

A Dose OF SASS



Day 3 of the conference is always one of my favorites. By this time you have seen so many colleagues whom you have not seen since your last educational conference—or possibly in years—and you probably have met so many new ones that will be friends for life. Together, we are an amazing collection of people.

As the conference theme says, “When we meet, we change the world,” and as a result of this gathering, we are going to go out and change the perception of meetings and events around the globe. The value of meetings and events is indisputable, but it is up to each of us to spread the word of their value in today’s economy. And as Barack Obama has so eloquently said on numerous occasions, “Yes, we can!” We truly are the face and voice of the meeting and event industry.

When we all leave Salt Lake City inspired, I encourage each of you to gather your industry and non-industry friends together for a wonderful summer fête.

The outdoors provides the perfect backdrop to play host to everything from a laid-back soiree with cocktails and hors d’oeuvres to an elegant dinner for friends, family and neighbors, all in celebration of warm temperatures and amazing sunsets. Additionally, it serves as the perfect opportunity in a relaxed environment to tell all of your non-industry friends about the value of our industry so they, too, can help spread the word.

One of my personal favorites is an all-white summer soiree. White provides an elegant twist to an outdoor picnic.

- Create your outdoor summer party on a beach, in a garden, in a backyard or on a small townhouse lawn or patio.
- Use a crisp summer white as your primary color. And don’t hesitate to pair white and off-white.
- Invite your guests to dress in all white and upon arrival to go barefoot.
- Place white paper bag luminaries with tea lights in sand to outline and define your entertaining space.
- Plan on having a variety of non-alcoholic options available for your guests. Assign a few of your good friends to keep an eye on the bar area.
- I’ve found that one of the best ways to keep your alcohol budget in check is to offer a signature cocktail at your party. This year for my fun summer soirées, I am serving my favorite luxury rum, 10 Cane! Everyone wants to feel luxurious, and this is a simple and easy way to incorporate that feeling into your party.
- If space permits, place a white tent in your entertaining space, and then take white fabric and simply drape it over the tent poles at the top (this allows you to cover the tent poles) to create sheer and billowy drapes.
- Straw beach mats will create a wonderful floor surface on the ground and

under the tent. For extra fun, top the mats with white pillows to promote ground seating and conversation.

- Gorgeous and airy summer white flowers such as roses, stephanotis, white phlox, white calla lilies, Casablanca lilies and hydrangea are a perfect touch for an outdoor party.
- Bring the indoors out. If you have a wonderful wood dining or coffee table that is easy to transport outside, do so; this makes for a fantastic dining or buffet table.
- White wood garden chairs are a great and comfortable touch to any summer event. Arrange these casually in an easy form to encourage relaxed conversation.
- String stylish white paper lanterns, white twinkle lights or solar lanterns to create ambiance. I always love to add a touch of romance with white candles in various sizes and in hurricane vases.
- Table cloths in crisp linen, sheer, textured or gauzy white add a special touch to any table setting.
- If you live in an area where temperatures dip in the evening, an outdoor fireplace, fire pit or chimenea is wonderful.
- Think about spraying the area the day before or placing citronella candles in the distance and providing a few cans of bug repellent for your guests.

Correction

The **CORT Event Furnishings** description in the *WEC Conference Guide* was listed incorrectly. We regret the error. The correct description follows.

Kevin Dana
South San Francisco, CA
650-624-0930
kevin.dana@cort.com
www.cortevents.com

Get a fresh perspective with the new outdoor product line from CORT Event Furnishings. Versatile and chic, the Meridian Collection is perfect for any outdoor or indoor event. Visit CORT’s redesigned Web site at www.CORTevents.com to view this exciting collection, and use the free easy space planning tool where you can create 2D floor plans in minutes! Call 1.888.CORT.YES for Style & Service Delivered.

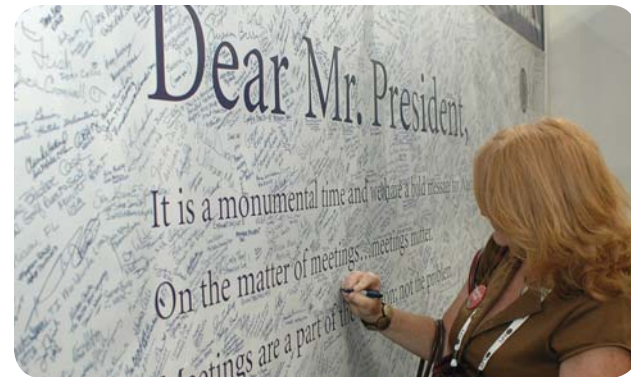
A Message GAINING MOMENTUM

The meeting and event industry has a letter for U.S. President Barack Obama:

“Dear Mr. President, it is a monumental time, and we have a bold message for Washington. On the matter of meetings...meetings matter. Meetings are a part of the solution; not the problem.”

But it’s not just any old letter, this one is eight feet tall and 48 feet wide, consisting of three, 16-foot-tall panels (one sponsored by MPI) with thousands of signatures and handwritten notes from industry members—and a watermarked photograph of the U.S. Capitol Building. The intent is to make sure the message gets across loud and clear.

Beth Hamiroune, vice president of sales for the Krisam Group and Global Event Partners, began this grassroots movement during the MPI New England Meetings Industry Conference & Exposition (NEMICE) trade show in



April. Originally part of her booth display, attendees began signing the panels in an overwhelming heartfelt response to express support for the industry.

She attended the 2009 U.S. presidential inauguration, which is where she snapped the letter’s photo.

“I was very emotional about the whole situation,” Hamiroune said. “When President Obama spoke out against meetings, I felt disappointed.”

The letter then traveled to an MPI chapter event in New York, and with the growing buzz found its way to the ASAE Springtime Expo. What has become referred to as The Wall just finished up its visit to WEC’s MeetingPlace trade show floor, garnering excited responses from new signatories.

Hamiroune hopes to deliver the letter to Washington this fall. Its path up to that time is still fluid, too, and MPI chapters are encouraged to play host to the letter at their events to add signatures and increase the impact of this powerful message.

MeetingPlace Cash Winners

Congratulations to the winners of the \$500 trade show giveaways, sponsored by Peabody Orlando!



Bronwyn Hansen
Senior Meeting Planner
ExxonMobil



Beth Hecquet
Director of Meetings and Events
National Association of Sports Commissions



Rebecca Jones, CMP, CTC
Meeting and Event Planner
Shell Oil Company



Patricia Keeney, CMP
Manager, Meetings and Conventions
Synthes (USA)



Shari Stafford, CMP
Manager, Community Affairs and Events
Southern Union Company



Mia Short, CMP
Advisor, Event Marketing
CVS/Caremark



Lauree Simes
Corporate Event Planner



Latonya Trower, CMP
Conferences Coordinator
American Society for Microbiology



Smart Negotiations

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the circumstances specifically justify it. Foster said planners should maintain the right of first refusal—you get first dibs on rooms if the hotel is being offered additional business. Hoteliers present were doubtful, saying they’d only agree to that if they’re just dealing with overflow business or if the dates are during the off-season. Foster responded that he sees this working with a lot of hotels, but that, of course, these tips don’t apply to every situation—second-tier cities are more likely to accept such contract components.

- Planner attendees mentioned seeing many hotels offer bookings without attrition clauses, but wondered if this indicates that planners are taking the business less seriously—and if hotels, in turn, would be less attentive to their business.
- Don’t agree to pay both attrition damages and meeting room rental unless the room-to-space ratio is out of balance—use a certain percentage of rooms, get a certain percentage of meeting space. Planners using more than their share of meeting space may earn “space hog” titles from properties. You always get the best terms if your ratio is in balance.
- Provide terms for “date change” versus “cancellation” and “rebooking.” By utilizing a “date change” clause, planners can avoid cancellation charges. Hoteliers were skeptical about the success of such clauses, and while Foster admitted this is a controversial idea, he has seen it utilized successfully and the current economy is potentially giving this option legs.

There was so much important content and great discussion that it can’t all possibly be included here. WEC attendees can, however, check out Foster’s “Hotel Contracts Boot Camp” session today at 9:50-11:30 a.m./09.50-11.30 in Room 255D.