

## HSMAI's Affordable Meetings Goes Green

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Sustainable practices are top of mind with meeting planners, even the Democratic and Republican national conventions will go green this year. With a conference agenda focused on sustainability and a general session on 'greening your meetings,' HSMAI will kick off its own green efforts at the 12th annual Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Affordable Meetings(R) West Conference and Exposition at the Long Beach, CA, Convention Center, June 11-12, 2008 by incorporating environmentally friendly operations into the day-to-day management of the show.

HSMAI plans to incorporate sustainable practices into its Affordable Meetings conferences and cut down on paper usage by switching to an electronic registration process for attendees, emailing badges prior to the show, posting the exhibitor set up manual online and distributing a CD containing all conference materials that will replace the traditional printed seminar book. Additionally, the conference journal will be printed on recycled paper. Attendees will receive biodegradable badges and lanyards along with re-usable tote bags made from recycled materials.

'We want to practice what we preach,' said Robert A. Gilbert, CHME, CHA, president and CEO of HSMAI. 'By setting an example, we not only educate attendees on green practices, but we provide ideas for greening their own meetings as well.'

At HSMAI's Affordable Meetings West, the Long Beach Convention Center will provide reusable water bottles and water stations to cut down on the use of disposable cups. The conference attendee hotels are also conveniently located within walking distance of the convention center.

Additionally, the conference in Long Beach this week will feature a general session on ways planners can 'green' their meetings without causing additional stress. Attendees will learn how to partner with eco-friendly meeting sites, discover why and how hotels and other venues are stepping up their investments in sustainability and about the latest developments in green meeting standards and metrics.

"Meetings and conventions can leave a hefty carbon footprint and the trade show industry is always looking for ways to reduce the impact meetings and conventions have on the environment," said Beth Petersen, show manager with GLM. "HSMAI's Affordable Meetings is showcasing how trade shows are taking steps to be environmentally friendly."

More than 700 attendees, representing meeting and event planners from a variety of organizations, with a majority representing corporate, association and independent sectors and the balance from government, non-profit, education, religious and medical/health care organizations, trade show management and the military, are expected to visit HSMAI's Affordable Meetings West 2008 show. Attendance at HSMAI's Affordable Meetings West is free-of-charge for qualified meeting planners.

Booth space is still available at the Affordable Meetings West and can be obtained by contacting Beth Petersen, show manager, GLM, (804) 261-3929, fax (804) 918-1547, e-mail: [beth\\_petersen@glmshows.com](mailto:beth_petersen@glmshows.com).

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