

## **Tradeshaw and Conference Etiquette**

**Objective:** The primary objective of this topic is to educate planners and suppliers on the etiquette of trade shows and sharpen the awareness of the SGMP members attending any trade show event.

**Background:** This program was developed in response to concerns from the membership regarding the conduct or behavior of some of our members during the National Conferences in the past few years. To be more specific, the supplier members who support our organization by exhibiting at our Annual Conference and regional SGMP Chapter trade shows feel strongly that the lack of attendance by our planner members during trade show hours has become a huge problem. There has been increased pressure for our suppliers to return to their properties and justify to their superiors why paying the exhibit fees is worth the investment.

It is also of concern when workshop attendance is low during certain time frames, even though free time has been planned into conferences.

It would be most helpful in each chapter dedicating the April, 2000 monthly program to this topic, to open the discussion by both the planner and supplier members regarding not only trade show etiquette but workshop attendance also.

**A Proposed Format:** A panel or single speaker

**Panel Participants:** An experienced Moderator/Facilitator

(2) Suppliers

(2) Planners

The panel should have attended and or exhibited at one of the SGMP Annual Conferences. All should be experienced. One of each should be a SGMP member. Others may be from other organizations such as MPI or PCMA, depending on expertise.

**Moderator:**

**Prior to the Meeting:**

- Contact panel members prior to the meeting to develop questions. These questions should be what is real and what it not.
- Prepare questions for Q/A, which will follow presentations.

**At the Meeting:**

- Introduce speakers - - give a little background on each
- Encourage discussion from the audience
- During discussion, capture ideas/concerns/responses on flipcharts

**After the Meeting:**

- Prepare a handout of the ideas addressed and write an article for chapter newsletter.

## **Sample Questions:**

### **Directed to Planners:**

- When attending a trade show, are you mainly interested in specific destinations, or are you attending to gather as much information as possible from all exhibitors?
- Is it price or quality that drives your hotel search?
- Is it helpful to be offered specials or packages from exhibitors?
- What can an exhibitor do or offer to hit your HOT button? What really turns you off?
- Are giveaways important?
- What might be some reasons why you would not attend the SGMP sponsored trade show?

### **Directed to Suppliers:**

- Do pre mailers to attendees really work?
- What are some of the key questions you ask trade show attendees when they visit your booth?
- What information should you be prepared to present to clients visiting your booth?
- (Per Diem rates, FEMA Compliance, shuttle service, renovation information, etc.)
- What are some of the necessary questions you ask trade show attendees when they visit your booth?
- Should I visit, even if I can't do business with you?

If the panelists don't address these, the moderator/facilitator should make sure they are covered. The comments below were generated through a facilitated discussion of planners and suppliers on this topic:

### **Views from the planner perspective:**

- Show me the respect and professionalism that you expect from me.
- Be friendly and interested, but not aggressive.
- Be prepared - know the interests and constraints of the attendees.
- Focus on ME; don't look around at others entering or passing by your booth.
- Don't enter another person's booth to try to sell your property or product.
- Understand the nuances of the Government market.
- Tell me you're on the FEMA list - for Govt. business, it's a deal breaker if you're not.
- Tell me you're fully ADA compliant - if not, what remedies are underway? When will they be completed?
- Tell me how I can get more for my per diem dollar.
- Tell about planned renovations.
- Tell me about your peak and shoulder seasons.
- Tell me about your hot dates.
- Follow up with me - mail collateral promptly, call or e-mail me, send a thank you note.

### **Views from the supplier perspective:**

- Visit my booth to introduce yourself. You may have thought that my property is out of reach for your programs, but it may turn out it will work very well.
- Bring future meeting specs to show.
- Be interested in my property, not my giveaways.
- Let me know if you have geographical restrictions.
- Don't judge my property because you've had a bad experience within the chain.
- Bring business cards.
- Be courteous.
- Don't be afraid to make eye contact.
- Don't be afraid to answer my questions.

### **Discussion on Workshop Attendance:**

The presenters of the workshops offered at chapter conferences and the Annual Educational Conference have spent a great deal of time in preparing these courses for the benefit of both planner and suppliers members. It is of the utmost importance that you attend these sessions for they are the cornerstone for which our society is founded ...EDUCATION. No one knows everything about this industry. There is always something that everyone can learn, regardless of experience or tenure.

The organizers of SGMP workshops, both locally and nationally spend numerous hours preparing the conference schedule, making a point that everyone will have well deserved leisure time. Please support your organization (SGMP as well as your employer) by attending as many workshops as humanly possible. Your input and attendance at these sessions are invaluable.

### **Special note to moderator:**

Although this program was developed because of an area of concern, the intent of this program is to educate planners and suppliers on the expectations the other side has when attending industry events. Further, it is hoped that after this program, members will be encouraged to get the most of the time spent at conferences. It is not intended to be punitive, condescending or "scolding" for past behavior. More, a reminder of the wonderful opportunities available by participating fully in SGMP sponsored events. Opening comments and moderation style should set a positive tone.

These questions may be printed or taped to index cards for use in the Trade Show Program.

When attending a trade show, are you mainly interested in specific destinations, or are you attending to gather as much information as possible from all exhibitors?	Is it price or quality that drives your hotel search?
Is it helpful to be offered specials or packages from exhibitors?	What can an exhibitor do to hit your HOT button? What really turns you off?
Are giveaways important?	What might be some reasons why you would not attend the SGMP sponsored trade show?
Do pre mailers to attendees really work?	What are some of the key questions you ask trade show attendees when they visit your booth?
Should I visit, even if I can't do business with you?	What does a supplier expect a planner bring to the show?

<p>What are some new trends in trade shows?</p>	<p>What are some tips to attract traffic to your booth?</p>
<p>What information do you expect the supplier to give you when you stop at their booth?</p>	<p>What should the supplier do after the show is over?</p>
<p>How do suppliers feel about giveaways?</p>	<p>Why is it important for planners to attend the trade show at any SGMP sponsored event?</p>
<p>What are the “etiquette” issues planners and suppliers should be aware of?</p>	