



May/June 2009

A newsletter of the Washington, DC Chapter of the International Association of Exhibitions and Events

www.dc.iaee.com

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...and more

IAEE DC Board Speaks to GWU Students

Every year, a few members of the DC Chapter of IAEE speak to students at George Washington University School of Business—Master of Tourism Administration Program. This year, board members Amy Durkin, CEM; DeVonne Parks, CEM; Andy Ortale along with Greg Ortale—from the Houston CVB and former chair of CEIR—spoke to students in the Conference and Exposition Management class.

“It was amazing to see the students really interested and eager to absorb all that they could while each one of us spoke about our jobs. I thought it was a unique experience to discuss with students a career that I am actually doing that they are interested in proceeding as their career. It was really fun and exciting to talk about what I do for a living,” said DeVonne, Director of Exhibits at the Special Libraries Association. Amy, exhibits manager

at the Council for Exceptional Children, presented “Top 10 Tips for Exhibits Management.” Items on her list included understanding how to read a floor plan, never signing a contract without doing a site inspection, providing excellent customer service to exhibitors, and having a mentor to show you the ropes.

DeVonne showed a slide presentation of her upcoming annual conference and exposition, which happens to be the associations’ Centennial celebration. She gave the students a glimpse of her responsibilities as she planned and organized some of the exhibit hall activities such as a 2009 Smart for2 car giveaway and keeping exhibitors happy by providing them with an exhibitor lounge and access to FREE exhibitor educational Webinars. The goal was to provide students with highlights of an event and to make sure that they understand

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NOTES FROM THE Board

Paying it Forward: The Value of Mentoring



Andrew Ortale,
Director,
Membership



Karen Miller,
Secretary

In this newsletter you will read about IAEE members who spoke to students at George Washington University School of Business—Master of Tourism Administration Program in February. It is a great opportunity to look into the future and, at the same time, remind ourselves of our obligation to the next generation of industry leaders. It would be a rare few among us who could claim to have reached their position without the guidance of someone who had already worn the same career path. Formal or informal, mentorship is an essential part of how our industry continues to grow, and from which we have all benefited.

We are at a time now when advanced degrees in hospitality, tourism, and event planning are becoming more and more popular; however, in an industry built on relationships it is important to remember the importance of having and becoming a mentor. It is by far one of the greatest benefits of

involvement in our industry... whether it is as informal as a senior colleague who helps guide another through difficult decisions or a more formal program with scheduled meetings and career counseling, these relationships are rewarding for both parties. For a protégé it is the steady voice of experience, and for the mentor it is a way to stay current, become involved and give back.

Some guidelines for the mentor relationship:

- Make it a two-way learning environment—both parties are more likely to connect with each other when the takeaways are shared.
- Don't just show up—as with any volunteer effort, be engaged and respect the mutual time commitment.
- Be open—as a mentor, be prepared to learn as well as advise. As a protégé, keep an open mind about the advice received.

- Make the time—agree up front on the amount of time and stick to it.
- Make it fun as well as rewarding.

It is important to remember that there are different types of mentoring relationships, but mentoring is really an extension of leadership. Protégés will look to their leaders as role models, and leaders need to be prepared to listen and lead by example. Providing a responsible and continuous opportunity to learn is vital to this kind of mentoring.

In a world where technology continues to offer us more and more ways to connect, or in some cases dissolve in pool of information, a trusted voice is more relevant than ever. So consider this a call to action; to reach out as a protégé or as a mentor. It is both a privilege as well as a great way to see that our industry will endure as it also evolves. ❖

2009 IAEE DC Programs and Events

Networking receptions and luncheon program are on the second Friday of the month. The networking reception runs from 11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and the luncheon program runs from 12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Friday, May 8, 2009

Networking Reception & Luncheon Program



Sponsor: Shepard Exposition Services

Location: Maggiano's Little Italy, 5333 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C. 20015
P: +1.202.966.5500

Metro: Friendship Heights

Topic: "What Can the B2B Industry Learn From Public Shows?"

Description:

There are myriad media options available for consumer show producers, and out of necessity, they are very adept at tailoring the media to their audiences. Learn best practices from a former NAB and CES executive, including top tips and how these techniques and new ideas can be used in the B-2-B world.

Speaker: Eric Udler, Super Pet Expo

About the Speaker:

Eric Udler began his career in the trade show industry in 1990 and after positions at CES and NAB, found his own company, FSI. He produced his first Super Pet Expo in 2001. The show is a fun-filled family event that takes place annually with shows several metropolitan areas including

New York, Philadelphia and Washington, DC. Each show attracts tens of thousands of pet owners, thousands of leashed pets and two hundred exhibitors selling some of the coolest pet products not traditionally found in the Petco's and Petsmart's of the world.

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Please note our luncheon day has changed from Friday to Wednesday—This Luncheon Only!
Networking Reception & Luncheon Program



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Location: Hilton Alexandria Old Town

Speaker: Margaret Pederson, IAEE Chair

Topic: State of the Industry

Friday, Sept. 11, 2009

Networking Reception & Luncheon Program

Location: Walter E. Washington Convention Center

Speaker: Doug Ducate, CEIR

Topic: Chapter Year in Review/CEIR Reports

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Get Connected to the DC Chapter:

Facebook: See "International Association of Exhibitions and Events DC Chapter"

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IAEE DC Community:
http://www.iaee.com/iaee_membership/members_only_resources

Flickr: http://www.flickr.com/groups/iaeedc_chapter

Visit the IAEE DC Chapter Web site at <http://www.iaee.com/content/about-IAEM/Chapters/washDC/WashDC.html>

Volunteer on a Committee! Contact Susan Bennett (susan.bennett@experient-inc.com).

www.dc.iaee.com

It's Never Too Late to Follow Your Dreams

by Ann Childress,
annschildress@gmail.com

“Go on, you can do it!” “You only live once, so follow your dreams!”

These are comments I heard regularly from my family and friends. But fear of the unknown and of failing held me back. Changing careers in midlife felt daunting and thrilling at the same time. Did I really want to leave the comfort, benefits, and familiarity of a lengthy profession and start over from scratch? I asked myself that question and a string of others over and over until finally the opportunity was staring me in the face. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't find a valid reason to remain in my comfy world, so I jumped

in feet first. It was one of the best decisions EVER!

I graduated college a B.S. in Medical Technology and began a career in hospitals and reference laboratories. When my son was born with health problems, I became a stay-at-home mom in the snap of a finger. Our income was cut in half while the medical bills piled up. I knew I had to do something to help support us financially while continuing to be with our son full time. So, armed with the BEST cheesecake ever, I moseyed into the restaurant below my husband's office and served a piece to the owner. He took one bite and his eyes rolled back in pleasure. The next thing I knew we had a contract signed on a napkin and I was supplying the

restaurant with cheesecakes. Little did I know then that I was laying the path for the career change I am making today.

As our son's health improved, I went back to work as a Medical Technologist. At the same time, people knew about my love of cooking and entertaining, and would ask me to cater luncheons and plan parties for them. Referrals fueled my catering business while I worked full time in the laboratory. As word spread, more events came my way: intimate dinner parties, destination weddings with 50–350 guests, pancake supper fundraisers for 350–750 attendees, group vacations, themed bridal and baby showers, and annual summer parties for 100–150 guests. These were elaborate

events with RFPs, decorations, catering, entertainment, and transportation. This went on for about 20 years.

In 2005, I was at a crossroads with my desire to plan events and meetings full time and that of the security of staying in the lab. While there are many similarities between the two careers—attention to detail, organization, ability to multitask, prioritization, and so on—the creative process was missing from the lab work. So in 2008, with the support of my family and friends, my dream became a reality when I enrolled in a certificate program for event/meeting planning through the local community college.

I pursued an all encompassing meeting planning internship for ten months with

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Janessa Perreault
Chad Stark

San Diego Convention Center Corporation
Kathleen K. Callender, CMP

US Travel Association
Geoff Freeman

Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau
Courtney Dyer
Cliff Myers

Continued from previous page. a medical association while attending classes. It was fantastic! I learned everything from site selection to marketing, budget analysis, and database management to what happens on site at the meeting. I had found my calling. My earlier fears were quelled and I was so excited about working in the field in which I have so much passion. I am confident that I made the right decision in changing careers. I graduate in May and am in the process of pursuing a position as either a Special Events or Meeting Planner. I continue to advance my education and increase my marketability through associations related to the event/meeting planning industry, by volunteering in various capacities, as well as networking. I am so

energized by learning something new with each contact. I know I made the right decision in changing careers.

I am so grateful that I took the plunge! I urge others to pay attention to their passions and hobbies. Life is an adventurous journey and there is no one handing out MapQuest directions. We all have strengths, hopes, and dreams. I don't suggest making a career change on a whim. But if you are passionate about something, ask yourself if there is a way to transform that into reality. It's never too late to live what you love. ❖



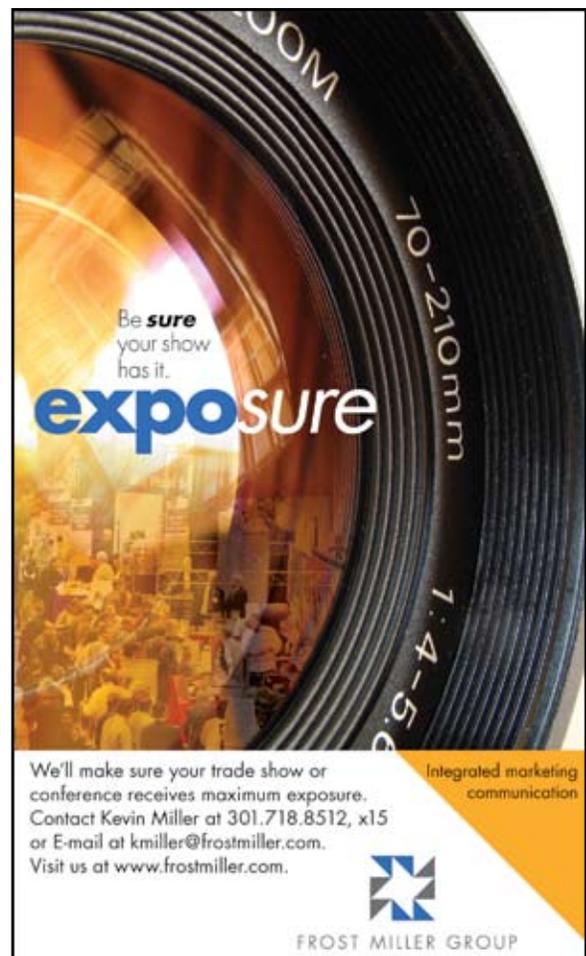
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Photos of the Washington DC chapter luncheons and other events

March 2009 Luncheon

6:



Thanks to Champion Exposition for sponsoring the April IAEE/PCMA event at the Nationals!

Champion has been selected as a national partner for IAEE servicing Expo! Expo! for the next two years.

"We are thrilled to partner with IAEE on both the local and national level."—Don Hewitt, Champion Exposition Services



April 2009 IAEE/PCMA Baseball Event



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Why Your Association Needs Social Media Now

by Alex George
Fixation Marketing, Inc.

Social media tools are becoming increasingly important for associations in their communications strategy. There are many social media tools or “outposts” available these days and associations have the daunting task of tracking these tools/sites, monitoring their mercurial nature, and learning how to best utilize their features to expand brand awareness. The good news is that there is a logical starting point for an association that decides to venture into the universe of social media.

Debating the efficacy of these tools as they relate to your bottom line or end goal is a necessary process. You may

8: be asking yourself, “Why are social media tools like Facebook and Twitter relevant to my association brand?” The simple answer is that if you do not take hold of the reins of your brand in these online environments, someone else will—or perhaps already has. The more complex answer begins with an analysis of social media’s inherent interactive and viral qualities, and the impact these qualities have on an association’s ability to control their brand.

There is no denying that social media has swiftly changed the way associations communicate with their members, conference attendees and exhibitors, shifting some of the brand awareness responsibility directly out of the hands of the association’s marketing and communications division and into the hands of members,

attendees, exhibitors and other potential prospects. Gone are the days where an association could rely solely on non-interactive, one-way traditional mass communication to sell their services. Today, members are getting online and sharing with each other—at rapid speed—their opinions and ideas about everything from association lobbying efforts and member services to tradeshow logistics and exhibitor services. New social media outposts like Facebook and Twitter have ushered in a new age of viral interactivity among members and their associations. Members want their associations to interact with them in more personalized, targeted ways that speak to their specific interests.

The good news is that you, as the voice of your association brand, have the power to jump into the community discussion, quiet the naysayers before it is too late, address real concerns, and answer some valid questions being posed by your customers or members—all in real time. And just as your members benefit from the ability to rapidly spread information, so, too, do you have the opportunity to swiftly steer your association’s story in the right direction.

Let’s use Facebook as an example of how to start from scratch with a social media implementation strategy. Before we get into the specifics, I would like to quickly address two common questions I get from clients when training them on social media tools:

1. “How do I integrate social media into my staff’s



“If content and context is everything, then using and posting content onto social media tools can be woven into existing staff resources. It’s a matter of taking your messages and content into your channels.”

—Margaret Core, Director of Sales and Marketing,
Conventions and Conferences

already hectic work schedule?”

2. “Do I need to hire someone to focus strictly on social media?”

First, integration into work flow is manageable and much less daunting than it can feel when initially learning about the tools, and we’ll explore the step-by-step process below. Second, I would not recommend hiring someone for this position before an audit has been conducted to determine what types of tools your association could benefit from. Now, onto an implementation strategy using Facebook.

Build your Facebook community from within

Before reaching out to existing members, tradeshow attendees, exhibitors or prospects, it’s important for your association team members to have their

own individual Facebook pages. This obviously cannot be a mandate, but should be strongly encouraged. Facebook filters should be applied to each team member’s page so that personal life and professional life do not mix. The point here is that each individual can control how much or how little other people see on their page.

The step-by-step Facebook page setup is fairly user friendly. Once you have a core team of staffers who are on board with your social media initiative and have established their own Facebook pages, you will want to designate one or two of them to be administrators when setting up your association’s group or company page. Your designated administrators will now set up a group page for your association. Facebook requires that any administrator must have their own Facebook page.

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Your administrator(s) should create the group through their own page, but brand it toward the association by naming the group accordingly and uploading the association's logo as the profile "picture."

Since many (or all!) of your staff members will have Facebook pages by now, the first step in building your group page will be asking them to become members of this group. Important: before reaching out to invite association members and constituents, first make sure you have a core group of members on your group page (your staff).

Inviting members to your association group

Your designated group page administrator should use the Friend Finder feature in Facebook to search by name for profiles of your constituents. He or she can search for multiple names at once. The search results page will display all of your association members who have profiles on Facebook. This is where your administrator requests to add each member as their friend and then invite them to join the association's group. The best strategy to reach your association members via Facebook is by asking your association staff members to personally invite members, plain and simple.

Another strategy is to identify association members who can serve as advocates or "champions" of the association on Facebook. Once you have identified a core group of members, ask them if they would be willing to spend a few hours a week searching for and inviting other association members to join the

group page. They can search Facebook using a member/prospects contact spreadsheet that your membership department provides. Chances are that these champion members already have strong ties with other industry members and will automatically have a group of folks they can invite to your association group page.

The most important thing to consider when implementing an invitation strategy is that it must be organic. Facebook is set up for individuals to communicate and share with each other. The site protects against large entities having the ability to solicit individuals.

We've got the page. We've got the members. Now what?

Your Facebook page should serve as a communication portal for your members where information can be distributed quickly and easily. Your responsibility to the page is to be its facilitator. Your association's page should not be a space where traditional marketing or sales messaging is communicated. If you begin to post things like "register now and save big" or "attend the largest show in the industry," your group members will no longer see the page as a trusted space to share and receive valuable information. Also, your page should not be set up and then left blank, without activity or members. You should post helpful industry information, press releases on current industry news, and updates on special events, conferences and tradeshow. By following these steps, you will help to expand the integrity of your online presence which is a natural extension of your association's brand. ❖

Get Connected with the IAEE DC Chapter

- Facebook: see International Association of Exhibitions and Events DC Chapter
- Flickr: see www.flickr.com/groups/iaeedc_chapter
- LinkedIn: see International Association of Exhibitions and Events Washington D.C. Chapter
- IAEE DC Community: www.iaee.com/iaee_membership/members_only_resources
- Volunteer on a Committee! Contact Susan Bennett (susan.bennett@experient-inc.com).

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Board Visits GWU (cont.)

Continued from page 1.

the details and organization is highly important. In addition, she offered the students a chance to experience it live to volunteer in all areas at SLA's Annual Conference & INFO-EXPO as it is a local meeting held in Washington, DC.

Andy, vice president of national sales at The Expo Group said "meeting the students enrolled in George Washington University's Tourism and Hospitality master's program was a glimpse into the future of our industry. It is a future where the leaders of tomorrow are choosing careers as meeting professionals, unlike so many in our industry today who admittedly "fell" into a job. And while tomorrow's professionals

are still learning the difference between NSF and GSF, they are learning fast, and will take us far."

For my part, I tried to impart onto them what I had learned in the industry...that being a decorator did not mean I had to know what colors worked together, that dray-age is not a rash but can cause them and that the number one rule of any tradeshow is that ready or not, the show will open. What surprised me was what I took away...that the industry can look forward to a young group of qualified meeting professionals, that they are being taught by professors who know and that we better be prepared to welcome and learn from the next generation."

"The Tourism and Hospitality department truly appreciates the great relationship we have formed with the IAEE DC chapter.

Each year, students learn from chapter members what you can't find in a text book," said Soyoung Boo, Ph.D., assistant professor. ❖

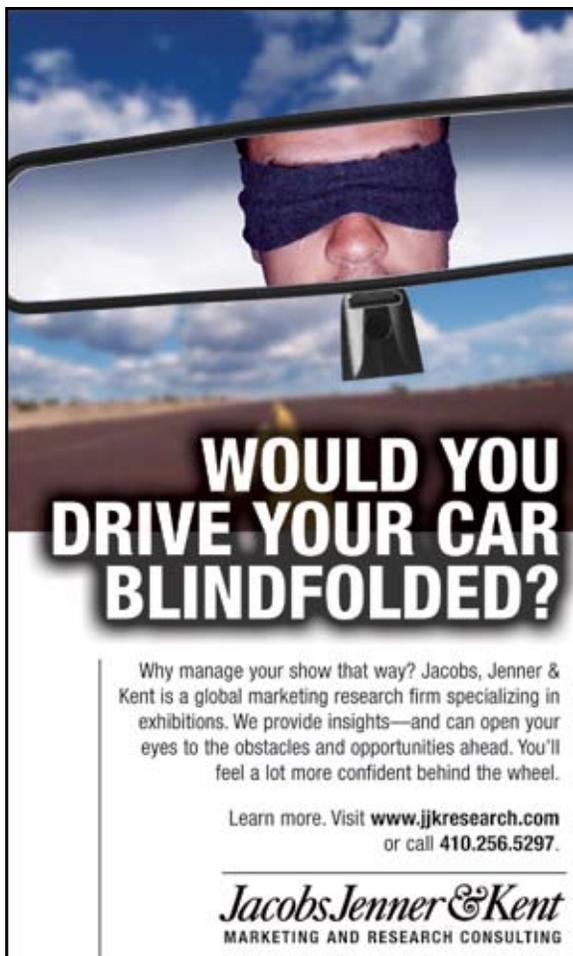
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DeVonne's favorite was the *Flintstones*.

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Wayne Crawford is Vice President of Sales at a2z, Inc. in Columbia, MD.

Kathy Glisson was at Biophysical Society in Bethesda and is now at Optical Society of America as Marketing Manager in Washington, DC.

Thomas Morano, CMP was promoted to Vice President of Meetings & Conferences at American Financial Services Association in Washington, DC.

Nadia Kader was at CES in Arlington and is now at FSI as Operations Manager in Rockville, MD.

Suzanne Cook is Sr. Vice President of Research at US Travel Association.

Kathleen K. Callender, CMP was at Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau and is now at San Diego Convention Center Corporation as Director of National Accounts.

William Ryan was promoted to Sr. Director of Global Development at the Optical Society of America in Washington, DC.

Carla Santos was at Portugal Travel News and is now at the American Association of Museums as Assistant Manager, Meetings in Washington, DC.

First-Timer Focus: Leah Williamson, A Group Design

Q: “How long have you been in the Industry?”

A: This is my twelfth year in graphic design services.

Q: “What brings you to IAEE?”

A: I was invited by Rob Dinker and Jim Kelley of ICAT Expo, and I am looking to become immersed in the Industry, explore the resources available, learn from the best, and to network.

Q: “What is your company’s niche?”

A: We excel in brand design and management for small business enterprises and help our clients keep clear, consistent messaging across all marketing mediums.

Q: “What is a little known fact that people don’t know about you yet?”

A: I am a native Washingtonian and used to work for the Smithsonian and other interpretive sites. I was involved in producing the audio tours of Arlington National Cemetery and the FDR Memorial... and loved it.

Q: “Last tidbit... what is your favorite travel spot?”

A: Though I have been all over the world and have many, Hong Kong is my favorite. From the mountains, to the water, to the people, it’s a gorgeous city.

“Thanks and we are looking forward to seeing more of you!” ❖

Interviewed by:

*Penelope Parr, CEM, CMP
General Manager—Baltimore/
Washington D.C.
USA Hosts, LTD*

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