

# ***EMCVenues MEET Chicago***

## ***\$\$\$ Saving Tip\$***

***Pheasant Run Resort  
St. Charles, Illinois  
Friday, May 29, 2009  
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.***

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# KNOW YOUR GROUP

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- **History, History, History**
- **Know the Value of Your Business**
- **What are your Client's Priorities?**

# ACCOUNTING

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- **Review your master account bill daily**
- **Limit authorized signatures**
- **Offer discount for early registration at association meetings**
  - **Invest money and use early registrants to entice additional registrations**

# AUDIO/VISUAL

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- Work with 1 audio/visual company as preferred supplier for volume discounts
- Assign meetings to rooms, wherever possible, with same audio/visual and set-up arrangements
- Bring your own flip charts and markers, blank overhead transparencies
- Purchase power cords and LCD projectors so you can pay a set-up fee rather than a daily rental charge.
- Rent equipment such as fax machine or copier if you anticipate heavy usage

# ENTERTAINMENT

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- **Contact local schools for entertainment in exchange for donation**
- **Contact entertainers who are in-town for other shows or functions**
- **Book celebrity impersonators for meet and greet instead of pursuing the real people**

# DECOR

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- **Theme events can be simple and reasonable – use simple flowers or centerpieces, candles, house linens, low lighting, custom menus, and great music**
- **Use facilities' in-house props, which are often free**
- **Use innovative centerpieces such as a Lazy Susan with buffet lunch for centerpiece**
- **Do it yourself by purchasing items at \$.99 stores – balloons, cylinders with colored beads, live plants**

# FOOD & BEVERAGE

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- **Use history to determine guarantees**
- **Meet with chef to custom design menus that fit your budget**
- **Theme events using ethnic foods that are less costly**
- **Serve light lunches such as salads rather than heavy entrees**
- **Cut down on portions**
- **Use boxed lunches, if appropriate**
- **Reduce number of courses at dinner**

# FOOD & BEVERAGE

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- **Use food stations spread throughout the room**
- **Serve continental breakfast instead of full American breakfast**
- **Piggy-back off other group's events**
- **Consider restaurant for meals for meals**
- **Networking Dinners – Dutch Treat**  
**Organize optional group dinners for attendees**
- **Negotiate complimentary receptions**
- **Shorten time of receptions**

# FOOD & BEVERAGE

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- **Take advantage of “dead wine”**
- **Request that servers do not “top off” glasses of wine**
- **Use opened bottles of liquor and wine for hospitality or VIP suite**
- **Use pitchers of water rather than bottled water**
- **Use butler service instead of buffet tables**
- **Use meal tickets**
- **People drink less at cash bars**
- **Order by consumption not per person**

# NEGOTIATIONS

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- **Rates/Dates/Space – pick 2 of 3**
- **Use Value season/holidays/days of week or Hot dates**
- **Consider booking in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> tier cities**
- **Consider working with a full-service venue like conference centers or cruise ships**
- **Review and negotiate your contracts thoroughly before you submit them for signature**
- **Negotiate multi-year contracts or bundle your business with other departments**

# NEGOTIATIONS

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- **Negotiate to remove resort fees, box delivery and storage fees, reduce F&B minimums, internet charges, fitness center fees**
- **Work with preferred vendors repeatedly to develop relationships and increase the value of your business**
- **Book unique venues where you can bring in your own vendors**
- **Take advantage of foreign exchange rates**
- **EVERYTHING IS NEGOTIABLE**

# NEGOTIATIONS

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- **Comp rooms - Don't settle for 1/50 - Get cumulative, not nightly count**  
**Pick-up Mon. 49 Tues. 49 Wed. 49**  
**Nightly 0 comp rooms; Cumulative 2 comp rooms**
- **Negotiate upgrades to concierge level for VIPs and key executives**
- **Request amenities for VIPs**
- **Get reduced rates for staff/speakers**

# PRINTING

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- **Use local printing outlet in meeting city to reduce shipping charges  
ALWAYS request a proof before printing.**
- **Do layout and design on your own software**

# SHIPPING/POSTAGE

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- **Prepare a time line with deadlines to take advantage of least expensive shipping rates**
- **Check post office regulations before creating mailings**
- **Barter with shipping companies to send your shipments at no charge**
- **Purchase office supplies locally to avoid shipping charges**

# **SIGNAGE**

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- **Create permanent generic reusable signs with updated information on velcro**
- **Prepare room signs listing all meetings in that room throughout the meeting**
- **Use hotel sign boards**

# **SPEAKERS**

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- **Get free speakers instead of fee speakers**
- **Book multiple bookings rates for same event**
- **Use local speakers**
- **Discuss discounted fee for sale of product**
- **Barter speaking engagement for something of value**
- **Arrange air transportation for speaker or specify least expensive air fare**
- **Review speaker audio/visual requests upon on-site registration**

# **SPONSORSHIP**

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- **Sponsorship of meal functions**  
**Serve dessert near sponsor's booth if trade show follows lunch**
- **ALMOST everything can be sponsored**
- **Marketing assistance**  
**Provide financial incentives for suppliers to promote meetings**

# STAFFING

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- **Develop company travel policy prior to meeting**
- **Arrange group breakfast functions with one menu to review meeting updates and ensure that staff doesn't oversleep**
- **Hire local staff to avoid transportation costs**
- **Use volunteers but anticipate approximately 30% no-shows**
- **Students can work for expenses and mentoring**

# MISCELLANEOUS

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- **Take advantage of using the Convention & Visitors Bureaus and Tourist Offices**
- **Check travel costs during site selection**
- **Registration information, confirmation packages, and speaker handouts can be sent through e-mail or given to attendees on USB sticks**
- **Recycle badges**
- **Consider outsourcing to save time and money**
- **Select hotels that offer frequent flyer points that can be used for speakers, staff, or attendees**

# **\$\$\$ SAVING TIPS**

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**What else?**

**Can you think of any other ways to save money on your meetings and events?**

# What are 3 things that you have learned from this workshop?

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- 1.
- 2.
- 3

**What will you do differently when you prepare your next budget?**