

VIRGINIA SOCIETY OF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVES

FEBRUARY 2015

NEXT EVENT

Monthly Meeting March 6, 2015

Greater Richmond Convention Center

Schedule

8:00 a.m. Registration

8:30 - 11:00 a.m. Seminar

> "Relationships, Rapport and Influence" Laura Boone, Principal Titan Group, LLC

11:00 - 11:45 a.m. Reception

11:45 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. Luncheon with a presentation from Laura Boone

Register online at www.vsae.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Membership SIG Meeting Tuesday, March 17, 2015 IIAV

Senior Staff SIG Meeting Friday, March 27, 2015 VACB

April Monthly Meeting - Breakfast Thursday, April 2, 2015 Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa at Short Pump

Annual Conference May 3-5, 2015 Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront

RELATIONSHIPS, RAPPORT AND INFLUENCE



Laura Boone, M.ED
Principal
Titan Group, LLC

Join VSAE at the Greater Richmond Convention Center on Friday, March 6th for our Monthly Meeting and Luncheon. Laura Boone of Titan Group, LLC will be presenting on "Relationships, Rapport and Influence."

Seminar

"Relationships, Rapport and Influence"

Have you ever known someone who has a knack for connecting with people? No matter who this person meets, he or she manages to create a sense of trust and understanding within a matter of minutes. We can intuitively believe that this is a natural gift - either you can build rapport like this, or you can't. However, this isn't correct: developing rapport is a skill that anyone can learn, and then use. In this session you will do the following.

- Learn how to build trust as the foundation for leadership.
- Learn how to authentically influence others
- Discover ways to develop rapport and create effective working relationships.
- Understand techniques to banish limiting thoughts and buy-in.

Register for the meeting today at www.vsae.org/monthlymeeting.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Contact for availability:

Hilton Garden Inn Richmond Downtown Tim Stacer 804-344-4300

Richmond Marriott Downtown

Jennifer Hunt

804-343-6902

2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE: RISING TIDES OF PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Wyndham Virginia Beach Oceanfront Virginia Beach May 3-5, 2015

Mark your calendar to attend Virginia's premier conference for the association industry. Join 200 of your favorite association executives, hospitality partners and others in the industry for three days of fun, sun and education.

VSAE's Annual Conference combines topnotch education with stellar networking opportunities to ensure attendees return to their organization with useful information and a stronger connection to the association community. This year's conference even affords attendees a chance to contribute to the conference content by giving an IGNITE presentation. IGNITE presentations are fast-paced 5 minute presentations with 20 slides that auto-advance every 15 seconds similar to the popular TED talks. Attendees are invited to submit an idea to give a presentation at www.vsae.org/IGNITE. Topics can be funny, serious, personal or professional. Whatever the topic, it should be something that ignites a passion within you.

Check out a preliminary schedule of events at www.vsae.org/Annual.

Conference registration opens in March.



ASSOCIATION PRESS PAGE 3

BOOK NOW OR LATER? THAT IS THE QUESTION...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



David Gabri is the CEO of Associated Luxury Hotels International (ALHI), the leading independent global sales organization serving North American meetings.

For more information, write him at dgabri@alhi.com.

In the meetings and incentive arena there are so many variables to consider when planning and coordinating your program. What is the focus and goal? Who is to attend? Where do we have it? When? What are the specific components of the program?

The number of questions (and checklists) is daunting.

One question that bears examination is, "Should I book now, or later?"

Conventional wisdom is that the answer typically is "book now." After all, there are many benefits to booking further out. At the top of the list is that it ensures your group will get the desired location, hotel or resort, dates, pattern, and meeting and function space that you seek. It becomes an item you can check-off and move to

other issues. You can rest assured as the program date nears that you have it set where, when and how you want it.

But you might be wondering if booking early is still advisable. If the market drops, will prices go lower?

While that is feasible, it still seems wise in most cases to book now rather than later, waiting for the possibility of rates to go lower.

In fact, booking early generally provides you a better negotiating position. Your organization will likely enjoy better rates and terms by booking further out, rather than experiencing a savings due to the chance of future lower rates.

Additional Benefits

In addition to holding a better negotiating position, are there any other benefits to booking early? The answer is a resounding "YES."

While the cost-savings and "peace of mind" that your program is set are often the primary motivators for booking further out, there are many other benefits too. This includes the ability to motivate your workforce and/or members of your organization about the upcoming program for a longer period of time.

Airline travel purchased further out generally provides your attendees better fares and routes with availability,

particularly if your program is in a busy destination or one with limited air seats to serve the market.

It also enables attendees the ability to line up their plans, such as arranging personal time.

Travel is a proven motivator, so the sooner you select an enticing location and appealing venue for your program, the more motivating it is for your potential attendees, and the better marketing job you can do to assure success.

Other Factors To Consider

While determining when to book is an important question to ask (and answer), another related question is, "are there other early booking opportunities to consider?" The answer, of course, is another, "yes."

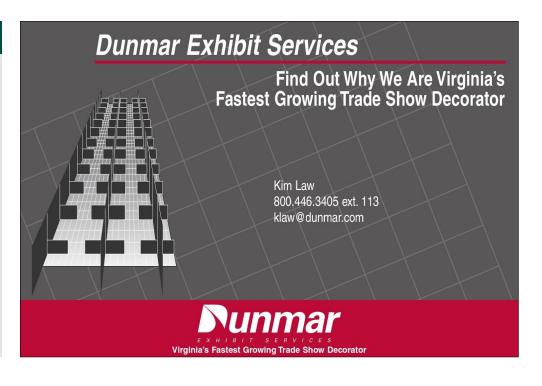
There are many great opportunities by booking at a property under construction. By taking advantage of pre-opening rates, you can get terrific deals and the utmost attention because the hotels and resorts are primarily focused on group business (i.e. YOU.)

So don't wait, and later be disappointed. That can create added pressure and negative results. Instead, get what you want, when you want it.

HEALTH CARE CORNER

As we enter 2015, political sessions are in full tilt. State and federal governing bodies are faced with Affordable Care Act issues that will change the landscape of healthcare for everyone. One of the continually debated issues is the shared responsibility tax penalty on individuals and employers, as well as the definition of what is a full-time employee. As leaders of the community, we all need to let our voices be heard. Please know all of us at Asset Protection Group are here to help you.

Questions? Contact: Monty Dise, President, Asset Protection Group, Inc. mdise@apgroupinc.com 804-423-7700



TOP 10 TIPS FOR SMALL STAFF ASSOCIATION MEMBER RETENTION

A new member joins your association. At first, he or she is active, participating, reaching out and attending events. But after awhile, you quit seeing the member at meetings and events. Dues keep coming in, but sooner or later, you lose those too.

It's normal for members to come and go in the timeline of an association. There are many factors that contribute to a member disengaging and eventually leaving an association, so

identifying strategies to keep them ahead of time will save you the headache of trying to win them back later.

Here are ten tips for holding on to members.

1. Have a solid mission statement.

The main thing that's going to attract and keep members is a solid, grounded mission statement. Your mission statement needs to be something that both your members and leadership can get behind and take pride in. Continual adherence to a strong mission statement will create camaraderie and pride in the association, and when your members look at their balance sheets and see your association's events and dues, they'll be less likely to cut that expense if they feel like they're a part of something that helps them and others.

2. Emphasize value.

Sometimes you have to remind your members of the value of your association if they haven't been able to experience the benefits lately. When you have well-attended meetings, bring up big wins the association has had lately or places where you've really made a difference as a group. A newsletter is another great place to put this information.

3. Keep programming fresh.

External reasons are one thing, but a lot of members drop off because events get boring or because they joined and never did anything with the association, so it wasn't worth the expense of dues. If you focus mainly on information, try having a few events that are all about networking. Mix up venues and themes, but be careful that your members don't get confused or lost.

4. Have a good system in place for interaction.

When members develop relationships with each other, they're more likely to stick around and take part in events together.

Not only does that strengthen the association, but it also widens possibilities for collaboration. Can you say subcommittee? Make it so members have an easy way to connect with each other. Your AMS could be just the platform you need as an easy place to keep members' contact information in a limited, for members-eyesonly, safe area. Most AMS solutions offer a secure social community available only to members and protected by a login. It's a

great place for members to interact and collaborate.

5. Focus on the social aspect.

As we just mentioned, interaction is really important and relationships are going to be what keep your members coming back for more. Encourage teamwork and be sure to

mix business with pleasure. For example, when a committee has been burning the midnight oil putting together a big event or panel, why not suggest the next meeting be at someone's home and have a little BBQ?

6. Revel in great communication.

When you, your board, or other key, active members have open lines of communication with members, jump on that. Make a separate list of active people to contact directly when you have time. That personal touch can make a big difference. Many sororities and fraternities have "pledge parents" who nurture excited new members into active sisters and brothers. Could your association somehow harness the energy that comes with new membership into something longer lasting? All it usually takes is a little personal contact.

7. Encourage everyone to take a turn.

It's easy to lean on the volunteers who are dependable and always deliver great results, but branch out. Invite members who may not be as closely involved in activities if they would be interested in helping out or attending a committee meeting. Keep in mind that they may not have time for additional volunteering so approach them with a friendly tone, and they may have a personality where they are perfectly content keeping their membership somewhat distant. But just the simple act of asking can stimulate conversation and open up a door, even if the answer is no.

8. Personalize as much as you can.

Personalizing your events to your association's members is a no-brainer, but what about appealing to even smaller groups within your association? For

example, if you happen to see a lot of recent grads, early-career workshops could be helpful and energize a demographic likely to forego association membership due to budget concerns. Also keep in mind the other concerns of your members outside of the business or hobby in question. For example, are there enough women or minority members to form a smaller subcommittee? What about mentor/mentee seekers? How about members studying for a particular certification? These are all great opportunities to mold your association's offerings to meet the specific needs of your members.

9. Be patient.

It takes awhile to build a following, and sometimes it takes a few false starts before you find a combination of programs and offerings that really work for you. It may be tough, but keep fighting the good fight. Associations thrive under diligent leadership and that's what you're offering. It may be a juggling act to keep your board onboard when plans start to fail, but sooner or later you'll figure it out.

10. Flexibility is key.

If you ask 100 different members what they want from your association, when they like their events and what kind of events they like to attend, you'll get 100 different answers. While it's impossible to make everyone happy, it is your job to make sure your members know they're heard. You may have to challenge some of your association's traditions or "that's how we do things" policies. Keep an open mind, be flexible, and you'll find out what works best for you and your members.

The most important theme throughout all of these tips, if you didn't catch it, is talking to your members and finding out what they think. Assess your situation now, ask for what they would like to improve or change, and see if they have ideas. Surveys can be useful, but I guarantee you'll get the best responses out of conversation. Don't get overwhelmed. You don't have to make all of these changes and improvements all at once.

For step one, reach out to one member. Just one. Start a dialogue, and go from there.

Reprinted with permission, this article originally appeared on MC Talks, the MemberClicks blog (http://blog.memberclicks.com/).
MemberClicks is a provider of association management software, specializing in small staff associations.

Association Press Page 5

YOU'VE GOT AN AUDIENCE: NOW, WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH IT?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Scott Oser is the President of Scott Oser Associates. Formed in 2006, Scott Oser Associates develops customized solutions for non-profit and for-profit organizations to solve unique membership,

marketing and sales challenges.

For more information, write him at info@scottoserassociates.com.

As an association publisher you are responsible for so much more than just a bunch of pieces of paper or web pages with words on them. You are sitting on an awareness builder, an example of your organization's knowledge and expertise, a membership recruitment and retention tool, a revenue generator and much more.

Here are some tips that will help you have success in all of these areas.

Know Your Audience

For most associations your publication is one of, if not the only, tangible item that members receive on a regular basis. It is therefore critical that your publication knocks the socks off as many readers as possible with every issue. In order to produce the best publication possible, you need to understand your audience.

Some key things you need to know about your audience include who they are, where they work, what positions they hold, how they like to receive their information (tips and tricks, longer thought pieces, or both) and any other important characteristics that will allow you to really write to your audience. The more you know about your audience, the easier it will be for you to know if you have a very homogeneous audience or one that may require geographic or demographic versions of your publication and ensure that you are producing the flagship piece that your publication is whether you want it to be or not.

Grow Your Audience

A publication is a great way to get your organization's name in front of a very large audience. It is tangible. It is easy to share with other people. It is relatively inexpensive to increase your distribution since the majority of your cost is sunk when producing member copies. Some ways to grow your audience include giving it away at targeted industry conferences and trade shows, using it in membership recruitment campaigns, providing it to VIPs like government leaders and other key individuals in your industry, selling reprints of popular articles and suggesting that members pass it along to others that would find the information useful. Not all of these techniques may be appropriate for your situation, but as

mentioned earlier, your publication can be the flagship for your organization, so you should do everything you can to make that happen.

Sell Your Audience

Once you know and grow your audience, you are in prime position to generate revenue by selling your audience to advertisers and other partners. Your association publication is unique because it reaches a targeted audience that no other publication reaches. In some cases vour audience may not be as large as some of your competitors, but showing advertisers that you know your audience and informing them of how reaching this unique audience will increase their chances of meeting and exceeding their business goals within your industry will in many cases have advertisers salivating to contract with you for multiple issues. One key thing to remember is that since you have already taken the time and money to grow your audience, you want to make sure that you profile your entire audience, not just your members if at all possible.

Producing a quality publication and using it in the many ways listed above is not nearly as simple as I have made it sound. If you know your audience, grow your audience and sell your audience doing these things will be much easier than they have been in the past.

1.800.365.3032 1.757.428.4752

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JANUARY MEETING EVALUATION PRIZE WINNER

Congratulations to Amy Hewett, Senior Director, Government

Relations of the American Heart Association, who was the January Meeting Evaluation Prize Winner.

Her prize is an overnight weekend stay with breakfast for two at the Hilton Garden Inn Richmond Downtown.

Don't miss out! Submit your evaluation when received by email.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Executive

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International Parking Institute Alexandria

Gordon Dixon

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Mia Galijasevic

Catapult, Inc. Richmond

Dana Geiger

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Association Press Page 7

PARTNER HIGHLIGHT: NEWPORT NEWS MARRIOTT AT CITY CENTER



What's new in Newport News? The Newport News Marriott is at the heart of City Center at Oyster Point and continues to offer conference attendees and travelers an exceptional stay in a convenient location. There are many updates at both the Marriott and City Center and they welcome VSAE friends to come experience it all in 2015.

Stylish Guestrooms

The Marriott has undergone a multi-million dollar renovation over recent months. The 256 guestrooms have received a fresh and modern style makeover that is sure to please your attendees. All guestrooms feature a flat screen television, a wine cooler, coffee maker, high speed Internet and views of the surrounding City Center landscape.

Convenient Amenities

The lobby has also been renovated and was opened up to give guests the freedom to enjoy food, beverage and time with friends and colleagues in a variety of seating and dining areas. The updates feature a beautiful new bar, lounge areas with flat screen televisions, community gathering tables and an outdoor patio overlooking the five-acre fountain that is the centerpiece of City Center.

Convenient business center stations and mobile check-in are also available here. The fitness center features all new equipment and the indoor pool is a welcome stop after a workout.

Expansive Conference Center

The conference center features 25,000 square feet of space, including the 12,000 square foot Grand Ballroom and flexible breakout options. The stunning Rotunda is a unique space for welcome receptions and special events. And the views from the 10th floor boardroom will certainly make your next board meeting memorable.

City Center at Oyster Point

Exciting new dining additions in City Center include Tucano's Brazilian

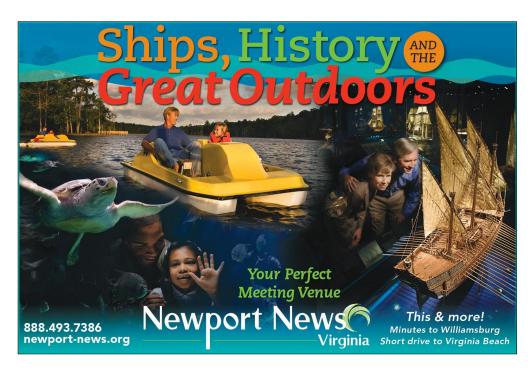
Steakhouse and Travinia Italian Restaurant and Wine Bar. Paragon Theater has recently opened featuring recliner seating, as well as NEO Kitchen and Bar and MyPi Pizza, allowing moviegoers to enjoy food and drink in the lobby before the movie or to take to their comfortable seats in the theaters. Enjoy gourmet sandwiches at Taste, or full American fare at The Cove, or visit The Lunch Bell for breakfast, Aromas Coffee Shop is a local favorite and Maggie Moo's will satisfy your sweet tooth. City Center is home to many boutique shops for hours of browsing. Step out the doors of the Marriott to take advantage of all that the new Newport News has to offer.

Convenient Hampton Roads Location

Ferguson Center for the Performing Arts, Christopher Newport University, The Mariners Museum and The Virginia Living Museum are among the attractions in the immediate vicinity. The Newport News Marriott at City Center is not only at the heart of Oyster Point, but is also at the heart of the Hampton Roads region. Centrally located on I-64 just 15 minutes west of Hampton and 15 minutes east of Williamsburg, the location makes it easy to see all that the region offers.

Contact:

Crystal MacDonald, Sales Manager, 757-310-5016 Lori Coyne, Director of Sales & Marketing, 757-310-5008





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Association Press

Published by the
Virginia Society of Association Executives
2924 Emerywood Parkway, Suite 202
Richmond, VA 23294
804-747-4971 Fax: 804-747-5022

VSAE online: www.vsae.org Email: info@vsae.org

Content Editor	Brandon Robinson, CAE
Layout & Design	Jamie Lacy
Editorial Deadline	First of Each Month
Advertising Space	Contracted Annually
Art Deadline	First of Each Month

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AROUND THE COMMONWEALTH

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS RECENTLY EARNED THEIR CAE

The CAE is the highest professional credential in the association industry. Less than five percent of all association professionals have earned the CAE.

- Sherri Halloran, CAE, Vice
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FREE STUDENT HELP FOR HOSPITALITY SALES PROSPECTING

Virginia Tech's Hospitality and Tourism Management Department, in the Pamplin College of Business, has students available to help you with prospecting for new business via the telephone or inperson.

Students available March 23-26, 2015. Contact Howard Feiertag at 540-231-9459 or write him at howardf@vt.edu.

There is no cost other than mileage, housing and meal reimbursement.

MEMBERS RECEIVE RECOGNITION

ConventionSouth magazine's Readers'
Choice Award recipients represent
CVBs, meeting sites and hotels in the
South that demonstrate a high standard
of professionalism and quality of service.
For a complete list of winners, visit
www.conventionsouth.com.

2014 Readers' Choice Award Winners:



- Chesapeake Convention & Visitors Bureau
- DiscoverLynchburg
- Hampton Convention & Visitors Bureau
- The Inn at Virginia Tech and Skeleton Conference Center
- Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau
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- Visit Fairfax

Smart Meetings magazines Platinum Choice Award recipients are recognized for raising the bar across the country, exceeding planners' and attendees' expectations with their stellar facilities, amenities and quality service. For a complete list of winners, visit www.smartmeetings.com/platinum.



2014 Platinum Choice Award Winners:

- The Greenbrier
- Pinehurst Resort

Successful Meetings magazine's Pinnacle Award recipients represent CVBs, hotels and conference centers that have excelled in professionalism, dedication in their service to meeting professionals and quality of the property. For a complete list of winners, visit www.successfulmeetings.com/pinnacle.

2014 Pinnacle Award Winners:

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FREE EXAMINATION of Your Current Health Care Plan

- Discuss 2015 PPACA/Obamacare Regulations
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- Suggest Options For More Effective Coverage And Value-Added Association Benefits
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