

A COASTAL COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION PUBLICATION

NOVEMBER 2012 VOL. 30 NO. 11 \$9.00

www.themeetingmagazines.com

Corporate & Incentive Travel

THE MAGAZINE FOR CORPORATE MEETING AND INCENTIVE TRAVEL PLANNERS

Meeting at Historic Hotels

Where Quality and Service Are Legendary

PAGE 18



Kate Stockton, CMP, president of Philadelphia-based Stockton & Partners, staged a meeting at the 1930s era Hotel Hershey, in Hershey, PA.

Photo by Susan Beard Design photography



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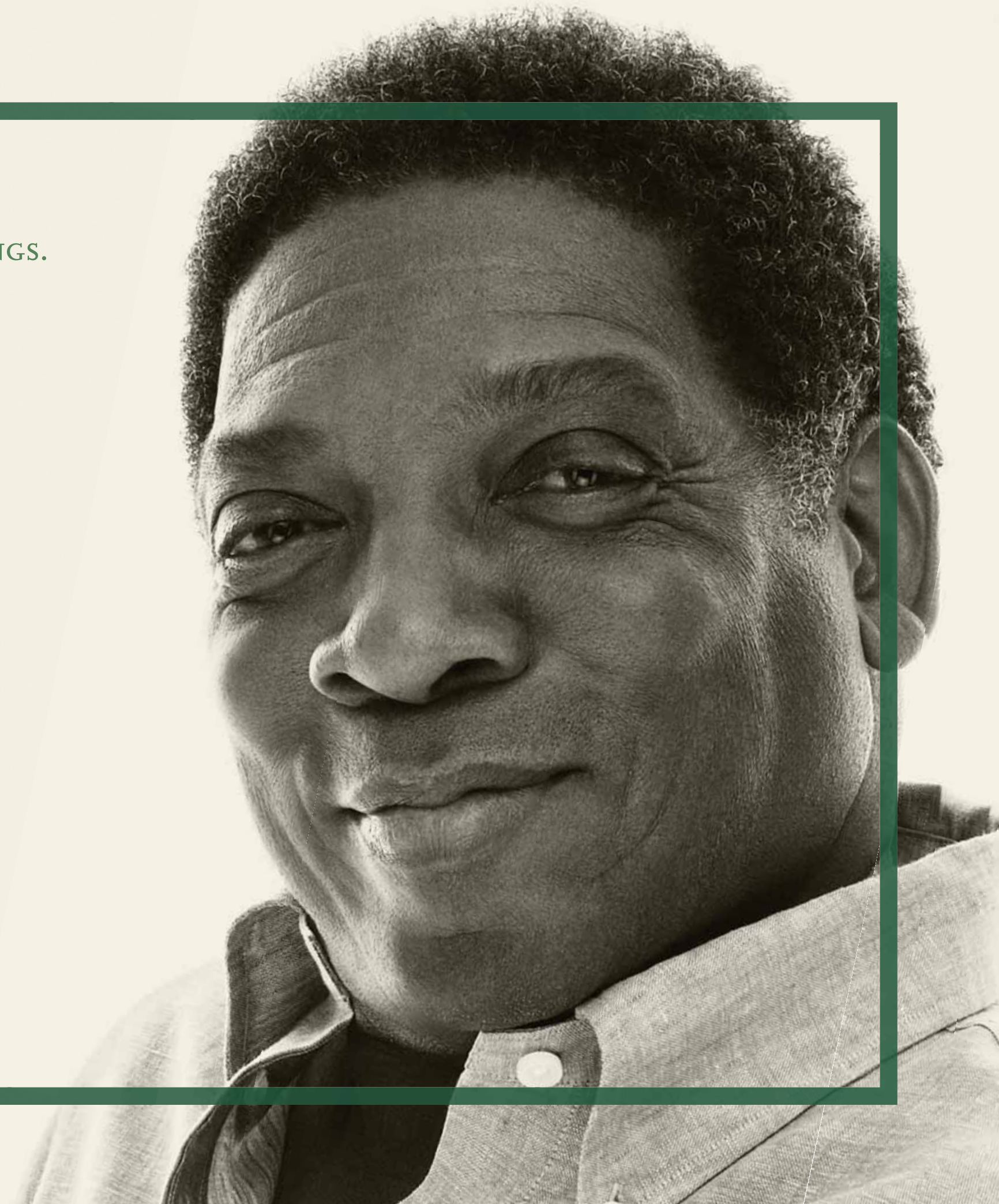


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www.TheMeetingMagazines.com

VOLUME 30 NO. 11

NOVEMBER 2012

ISSN 0739-1587

USPS 716-450

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Photo courtesy of The Plaza

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COVER STORY

Meeting at Historic Hotels

Where Quality and Service Are Legendary

By George Seli

The Plaza, A Fairmont Managed Hotel, which reached the century mark in 2007, boasts the quintessential Manhattan location across from Central Park.

Awards of Excellence
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The Best of the Best for 2012



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Photo courtesy of Destination New Orleans

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Attendees danced the night away at their "best event ever." Destination New Orleans arranged the '80s-style party for a client at a premier New Orleans hotel.



Photo courtesy of Tourism New Zealand

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A bungee jumper swan diving from the Kawarau Bridge in New Zealand is the highlight of an adventure incentive program but not for the faint of heart.

Corporate & Incentive Travel (USPS 716-450) is published monthly by Coastal Communications Corporation, 2700 North Military Trail — Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394; 561-989-0600. Single copies \$9.00 U.S.A. only. Yearly subscription price is \$90.00 in the U.S.A.; Canada and foreign is \$150.00. Back copies \$10.00 U.S.A. only. Distributed without charge to qualified personnel. Periodicals Postage Paid at Boca Raton, FL, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Corporate & Incentive Travel, 2700 North Military Trail — Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394. Nothing contained in this publication shall constitute an endorsement by Coastal Communications Corporation (Corporate & Incentive Travel), and the publication disclaims any liability with respect to the use of or reliance on any such information. The information contained in this publication is in no way to be construed as a recommendation by C&IT of any industry standard, or as a recommendation of any kind to be adopted, by or to be binding upon, any corporate/incentive travel planner or agent. Reproduction of any portion of this publication by any means is strictly forbidden. Editorial contributions must be accompanied by return postage and will be handled with reasonable care. However, the publisher assumes no responsibility for return of unsolicited photographs or manuscripts. Subscribers: Send subscription inquiries and address changes to: Circulation Department, Corporate & Incentive Travel, 2700 North Military Trail — Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394. Provide old and new addresses including zip codes. Enclose address label from most recent issue and please allow five weeks for the change to become effective. Printed in U.S.A. © 2012

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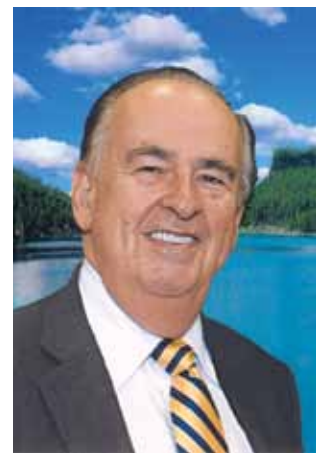
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PUBLISHER'S MESSAGE

Everything Old Is New Again

I spent a week in Las Vegas last month to attend the highly successful second edition of IMEX America. Again, I was very impressed. IMEX Group Chairman Ray Bloom, and his people certainly have figured out how to take a tired concept and make it new again. The hosted buyer idea, while not exactly new, boosts attendance, improves effectiveness and provides a win-win for all parties. This year, IMEX America's state-of-the-art technology helped schedule more than 38,000 appointments — 60 percent more than the inaugural year. Also, the show attracted 2,400 hosted buyers, 400 more than last year, and 2,413 exhibiting companies, (1,867 last year). More than one business associate of long standing remarked that the upbeat mood at the Sands Expo was reminiscent of the "glory years" of meeting each fall in Chicago at IT&ME. How true! All the excitement and buzz of meeting in Las Vegas surely helps draw record numbers for events large and small.



On the other hand, when your meeting or incentive needs a dose of the "real thing" to drive home your company's objective and entice your people to attend, that's the time to consider historic hotels and resorts. Many historic hotels are newly renovated with modern features and amenities, yet maintain the historic appeal and charm that will leave lasting impressions.

That's what Kate Stockton, CMP, president of event planning and meeting management company Stockton & Partners Inc., in Philadelphia did when she staged a meeting for a major U.S. apparel manufacturer and distributor. Stockton, who graces our cover this month, utilized not only the 1930s era Hotel Hershey (in cover photo) but event spaces at Hershey Park as well. In "Meeting at Historic Hotels — Where Quality and Service Are Legendary," our cover story on page 18, Stockton says, "The hotel has so many beautiful architectural details, along with the grandeur of the gardens. That old-world feeling sets a tone and a brand. And one of the things we like about most historic properties is that they have an intimate feeling; we are usually not the only group there, but it feels like that."

This issue marks our 28th Annual Awards of Excellence. Flip the magazine over to recognize the best of the best — our 2012 award-winning convention & visitors bureaus, hotels and resorts.

Harvey Grotsky
Publisher



A COASTAL COMMUNICATIONS CORPORATION PUBLICATION

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Site Introduces New Certification for Incentive Travel Planners

CHICAGO, IL — The new Certified Incentive Specialist (CIS) certification program by Site is designed to give professionals a greater understanding of the theory and practice of creative and effective utilization of incentive and motivational travel programs to drive business results. Professionals can receive the CIS designation by attending a two-day live education program that addresses the fundamentals of incentives, the value proposition of motivational programs and non-cash awards, the value chain, the composition of the incentive travel market, and the successful planning and delivery of incentives. The first two programs will be held this year on December 7 and 8 in Chicago and December 9 and 10 in Los Cabos, Mexico. Site members receive a preferred registration rate; non-members receive a complimentary Site membership with their registration. To see full program content and learn more about CIS certification, visit www.sitecisc.com.

Hilton's First All-Inclusive Resort in Mexico Opens

PUERTO VALLARTA, MEXICO — Hilton Hotels & Resorts has announced the opening of Hilton Puerto Vallarta Resort, its first all-inclusive resort in Mexico. Hilton Puerto Vallarta Resort features 259 luxury rooms and suites, and is owned and managed by Grupo Hotelero Santa Fe. There are 10,410 sf of function space at the resort, including seven flexible meeting rooms. Situated in the hotel zone, just minutes away from the international airport and the famous Malecon area, the beachfront resort offers amenities including a fitness gym, the "KI" Spa, four à la carte dining options, music lounge and kids' club. www.hilton.com



The Hilton Puerto Vallarta Resort in Mexico.

JW Marriott Brand to Open Luxury Resort in Los Cabos

CABO SAN LUCAS, MEXICO — Marriott International's luxury hotel brand, JW Marriott Hotels & Resorts, announced plans to open a new 300-room JW Marriott Hotel in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico in 2015. The JW Marriott, located within the Puerto Los Cabos master-planned development, will cover approximately 14 acres overlooking the Sea of Cortez and offer 820 feet of beachfront, just seven miles from Los Cabos International Airport. Puerto Los Cabos comprises a number of private residences, a marina, an 18-hole golf course designed by Greg Norman and Jack Nicklaus, restaurants and retail space. The hotel will feature a three-meal-a-day restaurant, a signature specialty restaurant, bar and grill and a pool bar. The resort also will have 13,131 sf of meeting space, including a divisible main ballroom, breakout rooms and a boardroom. Recreational facilities include a swimming pool, spa, an indigenous temazcal sweat lodge, jacuzzi, tennis courts and a fitness center. www.jwmarriott.com

Mexico's Tourism Industry Posts Significant Growth

NEW YORK, NY — Mexico's Secretary of Tourism Gloria Guevara released the Sixth Government Report on Tourism. The report chronicles a period of strong growth in tourism arrivals — both domestic and international — in addition to public and private sector investment in tourism over the past six years. Tourism, which constitutes more than nine percent of Mexico's gross domestic product, is a national priority. Between 2006 and 2011, the number of domestic and foreign tourists increased from 162 million to 191.5 million (18.2 percent increase), a historic record. Mexico aggressively pursued a market diversification strategy to reduce dependence on the United States market, attracting tourists from a wide range of other countries including Brazil, China, Russia, Canada and Korea. Mexico's global image was repositioned in part due to organizing and hosting global forums such as the United Nations' World Tourism Organization, the World Travel and Tourism Council Americas Summit, the World Economic Forum, the T20 meeting of Tourism Ministers in Merida and the G20 held in Los Cabos and participating in forums such as OECD and APEC. Secretary Guevara said that today, more than ever, Mexico is seen as a global leader in the tourism industry and is well on track to being a top five destination by 2018. www.visitmexico.com

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Congratulations to
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1 The Corporate Travel World (CTW) Asia-Pacific and Incentive Travel & Conventions, Meetings Asia (IT&CMA) 2012 annual conference, organized by TTG Events and co-located since 2004, was held at the Bangkok Convention Centre at CentralWorld, Bangkok, Thailand in early October. Martin Winter, (l) chairman of ICCA Asia Pacific Chapter, ICCA Board of Directors and CEO of Gold Coast Tourism (GCT), Australia, and Facilitator Welf Ebeling, regional director of GBTA Asia at the keynote address. **2** Winners of the TTG Awards at IT&CMA and CTW Asia Pacific 2012. **3 & 6** On October 8, 1,200 of the incentive industry's finest converged on the Hard Rock Hotel Las Vegas Beach Club to network at the sold-out Site Nite North America, as IMEX America kicked off. Frank Sinatra's "Come Fly With Me" served as the evening's theme song as attendees were greeted by models sporting authentic vintage Delta Air Lines flight attendant uniforms from the 1950s, '60s and '70s. **4** Marking the 40th anniversary of the phrase "destination management company" and the DMC concept at IMEX America, Chris Lee, (center) DMCP, CEO of Access Destination Services with his Dad, company founder Phil Lee, who coined the term "Destination Management" in 1972. They were joined in the Access booth by Pauline Risbecker Kim, Euromic Sweden. **5** Corporate & Incentive Travel Publisher Harvey Grotzky with Eleonara Garcia Ferrell, meetings director, Mexico at IMEX America. **7** Paulo Senise (far right), executive director, Rio Convention & Visitors Bureau with IMEX attendees.

Paving the Way



Elegance and Decadence, produced by Accent on Arrangements, afforded attendees a unique and memorable float ride through the French Quarter in New Orleans.

Photo courtesy of Accent on Arrangements Inc.

Follow DMCs Along the Road to Successful Outcomes

Destination management companies often get tall orders from corporate meeting planners and, as they have proven time and again, they're always up to the challenge — especially those DMCs that are members of the Association for Destination Management Executives International (ADMEI). ADMEI's mission is to increase the professionalism and effectiveness of destination management through member and industry education, establishment of standard ethical practices and raise the level of awareness of the value of destination management to various audiences.

A DMC, according to ADMEI, is a "professional services company possess-

By Stella Johnson

ing extensive local knowledge, expertise and resources, specializing in the design and implementation of events, activities, tours, transportation and program logistics."

In addition, ADMEI accredits companies and destination professionals and provides search tools to help planners find the DMC in a particular location.

The following success stories demonstrate how DMCs can be a planner's best friend.

Retro Party

Destination New Orleans is a full-service DMC providing event planning

and destination management for New Orleans special events. Nancy Trosclair, DMCP, the president of Destination New Orleans, is truly a planner's best friend. She recently planned a retro '80s-style party for a major hotel brand. You remember the '80s — that decade of extreme shoulder pads, high hairdos and MTV videos, which is now unabashedly replacing the Fabulous '50s soirees that were once so popular on the corporate scene. The gala affair, fit more for Boy George and Cyndi Lauper than Connie Francis and Ricky Nelson, was staged at a premier hotel in New Orleans.

To give a nod to the 1980s, Trosclair planned an evening inspired by Studio 54 but called it Studio '84. "Included were

lots of neon, spandex and disco balls, as we immersed the 600 attendees in a total 1980s environment and created a dynamic event that the client said was the best one ever. The guests were given costume items like boas, glow sticks and sunglasses in order to dress the part, while original music videos played on large screens and guests danced the night away," says Trosclair.

Trosclair adds that she doesn't know if she has ever seen a group immerse themselves so much in a themed event such as this one, or have so much fun reliving their younger years. For several weeks after the event, she received notes and messages from the corporate management team and the attendees themselves stating how fabulous it all was.

"After posting some of the photos on our company's Facebook page, positive feedback continued to roll in," she says.

What's more, Trosclair readily explains, is that Destination New Orleans was able to work exclusively with local New Orleans suppliers for all those special details, including décor elements, catering and the band, making it a win-win DMC event for everyone. "That was the icing on the cake," she says.

Paving the Way

Planners should rarely go it alone when coordinating events of this magnitude, especially when they are planning an event in an unfamiliar city. DMCs pave the way. As Diane B. Lyons, CMP,

venue, or the bus for that matter. We are the boots on the ground and a local partner for the corporate planner. We use all of our local connections to get the best deals possible while creating a one-of-a-kind event that truly makes the program special.



Nancy Trosclair, DMCP, President Destination New Orleans, Kenner, LA

"Most importantly, and this is something corporate planners might not think about, we also know which vendors and suppliers are financially stable and will still be open for business when the client's group finally comes to town."

Furthermore, Lyons emphasizes that a partnership with a destination management company is really important when something unexpected happens. "A strong DMC is your best ally for a successful outcome in that kind of situation," she notes. To offset that possibility, she cautions planners to avoid working with a one- or two-person operation. "What happens if something happens to the No. 1 person?" she asks. Her recommendations for planners include the following:

- First, consult with ADMEI for a list of recommended

"DMCs work long and demanding hours, like most of our friends in this industry. And great DMCs are customer-service oriented and bring the best supplier/vendor teams together to create amazing events."



Diane B. Lyons, CMP, DMCP, President Accent on Arrangements Inc., New Orleans, LA

DCMP, president of New Orleans-based Accent on Arrangements Inc. declares, "Anyone can book a venue. The information is available with just a few clicks on Google. But a DMC doesn't just book the

- DMCs in your event location.
- Make sure the destination planner you'll be working with is certified by the Association of Destination Management Executives.

- Check out the staff. Does the DMC have a DMCP (Destination Management Certified Professional) on board? This tells you that your DMCP knows their profession, just as a CMP knows theirs.
- Review the DMC's professional affiliations, if any. For instance, are they a

"The guests were given costume items like boas, glow sticks and sunglasses in order to dress the part, while original music videos played on large screens and guests danced the night away."

member of a DMC consortium such as the DMC Network? Most consortiums have partners who have high criteria such as minimum amounts of insurance, real offices (not kitchen tables), a minimum of one DMCP on staff and are CPA-certified as financially stable.

- Identify the kind of insurance they have and what your needs are for your event. Talk to your insurance agent and to your DMC to be sure you are covered for everything.
- Check references.

"Furthermore, to ensure the successful outcome of the corporate event, remember that DMCs are the location experts. They will provide planners with the knowledge and the right connections

all in a nice package," says Lyons. "DMCs work long and demanding hours, like most of our friends in this industry. And great DMCs are customer-service oriented and bring the best supplier/vendor teams together to create amazing events. As you go through the process of choosing a DMC, spend the time up front and go through the due diligence. All DMCs are not the same. Engage the DMC in lots of conversations as you go along. They will be your best partners for success."

One of Lyons' recent success stories revolves around an event called Elegance and Decadence, a client appreciation day in New Orleans for 250 top executives

and their guests. The event combined various elements of Mardi Gras with the elegance of antiques on Royal Street, as well as the unique cuisine of the Crescent City. "The mission was to top last year's event, which was dinner served on the floor of the Grand Canyon," says Lyons. "And we did. The highlight was the roar of the motorcycle police followed by



Photo courtesy of Destination New Orleans
Destination New Orleans received rave reviews for staging Studio '84, a special 1980s immersion event for a major hotel brand.

a 100-piece marching high school band. The clients were blown away when they saw that the floats behind the bands were for them to ride on as they practically glided through the town and owned Royal Street in the French Quarter."

At the end of the day, however, it's all about the memories. A DMC is only as good as the client feedback that follows. Lyons says that her company succeeded in surpassing the Grand Canyon event, as the company relayed that their people were speaking about New Orleans for months, and that it was viewed as their best event ever.

An Army of Options

Similarly, Sue Carey, DMCP, the vice president of AlliedPRA Palm Springs in California, observes that a good destination management company must be the expert on the location, on what is unique in the location and how it can enhance the client's event. "They must have an army of different options available to do so, from catering to décor and entertainment, as well as the transportation and the local docents that can bring the event to life," says Carey.



Sue Carey, DMCP, Vice President
AlliedPRA Palm Springs, Palm Desert, CA

One of AlliedPRA Palm Springs' best events to date was staged for 60 automobile dealership owners and their spouses from the Gulf States area. Carey arranged the event at Frank Sinatra's estate in Palm Springs, CA, which Carey describes as "an epic property from both celebrity status as well as for its beautiful mid-century design." Carey adds, "We then had a Frank Sinatra look-alike at the estate to greet the guests and to sing a few of Blue Eye's signature songs during

the dinner that ensued. We also had an engaging docent at the home to tell the guests all of the Hollywood stories of Frank Sinatra and Ava Gardner, and the parties they had there as a couple."

Because the Sinatra-themed dinner used small moon props as table centerpieces, the client described the event as the "Fly Me to the Moon" event. But judging from the overall success of this event, perhaps it could best be described as "over the moon."

Recipe for Success

CEO Gregorio Palomino, CEP, CWP, the founder of CRE8AD8 (pronounced Create-A-Date), a DMC based in San Antonio, TX, says every event is like a recipe. "Change one item and the event could change dramatically in

"We then had a Frank Sinatra look-alike at the estate to greet the guests and to sing. We also had an engaging docent at the home to tell the guests all of the Hollywood stories of Frank Sinatra and Ava Gardner."

one second or over a period of time," he says. "Some of the ingredients we always try to consider and somehow incorporate into all our programs are the climate, geographical location, suppliers and vendors, and, of course, the space we need for the event," Palomino adds. "They have to be, for the most part, LEED-certified and making a positive effort to be green, as well as the best in the business."

For the past five years, Palomino has

been doing just that and, by all accounts, has been successful beyond his wildest dreams. In fact, he claims he never even had an interest in destination management except for the fact that while working for other companies, he got tired of being micromanaged when he thought he could "do it better." So, he founded CRE8AD8 in 2007 and set out on a new career path by first handling events for two of his previous supervisors.

"I originally wanted have a side business that would make a little money with as little stress as possible. Well, we have that and more, more than I ever imagined and in just five short years," Palomino notes. "Thus far, we have expanded into various cities in the U.S. and abroad, giving us the ability to be a major player in a DMC role no matter where our clients go or come from. I am very proud of our accomplishments and our staff, but it's our clients that gave us the keys to our success, we just had to open the right doors."

One of CRE8AD8's most successful events was an incentive meeting in Germany for roughly 1,700 guests. Palomino says that the client had the perfect budget — "just enough to do something fun and cool."

The event was for a Fortune 150 company with salespeople from a major transport company and included four nights in a four-star hotel. "Using our timeline standards and suggestions, every passenger flew together from the major cities they were traveling from and arrived within five hours of each other," says Palomino. The group was greeted by the staff and transported in charter buses with a bartender serving

drinks. The basic event consisted of meetings, breakouts, banquet, golf, spa and so on.

However, CRE8AD8 also scheduled some unique activities such as a BMW Driving Experience, and the group learned how to make pastries as part of a teambuilding exercise. They also planned off-road excursions and a citywide scavenger hunt.

"It was great, no one got hurt, everyone arrived on time, departed on time and, best of all, the client rebooked," says Palomino, who suggests the reasons why the client automatically rebooked was because CRE8AD8 provided a turn-key solution for the event — from consultation to post-wrap.

More than anything else, Palomino's advice to corporate planners is that while it's a good thing to turn to CVBs for assistance in any city, it's the DMC that goes the extra mile and provides real value. "DMCs are the knowledge base of any city, organization or region. They know what is going on outside of



Gregorio Palomino, CEP, CWP, CEO, CRE8AD8/Meetings, Incentives & Corporate Events Division, San Antonio, TX

"If a DMC offers experiences you may not have heard of before, chances are you're 'on a win' already. A DMC alleviates stress, time and, hopefully, some of the costs."

the hotels and convention centers and beyond. If a DMC offers experiences you may not have heard of before, chances are you're 'on a win' already. A DMC alleviates stress, time and hopefully some of the costs," he says.

The Better Deal

Palomino reminds planners that DMCs are "the ones who do the legwork all year long to give the client some great ideas and extra value, some cost-efficient options and memorable meetings that make the planner look good." He says, "We spend millions in our cities and with our vendors, and you're about

to spend thousands. Who do you think will get the better deal?"

And as Sue Carey notes: "The DMC has already done the research and development for their destination. It does not spend time shopping around, they spend time designing and planning the myriad details. And, they can be cost-effective, too, as they are rewarded with special rates from their suppliers and vendors." Ultimately, using a DMC often saves the client time and money, and creates memorable, successful events as well.

Or in other words, "Think of us as the powerhouses and buyers in a city," says Palomino. **C&IT**



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Out of This World!

Spectacular Settings for Unforgettable Experiences

By Karen Brost

An adventure-themed incentive trip to New Zealand for a San Francisco technology company included bungee jumping and an awards ceremony at the Skyline Restaurant, a dramatic venue overlooking Queenstown.



Photo courtesy of Skyline Queenstown; inset photo courtesy of IDNZ/Kawarau Bungy Centre

New Zealand

The site chosen for the program, Queenstown, is located on New Zealand's South Island and is one of the country's top visitor destinations. The area is renowned for its wide variety of outdoor adventures and spectacular landscape, much of which is recognizable to fans of the Lord of the Rings movies, which were filmed here. "I've done probably four or five incentive trips (to Queenstown) over the last 15 years, and it's just one of those hidden incentive destination gems in the world. Once the guests get there, they just go, 'This is unbelievable. This is an absolutely spectacular place to be.'"

The program was held in February, which is late summer in New Zealand. "It really was a perfect time for the program," McKee notes. The group stayed at Millbrook Resort, a five-star property that offers breathtaking views of the nearby mountain range, which is aptly

named "The Remarkables." The 500-acre resort, which offers 27 holes of golf and an award-winning spa, has a charming, historic ambience and is located just 20 minutes from Queenstown. "It's kind of got that country feeling, so it was a good choice for them," McKee notes. "It was a five-night program, which I think is probably about the right time. Once you travel all the way there, four nights can work, but I think five nights is probably the optimum for an incentive trip."

The group's welcome reception was held at AJ Hackett Bungy New Zealand. "They do a really good bungee jumping demonstration where they have their experts doing jumps and flips, which is really fantastic for the participants," McKee says. He added that any attendees who wanted to jump themselves, did so at their own expense for liability reasons.

"They also had what we would call

kind of an extreme adventure day," he continues. "Half the group went up on helicopters and went on their way to Milford Sound, which was really a fantastic experience in itself. They ended up landing on a glacier where they were welcomed by tuxedo-wearing staff members serving champagne. That was a big 'wow' right there. Once they took off from the glacier, they landed on a west coast beach on Milford Sound. There were dolphins that were coming up towards the beach area that they could see. Then they got back up in the air to experience more waterfalls and all the alpine pools and you've got these soaring ice-capped mountains. It was just a fabulous, spectacular, breathtaking experience."

"The other half of the group went jet boating up the Dart River and they had a stop at Glenorchy, which is a quaint little town," he continues. Both groups then traveled to a secluded river bed location for a gourmet lunch. "Everything had to be flown in, but we had beautiful colored umbrellas and chairs and picnic blankets and things set out. The experience from the air when the folks flew in on the helicopters was just



Steve McKee
Account Executive
Meetings, Events
and Incentives
Maritz
Fenton, MO

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unbelievable. They're flying down this river at a low altitude, and they come around a corner, and they see from the air all these colored umbrellas. It was just phenomenal." He adds that for the jet-boating group to see their colleagues arrive by helicopter was quite a sight. "I think we had seven or eight (helicopters).

They all kind of landed in a row. It was just spectacular."

After lunch, the attendees had a choice of activities, including fly fishing or volleyball, then everyone switched and either took the helicopter tour or did the jet boating excursion. "It was certainly an adventure, exactly what the client was looking for, something just extremely memorable for them," McKee states. He added that during the rest of the program, the group also enjoyed other activities that included golf, wine tastings and wakeboarding on Lake Wakatipu.

"At the end, they did their awards ceremony up at Skyline (Restaurant) and took the gondola up," McKee explains. Skyline is a special event venue set high on a mountaintop overlooking Queenstown. "It's just breathtaking looking down on the city and the lake, and seeing the sun go down. It was just over the top."

McKee worked with the destination management company ID New Zealand to handle the details of his program. "They're fantastic to work with, just an excellent partner," he notes.

Air New Zealand offers nonstop service to Auckland from Los Angeles and San Francisco, with overnight flights that enable travelers to begin their adventures the morning they arrive. The carrier also offers connecting flights to cities within New Zealand. For more information and resources on New Zealand as a meeting or incentive destination, visit the Tourism New Zealand website at www.businessevents.newzealand.com.

Ireland

Richard Lowy, CEO of the event production firm Branded Experiences, received his favorite client comment ever after he planned a four-night client appreciation trip to Ireland. At the end of the intimate, four-day event for approx-

Going Global and Giving Back

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives have become an important part of many meetings, and now there's a way to combine CSR with incentive programs on a global scale. That's what Hands Up Incentives, a company headquartered in London, specializes in.

"Our point of difference is that we include a meaningful, hands-on community development component to every trip we run," explains Christopher Hill, the company's president and CEO. He shared a few examples. As part of a sales incentive program, groups can build houses, classrooms, libraries or IT rooms in Costa Rica or Cambodia; renovate schools or build playgrounds in Turkey; or build houses or renovate orphanages in South Africa.

So what about the luxury elements usually included in traditional incentive programs?

"Factors such as accommodations and meals tend to be the same as traditional incentive programs," Hill notes. "In fact, we pride ourselves on retaining all the usual elements of an incentive trip, such as gala dinners and luxury hotels, and overlaying this with the CSR component."

He described the typical reaction he receives from those who participate in a CSR-oriented incentive trip. "Even amongst hardened salesmen, and even when compared with the luxury hotels, gala dinners and amazing activities, the consistent highlight is the time spent giving back. Program managers describe the community development projects as 'the best teambuilding activity ever.'" — KB

imately 30 guests, his client exclaimed, "I'm in awe of my own program."

It's easy to see why. The guests stayed at Adare Manor Hotel & Golf Resort, a luxurious country manor that dates back to the 1800s and is set on 840 acres in the heart of County Limerick. "We looked all



Attendees enjoy a traditional "horses and hounds" greeting and Irish choral ensemble performance at Adare Manor Hotel & Golf Resort in County Limerick.

Photos by Stephen Wall Morris



The next day, the group traveled by Mercedes coach to see one of Ireland's top scenic attractions, the Cliffs of Moher, which soar as much as 700 feet above the Atlantic. After lunch at an Irish pub, they visited the Bunratty Folk Park, a recreation of an Irish village where visitors can experience what life was like in the 19th century. "We took them back in time. It was a very interac-

over Ireland, and I like the Adare Manor, because compared to the other castles, we were the big dog on property," Lowy says. "From the moment I contacted them, Bernie (McKeogh) and her team gave us exceptional service. And the property is magnificent."

Guests were welcomed to the estate with champagne and a traditional "horses and hounds" greeting. They then proceeded to the Carriage House at the Adare Golf Club for dinner in a private room that was dramatically lighted with LED lights. "It really took on this magical element," Lowy describes. After dinner, guests were treated to a performance by the Irish choral ensemble Anuna who were featured artists in the show Riverdance. "They came in wearing hoods and carrying candles in front of them, and the room was dark," he notes. "They were singing this chant, and they do this resonating harmony. It was very mystical. The people were just blown away."

But the program's true pièce de résistance was the black-tie dinner on the final night in Adare Manor's stunning Minstrels' Gallery. "It's an absolutely gorgeous room with massive chandeliers," Lowy describes. He had a special stage constructed down the middle of one long table, so 15 guests could sit on each side. Once they entered the room, they were greeted to the sounds of Gregorian chants. "The waiters all came in one line and served the first course. Then we cleared the first course, and these dancers, who were members of Riverdance, came in and literally walked down the middle of the table (and began performing)," he notes. After that, the next course was served while the guests were entertained by an Irish tenor, followed by the return of two of the male Riverdance performers who engaged in a competition. "So now we have half the room cheering for their guy, and the other half cheering for the other guy. This went on for (several) minutes with these guys going crazy, each one getting better and better."

After yet another dinner course and another performance by the whole Riverdance troupe, it was time for dessert, and a male vocal harmony group called the Keynotes arrived to sing "Danny Boy" and "Call to Ireland." "It's a magnificent anthem theme song for Ireland," Lowy explains. "Then we had the Riverdance guys come out again, and they danced while the tenors sang for our big finale number. The table was going crazy and applauding."

To pull off this spectacular program, Lowy worked with the destination management company Ovation Ireland. "Ovation did a great job," he concludes. "You cannot go wrong with Ovation. Normally, I take a team of people with me when I produce a show. (This time) I went over by myself. I've used Ovation before, and they give me 150 percent." And as for Ireland as a destination? "I can't say enough about it. It's fantastic," he says.

Lowy quoted famous filmmaker Steven Spielberg while he described what it takes to create a successful in-

ternational program. "He said, 'You take the surroundings around you, and you build that into the imagination.' Adare Manor just fit that perfectly. Every one of (the staff) just understood what I was trying to do. They helped us create this emotional experience in everything they did. They didn't say 'We don't do that,' or 'We can't do that.' They just did it."

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Macau-China

Macau is a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China, and despite its rich history, it is probably best known for being the largest gaming destination in Asia. In years past, visitors would fly into Hong Kong and take a one-hour ferry ride to reach Macau, but today, Macau International Airport is becoming a low-cost airline hub. That was one of the key factors that led the Centre for Aviation, headquartered in Sydney, Australia, to host a conference there for approximately 200 attendees.

"From an event production point of view, Macau is also more affordable than other destinations in the region," explains Susan Tran, head of knowledge events for the market intelligence organization. "For anyone wanting to do an event in China, it provides a good gateway to the mainland. Outside of the confines of a meeting, Macau itself is quite a unique destination — like a little piece of Portugal inside a little piece of China. This is often overshadowed by its reputation as a gambling hub, but beyond the glitziness, the city is quite an interesting place to explore as you can see evidence of its colonial past infused in the architecture."

The group chose the Venetian Macao Resort Hotel as the site of the meeting. The 3,000-suite property offers 1.2 million sf of meeting facilities as well as a 15,000-seat arena. One factor that impressed Tran's team was the flexibility of the meeting space. "The quality of the fit-outs and the high ceilings allowed us to create a setting that had an impact

on our delegates. Meanwhile, the range of facilities available at the Venetian allowed our guests to enjoy their time outside of the conference sessions, from the comfortable, well-equipped and oversized rooms to a wide variety of retail, leisure and entertainment options.

"It was a real pleasure to work with the Venetian team throughout the entire project, from the initial state of negotiating the contract right through to the catering and event logistics," Tran continues. "Even though we would have been one of hundreds of clients, we always felt looked after. With all the variables that come with managing an event, the last thing you want to worry about is the meeting space, but the

"We looked all over Ireland, and I like the Adare Manor, because compared to the other castles, we were the big dog on property."



Richard K. Lowy
CEO
Branded Experiences
Vancouver, BC

Venetian (staff) was generally one step ahead, preempting our concerns before we had even thought of them ourselves!"

Updates from Around the World

England. Following on the heels of the successful 2012 Summer Olympics and the record-breaking Paralympic Games, groups visiting London will benefit from the legacy of the games in terms of new and updated accommodations, sporting venues and transportation upgrades.

London also is becoming one of the most accessible cities in the world, and has a dedicated website www.inclusivelondon.com, which lists accessible buildings, venues and services.

Turkey. Istanbul is Turkey's largest city, and its economic, historic and

cultural center. The city offers three distinct areas for meetings. The airport area is the city's trade-show district and is home to the Istanbul World Trade Center Complex, which contains 11 exhibit halls. Istanbul's main meeting area, the Congress Valley, is located in the heart of the city's business and cultural district within walking distance of numerous four- and five-star hotels and two convention centers. The third meeting area, called the Conference Valley, contains more than 10,000 guest rooms including those at the seven five-star hotels. The area offers multiple meeting venues, including the Feshane International Fair, Congress and Culture Center, which was built in 1839 as an Ottoman textile factory.

Switzerland. Le Richemond, which is set on the banks of Lake Geneva and offers breathtaking views of the French Alps, has joined the Dorchester Collection's portfolio of luxury hotels. The hotel offers 87 guest rooms and 22 suites, along with five meeting venues, a spa and a signature restaurant, Le Jardin.

Singapore. The Mandarin Oriental, Singapore recently became the first hotel in Singapore to receive the Forbes Five Star rating. It also was the only Asian hotel to be awarded new five-star status for 2012. The hotel's Oriental Lounge is located on the 19th floor and offers panoramic views of the Singapore skyline. This level offers exclusive club benefits including a daily champagne breakfast, afternoon tea, evening cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, teleconferencing facilities and concierge services.

South Korea. In 2013, Hyatt Hotels is planning to launch its fifth hotel in South Korea with the opening of the new 268-room Park Hyatt in the port city of Busan. Hyatt already operates hotels in Seoul and Incheon and on the island of Jeju.

Japan. Prince Hotels & Resorts, which operates 43 hotels throughout Japan, recently revamped its website to add more user-friendly features. Visitors to the site can search for a hotel by map, brand or travel objective. Eight of the chain's Japanese hotels are located in Tokyo, the nation's capital. **C&IT**

Meeting at Historic Hotels Where Quality and Service Are Legendary

By George Seli



A 1905 conference at the Mohonk Mountain House, a National Historic Landmark in New Paltz, NY that has remained family owned since 1869.

Photo courtesy of Mohonk Mountain House

At some hotels and resorts, attendees are sightseeing the moment they arrive, since the property itself is among the city's not-to-be-missed, iconic experiences. San Francisco's Sir Francis Drake Hotel is one example. After Hartville, OH-based Trelleborg Wheel Systems Americas Inc. held a customer incentive program at the Sir Francis Drake, Marketing Coordinator Jessica Aubley, planner of the event, received added confirmation that the hotel has that iconic quality. "We have a Latin American dealer who emailed me since to say he's taking his wife to see the hotel, he loved it so much," Aubley relates.

Beefeater Doormen

The Sir Francis Drake opened in 1928 and was hailed as "the last word in ho-

tel" by newspapers, with such features as radios in every room and an indoor golf course. Harry Truman was a guest in the early '40s, and the '50s saw the introduction of the famous Beefeater uniforms for the doormen, which remain to this day. Most recently, the hotel has completed a three-year, \$30 million renovation of its 416 rooms and lobby, and has reopened Harry Denton's Starlight Room lounge on the hotel's 21st floor. Renovations to meeting space, which totals 18,000 sf, will be completed late first quarter 2013. But according to Aubley, the renovation was in no sense a reinvention. "They've modernized a historic hotel but kept the charm and the same look and feel of the furniture. That was really impressive to our group: When they did the re-

model a year and a half ago, they did not get rid of the feeling that you were back in the '20s," she explains.

In an era when Las Vegas is boasting "destination hotels" that are over-the-top, theme-park-like adventures, and New York is touting boutique properties geared toward the eclectic, tech-savvy traveler, meeting planners do well to bear in mind classic properties such as the Sir Francis Drake, which draws specifically because they are *not* the latest thing. Accordingly, such hotels will renovate and add modern features while keeping the historic architectural and décor aspects that make great conversation-starters among attendees.

The Pink Palace

Consider the 5,400-sf Grand Ball-

room at Loews Don CeSar Beach Resort & Spa in St. Pete Beach, FL. Its two elegant tiers and curving staircases descend to a rich, dark wood dance floor on the lower level. Arched windows offer panoramic views of the Gulf of Mexico, which were enjoyed by the 140 attendees of Lewisville, TX-based Hoya Vision Care's national sales meeting in January. "They call it the grand ballroom for a reason; it's very spectacular in its own right, and you would possibly save on theming or décor from the planning side," says Ron Biggs, Hoya's director of procurement and planner for the event.

While ballrooms at some of Las Vegas' newer properties offer "more of the wild factor and AV capabilities," Biggs asserts that "you can't replicate the ballroom atmosphere they have at the Don CeSar," a property built in 1928 to resemble a Mediterranean-style castle. "The Pink Palace" houses 277 guest rooms, 38,000 sf of indoor/outdoor meeting space, the 11,000-sf Spa Oceana and the award-winning Maritana Grille.

The resort's striking appearance was ideal for marketing materials, Biggs adds. "Having that hotel the way it looks on the water is fantastic. We did an e-promotion to our group that featured a yacht on the water with the Pink Palace in the background off the bay. And when you are down there on the beach or coming in from the highway and you see it, it's spectacular." Among the resort's "venues with a view" is the penthouse, where the group's CEO hosted a dinner on a private deck.

Gracing 'The City Beautiful'

Another picturesque historic hotel in the Sunshine State is The Biltmore, located in Coral Gables, just south of Miami. A National Historic Landmark, the Biltmore was built in 1926 on 150 acres. It was the centerpiece of real estate developer George Merrick's vision of Coral Gables as "The City Beautiful" and featured Mediterranean revival architecture, with

its façade currently under renovation. In the 1920s and '30s, the hotel frequently hosted notables such as Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Ginger Rogers, Judy Garland and Bing Crosby. The 275-room resort is home to a Donald Ross 18-hole golf course, the country's largest hotel pool and private cabanas, the signature Palme d'Or restaurant, Biltmore Spa and even a Culinary Academy, not to mention 76,000 sf of meeting and function space, including 40,000 sf of technologically cutting-edge meeting facilities in the adjacent Conference Center of the Americas.

Hershey Treat

Few historic hotels offer groups an entire theme park for free-time leisure, and the 1930s era Hotel Hershey, in Hershey, PA, is one of those few. When Kate Stockton, CMP, president of event planning and meeting management company Stockton & Partners Inc., staged a meeting at the hotel for a major U.S. apparel manufacturer and distributor, about 120 of the company's salespeople participated in a teambuilding event at Hershey Park "and then we kicked off our session at the park in one of the pavilions and actually had a formal sit-down program with a celebrity moderator," Stockton relates. "This past year we did our awards ceremony in the Hershey hotel gardens under a tent and then up in the Castilian Ballroom, which is this very beautiful turn-of-the-century deco ballroom. We just uplighted a



Attendees of a U.S. apparel manufacturer enjoy a cocktail reception at The Hotel Hershey, a landmark since the 1930s. Stockton & Partners staged this and other events for the company.

Kate Stockton, CMP
President
Stockton & Partners Inc.
Philadelphia, PA



"One of the things we like about most historic properties is that they have an intimate feeling; we are usually not the only group there, but it feels like that."

little and did beautiful linens and centerpieces, and the room spoke for itself.

"The hotel has so many beautiful architectural details, along with the grandeur of the gardens," she continues. "That old-world feeling sets a tone and a brand. One of the things that attracted this client to this property initially is that part of their sales piece is always very specifically embodying their brand, and the Hershey properties do that particularly well. And one of the things we like about most historic properties is that they have an intimate feeling; we are usually not the only group there, but it feels like that."

The four-diamond, four-star Hotel Hershey, a member of Historic Hotels of America, offers 276 guest rooms including 48 premium cottages and 25,000 sf of meeting space.

Where ‘Nothing Unimportant Ever Happens’

Hotels like the Hershey, which has been welcoming guests for more than 70 years, certainly become icons in their own milieu. And in the Northeast U.S., there is arguably no more iconic hotel than The Plaza, which boasts the quintessential Manhattan location across from Central Park. The French chateau-style building turned 100 in 2007 following a five-year restoration, and now offers 282 guest rooms along with 21,000 sf of meeting space. Here, at the hotel where “nothing unimportant ever happens,” business sessions take on a sense of grandeur, and attendees can dine at the historic Palm Court, New York City’s iconic destination for afternoon tea. Yet there’s always something new at the Fairmont-managed Plaza: The Plaza Food Hall, created in partnership with celebrity chef Todd English has transformed the hotel’s retail corridor into a feast of culinary delights. The popular eatery has expanded twice since opening in 2010. Adding a high-tech touch to the historical, The Plaza features iPads with a virtual concierge in all guest rooms.

138 Working Fireplaces

About 80 miles north of New

World’s Largest Porch

Also “close to nature” is the Grand

York City in New Paltz’s Shawangunk Mountains is a very different kind of historic hotel, situated by Lake Mohonk near the top of Shawangunk Ridge. Family owned since 1869, Mohonk Mountain House has the appearance of a Victorian Castle and was named a National Historic Landmark in 1986, along with 83 other Mohonk buildings. The House has 266 guest rooms, three spacious dining rooms, 138 working fireplaces, 238 balconies, a new spa, a comprehensive fitness center, and an indoor heated swimming pool. The grounds feature golf, tennis, stables, gardens, a greenhouse, 125 “summerhouses” (rustic gazebos), a museum and an observation point known as Sky Top Tower. Needless to say, groups have numerous intriguing options for informal gatherings. Moreover, Mohonk Mountain House received both national (American Hotel and Lodging Association) and state (New York State Hospitality and Tourism Association) awards for outstanding guest service.



Photo courtesy of The Greenbrier
Dating from 1778, The Greenbrier, in White Sulphur Springs, WV, offers 100,000 sf of meeting space.

Hotel, which debuted in 1887. Perched high on a bluff on Michigan’s Mackinac Island, the hotel overlooks the Straits of Mackinac. Its famous 660-foot porch — the world’s largest — is visible when approaching the Island by ferry boat. No motorized vehicles are allowed on the island, so guests will be “transported” back in time as they stroll among the antique and fudge shops in the 19th Century Village, and tour Fort Mackinac and other historic sites. Grand Hotel, the world’s largest summer hotel, offers 385 uniquely decorated rooms and the Woodfill Conference Center, a two-story, 16,000-sf space that combines Victorian-era ambience with modern tech amenities such as free Wi-Fi.

Cattle Baron Showplace

Predating the Grand Hotel by a year is The Driskill, located in the heart of downtown Austin, TX, and originally the showplace of a cattle baron. At 189 guest rooms and 18,080 sf of meeting space, The Driskill is a smaller hotel, but it is sure to make a big impact on attendees with an ongoing roster of live musical acts and the four-diamond Driskill Grill, arguably Austin’s No. 1 restaurant.

Disneyland on Steroids

When one thinks of U.S. history, the state of Virginia naturally comes to mind, given its distinction as the “Mother of Presidents” and as a focal point for most of the battles of the Civil War. When planners think of Virginia, and its neighbor, West Virginia, two properties heavily steeped in the local culture come to mind: The Greenbrier, in White Sulphur Springs, WV, and The

Homestead, in Hot Springs, VA. Michael Despones Jr., director of corporate events for Los Angeles-based Farmers Insurance, had long been advocating The Greenbrier as a site choice, and finally staged the company’s most elite incentive program, the President’s Council, at the hotel. A National Historic Landmark dating from 1778, the hotel made quite an impression on the 325 attendees, which included the top-producing .5 percent of Farmers’ exclusive agents. “One of my attendees said it looks like a Disneyland on steroids because you walk in there and it’s this explosion of color, with the brightly colored flowers on the outside. But the building is stark white,” Despones describes. “It’s a historical property unlike any you’ve seen” was the promotional message to attendees, he says. In fact, the hotel’s social director sourced historians to speak to Farmers’ qualifiers during the bus transfer to the hotel from the airport in Roanoke. “It got them excited about the property,” Despones says. “And that’s what’s so nice about the Greenbrier: they handle everything, my



Photo courtesy of Sir Francis Drake Hotel
Harry Denton’s Starlight Room lounge was recently reopened following guest room and lobby renovations at the Sir Francis Drake Hotel in San Francisco.

optional activities, my transportation, personalized gifts for attendees.”

The 710-room Greenbrier offers more than 100,000 sf of meeting space and activities well-suited to Farmers’ active group, which ranged in age from upper 20s to mid-50s. These included falconry, archery, golf, white-water rafting and more. “They have a place called Kate’s Mountain (a cabin-like venue seating up to 300 for dinner) where our group en-

joyed an Appalachian dinner at sunset,” he relates. Attendees could watch local artisans at work and purchase their wares. Afterward they boarded a shuttle for the pool where a desert reception with a fireworks display awaited them. “The Greenbrier took care of a wonderful display, and you couldn’t ask for anything more,” Despones says.

Homestead Away From Home

The Homestead, which predates the Greenbrier by 12 years, also offers its share of outdoor splendor given its setting within the Allegheny Mountains. In June the Homestead finalized construction of Allegheny Springs, part one of its sweeping \$25 million transformation. Allegheny Springs comprises Mountain Rush, featuring three 100-foot water slides, a 400-foot lazy river and private cabanas. The transformation also will add the new Spa and Wellness Center at The Homestead, Jefferson’s Grill restaurant (featuring a farm-to-table menu) and MiniCascades, an 18-hole miniature golf course. The course is named after the award-winning Cascades

Course, which complements the Old Course. The 483-room Homestead offers 72,000 sf of meeting space and other recreational amenities, such as the South’s first downhill ski area, a 48-stable Equestrian Center and show ring, and one of the top-rated shooting clubs.

Grande Dame of the Rockies

Among larger historic hotels, there is The Broadmoor, which opened in 1918 in Colorado Springs, CO. The “Grande Dame of the Rockies” offers 744 accommodations (593 guest rooms, 107 suites, 44 Cottage bedrooms) and 185,000 sf of meeting space, which includes the pillarless, 60,000-sf Broadmoor Hall and 62 meeting rooms. Three championship golf courses include the historic East Course, and attendees also can enjoy Colorado’s only five-star spa and its only five-star, five-diamond restaurant, the Penrose Room.

Stellar Venues

Each of America’s legendary hotels is in fact a trove of unique venues, whether it be The Greenbrier’s Kate Mountain or Harry Denton’s Starlight Room, located 21 stories high within the Sir Francis Drake Hotel. Trelleborg Wheel Systems Americas’ 24 representatives and customers had lunch in the Starlight Room, replete with red roses and 1930s glamour. “It was absolutely incredible,” says Aubley, “because you have attendees sitting in a meeting room all day, and yes they have windows, but you usually keep them closed for the PowerPoints. So then you take them up for lunch as high as you can get in the hotel and it overlooks the whole city as you eat. You cannot have a better view.”

The group also could not have had better service. More than the expected “white glove” service at such a property, the concierge at the Sir Francis Drake went the extra mile for the Trelleborg group in coordinating their Napa Valley excursion, Aubley relates. “We had an issue with the bus company coming late, and we missed our first wine tasting because the winery was ready to close. The concierge brainstormed on the phone until they found somewhere for me to take my group.”

When considering historic properties, one basic fact should not be overlooked: They are successful, long-running businesses. As such, they serve as exemplars to corporate groups when it comes to customer service, management and delivering a quality, improved product year after year. “During my site visit my sales rep came in and talked about why they’ve invested in renovating the Sir Francis Drake and in the staff, and I could not have asked for something better to hear. So we asked them to share it with our team, because our whole meeting was about value and quality,” Aubley relates. “When I first walked into the hotel I was skeptical; my managing director prefers very modern hotels. But everything about the property just screamed quality, and that’s what we were looking to show our attendees.”

C&IT

U.S. Postal Service Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation			
1. Publication Title: Corporate & Incentive Travel			
2. Publication Number: 716-450			
3. Filing Date: October 25, 2012			
4. Issue Frequency: Monthly			
5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 12			
6. Annual Subscription Price: \$90.00			
7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication: 2700 North Military Trail, Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394 Contact Person: Harvey Grotzky Telephone: 561-989-0600 ext. 106			
8. Complete Mailing Address or General Business Office of Publisher: 2700 North Military Trail, Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394			
9. Full Names and Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor and Managing Editor: Publisher: Harvey Grotzky, Coastal Communications Corporation, 2700 North Military Trail, Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394 Editor: Susan Fell, 2700 North Military Trail, Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394 Managing Editor: Susan Gregg, 2700 North Military Trail, Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394			
10. Owner: Coastal Communications Corporation, 2700 North Military Trail, Suite, 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431-6394			
11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities: None			
12. Tax Status: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months			
13. Publication Title: Corporate & Incentive Travel			
14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: October 2012			
15. Extent and Nature of Circulation: Request			
		Average Number Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months	Number Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
Legitimate Paid and/or Requested Distribution	a. Total Number of Copies (net press run)	42,000	42,000
	b1. Outside County Paid/Requested Mail Subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541	24,967	24,988
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	b4. Requested Copies Distributed by Other Mail Classes Through the USPS*	0	0
Nonrequested Distribution	c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4))	24,967	24,988
	d1. Outside County Nonrequested Copies Stated on PS Form 3541	16,380	16,408
	d2. In-County Nonrequested Copies Stated on PS Form 3541	0	0
	d3. Nonrequested Copies Distributed Through the USPS by Other Classes of Mail	0	0
	d4. Nonrequested Copies Distributed Outside the Mail	150	160
	e. Total Nonrequested Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3), and (4))	16,530	16,568
	f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and e)	41,497	41,556
	g. Copies not Distributed	503	444
	h. Total (Sum of 15f and g)	42,000	42,000
	i. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation (15c divided by f times 100)	60.2%	60.1%
16. Publication of Statement of Ownership for a Requester Publication is required and will be printed in the November 2012 issue of this publication.			
17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or owner (Signed): Harvey Grotzky, President & CEO Date: 10/25/12			

ON THE MOVE



CASEY



JACOBSEN



HARVEY



BRANCIFORTE



CHAGNON

Laura Jung was named director of group sales for the San Francisco Marriott Marquis, responsible for the Midwest and Canadian markets. She was most recently director of group sales for the Hilton Union Square, San Francisco, CA.

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Inc. has appointed **Mary Casey** as senior vice president of sales, North America Division. With more than 24 years of experience with Starwood, Casey most recently was vice president, global corporate sales.

Amy Jacobsen was named sales manager for The Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club with a focus on mid-Atlantic

and Western U.S. regions. She most recently served as national sales manager at the Loews Don CeSar Hotel, St. Pete Beach, FL.

The Peabody Orlando, Orlando, FL, has named **Karen A. Harvey** as national sales manager with a focus on group meetings and events. She most recently served as national accounts manager, citywide team, with Visit Orlando.

Wyndham Grand Orlando Resort Bonnet Creek, Lake Buena Vista, FL, has named **John Branciforte** as director of sales and marketing. With more than 25 years of hospitality sales and marketing experience, he most recent-

ly served as director of sales and marketing at Cheyenne Mountain Resort, Colorado Springs, CO.

Michael Chagnon was named director of sales and marketing for Villas of Grand Cypress, Orlando, FL. Chagnon, who brings 25 years of experience in luxury hospitality sales and marketing to his new position, was most recently director of sales and marketing for The Equinox, Manchester, VT.

The Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina, San Diego, CA, has named **Russ Mitchell** as director of sales and marketing. He previously served as director of sales and marketing for The US Grant, San Diego, CA. **C&IT**

READER SERVICES / AD INDEX

PAGE	ADVERTISER	PHONE NO.	WEB SITE	CONTACT	E-MAIL
13	Grand Lucayan Beach & Golf Resort	800-693-1413	www.grandlucayan.com	Group Sales	groups@grandlucayan.com
COV I	Grand Sierra Resort and Casino	866-473-6672	www.grandsierraresort.com	N/A	N/A
5	Green Valley Ranch Resort, Spa & Casino	888-319-4661	www.sclv.com/meetings	Veronica Kistner	veronica.kistner@stationcasinos.com
AOE 5	Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau	800-933-8448	www.miamimeetings.com	Ileana Castillo	ileana@miamimeetings.com
AOE 11	Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa	850-267-9600	www.hiltonsandestinbeach.com	Matthew Price	sales@hiltonsandestinbeach.com
AOE 13	The Houstonian Hotel, Club & Spa	800-231-2759	www.houstonian.com	Mark Lupton	sales2012@houstonian.com
COV II, 3	Hyatt Hotels & Resorts	855-374-9288	www.hyattmeetings.com	Group Sales	meetings@hyatt.com
AOE 7	Long Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau	800-452-7829	www.visitlongbeach.com	Iris Himert	irish@longbeachcvb.org
7	Omni Hotels & Resorts	972-871-5623	www.omniunderstands.com	Mark Wykes	mwykes@omnihotels.com
AOE 15	Ponte Vedra Inn & Club	800-234-7842	www.pontevedra.com	Tony Fitzjohn	sales@pvsresorts.com
5	Red Rock Casino, Resort & Spa	888-319-4661	www.sclv.com/meetings	Veronica Kistner	veronica.kistner@stationcasinos.com
AOE 17	Rosen Centre Hotel	407-996-9840	www.rosencentre.com	Todd Frappier	tfrappier@rosencentre.com
AOE 19	Rosen Plaza Hotel	407-996-9700	www.rosenplaza.com	Victoria Hall	sales@rosenplaza.com
AOE 21	Rosen Shingle Creek	407-996-9939	www.rosenshinglecreek.com	Leslie Menichini	sales@rosenshinglecreek.com
AOE 23	The Scottsdale Plaza Resort	480-922-3300	www.meetatscottsdaleplaza.com	Kelly Moenter-Nofal	meet@scottsdaleplaza.com
AOE 25	The Seaport Hotel & World Trade Center	617-385-4212	www.seaportboston.com	Group Sales	sales@seaportboston.com
AOE COV II	South Point Hotel & Spa	702-797-8050	www.southpointmeetings.com	Maureen Robinson	sales@southpointcasino.com
AOE 27	The Venetian Resort Hotel Casino	702-414-4202	www.venetianpalazzomeetings.com	Chandra Allison	chandra.allison@venetianpalazzo.com
AOE 9	Visit Denver	800-480-2010	www.visitdenver.com/conventions	Rachel Benedick	rbenedick@visitdenver.com
AOE 29	Wynn Las Vegas	888-320-7117	www.wynnmeetings.com	Hotel Sales	hotelsales@wynnlasvegas.com

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