

# WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

The rallying cry "we are in this together" started before we knew what it meant.

People began losing jobs in early March, and then finally, hotels across the nation shuttered their doors. Out of this difficulty, something beautiful began to happen. People stepped up.

This is nothing unusual for our industry. We have seen it time and time again during regionalized events such as flooding, earthquakes, and hurricanes, or for acts of terrorism as seen during 9-11. But the entire nation shut down? This is new and, to use a currently overused word: unprecedented.

While this unexpected shut-down is difficult for all of us, the spirit of hospitality and genuine care about one another is not a surprise. We are in this together and the INTENTIONAL acts of kindness witnessed throughout our event/hospitality family have been inspirational.

During this difficult time, we have witnessed children without lunch, people without an income, along with an overburdened unemployment system, and people who are genuinely afraid. While we can do nothing to speed up the government programs or huge reduction of jobs in our industry, there are ways to help and it is great to find daily examples of people doing what they can to help others.

Corporations, individuals, groups, families, and organizations are stepping up and helping one another. The event/hospitality community has become a support system for one another. Facebook Groups have been created, Zoom is used for something more than a sales tool or company meetings, Amazon packages arriving randomly, and toilet paper shared.

It is encouraging to see stories about hotels, restaurants, and distribution centers giving away stocked food. Provisions are being given to the recently unemployed or delivered to food banks, churches, and community outreach programs by volunteers without jobs themselves. There are numerous stories of restaurant deliveries to hospitals to show appreciation to medical staff and to support the restaurant. Front door dashes where necessities arrived and landlords who not only waived rent, but also bought groceries for their tenants. Supervisors

who gave their vacation hours to help keep team members employed (see a story from our industry inside).

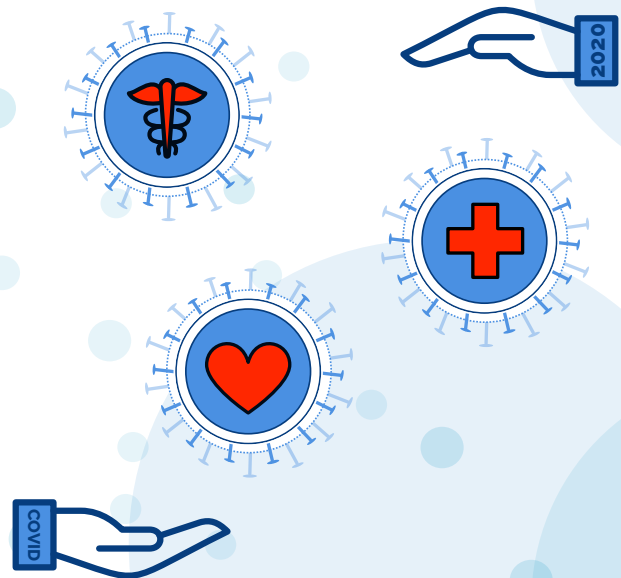
The list could go on and on. Masks made, hand sanitizer shared, encouraging artwork displayed, pianos played, nightly expressions of appreciation from the doorways of homes across the nation, and on-line recitals and concerts to support those in need.

This continued expression of love and caring within our industry and throughout the country is an inspiration. Our industry is no stranger to this way of life, we know it is about the people and none of us are surprised to hear from our clients and colleagues "we are in this together". Because truly we are!

***"We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided"***

J.K. Rowling

**Tanna Pearman**  
Business Development Director, THE ROW Reno



**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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Email if you have comments or suggestions. We are also accepting articles for our library to be used for future issues. If you would like to submit an article, send an email for guidelines.



**message from the board**



As we edge towards the third month of the COVID-19 crisis, and the complete disruption of our industry, it is hard to imagine what the future may hold. But as you look around, you can see the many signs of what makes our industry strong. We have an unwavering commitment to the importance of face to face meetings. And, more importantly, we shape our future by **GIVING**, being **RESILIENT**, and being **BRAVE**.

Every day we hear proud stories of our organizations **GIVING** back to serve our communities. Whether it's donating food, supplies, or masks, we do what we do best; we take care of each other. Restaurants are donating meals to hospitals, homeless individuals, and families in need. Convention centers are converting to hospitals and hotels are housing healthcare and front-line workers. These are just a few examples; there are so many other stories that illustrate how we are rising and serving, sharing hope and care during this challenging time.

Looking closer to home, you can see heroic efforts from our Professional Development Committee. The PDC took a pivot and quickly created a series of Virtual Lunch and Learns with engaging topics designed specifically for you. Our first Virtual Lunch & Learn was a great success and had over 200 individuals participate. Check out page 14 for future dates of our Virtual Lunch and Learn series. Soon, you'll hear about our redesigned SPARK education event as well. These efforts were driven by **RESILIENT** volunteers, to find solutions and a commitment to bring us together while we are apart.

While our industry may be forever changed, we are **BRAVE** enough to emerge stronger. We will lead the world to bring people back together in ways where they feel safe. Who better than us to design these new experiences? Multiple industry organizations are working together and collaborating to move our business forward. We will be back. Whether it's big events, small meetings, celebrations or conventions, what we do touches people's lives in important and memorable ways. We will help people learn again, laugh again, and smile again. We will get through this together.

We are **GIVING**. We are **RESILIENT**. We are **BRAVE**. We are **PCMA**

**PLEASE BE SAFE AND CONTINUE TO CARE FOR EACH OTHER!**

Mary Kreins  
Board of Directors, Education Pillar



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# Meetings and Magnetometers

Due to safety concerns and issues that have occurred at large scale events around the country and internationally, there is a lot of conversation regarding the need for magnetometers and bag checks at conventions. Venues like stadiums, arenas and amusement parks have strict protocols, including limited-size clear bags, to improve attendee and employee safety and security.

Currently, there are only a few convention centers who offer or mandate the use of magnetometers for events and conventions. This topic has been discussed by many association leaders in our industry for years due to fears that if we don't initiate security guidelines and standards for our industry, someone else will. While discussions continue to occur, we can learn and prepare accordingly from previous experiences where high profile speakers attended events and magnetometers have been utilized.

**When we think of magnetometers, we think of lines and long waits. While at times this may be true, here are some actions you can take to expedite the process.**

1. If Secret Service is involved, city police will be required to manage guest flow through the magnetometers. If you can hire your own security, select one that is familiar with working with magnetometers.
2. City police or the security company will be able to advise how many people can get through each magnetometer per hour. Based on this information, you can determine what time you will need to start allowing guests in to start your meeting on time.
3. Location, Location, Location! You never want to place magnetometers at the immediate entrance to a room you are using. If someone is trying to get in the room to cause harm or disruption, you want to make it hard for them to be able to break through the line and access the room within 3- 4 seconds. Discuss options with the facility, but ultimately you want to have space for attendees to form a line, pass through the magnetometers and have space to walk, before entering the session room.
4. Preparing your attendees on what to expect is as important as preparing for the high-profile speaker. Inform your attendees multiple times of the required credentials they must present for access to the room (e.g., ID and convention badge) as well as the list of non-approved items. This should be communicated on all forms of social media prior and on site. Have volunteers available to tell people waiting in line what they can and can't bring into the room. Trash cans will be needed at the entrance of the magnetometers so attendees will have a place to discard non-approved items. If you offer an "item check" for those who prefer not to throw out items, you will need to discuss location and logistics and gain approval in advance from security.
5. It will be important to decide how to get your leadership and any VIP attendees through the magnetometers without waiting in line. Assigning a staff member to meet and walk them to the front of the line is one option to consider.

The suggestions above are traditionally used for a one-time, scheduled event during a conference. Lines of some form are inevitable, due to a focused time. Deciding to use magnetometers for your entire event may produce a small wait at the entrance, but the safety and security of your meeting, your attendees, employees and your organization are worth it.

### Stacey Knoppel

Director, Convention Management, Events DC,  
The Walter E. Washington Convention Center

## REAL ID Deadline Extended

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the US Government has extended the deadline for REAL ID compliance through October 2021.

"Due to circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the national emergency declaration, the Department of Homeland Security, as directed by President Donald J. Trump, is extending the REAL ID enforcement deadline beyond the current October 1, 2020 deadline. I have determined that states require a twelve-month delay and that the new deadline for REAL ID enforcement is October 1, 2021. DHS will publish a notice of the new deadline in the Federal Register in the coming days."

For additional information, please visit the REAL ID website/fact sheet at:  
[https://www.tsa.gov/sites/default/files/resources/realid\\_factsheet.pdf](https://www.tsa.gov/sites/default/files/resources/realid_factsheet.pdf)

Rosa Mendoza-Friedheim



## What's Next in the Life of **CHRIS CHERKIS, CMP**

To paint the backdrop of Chris Cherkis' career life, he didn't start out with meeting planning in mind. He studied Scenic Design for Stage and minored in Arts Management and Administration in college. He worked on capital campaigns for universities and colleges and, somewhere in between, he interned at the Kennedy Center. Chris found that he enjoyed the program aspect of his studies. Wanting to get back to D.C. from upstate New York, Chris could see that the project management of production and campaigns lead to a pathway that aligned with meeting planning. He took that experience and went to work for several years with Courtesy Associates in D.C., a SmithBucklin subsidiary. His exposure as a 3rd party was exciting, providing logistic and strategic support for a variety of clients from fundraising galas to government meeting and trade shows – and a great introduction into the world of meetings.

Chris then moved on to National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) where he has been for the past 7 years until just recently becoming another casualty in the COVID-19 workforce reductions. As a manager, much of his job responsibility was tactical; submitting specs, reviewing diagrams and navigating venue regulations. In his director role, he spent time supporting and encouraging a growing team that took over many tactical roles, which allowed Chris to focus on the day-to-day operations of over 10 annual events, their budgets, performance and, of course, keeping up with new trends. Chris feels that your professional development doesn't need to include a title change; it can come through the experiences that you create and deliver to your members. If our conversation had taken place a couple of months ago, the discussion would have been quite different. Now he is taking a fresh new look at things. Chris is pivoting his focus from how events were to what they will look like in the future and seeking opportunities to help organizations produce events that engage, educate and inspire!

On a personal level, Chris wants to set his sights on the past, to an era when people took time to write letters. With all our technology, he thinks it's equally important to remember to connect with folks in creative ways outside of technology. In the current environment, Chris also plans to take time to pursue his artistic passions, like sketching & painting. He looks forward to a future allowing more personal travel and reconnecting with the things he enjoys that may have gotten lost in the noise of the busy travel and work schedules that event professionals have. If there's a silver lining in COVID-19, it's giving people the time to refocus.

COVID-19 is devastating, and it's given us a great opportunity to look at how agile our future is. All of us, professionally and personally, will be better for it. We just need to shake it out and go forward.

**Marilyn Atchue-Zuill**  
Global Account Director, HPN Global



### **STAR OF THE QUARTER!**

**Congratulations goes to CHANDRA CHAMPION, MSSA, CNM from the PCMA Communications Committee who is the winner of our Capital Chapter Q1 Star Award! Thank you for being such an engaged, committed, responsive and reliable volunteer!**



**The other well-deserving nominees were:**

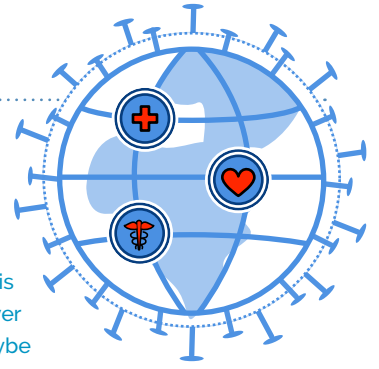
**Annette Suriani, CMP** - Membership Committee

**Lauren Chelf** – Membership Committee

**Shameka Jennings, MTA, CMP** - Marketing Committee

**Bel Hanson** - Marketing Committee

**A huge thank you to each of you for helping make the Capital Chapter UNMISSABLE!**



## COVID-19 AND ITS AFTERMATH

The Catalyst has been buzzing with questions from members and partners. Many of us are in a new wilderness and are connecting with our peers for advice and support. Over the last two months, I've seen a plethora of questions from "Should I Cancel My Event?" to "Should We Continue Hosting our Annual Conferences Virtually?"

Let's start off with the biggest question that was on EVERYONE's mind: Transitioning from In-Person to Virtual. Between this topic and Choosing the Right Virtual Platform Vendor there were at least 20 inquiries on the PCMA Catalyst Forum.

For me, this was a huge area of concern with my own conferences. After much discussion and back and forth, my organization settled on canceling two in-person conferences. It was a very TOUGH decision for myself and my leadership so I was really interested in hearing what my peers had to say about this topic.

Senior Director of Meetings and Events with the American Staffing Association, Lisa Simpson was tasked with gathering information for her leadership regarding the pros and cons of transitioning from live to virtual, specifically around the following:

1. **LENGTH OF LIVE VS. VIRTUAL**
2. **DID THE DATES REMAIN THE SAME OR CHANGE**
3. **PRICE FOR LIVE VS. VIRTUAL**

**Jim Parker with Digitell, dove right in to answer Lisa's question:**

**1. LENGTH OF LIVE VS. VIRTUAL** - The key here is to deliver engagement. Quality over quantity for sure. If your meeting is only 2-3 concurrent sessions, then you could replicate that meeting online very easily. If it is a city wide with 15-20 concurrent sessions, then it would be best to divide your content into areas of interest and maybe run a 1-2 day virtual event once a month over several months. Attendees will stay on and participate for a long time so don't worry about running a full day event. The key is creating value so the content should be high quality, and the engagement should be fed by you and your team.

**2. DID THE DATES REMAIN THE SAME OR CHANGE** - This is really dependent on when your event is supposed to take place and how much time you have to plan/execute your virtual event. I would suggest postponing your event for two months, so you can create a better online experience.

**3. PRICE FOR LIVE VS. VIRTUAL** - Virtual events can run from \$5,000 to \$100,000 depending on what you are trying to

accomplish. My recommendation is to keep your costs down and deliver a great event for one day, and maybe do 1 day a month for 3-6 months. During these challenging times the more people are able to connect with others the better they will feel about attending in-person.

**To Use Two Links or Not...that is the Question:**

Stephanie Bryk, with LeadingAge Illinois, asked "when transitioning your breakout sessions to webinars, specifically for a session that is scheduled for 2 hours in the morning, followed by a 1 hour break, and then reconvening for 2 hours, do we use 1 link or 2 separate links and do people really call back in after the break". She was using GoTo Webinar and her plan was to use 1 link and just 'pause it' during the meeting break period.

**Greg Kamprath, with IMS Technology, suggested the following:**

If you only have one "room" you might consider putting up a hold slide with your branding and saying "Please join us at 11am for our next session with Dr. Jones" or similar. That way people can leave the meeting if they want to rather than having to click on a new link. This may help with retaining some folks. He went on to say, "In your marketing you could highlight the two different sessions, but still use the same link, something like:

**Opening Keynote: Tina Smith**

8:00am-10:00am

*Click here to join the session*

**Our New Realities: Presentation by Dr. Jones**

11:00am-1:00pm

*Click here to join the session*

But for both of those "click here" the links would be the same meeting link. If you were considering having multiple concurrent sessions, then it makes more sense to have different links but still send people to the same landing page with agenda and links. The only other consideration for making them separate links is if you wanted to limit access for some people based on which session they registered/paid for."

**I want to leave everyone with this thought:**

**WE'RE A FAMILY...WE'RE A COMMUNITY...WE'RE ONE IN THIS FIGHT!!!**

Chandra Champion, MSSA, CNM  
Conference and Events Manager, National WIC Association



## 2020 special feature

# Chapter Members and Their Pets



### BRUNO & CLARK

***"What? Just because you have to work doesn't mean I can't chill with my friends."***

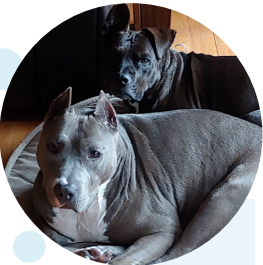
|| Samantha Cribari-Starr, CMP-HC, DES



### DEXTER

***"When you're on a call in an open workspace and the co-worker in the next cubicle keeps staring at you."***

|| Jodi VanWoerkom, CMP  
Event Manager, Association for Talent Development



### SAKONI & KONA

***"We're excited that mom's travel is cancelled for the next two months!"***

|| Laurie Tritsch Hawes, CMP  
Owner, The Hawes Group, LLC



### STRIKER

***"Striker loves spending time in my home office and enjoys being part of the team for our morning staff video call. For his contributions, Striker gets compensated with extra treats and belly rubs. I think he could get used to this teleworking idea!"***

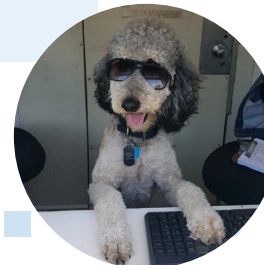
|| Leah Lewis, CMP  
Director of Meetings, American Gear Manufacturers Association



### TITAN

***"Having my mom home is dreamy!"***

|| Katelyn Diehl  
Convention Sales Manager, Destination DC



### ELI

***"Tony Scurry's standard poodle, Eli, chillin at work!"***

|| Tony Scurry, MBA, CMP  
Owner, 7 Pointe Planning Inc.



### BUDDY

***"More walks during the day means I can have those geese, right?!"***

|| Amy Rossie, CMP  
Association Sales Manager, Hyatt Regency Bethesda



### BAILEY

***"Bailey likes playing with the big dogs! Working on that promotion!"***

|| Liza Trey, CMP  
Meeting Consultant, Trey & Associates



# GLOBAL MEETINGS INDUSTRY DAY

## Tentatively Rescheduled for September 2020

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID) in person event was restructured and repurposed as GMIDGoesVirtual, a virtual gathering of Meetings Means Business advocates across the globe, held on the original date of April 14, 2020.

Discussions on COVID-19 and its impact, not only on face-to-face meetings, but within our communities, work and family took place. This was a celebration of resiliency within our amazing industry and moving forward! With over 12,000 virtual attendees, GMID also attempted to break the Guinness World Record for Largest Audience for a Virtual Conference.

Despite these unprecedented times, and in full support of the **GMIDGoesViral** virtual gathering, the PCMA Capital Chapter and MPI Potomac Chapter will nevertheless partner to host GMID at the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C., in September, reinforcing the need to meet face-to-face. This event will enhance the annual co-networking event between PCMA and MPI held every year in September.

After social distancing and endless virtual meetings, both organizations felt the need to reschedule and resume this face-to-face celebration for all of their members. We will also continue to partner with IAEE, SGMP, and AMPS, on a Social Media/Marketing campaign.

The day will include Advocacy Training led by Washington, D.C. professionals. This training is a place to learn and explore legislation along with providing tools to ensure successful Hill Day appointments. This training helped to make last year's Hill Day a huge success with approximately 50 participants, each visiting at least 2 representatives on Capitol Hill. This year we anticipate exceeding participation numbers at Hill Day.

There will also be a robust program for GMID's educational sessions. We hope to maintain our original line up of speakers such as Erik Hansen with US Travel Association and Mary Kate Cunningham with ASAE.

Rounding off the event will be a panel discussion moderated by Anthony Molino, National Sales Manager, Choose Chicago, featuring three participants of the Hill Day appointments and their takeaways from the experience. Reception will follow.

Please join us in celebrating GMID 2020, a bigger and better event! Dates will be announced soon.

|| Rosa Mendoza-Friedheim





# Staying Active while TELEWORKING

The world of work has been changing at an unprecedented pace over the last few weeks. There is a lot of pressure worldwide to implement remote work solutions. While there are some benefits to employees working from home – including reduced commute times, not having to dress up or put on makeup – one of the downsides is the difficulty of staying active. These days, you probably find yourself sitting in an easy chair or a home office all day long. If you were used to walking to and from your favorite lunch spot near the office or going to the gym regularly, you might need a different strategy. All this can lead to a sedentary and unhealthy lifestyle. I know for me, the most exercise I get some days is walking to the fridge and picking up a wine glass!

As we all get used to the new normal of working from home 100 percent, we must stay active – not only physically, but mentally and socially as well. So, to help you keep yourself active while still getting your work done, we asked our hospitality community to share the small ways they stay active when working from home and compiled a few strategies for avoiding inactivity in the at-home workplace.

- 1. DEVELOP A SCHEDULE.** Habits and rituals are very powerful behavioral practices that can keep you on track or derail you. If you usually stop at the gym before or after work, try to stick with that same timeframe. Just because you are working from home, does not mean you should miss out on time spent taking care of yourself—exercise benefits extend beyond the physical sense and can have huge implications on mental performance. It is important to create a schedule for yourself to keep you accountable to your fitness. ***If your schedule included working out before or after work, keep it up. There are many on-demand exercise videos available to keep the momentum going. Check out YouTube, Daily Burn, BeachBody, ClassPass, or even your local gym for workout videos.***
- 2. GO OUTSIDE.** Harvard physician Eva Selhub, the co-author of *Your Brain on Nature*, says a drop of nature is like a drop of morphine to the brain since it “stimulates reward neurons in your brain. It turns off the stress response which means you have lower cortisol levels, lower heart rate and blood pressure, and improved immune response.” Getting outdoors can do great things for your health. Reducing stress, lowering blood pressure, and improving immune function are among nature's health benefits. What's more, incorporating elements of nature into your workday can also give your brain a boost, resulting in increased productivity, focus, and creativity. ***Walking, running, hiking, and biking are great ways to keep your body and mind moving. Also, if you have kids or pets, bring them along for the fun.***
- 3. TAKE SOME TIME FOR YOURSELF.** Most people in our culture feel the need to be going all the time. If we are not working and putting our energy into something, we believe we are wasting time. We may feel taking time for ourselves is a waste and won't accomplish anything. Taking a little time for yourself refreshes and re-energizes you. It allows you to think more clearly and make better decisions. Carving out time for yourself is vital for keeping yourself healthy, and that means a happier family and more productive work. ***A few ideas shared include: Engage in one of your favorite hobbies. Read a book. Watch a Ted Talk or webinar. Write a blog post. Take a class.***
- 4. GET SOCIAL.** There is no doubt about it – we human beings are profoundly social. We have a powerful drive to connect with other people and this drive is deeply embedded in our industry. We thrive on human interactions and connections and it is important to maintain those relationships while working from home. ***Connect with your teammates via Zoom, GoToMeeting, or WebEx. Or step that up and have virtual happy hours with family, friends, or industry colleagues. It will give you something to look forward to after work too!***

We hope a few of these ideas inspire you.  
Tweet us at [@PCMACC](https://twitter.com/PCMACC) on how you are staying active while teleworking.

Shameka Jennings MTA, CMP

Director of Meetings and Partnership Development, National Coalition of STD Directors



# How I Handled My Annual Meeting Cancellation and What I Learned from It

Amy Durkin, CEM, CMP, Director of Events for the National Catholic Educational Association recently shared her timeline and processes she had to develop and enforce when faced with the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the prospect of cancelling the NCEA 2020 Convention & Expo scheduled to take place April 14-16, 2020 in Baltimore, Maryland. During these unprecedented times, Amy had to develop a timeline and agenda for a possible (and eventual) cancellation of the organization's largest gathering. Unprecedented as well, was the ever changing and fluid information being delivered by the government, medical industry and other entities.

Prior to March 2nd, the organization was still enforcing no refunds for exhibitors with the exception of international attendees and exhibitors.

Between March 2-10, more serious conversations on the severity of the situation took place and a task force was set up. At this point, an outline was drawn up for steps towards a possible cancellation. At this time, the content team was tasked with determining the possibility of content via webinar/virtual presence.

Once Declarations were starting to be issued regarding social gatherings, it was decided that the meeting would have to be

cancelled. Due to the nature of the meeting, postponement was not going to be an option as most of the attendees are teachers that are out for the summer.

As an event professional, Amy feels her saving grace was her organizational skills and the documentation of all of her files prior to the cancellation that enabled her to keep abreast of all of the requirements for insurance purposes and defining a timeline for the future. It was at this point as well that 2021 budgets were due. As Amy stated, "How do you plan for future conventions now when we need to get through today?"

## **Amy also mentioned some key takeaways from this event after NCEA staff went remote:**

- Keep data and reports up to date and at your fingertips
- Keep communication channels open
- People are affected not only professionally but personally as well - do not let personal issues get in the way
- We are still in this together – stay focused

|| Rosa Mendoza-Friedheim



KEEPING PEOPLE  
**CONNECTED**  
WHILE WE STAY APART **TO STAY SAFE**

**EVENTEQ**

To book our webcast studio and learn more about our virtual solutions, visit [EventEQ.com/Solutions](https://EventEQ.com/Solutions) or email [Rebecca.Ramsey@EventEQ.com](mailto:Rebecca.Ramsey@EventEQ.com).

# What Do Meetings of the Future Look Like?

This title suggests an answer may follow. Spoiler alert - it is too soon to tell, but don't stop reading! While there may not be a clear prediction of what the future of meetings will look like, the questions being asked give us some good hints.

During a recent conversation with Visit Austin's Customer Advisory Board, Christina Childs, Deputy Director, Event Operations with Solar Energy Trade Shows, shared they are currently moving forward with their September convention in Anaheim. Aside from the more obvious solutions, she asked the group, "What have you done to create the ability for attendees to social distance during events such as trade shows, receptions, luncheons, and education sessions?"

Yurii Land, CMP, Strategic Account Director with Experient said, **"One thing we are starting to discuss is how the registration area will look." Ideas Yurii shared included:**

- Widening counter placement to allow 6-foot distancing
- Placing tablet/computer workstations further apart
- Handing out sponsored stylus pens for touchless access to tablets
- Mobile print pods at the hotel to reduce main registration traffic at the convention center

Dee Clemmons, CMP, CAE, Senior Vice President, Events and Strategic Partnerships with Airports Council International - North America, shared, **"We are really looking at the service of food and beverage and how we will do this differently." Other ideas being considered:**

- Create big grab and go cafes in areas of the show floor
- Serve pre-packaged items during lunch times with an attendant stationed to limit quantities
- Provide attendees tickets of a certain value and price each item

**Amy King, CMP with Ameriprise Financial offered suggestions focused on reducing touchpoints:**

- Mail out materials like badges that can't be digitally distributed in advance
- Research capability of the hotel to offer keyless check-in
- Ask outlets to offer pre-packaged coffee condiments for grab and go vs. communal self-serve
- Eliminate water pitchers and candies pre-set in meeting rooms
- Talk to hotels and convention centers about opening the stairwells so attendees have the option of stairs instead of crowded elevators

**Some other clever predictions from Red Velvet Events' When We Meet Again blog <https://redvelvetevents.com/outplan/when-we-meet-again-in-hotels-and-restaurants/>**

- Signs left in hotel rooms notifying the next guest when the room was last sanitized
- Disposable bleach wipes will become normal amenities in each room. Wipes at higher-end hotels will be a bit fancier (think lovely scents and nice packaging too)
- All hotel staff will need to wear gloves. They will be industrious at first, becoming more stylish as this becomes normal. Again, the nicer the hotel, the nicer the gloves (think 'white glove' service but for the 2020s vs. 1940s)

All these efforts help answer key questions around attendee safety and security. It will be critical for event professionals and their supplier partners to effectively communicate in advance what measures are in place to ensure attendees feel their safety attending a live event is a top priority.

These will be very personal decisions for attendees and, realistically, we will see a staggered return to live events. Evidence of this sentiment was shown in a poll during GMID's Virtual event on April 14 with 62% of over 7000 respondents indicating they felt ALL future events would be a hybrid of live and virtual.

As Sherrif Karamat, CAE, PCMA President and CEO said on his GMID Day video, "Simply put, we need to meet differently. Tomorrow our industry is going to be different. That does not mean it's going to be better or worse. But it does mean we need to move outside of our comfort zones."

Co-location opportunities within similar industries are one example of "meeting differently". Ashley Vercellone, Senior Director of Events & Operations with National Association of College Auxiliary Services, shared that her team had been making outreaches to associations in the higher education sector that had to cancel their spring conventions to offer the opportunity of running a tract of sessions at their November annual conference.

This same idea is summed up well in Michelle Russell's Convene article, "How is COVID-19 Transforming the Events Landscape". Referencing Don Neal with 360 Live Media, Russell writes, "Neal thinks that for associations and commercial events that have canceled their events during COVID-19 — formerly competitors in the same industry or profession — there's an opportunity to explore "having a large kind of co-located ecosystem community event".

While we may not know exactly what the future of meetings will look like, with over 10,000 participants logged in for GMID virtual, it is very clear that we are all invested in finding the solution together!

|| **Kristen Parker, CASE**  
Director of Eastern Regional Sales, Visit Austin

# People Stepped Up!

It happened all across America (and the world), people going the extra mile to help others.

The following story was shared in the Facebook group, Hospitality Family (a group created in March and boasting nearly 46,000 members) by Brian Stout, a banquet server at the Marriott Orlando Airport Lakeside. Brian told his colleague he had shared this story and it would be featured in the Chatter. The colleague told Brian he did it for peace of mind, not recognition.

## **BRIAN'S STORY:**

David Napier, Chief of Loss Prevention, at Marriott Orlando Airport Lakeside has been saving his PTO to surprise his wife with a long-deserved vacation. In the past few years he has used his PTO for various circumstances rather than giving his wife the kind of vacation he wanted to.

Each year something came up. Last year, they purchased a home and used PTO to get established. Recently, David confided in me how great it felt to provide his wife with things he had worked so hard for her to have and how he was looking forward to using this year's PTO to take her on the getaway she had always wished for. He was excited to finally get to use his PTO to get away!

Those goals/dreams were once again set aside when this remarkable man was given his COVID-19 department cuts. He realized these cuts would hurt the people in his department. He called his wife to let her know what he felt should be done. His wife agreed, without hesitation. He then called the GM who approved the plan. This generous man took his entire PTO of six weeks and, rather than sending people home, was able to adjust staff schedules. This gesture helped people to prepare themselves before having to be without an income.

This kind act of generosity is an example of many happening spontaneously throughout our industry. Continue stepping up members, even the smallest gesture can make a huge difference!

**"Hard times don't create heroes. It is during the hard times when the "hero" within us is revealed" - Bob Riley**

**Tanna Pearman**

Business Development Director, THE ROW Reno

## Diversity & Inclusion Taskforce Update

The Diversity & Inclusion Task Force has been busy working on a Mission Statement to guide us as a task force within the PCMA Capital Chapter. At our last meeting, we tried to pinpoint what we do well as a chapter and what we need to improve on. Our top three objectives are to create the Mission Statement, create a Code of Conduct, and to evaluate and create best practices for event design to ensure inclusive atmospheres for our membership.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the task force, please inquire at [rebecca.ramsey@eventeq.com](mailto:rebecca.ramsey@eventeq.com) for more information.



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# Committee Updates

Despite the unique challenges each of us is managing, all our chapter committees have found the time and passion to contribute to PCMA, the chapter, and our industry when it is needed most. Thank you all for your hard work and continued dedication to our industry, organization, and each other. Now, more than ever, the true spirit of hospitality is shining brightly.

Here are just a few highlights from our committees in addition to those that have been highlighted in this issue's articles.

**Community Service Committee:** Our community needs help more than ever and CSC has stepped up to the plate to provide us with information to give back to both the industry and the greater Washington, D.C. area. Head to <https://capital.pcma.org/community-service/> to find information on how to donate to the PCMA Foundation Industry Fund, The American Red Cross blood drive, Capital area food Banks, Martha's Table, and the Humane Rescue Alliance.

**Emerging Professionals Committee:** Although we have had to suspend this year's internship program, EPC remains in contact with our local universities. Their continued outreach and mentorship of our emerging professional members is critical as we face the challenges of restarting the industry, and keeping our next generation engaged to lead the future.

**Finance Committee:** The financial impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic have affected everyone, including the chapter and its current budget. While we know all sources of revenue will be reduced, I am thankful to our past and present leaders, as well as, management for sound stewardship of our finances. As a result,

the chapter remains in good financial health. Know that our priority is remaining financially sound while continuing to invest in our member experience and providing the best possible resources and education.

**Marketing Committee:** They have been working overtime with all committees to promote changes in existing programs and products, announce the new products, and grow our day to day member engagement and interactivity on social media. Some of our posts have received record interactions as we provide critical updates and resources to our members. Keep a look out for the addition of YouTube as our newest method of Chapter communications!

**Sponsorship:** These often unsung-heroes have been working behind the scenes NONSTOP! This team has reached out to our sponsors and advertising partners to check in and advise on our flexibility during what is possibly the most challenging time our industry has ever seen. While we have seen some adjustments in this area, the support of the chapter by our sponsor partners is clearly unwavering.

**Professional Development Committee:** Already putting into action some of the most significant changes and innovation the chapter has ever seen, the PDC committee has remained incredibly agile. The result was a relaunch of our "Lunch and Learn" 1-hour education/discussion sessions and working towards producing our scheduled education events in virtual formats.

|| **John Rubsamen**  
President, PCMA Capital Chapter

## Upcoming Virtual Lunch and Learn Schedule

The PCMA Capital Chapter has recently launched a Virtual Lunch and Learn series to engage our members in critical conversations and provide education to prepare us for the future in these unprecedented times. The bi-weekly series is free to members and takes place on Zoom to keep our members connected and engaged with one another as we talk about hot topics our industry is facing.

**We hope you will join us for one of our upcoming presentations:**

**May 21 at 12:00 pm:**  
**THE VALUE OF VIRTUAL**

With in-person events being cancelled and postponed, event professionals and suppliers are embracing new ways for attendees to learn and connect from a distance. Join us for a Virtual Lunch and Learn to talk about moving in-person events to a digital platform, or hybrid event, and share tips for others going through the same experience.

**June 2 at 12:00 pm:**  
**EAT, PRAY, LOVE 2.0**

We are living through challenging times and we all know we need to take care of ourselves. But sometimes it's easier said than done. Take a well-deserved break and recharge with your peer community. Let's inspire each other by sharing our wellness "secrets", productivity tips and hacks, and promise not to use the word "pivot"!

**July 15 at 12:00 pm:**  
**CREATIVITY ON A BUDGET**

Event professionals and suppliers have the opportunity to develop creative and engaging events, but can this be done when your budget is cut back? Join us for a Virtual Lunch and Learn to discuss how to engage people with little to no budget and share your experiences on saving money without taking away value from attendees.

More topics will be announced soon based on real time attendee feedback. Be on the lookout for registration information coming soon!

|| **Leah Lewis, CMP**  
Director, Meetings, American Gear Manufacturers Association

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