Small, Medium or Large: Planning Local Arrangements

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Suddenly you are a member of a local arrangements committee.

Whether you are a committee of one, or one of many, you will need to...

1. Develop a bid to bring a conference/meeting to your area
2. Pull together arrangements for a site that someone else or a consultant arranged the bid
3. Take over a portion of local arrangement responsibilities because someone left and the job needed to get done
4. You love being involved – bring on the party!

As the song from Sound of Music goes...

“Let’s begin at the very beginning, a very good place to start....”
What is involved?

- Developing a bid
- Organizing a LAC
- Pulling it off

*Today’s session:*

“Small, Medium or Large: Planning Local Arrangements”

will discuss how to make it all happen, or at least how to get started.
Developing a bid

- Why would someone want to come to your city?
- What sells the city, makes it attractive to prospective attendees?
- What are the expectations of the organization, which will bring the people to your area?

Reminder:

*Know The Dates The Organization Is Interested In.*
Developing a Bid (cont.): What will bring the people to your area?

- Ease of getting to the city
- Length of conference
- Number of anticipated attendees
- Hotel – walking distance, safety
- Overflow space – proximity of other hotels
- Availability of public transportation and/or parking convenience
- Food – price, variety
Developing a Bid (cont.): What will bring the people to your area?

- Local attractions and/or Entertainment
- Program format and meeting space needs
- Computer connectivity and A/V needs
- Vendor area
- Time of year – weather, holidays
- Scheduling conflicts with competing professional associations
- Local support from your colleagues
Developing a Bid: Determining The Organization’s Bid Criteria

- Pricing of hotel space
- Computer line costs
- Audio/Visual
- Estimated listing of food costs
- What the hotel will do for you
Developing a Bid: Organization’s Bid Criteria (cont.):

What will the host hotel do for you?

- Hotel reputation
- Conference commitment for holding on site events
- Seating between session
- Comp rooms
- Overflow guarantees
- Other accommodations
- Union rules
Developing a Bid: Getting the best deal

- Visit several hotels/sites
- Tell them you are looking and considering them ... and their competition
- Determine the dates you want are available
- Use the same factors for comparison shopping
- Visit the tourist bureau or chamber of commerce
Developing a Bid: Preparing your presentation

- Select the hotel/conference center that best meets the expectations of the group
- Provide an explanation of why this facility best meets the needs
- Have brochures or other documents that “show off” the facility
- Provide hotel documentation of their guarantees
- **SELL THE SITE**
Keep In Mind….

- Find out who is responsible for signing contracts. Remember, you are a member of the association, not necessarily the person who should sign on behalf of it. Some associations may require a lawyer review the contract.

- Hotels will try to move you along to commit. The hotel’s favorite line: *We have another group interested in the dates we are talking about.*
Organizing a LAC

The Program Committee and LAC need to work collaboratively at critical points to insure the conference runs smoothly. Everyone needs a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities.

The key points are…
Organizing a LAC: Key Points
Connection with Program Committee

- Speakers Needs
- AV/Room Set Up
- Conference Schedule
- Communication Before & During Conference
- Equipment Troubleshooting
- Evaluation Tool
Slave-ship daily schedules

DAY'S ACTIVITIES

Tues.

6:00 - 7:00 Rowing
7:00 - 9:00 Rowing
9:00 - 10:00 Rowing
10:00 - 12:00 Rowing
12:00 - 2:30 Rowing
2:30 - 4:00 Rowing
4:00 - 6:30 Rowing
6:30 - 7:00 Aerobics
7:00 - 9:00 Rowing
9:00 - 10:30 Rowing
10:30 - 12:00 Rowing
12:00 - 1:30 Rowing
Pulling It Off:

Details!
Details!
Details!
Conference Planning Elements:
some elements may or not be included

- Program
- Volunteers
- Publicity
- Site MNGT
- Registration
- Budget
- Technology
Areas to consider:

- **Selecting a conference or site theme**
- **Program**
  - Content
  - Printing
  - Speakers
  - Facilitators
  - Room assignments
- **Special Events**
  - Welcome activities
  - “BIG” event
Areas to consider:

- **Publicity**
  - Pre-conference (how, where)
  - During the conference

- **Tours**
  - Determining what to offer
  - Tour company arrangements
  - Minimum headcount

- **Pre-/Post-Conference Events**
Areas to consider:

- **Determining a registration fee**
  - What does the meeting cost?
  - What is included

- **Conference Registration**
  - Packet
  - Nametags
  - Conference program
  - Personnel to work area
  - Days/times of operation
  - Fee collection
  - Overall registration process
  - Goodies/freebies
Areas to consider:

- **Technology**
  - To have or not to have, that is the question
  - Who needs it and to do what
  - Equipment limitations
  - Wiring & electrical issues
  - Vendor contract
Areas to consider:

- **Budget – establish net revenue goal**
  - Program & Publicity – largest areas
  - Planning: travel, meetings, food
  - Gifts to thank volunteers
  - Attire
  - Consider liability issues
  - Use software to track revenue and expenditures

- **Vendors**
Areas to consider:

- **Site Management**
  - Union compliance issues
  - Physical Arrangements
  - Signage
  - Seating areas between sessions
  - Time to turnaround rooms
  - Special needs-- disabilities
A good host must always be a stickler for attractive food presentation! I always take the foil completely off the TV dinner before serving.
Areas to consider:

- **Food**
  - Breaks
  - Special meal functions/receptions
  - Special group food needs
  - Short lines & ready access to food/drinks

- **Hospitality**
  - Giveaways (prize drawings)
  - Local attractions
  - Restaurant guides
  - Transportation guides
  - Maps
Pulling It Off: Volunteers! Volunteers! Volunteers!

- Orientation session for volunteers
- Recognize volunteer contributions publicly
- Celebrate the end of the conference – particularly with those in key leadership roles.
- Selecting the right people to help you bring the event off or how to select a committee
- Involving your state/regional membership in the event

When it’s over – evaluate, pass the information on to the next group, and congratulate yourself, and everyone else involved...(THEN TAKE A VACATION)
It Takes A Village To Raise A Child…

…But It Takes A Committee To Pull Off A Conference

(Small, Medium or Large)!
“Anyone for a chorus of ‘Happy Trails’?”