

YOUR ASSOCIATION PRESS

June 2021

The Need to be Decisively Indecisive: Understanding Behavioral Changes for the **Meetings & Event Industry**

by Michael Dominguez, 2021 Annual Conference Keynote Speaker

As we gradually emerge from the pandemic, we are all just beginning to comprehend the full scope of all the forks and twists in the road that we have been forced to navigate. The future is finally looking clearer, yet there has never been a greater need for you to be decisively indecisive.

"Affective forecasting", the psychological study of how one feels into the future, is front and center after 2020. Our collective experience has absolutely been unexpected, uncertain, and devastating in many ways. We now face a world, country, economy, and industry facing a road much less traveled as we begin to restart our global commerce engine and hospitality industry.

What will be the long-term changes in our industry? What were the silver linings to come out of this challenging time? It is important to know where to look for these answers and more importantly, not to overthink what may or may not be structural in change.

The closing keynote at Annual Conference, Where Does the Meetings Industry Go From Here? Reflections and Observations on a Post-Pandemic World, will help identify the key areas on which to focus going forward. What we do in the next 18 months will set the course for permanent behavioral changes to the meetings and events industry.

Michael Dominguez will provide an update on the global situation regarding COVID-19 and vaccine distribution, as well as the current state of the economy and expectations for 2021 and 2022. You can expect a thorough review of predicted changes in both the travel and meetings industries for the remainder of 2021. He will also explore the importance of adopting new technology and processes to accommodate a "fast forward" society. Despite all that we have been through, the need to engage is still ever-present and can be embraced in new and innovative ways.

1:30 - 2:30 p.m. **SUNDAY. JUNE 27-**

TUESDAY. JUNE 29 2021 Annual Conference

UPCOMING EVENTS

WEDNESDAY. JUNE 23 Webinar

Planning for Growth Solving Problems for Success

> Marriott Virginia Beach Oceanfront

TUESDAY, JULY 13 2021 AMC Retreat Richmond Marriott Short Pump

THURSDAY, JULY 29-FRIDAY, JULY 30 **2021 Meeting Planner Summit** Hotel Madison & Shenandoah Valley Conference Center

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12-FRIDAY, AUGUST 13 SIG-a-Palooza Virtual

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 2 Seminar with Lunch Richmond Marriott Downtown

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13-**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 CEO & Senior Staff Retreat** The Omni Homestead

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6-**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7** Fall Conference **Greater Richmond Convention**

Center and Hilton Richmond Downtown

VIEW UPCOMING EVENTS AT VSAE.ORG/CALENDAR

SIG-a-Palooza Registration Opens in July



Join VSAE members for virtual gatherings of VSAE's Shared Interest Groups (SIGs) on Thursday, August 12 and Friday, August 13. These member-led groups are organized around areas of interest and offer a forum for you to discuss what matters most to you with fellow association colleagues. This is a FREE event.

Following are the current SIGs available to VSAE members and meeting times. Sign up for as many as you'd like!

THURSDAY, AUGUST 12

- AMCs | 9:00-10:00 a.m.
- Senior Staff | 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- Communications & Marketing | 1:30–2:30 p.m.
- Government Affairs | 3:00–4:00 p.m.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 13

- Associate Member | 9:00–10:00 a.m.
- CEOs | 10:30-11:30 a.m.
- Meeting Planner | 1:30–2:30 p.m.











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Widespread Risk Advisors



Offering programs in a hybrid format makes VSAE's programming more accessible and reaffirms VSAE's position as a source of best practices and solutions in a post-COVID world.

Board Explores Fiscal Strength, Human Talent, and Member Value

The 2021 VSAE Board of Directors Retreat took place May 10-11 in Lynchburg. Special thanks to **Shelley Waldeck** and the entire team at **The Virginian Hotel** and **Lisa Meriweather** with the **Lynchburg Department of Economic Tourism** for being such excellent hosts!

Over one and a half days, the Board focused on three themes: fiscal strength, human talent, and member value. Regarding fiscal strength, the Board examined membership trends over the past decade and reviewed opportunities to expand membership for both executive and associate members. It also discussed strategies for diversifying and expanding revenue. The Membership Committee will be charged with reviewing the current membership structure and reporting back its recommendations to the Board by early 2022.

Discussing human talent, the Board reaffirmed its commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and considered how to build on the association's recent efforts. The Board also discussed how to engage with young professionals and non-CEOs and get them more actively involved, as well as continue to provide meaningful leadership training. Both DEI and Young Professionals task forces have been created to lead these efforts. Information on how members can get involved in these task forces will be announced at Annual Conference.

Turning to member value, the Board recognized the importance of continuing to offer VSAE programs and events both virtually and in a hybrid format, when feasible. Doing so makes VSAE's programming more accessible to association professionals across the Commonwealth and reaffirms VSAE's position as a source of best practices and solutions in a post-COVID world. The Board also noted the importance and value of returning to in-person events, with virtual and hybrid options serving as a compliment to the in-person experience.

The Board welcomes member feedback and input at any time. Additional information on these initiatives will be shared at Annual Conference.



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Widespread Risk Advisors



VSAE 2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE June 27–29, 2021

Marriott Virginia Beach Oceanfront

SCHEDULE

Sunday, June 27

Schedule subject to change. See detailed schedule at **vsae.org/annual.** Descriptions in teal are for hybrid attendees only.

11:00 am	Golf at Broad Bay Green Golf Course
1:00 pm	Pre-conference recreation activities
5:15 pm	New Member and First-Time Attendee Mixer (invitation only)
6:00 pm	Opening Reception

Monday, June 28

	Hours
6:30 am	Yoga Wake Up CAE Credit!
7:30 am	Registration Opens
8:00–9:00 am	Get to Know Your Digital Colleagues Icebreaker
8:30 am	Breakfast
9:00–9:15 am	Opening Remarks
9:15–10:15 am	Opening Keynote by Marcus Sheridan*
10:30–11:45 am	Breakout Sessions Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: From Theory to Practice Life on a 3x5 The Reinvention Mandate: Shaping Your Association's Turbulent Twenties Today
12:00 pm	Lunch and Installation of 2021–2022 Board Officers
2:00–3:15 pm	Breakout Sessions Data-Driven Decision Making to Improve Bottom-Line Success How to Ramp-up Corporate Sponsor Relationships Launching a Public Information Campaign During a Pandemic
3:30-4:45 pm	"Ask Me Anything" with Presenters
3:30–4:45 pm	SIG Meetings
5:30 pm	President's Reception (invitation only)
6:15 pm	Jazz Night with the Greats
7:15 pm	Dinner & Entertainment

Tuesday, June 29

6:30 am	Yoga Wake Up
7:30 am	Registration Opens
8:30 am	Breakfast and Closing Remarks
9:30–10:15 am	Closing Keynote by Michael Dominguez
10:30–11:45 am	Breakout Sessions • Culture of Engagement: How to Build a Passionate, Engaged Membership • Lessons from the Association Initiative on Small Improvements

VSAE.ORG/ANNUAL

Things You Need to Know for Annual Conference

Our 2021 Annual Conference is nearly here! And for many of us, it will be our first in-person event in over a year. Your conference attendee skills might be a little rusty. Here are a few helpful tips for having a stellar experience.

- Determine Your Purpose for Attending the Conference. The way you approach this event, the sessions you choose, and the people you talk to are all determined by your reason for being there. Figure out that objective before you walk into the Seaside ballroom or hit the Zoom link.
- Build Stronger Relationships. A conference is the time to meet new people, but it's also a time to build on the relationships you already have. If you know of people you want to reconnect with or get to know better who will be attending—clients, vendors, friends-of-friends—reach out before the conference to set up a time to meet for coffee or a meal while you're at the event. You can find their contact information in the Who's Attending section or message them directly in the app.
- Read All Conference Related Correspondence from VSAE. I know, I know, more email? Yes, but we only send what is important to your conference experience. This includes schedule updates, how to connect with fellow attendees, and other important announcements regarding the conference itself. This information is invaluable to your conference experience.
- Connect with Content Leaders. Our speakers and panelists are experts in their fields and are looking forward to meeting us. So don't be afraid to contact them before the conference, ask questions in the sessions, or hang around after a session to say hello, tell them you loved the presentation, and grab their business cards. And if you don't get a chance to ask your question in person, you can always contact them via email, the mobile app, or social media platforms.
- Put the 'Social' in Social Events. Even if groups are not your thing, make an effort to attend a pre-conference activity, the Opening Reception, Jazz Nights with the Greats (see mobile app for more info), and the after-dinner Beach Club Bash.
- Pack Strategically. Within the mobile app there's a great list of what to pack for the conference in Conference Attire. Items that tend to be forgotten that will be important, especially for vaccinated attendees who choose not to wear a mask...lip balm and breath mints.
- **Take a Moment.** Before your first session, take a deep breath and look around at the attendees or at the gallery on your computer screen. You're here, you made it to the conference, and it's good to have you back!

GET DETAILED SESSION DESCRIPTIONS, LEARNING OBJECTIVES, PRESENTER BIOS, CONNECT WITH OTHER ATTENDEES, AND ENGAGE ON SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE OFFICIAL VSAE MOBILE APP, ENGAGEFULLY.



GET SOCIAL! #VSAEAC21

Meeting Planners to Meet The Challenge

Meeting Planner SWALIT

Our theme for the 2021 Meeting Planner Summit is *Meeting the Challenge: Living Through a Meeting Management Evolution.* Perhaps it should be, "Meeting the Challenges..." as there have been so, so many for meeting planners and association executives over the last year. While the list is long, our meeting planners have shared their voices and all agree that learning to plan and execute a hybrid event is one of, if not the most, daunting challenge they are facing.

To enlighten us on this issue, we have dedicated three sessions at the Meeting Planner Summit to hybrid events. By working together and learning from each other, we plan to prevail with these topics:

- ► Conquering Hybrid Events: The Planning
- ► Conquering Hybrid Events: The Execution
- ► Conquering Hybrid Events: The People

The Planning and The Execution will open the Meeting Planner Summit as back-to-back sessions with a panel that includes virtual and hybrid experts as well as association executives who have previously organized online and hybrid meetings. By combining these parallel perspectives, we will be able to see both sides of the unique process that is a hybrid event.

The Planning will take us through where to start with organizing two events at the same time. We will learn how to conquer the mountain by making hybrid and virtual meetings work on both the technology and attendee sides. During The Execution we will discuss how to deal with the inevitable, and yet inevitably different, fires and roadblocks of this new meeting planning process. How do we get past them to create a meeting that is enjoyable for our attendees and manageable for the planners?

Join us on July 29-30 as we meet the challenge! And if conquering hybrid events isn't your thing, there's always Coloring and Cocktails during our new-this-year decompression session. Whatever your motivation, we look forward to seeing you!

Register at vsae.org/mpsummit

Mark Tour Colemans!

AMC Retreat



July 13, 2021
Richmond Marriott Short Pump
VSAE.ORG/AMCRETREAT

Meeting Planner Summit



July 29–30, 2021
Hotel Madison & Shenandoah
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CEO & Senior Staff Retreat



September 13–14, 2021The Omni Homestead

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Fall Conference & Expo



October 6-7, 2021

Hilton Richmond Downtown

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LET'S RECAP!

Continuing the Conversation – A Reimagined Workplace with Support for Mental Health

The workplace is evolving as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The needs of our teams have changed as well. During this conversation, the Senior Staff SIG spent time talking about what a reimagined workplace means for each of our organizations as this evolution takes place. We covered a lengthy list of topics with specific focus on the importance of being intentional and thoughtful in moving forward. Additionally, we addressed the importance of an awareness around mental health in the workplace and ways to provide a supportive environment for our teams. Our next conversation will take place during Annual Conference in June.

Reunited and it Feels So Good! June Seminar Marks Return to In-Person VSAE Events







Photos by Andrew Mann, Association Manager with Ruggles Service Corporation.

On Friday, June 4, VSAE held it's first inperson seminar and luncheon since March 2020! Held at the **Delta Hotels by Marriott** Richmond Downtown, VSAE members and guests alike enjoyed a Friday morning and early afternoon filled with education, networking, and great food. The morning seminar was a panel presentation titled, "Creating the Future of Meetings & Events." The three-person panel included Randy Cummins, President of James River Audio Visual Services, Eileen Johnson, CAE, Partner at Whiteford, Taylor & Preston, and Stewart Hinckley, President & CEO of Ruggles Service Corporation. The seminar was also streamed via Zoom, a practice we plan to continue for any members or non-members who would like to attend seminars and other VSAE events virtually.

The panel led a discussion on several topics related to returning to meetings during the age of COVID-19 including: considerations and accommodations for in-person events, technology and staffing requirements for a successful hybrid event, and legal concerns for returning to in-person meetings. In addition to presentations by the panelists, attendees were able to participate in a Q&A, and share some of their thoughts, ideas, and best practices about returning to meetings. After the seminar, attendees were treated to a reception and three-course lunch at the property. It felt great to "see" members in person again, and we look forward to seeing everyone in Virginia Beach later this month!

PARTNER HIGHLIGHT - COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG RESORTS

Meetings aren't ordinary at Colonial Williamsburg Resorts. Here, you're inspired to create change with modern features and timeless surroundings that enable extraordinary events. With our unique hotels, amenities, and dining offerings, and our exciting entertainment and activity choices, your event will be successful and memorable. We also include up to two complimentary Colonial Williamsburg tickets when you book direct!

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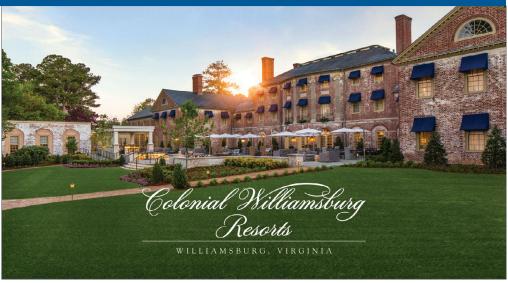
Colonial Williamsburg Resorts offers a collection of event venues perfect for meetings or social gatherings, and experiences customized to meet your every desire. From intimate to grand, our immaculate event spaces can accommodate 18 to 1,400 attendees. With more than 100,00 square feet of flexible event space, we are sure to have the perfect venue for your group.

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Elevate your events with our outstanding assemblage of iconic destinations. The Williamsburg Lodge, an Autograph Collection Hotel, beautifully blends southern hospitality and modern amenities. The epitome of elegance, the Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star, AAA Five Diamond Williamsburg Inn offers luxurious venues and upscale service. At the Williamsburg Woodlands Hotel & Suites, the conference center offers an exclusive retreat atmosphere with unique breakout spaces conveniently located near the Historic Area, with an enhanced breakfast included. If you're seeking a more quaint atmosphere, you can stay at one of our historic Colonial Houses or discover the spacious guest rooms and natural beauty of the boutique Griffin Hotel.

TASTE THE TRADITION

Cuisine is king at Colonial Williamsburg Resorts. Our award-winning culinary team has created a delicious array of banquet menu offerings – guaranteed to satisfy any palate. From our southern-



inspired meals to our specialty breaks and bars, we work with you to design the perfect culinary experience for your event. We feature more than on-site restaurants, bars, and lounges; you'll find historic dining taverns, cafés, and a bakery located throughout the resort campus, as well as unique dining events and cooking demonstrations at our Taste Studio.

STAY ENTERTAINED

At Colonial Williamsburg Resorts, you'll be surrounded by exciting attractions and activities to keep your group entertained and engaged. Our world-renowned golf club, Golden Horseshoe, features two championship-level courses and an executive course to challenge players of every skill level. We also offer a world-class 30,000

square-foot spa and fitness center, four pools (one indoor), and eight tennis courts to stay fit during your trip. Authentic 18th century taverns and 40 boutique shops and dining options in Merchant's Square are within walking distance or accessible by our shuttle. And when it's time to kick up the fun, take your team on a pub crawl, book a historic area ghost tour, add a fife and drum performance, or book one of our nation builders to address the group.

CONTACT:

JOSEPH BARROW

Director of Hotel Sales Colonial Williamsburg Resorts (800) 822-9127 sales@cwf.org



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AROUND THE COMMONWEALTH



Bob Bradshaw, Jr., MAM, celebrated his 20-year anniversary with the **Independent Insurance Agents of Virginia, Inc.** in May.

Courtney Edelblute is now the Director of Sales with the Holiday Inn & Suites - North Beach.

Rebecca Butler has been promoted to Vice President of Marketing, Communications, and Development at **Virginia Association of Free & Charitable Clinics.**

Congratulations to **The George Washington – A Wyndham Grand Hotel** for being named Wyndham Grand Hotel of the Year 2020.

Mike O'Connor, President of **VA Petroleum, Convenience & Marketers Association**, was a recent guest on the Fox Business Network's "Cavuto Coast to Coast" program. He discussed the gasoline supply problems associated with the Colonial Pipeline ransomware incident and resultant impact on Virginia consumers.

The Omni Homestead Resort has named award-winning resort executive Mark Spadoni their managing director.

Organization Management Group (OMG) is pleased to announce its newest subsidiary, OMG Accounting & Finance Solutions, LLC. Blair P. Kinchen, CPA, CGMA, MSA, is Senior Vice President of Finance and will lead the new division.

Devon Possanza, CMP, Meeting Planner with **Easter Associates**, earned her CMP designation in May.

Richmond Marriott Downtown has completed it's renovations and **Tim Koch** has returned as the Market Assistant Director of Sales.

Amy Sales, CMP, Senior Director with **Easter Associates,** proudly announces the birth of her daughter, Sloane Vealey Sales. Sloane arrived on St. Patrick's Day and was 6.9 lbs. and 19 inches long.



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