

# MPI

MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL



## OHIO CHAPTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL OHIO CHAPTER



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## The Official Newsletter of MPI Ohio Chapter

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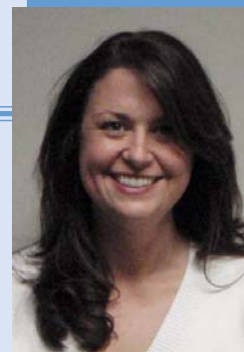
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**MPIOH Mission Statement:** To enhance the overall quality and awareness of the meetings industry by ensuring the professional development and growth of its membership through targeted educational programs and networking opportunities.

# President's Column

By Wendy Nicodemus, CMP



Our second annual Member Appreciation event took place on April 20<sup>th</sup> at OCLC in Dublin. This event, which is provided complimentary to members, gives our chapter a chance to say thank you to our members and many volunteers. These individuals do a great deal for our chapter as well as the meetings and events industry as a whole. We hope that our members continue to feel the value of being involved with the Ohio Chapter of MPI, as our board is driven towards finding new and creative ways to integrate our members and volunteers with the chapter. Currently, 36% of our members are engaged in volunteering for the chapter. This statistic is so important because with MPI, we are only as successful as our volunteers make us. The results could be observed with the active volunteers who participated in the MidAmerica Conference. The synergy amongst our members and volunteers could be viewed when they executed an amazing, fun, and educational event. Our past success as a chapter reflects back to those that give their time and expertise to really make a difference.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, over sixty million people volunteer in the U.S. The third week in April has been designated National Volunteer Week, a time to acknowledge the selfless, tireless, priceless people who do the work no one else wants to do without pay or constant recognition. Appreciation is such an important aspect in being thoughtful in both your personal and professional lives. It can be as simple as giving a card to an employee for a job well done or sending flowers to an industry peer in a crisis. Even a personal email message to a client who you know is stressed can go a long way in your relationship, and can do wonders for the mood of the individual.

The Ohio Chapter of MPI continues to give back as much as possible to our members; one of these aspects is our scholarship opportunities for career development and continued education programs including the CMP Certification Program as well as International MPI events such as the World Education Congress which will be held in Orlando, FL this year. Each year our chapter invests thousands of dollars to the growth and development of our membership. MPIOH also tries its best to plan and organize monthly educational events that are current on a variety of industry topics that can directly affect your career. Our hope is that you find your membership through the Ohio MPI Chapter rewarding and we appreciate your continued support.

Philosopher Voltaire states that "Appreciation is a wonderful thing, it makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well."

# MPI Ohio Chapter Meeting

February 16, 2011 - Duke Energy Center

By: Luann Ulrich

## Panel Discussion on the Trends & Décor in the Food & Beverage Area

### Panelists:

#### Aaron Hagerdorn

##### Executive Chef Hyatt Regency Cincinnati

Aaron is a 16-year veteran in the food industry starting as a dishwasher of a small family owned restaurant in suburban Columbus, Ohio. After graduating from the CIA, he spent several years traveling and working at a wide range of establishments around the eastern United States in order to learn more about the trade. Over his career he has worked in many different types of establishments including upscale pubs, family owned restaurants, small fine dining restaurants, hotels, and conference centers, not to mention working with 2 Certified Master Chefs. Aaron used this experience and his training to focus on New American Cuisine using classical techniques.

#### Robin Gentry McGee, CHHP, AADP

##### Health and Wellness Consultant

Robin Gentry McGee is a Health and Wellness Consultant and a chef who specializes in organic whole foods. Robin works in private practice with individuals and groups as well as teaching and facilitating workshops. She is founder of Functional Formularies® a bio-identical food formulation consulting firm. She works closely with The Block Integrative Cancer Center in Chicago doing customized organic whole food enteral formularies.

In her work, Robin draws on many years of experience in the health and wellness industry. She is the former owner of Just Great Foods, the area's only organic whole foods restaurant. Robin is also an accomplished food stylist and has studied design specializing in sustainable and eco-friendly products.

She has just completed her first book "A Turn for the Worst" which chronicles the journey with her father's traumatic brain injury, and is currently working on a new book "Living Well with Whole Foods".

#### Laura Bradigan

##### Owner Laura's Catering

Graduating in 2002 with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Capital University after 3 years of Law School preparation, Simply Nanette Catering became my odd pathway out of Law and branch into the world of hospitality. From making deliveries, or helping in the kitchen I learned the different aspects of a catering business including the ins and outs of personal connections or the attention to the smallest of details. In 2008 Simply Nanette was sold and Laura's Catering LLC was born into the Columbus, Ohio community.



#### Robert Hughes

##### Director Special Events for All Occasions

Robert Hughes has 20 years of experience in the event rental business. His responsibilities include planning and executing both corporate and social events for All Occasions' varied customer base. He played a key role in developing the Certified Event Rental Professional (CERP) program for the American Rental Association and was a member of the inaugural group to receive CERP designation. A member of the founding group for the Greater Cincinnati Chapter of ISES International Special Events Society, Robert has spoken at numerous national conventions and trade shows.

In honor of the topic of the day, All Occasions Event Rental provided a wonderful assortment of table coverings and Ovations Food Services provided a wonderful menu of Chop Salad with Zucchini, Carrots, Squash, Red Onion and Cilantro in a Light Balsamic Vinaigrette resting in a Martini Glass on a Bed of Bibb Lettuce and Red Peppers followed by Filet Mignon with Bleu Cheese Crouton with a Three Bean Confetti and Asparagus with a sweet ending of Espresso Panna



## MPI Ohio Chapter Meeting continued

Cotta with White Chocolate Cream, Chocolate Cigar and Walnut Encrusted Strawberry (see photo of salad and dessert).

Question topics ranged from Green/Organic to Vegan/Vegetarian Menus and Décor. Below are a few Q & A highlights:

### Is “green” healthier and what type of “green” requests do you see? :

*Aaron:* “If you can’t pronounce it – don’t eat it”. There is actually an article on the internet entitled “What Not to Eat at Trader Joe’s”

*Robin:* You need to read labels – even “healthy stores” like Trader Joe’s and Whole Foods offer pre-packaged items. There is actually a store in Dayton that promises “you never have to read our labels”.

*Robert:* The rental industry has been “green” in many ways for years – the table cover may be made of polyester, but the cloth you rent today literally will be used hundreds of times over many years. The industry is based on reuse of all products.

### What new trends were highlight at this year’s Special event? :

*Robert:* Metallics and sequins are still very strong, textured linens, mirrors, crustal, beading, LED bases, virtual bands/entertainment and mixing technology into the industry (i.e. social media, smart phones, apps)

### Sustainable Foods – How do you take the concept from home to restaurant to hotel? :

*Aaron:* there are large indoor facilities in Ohio \* Indiana as well as several small farms that have added greenhouses as a salvation for their business. The large facilities have the ability to keep up with their hotel orders. Working with groups that have made corporate social responsibility a priority has given him the ability to



implement initiatives within the hotel that include composting, using local farms, etc.

### What offers the most “bang for the buck” in event décor? :

*Robert:* Linens and basic lighting are the best start. As you add more “details” you typically add more in costs. The popularity of HGTV, Style and other cable channels has added to the request for specific décor ideas but

clients must remember that it takes more time (which equates to higher labor cost) to get that finished look. Look to your vendors for ideas and suggestions – remember that they do this for a living and are making suggestions based on experience, knowledge and the desire to make each event special.

### What type of menus are being requested? :

*Aaron:* The trend for 2011 is healthier alternatives of traditional meats/chicken – i.e. foods people recognize with a healthier angle (i.e. gluten free, less fat, etc.). He has added 7 lunch and 7 dinner vegetarian options to their regular catering menu.



*Robin:* Make sure that you know what and who you are serving. There are bad gluten-free and fat-free products out there. Also, if you are targeting a group with a high population of vegetarians, make sure that your venue can provide menus at your restaurants so they don’t have to go off-site. There have been

clinical trials that reflect positive outcome for changes in hospital menu which have led to a shift by hospitals to allow foods to be brought in for specific conditions.

*Laura:* There is a definite trend towards different vegetarian options “no pasta or salad” and authentic ethnic stations. The public is much more informed these days thanks to Food Network and the internet so catering offerings must keep up.

# The New Standard for Content Creation

You probably have 16:9 1080 HD televisions in the family room, home theater, and maybe even the bathroom. Shouldn't your corporate video messages and indeed all visual content for meetings and conferences meet the same standard?

High Definition production has been slow to come to the corporate communications market; initially because of cost. Today the cost differential has mostly disappeared. More and more production facilities are exclusively HD with rates equal to or lower than those for standard definition.

## **Plan for HD production.**

OK, you have that big corporate meeting or marketing initiative on the calendar and you decide that the message demands dynamic visuals and the best possible image quality. What next? Plan for high definition production from the beginning. Select a production partner that is fully committed to the HD workflow with high quality cameras for acquisition and full HD post-production. If your video content will be projected at a corporate meeting, make sure you specify 16:9 aspect ratio projection screens (HD format) as well as HD capable video projectors. You should be looking for HD projectors with light output in the range of 10,000 to 18,000 lumens, depending on the screen size.

## **Coordinate with everyone.**

Make sure everyone creating screen content for your event (Power Point and/or Keynote graphics for presentation support) knows to deliver in a 16:9 format. Coordinate the activities of your video production team with those responsible for on-site execution to assure proper playback and projection equipment.

## **Can I still utilize legacy video footage?**

Transitioning to HD production does not spell the end to that library of existing standard definition video. Any competent editor can use some creative tricks to weave existing footage into an HD production. That old footage will never look quite like HD, but it will serve the purpose and retain its value.

## **Use Event Production Services to design seamless content.**

A full service event production company can be a valuable resource to help create, produce and display HD video for your organization's next meeting. A full-service company can coordinate HD video production with on-site projection technology to maximize the impact of your image and add to the professionalism of your next event.

*- Bill Biegler is a Producer at Bartha*





# Up to Snuff

By: Tim Sanders

## EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE YOU HEAR SOMETHING IN A SPEECH THAT ROCKS YOUR WORLD.

For me, it happened in 2001 when I was sharing the stage with former Yahoo! executive, current Florida State Sen. Jeremy Ring. He and I were touring regional offices giving pep talks to our sales teams.

The troops needed motivation, as the economy turned ugly and the dotcom bubble burst. They'd show up every day at work with deer-in-the-headlines looks. For a few years, Yahoo! had been the darling of Madison Avenue and Wall Street. But that was changing as the media and investment communities hammered at our business model. With the implosion of the online ad market, employees feared for their jobs—with good reason.

Jeremy challenged audience members to update their résumés every year. "Otherwise," he pointed out, "you can get whacked by the times, just like a lifer at Xerox." Ouch. His point: A better résumé gives you a better chance to land on your feet when the magic carpet of momentum is yanked.

It was a wakeup call. I hadn't had a résumé for years (I was lucky enough to be hired at **Broadcast.com** without needing one). Moreover, I hadn't really thought much about how my total offering had evolved in a bullet-point measurable way. Taking his advice to heart, I made résumé overhaul part of my first-quarter planning from that day forward. And I've seen a real payoff, as multiple layers of change required me to tap into diverse interests, educational backgrounds and business

experience. It's helped me stay relevant.

For meeting professionals, this is an important exercise. Take these steps, add something valuable to your résumé this year and you'll be ready for anything.

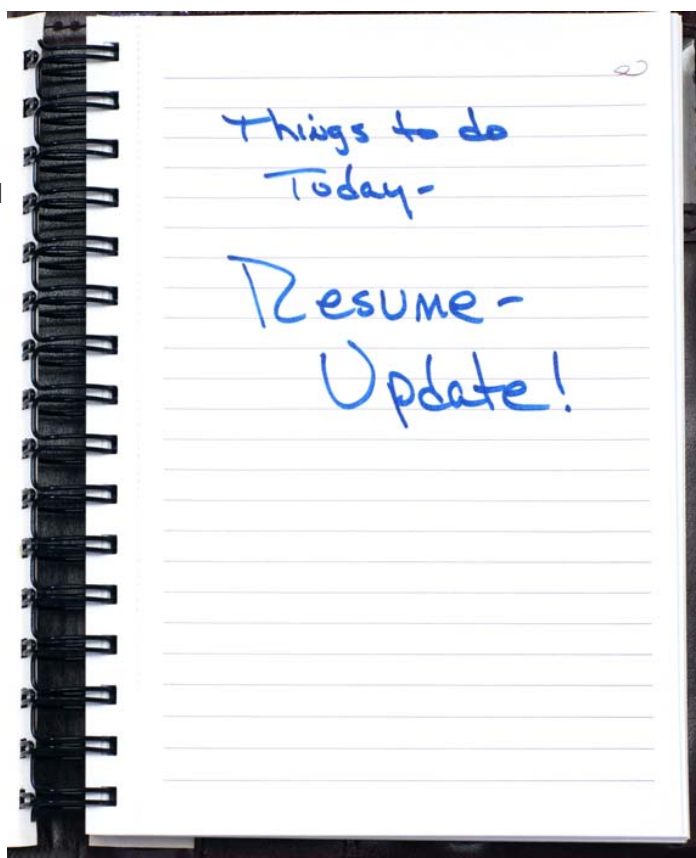
**1. Create three résumés.** Build résumés that allow you to track your progress over the last decade. Start with the year 2000, creating a résumé that highlights your educational background, work experience, hobbies/

interests and achievements. Then, update it through 2006, adding any necessary bullet points to those four categories. Finally, update your résumé to current date. By establishing these three résumés, you produce a unique view into how value changes year-over-year. Note which additions have made the biggest impacts and shielded you from various twists and turns in your personal landscape.

**2. Come up with résumé additions for 2011.** Start with your interests: What are you curious about? What have you been meaning to learn or gain experience doing? You are more likely to finish what you start if you start something you already care

about. Next, review macro-trends that impact your career, industry or situation. Consider technology, the economy or developments at work or in the market. Finally, make a list of your personal deltas—those areas where you feel like you are coming up short, either in knowledge or practice.

**3. Select a synergistic project.** Review your three lists from step two, connect the dots and identify a candidate for this year's add-on to the new you. As with all investments you make with your precious time (you have work and personal obligations no less), look for synergy.



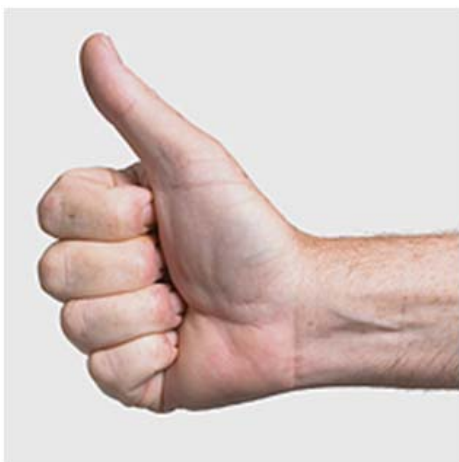


## Up to Snuff, continued

Add something to your résumé that feeds some part of your career.

I've just completed this three-step process and selected "Learn Level 1 Spanish" as my 2011 project. I've been meaning to do this for years. In fact, I bought the Rosetta Stone language-learning software last year. It's been sitting on my shelf ever since. I'm being booked to speak in South America more often these days and could benefit from conversational capabilities while there. So, my 2011 selection is highly synergistic with my career. I'm also interested in the brain-stretching benefits of learning a foreign language, which will hopefully improve my capabilities as a writer and business consultant.

If you are a meeting planner, consider gaining expertise in digital media, for example. Take a class, either online or through your company's training and development program. If you are in hospitality and have a green-business-thumb, join a sustainability project at work or in your community. In both cases, you'll diversify yourself



as you add to your professional tool kit.

**4. Review progress during the coming year.** Don't let March arrive without initializing your project in earnest. Volunteer, sign up or start scheduling regular time for it by then. On June 1, review your progress, knowing that you'll need to be at least a third of the way done. By late August, give yourself one more review to ensure that you'll complete the task before the productivity-ending fall break. During the winter season, update your résumé and add something new. Celebrate your accomplishment, and if you can, calculate the financial or emotional benefit this effort has given you over the year.

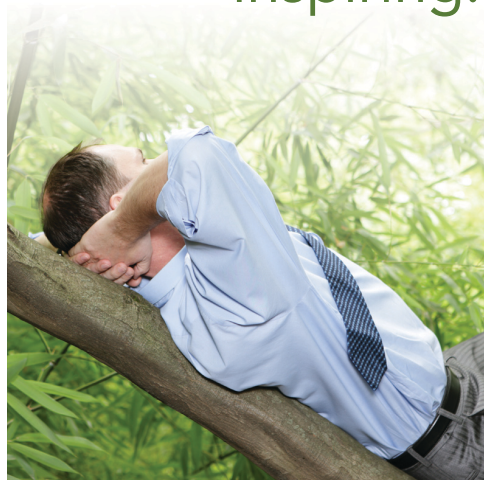
Alan Kay, considered the father of the personal computer, once quipped: "Perspective is worth 50 IQ points." Likely, he's right—the more clearly you can see yourself, your growth and your potential, the more effective you will be. This exercise will give you a bird's eye view of your personal narrative. It'll be there, staring up at you in black and white, asking, "What have you done for me lately?"

### One+

#### About The Author - Tim Sanders

TIM SANDERS, a top-rated speaker on the lecture circuit, is the author of *Saving the World at Work: What Companies and Individuals Can Do to Go Beyond Making a Profit to Making a Difference* (Doubleday, September 2008). Check out his Web site at [www.timsanders.com](http://www.timsanders.com)

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## Give a Little Bit + More Career Tips

By: Blair Potter

Website [CAREEREALISM](http://CAREEREALISM) offers four self-perceptions that will help you improve your career. Here's an excerpt:

**Give a little, get a little:** One of the single biggest ways to improve your job prospects is to network with other people. How you network is a critical component to success. Interested in getting help from someone influential? You need to give that person something first. Look for ways you can add value for that person; you will then be in a much better position to solicit help—or, even better, they might offer. One of the best ways to increase your circle of influence is by providing something yourself first.

**Dress for success:** It should come as no surprise that others like to be around good-looking people. Studies show that those who present better get offered positions more often. The way you carry yourself and how you dress is directly correlated to how you feel about yourself. If you look put together, you will feel better about yourself; the chances your positive impression will come across to those around you will vastly improve. As a result your self-perception will improve.

**A stranger is a friend you haven't met yet:** How many times have you been in an elevator and said hello to someone? How many times has that led to a full-blown conversation? You didn't know that person before stepping into the elevator. BUT, you could very well end up developing a valuable friendship from a short exchange.

**Establishing your personal brand:** Your personal brand and perception in the market is critical to facilitate your success. You want to create a demand for YOU. The idea is to generate recognition so others perceive you as valuable, in the know, a resource. You need to present yourself in a way that engages others so they are interested in pursuing you. Establish your presence as someone who can deliver—consistently. Demonstrating you are a valued resource will go a long, long way in establishing your personal brand. This in turn will generate interest in you. Deliver what you say you are going to deliver. Follow-up with people. This will ensure when your name is mentioned only positive things are shared and spread.

## MPIOH Upcoming Events



### APRIL

**20<sup>th</sup> – Maximizing Your Networking Skills**  
Member Appreciation Luncheon  
**FREE TO MEMBERS**  
Conference Center at OCLC  
Dublin, OH  
10:30am– 2pm

**27<sup>th</sup> – Reach Meeting**  
Columbus, OH  
7:30am – 9am

### MAY

**4<sup>th</sup> – REACH Meeting**  
Cincinnati/Dayton, OH  
7:30am – 9am

**11<sup>th</sup> – REACH Meeting**  
Cleveland, OH  
7:30am – 9am

**18<sup>th</sup> – Chapter Luncheon Meeting**  
Put-In-Bay, OH  
10:30am – 2pm

**25<sup>th</sup> – REACH Meeting**  
Toledo/Sandusky, OH  
7:30am – 9am

### JUNE

**15<sup>th</sup> – Recognition Program**  
The Franklin Park Conservatory  
Columbus, Ohio  
10:30am – 2pm

**Please mark your calendars  
and visit [MPIOH.org](http://MPIOH.org)  
to register for these events**



# Hotel Contracting Strategies in the Current Economy

## *Legal and Practical Contract Strategies Every Meeting Professional Must Know*

By: Mary Vlahos

I attended the January luncheon for the Ohio Chapter of Meeting Professionals International (OHMPI), and had the pleasure of hearing John S. Foster Esq., CHME speak on contract strategies. The presentation was loaded with valuable information that I would like to share with you.

Negotiating tips:

- Sending out RFP's to several hotels will help you ensure you are getting the best rates and terms. Be sure to include all requirements and requests in your RFP. It is best to negotiate everything up front before the contract is signed than after when you have no leverage. Remember, requesting before the contract is signed is negotiating; requesting something after the contract is signed is begging.
- Multi-year contracts at the same hotel may get you a lower rate. How do you ensure good customer service year after year? Most companies survey their attendees after the convention to gauge the success of their event. You can include a clause in your contract that if the survey scores don't reach an agreed upon level then you have the option to terminate the contract. It is also a good idea to do separate contracts for each year even though it is a multi-year agreement. That way if you should breach a contract for one year it does not affect your other years.
- Breach of Contract: Understand the difference between "penalties" versus "damages" and what's enforceable. Penalties in a contract are not enforceable, but damages are enforceable. If performance damages (attrition), are part of the contract include a clause that all late reservations (those made after the cut-off date), are given the group rate and included in your quota. Also request that the group rate be extended pre and post conference and that those rooms are also included in your quota. Extending the group rate ensures that

your last minute attendees are not discouraged from booking your hotel because the group rate no longer applies.

- Associations: Association member companies may reserve blocks of rooms for their employees. These rooms should be set up as sub-blocks, usually for ten rooms or more, under the member companies name and with their credit card as a guarantee. This will sift the risk from your association to their company. Both associations and corporations should be able to assign unused space to other organizations or departments using the same dates to avoid attrition damages.



- Negotiate up front how attrition damages will be assessed. Be sure they are "liquidated damages." These can be calculated by taking gross departmental revenue minus variable expenses. In other words, how much profit is the hotel making on overnight rooms, meeting room space or food and beverage? The lost profit is what you should be responsible for not the gross revenue. After all they have incurred no expenses if you haven't had an event there. Each component of your event may have a different profit margin, but here are some guidelines.

## Hotel Contracting Strategies in the Current Economy, continued

Guest rooms- 65-75% Catered food- 20-30%

Alcohol- 80-85% Meeting rooms- 90-95%

The injured party must also agree to mitigate damages (resell the space), and you should get credit for any resold space against your attrition quotas.

- Include a “No Additional Charges/ Authorized Signatures” clause: This will protect you from getting more of a bill than you anticipated. You need to make sure that an authorized signature is obtained for any charges not specified in your contract and that agreeing to an additional charge will not be a condition of check-in. Your hotel or meeting facility can’t charge you any additional fees, gratuities, service fees etc. if it’s not in the contract unless you agree to it.

- Provide a strategic formula in the contract for setting future rates: In some cases you need to reserve space years in advance and group rates haven’t been published yet. You can put a clause in your contract that stipulates how that group rate will be calculated. It can be the lesser of the following formulas.

- The current group rate plus X% a year
- X% off the lowest rack rate for the dates of the meeting
- The current group rate quoted plus/minus the change in the Consumer Price Index

- Include a formula in your contract on how attrition damages will be calculated. Here is an example:

Total number of hotel rooms in the hotel

Minus off market rooms (rooms that are down for service or other reasons)

Minus last sell rooms (rooms that are held for elite status members)

Minus “sold” rooms (including rooms billed to other groups for attrition, cancellation or no-shows)

Equals unsold rooms

Attrition calculation-

Final room block per night

Minus allowable attrition per night

Minus rooms occupied (paid for per night by group’s attendees)

Equals group’s shortfall or overage per night

- Catering Food and Beverage minimums should be based on minimum revenue guaranteed by the group, less allowable attrition, not on the number of people expected. It should also reflect revenue multiplied by the agreed upon profit margin of 20%-40% not gross revenue.



- Include a clause that allows you to cancel if performance is impossible, impractical, or unreasonable due to an unexpected event, or frustrates the purpose of the party affected.
- Include an audit clause that allows you to independently audit the Hotel’s records to verify accuracy.
- Date change vs. cancellation and rebooking clause: Include a clause that allows you to change your dates without liability rather than treating it as a cancellation and rebooking. If the hotel or the hotel ownership remains the same, the projected revenue is equivalent and it is within a specified time period you would be allowed to change your dates without being charged additional fees.

This is just a brief summary of all of the information that was presented. The most important point that was made was to read and understand every word in the contract before signing it. Neither the presentation nor this article is legal advice. It was recommended that when you draft your contracts that they be reviewed by an attorney or your company’s legal department. Every organization is different, with different needs, and your contracts should be customized to reflect those requirements.



# Hiring Managers vs. Millennials

By: Jason Hensel

While the recession may have pushed Millennials (born 1980-95) to say they have more realistic expectations about career advancement, hiring managers don't yet see a change, according to "**The Future of Millennial Careers**" study released today by the Career Advisory Board, presented by DeVry University.

The survey of young professionals, ages 21 to 31, and hiring managers, indicates Millennials believe doing work that is personally meaningful to them and achieving a sense of accomplishment are just as important as earning a high salary for a successful career. In fact, 30 percent of Millennials identify meaningful work as the single most important measure of a successful career.

Conversely, hiring managers believe high pay plays a greater role in Millennials' perception of career success. Forty-eight percent of hiring managers rank high pay as the No. 1 way Millennials measure their career success. Only 11 percent of hiring managers say Millennials consider meaningful work as the No. 1 measure of success.

Millennials and hiring managers do agree on the opportunity areas for Millennials to develop their workplace skills. Fifty-one percent of hiring managers believe Millennials exhibit an inability to accept criticism from their managers with 54 percent of Millennials in agreement. Fifty-five percent of hiring managers believe Millennials lack patience with established processes, and 47 percent of Millennials agree. Thirty-eight percent of Millennials believe their generation cannot communicate effectively, and 35 percent of hiring managers agree.

The desire and need for mentorship is another area where the two groups have a meeting of the minds. Specifically, 47 percent of Millennials and 49 percent of hiring managers agree mentoring is the most helpful way for Millennials to overcome their weaknesses. Thirty-eight percent of managers and 37 percent of Millennials believe that participating in company-sponsored training

opportunities is another way to address their challenges.



Other relevant insights from the research include:

- 78 percent of Millennials speculate they will have five or fewer jobs over the course of their career.

- 65 percent of Millennials and 56 percent of hiring managers consider education to be among the three most important ways to advance their careers.

- 54 percent of Millennials and 48 percent of hiring managers say computer skills and comfort with digital technology—such as using social media and learning about new technology—is among the top three career skills. Twenty-one percent rank digital comfort as the Millennial generation's most valuable professional skill.

*(Story materials provided by DeVry University.)*

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# Welcome New Members

Chuck Altizer  
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Bartha

Cynthia Bessette  
Senior Sales Manager  
InterContinental Hotels Group

Corey Cook  
President  
Inntelligence, Inc.

Amy Farkasovsky  
Meeting Planner  
Cardinal Health, Inc.

Kimberly Hayes  
Sales Consultant  
Sinclair Community College

Christa White  
Sales Manager  
Hyatt on Capitol Square

## New Member Spotlight

### **Amy Farkasovsky** **Cardinal Health**

Amy is originally from Farmington, Michigan and has lived in Westerville, Ohio for 10-12 years.

She went to school at Bowling Green State University and studied Fashion Merchandising. Amy spent 5 years in management at Harald's (a high end department store) before transitioning into meeting planning. She has been employed with Cardinal for 7 years, and has done executive meeting planning and supporting the business units.

Both Amy and her husband work for Cardinal Health and they have one little boy. She loves to cook, drink wine, travel, and decorate her house.

### **Maggie Johnston**

Maggie is the Meeting Coordinator at Assurex Global in Columbus, Ohio. She been with the company for 5 years and has been head of the meeting department for the past 2 years where she plans meetings for the companies' Partner insurance brokers across the world.

Prior to joining Assurex Global in 2006 she worked in Washington, D.C. for the National Sheriffs' Association and on Capitol Hill. Maggie completed her undergraduate studies at Elon University in North Carolina, where she specialized in business marketing.



### **Joelle M. Baugher**

Joelle currently works at TRS in Cincinnati. Previous to that she worked as a volunteer manager for the 500 Festival in Indianapolis, IN. It was through her volunteer activities that she landed her job with TRS.

Joelle earned her undergraduate degree in Communications at University of Colorado in Boulder, CO, her graduate degree in Public

Affairs with an emphasis on nonprofit management at IUPUI (Indiana University Purdue University in Indianapolis).

Joelle has been married 3 and one half years and they have a Cairn Terrier named Bella. She is training for the Flying Pig Half Marathon in Cincinnati the first weekend of May. Good luck Joelle! We look forward to networking with you at future meetings.



# The Social Networker

By: Dann Anthony Maurno



Chris Brogan knows social media like few do. He was using it in the late 1980s, when the only platforms were green-screen bulletin boards over ultra-slow dial-up modems. But he saw something magic there.

“Suddenly, I’m meeting people in a social

setting who are into what I’m into, versus meeting them by proximity,” he says.

Some 25 years later, Brogan is a social media guru. He literally wrote the book on it; he is co-author of *The New York Times* bestseller *Trust Agents*, about using the Web to build trust, reputation and relationships. He is a featured columnist in *Entrepreneur* magazine, and his blog is No. 3 in the Ad Age Power 150 and was ranked by Technorati as one of the top 100 blogs in the world (alongside Ariana Huffington, Perez Hilton and TechCrunch). Pepsi, Comcast, General Motors and Microsoft have all paid handsomely for his wisdom, and beginning in May he’ll share that knowledge with meeting professionals through a column in *One+*.

## Relationships Before Transactions

It is no accident that Brogan’s company is called Human Business Works.

“What I’ve been teaching all along is how to use these tools to *become* human, at a distance,” Brogan says.

The online world of the 1990s had a feeling of distance, because the Internet was used as a broadcast outlet.

“The tools didn’t facilitate interaction. Calling [the company] Human Business Works points out that in business, you’re hoping for a *relationship*, not a transaction.”

People trust, admire and interact with people.

“This matters to [meeting professionals] because you’re looking for recurring business. You’re looking for the opportunity to serve a community—that’s what MPI members do. So ‘Human Business’ reminds people who work with us that that’s what we’re there for; not always

to maximize revenues as much as to create longer-term relationships.”

The maximized revenues naturally follow.

Used right, Brogan says, social media helps to build those relationships before, during and after an event. Before, a community can gather in a moderated forum, or simply in a LinkedIn community or on a Facebook page. They whip up enthusiasm among themselves for the event and recommend it to others.

At the event, attendees are not meeting for the first time at a cocktail mixer and reading one another’s “Hello, My Name Is” badges; they have already established a rapport and found common interests. And they know one another by sight. Brogan makes his face conspicuous in his blogs, on his website and in YouTube videos.

“I *want* people to find me—people who can introduce me to other people I should meet.”

As attendees maintain those relationships they’ve built, they become better prospects to attend next year.

“If people attend and don’t feel they’ve met new people, they’ll go home without any interest in coming back. So there’s a huge opportunity to ensure the success of that event [this year and the next],” Brogan says.

## Relationships Sell

So why waste time with online registration and direct mailers? Why not just hook attendees on Facebook?

“Anytime a planner uses these media as a broadcast channel, they’re wrong,” Brogan says. “We get enough blurts already, and we don’t respond to it,” he says referring to one-way messages like direct mail and e-mail. “We respond to two-way information—a conversation.”

So the method in social media is to engage others in a conversation—alongside each blog or forum is a call to action, such as attending an event.

That is another opportunity for meeting professionals to use social media tools directly on an event website to engage prospective attendees.

“You can drive someone to a website. But if I’m not sure I’m going to attend, can I talk to somebody there? And is it really easy to have a social media conversation, or do I have to call an 800 number?”

## The Social Networker, continued

That, Brogan believes, could be the point at which you lose a prospect; a multitasker or social media enthusiast may simply not bother to use the phone.

Perhaps engagement and conversation seem too soft for aggressive meeting professionals. But social media is not communications lite; people communicate through social media to engage with friends and are increasingly comfortable using the tools in business. And with its opt-in nature, people who get in touch have volunteered to be leads. They have qualified themselves.

But they can disqualify themselves just as easily, especially when faced with a hard sell.

"In social media, at least the commons like Twitter and Facebook, those are opt-in," Brogan says. "So if you're in the commons leg humping to get me to go to a meeting, I can opt out of your conversation and never see you again. You really have to respect the conversation."

Sure you're on the clock and have a quota. But as Brogan advised in a whimsical YouTube post, "You've got to engage people like they're real human beings. Then if you sense that they need your product...talk about what you have to offer."

Something else meeting planners can do with social media is sales nurturing. Brogan describes classic sales nurturing as, "This horrendous thing where a sales guy would call a person again and again, until that person finally says 'yes.'" Social media create new tools for reaching out and establishing a relationship that leads to business. Brogan met a business associate from New Zealand because they connected online over their mutual admiration of Batman. The business relationship came later, when they both attended a conference in Boston.

Is that sort of manipulative? Forced? It may feel that way in America, Brogan says, but it is the way of business in Japan (and it works).

"There, the social strata is tied tightly to the corporate

world. In America, we have some relationships with business friends, but we're supposed to make friends with our neighbors so we can have cookouts. I don't want to crush the Weber grill, but we're having this daily consensual cookout with the whole world now. We can talk with an associate in Japan as though it's over the back fence and perhaps do business."

### Connections and Business

All of that aside, social media can ease the business of meeting and event planning.

"Connections are the bread and butter of event planning—you need a network. There are event planners in the office next door to me, a company called Destination Partners, and they're forever on the phone saying, 'This bus contract failed, do we know who can get us another?'"

"So, how can you make your social network a more value-resonant network? How do you use serendipity to get a better response?"

Serendipity is, by definition, luck—unexpected good fortune, sometimes divinely

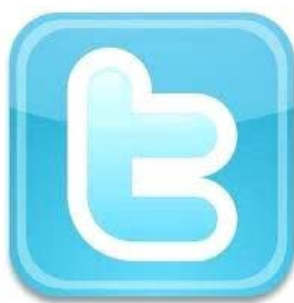
provided. But Brogan creates his own good fortune through Twitter.

"Your phone doesn't accidentally add 200 or 300 new contacts," he observed in a 2009 talk. "Twitter does; new people come and find what you're doing," and Twitter connections become people on whom you can call.

"Every day I need something, and I ask Twitter instead of Google, and I find something I need in a business capacity. I'll hear from someone who tells me, 'My brother is a CEO of a company that does that,' and I have that connection."

Pay attention to this, Brogan says; your connections will be more important than your résumé, particularly in the meeting and business event industry.

"I've maintained for a few years now that at some point, when we go to a job interview, the person across the desk will ask, 'Who do you know?' instead of, 'What do you know?' It's going to matter."





## The Social Networker, continued

Brogan had to interrupt our conversation and leap onto a conference call with a client. He was talking the client through measuring the tangible ROI in social media.

"In this budget-challenged time, you need material impact, and here's one way to do that," he says. (See "Untangling the Value of Social Media" in the October 2010 edition of *One+* for more on the ROI of social media.)

A Batman bobblehead doll seemed to nod and listen in on the call; Brogan sat in front of four Batman paintings.

It is no accident that Brogan is a Batman aficionado; they both enjoy tools.

"In the fictional world where Batman exists, there are real superheroes with powers. [But] he's just some schmoe with a bunch of gadgets and tools and he has to keep up."

And Batman keeps up with Superman, wonderfully well, with tools of his own creation.

"Talking to MPI's members is going to give me an opportunity to share ways they can improve their business using these tools," Brogan says. "These social tools aren't everything; I'm not blind to think the tools I'm using are the only way one markets. But I'd say that, should you have not executed anything better than Twitter and a Facebook page, we'll have a lot to talk about."

And Brogan is excited to do that.

"That's my win: helping educate someone to take a few more steps into that water."

From *One+*

By *Dann Anthony Mauro* | March 01, 2011

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Newly renovated lobby and dining room at the lodge!

# Social Media Update

As of March 31, 2011:



The MPI Ohio Chapter page has 69 connections and our chapter Facebook group has 114 members. Please continue to visit, write on the wall and tell others to check us out.



We have 985 people following us on Twitter and hope you are one of them. If not, follow us at @MPIOH.



We now have 357 members on the MPI Ohio Chapter group. LinkedIn continues to be the most predominantly used social media in the professional market and we hope you'll join our group if you haven't already.



All of our social media sites have been increasing nicely  
– thank you for everyone's participation. ☺



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