

the official newsletter of the pcma capital chapter

Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID)



On April 6, PCMA Capital Chapter and MPI-Potomac united in presenting the Second Annual Global Meetings Industry Day. The latest statistics show that 90 events took place on this day with the breakdown as follows:

- » 70 - North America
- » 16 - Europe
- » 2 - Africa
- » 1 - Asia
- » 1 - Australia

Our theme of “It Starts With Us: Creating Connections and Building Bridges” encompassed the Meetings Mean Business goals for this year’s event:

Personal Connections: through personal connections and conversations, information is shared, discussed and tangible outcomes are derived.

Positive Business Outcomes: when companies provide travel for their employees to attend conferences and tradeshows, the tangible benefits they come back with far outweigh the costs.

Building Strong Communities: the economic impact to local communities is huge. It creates jobs, generates commerce and creates far-reaching community impact.

In keeping with our tradition of working with U.S. Travel Association, Erik Hansen, Vice President of Government Relations, was our opening guest speaker. With his focus on issues related to aviation, surface transportation, infrastructure and federal travel, his presentation and subsequent Town Hall Meeting was very well received.

Seth Turner of the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF) works directly with Members of Congress and staff to enhance their operations

and interactions with constituents. CMF works directly with citizen groups to educate them on how Congress works, giving constituents a stronger voice in policy outcomes.

Finally, our fabulous panel consisting of Thomas “TJ” Maloney, Senior Director of Government Affairs, Marriott International; Marcus Eng, CMP, Meeting Manager, American Public Transportation Association; and Nancy DeBrosse, Senior VP of Strategic Account Management, Experient; with moderator Terrence Donnelly, CMP, Vice President of Sales, Experient, offered an insightful view on many aspects of the meetings industry, including International Travel & Visa Waiver, Latest on Bathroom Bills, Fight Against Human Trafficking, U.S. Infrastructure, and Government Travel!

Let’s not forget CNTV’s Carrie Ferenac’s video stream from Las Vegas interviewing attendees on the importance of face-to-face meetings at the Car Wash Show, and our fabulous reception sponsored by the Sphinx on K.

Mark your calendars for **April 12, 2018** for the next GMID!!!! •

by Rosa Mendoza-Friedheim,
Regional Director of Sales, GFCLCVB



The **PCMA Capital Chapter** is where “You Belong”!

Mission: The mission of PCMA and the Chapter is to be the leading organization for meeting and event professionals by delivering superior and innovative education and promoting the value of professional convention management.

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If you have any comments, suggestions or would like to write an article for *The Chatter*, email: PCMAchatter@gmail.com

Message from the Board

*Geraldyn Krist, CMP
Account Director
Sheraton New Orleans*



Happy Spring Capital Chapter Members! It is my pleasure for the second year in a row to write the Message from the Board for our annual supplier issue! Speaking for all suppliers, we love the relationships that we build with our supplier and planner partners in the industry. Many of these relationships transform the traditional planner/supplier role into long lasting friendships. On any given day, my Facebook feed is filled with pictures of all of my friends (hotels, CVB's meeting planners, DMC's) getting together for lunch, cocktails, and concerts or just to hang out and enjoy each other's company. Need a dog walker, babysitter or running partner? Just ask on Facebook. I guarantee that you will find someone, no matter what their title is.

I hope each of you will find a few minutes to read this month's Chatter. We highlight the wonderful GMID program held last month at The Sphinx on K. Want to learn more about the "Mega Mergers" happening in our industry? Turn the page. As a planner, do you want to know about the time it takes a supplier to turnaround your RFP so you can receive timely responses? It's all in this issue, plus much more.

If you are new to the industry and PCMA – welcome! Our Chapter of 1,600 is an amazing and overwhelming group to become a part of. Some suggestions for the "new kids" – start small. Find someone in the room that you know and ask them to introduce you to others. Meet the Board Members and Committee Chairs. Share your interests and knowledge. Joining a committee is a great way to meet people and become involved. Membership has its privileges so make sure you take advantage of everything that PCMA and the Capital Chapter have to offer! •





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Tracking of Room Nights Will Continue to Matter...It's the Room Block That Might Not!

If the title got your attention, I'd like to first emphasize that the tracking of overnight attendees and hotel rooms sold to the attendees of events we book will become a higher priority for convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs) and their hotel partners. In this age of data driven decision making, I'm truly surprised we haven't turned our attention sooner to understanding where our attendees are staying and capturing their specific economic impact.

Over a year ago, with the help of five industry foundations (PCMA Education Foundation, Destination & Travel Foundation, Center for Exhibition Industry Research Foundation, ASAE-The Center for Association Leadership, and MPI Foundation), I had the opportunity to work with Tourism Economics and authored the Event Room Demand Study, which for the first time quantified the volume of rooms being booked outside the planners' contracted room block. On average, according to the findings, one out of every three (34.1%) rooms were booked outside the contracted room block. For citywides, the average is understandably higher (nearly 45%).

Unfortunately, we are unable to apply these averages broadly to our events because a considerable amount of variability exists among events and suggests that certain event characteristics may show differences in the number of rooms booked outside the block. Suffice to say, this trend makes it very difficult to track the room nights and if CVBs or convention centers have offered any incentives or discounts to attract the event, the inability to justify the return on this investment should be a concern for all parties. That's why I say the room block shouldn't matter in this case. It is no longer an adequate representation of the value of the event.

So how will we begin to better track room nights if the contracted room block is no longer reliable? We need to quantify and calculate the event's room demand. This is a new quest of DMAI's with the development of a tool for CVBs called the Event Room Demand Analyzer. The tool analyzes the attendees', exhibitors', and staff's registration zip codes to determine the number of overnight visitors and applies a persons per room ratio to quantify the event's total room demand. The tool will become available to CVBs by the end of June, so planners will have the opportunity to partner with their CVBs to analyze any past events.

For more information, feel free to contact shimo@destinationmarketing.org.

by Kyla Knudson, CASE, CIs, Director,
East Coast USA Meetings, Incentives,
Conventions & Events, Travel Alberta

Do You Really Need That Proposal Tomorrow?

We are all excited! The Meeting Industry Economy is back and stronger than ever!

The industry has seen an increase in meeting-related business; however, this increase makes the 24-hour response more difficult than ever.

During the past five years, a 300 percent increase in RFPs has been reported and when you add the broader implementation of revenue management, it is nearly impossible for a Sales Professional to provide a proposal within 24 or even 48 hours.

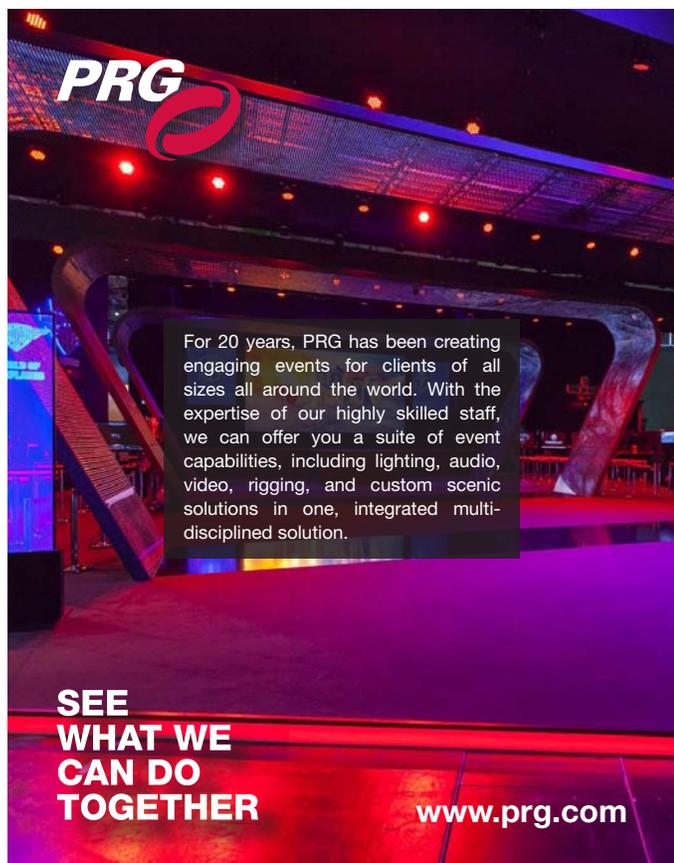
Decisions for bidding on meeting business are being made more strategically and the process often includes a team approach with Directors, Revenue Managers and sometimes General Managers involved. During the evaluation process Sales Professionals may find themselves "selling" to the Revenue Team while another member of the Sales Team is competing for similar dates.

To make sure an RFP is at the top of the Revenue Team's recommendation and that a strong proposal is received, it is helpful to allow more realistic timelines (this will also create fewer correspondences requesting extensions). The larger and more detailed a program, the more time required to ensure the best offer is presented.

For the fastest and most thorough response, make certain your RFP is up to date and includes as much detail as possible. When an RFP includes historical data, food and beverage spend, audio visual/Internet expectations and detailed meeting space agenda, there are fewer emails exchanged and phone calls required. These details enable Sales Professionals to more quickly move your RFP through the process and respond in a timely manner.

Seasoned Meeting Professionals indicate a five- to seven-day timeline is the best rule of thumb when requesting proposals.

by Tanna Pearman, Business Development Director,
Eldorado Resorts Inc. and Jennifer Bumbalo, Convention
Sales, Reno-Tahoe Convention Visitors Authority



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PCMA Capital Chapter Shadow Program Relaunches

As the new year blossoms, PCMA Capital Chapter is pleased to reintroduce the Shadowing Program, geared to pair students and emerging professionals as well as those interested in a career change to our industry, with real-world experience through shadowing opportunities with local industry professionals.

As a PCMA member established in your career, you have a unique opportunity to provide hands-on experience for someone exploring which direction to pursue as a career in hospitality. Shadowing can range from helping with registration at a local meeting to observing a sales appointment, exhibit hall set-up/tear-down or one of so many other hospitality industry roles. Shadowing is special in that any of us, meeting planner, service provider, CVB, hotelier, and association staff member can offer a few hours that could help solidify the career path of a future industry colleague.

If you have a few hours, please consider volunteering your time to help our chapter roll out and grow this strategic program.

If you are considering a new career direction, or are just beginning your career, please click on the link, below, to sign up as a Shadow Recipient.

Program Goals:

- Create nurturing and educational opportunities for PCMA student & emerging professional members within the industry.
- Foster interpersonal growth and self-enrichment.
- Provide opportunities for industry professionals to share experiences and skills necessary to achieve success in their careers.
- Enhance perceived value of PCMA among the membership and within the meeting planning community.

Questions? Email pcmashadow@generationmeet.com •

*by Ann Garvey, CMP, CEM,
National Sales Manager, Visit Norfolk*



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Marriott-Starwood Merger: The Planner's Perspective

The hospitality world became a much smaller space in September 2016 with the acquisition of Starwood Hotels by Marriott International, Inc. The \$12.2 billion deal resulted in the largest hotel company in the world, encompassing over thirty individual hotel brands, 5,700 properties, and 1.1 million rooms; allowing Marriott to have a presence in 110 out of the 196 countries that exist today. If you're invested in Marriott or are a fan of globalization this was great news, but what does it mean to us planners?

Meetings and Conventions, which is owned by Northstar Travel Media LLC published a survey about the merger. The primary concern that was expressed by planners was that it would be much more difficult to negotiate favorable room rates for their meetings. This is a valid concern as there is a precedent in our industry for this. The "Motley Fool" reported American Airlines – US Airways saw customer costs increased by seven percent in Q4 2016. While only directly related to our industry it does highlight the basic economic principal that with less competition there is less incentive to be competitive in the market place. Simply put, we now have a choice between Hilton and Marriott and, depending on the location, it could be a choice between Marriott and Marriott.

The good news is that Marriott has been very vocal about maintaining favorable reward points programs which do wonders to defray costs for planners over the long-haul. Planners who have worked with Starwood and Marriott in the past now have a much larger combined pool of points to leverage. The other good news is that the merger allows more opportunities for long-term, multi-city deals. Planners will have the ability to secure lower rates and more concessions by working with one company in their strategic planning.

Where we find ourselves now is in a "wait and see" situation. The acquisition is not even a year old and even Marriott is still figuring out what needs to be done across its now thirty brands. The emergence of this mega hotel company will also put pressure on Hilton, IHG, and other hotel companies to be disruptive with their strategy in order to successfully compete in the future. So I guess we'll see. •

by Kyle West, MBA, CMP, WorldTEK Events, LLC

Can We Talk?

I spent a lifetime on the supplier side of our industry and certainly one of my greatest bugaboos was the lack of communication/feedback from planners. I was not alone! As planners, we ask our suppliers to respond quickly to RFPs and when they do their follow-up is quite often met by utter silence. Is their hotel what the group wants? Does the rate and space work? Can the dates or setup be tweaked? Are they in the running? If there was something they could do to make their bid more attractive, they are clueless.

When I started sourcing meetings, I was determined to communicate with my supplier partners; even when it was difficult to find time. The positive results far outweigh the effort it takes to respond. With communication, the process becomes a team effort to get the job done to everyone's satisfaction. Communication works wonders!

The dilemma... Suppliers, if you want to know CRAZY BUSY! step into a planner's shoes. Finding the right fit for a meeting with all its working parts takes a lot of time and effort and that is just the beginning of the planning process. There might be 15+ hotels sourced for that one meeting. If each hotel wanted to chitchat about the meeting, the planner's job would never get done.

To help suppliers... Planners start with a thorough, no-stones-unturned RFP so that suppliers can respond without questions. Besides the usual dates, rate range, space (with times and setup), F&B and AV, include HOT buttons (yours in order of importance and those of the attendees), a bullet point list of special needs, any flexibility, how the decision process works, a timeline for the decision and your preference for communication. A quick update email would be helpful and appreciated.

To help the planners... Suppliers READ the RFP! Respond to everything and you will have lessened the planner's load and earned brownie points in doing so.

To both planners and suppliers... Respect each other. Know that the planner's time is valuable and in short supply and communication is precious to the supplier. Each has a job to do and understanding, communication and teamwork makes a difference. •

by Marilyn Atchue Zuill, Global Account Director, HPN Global



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Let's Make A Difference

Looking to give back to the community but not sure how? The PCMA Capital Chapter has you covered. Whether you have volunteer time, donations or both, there is a community service project for you. Below is a list of our upcoming projects planned for the year:

- Time
- Money
- Collecting Items

Charity of the Year - Bread for the City

- Bread for the City provides vulnerable DC residents with service including, clothing, medical care, legal and social services. The chapter will be collecting donations for the charity throughout 2017 and organizing a volunteer event.

DC Greens

- DC Greens uses the power of partnerships to support food education, food access, and food policy in the nation's capital. DC Greens offers teacher training, cooking classes for kids, and a community garden. It also has various collaborative partnerships with DC Hunger Solutions, schools, and incentive programs in farmer's markets. The Community Service Committee held a great volunteer event with DC Greens on April 28th.

Humane Rescue Alliance

- The Humane Rescue Alliance (HRA, formally the Washington, DC, Humane Society and Washington, DC, Rescue League) serves more than 60,000 animals a year, without ever turning a D.C. animal away. We are collecting unwanted clean T-shirts and socks. Please bring these items to the chapter's April and May events. Save the date for our volunteer event to be held July 10, where we will recycle these materials to build toys for dogs and cats, learn about the shelter's good work and interact with some of its residents!

Service N' Sync

- The Community Services Committee is excited to return to the Capital Area Food Bank for Service 'N Sync. Please donate a few hours of your time on November 9th to help sort and package food for the 500,000 people in the DC region struggling with hunger.

A few of the volunteer events have a participation fee attached. These fees cover expenses related to the project, ie., materials, transportation, meals, etc. Please stay tuned for more details on these upcoming service projects. With multiple ways for you to get involved, we are looking forward to 100% participation among our chapter members this year. •

How LEED-Certified Venues Contribute to Sustainable Events

When 'being sustainable,' green or environmentally responsible comes to mind, people naturally think of actions like recycling, reducing waste or reusing items. However, integrating sustainability into meetings and events incorporates environmental, social and economic initiatives.

There are several ways that an event can have a positive impact in the community where it is held by selecting a LEED-certified venue. LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is a certification program for buildings and communities governed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) that guides their design, construction, operations and maintenance toward sustainability. It's based on prerequisites and credits that a project meets to achieve a certification level: Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum. LEED was developed to address all buildings everywhere; there is a LEED for every building.

What does this mean to the event professional? LEED-certified venues with active sustainability practices can offer considerable opportunities to not only improve the environmental and social responsibility of an event, but can significantly reduce waste and overall costs. In addition to inquiring about rates, dates and space for a potential venue, consider adding these 5 sustainability questions to your site inspection checklist:

1. What is your LEED rating?

Or, have you established an environmental management program?

2. What are your practices concerning Food and Beverage?

Do you support local food businesses? Does your venue buy food in season or in bulk or work with caterers who do? Do you use water bottles vs. water pitchers, urns or water stations or have a water filtration system? Is water only preset on request?

3. What are your waste diversion and recycling practices?

Do you have a local community partnership established to donate leftover food or materials to groups in need? Do you have a composter or food digester?

4. What methods do you use to implement energy efficiency?

Do you use energy-optimized lighting, heating, and AC, i.e., automatic timers, etc.?

5. What percentage of your cleaning supplies and paper products is eco-friendly?

Working with a LEED-certified venue can also help event professionals reduce corporate risks by protecting their company's reputations and positioning themselves as thought leaders who consider how they impact the environment and society. So, the next time you source a venue, consider a LEED-certified venue! •

by Carolyn A. Patterson, Event Manager, American Psychological Association and SPIRE Conference Center

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Member Spotlights

Spotlight on a Supplier

Caroline E. Gardner, CMP

*Director, Convention Sales Mid-Atlantic
Choose Chicago*



Caroline's Dad was in the Air Force so she was lucky to have an opportunity to live in a few places while growing up. Caroline was born in Okinawa, Japan and subsequently moved to Virginia, Florida, Canada and eventually back to Yorktown, Virginia where she spent most of her formative years. Living away from family meant long road trips back to visit.

With any long road trip (especially going from North Bay, Ontario to Fredericksburg and Charlottesville) stays in hotels along the way were required. Caroline loved picking out the hotel and spending the night in a new place. You can say that is how she got her start in the hospitality industry!

Caroline completed a degree in Hospitality & Tourism Management at Virginia Tech and the rest is history. To this day Caroline loves exploring and one of her favorite spots to explore is the Outer Banks. In fact, she will just be returning from a week's vacation there this month!

Caroline joined PCMA to become more involved in the industry she loves and has served on several committees over the years. She is currently serving on the Capital Chapter Communications Committee as Co-Chair and appreciates all the great networking and education PCMA offers. Next time you see Caroline be sure to ask her about her brush with fame—Nicholas Cage! •

by Kyla Knudson, East Coast Director, Travel Alberta

Spotlight on a Planner

Jennifer Haire, CMP

*Director of Association & Conference Services
National Center for State Courts*



Jennifer Haire has done it all! Well, maybe not all, but if you look at her resume she has held roles in many different aspects of the meeting industry—hotel, DMO, AV, third party planning.

Jennifer loves her current role at the National Center for State Courts as the Director of Association and Conference Services. Her favorite part of the job is the knowledge she has gained about the court systems and political pieces involved. She works with great people and has been given freedom to do her job well. She must love her job because NCSC is headquartered in Williamsburg, Va., and that's 151 miles from her home in Falls Church, Va. Luckily, she made this commute for the first two years with the association, and now she is only in Williamsburg one week each month. Jennifer is celebrating five years at NCSC this June.

Jennifer, originally from Dallas, but grew up in Albuquerque, was only supposed to be in Washington, DC for a year. Now, it has been nearly 18 years for her. She said that her amazing network of friends and love of all the seasons is why she has stayed. Her other passions in life are dogs, golf, and wine—not necessarily in that order. She has an adorable rescue dog from Puerto Rico named Josie, and she is a foster home for a local rescue in NOVA. She is gearing up for an Arizona golf outing this spring and travels with golf clubs whenever she can.

Jennifer has a fun and outgoing personality with the smile to match. Plus, she is pretty wise, too. Her advice to others in the industry is, "Work for what you want. Don't expect anything to just be handed to you. Dress the part. Be professional." If you haven't met Jennifer be sure to, it's well worth it! •

*by Will Trokey, CMP,
National Sales Manager, Visit Charlotte*

PCMA Capital Chapter EPC Corner

Have you visited **Generation:Meet** lately?

Check out our revitalized blog for:

- Opportunities to be a mentee or mentor
- Opportunities to be a "ghost planner" through our Shadowing program
- Newly posted career and internship opportunities
- Upcoming PCMA Capital Chapter events



PCMA Capital Chapter's Emerging Professionals Committee (EPC) is committed to the professional development of rising industry professionals...from those who have recently graduated to those that may have upwards of 10 years of hospitality experience. In addition to providing rising professionals focused education, mentee, shadowing and job/internships opportunities we also visit local colleges and universities to inspire and share our experiences.

Be sure to join our blog to stay informed - <https://generationmeet.com/>



Mark Your Calendar

Please join us for these upcoming events. Visit our chapter website for details and to register: www.pcma.org/connect-and-grow/chapters/capital

May 18

Mini Hackathon: Innovation Unleashed

Program: 3:00 - 6:00 pm
SPIRE Conference Center
750 First St NE, Washington, DC

Sponsors: SPIRE Conference Center, Geppetto Catering, Transportation Management Services (TMS), Destination Cleveland

June 8

Embry Rucker Community Shelter - Community Service Event

July 10

PCMA Goes To The Dogs - Community Service Event

July 17

REBOOT (half-day education program)

Sponsors: Omni Shoreham Hotel, Visit Norfolk, Visit Tampa Bay, Three Cities Alliance

August 23

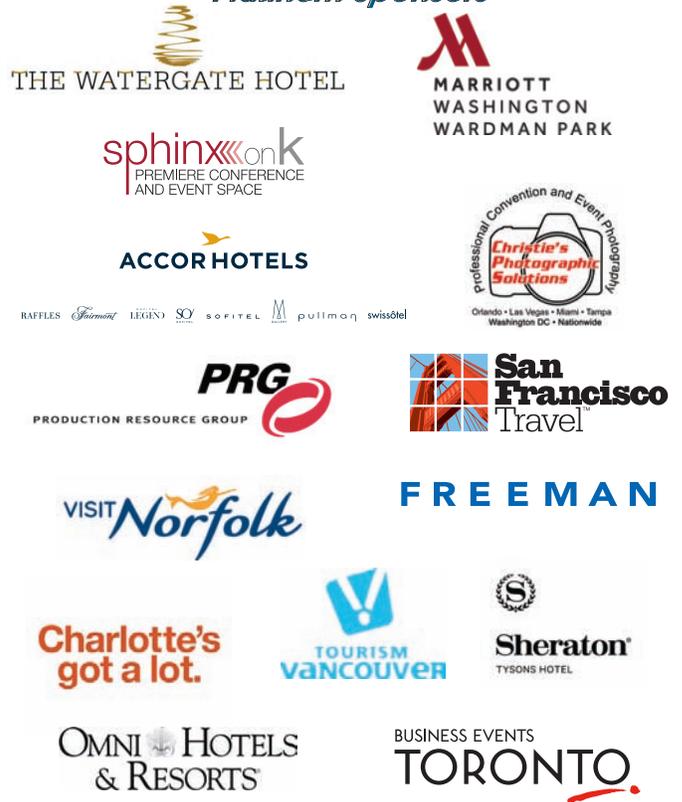
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