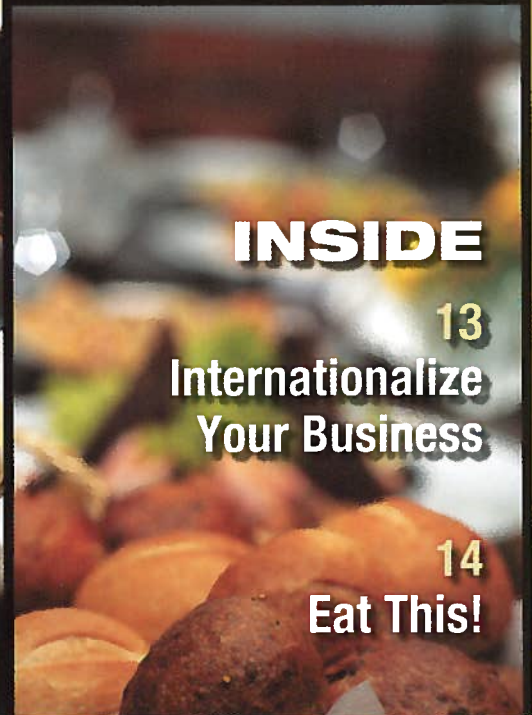


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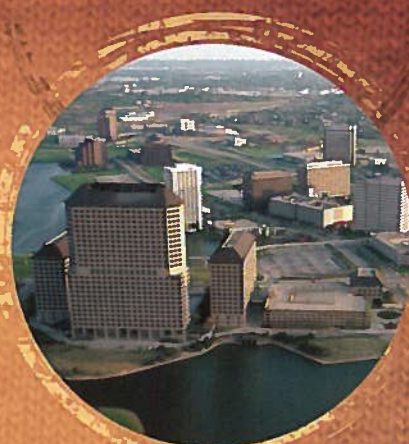
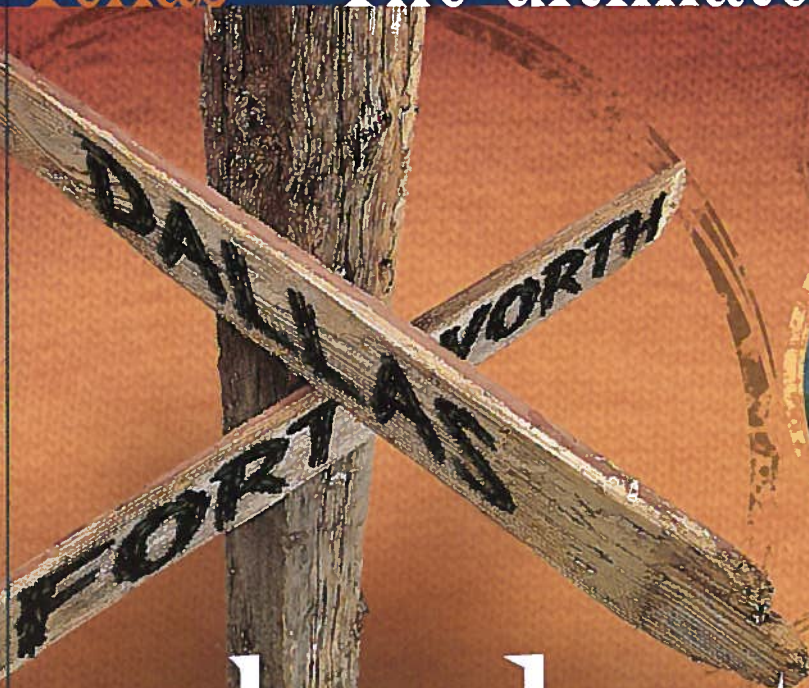
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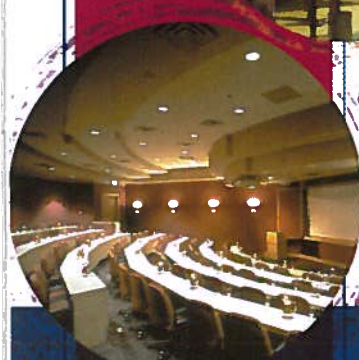
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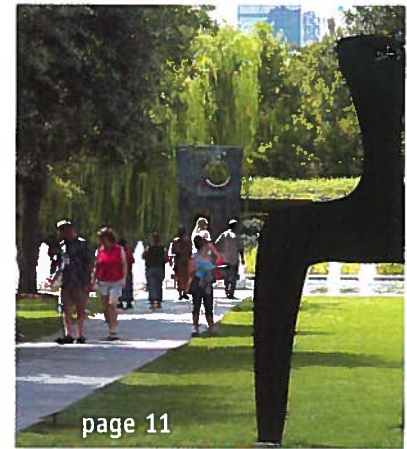
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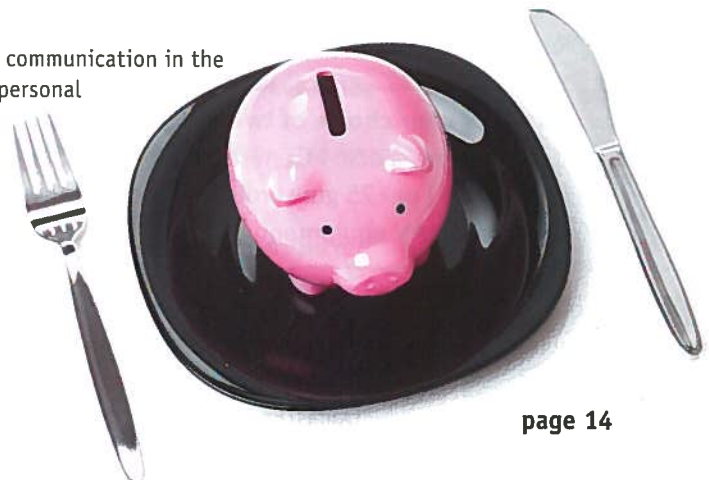
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By Carol Benavidez, CMP
HelmsBriscoe

Members' Choice Awards will, hopefully, start a legacy for years to come.



Another Reason to Celebrate

It is almost time to CELEBRATE this term's accomplishments.

The celebration will include a new process, new name and new format. So, it is so exciting to announce the **Members' Choice Awards** scheduled for June 2009.

Our annual June Awards Gala will include highlights from the July 2008-June 2009 term, installing the new Board of Directors for the July 2009-June 2010 term and also recognize our Chapter Award winners. The new process will involve every MPI D/FW Chapter member.

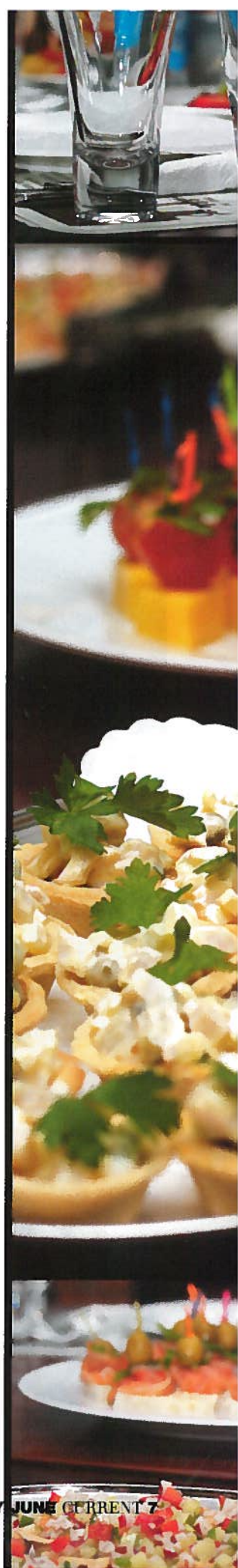
As a member of this Chapter, you will be able to nominate individuals, committees and even companies in specific categories to recognize the talent and dedication over the last year. As long as the MPI D/FW Chapter member meets the eligibility requirements for the specific award, they will be a nominee. There is no limit to the number of nominees in each category.

The selection criteria and process involves the nominee providing a description of their accomplishments. All nominees' information will be presented in a survey format going to the entire membership. All MPI D/FW Chapter members will be able to vote for one nominee in each category. Results will be tabulated by our chapter administrator with the one winner obtaining the most votes. A secret ballot will be given to the presenter of each award the night of the event.

Here is a list of awards for consideration with some new options. Please review the website, www.mpidfw.org, for descriptions and eligibility requirements.

- **Planner of the Year;**
- **Supplier of the Year;**
- **Rising Star;**
- **Outstanding Student Member of the Year;**
- **Membership Recruitment Award of Excellence in honor of Suzi Fivash;**
- **Outstanding Mentor of the Year in honor of Fred Knieberg;**
- **Outstanding Chapter Leader of the Year;**
- **Outstanding Chapter Committee of the Year;**
- **Outstanding Monthly Program of the Year;**
- **Outstanding Chapter Special Event of the Year;**
- **Outstanding Venue of the Year;**
- **Strategic Partnership Award of Excellence;**
- **Corporate Social Responsibility Award of Excellence;**
- **The Meetings Industry Leadership Award in honor of Colleen Rickenbacker, CMP, CSEP;**
- **along with the President Awards and Lifetime Membership Award.**

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The new name, **Members' Choice Awards**, will, hopefully, start a legacy for years to come. It is all about members nominating and also voting for the winners. It will be an incredible honor for each nominee and winner to know they have been voted on by the entire Chapter membership recognizing their achievements.

The **Members' Choice Awards'** new format will consist of a reception followed by the announcement of all the nominees and winners of the awards. Then we will celebrate with dinner and entertainment. For at least the next three years, we hope to provide the consistency in the same format, with the previous winner announcing the next winner by secret ballot.

I look forward to seeing you all at Awards Gala on June 25, where we will recognize these most distinguished members.

Sincerely,

Carol Benavidez, CMP
MPI D/FW Chapter President

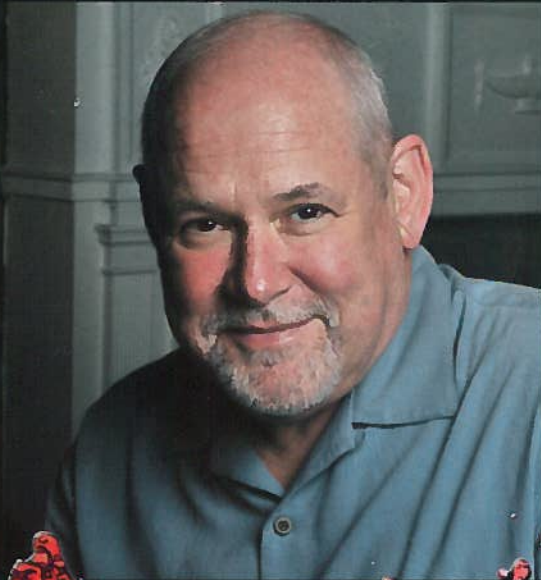


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Westin City Center
650 North Pearl Street
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JUNE 2

All Chapter Committee Meeting
6 – 7:30 p.m.
Addison Conference Centre
15650 Addison Road
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JUNE 17

Eleventh Annual CMP & CMM Achievement Celebration
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JUNE 25

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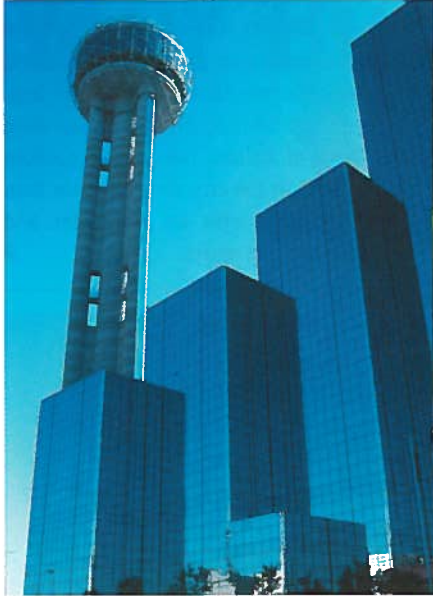
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City Talk is a spotlight on the new development and upcoming events in our Chapter's cities, brought to you by your local Convention and Visitors Bureaus.

Upcoming Developments: City of Dallas



The Dallas Arts District.

The new Reunion Tower's Five Sixty by Wolfgang Puck opened in February.

Several new and planned hotels have energized the hospitality industry, adding to the growth and revitalization of Dallas' core.

Dallas Continues on Path of Growth

With new projects and developments taking shape in the city, Dallas remains a leading convention and meeting destination. There are new hotels, attractions and restaurants, and the possibilities for meeting professionals continue to grow.

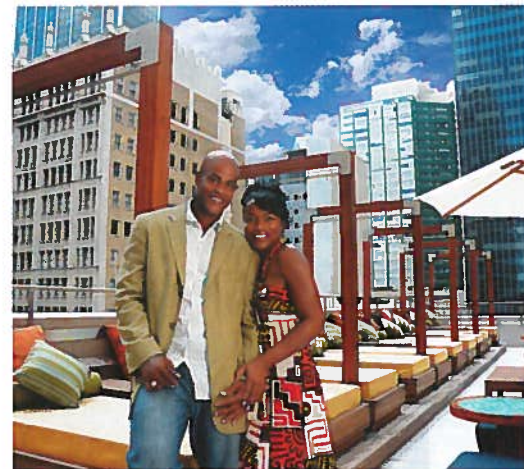
The economy is a current hot topic in the industry. Meeting professionals, both corporate and association, are focused on the bottom line. Dallas has always been a value city where travel is cost-effective and convenient. The city was recently named the "No. 2 Top U.S. City for Vacation Value" by Hotwire. With a central location, competitive rates and top attractions, Dallas draws business and leisure travelers alike. Meeting professionals, especially, will enjoy the city's offerings, as it is positioned in a right-to-work state.

In the past year, numerous hotels have been renovated across the city, adding even more luxurious accommodations for groups. At the end of 2007, the iconic Hyatt Regency Dallas at Reunion finished a renovation to its hotel. The final two phases of the \$46-million renovation project

were completed with the unveiling of the Historic Union Station in mid November of 2008. Union Station includes a \$6 million kitchen and more than 20,000 square feet of enhanced event space managed by Wolfgang Puck Catering. And the new look of Reunion Tower's Catering Level, Observation Deck opening in summer 2009, and acclaimed restaurant, Five Sixty by Wolfgang Puck, in January 2009. In April 2008, the Fairmont Dallas completed a \$14-million renovation and added luxury accommodations as part of the Fairmont Gold concept. The Adam's Mark hotel was rebranded to Sheraton Dallas in April 2008 and began a planned \$70-million renovation soon after. Lastly, in May 2008, the Renaissance Dallas Hotel completed a multimillion-dollar renovation to redefine the property's 514 guest rooms.

Several new and planned hotels have energized the hospitality industry, adding to the growth and revitalization of Dallas' core. As of March 2009, the city has more than 70,000 rooms available to conventioners and visitors. The Joule, A Luxury Collection Hotel was completed in June

2008 in the city's Main Street district. The boutique property combines a 1920s historic structure with a new, modern 10-story tower and rooftop pool. The planned Dallas convention center hotel continues to make progress, as the Dallas City Council recently approved hotel operating agreements with developer Matthews Southwest
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The Joule, A Luxury Collection Hotel, was completed in June 2008.

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and operator Omni Hotels. The project is expected to break ground soon and is slated for completion in 2011. The aloft Dallas Downtown Hotel, a Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide property, will open its doors this fall with 193 guest rooms and a stylish, urban façade.

Dallas' renewal extends beyond hotel properties. With new venues and restaurants, there are always new attractions that conventioners may visit during free time. The Trinity River Audubon Center opened in October 2008. The flagship development of the Trinity River Corridor Project opened its facilities in the 6,000-acre Trinity Forest and offers hike/bike trails, guided tours and educational classes. In October, the highly

With a central location, competitive rates and top attractions, Dallas draws business and leisure travelers alike.

anticipated Dallas Center for the Performing Arts will begin a weeklong grand opening. The center's venues will complete the Dallas Arts District expansion. In addition, two impressive, upscale restaurants opened in February: Kent Rathbun's Blue Plate Kitchen and Five Sixty by Wolfgang Puck. Local celebrity chef

Stephan Pyles will debut his new restaurant, Samar, by the end of the year.

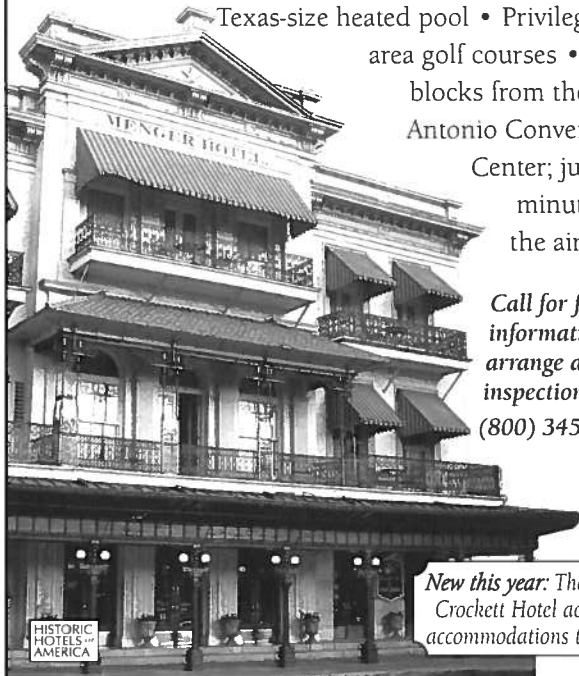
Exciting festivals bring fun and glamour to the city all year long. June 12-14, the City Arts Celebration will kick-off its sixth year in the Dallas Arts District. The festival, sponsored by TXU Energy, showcases the incredible performing, visual and culinary arts with free concerts, food, demonstrations and exhibits. In addition, this is the only time of the year that all museums will be open and free to the public. In July, the West End historic district comes alive with Taste of Dallas. The largest outdoor food festival in the city attracts more than 275,000 visitors with its restaurant and retail booths and music.

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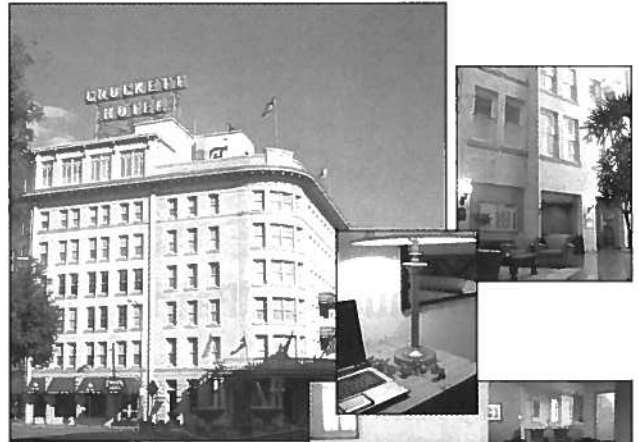
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Internationalize Your Business



By Colleen A. Rickenbacher, CMP, CSEP, CPC

How to Work With Diverse Clients With or Without Leaving the United States

Take a look at the people in your company, the people who buy your products or the services that cater to your needs. Think about your neighbors and community members. Chances are these people are a blend of nationalities, cultures and religions. The United States has long been called a “melting pot,” and according to research, the diversity is only going to increase.

This multicultural atmosphere not only affects our daily lives, but also our companies and the way we do business. Maybe you never actually cross an ocean to work with a person from another country, but whether you realize it, you are still working and selling globally. This includes the business you do over the phone, on the Internet, in a meeting or over a meal. We need to continue to build a strong relationship and better understanding of this diverse clientele.

1. Religion: Understand their culture. Religion in other cultures is often the basis for their work and existence. Respect other people’s religious

holidays, and be aware of the days they celebrate so it doesn’t conflict with a major deadline or important meeting.

2. Family: Family is also a major factor in their structure. Be respectful of the time they want to spend with their family, and work within an agreed-upon schedule.

3. Person-to-person contact can be a wonderful opportunity for you to close a deal or for future communication. Your appearance, body language, service and leadership styles, gestures and overall attitude can make that difference. Status and respect in other countries is judged by first impressions. How are you doing?

4. Are you meeting them at the right time and day? Ninety-nine percent of other countries use a 24-hour clock or military time. The United States lists

month/day/year. They list day/month/year. Clarify so you are arriving on the correct day, correct month and at the correct time. Spell out the month to avoid any confusion.

As a business in today’s marketplace, your company needs to stay competitive. Learning how to work with and be respectful of other cultures can give you that extra edge. Many countries are now conforming to more westernized styles of dress, handshakes instead of a bow, and many have even adopted our style of work. But their ties run deep to their culture, and knowing and understanding will put you a step ahead. ▀

Colleen A. Rickenbacher is a business etiquette expert and author.

Whether you realize it, you are still working and selling globally.



By Matthew Massengale,
CMP, DCMP
Celanese Corporation

Eat This!

Food and beverage planning should be fun and exciting. Be open to new ideas the chef proposes, and have fun exploring the culinary world.



Your attendees have come together to learn, collaborate, plan, budget and solve the world's problems. While all of these things are crucial to your organization, your attendees are going to have to eat. Some say food and beverage is almost as important as the meeting itself. It is your responsibility as the meeting professional to make sure your attendees' epicurean needs are met and satisfied. Planning food and beverage functions can be challenging and time consuming. The following information is a food and beverage planning guideline that will hopefully help you with this daunting task.

When and Where?

The program has been scheduled and the preliminary agenda established. By this point, you should know where the meeting is going to take place and be able to determine the type of food and beverage events that need to be scheduled. Most likely you will be planning events such as breakfast, morning and afternoon breaks, lunch, receptions and dinners.

Budget! Budget! Budget! ... Contract!

Now that you have determined the type of events you are going to plan, it is important to create a budget. Your food and beverage budget should include items such as the food and beverage minimums required, labor charges, chef fees, bartender fees, room rental

fees, service charges and sales tax. When you contracted the venue for the meeting, they most likely included a clause about food and beverage and the minimum amount you will be required to spend. This minimum typically does not include service and tax. Service and tax will increase your cost often up to 25 percent or more. Make sure you include these additional costs when budgeting for your event. Some venues will also state that if the client does not meet the food and beverage minimum, they will have to pay the difference between the minimum and the amount spent as a room rental fee. Most times you can negotiate with the venue and include a food and beverage attrition clause in the contract. This is sometimes called "slippage." If you had a "20 percent slippage clause," you would only be required to meet 80 percent of your food and beverage commitment, exclusive of service fees and taxes.

What's on the Menu?

Before you can start planning your menus, you must know your attendees. What are the demographics of the group? Are the attendees well traveled? Do they have sophisticated palates? Are there any health concerns, food allergies or dietary restrictions you should be aware of? It is very important you know this information in order to plan appropriate food for your attendees. Following are some tips for planning different food and beverage events.

Morning Break Beverages

Beverages	100 percent Male	100 percent Females	50 percent Male/ 50 percent Females
Regular Coffee	Attendees x 60 percent	Attendees x 50 percent	Attendees x 55 percent
Decaf Coffee	Attendees x 20 percent	Attendees x 25 percent	Attendees x 25 percent
Hot Tea	Attendees x 10 percent	Attendees x 15 percent	Attendees x 10 percent
Soft Drinks	Attendees x 25 percent	Attendees x 25 percent	Attendees x 25 percent

Afternoon Break Beverages

Beverages	100 percent Male	100 percent Females	50 percent Male/ 50 percent Females
Regular Coffee	Attendees x 35 percent	Attendees x 30 percent	Attendees x 35 percent
Decaf Coffee	Attendees x 20 percent	Attendees x 20 percent	Attendees x 20 percent
Hot Tea	Attendees x 10 percent	Attendees x 15 percent	Attendees x 10 percent
Soft Drinks	Attendees x 70 percent	Attendees x 70 percent	Attendees x 70 percent

Breakfast

Breakfast is the first meal of the day and literally breaks the fast of the night. When planning breakfast for your group you have several choices to offer. You can offer a full service, that according to the Convention Industry Council manual, is where attendees are seated and a combination of pre-set and plated service is featured. Continental breakfast is a cost-savings option that offers selections of pastries, juices, coffees and teas. The last type of breakfast would be the full buffet. This is usually the most expensive option, but it offers the widest variety of selections. The type of breakfast selected will depend on audience, available space and agenda.

Morning and Afternoon Breaks

Morning and afternoon breaks provide a time for the attendees to break away from the session and stretch their legs, check e-mails, make phone calls, network and re-energize. Morning breaks are typically scheduled between breakfast and lunch and afternoon breaks between lunch and dinner. Food items should be light, snack items that provide energy for the attendees.

When planning for coffee, purchase by the gallon. Here is a standard guide for planning on the amount of beverages needed for morning and afternoon breaks. Take the number of attendees and multiply that by the percentages listed in the charts above. This will give you the number of cups or sodas you will need. For coffee and tea, divide the number of cups by 20 (there are approximately 20 6.4-ounce cups per gallon) and this will give you the number of gallons needed. Round up any partial gallons to the next half gallon.

Here is an example: You have 100 predominately male attendees at a morning meeting.

Regular Coffee	$100 \times 60 \text{ percent} = 60 \text{ cups} \div 20 = 3 \text{ gallons}$
Decaf Coffee	$100 \times 20 \text{ percent} = 20 \text{ cups} \div 20 = 1 \text{ gallon}$
Hot Tea	$100 \times 10 \text{ percent} = 10 \text{ cups} \div 20 = 1/2 \text{ gallon}$
Soft Drinks	$100 \times 25 \text{ percent} = 25 \text{ sodas}$

Lunch

Lunch is the midday meal that is usually served between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Like breakfast, there are several types of lunches that

can be offered. These offerings depend again on your attendees and the amount of time the schedule permits. For the schedules that allow more flexibility, a plated lunch can be served. Some meeting schedules provide for a shorter lunch period, where a buffet of cold sandwiches might be a better option. For meeting attendees on the go, you could offer a box lunch they can take back into the meeting room and dine while the meeting continues. This is commonly referred to as a "working lunch."

Reception

After a long day of meetings, attendees look forward to a reception where they can network with their colleagues in a more relaxed atmosphere. When planning food and beverage for your reception, you must decide several things: How long is the reception? Will dinner be served after the reception? Will you offer a bar and, if so, what will be served?

Planning reception food menus can be quite exciting. Meet with the chef and share your vision, your budget and challenge his/her

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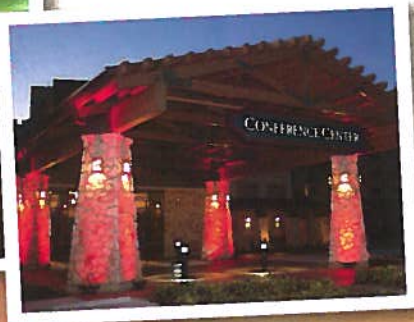


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It is your responsibility as the meeting professional to make sure your attendees' epicurean needs are met and satisfied.

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creativity. Chefs love to create! Ask the chef to recommend regional foods. The chef will know what is in season and what can be sourced locally. This could provide a cost savings. Butler passing the hors d'oeuvres cuts down on the number of items consumed by the attendees and will prove to be a cost savings. Plan on four to six hors d'oeuvres per person if dinner is being served after the reception and 10-15 hors d'oeuvres per person if the reception is taking the place of a dinner. Hors d'oeuvres should be 1½ to two bites each. Select items that don't have tails or are placed on skewers, picks or spoons. These items create waste, and attendees are often left holding a tail, not knowing what to do with it. If you decided to provide a buffet for your reception, place your buffet tables along a wall as people will not eat as much if they don't have access to all sides of the table. Use small plates and station a banquet staff at each table to replenish food, remove dirty plates and act as a deterrent for people overloading their plates. Also keep seating to a minimum. This will discourage people from loading up their plates and sitting down for a meal of reception food. It is always nice to have live music entertainment or dancing, and these also reduce food consumption.

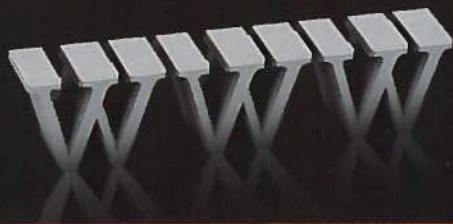
Planning your bar package can sometimes be one of the most difficult tasks. It is important that you know your audience and the company policies regarding alcohol. It is also important that the attendees are aware of this policy. Alcohol should be purchased on a "per drink basis" or "based on consumption." A good rule of thumb for alcohol is to plan on two drinks per guest in the first hour and one drink per guest each additional hour. This number may increase if the weather is warm, the attendees are dancing or there are other physical activities. Alcohol consumption can turn from pleasant to disastrous in the blink of an eye. Be sure to have a plan in place if this happens to you. Most employees are on their best behavior when consuming alcohol in front of supervisors. If the event includes attendees who are not employees, they may be less inhibited and may consume more alcohol. Start closing the bars 15 minutes before the scheduled end time. This will save money as well as reduce alcohol consumption. Don't announce "last call." Have you ever experienced that one person who kept telling you, "I'm not as drunk I am"? Make sure to have taxis available and even hotel rooms for those who have consumed too much. Be sure to have plans and procedures on how to deal with an inebriated attendee.

Dinner

Dinner is the last and the most important meal of the day to some. When planning dinner for your group, again, it is important to know the expectation of your attendees and the amount of time available. Dinner services can range from a casual-themed buffet to a nine-course French Service. Dinner services are only limited by your budget and your creativity. Buffet dinners typically last one hour while plated dinners can range from 1½ to three hours. Planning dinners is another great opportunity to meet with the chef and tap into his or her knowledge and creativity. Once you provide the chef with information about your attendees and the type of dinner you would like to provide, he/she can create a fabulous menu for your attendees. If budget is an issue, the chef can substitute items, change cuts of meats or eliminate courses. Plated dinners are typically less expensive and less wasteful than buffets. While buffets are much more casual and create more of a networking environment, preparation labor costs can run as much as 20 percent more than plated dinners.

Food and beverage planning should be fun and exciting, but many people find it extremely intimidating. Be conservative with your guarantees, and use past events to establish these numbers. Be open to new ideas the chef proposes, and have fun exploring the culinary world. ▽

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The Lost Art

By Cyndi Gundy

Department of Marketing

University of Central Florida College of Business

It's the same routine, we grab the stack of mail and flip, flip, flip, bill, bill, pre-approved credit card, bill, pre-approved credit card and then, there it is, in all its glory: the Holy Grail of snail mail – the handwritten note. It's the real thing. Blue cursive writing, a familiar name in the upper left hand corner, and a genuine, U.S. postage stamp!

You smile with anticipation as you slowly open the envelope and pull out the note card. It feels great. You can't really explain why – it just does. Technology and the speed of communication in the 21st century have



Your unique, personalized notes will send the message that you are willing to go the extra mile in everything you do.

Five Power Principles for Gaining the Winning Edge With Handwritten Notes

1. Be Prepared

Develop the habit of carrying note cards and stamps with you at all times. Set a goal of sending three to five handwritten notes each day.

2. Time is of the Essence

Note cards should be sent within 24 hours if you are thanking the recipient for something specific. Make it a habit to send a handwritten, thank-you note after every meeting with a customer or prospect. Write the note before your next appointment. Drop your notes in the mail box at the end of the day.

3. Personalize

Go to your local printer and invest in stationery with your name on it. You don't have to break the bank to get a quality print job. Keep it simple. Use good paper, a conservative font, with your name engraved in black ink, and don't forget the envelopes. Your unique, personalized notes will send the

message that you are willing to go the extra mile in everything you do.

4. Ping Your Network

Develop a correspondence schedule, ensuring customers, friends and your network are "touched" several times each year. Something simple like: "Hi John, Happy New Year! I came across this article that highlighted a new initiative over at the Expressway Authority, which I know you've been pursuing as a client. Thought you may be interested. Enjoy Warmly, Benjamin." Don't forget to include your business card; in fact, include two – one to keep and one to pass along.

5. Let Zingy Do It

You are looking at your schedule, your BlackBerry, the 300 new e-mails you haven't answered yet, and the sales report you owe the boss and thinking to yourself, "Yeah, right, like I have time to mail note cards!" Here is some good news. The Internet comes to your

With just a little extra effort, you can connect with future prospects, strengthen your business network and build stronger personal relationships.

made the personal note a dying art. Most of us have to think really hard to remember the last time we got one. There is good news though. In this void, your simple, handwritten note will stand out.

Your customers will remember you. They will associate you with the good feeling they received when they pulled your note out of their stack of junk mail. With just a little extra effort, you can connect with future prospects, strengthen your business network and build stronger personal relationships.

When you send a short, handwritten note, you tell the recipient that they are important, and you create a positive emotional experience that lets them know you care. ▸

Handwritten Notes

rescue again. There is a great new service called ClientZing that helps you announce products, set appointments, say thank you, and express yourself with *real note cards* to your prospects and clients.

This really cool and convenient service was built by salespeople who get it. ClientZing is a web-based card mailing service that helps you keep in touch with your business contacts. In less than a minute you can pick a fun message and card, add a personalized note, and "zing it" to anyone! Here is the amazing thing – ClientZing prints the card, puts it in an envelope, and sends it to your client via first-class mail. ClientZing will let you send your first card *free* – no credit card, obligation or strings attached. ▸

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Final Thoughts



Two years later, it is time to pass on the torch to someone new.

By Jennifer Fortman

Stonebridge Ranch Country Club

When I was asked to serve as the managing editor for *Current*, I was under-qualified and overwhelmed. I accepted the challenge, and then much to my own surprise, I fell head over heels in love with it! One of the most rewarding aspects of volunteering my time with the MPI D/FW Chapter has really been the opportunity to do something I never would have dreamed of doing. I have gained experience I wouldn't have otherwise and, in the end, have grown professionally.

Two years later it is time to pass the torch on to someone new. While this is a bittersweet transition for me, I am ecstatic we have found such a capable and intelligent new leader to drive the continued success of our Chapter's magazine. Check out the Supplier Spotlight on p. 20 to get to know Noemi Aguirre, your new managing editor for the 2009 – 2010 term. I would be remiss to not give a heartfelt thank

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Meet *Current's* New Editor: Noemi Aguirre

By Jennifer Fortman
Stonebridge Ranch Country Club



Noemi Aguirre

As the term comes to a close, we in MPI move to serve in other positions within the Chapter. I would like to introduce the upcoming editor for the 2009-2010 year for the *Current*: Noemi Aguirre.

Aguirre is the sales assistant for Wolfgang Puck Catering at Union Station/ Reunion Tower in Dallas, and has served as the assistant editor during her first year of membership.

Current: Why did you choose to get involved in MPI?

Aguirre: I wanted to get involved in an organization where I could grow professionally as well as get to know others in the industry. My former boss suggested MPI, which I joined and love!

Current: Tell us a little about yourself.

Aguirre: I am originally from the Dallas area and graduated from Baylor University. I took an interest in event planning after taking a role as an events intern and graphic design specialist for an international conference hosted by Baylor. I started out as a planner and now am on the sales side, which is a new and exciting challenge.

Current: What are some of the things you like to do when you are not working?

Aguirre: I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, yoga, playing tennis, reading and working out. I have two beautiful nieces who are a joy to take shopping. When I do have a few vacation days, I love to travel, especially to Mexico where my extended family lives. And I cannot leave out taking my precious Yorkie-poo, Ryleigh, for rides in the car with the windows and sunroof open!

Current: What are your career-specific goals?

Aguirre: One goal right now is to accumulate enough points to apply for the Certified

Meeting Planner exam. I would also like to become more knowledgeable about food and wine. I attended my first wine tasting and cannot wait until the next!

Current: What is your vision for the Current?

Aguirre: Planners and supplier should be able to pick up the *Current* and use it as a resource and incorporate it in their daily business.

Current: You are a fairly new member to MPI D/FW. What is your advice to those who are just joining or have joined in the recent months?

Aguirre: Our Chapter offers so many opportunities to network, and members should take advantage of that. Don't just go to the meetings and say you are not getting anything out of your membership. If you get involved you will get 10 times what your membership is worth, so don't sit on the sidelines - get in the game!



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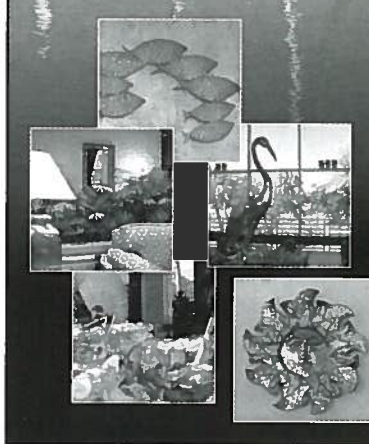
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you to Tara Horstmeyer, our Naylor, LLC editor, for all of her patience, support and guidance. We are lucky to have such a brilliant partner.

Now, I challenge all of our membership to step out of the box. Volunteer your time, not only with something you know how to do, but also in an area you don't see yourself as a natural fit for your talents. You may be surprised what you will learn and gain as a person. There has never been a better time to become a better version of you. Don't wait! Get involved today. **D**

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