

the official newsletter of the pcma capital chapter

Airbnb and the Rise of the Sharing Economy

Welcome to the sharing economy! With 800,000 listings in 191 countries and 34,000 cities, Airbnb is not going anywhere but up. On any given night, Airbnb hosts over 400,000 guests. There are both positives and negatives to ponder when considering this service. Here are few upsides to Airbnb:

- **Greater inventory:** Some cities either have limited inventory or sellout of their blocks. Airbnb adds inventory overall.
- **Affordability:** As hotel rates continue to grow with greater demand, Airbnb can provide an alternative for those who can't afford the top dollar markets like San Francisco.
- **Bringing New Attendees to Events:** Members with or without families might want to extend their stay to enjoy more time in the destination.
- **Creating More Collaborative Environments:** Some companies are using Airbnb to enrich their team building by booking a house for all attendees to stay in.

Some CVBs, DMOs, and third parties are working with Airbnb to track attendance at events. Airbnb has agreed to occupancy tax in some cities. Professionals need to find the most appropriate way to leverage the technology that Airbnb represents. It's not likely that Airbnb will take everyone out of the hotels; this will just be another component to meeting structure.

Programs like Airbnb also put the "power" into the hands of the end user, and that is part of what makes the service so attractive. There are downsides to this, however, which may not be considered by the casual user:



- **Privacy:** Many locations offer shared accommodations. Having a productive work trip or simply opting to avoid other people for some peace could be a challenge.
- **Risk:** Though the "power" is in your hands, so is the responsibility if you end up with a bad deal-you won't know until you get there, and you won't have the service recovery of a major brand to help you out.
- **Rate competition:** Should Airbnb become embraced by the tourism community, and pay occupancy taxes, their rates could negatively impact the average in the destination, and ultimately drive that average down (per diem could specifically be affected).

While it is certain that Airbnb is here to stay, what is uncertain is the overall impact to the meetings industry. Benefits and risks exist, and planners need to weigh those benefits with the risks to make intelligent decisions for their attendees and host cities.

by Mark Harvey, CGMP, CMP, CMM, Director of Meetings & Operations, SGMP
and Will Trokey, CMP, National Sales Manager, Visit Charlotte

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

Jim Kelley
Vice President, Industry Relations
PRG



con·trar·i·an: To take the road less travelled, to go against the grain, to simply take a stance.

Our days are filled with hundreds of moments where we can be contrarian or take the opposite position of someone else. When you think of someone who is 'contrarian', do you assume they are difficult? When

you think of taking a stance that is opposite of someone, do you think a conflict is about to ensue? Here is my challenge to you; start viewing being contrarian and taking the opposite position as a moment to make a difference, change someone's day, and potentially change someone's life.

As a supplier, one of my goals is to get the highest price possible for my company's services, while the buyer is trying to get me to provide my services for the lowest price possible. This is a classic point/counterpoint scenario, yet we both know the outcome will be somewhere in the middle. For us to get there and do what is best for our respective organizations, we often have to take a contrarian stance within our own organizations to get to that middle ground.

This past year at Convening Leaders I had the distinct privilege of mentoring a student from Ferris State University who was born the same year I attended my first Convening Leaders. During our time together, she encouraged me, challenged me, and energized me: a total contrarian outcome for the normal mentee/mentor relationship. To those in the over 50 crowd, I encourage you to have a meaningful conversation with someone under 40 (preferably under 30) every week. You will be better because of it.

We all have our own thoughts, opinions and goals. It is okay to be contrarian or have a different perspective; respect, listening and kindness must accompany those differences.

Enjoy this issue of the Chatter and I look forward to hearing your counterpoint!!! •



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.



@PCMACC



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!



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

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Did you feel that kinetic shift when you entered our atmosphere? Don't worry, the earth's gravity hasn't changed—but everything else has. The Long Beach Convention & Entertainment Center has tilted event planning on its axis with new dimensions of intrigue. Featuring mind-blowing light and sound capabilities and interconnected venues that flow seamlessly from one to another, LBCEC offers a true campus experience like no other special event center on earth. Visit sightsoundlbc.com to see where connection happens.

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Social Media: Here to Stay?

How are you using social media to connect? Do you use LinkedIn to stay in touch or share a consistent message? Do you keep a separate Facebook page for personal and professional life or ban business interaction from your page all together? What about Twitter and Instagram? Are they novelties for connecting at tradeshow or something embraced on a regular basis?



As the preferred business connector among most meeting professionals, LinkedIn is a great tool to broadcast your digital resume as well as to connect with business professionals. The ability to join groups can be positive, yet overwhelming. A good approach is to start with a few groups where you can contribute to the ongoing conversations as opposed to joining every meetings or events-related group.

Facebook is a part of many meeting planners professional and personal lives. Many of us post pictures from our various meetings and trade shows, activities, and life in general. It's a great way to stay in touch with people we rarely see face to face, and can strengthen long distance business relationships. If you prefer to have a clear distinction between your professional and personal online presence, set up a work group versus a non-work group to manage post visibility among your Facebook connections.

Twitter is an enigma to many people. Some professionals are very active on Twitter, sending tweets and retweeting useful articles. However, it seems the majority of meeting professionals are not as active on Twitter and Instagram as other social media channels even though both platforms are great tools for insight into various meetings and events. Many new and innovative ideas can be found by viewing official event/meeting Twitter and Instagram accounts and event hashtags.

Social media is here to stay, and in order to remain relevant and connected in today's business culture, it's important to figure out a way to incorporate social media in your daily work life. Conversely, there are ethical considerations to be mindful of when posting professional-related content on personal social media accounts. Many organizations have developed social media policies for staff. If your organization has one, become familiar with it to avoid any potential embarrassment or harm. When in doubt, it's always best to err on the side of caution and refrain from posting something or using the official meeting or event hashtag. •

by Tanna Pearman,
National Sales Manager, Silver Legacy Reno, NV
and Tiffany Melton, CMP,
SPARGO, Inc.

Resources May Change but Values Stay the Same

Surprise, surprise. The more things change, the more they stay the same!

Ask three people how they advanced, or planned to advance, their career in the hospitality industry, and their answers would probably look somewhat like this:

- Face-to-face meetings
- Networking
- Job listings
- Communication
- Business finance acumen
- Mentor
- Education/certification
- Professional organizations

If we told you these answers came from a Baby Boomer, a Gen X-er and a Millennial, you would say, "What?"

The goals have stayed the same. What has changed over the years is the resources used to attain those goals. We continue to go about it a little differently.

Face-to-face meetings can now involve webcams; networking can be done through LinkedIn; job listings can be viewed online; communication -- the sky's the limit, you name it; business finances can be referenced with a click; your mentor may live on the other side of the country; education/certification can take place without having to leave your home or workplace; professional organizations are still here, still educating and communicating and still providing opportunities for face-to-face meetings and networking.

What hasn't changed are the core values needed for advancement in the industry: flexibility, creativity, competitiveness, adaptability, receptiveness, commitment, engagement and a desire to be a lifelong learner. •



by Jacqueline K. Mongold, CMP,
National Rifle Association of America
and Mindy Halpert, CMP, Consortium for School Networking

CVB and Vendor Partnerships

Mary: Peter Green, CMP hired me into my first CVB position and in one of my first bids, suggested I map out the client space into the center and hotel space so the client could take what I submitted and tweak as they understood the program to utilize the space. This allowed the planner to not spend their time trying to understand our meeting space and allowed me to become more familiar with the program needs and where we excelled or fell short in meeting the space requirements.

Marie: Walking into a facility for the first time can be very overwhelming. Having your CVB expert map out space beforehand can not only save a lot of time, but allow for the planner to focus on bringing new initiatives and ideas to the site visit. Besides spending time plotting out which room can hold 100 people, we can collaborate on a new idea and strategize how to execute. Most importantly this is one of the first steps of developing a partnership; once onsite both parties can get to know the membership better, new developments in the city and hobbies you may have in common.

Marie: Angie Foreman, ConferenceDirect partner at my association, taught me how to truly use my vendors as a resource. I was struggling to fit my staff and member's meeting dreams into my budget when Angie suggested I reach out to my decorator, AV and facility partners to see what we can do. As I walked my partner team through our vision and presented my budget, they were already collaborating to deliver a great meeting within budget. It was not only the large cost savings and creativity of move-in times and labor, but also the small items such as getting easels from the hotel at no charge. Besides trying to do it all myself and crunch numbers, bringing everyone together made me realize how valuable partners are and that they work together to help achieve the association's goal.

Mary: In the initial site visit, it's a good idea to have the hotels, service providers in the building (F&B, AV, Telecom etc.) participate in a welcome meeting to discuss the day's visit. This allows the planner to share the unique needs of the organization with all the people they will meet during the site that day so they only have to tell the story once. It allows for each hotelier and vendor to hear the same information and gives them time between the meeting and their site visit to find ways to differentiate their property and show how they can meet the organization's needs. It also allows the service providers in the building to address questions or concerns about the building, while showcasing where they can meet the client's desires based on what was learned in the initial meeting. Providing vendors all the information needed at the start of the partnership ensures that each vendor can bring their best assets and experience to create a successful event. This includes meeting the budget needs of the organization, creating a positive memorable attendee experience and partnering to ensure both sides meet their goals. •

*by Marie Fredlake, ConferenceDirect
and Mary Gallagher, CMP, LA Tourism & Convention Board*

EXPLORE A REFRESHED DC HOTSPOT.

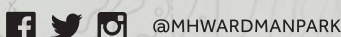


Washington Marriott Wardman Park is igniting the DC scene with its recent multi-million dollar renovation. The new look and feel draws from the hotel's roots in lavish living while blending it with the inspiring contemporary neighborhoods surrounding it. The adjoining areas of Adams Morgan, Cleveland Park and Dupont Circle are flush with bespoke stores, ethnic cuisine and vibrant nightlife. Or explore downtown DC just two metro stops from the hotel.

While summer heats up in the city, relax in a refreshing haven just outside your door. Take advantage of the new, pristine outdoor pool or go for a stroll under the canopies of oak trees along the water in Rock Creek Park.

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Exhibitions Day 2015

On June 8-9, PCMA Capital Chapter members, along with members from 16 international organizations, participated in the 2nd annual Exhibitions Day. Exhibitions Day was established by IAEE's "Exhibitions Mean Business" (www.exhibitionsmeanbusiness.org) campaign to spread the word on Capitol Hill about key issues impacting our industry. The hospitality industry contributes \$71.3 billion to the US GDP annually and supports over 1.8 million full and part-time jobs!

After attending a deep dive on June 8th where major issues were reviewed, on the morning of June 9th representatives from the Capital Chapter ascended Capitol Hill with messages impacting current issues such as the Jolt Act, Open Skies, and Trade Promotion Authority. We also asked for support of any bill or legislation that allows government employees to attend meetings and events, or to block any bill that takes away a government employee's ability to attend events. Individual appointments were scheduled among House and Senate members to foster relationships, raise awareness about our industry and educate congress members about the value and impact that exhibitions and events have in their communities. Before leaving the offices, attendees asked for action on these issues.

The JOLT Act (Jobs Originated through Launching Travel), is a bipartisan effort to reform the Visa Waiver Program while preserving international travel safety measures. The goal is to help increase international travel to the U.S. Support of this bill is expected to help bring 100 million visitors to the U.S., impacting jobs, tax revenue, and U.S. exports.

Open Skies agreements allow free and open competition among air carriers eliminating government control over routes and pricing. In a unique twist on the normal request, we asked congress to stand down on this issue and remain neutral. The current agreements are working.

The Trade Promotion Authority measure significantly strengthens American travel and the economy by ensuring rules for a two-way trade and helping America get the fairest deal out of new trade agreements. Expanding these parameters is a boon for U.S. exhibitions by fostering more participation in trade shows and B2B events.

Plan NOW to attend Exhibitions Day in 2016. Getting the word out, fostering relationships, and asking for support of current legislation is vital to our industry and to helping our legislators and government officials understand the importance of what we do every day!

Don't forget to "like" Exhibitions Mean Business on Facebook and follow @ExhibitsMeanBiz on Twitter. •

by Kim Allison, Associate Director of Sales, CAE, CASE, CTA, Visit Baltimore

The Planner Panel: Best & Worst Meeting Experiences

Long ago, I attended the MPIWEC conference at the Opryland Hotel and it was incredible! The atrium was the setting for the reception with full orchestra situated on guestroom balconies above. The food included wild game...delicious! The pièce de resistance was "A Good ol' Country Christmas". Dinner was served family style. Lights extinguished while white-gloved waiters marched in turkeys dressed in glow sticks. On stage: First carolers, then a city street bustling with shoppers, migrating to the outside of a house being prepped for the holidays. House opens and the cast is decking the tree, reading children stories and enjoying friends and family... All set to singing! It was amazing!!

by Marilyn Atchue-Zuill, HPN Global

During a site visit with a client who was tasked with representing America's Zoo's & Aquariums, one of our hotel partners was putting the finishing touches of an ice sculpture of a dolphin encircling the company's logo in the hotel lobby upon our entrance. Everyone was blown away.

by Ryan Barth, CMP, ConferenceDirect

Our annual meeting got off to a great start, but that soon turned. A tropical storm hit Orlando creating massive downpours and leaky ceilings. A fire broke out in the hotel causing the fire doors in the exhibit hall to automatically close; one of which got stuck cockeyed. Later in the evening, one of our attendees had an altercation with another individual and he ended up putting a huge hole in the lobby wall. The next morning a stalker ran around the hotel courtyard and parking lot. While this was a trying meeting, in the end we just had to laugh.

by Tracie Howard, AcademyHealth

I was assigned to hire a Brazilian dancer for a Carnival themed reception we hosted to celebrate the organization's growing partnership with Brazil. We had a planning call to discuss what music she would play, when she would arrive, and that she would wear her more conservative costume. When she arrived, I showed her to the dressing room and went back to check on the event. She danced in right on cue as planned. As everyone in the room looked up, their mouths dropped. Lesson learned: association "conservative" is different than Brazilian dancer "conservative."

By Anonymous

PCMA Education Foundation \$30 for 30 Years

The PCMA Education Foundation is celebrating its 30 year anniversary in 2015 and has kicked off a “30 for 30” campaign. Since 1985, through the generosity of PCMA members and sponsors, the Foundation has funded hundreds of industry initiatives, student scholarships, research projects and education programs. In the last decade alone, over \$1.5M has been invested to further our industry.

The Foundation’s scholarship program benefits 21 university students annually. Valerielizabeth (Valerie) Villa, 2014 Foundation Diversity Scholarship winner, shared her touching story with Education Conference attendees in June:

As one of six children raised by a single mother, Villa struggled to pay for college and the scholarship provided three semester’s worth of textbooks and a backpack with a working zipper. She is passionate about working in events when she graduates this December and will stay active with PCMA and plans to pay it forward by supporting the Foundation with an annual gift.

In addition to impacting the lives of students, the Foundation funds projects like the Best in Class program that provides a complimentary speaker to all 17 PCMA Chapters; the collaborative Economic Significance Study; the 20 in their twenties Program that showcases the next generation of industry leaders; and the most recent, a collaborative landmark study on Event Room Demand launched this month by DMAI.

We invite you to participate in the Foundation’s “30 for 30” program by donating \$30 or more to fuel the Foundation’s work and make a direct impact on current professionals, students, and our industry.

Donate today [online](#) or by texting “30for30 \$30 First Name Last Name” to the number: 41444.

On behalf of the Foundation, thank you for giving!

by Meredith Rollins, Executive Director, PCMA Education Foundation



Valerielizabeth Villa, 2014 PCMA Education Foundation Diversity Scholarship winner

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Q & A with Tom Noonan, President and CEO of Visit Baltimore

Q. During the unrest in April, how did Visit Baltimore work with groups scheduled to meet in Baltimore over that timeframe?

Immediately after the unrest, I told my team that we had to switch our focus from being a sales and marketing organization to a customer service organization. We're always both, of course, but it was a matter of shifting priorities to make certain our customers and visitors were provided the latest information about what was happening, where it was happening and what, if any, impact it was having on our tourism amenities. We communicated with groups as much as we could by phone and in person. We also directed groups and visitors to use our website as a resource, [which was] updated on a daily basis to provide as much information as we could.

Q. When considering possible emergency planning, what are some important things that meeting professionals should consider?

In the event that an organization does not already have an emergency management plan in place, I recommend using the destination's CVB as a resource to develop an emergency plan. Make sure you have a conversation about emergency management plans and the CVB's emergency resources in advance of the event. Visit Baltimore has a public facing emergency management document that can be shared with meeting planners and attendees, and can walk planners through the integrated emergency management plan in place to address the needs of residents and visitors in times of emergencies.

Q. Moving forward, how will you return to the job of marketing the city of Baltimore?

We're making sure that people know that Baltimore is a great city with terrific assets, offering visitors a positive, rewarding experience. You can come to town and have a great event, stay in a world-class hotel, eat in fantastic restaurants, and visit some great attractions.

We are calibrating our message to be sensitive to recent challenges, but we're not being shy about delivering a message whose bottom line is, "come to Baltimore." We've relaunched our "My BMore" advertising campaign and are working to balance the negative images portrayed in the media with information about our truly great American city. We're also doing our part to support the One Baltimore effort that was launched by Baltimore's mayor to help address some of the underlying causes of the unrest in April. •

by Sara Warfield, CTA, Vice President of Communications, Visit Baltimore

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Member Spotlights

Spotlight on a Planner

Jessica Larsen

Event Planner

The Heritage Foundation



Although Jessica grew up in upstate New York, childhood vacations introduced her to Virginia and she fell in love. To her, Virginia was magical and “home”. When the time came, she enrolled at Virginia Tech majoring in Public Relations and unwittingly began career training. She worked in admissions, led campus tours as a Hokie Ambassador, and assisted

with sorority membership scheduling/recruitment and the Tech Media Bureau.

With her degree in hand while taking a few summer weeks to job hunt, Jessica walked unannounced into an upstate New York meeting management company and was hired the next day. The company specialized in large pharmaceutical meetings. Fast-forward and Jessica let her boss know that her heart was in Virginia who arranged for an interview with Wanda Johnson with the Endocrine Society. Jessica was on her way to VA and a new job!

Jessica met Colin Powell at a recent conference and found him amazing; however, if she could choose to have lunch with anyone, it would be her late grandfather. Bigger than life in more than his 6’8” stature...kind, generous, the embodiment of everything a girl could dream of.

Jessica loves reading, water sports, horseback riding, and being with family and friends. At the top of her vacation list is the Italian Riviera. Her biggest accomplishment is finishing 3rd place (in her age group) in a triathlon; however, her dad thinks it’s when she used their family tractor to pull another tractor out of a ditch in a snow storm...she was 10 years old!

Jessica recently left the Endocrine Society and is now Event Planner for The Heritage Foundation in DC. •

by Marilyn Atchue-Zuill,
HPN Global

Spotlight on a Supplier

Michelle Coombs

National Sales Director

San Diego Tourism Authority



Michelle Coombs’ heart is in San Diego. In addition to her present position, there are several links with the city during her career. After graduating from St. Cloud State University in Minnesota with a degree in Recreation Administration, she secured an internship at the Lawrence Welk Resort in San Diego. While there, she received a certificate in event management from San Diego State University. She noticed

that “people in Sales and Marketing were making more money,” so she joined the Sales force at a local conference center, focusing on the wedding market. She then moved to working with groups with Paradise Points Resorts.

Her first job in the Washington area was as a planner with the Washington Business Journal (WBJ). Then, she worked in sales for The Ritz-Carlton, Pentagon City. While there, she joined PCMA and served on the Communications Committee. She re-joined PCMA after she began working with San Diego. Michelle was recently named Director of Publications for PMPI and looks back to her days with the PCMA Committee as a learning experience in the field.

On the personal side, Michelle is married to Joe Coombs, whom she met while he was a reporter for the WBJ. They have a son, 7, and a daughter, 5. She works from home, focusing on selling the city during the day, and on her family when they come home after business hours. What does she like most about her job? “The destination. I am just excited about representing San Diego. It’s like coming home,” Michelle said. •

by Sara Torrence, CMP Emeritus,
Sara Torrence and Associates



The PCMA Capital Chapter represented in Ft. Lauderdale during the PCMA Education Conference in June



News Bytes

Email your news: PCMAchatter+news@gmail.com

SHANNON BURKE: WINNER OF THE "MEMBER GET A MEMBER CONTEST" (17 NEW MEMBERS WERE RECRUITED VIA THE CONTEST)

SAKURA EMERINE & CASSANDRA DURAND: WELCOME TO THE CAPITAL CHAPTER & DISNEY SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Mark Your Calendar

CAPITAL CONNECTION

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

8/20 How to Design and Enhance the Educational Experience

Education Program: 3:00pm – 5:00pm
Reception: 5:00pm – 6:00pm
Pinstripes Georgetown
1064 Wisconsin Avenue, NW

9/16 What Do You Do When the Circus Comes to Town? Contingency Planning for a New Millennium

Education Program: 3:00pm – 5:00pm
Reception: 5:00pm – 6:00pm
DoubleTree by Hilton - Crystal City



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