JULY - SEPTEMBER 2023

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF

Human Nature

OHIO CHAPTER

Face to Face Connections

The Transformative Power of Embracing Our Positive Potential and Nurturing Sustainable Connections

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MPI OHIO CHAPTER.

Define is the official publication of the Ohio Chapter of Meeting Professionals International. It is published quarterly as a benefit of membership and circulated free of charge to MPIOH members.

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OUR MISSION.

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.



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Welcome to my favorite time of year. Fall and Football are in their full glory with IMEX and the Holidays knocking on the door. College football and 70-degree weather are what gets me through the busy weeks of fall in our industry. Additionally, I have come to look forward to IMEX and my annual trip to Las Vegas. Sometimes I dread it as I prepare, but once I get there and catch up with so many industry friends and colleagues, I realize how lucky I am.

The theme of IMEX this year is Human Nature. Perfect, right? One of my favorite traits of human nature is the need to gather and live in communities. MPI Ohio is a community we have all chosen to participate in. We all use this as a vehicle for professional and personal growth. However, we do not all participate for the same reasons. Whether it is for continuing education credit, business opportunities, career growth or just to get out of the office, we are all attracted for different reasons.

Not only are we all here for different reasons, but we also all come from different places. Since the shutdown of our industry over 54% percent of us are new to the industry and the industry is around 9 years younger than it was before.

As volunteer chapter leaders we have had some difficult decisions to make. How do we make MPI a useful tool for such a variety of generations, backgrounds, and work experience? How do we adjust to the volume of work on everyone's desk, how do we adjust to a lot of us working from home? The past couple years we have tried quite a few things to meet the needs of everyone. Some have been a tremendous success, some have not. Just as the meetings industry is trying to understand new travel and meeting attendance trends, we are learning as we go.

I chose the KISS method to be my theme this year. Let's do fewer things but do them exceptionally well. We not only need to change as our membership changes, but we also need to keep up with trends and technology. In doing so we also must look to the past and keep in mind what has been successful year after year for this organization. We have had amazing chapter leadership throughout the last few years, and it has not been an easy space to occupy. I have the benefit of seeing what they have tried over the last 4 years. Hopefully we can keep refining our offerings and continue to provide value for everyone.

With those thoughts in mind, we have created a great calendar of events that may be familiar to you. We have streamlined our chapter meetings to rotate through Northern and Southern Ohio. With the inaugural Navigate in February we successfully "reimagined" an event that has been wildly successful for the past 15 years. Last month we once again partnered with OSAP to bring you a joint educational event. To mitigate financial risk, both events were initially kept small. Now our goal is to grow them beyond what they were in the past.

Moving forward one of the most obvious changes is this newsletter. I am excited that this is not only my first newsletter, but the first issue in our all-new digital only format. Our communications team has put quite a bit of time in re-imagining our quarterly newsletter. I love it and I hope you do as well!

This Chapter is run by volunteers and the more we have the more we can do. We need your help with this, we are at an all-time low for committee participation numbers. The more volunteers we have the less time it takes away from everyone's "real job". If you actually read this far, please take a moment to consider joining a committee. Reach out to a board member or Admin@mpioh.org to get started.

Thank you for your participation and see you at an event soon!

Cheers,

ason

2023-2024 MPI OHIO CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS.



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Celebrating SUCCESS: Elevate Awards Event + Fundraising Auction

The June Elevate Awards Event + Fundraising Auction was an incredible success, bringing together professionals from the Ohio meetings industry to recognize outstanding achievements while also raising funds for future education programs and scholarship opportunities. The resounding success of the event would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our exceptional members, donors, partners and sponsors who played a crucial role in making this event a true triumph. Please join us in acknowledging and expressing our gratitude to the amazing venue Vitria on the Square as well as our Gold, Silver and Bronze Sponsors.

At the core of the event's success was the exquisite **Vitria on the Square** who graciously hosted our event. Their team went above and beyond to ensure every detail was flawlessly executed. Their top-notch hospitality, culinary and AV staff created the perfect atmosphere. Thank you for making our occasion truly special.

Our esteemed Gold Sponsors included **Destination Toledo**, a driving force in

promoting tourism and meetings in the area and fostering growth in the Ohio meetings industry. **PRA Business Events** was true to their word in promoting our efforts to move hearts, minds and businesses forward. **Visit Westerville**, renowned for promoting charm and versatility, had a tremendous impact on our success. **Redstory**, a trailblazer in creative storytelling, played a pivotal role with their generous contribution. And **Abbey Border**, now in the real estate sector with Century 21, continues her dedication to celebrating our MPI community.

Our Silver Sponsors "elevated" the event's impact with their support. **Nationwide Hotel and Conference Center**, a cornerstone of hospitality, demonstrated their ongoing contributions to the MPI Ohio Chapter. **Visit Canton's** continued generosity and commitment to the meetings industry is greatly appreciated.

Our Bronze Sponsor, **Distinct Event Planning**, known for their expertise and commitment to crafting memorable events, was also instrumental in supporting our mission. The Elevate Awards Event + Fundraising Auction not only celebrated success within the Ohio meetings industry but also served as a powerful platform to give back to the community. The event supported Local Matters, a deserving charitable organization that empowers communities to make healthy food choices, addressing food insecurity and creating positive change.

Dwight Loken The Meeting Connection

UNITED FOR A GREATER CAUSE! Thanks to the incredible generosity and unwavering support of our members and all our generous sponsors, we were able to raise significant funds for future education programs and scholarship opportunities, empowering the next generation of industry professionals. This event stands as a testament to the power of collaboration and the genuine dedication of our members. MPI Ohio Chapter is committed to excellence, hospitality, and community upliftment.

awards

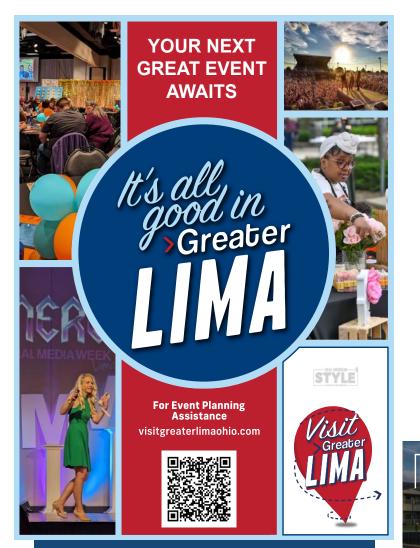
Please join us in extending our heartfelt gratitude to all sponsors, donors, partners and attendees for making this event an overwhelming success. Together we're paving the way for a bright future!

> Vitria on the Square in Columbus, OH

wards

CHRISTY SELBY LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

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WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

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LEADERSHIP AWARD GREG DICKERSON Bowling Green State University

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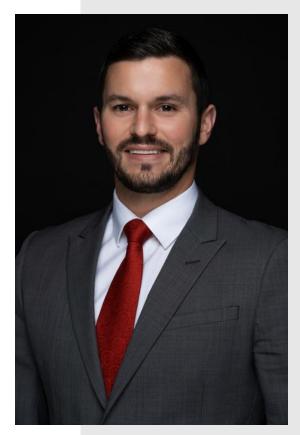
THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN BOOKING A NEW VENUE

Every planner loves to book a brand new venue, but there are risks involved - being one of the first events in the space is exciting! Your attendees love being in a new space and if all goes well, makes the planner look great to their client! If it doesn't go well, that is when you could second guess your venue selection. To avoid the second guess of your selection think about these questions to ask or consider in the venue selection process... **#1** Ask the venue- what is your Realistic timeline of completion? From what you are seeing, is that timeline realistic / do you trust what the venue is telling you?

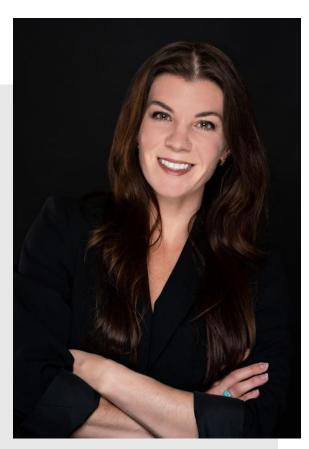
#2 Who owns the venue? Remember the venue representative most times may work for a management company and not the ownership of the venue. Are they a small "mom & pop" or are they a large business? Construction delays usually happen at the end of the project either due to funding or supply chain issues. If the venue is owned by a large company this can sometimes (not always!) tell you that funding likely will not be the issue for a delay.

#3 Walkthrough how the event will operate (it is helpful if they have renderings).

a. Depending on the venue's construction timeline determine what the lighting will be- are there windows? Get rid of all the construction dust and noise and picture your group in the space, looking at the renderings- what is the vibe? That is important to determine how the event will go, paired with what the goals of the event are set to accomplish.



Bryan Wright, General Manager of Vitria on the Square in Columbus



#4 Does the venue have a realistic diagram based on their CAD Drawings to ensure it is to scale.

a. Are there columns set to be in the space? If so, where and how many? What is the ceiling height? Is the space going to be open and airy or is it more closed in? Will either answer work for your vision of the event?

#5 Square footage is fact- ask the square footage of the space and if they are not sure, have them get it-that measurement will not lie to you!

a. Where are the doors to the space located? Knowing that will cut into the setup of your event, also- don't forget service doors, just because your guests would not be using them doesn't mean that the service team wouldn't need to use them and couldn't be blocked.

#6 Gauge the vibe- do you think it is realistic that this venue representative will still be there once the venue is opened. Opening a venue is a lot of work!

Andrea Kellett, Senior Catering Manager of Vitria on the Square in Columbus

#7 Does the venue have other venues they manage that are open currently and have a good track record regarding food and beverage quality? How can you ensure the food and beverage service will be up to your standards when booking an event space that doesn't have a functioning kitchen? When booking be sure to ask your planner their opinion on the service, as well as dig for any information you can find on the executive chef and what their background looks like. Prior experience will often be a good indicator as far as the quality of food and service you'll be receiving.

#8 What happens if the venue doesn't complete construction by the time my event takes place? What if a delay does happen and your date must be shifted? Find out what the venue will do for you in this case! It's always a possibility dependent upon the construction company; delays could happen. As the client you would be entitled to some sort of compensation or solution, find out what that could look like prior to booking.

#9 What is the cancellation policy? Are all fees and taxes included with the initial proposal? Overall, just make sure the venue and the venue representative have these details squared away and set in stone. The last thing you want to see after booking is additional fees added on or a wishywashy cancellation policy.

#10 Ask the person who is showing you the space, "Would YOU book this space for your special event?" Often, the person touring you is going to be excited to share their space with you, for more reasons than just income potential. See what they're passionate about and what they're most excited to share with you and your guests. Special events tie people together and create an experience that is unforgettable. See what fuels their fire and you'll likely have an even better indicator as to what to expect from booking your event with their venue. If they aren't passionate about it, you may want to reconsider.

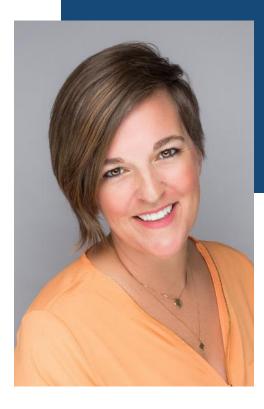
Submitted by Bryan Wright, General Manager, and Andrea Kellett, Senior Catering Manager of recently opened Vitria on the Square in Columbus located at 15th and High right next to The Ohio State University. www.vitriaonthesquare.com







Nurfuring your Network TO CREATE A SUSTAINABLE IMPACT



COURTNEY LOHMANN, CMP

Certified, Sustainable Event Planner Founder, Courtney Lohmann Consulting

Our industry has always been about connections. Connections to clients, connections to partners, connections to place – connections define why we meet. And as we look to the future, we must transform our connections, grow our mindset and open ourselves so that we can achieve the positive potential our industry deserves to showcase.

Sustainability is often thought of as environmental. It's seen as something that happens in nature. Some of that is true.

But it happens with people too. Think about a forest. The trees, vines, insects, birds, worms, all the organisms are working together to keep the forest going. They keep the forest healthy. If you remove one of the elements, the forest will be imbalanced. It won't operate properly, efficiently, or sustainably. And then it won't thrive. The forest is a team with players, each with their own unique contribution. And it's not much different from our industry.

Whether you are a planner, a hotelier, venue, 3rd party, supplier, etc., you bring something unique to the industry. You have a perspective, knowledge and talent that can't be duplicated. You have a purpose and removing you from the equation throws our entire system out of balance. It causes us all to work in an inefficient manner. It doesn't allow us to grow and thrive. Nurturing our connections and partnerships is what makes us stronger. Learning from one another, sharing our experiences and knowledge and bonding together is what makes our individual roles sustainable. It's what makes our business unstoppable. It's what makes our industry transform into a powerhouse of positivity. Think about who you are connected with today. And then consider at least one additional connection you can add to your network. By nurturing that network and feeding it to thrive, set a goal for the positive potential you can all have, together.



Courtney Lohmann, CMP, is an award-winning leader, CSR and sustainability expert and sought after thought leader / keynote speaker. She is the founder of Courtney Lohmann Consulting, a consultancy that has developed a new approach to understanding and implementing sustainability strategies. She has set out to help businesses in the hospitality, events and tourism industry identify, design and implement the right sustainability solutions for their business so they achieve the right impact. You can learn more about Courtney and connect with her at – www.courtneylohmann.com

Can Al Be a Force for SUSTAINABILITY?

JIM SPELLOS

With all the talk about the impact artificial intelligence is having on our work and personal life, I think it's important to look at the impact a bit more broadly. So much of the commentary about AI is so negative, which I very much disagree with, but that's for another article. For now, let's take a quick look at ways it can (and should) positively impact sustainability.

For starters, AI algorithms can predict energy consumption patterns and adjust systems for optimal efficiency. In data centers, AI can manage cooling systems to reduce energy use, which Google has successfully implemented, cutting their cooling costs by up to 40%.

Regarding the environment, AI can analyze soil data, weather conditions, and other factors to help farmers make real-time decisions. This can reduce the need for water and fertilizers, making agriculture more sustainable.

Al can help cities become "smart" by optimizing traffic flow, reducing energy consumption in buildings, and improving waste management. For instance, some cities use AI to analyze the quickest and most fuel-efficient routes for waste collection vehicles.

And of course, since the mobile device is how we interact with technology the most, AI-powered apps on our mobile devices can provide real-time feedback on our carbon footprint. By tracking transportation choices, energy consumption, and even food preferences, these apps can suggest personalized ways to reduce our environmental impact.

While so much press focuses on the negative aspects of AI, including the energy it uses to train its' language models, it's good for us to know that there are significant benefits, including in the sustainability conversation, in using these tech tools. And any way we can more sustainable as a society, that's a huge win for everyone.



Jim Spellos is the President of Meeting U., educating the hospitality industry on all things technology since 1999. He is honored to be recognized as one of the 50 most influential people in Meeting Professionals International over their 50-year history.

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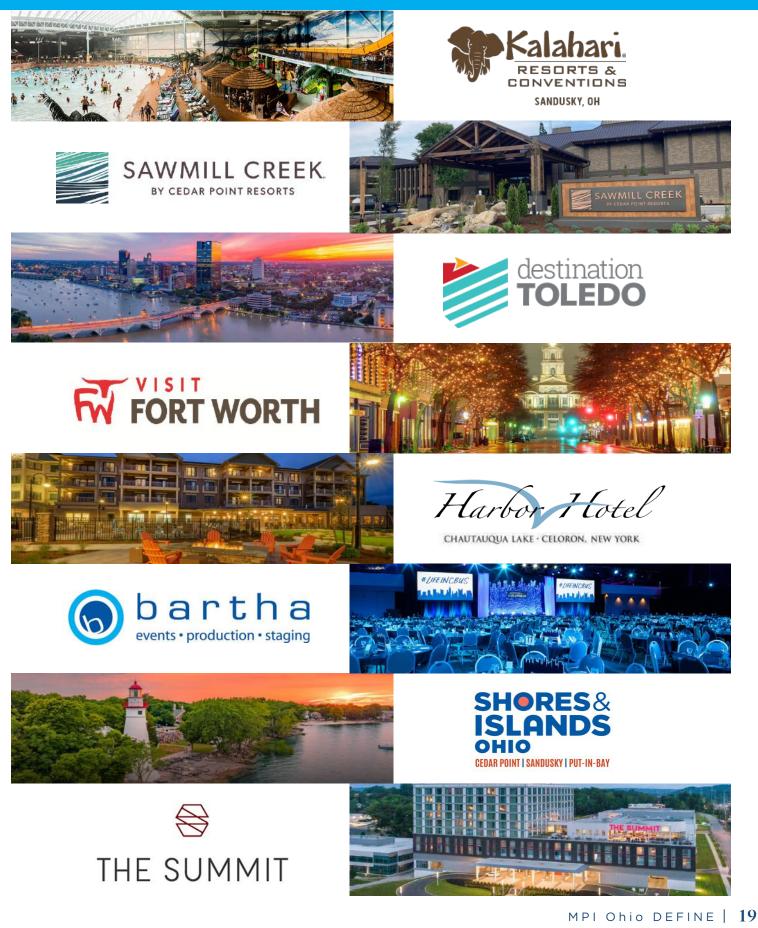


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JANUARY 17, 2024 MPI JOINT CHAPTER EVENT Virtual

FEBRUARY 26-27, 2024 NAVIGATE CONFERENCE The Junto Columbus, OH

APRIL 17, 2024 CHAPTER MEETING Stay tuned for details! Cincinnati, OH

*ALL DATES & LOCATIONS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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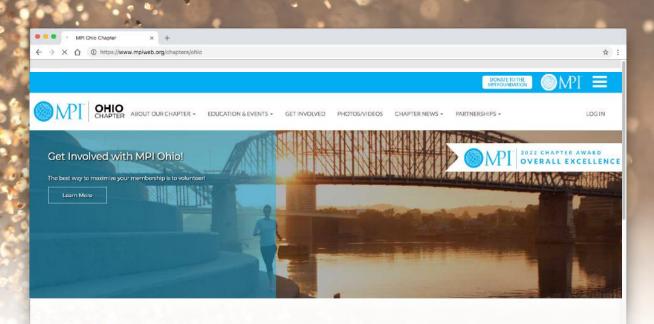
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About Our Chapter

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Founded in 1977, MPI Ohio has nearly 300 members. We are dedicated to the advancement of the meeting profession by providing excellent educational apport unities betweeking and as a

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE www.mpioh.org



Join our Group Forums at **http://u.MPI.org** where MPI members can engage in conversations, ask questions, share best practices, and network with the world's most vibrant online community.

Linked in

They say learn something new everyday. There is no easier way than participating in our LinkedIn group at "**MPI Ohio Chapter**." You may even teach your peers a thing or two!



To stay in the loop, be sure to follow us at "**MPI Ohio Chapter**"



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