

HSMAI's Affordable Meetings West Offers Ideas for 'Greener' Meetings

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Expo Generates Qualified Leads for Exhibiting Companies

Attendees at the 12th annual Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Affordable Meetings(R) West Exposition and Conference held at the Long Beach Convention Center, Long Beach CA, June 11-12, 2008 learned some top tips for planning "greener" meetings in a general session led the by President of Green Events Source, Deborah Popely, President of Green Peas Events, Janet M. Cooperman and Veronica Quintero of Savor SMG Company.

"We should be saying we're doing greener meetings," said Popely. "Green is a comparative term, different meeting conditions require different approaches."

Some top green planning tips from the session included:

Reference credible guidelines and sources when incorporating green into a meeting or event

Explain your reasoning for going green and your attendees will support a good faith effort

Have a plan and start small

Include a green wish list to submit with your RFP

Serve locally produced foods and utilize products and services from local businesses

In addition to the general session, meeting planners also benefited from more than 20 educational sessions covering basic meeting planning skills to tips to lead in today's multigenerational workplace. Several attendees were also the lucky winners of jetBlue airline tickets and cash prizes sponsored by the San Jose Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Exhibitors also enjoyed a successful show, which generated many qualified leads for the more than 200 exhibitors featured at this year's show.

"Affordable Meetings generated the highest number of qualified leads out of any other show we attend," said Callie Reagan of Sodexo Conferencing. "Attendees at Affordable Meetings come prepared to do business."

Exhibitors ranged from hotels and resorts to conference centers and event technologies, such as Listenation, an exhibitor that provides voicemail marketing tools. "I was pleased to see so many attendees open to learning about meetings technology," said Ray Baum of Listenation. "I provide a marketing service to meeting planners and enjoyed meeting highly qualified attendees who were ready to do business."

Cheryl Little of the San Jose CVB, host of HSMAI's Affordable Meetings West in 2009 and repeat exhibitor, mentioned that the number one reason for exhibiting at HSMAI's Affordable Meetings West is exposure. "We come to affordable meetings to maintain face-to-face relationships with past clients, network to build new relationships."

HSMAI also selected Exhibitor Booth Award winners in the following categories:

Best Booth Overall (for the outstanding creation of an effective, attractive environment that communicates their message.)

Larkspur Hotels & Resorts - Best Single Booth

Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau - Best Multiple Booth

Best On-site Booth Promotion/Marketing (for original and effective promotional and marketing materials.)

Ghirardelli Chocolate Company - Best Single Booth

Hawaii Visitors & Convention Bureau- Best Multiple Booth

Coming up next for Affordable Meetings is HSMAI's Affordable Meetings 19th Annual National Exposition and Conference and the introduction of the Event Technology Expo, set for Sept. 10-11, 2008 at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C.

HSMAI's Affordable Meetings remains a top exposition and conference for meeting planners to attend each year. For additional information and a complete program schedule, visit www.affordablemeetings.com.

About HSMAI's Affordable Meetings(R) West

Year-after-year, the highly-acclaimed trade exposition is a main attraction for attendees looking to meet and network with knowledgeable suppliers who are determined to help produce valuable meetings and assist with purchasing decisions. Exhibitors represent hotels and resorts, university conference centers, unique meeting sites, convention and visitor bureaus, transportation companies, trade publications, software and audio/visual businesses, and other meeting and convention

suppliers. HSMAI's Affordable Meetings is owned and presented by the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International Americas region and managed by GLM, a dmg world media business. Visit www.affordablemeetings.com for more information.

About HSMAI

HSMAI is an organization of sales and marketing professionals representing all segments of the hospitality industry. With a strong focus on education, HSMAI has become the industry champion in identifying and communicating trends in the hospitality industry, and bringing together customers and members at annual events, including HSMAI's Affordable Meetings(r). Founded in 1927, HSMAI is an individual membership organization comprising more than 7,000 members worldwide, with 39 chapters in the Americas Region. For more information on HSMAI, contact the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International, 8201 Greensboro Drive, Suite 300, McLean, VA 22102, phone (703) 610-9024, fax (703) 610-9005, or visit the website at www.hsm.ai.org.

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