



MPI NEW ENGLAND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE & NETWORKING RETREAT 2009

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How to Move from a Meeting Logistics Expert to a Strategic Planner

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NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

DEFINING THE POWER OF MEETINGSSM

Learning objectives

- Create positive change within your organizations events policies
- Incorporate your organization's goals and messages into your planning process
- Learn to think strategically and develop skills to achieve buy in from upper management

The last year in review:

AIG effect

The meetings/hospitalities inability to respond

Keep America Meeting campaign

Rolled out in March

The Wall

Meeting constituents fight negative perception

Where are we now?

- ❑ Hotel Foreclosures Back on the Rise
- ❑ Tax Hikes to Raise Meetings' Hotel Tabs
- ❑ Meeting Professionals anticipate a 9% decrease in number of meetings
- ❑ Budget cuts are estimated at 10%
- ❑ Attendance is down by 10% or more
- ❑ People are loosing jobs

How do you Survive?

- Define and engage
- Establish objective which correlate to your organizations goals
- Develop and manage the budgets
- Impact change
- Learn to Speak the Language of Business

What's first – define your objectives

- ❑ Three simple questions:
 - Who – is the audience
 - Why – are you meeting
 - How – should this meeting look
- ❑ What is an objective?
 - We do this meeting every year....
- ❑ What is the ROI of taking the work force out of their day-to-day role?

Why do you define?

- Helps you develop the program
- Keeps you on track
- Provides a reference point
- Provides you with the stated goal

Budget development....

- Refer to history/documents from the past
- List all line items
- Extend out each category
- Allow a cushion
- Separate/analyze major line items

What is a “good” piece of business?

- Is it just rate?
- Calculate the value of your concessions
- What about the pattern
- How is the airlift
- Separate/analyze major line items

Budget based negotiations....

Do you know the value of your meeting?

- What is your piece of business worth
- What is essential vs non-essential to your client
- Make smart decisions

Let's look at some rates

Guest room rates:

- Base rate - \$199
- Resort fee - \$15
- State sales tax – 6.25%
- Massachusetts occupancy tax 14.45%
- Final room rate is \$258.30

Understanding your F&B....

Load your cost:

What is the gratuity – 15%

Service charge – 5%

Sales tax – 6.25%

A bottle of water becomes \$5.07 each!

\$4.00 – posted cost

\$0.60 – gratuity

\$0.21 – taxable service charge

\$0.26 – sales tax

Be creative....



The Process...

- ❑ Constant re-evaluate the objectives
 - eliminate the fluff
- ❑ Scrupulous attention to cost
 - question the spend
- ❑ Evaluate attendance guidelines (corporate)
- ❑ Be prepared to sacrifice short term goals in order to meet long term objectives

Working with the data

Prioritize!

- Identify essential vs non-essential spending
- Identify areas for cost containment
- Know the terms of your contracts
 - attrition
 - F&B minimums
 - meeting room rental
- Minimize RISK

Develop policies...

- Do you have a travel policy?
- Does your organization utilize preferred vendors?
- What does your expense reporting system look like?
- Are efforts underway to centralize your meeting booking process?

Contingency planning...

Changing the Plan

- ❑ Review all aspects of program including:
 - location and venue
 - customized packages
- ❑ Guest speakers; attendees as presenters
- ❑ Supplier partnerships
- ❑ Staffing—reviewing skill sets and players
- ❑ Communications via the “new” media

Strategic Partnerships

- ❑ The sales manager isn't the enemy!
 - Share your strategic objectives
 - Explain your ROI perspective

- ❑ Partnership with the hotel to deliver the exceptional experience required

Beyond One Piece of Business?

- ❑ Data analysis
 - Partner with procurement
 - Obtain complete spending data from AP

- ❑ Leverage you overall spend
 - Establish preferred vendor relationships

- ❑ Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Today's Challenges...

- Understand short term vs long term objectives
- Think outside of the box
- Share information
- Offer solutions
- Minimize RISK
- Become a strategic partner

To get to the C Suite...

- Differentiate yourself
- Earn the respect of leadership within your organization
- Incorporate the mission and brand
- Be an advocate for your organization

C Level Conversations

- ❑ Understand the companies mission and objectives
- ❑ Learn to speak in terms that the C-levels understand
- ❑ Make strategic suggestions
- ❑ Ask the appropriate questions
- ❑ Speak the language of business
 - Cut to the chase!

Strategic Meeting Management

- ❑ Introduce this concept to your management
- ❑ Begin with little pieces....
 - Centralize your spending
 - Initiate corporate policy for both meeting and transient spending



meeting consulting, design, & management