

the official newsletter of the pcma capital chapter

## Event Sponsorship: Good-Bye Banners and Hello Sponsored Content!

In marketing today, we know content is king. Companies strive to demonstrate themselves as thought leaders in their communities, rather than strictly as sales solicitors. Conventions are a particularly important platform for companies to shine through as content leaders in a face-to-face setting by hosting workshops, presenting keynotes, and presenting in panels, etc. Though content and thought leadership marketing is not a new trend for 2017, it is affecting how our event sponsors are investing in our meetings now.

Event sponsors are demanding opportunities to engage with attendees, and are less interested in spending additional dollars on branding opportunities such as banners and column wraps. They want to have an arena in which they can align their company as subject matter experts first, and cultivate sales at the booth later. Many companies, especially those in industries with smaller marketing budgets, are only agreeing to exhibit at a show if there are additional speaking opportunities involved. They want to be able to create their own content and present it at a workshop session, for example.

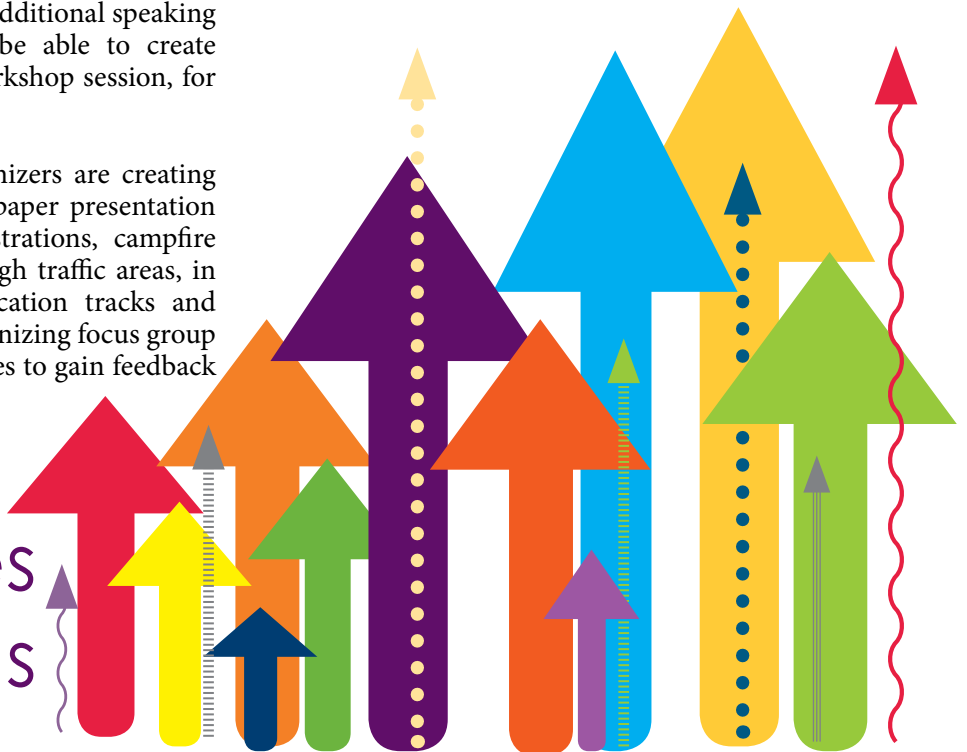
To address the increased demand, organizers are creating new, engaging platforms such as white-paper presentation sessions, “playground” product demonstrations, campfire chats, exhibitor presentation stages in high traffic areas, in addition to traditional, sponsored education tracks and workshop sessions. Planners are also organizing focus group sessions to connect vendors with attendees to gain feedback about the vendor’s products and services.

Many associations wrestle with the appropriate amount of sponsored educational content to allow at a show. As one association meeting planner recently stated, “[Attendees] are all grown adults. They can decide for themselves if they want to listen to the sponsored content!” The key is to clearly communicate that the content is sponsored, and attendees will self-select. If attendees see the content as valuable, they will elect to participate.

As the demand for thought leadership marketing continues to grow, association meetings must evolve to say goodbye to traditional banners and capture the new wave of sponsored content.

by Christine Frye, CTA,  
National Trade Productions

## Best Practices & Trends



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.

**President**

Joy Womack, CMP  
Experient  
703.239.7504  
Joy.womack@experient-inc.com

**President-Elect**

Diane Kovats, CAE, CMP  
International Society for Computational Biology  
760-522-8805  
dkovats@iscb.org

**Treasurer**

Marcus Eng, CMP  
American Public Transportation Association  
202.496.4874  
meng@apta.com

**Secretary**

Vicki Johnson, CMP  
Vicki Johnson & Associates, LLC  
703.532.3166  
vicki@vjmeetings.com

**Immediate Past President**

Mary Gallagher, CMP  
LA Tourism & Convention Board  
571.384.6507  
mgallagher@LATourism.org

**Directors**

Mary Beth Baluta, Cincinnati Convention and Visitors Bureau  
703.892.0330; mbbaluta@cincyusa.com  
Mindy Halpert, CMP, Consortium for School Networking  
202.410.2778; mhalpert@cosn.org  
Jim Kelley, PRG Corporate & Tradeshow Services  
404.214.4833; jkelley@prg.com  
Geraldyn Krist, CMP, CTA, Visit Kansas City  
816.691.3822; gkrist@visitkc.com  
John Rubsamen, Americans for the Arts  
202.371.2830x2008; jrubsamen@artsusa.org  
Malene Ward, CMP, CEM, Adestra, Inc.  
malene.ward@adestra.com

**Committee Chairs****Communications**

Caroline Gardner, CMP, Destination DC  
Jennifer Haire, CMP, National Center for State Courts

**Community Services**

Peter O'Brien, CMP, CASE, Marriott International  
Jeanette Naiman, CMP, AMSUS-The Society for Federal Health Professionals

**Emerging Professionals**

Katharine Gausmann, CMP, National Association of Secondary School Principals  
Christine Faïman, CMP, Marriott Global Sales Organization

**Government Relations/Advocacy Task Force**

Annette Suriani, CMP, AMS Meetings Solutions  
Rosa Mendosa-Friedheim, CASE, CDMP, Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Marketing**

Natalie Sorokin, American Public Health Association  
Kristen Twyman, CMP, Experient

**Membership**

Ryan Barth, CMP, Conference Direct  
Rebecca Murphy, CMP, NACUBO

**Professional Development**

Sara Haywood, CMP, Association of American Geographers  
Dan Ketelsen

**Sponsorship**

Samantha Moore, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America  
Rebecca Ramsey, Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Liz Dane, St. Petersburg Clearwater Area CVB

**Chapter Liaison to PCMA National Board of Directors**

Tamela Blalock, MTA, CMP, National Association of Wholesale Distributors

Capital Chapter: [pcmainfo@ascent-management.com](mailto:pcmainfo@ascent-management.com)

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



## Message from the Board

Mary Beth Baluta

Regional Director of Sales

Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau



Through the years, I have had the pleasure of attending many industry events that featured professional speakers and education breakouts focused on assessing, questioning and modifying best practices and trends. I feel lucky to be part of an industry that believes it is important and necessary to constantly evaluate what is best for the industry and how it impacts society. PCMA has always been a

leader in educating us regarding best practices and trends, and I think we can all feel confident that we have a mindful source to keep us on track and up to date.

All of these experiences have helped me to identify what I believe are viable best practices and trends. Among those that have proven most valuable form a short list of takeaways: be true to yourself and listen to your gut, be a good listener, be open to other people's ideas and points of view, be prepared for all meetings and appointments, be humble, be authentic, be true to your word (when you say you're going to do something, do it, even if it means making changes to the project and/or timeline), and last but certainly not least, be gracious if things don't work out the way you envisioned and offer a solution.

We all know that trends in the meetings and events industry are ever-changing. As meeting professionals, it is our job to be familiar with the newest trends so we can provide the most ideal attendee and client experience possible. Issues such as safety, technology, and engagement compete for our attention in an age when success is measured by more than just financial performance. Guidelines must be set for engagement levels and increased overall participation by onsite and virtual participants. Effective event mobile apps have become a must during meetings. These are examples you may have already recognized in your own programs.

There is continually more to learn, and more to know. We hope you enjoy learning more about best practices and trends in this month's Chatter. •



### Connect with the Capital Chapter!



Connecting with the Capital Chapter is not just about tracking what we are up to. We want to see what you are up to as well.



PCMA Capital Chapter has become the first PCMA chapter to have an Instagram account because we believe in being creative and having fun with our communication. However, it is only as good as our members make it, so start shooting and posting today!

@PCMACC



Follow us @pcmacapitalchapter and remember to tag us in your spring meeting photos as well by adding us into the comments or tag section. •



# HAPPIEST CITY. HAPPY PLANNERS. HAPPY ATTENDEES.

It's no wonder National Geographic rated Madison, Wisconsin as one of the **Top 10 Happiest Cities in the World**: Our city boasts five sparkling lakes, and our state capitol and UW-Madison campus are connected by a single, walkable street lined with retail, restaurants and museums.

Besides earning national recognition for our amenities, we've also earned the praise of planners and attendees: **100% of exit surveys show Madison met or exceeded expectations as an event destination.**

Discover more about why we're ranked repeatedly and booked eagerly at [visitmadison.com/happy](https://www.visitmadison.com/happy).

**MADISON**  
GOING > BEYOND > VISIT™  
GREATER MADISON CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU





**Charlotte's  
got a lot.**

[charlottesgotalot.com](http://charlottesgotalot.com) • 800.231.4636

## Connecting through Craft Beer

It's an age-old fact: We're drawn to things that offer a personal connection. And when we connect, we remember. Make this the goal at your next meeting.

**Leverage a national trend on a local level.** The craft beer boom, for instance, is evident nationwide. If you're hosting in a city with a vibrant craft beer scene, like Charlotte, Denver or Portland, take advantage of the city's unique beer culture. Weaving the craft beer message into your presentation will give guests a taste of the local vibe.

**Highlight the trend's "gravity."** Powerful statistics will help attendees understand the relevance of the trend and how it impacts the destination. Hearing that there are more than 4,000 breweries nationally and more than three dozen breweries in the Charlotte region, for example, is instantly compelling.

Beer lovers or not, attendees will likely have a hometown brewery that comes to mind when they hear "craft beer." There's the personal connection.

**Incorporate the trend into your event.** When it comes to leveraging the craft beer trend, let the key message flow freely and get creative.

Work with the destination's convention center and/or hotel partners to offer the most popular local craft beers at your receptions or dinner events. In Portland, pick the popular Deschutes Brewery Obsidian Stout for one of your pours. Tie in a few facts about the homegrown brew, like the national awards it has garnered. Utilize the beer gardens, patios, and communal spaces that many breweries boast for a perfect off-site location. In Denver, treat guests to a stop at Breckenridge Brewery. They'll have a chance to see the trend in action while networking. Build brewery tours into your pre- and post-event offerings. If you're meeting in Charlotte, take attendees on The Olde Mecklenburg Brewery's tour, which has been voted the top brewery tour in the nation by *USA Today* readers.

Follow these steps, and your attendees will leave with an appreciation for their time spent away. And they'll be sure to remember it—and your message—long after. •

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

## Making Meetings Parent-Friendly: Striking a Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance is tough to achieve for most, and your attendees with children may feel that strain acutely. According to a 2012 survey from the Pew Research Center, more than half (53%) of working parents say it is difficult to balance job and family responsibilities. With a few thoughtful touches, you can make attending your meeting easier for even the most harried working parent.

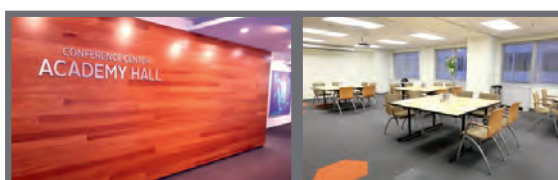
First, consider your agenda. Condense your program to accommodate a later start, earlier end, or both, making it easier for attendees with kids to attend your conference while maintaining school or daycare schedules (bonus: your non-parent attendees will appreciate a little extra sleep in the morning, or getting a head start on the commute home). By seeking opportunities to streamline your agenda, you won't have to compromise content to save time. Small time-savers can make a big impact; trim your break times to 10-15 minutes, and select a quicker lunch option such as a grab-and-go boxed meal.

Networking is something attendees look forward to, and an important part of a successful conference. While post-event social gatherings provide a relaxed environment for attendees to mingle, these can be challenging for parents who may have to make special childcare arrangements to attend (or not be able attend at all). Consider forgoing a working or keynote lunch, and instead use the time as an additional networking opportunity.

Lastly, the transition back to work can be difficult for new moms. Ease this by providing a lactation room at your event. Speak with your venue about allocating a small, lockable room with seating and power (and even better, a small refrigerator), providing nursing moms a comfortable, private area to pump breast milk. If technology and budget allow, provide an audio or video feed to the lactation room, so mothers won't have to miss a minute of your event.

By removing these potential barriers for parents, you can boost your event's attendance. These small measures send a big message: you value work-life balance. •

*by LeeAnn Charpentier, CMP, Sales & Conference Planning Manager, FHI 360 Conference Center*



### Newly Renovated Meeting Space!

Come see our updated look! Featuring...

- Meeting space for 5-300 guests
- Naturally-lit pre-function spaces
- On-site Audio-Visual Support Technicians
- Speaker Green Room, Lactation Room, and Charging Station
- Complimentary WiFi
- Convenient Dupont Circle location, 4 blocks from Metro



#### FHI 360 Conference Center

Inspired Meeting Spaces in the Nation's Capital  
www.fhi360conferencecenter.org  
conferencecenter@fhi360.org  
202-884-8279

## Revenue Management from a Destination Perspective

Two and a half years ago, I moved to Seattle and took on a brand new role that few DMO's have envisioned, let alone put into practice: revenue management from a destination's perspective. This role is even more unique, in that I report to the CEO of both Visit Seattle, and the Washington State Convention Center (WSCC). With a background in hotels, most recently in hotel revenue management, I drew from my experiences and translated them to apply to the destination and convention center side of this ever-changing business. As an industry, we are on the cusp of elevating this discipline to a higher level of importance, like the evolution of the revenue management discipline within hotels over the last 10-15 years.

Most of my duties revolve around working with the Visit Seattle and WSCC sales teams evaluating prospective business for the city. In combining resources such as STR data from hotels, attendance and pickup data from DMAI's empowerMINT, and the WSCC's own booking history, I work with the sales team to make the best decision on whether we should pursue the group in question. In most cases, the business does make sense for the city. However, one of my primary concerns is that we make the best decision with the space we must sell. Rolling in pace and booking window data helps to determine if we should pursue a specific year, for example.

Aside from using destination-wide data to help identify trends, I stay in constant contact with the city's key hotels and their respective Directors of Revenue Management (DORM) to ensure the strategy we are pursuing is as closely aligned to theirs. In my short time in this role (and in this industry), I have found that the most critical piece to success lies in communication; constant and targeted, accountable and actionable are the key. Our shared goals of success for the destination through maximization of the space and availability of the center and hotels are the primary motivation when making every decision. •

—by Patrick Smyton, Senior Director of Convention Strategy, Visit Seattle

## What's Happening, What's Hopping, American Society of Neuroradiology (ASNR) is Turbo Talking...



Are you trying to make design changes to your meeting? As a medical society, accepting all types of oral presentations is a goal. Accepting oral presentations helps to increase attendance, allows presenter to showcase their research or education and allows attendees to see new scientific research. Each year, ASNR continues to increase number of submitted abstracts, especially in the orals submission category. ASNR tried something new in 2016, integrating a new feature of offering top oral presenters an opportunity to present a high-impact research paper followed by an in-depth electronic poster tour by the authors...calling them "Turbo Talks."

We used a 90-minute session, then selected top-tiered research papers to present for three minutes (brief talk) followed by an electronic poster presentation by authors for in-depth questions and answers in an adjoining area. All 16 research papers were back to back, with no questions: a rapid format. The three-minute presentation was to capture the essence and salient points of the work, describing it as highlighting innovations, results, and outcomes in "the big picture" (keeping the slide number to five-eight). The moderators were to keep time limits for each talk along with being jovial and fun to keep all interested.

After the rapid talks, the moderator was to invite the audience to move next door and to encourage the audience to visit the display stations for more in-depth research. Each presentation would have their own monitor to present details of the research. The moderator helped to facilitate the discussion in this area, too. The electronic displays allowed flexibility, ease of flow of the attendees, and allowed co-authors to be near the presenter to help with discussions.

This format allowed ASNR to accept over 100 oral presenters for the meeting. It offered a new option for those who wish to present orally, and to identify their research while taking advantage of the in-depth presentations using multi-media formats. A great way to take advantage of the versatility of formats. •

—by Valerie Geisendorfer, CMP, Senior Manager of Scientific Meetings, American Society of Neuroradiology

## Have you heard? Did you see? Have you tried? UberEVENTS: The End of Event Transportation as We Know It?

UberEVENTS allows planners to customize a guest pass for attendees with the event date, time, and promo code. Planners can then decide how much to pay toward the total fare. Attendees enter the code and request a ride. Matthew Fox of Meeting Management Services is using UberEVENTS for the first time in Laguna Beach, CA later this October as an alternative to shuttling. "I looked into using the service because I only had 20 people at the overflow hotel and still wanted to provide transportation. We could have hired a mini-coach, which seats 28 people. This was going to cost \$1,000's of dollars just to move 10 people a couple of times. UberEVENTS is cheaper, greener, and on demand so attendees don't have to wait for a shuttle."

Annette M. Suriani CMP with AMS Meeting Solutions, had a one-day program scheduled at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. On Friday afternoon, after a decent snowstorm, the group decided to take the force majeure and cancel the meeting. Because the clean-up seemed to be going well, the Executive Director of the association decided on Sunday at 4:00 pm, that the meeting was back on for the next day. Annette contacted Uber and got a code that was emailed out to the participants saying they should still attend the program (starting after lunch on Monday) and the association offered to pay \$10.00 towards their Uber fare. "It probably cost us \$1,500.00 but we had a lot more people come had we not offered it. The attendees loved it! It was actually a great experience and one that I learned a lot from when dealing in a crisis." UberEVENTS offers reliable rides so you know your guests will arrive safely in any situation. Find out more by visiting [www.uber.com/events](http://www.uber.com/events). •

—by Krystine LoBianco CMP, National Sales Manager, Connecticut Convention Center

# ARRIVE ON

THE

# FAST TRACK

**NOW OPEN**

\$9 RAIL SERVICE FROM DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT TO DOWNTOWN DENVER



Airport rail service now open



Get to downtown for \$9



Start planning at [CONVENTIONSELEVATED.COM](http://CONVENTIONSELEVATED.COM)





IF THREE  
IS A CROWD,  
IT'S TIME  
YOU  
JOINED  
THE  
CROWD.

VISITMilwaukee  
Travel  
PORTLAND  
VisitPittsburgh  
  
3Cities  
making a difference

## Event Planning Checklist for a Healthy Meeting

A healthy meeting is a way to connect with your attendees' personal goals without losing a step in their day-to-day business. Understanding those personal goals can turn your attendees into excited ambassadors for your event, making it even more of a success.

### Make Time for Physical Activity

- **Walk breaks:** Long days of programming can lead to overworked attendees that may stop taking in information. To combat this problem, designate times throughout the day as walk breaks. You can create led-walk breaks with themes or schedule a walk break into your program. Plus, the sun has an amazing ability to make people feel better, so take advantage of this free resource and get moving outside.
- **Organized class:** Many of your attendees have a routine at home that includes classes such as yoga or bootcamp. Help them continue that routine by providing a fitness class. Don't have the budget? Look for free options in your city, like Workout on the Green in Cincinnati's Washington Park. Simply tell your attendees about the class, and your work is done.
- **Moving session:** Create a session sans PowerPoint and ask attendees to get up and move around. For example, taking photos for social media could be taught in a classroom, or attendees can actively take photos while getting feedback in real time. Hands-on experiences add movement and a more enhanced learning opportunity.

### Eat Better

- **Lighter food:** Heavy food can make your attendees sleepy and affects their overall mood, which means less is getting done. Although lighter food may be more expensive, it actually ends up being an investment in more efficient meetings and happier attendees.
- **Replace the sugary snacks:** There's nothing worse than an attendee with a sugar crash. Although ice cream for an afternoon treat seems like a fun snack, it may actually hurt more than help. Instead, offer snacks with fruits and vegetables, which give attendees the energy they need without the crash.
- **Offer water:** Many times when people think they're hungry, they're actually just thirsty. Making sure ample water is offered in every session can mean less food is consumed and attendees feel better overall. •

by Cincinnati USA Convention  
& Visitors Bureau



Workout on the Green

“Each year it's a  
good investment.”

**imex**  
america

OCTOBER 10-12, 2017  
LAS VEGAS

WE'LL SEE YOU IN 2017!

**Great news**—IMEX America returns next year for our lucky number 7 show. Count on meeting us in Las Vegas for yet another jackpot of industry connections and unrivaled business prospects.

THE *pulse* OF THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY.  
IMEXAMERICA.COM



## Meeting Outside the Box

Traditionally, unique venues have been relegated to receptions and large scale events. You might be surprised to find that many such buildings have been repurposed to cater to the meetings market!

I interviewed several individuals regarding the benefits and challenges of using unique venues, and received feedback from many on PCMA's Catalyst Forum. I learned about a plethora of unique meeting locations from historic buildings to university campuses, sailing vessels to ranches and everything in between. Here are some of my findings from those conversations:

### Benefits:

- **Cost Savings** – in many unique venues you can use your own caterer or audio visual company and the cost for these facilities tend to be more reasonable than traditional venues with no food and beverage minimums.
- **Atmosphere** – the event has a built-in ambience and requires less expense with décor.
- **Experience** – everyone agreed that unique venues create better attendee engagement. Attendees begin talking about a unique venue well before they arrive and tend to remember the event over that held in a typical ballroom/meeting space.

### Challenges:

- **Space restrictions** – many of the unique venues have smaller spaces, narrow hallways, lack kitchens, and have audio visual challenges.
- **Core Mission vs. Your Mission** – Many unique venues have an alternate core mission, Universities and Museums are designed to educate and provide knowledge, they may have restricted hours, times of the year or areas of accessibility.
- **Staffing** – these facilities might not have the extensive staff Meeting Planners are accustomed to working with.

While many people think of unique venues as those included above; it is important to remember there are many unique venues that do not fit in to this box. There are historic buildings that are not museums and have been redesigned to act as meeting venues. These facilities have been retrofitted with appropriate technology to accommodate large scale meetings with general sessions and breakouts.

When searching for a location to accommodate your next function, consider something less traditional. You will need to remain flexible and it might not be what your organization is accustomed to; however, everyone I talked to agreed, it is worth the extra effort to hear your attendees will talk about the experience for years to come. •

---

*by Tanna McTee-Pearman, National Sales Manager, Silver Legacy Resort  
with assistance from Chuck Salem, Unique Venues; Farin Salahuddin, National Trust for  
Historic Preservation; Mary Denson, Corporate Events and Occasions; and PCMA Catalyst  
Forum contributions*



# distinctly NORFOLK

Norfolk, Virginia offers everything you'd expect from a modern meeting city and a few bright spots you didn't. State-of-the-art meeting services and venues inspire interest, collaboration and success, while a world of dining, entertainment and waterfront recreation await right outside.

Discover it all at [visitnorfolk.com/meet](http://visitnorfolk.com/meet).

VISIT **Norfolk**

The heart of the Virginia Waterfront.™

1-800-368-3097



# Long Beach

California Fresh, Urban Coast

*Imagination realized.*



**The Pacific Room** brings together dazzling light, sound, décor and atmosphere for an infinitely versatile experience. A **turnkey setting** with pre-wired, pre-rigged lighting and sound, and stylish furnishings — all of which is yours to utilize at no charge — **saving over half a million dollars in rental and labor costs**. Experience an atmosphere that invites connection and rocks the wow factor — **there's nothing like it** (on this planet anyway).

## Global Industry Trend: Room Blocks or Venue Rentals

Whether I was with a Tourism Board, hotel chain, or DMO, we set goals and measured success in room nights. Volumes have been written on room block management. Third parties emerged with new ways of doing housing and minimizing risks. Poachers made their own fortunes intercepting bookings. Online agencies made it impossible to keep up with the rate fluctuations. Now we look at Airbnb as the newest threat. Decades have passed and we seem to be fighting the same battle.

Whether you look at The British Meetings & Events Industry Survey (corporate and incentive market) or the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers Annual Survey, all clearly show that room blocks are fading away while registrations are strong and growing.

This is a bigger challenge in the U.S. than internationally. International buyers give priority to venues and are comfortable paying rental fees. They do not have to deal with guaranteed room blocks in order to secure their event space. They negotiate rates with a few “conference hotels” and secure minimum blocks for a core group of delegates, staff and VIPs and do not have to deal with attrition threats or penalties. In the U.S. they face a challenge of finding adequate event space if they do not commit to a certain number of rooms. Those suppliers who understand the trends and are open to new ways of doing business reap the benefits of International meetings, whether it is capturing full rental fees or total event spend.

Decreasing room blocks make it harder for destinations globally to calculate the overall economic impact of business events. Industry organizations are constantly seeking new ways of tracking delegates’ spending. Without those numbers cities don’t get funding or support for attracting International meetings.

It may be the time for us to reconsider the metrics for evaluating event ROI, negotiating contracts, setting our sales team goals and success measurements, and evaluating the true impact of the Meetings Industry. •

by Larissa Tishevskaya,  
International Convention Sales,  
Destination DC

## The Experience Factor

Today’s program attendees’ expectation for an “experience” beyond just content is growing! Memorable events are the new norm.

The “Experience Economy” is not only back, but the bar has been raised higher than it was before the recession.

What are some of the hot trends?

According to Catherine Chaulet, president of Global DMC Partners, one hot trend is incorporating healthy living into programs.

“Fitbits and other health-tracking devices are all the rage,” she said, “and ‘sweat-working’ programs instead of networking programs.”

Another hot trend Catherine cited is the “Recycle and Redesign” concept, where everyday items are being reproduced into unique event décor.

She also reports that incorporating a surprise element is big. “Our DMCs have used projection mapping to turn spaces into display surfaces for video. With just a few clicks, a hotel ballroom can be transformed into an underground speakeasy, an elegant opera house, or pop-up street market.”

The strength of the U.S. economy and U.S. dollar is enabling organizations to spend more on distinctive experiences.

This does not mean the event needs to be extravagant. Providing memorable experiences in an environment that is motivating, compelling and unique actually increases your ROI. All of this can be accomplished while protecting your budget.

Utilizing a DMC that provides skilled, local expertise helps incorporate unique experiences that reflect the local culture in a cost-effective way which accomplishes the program’s objectives while providing truly memorable experiences.

Another growing trend is incorporating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) events. This can range from a Clean The World event to help recycle soap, to planting trees, to food drives, to hosting a “lip sync” contest where votes cost \$1 to benefit a charity.

If properly coordinated, with key executives participating, the CSR event often is the most memorable part of the program for attendees. •

by David Gabri, CEO, Associated  
Luxury Hotels International (ALHI)

## Joint PCMA/MPI Networking Event at the Odyssey - October 2016



## Teamwork Makes the Dream Work Uniting Meetings and Education

On October 26, 2016 the members of the Capital Chapter were able to affirm that indeed; Teamwork Makes the Dream Work. Over 120 Capital Chapter members attended this awesome 'Best in Class' session hosted by the Emerging Professionals Committee (EPC). The session was facilitated by speaker Debra Zabloudil CAE, FACHE and President & CEO of The Learning Studio, Inc., a consultancy and training organization.

During the session members learned the value of gaining insights from their peers as it relates to collaborating as a team, which ultimately results in process improvements, innovative thinking and much more. We also learned that the Golden Rule of Working Together is – “Striving to be strategic and challenging each other to be innovative”

Debra's presentation was rhythmically thought provoking as she helped us associate things like keeping your audience #1, reinventing yourself, building a fan base and staying relevant, by correlating these initiatives with music legends like Paul McCartney, Dave Grohl, Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett.

Here is what Jennifer Bond, Director, Meetings & Events, American Farm Bureau Federation had to say: “(My favorite part was) the speakers' content. I like the push to discuss the silos between meeting planners and program directors (logistics vs education).”

A huge thank you goes out to our Platinum Program Sponsor Tourism Vancouver for helping to make this such a successful event; especially sponsoring 50 planner attendees. Thank you also to our host AUSA, Silver Venue Sponsor, for such a great venue. •

— by Rene McCoy, Member,  
Emerging Professionals Committee /  
Global Account Director, Starwood Hotels  
& Resorts



## Stay on Top of the Industry with PCMA's Catalyst

Catalyst is one of the best tools to keep up to date on industry issues. It's where our community comes together to share opinions and best practices. Participate with the community on Catalyst and feedback will come pouring in.

If you haven't signed up for Catalyst, log into your PCMA account, click on Catalyst Forum in the main navigation and start selecting communities.

I asked Michael Doane of Cadmium CD, who loves to participate, to share his reasons for being active.

**How is Catalyst part of your routine?** I check PCMA Catalyst's Daily Digest newsletter every day. If I see a topic I can contribute to, I click through from the email to respond.

**How does Catalyst fit into PCMA's overall value?** Catalyst is a huge value-add to PCMA membership. I am both a meeting planner and a marketer. If I have a personal question about the industry, I can go to the forum for an answer. From a vendor perspective, Catalyst allows me to see the industry's hot topics and answer prospective

clients' questions about technology that we offer. When you contribute, there is a chance that your contribution will show up in the Daily Digest newsletter and reach many more eyes than you originally anticipated.

**In what kinds of conversations do you participate? As a supplier, do the conversations lead to business or is that not a priority?** It's the best tool you have to contribute to the industry in a meaningful way. That being said, selling is not a priority when participating. I believe it is against the terms and conditions of the Forum. The goal of my interactions is to support other members by providing valuable information based on their questions.

**What advice do you give when it comes to participating in the Catalyst community?** Suppliers should always read the full title question before responding. Often I see people swoop in with a response (usually a pitch) that is far in left field from the original question. For PCMA members not using the forum, I'd say start using it! It's an amazing resource that lets you tap into the collective knowledge and experience of your peers. You can learn about contracts, RFPs, technology, venues, and so much more. •

— by Phil Rappaport, Vice President, Sales & Marketing, AgendaPop Mobile App



THE "FIELD TRIP FEELING"  
SHOULDN'T BE NOSTALGIC.



Hot Shops Art Center - Glass Blowing Studio

When you want to unearth something fresh, look to the heart and soul of the Midwest. Omaha offers unique ways to create memorable experiences that feel more like field trips than meetings. Customized glass blowing sessions, guided culinary walking tours, hikes through the world's largest indoor desert, cocktails in a pink marble museum, and dinner in an underwater shark tunnel.

**So have fun in Omaha - no permission slip required.**

*Visit*  
**OMAHA**™

[VisitOmaha.com/MeetHere](https://www.visitomaha.com/MeetHere)



## Member Spotlights

### Spotlight on a Planner

Sara Torrence

President

Sara Torrence & Associates



Sara and twin sister, Jane, began life in the foothills of NC. The “Redmon Twins” attended the Women’s College of NC, later transferring to SMU. With a degree in government, they set their sights on Washington, DC. When looking for jobs, Sara reached out to her Dad’s friend, Terry Sanford (Governor of North Carolina), who contacted Luther Hodges (Secretary of Commerce)

and the sisters went to work for the Department of Commerce. Degree and Dean’s list notwithstanding, women were “secretaries” but Sara didn’t stay underemployed for long. Her boss introduced her to the National Bureau of Standards (NBS/later NIST). Under the DOC’s umbrellas, Sara was editor, worked registrations, segued into conference programs, ultimately taking her boss’ job as Chief of Special Activities. She’s worked with Presidents (her favorite-Bill Clinton) and Nobel Laureates and loved her job!

Sara was a founding member of SGMP, member of MPI, PCMA and one of the first CMP’s. Courses in meeting management weren’t offered so in 1991 Sara published the book “How to Run Scientific and Technical Meetings” (major accomplishment!). The book has been used as a university textbook. She wrote a Meeting Management Column for Convene and after retirement (2002), a “Sara on Site” column.

Sara is an admitted Franc-o-file (loving anything French)...books on Provence, her 600-bottle wine cellar with French Bordeaux and Burgundies and she would love to dine with Napoléon and Thomas Jefferson to discuss the Louisiana Purchase. Married for 47 years, Sara and her hubby enjoy visiting France and have a blue-eyed cat named Sinatra. •

—by Marilyn Atchue-Zuill,  
Global Account Director, HPN Global

### Spotlight on a Supplier

Phil Rappoport

Vice President, Sales & Marketing

AgendaPop Mobile App



“Connecting people” is what’s important to Phil Rappoport. His company’s mobile event app, AgendaPop, makes it easy for attendees to enjoy a conference and network with other professionals.

As Vice President for Sales & Marketing, Phil works with event organizers to elevate the attendee experience. His impressive career in media and the Internet positioned him to make new technologies simple and inviting.

An alumnus of the University of Illinois, Phil started his career in Chicago radio, producing talk shows as well as Chicago Cubs baseball. In New York, he persuaded Miles Davis and 20 famous pop/jazz musicians to film TV commercials for a new radio station. Phil then worked for Fox TV and later produced a network show for ABC. During AOL’s formidable years (pre-Google), he was the director in charge of the initial online experience. Remember “You’ve Got Mail?” Phil’s the guy who got dozens of celebrities to voice their version of the phrase.

Active with PCMA since 2015 and the co-chair of our Marketing Committee, Phil has been a popular speaker locally and nationally, educating planners about the mobile app marketplace and questions to ask when selecting an app provider.

Married for 27 years, Phil has two sons in their twenties. Phil roots for the Nationals (and Cubs), and can be found on weekends riding the W&OD Bike Trail in Northern Virginia. He finds time to volunteer, having served as a board member of the Capital Area Food Bank.

When asked what his best advice for planners would be, Phil says “Be human, be kind, and be professional. We’re a community. Respond to calls and emails; suppliers just might be your link to career opportunities.” Wise words from a man who may have the phrase “make the connection” engraved on his heart. •

—by Kyle West, CMP, MBA,  
WorldTEK Events





## News Bytes

Email your news: [PCMAchatter+news@gmail.com](mailto:PCMAchatter+news@gmail.com)

**Kelly Ferrante** is now Senior Conference and Meetings Manager, National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC)

**Gracy Olmeda** is now Assistant Director of Conference and Meetings, NACAC

Hooray for the PCMA Capital Chapter Stars of the Quarter:

- **Matthew Fox**, Director of Registration, Meeting Management Services, Inc.
- **Linda Minor, CMP**, Senior Manager, Meetings & Global Affairs, American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery Foundation
- **Marcus Eng, CMP**, Meeting Manager, American Public Transportation Association

PCMA's Q3 HQ Member-Get-A-Member (MGAM) campaign recipient is from the Capital Chapter! Congratulations **Kacie Hackett, CMP**, Specialist, CES Conferences, Consumer Technology Association.

Congratulations to the five 20 in their Twenties, Class of 2017 winners from the Capital Chapter:

- **Matthew B. Fox**, Meeting Management Services, Inc. - Event Champion for our 2016 Global Meetings Industry Day event
- **Christine Frye, CTA**, National Trade Productions - 2017 Capital Chapter Government Relations/Advocacy Committee Co-Chair
- **Eric Kincaid**, Destination DC, new PCMA member
- **Kaitlyn Palatucci**, American Frozen Food Institute - 2016 Education Conference scholarship winner
- **Andrias J. White, MBA, CMP, CSEP**, Events DC, previous PCMA Leadership Scholarship Recipient



## 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](http://www.pcma.org/connect-and-grow/chapters/capital)

- 11/10 2016 Service 'N Sync - Food Bank**  
9:00am-4:00pm  
Capital Area Food Bank, 4900 Puerto Rico Ave, NE, WDC
- 11/21 REWIND 2016 - Year in Review**  
5:00pm-8:30pm  
Marriott Wardman Park, 2660 Woodley Rd, NW, WDC
- 1/8/17 Capital & Chesapeake Chapters' Reception at Convening Leaders 2017**  
4:30pm-6:00pm  
*More Details Coming Soon!*

## WE SALUTE OUR SPONSORS!

### Platinum Sponsors



### Gold Sponsors



### Silver Sponsors



### Bronze Sponsors





PRESORTED  
FIRST CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
RICHMOND, VA  
PERMIT #320

**Capital Chapter of PCMA**  
3337 Duke Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314-5219

**Chatter Info...**

The Chatter is published by the  
PCMA Capital Chapter  
Attn: Pam Valenzuela  
3337 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-5219  
Phone: 703.370.7436 x600, Fax: 703.342.4311  
Email: PCMAinfo@ascent-management.com

**Issue Editors...**

Kim Allison, CAE, CASE  
Visit Baltimore  
kallison@baltimore.org  
Mark Harvey, CGMP, CMP, CMM  
Ethos Meetings and Events, LLC  
mark.harvey@ethosmeetings.com

**Production Editor...**

Tracie Howard, CMP  
AcademyHealth  
tracie.howard@academyhealth.org



**Award-Winning Service that's  
AHEAD OF THE PACK**

Your Signature Boston team provides everything you need for a successful event. Including award-winning technology, innovative hotel and transportation solutions, outstanding food services, and more. Which is why we're the leader in well-run events.

Schedule a site visit or learn more at [SignatureBoston.com](http://SignatureBoston.com) or 877.393.3393.

**Signature  
BOSTON**  
Remarkable experiences.  
Imagination realized.

MASSACHUSETTS CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY

**Run Better. In Boston.**