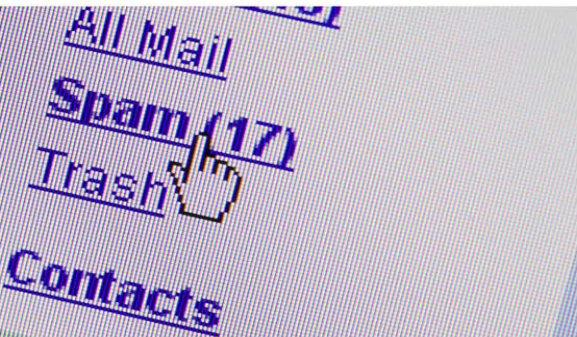




OHIO CHAPTER

define

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL OHIO CHAPTER



OCT/NOV 09 ISSUE

What's Inside:

Board of Directors

President's Column

MPIOH New Members

Cool Tools: Fun for All

MPIOH Technology Day

MPI and Social Media Web 2.0

Event Layouts: How Event Software Can Help You Create Perfect Events

22nd Annual Educational & Scholarship Holiday Auction

Dip a Toe into Some Technology

Engage Attendees and Measure ROI with One Simple Tool

Northern Cincinnati Ad

The Official Newsletter of MPI Ohio Chapter

Define is the official publication of the Ohio Chapter of Meeting Professionals International. It is published every other month as a benefit of membership and circulated free of charge to MPIOH members.

Copyright, 2003. All rights reserved.

Permission requests to reproduce written materials should be sent to 4100 Executive Park Drive, Suite 16, Cincinnati, OH 45241.

Information appearing in this publication is obtained from sources we believe to be reliable. The information may not be a complete statement of all available data and is guaranteed as such. Calculations are based solely on editorial judgement and analysis of technical factors and meeting professional industry information sources. *Define* is copyrighted and portions may be reprinted with the permission of MPIOH. *Define* is not responsible for the contents of its advertisements and advises all members to investigate claims before making any purchases.



Helping to build your companies voice,
identity and personality.

Reserve your space for the upcoming issue!

For more information, please contact Barb at 614.273.0783.
barb@burgiemediafusion.com

Advertising Opportunities: For information about advertising opportunities, please contact Barb Burgie at 614.273.0783 or barb@burgiemediafusion.com.

MEET OUR 2009-10 MPI OHIO CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President

Mark Wallisa, CMP
The Savannah Center
at Chappell Crossing
5533 Chappell Crossing Blvd.
West Chester, OH 45069
Phone: 513-977-5941
mwallisa@savannahcenter.com

President - Elect

Wendy Nicodemus, CMP
Quest Conference Center
8405 Pulsar Place
Columbus, OH 43240
Phone: 614-540-5540
Fax: 614-540-5541
wnicodemus@quest-centers.com

Immediate Past President

Gail McLaughlin, CMP, CMM
Pro Football Hall of Fame
2121 George Halas Drive, NW
Canton, Ohio 44708
Phone: 330-456-8207
Fax: 330-456-8175
gail.mclaughlin@profootballhof.com

Vice President of Communications

Beth Hecquet, CMP
National Assn of Sports Commissions
9916 Carver Road, Suite 100
Cincinnati, OH 45242
Phone: 513-842-8508
Beth@SportsCommissions.org

Vice President of Education

Judy Stooft
Central Ohio Professional
Education Council
4265 Lindy Lane
Mechanicsburg, OH 43044
Phone: 614-799-9442
jstooft@copec-oh.com

Vice President of Finance

Barb Burgie
Burgie MediaFusion
2241 Teardrop Ave
Columbus, OH 43235
Phone: 614-273-0783
Fax: 6142730038
barb@burgiemediafusion.com

Vice President of Membership

Anna Ryan, CMP
OCLC Online Computer Library Center Inc.
6565 Frantz Rd. MC 201
Dublin, OH 43017
Phone: 614-764-6179
ryanana@oclc.org

Director of Communications

Deb Jones
Oglebay Resort & Conference Center
Route 88 N
Wheeling, WV 26003
Phone: 304-243-4064
Fax: 304-243-4105
djones@oglebay-resort.com

Director of Education

Don R. Miller, CMP
HelmsBriscoe
P.O. Box 291
Mount Gilead, OH 43338
Phone: 614-726-3088
Fax: 866-341-8978
dmiller@helmsbriscoe.com

Director of Professional Development

Anne Colinan Dufort, CMP
Limited Brands
Two Limited Parkway
Columbus, OH 43230
Phone: 614-415-5291
adufort@limitedbrands.com

Director of Recognition

Barbara Perry, CMP
Abbott Nutrition
625 Cleveland Avenue
Columbus, OH 43215
Phone: 614-624-6448
barbara.perry@abbott.com

Director of Special Projects

Barb Yeater
Crowne Plaza Cleveland
City Centre Hotel
777 St. Clair Ave. N. E.
Cleveland, OH 44114
Phone: 216-373-3346
Fax: 216-771-5129
byeater@dhmhotels.com

Director of Strategic Partnerships

Susan Smith, CMP
Northern Kentucky CVB
50 E Rivercenter Blvd, Suite 200
Covington, KY 41011
Phone: 859.655.7662
Fax: 859-261-5135
ssmith@nkycvb.com

MPIOH Executive Office

Lauren Estness
4100 Executive Park Dr.
Suite 16
Cincinnati, OH 45241
Phone: 513-563-8674
Fax: 513-563-9743
Email: mpioh@aol.com

MPIOH Mission Statement: To enhance the overall quality and awareness of the meetings industry by ensuring the professional development and growth of its membership through targeted educational programs and networking opportunities.

President's Column

By Mark S. Wallisa, CMP

What I Learned at the MPI Technology Conference

The 5th annual MPI Technology Conference was held on September 9th at the Conference Center at Northpointe, and based on the comments and feedback I received from many attendees, it was once again a rousing success. When I first became active in MPI 10 years ago, it was primarily due to the quality of the educational programs they offered. This year's Technology Conference continued that tradition of providing outstanding educational content that was specifically focused on the meetings industry.

The conference began with Jim Spellos delivering a tremendous keynote address entitled; "Hot Technologies in the Meetings Industry." For those not familiar with Jim Spellos, he is the President of Meetings U (<http://www.meeting-u.com>), and considered by many to be one of the foremost authorities on technology within the meetings industry. Jim not only possesses a wealth of information on the latest innovations in technology, but due to his 20 years experience as a meeting planner, his presentations focus on how the various technologies can be applied to make meetings more productive and effective.

The early part of his presentation was centered on "Web 2.0", and how the use of internet has evolved from a one-way exchange of information, to a two way flow between multiple parties involving "collaboration, converging and connecting." Virtual communities are now being created on the internet where a wide variety of people engage one another to connect (Facebook), collaborate (LinkedIn) and even provide content (Wikipedia). Spellos also touched briefly on the explosion of business uses and applications available thru social networking (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn), but because there was an entire breakout session dedicated to social media, he did not delve into this area in great detail. However, when asked which social networking site had the greatest business potential, he said without question that it was Twitter. The reason he thought Twitter was the most effective was the ability a company can have for real time communication with its customers, and the capability to get immediate feedback. He cited examples within our industry where Marriott and Hyatt Hotels have used Twitter very effectively to engage their customers with

special offers, with the ability to instantaneously measure the effectiveness of the marketing campaigns.

Spellos' affinity for technology gadgets is legendary within our industry, and his keynote address was no exception. He provided examples within the hotel industry where applications are downloaded upon check-in to guests' BlackBerry's and I-Phones eliminating the need for keys and paper billing. There was a demonstration of PollEverywhere, which was a neat audience response system that's web-based where meeting attendees participate by text messaging their responses, or by using Twitter, and the survey results are provided instantaneously. The site tour of the future was unveiled via Virtual Visit, a virtual tour product that enables prospects to tour your hotel or conference center with 360-degree views that were extraordinary for their clarity and precision. These were just a few of the meeting industry products and applications demonstrated by Spellos, and based on the outstanding feedback received on the attendee evaluation surveys, they were very well received by the audience.

The conference then featured three concurrent breakout sessions lasting 90 minutes each in the morning, and 3 more in the afternoon. Jim Spellos delivered one of the morning sessions entitled; "Web (r)X, Are you really reaching your customers?" During this highly interactive session, Spellos provided an in-depth critique of the web sites of members of the audience (At least the ones bold enough to provide their company's web site address!). By demonstrating the importance of keywords within web site copy, Spellos showed how search engines locate web sites based on the search criteria of the end user. By optimizing your web site with relevant keywords, it increases your ranking enabling your company to be found on the first page of a search inquiry.

Tiffany Odutoye conducted a breakout session on Social Media that was held in the morning, and repeated again in the afternoon. This highly interactive workshop demonstrated the business applications of the "Big 3" in social networking; Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Odutoye provided numerous examples of



President's Message continued

meeting success stories using social media, and showed how effective and easy it is to use live video feeds thru YouTube, or how setting up pre-event contests on Twitter can create excitement and buzz for your meeting. She also showed how the use of Delicious in conjunction with Blogs can create a sense of community for an event, as well as provide an excellent way to build your brand.

Matthew Raunch also conducted an excellent session

on "Understanding Your AV Bill," and Pam Reinhard did an interesting and informative workshop on "Adding Podcasting to Your Online Presence." The final afternoon session was given Jim Spellos on "Excel for the Meeting Professional."

All told, the conference was a highly informative and interesting day, and well worth the time and expense. It was given very high marks by the attendees, with an overall rating of 4.73 out of 5.

Introducing the Newest MPIOH Members

By Crystal Culp and Anna Ryan

Danielle Shiltz **Catering Manager** **Embassy Suites - Dublin**

Danielle has been in the industry for over 13 years. The past 9 years have been with the Embassy Suites – Dublin. Danielle is working towards obtaining her CMP. She is taking part in the study group MPIOH offers and plans to take the test in January. She has also joined MPIOH for the education and networking opportunities.

When Danielle is not working she enjoys spending time with her family. She also shared that her family will have an addition in January. Let's all keep our fingers crossed for her that her addition will be here after the exam on January 9, 2010. When asked her favorite place to go on vacation her reply was somewhere new! We wish Danielle luck in obtaining her CMP and welcome her to MPIOH!

Kellie Williams **Sales Manager** **Westin Columbus**

MPIOH is pleased to welcome Kellie back to the MPI, as a valued member since 2006. Kellie changed jobs a year ago and let her membership lapse in the transition. She has since learned that the MPI Membership follows the person and not the company. Kellie wants to make sure others are aware of this so they don't miss out on the wonderful networking and education that MPIOH offers if they should go through a job change. Congratulations Kellie on your 1 year anniversary with

Westin. The hospitality industry has turned into a natural fit for Kellie. After working 6 years in the financial industry, she was ready for a change, and a friend that worked for Hyatt suggested Kellie try out the hospitality industry. Seven years later, Kellie loves the industry and the daily challenges and new people she gets to meet.

Outside of work, spending time with family is Kellie's main priority. With a passion for weekend getaways for her and the family, she's willing try most destinations just to experience something new! Welcome back Kellie! And good luck in 2010 as you begin pursuing your CMP.

Crystal Culp, Crowne Meetings Director
Crowne Plaza Dublin, Ohio
Anna Ryan, CMP
Corporate Meeting Services, OCLC, Inc Dublin, Ohio

MEMBERS ON THE MOVE

Ann M. Luketic, CMP has recently joined ValMark Securities. Her new contact information is:

Conference Planner
ValMark Securities, Inc
130 Springside Dr. #300
Akron, OH 44333
T- 800-765-5201 x 3405
F- 330-576-1250
ann.luketic@valmarksecurities.com

Congratulations Ann!!

Cool Tools: Fun for All



By Jim Spellos

As summer heats up, there are plenty of cool tech tools around to help you be more productive. So let's get right to it: I know you're doing more with less these days.

Do The Wave—No, not that 1980s thing they did in baseball parks, but the GoogleWave. Keep an eye out for this tool, which is intended to

help with collaborative communications. E-mail, chat, videos, and maps will all be combined on a single screen. Check out the "Take a Sneak Peek" link from the Wave page (or, if you're really daring, watch the one-hour video of its release to programmers—okay, that's only for geeks like me) to learn more.

Spilled Milk? Don't Cry—For a number of years, one of the best Web-based task managers has been Remember the Milk. A free tool, with apps and gadgets for various mobile devices (such as the iPhone), it provides everyone with the ability to manage tasks without requiring Outlook or any software.



This Is Your Brain on Evernote—Sometimes, a basic task list isn't enough.

You might be at a trade show and want to capture the business card of a colleague. Instead of taking the card, take a picture of it, upload it to Evernote, and then you can organize the information however you want it. There's a free service and premium-level service. Check out the videos on the home page to better understand how to make it work for you.

That's Bing, Not Bling—Microsoft's latest foray into the search world is the rebranded Bing. Formerly known as Windows Live, Bing has received a number of accolades in its first month of existence as a search engine that has a better visual design than Google. One of its features is organizing information into categories (which Google does as well, but using a different layout).

So, Google Counters With . . . of all things, a new operating system, scheduled for release early next year, to compete with Windows. It appears that the new OS will be targeted for the highly popular Netbook computers. It will be interesting to see how Google and Microsoft duke it out in both the search and OS areas. If you want more info on the Google OS announcement, check out this post from the Official Google Blog.

Blog of the Month—

Recently, I've enjoyed reading Elliott. Elliott (actually Christophe Elliott) is a travel journalist, and his blog often includes the information that travel organizations don't want you to hear. Recent blogs have discussed which airlines charge the most in ticket cancellation fees (his research indicates United), as well as why some of the reviews on TripAdvisor may not be legit. It's well written, and always gets you thinking.



Shazam Can Name that Tune—This app is just for fun, available for both the iPhone and the Google Android phone. The premise is simple: You hear a song on the radio, but you don't know who the artist is, or the song's title. Open up Shazam and let it "hear" the song for 20 seconds. It'll tell you the artist, the song title, and where you can buy it. Pretty neat.

James Spellos, CMP
President, Meeting U.

<http://www.meeting-u.com>

jspellos@meeting-u.com

Blog - www.fabulousspellosbrothers.typepad.com

Follow me on Twitter - www.twitter.com/jspellos

(ph) 718-224-5516

(fx) 718-423-6857

"Customized Solutions for the Business Professional"

MPI Ohio Technology Day

By Mary Vlahos
Canton/Stark County CVB
www.VisitCantonStark.com

I just attended a great educational session in Columbus at the North Point Conference Center. The Ohio Chapter of Meeting Professionals International's Technology Day. Every year I attend this event and I am never disappointed but this year was exceptional. Having high quality education and top notch presenters seems to be a rare combination that a lot of organizations can't seem to manage. In times of tight budgets and more intense work loads we really need to examine how we spend our money and our time out of the office "opportunity cost". Could I be more productive doing something else, is a question we all need to ask ourselves before we attend an event? This full day of education was definitely worth my time and money.

The day started out with a general session lead by Jim Spellos "Hot Technologies in the Meeting Industry", some of which I had heard of and new ones that totally amazed me for example Technology Entertainment Design or TED. This is something totally new and not even on the market yet, but coming soon, check it out at www.ted.com.

The next session I attended was a breakout also taught by Jim Spellos "Web (r) X- Are You Really Reaching Your Customers?" This session examined the effectiveness of websites, SEO (Search Engine Optimization), the first impression people get when viewing your website, and free or low cost tools to help your website rankings. Fortunately for me my website was

chosen as an example, yeah! It's great to have someone tell you what is wrong with your website. Expert advice is always appreciated.

Pam Reinhard from the Ohio Veterinarian's Association did an excellent job teaching us all about "Adding Podcasting to Your Online Presence". She took us through a step by step process on how to produce a podcast, equipment needed to produce an audio podcast, and resources on where to get a host site and the dos and don'ts of the entire process. It was great to learn from someone that had already gone through the process and learn from her mistakes. The resource lists that she provided will become invaluable in the future when my CVB starts our own podcasting.



The only thing I regret is not being able to clone myself and attend some of the other breakouts that were going on simultaneously. The classes I missed but heard from other attendees that were great were; "Understanding Your AV Bill" by Matthew Rauch, "The Event Planners Social Success Secrets" by Tiffany Odutoye and the "Excel Master Class for the Meeting Professional" by Jim Spellos. If you have never attended OHMPI's Technology Day you need to check the MPI Ohio calendar of events for next year www.mpioh.com. It is well worth your time and money and definitely something that will change the way you do business.



MPI and Social Media

web 2.0



By: Jason Diehl

In May of this year MPI Ohio entered into the Social Media world with Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Many of you will certainly know this based on the overwhelming popularity and involvement, but many of you may not know what is going on.

First I am certain that everyone has heard someone with MPI say if you want to get the most out of MPI, get involved. This is the same with Social Media. It is easy to join, but when you begin to get involved is where it pays off. It is pretty simple: Social Media needs everyone to “be social”.

First the most popular Social Media site, Facebook. Over 300 million are now a part of this exciting network of people. How does this translate for MPI? It has been the least popular for us. Why? Though Facebook is what you might immediately think of when you hear Social Media, it is not necessarily the right forum for everything. Many use Facebook for personal use and do not like to blend the line. It is strictly up to a person’s preference though. Facebook will be great for student involvement and will be crucial to help more students get involved.

How does Facebook exactly work? It can be very confusing because there is so much. I won’t attempt to explain all there is, but want to give a quick overview. As you start Facebook you setup a profile with as much or as little information as you desire about yourself. You then find people you know and become “friends”. This then allows you to learn what is going on

with them and easily interact. You can interact through chats, messages, and even just writing something on their profile wall. This gets you started and then your involvement grows from there.

MPI is using a “Group” as its medium. “Group” refers to a group of individuals that are all part of a same organization. Simple enough, right? It is as simple to join a group as it is to make someone a friend. A “group” gives you a forum to discuss anything and one other great function is you can add “Events” on the group page. We will be posting most all events on Facebook for you to watch out for. You may have seen “Fan Pages” and this is another type of group, but a little different. You become a “fan” of someone or something, instead of a “member”. For instance you can become a “fan” of a certain sport team, college, or musical group. Both “Groups” and “Fan Pages” are not profiles, but a way for groups and companies to be a part of Facebook. Profiles are only for personal pages. Hopefully this clears up some confusion that people have and did not cause more confusion.



Twitter is the next site I want to mention. Jim Spellos at the MPI Tech Day referred to this as the one site you should be on. This site allows you to microblog. Blogging as it is referred to is simply when someone writes something to the web...a web log... put that together and you have BLOG. Microblog is just a short version of this. There is a

lot to learn about Twitter, and we are using it in a variety of ways. We are making announcements of upcoming events, as well as things going on within MPI. We are also announcing major news in the industry and “retweeting” many other MPI groups and industry partners. During our events we are updating or “tweeting” to those who cannot be there on what is

+ ADD TO FRIENDS

MPI and Social Media (Web 2.0) continued

going on. We are telling people where we are for luncheons, REACH meetings and events. To date we have almost 250 followers after just a couple of months with a lot of interaction.

Twitter is very simple and the first myth that should be debunked now is that it is “just like the other sites”. This is not Facebook and should not be used this way. My suggestion is to watch first, then start “Tweeting”. Who should you watch? Find a few things you are interested in, then see who they are following and you will quickly build a group to watch. Sick of someone you are following? Stop following them and if someone follows you it does not require you to follow them. Many are confused by Twitter, but it is the simplicity that is so confusing. A couple of notes are that links to websites might look a little strange on twitter, but that is because they are normal sites that are shortened to fit into the 140 character Tweet. It is also confusing to see the @ sign, but think of it as www. For instance @MPIOH takes you to MPI's profile on Twitter, just like www.mpioh.com takes you to our website. Twitter is quickly growing and a great way to always stay up to date. I highly suggest using this great tool.

Follow Me



LinkedIn has been the most successful for us. We have over 200 members and it is continuing to grow. The most exciting thing is the involvement! In some ways, LinkedIn is like Facebook, but is your professional profile while Facebook is your personal profile. It is great way to list your previous positions, your resume, organizations you are a part of, and much more. LinkedIn again has groups like Facebook and it has been exciting to watch this grow quickly for MPIOH.

When you become a part of LinkedIn you get the chance to be a part of all the discussions that happen. There have been some great discussions as events are coming up and when there is any industry news. Have a question and want to get some insight? LinkedIn gives you access to many others in your industry. There is also great networking access as you can see

who else is a part of MPI in Ohio. You can also have the ability to post jobs for free on the site. How great is that!



News is something that is exciting and unique to LinkedIn. It uses RSS feeds to bring up to the moment news on the meetings industry. What are RSS feeds? RSS is Real Simple Syndication, or you can think of it as Real Simple Subscriptions. It lets you easily pull all sorts of news from all over into one place.

You can use it through LinkedIn, but there are many other readers including Yahoo, Outlook and Google. You simply find these feeds on a news sources website. To get all of MPIOH's RSS feeds we used a discussion and had many members suggest what they read. There were some great suggestions and they helped to create our news feed. Check it out today and stay more up to date on the meetings industry.

I hope this helps you know what MPI Ohio is doing with Social Media and gets you excited to be involved. Social Media can be a little intimidating, but once you get started you learn quickly. Getting started is the biggest hurdle. If you have any questions please find me online or check some of the documents at www.slideshare.net/jasondiehl. You can also check YouTube, SlideShare or Google. All three of those sites have so much great information to get you started. Happy socializing and see you online!

Jason Diehl, Sales Manager
Embassy Suites Columbus-Airport

Events Layouts: How Software Can Help You Create Perfect Events

By: Ann Puckett, QE Software LLC

We are constantly inundated with new software, iPhone apps, and packages designed to help our businesses. But how do you decipher between all of the programs available? How do you know which ones you need? What if you just used Word, Excel or Paint, isn't that good enough? Well...the answer is yes, but it is much better if you can use a package that is tailored specifically for the event industry. There are several software packages available but one software package you should have in your arsenal is room diagramming software.

Room diagramming software can also be called room layout, floor plan and sometimes event layout or event design software. Either way, it is a software package designed to create floor plans for your event. This software allows you to place tables, chairs, dance floors, audio-visual equipment, bars, stages and trade show booths, to name a few. This software allows you to create any type of event and it should allow you to see your entire event as if it were to be laid out, to-scale. This way you know exactly how your event will look and also have the peace of mind that your event will fit.

Room Layout software allows you to present professional diagrams to your clients, not pencil-drawn chicken scratch drawings. When presenting clients with an accurate, to-scale drawing you set the professional tone in your early meetings. You know you can present the best to your clients and they know they can expect nothing but the best from you. Establish trust upfront and know that your client will have faith in you, your work and your company.

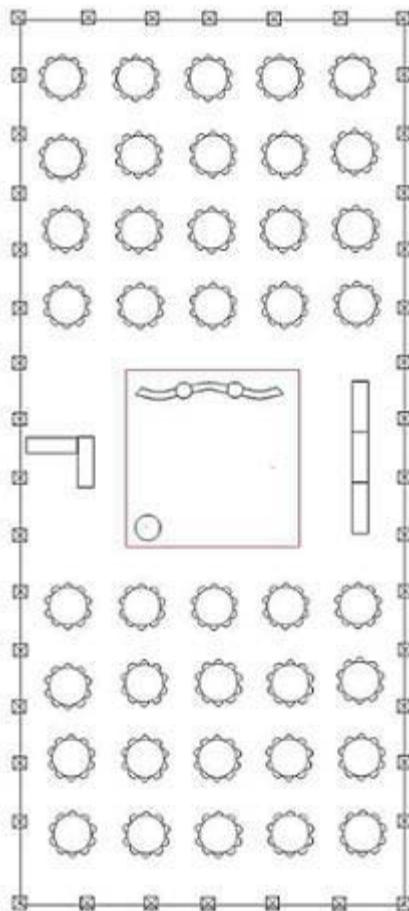
Wedding, event and corporate planners, hotels and

banquet facilities, rental companies and caterers can all benefit from having software like this. Also anyone that deals with event setup, décor, production or design can also benefit from this software – including florists, lighting companies and even DJ's and bands.

There are two-dimensional (2D) and three-dimensional (3D) packages available. The 2D packages are cheaper, easier to use and provide a quick overview of your event. The 3D packages, give your client a walk-through of the space and they can see exactly what the event will look like, down to the exact tablecloth and flooring colors. If you are a decor, production or audio-visual company, interested in lighting and a full scale walk through, the 3D package is more up your alley. These software packages are excellent but can take hours to setup an event. I would recommend a 2D and a 3D package because you will need both depending on the situation. You can wow clients with a 360° walk through, but remember on the day of the event, you still need a floor plan that is portable and easily communicated with all of the vendors involved.

Use these 5 benefits listed below to help you pick a compatible room layout software package for your business. The software should let you:

1. **Create Unique Designs and Experiment with Different Options** – Consider your software like a blank sheet of graph paper – create anything you want! Wow your clients with the possibility of your designs! With this, you can introduce new concepts to your clients that they might not have thought of like trying square



Events Layouts: How Software Can Help You Create Perfect Events

tables instead of round tables. If you are not sure where to place the buffet, try different options with a few clicks of the mouse to conceptualize the correct placement. There are some software packages that do not offer layouts to scale – steer clear of those.

2. See the Layout of Your Event and Know it Will Work

- Sometimes designs and space requirements are hard to visualize. Good software has automatic room and spacing calculators built-in so you can easily find the maximum capacity of the space for people, tables and event type. You can also do a quick proof of concept for a client during a site visit and quickly show your client what their event will look like and help sell the site. Or show them that you need to look for a new location because the space is not compatible. In addition, you can know the sizing you are looking for when you start to do site visits and recommendations or sizing for tents.

3. Easily Communicate with All Clients, Vendors and Staff

- Any last minute changes can be handled efficiently and effectively with a couple clicks of the mouse, not erasing and redrawing. In the end, it is all about the event running smoothly and the more people you have communicating on the same page the better. With a good software package you can create drawings and simply email them to your clients, staff and vendors or post them on the web.

4. Make Last Minute Changes a Breeze

- Changes always happen and most of the time they are last minute! This way you can easily make a change in the software and communicate those changes immediately. One of our clients contacted us after an important fund raiser praising the software because it had saved their event and guaranteed the business for the following year. Lisa from Event

Management International stated, “We were able to sit down with our client two days before the event, show them what the changes would look like and made recommendations for new setups. Within one hour, we made the changes to the event, notified the rental company, outside vendors and our staff. The event went off without a hitch. Our client was so ecstatic they booked us on the spot for next year’s event.”

5. Utilize Extras to Put Your Event Over the Top

- Some software packages allow you to track each guest, their food choice and their table assignment. You can also group people together by company or donation level for fundraisers. Not only will the catering company look like a star, guests won’t be wandering around aimlessly looking for their table and the event will run smoothly. All software should have full reporting capabilities and event inventory listings.



Prices for good room layout software range anywhere between \$150 to \$30,000. On average you can find a great 2D package for around \$300-500 per license. Anything higher than that price should be a 3D package and anything lower typically won’t have all of the features you need to make your

event a success.

Invest in good room layout software and it will save you much time and effort, allow you to present yourself professionally and most importantly let you to have fun doing what you do best – Creating Fantastic Events!

Ann Puckett, is a Professional Bridal Consultant and owner of QE Software. She designed Venue™ Room Layout Software in 2001 after a disastrous event setup at a local country club. QE Software provides event layout software as well as training on event setups including site selection, proper layouts, event software and all things technology. QE Software’s goal is to provide software to help event planners, caterers, and facilities embrace technology to help their businesses run efficiently. www.QESoftware.com 877-737-6389 annpuckett@qesoftware.com

22nd Annual Education & Scholarship Holiday Auction



By Barbara Yeater

The Ohio Chapter of Meeting Professionals International (MPIOH) is holding the 22nd Annual Education & Scholarship Auction on Wednesday, December 2, 2009. The proceeds from the Auction are used to defray costs of MPIOH related educational programs and for educational scholarships. In addition, "A Kid Again" will benefit with a portion of the proceeds. A Kid Again strives to enrich the lives of children with life threatening illnesses and their families by providing healing times of respite through our fun-filled group activities and destination events, which they call adventures.

Our Host Facility this year is the Columbus ZOO. The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is a 90 acre Zoological garden with over 700 wildlife species. But that's not all, we also have 17 amusement park rides, an 18 hole golf course and a brand new water park, Zoombezi Bay, with state of the art slides, a wave pool, action river, lazy river, private cabanas and kiddy pool. With all this entertainment why not make the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium the location for your next event. With over 16 facilities, accommodating both indoor and outdoor settings, catering onsite and discounted ticket options



the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium is the perfect destination for your next company outing, business meeting or group get-together.

We would appreciate your participation in the Auction through the donation of auction items. As a contributor, you will receive exposure to over 1000 meeting planners and suppliers through item lists, promotional materials, and the MPIOH web site prior to the Auction, as well as visibility to over 200 attendees during the networking reception and Auction on December 2nd. After the Auction, you will be recognized as a contributor to our success through our chapter newsletter, which is distributed to over 350 meeting industry planners and suppliers.

Watch for the invitation to be released very soon through our weekly e-newsletter. In the meantime donations and questions regarding the event may be directed to me at 216-373-3346 byeater@dhmhotels.com or Lauren Estness 513-563-8674 mpioh@aol.com

Thank you in advance for your support of the Ohio Chapter of Meeting Professionals International!

Dip a Toe Into Some Technology

By Jeffery Rasco, CMP and Christina Rasco Adams

Graduated to Web 2.0? Lose you already? Whether you “tweet” on a regular basis or have never used “google” as a verb, let’s get your feet wet and discover how to effectively use the Web’s latest offerings.

Here’s a quick lesson: The first era of the Internet was all about sending and getting information from one source to another. Sending e-mail, chatting with pals, surfing the Web, shopping—a user searched for information and communicated in a linear way. While these things remain integral parts of daily life, today’s Internet introduces a collaborative feel to the way we communicate and exchange information. The Web has evolved into a place where we not only get and pass along information, but we also contribute.

A complete guide to these trends and applications would fill several volumes and require updating on a daily basis—the goal here is to review the most active Web 2.0 components that, when used well, can increase efficiency in your professional and personal life, create buzz for your business and events and innovate the way you meet, communicate and network.

BLOG IT UP

If you look solely at coined dates, Weblogs (blogs) are really a predecessor of the Web 2.0 movement. Blogs started appearing in the late 1990s as essentially a journaling tool to document thoughts, descriptions and commentary on events and post pictures, videos and graphics. More recently, blogs have morphed into forums that reach well beyond the personal diaries they were initially perceived as.

The uses are endless. Blogs can be private or public, can restrict contributors to a single person or be open to anyone to post content or comment on material and can take on any look or layout imaginable. Families and friends use them to stay connected, news services use them as means for outreach and opinion forums,

corporations utilize blogs both internally and externally and recent elections exhibited how blogs could be used effectively to engage supporters.

The platform is an easy and effective way to garner interest in events and keep attendees, prospects, speakers and planners updated. Posting updates about the event, such as session topics and event promotions, may be easier via a blog than altering an event site. Blogs can even allow speakers to collaborate and connect with attendees in order to better develop their sessions to meld with attendee interests.

Here’s a way to get active in the blogosphere.

1. You can install blog software on your Web site (the links to your blog entries from other bloggers are good for search engine visibility). It requires a bit of techie knowledge, but it’s not a big project for your webmaster. An even simpler way to enter the blogosphere is through a blog application. These make it easy to get your ideas out to the world. There are several blogging programs available, so first you will need to choose a provider. Any search engine will return numerous possibilities, so poke around and select one that suites your needs. For a recent family blog we put together, we



Dip a Toe Into Some Technology continued

chose Blogger (www.blogger.com), a Google product.

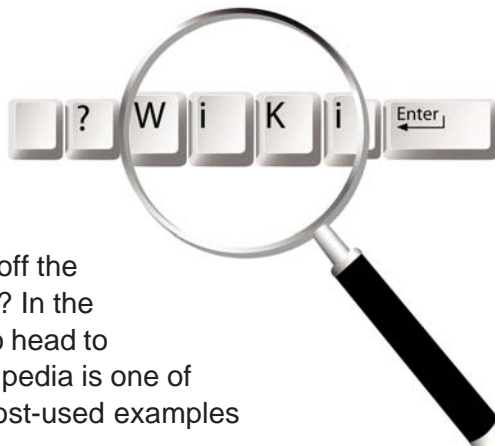
- 1) Create an account. Supply a few pieces of pertinent information, and you're official.
- 2) Create the look and feel of your blog site. Depending on your proclivities, this could be the easiest or most difficult part of the process. (Don't worry, you can always change it later.) There are a multitude of template selections, or you can design your own. Of course, if the blog is tied to an event or business, stick with those styles and branding requirements.
- 3) Most blogging programs offer settings to help control privacy levels. For our family blog, we chose to make the blog private, which limits access to the site to only approved members and restricts postings to only those set to "author" status. These settings can be manipulated to varying levels depending on what is needed.
- 4) Click on the "post" link, and now you're ready to start posting! Most will take you to a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor, which will help you type and format your message. Submit it, and you've entered the world of blogging.

While step No. 5 is technically the final step to your first post, it should not end your blogging career. Blogs can easily get outdated, and outdated blogs are worthless. Keep your blog current with regular posts. If you are relying on a group of contributors to add to the blog, remind them regularly or create a posting schedule.

WIKIS

Even if you don't know it, you are probably familiar with wikis.

When was the last time you pulled one of those lettered encyclopedia volumes off the shelf? Can't remember? In the Internet age, we tend to head to Wikipedia instead. Wikipedia is one of the best-known and most-used examples



of wikis. As defined by Wikipedia (how appropriate), a wiki is a page or pages that enables visitors to contribute or modify existing content. According to its Web site, there are hundreds of thousands of visitors making hundreds of thousands of edits to articles and contributing new ones each day.

Don't let the size of Wikipedia intimidate you. It is a massive example of a concept that can be used effectively in much simpler contexts. The platform creates an open environment in which users can add and edit the pages' content within a simple, easy-to-use interface, making it an effective tool to allow groups to collaborate.

In his video "Wikis in Plain English," Lee LeFever offers the example of a group of friends planning a trip. Rather than trying to coordinate through a barrage of e-mail, the friends utilize a wiki to organize the trip on one cohesive space they can all visit and contribute to.

The Meetings Industry Wiki (found in the Resources section at www.mpiweb.org) exhibits how wikis can be used to share information among a large group of people from across the globe. All members are able to add articles or edit existing articles with the click of a button. With no programs to download, the only pause is to enter your username and password.

It's simple to create your own wiki. In fact, one wiki program touts that you can create your own in under 60 seconds. Read on.

1. Like other Web 2.0 trends, there are several applications you can use to build your wiki. Do a little research and choose a provider, then create your account. While larger wikis may incur fees, many of the providers do not charge for moderate-size wikis. We tested Wikispaces (www.wikispaces.com) and PBWiki (www.pbwiki.com) and preferred PBWiki, although both are fairly straightforward.

2. Next you'll name your wiki. The name you choose will be incorporated into the domain so the URL to your wiki will look something like <http://yourwikiname.wikiprovidername.com>.

Dip a Toe Into Some Technology continued

3. Seconds later, you will be on your wiki. Click the edit button and the page will become editable. You will be able to add text and images and format the page.

4. Hit save and your page is now part of the wiki world. Invite others to your site to view and contribute.

MEDIA BROADCASTING

Being able to put video presentations quickly and easily online is very cool. It has extremely practical applications, too.

Audio podcasts have been around forever (in Internet time), but until fairly recently, video was far less common. Video streaming has been available but required significant resources to house and feed the files on demand. Four years ago that changed with the birth of YouTube. Also, Apple's popular iPods gained a video viewer, and the popularity of podcasts grew into another medium. Suddenly, anyone could be a media broadcaster, potentially reaching millions on their computers, media players and mobile phones.

At first, self-posted videos were quite often of poor quality—amateurish productions that were simple, silly pleasures (think water-skiing squirrels). Today, YouTube and its sister video hosting services provide educational, promotional and every other imaginable variety of video in environments that are simple (and free) to use. One of the features that makes them most attractive from our perspective is the ability to post a video and instantly have the HTML code necessary to embed the video in your own Web site, blog or social networking page, or to simply send the link to your audiences in an e-mail.

To get started, you usually need to set up an account with one of the services. Some of the most popular are YouTube, iTunes, Blip.tv, Revver, Digg, Mevio and Crackle. Interestingly, Google (which owns YouTube) also allows subscribers to upload and share videos. If you already have Google e-mail, blogs or any of its other services, it is easy to move around between the applications. Social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook also offer simple solutions for video uploads.

Once your account is established and you are in the program, browse your computer for the file you wish to share, name it and provide a description. You may also be asked to provide a genre (business, special interest, comedy) and select whether your video is available for the public or will be for private use. Most files that you record on a digital camera, or even your cell phone, will be in a proper format, but check with the service for preferred file types. YouTube likes H.264 compression in MPEG-2 or MPEG-4 formats—most of which are standard.

If you plan to produce your video to promote your meeting, property or services or for other professional purposes, you will want to record with the best possible quality. Select a good camera, and consider one that can record in high-definition digital format. If you use tape, it can be converted, but that's an additional step. Many people feel the audio component is even more important than the video quality. Although you can use the microphone built into the camera, for the best overall production you will want your camera to have an audio input so you can hook up an external mic for optimum quality.

Finally, consider lighting and location. You are a great presenter, and you've written a killer script, but if the image is muddy or washed out, viewers can become distracted. A well-lit subject against a neutral background allows the viewer to focus more on what's important: you and your message. You can rent or purchase tungsten studio lights, or take advantage of outdoor locations and natural light to produce professional-looking clips.

Your show may be one continuous take, or you may want to break up the video with extra shots for emphasis or explanation. Editing software such as Windows Movie Maker or Apple iMovie are probably already on your computer, but others such as Apple's Final Cut or Podcast Producer, Sony's Vegas or Yahoo's JumpCut may offer the more sophisticated options you seek. Any of these allow you to weave together different shots, audio and graphics for an effective videocast.

Dip a Toe Into Some Technology continued

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

Web 2.0 focuses on what we're dubbing the three Cs—content, collaboration and connections. The components of this generation of the Internet transform the way we use the Web, but in simple ways that are accessible to all users and opening up a world of creativity.

Not long after you start tweeting, blogging and wikiing, it's easy to see the need for one more C—coordination. Take a look at your inbox and you'll see that the last thing you need is to be inundated with more stuff to sift through, particularly when half those tidbits are 140 character reflections on someone else's life. Not always efficient, nor effective.

Never fear, the trend toward integration is moving at the same 2.0 breakneck pace. Social networking sites have applications to connect your Twitter and other accounts to their pages. Spots such as MyYahoo or Google Reader allow you to follow news blogs through RSS feeds, monitor Facebook and check the weather and sports scores from a single vantage point. Additionally, mobile phone technology is allowing even greater access (drivers beware). As these technologies develop further it will become even easier for us to enjoy the Wonderful Wide Web and utilize all four Cs.

JEFF RASCO, CMP, and CHRISTINA RASCO ADAMS are partners in Attendee Management Inc. based in Wimberley, Texas. Connect to One+ editors via social media on the PlusPoint blog by visiting www.mpionplus.org.



Great meetings
inside or out

Now is the time to discover, or rediscover, Oglebay

Wilson Lodge at Oglebay recently completed an extensive expansion and renovation project adding 59 new premium rooms and the new West Spa. The project also included the remodeling of the existing 212 rooms. Wilson Lodge offers fine and casual dining, wireless Internet, an indoor pool, jacuzzi and fitness room.

Surrounded by 1,700 acres of picturesque natural beauty and abundant recreational opportunities, Wilson Lodge provides a unique atmosphere for corporate meetings, conferences, retreats and outings. Our first-rate facilities and professional staff allow you to relax and rejuvenate, and that inspires successful and memorable meetings.



Resort & Conference Center
Wheeling, West Virginia
800-972-1991
sales@oglebay-resort.com
www.oglebay-resort.com

Just 2 hours from Columbus and 3 hours from Cleveland

Engage Attendees and Measure ROI with One Simple Tool

By Greg Alexander

Recent attacks on our industry by government officials and the media are causing most organizations to redefine their meetings and events strategy. Meeting planners around the globe were among the first to be asked to justify spending habits. The reputation that meetings are extravagant cocktail hours in disguise has organizers defending not only their events, but their careers as well. During the past year, gauging return on investment (ROI) and return on objectives (ROO) have moved to the top of priority list, causing event planners to search for tools that can accomplish both tasks - minus costly or labor-intensive processes.

There is an often overlooked technology that offers the ability to improve and measure the engagement of attendees, while at the same time gathering information to prove ROI and ROO. For years, Audience Response Systems (ARS) have been used in gaming applications to add a fun factor and for simple polling on issues and opinions. Today's technology is easy to use and offers much more than simple polling and games.

Meeting Effectiveness

The average attention span of attendees in a standard presentation is seven minutes! (Papp, 2006). Even the best presenters have delivered presentations in which we see the audience fidget with cell phones, fight the overwhelming urge to sleep, and do anything but pay attention to the message. How much of the information will these individuals comprehend? More importantly, how much of the information will be retained and used when they return to their workplace?

ARS has been proven to engage attendees and improve effectiveness. According to a study by Davis, Freemantle & O'Brien and published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, physicians attending interactive sessions experienced significant positive changes at a rate of 95% more than those physicians attending non-interactive sessions. Imagine telling your clients that you can improve the effectiveness of their event by 95% - and that you have the ability to provide reports that document just how effective the event has been!

Return on Investment/Return on Objectives

Providing metrics on the ROI or ROO of an event can be a daunting, if not impossible task for most meeting planners. In an effort to go "green" many organizations are eliminating paper from post-event surveys by utilizing online tools. This eco-conscious move not only takes paper out of the equation, but also the manpower spent collecting surveys after each session, calculating data and entering results into a database for further analysis. The catch, however, is that only approximately 10-20% of attendees typically reply to online surveys.

ARS offers a simple "green" solution. By asking survey questions at the end of each session, data from attendees is immediately available for analysis.

Many organizations use this real-time data to make changes to their event and improve the ROI or ROO while on-site, rather than learning too late that simple adjustments would have vastly improved their program.

In one survey, 98% of attendees surveyed prefer the use of ARS in presentations that they attend (Cawley & Culpepper, 2007). While still a fun way to engage audiences, the true value is seen when gathering opinions, gaining consensus, voting on issues,



Engage Attendees and Measure ROI with One Simple Tool continued

assessing learning, initiating discussion and much more. Response technology has advanced to allow attendees to participate via credit card size keypads, smart phones or computers. Responses can be accumulated from individuals attending the local event, attending from remote locations, or in a virtual environment over the Internet.

Meeting planners looking to ditch pen and paper in lieu of alternative methods of collecting valuable data have found a reliable tool in audience response. A simple integration with familiar programs like Microsoft PowerPoint® makes it mere clicks to create engaging, interactive presentations that instantly measure ROI

and ROO. If you are looking for a simple way to engage attendees and collect information that is invaluable in measuring meeting effectiveness, then pick up ARS and see its true value at your next meeting or event.

Greg Alexander is Market Manager - Rental Events for Turning Technologies, the global leader in audience response solutions. Greg is a member of Cambridge Who's Who, MPI, and PCMA with over 20 years of corporate and event experience. He recently served as an expert for Virtual Meeting World's webcast program "Meetings Tech: Leverage The 2.0 World To Improve Your Events." Contact Greg directly at galexander@turningtechnologies.com or 330.884.6078.

inn & spa ad cedar falls
1/2 page ad



COME FOR THE PERFECT MEETING. STAY FOR THE EVERYTHING ELSE.

With over 50,000 sq. ft. of flexible meeting and banquet space, the meeting capabilities at Belterra® are matched only by our highly-trained, courteous and attentive staff of planners. Whether you're planning a large convention or a more intimate meeting, we are ready and willing to perfect every detail. From exquisitely prepared meals for hundreds to state-of-the-art audio visual packages, come discover the many reasons why events at Belterra are **EASY TO LOVE. HARD TO LEAVE.®**

For reservations call 1.888.440.4498
or visit beltterracasino.com.
777 Belterra Drive, Florence, IN 47020-9402

Visit us online at beltterracasino.com/meetings to
receive special package rates and complimentary
for meetings or events booked before 12/28/09.



Canton Ad