

FALL
2020

associations

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A blend of in-person and virtual
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Associations Now (ISSN 1557-7562) is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October with a special additional issue in August by ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership, 1575 I St., NW, Washington, DC 20005-1103. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, DC, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Associations Now* Circulation, ASAE Member Service Center, 1575 I St., NW, Washington, DC 20005-1103.

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Subscription rate for members is \$24, which is included in ASAE dues. U.S. subscription rate to nonmembers: \$50, one year; \$80, two years. Canadian subscribers add \$5 each year; all other non-U.S. subscribers add \$10 each year. Single copies: \$8 for members and \$16 for nonmembers. Directory issue: \$160. Order back issues by calling 202-371-0940 or 888-950-ASAE.

ASSOCIATIONS NOW

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Our Value (what we do) ASAE connects great ideas and great people to inspire leadership and achievement within the association community.

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- Warren Buffett

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features

The Meetings Issue

The Rise of the Hybrid Meeting

Hybrid conferences, mixing in-person and virtual elements, may be the new normal for 2021 and beyond. They present plenty of logistical challenges, but also new opportunities for creativity and engagement.

BY MARK ATHITAKIS



Planning Your Face-to-Face Comeback

Associations were quick to convert their conferences to virtual events when COVID-19 halted in-person meetings. Looking ahead, associations and their attendees are eager to get back together face to face. But how?

BY ALLISON TORRES BURTKA



The New Business Essentials for Meetings

COVID-19 changed pretty much every aspect of meetings, including the business side. As associations make plans for future meetings, it's more important than ever to get fundamentals like event insurance, contracts, and safety guidelines right.

BY RASHEEDA CHILDRESS



Membership Reshaped by Crisis

It's telling that when a pandemic hit, many associations moved immediately to get their members what they needed as fast as possible. This shift to quickly delivering value will be key to maintaining membership through the crisis and in the long run.

BY LISA BOYLAN

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"Nothing has prepared us for 2020. It's been difficult. Many long days and sleepless nights. But we manage to log on every day ready to face the challenges ahead."

—Stefanie Reeves,
FASAE, CAE, p.18

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Hard Lessons

I've been thinking a lot about how 2020 has changed us. It's not yet clear whether the change is for better or worse, but we, the people, are different now.

At the moment, as a nation, we're contentious, angry, and sad; we're skeptical and far too suspicious of each other. Our sour mood—however justified—has the practical effect of prolonging the very problems we need to solve, from ending the pandemic to rebuilding the economy to achieving racial justice at long last. Collectively, we're not our best selves.

But by nature I've always been optimistic, and I have the good fortune of working in the association community, where a positive vision of the future is the prevailing mindset, even in hard times. I don't mean that we're prancing about in our rose-colored glasses—far from it. Associations have been feeling the strain and a good deal of pain along with everyone else, making hard decisions, and doing their best to get through to the other side.

That effort is particularly intense in the meetings and events business, which generates the lion's share of association nondues revenue. Associations have shown their usual creativity in reinventing in-person events for virtual spaces this year and now are planning for a post-pandemic future while the ground is still moving beneath their feet. In-person meetings will be back, we hope sometime in 2021, but even so, the association executives and meeting planners we spoke to for this issue share a consensus view that the conference model has changed for good. Virtual meetings have had a big-tent effect of attracting new attendees, and the hybrid events that are beginning to emerge are bringing together the best features of in-person and virtual meetings.

So, yes, we are changed—as associations and as a nation. We won't be struggling forever. My hope is that 2020 will prove to be a period of acute growing pains and hard lessons that lead us to a better place, and back to our better selves.

Julie Shoop
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The A List

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SHELBY DAVIES- SEKLE, CMP

■ DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, SPECIAL EVENTS
■ INOVA HEALTH FOUNDATION
■ FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA

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something more
to learn.

WHAT I DO WHEN I'M NOT AT WORK

Try new restaurants, travel,
work on craft projects

ON MY DESK RIGHT NOW

My notebook, a
variety of colors
of my favorite pen
(Papermate Inkjoy
gel pen), and my "I Do
Marathons at Target"
water bottle (gotta
stay hydrated!)

WHO I'M FOLLOWING ON INSTAGRAM

Mainly friends and family, plus
@buzzfeed, @FGIDC, @chrissyteigen

MY MEDIA MIX

Music: Top hits from the
2000s—everything from
Drake to Ariana Grande

TV: *Project Runway*, *Nailed
It*, *Ozark*, *Bob's Burgers*

Podcasts: *How I Built This*,
Criminal

IF I WEREN'T DOING THIS, I'D ...

... be a clothing or accessories
buyer. I studied apparel design and
merchandising in college.

Ask
the
CEO

“
We plan
ways to
achieve our
goals in the
shortest
period of
time with fun
grassroots
marketing
campaigns.

TOP ASSOCIATION EXECS IN CONVERSATION WITH MEMBERS

Rick Harris, CEO of the Association of Proposal Management Professionals, answers questions from APMP member **Ginny Carlson**.



What do you credit for APMP's recent impressive uptick in membership?

We have confidence in a membership model that works—for individuals or companies—and no matter where members are in the world. APMP membership is competitively priced. We invest in personal and professional development and virtual events, and we create clear paths for members to earn more money in their jobs. We also have a thriving certification program. Our board believes in the straightforward business concept that membership value must always be higher than membership cost.

How do you and your staff balance executing a strategic plan with an entrepreneurial spirit and a willingness to try new things?

I love any strategic plan for the incredible amount of thought, research, forecasting, and planning that has gone into developing it. We plan ways to achieve our goals in the shortest period of time with fun grassroots marketing campaigns. By thinking entrepreneurially, we communicate messages to our audience the way we want without a staggering marketing budget attached to the project. We ask all our staff to think and act like entrepreneurs.

RICK HARRIS, CEO OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PROPOSAL MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS

What lessons have you learned during the COVID-19 pandemic that you think will carry over in the long term?

COVID-19 has taught me a lot—and most of the lessons have been bruising. The first lesson is to be positive and avoid people who want to commiserate about the problems we are all facing. It's easy to be negative when all your live events are canceled and your budget develops crater-sized holes—but you can't. You have to get to work and lead. We are already planning on what we will do if live events are not possible for the next three years. If live events come back sooner—we'll be better poised for our faster financial recovery.

Finally, look hard at where your association is investing in new products and programs and double down on things that will grow membership and contribute to your bottom line over the next three years. It's easy to cut expenses to the bone. But if you are thinking entrepreneurially, you invest in your future with the same confidence and vigor that you had before February 2020.

COMINGS AND GOINGS

A roundup of new hires and other personnel moves in the association industry

The Credit Union National Association named **Des-hundra Jefferson** its chief strategic communications officer and **Damon Smith** its senior director of advocacy and counsel.

Troy Riddle was named chief diversity, equity, and inclusion officer of the Natural Resources Defense Council.



Larry Alexander, FASAE, president of the Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau, will retire in December.

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores promoted **Christie Boutte** to senior vice president of state strategic affairs and advocacy.

Continued on page 10



POWER OF A

Making Science Local

AN ASSOCIATION CONNECTS COMMUNITIES
AND SCIENTISTS TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABILITY

MANY COMMUNITIES CAN build up enthusiasm for environmental projects, but they may not have the scientific know-how to get those projects off the ground. Sensing that knowledge gap, in 2012 the American Geophysical Union launched the Thriving Earth Exchange, which connects member scientists to community sustainability initiatives around the world.

Sorting out what that connection would look like took some time, however. At first, says Thriving Earth Exchange Director Rajul Pandya, the program was formatted like a contest in which applicants would “win” opportunities to partner with a scientist assigned by AGU.

“What we found out was that communities didn’t want disembodied experts giving them ideas,” he says. Today, the program uses volunteer fellows to serve as liaisons between the communities applying for assistance, identifying member scientists who are good fits for particular initiatives.

Most of the projects the Exchange has worked on are based in the United States, but it also encompasses initiatives to increase access to real-time global air-quality data and address water accessibility in Ethiopia.

In New Orleans, AGU helped one community organization collect rain-gauge

data to show flooding risks. “They were able to work with a scientist [member of AGU] to process that data, share it with the city council, and convince the city to enlarge the footprint of a flood redevelopment plan to include their neighborhood, which had previously been left out,” says Pandya.

The exchange, which received a 2019 Summit Award in ASAE’s Power of A competition, launched with a goal to support 100 projects in its first five years, in time for AGU’s

centennial last year. Pandya says he thinks it can expand tenfold in the next five years, with more partnerships and more engagement with fellows and scientists. In that regard, everybody’s new comfort level with remote learning is a blessing.

“A virtual environment creates an opportunity for us to grow the fellows program in a way we couldn’t in person,” he says.

That kind of flexibility is essential to any such program, says Melissa Goodwin, Thriving Earth Exchange manager of operations and program development.

“We learn new things from every project and conversation, and the integration of those learnings into what we do and how we work has been crucial for the continued refinement and development of the program,” she says.—**Mark Athitakis**



*Continued from
page 9*

Caley Mutrie, IOM, CAE, joined the Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies as executive director.

INFORMS welcomed **Elena Gerstmann, Ph.D., FASAE, CAE**, as executive director.

Merrill Drew joined the American Supply Association as director of marketing and communications.

The Michigan Dental Association welcomed **Don Winn** as chief financial officer.



The National School Boards Association welcomed **Anna Maria Chávez** as executive director and CEO.

Cynthia O’Malley joined NACE International as chief integration officer.

DRI—The Voice of the Defense Bar named **Dean Martinez** its new CEO.

The American Geophysical Union welcomed **Randy Fiser** as its CEO and executive director.

The United States Professional Tennis Association appointed **James Burke** as director of marketing and communications.

Krystal Register will lead health and well-being initiatives at FMI—The Food Marketing Association.

David Keen, CPA, joined the American Physical Therapy Association as chief financial officer.

Tracy Vanneman, CAE, has been selected as executive director of the Society of Industry and Organizational Psychology.

Dr. John P. Troup was named vice president for scientific affairs and dietary supplements at the Consumer Health Products Association.

The American Cleaning Institute welcomed **Nathan Sell** as director of regulatory science.

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Money & Business



NEW MONEY

Partnership Refresh

A revamped sponsorship program paid dividends when the pandemic hit

By Rasheeda Childress The Academy of Medical-Surgical Nurses was in the process of changing its partnership program—shifting from platinum, gold, and silver sponsorship packages to a premiere partnership program—when the pandemic forced the world to close down. ¶ “We launched it just before COVID,” says AMSN CEO Terri Hinkley, Ed.D., CAE. “It ended up being an opportunity.” ¶ The groundwork laid before the pandemic allowed AMSN to secure medical technology company Medtronic as a new sponsor and build benefits for the company that wouldn’t be easily upended by the coronavirus.

Instead of standard sponsorship options, the premiere partner program is tailored. “The program is designed based on what their needs are,” Hinkley says. “We start with an exploratory call and whittle down from there how we can position their organization to achieve those goals with the many products and services [we offer].”

The program gives partners access to perks like focus groups and research that taps members for insights. “They have every opportunity for engagement with our members and stakeholders, and it’s exclusive to the folks in the premier partner program,” Hinkley says.

The program also helps AMSN beyond the nondues revenue it brings in. For example, the association conducted a survey for a sponsor on how the pandemic was impacting members.

“It helped us understand what their practice environment was looking like,” Hinkley says. “It informed how we could continue our messaging to members. We could say, ‘Don’t worry about your membership renewal.

We’re not going to drop you during this period.’

It reinforced the necessity for what we were building and doing. It was definitely a win-win.”

Hinkley says changing a sponsor program to be more responsive “is not a short process” because it takes time to determine how to best serve the client, but she believes it’s well worth it.

“We were able to engage a brand-new sponsor in the middle of a pandemic, when so much was clearly being impacted,” Hinkley says. “For the first time, they felt like the organization was listening to them and we had clear ways to address their objective, and we demonstrated with them a level of service that they had never had before.”

Delivering that kind of value is critical now. “In today’s environment, when we’re all fighting for nondues revenue, we have to recognize that businesses are changing,” she says. “Businesses outside nonprofits are allowing for customizable experiences, and we in the association world can learn from the for-profit world.”

“We were able to engage a brand-new sponsor in the middle of a pandemic.”

— Terri Hinkley, Ed.D., CAE

IDEA BANK



Unspoiling Sports

Free cameras for schools will help fans watch safely

WHAT’S THE GREAT IDEA? Provide free cameras to high schools for broadcasting sports

WHO’S DOING IT? National Federation of State High School Associations Network

WHAT’S INVOLVED? The pandemic has made gathering for sports events difficult or impossible due to social-distancing guidelines. But what if fans could watch their favorite high school team from the comfort and safety of home? That’s the goal of NFHS Network’s new program that gives two Pixellot automated production units to schools. NFHS has 51 state association members that include 19,500 schools, all of whom are eligible to request the cameras. ¶ “We are able to showcase these students to not only the fans of the schools, but to the grandparents, the aunts, and uncles who live outside of the state,” says Mark Koski, CEO of the NFHS Network. ¶ NFHS chose automated cameras to make producing the broadcasts as easy as possible. “It turns on 15 minutes before the game and picks up all the game coverage with no human needed to turn it on or run it,” Koski says. “It will zoom in on the play and zoom out on its own.” ¶ The camera giveaway is sponsored and will generate more content for the NFHS Network subscription service, which is like a Netflix for high school sports. Schools that receive the cameras agree to use them for games for five years and can earn local revenue from the broadcasts. For example, schools can sell local logo placement or have student announcers, who often provide play-by-play, read ads. ¶ “We knew with the pandemic that schools were in need of revenue, so this helps schools for additional revenue as well as helps fans see games,” Koski says.

WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING? The program has already received thousands of applicants—a big win for students who will get to watch their favorite school sports on TV this year, Koski says.

STARTUP STORIES

New associations launch to fill a void in their sector. Here, newbies tell us what got them started, how they're succeeding, and what they plan to do next.



GROUP TOUR PROFESSIONALS

LAUNCH

January 2020

LEADERSHIP

Von Harden, executive director, and Adam Conolly, director of operations

WEBSITE

tourpros.org

The Mission | Harden, who also runs an association for tour directors and guides, says he realized there was “a group adjacent to the people we already served—those small, local-based tour operators who didn’t have a champion for them.” He wants GTP to be that champion for local tours (such as food, wine, and city tours), venues, activities, and experience operators.

Early Successes | The pandemic has heightened the need for aid among destination operators. GTP has responded by creating a membership directory and an online community where members can help each other as they face the challenges wrought by COVID-19. “We’ve gotten a huge response from people who have signed up to the website and joined the Facebook group,” Harden says. “We just want them to be part of our community and help grow it.”

What’s Next? | GTP is focused on proving its value. “This is absolutely the wrong time to be asking people for money,” Connolly says, noting the group will not initially charge for membership. To bring member value, GTP is creating professional development programs, networking opportunities, and an annual meeting and is offering insurance at a group rate.

THE FIX

BETTER MARKETING FOR MEETINGS

Associations can plan a fantastic meeting—in person, virtual, or hybrid—but that doesn’t mean people will come. That’s where marketing comes in. **Aimee Pagano**, senior digital marketing advisor at HighRoad Solutions, says enticing content linked with digital strategies can drive attendance.

What are some effective meeting marketing strategies?

Marketing automation can play a huge role. Leverage all of the analytics and demographics within your marketing automation tool to get lead generation going. When we say lead gen, we’re starting with getting a juicy piece of content out there and gating it behind a wall where users have to provide their email to access it.

Does that lead generation content have other uses for the event?

You can use the intel from the content to actually guide what your program structure and program tracks at your event could look like. If you have

several pieces of content for lead generation, rank the content. If you see that your audience is gravitating toward one piece more than others, recognize the audience has a need for it. And then include more of that content in your conference programming.

What other tools can help improve meeting marketing?

Retargeting is a tool that is built into marketing automation. Somebody comes to your site and they get on your conference page and look at your conference agenda. With retargeting, you can set ads to follow that person online. You can put up opportunistic banner ads as they go to other sites, or you can show ads that highlight one of the speakers.

DATA POINT

A BLEAK OUTLOOK FOR FUNDRAISING

The coronavirus has devastated the economy, and that’s showing up in decreased giving to nonprofits. In a survey by the Association of Fundraising Professionals, 56 percent of fundraisers said they believe they will raise less money in 2020 than in a typical year, and a whopping 72 percent have the same belief about 2021. But fundraisers intend to persevere and will increase the use of several techniques, according to the survey:



82%

Donor retention and stewardship



78%

Social media



78%

Virtual events



78%

Online fundraising



75%

Email

SOURCE: Association of Fundraising Professionals, Coronavirus Response Survey, July 2020

AGENTS, PRINCIPALS, AND FARA RISK

Why associations can't ignore the Foreign Agents Registration Act

By Jim Kahl



THE FOREIGN AGENTS Registration Act has attracted significant attention in recent years as the Department of Justice (DOJ) has secured high-profile convictions of people associated with the Trump administration, including Paul Manafort and Richard Gates. FARA is a disclosure law aimed at uncovering the activities of “foreign agents” working for “foreign principals” to influence U.S. officials or the American public. FARA was enacted in 1938 to shed light on Nazi propagandists and was later used to counter communist activities.

You might think it unlikely that your association's routine activities present similar propaganda risks. Nonetheless, FARA may apply to a wide range of nonprofit efforts, including:

- **receiving a grant** from a foreign government or foreign government-controlled entity for U.S. activities
- **becoming a member** of a foreign organization and agreeing to work on

joint programs, especially when a foreign government may influence the organization's activities

- **agreeing to help** a foreign nonprofit organization influence the U.S. public or government about public policy issues, even if those activities serve the interests of both organizations.

An organization that qualifies as a foreign agent has significant compliance obligations. Among other things, it must register with DOJ, file detailed reports and copies of informational materials it distributes on behalf of the foreign principal, and retain a wide range of documents relating to its activities.

FARA's broad definitions give it an expansive reach. For example, a foreign principal can be a foreign government or political party, a corporation organized under the laws of a foreign country or having its principal place of business there, or even an individual from another country. A foreign agent is any person

or entity that acts within the U.S. at the order or request or under the direction of a foreign principal (directly or through an intermediary) and takes any of these actions:

- **engages in political activities** (attempting to influence the U.S. government or the U.S. public about policy issues)
- **acts as a political consultant**, public relations counsel, or a publisher/distributor of information
- **solicits, collects, or distributes** funds for the foreign principal
- **represents the foreign principal** before Congress or executive agencies.

FARA violations can result in fines or criminal sanctions. Fortunately, there are a few safe harbors. DOJ advisory opinions acknowledge that a nonprofit must, in fact, act as the agent of a foreign principal to trigger FARA. Mere participation or membership in an international organization does not raise compliance concerns.

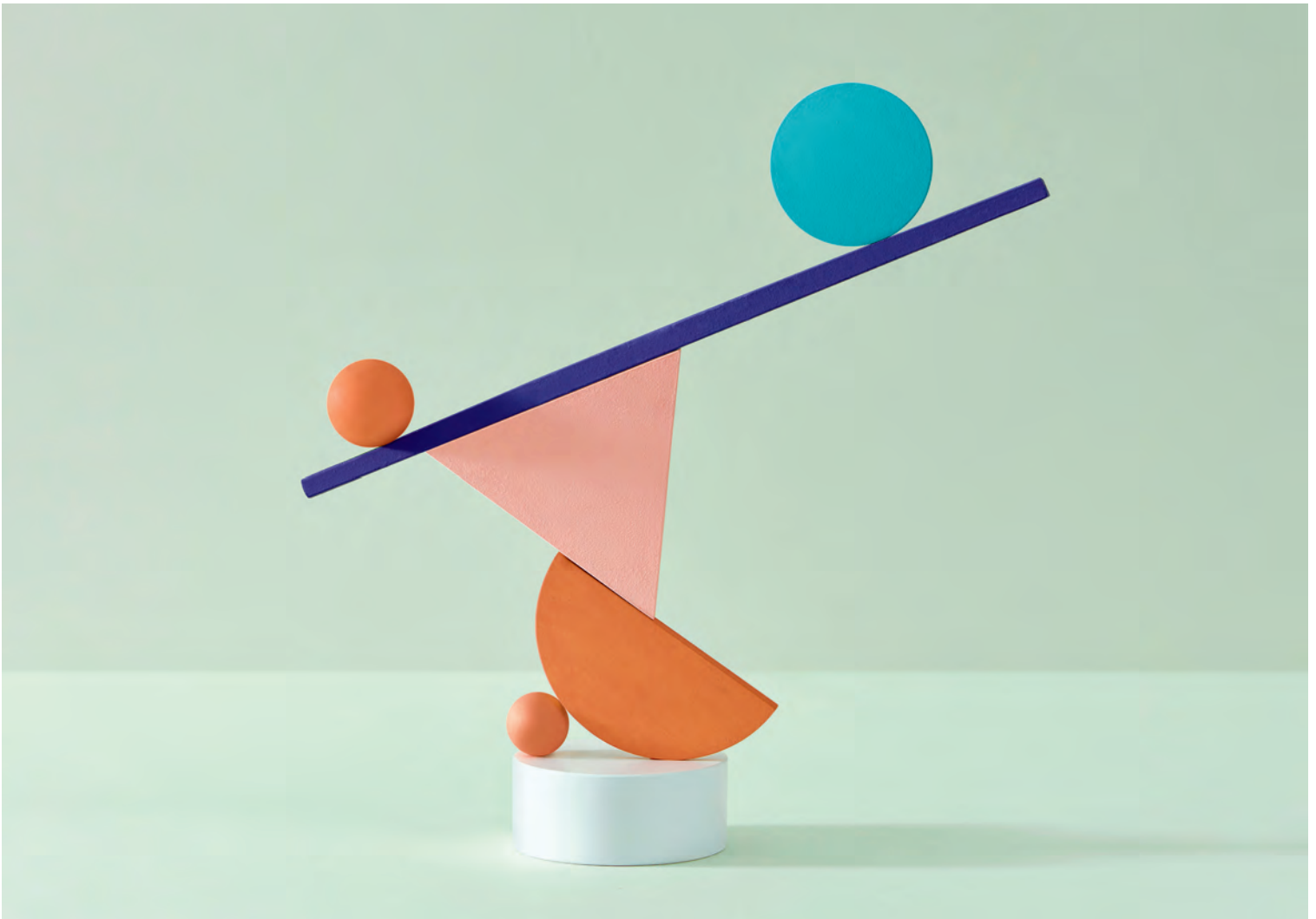
FARA also includes a few limited but complicated exemptions. For example, exemptions exist for organizations that act exclusively to advance religious, academic, or scientific pursuits; engage in activities that promote trade or commerce; or register under the federal Lobbying Disclosure Act (provided the foreign principal is not a foreign government or a foreign political party).

Commonsense precautions, such as refusing to undertake U.S. policy-oriented activities at the behest of a foreign organization, can help a nonprofit avoid FARA risks.

If you think that your organization's activities might cause it to be a foreign agent, consultation with counsel familiar with FARA is advisable. Determining whether an agency relationship or a FARA exemption exists often requires careful consideration of DOJ advisory opinions. In a close case, an organization may request an advisory opinion to confirm whether its activities are covered by FARA.

JIM KAHL is a partner at Whiteford, Taylor & Preston, LLP, in Washington, DC. Email: jkahl@wtplaw.com

Leadership



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Support Structure

Great committees make great boards

By Lisa Boylan No one needs a dysfunctional board—or anything dysfunctional, for that matter. So, what are the best ways to achieve the high-functioning committees that are essential to support high-functioning boards? ¶ It takes dedication and effort. It also means ensuring that the staff liaisons that work with committees are trained in volunteer management. A well-trained staff liaison will help the organization utilize volunteer resources as effectively as possible, says Erin Volland, CAE, senior consultant at Association Management Center. ¶ Staff liaisons of course need to be trained in basics like how to write agendas and minutes. But training should go beyond managing

those usual operational tasks to handling more subtle issues like “scope creep,” Volland says. Staff need to recognize when committees are doing more than the board has asked and help the chair guide the group back and facilitate the work that needs to get done.

Structure is everything. Some associations have dozens of committees, meaning staff liaisons spend all their time building agendas, writing minutes, and carrying out other administrative tasks that don’t actually support the work of the association, she says. Making sure the right committees and task forces are in place will advance the board’s work instead of adding unnecessary effort—or working completely against the board’s wishes.

“The more the board can delegate decisions to high-functioning committees, the more the board can focus on strategy and generative discussions that move the association forward,” Volland says.

The composition of task forces and committees is also critical, meaning selection for these groups is just as important as board selection, she says. A lot of boards are at the point where they’re just defining what leadership skills they need, so organizations first need to identify what competencies they’re looking for in committee and task force volunteers. More

boards are placing a premium on collaboration skills, technology savvy, and specific personal attributes, she says.

In the current environment, many associations and boards are looking within and assessing their structures to see if they’re actually working, Volland says. Before, an “if it’s not broken, don’t fix it” mindset prevailed, but associations are now recognizing that they don’t have the right balance of competencies on their boards and committees, or volunteer leaders don’t accurately reflect membership.

“As hard as this time is, if it wasn’t broken [before], 2020 broke it—or pointed out that it was broken,” she says.

That reckoning is giving associations an opportunity to address issues they might not have touched before because they were politically inconvenient, Volland says. Many leaders are now realizing that “this is the change we have to make to be successful—and to meet member needs.”

“Making sure the right committees and task forces are in place will advance the board’s work.”

— Erin Volland, CAE

**CEO
to
CEO**

What leadership skill emerged in you during the crises of 2020 that you didn’t know you had?



**Shawn Boynes,
FASAE, CAE**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ANATOMY
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND**

Speaking my truth related to social justice issues and its impact on the organization. As a Black CEO, it can be tricky trying to navigate being authentic while not being labeled self-serving. The AAA Board of Directors made the decision to issue a statement against racism without my prompting as their leader. That made it easy to guide them through the process of crafting the statement and quickly issuing it to members and the broader public.



Patrick Gouhin

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
ANGEL CAPITAL ASSOCIATION
OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS**

Diplomatic decisiveness to quickly gather facts, gain consensus from stakeholders, and drive toward immediate action before pain points could have an even greater negative impact on the future of the organization.



Sandy Spavone

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FAMILY, CAREER, AND COMMUNITY
LEADERS OF AMERICA
RESTON, VIRGINIA**

I turned a lemon into some great lemonade. There was no closure for the class of 2020 and the 2020 national youth council, so we held a graduation celebration as part of a general session at our virtual conference. Youth were hosted at the Knoxville Convention Center to film their general sessions in person, which provided them some normalcy and some closure.



**Stefanie Reeves,
FASAE, CAE**

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MARYLAND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
COLUMBIA, MARYLAND**

Resilience. No matter what you contend with as a CEO on a daily basis, nothing has prepared us for 2020. Having to not only pivot your association activities but also help your members pivot while trying to stay healthy and safe defies logic at times. It’s been difficult. Many long days and sleepless nights. But we manage to log on every day ready to face the challenges ahead.

3 LESSONS

LEADING FROM THE LIVING ROOM

Donna Meltzer keeps her staff together even when they're apart

■ CEO
■ NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
■ WASHINGTON, DC

Pandemic life requires a lot of face time.

Bringing my entire network together for a weekly Zoom call has kept everyone updated on policy decisions, funding opportunities, and important deadlines. We see each other's faces and feel united in our effort to problem-solve. These weekly calls have helped me keep on top of issues and concerns in the states and territories. We've used that information to shape legislative language and policy recommendations for Congress and our federal partners.

Funders want to be helpful.

When we announced we could not host our usual in-person conference, I met via video with each funder to customize a mutually acceptable plan for how we would use their contribution. This has shaped our new online conference and other new products and deliverables. The one-on-one chats built mutual respect and ensured everyone will be satisfied with how we are using their funding. Exciting new opportunities for our members are now moving forward.

We can all be productive from home.

This is true even when children and pets are needy, and the internet is spotty. I have encouraged my staff to get creative and they have! They created new opportunities for our members, brought guest speakers to our meetings who normally would not be able to join us, and found ways to connect leaders around the country. I call it Leading from the Living Room. We miss one another, but we create space for brainstorming over coffee, social-distanced meetings in my yard, or small group calls.

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Technology



TECH MEMO

Past Versus Present

These times require using tech tools in new ways

By Lisa Boylan The notion of “business continuity” went from a perennial PowerPoint topic to urgent necessity overnight after COVID-19 hit. It’s one thing to plan for the future and quite another once that future arrives unbidden—a challenge that association CEOs and CIOs have been grappling with for most of 2020. ¶ The pandemic created an “intersection of a slow-moving natural disaster in concert with innovation we had had our eye on for some time,” said Mark Dorsey, FASAE, CAE, chief executive officer of the Construction Specifications Institute, participating in an ASAE webinar earlier this year.

Dorsey and other association executives in the conversation agreed that most organizations adapted quickly to a severe situation, and the technology they had in place, while in many cases not ideal, sustained them.

"It's not the technology that's going to be a barrier to continued success, it is how you implement that technology and how you deliver value from that technology in this new normal."

—John Sullivan

"It's not the technology that's going to be a barrier to continued success, it is how you implement that technology and how you deliver value from that technology in this new normal," said John Sullivan, chief information officer of the American Chemical Society (ACS).

One key challenge for associations has been how to take the mechanics of board meetings online. Executive leadership meetings work well on Zoom with 25 people or fewer, but when you get into councils and

assemblies with hundreds of participants, then it's time for the next level of support, Sullivan said.

It is possible to get concierge service on GoToWebinar, for example, that will handle polling, voting, and logistics, he said. And there is a whole generation of software that is largely put together by firms that conduct stock and shareholder meetings because they have sophisticated governance rules for those meetings.

These come close to providing the facilitated experience ACS needs for its 500-person council meetings, Sullivan said. But even these sophisticated tools can't handle the nuances of the voting systems that are codified in ACS's bylaws. "It's preventing our organization from using a very viable solution, and it has nothing to do with the technology. It has to do with being stuck in the ways of the past," he said.

But there are positive effects too. "Meetings strictly governed by

Robert's Rules of Order were stifling, but we preserved them," said Mark Golden, FASAE, CAE, executive director of the National Society of Professional Engineers. Virtual governance meetings allow board members to reassert the kind of basic management and control functions that *Robert's Rules* was originally designed to serve.

"It's not so much about who seconded the motion. You still need to be able to control the conversation, so people are recognized and allowed to speak," Golden said. "In many ways, that's easier to do on a tool like Zoom than it is when you're in a room."

There's a mythology that *Robert's Rules* is a legal construct that must be followed, Dorsey said. "I figure if the British Parliament can figure out how to have somewhat virtualized meetings, the rest of us can, too."

He added, "The main thing COVID cuts through is the fear of change, because we have no choice but to adapt."

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JILL STRANIERO, CAE, DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL EXPERIENCE,
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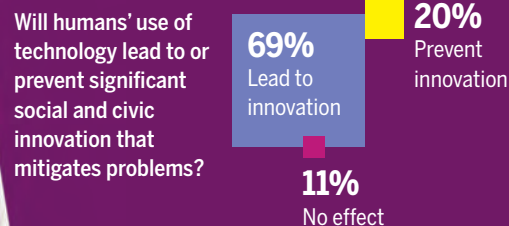
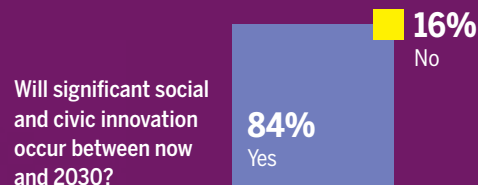
More info: [Mural.co](https://mural.co)



DATA POINT

Will Technology Save Democracy?

Many experts worry that people's use of technology will erode central components of democracy and democratic representation in the next 10 years. At the same time, they also anticipate significant social and civic advances to address emerging issues, which they say will result in positive outcomes for the public good.



SOURCE: The Pew Research Center, *Future of the Internet* survey, June 2020

DRUPAL DEADLINES TO WATCH

If you use the Drupal content management system, it's a good idea to upgrade to Drupal 9 before November 2021.

JESSE FIRESTONE, senior Drupal developer at Fíonta, explains why.



Why is Drupal recommended for associations?

Drupal is a highly regarded, reliable, and secure platform. Drupal is open-source, so it has the practical advantages of being safer and more stable—but it also comes with the charm and fellowship of a community effort. Associations in particular can benefit from Drupal's scalability, which helps their website grow with them without incurring technical debt, and its flexibility, which enables them to integrate with the variety of technologies and platforms necessary to do business in the modern era.

Why is it important for associations to upgrade to Drupal 9?

Drupal is dependent on a framework called Symfony. The current version, Symfony 3, will be considered end-of-life in November 2021 and replaced with version 4.4. Simply put, after that date security bugs in Symfony 3 will not be fixed, and Drupal 8 will become unsupported as well. The community will be focused on Drupal 9, so new functionality will only be released in versions 9.1 and beyond.

Are there specific benefits to upgrading to Drupal 9 related to COVID-19?

The effort to upgrade from Drupal 8 to Drupal 9 is relatively minor, so associations may want to take advantage of this time during COVID-19 to proceed with the upgrade. Associations that use Drupal 7 should begin

planning for the upgrade to Drupal 9, as this project represents a greater level of effort. However, Drupal has announced that as a result of COVID-19's effect on the economy, Drupal 7's end-of-life has been delayed an additional year, so there is some extra breathing room.



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Membership



24

ASSOCIATIONS
NOW
FALL 2020

MEMBERSHIP MEMO

Get Better D+I Data

Build trust and help
members self-identify

By Lisa Boylan To track your association's progress on diversity, equity, and inclusion, it helps to know your own membership demographics. That may seem obvious, but it's not easy, says Vicki Deal-Williams, FASAE, CAE, chief staff officer for multicultural affairs at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. ¶ A generation ago, some Black people hesitated to share their race on surveys because of fears of discrimination, she says. Today's generation doesn't provide it because they don't see it as an important factor for segmentation. Younger generations

are more diverse, and they define that diversity differently.

“Some of them can’t see a way of fully representing any of their dimensions by checking a box, because those dimensions don’t exist in isolation,” Deal-Williams says. “They are not just Black. They are Black and female, or Black and LGBTQ, or Black and Latinx.”

That’s why it is essential to give your members as many options to fully identify who they are. For example, “we have to consider sex and gender identity and offer individuals a way to self-identify without forcing them into categories others have chosen for them,” she says.

Collecting demographic data can be difficult, but, as with many things, the best way to get it is to ask for it. Trust will be key. “The only way to ask for it is to be fully transparent about why you want and need it, what you’re planning to do with it, and how you’ll safeguard it,” Deal-Williams says.

This year has provided innumerable challenges. People have lost faith in all kinds of institutions, Deal-Williams says, but they also recognize they can’t survive alone, and they know they will need to associate with others to raise a collective voice about their concerns—which they have seen firsthand can be effective.

“Hopefully, they’ll turn to associations as a source for that sense of community, and they’ll trust us as long as we don’t betray that trust,” she says, adding that it will be critical for associations to work to ensure confidentiality and appropriate use of this data.

“Addressing diversity requires a strategic approach. An organization has to determine where they are and create a vision of what they realistically want to achieve, and then set out on a journey toward that future state,” she says. “You’ll never know if you’ve made progress if you haven’t put a pin in where you started and track your path to note how far you’ve come.”

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

A GET-OUT-THE-VOTE DETOUR

How a multistate grassroots bus tour changed course

Kip Eideberg, the Association of Equipment Manufacturers’ senior vice president of government and industry relations, hit a roadblock when the pandemic arrived: It sidelined a grassroots initiative designed to meet members where they are—literally.

A get-out-the-vote bus tour was set to roll into member towns and build momentum in the lead-up to a critical election. That didn’t happen. What did happen—a digital “Equipped to Vote” campaign—is a testament to AEM’s member engagement.

AEM’s revised campaign features:

1 AN EVENT-IN-A-BOX. AEM looked back on previous initiatives to build the new one. Mimicking a previous “event-in-a-box” campaign, AEM sends giant boxes to participating members filled with promotional posters, hats, water bottles, and other giveaways and a how-to guide to help members stage their own grassroots events.

2 AN ONLINE ELECTION CENTER. The “Equipped to Vote” digital campaign features a 2020 online election center with tools and resources, interactive programming, and educational games for supporters to test their knowledge and win prizes.

3 A PLEDGE TO VOTE. The main goals of the digital campaign are to encourage supporters to take the pledge to vote in November and to lend nonpartisan support to candidates running for the House and Senate that back AEM’s legislative priorities.

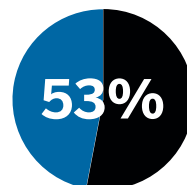
“We hope it will be a hybrid—a heavily digital campaign that still has a strong in-person element to it,” all powered by AEM members, Eideberg says. —L.B.

DATA POINT

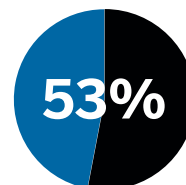
LISTEN TO YOUR MEMBERS

COVID-19 and the concurrent economic fallout have had a marked effect on associations’ ability to engage and communicate with members, according to Naylor Association Solutions and Association Adviser’s *2020 Association Communications Benchmarking Report*. The good news is that associations are focused on strengthening member engagement by providing more relevant, tailored, and responsive content. The pandemic has “forced associations to make daring decisions on how to innovate and engage with members in new ways, while also giving themselves the permission to fail fast and try again,” says Naylor’s Sarah Sain.

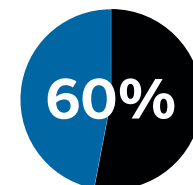
What now? Respondents who said they:



Need to do a better job of understanding why certain content resonates with members



Need to improve their understanding of members’ needs, demographics, and goals



Would improve their content strategy and content curation if they got an unexpected 50 percent increase in their communications budget

SOURCE: Naylor Association Solutions and Association Adviser’s 2020 Association Communications Benchmarking Report, July 2020

Meetings



26

ASSOCIATIONS
NOW
FALL 2020

MEETINGS MEMO

Virtual Accessibility

Online events must
be accessible too

By Samantha Whitehorne Like most organizations, the National Federation of the Blind had to quickly transition its 3,000-plus-attendee National Convention, originally scheduled to take place in July in Houston, to a virtual event due to COVID-19. ¶ But NFB had an additional challenge that most associations don't face: The majority of its attendees have at least a visual disability, and in some cases, both audio and visual disabilities. ¶ "While we were used to providing accommodations to our attendees at our face-

Meetings

to-face meetings, hosting a virtual event for the first time created some new considerations,” says John Berggren, NFB’s executive director of operations.

To ensure that the virtual conference was accessible to all attendees, NFB took a number of steps. As with previous events, the organization asked attendees to request accommodations ahead of the meeting.

The group also made sure to choose tools that are known to be particularly good for accessibility. For instance, all convention sessions were held over Zoom. Not only does it provide closed captioning, but it also creates automatic transcripts and supports screen readers. Twenty percent of attendees joined over the phone, and Zoom allowed them to mute, unmute, and raise their hand via the dial-in-only option.

In addition to Zoom, NFB also selected a virtual event platform, created by CrowdCompass, that offered several accessibility options. Plus, they hired professional captioners who could step in as needed and recruited members to serve as Zoom hosts to monitor for any accessibility issues during the conference’s 200-plus sessions.

“We wanted to give our attendees a lot of variety to make them feel comfortable,” Berggren says. “The virtual experience was just as new to them as it was to us.”

According to Berggren, NFB is happy with the experience it provided to its more than 9,000 virtual attendees. “It wasn’t perfect, but not much is the first go-round,” he says.

For other organizations looking to create accessible virtual meetings, Berggren offers a few pieces of advice. “First is to engage your members who have specific accommodation needs and ask them what you could be doing to help make their virtual experience successful,” he says. “Then, reach out to expert organizations and ask them how you can best execute on those needs.”

But more importantly, Berggren says, associations need to start planning their virtual events with accessibility in mind. “If it’s an afterthought, it’s too late,” he says. “And it will likely be a huge lift to get the tools you’ve already selected to work for your attendees with disabilities.”

SMART BUSINESS

FEE OR FREE?

Deciding whether to charge for virtual events

THE PROBLEM. When the American Society for Nutrition decided to switch its face-to-face conference to an all-virtual event 60 days out, Mary Pat Cornett, CMP, CAE, chief strategy and operations officer for ASN, said the team of 10 tasked with organizing it didn’t know a lot of things. Among them: whether people would actually be interested in attending a virtual offering. “Our meeting is all about connecting and people getting to see their colleagues in person, so we were a little anxious about what would happen,” she says.

THE TACTICS. Because of this uncertainty, ASN chose to not charge people to attend the online conference. The team also decided the event would not be billed as a replacement for the live event, but instead an entirely new one—Nutrition 2020 Live Online, a mix of live and prerecorded content.

THE RESULTS. The decision to make the meeting free led to significantly higher attendance than any previous in-person ASN event. Over the course of the four-day conference, 30,000 people from 164 countries participated—a number that far surpassed ASN’s expectations and usual 3,500-person attendance. For Cornett, it also confirmed something she long suspected—that ASN had a much wider audience it could tap into.

“To me, the biggest learning out of this whole thing is that there is absolutely a value to free, and for us, this is a game-changer for our organization,” she says. “Now people in our nutrition space have great confidence in us, and if we offer something now that’s virtual, they’re going to feel good about it.”—S.W.



DATA POINT

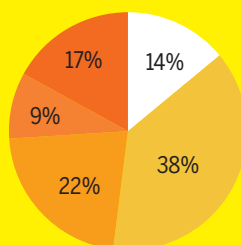
EXHIBITOR PARTICIPATION

Even as in-person events are reimagined as virtual, it’s not a given that your exhibitors will automatically move to your online format. In a survey, here’s what 13,435 exhibitors had to say about their expected participation over the next year.

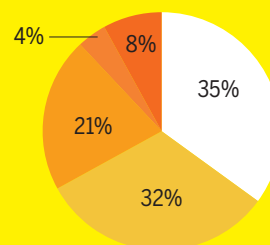
Number of Shows

- Zero
- One to Three
- Four to Six
- Seven to Nine
- 10 plus

In-Person Conference or Tradeshow



Virtual Conference or Tradeshow




SOURCE: Redefining Value for Today’s Exhibitors and Sponsors, Tradeshow Logic, May 2020

THE RISE OF THE HYBRID MEETING

Hybrid conferences, mixing in-person and virtual elements, may be the new normal for 2021 and beyond. They present plenty of logistical challenges, but also new opportunities for creativity and engagement. **by Mark Athitakis**





Association meeting planners have spent much of 2020 on shifting sands. In early March, when the COVID-19 pandemic was still more threat than reality in the United States, some associations were able to keep their in-person meetings intact. But by summer, most had shifted their conferences to virtual platforms.

Now, the prevailing question is what meetings will look like in 2021. Many associations are considering hybrid events—an in-person conference that accommodates virtual attendees who are skittish about travel or who may simply prefer that mode of learning and networking.

“There’s no question it’s the wave of the future,” says Sarah Michel, vice president of professional connexity at Velvet Chainsaw, an association meetings consulting firm. “We are changed forever.”

The tricky part is determining what that change looks like and how to adapt. Hybrid meetings make new demands on staffing, scheduling, pricing, tradeshows, attendee engagement, and more. Many are learning on the fly, but some have long experience with the format or are bringing innovative ideas to creating a compelling meeting—just one that might not look like last year’s meeting for some time.

Past Practice

In 2010, the American Payroll Association decided to experiment with its first hybrid annual meeting, adding a virtual element to its in-person conference. One motive for the shift was travel restrictions for government employees that reduced the pool of likely in-person attendees. But APA Executive Director Dan Maddux also saw an opportunity for the association to prospect for new members and attendees.

“We considered it an introduction to some of the layers and textures of the annual congress,” he says. “We were priming people to want to come to the live experience.”

In the years that followed, APA honed the particulars of the hybrid experience, essentially creating two versions of the same event. It staggered the dates for in-person and

Top Concerns About Hybrid Events

virtual participation, in part to keep tradeshow vendors from having to manage two audiences simultaneously. It tweaked session lengths. And in 2019 it made what's turned out to be a forward-thinking decision, putting a price tag on the virtual version for member attendees.

APA has already moved many of its educational efforts to virtual formats, Maddux said, which allayed skepticism. "The value proposition was there," he says. "People understood the value of it, so people didn't have a problem paying for it."

This year's APA conference was all-virtual, but its past experience has left it well-positioned for next year, Maddux says. In 2021, APA plans to host an in-person annual conference in the spring and a virtual version in the fall. "We created a whole new brand in the midst of a worldwide pandemic," he says.

One insight APA has gained is that speaking and presenting for two formats requires two very different styles and skill sets. "We train our speakers bureau of members to instruct in person and virtually," says Maddux, who recommends that all speaker contracts should contain language detailing how speakers will present and engage with a virtual audience, whether a virtual version is planned or not.

Finding speakers who have that flexibility—or training them to develop it—will be increasingly essential for hybrid events, says Michel.

"You need to understand that you're serving two audiences," she says. "There are points where you want those two audiences to converge and feel like one community, like in all main-room experiences. But even then that doesn't mean you just stream what's happening."

That means new kinds of attendee engagement, on two fronts.

New Rules of Engagement

A particular challenge of a hybrid meeting is that it necessitates new job roles. Meetings staffers might be

skilled at session prep for in-person meetings or facilitating online conversations—but perhaps not both.

"It's like adding a new event to the schedule with just as many steps to have a virtual program running at the same time or after the live event, without adding more staff to produce it," says Karen Vogel, managing partner at the Event Advisory Group.

One way an association can handle that, says Michel, is to deputize and train highly engaged members or well-known volunteer leaders, including board members, to serve as conversation facilitators on the virtual side of hybrid events.

"Imagine being a virtual attendee, and a well-known, high-influence association member is now moderating the chat and what's happening online," she says. "The event's networking value goes up. There's a big opportunity to use your volunteer leaders that way."

It may be worth taking the time to study up on what works best rather than hustle to create a subpar virtual event that alienates attendees. Earlier this year, the Airport Minority Advisory Council, a trade association representing minority-owned businesses in aviation, decided to outright cancel its 2020 annual meeting and present a hybrid event in 2021. Rather than try to stage a virtual event this year for an industry that's been especially hard-hit, AMAC decided to train its members on virtual events to build up their comfort level and experiment with session length.

"We want to know our audience and know what works for them," says AMAC Chief Operating Officer Anthony W. Barnes. "We've been doing a lot of trial runs and getting our members more used to virtual events."

The virtual events also give AMAC time to sort out the particulars of the hybrid conference's tradeshow, session length, and attendee interaction. It's exploring ways to have in-person and virtual attendees in particular business categories, like construction

Hybrid conferences aren't new, but the urgency to retool meetings due to COVID-19 has made many event planners anxious about making a pivot. A survey of meeting planners conducted in July by the firm etc.venues found that 73 percent of respondents were planning a hybrid event in 2020, but their top concerns were widely distributed:

Largest Barrier to Choosing a Hybrid Event

19%
Lack of experience

17%
Cost

17%
Risk of failure

17%
Perceptions of low attendance

16%
Confusion with technology

15%
Getting stakeholder buy-in

SOURCE: etc.venues, July 2020



You need to understand that you're serving two audiences. There are points where you want those two audiences to converge and feel like one community, like in all main-room experiences. But even then that doesn't mean you just stream what's happening." — **Sarah Michel, Velvet Chainsaw Consulting**

or concessions, communicate simultaneously. But Barnes notes that any hybrid plan will have to acknowledge that the environment is still changing.

"There's a lot we don't have clarity on," he says. "If we're optimistic and plan for three or four hundred people [in person] next year, are there still going to be social-distancing rules that will limit our numbers? Are we going to be able to serve food at a reception?"

Vogel recommends that associations take a cue from AMAC and take time to think—not just about the virtual elements of a hybrid event, but also about which communities are likely to attend in person. In the near future, in-person attendees are less likely to come from a particular member class and more from a particular region—those within driving distance of the venue.

"I think that if an association were smart, they'd really focus on where the event is next year and really try to draw in as many attendees as they can locally and regionally," she says. "Then for everyone else, make sure to have an offering to include them. But you had better make sure that you've got enough [attendees] within your local and regional area to have a successful live event."

The virtual program "is also an opportunity to draw an expanded audience of first-time, national, and global attendees that normally do not attend your event," Vogel adds. "The key is knowing what your members and the industry want and are willing to support."

Making Lemonade

Planning a hybrid event can provide an opportunity to rethink what kinds of in-person connections are meaningful for members. In June, the American Society of Golf Course Architects decided to cancel its annual conference this year in Cleveland. The hallmark of the conference, says ASGCA Director of Programs Aileen Smith, CAE, was a group trip to an architecturally significant golf course in the host city.

Moving to virtual removed that option for Cleveland. But it opened it up for the rest of the country.

"Getting together is really important to our members," she says. "There are so few people who do what they do."

So ASGCA leadership talked with members about creating regional golf gatherings where members within driving distance of a particular course can get together. ASGCA has given members leeway to arrange events on their own but asks them to communicate with the association so it can connect sponsors to the events. This year, it scheduled 13 such events across the United States.

"We're seeing this as a lemonade-making situation," Smith says. "It's an opportunity for us to flex muscles that we haven't used much before."

Golf has the benefit of being an activity that lends itself well to social distancing. The American Trail Running Association is similarly taking advantage of its discipline to stage a hybrid conference in 2020.

Terry Chiplin, a private event planner who stages the conference in partnership with ATRA, says that because the conference is typically small—about 200 participants—he decided to call registrants for its in-person 2020 conference individually to sense their comfort level with the meeting. Most were willing to attend in person but some were not, so he saw an opportunity to bring in more attendees and potentially new ATRA members by hosting a virtual conference that livestreamed sessions and included networking events in parallel with the in-person ones.

Discounts for virtual attendees are deep, which Chiplin says reflects the

lower cost of hosting a virtual meeting and makes access easier for those new to the organization. So while not everybody attending the U.S. Trail Running Conference in October will be jogging through Fayetteville, Arkansas, Chiplin is confident he's laying the groundwork for future in-person meeting attendees. And for a group of people who love the outdoors, the virtual event has an upside.

"It's a really elegant way of decreasing the carbon footprint of the conference but at the same time allowing outreach to grow," he says. "We are hopeful that the total number of people who attend will be larger than our past events. That's the vision."

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- "How an Association Turned Its Major Conference Into a Virtual Event in a Week," by Bob Moore, CAE, asaecenter.org, April 8, 2020
- "How to Design and Execute a Hybrid Meeting Strategy," by Matt Hughes, asaecenter.org, October 29, 2019

PLANNING YOUR FACE-TO-FACE

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ASSOCIATIONS
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FALL 2020

Associations were quick to convert their conferences to virtual events when COVID-19 halted in-person meetings. Looking ahead, associations and their attendees are eager to get back together face to face.

But how? **by Allison Torres Burtka**

omeback

WHILE MANY ASSOCIATIONS are planning for their “comeback” in-person event after coronavirus-related shutdowns, much remains uncertain. Federal, state, and local rules and guidelines are still in flux, and budgets are tight. How do you plan when you don’t know how many people can travel? How do you adjust the physical space so that people can stay six feet away from each other? How do you deliver the content attendees expect while also addressing their health and safety concerns?

In-person meetings will need to be redesigned from top to bottom, from the agenda to the expo hall to meals. All these things are doable—associations just need to be more creative and adaptable than ever.

“I think we just have to take the viewpoint of, ‘We can do something,’” says Aaron Wolowiec, CMP, CTF/MT, CAE, president and CEO of Event Garde. “It’s not like our hands are completely tied. We just have to return to in-person meetings slowly and get more creative.”

Space and Time

When event production company PSAV started thinking about the return of in-person meetings in the



Quick Tips for In-Person Events

earliest phases of recovery, the team considered the logistics required to host meetings with up to 25 people per room, then how to deliver the same presentation to 50 people in two rooms at the same location simultaneously, and then how to extend that across multiple venues, says Matt Johnsen, vice president of product management. This might mean “multiple rooms and multiple venues across multiple regions, but still being able to connect everyone together through various platforms, so that they can have that unified meeting experience.”

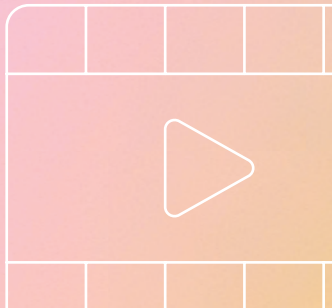
Rooms that are big enough for social distancing might require larger projectors and screens, as well as more microphones for both presenters and attendees. “The core technology required to host these types of meetings is going to be available pretty much across all markets,” Johnsen says. “The key difference here is that you’re likely going to be utilizing some of this equipment that you normally would use in a larger meeting setting.”

Associations also are considering how to safely hold educational breakout sessions. “I’m very concerned about making sure that we can provide access to that education, even if folks aren’t able to get into a particular room,” says Bethany Chirico, CMP, CAE, managing director of global meetings and business development at the American Industrial Hygiene Association. Planners will need to figure out what to do when a room hits its capacity, which could mean providing overflow space or a way for some attendees to access the session remotely, she said.

Planning for the 65 to 70 committee and volunteer groups that typically

Provide a preview.

To prepare attendees for the changes they’ll encounter at a post-COVID conference, the American Industrial Hygiene Association is considering creating a video experience that would show attendees “here’s what you’re going to expect from us X number of days out, here’s what you’ll need to bring. ... Here’s what the exhibit hall will look like,” says AIHA’s Bethany Chirico.



Document the event.

Associations should spend money to have a professional photographer onsite who can snap photos that can be used as stock art in future publications and marketing materials. Crowd shots from past in-person events “aren’t really relevant right now,” says Aaron Wolowiec, CAE, of Event Garde.

not everybody is following the same agenda, so that you can lighten the load a little bit in terms of traffic,” Johnsen says. “Attendees may feel more comfortable with shorter sessions, so they’re not in one particular room for an extended period of time.”

More time may be needed between session blocks as well, to allow people to get in and out of rooms while staying socially distant. Wolowiec says his team has been talking about staggering break times so that not everyone rushes to the restroom at the same time.

A New Look for Networking

Networking receptions will look a lot different too, since attendees will no longer be able to walk in, grab a drink, and start shaking hands with people. Associations will need to plan proactively, Wolowiec says, “to set up the rules and expectations and to set up the room, the food, the drinks, and the activities in a way that will encourage social distancing.” Without this structure, attendees may fall into old habits of gathering that bring them too close together.



Collect participant data that you might need later.

If an attendee, staff member, or venue representative tests positive for COVID-19, you may need to communicate with participants and the local health department as part of contact tracing, Wolowiec says.

So, what might a networking event look like? For one, there will be fewer highboy tables for people to stand around and fewer long lines for the bar or hors d'oeuvres table. "Instead, don't be surprised to see entry and exit protocols, one-way traffic flow, seating assignments at traditional banquet rounds, designated bars and food stations assigned by table, and a well-choreographed agenda of activities," Wolowiec says. These might include trivia games that attendees can download to their phones to play.

If You Build It, Will They Come?

Because different areas of the country are in various stages of shutdown and reopening, and (at press time) it's not known when a vaccine will be available, it's hard to predict when people will be able to travel to an in-person meeting.

Surveying members is critical. "For some of our clients, we're seeing numbers as low as 3 and 5 percent of members who say that they're permitted to or interested in attending an in-person event right now," Wolowiec says. He recommends asking prospective attendees whether they feel comfortable attending, whether they have employer-imposed travel restrictions, and whether their professional development budget has been cut.

"I can host the safest in-person

Stress the importance of mask and social-distancing guidelines.

Because the Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance is a chemical-oriented industry, members are used to following respiratory protection measures. Still, "I'm going to emphasize in a major way that they need to bring that mentality now to this part of the job, making sure that none of us makes each other sick," says Executive Director Kurt Riesenberg. "That'll be an important component, I think, of us being able to pull this off."



meeting I want, but if people just can't come, they can't come," he says.

AIHA is currently planning for its May 2021 annual conference in Dallas. "Will we in fact be one of the first shows to come back? Or will there be folks coming back in January, February, March, and what will we learn from them as we move forward?" Chirico says.

Budget uncertainty also makes planning difficult. "We have no idea how many people are going to come to see us in Dallas," Chirico says. "Are we budgeting for half the [usual] number, a quarter of the number?" The association also doesn't know whether the revenue the meeting brings in will cover the cost of everything needed to create a safe environment.

The Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance is also moving forward with plans for its 2021 Sprayfoam Show in February. "We are preparing to host it and committed 100 percent to it being on until we are told it cannot be," says Executive Director Kurt Riesenberg.

In negotiations with the hotel and venue, SPFA has built in as much flexibility as possible and has not

scheduled its 2022 show anywhere, so if the 2021 show needs to be cancelled, the 2022 event will be held there. "The whole world could change twice by the time the show comes around," he says.

Planning for the unknown also requires more collaboration than usual among association leaders and staff. "Now is not a time to set a meeting planner or meetings department out on their own as an island," Wolowiec says. CEOs and top leadership, including the board of directors, should also be included in these conversations.

For in-person conferences, Wolowiec recommends starting small, such as a local or regional event for 100 people or fewer.

"It's an opportunity to let people dip their toes in something that doesn't seem incredibly overwhelming, allows venues to start to get some practice, and allows the association to figure out what they did well and what they could improve for the future," he says. "Don't let those key lessons learned be on your biggest event of the year."

Ultimately, flexibility and creativity will be necessary for resuming in-person events. "There are lots of different ways to get to outcome Z that don't involve starting at the letter A," Chirico says. "This is our time to get creative and try some unique things."

ALLISON TORRES BURTKA, a longtime association journalist, is a freelance writer and editor in metro Detroit. Email: allison@atburtka.com

THE NEW BUSINESS ESSENTIAL FOR MEETINGS

COVID-19 changed pretty much every aspect of meetings, including the business side. As associations make plans for future meetings, it's more important than ever to get fundamentals like event insurance, contracts, and safety guidelines right. **by Rasheeda Childress**



It's often said that the only constant in life is change. And nothing has illustrated that more than COVID-19, which has upended business as usual for associations. While organizations had come to rely on event-related insurance coverage, contract language, and venue costs remaining relatively consistent, the pandemic has put all those things in flux.

"I don't think we're going to see a clear picture of what this is going to look like at least until the end of the year," says Beth Mauro, senior director of client services at Association Headquarters.

In order to mitigate risk, experts say organizations need to understand and navigate the changes that COVID-19 has brought to event insurance, contracts, and safety guidelines.



Insurance

As the number of coronavirus cases around the world was rapidly increasing, many associations began to take a closer look at their event cancellation insurance coverage. Typically, associations purchased event cancellation insurance to reduce losses if their meeting were to be canceled due to an "act of God," damage at the venue,

or something beyond their control. And before COVID-19, most associations could easily add a rider to cover communicable disease. However, the increase in pandemic-related claims is having an impact on the availability of this additional coverage.

"The big difference is, previously, you had the option to add communicable disease coverage to the policy," says Seth Fleischer, a business development professional at Aon Affinity. Now, "no carrier in the market is offering communicable disease coverage. Not just COVID-19, but no communicable disease."

Meanwhile, the price of event cancellation insurance has gone up significantly. However, even with those higher rates, insuring future meetings is still important.

“Should they wait for rates to level off? I don’t think that’s a wise decision,” says Lou Novick, national director, associations, in the nonprofit practice at Gallagher. “The value an association has in obtaining event cancellation early on is that it is not at risk that new causes of loss will be excluded. The classic example is an organization that bound coverage including communicable disease in 2019 for 2020, 2021, and 2022 would not have coronavirus excluded from coverage for those meetings.”

When purchasing insurance, ask your carrier if any other provisions have changed, and read the fine print. “The challenge is to make certain they know what they’re not getting,” Novick says. “Some carriers have decided to remove what is known as ‘enforced reduced attendance,’ or ERA. ERA is the feature of coverage that refunds to the insured association those amounts that are requested as refunds by exhibitors and attendees who would not make it to the meeting for reasons beyond their control—and for reasons that aren’t otherwise excluded.”

Another change is that some carriers now offer virtual meetings cancellation insurance, which is much less expensive than its in-person counterpart. “The registration fee is so much less than an in-person fee. Or someone is putting on a virtual event at no charge to the attendees,” says Fleischer. “That’s going to have an effect on premium.”

Coverage for hybrid meetings is also expected, but Fleischer says the

industry is still working out the pricing model on that. “A hybrid meeting could be 20 percent in person and 80 percent virtual,” he says. “I think the split of in-person versus virtual would guide what the policy is expected to look like.”

An additional important step, especially with virtual meetings as the current norm, is ensuring that third-party vendors are insured. “We had to make sure they were carrying cyber liability insurance,” Mauro says. “We are responsible for protecting the data of our members, so any partners we work with have to protect that data the same way.”



Contracts

Government-imposed restrictions on mass gatherings meant many associations

were unable to hold their meetings. Under “force majeure” clauses, some associations were able to cancel venue contracts without penalty. As associations plan future meetings, the right contract language will be extremely important.

Mauro says when closures began, her team spent a lot of time looking at contracts. “We went back to look at our force majeure clauses, timing, and when notifications had to be made, so we understood the climate and when things had to be done,” she says. “Going forward, it will become the norm for associations to assess meeting risk on a more granular level—looking at what is happening in

the world, in the industry you serve, and in the location where you will be producing your meeting.”

Jeffrey Tenenbaum, managing partner at Tenenbaum Law Group PLLC, says venues are trying to change the force majeure language to place more limits on when groups can use it.

“The hotels and big chains have come up with new language and new twists on how to write force majeure,” Tenenbaum says. “The hotels are pushing hard for it to say [the contract can only be canceled if it is] ‘illegal or impossible’ to hold an event. Their lawyers are telling them to not agree to ‘inadvisable, or commercially impracticable.’”

Another change is that venues are asking for large deposits upon signing the contract. “Of all the hundreds of association hotel contracts we’ve reviewed in the past, I’d say at least half, if not more, did not have any deposit required,” Tenenbaum says. “Now, I’m seeing there is a greater push from the hotel and convention center for deposits. If the hotel has a big deposit, they will have more leverage.”

Both Tenenbaum and Mauro note that even with good contract language in place, circumstances are not always favorable to making changes without penalty.

“It’s difficult to make anything ironclad,” Mauro says. “That is where good relationships with your partners are mission-critical. We all know that everyone is taking a hit in these difficult times, and we try to be really respectful of everyone’s situation.”

Speaker contracts are also evolving. As meetings pivot to virtual, Tenenbaum recommends that associations get permission for recording rights.

In addition, paid-speaker contracts should be reviewed thoroughly to ensure they can easily transition to a virtual event. “You may not need as many speakers; you’re not going to pay for travel fees,” Tenenbaum says. “Ideally, you want those agreements

Everybody wants to get back to live meetings. We are all seeking answers right now. We have to be patient and prepared while we keep the lines of communications open. —Beth Mauro, Association Headquarters

Top Takeaways

with the speaker to also have a force majeure clause. Otherwise, you have to negotiate to amend.”



Safety Compliance

Another area where meetings will change drastically, and in ways that are still unclear, is how to ensure that they comply with local and federal safety guidelines. The main problem is these rules can vary greatly by jurisdiction.

As jurisdictions began to shut down in March, Mauro was constantly monitoring cities where meetings were scheduled. “You’re tracking where your facilities are, to find out what the rules are in that particular county,” she says. “Sometimes counties are out of sync with the state. In every part of the country, there are different rules.”

The rules are also in flux, as scientists learn more about how COVID-19 is spread and ways to prevent transmission. “It is changing so fast right now; you can draft a policy, and it wouldn’t be relevant in six months,” Mauro says.

Tenenbaum says associations need to follow national and local standards of care when hosting future in-person events. “You need to do at least the bare minimum if you want to mitigate your liability,” he says. “You also want to shift obligations as much as you can to the venue. They all have a part to play to keep people safe.”

For example, if venues have a mask requirement, they would be in charge of enforcing it. “Don’t ever have a rule or a policy if you’re not going to enforce it,” Tenenbaum says. “That can [result in] a claim for negligence. If you have a rule, you need to generally enforce it.”

While some associations are considering having meeting attendees sign liability waivers, Tenenbaum cautions they are not a panacea. “It’s not going to solve all of your liability concerns,” he says. “Does it help? Yes.

Insurance

Continue to purchase event cancellation insurance, even though you can’t get communicable disease coverage. Also look at the fine print on your policies to ensure you haven’t lost any coverage. Consider cyber liability coverage for your event and the vendors servicing it.

Contracts

Be sure you have a strong force majeure clause in your contract to help mitigate losses from canceled events. Also, note that hotels are looking to change force majeure contract language and asking for bigger deposits.

Safety compliance

The safety rules are changing often as scientists learn more about COVID-19, so it’s important to keep up and recognize that your policies may need to evolve. Some associations are considering asking attendees to sign liability waivers, but those are far from foolproof. Having attendees agree to follow rules ahead of time is helpful.

Does it protect you? If the association was found to be grossly negligent, a waiver is going to do no good.”

If associations do decide to use a waiver, they must make sure it’s not buried in the fine print. “I would strongly recommend you have it jump off the page, affirmatively have [attendees] click that they accept that waiver, and make it clear and in plain language,” Tenenbaum says. “You want to be able to show that people understood it and went in with their eyes wide open.”

Also consider if asking attendees to sign a liability waiver could negatively affect attendance. Another tactic is to have attendees agree to follow meeting rules—from the association and venue—in advance. Registrants are typically more willing to do that than sign a liability waiver, Tenenbaum says.

As cities start allowing groups to gather again, associations will have to stay nimble. “Everybody wants to get back to live meetings,” Mauro says. “We are all seeking answers right now. We have to be patient and prepared while we keep the lines of communications open.”

RASHEEDA CHILDRESS is associate editor at *Associations Now*. Email: rchildress@asaecenter.org.



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- “The Role Attendees Play in Creating Safe Meeting Environments,” by Samantha Whitehorne, associationsnow.com, July 30, 2020
- “How to Turn the COVID-19 Conference Sponsorship Nightmare Into a Growth Opportunity,” by Bruce Rosenthal and Dan Kowitz, asaecenter.org, April 14, 2020

Membership Reshaped by Crisis

It's telling that when a pandemic hit, many associations moved immediately to get their members what they needed as fast as possible. **This shift to quickly delivering value will be key to maintaining membership through the crisis and in the long run.**

by LISA BOYLAN



When COVID-19 hit, one of the first things the Council for Exceptional Children did to support its members was to give away as many pertinent resources as it could—recorded webinars, journal articles, and more—and then use the value of those resources to seize a membership opportunity.

CEC created a free membership promotion that would give new members access through the end of the year, and about 26,000 special educators took

advantage of it. So far, CEC has retained nearly 20 percent of the members who came on during the free trial, says Executive Director Chad Rummel, CAE.

Once they saw a spike in interest that nearly doubled their membership, they began to wonder why those people weren't already members. "As we began talking to and surveying them, I was extremely excited to see how they identified an untapped need for professional development that I know we can provide," Rummel says.

COVID-19 has already had an enormous impact on membership, and how the future plays out is going to be different for each organization, says Sheri Jacobs, FASAE, CAE, president and CEO of Avenue M Group. But, she says, "I believe there are pandemic habits that are here to stay."

Jacobs compares the decisions many members will have to make about how they spend their organizational budgets to managing a household budget. They will assess what they really need and what they can do without. Many association members will likely need a different set of skills than they needed before the pandemic, because the way many professionals do

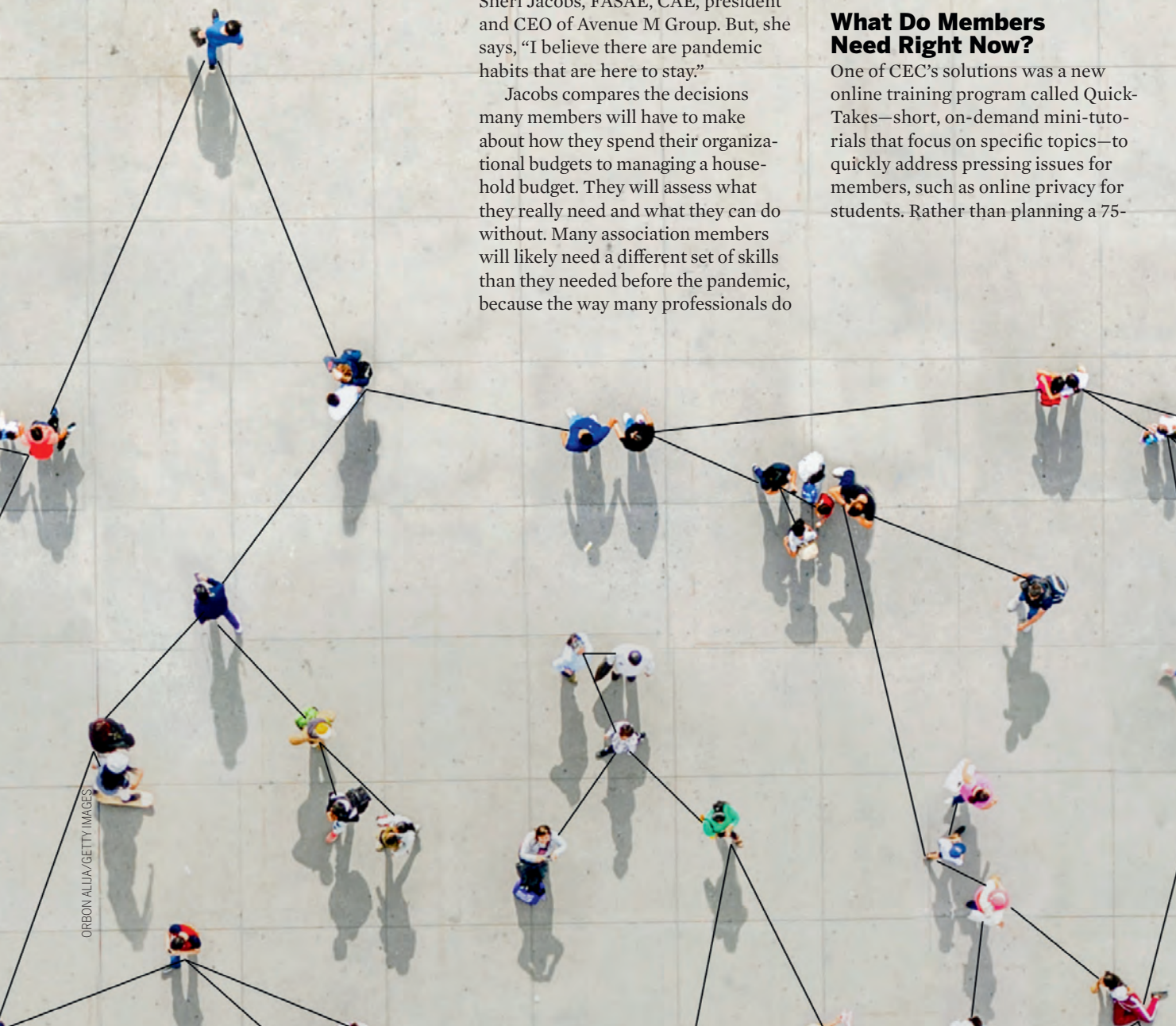
their jobs has changed dramatically.

"There's going to be a significant increase in certain kinds of retraining, or new skills, or access to processes or standards that members are going to find very valuable and are going to need," Jacobs says. "That's a positive that presents a huge role for associations."

The challenge is in how to package and deliver the new offerings, especially when association budgets are slashed. Jacobs says it goes beyond planning virtual events and asking: How do we get quick, easy, and reliable answers and new ways to work out to our members?

What Do Members Need Right Now?

One of CEC's solutions was a new online training program called Quick-Takes—short, on-demand mini-tutorials that focus on specific topics—to quickly address pressing issues for members, such as online privacy for students. Rather than planning a 75-



to 90-minute webinar, the QuickTakes sessions run eight to 20 minutes and provide fast and highly relevant answers for members with more agility than a webinar.


At the end of the free membership offer, CEC surveyed the 26,000 participants to ask why they took advantage of it and what they found most beneficial. Over 85 percent said it was the online training. Rummel says the team took that feedback and did a deep dive into their membership package offerings, which they determined were structured more around discounted add-ons than professional development opportunities. So they changed their membership packages.

Now CEC has three tiers of membership built around valuable content. The first tier offers access to members-only content and the in-house QuickTake video series. Middle-tier members get access to all recorded webinars in the library. And the top tier allows unlimited access to all CEC's live webinars. In addition, they used this jumpstart to launch a learning management system and their first five-part synchronous course, a timely resource designed for new teachers in the post-COVID classroom.

Rummel says members' professional development needs should be addressed not just at the programmatic level, but also in membership offerings. "These can't be seen as just add-ons when they are so fundamental to why members come to our associations," he says.

There Is No Playbook

Staff and volunteer leaders at the Association of the Wall and Ceiling Industry spent the last year anticipating an economic downturn, although not to the degree of the current crisis, says Chris Williams, CAE, AWCI's director of membership. AWCI repositioned its messaging when the pandemic struck to emphasize that it was there for members through good times and bad. The staff was confident in the association's value to members after a 2019 focus group where members said their dues payment gave them a significant return on their low initial investment.



"Membership isn't an expense—it's an investment in not only sustaining your business and your employees through this unique time in history, but positioning yourself to grow now—and as we emerge from the storm."

**— Chris Williams, CAE,
Association of the Wall
and Ceiling Industry**

Based on the organization's position as the networking hub for the industry, a message of "Together We Are AWCI," and the proven value of their dues payment, Williams says, "I believe we'll be able to meet our recruiting goals even in the face of economic hardship."

AWCI will keep its dues as-is through the 2020-21 membership year, but it plans to help some of its chapters spread out their membership dues throughout the course of the year. Chapters collect dues from members and pay a portion of each member's dues, in one lump sum, to the national office by July 1 of each year. AWCI is working with individual chapters to spread that lump-sum payment out over the course of the membership year.

This will likely be a popular trend, according to Jacobs, who says there is so much more opportunity to take

risks that were unthinkable in the recent past.

There is no playbook, she says. Associations will have to plan for a likely dip in revenue while also offering members more flexible payment options and installment plans. "It's what they're comfortable with. It's what they know," Jacobs says.

AWCI is launching a new membership management system in March 2021, which will provide an entirely new and interactive experience for its members. AWCI will tout increased access to member benefits and virtual networking and promotion opportunities created by enhanced member profiles, directories, and more in the new system.

This is an opportunity to reinforce the actual value of not only AWCI membership, but association membership in general, Williams says.



“Membership isn’t an expense—it’s an investment in not only sustaining your business and your employees through this unique time in history, but positioning yourself to grow now—and as we emerge from the storm,” he says.

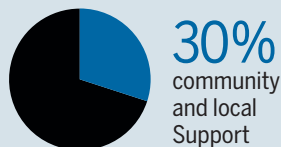
Expect the Unexpected

Nothing has turned out as planned since the advent of COVID-19—and that includes membership numbers. The American Society for Histocompatibility and Immunogenetics actually saw an increase in membership, with 100 new members joining since the same time last year, says Kathy Giovetsis, CAE, ASHI’s executive director. She attributes the growth to members’ need for ongoing education and continuing education credits.

Rather than immediately changing ASHI’s dues structure because of the

Best Benefits

At the end of the Council for Exceptional Children’s free membership offer, the group surveyed the 26,000 participants to see what they found most beneficial. Here were the top four benefits:



pandemic, Giovetsis’ team continues to analyze and reevaluate the membership categories and benefits linked to each tier. For example, the technologist membership category was originally offered for the first three years of a technologist’s career, but it was extended to five years to better align with the career trajectory of technologists. Recently, the ASHI board decided to lift the five-year restriction altogether and allow technologist members to retain that level of membership indefinitely.

The unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 crisis has upended many sacred cows and forced everyone to crush the phrase “think outside the box”—maybe forever—with actions that go way beyond the brainstorming sessions and flip-chart purgatories of the past. Virtual events and webinars quickly became the coin of the realm, but Jacobs cautions that “it’s a dangerous thing to rely on what’s happening today,” because change is happening so fast.

Jacobs credits the speed at which things are moving for waking up associations and getting them to “try new things and let the market tell them what works.” She adds, “We made decisions on what worked in the past based on the opinion of the highest-paid person in the room.”

She sees a lot of “very smart” association professionals who have been waiting for permission to explore new ideas and innovative programs. Her optimism about the future is rooted in the knowledge that change is going to happen rapidly, and for the good.

“I am optimistic because I’ve never seen such a great need for associations to exist,” Jacobs says. “But I’m also realistic in knowing that it’s going to take many iterations. We are not going to figure it out right out of the gate. And we’re going to have to be strong as we figure it out.”

LISA BOYLAN is a senior editor at *Associations Now*. Email: lboylan@asaecenter.org

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ASSOCIATION AGENDA

COVERING FUTURE RISK

Associations need government-backed pandemic risk insurance

By CHRIS VEST, CAE

WHILE MUCH ATTENTION DURING the COVID-19 pandemic has been rightly focused on gaining access for nonprofit associations to federal relief programs like the Paycheck Protection Program, it's also important that Congress take action soon to protect against economic losses from future pandemics or public health emergencies.

By now, associations are painfully aware of the catastrophic impact the novel coronavirus has had on face-to-face meetings, conventions, and tradeshow. A legislative solution supported by ASAE, the National Retail Federation, the U.S. Travel Association, and more than two dozen other organizations is the Pandemic Risk Insurance Act of 2020 (PRIA), introduced by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), a senior member of the House Financial Services Committee.

Maloney's bill would create the Pandemic Risk Insurance Program (PRIP), a system of shared public and private compensation for business interruption losses resulting from future pandemics or public health emergencies. Like the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program, created after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the PRIP would serve as a federal backstop to maintain marketplace stability and to share the burden alongside private industry. Business interruption insurance losses covered by the program include commercial lines of property and casualty insurance, event cancellation insurance, or other nonproperty, contingent business interruption insurance.

"ASAE thanks and applauds Congresswoman Maloney for introducing this important bill, which will no doubt help provide America's associations the security they need to fully reignite our community's far-reaching economic impact through industry-focused conferences, workforce development, and educational programming, among other critical services," said ASAE President and CEO Susan Robertson, CAE, when the bill was introduced in May.

CHRIS VEST, CAE, is director of public policy at ASAE. Email: cvest@asaecenter.org



FOUNDATION REPORT

SUPPORTING BUSINESS INNOVATION

New research shows associations play a major role in workforce development

By KEITH SKILLMAN, CAE

An ASAE Research Foundation study underscores the importance of readiness in eight key domains essential to supporting nondues revenue innovation. More importantly, the research validated a tool that association leaders can self-administer to assess their readiness state—compared to peers and a standard of excellence—and begin to chart a path to improvement.

The foundation research, led by Association Ventures, validated a maturity model among participating associations. Healthcare associations were chosen because disruption driven by value-based payment and digital transformation of healthcare delivery is intense. However, the results are widely applicable to associations.

THE EIGHT READINESS DOMAINS ARE:

- 1 Diverse talent.** This domain scored "mature" on average because of positive cultures and recognition of the value of diversity.
- 2 Collective purpose.** Mission clarity but lagging alignment with innovation put participating organizations at "progressing."
- 3 Empowerment culture.** Participants scored their organizations "progressing" because constructive internal exchange is valued, but little testing of ideas as a path to learning exists.
- 4 Engaged ecosystems.** Lack of co-creation of value with external business partners put participating groups at the "early" stage.
- 5 Operational agility.** Lack of process, metrics, and budget linkage to project management contributed to a maturity score of "lagging."
- 6 Digital practices.** This domain was also characterized as "lagging" due to digital and data platforms not being embedded and viewed as a core resource.
- 7 Catalytic leadership.** Lack of external funds for leaders to support innovators led to a score of "lagging."
- 8 Foresight governance.** This also was scored as "lagging," due to inadequate monitoring and attention to disruptive change drivers.

An overview report, *Advancing Business-Venture Innovation: A Readiness Tool for Health Associations*, and four companion briefs, including self-assessments, are available in the ASAE Bookstore at asaecenter.org/bookstore.

KEITH SKILLMAN, CAE, is senior research and content advisor for the ASAE Research Foundation. Email: kskillman@asaecenter.org.

EXECUTIVE PLANNER

ASAE'S UPCOMING EDUCATION LINEUP

The Bottom Line: Finance for the Non-Financial Manager—Virtual Half Day**November 5**

Online

You may not work in the finance department, but you still need some essential knowledge about your association's finances. In this half-day session, nonfinance employees will learn the basics, including key terminology, basic accounting concepts, and principles for interpreting financial statements and data.

3 CAE Credits
\$99 Members; **\$139** Nonmembers

CEO Symposium—Virtual Edition**November 9-10**

Online

This symposium is designed to help CEOs and their volunteer leaders work more effectively together. Participants will discuss current and anticipated leadership challenges, how to use research in knowledge-based decision making, and ways leaders can impact change and innovation at their organizations.

7 CAE Credits
\$249 Members; **\$349** Nonmembers

Leading Yourself Online Course Collection**November 11 - December 2**

Online

While there's a notion that some people are born leaders, the truth is that leadership skills are cultivated. This online course collection offers help honing a variety of skills designed to make better leaders. Participants work at their own pace over a three-week period.

10 CAE Credits
\$389 Members; **\$555** Nonmembers

Young Professionals Leadership Development Series: Emotional Intelligence for Workplace Effectiveness**January 7**

Online

The pandemic and its fallout made 2020 an emotional roller coaster. Start the new year right with this session on emotional intelligence in the workplace. Learn the importance of EI at work, how to foster EI behaviors, and how to use EI to be effective.

1.5 CAE Credits
\$39 Members; **\$49** Nonmembers

Exceptional Boards: Strengthening the Governance Team**January 25-26**

Location TBD

In this intensive two-day workshop, CEOs and their board members examine ways to strengthen their working relationships and improve the board's work. Due to changing safety regulations, this event will likely be a hybrid or all-virtual event. Check asaecenter.org for status updates.

11.75 CAE Credits
\$995 Members; **\$1,395** Nonmembers

Explore Technology to Move You Forward

This year, more than ever, associations have had to rely on technology to wade through an unprecedented pandemic. Some associations have discovered where their existing tech tools are falling short of providing members the level of service they've come to expect.

ASAE's 2020 Virtual Technology Exploration Conference will allow association staff to explore the various technologies available to carry out their organizational mission. This year's event will take all the things people loved about the in-person conference and bring them online so attendees can reap knowledge without worrying about safety or travel restrictions.

TEC attendees can tap into three learning tracks: foundational, for those seeking introductory information; applied, for those planning to build on existing knowledge; and strategic, for those who want to heighten their expertise.

Earn up to **8.5** CAE credits at the event.

What:	When:	Where:
Technology Exploration Conference	December 8-9	Online

Learn more at tec.asaecenter.org

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

Associations Now (USPS 1557-7562) is published quarterly, with a special additional issue in the summer, by ASAE: The Center for Association Leadership.

The mailing address of both *Associations Now* and ASAE is 1575 I St., N.W., Washington, DC 20005-1103. The publisher is Karl Ely, the editor-in-chief is Julie Shoop, and the editorial director is Samantha Whitehorne. The owner of the publication is ASAE.

In July 2020, ASAE published 21,933 copies of *Associations Now*; the average for the preceding 12 months was 21,472. The paid/requested outside county mail subscriptions for the July 2020 issue were 20,472; the average for the preceding 12 months was 20,122. No copies were distributed through other U.S. mail classes for the July 2020 issue or in the preceding 12 months. Total paid distribution for the July 2020 issue was 21,076; the average for the preceding 12 months was 20,781. The number of copies of the July 2020 issue that were not distributed was 723 (office use, leftovers); the average number of copies not distributed during the preceding 12 months was 557.

Ninety-nine percent of the circulation of the July 2020 issue, and 99 percent of the circulation in the preceding 12 months, was paid. *Associations Now* is published five times per year.

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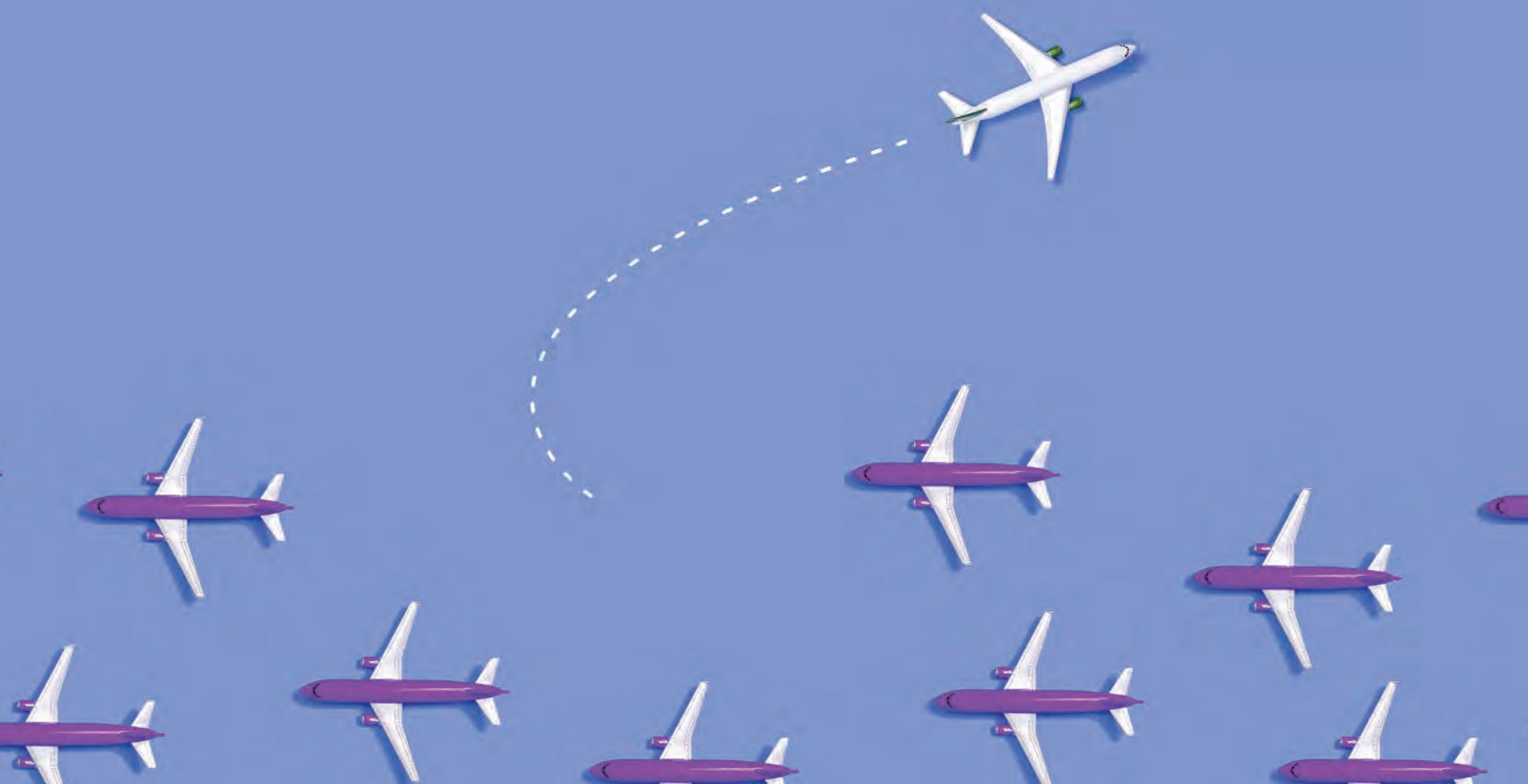
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DESTINATIONS WITH A DIFFERENCE





MEET ATLANTIC CITY

A hidden gem along the New Jersey shoreline

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ATLANTIC CITY IS A HIDDEN GEM ALONG

the New Jersey shoreline, offering visitors much more than a seaside destination. Our nine casino resorts have reopened with in-depth health and safety guidelines, along with additional restrictions following the governor's restart and recovery phased reopening.

Atlantic City is made up of more than 17,500 first-class hotel rooms that will suit the perfect accommodations for your attendee's complete comfort and relaxation, while providing the maximum safety and cleanliness precautions.

It's also just a short drive away! Our seaside destination is the perfect location for attendees to travel to in the comfort of a car. Atlantic City is located within a few hours drive of nearly one-third of the nation's population and is easily accessible from many cities along the Northeast.

Atlantic City can give you the space you need! With 1.8 million square feet of meeting space citywide and 486,600 contiguous square feet of exhibit space at the Atlantic City Convention Center, we have the wide-open space you need for your group to meet with the proper social distance.

Take a stroll on the world-famous Boardwalk, bask in the glowing sun, or take a dip in the Atlantic Ocean. The culinary scene in Atlantic City offers a wide range of opportunities and diverse budget appeal. We have seen a pivot to our al fresco dining and restaurant owners have been extremely

creative, while focused on the required safety guidelines.

Of course, our favorite pastime is shopping, and it's tax-free! Don't forget about the hottest shopping around, Tanger Outlets The Walk. The Walk has more than 100 retail establishments, including Kate Spade, Coach, Michael Kors, Guess, Banana Republic Factory, Vera Bradley, and more.

Located on the world-famous Boardwalk and steps from the casino resorts, the historic Steel Pier will channel your inner youth with amusement rides and games. One pier, one wheel, endless fun. Step onto one of the 40 climate controlled gondolas on Atlantic City's newest attraction, The Wheel. The third-largest "wheel" in the United States lights up the ever-changing skyline of Atlantic City and offers sweeping views.

Since Meet AC's inception in 2014, we have been growing our digital footprint to serve relevant Atlantic City content to the industry. Immerse yourself! Our award-winning virtual reality experience allows you to discover Atlantic City from anywhere. Take a site visit of the Atlantic City Convention Center, or catch a wave or two in the beautiful Atlantic Ocean for a firsthand experience like no other.

We have the venues, knowledge, and professional staff needed to plan and produce your meeting or convention. Events of all sizes will receive world-class treatment from our team to create memorable meetings together.

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ASSOCIATIONS
NOW
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EXPERIENCE ATLANTIC CITY'S

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THE BROADMOOR AND ITS WILDERNESS

Experiences encompass a total of 5,000 acres within the breathtaking Pikes Peak region. The main resort has 784 guest rooms and suites; championship golf courses; an award-winning spa; unique retail; and 20 diverse restaurants, cafes, and lounges. The Broadmoor's unparalleled combination of an illustrious history of innovation and distinctive culture of service has made it one of the country's premier event destinations for more than 100 years.

DYNAMIC MEETING VENUES

The Broadmoor understands the unique needs and attention required to create successful meetings. The Broadmoor's 125,000-square-foot exhibit hall addition makes it the only Forbes Five-Star, AAA Five-Diamond hotel in the country to operate a sizeable onsite exhibition space.

Explicitly intended to accommodate tradeshow and exhibits, the interior of the space is less formal and very versatile. Additionally, 32 breakout rooms surround the exhibit space, with direct interior connectivity to the adjoining Broadmoor Hall. Together, the exhibit hall, Broadmoor Hall, International Center, and Colorado Hall will comprise "The Broadmoor Event Center." Add in the main campus meeting space and you have 315,000+ square feet to offer your group.

For a complete change of pace, meet at the all-inclusive Cloud Camp, which features 22 scenic, well-appointed lodge rooms and cabins. The luxurious lodging is complemented

by the 1,500-square-foot Overlook meeting room, a fully equipped, audiovisual-ready meeting space.

GET OUTDOORS!

As luck would have it, Colorado Springs is known as an alpine desert and, just as Mr. Spencer Penrose anticipated, his summer guests would be traveling from high humidity and sweltering heat. The Broadmoor and The Broadmoor's Wilderness Experiences are the perfect destinations to enjoy a temperate climate, consisting of 300 days of sunshine and low humidity. Thanks to the beautiful weather, visitors to The Broadmoor spend much of their time outdoors: hiking, golfing, mountain biking, fly fishing, or simply relaxing.

At The Broadmoor, nestled in the elbow of Cheyenne Mountain, nature's playground is knocking at our backdoor. Allow yourself to step outside of your comfort zone and experience flora at its finest. Kick it up a notch by taking the next 8/10 of a mile by foot from the entrance to the base of the falls, add the 224 steps to the top of Seven Falls, and incorporate the trail system at the summit to round out your experience while enjoying the picturesque beauty. Need a quick detour? Fly through Cheyenne Canyon, above Bristlecone Pine treetops and over the "Grandest Mile of Scenery" with The Broadmoor Soaring Adventure. The Woods and Fins courses consist of 10 ziplines, two 200-foot suspension bridges, a 180-foot controlled rappel to the canyon floor, and an overwhelming sense of accomplishment.

AN ICONIC ADDITION TO THE LEGENDARY

BROADMOOR.



Looking for a grand space for your next trade show or exhibition? The Broadmoor Exhibit Hall, a 125,000-square-foot complex, featuring a 93,500-square-foot exhibit hall and 32 impressive meeting rooms, is unlike any other. The two-story structure perfectly complements The Broadmoor Event Center and brings the total meeting space to over 315,000-square feet. Providing everything you need for a spectacular event. Contact Curtis Robison at The Broadmoor today for more information.




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VISITDALLAS

Dallas hospitality community leads the nation by seeking GBAC STAR cleanliness accreditation

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THERE ARE A FEW PHRASES THAT WILL

forever define the COVID-19 global pandemic: social distancing, flattening the curve, shelter in place, and, now, “the new normal.” As repetitive as these words have become, there’s no denying that we live in a new time with new rules. The Dallas hospitality community stepped up and implemented standardized safety protocols for hotels, the convention center, and city venues, adding some certainty to very uncertain times.

In May, VisitDallas and the Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District (DTPID) announced a collaborative initiative to lead the nation by becoming the first destination to seek Global Biorisk Advisory Council (GBAC) STAR accreditation designating Dallas hotels, the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center Dallas (KBHCCD), and selected city-owned arts and cultural institutions as sanitary and safe.

In July, The Westin Galleria Dallas announced it is officially the first hotel in Dallas to achieve the cleanliness accreditation. Currently more than 20 additional hotels, both Dallas airports, and the KBHCCD are well on their way to earning accreditation.

“When visitors, meeting attendees, and business travelers return to enjoy our great city, we want them to have peace of mind that Dallas is doing everything we can to create the safest and healthiest environment possible,” said

Craig Davis, president and CEO of VisitDallas.

The initiative—administered by a division of ISSA, the worldwide cleaning industry association—is the gold standard for cleaning, disinfection, and infectious-disease prevention protocols. The comprehensive program covers everything from SOPs and employee health to cleaning supplies and smart technology solutions. From sanitization stations to contact-free staff encounters, Dallas hotels are leading the nation in safety procedures and protocols.

“We know many Dallas hotels have their own individual and brand-led sanitary programs,” said Greg White, chair of the DTPID and general manager of The Westin Galleria Dallas. “This third-party accreditation program provides an extra layer of protection and trust to ensure that hotels and other key city facilities are in a safe, sanitary, and healthy condition.”

The city’s entire hospitality community is working hard to ensure that Dallas is a certifiably safe place to travel for work and fun.

“We applaud VisitDallas and the DTPID for their leadership in pursuing GBAC STAR accreditation,” said GBAC Executive Director Patty Olinger. “Through the accreditation process, Dallas illustrates that it has a comprehensive program in place to ensure a clean, safe, and healthy environment for all its visitors.”

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A TOP MEETING DESTINATION

#5 ON CVENT'S LIST OF TOP MEETING DESTINATIONS FOR 2019 (UP FROM #6 IN 2018)



ACI World, March 2020



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**#1 IN THE STATE OF
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Forbes, 2018



The Dallas Morning News, March 2019

top 10
**NORTH AMERICAN
MEETING DESTINATIONS
FOR 2019**

Successful Meetings, September 2018



WalletHub, October 2018



Air Transport World,
January 2019



Condé Nast Traveler,
October 2018



CompTIA, October 2018



Site Selection, 2018

These are just a few things our visitors and industry leaders are saying about Dallas. That's why it's the perfect place for your next event—whether it's a meeting for 10 or a convention for 10,000. From two international airports to hotel options ranging from economy to luxury, we've got everything you need to make your meeting a success. So what are you waiting for? Book your event in Dallas today.

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AS AN INDUSTRY BUILT AROUND HANDSHAKING

and gathering and networking, the landscape of meetings is changing dramatically. Visit Irving, the Irving Convention Center, and Irving's hotels and venues have collaborated to implement extensive safety protocols to provide peace-of-mind and ensure your group can meet safely—when you're ready. Specifics are outlined on our website.

DON'T JUST THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX, GO OUTSIDE OF THE BOX!

Room sets and event F&B will look different, but we're ready with social-distancing plans in place. And we have lots of outdoor venues! While any ballroom can be set with social-distancing measures, the risk of spreading the coronavirus has been found to be lower outdoors. And the closed-off nature of indoor events feels less natural, making interactions feel less organic. That said, an outdoor event lawn, patio, courtyard, waterfront terrace, or festival plaza might just be a win-win strategy, and we have them all.

FLEXIBILITY TAKES CENTER STAGE DURING COVID-19

Our city, convention center, and hotel partners are also working together to help mitigate financial risks with flexibility and favorable contract terms for our clients, and we're introducing a zero-attrition program soon. Plus, many Irving hotels are also offering added amenities and benefits.

MEANWHILE THE BEAT GOES ON IN IRVING

Irving rocks! It may be a cliché, but we truly are a hidden gem. With a beautiful lake and Venetian-like waterways throughout the master-planned community of Las Colinas,

Irving is charming, clean, and safe. The area's Las Colinas Urban Center is home to a new, walkable entertainment district (now more important than ever), and this district is completely reshaping the convention experience. The area houses dining, nightlife, and accommodations anchored by the Irving Convention Center and its Westin headquarters hotel. Irving's go-to entertainment destination, the Toyota Music Factory, features a thriving music and foodie scene, plus unique event venues, ranging from offsite meeting spaces to special event sites. On nights when the amphitheater—The Pavilion—isn't rockin' tunes, the venue is available for groups from 40 to 4,000.

SMALL-TOWN EASE, BIG-CITY FLAIR

We're easily accessible and affordable, but still offer all the bells and whistles. Irving is less than a three-hour flight from either coast and minutes from Dallas/Fort Worth International and Dallas Love Field. With more than 85 hotels and 13,000 rooms, Irving offers options to suit every taste and budget—from full-service, five-star luxury at the Four Seasons, to affordable limited-service options. Well-designed convention districts, where everything is walkable, cut costs on transportation and logistics.

AN EXPERIENCE AS BIG AS TEXAS

When you choose Irving, you'll find everything you expect a meeting destination to offer, but remember, everything is bigger in Texas and, in Irving, we like to say everything's better! We deliver an at-your-service attitude, first-tier accessibility, accommodations, and amenities. And we serve it with a big side of southern hospitality and a Texas cultural immersion experience.



“Harmony”

“Our industry is resilient and our future full of promise. Collaboration. Connection. Relationships. Partnership. These are the strands in our DNA that set the meetings and events industry apart.”

– Maura Allen Gast, FCDME, Executive Director, Visit Irving



Our hearts go out to everyone during this challenging time. We hope you've been inspired by the acts of kindness all around us. We look forward to having you Visit Irving . . . later. Until then – stay home, stay kind, stay connected! The beat will go on in Irving, and when it does, we hope you'll be here to rock with us.

IRVING ROCKS Innovative Meetings and Events


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TACOMA AND PIERCE COUNTY

Plan now, visit later

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a metropolitan city, and a wide-open sea and waterfront into one destination, whether you're talking to meeting delegates or leisure travelers, you're offering something rare, if not unique, in the United States. It's a destination built to inspire.

And while we're waiting to welcome large groups due to COVID-19, planning never stops.

In the meantime, we've built skyline-changing infrastructure to make holding a meeting in Tacoma an even easier choice. The new Marriott Tacoma Downtown recently opened, adding 304 guest rooms and just over 20,000 square feet of meeting space to the downtown core, with the largest ballroom being 10,500 square feet. Much of the hotel, including the rooftop outdoor events center's 6,500 square feet, features views of Mount Rainier, downtown Tacoma, and the Salish Sea.

Combined with the Hotel Murano, Courtyard Tacoma Downtown, Silver Cloud Inn Tacoma Waterfront, and Holiday Inn Express & Suites, downtown Tacoma now offers more than 1,000 convention-ready rooms within walking distance of the convention center.

What this really means is convenience for the meeting planner, and for attendees.

Located just 18 miles south of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, a meeting attendee's Tacoma experience often starts downtown at the Greater Tacoma Convention Center (GTCC). It's the city's largest meetings venue, with 119,000 square feet of meeting and exhibition space, sweeping views of the Salish Sea and Mount Rainier, and only a couple walkable blocks from the Museum District, dozens of restaurants and bars, and several hotels. Making downtown Tacoma feel even more convenient is the free-to-ride Tacoma Link Light Rail, which runs through the center of downtown, seamlessly and safely connecting attendees to even more attractions, performing arts, restaurants, taprooms, and museums.

Tacoma's thriving Museum District lets attendees wander amongst six world-class museums just a few minutes' walk from GTCC, and features a constantly refreshed stream of historical, nautical, automotive, and artistic exhibitions. As the hometown of glass-art legend Dale Chihuly, art is in Tacoma's DNA, and the Museum District contains not one, but two art museums: The Museum of Glass and Tacoma Art Museum. Meeting planners consider these perfect venues for welcome receptions or offsite events when using GTCC, and attendees love to explore the Chihuly Bridge of Glass, a 500-foot pedestrian overpass with 2,364 pieces of Chihuly's glass artwork that connect the two museums.

Since many attendees spend their breaks between meetings with the waterfront and Salish Sea on one side and Mount Rainier towering over the city on the other, pre- and post- trips become a must. Mount Rainier offers outdoor adventure or relaxing walks to waterfalls. Gig Harbor is a waterfront village just 15 minutes from the convention center. Sumner and Puyallup are pure Main Street Americana, with antique shops, bakeries, parks, and cafes lining beautiful downtown streets. DuPont and Lakewood are dotted throughout with golf courses and nature trails. Fife is bursting with gaming and entertainment. Pierce County is truly a mountain, city, sea experience for any level of activity.

All this packed into a midsized city means that when your meeting is in town, you run the show. Restaurants know you're coming and welcome your attendees. Museums are ready to serve. There's a genuine excitement that can't be replicated in bigger cities, and award-winning service from Travel Tacoma—Mt. Rainier Tourism and Sports that's ready to make the planning process as easy for you as the decision to attend will be for your attendees.

We can't wait to welcome you to Tacoma and Pierce County.

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TRAVEL TACOMA MT RAINIER tourism & sports



Tacoma, Washington

An inspiring, artistic waterfront destination with unmatched service that is right-sized and convenient for you and your attendees

CONVENIENCE

- Convention center just 18 miles from Sea-Tac International Airport
- Easy walking distance to six museums, a theater district, the waterfront, hotels, restaurants, and breweries
- Free light rail connects Convention Center to even more dining and recreation

QUALITY

- Mid-sized meeting destination with 1,000+ rooms in the downtown core near the convention center
- Range of downtown accommodations includes full-service, select-service, extended stay, boutique, and even waterfront

SERVICE

- Tacoma named #1 for mid-sized meetings and convention center listed as a top-20 venue in North America
- Award-winning sales team available every step of the way
- Support for planning of experiential pre/post activities

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PLANNING CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

during the current health crisis is scary and confusing—and poses even greater challenges and uncertainty. Social distancing and face masks are the first line of defense, but there are other protocols that we can implement. Combating fears and instilling confidence will only happen with taking the right information—the facts about prevention—to create a scientifically proven plan. And Salt Lake is doing just that.

We don't just talk of safety; we're getting a degree in it. The Salt Palace Convention Center is working alongside the GBAC® (Global Biorisk Advisory Council) and ISSA® as part of their safety accreditation program. They are the gold standard in the cleaning industry, specializing in outbreak prevention, disinfection, maintenance protocols, and workplace practices to combat infectious disease. This all culminates with stringent standards to maintain and establish a safety seal of approval to our facilities. These are no ordinary rules of merely moving seats six-feet apart and remembering not to shake hands. There are 20 GBAC STAR™ program elements designed for specific task performance we are under stringent guidelines to follow. And we're going to, because your safety, confidence, and peace of mind are the only things that matter.

Yellow and orange for a goal of green. Current risk levels call for a reimagined vision of how we can continue to serve you, starting with facility and room capacity, which will be lowered and accommodated to whatever event you would like to host. Planning, setup, and services will all be adjusted and tailored without compromising the integrity of

your assembly, with additional spacing between chairs and tables, adjustments to food and beverage service stations, and social-distancing signage. Even the restrooms will have stall and urinal closures to maintain your circle of safety.

The crowd has spoken. And they would prefer not to be one. So, we are implementing tiered arrival and departure times for attendees, limiting the number of people to admit to any event, ticket sale reductions, multiple sessions of the same function, and other solutions to maintain every precaution.

The sanity of sanitized. Hand-sanitizing stations will be placed in every area of the facility for your convenience. We also encourage the use of a face mask and have given the right to all event planners to restrict access to their contracted space if they deem wearing one essential.


Summer should be the only thing over 100.4°. Entrance screenings and temperature checks will be implemented when you enter our facility for any events. If you're ill, stay home. No game, meeting, or celebration is worth the consequence.

Even our building is maintaining its health. The Salt Palace Convention Center, in partnership with Visit Salt Lake and PSAV, has attained Level 1 of the APEX/ASTM Certification from the Events Industry Council and is a current member of the American Society of Materials Testing. This means we're practicing green initiatives and being a better friend to the environment.

We're doing this through our 6,006 rooftop solar panels, LED lighting, waterless urinals, drip irrigation, and soon—paper-free events.



This is **THE PLACE** THIS IS SALT LAKE



This is the place that's home to the new, \$4.1 billion Salt Lake City International Airport, the nation's first international hub airport built in the 21st century. Larger, more efficient and more tech-savvy, The New SLC makes Utah's capital city even more accessible. Its design featuring open spaces, stunning mountain views, more shops and more restaurants makes travel to Salt Lake even more enjoyable.

"SLC International has exceptional access and proximity to the city," says Airport Director, Bill Wyatt. "Continually ranked #1 in the country for on-time arrivals and departures, the new airport will make travel even more efficient."

So whether you're a veteran business traveler, eager convention-goer or thrill-seeking vacationer – this is the place. This is Salt Lake.

SALT VISIT **LAKE**

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CHARACTERIZED BY DIVERSE MEETING

districts, expansive outdoor event spaces, entertainment for every curiosity, and an expansive 200-acre convention campus, Atlanta puts meeting and event possibilities on a different level. Where to start? The city's meeting districts and in-town neighborhoods—each with their own flavor of community charm, culture, and investment in the future of meetings and conventions.

Atlanta's downtown, walkable convention and entertainment district offers more than 12,000 hotel rooms, 733,000 square feet of versatile exhibit space, and a largely diverse mix of restaurants within a mile of the Georgia World Congress Center. Notably, GWCC—America's fourth-largest convention center, with more than 1.1 million square feet of contiguous exhibit space—led the nation as the first convention center in America to achieve GBAC STAR™ facility accreditation from the Global Biorisk Advisory Council. The GBAC STAR program helps commercial and public facilities of all sizes establish and carry out an organized approach to cleaning, disinfection, and infection prevention.

Downtown's meeting options don't stop there. Unique spaces like Atlanta Convention Center at AmericasMart and 200 Peachtree, as well as top attractions like the National Center for Civil and Human Rights, Chick-fil-A Fan Experience, Georgia Aquarium, CNN Center, and World of Coca-Cola, make meeting in this district all about options.

Midtown is the heart of Atlanta's arts and cultural community. The buzzy district offers 4,800 hotel rooms and 198,000 square feet of meeting and event space for

small to midsized meetings. After the meeting, attendees can enjoy extraordinary exhibits, musical performances and entertainment for all ages at award-winning venues like Alliance Theatre, Fox Theatre, High Museum of Art, and Museum of Design Atlanta. Locals and visitors alike congregate at Piedmont Park, Atlanta's favorite green space, for festivals and concerts. This district is also home to some of the city's best restaurants, trendy boutiques, and chic nightclubs.

Embodying luxury and storied Southern charm, Buckhead is Atlanta's meeting district that adds style to any meeting or conference. The neighborhood reigns supreme when it comes to high-end accommodations, with more than 5,600 hotel rooms and 206,000 square feet of meeting and event space. Exquisite eateries and ultra-luxe shopping spots—like The Shops Buckhead Atlanta, Phipps Plaza and Lenox Square—add to this neighborhood's posh profile.

In Atlanta's in-town neighborhoods, attendees can uncover exciting spots off the well-worn tracks or revitalized areas like Ponce City Market. Renowned and diverse institutions like The National Center for Civil and Human Rights or the High Museum of Art are peppered throughout the blocks and are just a sample of the city's multicultural landscape. Circling the core of these neighborhoods is Atlanta BeltLine, which offers trails, walkways, open green space, and parks set along the 22 miles of reclaimed railroad tracks.

There's so much more to discover in Atlanta. To explore more meeting options throughout the districts or for planning tools and more information, visit AtlantaMeetings.com.





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EXPERIENCE COLUMBUS

Columbus capitalizes on safety amidst COVID-19 pandemic

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COLUMBUS HAS SHOWN TIME AND AGAIN

that it's a city built on bold ideas and fueled by relentless optimism. As a community, we dream big and let nothing stop us from turning today's dreams into better tomorrows. Any of the nearly 6,000 attendees of last year's ASAE Annual Meeting & Exposition who held a baby kangaroo, danced to John Legend, or sipped on water infused with Smartfarm herbs knows this to be true.

Right now, when life seems to be put on hold, we recognize that it's more important than ever that we look forward and work together to outlast the spread of COVID-19. One of Columbus' hallmark characteristics that has been essential to making meetings a success is the spirit of teamwork and collaboration that runs throughout our city. At the Harvard Business School, it's called "The Columbus Way," signifying that the way we cooperate is far from typical. In Ohio's capital, we're always "all in" to bring the community together to ensure successful events, and now we're applying that same energy to health and safety.

LIVE FORWARD PLEDGE

Columbus has begun the process of reopening amidst the COVID-19 crisis and is committed to doing so the right way to stop the spread of the virus. More than 150 businesses have signed the Live Forward (FWD) Pledge, a commitment to:

- follow guidelines set forth by local, state, and federal health officials;
- require employees and guests wear proper protective gear;
- implement proper social-distancing practices.

We know from research conducted by Longwoods International that safety is every traveler's top priority when planning a trip while COVID-19 persists, and that 61 percent are more likely to travel to a destination where masks are required. Ohio has been at the forefront of best practices since the onset of the pandemic, and a strict citywide masks mandate exists on top of the state mandate.

Look for the orange CBUS FWD window decal the next time you're in Columbus as an easy visual indicator of which businesses have made the health and safety of their patrons a priority upon reopening.

GBAC ACCREDITATION

While meeting size is currently capped at 300 in Ohio, Experience Columbus is preparing for the return of larger gatherings by coordinating citywide pursuit of the Global Biorisk Advisory Council's (GBAC) STAR™ Accreditation. This performance-based program is the cleaning industry's only outbreak prevention, response, and recovery accreditation, offering third-party validation for facilities.

Primary visitor touchpoints that have currently leveled-up their FWD Pledges with this commitment include John Glenn Columbus International Airport, Greater Columbus Convention Center, Central Ohio Transit Authority, the Hilton Columbus Downtown, Hyatt Regency Columbus, Hyatt Place Columbus/OSU, Courtyard Columbus OSU, The Grand Event Center, Nationwide Arena, and Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens.

Rest assured that when your group is ready to meet in person again, Columbus will work with you to plan a safe and successful meeting.





LIVE TO CRUSH EXPECTATIONS.

Follow your instincts. Blaze a new trail. Reimagine what's possible.

Columbus is doing what it takes to make the new normal a more successful normal with our new citywide "Live Forward" safety pledge and our pursuit of the GBAC STAR™ cleanliness accreditation.

Learn more at ExperienceColumbus.com/meet



COLUMBUS
LIVE FORWARD



VISIT LAUDERDALE OPEN FOR MEETINGS



The Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center \$1 billion expansion project is underway. The transformed venue incorporates ASM Global's *VenueShield* environmental hygiene protocol to provide the highest levels of cleanliness and safety.

And with Visit Lauderdale's Safe + Clean Pledge you can be assured that hotels, restaurants, attractions and other businesses are going above and beyond to keep your group safe and healthy. The expanded convention center opens in phases beginning in October 2021 with full completion anticipated in 2024. Be among the first to reserve your meeting space between 2021 and 2024 and it could be free. Learn more about our \$10 million in free meetings space offer at sunny.org/meetings





GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE

Your meeting is a go

CONTACT

Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau

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CONVENTION CENTER REIMAGINED

The Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center is undergoing a \$1 billion expansion project and will be bigger and better with 1.2 million square feet of space. The transformed venue will feature 350,000 square feet of contiguous exhibit space and a new 65,000-square-foot waterfront ballroom, plus original dining concepts, enhanced water-taxi access, and an expansive outdoor waterfront plaza available to the public. The project opens in phases beginning in October 2021, with full completion anticipated in 2024.

10 MILLION REASONS TO MEET IN GREATER FORT LAUDERDALE

Be among the first to reserve meeting space in the newly expanded Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center, and it could be free. The convention and visitors bureau is giving away \$10 million in meeting space for events booked during eligible 2021-2024 dates.

SAFE + CLEAN PLEDGE

The safety of planners, meeting attendees, visitors, and area residents is our highest priority at Visit Lauderdale. Hotels, attractions, restaurants, public facilities, and businesses throughout Greater Fort Lauderdale are taking the Visit Lauderdale Safe + Clean Pledge to provide a unified message that health and safety standards and protections against the spread of COVID-19 are a top priority.

PROTECTED WITH VENUESHIELD

As safety is a top priority, the expanded center is being designed with ASM Global's *VenueShield* protocol to provide the highest levels of cleanliness and safety, while inspiring the confidence of planners and attendees, all in partnership with leading medical professionals, industry experts, and public health officials.

THINGS TO DO

Explore the area's diverse dining scene, including everything from seafood and gastropub menus to vegan and farm-to-table fare. Sip on a cocktail, and soak up the views at one of the many waterfront restaurants. And follow the Greater Fort Lauderdale Ale Trail to find local brews at some of the area's best breweries and craft beer bars.

Your group can also head out on an epic Everglades adventure. Round out your event with a wellness or shopping excursion. Greater Fort Lauderdale offers an array of spas and wellness centers, plus world-class shopping like Sawgrass Mills, The Galleria at Fort Lauderdale, and Las Olas Boulevard.

Do more than meet your goals. Make an impact on your attendees. Learn more about meetings in Greater Fort Lauderdale at sunny.org/meetings





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Savannah is ready to “wow” your meeting attendees

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VisitSavannah.com

DISCOVER WHY SAVANNAH IS THE JEWEL

of the South for meetings and conventions. With ample meeting venues in a city steeped in history, with an amazing food culture and charming places to stay, you'll please your convention crowd by making Savannah the spot for your next meeting.

Savannah is home to a multitude of meeting places, ranging from characteristic historic homes to the 330,000-square-foot Savannah Convention Center. Plan something a little different and host a meeting on one of Savannah's elegant city squares, or stage a one-of-a-kind themed event in one of our museums or theaters. If versatility is what you're looking for, the Savannah Civic Center delivers with 25,000 square feet of exhibit space and a spacious 2,500-seat auditorium. Of course, our many hotels, inns, and restaurants provide a wealth of options for meetings and events of all sizes.

Savannah's unique venues are ready to accommodate events of all sizes in a cautious and socially distant way. The Savannah Convention Center is situated on the Savannah River and offers fantastic waterfront views as well as plenty of space. They are also among the first wave of convention centers to receive GBAC STAR accreditation for cleaning, disinfection, and infectious-disease prevention.

We have hotels and motels to suit all tastes and budgets. The includes the new JW Marriott at Plant Riverside District,

perched on historic River Street and featuring 13 dining establishments, three rooftop bars, and a 135-foot long chrome dinosaur! Or choose from historic inns and bed and breakfasts with all the comforts of home and RV sites, or head for a beach.

Meeting attendees also are sure to enjoy Savannah's palate-pleasing twist on Southern cuisine and farm-to-table fare served at many award-winning restaurants that are ready to host your networking breakfast events, executive lunches, and award dinners in style. This city is famous for its unique brand of coastal cuisines, with restaurants serving authentic shrimp and grits, extra-crispy fried chicken, mouth-watering barbecue, and so much more.

By its nature, Savannah loves to welcome guests. But it also cares for our fellow citizens, our visitors, and each other. The Savannah community has come together to create the Savannah Safe Initiative, a commitment to help stop the spread of COVID-19, with cleaning and disinfecting protocols to help ensure the health and safety of everyone in our places of business.

From the moment you start planning your event to the closing-night festivities, you and your attendees will be the city's honored guests. Count on Visit Savannah to make your next meeting, incentive trip, or conference event a huge success.

Start planning your meeting today at VisitSavannah.com.

70

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THERE'S AN ASSOCIATION
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ELECTRIC AUTO ASSOCIATION

While the combustion engine has played a big role in the history of cars, members of the **Electric Auto Association** believe electric engines are the future. Founded in 1967, EAA's current mission is to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles through education, infrastructure support, and demonstrations. EAA chapters play a large role in the association, conducting grassroots education and hosting demonstrations to show "there is an electric vehicle for every lifestyle."

AMERICAN MINIATURE RACING CAR ASSOCIATION

Who says Americans only like to go big? The **American Miniature Racing Car Association** would surely disagree. AMRCA focuses on tether racing, a competition for model race cars powered by a motorized engine and hooked to a post. The organization gives miniature-car-racing enthusiasts a chance to network, learn from each other, and, of course, compete. AMRCA hosts multiple races on tracks around the country each year.

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT AUTOMOBILE DEALERS ASSOCIATION

Since 1946, the **National Independent Automobile Dealers Association** has used creative strategies to keep its member dealers at the forefront of the auto sales industry. NIADA has spearheaded campaigns to counter the negative stereotype of used-car salespeople, launched its own online television network (autoconsumer.tv), and created certification programs to attest to the quality of pre-owned vehicles.

IN SOMETIMES SURPRISING WAYS, ASSOCIATIONS PLAY DIRECT AND INDIRECT ROLES IN BRINGING THE PRODUCTS, SERVICES, AND ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIFE TO PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD. ON THIS PAGE EACH ISSUE, FIND OUT HOW.—RASHEEDA CHILDRESS



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