Freebies, Perks and Points, Oh My!
Beware the Ethical Pitfalls of Planning
PAGE 14

Golf & Spa Events
Maximize the Meeting Experience
PAGE 38

Airline Mergers
PAGE 18
It’s So Miami
PAGE 19
Asia-Pacific
PAGE 44
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The Meeting Magazines.com • Corporate & Incentive Travel • June 2013
For the Good of All

Even as most of the fallout from the ethical lapses of companies such as Enron, Tyco and AIG recedes from the headlines, new stories appear, providing object lessons for meeting planners and fodder for ethical case studies. These days, the IRS is in the news for alleged lavish spending and questionable behavior at training events, which were held before more stringent federal guidelines were enacted. These sometimes sensational reports tend to tarnish the role of the professional meeting planner and also demonstrate that too few journalists really take the time to fully understand the workings of the meeting and event industry. Thus, it is incumbent upon professional planners to be aware of and uphold their company’s ethics policies and to continually learn what’s new in the field from their associations such as MPI, PCMA and CIC, among others.

The cover story in this issue on page 14 — “Freebies, Perks and Points, Oh My! Beware the Ethical Pitfalls of Planning” — is a treasure trove of information and insight from planners and experts in the field. “The feedback has been generally positive or neutral after we announced our updated ethics policies,” says Karen Kotowski, CAE, CMP, the CEO of the CIC (Convention Industry Council). “We see more attention paid to the optics of certain practices like FAM trips, because our industry as well as all businesses, including the government, are under greater scrutiny. As a meeting industry trend, we are hearing more talk about CSR, ethics and good business practice. CIC member organizations have introduced and are enforcing their own codes of conduct or ethics and provide sessions at their annual meetings on the topic.”

Highly respected, veteran meeting planner Sharon Marsh, CMP, CMM, meetings group manager for Medtronic Inc., doesn’t mince words as she warns meeting planners that “going on a FAM trip when you know you most probably won’t use the destination/property is like stealing”; and also as she cautions suppliers “to provide sessions at their annual meetings on the topic.”

For the good of all, become aware of ethical pitfalls and strive to do your best to stay above the fray. As Marsh concludes, “I won’t do anything that I am ashamed to let anyone know. This should be the rule we all use.”

For the Good of All

Harvey Grotsky
Publisher
MEETING VALUES

The Hyatt Times Square
NY to Debut in October

NEW YORK, NY — Hyatt Times Square, New York, Manhattan’s largest new Hyatt hotel in more than 30 years, is expected to open in late October 2013. Services and amenities will include a rooftop lounge, trendy diner, state-of-the-art fitness center and iPad check-in, as well as the only hotel spa in the area. The 487-room Hyatt Times Square is in the heart of Times Square. The hotel’s 54-story glass exterior adds a dramatic flourish to the theater district. With floor-to-ceiling windows and original art, the rooms are relaxing while still reflecting the thrill of city life. The hotel’s 2,400 sf of flexible space and its 1,400 sf of outdoor terrace can be tailored to provide the perfect setting for any occasion. Plus, its central location provides easy access from Manhattan’s main transportation hubs, and business and financial centers.

www.timesquare.hyatt.com

Hyatt Regency McCormick Place, Chicago, IL

The hotel will match or beat room rates from like four-diamond hotels for planners who book and hold new meetings July 1–September 4, 2013. Offer includes free meeting room rental for the general session, reduced self-parking of $22 per day ($12 value per night) and free guest room and general session WiFi ($9.99/room/day and $50 for general session). Groups that actualize more than 250 guest rooms will receive a gift card valued at 3 percent of room revenue toward their next office supply or computer order. Email saleschi@hyatt.com or call 312-528-4180. www.mccormickplace.hyatt.com

MIP-WEC Aims to ‘Revitalize Meeting Professionals’

DALLAS, TX — Meeting Professionals International (MPI) will address the rapid changes facing the meeting and event industry at the 2013 World Education Congress (WEC) July 20–23 at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center, Las Vegas. The opening general session will explore the transformational power of meetings with leading business experts and keynote speaker Candy Chang, a TED senior fellow and urban space artist and designer. Accomplished speaker and former U.S. Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman will discuss transformational leadership and how to find purpose through social action at the closing session. “We recognize the meeting and event industry is changing rapidly, so MPI is also transforming to better serve our members. At WEC 2013, we will provide new tools, techniques and learning experiences to help meeting professionals evolve and succeed,” said Paul Van Deventer, president and CEO of MPI. “Our goal with this year’s conference is to revitalize meeting professionals so their meetings can revitalize others.” MPI added a second Flash Paint session, which is a distinctive, fast-paced platform of three, 15-minute presentations from diverse and innovative speakers. Other program highlights include a hosted buyer program; MarketSquare, RISE Awards Luncheon; Helping Hands Community Service Project; and a Dinkels Bentley Performance. Fundraising events include the Players Golf Tournament, The Big Deal, an official World Series of Poker satellite tournament, and Rendezvous, the foundation’s signature networking event. www.mpiweb.org/wec

New Orleans Downtown Marriott at the Convention Center, Meetings booked by December 24, 2013 and consumed during select 2013 dates receive incentives based on the size of any size of the event. Groups of any size receive incentives based on the size of the event.

- comp meeting room Internet access; 10 percent off in-house AV; 10 percent off parking for attendees, 200 or more room nights; comp meeting room Internet and data projectors; 15 percent off in-house AV; 15 percent off parking for attendees. More than 250 room nights: comp meeting room Internet and data projectors; 20 percent off F&B; 20 percent off AV; 20 percent off parking for attendees; and more. 800.305.6342, www.neworleansmarriottconventioncenter.com

- Hyatt Fisherman’s Wharf, San Francisco, CA. Bookings with 10 rooms or more for stays November 24–30, 2013 start at $159; December 15, 2013-January 5, 2014, from $128. Additional concessions, based on number of rooms booked, include: 1/40 comp room; comp meeting room rental; comp high-speed Internet in guest rooms; 10 percent off AV; comp one-hour reception; 5 percent discount on 2012 menu pricing; VIP welcome amenities; and more. Contact Marianne Milton, director of sales and marketing, 415.486.4415, marianne.milton@hyatt.com, www.fishermanswharf.hyatt.com.

Van Deventer

MP-WEC

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*Dates and venue subject to change. Please see innoftheMountainGods.com for updates.

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES, CA — Los Angeles Times Meetings + Events will introduce its new Strategic Partnerships Program at its annual Partnership Summit on July 30 at the Universal Studios Lot. The Summit is free and open to anyone interested in the meetings and events industry. For more information and to register, visit www.latimes.com/meetings/events/summit2013.

The New Tropicana Las Vegas Expanding Meeting Facilities

LAS VEGAS, NV — The new Tropicana Las Vegas – a DoubleTree by Hilton announced plans to significantly expand its meeting and convention facilities from 60,000 sf to more than 100,000 sf. The hotel will build five 650 sf breakout rooms on the second floor of the Club Tower, adding to its three ballrooms. All of the new breakout rooms will have natural light and private his-and-her restrooms. The resort also will expand the Tropicana Pavilion, which is a wing of Tropicana Las Vegas’ conference center. When combined with existing space in the Tropicana Pavilion, the venue will offer more than 55,000 sf that can be used for large exhibits and general sessions. All of the meeting facilities are complemented by customizable catering services, a dedicated audio-visual department, separate conference services registration desk, business center and easy parking access, among other benefits. www.tropicana.com

MEETING VALUES

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The Renaissance Atlanta Waverly Hotel & Convention Center recently completed renovations of all 522 guest rooms and suites, including the Club Level. Contemporary treatments of traditional furnishings feature hardwood furniture complemented by deep tan and purple tones.

Touches include chic wall graphics and archeded floor lamps.

The Renaissance Atlanta Waverly Hotel & Convention Center, a centerpiece of northwest Atlanta’s booming Galleria office and shopping complex, showcases 60,000 sf of flexible meeting space and a direct connection to an additional 350,000 sf of event space at the Cobb Galleria Convention Centre. The hotel features a dramatic 14-story atrium and 32 high-tech meeting rooms. The hotel is currently offering a Live Life Larger and “Maximize Your Meeting” special meeting value.

www.waverlymeetings.com

EVENTS CALENDAR

JULY 15–17, 2013
DMAI 99TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
The Peabody Orlando
Orlando, FL
202-296-7888
www.destinationmarketing.org

SEPTEMBER 4–6, 2013
HSMAI’S MEET NATIONAL 2013
Walter E. Washington Convention Center
Washington, DC
914-923-3270
www.hsmai.net

OCTOBER 14, 2013
SITE NITE NORTH AMERICA
Palm Casino Resort
Las Vegas, NV
312-322-5146
wwwSITEglobal.com

OCTOBER 15–17, 2013
IMEX AMERICA
Sands Expo at the Venetian/Palazzo Hotel
Las Vegas, NV
+44 1273 227311
www.imexamerica.com

OCTOBER 26–29, 2013
SITE CLASSIC
The Resort at Pelican Hill
Newport Beach, CA
312-521-6348
wwwSITEglobal.com

JULY 20–23, 2013
MPI 2013 WORLD EDUCATION CONGRESS
Mandarin Bay
Las Vegas, NV
972-702-3051
www.mpiweb.org/wec

AUGUST 4–7, 2013
Geba CONVENTION 2013
San Diego Convention Center
San Diego, CA
703-684-0836
wwwGBTA.org

AUGUST 5–7, 2013
IACE MIDYEAR MEETING
Omni CNW Center
Atlanta, GA
wwwIACE.com

DMAI ‘Better Together’ in Orlando This July

WASHINGTON, DC — Destination Marketing Association International expects more than 1,000 destination marketing professionals to convene in Orlando for its annual convention July 15–17 as The Peabody Orlando. The theme of this year’s convention is “Better Together: Integrating Our Strengths.” More than 40 education sessions include forming integrated teams, building collaborative partnerships within the community, creating integrated marketing and sales, and positioning and strengthening the DMO industry as a channel. “Here at DMAI, we have long realized destination marketing as a serious engine to drive job creation and economic growth through travel and tourism,” said Michael Gehrisch, president and CEO of DMAI. He added, “We equally realize the challenging environment for destination marketing executives, and are committed to improving the effectiveness of these organizations and ensuring their success.” Rachel Botsman, author, futurist and social innovator, will open the general session, and marketing and leadership strategist and author David Meerman Scott will close the meeting. Registration and more information is available at annual.destinationmarketing.org.

SNAPSHOTS

1 IMEX Group Chairman Ray Bloom (at the podium) announced that the IMEX trade show in Frankfurt May 21–23 posted a 33 percent increase in business appointments with 3,900 hosted buyers from 75 countries, and an overall visitor total of 9,000. 2 Ray Bloom presented the 2013 IMEX Academy Award for Africa and the Middle East to Site President 2013 David Sand (left) who is CEO of Uwin Incentives, a company he founded in 1994 and today operates in Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. 3 Site President 2013 David Sand presented the 2013 IMEX Academy Award for Asia and the Pacific to Site President 2013 Shayne Strege (center) who runs Uwin Incentives. 4 IMEX Group President and CEO Ray Bloom (at the podium) announced that IMEX America, held in Las Vegas May 9–12, posted a 17 percent increase in hosted business appointments with 911 hosted buyers from 67 countries, and an overall visitor total of 32,000.

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8 June 2013 • Corporate & Incentive Travel • TheMeetingMagazines.com
If you read the Convention Industry Council's (CIC) recent white paper “Up to Speed: Event Bandwidth and High Speed Internet Access” and checked out their attendee bandwidth estimator (www.conventionindustry.org), you already know how important a great High-Speed Internet Access (HSIA) experience is to the success of your event. But how do you put that information to use to ensure your attendees have a successful Internet experience?

Before we get to how to manage a successful experience, it’s important to understand the different methods facilities deploy to help manage bandwidth.

Bandwidth Management Techniques

Bandwidth management is a collection of techniques for managing Internet traffic priorities, which prevents a small number of “rogue” users from consuming more than their fair share. However, it’s important to know what type of bandwidth management is in place for your event, not only to ensure that everyone has a positive experience, but also to make sure you have enough bandwidth to accommodate all your event objectives.

Traffic Shaping is a technique to slow down or even stop Internet traffic of a particular type. For example, to provide enough bandwidth for attendees to check their email, the facility might slow down or block streaming video. The challenge with Traffic Shaping is that it’s not obvious to the end user what’s been blocked, which can lead to frustration and complaints.

Device Bandwidth Limiting caps the amount of bandwidth each individual device can consume. It allows a guest to use the bandwidth they have been allotted for any purpose and prevents any one user from overloading the network. However, as different users have different bandwidth needs, it hinders those who require more.

Dynamic Group Bandwidth assigns a dedicated pool of bandwidth to a set of users. Those within the group equally share the pool, and as more users join, the pool adjusts to equally distribute the available bandwidth. Separate pools can be created for different users, so for example, presenters may have a dedicated pool separate from attendees.

Bandwidth management techniques vary by facility, so it’s important to understand which are in use and how they can be tailored to meet your needs.

Estimating Bandwidth Needs

CIC’s attendee bandwidth estimator, which was developed with the technical expertise of audio-visual services company PSAV, is great for calculating the Internet needs of your guests, but how do you estimate the HSIA needs for your entire event? Try breaking up the Internet needs of your event by your different constituents — attendees, presenters, exhibitors and show management — and consider the needs of each. Remember that if you are planning to use the Internet to distribute content, stream sessions or broadcast a presenter remotely, the bandwidth at the other end of the connection is just as important as the main facility’s.

You can also break down your Internet requirements by each room. In your room-set spreadsheet, add a column for bandwidth and note the sessions with presenters who are doing particularly Internet-centric tasks. This is especially important because if the venue utilizes Device Bandwidth Limiting, the presenters could require a higher limit than the attendees. For parallel track sessions with high-demand bandwidth, consider scheduling the presenters so that those with the greater bandwidth demands are staggered over the event.

Learn from your experience by requesting your bandwidth reports, which are a fantastic starting point for planning the
bandwidth needs of your next event. But make sure you make the request before the event begins, to confirm the facility is tracking the information. When planning your next event, note that bandwidth consumption is rising faster than 30 percent per year, so be sure to adjust for growth.

Bandwidth Isn’t Everything
A facility can have all the bandwidth in the world, but if the Wi-Fi infrastructure isn’t equipped to handle the job, the bandwidth will never make it to your attendees. Wireless access points (WAPs) can accommodate a limited number of devices, which varies with age and manufacturer, so it’s just as important to understand this aspect as it is to understand the bandwidth itself. Find out how many WAPs serve the event space and what their capacities are. Remember that attendees are often using more than one device, so it’s important that the overall Wi-Fi capacity meets or exceeds the expected number of wireless devices estimated to be in use at one time. Wireless device count reporting is also becoming available at more and more venues and is another great event planning tool.

Let’s Plan Together
Don’t worry — we’re not suggesting event planners become Internet experts. After all, you don’t need to be a chef to plan a great food and beverage package. However, it is important to add a thorough discussion about Internet service and its intended use in the planning stage. The more you know, the better you can explain and plan your HSIA needs with the facility.

Top 10 Do’s and Don’ts for Managing Event Bandwidth
1. **Do** request bandwidth and devices reporting in advance of the event (and remember to get the reports afterwards).
2. **Do** maintain detailed notes on the Internet requirements of each session.
3. **Do** consider the Wi-Fi capacity of the facility and bandwidth available.
4. **Do** ask what bandwidth management techniques are in place and if they can be customized for your specific needs.
5. **Do** engage in detailed discussion about the Internet experience you need so the facility can build a tailored package that suits your event. In-house audio-visual and IT teams are a great starting point since they have the most experience of the facility.
6. **Don’t** forget to include an event profile in your RFPs. To accurately plan for your HSIA needs, the facility will need to understand everything you plan to do that requires the Internet.
7. **Don’t** assume the performance of the network during a site survey (i.e. an empty building) is comparable to its performance on event day.
8. **Don’t** rely on bandwidth testing apps as an accurate reflection of the facility’s capabilities. These apps only show the bandwidth delivered to a single device at that moment. If the facility is using Device Bandwidth Limiting, the speed test will never show the facility’s full potential bandwidth.
9. **Don’t** ignore the HSIA needs of remote presenters on the other end of the connection.
10. **Don’t** negotiate the HSIA price until you are certain of the product (bandwidth, Wi-Fi capacity, reporting and support).

“**When planning your next event, note that bandwidth consumption is rising faster than 30 percent per year.**”

Matt Harvey

oversees Network Services for audio-visual services company PSAV. Internally known as Client Network Services, the department designs, installs, and manages High Speed Internet Access (HSIA) networks in more than 150 hotels and convention centers. Harvey is responsible for all aspects of new HSIA location sales and installation, event support and business strategy. Harvey began his career with PSAV in 2003 and has held a variety of successive roles before promotion to his current role as V.P. Client Network Services in early 2012. He is an active participant in Hotel Technology Next Generation’s (HTNG) Infrastructure Resource Team. www.psav.com

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The theory of ethics may have been conceived by Aristotle, but defining what constitutes ethical planning behavior has never been more complex, and the potential impact on a career rarely so dire. Meeting planners have long worked under a code of ethics, but those lines defining ethics are not as clear they were a decade ago.

Repercussions for unintended ethics violations can be as severe as those for willful misconduct. “More and more planners are losing their jobs because of an ethical violation, and usually they were unaware it was a violation,” says Joan L. Eisenstodt, Eisenstodt Associates LLC, Meetings & Hospitality. “There have been so many cutbacks, especially with governmental organizations and their meetings, that scrutiny has intensified about all spending. Desire is growing awareness about ethics at all levels.”

A consultant, facilitator and trainer specializing in planner ethical awareness issues, Eisenstodt says that in the 21st century, ethics awareness has exploded throughout the profession. “There is a real anxiety about ethical issues in the hospitality and meetings industry. I have been doing more work on the local level, speaking with and conducting training for state and regional chapters of the national organizations. For corporations, it’s become part of their yearly training, and many do it online where one must take an ethics test at the end.”

Ethics Guidelines
All the leading meeting and event planner associations, such as the Convention Industry Council (CIC), MPI and PCMA, have ethics policies — codes of conduct — that outline the proper practices like FAM trips, because our industry as well as all businesses, including the government, are under greater scrutiny. As a meeting industry trend, we are hearing more talk about CSR, ethics and good business practice. CIC member organizations have introduced and are enforcing their own codes of conduct or ethics and provide sessions at their annual meetings on the topic. “We’ve always had policies and procedures that CMPs agree to abide by, and in 2011 we established new oversight to address what happens if they aren’t followed,” says Kotowski.

Kotowski points out that no ethics-related complaints have been received by the CIC, which means that if violations of ethics violations the motivating factor for putting “teeth” into the code. Instead, the new codes answer the need for stronger and more explicit codes of ethics. “Having a code of professional conduct is a requirement by the National Center for Credentialing Assessment (NCCA) for accredited certification programs,” says Kotowski. “While not an NCCA-accredited program, the CMP follows NCCA best practices. A code of ethics is a set of principles and rules used by organizations or individuals to govern their decision-making in choosing between right and wrong. Some may include the recourse or disciplinary process within them. The procedures are available on our website (www.conventionindustry.org) for anyone to view, and it explains who can bring allegations and how.”

Ethics Awareness Grows
The catalyst for renewed emphasis by the profession about ethics seems to have originated outside the meetings industry. “One of the reasons is that there are more ethics crises in the news related to large corporations,” says Elizabeth Henderson, M.E.D. “Enron and WorldCom were both ethical lapses of (creative accounting) that brought down the corporation. The global financial collapse in 2008 also spawned events-related incidents, such as the AIG effect, that raised awareness of ethics.”

Henderson is co-author with Mariela McIlwraith, CMP, CMM, MBA, of Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility in the Meetings and Events Industry (John Wiley & Sons Inc., 2012). She also is the chief sustainability expert for Meeting Change, a meeting consultation company. (McIlwraith is president of the Meetings and Events Industry Council.)

Henderson points out that since planners interact with individuals from an array of other professions, the unscrupulous behavior of the latter has a guilt-by-association impact on the former. “The ethical lapse here is related to the lack of transparency and the resulting lack of trust involved in the financial collapse. The tie to meetings is the fact that planners were positioned as a major ethical issue with planners who have lost their jobs because they did not understand how their company’s ethical policy related to their jobs as planner.”

Often a corporation’s code of conduct insufficiently addresses realities faced by planners, whose jobs description can include what appears to be an abundance of perks. “Employees are made aware of ethics at an orientation or in the employee handbook, but that is usually the end of it, until a problem occurs, and it occurs often for planners,” says Eisenstodt. “Planners are in the position of accepting lunch, dinners, flights, and of some that is part of doing the job. But if that isn’t clear from the beginning, the appearance of a conflict of interest can be career-dangering.”

FAM Trip Abuse
Ethics experts agree that the most common breach is FAM trip abuse. FAM trips are expense-paid trips to a venue and/or destination to “familiarize” the planner with the meeting setting. For many planners, taking a FAM trip to a destination they have no intention of booking is tantamount to a free vacation, but for the destination, promotion can be paramount. “FAM trips are always being offered, and they really want meeting planners to attend,” says Sharon Marsh, CMP, CMM, meetings group manager, Medtronic Inc. “When I tell them that the destination is not one we will use because of internal corporate policy and/or regulatory guidelines, they still want me to attend so I may change industries in the future.”

Going on a FAM trip when you know you most probably won’t use the destination/property like stealing.”

A tarnished reputation, job dismissal and the loss of a CMP credential are the consequences of FAM trip abuse. “The suppliers have a responsibility in this unethical behavior,” says Marsh. “They push these trips because planners have no idea whether they are a properly qualified lead for the FAM. And suppliers continued to invite meeting planners who are known to take advantage of FAM trips over other qualified ones. FAM trips are expense-paid trips to a destination they have no intention of booking is tantamount to a free vacation, but for the destination, promotion can be paramount. “FAM trips are always being offered, and they really want meeting planners to attend,” says Sharon Marsh, CMP, CMM, meetings group manager, Medtronic Inc. “When I tell them that the destination is not one we will use because of internal corporate policy and/or regulatory guidelines, they still want me to attend so I may change industries in the future.”

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planners know that,” says Eisenstodt: “There’s a lot to investigate and evaluate. But to everybody else in the company, it looks like fun and not work at all. It is very easy for a planner to appear to be abusing the site visit, especially by people who are over them in the company and have never had to go on a site visit. It’s best to err on the side of caution.”

**Rewards Points**

Hotel rewards points are another ethical pitfall planners are now more aware of avoiding. “Most of the time, frequent flyer miles and loyalty points in a hotel go to the individual, but not always,” says Eisenstodt. “Those programs have been around long enough for the companies to have developed guidelines. But points of the hotels are often not covered, because they are for room blocks, and (because) only the planner is involved with these vendors, it has to be known who has ownership of the points. It’s probably better to have them written into the contract with the individual planner, to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest.”

The point policy should also be clearly stated with the hotel, prior to any contract.”

Eisenstodt adds, “That policy must also take into account all possible contingencies: whose points are they; whose names are on the accounts they go into; and what happens to those points if that person is terminated.”

“Laugher is great for the staff to accept planner points on an individual basis, offered by various chains. Any points accrued to be used to benefit the group being served by the accumulation of points.”

“This is another conflict of interest issue, where the point accumulation by an individual can be seen — regardless of the planner’s actual intentions — as an incentive for selecting one venue over another. This same dilemma becomes magnified when planners utilize a third party when contracting for different components of a meeting.”

For some corporate planners, the entire process is implemented in house, so they have to send their staff, or internal contract third-party planners for the event. Employing contractors, however, does not eliminate your ethical responsibilities. “Failure to disclose commission, particularly by a third-party planner, is a problem I see rising more and more,” says McIlwraith. “While mainly with hotel bookings — although other relationships with other vendors can fall into this pattern — the ethical conduct of third-party planners who submitted a commission for the sale from the hotel, depending on the hotel and the number of hotel rooms utilized. “The planner is the one ultimately responsible and has to answer to employers,” says McIlwraith. “Everything has to be spelled out in the contract, including any commissions paid out or other economic benefits for all participants in the contract.”

**Intelectual Property Rights**

Other, newer areas of concern include intellectual property rights and social media, causing ethical, legal and even moral turmoil. “Ethical pitfalls and misconduct can be collective for the company and not just the individual planner, to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest.”

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**10 Slippery Slopes**

When it comes to meeting planner ethics, one basic recommendation is to stay updated on the industry’s professional codes of conduct as well as being familiar with the details of your company’s ethics regulations. According to meeting professionals, here are the most common ethical lapses among planners and suppliers.

1. **FAM trips.** Planners should restrict FAM trips to those sites they’re likely to book. And venues and destination suppliers should go by limits on their offerings. Defining likely and potential site selection can be a gray area, but FAM trip abuse is a leading ethical issue.

2. **Amenity abuse.** What was that meal you accepted that legitimate part of a site visit? Did you receive a free spa day while you know your group will only play golf? Easily overlooked or taken for granted as just the way business is done, accepting free amenities that you know will other wise be charged is considered by many to be unethical.

3. **Hotel points.** Most corporations have a frequent flyer policy in place stating who owns miles acquired during company time. Sometimes hotel points are decided under a similar policy — for the individual. But who, ethically, should own those points? The answer to that question is not as important is having a company policy that states who owns the points and the planner conforming to that policy.

4. **Third-party planners.** When contracting with third-party planners, all commissions and other economic benefits (such as hotel points) the contractor receives from the hotel and other vendors must be clearly stated in the contract. The decision to use a venue must clearly be on the basis of the property, and not an incentive to host that event will be compensated by anyone involved with the contracting process. The ethical conduct of third-party planners and other contractors is the responsibility of the corporate planner in charge of the overall event.

5. **Influence property theft.** How original is your idea for a meeting? If it resembles a meeting or other event you’ve seen or heard about, then it is probably not original. For and/or received, then it is probably not original. Before sending your lawyer an emergency text, sit down with your stakeholders, presenters and others involved and devise a sensible social media code of conduct for your meeting, then make sure these rules are followed, posted on your website and available at the meeting site.

6. **Gifts.** In gratitude for your last meeting held there, the general manager of the hotel sends you a gift basket that by the looks of the champagne and caviar, cost hundreds of dollars. Can you ethically accept it? A gift that the hotel and other suppliers know will not be part of the meeting being planned is considered by many to be unethical.

7. **Trade show raffles.** One of the most egregious ethical lapses is the trade show raffle. At an industry event, planners put their business cards in a fish bowl; winners are drawn at the show’s conclusions, with the prize often being an all-expense trip to the venue and/or destination. Ironically, the winners are often the very clients the venue and/or destination is soliciting business from. While this “news” may not shock many industry members, accepting this prize often violates the gift provisions of the company’s code of conduct.

8. **Amenity abuse.** What was that meal you accepted that legitimate part of a site visit? Did you receive a free spa day while you know your group will only play golf? Easily overlooked or taken for granted as just the way business is done, accepting free amenities that you know will other wise be charged is considered by many to be unethical.

9. **International incidents.** Business customs of other cultures may unintentionally conflict with your company’s code of ethics. For example, refusing offered gifts, implying that it is considered bribery, can be offensive. Being upfront about policies before an important negotiation, whether cultural or political concerns, such as a country with lax pollution laws, weak workers’ rights, etc., can cast the entire event in a bad light and cause a planner’s actions to appear unethical. During the site selection process, planners may unintentionally conflict with fully research any potential conflicts a foreign destination may present to your company’s code of conduct.

10. **Suitcasing the show.** More applicable to trade shows, suitcasing is when a non-exhibitor attempts to collect a free booth from another attendee or another exhibitor. Planning to try and purchase booth space. Not only can this potentially annyo attendees, and will be seen negatively by those who’ve purchased exhibit space, a planner who allows this can be held ethically liable for the infraption. — **TM**

**Social Media Scenarios**

“The use of social media by your meeting attendees is an evolving ethics issue.”

“I am especially concerned with the potential impact of social media on ethics,” says Henderson. “Many corporations have policies that do not allow people to take and/or post photographs of employees, because this could violate privacy,” says Henderson. “At events, meeting planners should be notified of what that policy is so they do not inadvertently contravene it. I suspect that most meeting professionals and their colleagues have even considered this issue in depth.”

In addition to violating company policies, social media has a potential for other legal ramifications. “A number of lawsuits have been filed for defamation, related to the use of social media,” says Henderson. “You are responsible for anything, however innocuous you think it might be, that you post on Twitter or a blog and are, in addition, liable for comments on your blogs, moderated or not.”

**Shades of Gray**

“Today’s ethics controversies can be ambiguous, with possible outcomes far from certain. Says Henderson, “In ethics, perception is reality. If you are believed to have acted unethically, that perception can live on even if you have realized doing nothing wrong.” Of course, the challenge is getting rid of the gray areas. According to Marsh, if something is questionable or causes even the potential of ethical unease, the behavior is best avoided. “If I don’t want anyone to know what I have asked for and/or received, then it is probably best to avoid asking for the gift.”
Airline Mergers, Rising Costs and Extra Fees
What Does It All Mean?

By John Buchanan

A s the meeting industry continues its return to the robust glory days of early 2008, a new challenge looms — rising airfare costs and ongoing mergers that stifle competition and potentially limit practical options for planners. And those factors have been further exacerbated by the pending marriage of American Airlines and US Airways. The nearly $11 billion deal, which is expected to occur in the third quarter of 2013 if it is approved by the Justice Department’s antitrust division, will produce the world’s largest airline. Continued on page 35

Continued from page 18

The ongoing changes in the airline industry over the last several years have dramatically impacted the meeting industry, says Caren Bigelow, CRP, director of travel at USM-Motivation in Atlanta, an independent planner of meetings, conventions and incentive programs. “Number one is the reduction in the availability of seats,” Bigelow says. “That has been the biggest factor, along with cost. The consolidation of hubs as a result of the various mergers in recent years means there aren’t as many flights from secondary or rural destinations. And all of that is based on the fact that the airlines have basically changed how they operate based on the economics of that industry.”

The net result has been a more complicated and less enjoyable experience for both planners and attendees. Virtually every flight goes out full now, with a standby list, and that often makes flying merely tolerable at best.

“As a result, Bigelow says, the meeting planning process has been changed, too. “When you start talking today about having a meeting or incentive program and you’re discussing destinations, airlift is now your No. 1 consideration or question,” she says. “So, as a matter of basic practice, what we do now with a client is that we will offer a list of potential destinations and then clearly define whether you can get your entire group in by your welcome reception, or if you want to have a meeting start at noon, whether that is even possible.”

A Relationship Gap

Gregorio Palomino, CBMP, CEP, CWP, creative executive officer at San Antonio-based meeting and incentive planning company CRE8AD8, cites a related issue that is contributing to the increasing difficulty of managing airlift and costs. Many companies and meeting planners, he points out, now have preferred vendor pacts with hotel vendors. But nowhere near as many have preferred vendor pacts with airlines, which creates a “relationship gap” between the two key supplier categories.

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“The hotels have really worked to make things easy for meeting planners and vice versa,” Palomino says. “But airlines have not really done the same thing. It’s generally much more complicated to do business with the airlines.”

Spiking Airfares and Fees

“I think we’ll see additional fare increases of 10 to 15 percent. And now that the remaining major airlines have even more of a monopoly, it’s going to be even easier for them to control pricing and drive up fares. And the reality is that they have to do that to cover their increasing operating costs like fuel, which is going to continue to go up.”

“A lot of large companies that do a lot of meetings, that means they are looking more to third-party service providers like us that have the expertise and experience in dealing with the airlines. As the airline industry has continued to consolidate and cut capacity since 2008, we’ve seen a sharp increase in our corporate business. And our new clients typically say, ‘We don’t really understand the airline side of the business, so we want you to take care of it for now. Now it’s your problem to deal with, not ours.’”

Part of the problem, Palomino says, is that airlines could have — and should have — done a better job of communicating directly and clearly with meeting planners in the run-up to each of the major mergers, such as United and Continental. “There was very little information that went out,” he says. “And that just led to a lot of the confusion and concern about what was happening.”

Among the kinds of information that would have been helpful, Palomino says, would have been clear guidance on how to consolidate and manage frequent flier miles and various kinds of rewards points. “United and Continental could have been more helpful in telling us how to protect our miles or points or whatever it was,” he says. “But they didn’t do that. And that lack of communication from the various airlines caused a lot of confusion. And it worried a lot of planners.”

Now the same concerns are surfacing again with the American-US Airways merger. And, Palomino says, it remains to be seen how those concerns will play out.

Gregorio Palomino
CBMP, CEP, CWP
Creative Executive Officer
CRE8AD8
San Antonio, TX

continued on page 35
Meet differently in this vibrant, diverse destination on the move — with international appeal, easy access and oh-so-inspirational places and spaces.

By Susan Gregg

The perfect meeting — one that is transformational, inspirational, illuminating, energizing, even exciting — needs a special setting. A true original that’s vibrant, innovative and cutting-edge — ideally with a tropical twist to keep things cool. It’s So Miami — a city with a distinctive, multicultural vibe, blending urban chic with old Florida beauty and laidback charm. Miami’s skyline, rising above the sparkling blue waters of Biscayne Bay, claims one of the country’s most diverse populations, plus world-class arts, culture, dining and 24/7 entertainment. It’s a city with an air of intrigue, one that arouses creativity and a sense of new possibilities.

And just like the most innovative and successful companies, Greater Miami continually reinvents itself, from chichi South Beach and the Art Deco District to the business-driven downtown to the sophisticated suburbs of Coral Gables and Coconut Grove.

Spectacular beaches, sparkling new performing arts centers, major sports venues, world-class boutiques, hotels, clubs and restaurants (5,000 of them!), two national parks and impressive meeting facilities beckon millions year-round. The numbers prove it: In 2012, Miami welcomed a record-breaking 13.9 million overnight visitors — nearly 20 percent of whom traveled for meetings, conventions and business — with a record $21.8 billion in visitor spending. A hub for international visitors and meetings, Miami set more high marks with 6.8 million international visitors in 2012, including record international attendance at major citywide conventions.

Miami offers meeting planners nearly 50,000 hotel guest rooms: Downtown, Bayside, the Gables, Brickell, the Grove, Doral, Aventura and Miami Beach boast an extensive, diverse array of accommodations and meeting spaces, while South Beach remains home to the world’s largest collection of restored art deco, art nouveau and intimate boutique hotels. Our grande dames remain forever young thanks to billions of dollars in renovations, and in recent years they’ve been joined by notable brand new hotels flying famous flags from around the globe. And the improving economy is fueling a new surge in hotel growth and development at the beach as well as downtown.

Planners will find first-rate indoor meeting spaces, as well as captivating outdoor event venues that are tailor-made for our warm, breezy, subtropical days and nights. Choose from rooftop pool decks, lush, tropically landscaped patios, expansive event lawns overlooking prestigious golf courses, or palm tree-lined courtyards and terraces with views of sun-drenched beaches and the blue-green ocean and bay.

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Major meeting facilities include the Art Deco-inspired Miami Beach Convention Center, just steps from the South Beach District and Atlantic surf and sand, that features 502,000 square feet of exhibit space, 70 flexible meeting rooms, and 100,000 square feet of pre-function space. Next door is the iconic 2,700-seat Fillmore Miami Beach at the Jackie Gleason Theater, which offers space for special events, meetings and receptions. Also nearby on Convention Center Drive is the Miami Beach Botanical Gardens with added options for indoor and outdoor event spaces.

In the heart of downtown adjacent to Brickell Avenue and the international financial district, the Miami Convention Center has a 444-seat auditorium, 117-seat lecture hall and 34 meeting rooms. The center, which overlooks the Miami River, can accommodate from 20 to 5,000 attendees. The James L. Knight Center auditorium seats 5,000 and features advanced sound and lighting systems.

TROPI-COOL EVENTS AND VENUES

Opportunities for singular, locally-inspired experiences for groups are endless. How about a Cuban heritage tour that includes ethnic cuisine, historical highlights, salsa dancing...
and cigar-rolling lessons? Or take over one of South Beach’s trendiest nightclubs — yes, it’s possible before the late-night scene kicks in after midnight — for a gala dinner and event night, complete with high-end audio-visual production for entertainment. Check out Mansion, Opium and Bamboo for starters. Always popular are event venues of the floating kind — private dinner cruises on luxury yachts that ply local waterways past homes of the rich and famous. Better yet, allow your attendees to feel like one of the rich and famous during an evening gala at Villa Woodbine, a private Mediterranean Revival mansion built in the 1920s with lush gardens and an open-air design suited to the tropics. It’s situated on what was known as Millionaire’s Row in Coconut Grove.

There are countless venues available for groups to create one-of-a-kind events. Here are more great options:

Two new performing arts centers take center stage with plenty of spaces for private gatherings. The New World Center, home to the New World Symphony and world-class performing arts on South Beach, was designed by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry. The center features SoundScape Park, where audiences can watch films and performances shown on the 7,000-sf projection wall. In downtown Miami, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts is Florida’s largest performing arts center, which houses the Florida Grand Opera and Miami City Ballet.

Bicentennial Park, located in downtown Miami on Biscayne Bay, is currently being redeveloped into the 29-acre Museum Park, which will be home to two new museums: The Perez Art Museum Miami and the Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science. The Perez Art Museum, the park’s centerpiece, will open in December 2013. It will be three times the size of the museum’s current facility on West Flagler, and will feature expanded exhibition space for new collections, an educational complex, public gardens and sculpture installations. Planners will want to investigate the museum’s indoor spaces for meetings and events, as well as its spacious outdoor plazas on the waterfront that will offer sweeping views of Biscayne Bay for a variety of group events such as receptions and dinner parties. The 250,000-square-foot Patricia and Phillip Frost Museum of Science, which replaces the Miami Science Museum, is scheduled to open in 2015. It will feature the Gulf Stream Aquarium, River of Grass exhibit and high-tech digital planetarium. Unique spaces will be available for events and meetings.

Marlins Park, home of Major League Baseball’s Miami Marlins, debuted in April 2012 in Little Havana, two miles west of downtown, sporting a state-of-the-art retractable roof, signature Miami cuisine, the Clevelander South Beach experience with swimming pool at field level, and breathtaking vistas of downtown Miami. A variety of meeting and function spaces are available for concerts, trade shows and any size corporate event. Also in downtown, attendees will enjoy exploring the

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Bayside Marketplace for waterfront dining, shopping and cruising excursions. Bayfront Park on Biscayne Bay provides another picturesque location for outdoor events. While in South Beach, planners can check out 1111 Lincoln Road, a 7th floor event space accommodating 700 attendees and featuring 34-foot ceilings and city, ocean and bay views. The tony and trendy Lincoln Road entertainment and shopping district is a great leisure diversion for attendees.

South of downtown is Coconut Grove, a one-time arts colony that is now a tourist magnet for its quaint boutiques, art galleries, cafes and restaurants. It’s also home to the historic Vizcaya Museum and Gardens on Biscayne Bay. Vizcaya, built in 1916, is an Italian Renaissance-style mansion with formal gardens that can be used to host elegant indoor and outdoor receptions and events.

Coral Gables is another sophisticated must-see neighborhood and tourist destination with renowned eateries, galleries and upscale boutiques. Its winding waterways, Mediterranean-style homes and dense tropical foliage really showcase Miami’s special beauty. And planners can showcase their own tropically themed events at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden — featuring the only outdoor rainforest in the continental U.S. — where special events for up to 500 attendees can take place.
AND WHEN THE MEETING ADJOURNS...

...The fun kicks into high gear—or low-key laidback—whether you choose lounging on the beach, taking the plunge into Florida’s favorite watersports and activities such as deep-sea fishing, swimming with dolphins, snorkeling, scuba diving, windsurfing, paddleboarding parasailing and kayaking; playing tennis or golf at a renowned resort; indulging in pampering at a five-star spa; skimming across the Everglades on an airboat; taking a Duck Tour in an amphibious bus; having a ball at major sports stadiums and arenas—or, if your meeting is family-friendly, visiting signature Florida parks and attractions such as Zoo Miami, Monkey Jungle, Everglades Alligator Farm, Jungle Island, Miami Seaquarium and the mysterious Coral Castle Museum.

Attendees looking for Florida in its natural state have several options: Biscayne National Park, 90 percent of which is underwater, is the place for snorkeling, diving and glass-bottom boat tours. Everglades National Park, a 1.5-million-acre subtropical wilderness, offers miles of biking and hiking nature trails, flats fishing and guided boat tours. Nature lovers also will find naturalist-guided excursions and natural history with Miami-Dade Parks’ EcoAdventures. The Barnacle Historic Park, which overlooks Biscayne Bay, features a Coconut Grove pioneer’s historic homestead built in 1991 and offers the 1,400-square-foot Micco Pavilion for a group picnic or reception.

GETTING HERE

A decades-long investment in transportation infrastructure has made it easier than ever to get here and to get around town. Miami International Airport boasts new terminals and high-speed train service that whisks travelers from plane to baggage claim and on to MIA’s new Intermodal Center—where groups can find rental cars, taxis, limos and public transportation all waiting for them in one convenient place. And now, air travelers will appreciate the fast, affordable new public transit option that connects MIA to the downtown area: The MIA Metrorail Station Orange Line.

Ninety-six percent of overnight visitors in 2012 arrived by air through the newly renovated Miami International Airport. Still others docked and departed through PortMiami, the Cruise Capital of the World, which welcomed an unprecedented seven new cruise ships in the last quarter of 2012. But no matter how or when you arrive, a world of wonders awaits to invigorate your meetings and inspire your group. No wonder—it’s So Miami.
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![Image of EPIC Hotel](epichotel.com)

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- $750 Gift Certificate when spending $25,001 - $30,000
- $1,000 Gift Certificate when spending $30,001 or more

**EPIC Perks offer must be consumed between May 1, 2013 through September 30, 2013. Offer is subject to availability and is offered to groups that contract 100 rooms or more for a minimum of two nights. Offer cannot be applied in combination with other special offers or already contracted groups.**

*Food and Beverage is not included in the private yacht cruise. Offer is subject to availability and offered to groups that contract 50 rooms or more for a minimum of two nights. Offer cannot be applied in combination with other special offers or already contracted groups.

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TRANSPORTATION

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As a result, Bigelow says, the meeting planning process has been changed, too. “When you start talking today about having a meeting or incentive program and you’re discussing destinations, airlift is now your No. 1 consideration or question,” she says. “So, as a matter of basic practice, what we do now with a client is that we will offer a list of potential destinations and then clearly define whether you can get your entire group in by your welcome reception, or if you want to have a meeting start at noon, whether that is even possible.”

A Relationship Gap

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“Spiking Airfares and Fees

“The hotels have really worked to make things easy for meeting planners and vice versa. But airlines have not really done the same thing. It’s generally much more complicated to do business with the airlines.”

“Costs are going to go up,” Palomino says. “I think we’ll see additional fare increases of 10 to 15 percent. And now that the remaining major airlines have even more of a monopoly, it’s going to be even easier for them to control pricing and drive up fares. And the reality is that they have to do that to cover their increasing operating costs like fuel, which is going to continue to go up.”

Michael Patton, CMM, president and CEO of San Diego-based POTHOS, a meeting planning company that has the additional distinction of being a full-service corporate travel manage-
Angeles Times first class passengers if you pay a fee. So you can get preferential boarding with that if you want, United Airlines will they can charge even more new fees,” working to come up with ideas on how change fee to $200, and some airlines because the costs of fuel and labor will brutaly competitive, Bigelow says, it’s Los Angeles Times about how the airlines are working to come up with ideas on how they can charge even more new fees,” Bigelow says. “And one example was that if you pay a fee, you can deliver your luggage to your home for a fee. Another example is the idea that you can get preferential boarding with first class passengers if you pay a fee. So it looks like when it comes to fees, there is no end in sight.

Spirit Airlines last year went so far as to charge a fee for carry-on bags, Patton says. “I do see deals with the traveler doesn’t have carry-on bags?” he says, adding that fortunately, no other airline has followed suit, primarily as a result of the PR backlash suffered by Spirit.

On the other hand, Patton says, at least one of the newest fees is even more outrageous than carrying for-charg bags. “Ryanair is now charging for access to the rest room on the plane,” he says. “I think that is ridiculous. And you have other airlines that are not charging onboard, but they have hostesses in the gate area who go around inviting custo ers to go to the rest room before they board. I also think that is ridiculous.”

The good news, Patton says, is that he thinks the addition of new fees might have reached its end. “I don’t really see that at this point,” he says, “how they can come up with any more fees than the ones they’re already charging.”

Budget Impact

The practical question raised for many planners by rising air travel costs is how those increases will be absorbed into budgets. The basic theory is that if fuel and labor cost increase, then they will be addressed with incremental budget increases that cover them, or will be subtracted from what’s left of the budget, such as F&B expenditures.

“Based on what I’m hearing, I think most companies will cut back somewhere else to deal with increased air fares,” Patton says. “And I’d tell you that less than 20 percent of companies are going to increase their budgets because airfares are going up. But it also de pends on the kind of program, or the destination selection. For example, just had a client that was planning to go to New York for a meeting. But when they saw the cost of getting there and the impact that would have on their planned budget, they decided to go to Destin, Florida, which saved them a lot of money.

Patton does not believe most clients will cut back on things such as F&B to accommodate higher air costs. “But what I do see in some cases,” he says, “is that clients are cutting back on hosted air for the meeting. They are capping the amount and saying attendees can’t just run wild in booking their flights. And that is particularly true for people such as speakers or other presenters.”

Bigelow has seen both approaches recently. “And it depends on the type of meeting or event,” she says. “For example, there might be a difference, even within the same company, between a typical business meeting and an incen tive program, particularly if it is a high end event.”

The underlying factor, Bigelow says, is that budgets remain tight and nowhere near 2008 peak levels before the recession hit. And even if service travel management department or outside travel management company. “More and more planners are now having to rely on their travel management de partments or travel management companies to deal with these issues,” she says. “But I also think most planners are very aware of these issues now too, so I think they understand the risks of presenting a destination that they can’t deliver.”

And it’s possible, Bigelow says, that the Caribbean — a perennially popular choice for incentive programs and some meetings — could be negatively impact ed by the American-US Airways merger. “American Airlines basically owns the Caribbean,” she says. “So that is a major concern of ours and also of a lot of other planners. We’re waiting to see what is ac tually going to happen. I have heard that when it’s all said and done and all figured out, that Delta is trying to take over some of American’s Caribbean routes because they are not very strong down there. And we don’t really care who ulti mately takes over those routes. We just want to make sure that the lift to the most popular destinations doesn’t go away. The concern is based on the fact that lift to the Caribbean was significantly re duced during the recession, and it hasn’t really come back yet.”

Planners concerned about lift to a particular destination can take advantage of tools such as GroupAnalyzer. com, Bigelow says. “It performs live air searches against real-time airline inven tory,” she says. “It’s similar to Kayak, but it’s built to help you get 300 people to a particular place on a particular date.”

Patton goes further and recommends that planners consider the option of a third party vendor, particularly one that has extensive travel management experience in addition to its meeting planning credentials.

In the current climate, planners need to use professional buyers and not just rely on the Internet for what they consider a commodity service,” he says. “Corporations don’t have the resources to do the job are still the best resource for moving people. But many planners continue to go to the Internet and treat air travel like a commodity. I don’t think you can do that effectively any more. You can go into court and re present yourself as your attorney. But the judge will tell you that’s not a very smart thing to do. And the same is true today when it comes to booking your air. The typical corporate meeting planner just doesn’t have the same experience and resources to do it on their own.”

There are also simple, practical con siderations, given the increasing com plexity of booking air for a meeting.
T

he legendary sportswriter Grant-

land Rice once said, “Golf gives

you an insight into human nature,

your own as well as your opponent’s.”

Attendees who love golf would undoub-
tedly agree with Rice. The nature of the
game, especially its casual pace, allows
business people to bond while sharing the
fun and joyful frustration of a very
trying game.

That’s why golf is often a centerpiece of
meetings and incentives. Many at-
tendees need golf to make their expe-
rience feel complete or special. Even
attendees who aren’t avid golfers want
to participate if only to network and ad-
vance their careers.

Simply including golf on the agenda
doesn’t guarantee that a meeting will be
memorable. What’s the key to success?
Create a golf outing that is fun, drives
networking and promote camaraderie and team spirit among their attendees.

Golf is the planner’s ultimate net-
working tool. “People like to do business
with people they like,” says Donna Collins,
senior account executive for Total Event
Resources, a meeting and event planning
firm located in the greater Chicago area.
“When people do things they like to-
gether, opportunities surface. A golf out-
ing brings the boardroom to the fairway,
greens and 19th hole. Competition, fresh
air, good food and drinks work together
to break down barriers to reinforcing re-
relationships, making the sale and mining
new opportunities.”

Planners always want golf to be an
ideal mix of networking, fun and enjoy-
able competition. But the mix can differ
according to meeting goals and the make-
up of groups.

Networking and fun were primary consid-
erations for a three-day meeting
in April for 325 executives, staff and dis-
attendees in May at the 379-room PGA National
Room & Spa, Palm Beach Gardens, FL. It
was the meeting’s fifth consecutive year
at the AAA Four Diamond property.

Oasis chose PGA National partly
because attendees were impressed by the
resort’s many amenities, including a
40,000-sf European spa, 19 tennis
courts, nine restaurants and lounges, and
39,000 sf of meeting space. However,
it is the resort’s five championship golf
courses that keep the group turning.
Oasis encourages attendees to hit the
golf fairways on their own starting the
day before the event.

Some people who don’t golf hadn’t heard
talk about golf. “We gave away shirts to every
golfer with our logo and that of a sponsor,”
says Doiron. “These people are very se-
rious about their golf, so when they get
here they want to take advantage of the
PGA. That’s one reason why we moved to
the resort. We can also keep the golf and
good for them. We also pay for shoe rental and greens
fees,” she says. “We told them what type
of shoes and attire to wear and to bring
sunscreen. Attendees were told to arrive
at the club by 7 a.m. for a shotgun start
at 8 a.m. About 70 golfers showed up.
We used a shotgun start because we had
a big group. It keeps everything moving
everybody tees off at the same
time at different holes and finishes at
roughly the same time.”

Players competed for prizes such as
closest to the pin, longest drive and lon-
gest putt. They also enjoyed box lunches
and beverages, and a professional pho-
tographer snapped photographs. After
the meeting, Defilippis sent photos of
the foursomes and award winners to
the players.

Beltone also took several steps to con-
nect its brand with the enjoyable experi-
ce of golf. “We gave away shirts to every
golfer with our logo and that of a sponsor,”
the meeting and allow our people from around the U.S. and world
to get reacquainted and learn from each
other,” says Defilippis. “Golf develops ca-
maraderie and team spirit. For example, our
Canadian attendees all wore the same
pants and polo shirts. People from the
Northeast all wore the same color shorts.”

Defilippis says the resort’s improve-
ments enhanced the attendees’ ability
“Where the Pros Play
Kiawah Island Golf Resort in South
Carolina, the site of the 2012 PGA
Championship, was selected as the site
for a technology company’s
three-day sales incentive be-
cause it hosted the PGA Tour
event. “That was a huge selling
point for us to take our guests
where the pros played,” says
the event planner. “It’s an ex-
citing and challenging course
that was a treat for them.”

The 280 attendees found the golf
experience feel of golf. “We gave away shirts to every
golfer with our logo and that of a sponsor,”
says Doiron. “These people are very se-
rious about their golf, so when they get
here they want to take advantage of the
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the resort. We can also keep the golf and
good for them. We also pay for shoe rental and greens
fees,” she says. “We told them what type

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A great golf experience also depends on providing pairings to the resort on time. “Sometimes facilities get pairings or rental club information an hour beforehand, and you have 30 people who need them, which makes the resort have to scramble,” says Instefjord. “More the info the facility can get to set things up, the better the experience will be. There are always last-minute changes and cancellations, but they are easier to deal with if the information comes a day or two before the event.”

Select the Best Format

Play format is another key to a successful golf outing. A scramble is one of the most popular formats, especially for larger groups. In a scramble, each foursome consists of players with four different skill levels — A, B, C and D. Every player tees off but lands. A scramble may fit a group with mixed golf abilities because it awards one point for each four some. The format also moves play along to help planners keep attendees on schedule, says Instefjord.

A scramble also helps attendees with limited golf abilities feel more comfortable. “If you aren’t a golfer but willing to have fun and be part of a team, the scramble is very attractive because if you mess up most of your shots it doesn’t matter,” says Instefjord. “Sometimes, if you don’t use that format, you lose a lot of players, or some may play but get frustrated and have a bad experience,” says Instefjord.

Convention or skilled groups may find a scramble less enjoyable. “Let’s say you are a really good golfer, you are going to a course you’ve always dreamt of, and you are playing a scramble. Memory of that experience might be less than it could be because you aren’t playing your own ball,” says Instefjord.

Groups with many advanced golfers may benefit from a best ball format. In this setup, all foursome members play their own balls. However, the best score for each hole is the team score. This format appeals to highly competitive golfers. Using more than one format is also an option. Instefjord has worked with groups that used two different formats — one for competitive groups who want to play their own ball and another that will use a scramble or another easier arrangement.

Site Selection Tips

Attendees’ golf skills and level of passion for the game are among several factors planners should consider in choosing a golf resort and planning golf events. Planners and golf experts offer the following tips:

1. Identify the golf event’s goals and objectives, including the desired return on investment. Keeping within the budget, “create the experience from the moment they drive up in their car to when they depart. There are endless opportunities to customize the golf experience,” says Collins.

2. Consider a course’s size and level of difficulty because they impact the pace of play. Usually, planners want to challenge players without making play too difficult.

3. Promote amenities during play. Collins suggests “neck massages at one hole, strawberries and champagne at the next, cigar rolling at the next, and soothing music at the next to calm the nervous golfer.” Also, ask the golf pro to give pointers to golfers who may be waiting for the group ahead of them.

4. Is the course on property or is transportation required? Paying to shuttle employees to and from a course increases meeting costs as well as the time it takes to complete a tournament.

Location and reputation are key factors. “Take for instance one of the golf capitals of the world: Myrtle Beach, SC. The area boasts 14 million visitors annually who come for the beautiful beaches, challenging golf courses and fresh local seafood. As leisure and business vacation areas cater more and more to business travelers and groups — a trend that some call ‘bleisure’ travel — planners are quickly learning that the destination is ideally suited for meetings and events. The Southern charm and hospitality of the area blends with modern amenities to make for best meetings and events. For example, the expanded and renovated Myrtle Beach Convention Center features the 100,000-sf Exhibit Hall, the

Set Up a Super Spa Experience

Over the years, Charisse Duroure, the spa director at the award-winning G Spa & Salon at MGM Foxwoods Resort & Spa, has developed a keen interest in all things that promote wellness for the body and mind. A 30-year fitness veteran, Duroure started her career managing athletic clubs and spas. All told, including the four years under her belt leading spa activities at G Spa at Connecticut’s Foxwoods Resort & Casino, Duroure has witnessed firsthand the evolution of the spa/wellness field.

“Those people are very serious about their golf, so when they get here they want to take advantage of the PGA Resort.”

Larry Doiron
Director of Sales Training
Oasis Outsourcing
West Palm Beach, FL

Larry Doiron Director of Sales Training Oasis Outsourcing West Palm Beach, FL they turn over the results to the facility and let them do the pairings with input from the planner,” says Instefjord.

Pairings also depend on meeting goals and the preferences of executives and attendees. “If the goal is for everyone to have fun, then ability may not be as important,” says Instefjord. “Or it may be more important for networking or friendships to pair certain people with others, and abilities have nothing to do with it. You may want to pair certain salespeople and clients. But you don’t want to pair your best clients with salespeople if there is big difference in their golf abilities.”

They are very serious about their golf, and attendees are very serious about their golf, so when they get here they want to take advantage of the PGA Resort.”

Larry Doiron Director of Sales Training Oasis Outsourcing West Palm Beach, FL

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Larry Doiron Director of Sales Training Oasis Outsourcing West Palm Beach, FL
“A golf outing brings the fairway, greens and 19th hole... making the sale and mining new opportunities.”

Donna Collins
Senior Account Executive
Total Event Resources
Schaumburg, IL

18,000-sf Grand Ballroom; 20 meeting rooms; spacious, sunlit, glass-enclosed prefunction areas; an adjacent 450-room luxury hotel; and more.

With nearly 100 championship golf courses in the greater Myrtle Beach area, the 200-unit Marina Inn at Grand Dunes’ claim to fame is to have two of those best golf courses located onsite — The Resort Club and the Members Club Grand Dunes. Also, the Marina Inn is centrally located within a short drive to the best of the north and south Myrtle Beach golf courses.

Themed Events and Activities
Non-golfing activities help make meetings even more memorable, which is why they are a staple of meetings at golf and spa resorts. Oasis Outsource’s sales meetings have included an onsite themed event for the last seven years.

This year, Oasis’ meeting featured a Key West-inspired, Margaritaville-themed event. “A street sign saying Dural Street was in the foyer where people walked across a 60-foot boardwalk three inches off the ground and about four feet wide,” says Doiron. “They go to the end of the foyer where they pass a buoy and walk into the reception with a steel drum band. The room was set up with bur-lap table cloths, tropical foliage, a 40-foot tropical mural and ceiling decorations. We had real and artificial palm trees. A band played Jimmy Buffett songs. The stage had a tropical feel and looked like something that Buffett would play on.”

Belton’s meeting also featured a themed event. “We held a biker-themed bash at The Westin’s Grand Pavilion. We hired a DMC to bring in three Harleys, and biker apparel such as helmets and leather jackets,” says Defilippis. “We gave out Harley t-shirts. Folks could sit on a Harley and take pictures and get (temporary) tattoos. The room was themed with Route 66 signs and old tires. People also could play pool, foosball and electronic darts. We also had dinner and a live band.”

Golf & Spa News
The 316-room Cheyenne Mountain Resort, located in Colorado Springs, CO, recently completed a major $3.8 million renovation of its Pete Dye-designed 18-hole championship golf course. The slightly longer course is now more challenging as all of the bunkers were rebuilt and tee boxes were elevated in keeping with the original Pete Dye-style of design. The driving range also was updated. Of particular note, the course is more eco-friendly as a new state-of-the-art irrigation system has been installed and approximately 15 acres of irrigated turf have been eliminated and replaced with native grasslands.

Also, 125 non-indigenous, low-water-use trees have been planted throughout the course, and more are planned for the future. It is anticipated that the combined impact of these conservation initiatives will result in a 30-40 percent reduction in water use. Located alongside a private, 35-acre lake, Cheyenne Mountain Resort also offers 18 tennis courts, racquetball and squash courts, a fitness center and an Aquatics Center, all of which are available to country club members and resort guests.

The 720-room Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate, located near Orlando, FL, opened a new 55,000-sf conference center that brings the facility’s total indoor meeting space to more than 128,000 sf. The conference center includes a 28,000-sf ballroom divisible into eight flexible meeting rooms, an event lawn and open prefunction area. The AAA four-diamond, 15-acre property features two championship golf courses, the world headquarters of the David Leadbetter Golf Academy and the full-service Mokara spa.

The 598-room Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa, located in Destin, FL, and well known for its four championship golf courses and The Dunes, a putting course, renovated its 32,000 sf of meeting space, accommodations and fine-dining restaurant.

The hotel’s Serenity by the Sea spa was recently recognized as one of the “Top 270 Spas in North America, Caribbean, Mexico and at Sea” in the Conde Nast Traveler 2013 Readers’ Poll.

The 508-room Westin La Cantera Hill Country Resort in San Antonio, TX, recently completed its new Westin Workout Fitness Studio. One of the studio’s innovative features is its blue-light technology that uses energizing fluorescent lighting to positively impact guests’ workouts.

The 998-room Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa, Hollywood, FL, just debuted its Heavenly Spa by Westin. Measuring 14,000 sf, the new spa includes 10 treatment rooms and offers a Halotherapy salt steam room, a Vichy shower, a relaxation area featuring a “Wall-of-Rain” and a spa café.

The 1,500-room Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando offers a wide range of golf-related services to help groups plan successful golf tournaments and outings. The resort’s onsite 18-hole course at Shingle Creek Golf Club offers five sets of tees to allow players to adapt their play to the appropriate level of difficulty, and a customized website can be created to help organize and keep track of the tournament.

The course also has a state-of-the-art GPS system that makes it easy for organizations to recognize hole sponsors and distribute tournament notes.

Meeting planners continue to meet the challenge of planning memorable golf events, even for attendees who have “seen and done it all” when it comes to golf and spa resorts. While many resort activities and amenities shape the attendees’ experiences, it is usually golf that leaves the most lasting memory, says Defilippis.

When asked what attendees remember the most about golf resort experiences, she says, “Probably the shots they should have made.”

I’ll resort to perfecting your swing.

Patrick Boucher
Director of Golf
make Singapore a top Asian meeting destination. One planner described why their company chose Singapore for an international conference for 150 attendees. “We needed a new venue to hold an Asian event, which is an expansion of our current annual conferences held in Europe and the U.S. Singapore was a desirable location, as we knew that language would not be an issue (as everyone spoke English) and many companies that attend our conferences have offices or are doing some business in Singapore as an Asian hub.

As the site of its meeting, the company chose the upscale Shangri-La Hotel, which is located in the heart of the city and offers 474 rooms and suites. The hotel’s amenities include CHI, The Spa at Shangri-La, which offers a tranquil setting amid acres of landscaped gardens and a waterfall. “The best features of the hotel were the staff,” the planner notes. “It was a five-star location as far as décor and service. When comparing other hotels, our local liaison said that the Shangri-La was the ‘best of the best.’ The prices were higher than our regular events, but our attendees left feeling they attended a quality event, and much of that was due to the venue and its outstanding staff.”

“The whole Shangri-La chain,” Devanney says, “is a real comfort zone. When guests walk in, they feel at home. They’re very comfortable.”

For planners searching for a hotel that has that kind of jaw-dropping architecture that attendees want to write home about, it would be hard to top the Marina Bay Sands Hotel — literally. The 2,561-room hotel, which is located in the central business district and overlooks the South China Sea, Marina Bay and the Singapore skyline, has three towers, each 55 stories tall, that are topped with a unique architectural feature called the Sands SkyPark. This lushly landscaped tropical oasis is the size of three football fields and contains restaurants, lounges and a massive infinity-edge pool that offers panoramic views of the city. Across from the towers on Marina Bay are three performance theaters, the ArtScience Museum, and the Sands Expo and Convention Center, Singapore’s largest exhibition and meeting venue, which features more than 1.2 million sf of MICE space across six expo halls, 250 meeting rooms and the largest ballroom in Southeast Asia accommodating up to 11,000 attendees. The center received the 2012 “Best Business Event Venue Experience” award from the Singapore Tourism Board.

There are 300 shops and restaurants at The Shoppes at Marina Bay Sands including rooftop and waterfront dining and celebrity chef establishments. Sandwiched between the theaters and the Sands Expo and Convention Center is the four-level Marina Bay Sands Casino, which offers its own varied dining experiences and one of the worlds largest Swarovski crystal chandeliers (weighing in at 7 tons).

The Fullerton Bay Hotel Singapore, a five-star property located on Marina Bay, offers groups a unique option for meeting space. Last year, the hotel introduced three floating “event pods.” Located on the water, the pods were designed to be reminiscent of trading boats. Each of the pods, which are named Compass, Voyage and Port of Call, is equipped with a balcony and rooftop area, and the wallpaper on the ceiling of the pods is finished with crystal beads to reflect the shimmering water below.

Where Exotic Experiences Await

By Karen Brost

Tthe Asia-Pacific region is renowned for its wide choice of exotic and culturally diverse destinations for meetings and incentives. Todd Black, president of Fishers, IN-based First Incentive Travel International, believes it is an especially good fit for experienced travelers. “For people who do Europe currently,” he notes, “I think there’s about 20 percent of that group that we can entice with ‘Have you thought about Asia?’ because they’re already committing to more than four nights, and I think that’s what it takes to do Asia, just for the flight alone.”

“With some good experience over there, and we have some really good partners, as well,” explains Kevin Devanney, president and founder of Incentive Travel Solutions in Charlotte, NC. “We stay abreast of (the region) because we present it often. The quality of the resorts is fantastic. They really have come a long way in the last couple of years. The number of resorts and hotels that we can use with our incentive trips that have popped up in Asia and especially in Australia and New Zealand and China in the last five to 10 years is amazing.”

Devanney explains that traveling to Asia is a new experience for many people. “When attendees are traveling to Asia for the very first time, I think there’s a little bit of apprehension and a little bit more handholding than we typically have with our groups that we take to Paris or Rome. At first, we operate a city tour and introduce people to the culture right away, and they feel comfortable after the first couple of days.”

Singapore

An appealing combination of easy access, excellent meeting facilities, perpetually sunny weather and a reputation for safety...
China
The destination management company Pacific World operates in China as well as in nine other Asian destinations: Cambodia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam. John Lee Yung Chun, regional marketing manager, Pacific World Asia, describes China’s appeal as a meeting destination. “China has developed a 21st century infrastructure for meetings and events, including an extensive network of modern airports, as well as state-of-the-art facilities, world-class hotels, convention centers and resorts, a cosmopolitan dining scene, and unique sites that lend themselves to outstanding gala-dinner venues.”

He notes that some of those gala venues include world heritage sites. “Event organizers can stage very large and impressive galas while experiencing history alive at such venues as the Great Wall and the Forbidden City, which can be put to equally impressive impact for smaller groups and incentives. Exploring China’s rich history and delving into its vibrant imperial and local cultural practices are enriching experiences for delegates, with lots of fun and great memories to be had.”

Black notes, “In mainland China you can see (historic sites such as) the Temple Inn Heaven and stand in Tiananmen Square, which is one of those cool experiences like standing in Red Square in Russia. It’s a must-do.”

“China is a bit more for a savvy group,” he continues. “If they’re young pharma reps winning an incentive for the first time, I don’t think China is the most motivating for them. For groups with guys that have already won 10 trips, then you start looking at China.”

Hong Kong
The cosmopolitan city of Hong Kong, with its dazzling skyline and spectacular views of Victoria Harbour, is another popular meeting and incentive destination in Asia. “It’s a dynamic city which truly offers the experience of a lifetime,” Chun notes. “It is built with the infrastructure and services required to welcome and support large groups of visitors and offers unique experiences to attract meetings, exhibitions and incentive programs. It is incredibly safe, with a super-efficient transport system, and all signs are in English.” The city also is a global hub that offers direct flights between more than 155 destinations a week.

“It’s got high-end shopping, high-end restaurants and five-star hotels,” Black explains. “It’s very modern. In my experience taking groups there, they’ve always loved it.” He adds that Hong Kong has more competition in the region than it has had in the past. “Fifteen years ago, Hong Kong was so far ahead of mainland China, meaning that it was much more sophisticated and the infrastructure was better. Hong Kong was like the New York of Asia. That’s not the case anymore. Beijing, Shanghai, and certainly other destinations in China have come up to the level of Hong Kong.”

The first Hotel Indigo in Hong Kong recently opened in the city’s historic Wun Chai neighborhood. One of the most unique features of the 138-room, 29-story hotel is the glass-bottomed infinity pool that juts out from the building’s rooftop.

Macau
This special administrative region of China, which is located across the Pearl River estuary from Hong Kong, is probably best known as “the Las Vegas of Asia,” but it also is known for its European style of architecture that dates back to the region’s history as a Portuguese colony.

Located on the Cotai Strip, the Sands Cotai Macau complex features five international brand hotels with a combined 9,000 guest rooms and 1.3 million square feet of versatile meeting space including 274 breakout rooms: The Venetian Macao; Sheraton Macao Hotel, Cotai Central; Conrad Macao, Cotai Central; Holiday Inn Macao, Cotai Central; and Four Seasons Hotel Macao.

Like its renowned sister property in Las Vegas, the 3,000-unit, all-suite Venetian Macao features stunningly realistic replicas of the architectural icons and canals of Venice, Italy. The sprawling resort complex includes more than 1 million square feet of meeting and exhibit space, including the 15,000-seat CotaiArena and 1,800-seat Venetian Theatre. Its acclaimed amenities include more than 30 world-class restaurants, 330 retailers at Shoppes Grand Canal and a Mayo Clinic Health & Wellness facility.

The CotaiExpo at the Venetian Macao features more than 800,000 square feet of exhibition space, and is one of the largest exhibition centers in Asia. It is complemented by more than 75,000 square feet of pillar-free, ballroom space and 108 meeting rooms with nearly 270,000 square feet of flexible meeting space.

The Sheraton Macao Hotel recently completed its 2,067-room Earth Tower, which brings the hotel’s total room count to 3,896, making it the largest hotel in Macau and in Starwood’s global portfolio. It’s All Within Reach
Malaysia

The year 2012 was a very good one for the country of Malaysia because it welcomed a record 25 million tourists. “Malaysia is one of the most affordable destinations in the world and in Asia,” Pacific World’s Chun says, “with unbeatable hotel rates.” The country’s capital city is Kuala Lumpur, which offers an interesting contrast between modern skyscrapers and heritage buildings from the British era. Malaysia’s beach destinations, such as Borneo, Langkawi and Penang, are ideal for incentive programs or pre- and post-meeting tours.

Thailand

Hyatt is expanding its presence in Thailand with the anticipated opening of the Park Hyatt Bangkok in 2014. The new hotel, which will feature a dramatic “twisting coil” architectural design, will contain 222 rooms and be connected to a 150-store retail complex via skybridge. Hyatt’s other Thailand properties include the five-star Grand Hyatt Erawan in Bangkok and the beachfront Hyatt Regency Hua Hin located 140 miles south-west of the capital city.

Japan

The Ritz-Carlton, Okinawa, which opened last year, is surrounded on three sides by an 18-hole championship golf course that overlooks the ocean. The hotel also is known as “Gusuku,” which means “castle” in the local dialect. The property offers 97 guest rooms and suites.

While Tokyo is Japan’s largest city, Kyoto is consistently ranked as the country’s second most popular city for meetings, conferences and events. Kyoto served as the nation’s capital for 1,000 years, and is now home to 17 UNESCO world heritage sites, many of which can be used for events. The city is located in close proximity to Kansai International Airport, and Tokyo is just over two hours away via the fastest bullet train in Japan.

Philippines

The five-star Fairmont Makati opened late last year in the central business district of Manila. It contains 280 guest rooms and suites offering beautiful views of the Makati skyline. The hotel’s tower also is home to Raffles Makati, a 32-room all-suite hotel and Raffles Residences, which offer 237 one- to four-bedroom suites available for short- and long-term stays.

Australia

“Paying Australia is in everyone’s top five of ‘wow,’” notes Black. “Forget dollars. When a client says I want a destination that’s going to motivate, Australia is one of them. For the ultimate ‘get out there and sell and you’re going to win this trip,’ Australia is definitely there.” The five-star Fairmont Makati opened late last year in the central business district of Manila. It contains 280 guest rooms and suites offering beautiful views of the Makati skyline. The hotel’s tower also is home to Raffles Makati, a 32-room all-suite hotel and Raffles Residences, which offer 237 one- to four-bedroom suites available for short- and long-term stays.

New Zealand

Whether they’re attending a business meeting or enjoying the rewards of an incentive trip they’ve earned, attendees naturally like to feel welcomed by the destination they’re visiting. According to the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2013 released by the World Economic Forum, New Zealand is one of the friendliest countries in the world. This popular Southern Hemisphere destination, which encompasses two major islands, also is legendary for its incredible scenery. Actor Martin Freeman, who starred as the title character in the recent movie “The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey” was obviously taken by the country’s scenic beauty. “The backdrop is so beautiful, people will think it’s CGI (computer-generated imagery),” he notes. “It looks too perfect.”

Devaney likes to use some of New Zealand’s lodges for his programs. “When we go to New Zealand, we tend to have smaller groups — 25 couples or something like that,” he says. In the Northland, one property he likes to use is Kauri Cliffs lodge. Set on 6,000 acres overlooking Matauri Bay, the lodge offers 22 guest suites and a two-bedroom owner’s cottage along with golf, tennis, a spa and secluded beaches.

On New Zealand’s South Island, he has used the Matakauri Lodge. Set on 6,000 acres overlooking Matauri Bay, the lodge offers 22 guest suites and a two-bedroom owner’s cottage along with golf, tennis, a spa and secluded beaches.

Getting There

Devaney made an interesting observation about the amount of flying time it takes for attendees to travel to Asia. “It always amazes me that (flying time) is the biggest conversation before the trip, but after the trip it is very rarely mentioned. After the trip, they talk about the destination.” Obviously, the attendees decide that their trip to Asia or the Pacific was worth the time it took to get there.
Sarah Cardenas was promoted to group sales manager for The Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club, Naples, FL. She most recently served as catering and conference services manager at the resort.

VisitPittsburgh has named Robert Leff as national sales director, responsible for the corporate market as well as the Northeast and Southwest national association accounts and territories. He most recently was director, national accounts, for Gaylord Hotels.

Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, Destin, FL, has promoted Nancy Willerson to director of group sales. She most recently served as director of regional sales based out of Atlanta. Dan Keyser was named executive director of resort sales. With more than 30 years of hospitality experience, Keyser most recently was the regional director of sales and marketing for the BF Saul Company’s hospitality division out of Bethesda, MD.

The Fontainebleau Miami Beach has promoted Louis Gonzalez and Jackie Payano to assistant directors of group sales. They both most recently served as directors of national accounts for the hotel.

The Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau, Honolulu, HI, has named longtime Starwood executive Karen Hughes as vice president of Meet Hawaii and travel industry partnerships. She most recently served as vice president of global leisure sales and distribution for Starwood Hotels & Resorts.

Jennifer Tucker was named group sales manager for Hawks Cay Resort in the Florida Keys. She was national sales manager at Gaylord Palms Resort, Kissimmee, FL.

L’Auberge Del Mar, Del Mar, CA, has promoted Robert Harter to director of sales and marketing. He was the hotel’s director of sales. Jeffrey Livingston was promoted to director of sales. He was associate director of sales. Jamie Clave was named sales manager responsible for the San Diego and Southwest markets. She was sales manager at Estancia La Jolla Hotel, La Jolla, CA.
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