

# KATHRYN A GLEESING

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## MEETING PROFESSIONAL

*Develops Meeting Strategies and Allocates Resources with Savvy and Mission-driven Purpose*

Extremely talented and passionate leader with diverse achievements positively guiding and propelling destination management/convention bureau/association sales goals and initiatives, combined with operations and start up business background. Solid reputation as meetings/logistics and membership expert and business operations architect with successful history of formulating and successfully implementing comprehensive proposals and action plans. Proven ability to optimize resources, add value and increase revenue while decreasing expenses. Possesses strong analytical, written and oral communication and builds successful relationships with staff, board of directors, members, customers/vendors and other key players.

### AREAS OF STRENGTH & EXPERTISE

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meeting and Event Planning</li><li>• Strategic Planning &amp; Initiatives</li><li>• Profit/Loss Administration</li><li>• Marketing Strategies/Solutions</li><li>• Sales/Sponsorship/Advertising Strategies</li><li>• Membership Development</li><li>• Client Maintenance/Retention</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Policy/Procedure Development</li><li>• Staff Training &amp; Development</li><li>• Mentoring/Coaching</li><li>• Business Development</li><li>• Quality Improvement</li><li>• Budget Oversight/Cost Reduction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social Media/Technology</li><li>• Strategic Partnerships</li><li>• Contract Review &amp; Recommendations</li><li>• Identifying Client Needs</li><li>• Recruiting/Staffing</li><li>• Customer Service Management</li></ul>
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### CAREER NARRATION

#### **DM-CONNECTION & EVENTS, LLC**

September 2016 to Present

*Dm-connection is the premiere meeting and event management/DMC company in Wisconsin. Over 30 years of experience selling the area, the only DMC with a Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) on staff and a member of ADMEI (Association for Destination Management Executives International). Working with the best vendors which offer discounts and that savings is passed along to you, this is what sets us apart and is key to making any meeting/event a success.*

#### **PRESIDENT**

Oversee all operations of business: business development, sales proposals, vendor outreach and contract negotiation, meeting and event planning.

- Contract work as requested by clients.
- Handle hotel, convention center negotiation, transportation (airport arrivals/departures and off-site venue transportation), entertainment, décor, corporate team building, CSR, tours, VIP services, off-site evening events, catering, etc.

#### **INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION OF EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS (IF)** July 2002 to July 2017

*Educational Association providing, education, information and research services for individuals and organizations that work with employee benefits, compensation and financial literacy. The IF is 37,000 members strong—the largest association serving the employee benefits and compensation industry serving US and Canada.*

#### **DIRECTOR OF IFEBP SERVICES, LLC**

Liaison with members and vendors; cultivates trustworthy and respectful relationships to build client loyalty; collaborates with executive staff on new business initiatives; and strategizes with board of directors to foster engagement in developing future business partnerships.

- Managed a 3 Million-dollar LLC which includes profit and loss within a \$30 Million dollar operation.
- Developed business/marketing plan for company which sells services to prospective clients.
- Manage a sales, sponsorship and advertising team and work to develop strategic goals for continued increased revenue each year, current revenue generation is \$2 million per year.
- Analyzed and presented financials for business sales and operations.
- Managed fifteen staff that handles the logistical operations of conference management for 70+ meetings annually in the United States and Canada. Responsibilities included: meeting registration, hotel management, audio-visual technology, exhibit hall sales and marketing, sponsorship and advertising, meeting/logistics management in addition to transportation management.  
Meetings ranged in size from 10 to 15,000 attendees, 25,000 hotel room nights and 300 exhibitors.
- Developed strategic plan and financials for an in-house AV studio which was built fall 2014 under budget and the AV team is developing educational programming that will be broadcast to IF members.
- Implemented and manage a Travel program for Foundation staff which includes reporting, cost analysis and savings generated to the Foundation.
- Generated RFP for Technology vendor introducing RFID scanning. Saved the company \$35,000 per year on staffing for manual processes for new processes put in place by the vendors.
- Launched a new program geared toward creating business around the US Annual meeting, which generated a 30% increase in new business.

## **VISIT MILWAUKEE**

October 1987 to July 2002

*Destination marketing organization with a mission to market Milwaukee as a premier destination for conventions, trade shows, and leisure travel. Visit Milwaukee has a strong base of 750+ members.*

### **DIRECTOR OF CONVENTION SERVICES, HOUSING AND VISITOR INFORMATION**

Developed new products/initiatives and packages to market to meeting planners and the leisure guest.

Established program agendas and tours for marketing Milwaukee to prospective clients. Managed multiple Strategic Business Units (one offsite) which increased revenue between 30-35% each year.

- Collaborated with the 750+ members, recommended marketing and promotional efforts to attract new business
- Worked closely with the Sales team to attract potential business and re-book after successful meeting. Rebooked business accounted for approximately 40% of overall sales goals.
- Developed and implemented a marketing plan which encompassed a fee for service formula to determine the dollar value of business used by a customer. Tracked over \$1 million in customer service value over a three year time period.
- Completed a five year visitor information plan encompassing criteria for future sponsorship levels which resulted in sponsorship with a major airline carrier and shared space in the convention center.
- Participating in long-range strategic planning for the company.
- Obtained sponsorship for Familiarization (FAM) trips and worked to form partnerships in the community for co-op leisure marketing program.
- Developed strong partnerships with the hotel community, convention center and several key hotels and reviewed business and meeting client expectations at monthly meetings. Overall customer service levels were the highest ever at the Bureau during my tenure.

## **EVENT SERVICE PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION (ESPA)**

Jan '03 - Jan '04

*ESPA is dedicated to advancing the practice of convention services management (CSM) in the meetings industry, and to preparing CSM professionals for their critical role in the growth and success of their organizations. The Association is a 500+ member organization.*

### **PAST PRESIDENT (VOLUNTEER)**

- Launched several new committees to work on key initiatives while developing a comprehensive strategic plan for the ACOM organization and implemented with the Board of Directors.

- Increased ACOM memberships through sales and promotions by 22% in one year during my term. Maintained a membership retention rate at 85%.
- Developed strategic partnerships as ACOM President with other industry related Associations developing joint programs and cross-marketed to the membership.
- Spearheaded RFP for new Association Management Company. Interviewed and selected new firm.
- Served as a board and executive committee member from 1996 through 2005.

## EDUCATION

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)**  
**Concentration in Leadership and Management**  
OTTAWA UNIVERSITY - Brookfield, Wisconsin

**Bachelor of Science in Management (BSM) with Honors**  
**Minor in Sales and Marketing**  
CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

## CERTIFICATIONS

Convention Industry Council  
Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) since 1994

DELP (Diversity Executive Leadership Program) Scholar – Class of 2009-2011

ADMEI – DMCP (Destination Management Certified Professional)  
Certification – February 2020

## BOARD INVOLVEMENT

CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD – VISIT MILWAUKEE -2013 TO CURRENT

PAST PRESIDENT AND BOARD MEMBER - EVENT SERVICE PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION (ESPA) TERM: 1997-2003

## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Association of Destination Management Executives International (ADMEI)

Event Service Professionals Association (ESPA)

Meeting Professionals International (MPI)

American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)

Professional Conference Management Association (PCMA)

Tribal Member of the Cherokee Nation – Tahlequah, Oklahoma