



EVENT PARTNERSHIPS

Terms of Engagement

Contracting partners for events on an ad hoc basis can be one of the most time consuming tasks encountered by meeting organizers. Join Therese Jardine, Senior Procurement Manager of VenueSource at Microsoft, and Jeanette Alvarez, Director of Global Account Operations at Experient, to discuss the dynamics of establishing five-year “master agreements” with key partners to help accelerate contracting timelines and minimize administrative time and costs.

- Discussion proceeded around the difference between supplier contracts vs. venue and hotel contracts and what should be included or excluded for each.
- Questions arose around whether or not pricing should be negotiated at this time. Pricing can be negotiated at a high level, for instance, including a maximum amount for certain items so as not to exceed a certain threshold over the 5 year term.
- The majority of the terms in the agreements should be those terms that are legal based and require leadership or legal review in order to move forward. The purpose of this exercise is to make it simple for the front line team members to work together easily and quickly to establish event specific term sheets and not involve others.
- Having a 5 year contract in place for key suppliers will save you time and money in the long run and help you to focus on your event.

On the Same Page

Communicating well with facilities and hotels can save time, money, and frustration for all involved parties, freeing up resources for more productive endeavors. Lynn Richmond, Housing Coordinator for the Southern Baptist Convention, leads this café about how to design “facility friendly” documents and communications that keep everybody on the same page.

Why did you come....as sales people? Need to understand how we can collaborate with each other

Q: How do you get people on the same page?

A. Over communication. Early communication is key. What is your target and agenda and end game? Early engagement of all stakeholders is key. Some key stakeholders may emerge later. Give heads up on hot buttons. From citywide standpoint more info in RFP is key.

- Sit down with convention center and hq hotel of past info distributed to partners.
- Work with Adobe forms. Great tool
- Sometimes needs change so the client needs to give current information
- Share the resume with the client so they can help build it
- Video of event is shared with vendors as well as past attendees...ie restaurants, taxis, etc.
- Be flexible to the needs of the group. le. ice cream vs liquor for Baptists
- Getting what worked and didn't worked is important as early as RFP
- Having live conversation with client is imperative
- Lynn from Southern Baptist has a 90 percent card. Gives to all personnel who interact with her attendees.

Below is a sample of the 3 ½ x 5 ½ cards that Lynn creates annually for any service person that will have opportunity to interact with their people because these are 90% of the questions that folks will ask:

SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION	
EVENT	LOCATION
* Children's Conference (Grades 1-6 -- Su/Mo)	Rooms 307-308-Level 300
* Children in Action - (Grades 1-6 -- Tu/We)	Rooms 316-320-Level 300
* Emergency Messages/Exec Comm Office	Room 330-Level 300
* Exhibits (Open Mo 8am-9pm/Tu 8am-6pm/We 8am-5pm)	Halls A-D-Level 100
* Information Desk (Opens Sun 3pm)	Pratt Street Lobby-Level 300
* Joint Missionary Commissioning Service (Su-4pm)	Ballroom-Level 400
* Ministers' Wives' Luncheon (After Tue AM session)	Hilton-Key Ballroom-Level 2
* Pastors' Conference (Sun-Mon)	Halls E-G-Level 100
* Pastors' Wives' Conference (Mon 9am-11:45am)	Hilton-Key Ballroom 5-8-Level 2
* Preschool Childcare (0-5 yrs)	Rooms 301-306-Level 300
* Registration (Opens Sun 4pm)	Rooms 327-328-Level 300
* Southern Baptist Convention (Tue-Wed)	Halls E-G-Level 100
* Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) (Su/Mo)	Sheraton City Center
* Youth on Mission (Grades 7-12 -- Tu/We)	Rooms 314-315-Level 300

Whose Grass is Greener?

Show organizers and their suppliers often come to the table with different goals and objectives, creating interesting dynamics during pre-event and onsite activities. Hosted by Jennifer Christensen the Senior Manager for Registrant Services at the Radiological Society of North America, this conversation explores improving the client/vendor relationship before, during, and after the show.

- Would like to bring vendors in earlier when talking to cities and thinking of bringing events to a specific city vs you picked my city do what I say
- Need better communication between everyone.
- Do you think clients are hesitant to give a budget because you will use it all? Yes and no. But give a parameters.
- What was the biggest thing as a vendor you wish you knew now that you're on the meeting side?
 - Never gave some things a second thought. Just assumed what they needed but didn't dive in farther.
 - We should be asking why and client should be telling you why so you can come to a conclusion together vs one or the other saying this is the way it has to be.
 - Biggest thing knowing the right people to have at the table then asking the questions
- Are there clients you work with that are partners and others that are vendors?
 - Partners....open book and really work with you and lay it out there
 - Vendors...don't open up closed vested take the info direct don't really work with you
 - Calling them partners can lead to legal issues
 - Some treat you like partners in same company and others treat you like vendors in the same company.
- How do you handle relationships that you're under contract with? Do you have an out?
- CVB, how many vendors are you working with?
 - Depends group to group. Some really lean on CVB and others don't and are really independent.
 - Initial sales really on hotels and convention center package. Events and locations come in later
 - Really depends on the group.
- How do you know when a client is serious vs just going through the motions because they are required?
 - Very common. Very hard. Very bad taste in your mouth
- Is gas greener? Both sides. Always something you love and hate
- Takeaway: just speak and say what's on your mind and have empathy. Communication is key!