Sea Island Resort offers an 18-hole putting course and a 17,000-sf golf performance center.

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A World Of Choices

IMEX America recently closed on another high as a catalyst for change and meetings industry advancement. If you didn’t attend this year’s event in Las Vegas, you missed a great opportunity to attend educational sessions and meet with properties and destinations from around the world. The show achieved a new high with a 3% increase to 76,000 appointments recorded.

Highlights of IMEX this year included dozens of high-level partner events such as EIC’s Hall of Leaders and Pacesetter Awards, MPI Foundation Rendezvous and SITE Nite. IMEX’s efforts to provide a wider range of healthier food and drink choices, including Impossible Burgers and Beyond Meat hotdogs proved a big hit, together with its Water Wise menu options. According to IMEX chairman Ray Bloom, “We’re opening people’s eyes to what’s possible with health, well-being, sustainability and better nutrition on the road and during large events. We really appreciate all those partners who have stepped up to help us make these massive strides forward. It’s also noteworthy that, thanks to Sands Expo, this year’s show was 100% powered by renewable energy.”

IMEX America takes place again next year in Las Vegas September 15-17, 2020. If you include golf in your programs or if you would like to learn how to successfully include golf in your meeting and incentive programs, you don’t want to miss an opportunity to participate in Corporate & Incentive Travel’s hosted, inaugural invitation golf tournament at the Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate March 26-29, 2020. Hosted planners will enjoy the three-day event with golf, instruction, and networking opportunities and fun. This event is ideal for novices and seasoned golfers. See our ad on Page 33 for further details or contact me to be considered to participate in Corporate & Incentive Travel’s hosted, inaugural invitation golf in your meeting and incentive programs, you don’t want to miss an opportunity to participate in Corporate & Incentive Travel’s hosted, inaugural invitation golf tournament at the Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate March 26-29, 2020. Hosted planners will enjoy the three-day event with golf, instruction, and networking opportunities and fun. This event is ideal for novices and seasoned golfers. See our ad on Page 33 for further details or contact me to be considered.

Looking for destinations that have everything to help make your meeting or incentive program a success? Look no further than the informative destination reports in this issue focusing on Orlando and Texas.
Majestic Las Vegas Resort Scheduled to Break Ground

LAS VEGAS — Majestic Las Vegas, the brainchild of Las Vegas native and uber-developer Lorenzo Dobkin, is set to break ground following the project’s unanimous approval by Clark County commissioners. The revolutionary $850 million, 620-foot-tall contemporary architectural masterpiece is scheduled to commence construction next year and is slated for completion in early 2023. The five-star, non-gaming, 720-room, luxury-branded resort will sit on the more than 6-acre site formerly occupied by the Clarion Hotel. This unparalleled location is directly across from the site of the new Las Vegas Convention Center opening in 2021.

The Los Angeles International Airport Marriott (LAX Marriott) recently broke ground on its meeting spaces renovation project. The property will complete $50 million transformation. Set to open later this year, the property’s Ballroom, which can accommodate up to 1,706 people. In addition to its proximity to Los Angeles International Airport, the LAX Marriott is centrally located near Downtown Los Angeles, Manhattan Beach and the various restaurants, shops and museums that capture the essence of the iconic Hollywood city.

New York City Snags Top Spot for Meetings and Events

NEW YORK — CWT’s 2020 Meetings & Events Future Trends report was published September 10, based on proprietary and industry data, including volume of business and booking trends. New York City takes first position on CWT’s top 10 cities for meetings and events in North America in 2020; London leads in rankings for Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA); Shanghai is No. 1 in the Asia Pacific (APAC) market; and Sao Paulo is foremost among Latin American destinations. While London, Shanghai and Sao Paulo occupied the same top spots on CWT’s 2019 lists, New York rose from second place last year to first in the latest rankings for North America, beating out Las Vegas, which fell from first to 10th place. That change, Beau Ballin, CWT’s vice president, commercial leader, North America, noted, is tied to myriad factors, including the cyclical nature of event bookings.

Tourism Toronto Appoints Scott Beck as President and CEO

TORONTO — Following an extensive international search, Tourism Toronto appointed Scott Beck as president and CEO. For the past 14 years, Beck has served as the president and CEO of Visit Salt Lake in Salt Lake City, Utah, and will begin his new role on Oct. 15. A proven leader in the destination sales and marketing industry, Beck serves on the Executive Committee of Destinations International for six years and served as the organization’s international board chair from 2014-2015. Before joining Visit Salt Lake, Beck worked in the hotel industry for 18 years, most recently with Ocean Properties Ltd. (OPL) as the general manager of the Salt Lake Marriott City Center.

San Francisco Travel Projects 10th Year of Record Visitor Volume and Spending

SAN FRANCISCO — For the 10th year in a row, the San Francisco Travel Association is forecasting record visitor volume and spending for 2019. San Francisco’s destination marketing organization is projecting 26.2 million visitors to the city for 2019, up 1.5%. On the convention side, San Francisco Travel has set a new record for the Moscone Center. The year 2019 will be the first to have 1.2 million definite room nights booked. Visitor volume for the region is projected to reach 57.7 million for 2019, with a total of $19.7 billion combined visitor spending.

5 Problems Facing Social Media in 2019

In this article, we’ll look at five main problems that are causing people to break up with their phones or quit social media altogether. These are the toxic parts of the new online world. As businesses, we need social media to be relevant and stay in the eyes of the consumer, too. However, there are lines that could be crossed if you aren’t careful. Here are just a few issues that are erupting every day on the internet: 1. Too much content: Ever heard of the ‘endless scroll?’ People become addicted to constantly checking their social media feeds and companies are constantly posting ads, blogs, photos, questions and podcasts. The brain can go through serious fatigue even without the added visual stimulation of the real world. Many young people are being diagnosed with ADHD and similar behavioral issues because of this kind of content overload. 2. Jealousy and constant competition: With photoshopped images and filters everywhere, it’s no wonder that the statistics for depression, loneliness, self-esteem issues and suicides are on the rise. Sadly, plenty of companies are taking advantage of this and posting envy-worthy bodies and lifestyles to make a quick buck from those with low self-esteem. 3. Cancel culture: This is a more recent phenomenon for social media, where many are being ‘called out’ for their past transgressions. In some ways, it’s great — the #MeToo movement and other similar movements are weeding out awful people that have held power for far too long. However, this trend is also affecting people in a bad way. Many ‘cancellations’ were incorrect but already forever ruined someone’s reputation. Does cancel culture mean you can’t make mistakes? We’re human, and mistakes are bound to happen, no matter how careful you are as an individual or company. 4. Not enough fact-checking: ‘Fake news’ is everywhere and sometimes people can’t tell the difference. Of course, Facebook and other companies are attempting to mitigate the problem, trying to stop conspiracy theories or forcing articles to go through fact-checks. However, it’s still a very real problem that, in some cases, can cause huge political upheavals and deadly consequences. 5. Diagnosis without experience: This isn’t just medical. It also calls upon other service industries as well. Suddenly everyone’s a doctor, plumber or dietitian from watching a YouTube video when, in reality, we know that most of the expert work comes from years of hands-on experience and education. This causes a lot of issues and has a real impact. Sure, you can pick up some handy tips from the internet, but you can’t diagnose yourself with a deadly disease just because a website said you had a few symptoms. These problems aren’t going anywhere for a while unless the social media companies, governments and other technologies can start combating them correctly. Social is now too integral to business success to stop using, but these are just a few things to keep in mind next time you’re hitting ‘post.’

Facing Social Media in 2019

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**New Tourism Alliance Highlights Unique Connection of Two Destinations**

NEW YORK — NYC & Company, New York City’s official destination marketing organization, and visitBerlin recently signed an official city-to-city tourism collaboration agreement. It marks the first time New York City has partnered with a city in Germany for tourism development and management. New York City encourages visitors to experience what NYC & Company is calling a “Monumental Year” for the destination. “New York City and Berlin are world-class destinations that share so much in common — from outstanding culture, attractions, entertainment, nightlife and events to beautiful, multicultural neighborhoods to navigate and explore. The two cities have extraordinary appeal,” says Fred Dixon NYC & Company president and CEO.

**INDUSTRY NEWS**

**Grand Hyatt Nashville Releases Renderings of Expansive Meeting and Event Spaces**

NASHVILLE, TN — The Grand Hyatt Nashville hotel, opening next year, recently released new renderings of the luxury hotel’s expansive indoor event space, including the 15,913-sf Lost Pines Ballroom and 7,616-sf The Baron’s Ballroom. Grand Hyatt Nashville will offer signature restaurants, a rooftop lounge and a pool deck overlooking the city. The hotel will also offer 591 modern guest rooms, and will be located on Broad Street within walking distance of many of Nashville’s most popular attractions, including the Nashville Convention Center, Country Music Hall of Fame, and Bridgestone Arena.

**Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort & Spa Provides Team-Building Activities**

AUSTIN, TX — Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort & Spa, one of Texas’ leading resorts located right outside Austin, provides a menu of adrenaline-inducing, team-building activities for groups. In partnership with the Lower Colorado River Authority, the resort provides everything from zip-line excursions and rock-climbing walls to guided tours on Utility Task Vehicles; and in partnership with T & D Adventure Parks LLC, parent company to Renegade Trailhead, groups can enjoy wrangler-led horseback trail rides. In addition, Hyatt Regency Lost Pines provides more than 60,000 sf of indoor and 240,000 sf of outdoor event space, including the 15,913-sf Lost Pines Ballroom and 7,616-sf The Baron’s Ballroom.

**Opening**

**Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood Opens New Spa & Salon**

HOLLYWOOD, FL — Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood recently announced the opening of the new Rock Spa & Salon. The 42,000-sf luxury spa, salon and state-of-the-art fitness center will be one of the largest wellness venues in South Florida. It offers rejuvenating services, beauty-enhancing treatments and a relaxing retreat for local visitors and guests. The wellness-focused enclave offers 21 individual treatment rooms; ladies and men’s locker rooms with steam, sauna, hot tubs and relaxation areas; as well as co-ed lap pool, hot and cold plunge pools and sauna. Fitness routines will benefit from the technology-based equipment from Technogym, a world-renowned manufacturer of quality, technology-based fitness products. Known for their ‘Connected Wellness Experience’, fitness enthusiasts can access their personal content and training programs no matter their location.

**Anniversary**

**The Peabody Memphis Celebrates its 150th Anniversary**

MEMPHIS, TN — This year, The Peabody Memphis will celebrate its 150th anniversary with a series of special offerings and events. The Peabody first opened its downtown Memphis doors in 1869, and has since become world famous for its charm, elegance, Southern hospitality and five resident ducks that march daily through the lobby at 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. The Peabody’s rich history includes: countless stories of first dates, last dances and memories made, but also of blues musicians creating influential recordings in guest rooms in the 1920s; of famous orchestras and big-band dancers swinging atop the hotel’s rooftop in the 1940s; and of a young rock ‘n’ roll icon named Elvis Presley signing his first major record contract in the lobby in the 1950s. In addition to completing a renovation of its Grand Lobby and all 464 guest rooms and suites, the “South’s Grand Hotel” will invite travelers to visit throughout its 150th anniversary year with a Grand Anniversary Package for $1,500, and multiple celebrations, including a throwback summertime Rooftop Party and an elegant ballroom celebration.

**Destinations**

**Cancun Ranked Top Destination in Latin America, Caribbean Region**

CANCUN, MEXICO — According to Hosteltur.com, the Global Destinations Cities Index 2019 found that six of the Top 20 most-popular destinations in the world were found in the Latin America and Caribbean region. Cancun is the top destination in the region, reaching its 3rd consecutive million international visitors in 2018 and a growth forecast of 1.35% for 2019. The majority of visitors came from the United States and Canada, with an average stay of 6.1 nights and a daily cost of around $146. Research also found that Punta Cana was the second most-visited destination, welcoming 3.89 million international visitors, and Riviera Maya rounded out the top 3 with a total of 3.17 million tourists arriving last year. Mexico City, Lima and Santiago de Chile round out the top five destinations in the region. The Global Destination Cities Index also found that seven of the Top 10 cities in Latin America and the Caribbean grew in terms of international arrivals last year, indicating positive overall growth in the region.
IMEX America
Las Vegas, September 10-12, 2019
A catalyst for change and industry advancement closed on another high. Exhibitors and buyers alike reported business success, whether it involves deals or getting new ideas to provide inspiration and creativity to help them in their jobs.
What Do Meeting Attendees Really Want?
5 Tips on What Matters for Meeting Content

BY MICHELLE KENNEDY

N

New, their attention span requires a little less time — five
minutes to be exact. Most humans are not able to multi-
task. They are mono-taskers who need to start and stop
frequently to process information. So how do you keep
them involved and participating? According to our team
at One Smooth Stone, you need to engage the audience
through repetition, color palette changes and technology.

Our recent blog article suggests one way to increase
attendee engagement is by using personal devices to take
back the audience through digital and personal engage-
ment tactics. Attendees want to
be part of something bigger, and
attendee engagement activities
that can help create this.

Small Doses
If you want attendees to
remember the information you
are presenting, chunk your
information to maximize reten-
tion. According to Business
Insider, people tend to remem-
ber 3-4 things at a time before
becoming overwhelmed, so be
sure your event speakers keep
this in mind. Likewise, most
people remember what is first and last in a presentation,
so make those minutes count.

One more tip: Presentations that ask questions as opposed to giving answers do a much better job at engage-
ment and retention.

Ease of Information
Here’s where you can really make an impact. Meeting
attendees — and people in general — like to know what
to expect. Consistent communication and technology
are the strongest assets here. A single platform or web-
site for registration and ongoing communications is key.
Use it to ease the registration process, provide real-time
updates, promote networking opportunity or personal-
ized event experiences. From directions to sessions, start
times or room changes — short, to-the-point communica-
tions throughout the day are essential for a positive overall
event experience. Attendees are tech savvy and expect their
experiences at the event to be the same, so give attendees
the tools they need to navigate your event like a pro.

Networking Opportunities
Contributing positively to the overall event experience
is networking with other attendees. Networking is and will
always be one of the primary reasons attendees sign up
for events. Networking personalizes the individual event
experience and has become crucial to professional success.
Attendees want to ensure their time spent out of the office
is time well spent, so make sure networking tactics are part
of your larger event strategy.

Put a twist on networking and go beyond business
cards and networking cocktails. Through apps designed
to encourage networking behavior, meeting participants
can skip straight to meaningful conversations that should
happen at events. One example of this technology is the
digital matchmaking platform Braindate, which uses
detailed algorithms to pull from attendees’ profiles, help-
ing connect people with like-minded interests. Attendees
can check in and meet up with their connections in des-
ignates onsite areas. Besides — why should match.com
have all the fun?

MICHELLE KENNEDY
Michelle Kennedy oversees integrated marketing for global Business Event
Management firm, PRA, serving over 100 destinations worldwide. Kennedy
brings more than 20 years of industry experience, having held head
marketing positions with several Fortune 500 companies and leading brands.

DepositPhotos.com
A s a futurist and a trends expert, I attend numerous conferences on how to create posi-
tive change and accelerate business growth each year. Ironically, the No. 1 buzzword as of late at these events isn’t ‘innovation’ anymore. Rather, it’s actually ‘incentivization’ — how
to motivate your workforce to routinely speak up, share
their insights and make more concerted attempts
at rapidly transforming ideas into actionable solu-
tions. Happily, finding ways to boost employee
engagement, and your abil-
ity to spark positive change, 
doesn’t have to be difficult.
You can radically increase
your ability to lead and
succeed just by making a
few simple adjustments in
strategy and thinking to
your leadership and work-
force development strate-
gies going forward.

SMALL CHANGES WORK
To begin with, it helps to realize that simple shifts in
business or communication strategy — or even simple
shifts in presentation or packaging — can prove every bit as
powerful as game-changing breakthrough innovations
at driving positive results. That’s because in today’s high-
technology world, where one person or one idea can change the
shape of an entire organization, evolutionary changes —
minor tweaks in approach — can prove every bit as pow-
erful as revolutionary changes, especially as they’re more
frequently implemented and compound over time. For
dependent reasons, the company didn’t take out millions in
radio or TV advertising or create all sorts of crazy new fla-
vors. Instead, it printed the 150 most-popular Australian
names for boys and girls on Coke bottles and — via cost-
effective social media programs — invited employees
offered more rapid ways to transform ideas into
action, and creating more opportunities that allow them
to consistently speak up, take ownership of challenges and
make necessary shifts in strategy when they see the need
for change impending.

WHAT DRIVES EMPLOYEES?
As you think about how to fuel this transformation
in your business, it may help to consider which factors
most effectively drive employees to positively engage
with your organization as well. Counterintuitively, you’ll often
find that the answer to encouraging peak performance is
most frequently not found in financial rewards. In
fact, contrary to popular
belief, the fastest way for
your business to encour-
age people to speak up
and participate more is seldom
to just throw money at the
problem. Because not
only are today’s workers
— especially younger
generations such as millenni-
als and Gen Zers — more
motivated by opportunities
to learn, grow and build
lasting careers than a pay-
check. They’re also increas-
ingly drawn to businesses
who champion innovation
and give employees an
opportunity to make an
impact — especially those
that consistently work to equip workers with the skills and
insights needed to succeed.

It’s especially worth noting, as with 73 million people
and counting, millennials — born roughly between 1981
to 1995 — have now surpassed baby boomers as the sin-
gle-largest generation in America and are now the single-
largest generation in the workforce. So if you’re looking
to better engage and inspire them, remember they won’t
necessarily be looking for bigger paychecks going forward.
Instead, they’re going to demand more regular opportu-
nities to exercise and boost their skills and insights thru
hands-on exposure in real-world environments — and
want to see immediate, instantly visible ways in which their
contributions are making a difference.

GENERATIONAL SHIFT
Gen Zers — individuals born after 1995 — are also pre-
dicted to be a major group in the workforce. And like mill-
ennials, they much prefer interactive exercises, lifelike
simulations and opportunities to shuttle between roles and
responsibilities over traditional training and career devel-
opment programs. However, these scrappy young profes-
sionals are also harder to reach and engage than previous
generations, especially noting that their average attention
span lasts 8 seconds — less than that of the common gold-
fish. So if you want to connect with tomorrow’s top work-
ers, boost employee
engagement around vari-
ous initiatives, it’s impor-
tant to design every pro-
gram you’re offering to be
more interactive, more
instantly attention-getting and more approachable
and social. Likewise, for
that matter, be aware that
most of tomorrow’s work-
force — regardless of their
age — won’t measure suc-
cess in terms of money, but
rather their ability to accomplish goals and make a meaningful
impact on the organization.
So basically, if you’re looking to empower
tomorrow’s leaders to succeed, let alone encourage them
to be more involved or inspire them to greatness, you won’t
just need to make a point to offer them more leadership
opportunities and more favorable salary and benefits pack-
ages. You’ll also want to work with your colleagues in every
department to create a more welcoming and supportive
environment that emphasizes professional growth and
development — and offers ample opportunities to spotlight
leading performers and their work. That said, the secret to
radically boosting employee engagement isn’t all that secret
when you come down to it. In fact, enabling and inspiring
people to do great things can be far easier and more cost-
effective than you think when you make a point to find
ways to more actively work with them more often — not just
have them work for you — in the years to come.

Millennials have now surpassed baby boomers as the
SINGLE-LARGEST
GENERATION in America, and are now the single-largest generation in the workforce."

SCOTT STEINBERG
Hailed as the World’s Leading Business Strategist, award-winning professional speaker Scott
Steinberg is among today’s best-known trends experts and futurists, and the bestselling author
of “Lead with Your Heart:” Make Change Work for You. 10 Ways to Future-Proof Yourself, Fearlessly
Innovate, and Succeed Despite Uncertainty,” and “Millennial Marketing: Bridging the Generation
Gap.” He is also president and CEO of BZ&D/EV: The International Association for Business
Development and Strategic Partnerships. His website is www.AKeynoteSpeaker.com.
How a Mountain Setting Elevates Meetings in Every Way

BY CHRISTINE LOOMIS

Located less than 1 mile from The Broadmoor in Colorado Springs, Seven Falls is a captivating series of waterfalls and hiking trails.

CALIFORNIA

The Sierra Nevadas offer more than a few mountain towns worthy of a planner’s attention. Among them, Mammoth Lakes in the Eastern Sierra Nevadas.

MAMMOTH LAKES

Sandra DiDomizio, CMM, MBA, founder/chief experience officer at Green Fox Events & Guest Services, brought 75 neurosurgeons to Mammoth Lakes, California, for an annual retreat. The group was based primarily at The Westin Monache Resort, Mammoth.

One reason for the choice of Mammoth was personal. “The primary of the group, Dr. Dorsi, loves Mammoth Lakes and has a personal connection to the area. The date also originated around his birthday, so he decided to invite all his colleagues and industry peers to his favorite place during his favorite time of year. The client wanted access to snow sports and activities for all the attendees and their families,” DiDomizio says. “Neurosurgery is one of the most stressful professions in the world. It’s relaxing for these doctors to be in the mountains and enjoy daily outdoor activities, while convening in the mornings and evenings. They also enjoyed the camaraderie. Some brought their spouses and children who could also enjoy all the winter recreational opportunities. In addition to snowboarding and skiing, there’s tubing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, sledding, natural hot springs and more. Many of these attendees don’t have time in their personal and professional lives for much recreation, so having a meeting in a recreational mecca makes their time together more special and makes the event more memorable.”

DiDomizio admits the group has at times experienced strong snow storms, closed roads and winds during event days. “We try to predict and be proactive, such as providing guests with alternate means of transportation. We work with a local shuttle company to drive down to Los Angeles to pick up guests if their flights are cancelled. We find alternate activi-

There’s something about the mountains, whether the cloud-piercing peaks of the Rockies, the high slopes of the Sierra Nevadas or the Appalachians folded into green forests and valleys in the east. Mountains can humble. Mountains can challenge. Mountains can inspire — all of which makes them ideal for corporate meetings and incentives.

Resort communities offer so many nontraditional, team-building experiences.

“Resort communities offer so many nontraditional, team-building experiences.”

SANDRA DIDOMIZIO, CMM, MBA

Founder/Chief Experience Officer

Green Fox Events & Guest Services

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The Rocky Mountains have an impressive array of activities made Cloud Camp the most exceptional venue to host our event.

Conner Wege, regional marketing strategist with Envision, brought a group of 20 for the company’s marketing seminar.

"Logistically, we needed a secluded, mountainous, yet premium location in which you can get your group out, "local guides, picnic tables, a mixology class and rooftop bar and pool. Another venue, the W Aspen, has the cache and global recognition of some of Aspen's highly regarded restaurants, "including the Wild Fig, Campo de Fiori, element 47, Steakhouse No. 316, Cache Cache, French Alpine Bistro – Créperie du Village and Jürg." 

About the Hotel Jerome, Seehof says, "The team at the Hotel Jerome is amazing — great food, flexible, detailed oriented, customer-service oriented. You can't say enough good about the team there." Seehof set functions in the hotel’s various spaces. "We used A/V for lighting our function and nightly hospitality spaces," she says. "Our welcome event was in the Aspen Times Room with the reception outdoors at the property. The food and beverage was excellent. I used Aspen Branch for florals and they were great to work with.

In addition to hotel staff, Seehof hired incentive planners who work with the Aspen Chamber of Commerce during planning and throughout the event. "The Chamber was a huge help with the program. They provided insight, ideas, maps and brochures. They have a lot to offer in terms of updated current events and activities."

She worked with local destination management company PRA Colorado, which she calls "fabulous." In the end, she says of Aspen, "considering the variety of activities, restaurants and shopping offered, you won't be disappointed. And the sheer beauty of the city of Aspen surrounded by all of the mountainous environment." Other venues include the W Aspen, which opened late summer. Among other niceties, it features a 12,000-sf rooftop bar and pool. Another venue, one and yet be different from the incentive programs they do," Seehof says. Biking, white-water rafting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, golf, jeep tours and a spa were among the activities. And because they were on their own for two nights, Seehof says they were able to experience some of Aspen’s highly regarded restaurants, "including the Wild Fig, Campo de Fiori, element 47, Steakhouse No. 316, Cache Cache, French Alpine Bistro – Créperie du Village and Jürg."
The Little Nell, underwent a refresh this past spring, and Hunter Loef is the town’s newest venue, able to accommodate up to 200 guests.

**SNOWMASS**

Last year, a $600 million development at the base of Snowmass Ski Area made its debut. It includes the new 99-room Limelight Hotel Snowmass and a reimagined base village around a plaza that features an ice rink in winter and grass lawn in summer. Inside the Limelight is a five-story climbing wall. Lodging also includes One Snowmass, with ski-in/ski-out residences, new shops and restaurants. Vice-roy Snowmass also got a refresh this spring, including complete redesign of all guest spaces.

**VAIL**

This year the Grand Hyatt Vail opened, the first Grand Hyatt in a mountain destination. The hotel features ski-in/ski-out convenience, 285 rooms and its own chairlift exclusively for hotel guests, a nice touch for incentive groups.

**MICHIGAN**

Yes, the mitten-shaped state has mountains, ski areas and resorts that provide a mountain magic of its own.

**CRYSTAL MOUNTAIN**

Among the recent improvements at this Midwest ski resort is a new pavilion tent near the base of the slopes. It has a concrete floor and can hold 250-300 for receptions. The Inn at the Mountain’s rooftop terrace is part of a $12 million expansion the resort completed last year. The space-with-a-view can host private functions of 70-80. Over at the Crystal Center, the resort’s conference center, new carpeting and furnishings provide a nice refresh, and new screens have been added to many of the resort’s conference spaces. And for meetings that have a bit of free time, attendees should know that Crystal Spa was recently rated the top spa in Michigan.

**VERMONT**

The Green Mountains are part of the impressively long Appalachian chain, and the setting for one of the state’s revered ski areas.

**STOWE**

In the northeast, Topnotch Resort provides the perfect spot for the annual sales and branding meeting of Cabot Creamery, with about 65 in attendance. The resort is tucked into Vermont’s Green Mountains, and Kurt Weber, Cabot Creamery senior vice president, says as soon as he saw it, he knew it was right. “The second I saw Topnotch and the facilities, rooms and access to Stowe, I was convinced.”

The company has held at least four meetings at Topnotch, which Weber calls ideal for events with fewer than 100 people. “The resort sets the right tone for a meeting,” he says. “People are out of the office, outside their comfort zone and there are fewer distractions than in the office. I want people to be more open and let their guard down a bit.”

Topnotch has fewer than 100 rooms. “This year they didn’t have enough rooms but it wasn’t a problem. There are condos on the property and I used those as well,” Weber says.

To those looking for an excellent meeting hotel in the mountains, Weber recommends a site visit. “I’ve done 25 years of meetings in a lot of rooms and Topnotch does a really nice job. If you have an opportunity to go there, you’ll be thrilled just like I was.”

**CALIFORNIA**

Summer in Mammoth Lakes, California offers dozens of outdoor activities sure to please attendees.

**THE BROADMOOR**

Only The Broadmoor offers so many distinct venues and experiences of all sizes and types. From impressive trade shows to executive dinners. From grand reception halls to eclectic lakeside cocktails at sunset. From state-of-the-art meeting rooms to secluded brainstorming sessions at Cloud Camp 3,000 feet above the main campus. You’ll find all of it and more within our 185,000 square feet of meeting space, connected by a thread of quality, service and meticulous attention to detail. Visit broadmoor.com and contact us today to explore the wonderful possibilities.
The health care meetings landscape is changing at a staggering pace. Privacy issues, compliance requirements and payment transparency regulations grow increasingly complex to manage. Some regulations conflict with others and many differ from country to country, or state to state. Planners whose meetings include an international audience must know not only the regulations of the place in which the meeting is set, but those in the destinations from which attendees come.

All of this makes planners with a certification in health care meeting management highly valuable. Unfortunately, there aren’t enough of them.

A PRESSING NEED

“What’s critical,” says Pat Schaumann, CMP, CSEP, DMCP, HMCC, president of Schaumann Consulting Group LLC “is the lack of trained professionals. With more than 1 million medical meetings on tap for 2019 in the U.S. alone, we’re experiencing a crisis in the number of trained medical meeting planners.”

Jacqueline Beaulieu, HMCC, MPI MD Advisory Board member and director of strategic marketing and client engagement with Poretta & Orr, a full-service experiential exhibit, event and strategic marketing agency. She agrees that qualified planners are in short supply.

“Reporting requirements differ by country, creating data-entry errors and missing or incomplete information.”

JOCELYNE CÔTÉ
Director, Strategy and Business Development, the Americas
American Express Global Business Travel

“Frequent changing of codes, including: state and city ordinances, changes made on-site once the meeting has been planned, food and beverage caps for health care professionals (HCPs) and privacy issues are all major challenges,” she says. She thinks other issues will factor in as well. “Medical meeting professionals will continue to see challenges because of the effect of politics and reactions to the opioid epidemic. The new SUPPORT Act will impact Open Payments by expanding the definition of a covered recipient, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will expand to other states and countries, more countries will add compliance and transparency regulations and so on.”

Beaulieu points to increasing globalization. “As companies and organizations continue to look for business growth opportunities, locations outside of the U.S. will be considered more often. So learning how best to conduct business globally will be a vital component to what medical meeting planners will need in their arsenal of skills,” she says.

That includes learning cultural differences in addition to differing compliance rules. Given that some 90 countries currently require compliance rules, Beaulieu adds, “Staying up-to-date and understanding the intricacies and impact they have on a meeting is critical. But global and federal regulations may be easier to stay on top of than state and city codes, which are also continually in flux.”

Jocelyne Côté, director, strategy and business development, the Americas at American Express Global Business Travel, points out several issues, including “balancing corporate requirements with...
Medical/Pharma meetings are increasingly complex to plan as compliance and other issues are rapidly changing, forcing planners to continually adjust.

Bemrose says the same strategy exists in Europe. “We ask our client/stakeholder the countries where the delegates are coming from and work with the strictest code. We also work with our clients to ensure that this matches with their own corporate policy. In some cases, the client’s policy is stricter than the regional regulations.”

In addition to differences from country to country, state to state, Beaulieu echoes Bemrose in noting that companies have their own internal requirements. “Planners often make the mistake of assuming that all company business practices are the same. Planners should be aware that there’s an element of interpretation when it comes to some compliance issues, so practices may vary from company to company.”

Beaulieu points out that meal caps are set for meetings in different ways. “There may be one cap for promotional events and a different cap for education events,” she says, “so giving thought. Inference an event is structured could help with meal caps compliances.”

Both Bemrose and Beaulieu say limiting a meeting to a shorter time frame, around a break rather than a full meal format, can help. “Planners can also give HCPs the option not to participate in a meal at all or to fully pay for their own meals,” she adds.

Sponsorships

“Although medical device company sponsors have longer proven sponsors under the their MedTech Europe regulations,” Bemrose says, “pharma companies still can. When some of the stricter regulations came into place, a few pharma companies stopped sponsoring HCPs to congresses, fearful of contravening codes. Over time, companies have found that sponsoring pharmaceuticals is not as advanced in the compliance space,” she says. “Communicating constraints upfront is key to achieving the desired outcome. If the hotel or restaurant is aware of the meal cap well in advance, creative menus can be designed.”

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Planners holding the HMCC certification must recertify every two years, but they must keep up with changes far more frequently.

If a company has a compliance director or compliance attorney on staff, Schaumann adds, planners should defer to them on issues.

Being unprepared, Beaulieu says, is a mistake. "One way to address that is to have a foundation of information and I think the HMCC course that MPI offers is a must-have first step for any medical or health care meeting planner. She advises planners "to get involved in the industry and attend meetings." In addition to the app, she suggests using the Policy & Medicine Compliance Update as a good resource.

"The good news is that we'll continue to see an increase in medical meetings worldwide," Schaumann notes. "Politics will continue to affect medical-meeting policies, Asia will become the second-largest pharmaceutical destination in 2020 and there are changes taking place in Asia that planners will need to address."

THE BEST ADVICE
"Ensure you’re educated, stay connected to the industry and stay current on changing laws and regulations," Côté says.

Schaumann encourages planners not to give up. "It’s funny how many times an attendee at one of my training sessions will throw up their hands and say, ‘I quit.’ I encourage them to not be frustrated, but to embrace the specialty field they’re in. There’s a lot to know and a lot to absorb about compliance, but the more you learn the more knowledgeable you’ll be, and that’s a huge benefit to an advancing career path.”

Bemrose advises planners to get involved in groups and organizations that can help them stay connected to information, and to carve out time each week for reading information, and listening in on webinars and attending meetings. "And take advantage of the interactive learning. I also see patients and peer groups influencing meeting content more and more."

Côté sees a shift in prioritizing the attendee experience. "Many organizations want to be influential and be a choice" for HCPs, which means attendee-focused, content-driven sessions, innovative experiences and hands-on training, including soft skills, she says.

"The best advice is to provide better patient care is not just the work or responsibility of physicians. There are so many components that fit together to make this happen and each of us plays a small part. Collectively, our efforts are helping advance health care at a rapid rate."

Bemrose advises much the same in Europe, "Read the major compliance regulations such as EFPIA, ABPI, PhRMA and the Sunshine Act, particularly around hospitality and meetings. Don’t be afraid to ask questions. Use the newspaper test: Would you be happy that the meeting/function was reported in the papers? And don’t forget," he says, "in some small way, you’re helping to improve patient lives."
Golf Resort Support Lively Meetings

By Mark Rowh

There are golf courses, and then there are golf courses. And to the benefit of meeting planners looking for outstanding settings, some of the most outstanding courses can be found at resorts that have incorporated the sport as a major part of their operations. More than just one more attractive feature, golf courses at many resorts can help build prospects for success for any meeting.

“Successful meetings are characterized by achieving business goals and giving participants a taste of the destination and its offerings,” says Heath Carter, regional vice president of sales and marketing at Coral Hospitality, a Naples, Florida-based hospitality management company. “Golf resorts are a prime destination for such events because they allow planners the ease of fun activities within a well-appointed facility.” He adds that golf resorts also tend to have peaceful and relaxing environments because of the scenery and the greens of the golf courses, contributing to a stress-free tone for corporate meetings. Having a golf course close to the meeting facilities can be a major asset for team-building activities.

A Winning Combination

Properties well known for golf often provide top-notch meeting facilities. With a profile as full-fledged resorts rather than simply hotels, this combination offers much that meeting planners should find attractive.

The Broadmoor, for example, has been a highly desirable Colorado location for meetings held by TWO MEN AND A TRUCK, a logistics company headquartered in Lansing, Michigan.

“The Broadmoor offers the perfect mix of meeting space, the best customer service, first-class accommodations, and so many fun things to do right on site,” says Cindy Wilhelm, executive assistant and special events coordinator. “Their food and beverage offerings are amazing, and you have to appreciate the on-site A/V services.”

The resort has two courses offering a diverse golfing experience. The highly-rated East Course combines challenging terrain with mountain vistas. Along with rolling fairways, the West Course has multilevel greens and steeply angled greens, all at an elevation of 6,800 feet.

The Broadmoor’s meeting and convention facilities, with 185,000 sf, accommodates groups of up to 6,500. The space includes a 60,000-sf pillar-free ballroom. In addition, nearby attractions expand entertainment options available to attendees. They include the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Garden of the Gods Park and Colorado Springs U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Training Center. Planned for a spring 2020 opening is a digital experience guests can enjoy at the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum. Holding a meeting at a golf resort offers benefits not only for experienced golfers, but novices as well, complemented by features that appeal to those who are not golfers at all, says Amy Long, chief innovation officer for Visit Colorado Springs. Not only are golf resorts invariably located in beautiful surroundings, but they typically offer other amenities such as: spa experiences, tennis, pickle ball, swimming pools, excellent restaurants and boutique shopping.

For golfers, a plus is that often they have the convenience of an on-site course that’s usually not open to the public, Long says. And for those who are inexperienced but would like to learn, a lesson with the resident pros may be appealing. In addition, group activities can be structured around the game. “There are some consultants who offer group golf experiences where they
use golf as a metaphor for how a person approaches professional and personal challenges, and an analogy for strategic planning and execution," Long says.

A distinct advantage is that more likely than not, golf planners can count on good weather.

“If a golf outing is planned, you’re pretty sure you will be in a warmer climate,” Wilhelms says. “Warmer climates mean fewer flight delays, more attendees and confidence to book outdoor venues at the resort.”

Another plus is that when the wide spectrum of physical activity is considered, more meeting attendees may be able to take advantage of this long-standing sport than some other, more physically demanding activities. While golf certainly requires certain basic skills, it’s still a less rigorous outdoor activity than say, skiing or hiking mountain trails.

OTHER GOLF RESORTS

For those who find the game enjoyable, the availability of golfing provides options for attendees to network on the course, aids in physical and mental exercise and ultimately allows for them to re-charge in nature, says the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau’s Mark McMinn, vice president of business development.

“It’s a transformative meeting experience that will inspire attendees and reinvigorate them,” McMinn says.

Among the Northern California region’s properties offering scenic views and appealing venues are Quail Lodge & Golf Club and Carmel Valley Ranch. Along with nine meeting rooms, Quail Lodge has an 18-hole championship golf course, an all-grass, nine-hole putting course and a golf academy for those wishing to improve their game. Guests can also take advantage of a heated pool, sand boce ball pits, tennis and pickleball courts and a Land Rover experience where participants learn new skills while enjoying an adventure some experience.

At Carmel Valley Ranch, golfers are challenged by a par-70, Pete Dye-designed course that features captivat-Chavon River. Jason Kycek, senior vice president of sales and marketing, reports that the hotel has undergone an extensive improvement plan in recent years. Guest facilities include not only suites and other rooms, but more than 500 villas that come with maid and butler service, daily breakfast, private pools, Jacuzzis, golf carts and other amenities. Some 15,000 sf of meeting space is currently available, and an additional meeting facility is scheduled for opening this year with a capacity of 600. Golfers can choose from three highly-rated courses with features ranging from coral shores to rolling hills and steep cliffs sides.

Located in the headwaters of the Florida Everglades, Rosen Shingle Creek boasts more than 1,500 guest rooms and 254,000 sf of meeting and event space, including a 95,000 sf ballroom. The resort’s championship golf course was designed by Arnold Palmer Design Company. Other amenities range from volleyball, tennis and fishing.

For meeting participants interested in improving their game, Rosen’s Shingle Creek Golf Club is home to the well-known Brad Brewer Golf Academy. Its new short-game practice area and state-of-the-art Swing analysis and game improvement technology is also offered.

Highly regarded by golf aficionados is Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate, which boasts two challenging 18-hole courses in an area that includes not only wind-swept dunes but also woodlands, wetlands and orange groves. A nine-hole par three course, lighted for night play, can be ideal for beginners. A driving range and practice area are also available. The resort easily accommodates large groups. Its more than 248,000 sf of meeting and banquet space includes three large and four smaller ballrooms.

Among 265,000 sf of meeting and event space, the JW Marriott San Antonio Hill Country Resort & Spa features two PGA tour certified golf courses on-site. Designed by Pete Dye and Greg Norman, respectively, the courses are located on 2,800 roll-acres and are watered by an eco-friendly, efficient irrigation system. Golf instruction includes two, three and five-day schools for golfers of all skill levels.

“Warmer climates mean fewer flight delays, more attendees, and confidence to book outdoor venues at the property.”

CINDY WILHELM Executive Assistant and Special Events Coordinator TWO MEN AND A TRUCK

Meetings offering include 49 indoor and outdoor venues with 52 maxi-mum breakout meeting rooms, a nearby ranch for a uniquely Texas meetings experience and a 9,000 sf pavilion. Other features include a 9-acre waterpark, lazy river and hiking and biking trails.

The two courses of Omni La Costa Resort & Spa, near San Diego, California also offer outstanding experiences for meeting attendees. One is a links-style course with fast conditions, while a second is a parkland-style course with an emphasis on accuracy off the tee. Along with traditional golf lessons, attendees can improve skills with a robotic swing trainer.

Omnis Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate
Planners may choose from 46 meeting rooms with 110,000 sf of meeting space available. Facilities include an event center with a ballroom, breakout rooms and a state-of-the-art learning center.

Trump National Doral Miami offers 643 rooms on an 800-acre resort. It offers more than 100,000 sf of meeting and event space including several large ballrooms. A popular attraction is a moonlight golf experience, where a putting green is transformed into a glowing miniature golf course and players, including novices, use glow-in-the-dark golf balls. Night driving and putting contests are also held.

Located on Georgia’s Southeastern coast with 5 miles of private beach, Sea Island resort features three championship golf courses. One course, Seaside, is an ocean-side links course bordered by dunes, wildflowers and bunkers. Players find that the changing winds offer an interesting challenge. Recent improvements include new cottages, an oceanfront pool and pool house, and an 18-hole putting course. Earlier this year saw the addition of a 17,000-sf golf performance center. The resort offers 42,000 sf of indoor meeting space. Groups up to 500 can be accommodated.

Last, but not least, South Florid’s Naples Grande Beach Resort in Naples, Florida offers a Rees Jones-designed private course located a short drive from the hotel. The club recently completed $8 million renovation and added its first formal clubhouse. Originally completed in 2000, the 18-hole, par-72 course has been highly rated in golf magazines. It features a variety of native Florida trees and outstanding water features.

The resort offers more than 83,000 sf of space to support both indoor and outdoor events. The resort’s second-floor ballroom level underwent a multimillion-dollar renovation last year.

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF GOLF RESORTS

From supporting recreational interests to promoting meeting goals, golf offers planners a variety of opportunities. “Golf as team-building can be a great option,” Buck says. Regardless of experience or skill level, you can find something for everyone, whether it be a quick lesson with a golf pro, a few swings at the driving range, or play a full 18 holes.” He says groups can use golf in exciting ways for interactivity or incentives for attendees such as long-drive or closest-to-the-pin contests.

Good planning should also take into account that while golf may be among the country’s most popular pastimes, it’s not for everyone. If group activities are planned, they should include options for those who are unable to hit the links or who are simply not interested.

To gauge individual interest, an easily executable strategy is to survey participants during the registration process and ask if golf will be a part of their plans. If not, alternative activities should be identified.

Carter says a simple strategy for planners is to allow extra time for participants to get ready for their tee time after the conclusion of meetings. “Many attendees will need to change clothes, get their clubs ready and want to putt or warm up on the range,” he says. “By allowing some extra time in the schedule, people will not feel rushed and enjoy their round more.”

Along with golf outings, the overall experience can be enhanced with related activities or giveaways. “A golf resort would be a choice venue for many people just for the opportunity to get a few holes in between meetings,” says Shelley Grieshop, creative writer/public relations director for Totally Promotional in Coldwater, Ohio. “But if you truly want to make your event memorable and interesting, infuse the golf theme into the itinerary.” That might mean posting golf quotes in conference materials or offering golf-themed gifts or prizes.

An all-out approach might include steps such as inviting a personality from the golfing world to serve as a speaker, or asking keynoters to incorporate golf jokes or anecdotes in their presentations. Even without such efforts, planning a meeting at a golf resort can be a win-win proposition. It could draw more participants than would otherwise be the case, and attendees may go away satisfied with their experience and more likely to want to attend future events.
A saying among professional negotiators is, “Whoever is talking the most is probably losing.” That’s especially true when the person talking most depends on words alone without using basic behavioral psychology that can help in face-to-face negotiations.

Using psychology can improve overall negotiation skills for veteran and novice planners as well as increase the odds for getting the best deal possible. However, adopting psychological techniques isn’t easy for two reasons: There is so much for planners to remember, analyze, interpret and decide while negotiating. And many planners aren’t accustomed to using psychology, although including such an approach can boost negotiation skills.

Experts agree that negotiation is part research, part business savvy, part creativity — and part psychology. According to Jonathan Howe, founding partner and president of Chicago-based law firm Howe & Hutton and a widely recognized leader in the meetings and hospitality industries, there are no specific psychological techniques that work best for planners. “Your basic negotiation skills, whether you are negotiating with a spouse or in today’s marketplace, are somewhat the same and that is important,” Howe says. “We all have our developed skills that we use.”

Howe adds, “You must evaluate the other side as an individual as well as the other side’s positioning relative to what they are trying to achieve. All of that gives you a clue to what you can put on the table and what might be reasonable in one situation, which might not be reasonable in another.”

A key to negotiating successfully is research, which goes hand in hand with psychology. Says Howe, “Information is power, and part of that is being able to know what you can about the other side. Psychology comes into play because part of the evaluation is knowing what works with that person. You want to evaluate the other side; find what makes them tick and what approach you should take.”

Carroll Reuben, CMP, CMM and president of Meeting Excellence, a Los Angeles-based meeting planning firm, agrees. Reuben says pre-negotiation research helps determine the difference between the best deal possible and the one a counterpart wants to provide. “The most important thing from my perspective is my preparation before I go into the negotiation,” Reuben says. “Having a good knowledge of the company or hotel is important as is demonstrating it. You definitely have leverage because you know where the profit centers are and where they may have flexibility to do anything.”

DO YOUR RESEARCH

Once research is complete, use it to help understand the other person’s thinking going into the bargaining and gain a psychological advantage. Accomplish that, experts suggest, by asking yourself the following questions before negotiating:

• What does the other side really want?
• Who are the stakeholders and negotiation influencers not sitting at the table? Try to know how they can impact your counterpart’s state of mind.
• What are you going to do and say if you don’t get the deal you want? Knowing what you will do if there is no agreement provides a sense of power and confidence.
• What interests do you share and how can you use them at the right time to gain leverage?
• Which facts can you use most persuasively?
• Is this a one-off negotiation or will you meet the person again?
Once research is complete, marry it with basic behavioral psychology tactics. For example, before negotiations start, make subtle ‘power moves’ that can improve leverage. One way to do that: When possible, choose the time and place to negotiate. Don’t be too flexible. People who are more accommodating have less perceived power.

Howe says it’s important to avoid showing what a counterpart can see as weakness leading up to negotiations even in small ways and offers the following example: “What if someone calls and says, ‘Let’s have lunch on Wednesday?’ Howe says, ‘I might say I can’t do Wednesday, but I can have lunch on Thursday and recommend a specific time and place. Does that work for you?’ I’m setting the game plan and using some type of power. It’s not aggressive power. But I’m trying to see what kind of sway I might have later.”

In addition, some experts suggest, when possible separate negotiations into two meetings because people tend to bargain a little less aggressively when they know they will meet again.

BUILD A CONNECTION

Once negotiations start, establish rapport with light chat and niceties to build goodwill. This is important because, according to a study in the Journal of Applied Sciences, the first five minutes of a negotiation can predict the outcome. According to Greg Jenkins, a partner in Bravo Productions, an event planning and production company in Long Beach, California, “Engage others beyond what you are negotiating with. When you also can connect on a personal level with the person you are negotiating with, that might just improve your chances of getting what you desire.”

There are several ways to build rapport. Anthony Taccetta, owner of Anthony Taccetta Event and Design in New York City, includes a unique approach to establish a connection. When negotiating with vendors on behalf of corporate clients, Taccetta personalizes the client to the vendor. Such an approach psychologically invests the vendor in the outcome.

“In order to do that, I often mention why the event is so important to the client,” Taccetta says. “It may be that the corporate stakeholder is a new hire, has a new role within the company or has been at the company for a long time, but with internal restructuring at a more senior level has been tasked to shake up an annual event and make it more modern and exciting. I make sure the vendor understands there is a lot on the line for that person.”

Taccetta cautions that building rapport has its limits. “It’s very important in the beginning to build rapport by chatting,” Taccetta says. “Sitting down for a cup of coffee or sandwich is great. But I don’t want to make the person my new best friend. Don’t over-bond. It might come across as desperation, which puts you at a psychological disadvantage.”

Taccetta says establishing rapport is especially important if you are dealing with prospective repeat customers. “But even if you build good rapport with a salesperson, he or she might be gone in a year or two because salespeople don’t last very long. It’s the nature of this business.”

So according to Reuben, planners are left having to repeatedly create rapport with different salespeople within relatively short periods of time. That’s why Reuben offers the following advice: “Take a far more professional approach rather than trying to be best friends. I wouldn’t waste too much time on it because the main thing is you must listen. Listening can be used as a psychological advantage.”

Listening builds trust and separates you from peers who push too hard. Listening also helps one learn and speak the ‘negotiation language’ of the other person and use it to gain an advantage. Says Howe, “Being a good listener and asking some good questions upfront helps you get to know the other side and what might be a need for them.”

Listening also demonstrates confidence, a key psychological trait of successful negotiators. According to Jenkins, “Listening to others demonstrates you are comfortable in your own skin and value other opinions even when you might disagree. Asking questions when you don’t know some-
EXUDE CONFIDENCE

Educated curiosity sends a verbal message of confidence which, accompanied with non-verbal signs of confidence, lends you more psychological weight to negotiation stances. According to Jenkins, “Walking into the negotiations standing tall, believing in yourself and your ability to achieve your goals will increase the chances of getting what you want. A firm handshake and good posture demonstrate confidence. A weak or less-than-firm handshake may cross you over to another person lacking confidence.”

According to Jenkins, over-confidence is what may seem counter-intuitive. "Ability to demonstrate flexibility shows confidence," Jenkins says. "Rigid thinking is a symptom of lacking in self-confidence and will be counterproductive in responding to the changes needed in negotiating with others."

In addition, Jenkins says, avoid over-confidence because it sends the wrong psychological message. "One can be over-confident and completely miss the mark," Jenkins warns. "Over-confidence can come across as arrogant, less-than-flexible and give the impression that you think you are smarter than the other person. What that happens, negotiations are off to a bad start and there is a good chance you may not get the outcome you expect or desire.

Choices of words and phrases can also impact negotiation outcome by communicating your negotiating options. "I will never forget early in my career arriving in Japan on a Tuesday and driving with people I would be negotiating with for the next two days. I had a lot of small talk which is good and helps rapport. They asked when I was going back, I said Friday. Well, Tuesday and Wednesday came and we didn’t get much done. On Thursday we moved well, but were not where we needed to be. So, I’m under the gun because I had boxed myself in by saying I’m leaving on Friday. Finally, I said I’d like to when we finish the negotiation, but the people in Japan are really interested and I’m going there on Friday if we don’t make a deal here." Howe was able to make the deal before leaving Japan.

Experts offer the following tips on the types of phrases that can gain a psychological upper hand and don’t weaken leverage. Use cooperative words or language, "we,” “us” and “brainstorm” because they imply a shared goal and working together. Don’t say “I have a better offer.” Instead, say “How would the deal you offer differ from the one I’m presenting?”

Use verbal mirroring, which involves repeating parts of the other person’s previous statement in the form of a question or stand-up, and indicates that you have listened. It also encourages the other person to clarify or provide more information. Example: Your counterpart says, “I can’t commit to that offer because it limits the hotel’s profitability.” The response: “You can’t commit because of limited profitability?” Pause and wait for additional comments. Pausing can also be useful when responding to the other side’s first offer or when making a counteroffer.

The 5 Most Important Verbal Strategies

• “Just relax your own body language. If you show any tension, you are going to get in trouble.”

• “Crossed arms might mean the person is cold. Does the person form a temple with their hands in front of the face? That can be seen as trying to assert authority, or the person might be praying. Sometimes you don’t know.”

• When it comes to non-verbal negotiating behavior, remember this advice: “Just relax your own body language. If you show any tension, you are going to get in trouble during the negotiation because it’s seen as weakness.”

Experts suggest the following non-verbal strategies:

• Use nonverbal mirroring to subtly reinforce certain behaviors. Social science research shows that nonverbal mirroring engages the other person and builds empathy. Example: When the other person leans forward and smiles, do likewise.

• Use the ‘pained pose’ — a pause in talking accompanied by a slight grimace, to show disappointment.”

• Feign indifference when reach an impass. Downplay a sense of urgency and time as issues by being relaxed. This can create slight psychological tension in the other party and improve chances for an agreement.

• Cross your arms to reinforce inflexibility just before you make a final offer or refuse an offer. Psychologists say it’s a powerful move.

• Spread arms or use other ‘open’ gestures to indicate receptiveness to the other person is saying.

• Pay attention to the other person’s body language, tone of voice and word choice. Do the verbal and non-verbal cues match? If not, there may be an opening to gain an advantage. Some planners absolutely love the challenge of negotiating while others don’t. But even veteran planners who like negotiating may feel tingles of uncertainty and anxiety during the process.

Harvey Grotsky, Pres/CEO/Publisher

Anthony Taccetta Event and Design

Feign indifference when reach an impass. Downplay a sense of urgency and time as issues by being relaxed. This can create slight psychological tension in the other party and improve chances for an agreement.
ll work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.” That’s not a meaningless phrase. For more than 300 years that proverb has been part of Western culture with good reason: It’s true. In order to thrive and to succeed at the highest levels, humans need to balance work and play—not just in everyday work and life but also at business meetings and conventions. That’s where entertainment comes in. But it’s not just about play. Entertainment is a valuable business tool. The right entertainment can: increase attendance; engage attendees; draw clients; and support a company’s values, brand and vision, not to mention enhance employee morale and bond colleagues in the shared experience.

So how do planners ensure they get the most business bang for their entertainment buck?

THE PLANNER PERSPECTIVE

Colleen A. Rickenbacher, CMP, CSEP, CPC, CPECP, co-founder, Global Protocol, Etiquette & Civility Academy, a company dedicated to helping current and future leaders improve their communications skills, business etiquette and professional image, thinks there are three major things planners should consider before booking entertainment. “They should keep in mind the goals, needs and purpose of the specific program or conference, the demographics of the attendees, and budget.”

She adds that, “Entertainment is a key factor to increase attendance at an event. It’s a great way to bring an entire company together from the top down, and entertainment can change the entire outlook of a corporation regarding attitude, morale and even productivity.”

Rickenbacher says entertainment should be incorporated as part of the overall program and part of the agenda and planning from the start. “The entertainment should always be a necessary tool to the program,” she continues. “It should have a major tie-in to the program and relate to the overall purpose of the meeting and the end result. Attendees should easily see this tie to their goals. Of course, if the entertainer is a well-known artist, than all the better for incentive building, camaraderie and boosting attendance.”

On the downside, Rickenbacher notes many things can go awry with entertainment when performers don’t show up. “Illness, a death in the family, flight delays, weather, simply running late, only half of the performers arrive or they arrive drunk. They may show up dressed inappropriately for the event or use language not appropriate for the audience. They might be no-shows, for no reason at all.” Consequently, Rickenbacher says planners must always have language in contracts to protect themselves for any and all events that impact fulfillment of the contract.

“Protect yourself in your contract with a clause that states that if the performer or speaker cannot perform, a substitute of equal or better quality will perform. Additionally, the client will have access to interviewing this substitute, if possible, before hiring. If that’s not possible, a video and/or references must be provided.”

Perhaps most importantly, she adds, “Planners should always be prepared with a Plan B.”

Another thing to consider: You may not need a big, expensive name to meet your objectives. “At times you may need that name for the draw,” Rickenbacher says, “but you would be amazed at the number of speakers and entertainers out there that are excellent and not nearly as expensive as someone ‘famous.’ They may even be in that same city as your program, thus saving you thousands of dollars in travel expenses.”

That said, she adds, “Always get good references, try to go and listen to them speak or perform and make sure they’re a match for your goals, objectives and the purpose of the event.”

Lindsey Wolf, DMCP, lead creative design manager at Texas-based Ultimate Ventures, part of the Hosts Global network, adds other considerations planners should have top of mind when booking entertainment.

Flexibility on-site, price point, guest engagement and interaction with the crowd, and a fast response time are among her top-five recommendations. To those she adds the necessity of an entertainer’s quality promotional photos and videos.

“It’s really hard to sell an entertainer that doesn’t have quality promotional material. I find that photos do not always cut it, and most of the time clients need to see a video before being able to pull the trigger,” she says.

Like others, Wolf thinks the right entertainment can increase guest engagement and “help drive the energy in the room.” And though some events may need a big name to drive attendance, she says, “If the entertainment is engaging enough, it doesn’t matter if they are lesser known.”

There’s also this fact: Entertainment is not a one-size-fits-all proposition. “What works for some groups doesn’t work for all,” Wolf says. “The more information the client has beforehand about demographics, the better. While one group may live for line dancing and photo ops, another group may find games the best way for guests to interact and bond. No two
events should be treated the same." Local entertainment can also impact attendees. "When groups come to Texas, nine times out of ten they’re looking for a Western experience," Wolf says. "They want that rustic, laid back, southern hospitality that Texas is known for. As a planner, I always try to find the right balance of a Texas feel without the event feeling too kitschy or cliché."

Among the western elements Wolf has successfully used are a mechanical bull, armadillo racing, rustic back yard games, a country-western band with line dancing lessons, and whiskey tasting or craft beer experiences.

Regardless of location, Wolf thinks live music is always a good idea. "Guests don’t want to spend time in a stale, quiet environment. A live band or DJ can read the crowd and keep the rhythm going. While an Electronic Press Kit (EPK) may have a band photo with certain members, the members are often plug and play. If a client books an act because of the look of the lead guitar player, for example, it may be that a different lead guitarist could throw a rock and hit incredible notes, "Wolf says. "It’s an experience serving as an extension of everything a company strives for the other 364 days a year. Achieving a ‘wow’ factor doesn’t mean overshadowing or stepping outside of company culture. We aim to tie in custom branding or interactive elements so employees truly feel the entertainment was created especially for them as a part of everything else happening. Nothing is by accident; every experience has a purpose.”

Being clear on purpose is one way to determine how much of the budget should be allotted to entertainment and what that entertainment should be. "Every program should prioritize its event and which components are the most important," Bass says. "From there, you can start assigning percentages, ranging from 10 to 25 percent for entertainment. Here in Music City, there’s a wide price range of acts. Without knowing your priorities, you cannot effectively build your budget."

Once priorities are established, next decisions include whether to book big-name or relatively unknown entertainment. "Our philosophy goes back to what is dictating the purpose for your event," Bass says. "If the purpose is to drive attendance, it might make sense to engage name-act entertainment you know your attendees would love. But as far as entertainment value, it’s not necessary to have name acts. If your purpose is to ensure your attendees have the most fun ever, it opens up so many more possibilities.”

"There’s a growing understanding that entertainment spend is proportionally of high value." JENNIFER MUÑOZ PEREZ

"Every destination is defined by its culture, history and specialties. Planners demand the authentic experience for those creating custom artworks within their projects. We highlight the Wynwood Walls, Florida’s Everglades ecosystem and our huge population of varying Latin cultures, including Cuban, Puerto Rican and Colombian. We work to merge their stories with entertainment programs.” Jennifer Muñoz Perez, account manager at Cream of the Crop Events & Logistics LLC in Florida, echoes other experts in noting that group destinations, budget and a company’s messaging goals are important factors in choosing conference entertainment. She also says planners should continue to think about budgeting and negotiate with entertainment providers to reach a fair price for something unique that creates a memorable experience.

Cream of the Crop Events & Logistics LLC designed a Miami ‘White-Hot Party’ performance that became the reveal of a company’s new executive.

But the room could have already seen the lead guitar player, for example, it may be that a different lead guitarist could throw a rock and hit incredible notes, "Wolf says. "It’s an experience serving as an extension of everything a company strives for the other 364 days a year. Achieving a ‘wow’ factor doesn’t mean overshadowing or stepping outside of company culture. We aim to tie in custom branding or interactive elements so employees truly feel the entertainment was created especially for them as a part of everything else happening. Nothing is by accident; every experience has a purpose.”

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ATTENDEE REMEMBER WHAT THEY SAW, HEARD AND FELT DURING A LIVE PERFORMANCE. BREAKFAST TALK OFTEN CENTERS ON THE SPECULATE OF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT. ATTENDEES REMEMBER A GREAT BAND AND DANCING FOR HOURS, NOT THE LIVEN THAT WAS ON THE TABLE.

While providing name entertainment isn’t always necessary, Perez says if the budget allows, using name entertainment sends a message to the audience that they’re valued.

Like Rickenbacker, Perez says local culture is often the go-to because groups want an authentic experience. "Every destination is defined by its culture, history and specialties. Planners demand the authentic experience for those creating custom artworks within their projects. We highlight the Wynwood Walls, Florida’s Everglades ecosystem and our huge population of varying Latin cultures, including Cuban, Puerto Rican and Colombian. We work to merge their stories with entertainment programs.” Jennifer Muñoz Perez, account manager at Cream of the Crop Events & Logistics LLC in Florida, echoes other experts in noting that group destinations, budget and a company’s messaging goals are important factors in choosing conference entertainment. She also says planners should continue to think about budgeting and negotiate with entertainment providers to reach a fair price for something unique that creates a memorable experience.

Cream of the Crop Events & Logistics LLC designed a Miami ‘White-Hot Party’ performance that became the reveal of a company’s new executive.
We designed an on-stage reveal that And Latin dancers who joyously share DJs. Next,” she says, “ask detailed a reputable, experienced agency, so you’re hiring the most talented and dependable performers. Corporate event work is a specialty; great club entertainment for their events. “Work with vetted artists and always have a force majeure clause in our contracts.” If entertainment fails our first call is to the artist’s agent and management team to find out if anyone else on their roster would be available to step in.” St. Onge says planners should seek out interactive entertainment experiences and team-building experiences as bonding options. One example is a song-writing workshop. “We bring in hit songwriters who will not only perform their hits but also work with small breakout groups to write a song on-site. To end the event, they’ll perform the song they just wrote with their team.” While it’s true that most companies want an authentic local experience, St. Onge says there are exceptions. For one of her events, set at the Country Music Hall of Fame, a non-country headliner was requested. “We were fortunate to have a great relationship with an agent who represents a super group of three mega-stars from the pop/rock scene of the ’90s, with two of the artists living here in Nashville. After the show, the CEO said he couldn’t have asked for a better event to captivate their diverse audience.” The take-away for planners? Just because a city is known for one thing doesn’t mean other great options aren’t available. As for budget, St. Onge says “10 percent for entertainment is average across the board, but at least in Nashville we’ve found that percentages increase when groups want to weave entertainment through an entire event.” She points out that there is also a cautionary note when it comes to booking big-name entertainment. “Once you bring in high-profile entertainment, that’s going to be the expectation of attendees going forward and planners have to be prepared to continue to look that caliber of entertainment in the future.” St. Onge’s best advice for planners is to build a team of partners to rely on. “You don’t have to be an expert in the entertainment field. A solid talent-buying partner can be your biggest collaborator, an ally on your side representing you as an entertainment liaison.” As is true with so many other elements of planning, the best course of action is finding and working with trusted partners and vendors. 

FROM THE ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDER PERSPECTIVE Those who actually provide entertainment view corporate entertainment much as planners do. Annette St. Onge, director of entertainment management/talent buyer for Aspen Ridge Entertainment, encourages planners to consider all those things mentioned by other experts here when thinking about entertainment for their events. She also puts an emphasis on addressing every conceivable issue — band attire, custom lyrics, logos, brand colors and more — ahead of time. “It’s crucial to have these conversations before you go to contract, so any additional work and/or fees can be negotiated on the front end. Once you go to contract, ‘no’ becomes an easy response from the entertainment. And we know in the event world, ‘no’ is a four-letter word.” And she emphasizes preparedness. “We work with vetted artists and always have a force majeure clause in our contracts.” If entertainment falls through, “Our first call is to the artist’s agent and management team to find out if anyone else on their roster would be available to step in.” St. Onge says planners should seek out interactive entertainment experiences and team-building experiences as bonding options. One example is a song-writing workshop. “We bring in hit songwriters who will not only perform their hits but also work with small breakout groups to write a song on-site. To end the event, they’ll perform the song they just wrote with their team.” While it’s true that most companies want an authentic local experience, St. Onge says there are exceptions. For one of her events, set at the Country Music Hall of Fame, a non-country headliner was requested. “We were fortunate to have a great relationship with an agent who represents a super group of three mega-stars from the pop/rock scene of the ’90s, with two of the artists living here in Nashville. After the show, the CEO said he couldn’t have asked for a better event to captivate their diverse audience.” The take-away for planners? Just because a city is known for one thing doesn’t mean other great options aren’t available. As for budget, St. Onge says “10 percent for entertainment is average across the board, but at least in Nashville we’ve found that percentages increase when groups want to weave entertainment through an entire event.” She points out that there is also a cautionary note when it comes to booking big-name entertainment. “Once you bring in high-profile entertainment, that’s going to be the expectation of attendees going forward and planners have to be prepared to continue to look that caliber of entertainment in the future.” St. Onge’s best advice for planners is to build a team of partners to rely on. “You don’t have to be an expert in the entertainment field. A solid talent-buying partner can be your biggest collaborator, an ally on your side representing you as an entertainment liaison.” As is true with so many other elements of planning, the best course of action is finding and working with trusted partners and vendors.
I don’t always achieve this.” Patino was also willing to take on new projects and responsibilities that were out of her comfort zone. “Ultimately, that was an important piece to moving up as I was exposed to the flip side of the risky feeling – accomplishment realized with bold actions.”

Today, Patino says, “I work hard at integrating work-life balance for our team members. I want fulfilled people doing great work and that can be accomplished by encouraging flexible solutions to unique situations.”

In terms of mentoring others, Patino expresses a need for self-reflection and passion. “Be clear on your strengths and the aspects of work that really make you excited,” she says. “If you don’t have clear personal goals, it’s hard to see the next step. I strongly believe that if you aren’t enjoying your work you should analyze what parts you do like and find a new work environment that matches your needs. If that doesn’t exist, create it.”

In 1992, our first son arrived. As my employer didn’t support part-time working we made the decision to set up an association management company and create a flexible environment for our family. I’ve been self-employed ever since because that gives us the freedom to focus on family and do the work I enjoy most.”

Also key, is to be well informed about your industry in order to have a competitive advantage over your peers, and to be open to new opportunities. “Having sold two businesses in 2009, I was open to new ideas and was introduced to HelmsBriscoe. That discussion wouldn’t have happened had I not been an active volunteer on the MPI International Board. As an entrepreneur at HelmsBriscoe, I’ve had the chance to grow as a leader, build a team, coach and train colleagues and spend time as a volunteer with MPI.”

THE POWER OF TEAMWORK
McKellar believes in the power of teamwork along with good communication and clear goals. “Empower others,” she says. “You can’t do every-
thing yourself. Build a strong team around you and recognize them on a regular basis for their contribution.”

For McKellar, mentoring goes beyond her team. “There are barriers that prevent people with special needs from applying for jobs when they could make a valu-
able contribution,” she says. “I’m passionate about encouraging man-
agers and supervisors to review their recruitment processes and look at how they can expand their pool of talented individuals. In the UK, HelmsBriscoe support a project to bring young adults with autism into hospitality. This is funded through the MPI Foundation and Meeting Needs. Over the past seven years, we’ve seen young adults grow in confidence and go on to gain employment through our work experience project.”

To those in the industry, McKellar suggests three strategies: “Examine your strengths and be clear on what you enjoy doing and are good at doing, then focus your job applica-
tions in those areas and become known as an expert in your chosen area. Be open to lifelong learning and seek out ways to gain relevant qualifications to support your goals. Finally, get involved in industry activity, be an active member of a profes-
sional association and give back where you can.”

Paul Van Deventer, is no stranger to the meetings industry. Today he’s president and CEO of MPI and he’s clear on what’s important for those who want to succeed. “Your personal integrity and brand are the most valu-
able assets you have as a professional and the business world, and the only things completely in your control,” he says. He considers it imperative to treat others as you would want to be treated. “Not only is that the right thing to do, but from a practical perspective, the world is really a small place and your career will usually be short. Inevitably you’ll run across former business acquain-
tances in the future.”

Van Deventer’s third insight may surprise some A-types: “Take time to stop and smell the roses. My career has afforded me the opportunity to travel the world, visit unique destina-
tions and meet amazing and diverse people. Thankfully, I had a mentor early in my career who empha-
sized the importance of ‘savoring the moment,’ advice I’ve ardently fol-

“Climbing the ladder was never a goal that I had for myself. In fact, the concept of ‘climbing the ladder’ can easily distract from what it actually takes to move forward in your career. If you look at most successful leaders, you’ll see they’ve made a lateral move or even taken a step backward at some point in their career in order to move forward.”

She also agrees that taking time to slow down is important. “When you’re wired to move quickly, work hard and drive forward, it’s easy to forget to pause and appreciate all that you, as well as those around you, have accom-
plished. These accomplishments, no matter how small or big, will be the ones that keep you and your team motivated — especially when things get challenging.”
As you move up in an organization, the ability to move was so important as the learning curve is sped up dramatically with moves.

Beyond that, he suggests, “Always raise your hand for the tasks nobody wants. There have been so many defining moments that have come from those opportunities. And it may be a bit cliché,” he adds, “but our approach and outlook to whatever is put in front of us is so important.”

Looking back, Dominguez didn’t understand things he knew. “Reflection is so important as you continue to advance to see the inflection points in your life. I can think back to times I thought, ‘I’ve got this, I know’ and nope, I didn’t have it.”

His advice to those coming into the industry, “First and foremost be humble — get over yourself. This goes to the servant leadership mentality and understanding that humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking more of yourself less.”

“Your actions, he continues will be what defines you. ‘As Thoreau eloquently said, ‘What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.’ And listen — often and with an intensity to learn and understand, not to respond.”

Paul Van Deventer, president and CEO of MPI, left, speaks at the 2019 World Education Congress Town Hall meeting in Toronto, Canada.

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The meeting was well planned and executed. The planner states, “We felt the logistics required to get attendees to and from the convention center weren’t ideal. A lot of money was spent on transportation for the day of the event along with the three days before the day prior.”

The hotel also provided “five-star” food and beverage, including allergies, kosher and halal meals. The chefs also did a great job helping us accommodate dietary constraints. “The experience was so positive the company has booked the hotel for 2020, and Nash highly recommends it for other organizations,” says LISA PRATT, Owner, Promotions Events Inc. (Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Disney Springs Resort Area).

As for meetings, the planner says, “We basically used all the hotel meeting space as well as hotel vendors for power and Wi-Fi, but brought in an outside production company for A/V.” One caveat for booking here: “With space always at a premium,” the planner advises, “make sure contracted hotel rooms and space are adequate for your meeting.”

EASY TO FLY TO, EASY TO DRIVE TO

Scott Washburn, president and CEO of Nevada-based Event Consultants LLC, has brought 3,000-5,000 attendees to Orlando for the past several years. The ConnectWise IT Nation Connect, a conference for companies that sell, service and support technology, is based at another International Drive property, Hyatt Regency Orlando.

Orlando is a great location due to ease of air travel and easy access for drive-in attendees,” Washburn says. “It’s also family friendly, so many attendees have family join them before or after the conference or even during. There’s so much to do in Orlando for all ages.

Additionally, Washburn says, “The Hyatt’s location is great with a lot of hotels nearby, many in walking distance, for overflow rooms. And there are great restaurants in the hotel and within walking distance.”

Washburn’s group used every inch of the Hyatt Regency hotel worked with us planning creative dinner options. All meals had ‘well-healthy’ options and lunches were well received with healthy options and creative components. The banquet staff and captains are the finest in the Orlando area.”

Amazing Orlando

Continues to Garner Planners’ and Attendees’ Praise

BY CHRISTINE LOOMIS

Orlando was founded in 1875, almost 100 years before the first theme park arrived. The city has history, quality infrastructure and a slew of meeting-friendly hotels. Most importantly, it welcomes and supports business. The fact that there are other theme parks to help drive registration is just icing on this sunny cake.

The Orange County Convention Center (OCCC) has announced an expansion to add 280,000 sf, including a 200,000 sf multi-purpose space able to accommodate up to 20,000 attendees, improving upon an already excellent facility.

SO MANY MEETING VENUES

The biggest choice for planners may be where in the city to meet.

Located 25 minutes from Orlando’s airport and 20 minutes from Universal Orlando Resort, SeaWorld Orlando and Walt Disney World Resort, the 862-room Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate is a destination in its own right. Maribeth Nash, corporate events manager with Missouri-based Origami Risk, provider of risk-management software, says, “It’s the best resort in the area and they were willing to work with us on our price point and needs. We also liked that it was a little away from Walt Disney World.”

The company’s User Conference last year drew 450 attendees. All functions were on-site, and Nash says “The resort is large enough that you don’t need to do anything off-site and can still feel like you’re getting variety.”

“The only hitch was that most attendees checked in at the same time, but not all rooms were ready. Nash suggests planners address that ahead of time and develop a solution.”

The experience was so positive the company has booked the resort for 2020, and Nash highly recommends it for others. “Your group will love the space, the resort and the food.”

The space was perfect and private as we had the entire Osceola building to ourselves. And attendees and colleagues are still talking about the amazing food.”

Nash calls the staff the best she’s worked with. “Everyone was on top of things 175 percent. From contract negotiations to running our program, to room coordinator, everyone went above and beyond.”

The hotel delivered on all fronts. “The space was perfect and private as we had the entire Osceola building to ourselves. And attendees and colleagues are still talking about the amazing food.”

The meeting planner says Orlando ticks off many boxes, including good airlift and fares and hotels with sufficient room nights and meeting space.

The planner’s group used the OCCC for its plenary as well as some meals, and, the planner notes, “Weather in December has been chilly the past two years so unfortunately outdoor options have not worked.”

In spite of the hotel’s convenient location, the planner says, “We felt the logistics required to get attendees to and from the convention center weren’t ideal. A lot of money was spent on transportation for the day of the event along with the three days before the day prior.”

That aside, the planner says, “Based on our past experience with the hotel, the selection was ideal for us.” The planner gives the hotel an excellent rating for everything from the contracting process and the sales contact and conference services manager (CSM) team to rooms, cleanliness and customer service.

The hotel also provided “five-star” food and beverage, presentation, creativity and service, the planner adds. “The staff and how easy they make your job.”

As for meetings, the planner says, “We basically used all the hotel meeting space as well as hotel vendors for power and Wi-Fi, but brought in an outside production company for A/V.”

One caveat for booking here: “With space always at a premium,” the planner advises, “make sure contracted hotel rooms and space are adequate for your meeting.”

EASY TO FLY TO, EASY TO DRIVE TO

Sea Tow Services International Inc. met last year at Wyndham Lake Buena Vista Disney Springs Resort Area.

The meeting was well planned and executed. The planner states, “We felt the logistics required to get attendees to and from the convention center weren’t ideal. A lot of money was spent on transportation for the day of the event along with the three days before the day prior.”

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Loews Sapphire Falls Resort was one of several Loews resorts to host as many as 4,100 attendees for the celebration of a global software company.

“Warmly meeting the group at Loews Portofino Bay Hotel was a key part of our planning,” says Pratt. “I knew a simple, wholesome dinner and reception for 4,000+ people all sitting and eating at once was a challenge and I didn’t want to put our company in that position. I wanted our people to enjoy themselves and have an atmosphere of celebration. Pratt shared that the meeting space at Loews Portofino Bay Hotel was a huge help in creating that atmosphere. Pratt says, “The staff was kind, engaging and went above and beyond, including managing a dinner and reception for 4,000+ people all sitting and eating at once. It was flawless. We were concerned about Wi-Fi capabilities given our numbers, but that was flawless as well. We were able to use the space really well. The staff also did a great job helping us accommodate dietary constraints, including allergies, kosher and halal meals.”

Pratt chose Universal Orlando and Loews hotels based on a successful meeting at Loews Portofino Bay years ago. The key was that she maintained relationships from that meeting.

“Keep in touch with our sales person. When I sourced this program, the meeting space at Loews Sapphire Falls wasn’t built, but she and her assistant helped me lay out every one of our projected breakout, general sessions and meals to ensure the meeting could fit in the space that didn’t even exist yet. My faith in her assessment of how we could make it work, along with the time spent mapping it out, made me confident in recommending it as an exceptional option for our program.”

Pratt says there were a few hiccups, including a shortage of matching chairs for a 4,100-person dinner. “The hotel provided options in a timely manner so we could quickly react.”

The solution: They borrowed chairs from one of their other hotels.

Pratt has high praise for the staff and facilities. “The staff was kind, engaging and went above and beyond, including managing a dinner and reception for 4,000+ people all sitting and eating at once. It was flawless. We were concerned about Wi-Fi capabilities given our numbers, but that was flawless as well. We were able to use the space really well. The staff also did a great job helping us accommodate dietary constraints, including allergies, kosher and halal meals.”

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CREATE PARTNERSHIPS
Planning this program was a long process made easier by solid partnerships. “The catering and convention services team spent years working with us to execute a flawless program,” Pratt notes. “Our convention services manager worked tirelessly with us to plan every detail from concept to completion.”

Pratt’s best advice for other planners: “Work collaboratively with your vendors. All of our partners worked incredibly hard on this project and were as invested in its success as we were. Key is creating a respectful, collaborative relationship where everyone is valued and all needs and priorities are considered. At times we could help the hotel by releasing space we didn’t need, for example — when you’re booking 3 1/2 years out, things change. That way they weren’t holding rooms we were never going to fill, which helped them meet their business goals. And we needed things that weren’t contractually agreed upon from the start, such as transportation support between hotels. Given our relationship and willingness to work as a team, the hotel helped with these kinds of needs and provided valued support and solutions.”

Hotels in Lake Buena Vista’s Disney Springs area are owned and managed independent of Walt Disney World. One is Wyndham Lake Buena Vista, Disney Springs Resort Area, where Sea Tow Services International Inc. met last year. The annual conference draws 125-150 attendees.

Cindy McCaffrey, vice president of program development for Sea Tow, says the Orlando area works well because 28 of the company’s 100 U.S. franchises are in Florida, with the remainder across the country. She calls Wyndham’s staff key to this property’s success. “It starts with the GM, trickles down through sales and on to the convention services and banquet team. This is the third annual meeting we’ve held at the property, and the first time ever we have repeated a location, let alone booked one three times.”

Noting that the hotel’s meeting space has recently been renovated, McCaffrey says, “Our meetings, breakouts and vendor showcase flow beautifully within the space at Wyndham. Our group used the meeting space and outdoor pool area for the majority of functions and meals as well as the vendor showcase. We also utilized the restaurant during the breakfast buffet. Our attendees like to start the day with a nice hearty breakfast and the Wyndham offers that and more. The character breakfast is always a hit when our attendees bring family along.”

She adds that the property is very willing to work with planners who want outdoor functions by the pool. “We had a couple of boats on trailers on display and they worked with us to make sure our attendees had access and the perfect view of them. Also, the food is not ‘typical’ hotel food. It’s tasty, abundant and always displayed with care and creativity.” And she says although the hotel is close to Walt Disney World, “It’s not so close that you can’t run a business meeting.”

THEME PARKS ARE NEARBY
Yet theme-park proximity has advantages. “You don’t need to worry about planning evening activities” McCaffrey says. “They’re right there waiting for attendees to explore.”

At a recent Promotions & Profits Retreat at another Lake Buena Vista hotel, Holiday Inn Orlando-Disney Springs Area, attendees gathered for a BallonCoach.com event. “Our attendees and staff were delighted that the Holiday Inn is in walking distance to Disney Springs’ main hub of activity for shopping, meals and entertainment in the evening after a busy day in classes,” says Joette Giardina, owner of BallonCoach.com and marketing director at PartyPeopleEvents.com. Other positives are easy access to a 24-hour grocery store, fast food and sit-down dining outside of that area, and Giardina notes that her staff was “easily able to go out for dinners off-property for small meetings.”

The group had lunch at the Holiday Inn daily as well as dinner the final night. “Every meal was presented well with a Disney character for Wi-Fi in all meeting spaces regard less of the hotel.”

“Wyndham Lake Buena Vista – Disney Springs Area offers a Disney character breakfast on Sundays.”

THE DISNEY DIFFERENCE
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Special Offer: Get 5x Hilton Honors Points when you book by December 31st!
Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort was perfect for one company’s annual conference, a planner says, because of the property’s vastness.

and tasted amazing,” Giardina says. “I got rave reviews from happy staff and attendees. It’s great,” she adds, “to have a reasonably priced hotel with delicious food, clean rooms, a relaxing pool and extremely friendly staff,” along with such easy access to all that the area offers.

In addition to the hotel providing flexible meeting space for the group, Giardina says the hotel staff is excellent. “The entire team was welcoming and informative on my original site visit, providing timely responses to all my requests,” she says. “And customer service during the event was excellent. Everything about the experience was top-notch and we’re looking forward to returning for our annual event.”

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JOETTE GIARDINA  Owner, BalloonCoach.com  Marketing Director, PartyPeopleEvents.com

Lovich, former event planner, says the conference outgrew its former location in Hollywood, Florida, and Orlando offers opportunity for expansion.

CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

“There are many different opportunities to be creative and to grow without having to be stuck in a convention center,” she says. The company has “four tracks, breakouts, half a dozen receptions and a full-blown exhibit hall,” so it needs space. Unless you go to Vegas, there isn’t really anywhere else that could house the programs.

Plus, she adds, “There’s the quality of the lodging, the hotel itself and the fact there’s so much access to restaurants, shopping and nightlife. Attendees like to bring their families and they like everything the location has to offer.”

The Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin was one of five Orlando properties considered. The company “… needed a lot of space but we also wanted to make sure we were taking over that entire space,” Lovich says. “When you have a medical meeting, it’s not feasible to have it bleed into somebody else’s conference. Ultimately, it was almost a 50/50 split between the Dolphin and another hotel, but what really played into the choice was opportunity for branding. The main source of income wasn’t registration, it was corporate support. The company does a lot of branding, and at the Dolphin you can literally brand that entire hotel; there are so many unique opportunities and that was a big plus.

Starting over at a new hotel can be challenging, Lovich notes, because you have to explain how you do things. When it came to the group’s room coordinator, that wasn’t necessary. “We didn’t even have to tell her. She knew and ran with it.” In fact, Lovich calls the entire team “phenomenal.”

The company used “every inch of space” at the Dolphin, but what Lovich loved were the options for creativity. “You can get as creative as you want or go as simple as you want. The hotel team will help you with anything. As big as the property is, once you get there, it’s a very easy flow. And I like the opportunities with different restaurants on-site — you don’t have to go off-property if you don’t want to.”

Lovich says the only challenges had been with her own team due to the growth of the conference, but the Dolphin even helps with that. “The goal with this conference has always been to stay in a resort hotel setting and not take it to a convention center,” she says. “The Dolphin allows them to do that. That’s a great thing for planners to know. If you do get that big, you still have the opportunity to spill over to the Swan side, which is nice.”

Planners simply can’t go wrong with Orlando. There really is something for everyone.
With Diverse Landscapes and Offerings, the Lone Star State Delivers Unique and Memorable Experiences

BY DEREK REVERON

Texas is diverse in every sense of the word, and when it comes to hotels and convention centers, the state offers everything planners need to make any size meeting a success. No wonder the same groups visit Texas repeatedly and have unique and memorable experiences each time.

DALLAS

‘Big D’ considers itself the star of meeting destinations in Texas — and for good reason. Dallas offers numerous first-class hotels and 1 million sf of meeting space, including the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Dallas (KBHCCD), which hosted Tyler Technologies Inc.’s (TTI) annual meeting for clients and employees earlier this year. The company also held smaller meetings at the Grand Hyatt DFW, Omni Dallas Hotel and The Adolphus, Autograph Collection.

About 3,900 attendees from every state in the U.S., Canada and Europe participated in the annual meeting. It was the first time TTI, based in nearby Plano, held the meeting in Dallas after having convened smaller events in the city over the years. Initially, TTI had some doubts about selecting Dallas, according to Lee Marquis, TTI director of events marketing. “To be honest, we never really thought Dallas had the draw of some of the other cities we rotated between, and it was a long shot.”

But meetings with Visit Dallas officials turned things around. “They did their homework,” Marquis says. “The first time we met, they knew our history, they knew about our company and they even knew what our stock was trading at that day. They took the time to ensure that we saw everything they had to offer from arts to dining to airlift.”

Most convincing of all, Marquis says, “There was a sincerity about wanting our business and a willingness to prove that they would provide a world-class experience.”

Marquis was convinced. “This was an overall home run for this meeting,” Marquis says. “We had record attendance and positive survey results. The main goals of this event were to provide attendees with education, training and networking opportunities, so easy access to breakout sessions was important.”

The event used a total of about 633,000 sf of meeting space citywide, including all available space in the KBHCCD and Omni Dallas Hotel. “Unlike many connected hotels and convention centers, the Omni and the KBHCCD meeting spaces are almost seamless,” Marquis says. “You don’t feel like you are attending separate conferences.”

Marquis also raved about the KBHCCD’s layout and configurable space. “The common areas were large enough to accommodate two large and two smaller tech hubs,” Marquis says. “Hall F provided great column-less space to accommodate an opening session, a general session and a keynote with former President George W. Bush.”

In addition to the ample meeting space, Marquis found meeting costs in Dallas overall to be affordable. “Hotel rates were of average-to-moderate value,” Marquis says. “Rates were less than many of those of comparably large cities but not bargain basement. The great value we received on F&B was offset by extra costs to shuttle attendees from other hotels.”

Marquis also received very valuable assistance on-site. “We experienced tremendous value from Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Dallas offers 1 million sf of exhibit space, three ballrooms and 58 meeting rooms.
The CBV,” Marquis says. “They stepped in to assist with some hotel issues and they were in regular contact with myself and my staff.”

Dallas continues adding to its total of more than 6,000 downtown-area hotel rooms. New properties include the Virgin Group’s 200-room Virgin Hotel, which opens this year in the trendy Design District.

Two mixed-use properties are expected to open next year. Plans are underway for the vacant First National Bank Tower to host a 200-room hotel under the Thompson Hotels flag, and the 164-room Pittman Hotel, bearing the Kimpton Hotels flag, will be located in the Knights of Pythias Temple as part of the Epic mixed-use development.

The Hilton Dallas/Park Cities has undergone a $5.5 million makeover. The 11-story property, in the Preston Center near the Dallas North Tollway and Northwest Highway, offers 224 rooms.

Another property, the 606-room Hilton Anatole is also in the Design District and provides 600,000 sf of function space, including 79 meeting rooms and nine ballrooms. Other function space, including 79 meeting rooms and nine ballrooms. Other properties attracting their share of meetings with a mix of Western heritage, urban vibration, meeting space and hotels. Looking to improve its meetings infrastructure, Fort Worth is undertaking major projects.

The 14,000-seat Dickies Arena, a new, $450 million multipurpose arena, is scheduled to open by the end of this year. The arena is just 10 minutes from downtown. Also, Texrail, the new 27-mile commuter rail line connecting DFW International Airport and downtown Fort Worth, operates every day for $2.50 each way.

New properties opening in Fort Worth in 2020 include the 246-room AC Hotel by Marriott and the 200-room Hotel Drover, an Autograph Collection property.

Popular meeting properties near the Fort Worth Convention Center (FWCC) include the Hilton Fort Worth, the Omni Fort Worth Hotel and the Sheraton Fort Worth Downtown Hotel. The Worthington Renaissance Fort Worth Hotel nearby offers 504 rooms and 33,000 sf of meeting space.

AUSTIN

Austin reflects its status as one of the state’s most interesting and diverse destinations. The destination’s uniqueness helped attract SANS Institute (SI), which will hold its third meeting in the city for clients later this year. More than 200 people attended SI’s training sessions earlier this year at the Hilton Austin, which connects to the Austin Convention Center (ACC) via an overhead walkway.

According to Rachel Nedelman, CMP, SI’s associate director of event contracting, Austin will continue to be the organization’s first choice. “I don’t know why Austin was initially chosen, but we continue to be in Austin because it is such a cool destination,” Nedelman says. “Who doesn’t enjoy great food, music and a laid-back vibe? And Austin has a lot of tech-based companies, so we get a large local draw,” Nedelman says. “We added a fourth event to our schedule for next year in Austin.”

Next year’s meetings will also take place at the Hilton Austin, which Nedelman says will continue to be a preferred property. “We have partnered with the Hilton Austin for many years for multiple events each year,” Nedelman says. “We receive great service from the sales side and service side. They know our programs and understand our needs and what is important to us.”

Nedelman considers her strong relationship with the Hilton Austin a big advantage. “Some of my favorite sales managers I’ve ever worked with work at this hotel, so it makes doing business there easy,” Nedelman says. “Plus, the hotel continues to renovate and stay current and has lots of space for us to grow into.”

In addition, the meeting space perfectly matched SANS Institute’s needs. “The space at the Hilton Austin is great,” Nedelman says. “They have so many meeting rooms, which works well because we use a lot of small spaces. They also have bigger ball rooms that accommodate our needs perfectly for a couple of programs. The stacked space makes the meeting flow really easy and cohesive. They definitely designed the hotel with a planner’s needs in mind.”

Yet another advantage the Hilton Austin offers is its strong relationships, we’ve been able to keep increases pretty low year-over-year, so we feel as though we receive pretty decent pricing,” Nedelman says.

More meeting and convention space is coming to Austin. The Austin City Council recently agreed on a $1.2 billion expansion of the ACC. The proposal would add the western portion of the convention center and rebuild part of the existing facility.

The newly opened, 27-story Fairmont Austin connected to the ACC, features 1,048 guest rooms and suites. The luxury hotel also offers nearly 140,000 sf of total meeting space, 91,000 sf of prefunction space and 13,500 sf of outdoor space.

Another convention hotel, the 350-room Austin Marriott Downtown, opens next year with 64,000 sf of meeting space.

In nearby Round Rock, the 350-acre Kalahari Resorts and Convention Round Rock opens next year with 200,000 sf of flexible meeting space, a 32,000-sf ballroom and a 40,000-sf ballroom.

IRVING

Thriving, modern and exciting – all describe Irving. The city offers live music every night of the week, 14 full-service hotels and a more than 200,000 sf of meeting space citywide, including the Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas (ICC). Irving offers planners even more since the opening of the 13-story Westin Irving Convention Center at Las Colinas located next to the ICC. The 350-room Westin complex offers 30,000 sf of meeting space and a 10,000-sf event lawn between the hotel and the nearby Toyota Music Factory retail and entertainment center. The versatile Toyota Music Factory offers an 8,000-seat indoor/outdoor concert hall, more than 20 restaurants and a wide range of musical acts and bars.

According to Maura Gast, FCDME, executive director of the Irving Convention & Visitors Bureau (ICVB), “With the Westin’s opening, meeting professionals now have a perfectly efficient destination package with the convention center and Toyota Music Factory with its Live Nation Pavilion and restaurant options.”

SAN ANTONIO

Downsant San Antonio is filled with meeting options headlined by the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center (HBCGC), with its 1.5 million sf of indoor space. The HBGCC attracts many repeat customers each year, including the annual national meeting of Sport Clips Inc., which includes employees, franchisees and suppliers.

According to Saronna Maldonado, CMP, director of events for Sport Clips Inc., “We were at the convention center with 2,805 in attendance in 2016 and again last year with 3,019 in attendance. We will be back at the center in 2020 and 2021 with projected attendance to be over 3,200 and 3,300 respectively.”

Sport Clips continuously returns to the HBGCC because the meeting space helps the company achieve its goals.

“The convention center has very flexible space,” Maldonado says. “We were able to utilize their new space for last year’s meeting. The meeting rooms can be one big room or broken down into a few smaller rooms.”

Maldonado adds, “The space is open and well-lit with lots of natural light coming into the lobby and each floor’s hallway. Being able to use the spaces for multiple purposes was important to us as we were celebrating our 25th anniversary and welcoming a huge group.”

In addition to the HBGCC, Maldonado finds San Antonio’s culture to be a big attraction. “San Antonio’s culture is very unique,” Maldonado says. “When we seek out a venue, there are several

Sundance Square Plaza in Fort Worth encompasses 35 blocks and is filled with dozens of options for shopping, dining and entertainment.
Texas Live! in Arlington is the center of the city’s new $250 million entertainment district. This location sits between the much larger destinations of Dallas and Fort Worth. Think again. Arlington keeps adding everything planners need, including meeting space, hotels, attractions, and entertainment. Late last year, Arlington opened Texas Live!, the center of the city’s new $250 million entertainment district located a short walk from the 90,000-sf Arlington Convention Center (ACC) and Sheraton Arlington Hotel. Texas Live! offers Arlington Backyard, a 5,000-person capacity outdoor event space; a Professional Bull Riders (PBR) bar with two mechanical bulls; and the 35,000-sf Live! Arena for concerts and outdoor festivals. There is also a range of dining options. In addition, the Live! by Loews’ Arlington hotel will open this year. The hotel will feature 35,000 sf of meeting space. Looking to capitalize on the growing competitive video gaming industry, Arlington also created the Esports Stadium Arlington & Expo Center, the nation’s largest venue of its type. The facility, which opened late last year, offers venues for esports events. Arlington spent $10 million to convert half of its convention center into 100,000 sf, state-of-the-art video game arena. Esports Stadium sits among Globe Life Park in Arlington, home of the Texas Rangers; AT&T Stadium, home of the Dallas Cowboys; Six Flags Over Texas; Six Flags Hurricane Harbor and several hotels and restaurants.

Galveston
The port city of Galveston, located 50 miles from Houston, offers a range of properties ranging from coastal R&Bs to luxury resorts, including San Luis Resort, Spa & Conference Center, the site of a recent Villa Healthcare meeting.

“Like the prices. Value was exceptional, based on comparative shopping at other locations.”

APRIL DOREMUS
Vice President of Engagement
Villa Healthcare

The recognition event included more than 100 salespeople, managers and executives. It was Villa Healthcare’s first meeting at San Luis Resort and the company plans to return. According to April Doremus, Villa Healthcare’s vice president of engagement, “We will be returning next year for our annual retreat. We reviewed other options for next year, but none could beat San Luis Resort.”

Doremus added, “The property’s meeting space met the group’s needs. All of our staff was able to stay at the same hotel. We liked its flexibility to host large events, small breakout sessions and formal galas.”

San Luis Resort also offered value. “We liked the prices,” Doremus says. “Value was exceptional, based on comparative shopping at other locations.”

In addition, Galveston provided several unexpected benefits. “There is ease of access and people can fly into the airport directly from all regions,” Doremus says. “There are entertainment options such as Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier, which features rides and amusements; and large conference rooms and meeting spaces facing the water. And there are also plenty of dining options.”

In all, the meeting was a big success. “Eighty-one percent of attendees rated the event five on a scale of 1 to 5,” Doremus says.
Hilton Cleveland Downtown has promoted Julia Austin to director of sales and marketing. Austin will oversee the sales and marketing efforts for the award-winning hotel, which is connected to the Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland and offers 50,000 sf of meeting space.

21c Museum Hotels has appointed Michelle Bearman as senior director of corporate sales. In her new role, Bearman will oversee corporate sales, work hands-on to provide training and development of 21c Museum Hotels sales teams, support openings and maximize overall sales efforts.

Singapore-based luxury hotel group Como Hotels and Resorts has appointed Elisa Chacon senior global director of sales for the Americas. Based in New York, she will manage both East and West Coast global sales offices and forge relationships with luxury consortia, wholesale and high-end travel agencies.

Orange County’s highly anticipated luxury travel destination, the JW Marriott, Anaheim Resort, scheduled to open in 2020, has named Maribel Denner as director of sales and marketing. Denner brings more than 30 years of hospitality experience to her new role.

The 240-room Sonesta Fort Lauderdale Beach, slated to reopen November 2019 after a multiyear renovation, has named Michael Dutton director of sales and marketing. Dutton holds more than 20 years of hospitality sales and marketing experience.

Singapore Tourism Board (STB) has named Kershing Goh, former regional director, the new senior vice president of Strategic Partnerships & Alliances. Goh will oversee strategic application of next-gen technology to Singapore’s tourism efforts, forging partnerships with leading technology providers and relevant lifestyle partners, and accelerating out-of-the-box ideas and projects for growth. STB has also appointed Rachel Loh as new regional director, Americas, succeeding Goh. Loh will oversee planning, business development, marketing and tourism promotions efforts in the Americas region, and drive strategies that affirm and enhance Singapore’s position as a dynamic, global tourism destination.

Visit Spokane has welcomed Kyle Minor as director of national accounts with the destination marketing organization. Prior to Visit Spokane, Minor worked as the senior manager of citywide convention sales at Destination Cleveland.

Teneo Hospitality Group, the premier Global Group Sales Organization, has named Judith Segura director of sales in Mexico. Based in Quintana Roo on Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula, Segura will be responsible for developing international business originating out of Latin America for Teneo member hotels globally.

Prince Waikiki of Prince Resorts Hawaii Inc. has welcomed Joy Tomita Anderson as director of sales and marketing. Tomita Anderson will oversee all sales, marketing and public relations initiatives for the 563-room Honolulu hotel, including its expansive meeting and events space and the 27-hole championship golf course, Hawaii Prince Golf Club.

Aulani, A Disney Resort & Spa, will make powerful connections with your attendees. It’s a celebration of Hawaiian culture, history and tradition that’s the perfect location for meetings and incentives. Set on the pristine western coastline of O‘ahu on the beautiful beaches of Ko Olina, this 21-acre oceanfront resort offers more than 76,000 square feet of meeting outdoor venues and a 21,000 square four conference center. And all of it — the space, the support and the programming — is fully customizable. Resort guests have the opportunity to enjoy KA WAAAA, A Lu‘au at Aulani Resort, to experience Hawai‘i’s history and its deep cultural roots in canoes exploration combined with Disney’s signature storytelling. Add to that the award-winning Leshani Spa, diverse restaurant options and shopping, world-class Disney entertainment, Ko Olina Marina, an 18-hole championship golf course and the comfort of 632 rooms you’ve got everything you could want to create an unforgettable experience for your attendees.

To book your event contact: info@disneymeetings.com
Phone: 888-674-5394
Fax: 888-674-5399
DisneyAulani.com
Elinor Steele’s goal was clear, but not easy: she wanted to inspire her guests above all else. She says that Disney made this happen, creating an event that reignited passion for the company and its culture—a passion that the people took with them when they left. That’s what happens when you work with Disney: your story isn’t simply told. It’s experienced, by every single guest. If this is the kind of inspiration you’re looking for, just use our imagination.