charlotte Douglas International Airport is just 7 miles from Uptown and the 550,000-square-foot Convention Center. The centrally located facility is connected to the NASCAR Hall of Fame, across the street from the 700-room Westin Hotel, and within walking distance of the soon-to-be Grand Bohemian, MOXY Charlotte Downtown and the JW Marriott.

When the \$115 million expansion is complete in 2021, planners will enjoy an additional 50,000 square feet of meeting room and pre-function space, bringing the total square footage to approximately 600,000. The Convention Center will feature 280,000 square feet of exhibit space and 154,000 square feet of meeting room and ballroom space.

This expansion brings the total individual breakout spaces to 54, which includes 50 meeting rooms and the ability to divide the 35,000-square-foot ballroom into four 7,700-square-foot breakout spaces. The flexible meeting space related to the expansion will include two 10,000-square-foot spaces each divisible into 19 different configurations with seating capacities from 200-1,200 theater-style.

With more than 5,600 hotel rooms within walking distance of the Convention Center, in the compact convention district, you’ll find a hotel and meeting space to accommodate every request. And steps from Uptown’s arts and culture attractions, sports venues, nightlife hubs and 200-plus restaurants, a bustling cityscape sits on its doorstep. Start planning your Charlotte meeting today.



LA BELLE HELENE


CHARLOTTE

   @charlottesgotalot \ charlottemeetings.com

Miami Great Meetings in

From perfect weather, pristine beaches, and top-rated attractions to world-class hotels, dining, and a thriving arts and culture scene, Miami has everything you need to host the meeting or convention of your dreams. Few places in the world deliver such a thriving mix of international sophistication, natural tropical beauty and authentic cultural diversity as Miami.

Miami is a place where beauty and richness await to be found across the city, particularly among the many hidden gems it offers. Miami's diverse neighborhoods are a great place to start, where visitors are encouraged to explore the rich cultural roots that make Miami an incredible melting pot. Discover the Latin flavors of Little Havana or the Caribbean heritage of Little Haiti. Stroll through the street art district of Wynwood or the charming bohemian neighborhood of Coconut Grove. If you seek a more cosmopolitan edge, the bustling epicenter of Downtown Miami, with its gleaming skyscrapers, sweeping waterfront bay views, and endless shopping and dining possibilities, is the perfect neighborhood for you.

And no journey to Miami is complete without exploring iconic South Beach, where the eclectic lifestyles and colorful art deco architecture come to life. Along with the stunning beauty of its beaches and colorful buildings, South Beach also offers a diverse mix of world-class boutiques, galleries and stores.

A vibrant and dynamic global hub, Miami continues to reinvent itself with incredible hotels, meeting spaces and enhanced infrastructure. Among the creative venue options is the reimagined Miami Beach Convention Center, featuring nearly 500,000 square feet of versatile exhibition space and more than 180,000 square feet of meeting space, including a 60,000-square-foot grand ballroom, a 20,000-square-foot junior ballroom, and 84 breakout rooms. The space also features a terrace where attendees can step out, mingle, and soak up the city's signature sunshine and



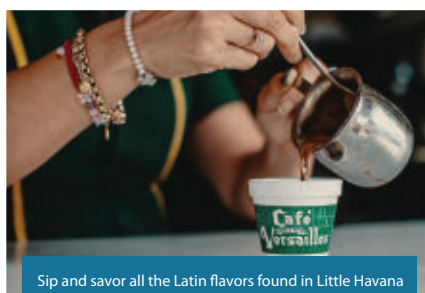
The reimagined Miami Beach Convention Center



Coming soon: an all-new connecting Headquarter Hotel

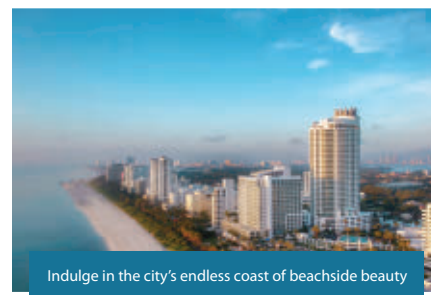


Immerse yourself in the Caribbean culture of Little Haiti



Sip and savor all the Latin flavors found in Little Havana

ocean breeze. The Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau is excited to announce that the Miami Beach Convention Center will soon be home to a connecting 800-room headquarter hotel, making Miami the ultimate convenient meeting destination.



Indulge in the city's endless coast of beachside beauty



Discover the cosmopolitan oasis of Downtown Miami

Miami is also easy to get to, with Miami International Airport (MIA) offering more than 400 flights from around the globe daily and serving more airlines than any other airport in the U.S. If you are already in Florida, try the Virgin Trains, a stylish express train service that provides intercity travel, connecting Miami, Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach, with service between Miami and Orlando coming soon.

These are just a few of the memorable and magical highlights awaiting any meeting planner considering Miami.

Visit **MiamiMeetings.com** to learn more.

CONTACT INFO

Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau
701 Brickell Avenue, Suite 2700, Miami, FL 33131

Contact: **Barry Moskowitz**
Vice President, Sales and Industry Relations
Email: barry@gmcbv.com • Phone: 305-539-3042
Website: MiamiMeetings.com

CITYWIDE FACTS & FEATURES

Guest Rooms: 55,394
Hotels/Resorts: 426
Meeting Space: 1.2 million square feet

WORLD



CLASS



CITY

FIRST CLASS CENTER.

The Miami Beach Convention Center is a dynamic, vibrant business destination offering 500,000 square feet of flexible exhibit space, 84 breakout rooms, and a 60,000 square foot ballroom. Coming soon, this stunning venue will be enhanced with an 800-room headquarter hotel, making Miami Beach the ultimate meetings destination.



800-933-8448 ext. 3071
Meetings@MiamiMeetings.com

MiamiMeetings.com

VISIT PHOENIX

PHOENIX, ARIZONA



In Phoenix, meetings are our specialty. And, with a diverse portfolio of conference-friendly accommodations, an award-winning convention center, convenient access to Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, and a booming downtown core—paired with the sun-drenched Sonoran Desert beauty that sets this destination apart from any other—Phoenix is emerging as a cutting-edge choice for meetings.

Thanks to an influx of entrepreneurs, visionaries, restaurateurs, students and artists, the city is brimming with new investment and youthful energy.



In recent years, more than \$5 billion has been pumped into a 1.7-square-mile zone in the heart of the city, according to the City of Phoenix Community and Economic Development Department, including new and improved office space, shops, restaurants, entertainment venues, hotels, and convention and academic facilities.



Ranging from boutique to business chic, downtown Phoenix hotels offer more than 3,840 guest rooms. Additionally, Greater Phoenix is home to nearly 40 resort properties, bringing the destination's room count to more than 68,000.

Phoenix's drinks and dining scene is in full bloom. In the downtown area, dining and entertainment districts—including Heritage Square, CityScape, and Roosevelt Row—are walking distance from the Phoenix Convention Center and surrounding hotels.



- ❶ Downtown Phoenix skyline from Phoenix Mountains Preserve.
- ❷ The Valley Metro Rail passing Civic Space Park.
- ❸ Arizona Wilderness Brewing Company's downtown beer garden.
- ❹ The Phoenix Convention Center in the heart of downtown.

Contact Information

400 E. Van Buren St. Suite 600
Phoenix, AZ 85004
312-216-8777
mlawrie@visitphoenix.com
visitphoenix.com/meetings

Destination Stats

Accommodations: 480 hotels in Greater Phoenix; 66,000 guest rooms

Airport Proximity

Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, 4 miles from downtown Phoenix



THEY SAY WE'RE NOT LIKE OTHER CITIES.
WE SAY, THAT'S OUR BEST FEATURE.



You're not looking for another breakout—you want a breakthrough. In a city where unconventional places meet state-of-the-art convention space, success can be found everywhere you turn. So come, and let Phoenix surprise you.

Explore more at
visitphoenix.com/meetings.


VISITPHOENIX®



ENHANCING

A wide-angle photograph of the Orange County Convention Center, a large, modern building with a prominent, multi-tiered glass dome. The building is surrounded by lush greenery, including palm trees and manicured lawns. In the foreground, a calm body of water reflects the building and the sky. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Orange County Convention Center

WHEN YOUR CONVENTION CENTER IS ALREADY ONE OF THE BEST,
HOW DO YOU MAKE IT EVEN BETTER? **YOU EXPAND.**

+

MORE SPACE

340,000 square feet of
new flexible space

+

MORE CONNECTIVITY

A new Grand Concourse
with 60,000 square feet

+

MORE VERSATILITY

20,000-seat
multipurpose venue

EXPANDING IN 2023

AMAZING



Learn more at OrlandoMeeting.com

VisitOrlando
Imagine the possibilities.



YOU DON'T NEED TO PAY MORE FOR EXPERIENCE

Cook and Kocher Insurance Group places insurance for close to 100 associations and non-profits in the Chicagoland area. CKIG provides creative solutions to help their clients mitigate risk while helping them to reduce their insurance costs.

To learn more call us at 847-692-9200.

- › DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS
- › MEETING CANCELLATION
- › MEDIA LIABILITY INSURANCE
- › PROPERTY CASUALTY
- › WORKERS COMPENSATION
- › HEALTH INSURANCE

COOK & KOCHER
INSURANCE GROUP

Jack Cook

CLU, ChFC, RHU

Jackc@cookandkocher.com

www.cookandkocher.com



IN GRAPEVINE, THE LIST GOES ON AND ON...

...and only in The Christmas Capital of Texas® will you find unique meeting venues like winery tasting rooms and a vintage excursion train. There are so many perfect places for creating amazing events.

Believe! Each amenity is like a little something extra in your stocking.

- 11,000 area hotel rooms within 15 minutes of Historic Downtown Grapevine
- Over 1,000,000 sq. ft. of meeting space throughout the city
- More than 200 restaurants
- Boutique-style shops and well-known stores
- 81 holes of golf and tranquil day spas

ALL within 10 minutes of Dallas Fort Worth International Airport.

GRAPE⁹INETEXAS


Discover the magic of meeting in the Christmas Capital of Texas®!
Visit **GrapevineTexasUSA.com** or call **817.410.3185**.



Safe Space

Creating an inclusive meeting environment for your attendees.

By Brooke Morris-Chott



“We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color.”

—Maya Angelou

The concept of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) has been gaining much attention from associations and companies, with many adopting and promoting the notion and practice of EDI within their organizations. From hiring practices to producing educational materials focused on inclusivity and diversity, organizations are embracing EDI and making efforts to incorporate it into their mission and values. While many have successfully created inclusive environments within their organizations and office settings, integrating the principles of EDI outside of the organization can be difficult, particularly when holding meetings and events. As communities are taking a stance on how they handle sensitive issues surrounding the acceptance and inclusion of disenfranchised or marginalized groups, organizations are challenged with making tough decisions when it comes to deciding on conference and event locations.

Diversifying Organizers

As more organizations begin to cultivate the values of EDI, the significance of including a diverse body of meeting organizers, speakers and attendees is becoming an important component in how events and meetings are being crafted and executed. As a result, organizations are striving to ensure that women, people of color and those identifying as LGBTQ are being represented on discussion panels, conducting presentations and holding keynote talks, as well as having a strong attendance at their events. In May 2019, Meeting Professionals International (MPI) released its “State of Inclusion in Meetings & Events” report, which examined how and to what extent event professionals plan for inclusivity and diversity, knowledge gaps in this area and best practice examples for the creation of inclusive experiences. According to the study, 20% of respondents said they include diversity and inclusion initiatives to comply with legal requirements and 31% use diversity and inclusion to respond to guest expectations. In addition, 56% of

Choosing a facility with gender-neutral bathrooms and accessible features goes a long way in ensuring an inclusive meeting environment.



respondents said their organization has a written diversity and inclusion policy.

Inclusive Venues

Although some organizations' efforts have made their conferences and events more EDI-friendly, there are other aspects of the meeting environment that make it difficult to be entirely inclusive. One of the most significant meeting details that plays an important factor in conference and event planning is the meeting venue. The venue—whether it be the meeting space or the community in which the meeting is held—weighs heavily on how welcoming an event is for attendees, and those that lack a friendly environment can create an atmosphere of hostility and exclusivity. Accessibility, for instance, is a major issue at conferences and events, and meeting planners have worked diligently over the years to make sure their events are held at locations that are accessible to all. Accessibility, however, isn't solely limited to access for those who have mobility and hearing impairments—it now extends to issues such as gender identity.

The fight for recognition and mainstream acceptance of those within the LGBTQ community has been an issue within our society for decades. Recent statewide laws—coupled with the current political climate—have created an atmosphere of alienation and contention for this community. In the 2017 article “First Days of 2017 Bring New ‘Bathroom Bills,’” CNN's Ray Sanchez points out that, beginning in 2013, at least 24 states have considered restricting access to restrooms, locker rooms and other facilities based on biological sex. And, in 2017, the enactment of controversial legislation surrounding these bathroom bills came to a head as many companies and organizations were forced to make decisions on how they would conduct business in states that estranged certain communities and failed to practice inclusivity.

North Carolina, for example, went under scrutiny due to its stance on House Bill 2, the Public Facilities Privacy & Security Act, enacting legislation banning people from using public bathrooms that don't correspond to their biological sex as listed on their birth certificates. This caused the state to lose significant revenue, such as businesses canceling plans for expansion and the NBA moving its All-Star game from Charlotte to New Orleans, La. It also prompted organizations to rethink allowing cities in states like

North Carolina to host their events, compelling them to seek out destinations that serve the needs of all who attend.

“As associations continue to expand their diversity and inclusion efforts and make D&I a strategic imperative, so do destinations,” stated Samantha Whitehorne in the May 2015 Associations Now article “Destinations Make Diversity and Inclusion a Strategic Priority.” “These cities want their marketing messages to not only reflect the diversity of their communities, but also be welcoming to business and leisure travelers who come from a diverse set of backgrounds and cultures.”

As a result, many cities are retaining EDI specialists and creating committees to develop diversity and inclusion strategies to promote their cities to those who are underrepresented. In addition to implementing policies like having gender neutral restrooms at convention centers and conference hotels, a number of venues are now training their staff to understand things like gender fluidity and accommodating the safety and comfort of those who are visually impaired by installing things like audible pedestrian signals at intersections.


City Selections

Despite the efforts of many cities to support EDI and establish inclusive practices, there are still communities that have yet to embrace diversity and inclusion. Whether it be passing legislation that is detrimental to marginalized

people or failing to provide adequate access to people with physical impairments, a myriad of U.S. cities have stark conservative views, making diversity and inclusivity unattainable.

So, what can organizations do to ensure that their meeting's host city is EDI-compliant? Start by incorporating bylaws and resolutions that require venues to honor the organization's diversity and inclusion policies and make certain that all involved in the event are aware of its EDI procedures and practices. This not only makes meeting presenters, attendees, vendors and host cities aware of the organization's support of EDI, it also ensures that the meeting will be a safe, completely inclusive environment for all.

Bottom Line

Equity, diversity and inclusion are essential to creating a welcoming environment in which all individuals and groups are respected, valued and supported. In fostering an inclusive climate at meetings and conferences, organizations can almost guarantee the success of their events as their attendees will feel more comfortable participating and engaging, and in turn more likely to leave with a positive experience. 

Brooke Morris-Chott, MPS, is the communications program officer at the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALCTS), a division of the American Library Association.

Seven Practical Tips for Inclusivity



1

Publish an Event Code of Conduct



2

Feature Diverse Speakers



3

Incorporate Sessions on Diversity



4

Offer Flexible/Gender Neutral Registration Options



5

Provide Event Scholarships



6

Offer Captioning/Sign Language/Interpretations



7

Offer Cultural/Religious Food Options



Spokane. it's about time.

Make the Most of it.

Experience Spokane, a hassle-free, urban delight. Be treated to quick, easy airport access — just 12 minutes from our vibrant, downtown core with beautiful hotels, and accessible state-of-the-art facilities. And when the clock says it's quitting time, step out and take a refreshing walk in our 100-acre park, stroll by a raging waterfall, or imbibe in the many after-meeting opportunities there are to explore — all within walking distance to your hotel room. Spokane, from touch-down to check-out, time is on your side.

**Make the most out of your next meeting,
contact Visit Spokane today.**



Photo by Nick Brommer



visitspokane.com/meetings

Spokane

How to make
event app
technology
work for you.

The All- Important APP

*By Hanna
Aronovich*

Attendees go to conferences not just for the opportunity to learn or earn continuing education (CE), but for the connections and experiences. Technology is playing a critical role in facilitating these experiences. Conference and event apps have been widespread for several years, but as technology evolves, so do the capabilities and opportunities available through conference apps.

A conference app serves as an important hub that can provide essential information, such as the conference agenda, speaker bios, session locations and registration, presentation resources, shuttle schedules, and exhibit floor plans. Beyond the basics, apps can provide a variety of ways for attendees to engage—whether it be through networking features, such as viewing others who have registered for a session, sharing photos, or gamification elements, like rewarding attendees with points and prizes for taking certain actions in the app.

If you're considering implementing a conference app for the first time, there are definite benefits, but also a learning curve. Knowing what to expect for a first-time event app implementation and anticipating some of the challenges can help ensure a successful launch. If you're experienced with the technology but looking to up your app game, there's always something new to consider, with the digital landscape changing so quickly.

Here's the download on conference apps and some guidelines to follow to ensure your event app gets five stars.

12 Tips for Event App Success

1

Be aware of the app landscape.

If you're thinking about introducing an event app at your next meeting, you might not know

where to begin. Unless your organization has a robust, in-house IT department that has experience with programming and building apps, chances are your organization will look to a third-party to help with app development.

There are hundreds of companies that offer event app-building services of varying degrees. EventMB publishes an annual Event App Bible that gives a comprehensive overview of more than 100 event app companies; a useful guide for all meeting planners.

Although there are enough options to make your head spin, one trend that is being seen throughout the industry is consolidation, with many event app companies merging or acquiring one another. Consolidation can lead to stronger event app capabilities and potential for more synergy with other tools in the marketing technology stack, but it also means less choice for meeting planners—or that your beloved app tool could change or be discontinued in the future.

2

Look for comprehensive app features.

Event apps can be built with basic or advanced features, but a few core attributes will serve your attendees best.

Marie Simmons is a technology and mobile strategy consultant at Meeting Expectations, an association management company that also specializes in meeting and event management for nonprofit and for-profit clients. Simmons confirms that the agenda and interactive maps are top features. "It can



Conference organizers must identify what features they're looking for when designing an event app. For example, having an exhibitor floor plan and directory readily available can greatly improve the event experience for attendees.

become a maze on the exhibit floor, and the interactive map can show you exactly where you are," she says.

Networking features are also growing in popularity. "Attendees can reach out and schedule one-on-one meetings with others at the event," Simmons says, adding that attendees can set their profiles to private if they don't want to be contacted.

Rating features, such as attendee polls and surveys, not only keep attendees engaged, but also provide valuable data to

conference planners. Offering

these tools through the app can help with participation rates. "Attendees often don't have the time or patience to complete session or post-event surveys on paper or through email," Simmons explains. "With the app, you can send a poll or survey notification and make it easy for people to complete it on their phone."

Not to mention, last-minute changes or day-of communications are a snap with the app. "In the real-world, things change, people don't show up, sessions might go over or breakfast might be moved," Simmons says. "When a change like that happens, conference planners have to scramble to let everyone know. But with the app, push notifications can be a lifesaver to let attendees know about changes or just to remind them where to go."

Lara Deloza, director of brand content and communications at the International Literacy Association (ILA), says her organization has used an app for its annual conference for a few years. "It's been a great tool for attendees to build their schedules and we're able to update room and speaker changes on the fly, plus use push notifications for alerts," Deloza says.

3

Plan ahead.

Meeting Expectations' technology team, including Simmons, builds

custom conference and event apps for a variety of clients and at a range of price points. Typically, Simmons says, a uniquely branded event app can be launched within four or five months.

Apps can be built and launched through a container app—which is essentially a house for one or more event apps—or as a stand-alone app. Container apps can be entirely custom-branded for the organization, or they can be app-vendor branded, and the organization's app lives within the vendor container.

Organizations that wish to build their own container or a standalone app are looking at a longer timeline. Building your own container or standalone app requires setting up a Developer account with the Apple App Store, which can take weeks, and the Google Play Store, which can take a few days. There is also a review and approval process, which takes some time—anywhere from a few hours to a few days.

The upside to this approach, although more time-intensive and costly, is that the app is a completely branded experience for attendees.

However, the technical requirements should not be overlooked. "There are more hoops to jump through with a fully branded app," Simmons says. "There's the cost for the developer license and the time for approval."

4

Get several quotes.

The event app world can be a bit opaque at times, especially when it comes to price. Many event app companies do not publish their fees publicly. EventMB's Event App Bible secured quotes from app providers for an event with 100 attendees, and prices ranged on the low end at \$1,900 to nearly \$10,000; the median price was \$4,500.

With prices ranging so drastically, costs can escalate quickly. You'll want to spend time determining exactly what you want your event app to achieve so that you can be clear about your requirements and expectations when pricing out your options. And, if your event draws a smaller crowd, one of the free event app solutions might work for you.

5

Consider the potential cost savings.

Event apps are an investment, and if executed correctly, they can bring about some savings, especially if it allows your organization to reduce costs elsewhere. For example, some event apps also offer registration and check-in features, which can save you costs if

you are paying for these capabilities through separate tools.

And, of course, with an event app, there is the potential to reduce or minimize printed materials. Deloza says ILA hasn't entirely replaced its printed program, but it has allowed the program to become slimmer. "We've been able to cut our printed program pages in half," she says.

Simmons agrees that it's important to look at the full picture: "It usually takes one or two years before an organization feels ready to reduce or eliminate the onsite guide, but once they look at the budget, it makes sense."

6 Take advantage of sponsorship opportunities.

Sponsorship and advertising opportunities can not only defray the costs of an event app, they can also produce a new revenue stream. Simmons says she has seen many associations successfully take advantage of mobile app sponsorship opportunities. "You can add opportunities to the sponsorship prospectus, such as offering a splash screen or banner in the app," she explains.

Deloza agrees, and ILA has been able to enhance its sponsorship offerings through the event app. "Exhibitors like the app directory, which shows their booth numbers and location," she explains. "We've been able to sell ads and sponsored push notifications to help defray some of the costs."

If you're planning to rely on sponsorship and ad dollars, make sure that the event app you select has the capabilities to support these features.

7 Benchmark your success.

When launching your app for the first time, be prepared for lower adoption rates. But with each following year, you can expect to see the percentage of attendees who download your app rise.

Simmons says the first year an organization offers an event app, a 30–35% adoption rate is not unusual because attendees are still getting used to the app. "There is typically some resistance the first year," she says. After the first year, a 65–75% adoption rate is a good benchmark to strive for.

Deloza says ILA's annual conference draws about 5,000 attendees and about half of all attendees downloaded and used the app. ILA also used an app during a smaller meeting of fewer than 600 attendees, and it was a hit. "More than two-thirds of attendees not only

downloaded the app but created profiles and used it."

8 Promote and demo the app.

Sufficiently marketing and promoting your event app is key to driving high adoption rates. Be sure to prominently feature the app on all conference marketing materials. Also, provide a demo or tutorial so that attendees can learn how to make the most of the app's features.

ILA provided an online guide for how to download and use the app, as well as an in-person demo, which likely contributed to the high adoption rate. "There was a learning curve the first couple years," Deloza recounts. "But now, we debate whether or not to even hold the demo since few people show up for it."

9 Provide free Wi-Fi.

To make the app experience as seamless as possible, provide free Wi-Fi during your event. Deloza said the first year ILA offered the event app, Wi-Fi was not offered at the conference because the contract had already been negotiated years in advance. As you might expect, attendees were frustrated and Deloza says the lack of Wi-Fi was "problematic."

10 Review the data.

An important and useful aspect of event and conference apps are the analytics. After the event, review the app data to gather meaningful insights. There are basic analytics, such as number of downloads and overall traffic, but conference planners can also look at more nuanced usage patterns, such as which speakers or sessions get the most traffic or bookmarks, providing guidance for future planning. Some apps will even integrate with Google Analytics for more robust reporting.

The amount of data you can glean from your event app will vary depending on the app's capabilities, so keep your reporting needs in mind when selecting and developing your app.

On average,
48.5% of all event attendees adopt an event app and perform 34 engagements with their event app.

Source: Cvent's *Mobile App Benchmark Report*

For an event with 100 attendees, prices ranged from the low end of \$1,900 to nearly \$10,000; the median price was \$4,500.

11

Be realistic.

Like with all technology, expect some bumps in the road. Even with the slickest apps, there may be some tools that don't work as expected or have low participation rates. Deloza has experienced this firsthand: She is still working on gaining more traction in the networking feature and has struggled with some of the reporting features. ILA attendees can rate sessions, but


Experts see the future of event apps as being more engaging, providing recommendations and helpful additions to improve user experience.



"it's not a feature that's used as heavily as I'd like," Deloza notes.

12

Keep an eye on emerging technologies.

If your organization has offered an event app for many years, consider integrating emerging technologies to keep attendees engaged. The most advanced event apps are offering tools like recommendations for nearby places and events of interest, chatbots, indoor navigation and augmented reality features. 

With 2019 Holiday Showcase around the corner, download the Forum Events app on iOS or Android today.



Hanna Aronovich is the chief marketing and communications officer at the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. She can be reached at haronovich@danb.org.

G

G


MEET IN THE CENTER OF IT ALL.

Greensboro offers the perfect combination of small-town charm and big city appeal. See what's new in Greensboro! You will be surprised by all it has to offer.

greensboro
●●●● NORTH CAROLINA
Convention & Visitors Bureau
VisitGreensboroNC.com

G

G



*give your members'
stories the power of*

FLIGHT



GLC

a marketing communications agency

Visit us at booth #521

**STRATEGY | CONTENT | CREATIVE
DISTRIBUTION | RESULTS**

Joe Stella | jstella@glcdelivers.com | 847.205.3127
glcdelivers.com/associations

Meeting in the Lap of Luxury

FORUM spoke to well-known meeting veteran, Michael Dominguez, about his big professional move and his thoughts on the industry.

Interview by Meredith Landry



When Michael Dominguez was 15 years old, he worked at the Hyatt Regency San Antonio Riverwalk. It was his very first job in hospitality. On July 8, 2019, Dominguez took over the top spot at Associated Luxury Hotels International (ALHI), becoming only the fourth CEO of the 33-year-old organization. With headquarters in Boston and Plano, Texas, ALHI is a global sales organization dedicated to the meeting and incentive marketplace, and as its new leader, Dominguez has big plans.

Previously, the industry veteran served as senior vice president and chief sales officer for MGM Resorts International, and as vice president of global sales at Loews Hotels. We spoke to Dominguez about his new role, trends in the meeting industry, what association leaders can do to get the most out of their meetings, and what the future of the meeting industry holds.

FORUM: You were with MGM Resorts International for seven years. Can you tell us about your recent move to ALHI?

DOMINGUEZ: Honestly, I was just minding my business at MGM when the Chairman of the Board at ALHI approached me to see if I'd be interested in this role. Apparently, he'd spoken to many of our members and customers about the best person for the job, and my name came up almost unanimously, he said.

I've been a member of ALHI for 14 years, so I'm very familiar with its reputation and its market. It was a great opportunity to jump into the luxury market, and it's not every day that you get the chance to be the CEO. I'm thrilled for the chance to run the organization. It's an exciting time to be able to do this work, and while I've worked with larger hotels during my career, I've worked with independents most of my life, and that experience has prepared me for this.

One of the first things I did was move our sales and marketing headquarters from Orlando to Plano, Texas, which is a suburb of Dallas. The move was two-fold. First, we needed to be more strategically located, and I can travel from here very easily. We need to be flexible, and we can do that here. Plus, lots of other big industry organizations, as well as Fortune 500 companies, are head-

quartered here, so the Dallas area just makes sense for us.

But the second part of the move is much more personal. My mother was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease a year ago, and my parents live in San Antonio, which is an easy 45-minute flight from here. It's still early, and she's still very active, but I try to make every effort to spend as much time with her as possible.

FORUM: What do you hope to achieve in this new position?

DOMINGUEZ: Overall, my goal is to ensure that we are driving more value to our hotel membership and solving for more of the nuanced issues that may be unique to our members. We need to find ways to continue to drive our marketplace while connecting our clients with our hotel members in an effective and productive way. And we need to remove friction in our engagement with both our member hotel community as well as our partners and clients.

FORUM: What trends are you seeing when it comes to meetings?

DOMINGUEZ: First, there is a great deal of focus on content delivery and what we refer to as "meeting architecture." We're not just looking at the physical environment, but the mental environment and how to best engage our attendees. For example, it used to be that a classroom-style setting for a meeting was the norm. But now, there's a shift toward mixing different types of environments and different formats that enable us to deliver the content in the best way possible. The keynote is still important, but it's no longer the most important thing.

Also, content is no longer king. Context is king. I can Google anything to get the information I need, so it's up to organizations to tell me why their information is important, why is it relevant to my interests and what does it mean for me? Today, it's all about context, rather than content.

In that same line of thinking, attendees want more organic content, more open dialogue. They want to have an experience, but they also want to learn the good, the bad and the ugly. For instance, a famous keynote speaker at an event we hosted several years ago canceled only 12 hours before his scheduled speaking engagement. Because of the excellent coordination between my team and the hotel, we were able to reconfigure a lunch experience that went over really well. We

began the lunch session by telling everyone about what happened with the speaker, and invited them to stick around at the end of the meeting—which we ended 30 minutes early—to hear about how we pulled it all off. Turns out, more than 600 people stayed, and over half of them had experience with a last-minute speaker cancellation. They truly enjoyed the opportunity to learn, and it was real and truthful.

Another trend I'm seeing is taking the meeting and letting it live beyond the four walls of the meeting room. Organizations are taking the discussions and learnings from the meeting and making it part of an online community that is fully engaged. Because of social media today, you can now have content that lives on and continues to engage people. The companies that are doing it best have online communities for employees and members where they're asking questions and surveying people to get even more information out of the original meeting. If cost is an issue, some companies opt for a Facebook or LinkedIn platform. Wherever you decide to host your community, it's important for the conversation to be organic. You can start the dialogue, but you'll have to let folks go wherever they go, whether it's positive or negative. You need to know what they're saying—you can't afford not to. So, this is a trend I definitely expect to see more of in the future.

FORUM: What should associations be aware of when they are planning meetings in the coming year?

DOMINGUEZ: I don't think we're talking enough about the REAL ID program, which goes into effect in October 2020. It's going to sneak up on people, and could potentially cause problems for a lot of meeting professionals. Only a small percentage of the population even knows the program exists. My fear is that people will be missing meetings all over the country because they didn't have their REAL ID on time. We need to work diligently to let our members know that it's time to take action.

On an international level, there are definitely things that could be problematic for meeting professionals, but we still don't know for sure. First, having an unsettled trade war with China could pose problems moving into the future. We really need resolution there. We also need resolution with Brexit. Whatever happens with that will determine the European economy, the global economy and how we trade with the U.K. At this point, it's anybody's guess, but these two issues could



seriously impact meeting attendance and spending next year.

FORUM: What can association leaders do (or how can they prepare) to get the most out of their meetings?

DOMINGUEZ: The question I want association leaders to ask is: How can we consistently get great feedback from attendees or potential attendees regarding what they want to get out of the meeting? We tend to move forward with big assumptions about how the audience wants to receive our information, but we can do better. It's common to send out surveys in the mail asking for feedback after a meeting, but that's too easy to ignore. Why not survey attendees now while they're in the room still? And with the right technology, you could do it quickly and even for free.

Feedback is important because it's like listening to your customers, only your attendees are your customers. Knowing what they want, what they don't want, what makes them happy and what their individual needs are is the only way to stay relevant today. For so long, associations have tried to be everything to everybody, but I think we should drill down even further, break everyone into smaller groups, and figure out specifics, like: What is it exactly that you want to learn? Then, deliver that.

FORUM: What type of relationship and/or communication should association leaders have with the hotel or meeting site?

DOMINGUEZ: It is important to have a conversation on objectives for the meeting. What are you truly trying to accomplish? In some instances, the program may be setting strategy, or looking for engagement/team building or a program that drives the financial health of the organization. Knowing that in advance will help the hotel/site to assist you in accomplishing those goals.

FORUM: Are hotels offering any new or interesting amenities to attract meetings?

DOMINGUEZ: I see a lot of hotels looking at very progressive technologies that will help with engagement. I also see them looking at creating physical environments that are more conducive to collaboration. In general, there's a greater focus on mindfulness and behavioral

science when it comes to delivering meetings. For example, science tells us that the average adult attention span is approximately 20 minutes. So, why are we still using keynote speakers who deliver two-hour addresses? Hotels and other meeting professionals should embrace smaller, shorter sessions with more breakout sessions.


FORUM: What are the changes you've seen during your time in the industry?

DOMINGUEZ: There have been so many over the years, but the biggest and most exciting change I've seen is the advancement of the profession of the meeting professional. Meeting professionals have been around for a while, but they used to have to fight for a seat at the table. Now, they are seen as an integral part of sales and marketing and a way to achieve an organization's objectives. I'm thrilled for this change.

Another big change is how we see our audience. We used to have "attendees" at meetings, but now we have "participants." We used to talk "to" them, whereas now we talk "with" them. It's a much more engaged, interactive and organic exchange.

And, of course, the advancement of production and production values is another big change. Meeting participants want to be entertained these days, which means rolling out all of the technology. We have to create exciting environments now; that has become an expectation.

FORUM: Looking to the future, what are your predictions for the industry in the next decade or two?

DOMINGUEZ: I always think that it is difficult to understand what the world will look like in a decade, as the speed of change will ensure that what I know now as a lens will look extremely different in 2029. I think the continued advancement of technology will allow for a more productive and engaged meetings community as a whole. Artificial intelligence, specifically, will allow us to customize the meetings experience like we never have before. To think of the ability to have educational programming that feels like it was just for you is an exciting thought and not far from reality. 

HYATT REGENCY HOTEL

Opening January 2020

LET'S PLAN. LET'S MEET. LET'S PORTLAND!



LET'S
Portland!

The Oregon Convention Center is also going through an exciting renovation, which will also be completed at the same time as our new Hyatt Regency Portland (January 2020). See for yourself why Portland makes planning the easy part.

travel
PORTLAND

VISIT VANCOUVER'S
POP UP SHOP AT
HOLIDAY SHOWCASE
TO HELP RAISE FUNDS
TO FIGHT HUMAN
TRAFFICKING IN OUR
INDUSTRY.

BOOTH 107

Join Tourism Vancouver, Association Forum, Maritz Global Events and Discover The Palm Beaches in the fight against human trafficking. All funds raised will benefit a local charity. Together we can make a difference.

Inspired by the work we are doing?
Contact Rachael Riggs (rriggs@tourismvancouver.com) to
book your next Vancouver meeting

Tourismvancouver.com/meetings

VAN
COU
VER



MORE INSPIRATION. LESS RESTRICTION.

Reno Tahoe is providing a \$5,000 signing bonus when you book new business between now and June 30, 2020, with 1,000 or more room nights! And most of our convention hotels remain independent and offer full 10% room commissions.

More than 1 million square feet of meeting space, 16,000 luxurious hotel rooms and fewer restrictions than most destinations mean more unique planning flexibilities. Pair these amenities with award-winning breweries and eateries, as well as beautiful natural surroundings, and Reno Tahoe is sure to contribute to the success of your event.

RenoTahoe
VisitRenoTahoe.com

**Some exclusions apply*

Elevating Your Audience's VOICE

The audience-engagement app, Conferences i/o, provides presentation tools to increase participation for presenters and attendees.

By Dan Shea

When John Pytel was a student at Michigan State University, he noticed a reluctance among students to raise their hand and ask questions in large, 300-person lectures. As a result, many of the students' questions would go unheard and unanswered.

This realization led Pytel, along with his co-founder and classmate Dave Mulder, to develop an interactive tool called GoSoap-Box that allowed students to upvote each other's questions, giving professors an idea on what information their students needed further help with. Eventually, the tool caught the attention of ASAE's Reggie Henry, who saw potential for it to be used outside the classroom. This led to the development of Conferences i/o, an audience-engagement app built for conferences and continuing education sessions.

FORUM sat down with Pytel to learn more about how audience-engagement apps can empower attendees, maximizing their learning and retention.

FORUM: How does audience engagement help presenters connect with their attendees?

PYTEL: Engagement really all comes back to empowering learning. Sitting back and listening is not the most effective way for people to learn. They can only absorb content for so long before they begin to check out and get distracted. The audience is more able to retain the content when they're actively engaged with the material.

There are some presenters who are naturally engaging. Technology isn't a requirement to have an engaged audience. However, not every presenter is Steve Jobs, and speaking may not be their full-time job. They might just be subject matter experts who have been asked to speak on a topic. That's where the technology aspect comes into play—it takes that typical lecture-style format, where a presenter is up on stage trying to educate an audience, and makes it a more engaging experience for the attendees, without the expert having to necessarily be a great speaker.

Engagement can happen in various ways. With Conferences i/o, the focus is on real-time engagement, including elements like Q&A, polls and gamification. Allowing the audience to ask questions is one of the easiest ways to make a presentation more engaging. We know that everyone has questions, but there

are a lot of problems with typical hand-raising. The No. 1 fear in the country is public speaking, so the majority of people don't want to speak up. There are also people who don't want to admit they don't know something. What ends up happening in a traditional Q&A is you only hear from a very select group of people, including what we call "microphone hijackers." These are attendees who are more interested in acting as if they are the subject matter expert, giving their opinions and otherwise rambling on. Using an audience engagement tool prevents these individuals from monopolizing the presenter's time. It also allows people to ask questions throughout the program, so the presenter can understand the audience's needs in real-time.

There have been many studies done on educational formats and audience-engagement in general, including one called The Engaging Method by Scott Gould—it found that in a traditional lecture-style presentation wherein a speaker lectures to attendees for 60 minutes, on average, the attendees only retain 10–15% of the content. But if you do something active to keep them engaged, such as a poll question once every 15 minutes, it can increase their retention by up to 70%.

FORUM: What are some of the trends you have been seeing in attendee engagement at conferences?

PYTEL: Integration and streamlining are two major goals that associations are working toward right now. We've seen many of our customers integrating their audience engagement app into their mobile events app to make things easier for their attendees. There's also been an uptick in integrating these apps into their live-streaming platforms, so that it's not a separate experience for virtual attendees. They're participating in the same Q&A and responding to the same poll questions as the in-person audience, which helps to bridge the gap between the two groups of attendees.

One of our customers, the American Association of Family Physicians (AAFP), requires their presenters to go into the app and answer any questions they were unable

In my opinion, there's no doubt that virtual is the direction that meetings are headed. I think at some point, everything's going to be online.

— John Pytel,
Co-founder and CEO, Conferences i/o



Image: conference.io

to get to in the presentation. They've said that it's become so ingrained that if there's a session that the presenter doesn't put in those answers a day or two after, they hear from the members about it. It creates a whole loop of using the tool before, during and after the conference, making the technology a core part of what they offer.

With continuing education (CE) programs being such an important element of association education, we kept hearing from our users about a pain point in managing the requirements of CE programs, including attendance tracking and certificate distribution. This led us to introduce an attendance tracking solution that digitizes and automates those processes. For many associations, they're still using pen and paper to track CE credits and certifications, so being able to streamline that into the app is a huge timesaver.

FORUM: Do you anticipate a decline in face-to-face meetings as people become more accustomed to digital alternatives?

PYTEL: In my opinion, there's no doubt that virtual is the direction that meetings are headed. I think at some point, everything's going to be online. It's going to take a long time to get there, but even 100 years from now, I believe virtual is going to be the norm.

Right now, there are very few conferences that have already switched to being entirely virtual. But, we have started to see organizations start to implement those digital aspects by live-streaming select sessions.

Again, it's going to take a while because the technology needs to catch up and it's a major change in terms of the experience. We've definitely seen it start to happen for smaller sessions and seminars, but that's an easier transition than turning a whole conference into a virtual experience.

FORUM: How can associations best utilize attendee-engagement tools to help their members retain and understand key learnings from a presentation?


PYTEL: Associations need to put an emphasis on using the tools to be most successful. The first part is encouraging the attendees to use it, which usually isn't challenging. No one wants to just sit back and listen—they want to be engaged—but you do want to make it easily accessible. This can be accomplished by integrating it into the mobile app, as well as by promoting and communicating information about the app. It's not just enough to rely on the attendees to find it on their own. You have to encourage them to participate and tell them where to go. The more communication and reminders, the better participation you'll have.

The bigger challenge we see is getting the presenters to adopt it. Some organizations will require that the presenters use it, but the majority don't. They invest in the product, but then leave it up to the presenters to decide if they want to use it. There's a spectrum—10% of the presenters are early adopters who see it's available, are excited about it and jump at the opportunity to use it. Then there's the 10% who, unless it's required, are never going to use it. They've been doing their presentation for years and they don't want to adjust it. Then there's the 80% in between that may need a little more convincing and communication about the app and its benefits. For that 80%, we've created a resource called our Polling Benefits Guide, which an organization can send to their presenters. The Guide provides three helpful tips for adopting the tools:

- 1 First, it lets them know how simple the process will be. There's a stigma around audience response systems—it's going to be a lot of work or they're not reliable—

because in the past that might have been the case. It's important to let them know how easy it is to use—it's right there in their PowerPoint.

- 2 Then, the guide educates them on why it's important and talks through the benefits for their attendees, as well as for the presenters. The education element is a key to adoption by presenters. They need to understand the purpose and the advantage of using the tool.
- 3 The last part of that guide gives them inspiration and ideas of how they can use it to learn more about their audience, such as collecting demographic information, assessing what their audience wants to hear about or evaluating learning.

These different examples show presenters what they can do with the tool in order to maximize engagement and participation by attendees, and in turn increase the benefits for all meeting participants. 

Dan Shea is a freelance writer and association professional. He can be reached at danielwshea@gmail.com. For more information on Conferences i/o, visit www.conferences.io.



Congratulations
Delia Murphy

Account Executive, Kellen

Executive Director,
National Pasta Association

Member Services & Engagement,
International Door Association

- and now -

Association Forum Forty Under 40



Promotions and Changes



Joseph Sapp, CAE, has been promoted by Talley Management Group, Inc. (TMG) to the role of chief operating officer. Sapp has been with the organization for 12 years and has worked at nearly every level of the company, most recently as associate director of association management services and director of strategic development. He was a 2014 recipient of Association Forum's Forty Under 40 award and is the immediate past-president of the Mid-Atlantic Society of Association Executives.



Scott Beck has been named president and CEO of Tourism Toronto, effective October 15. He joins the organization from Visit Salt Lake, where he served as president and CEO for the past 14 years. Previously, Beck held leadership positions with Ocean Properties Ltd., most notably as the general manager of the Salt Lake Marriott City Center. He served on the executive committee of Destinations International for six years, including as the organization's international board chair from 2014–15.



The National Precast Concrete Association (NPCA) has named **Frederick H. Grubbe, MBA, CAE**, as its president and CEO, effective January 2, 2020. Grubbe has more than 25 years of executive leadership experience at nonprofits, including at the Appraisal Institute, the National Fraternal Congress of America and the Think First Foundation. He has also held senior positions with the U.S. Department of Transportation and in the White House. Grubbe has previously served as the chair of the board of directors for Association Forum. He succeeds Ty Gable, who retired after 26 years with the organization.



Tom Bohn, CAE, MBA, has been named president and CEO of the Association for Corporate Growth. He will assume the role on December 1. Bohn was previously the CEO of the North American Veterinary Community (NAVC), a position he had held since 2013. He has also served in leadership positions with the Institute of Financial Operations, Institute of Internal Auditors and the YMCA of Central Florida. Bohn is a member of the board of directors of Heart + Paw. In 2017, he was named one of the *Orlando Business Journal's* CEOs of the Year.

News and Awards

Five SmithBucklin client organizations have been selected as winners of the Association Media & Publishing (AM&P) EXCEL Awards, which recognize excellence and leadership in nonprofit association media, publishing, marketing and communications.

Lamaze International: Gold EXCEL Award in the rebranding category

Bank Insurance & Securities Association (BISA): Silver EXCEL Award in the publication redesign category

Association for Computing Machinery's Special Interest Group on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques (ACM SIGGRAPH): Silver EXCEL Award in the promotional podcast category

Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc. (SGNA): Bronze EXCEL Award for its awareness campaign

International Live Events Association (ILEA): Bronze EXCEL Award in the digital special report category



New AF Members

Individual Members

James Cox, American Institute of CPAs

Amy Frazer, CTA, Experience Columbus

Scott Freeman, 501 Financial Management

Bozana Gasic, American Egg Board

Keri Kramer

Brad LaTour, Clowder

Denise Pedersen, Destination Madison

Cecilia Sepp, Rogue Tulips LLC

Sean Thorndike, CSI DMC

Sherry Vale, Destination Cleveland

Cindy Wilson, Rosemont Convention Bureau

Forum Plus Members

Bria Douglas and **Katherine Koszy**, American College of Prosthodontists

Michael Frale, **Cristina Graham** and **Jody Stautzenbach**, American Epilepsy Society

Vanessa Lewin, American Orthopaedic Association

Nicole Kasper, Congress of Neurological Surgeons

Colleen Nolan, MCI USA

Discover Your Benefits:

Association Forum members are afforded a number of amazing benefits. Go online to associationforum.org/membership to check out all that AF can offer.

keppler
S P E A K E R S

Bringing Emotional Connections to
ASSOCIATION AUDIENCES
From Fraud Fighters to Ground-Breaking Female Firsts

FRANK ABAGNALE
Renowned Cybersecurity and Fraud Prevention Expert

SARAH THOMAS
The NFL's First Female Official

ALISON LEVINE
First American Women's Everest Expedition TEAM CAPTAIN

Shannon Huffman Polson
US Army Veteran, Leadership Expert and Author
NETWORKING BRUNCH KEYNOTE

MEET SHANNON!
KEPPLER SPEAKERS
BOOTH #416

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2019

ASCM	www.ascm.org	17
Barnes & Thornburg	www.btllaw.com	6
Chicago Association of REALTORS®	www.chicagorealtor.com	2
Choose Chicago	www.choosechicago.com	10-11
Cook and Kocher Insurance Group	www.cookandkocher.com	26
Destination Cleveland	www.thisiscleveland.com	7
Discover Puerto Rico	www.discoverpuertorico.com	61
eShow	www.goeshow.com	Inside Back Cover
GLC	www.glcdelivers.com	39
Grapevine TX CVB	www.grapevinetexasusa.com	27
Greater Chicago Events	pattycoen@att.net	Back Cover
Greater Miami CVB	www.miamimeetings.com	20-21
Greensboro Area CVB	www.visitgreensboronc.com	38
Higher Logic	www.higherlogic.com	63
Kellen	www.kellencompany.com	49
Keppler Speakers Bureau	www.kepplerspeakers.com	51
Louisville	www.gotolouisville.com	14-15
Omaha CVB	www.visitomaha.com	58-59
Reno Tahoe	www.visitrenotahoe.com	45
SmithBucklin	www.smithbucklin.com	62
Synchronicities	www.synchronicities.us	13
Tourism Vancouver	www.tourismvancouver.com	44
Travel Portland	www.travelportland.com	43
Visit Charlotte	www.charlottemeetings.com	18-19
Visit Denver	www.conventionselevated.com	Inside Front Cover-1
Visit Milwaukee	www.visitmilwaukee.org	52
Visit Orlando	www.orlandomeeting.com	24-25
Visit Phoenix	www.visitphoenix.com	22-23
Visit Seattle	www.visitseattle.org	5
Visit Spokane	www.visitspokane.com	32-33

MEET

Milwaukee

Sometimes random. Always wonderful.

Plan your next meeting in Milwaukee at visitmilwaukee.org/meet

300,000 SQ. FT. CONVENTION CENTER | 17,000 HOTEL ROOMS
170 DOWNTOWN RESTAURANTS | 10 MILES OF LAKEFRONT

visit Milwaukee

ASSOCIATION FORUM'S PARTNERS *Make it* POSSIBLE

Choose Chicago



WELCOME TO THE CITY THAT FEELS LIKE HOME Chicago is a city unlike any other. We've got the architectural marvels, world-class museums, dynamic entertainment, and award-winning dining scene you'd expect from one of the world's greatest cities. But we're more than just another big city—our welcoming residents, inclusive neighborhoods and Midwestern soul truly make Chicago the city that feels like home.

Looking for the ultimate wow factor? You'll find it in Chicago. Conferences, conventions, meetings and special events find their home in Chicago, whether at McCormick Place, the Western Hemisphere's largest convention center, historic Navy Pier, with its stunning lakeside venues, or one-of-a-kind, only-in-Chicago spaces that fill attendees with awe.

Welcome to soaring views from one of the world's tallest buildings, lectures among ancient artifacts, meeting rooms with stunning waterfront vistas—the possibilities are simply endless, and all within a city renowned for its award-winning restaurants, pro sports teams, outdoor recreation, iconic architecture, jaw-dropping attractions and innovative hotels.

Whether you're planning an intimate meeting for 10 or a large-scale event for 50,000, Choose Chicago's experienced Sales and Client Services teams are your one-stop resource for advanced meeting planning, provided to you at no extra cost at all. We'll assist you in finding the right hotels and venues, speakers, entertainers, transportation services, decor companies, caterers and more.

Destination Cleveland

Sherry Vale

National Sales Manager – Chicago
334 Euclid Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44114
216-875-6616
svale@destinationcle.org
www.thisiscleveland.com/meetings



Cleveland has the meetings and conventions infrastructure covered. But it's not just about the logistics, it's about the experience. Here are five reasons Cleveland should be your next meeting destination:

5. **Hotels are everywhere.** Greater Cleveland has nearly 24,000 guest rooms across all major hotel brands, with 5,000 guest rooms in 18 hotels downtown. Add in flexible meeting spaces, art galleries and unique dining spots, and these hotels become destinations in themselves.
4. **Downtown Convention Center District.** The high-tech, eco-engineered Huntington Convention Center connects to the 600-room Hilton Cleveland Downtown hotel. The district includes the Global Center for Health Innovation and is within walking distance to hotels, entertainment districts, sports venues and lakefront attractions like the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.
3. **Walking around is easy.** Cleveland has one of the most pedestrian-friendly downtowns in America. PCMA's Convene magazine ranked the Huntington

Convention Center of Cleveland No. 4 on the list for "Top 15 Convention Centers in Highly Walkable Places."

2. **Plenty of food and fun.** From lunch breaks to strategy sessions to after-hours revelry, Cleveland is full of restaurants that specialize in large parties. Famed chefs, celebrated restaurants and popular food trucks all call Cleveland home, while the JACK Cleveland Casino and music venues provide lively nightlife.
1. **Great Lakes adventures.** Summer or winter, Lake Erie gives visitors a chance to enjoy lakeside views and activities. Commission a group adventure with BrewBoat CLE at Whiskey Island or swim the waters of Edgewater Park Beach. Staying Downtown? Book a jet ski, kayak, paddleboat or board at North Coast Harbor Marina.

Discover Puerto Rico

Deborah Cohen

Director of Meeting & Convention Marketing
500 Calle De La Tanca Building
Ochoa, Ste. 402B
San Juan, Puerto Rico, 00901
+901-359-0679
deborah.cohen@discoverpuertorico.com

www.discoverpuertorico.com/meetings



Work on Your Culture While Immersed in Ours

Have we met yet? We should. Welcome to Puerto Rico, where a world of color, music and dance await your attendees. From old-world charm to dazzling modern convention facilities, our island paradise will live up any meeting. Majestic coastal views won't only make your next event unforgettable, it also will help get the inspiration flowing. Many of our top event facilities boast prime seaside real estate. A soft ocean breeze can work wonders, after all. You'll find an astonishing range of accommodations that work for every taste and budget, from luxurious and familiar to hip and authentic.

Check out the Puerto Rico Convention Center, boasting 600,000 square feet of flexible meeting

space in the heart of San Juan's blossoming Convention District. Surrounded by hotels, restaurants and a casino, it is the perfect venue for your next meeting. Then again, you might want something less conventional for your attendees, like a world-famous rum distillery, or even a coffee hacienda.

At the end of the day, your attendees will step outside to find stunning sunsets, warm weather and vibrant nightlife. Some of the best team building happens between meetings, where they can taste the local cuisine, enjoy a cocktail and dance to the rhythms of the island. Plan your next meeting in paradise and leave your worries—and your passports—behind. Find out more at DiscoverPuertoRico.com/meetings.

Exploring Louisville's Convention Reinvention

David Kinney

Director of Midwest Sales

401 West Main Street, Suite 2300
Louisville, KY 40202
502-379-6105
dkinney@gotolouisville.com



If you haven't visited Louisville lately, you're in for a surprise. With Bourbon mania sweeping the world, Bourbon City is in the midst of a renaissance—and the result is an all-new, one-of-a-kind convention experience.

Louisville has poured more than a billion dollars into its downtown corridor adding hotels, restaurants, and seven urban bourbon distilleries. For convention planners, the crown jewel of the city's reignition is the stunning new Kentucky International Convention Center (KICC).

KICC opened in August 2018 after a two-year, \$207 million expansion and renovation. Here are a few highlights:

- 200,456-square-feet of contiguous exhibit space
- 40,256-square-foot ballroom
- 175-seat conference theater
- 52 meeting rooms
- Catering capacity of 15,000 meals per day

But there's more to KICC than amenities and technology. Over 130 bars and restaurants and seven urban bourbon distilleries are a just short walk away. And Louisville's culinary & cocktail scene is flourishing, earning accolades from Bon Appétit Magazine, who declared it, "One of the Best Foodie Towns in America."

If that's not enough to warrant hosting your next meeting in Bourbon City, keep in mind that accommodations won't be a problem. Downtown Louisville offers 6,000+ hotel rooms including the all-new Omni Louisville—a four-diamond hotel across the street from KICC.

When it comes to hosting meetings, conventions and events, Louisville has it all—along with a hearty helping of Southern hospitality.

Learn more by visiting GoToLouisville.com/Meet.

Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau

Joe Thompson

Director of Sales

636 S. Main St.
Grapevine, TX 76051
817-410-3552
JThompson@GrapevineTexasUSA.com

www.GrapevineTexasUSA.com



Historic Grapevine, Texas, is the go-to destination when planning a meeting in North Texas! Grapevine provides attendees with more than one million-square-feet of meeting space and 11,000 rooms within 15 minutes. Grapevine is home to a variety of luxury hotels and lodging options; a historic downtown lined with unique shops, restaurants, museums and art galleries; nine winery tasting rooms; and outdoor recreation, including 81 holes of golf and activities on Lake Grapevine.

Centrally located between Dallas and Fort Worth, Grapevine is easily accessible by land, air and commuter rail. Sitting at the crossroads of three major interstates, Grapevine is also host to Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW), the premier international gateway in the U.S. with more than 1,800 daily flights to 182 domestic and 62 international destinations. TEXRail commuter rail connects DFW Airport's Terminal B to Historic Downtown Grapevine, bringing visitors to Main Street in less than 10 minutes.

New developments in Grapevine: In February 2019, Peppa Pig World of Play, the first attraction of its kind in North America, opened at the 1.8 million-square-foot Grapevine Mills mall. The Salt Lick BBQ, an iconic Texas restaurant, announced plans to build a satellite location in Grapevine, with groundbreaking next year.

The highly-anticipated \$105 million public/private sector transit-oriented development, Grapevine Main Station, will open to the public in Summer 2020. One of nine stations affiliated with TEXRail's 27-mile commuter line, Grapevine Main Station will service passengers arriving and departing Grapevine. The development will feature a 38,000-square-foot outdoor Plaza; a 42,000-square-foot, five-story Rail Station with food and retail; Hotel Vin, a six-story, 120-room boutique hotel; and a 552-space parking garage. Stand Rock Hospitality announced plans to build a \$330 million, 1,020-room waterpark resort hotel, and will break ground in 2020. For more information, visit GrapevineTexasUSA.com.

Greater Miami CVB Company

Barry Moskowitz

Vice President, Sale and Industry Relations Sales

701 Brickell Avenue, Suite 2700,
Miami, FL 33131
(305) 539-3042
barry@gmcbv.com
miamimeetings.com



A vibrant and dynamic global hub, Miami offers a stunning array of creative venue options for even the largest meeting needs, including the opened Miami Beach Convention Center.

Located in the heart of South Beach, the Miami Beach Convention Center is a bright, glass-encased facility, featuring nearly 500,000 square feet of versatile exhibition space, more than 180,000 square feet of meeting space, as well as a 60,000-square-foot grand ballroom, a 20,000-square-foot junior ballroom, and 84 breakout rooms. It is as innovative and tech-rich as it is beautiful.

Along with the Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami continues to reinvent itself with trendy hotels, a variety of meeting spaces and enhanced infrastruc-

ture. Few places in the world deliver such a thriving mix of international sophistication, natural tropical beauty and authentic cultural diversity as Miami. From picture-perfect weather, pristine beaches, top-rated attractions, to eclectic dining, and a thriving cultural scene, the destination offers endless possibilities for exploration and entertainment.

Flying to Miami is also a breeze, with Miami International Airport (MIA) offering more than 400 flights from around the globe daily and serving more airlines than any other airport in the U.S.

Although these are just a few, there are many more magical highlights awaiting any meeting planner considering Miami as their next meetings destination. Visit MiamiMeetings.com to find out more.

Reno Tahoe

Maddie DaMario (Metcalf)

4001 S. Virginia St., Suite G
630-247-8833
mmetcalf@renotahoeusa.com
visitrenotahoe.com

Reno Tahoe is a dynamic, four-season resort destination in a spectacular natural setting. Here, genuine Western heritage and hospitality are served up alongside a region in the midst of exciting transformation, offering travelers world-class attractions, outdoor adventure and an annual calendar of cultural, culinary and sporting events. "America's Best Lake," Lake Tahoe is just 40

minutes from downtown Reno, surrounded by the highest concentration of ski resorts in North America. And an abundance of outdoor recreation is complemented by award-winning breweries, world-renowned spas and nightly entertainment.



Greensboro Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

2411 W. Gate City Blvd.
Greensboro, NC 27403
336-274-2282
Fax: 336-230-1183
Toll Free: 800-344-2282



Be in the center of everything going on in North Carolina. Located in the center of North Carolina's state and the center of the eastern seaboard, Greensboro is easily accessible for travel—whether business or pleasure—flying or driving. Fly into The Piedmont Triad International Airport or drive using Interstate 85, 40 and 73. Greensboro is home to one of the Southeast's largest convention centers, Koury Convention Center, along with the 22,000-seat Greensboro Coliseum.

Worry less, with over 88 area accommodations and 10,100 hotel rooms. By 2020 Greensboro will have six additional hotels. Greensboro can accommodate any size event.

Fun and exciting things are happening—Greensboro has great dining, nightlife, golf courses, festivals, world-class museums and outdoor recreation, including 90 miles of walking trails.

Stroll in one of the beautiful gardens. Visit one of over 135 attractions including Greensboro Children's Museum; Replacements, Ltd.; plus the Greensboro Science Center, home to the Wiseman Aquarium, the first LEED-certified aquarium in the United States, and SKYWILD, the first aerial adventure park where zoo visitors can watch participants perform tasks that mimic animal behavior. Witness history at the International Civil Rights Center & Museum, Greensboro History Museum and Guilford Courthouse National Military Park. Greensboro boasts 16 different styles of cuisine and is home to over 500 restaurants. From world-class haute cuisine to down-home, tangy, pit-cooked barbecue, Greensboro's selection of restaurants offers pleasures for every palate. Make Greensboro, NC, your next meeting or destination where history is rich and Southern hospitality is deeply rooted.

Synchronicities

Junior Tauvaa

Senior Vice President, Sales & Services

Visit Anaheim
714-765-8847
jtauvaa@visitanahaim.org

Mario Bass

Vice President, Sales & Services

Visit San Antonio
210-244-2045
mariobass@visitsanantonio.com

Rebecca Ramsey

Regional Director of Sales, Midwest

704-277-2030
rramsey@baltimore.org
Baltimore.org

Anaheim, Baltimore, San Antonio
Three destinations connected for your success.

Enhanced Marketing/Attendance Building

Optimal attendance is the goal for every meeting. That's why we work to support your strategy through an enhanced marketing campaign. In addition to customized destination marketing tools, Synchronicities works with you to identify key audiences and need areas to build attendance across the three cities.

Seamless Knowledge Transfer

The Synchronicities partners work together to seamlessly transition your event across destinations. We share profiles, convention center reports, programs and key learnings from prior years to make your job easier. We can even send service representatives to gain firsthand experience at each of your Synchronicities meetings in preparation for the next.

Customized Welcome Program

When you're in a Synchronicities city, we roll out the red carpet with an enhanced welcome program that makes attendees feel right at home. Welcome pro-

grams are customized to best fit your needs. Examples include hotel signage, welcome desks at the airport, welcome banners, buttons, hats and even customized discount programs.

Financial Booking Incentives

Book with Synchronicities and a customized financial incentive package will be created to best affect your bottom line. The more cities you book, the more lucrative the financial offerings will be.

Synchronicities unites the vibrant cities of Anaheim, San Antonio and Baltimore to give meeting professionals consistent service, customized engagement and an opportunity to maximize ROI. We're committed to making your meetings successful as well as memorable.

Synchronicities.us



Tourism Vancouver

Yael Stein

Marketing Manager, Meetings & Conventions

604-631-2881
ystein@tourismvancouver.com
tourismvancouver.com
insidevancouver.ca



Vancouver is consistently voted one of the world's most livable cities and has received countless awards and accolades for its attraction to meeting planners and visitors worldwide. The city is surrounded by snow-capped peaks, lush green parks, and the sparkling Pacific Ocean—combine that with an award-winning convention centre, first-class hotels and exceptional cuisine, and you'll see why Vancouver strongly appeals to meeting organizers and delegates alike.

Vancouver has also achieved the all-important balance between accessibility to destinations worldwide, meeting spaces that can accommodate a range of attendee numbers and tastes, and year-round activity options for post-conference gatherings.

With all that and more, it's no wonder the city is quickly becoming a preferred fixture on the world meetings stage.

With a resume of meetings and events that includes the annual TED Conference, PCMA's Convening Leaders and the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, Vancouver has what it takes to make your event one that attendees will talk about for years to come.

In a spectacular cosmopolitan city with unsurpassed natural beauty, Vancouver offers unparalleled destination value in one of the most cohesive and supportive hospitality networks in the world.

Ready to book your Vancouver conference? Contact Tourism Vancouver's Meetings team to get started.

Travel Portland

James Jessie

Senior Vice President of
Convention Sales

100 SW Main St. Ste. 1100
Portland, OR 97204
503-275-9770
james@travelportland.com

www.meetings.travelportland.com

PORTLAND

Dream up one-of-a-kind experiences for your next meeting, then make it happen in one-of-a-kind Portland. Check out these 5 reasons you should meet in Portland!

1. Great Value—and Values.

With no sales tax or food and beverage tax, Portland lets you stretch your budget while delegates indulge. We're also big on saving the other kind of green, with a natural commitment to sustainability, inclusion and ethical practices.

2. Spacious, Beautiful (and Sustainable!) Convention Center.

The Oregon Convention Center (OCC) became the nation's first LEED-certified meeting facility in 2004, then upped its game by going LEED Platinum in 2014. The OCC offers 255,000 square feet of contiguous exhibit space, 50 meeting rooms totaling 55,000 square feet and two ballrooms totaling 60,000 square feet.

3. Happy Planner, Happy Delegates (and Lots of Them).

You're already a hero or heroine; meeting in Portland will catapult you to super status. The city's welcoming culture and famous food scene delights delegates, and Travel Portland's here-when-you-need-us service keeps planners smiling.

4. Hotel Package That Keeps Getting Better.

With an enviable collection of boutique and big-name hotels, Portland's hotel package is experiencing a big growth spurt. Our 7,000 central-city rooms will be joined by the new 600-room Hyatt Regency headquarters hotel, opening in 2020.

5. Award-winning Transportation.

Portland has the nation's best airport — and getting around gets even better when you step outside and experience our convenient, easy-to-navigate transit system that includes light rail, streetcars and the original mode of transport: walking.

Visit Charlotte

Donna Forbes

501 S. College St.
Charlotte, North Carolina 28202
704-905-0861
donna@whiteadv.com

www.charlottesgotatlot.com


CHARLOTTE

As the 16th largest city in the nation and third fastest growing major U.S. city, Charlotte, North Carolina, should be at the top of any meeting planner's list. Thanks to smart development and progressive amenities, the Queen City continues to grow as the premier destination for meetings, conventions and trade shows.

As one of the top 10 busiest airports in the world, the Charlotte Douglas International Airport offers more than 170 nonstop flights to destinations worldwide, including to 40 international cities. Sixty percent of the country is within a two-hour flight of Charlotte, and more than 50 percent of the U.S. population can make it to the city in less than a day's drive by taking Interstates 77, 85 or 40.

The Charlotte Convention Center reigns supreme as a centrally located meeting hub. The 550,000-square-foot facility has more than 280,000 square feet of exhibit space and 126,500 square feet of meeting and ballroom space. The Convention Center's \$115 million expansion is officially underway—and slated for completion in summer 2021. The expansion will add more than 50,000 square feet of meeting room and pre-function space, bringing total individual breakout spaces to 54 (up from 40).

With an increase in business and leisure travel each year, the hotel market in Charlotte is one of the most active in the country. With more than 5,600 hotel rooms in Center City and another 7,070 rooms scheduled to open in the region through 2022, there's no better place to meet than in Charlotte.

Visit Orlando

Kerri Byrd

6277 Sea Harbor Drive Suite 400
Orlando, Florida 32821
407-841-2299
kbyrd@pushhere.com

www.orlandomeeting.com



As one of the leading meetings destination in the country, Orlando offers a world of possibilities for unique one-of-a-kind meetings and events. From low-cost accessibility and a top-rated convention center to a wide variety of hotels and world-class entertainment options, Orlando is an exciting gateway city for meetings of all sizes. Whether

networking with colleagues at 400 feet up atop the Wheel at ICON Park™ or hosting a private company event in one of our world-class theme parks complete with a fire-breathing dragon, no other destination delivers excitement quite like Orlando. For inspiration and planning assistance, visit www.OrlandoMeeting.com.

Visit Phoenix

Ronnie Collins

400 E. Van Buren, Suite 600
Phoenix, Arizona 85004
602-452-6215
rcollins@visitphoenix.com
visitphoenix.com

Phoenix makes meetings memorable. Hotels and resorts bask in near-perpetual sunshine. Jaw-dropping sunsets paint the desert sky nightly. And the Phoenix Convention Center sits in the middle of a walkable downtown filled with unique meeting spaces, independent restaurants, craft brewpubs and live-music venues. We're not like other cities; come find out why.



Visit Seattle

Troy Anderson

Director of Sales

701 Pike Street, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98101
206-461-5823
tanderson@visitseattle.org
visitseattle.org/meetings



Seattle's current growth offers increased amenities and highlights its richest offerings, leaving meeting attendees inspired.

Additional infrastructure. The Summit building—slated to open for group business in Spring 2022—will complement the existing and already-bustling Arch building, just a block and a half away. The combination of these two facilities provides meeting planners with more space to host and inspire attendees.

Expanded hotels. Added hotel capacity makes Seattle an even more comfortable place to hold meetings. Last year, our hotel inventory increased by twenty percent, augmenting an already outstanding hotel package. This increase brought the total downtown room count to 14,160 at the end of 2018, with an expected five percent increase in 2019.

Improved access. Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is the fastest-growing U.S. airport, serving 91 nonstop domestic destinations and 29 international destinations. A hub for both Delta Air Lines and Alaska Airlines, the facility is undergoing a nearly \$17-million central terminal renovation including ADA accessibility improvements, an addition of 10,000 square feet of dining and seating space, and a new, International Arrivals Facility that will double its gate capacity. Sea-Tac airport to downtown Seattle is only 30 minutes via Light Rail, adding a more efficient travel option into the city.

Whatever size or style of meeting you plan to hold, learn more about how the city can serve as a place for inspiration at visitseattle.org/meetings.

Visit Spokane

Jamie Rand

601 W 1st Ave #1000
Spokane, Washington 99201
509-742-9373
rand@visitspokane.com
www.visitspokane.com/



Greater Spokane is a city rich in history, architecture, art and culture. Brick, metal and glass buildings, cars and rumbling rail cars contrast the natural treed and basalt-filled landscape. Nestled in the middle of the metropolitan bustle of downtown Spokane is Riverfront Park, location of the 1974 World's Fair. Take a turn on the Skate Ribbon, ride the historic Looff Carrousel and feed the Garbage Eating Goat.

While you're enjoying the calm of the park, you might hear a mighty roar. Follow the sound and you'll discover the Spokane Falls. Get a bird's eye view by riding the gondolas or walk all the way down and find yourself dodging wayward water. It's a breathtaking sight sure to leave an indelible mark on your memory.

Spokane lives up to the Pacific Northwest stereotype. With outdoor recreation galore and a bold

culinary scene, it's easy to understand. The city is filled to the brim with tasty microbrews, robust wines, and daring distilleries. Follow the Ale Trail, hit up the Cork District or discover Dry Fly Distilling and Warrior Distilling. If it's food you want, you'll find palate-pleasing adventures to fit any taste. If you simply want coffee, you're in the right city. *National Geographic Travel* magazine named Spokane one of the top coffee cities in the United States in 2018.

Must see spots in Spokane are the Historic Davenport Hotel and the Martin Woldson Theater at The Fox in the heart of the Arts & Entertainment District.

Spokane is a city worth exploring, so make the most of it. And the best part is: it's all walkable.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

- 1. Publication Title:** *FORUM*.
- 2. Publication no.:** 1056-0092
- 3. Filing Date:** November 2019.
- 4. Issue Frequency:** Bi monthly, with combined January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October and November/December issues.
- 5. No. of Issues Published Annually:** 6.
- 6. Annual Subscription Price:** Free to Membership.
- 7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication:** Association Forum, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
- 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters:** Association Forum, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
- 9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Address of Publisher and Editor:** Publisher: Michelle Mason, FASAE, CAE, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606. Editor: Kara Brockman, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
- 10. Owner:** Association Forum, 10 South Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606.
- 11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding One Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities:** None.
- 12. The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:** has not changed during the preceding 12 months.
- 13. Publication Title:** *FORUM*.
- 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below:** August 2019.

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation:

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	Actual No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total No. Copies (Net Press Run)	1,521	1,484
B. Paid Circulation		
1. Outside County Mail Subscriptions	0	0
2. In County Mail Subscriptions	0	0
3. Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution	0	0
4. Other classes mailed through the USPS	0	0
C. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation	1,444	1,416
D. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution by Mail		
1. Outside County Copies	29	28
2. In County Copies	0	0
3. Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	0	0
4. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail	0	0
E. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution	29	25
F. Total Distribution	1,473	1,441
G. Copies not Distributed	48	43
H. Total	1,521	1,484
I. Percent Paid and/or Requested	98.0%	98.3%

16. This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November/December 2019 issue of this publication.

17. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

—Kara Brockman, Director, Education and Content

OMAHA'S CHANGING LANDSCAPE

Coming Winter 2019

480 Texas-inspired • luxuriously-appointed guestrooms • including 190 suites
Over 90,000 square feet of redesigned • flexible meeting space to include
50,000 Square Feet of Convention Space • New Tech Center • New Lobby
Lounge Bar • New 160-seat Hearth restaurant • New Upscale Grab and Go
• Herb 'N Kitchen • Full Service Starbucks



When you want to unearth something fresh, look to the heart of the Midwest.

Consistently ranked as a 'best value' city and renowned for its hospitality, Omaha offers accessibility, affordability and fun.

Conveniently located at the crossroads of the country, whether flying or driving, getting to Omaha is a breeze. Omaha offers non-stop service to 34 of the country's largest airports. Once you arrive the downtown convention district is a short 4 miles away. That means more time to enjoy a city that is comfortably easy, yet bursting with activity.

And even more activity is on its way. More than \$1.3 billion is being dedicated to revitalizing and enhancing Omaha's downtown convention district and airport.

Within five years, the Omaha airport (OMA) will undergo a \$500 million rebuild which will modernize and reshape how the airport looks and operates. The project is in response to

steady passenger growth and airline expansion. The airport surpassed five million passengers last year - a record. A \$300 million riverfront revitalization is currently underway. This transformational 90-acre project includes many "wow" features such as cascading waterfalls, park-side cafes, a sculpture garden and an urban beach. To enhance this area even further, yet another \$500 million dollar project will include a new two-block-long plaza lined with retailers and restaurants with access to lake activities.

This will add to an already robust convention district that includes Omaha's convention center featuring more than 346,000 square feet of meeting space, plus an 18,300-seat attached arena. The technology-rich center is close to more than 3,000 downtown hotel rooms, including two full-service properties directly across the street, one connected via glass-enclosed skywalk.

Within blocks of the convention center

is **Omaha's Old Market**

Entertainment

District - unique

boutiques, antique emporiums, art galleries, pubs and more than 30 distinctly Omaha restaurants featuring local farm-to-table favorites and flavors from around the globe. For a relaxing

stroll, check out Bob. He's a one-of-a-kind pedestrian bridge that stretches 3,000 feet across the Missouri River and is one of the longest pedestrian bridges to link two states. Under Bob, you'll find **OMAR the Troll**. Interact with OMAR through videos that you'll find on the bridge, and even turn yourself into OMAR using the special Snapchat filter. Get your culture fix at The Joslyn Art Museum, a pink marble art deco masterpiece, featuring rare works of art from such masters as Rembrandt, Monet and Pollack. Hop on board history at The Durham Museum, where you can explore old-time passenger trains. Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium is consistently ranked as one of the "World's" best, and is home to the world's largest indoor desert and North America's largest indoor rainforest.

With more than 15,000 hotel rooms, you'll find a wide variety of hotels located throughout the city. And we're just getting started; Omaha's hotel supply continues to grow along with its value as a meeting destination.

Visit
OMAHA

For more information
call **866-937-6624** or go to
VisitOmaha.com/Meetings



A photograph of three people—a man on the left, a woman in the center, and a man on the right—blowing into a large, colorful glass sphere. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is filled with festive decorations, including colorful balloons and streamers. The text "THE 'FIELD TRIP FEELING' SHOULDN'T BE NOSTALGIC." is overlaid at the top.

THE "FIELD TRIP FEELING" SHOULDN'T BE NOSTALGIC.



Hot Shops Art Center - Glass Blowing Studio

When you want to unearth something fresh, look to the heart and soul of the Midwest. Omaha offers unique ways to create memorable experiences that feel more like field trips than meetings. Customized glass blowing sessions, guided culinary walking tours, hikes through the world's largest indoor desert, cocktails in a pink marble museum, and dinner in an underwater shark tunnel.

So have fun in Omaha - no permission slip required.

Visit
OMAHA™

VisitOmaha.com/MeetHere



December

**DEC
17**

Holiday Showcase 2019

8 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Hyatt Regency Chicago
151 E. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60601

January 2020

**JAN
16**

Governance Essentials: Effective Practices for Staff – Suburban Location

9 a.m. – 12 p.m.
8735 W. Higgins Rd, Ste 300,
Chicago, IL 60631

**JAN
28**

Winter Healthcare Collaborative 2020

12 p.m. – 5 p.m.
211 E. Chicago Ave,
Chicago, IL 60611

February 2020

**FEB
19**

Component Relations SIG

9 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

**FEB
26**

Finance + HR Symposium

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

March 2020

**MAR
11**

2020 Women's Executive Forum

8:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.
172 W Adams St.
Chicago, IL 60610

**MAR
25**

CEOnly Exchange

9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

**MAR
31**

SmartTech 2020

OLC Education & Conference Center
9400 W Higgins Rd, Ste 100,
Rosemont, IL 60018



Learn More About SIGs If you're looking for more information about Association Forum Shared Interest Groups (SIGs), go online to associationforum.org/sharedinterest.

Online Learning!

Easy-to-access on-demand education always available for the association professional on-the-go. Expand your knowledge and earn CAE credits at your convenience.

pathlms.com/association-forum



Events listed here are Association Forum programs. Further details and registration information can be found at www.associationforum.org. Programs are subject to change.

Calendar Legend

● Education Events ● Shared Interest Group Events ● Webinars

Location is Association Forum, 10 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 800, Chicago, 60606, unless otherwise noted.

The New York Times
**NO. 1
PLACE
TO GO
IN 2019**

San Juan, Puerto Rico

WORK ON YOUR CULTURE WHILE IMMERSED IN OURS

Have we met yet? We should. Welcome to Puerto Rico, where a world of color, music and dance await your attendees. From old-world charm to dazzling modern convention facilities, our island paradise will liven up any meeting. Majestic coastal views won't only make your next event unforgettable, it also will help get inspiration flowing. A little ocean breeze can work wonders, after all. You'll find an astonishing range of accommodations that work for every taste and budget, from luxurious and familiar to hip and authentic.

With 600,000 square feet of flexible meeting space in the heart of San Juan's blossoming Convention District, the Puerto Rico Convention Center is surrounded by hotels, restaurants and a casino, making it the perfect venue for your next meeting. Or choose a less conventional location for your attendees, like a world-famous rum distillery.

When the day is finished, your attendees will step outside to find stunning sunsets, warm weather, and vibrant nightlife. Some of the best team building happens between meetings, where they can taste the local cuisine, enjoy a cocktail, and dance to the rhythms of the island. Plan your next meeting in paradise and leave your worries—and your passports—behind. Find out more at DiscoverPuertoRico.com/meetings.

DISCOVER
Puerto Rico

CONTACT US

Deborah Cohen, Discover Puerto Rico
500 Calle De La Tanca, Ochoa Building, Suite 402B, San Juan, 00901, Puerto Rico
+1 787-710-8280 | Deborah.Cohen@DiscoverPuertoRico.com



SMITHBUCKLIN

PROMO



ASSOCIATION BRAND STEWARDS

Does your current supplier of promotional and printed goods understand your association's members and mission? Do they ask the right questions to ensure your branded goods support your programs and strategic goals while delighting and inspiring your audience?

SmithBucklin Promo, in partnership with **American Solutions for Business**, has the experience and expertise associations need for on-time procurement of on-budget promotional products and printed goods. Associations of all sizes turn to us to fulfill their promo needs. You should too!

We are:

- Collaborative professionals who respect an association's brand, mission, and members
- Creative and strategic sourcing experts, from concept to delivery
- Preferred partners with thousands of suppliers, ensuring the lowest pricing on millions of items
- Flexible and responsive
- Able to provide eCommerce solutions, kitting, warehousing, and more

Please visit the SmithBucklin Promo team at **Holiday Showcase Booth 718** to learn more about how we can support not only your association's programs, but also its mission!

In Partnership with:



hello.



Higher Logic's solutions
help associations with:

.....

**Member
Retention**

**New Member
Acquisition**

**Learning +
Education**

Events

**Non-dues
Revenue**

.....

LET'S CONNECT



HIGHER LOGIC
ALL TOGETHER

Meetings and Events See Sustained Growth

Despite apprehension regarding a potential economic downturn, the outlook for meetings and events in the coming year is optimistic. Published by American Express Meetings and Events, the “2020 Global Meetings and Events Forecast” predicts that all meeting types—from internal meetings and product launches to conferences and tradeshow—will experience steady growth for the fifth year in a row.


Surveying 550 meetings and events professionals around the globe, the forecast shows that, overall, respondents are “very optimistic” about the meetings and events industry in the next 12 months.

Meeting planners are willing to spend to improve the on-site attendee experience. Expect to see more integrated tech, like mobile apps, as well as more experiential elements, giving attendees more of what they’ve come to expect and look forward to. On the downside, however, planners may see some challenges securing venues, as demand is likely to be greater than the increasing number of available meeting spaces.

Among other forecast highlights:

Overall Spend Is Up in Every Region

(Overall meeting spend within organization)

North America  **1.6%**

Europe  **2.1%**

Central/South America  **2.6%**

Asia Pacific  **1.3%**

Meetings Will Be Longer

Days Per Meeting

+ .5% – 2.9%

More People Will Be Attending

Number of Attendees

+ 1.1% – 3.1%

Primary Locations for Meetings, 2020 vs. 2019

Location selection strategies differ across regions. While many meeting professionals are not changing their destination types, a considerable percentage is shifting either to larger cities or second-tier destinations.

	North America	Europe	Central/S. America	Asia Pacific
Yes , selecting large city destinations more frequently	26%	31%	41%	30%
Yes , selecting second-tier city destinations more frequently	21%	29%	30%	27%
No , the types of destinations are not changing	50%	39%	30%	40%
Other	3%	2%	0%	3%

Most Compelling Reason to Use Mobile Apps

Attendees can expect to see more mobile app implementation to improve communications and the overall engagement of meetings attendees.

	North America	Europe	Central/S. America	Asia
Improve communications	42%	38%	39%	37%
Improve engagement of attendees	44%	32%	33%	40%
Facilitate networking among attendees	19%	27%	30%	24%
Measure effectiveness of presentations	16%	19%	17%	19%
Measure event effectiveness overall	11%	19%	20%	19%
Communicate with attendees regarding changes or emergencies	35%	28%	23%	32%
Deliver documents electronically	23%	29%	27%	16%
Compliance measurement	8%	7%	11%	14%

Source: North American, European, Asian Pacific, and Central/South American Surveys from American Express Meetings & Events, 2019.

All Your Event Management Solutions, under One Umbrella!



- Mobile Apps
- Registration & Badge Production
- Exhibit Sales & Floor Plan Management
- Total Networking Xperience TNX
- Hosted Buyer Program
- Continuing Education Management & Certificate Printing
- Responsive Event Website Hosting
- Housing Management
- Session Tracking/Lead Retrieval/Rfid
- Call for Submissions/Abstracts/Speakers with Committee Review
- Session & Speaker Management
- Meeting Logistics & BEO Management
- Banquet/Table/Seating Management
- AMS & CRM Integration

Official event solutions provider for Association Forum.

**Stop by Booth #707 December 17 at
the Association Forum's Holiday Showcase!**

www.goeShow.com

eshow
event management solutions



GREAT CHICAGO EVENTS CELEBRATING 20 YEARS

Your Resource for Business Event Strategy



Degrees & Industry Designations

- MBA in Marketing and International Business
- CMM
- CMP



Skill Sets

- Meeting Industry Education
- E-Learning Instruction
- Strategic Meeting Design & Goal Setting
- Pre-show & On-site Logistics
- Budget Management
- Staff Transition Management



Industry Expertise

- Medical
- Legal
- Financial

As a meeting planner for more than 20 years, the **benefits brought to your organization include:**

- Strategic meeting planning and program management
- Creating content for learning environments in meeting room settings and elearning or LMS formats
- Utilizing negotiation skills to increase the meeting's or event's ROI
- Building consensus among meeting stakeholders to ensure that the organization's vision and mission are accomplished

Let's strategize now!

Patty Coen, MBA, CMM, CMP
Senior Consultant

Phone: 312-860-0207 | Email: pattycoen@att.net