



APEX TOOLBOX **brings accepted** **practices to your desktop**



by Mary Power

This new product provides meeting professionals a neatly packaged set of ready-made tools that can be customized for individual events.

You have read about the “Tools to Use” developed through the Accepted Practices Exchange (APEX) initiative in many magazine articles this year. You have asked how you can easily use these tools before the APEX Technology Advisory Council (TAC) completes the data specifications that will

make all accepted practices automated. The Convention Industry Council (CIC) has listened and responded!

In July 2005, the CIC released APEX Toolbox for Meeting and Event Planning, a user-friendly toolset designed to interface with the Microsoft Office™ suite of software – specifically Word™, Excel™, and PowerPoint™. This new product provides meeting professionals a neatly packaged set of ready-made tools that can be customized for individual events. These include:

- The APEX Industry Glossary with over 3,900 industry-approved terms, acronyms, and abbreviations, and their respective definitions.
- The APEX Event Specifications Guide (ESG), which is driven by the wizard technology contained in MS Office. Using this tool will help meeting professionals prepare detailed instructions for events more quickly and efficiently.
- The Housing and Registration accepted practices, including event registration, housing, and rooming list forms and templates.
- Completed samples of all hard-copy (cont. next pg.)

APEX templates that have been adopted as accepted practices, so that planners can use them for reference.

- All checklists from The Convention Industry Council Manual, 7th Edition.

In addition, APEX Toolbox for Meetings and Events has the built-in ability to create an Adobe-compatible PDF file, so that users can distribute secure files via email, or post them to a website. It also has an automatic profile feature that inserts the user's name, address, and event-related information into new documents automatically. What a time savings for users!

"The final automation of the APEX products will take time to develop," said Terri Breining, APEX Commissioner. "This is no 'flip of the switch' technology, since it is a function of the business cycle of corporations within our industry. Therefore, we wanted to move forward and provide a product that could be used now. The APEX Toolbox was developed for three important reasons – to help event organizers implement accepted practices as they are developed by the APEX initiative; to provide vital revenue for APEX to move forward; and to give meeting professionals an incredibly functional product that is also a great value!"

It certainly is priced to sell -- \$99.95 for so many time-saving tools! "In the first three weeks, we sold almost 100 copies to individuals. And Hyatt Hotels has already purchased 4,000 copies to give to customers. A number of other Industry corporations are interested in doing something similar," Breining said.

APEX Toolbox will be updated regularly. If a user registers his/her copy when first purchased, he/she will automatically receive updates with new APEX tools and templates as they are available. The first update will be released in the second quarter of 2006, and will include the Post Event Report (PER) forms and templates.

To purchase your copy, go to www.conventionindustry.org. It is a "small purchase" for any meeting professional trying to save time and money and provide top level service in today's business environment. **MEET**



Mary Power is the President and CEO of the Convention Industry Council (CIC) representing all aspects of the meeting, convention and exhibition industry. Power has more than 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry and in association volunteer leadership.