

CURRENT

MAGAZINE

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Code Green: The Pulse on Today's Newest Movement

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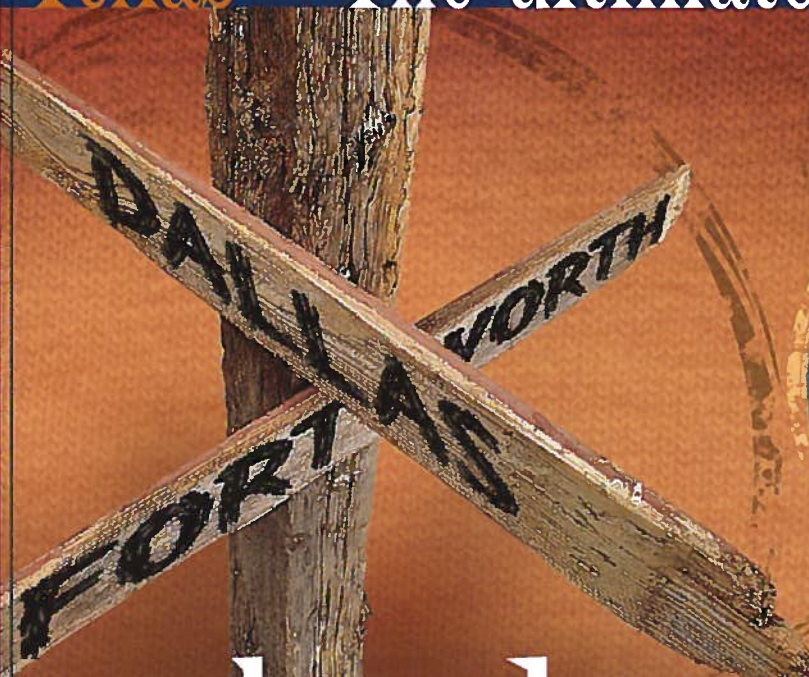
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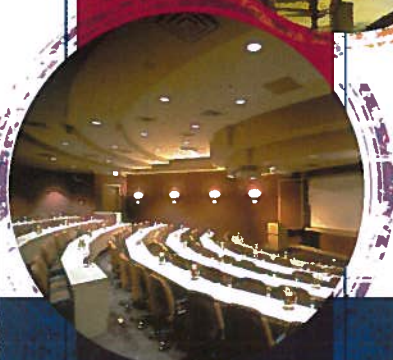
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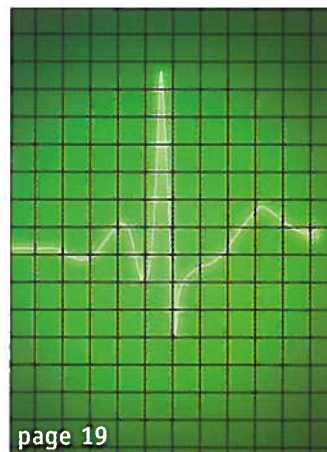
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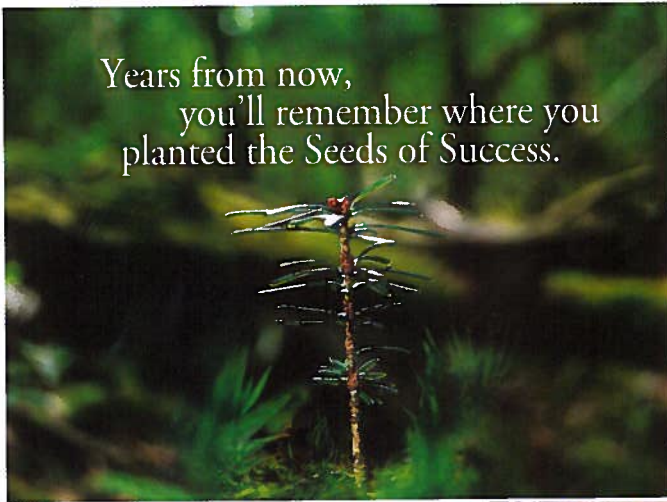
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By Carol Benavidez, CMP
HelmsBriscoe

**We've set
some pretty
high goals,
and we
need your
involvement
to reach
them.**



Buckle Up and ENJOY the Ride

As the 32nd president of the MPI D/FW Chapter, I am so excited and honored to embark on this new journey. There are many people involved, and I want to share the vision and goals from the Board of Directors. Before the new term started, we spent time reviewing the results of the Member Survey and listened to YOU, our members.

Thank you for sharing what you want from your membership. It was interesting to note 69.8 percent of the responding members have been in the industry 10+ years. Collectively, we have a lot of information to share, and we want to encourage interaction at all Chapter levels; this will support new friendships, new business relationships and new ideas.

Talk about being influencers in the industry! The survey shows 42.3 percent of us spend \$1 million+ annually on meetings and events. We are definitely connecting with the world in business opportunities.

Additionally, the components most important to everyone are professional development/education and networking events. Therefore, we focused on these two requests by department. There are many aspects to each area but here are a few highlights:

LEADERSHIP

Have you attended one of the All Committee Meetings yet? This meeting brings all committees/departments together on one night to ensure better Chapter communications and to focus on making sure we connect with your professional development needs. VP Leadership, Jesh Batra, and Director Leadership, Lawana Gladney, Ph.D., are prepared to assist in setting up the right track to fit with your schedule and interest level.

MEMBERSHIP

VP Membership, Carrie Elder, CMP, and Director Membership, Timothy Arnold have many plans for interactive networking opportunities throughout the term. Are you ready for competitive bowling? Save the date of Oct. 28.

FINANCE

The Finance team will offer a new "budgeting committee" to assist with the running of the Chapter as a business but can offer useful tools for your day-to-day operation. VP Finance Dvorah Evans, CMP, and Director Finance Matthew Massengale, DMCP, CMP, can also be contacted for sponsorship opportunities.

COMMUNICATIONS

Are you a "Mover and a Shaker"? Not only does this department bring news to the Website and *Current Magazine*, VP Communications/Marketing/PR, Paula Bruton, CMP, and Director Communications/Marketing/PR, Melissa Mihelich, have some exciting new ideas in the works.

EDUCATION/EVENTS

We definitely heard you on the survey. With VP Education/Events Kim Reynolds, CMP, CMM, and Director Education/Events, Sandi Galloway at the wheel, over the next

term we are going to bring together some advance topics in supplier/planner relationships, contract reviews and highlights with a "MPI Gives Back," Chef's Challenge, Casino Holiday Party, and we look forward to partnering with another association on the annual golf tournament.

Of course, I need the knowledge of immediate past president, Nancey Hernandez, CMP, and the support of President-Elect Jason Ware in executing some personal goals.

We've set some pretty high goals, and we need your involvement to reach them. By the end of the term, I would like to position Dallas/Fort Worth as the premier chapter within MPI International by

42.3 percent of us spend \$1 million+ annually on meetings and events.

growing our membership from 979 to more than 1,000 members, increasing our membership satisfaction from 4.81 percent to 5.11 percent, and increasing our monthly program attendance average to more than 200 people. I want to substantially increase in committee involvement, from 16.9 percent (162 members) to 24.8 percent and keep up our tradition of community service and "giving back" in the forefront.

So, as we work together to fulfill the needs of our members, think about "Exchanging Ideas to Connect the World." Wherever your travels take you, I encourage you to reach out to other communities and groups.

You can only grow if you challenge yourself.

Sincerely,



Carol Benavidez, CMP
MPI D/FW Chapter President

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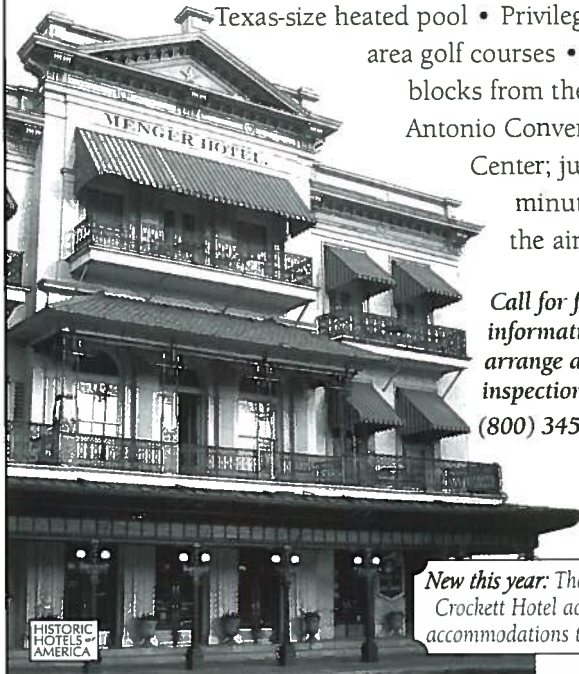
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By Jennifer Fortman
Gleneagles Country Club, Plano

**Now is an
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to become
the best
version
of you.**

Opportunities Abound Despite State of Economy

Cheer up. Things aren't so bad.

OK, so gas prices are outrageous, but if I cut out my morning Starbucks I make up for that higher priced gas easily. Seriously, do the math. You'll be shocked when you add up your annual spend at the coffee bean haven that I love so passionately. I did the math, and much to my dismay, I spend a staggering \$1,000 a year at Starbucks. On the other hand, I drive about 14,000 miles a year and use 500 gallons of gas to do so. This year the rising price of gas has resulted in a personal financial hit of \$575. So, I'm dumping my lover from Seattle, paying for the family's increased gas expense and will still have a little left over for a new pair of shoes.

I know this is a pretty simplistic view, and I know people are seriously struggling, but Dallas/Fort Worth is doing better than most cities. Forbes.com announced in May that it is actually one of the most likely "Recession-Proof Cities" and came in at No. 10 on its "best of" list. At the time our unemployment rate declined, our median house price increased, and our region is a diverse business environment with powerhouses like Exxon Mobil, Texas Instruments, Tenet Healthcare and Dean Foods. Also making the Forbes list is Houston at No. 7, Austin's No. 3 and San Antonio is rounding out the Texas cities at No. 2. It appears that it's good to be a Texan right now.

All that being said, now is an ideal time to become the best version of you. Work on your personal standards and best business practices. Inside this issue of *Current*, planners won't want to miss the first of the two-part series on Strategic Meetings Management, focusing on bottom lines and producing significant ROI (p. 16). In our continued commitment to the environment and green practices, don't miss a terrific article on getting on the green meetings bandwagon (p. 19). So, perk up, turn off the gloomy news and figure out what you can do to survive—strike that—thrive during these tough times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Fortman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Fortman,
Managing Editor, *Current Magazine*

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Interested in volunteering on the magazine committee?
E-mail editor@mpidfw.org for more information.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



SEPTEMBER 18

All Chapter Committee Meeting

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Location to be determined

SEPTEMBER 25

September Chapter Meeting

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Radisson Hotel Richardson
1981 North Central Expressway
Richardson, TX 75080

OCTOBER 16

All Chapter Committee Meeting

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Addison Conference Centre
15650 Addison Road
Addison, TX 75001

OCTOBER 23

October Chapter Meeting

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Omni Park West
1590 LBJ Freeway
Dallas, TX 75234

OCTOBER 28

All Member Networking Event

6 – 8 p.m.
300 Dallas
3805 Beltline Road
Addison, TX 75001

NOVEMBER 6

Special Education Session

Hotel Contracts Boot Camp:
Tips to Ensure a Successful
Meeting & Avoid Litigation
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Westin Galleria Hotel
13340 Dallas Parkway
Dallas, TX 75240
See ad on page 24 for more
information.

NOVEMBER 20

November Monthly Meeting

11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
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Please note the Chapter will no longer accept walk-in attendees at the monthly meetings. Advance online registration is now required at www.mpidfw.org.





I am CMM

Deborah Cohen, CMM
Marketing/Development Director
Urban League of Greater Dallas
Dallas, Texas



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day, still have time
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DALLAS/FORT WORTH
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The 2008 Global CMM program is scheduled for Oct. 18-23 in Dallas at the Fairmont Hotel. For more information about MPI or the CMM program, go to www.mpiweb.org.

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City Talk is a spotlight on the new development and upcoming events in our Chapter's cities, brought to you by your local Convention and Visitors Bureaus.

Upcoming Developments: City of Frisco

Frisco now boasts an excellent range of hotel accommodations for conferences, sporting events and business meetings. Three new hotels opening this fall will add 350 rooms to an inventory of more than 1,100 hotel rooms:

- Comfort Suites
- Hilton Garden Inn
- aloft Frisco

The award-winning Westin Stonebriar Resort, one of only two resorts in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, is constantly raising the bar on luxury accommodations and guest satisfaction.

The 330-room, all-suites Embassy Suites Dallas-Frisco houses the second largest ballroom in the state of Texas!

New Attractions, Unique Meeting Spaces

Take a journey through local history at the Frisco Heritage Museum and be sure to stop at Babe's Chicken Dinner House right next door for some of the best southern fried chicken west of the Mississippi River. Babe's is expecting a stampede of 300,000 visitors the first year! The Smith-Muse House and Train Depot also provide unique off-site meeting and event space on the grounds of the Heritage Museum.

Spotlight on Dining

- TruFire Kitchen & Bar
- Tijuana Latin Grill
- Isabella's

Expansion and Renovation Plans

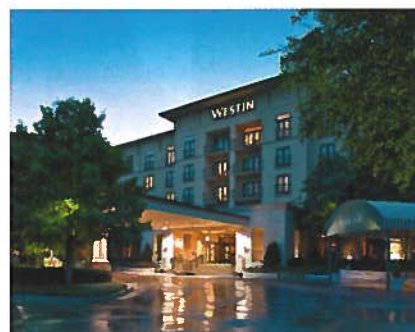
There is a demand for more than just ice at the Dr Pepper StarCenter. Expansion plans include arena seating for 5,000 with an additional 1,000 floor seating, a private club area, 12 executive suites and a full-service kitchen, which would be ideal for off-site activities and teambuilding exercises.

What to Do Between Meetings

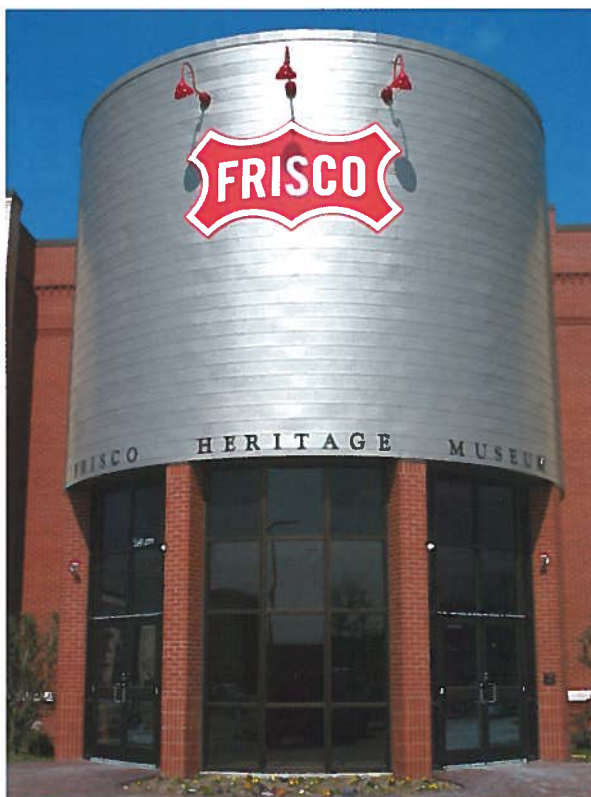
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Home to professional baseball, soccer, hockey and arena football, Frisco is a sportsman's dream.



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http://www... Condensing Hyperlinks



By Karen Fogle, CMP
MPI D/FW Website Manager

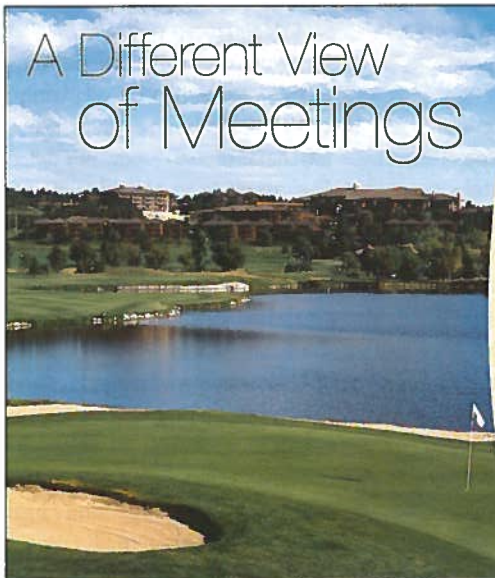
Want to know how to make this long hyperlink:

http://www.mpidfw.org/index.php?submenu=memsvcs&src=gendocs&ref=memsvcs_buddy&category=Member%20Services
simply read **MPI D/FW Buddy Program** in your e-mails? Read on...

- 1 To condense hyperlinks to smaller URL addresses:
 - 1 Copy the full string of the URL to your clipboard or NotePad (i.e. highlight, then hit Control C to hold a copy of the string).
 - 2 Type a short version of text that describes the hyperlink in your document or in an e-mail in Outlook.
 - 3 Highlight that short-version text and right click on the Hyperlink icon OR on the Navigation bar, under Insert - click Hyperlink, then hit Control V to add the full string hyperlink address into the address bar in the pop-up; click OK to save the work.
 - 4 The hyperlink will be live and shows up as the shorter description!
 - 5 As long as you can set up the short version of text with hyperlink in Word format, you can then copy that short URL to another document or format, such as Outlook.

Thanks to Rick Weaver of The Weaver Group for this quick tip.

DALLAS/FORT WORTH CHAPTER
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The Practice of STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT



Getting Started: Where Are You, Where Are You Going, Who Will Help You Get There?

The dollars being spent on meetings are under review and at risk. In these times of trimming the bottom line, meetings, traditionally viewed as an expense, are an easy target for senior executives looking to streamline. As a meeting professional, your responsibility is to shift the perception of meetings and events from a cost center to a valuable strategic asset. Meetings and events should help drive revenue generation and maximize employee retention. By identifying current meeting spend, quantifying the value of your programs and developing a clear, long-term, spend-reduction strategy, you will gain respect from senior executives whose primary focus is the bottom line.

Meetings Consolidation, End-to-End Event Management or Strategic Meetings Management are some terms currently used to describe the latest trend in our industry. In theory, a Strategic Meetings Management Program, or SMMP, simplifies and standardizes the meetings process while saving large amounts of money on meetings and events. Sounds clear, concise and easy to swallow, right? Unfortunately, in practice, it is quite the opposite. Identifying, purchasing and managing the elements of an SMMP will require developing a complex process that you may find even more complicated to sell than it was to develop. The No. 1 objection from decision makers will probably be the cost. Without understanding both sides of the equation, the spend and the savings, it can be deceptive. The key to communicating the value of this necessary expense is to collectively track the small dollars being lost on every contract and at every meeting. This collective overspend will most likely dwarf the long-term investment for an SMMP. The process of identifying your estimated spend, and therefore estimated savings target, is a Herculean task but necessary to implement this process.



By Kate Demarest Lastinger, CMP, CMM
Metaphrasis Group

I like to equate an SMMP to politics or religion; there are many different parties and congregations, and most people are passionately convinced that there is only one right way—theirs! Because the options available for executing an SMMP are many, you must first identify your company's true needs. This information will allow you to pursue the "right way" to ensure a successful implementation. The first step in this process is to identify your resource pool and understand exactly where you are today.

Identifying Your Current Situation:

- Do you currently have an internal planning department?
- Is this department equipped with the appropriate skill sets and availability to tactically execute all of your events?
- Does this department include meeting professionals who are educated in meetings strategy?
- Does this department have the tools required to implement and manage a successful SMMP?
- Is your corporate culture one of "mandate" or "placate"?
- How much is your company currently spending on meetings and events?
- Can you identify specifically how those dollars are being spent (hotels, airfare, food and beverage, entertainment)?
- Can you tactically reduce the spend during execution, utilizing your current planning team or vendor partners?

The answers to the above questions will give you a starting point to understand exactly what your strengths are and a general idea of the type of SMMP you may find most successful.

Once you know where you are, you need to determine where you are going to be next year, five years from now and beyond. To further identify the needs of your organization, input from your most senior executives regarding both the long- and short-term goals and objectives will be required.

Editor's Note: This is the first in a two-part series exploring how to create a meeting consolidation plan that works for planners and suppliers alike.

MEETINGS



Identifying Your Destination (Organizational Goals):

- A major reduction in corporate or organizational spend
- A growth in revenue-generation via sales channels
- Product development or enhancement via operational channels
- Recruitment and retention of qualified employees and management teams
- Development of strategic initiatives, driving employee or client information streams

Typically, these goals will be associated with a specific budget number that will help you to best position your program for the strongest impact to secure funds from decision makers.

By understanding where you are now and your final destination, you should be better able to identify the processes and partners who you will need to map your path. For instance, if you currently have a planning department that is involved in the industry and keeping up with the trends, and you have an executive team with a primary objective of reducing spend by \$5 million over three years, you should focus on a full SMMP that would be implemented internally. You would then need to identify a meeting management vendor that could provide tactical execution and a proven SMMP technology vendor. These vendors would provide day-to-day event support and data management, allowing your internal team to focus on strategies.

When identifying a vendor partner or partners to support an SMMP, you must ensure you are targeting proficient meeting management companies that specialize in facilitating the needs important to your organizational goals. For example, when looking at either strategic or tactical executions, your vendor partner(s) should provide a stronger negotiating power than your company can realize on its own. In each case, the vendor should be properly staffed with identified, dedicated meeting professionals who can develop long-term strategies, and/or manage the appropriate workload to fully

execute all of your meetings and events. When working with vendors who will manage the strategic aspect for your organization, look to vendors who are identified regularly in industry articles and as speakers or panelists at industry seminars. Typically, this would indicate that the identified company is strongly involved with the meetings industry growth and development, and that they can provide you with the best practices and most cutting-edge strategy standards. When researching companies, pay close attention for mention of their specific clients and client contacts. The most honest reference you are going to get will be from a current or past client of the vendor who you contact directly.

Another important aspect of this initiative is to identify the proper technology to manage your data. Again, this is widely dependant on your needs, and the options will vary with each technology, often within each technology. To execute an SMMP, look for a technology that can capture information for every meeting executed at your company. Additional features that are critical to the success of this program will be collection and management of specific budget data, process compliance, sourcing or purchasing, attendee management, and policy/procedural portals. These system licenses can be purchased directly by your company or secondarily licensed via a meetings management company. As this industry is in a growth cycle, you will see many technology companies joining the ranks. Make certain to purchase a system that is specific to meetings management and has hearty planning and reporting functions. There are several systems currently available, some of which have been developed hand-in-hand with meeting planners. These systems are the ones that will best support an SMMP. While they may seem more expensive at the initial purchase point, they are robust and will typically not need to be customized in order to execute tasks critical to the SMMP success.



Make no mistake, while it will cost money to save money, the captured savings can be dramatic.

Identifying the Right Vendor Partners

- Do you need a tactical support partner, a strategic support partner or both?
- Do all of your considered vendors provide your organization with stronger negotiation power?
- What are the industry reputations of these vendors?
- Is the staff at each vendor actively involved in industry organizations such as MPI or PCMA?
- Do the vendors have client lists that you recognize?

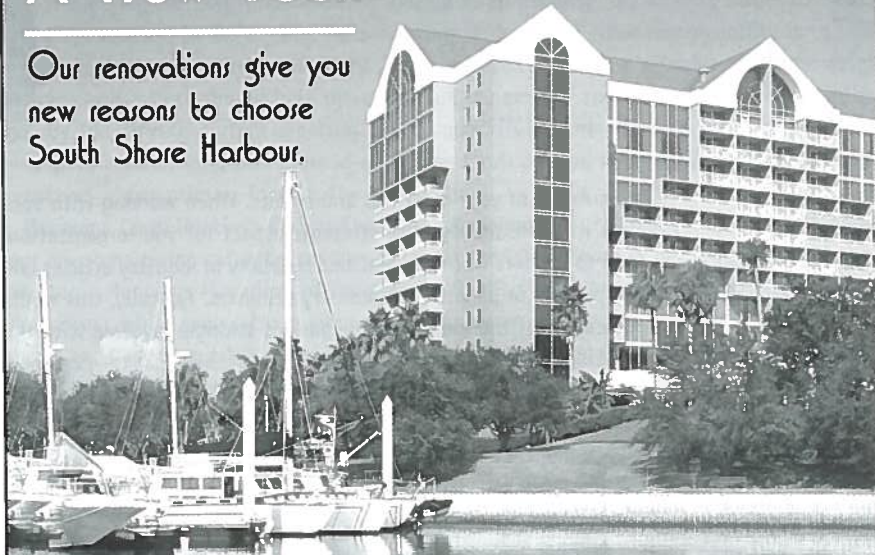
- Are they currently performing the functions you are purchasing for clients that you recognize?
- Have you spoken to current or past clients and obtained strong references that are in sync with your goals?
- Regarding technology, does the system have all of the features you have identified as critical to your data capture and reporting needs?

There are many vendors who will be more than willing to help you with this initiative; it is your job to make sure you are hiring vendors who can actively manage your SMMP or affiliated segments in a way that best suits your organization's objectives. It is critical to hire vendors with the experience and knowledge to execute properly and keep every aspect moving toward your stated goal. Whether you choose a tactical consolidation or strategic solution, you are embarking upon a process that will require a large amount of new spend. Make no mistake, while it will cost money to save money, the captured savings can be dramatic. Securing the funds needed to develop an SMMP will require you to take a risk. Your professional reputation is at stake, so be diligent. Nothing will serve you better in the selection of your vendor partners than digging deep and learning as much as possible about those companies and individuals that will be partnering with you.

If in reading this, you realize you're well into the process and on track, then congratulations! If not, please take comfort in knowing that many planners have worked this out by identifying what they did not know first, then moving on to what they did know. Our industry provides many resources and white papers that include best practices, tools and protocols on average industry spend predicated upon the sizes and types of organizations. I recommend you actively seek out a variety of these resources and find support that fits to your organizational needs. ▀

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Code GREEN

The Pulse on Today's Newest Movement



By Loriann White, CMM
ConferenceDirect
Atlanta Green Meetings Council

The word “green” conjures many meanings. To some, it represents to accelerate at a traffic light or simply “go.” Others view it as a prelude to the season of spring, while others associate green for the color of money. However, in today’s meetings and hospitality world, green embodies a new and exciting movement, one our industry hasn’t seen for quite some time: Green meetings.

In actuality, the practices in greening have been around for a while. During President Jimmy Carter’s administration, remember the commercials where a Sioux Indian paddles down a river riddled with litter from all angles? It ends with a close up to a single tear drop. Fast forward to Vice President Al Gore’s documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, where global warming – or, a more politically correct term often used, climate change – is the real focus. Both represent the same message, a message corporate America has engaged, especially when you can pick up your favorite read and find how-to tips and ways to green your life and business. This message is plastered on every news station and program from

coast to coast. As a matter of fact, February’s issue of *Entrepreneur Magazine* proudly announced climate change as well as corporate social responsibility among the top 25 trends in today’s business.

You might ask yourself, “How does this relate to our industry?” The two go hand-in-hand. Plus, add green into the mix, and it equals green meetings. It might have taken a while to label this practice; however, its one movement our industry can no longer ignore.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the definition of a green meeting is that it incorporates environmental considerations throughout all stages of the meeting in order to minimize the negative impact of the environment. What does this mean to you?

Some view green meetings as a fad. Others view it as a trend. I happen to believe it’s a movement; a movement that has only begun to scratch the surface. Let’s use a comparison. Remember when procurement first came on the meetings scene? Remember all the criticism corporate Amer-

ica endured, scandals mixed with fear that swept our industry? Soon after, the Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) Act was born, which quickly became mainstream. We learned, adapted and evolved. Many thought procurement was a fad or a trend then, but we were mistaken. It was a movement, one that changed our industry. So will green meetings.

As meeting professionals, we are in the driver's seat, especially planners. I like to use the analogy of planners being the quarterback in a very important game or playoff, the venue as the stadium and the banquet staff, transportation, DMC and everyone else who touches the meeting as a part of the team. The stakeholders, board of directors and attendees are the spectators. The planner (a.k.a. quarterback) must be well versed in order to make and execute the plays, right? The team implements the plays and, if all goes well, your team scores (a.k.a. results). At the end of the game, you communicate your score or results to your spectators, right? How does this relate to green meetings? Simple: The planner needs to be the one who is well informed and versed in the practice of greening in order for the meeting to be a success. It's a bonus to have a venue (or in this case, stadium) green

in nature, but it's the planner who will make sure none of the balls are dropped.

Three Components or Benefits to a Green Meeting

The first benefit is the environment's bottom line. This is the "feel good" factor, as we know going green is good for the environment. For example, if a five-day program serves 2,200 people breaks, breakfasts and lunches using glassware instead of plastic disposables, it prevents 1,890 pounds of plastic from going to the landfill. Plus, by not pre-filling water glasses at each table during the same program, 520 gallons of water can be saved.

The second benefit is corporate social responsibility. Basically, saying it's good business to act and treat others as you would like to be treated – with respect. There are many examples to share, but one that comes to mind is Starbucks. Not only does it have an outstanding employee benefit package but recently closed all locations for several hours – at the same time – for training purposes. It also invested tons of money in redesigning its materials to state its support in the Fair Trade practice, overall mission and commitment to the environment.

The third benefit is the economic bottom line. Essentially, going green can save you green. For instance, collecting name badge holders to reuse at the event of 1,300 attendees can save you approximately \$980. Or, better yet, encourage your attendees to bring their own name badges and donate these savings to an inner-city school program. Another example is by utilize technology, an event with 250 attendees can save you approximately \$1,100 by using online registration, e-mail evaluations and speaker handouts at the program conclusion. This might sound small but it adds up – quickly.

To quote Winston Churchill, "We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give." Ask yourself, "What can you give today that will impact your tomorrow?" Is the green movement the answer? Whether it's the corporate social responsibility, economic or environmental benefits to green meetings, I'm unsure. However, I live every day to do well by doing good. And by doing green business is good business. By implementing one of the best green practices mentioned in the sidebar below, you will do well by doing good.

10 Easy Best Practices to a Greener Meeting

1. Practice the Three R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Ask your venue or hotel to provide visible and accessible reduction, reuse and recycling services. This includes incorporating in your post-conference report an eco-audit. An eco-audit is a document that contains a detailed report on your eco-related service expenditures to include energy, water, linen and food and beverage usage. Use this document as a benchmark. This is especially important if you/your company decides to go green. You need to know where you are in order to set goals as to where you want to be. An eco-audit will help.

2. Use Paperless Technology

Use electronic technology to cut paper use. Create a Website, offer electronic registration and advertise using the Web and/or e-mail. Technology is here to stay; we might as well put it to good use.

3. Put It in Writing

Establish an environmental mission statement or policy for the meeting. Add this to your communication vehicles such as your request for proposal (RFP), Websites, contracts and conference and promotional materials. Share the policy with suppliers, attendees, speakers and the hotel or venue.

4. Meet Close

To reduce carbon emissions in transportation; condense distances traveled by speakers and attendees by choosing a city that's close to as many attendees as possible. Within the city, choose a venue or hotel that is close to the airport or encourage your attendees to utilize mass-transit services to downtown locations or manage your attendees' transfers by offering group transportation with a green sensitive company.

5. Bulk Up

Have your food and beverage service provider use bulk dispensers for sugar, salt, pepper and other condiments. This includes water pitchers instead of bottled waters or pre-set water, especially if you have ordered sodas or teas as an alternative.

6. Lighten Your Stay

Choose a venue or hotel that offers a linen-reuse program. Ask yourself how often you change your bedding or towels while at home. If the answer is more than three days, then use the same practice while as a guest. This will save water and energy.

Did You Know?

Public transportation produces about half as much carbon dioxide (CO₂) and nitrogen oxide (NO_x), per passenger mile, as private vehicles?



Green Meeting Contract Addendum

Facility will use commercially reasonable efforts to comply with (your company name here)'s environmental priorities and commitments including, but not limited to, the items below.

General

- Provide a recycling program including paper, plastic, glass, aluminum cans and cardboard.
- Provide clearly marked recycling containers in meeting room areas.
- Provide recycling in guestrooms.
- Use cleaning products that do not introduce toxins into the water and air.
- Comply to provide an eco-audit at the conclusion of the meeting or during post-conference meeting.

Food and Beverage

- Served on china versus disposable service ware, including coffee stirrer sticks. No use of Styrofoam.
- Usage of cloth napkins when possible.
- Condiments should be served in serving containers and not individual packets when possible.

- Donate unconsumed foods to a local community food bank. If facility does not have a food donation program in place, facility agrees to work with us, at no cost to us or the facility, to provide food donation.
- Facility to have a food compost program. If facility does not have a compost program in place, facility agrees to work with us, at no cost to us or the facility, to provide alternative food compost solutions.
- Facility to use cream pitchers, sugar bowls and spoons.
- Do not pre-set water and/or teas unless otherwise designated in BEO. Use beverage pitchers to serve water and/or teas.
- Ability to work with chef regarding the use of local foods and produce to help reduce carbon footprint.

Guest Rooms

- Have linen-reuse program.
- Instruct housekeepers not to replace consumable amenities unless they are empty.
- If facility does not currently have a recycle/reuse program in place, the facility agrees to work with (your company name here) to provide, at no additional cost.

Facility agrees to instruct its employees regarding the requirements above.

Did You Know?

By turning down your central heating thermostat 1 degree, fuel consumption is cut by as much as 10 percent. One ton of carbon dioxide that is released into the air can be prevented by replacing every 75 watt light bulb with energy-efficient bulbs.

air conditioning will be turned off when meeting rooms are not in use. The same practice can be used in your guestroom as well by turning off the lights, television and radios. Unplug your cell phone and laptop chargers as they use energy when not in use, too. This information can be reported and included in your eco-audit.

8. Eat Green


An average meal takes approximately 3,000 miles to reach your plate. Help reduce your carbon footprint while stimulating the local economy and encourage your chef to buy from vendors who purchase local foods and seasonal produce. Do the social responsibility part and donate unconsumed foods to a local shelter. In 1987, the Good Samaritan Act was approved and should release your venue or hotel from any challenges associated in donating to a local shelter. In most cases, they will

arrange to come and pick the donation at no additional costs. And in some states, it's a tax break!

9. Close the Recycling Loop

According to Mead Paper Company, American businesses use more than 21 million tons of paper each year. Do your part – recycle and try to print on recyclable paper. If printing is a must, print on both sides. According to the same source, 17 million trees per year are cut down to supply fax paper in the United States. You can reduce paper usage by avoiding a cover page when faxing. By doing so, you will save paper on both ends of the transmission.

10. Spread the Word

Communicate. Tell attendees, board of directors, stakeholders, venue, speakers and the media about your success. You'll be surprised how efforts to be greener are often (more like highly) contagious. 

7. Save Energy

Coordinate with the meeting venue or hotel to ensure that energy lights and

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Beth Croll, CMP of the American Heart Association



Q. WHAT IS ONE INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF THAT NO ONE MAY KNOW ABOUT YOU?

A. I LOVE HIKING IN COLORADO AND ONCE GOT "CHASED" BY A MOOSE UP A NARROW TRAIL. THERE WAS A MOUNTAIN WALL TO MY LEFT, A STEEP DROP-OFF TO MY RIGHT, SO THERE WAS NO PLACE TO GO EXCEPT UP. MY HUSBAND SAID HE'S NEVER SEEN ME MOVE SO FAST UP-HILL! IN HINDSIGHT IT WAS PROBABLY A CASUAL, STOP-TO-EAT-LEAVES STROLL, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO GET IN HIS WAY.



Q. How long have you been working for the American Heart Association?

A. Almost eight years.

Q. What is your position?

A. Senior Program Manager, Scientific Sessions.

Q. What are your job responsibilities?

A. Working with our Program Committee to develop a scientific program that consists of roughly 2,000 invited and 4,000 abstract presentations. Once the program is developed, I distribute the program via the Web and various printed pieces for marketing purposes as well as on-site navigational pieces.

Q. What are the most rewarding aspects of your position?

A. The end result and creating a positive experience for our attendees. I love seeing all of the many details we've worked on all year come together successfully. I also like to think that the knowledge these doctors are gaining at our meeting will one day benefit someone I know and love.

Q. How long have you been an MPI member?

A. Almost three months.

Q. What is the professional accomplishment you are most proud of?

A. Obtaining my CMP designation. ▀

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Man vs. Office

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What's Cooking With Chef Avner Samuel of Aurora



By Matthew Massengale, DMCP, CMP EDS

When Samuel opened his current 'dream restaurant,' Aurora, in August 2003, the *Dallas Morning News* claimed it was the 'farthest reaching, most daring restaurant to open that year,' and Aurora was awarded five stars.



Seafood Platter

Join us as we turn over a new leaf. Welcome to *Off the Vine*, the hottest place to come for the latest trends in food and beverage, cool tips from great local chefs and the latest news from the culinary world. *Off the Vine* is proudly sponsored by The Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau.



AURORA

Avner Samuel, chef/owner of the award-winning and nationally recognized Aurora restaurant, has been featured in numerous publications including: *Gourmet*, *Bon Appetit*, *New York Times*, *Restaurant Hospitality*, *Esquire Magazine*, *Men's Health*, *Time Magazine*, *Texas Monthly*, *D Magazine* and *Dallas Morning News*, illuminating his successful career in the culinary arts.

Born in Israel and the eldest son of seven children, he began cooking in a commercial kitchen at the age of 13. In 1975, Samuel graduated from the prestigious Tadmor School of Culinary Arts in Jerusalem. Following his schooling, he spent five years training in France at the renowned La Varenne School of Culinary Arts in Paris and Lenôtre Culinary School in Plaisir, France.

Samuel apprenticed in numerous Paris restaurants before moving to the United States in 1980 where he served as executive sous chef of the Boca Raton Hotel and Club in Boca Raton, Fla. In 1981, Samuel moved to Dallas to become the executive chef of the newly opened The Mansion on Turtle Creek. There, he led an award-winning kitchen with innovative menus that featured unique dishes such as his signature tortilla soup.

During his 4½-year tenure as the executive chef of the Mansion, Samuel worked with some of the most talented chefs in the industry. Among them was the renowned Wolfgang Puck who served as consulting chef for Rosewood Hotels and Resorts. It was also during this time that Samuel made a splash on the American culinary scene as the pioneer of Southwestern Cuisine. He was recognized



Chef Avner Samuel

as one of the "Gang of Five." This elite group of Texas chefs included: Avner Samuel, Dean Fearing, Robert Del Grande, Anne Greer McCann and Stephan Pyles.

In 1985, Rosewood asked Samuel to open its newest Dallas property, Hotel Crescent Court, where he served on the executive committee and was the executive chef. Samuel later became the executive chef of the Fairmont Hotel for four years. In 1991, he moved to London to reopen the newly renovated Churchill Hotel London where he created a sensation with his genius menus.

Samuel then decided to return to Dallas and open his first restaurant, Avner's on McKinney Avenue, which was named to *Esquire Magazine's* list of the "10 Best New Restaurants in America" in 1993. Two years later, he added the critically acclaimed "Yellow" to his list of fine restaurants. In 1998, Samuel opened his highly lauded Bistro A, which was named to *Dallas Morning News's* list of the 10 Best New Restaurants for that year.

When Samuel opened his current "dream restaurant," Aurora, in August 2003, the *Dallas Morning News* claimed it was the "farthest reaching, most daring restaurant to open that year," and Aurora was awarded five stars. The *Dallas Morning News* also voted Aurora as the "No. 1 Best New Restaurant" of the year. Local and national media attention focused quickly, with *Gourmet Magazine* writing that Aurora is "where to eat right now in 30 American cities," and *Men's Health* stating that Aurora is "one of 11 restaurants, worldwide, that mean business."

Off The Vine: Chef Samuel, what do feel is currently "HOT" in food and beverage?

Chef Samuel: Going local is becoming not only a trendy thing to do, but more chefs are realizing their responsibility to support their local economy. In regards to kitchen and preparation, there is not such an emphasis on spices and complex mixtures, but rather going back to natural flavors and classic preparations of ingredients. The techniques we use are utilized not to hide or overpower the flavor, but are meant to rather enhance the flavor of

Born in Israel and the eldest son of seven children, Samuel began cooking in a commercial kitchen at the age of 13.

the protein or vegetable. We use clean, fresh produce purchased from local, sustainable farms.

Off The Vine: What future trends in food and beverage do you see?

Chef Samuel: Once again, incorporating locally grown, certified organic ingredients from sustainable area farms and replacing internationally sourced proteins with free-range, hormone-free, selections from Texas and surrounding states. We use a lot of the natural flavors of vegetables and herbs through emulsions for our sauces. We don't rely heavily on seasoning our food items except with basic salt and pepper.

Off The Vine: Do you have a culinary tip or trick you would like to share?

Chef Samuel: We extract the chlorophyll from parsley and spinach – not a puree, but as an actual extraction of the greens – and use it to infuse with our butter to make our "cappuccino" foam for our

lobster appetizer. It's amazing to watch the green separate from the clear liquid.

Off The Vine: Would you like to share your favorite hors d'oeuvres recipe?

Chef Samuel: We like to prepare a farm egg custard using local farm fresh brown eggs. We couple the egg yolk mixed with milk and cream and then double boil the liquid back into the egg shell itself. This is served topped with beet-cured salmon and American sturgeon caviar. Our patrons love this complementary amuse-bouche. ▮

For More Information

To learn more about Chef Avner Samuel and Aurora, visit www.auroradallas.com or 4216 Oak Lawn Avenue, Dallas, TX 75230 or you can call (214) 528-9400.



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MPI D/FW is proud to recognize these members for their **service, commitment and tenure** in helping our chapter achieve the highest level of professionalism in the industry.



35 Years (2)

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25 Years (2)

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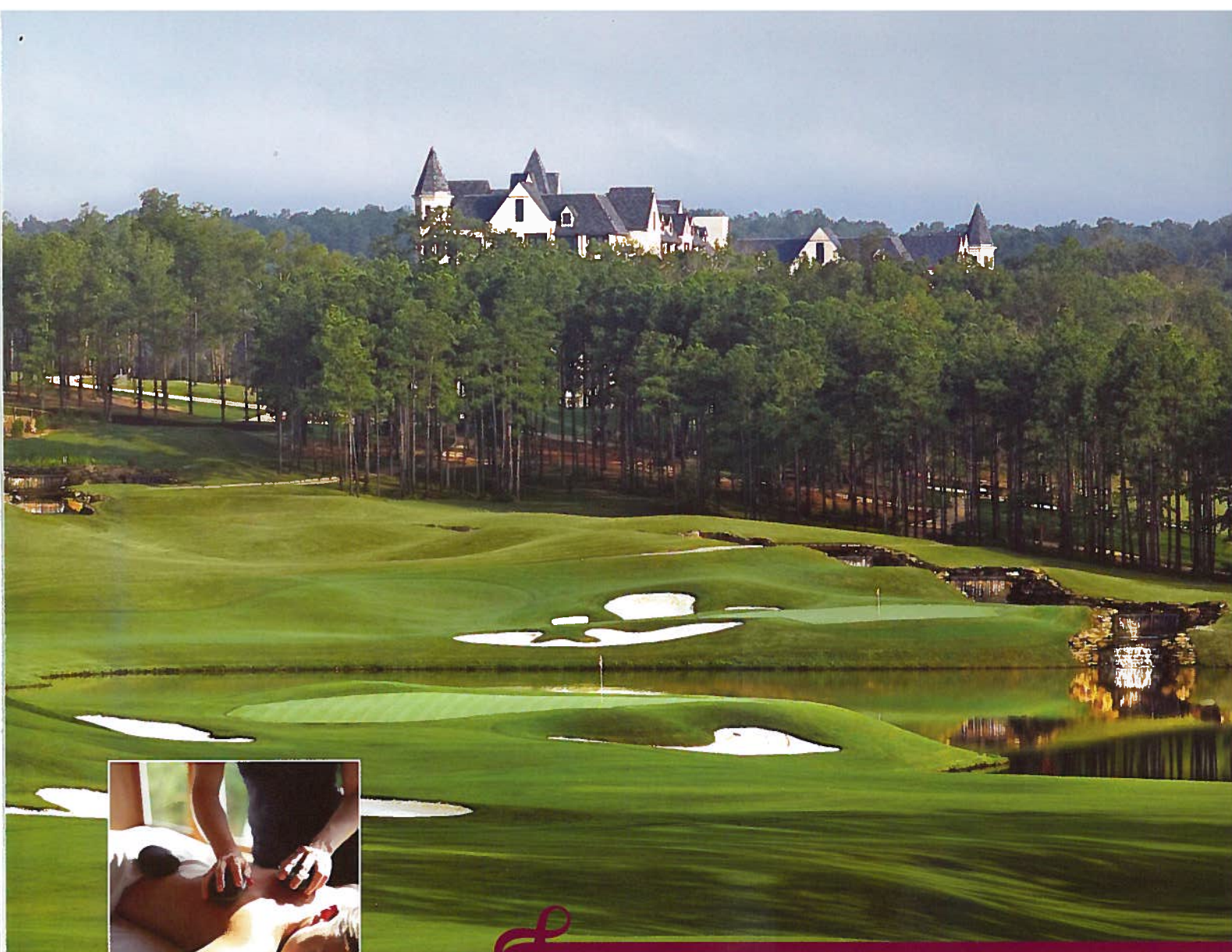
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