

OHIO CHAPTER



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL OHIO CHAPTER



June/July '11 ISSUE

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Lake Erie Shores & Islands.



The Official Newsletter of **MPI** Ohio Chapter

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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

During my year as President I have been fortunate to be a part of so many wonderful and rewarding experiences. Throughout my term I have had the pleasure of working with an amazing team and have developed friendships that will last a life time. I am continuously amazed with the amount of time that our board puts into the Ohio Chapter of MPI each year. I believe a leader is only as good as the people that surround them. We could not have picked a more outstanding, driven team to implement new ideas, grow our chapter and show exemplary leadership skills.

Finding the time to implement change, drive the team to success and keep moving forward was not always easy. During my term we started on a decline with membership during the economic set back and had many tasks ahead of us. We were offering new education and networking opportunities, expanding our territory in Ohio and were implementing more social media communication. The board had also stressed for some time a need for a new website and wanted to take on the project. Throughout all of these tasks the board is in the forefront of our membership and peers who are counting on them for productivity. My hope is that with all the hard work of our board and volunteers that we were successful at meeting your needs this year.

Each year, we schedule a chapter board retreat, where we work together to come up with a business plan and budget to be implemented the following year. I have to say; this year we met them. We recently received our national survey scores from our participating members which show we are meeting your needs. Our goal was to meet 8 out of 10 in all areas of engagement and I am proud to say we came in at 7.94%. Not quite the full 8, but we will take it!

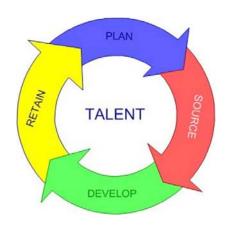
In the year to come, I will serve as your Past President. My main duty will be to engage our membership and lead the succession planning process in search of future board members to continue the exemplary service of our members. I promise to stay fully involved and work with the new team that will be leading the way. We hope to involve more planners on the board and in volunteer positions. We will be implementing actual training sessions and even more networking opportunities. We will continue to listen to our membership and work with you on your future within MPI.

I hope you all enjoy the new website that will be rolling out soon along with many other great things to come. Thank you all for being invested in your chapter. We appreciate all of your support.

Unable to Find the Right Talent

By: Jason Hensel May 20, 2011

ManpowerGroup released yesterday the results of its sixth-annual Talent Shortage Survey, revealing that 52 percent of U.S. employers are experiencing difficulty filling mission-critical positions within their organizations, up from 14 percent in 2010. The number of employers struggling to fill positions is at an all-time survey high despite an unemployment rate that has diminished only marginally during the last year. U.S. employers are struggling to find available talent more than their global counterparts, one in three of whom are having difficulty filling positions.



According to the more than 1,300 U.S. employers surveyed, the jobs that are most difficult to fill include skilled trades, sales representatives and engineers, all of which have appeared on the U.S. list multiple times in the past. The survey also highlights the most common reasons employers say they are having trouble filling jobs, including candidates looking for more pay than is offered, lack of technical skills and lack of experience.

"The fact that companies cite a lack of skills or experience as a reason for talent shortages should be a wake-up call for employers, academia, government and individuals," said Jonas Prising, ManpowerGroup president of the Americas. "It is imperative that these stakeholders work together to address the supply-and-demand imbalance in the labor market in a systematic, agile and sustainable way. There may also be an increasing imbalance between employers willingness to pay higher salaries in what is still a soft general labor market compared to the salary expectations of prospective employees, especially those with skills that are in high demand."

U.S. Hardest Jobs to Fill in 2011	U.S. Hardest Jobs to Fill in 2010
1. Skilled Trades	1. Skilled Trades
2. Sales Representatives	2. Sales Representatives
3. Engineers	3. Nurses
4. Drivers	4. Technicians
5. Accounting & Finance Staff	5. Drivers
6. IT Staff	6. Restaurants & Hotel Staff
7. Management/Executives	7. Management/Executives
8. Teachers	8. Engineers
9. Secretaries/Administrative Assistants	9. Doctors, Other Non-Nursing Professionals
10. Machinist/Machine Operator	10. Customer Service Representatives, Customer Support

2011 MPI MidAmercia Conference in Review

By: Alec Windle

The annual MPI MidAmerica Educational Conference is an event that chapter members and supporters look forward to each year. As a premiere educational and networking opportunity, MidAmerica leaves attendees

excited for the following year, which switches host sites between the Ohio and Kentucky Chapters. This year, the 11th annual conference was hosted by the Crowne Plaza Louisville, located conveniently next to the airport, and offers a variety of flexible event space, which made a great layout for the three day conference. The weekend began with a Bourbon Country Tour sponsored by Mint Julep

Tours and Buffalo Trace Distillery. This was a great way to kick off the conference, allowing attendees to catch some sites and get a better feel for what Louisville has to offer. Participants also were able to taste a number of fine bourbons during their tour of the historic Bourbon Trail.

Back at the hotel, the first time attendee reception was extremely well received. With mentors from both Kentucky and Ohio Chapters present, first timers were

able to get to know involved members and really get a good idea of what to expect from the upcoming conference. The attendees also had a chance to meet and network with other MidAmerica rookies, allowing them to feel more welcome with the crowd.

The opening night reception is always a lot of fun, and this year was no exception. Sponsored by the Crowne Plaza

and featured in the sponsor spot light area, the reception gave attendees a chance to network with the variety of excellent vendors. The location of the reception also allowed attendees to check out the array of silent auction items up for bid in the main hallway, featuring overnight packages in the Florida Keys to New Orleans, Louisiana. By far the most entertaining aspect of the evening was the Kentucky University Wildcats, NCAA

Elite Eight game which was being placed on a flat screen in the event space. Attendees were gathered around, cheering their team to a win and trip to the final four.

The following morning the opening ceremony kicked off with emcee and Ohio Chapter Member John Petz with Bore No More. John is always great at waking people up with a good laugh and getting the event off to the right foot. The first speaker on the bill was a great one, an individual that has done so much for the international meetings industry during his career. MPI International Chairman Eric Rozenberg joined us to discuss the state of the international

meetings and events industry. As founder, owner and President of Swantegy and through his volunteer position with MPI, Mr. Rosenberg is constantly enthralled in the international side of the industry. His experience gave attendees great feedback and insight on where we are today and what to look for in the future.

His most notable example was of software giant SAP's annual event titled, "Sapphire Now". Sapphire Now compiles all forms of media coverage of the event which

takes place in multiple locations around the world, all of which are simulcast at each location. The event takes the term "high-tech" to new altitudes, with conference television shows, real time video feeds of each keynote and social media integration. All aspects are compiled in an onsite touch screen wall which projects all aspects of the conference for attendees to view, collaborate and converse with online conference attendees.



One of the more well received keynotes of the weekend was Colleen Francis with Engage Selling Solutions. Ms. Francis gave fantastic insight on sales and marketing theories for today's clients. She pushed for people to "meet the client where they are" in terms of marketing and sales communication strategies. She stated that too often, companies try and push their clients to particular marketing mediums (Social Media, E-Marketing, etc.) or

2011 MPI MidAmerica Conference in Review, continued

TUST ADD BOURBON

only use one way of contacting a lead. Ms. Francis feels that in all actuality, as the sales person you should be

reaching out to your clients in whatever way they personally choose. She told a story about one of her clients who was impossible to get a hold of on the telephone or by email, but in the end negotiated a multimillion dollar deal over text message. Ms. Francis felt passionate about the relationship and humanistic aspect of sales, and raved that you are in

business to help individuals, not sell them a product. Regardless of what you are selling, the service oriented person will be much more successful in the long run.

As a technology geek, I was most excited about the two breakout sessions featuring University of Central Florida Professor James Hogg, PhD. Dr. Hogg's first session titled, "Mobile Technologies for the Meeting Professional" was a much deeper look into the coming trends in event technology than other tech based presentations. There

are so many mobile devices on the market today that have the ability to improve the productivity of a meeting professional. One of the devices discussed was Pico Projectors, hand held projection systems that display a smaller size image for personal presentations and video viewing. Various companies including Apple are coming out with their own

versions of the device. Companies are also in the process of integrating this technology into cell phones. Many brands are also in the process of producing video conference cell phones, with Apples iPhone leading the way with their "Facetime" technology. Mobile applications such as Skype, Webex and gotomeetings are also in the works which will integrate this technology as well.

The most eye opening topic discussed in the fact that many people do not realize that we have left the

"information age" of technology and are entering into the "Nano and Bio Tech" age. Companies are building

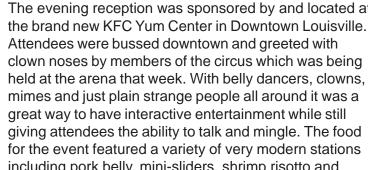
> computer cells that are smaller and smaller, with even more power, resulting in microscopic designs with capabilities that were once unimaginable. Dr. Hogg showed a short video of a Nokia product in the research and prototype stage called Morph Technology. This device will be designed entirely with nanotechnology, integrating microscopic electronic material based around fabric. Experts such as Dr. Hogg look for devices such as Morph to make their way to

shelves within the next decade.

Monday's luncheon was sponsored by Lake Erie Shores & Islands and Kalahari Resorts which will be the host of the 2012 MidAmerica Conference in Sandusky. Ohio. The space was decorated beautifully with stuffed animals at each place setting and a Lake Erie gift package inside a safari hat as the center piece. Following the luncheon, attendees were lead into the main event space for afternoon keynote speaker, The Passing Zone with Jon Wee and Owen Morse. The

> Passing Zone is a comedy juggling entertainment duo that brings their own sense of exuberance, comedy and innovative theories that make for an entertaining and informal keynote. The duo has been featured on America's Got Talent and have opened for legendary comedians Bill Cosby and George Carlin. Many of their dangerous juggling sets were a hit with the audience, including their finale, which featured chainsaws and tutus.

The evening reception was sponsored by and located at the brand new KFC Yum Center in Downtown Louisville. Attendees were bussed downtown and greeted with clown noses by members of the circus which was being held at the arena that week. With belly dancers, clowns, mimes and just plain strange people all around it was a great way to have interactive entertainment while still giving attendees the ability to talk and mingle. The food for the event featured a variety of very modern stations including pork belly, mini-sliders, shrimp risotto and even a bacon cotton candy station. Overall the evening



2011 MPI MidAmerica Conference in Review, continued

was very well received and made for an exciting conclusion to a great day!

Day three's morning key note was certainly one to

remember. The agenda listed the speaker as our "special guest" with Why Intelligent misbehavior makes a meeting successful, leaving everyone in the audience very interested as to whom would take the stage. During breakfast, groups of attendees were mingling as one of the members of the wait staff made his way from group to group with a serving tray trying to pass out straws. Once attendees were seated in the main event space for the presentation, he began

approaching people to take their trash. His demeanor was very awkward and it was evident that people began buzzing about him after each meeting. Emcee John Petz, took the stage to welcome the speaker, but started by apologizing to the audience on behalf of the hotel

management for the actions of the awkward server at breakfast. He then informed us that the server wanted to come and apologize in person, all the while the server was walking towards the stage. To the surprise of the audience it then became evident that the weird server was actually the "special guest" speaker, Rick Lewis.

Mr. Lewis went on to perform a number of mime and juggling acts and even rode a

15 ft. tall unicycle, with audience members helping to get on top. But what really blew me away was the acting job that he had done the entire morning without ever breaking his cover. At the end of his entertaining presentation he spoke to the audience about the act and gave a little background about himself. The fact that he was able to start conversation amongst attendees over his odd mannerisms is such a creative way to get people to realize that people naturally feel a need to act

"normal", but in fact the most successful people are far from normal.

The closing session speaker for the 11th annual

MidAmerica Conference was
BizBash Media President and
one of the foremost experts in
the special events industry,
Richard Aaron, CMP, CSEP.
Mr. Aaron is also an associate
professor in Event
Management at New York
University, the founding
President of MPI New York and
has been named "Event Guru"
by Meetings News. Through
his immense amount of industry
experience Mr. Aaron has
gained valuable knowledge on

where the events industry is heading in the near future. His presentation consisted of various industry trends that are being used for both large and small scale events. Mr. Aaron discussed everything from décor options to innovative ideas that are shaping the way that the attendee experience is integrated into the event. It was a

great chance for attendees to hear from a well known event professional that covers some of the most highly touted events in the country. It was a pleasure to have Mr. Aaron as our closing speaker.

This year's MidAmerica Educational Conference was certainly one to remember, and as the surveys were reviewed it was evident that attendees were very pleased with the educational content that was provided. It is

amazing that the MidAmerica committee is able to pull together such a well rounded event for their peers year in and year out. A special thank you goes out to Co-Chairs for the event, Barbara Burgie with the Ohio Chapter and Tina Bowling with Kentucky. The event could not have been possible without all of the assistance from all of the volunteers. Also, thank you to all of the attendees for their continued support of MPI. We look forward to seeing everyone next year with Lake Erie Shores & Islands at Kalahari Resort in Sandusky!







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BEYOND MEETINGS. If you're looking for a place to hold your next convention, event or conference, look beyond the obvious to the Convention Center at Kalahari Resort in nearby Sandusky. Our existing Convention Center has over 95,000 square feet of flexible meeting space, incredible food, service and amenities all in an inspiring environment with authentic African art and artifacts throughout. Scheduled to open December 2011, Kalahari's multi-million dollar expansion will more than double the current convention center space to over 200,000 square feet with room for up to 5,200 guests. To book your dates or learn more details, email OHGroups@KalahariResorts.com.

KalahariResorts.com • 877-642-6847 • Sandusky, Ohio

Prestige AV AD 1/2 pg Vertical

How the CMP Designation Has Helped My Professional Life and Why It Is Important To Retain It

By: Nancy J. Tiemeier, CMP

October 1, 2001 Obtained Certified Meeting
Professional Designation
October 1, 2006 Re-Certified for CMP
April 2, 2011 Obtained EMERITUS STATUS - CMP

Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) – This designation displayed after a name in our industry indicates the person has achieved one of the highest standards in the meeting management profession. The CMP establishes a level of knowledge, performance, and ethics held by that meeting professional.

Over 20 years as a Meeting Planner, 11 of those holding my CMP, I can attest to the individual respect management bestowed upon me. Earning the CMP designation gave me the drive for continuous education, industry and association involvement, mentoring and overall knowledge of our industry. As a corporate planner the CMP designation was not as readily recognized by upper management as other certifications. However, in gaining detailed tools of the trade through studying for the CMP and earning CEU's for recertification, I found the confidence to gain "a seat at the table". Management became aware that a Meeting Planner with his/her Certified Meeting Professional designation displayed outstanding knowledge, team contribution, and overall execution of the meeting or event. With this realization I maintained my value with my employer and fellow professionals.

There is another side to the CMP – our peers. As the CIC brochure indicates – "The CMP is widely recognized throughout our industry." As a Certified Meeting Professional you will immediately "elevate your professional status with your business partners." There certainly is value for suppliers and planners to demonstrate their desire to improve their knowledge of the industry by earning their CMP designation. Even non-meeting professionals hold the CMP designation in regard. By gaining the CMP one proves he/she is responsible, knowledgeable and accountable to execute a successful meeting or event.



DAY/DATE:

Saturday, July 9, 2011

Greetings Potential Certified Meeting Professionals!

Will you be sitting for the CMP (Certified Meeting Professional) exam or are you currently studying to test in the future? Attend the "MPIOH Boot Camp" to get in shape for the challenge! This is our 9th year offering this program and we have held a 90% pass rate over the past 10 years!

This one-day course will mirror the test blueprint, prepare you for the test environment and identify areas of weakness for testing.

March toward the CMP certification, register today!

LOCATION:

Quest Conference Center 8405 Pulsar Place Columbus, Ohio 43240 614-540-5540

The Hampton Inn & Suites Columbus/Polaris is located right next store to Quest Conference Center. The room rate for Boot Camp attendees is \$89.00.

FEES:

\$55.00 - MPIOH Members \$75.00 - Non-Members

RSVP BY: Monday, July 4, 2011

Conferences Need More Power (and Connectivity)

By: Graeme Codrington



I don't think anyone would argue with the fact that we know technology is—and will remain—a major driving force for change in the world. Especially in the world of work,

technology is going to shape and reshape our lives in the decade ahead. Key trends to watch include the move to online interaction and activity, the accelerated shift to mobile (especially smart phones) and the ways social media redefine our interactions with people and information.

A Techno-Clash of Generations

The implication is that people are becoming more comfortable using technology continuously and for everything. This is causing some tension in office spaces, specifically in terms of generational styles. Younger and older colleagues don't understand each other's approaches to communication and workflow, which causes issues in how to run effective meetings (should we allow laptops and smart phones?), how to conduct effective performance reviews (can it be done online?) and even how to provide good customer service (I don't know of anyone under the age of 35 who actually wants to meet their financial advisors face to face, although this seems to be what IFAs insist on doing).

There's a simple reason for all this. Most Boomers (born after World War II into the 1960s) entered a business

world with no mobile phones, no e-mail and no fax machines. It was a world of pulse dialing, long distance operators, typing pools and the telex. Boomers learned that the most efficient way to solve any issue was to walk into an office, sit across from a human, look him or her in the eyes and speak to resolve the problem. Meetings delivered information efficiently to groups of people and were the default

option. If you couldn't have a meeting, then a phone call might suffice—although that was problematic and cumbersome (people either didn't have their own phones or had no answering service when they were away from

them). If both of these methods failed, you resorted to writing—inter-office memos and letters were the least efficient communication forms. It is no surprise that meetings are still the Boomer preference.

But along came Generation X (born in the 1970s and 80s). This generation was raised with computers and has spent almost all their working lives with a mobile phone in hand and an e-mail-enabled computer never more than a moment away. Writing is by far their choice for efficient communication. E-mail and instant message are their preferences. Information arrives instantly, can be just a few lines, doesn't need a greeting or a salutation and can be as emotionless as required.

If Gen X can't write, then they'll use the next most efficient form of communication: the phone. Not a landline if they can help it—mobile to mobile. They'd prefer your voice mail, because otherwise they'd have to actually engage in a conversation. And if phones aren't an option, they will resort to what they perceive as the least efficient form of communication: face-to-face conversation. It's no surprise that their preferences are therefore diametrically opposite to those of their corporate elders.

All of which means: The two generations dominating the world of work have very different expectations and desires for what good communication looks and feels like. And that means they'll have very different views of what is needed to make a good conference.

More Power to the People

One of today's biggest shifts is the amount of technology used during most meetings and conferences. Increasingly, conference sessions are filled with audiences hard at work on their smart phones and laptops while at the same time listening to speakers or engaging in workshops. But if you look closely, you'll see some frustration on their faces. The conferences are not geared for their technology use.

Power Up. Most conference venues do not provide nearly enough power supplies for delegates. There should be adequate sockets at well-spaced intervals

John Lennon

The Hits

Power To The People

Conferences Need More Power (and Connectivity), continued

throughout every meeting room and under every single table. You provide water and sometimes even a nice bowl of sweets for the delegates. Give them power, too!

Get Thee Online. Access to the Internet should not be an afterthought or optional extra at a conference. And delegates should not have to pay for it. Unless you make delegates pay for their water, their tea and coffee and their toilet facilities, Internet access should be included in the cost of the conference. It's a utility and a vital one at that. It should be available. It should be fast. I don't want



another free venue-branded pen or desk pad set. Spend that money on Internet access, please.

Can You Hear Me Now? Make sure your conference venue has an adequate mobile phone signal. If it doesn't, hound the mobile phone providers until they upgrade your local base station and boost your signal. Unless you're deliberately providing a "mobile free" venue (and there may be something in doing just that), make sure your delegates don't have to climb up to the second-floor balcony and hang over the edge just to get enough signal to phone the office.

Upgrade Technology. Get decent data projectors, decent speakers and sound equipment and someone who knows about technology to check that it is all set up correctly. (One of my biggest frustrations are lights above the screen that cannot be dimmed or switched off independently to the rest of the room and electricity supplies that are not grounded, so you get a constant low-grade buzz through the speaker system.)

Failing to cater to the technology needs of the younger generation will soon be a deal breaker for conference venues and organizers. Act now to get ahead of the technology curve, and make sure your conferences are properly powered up. **One+**

Water's Edge Training & Conf. Center 1/2 pg Ad

Letter from the President

Dear Supplier Members,

We appreciate your continued support of the Ohio MPI Chapter. Our new board is encouraged after reading the survey comments and eager to develop a business plan

There are several changes that will take place over the next year. Many of them will happen within the next month. We will be increasing our level of educational offerings next year and provide you with some new networking opportunities. We will also focus Our current planner to supplier ratio is 56% planner and 44% supplier. This will give you a great opportunity to network and meet new possible clients.

We will also be receiving an increase in membership fees as a directive from the MPI International Board of Directors. Effective July 1, 2011 the new supplier membership fee will go up to \$450.00 a year. With that being said we are now offering our supplier members a discount if you renew by June 30, 2011 It does not matter when your renewal date is in the New Year. You can renew at any time prior to June 30th at the current rate of \$325.00. You can also inquire about scholarships on the website or by calling any board member.

There continue to be a growing number of opportunities for you to showcase and advertiser your facilities and services to our members. We are very excited for a new sponsorship program, our new website and the continuation of the DEFINE magazine.

We hope that by implementing your ideas into our business plan we will ensure the Ohio MPI Chapter has another successful year!

We look forward to serving you in the New Year!

Wendy Nicodemus, CMP Ohio MPI Chapter President

Welcome New Members

Michelle Baker

Senior Conference Coordinator McKinsey & Company

Cheryl Boyd

Sales Manager 21c Museum Hotel

Kelly Duch, CMP

Sales Coordinator Petali Teas/Mootz Run Ltd

Caryn Headley

Conference Services Manager Inter-Continental Hotel & Conference Center Cleveland

Mitchel Jacobs

Director of Events Thirty-One Gifts

Michael Levine

Owner

Brand Marketing Works, LLC

Peggy Mosher

CEO. Owner **Grand Oaks Event** and Business Center

Lorena Richtarsic

Jennifer Sanderow Run 2 Promotions

Shana Wheeler

Marketing Events and Media **Relations Manager** Mettler Toledo

Ann Wilson

General Manager Cooper Creek Event Center

Should I Stay or Should I Go?

he Clash

By: Dawn Rasmussen

IT'S OKAY TO OCCASIONALLY INDULGE YOURSELF IN THAT FANTASY OF GOING OUT IN A **BLAZE OF GLORY, LIKE A CERTAIN JETBLUE**

FLIGHT ATTENDANT DID LAST

YEAR.

But then it's time to get real. We will all find ourselves in the prickly dilemma of deciding to stay or go at least once in our careers. My trick to navigating the confusing mess of emotions that keeps us from making logical decisions is to rip lyrics from a 1981 The Clash song. So, darlin', you gotta let me know...

"If you say that you are mine, I'll be here 'til the end of time." Employers are about as loyal to you as you are to them. But loyalty can fade when finances take a tumble. Conduct periodic gut checks on the fiscal health of your employer. If the vibes aren't good, follow your intuition.

"It's always tease, tease, tease." Figure out whether promises of promotions, raises and incentives are going to be delivered on. If you get reassurances, but the company doesn't deliver the goods, it's time to put the teasing to an end. Start looking.

"One day is fine; the next is black." Ever work in a yo-yo environment? One day you feel great about your work, only to crash under an unsupportive boss? A healthy work environment means you are excited every day about going to work and feel rewarded and recognized for your contributions. Sure, we all have bad days, but when they equal or outnumber the good ones, then you've got some tough decisions to make...soon.

"If I go, there will be trouble." The toughest part about leaving a current employer sans alternative employment is facing extended periods of no income. It's the risk you take, which is why most career professionals advise that you don't depart one employer until you've lined up something else. Ultimately, decide whether the trouble of looking for a job is worth the reward of a great job.

"If I stay, it will be double." Don't ignore the mental cost and toll of constant issues or stressors at work. Staying in a job you hate can take years from your life. not to mention impact or initiate health problems. Know anyone who has gotten ulcers from their jobs? I do.

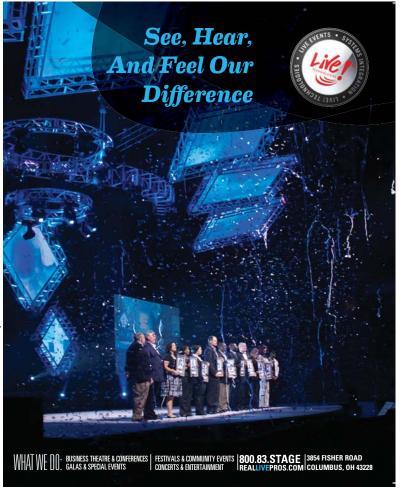
"This indecision's bugging me." We most need change when we fear change the most. If you have been on the fence for a long time, it means there is something gnawing at you, and the status quo isn't solving it.

> "Exactly whom I'm supposed to be?" English author Rose Tremain penned the famous quote: "Life is not a dress rehearsal." If you are not connected to your passion and realizing all you can be, it's time to move on.

"Should I cool it or should I blow?" I once had a hothead of a boss who was so irrational that it would almost push ME over the edge. But cooling it was the best idea—rather than taking a cue from our JetBlue flight attendant. Short-term reactions can impact long-term

employability, so take a step back and determine whether intra-office clashes are one-time-only occurrences or symptoms of larger, deeper problems.

If your employer doesn't want you, then setting yourself free could be the door to new possibilities and a healthier work environment. One+



How To: Make Your QR Codes More Beautiful

By: Hamilton Chan



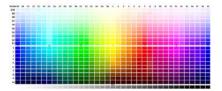
The QR code: A thing of beauty or an eyesore? The magical barcodes that can be scanned by a smartphone to launch an offline-to-online experience are often criticized for their black and white checkerbox appearance. Those who doubt that QR codes will go mainstream are quick to point out that the look of QR codes will deter marketers and

advertisers from using them.

Fortunately, QR codes are malleable and can be redesigned in truly extraordinary ways, while still maintaining their scanability. The truth is, QR codes no longer have to be checkerbox in appearance. We've entered a new phase of "designer codes" that can be integrated into marketing campaigns in an attractive way that isn't an eyesore.

QR codes have so much potential from a design perspective, so let's take a look at a few tricks and techniques you should keep in mind when designing a code to enhance your brand and appeal to your audience.

1. Add a Color Palette



The easiest way to add branding power to your code is to add color to it. Your QR code does not have to be standard black and white in order to be scanned. You can embed multiple colors and apply a color gradient without affecting scanability. The only rule of thumb is that the code color should generally be dark and placed against a light-colored background. Make sure the contrast is sufficient, or the code will be difficult to scan.

A "reversed out" code, where the background is dark and the boxes are light colored, is generally not recommended. Only a small handful of QR code readers can treat such codes as a film negative and properly interpret the data.

2. Soften Hard Edges with Round Corners

One of the QR code's greatest aesthetic flaws is its numerous hard edges. You can dramatically lessen the severity of this look by strategically rounding some corners. It is not necessary to round all of the corners, but softening up the edges will definitely make the code appear more friendly and approachable.



3. Incorporate Dimensionality for 3D Impact



One high impact way to brand your QR code is to obstruct some of the boxes with imagery, such as a logo. By placing an image in front of the code, you imbue the code with a sense of depth. An ordinary barcode suddenly becomes a form of artwork, and you can really make a statement with the way you melt boxes together or choose to

obstruct aspects of the code.

Fun ideas include adding a logo to the center of the code, but you could also add interesting elements to the corners or the sides for an even less standard look. Adding images or characters between the boxes is another playful way to dress the code with personality and style.

4. Use QR Codes With 30% Error Correction

If you decide to add in a logo to create a 3D feel for your QR code, you need to decide which part of the coding to obstruct with your logo. The key to creating these eye-popping designer codes is to take advantage of the fact that up to 30% of a QR code's data can be missing or obstructed, and



still be scanned. QR codes can be generated with 0%, 10%, 20% or 30% error correction rates built in. Building in the 30% error correction rate adds more noise (extra boxes) within the code, but those extra boxes within the code can then be removed to make way for a logo or other interesting imagery.

How To: Make Your QR Codes More Beautiful, continued

If you use a QR code with 0% error correction, the code will look more streamlined, but opportunities to brand the code by adding in a logo are very limited. Removing or obstructing a single box within a 0% error QR code could render it unscannable.

5. Apply a Trial-and-Error Process...



Technically, it is possible to mathematically compute which boxes in a QR code are the buffers that can be removed, but such computations are generally unnecessary. By applying a simple process of trial-and-error, anyone can begin applying their design techniques to a code and then test for scannability.

Be sure to test your code's scannability with multiple QR readers, ideally three or four. Some readers may be able to overcome some stylistic elements of your designer code, whereas others will not. Deploying your code without testing for scannability is designer malpractice and can cause serious heartache with clients. It is true that even with reasonable precautions, designer codes may still be difficult to scan, so you must always weigh the costs of scanning difficulty against the benefits of designing a code that is eye-catching. If a designer code takes more than a few seconds to scan, it probably needs to be redesigned.

Conclusion

In the end, creating branded QR codes is as much art as it is science. The mathematical qualities of a QR code and the impact of a clever design can truly elevate a QR code to the point where the code becomes the central artwork of a piece of marketing collateral. Applying designer best practices will enhance scanning conversion rates and effectively augment an offline item with online capabilities.

It is only a matter of time before QR codes hit mainstream. Knowing how to innovate both in technology and design, and how to implement a QR

code in the right way for your business, will keep your brand on the cutting edge of marketing and technology.

Hamilton Chan is CEO and founder of Paperlinks. With the free Paperlinks iPhone app, featured previously by Apple as the #1 New & Noteworthy app, consumers can scan and view QR code content with a native app experience. Paperlinks also provides a powerful platform for generating QR codes, hosting content and tracking their performance.

Niagara Event Center and Islander Inn 1/4 pg Ad

What's on Tap?

By: Katja Morgenstern

As spring and summer approach, we change the beverages we drink, and so do our delegates. We have all planned with conference staples: chardonnay for white wine and cabernet or merlot for red, coffee and hot tea breaks and let's not forget soda and iced tea lunches. It's time to hydrate our parched senses with different options and give our delegates something more salient than typical conference bevs.

Let's start with inspiration from all the new-growth plants and veggies with a few organic and vegan wines. These flavors will interest and delight the palates of your delegates; after all, the educational sessions expand their minds, why shouldn't beverages do so as well?

Organic Wines

You think the cost of organic wine is prohibitive. It's not. The cost difference on average is only US\$2 to \$4 a bottle. And wine isn't by nature organic, though you might think it should be. There are even different definitions for what makes a wine organic. The most common and simplest: Organic wines are produced without the use of artificial chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides and fungicides. Here are some of the more affordable and popular organic wines.

Badger Mountain Vineyard (Washington) Bonterra Vineyards (California) Cooper Mountain (Oregon) Deerfield Ranch Winery (California) Frog's Leap (California)



Vegan Wines

With the continued increase in vegan and vegetarian attendees, you must start to consider wines that fall into vegan/vegetarian friendly categories. A vegan-approved wine is one that has not in anyway come into contact with animal by-products during production. Here are a few Vegan options.

Badger Mountain (Washington) Frey Vineyards (California) Stellar Winery (South Africa) Yellow Tail (Australia, reds only)

Think sustainable and green this spring with these inexpensive wine choices. Next month, we'll explore coffee and tea. **One+**

MPIOH Upcoming Events

JUNE

8th Reach Meeting
Wingate by Wyndham &
Meridian Conference Center
West Chester Township, Ohio

15th Recognition Program
The Franklin Park Conservatory
Columbus, Ohio
10:30am – 2pm

JULY

9th CMP Boot Camp Hampton Inn & Suites Columbus - Polaris Columbus, Ohio 7:30am – 4pm

Please mark your calendars and visit MPIOH.org to register for these events

Social Media Update





The Ohio Chapter of MPI fan page has 72 connections and our chapter facebook group has 118 members. Please continue to visit, post and invite others to our page.



Twitter Updates
We now have 1,031 Twitter followers.
Hooray, we broke 1,000!! Keep tweeting!!



Currently we have 375 members on our LinkedIn Group.

We ask that you tweet and post responsibly and frequently.

Change is Good Anchor a Productive Meeting in Lake County, Ohio



Lake Erie East's Coastal Meeting Oasis

- \$17 million renovated Quail Hollow Resort + Quail Hollow Country Club featuring two 18 hole designer/championship courses. 15,000 square feet of meeting space + 176 rooms.
 And nearby Baymont Inn & Suites with 55 rooms.
- Four properties with 400 rooms & suites near and including 60,000 square foot elegant conference hotel, Holiday Inn Express LaMalfa.
- \$1.7 million renovated Radisson Hotel & Suites Cleveland/Eastlake with 18,000 square feet of flexible meeting and banquet space + 148 rooms.

- Lake County specializes in unique meeting venues for retreats, board meetings, and seminars including:
 - The region's largest winery district with private meeting rooms and catering.
 - Lake Metroparks and Holden Arboretum featuring refined, meeting facilities in a tranquil setting with meal options.
 - Elegant, renovated mansions offering state of the art AV/Internet service and meal functions.
 - More championship golf with country club meeting and dining facilities.
 - Lake Erie charter fishing captains.
 - \$27 million Lake County Captains (Cleveland Indians) Class A affiliate) Classic Park with private picnic pavilions, suites and catering.
 - Distinctive waterfront and gourmet restaurants with private meeting space.

Improve your next meeting function with a relaxing, refreshing, refined Lake County venue.



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