



Different by Nature.

**SALT LAKE CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD
May 11 - 13, 2009 Meeting Minutes
Confidential**

Board Members (in Attendance)

Sue Davis	SPIE-International Society of Optical Engineering
Elyce Jones	Omniture
Desirée Knight, CMP	The American Railway Engineering and Maintenance of Way Association
Shirlee Kyle	Distributive Education Clubs of America
Marguerite Leishman	Association for Career & Technical Education
Nicolina Mangano	American Bar Association
Stephen Miner	American Wind Energy Association
Ross Mirmelstein, CMP	National Sheriffs' Association
Don Richardson	Stampin' Up!
Amanda Rushing, CMP	American Society of Civil Engineers
Lil Shepherd	DoTerra Essential Wellness
Kendall Starkweather, Ph.D., DTE, CAE	International Technology Education Association
Shari Wilson Pontillo, CMP	Rotary International

Salt Lake Host Committee

Scott Beck	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Pat Holmes	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Mark White	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Allyson Jackson	Salt Palace Convention Center / South Towne Expo Center & SLCVB Board of Trustees/Executive Committee

Facilitator

David Kliman, CMP, CMM	The Kliman Group
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Graphic Recorder

Sophia Liang	Graphic Footprints
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Guest Speakers

Carolyn Barney	Salt Palace Convention Center
Norma Dean	Delta Air Lines

Jed Hansen
Brent Pribil
John St. Martin

Salt Palace Convention Center
Omniture
Salt Palace Convention Center

Gallery Attendees

Jason Badell
Ann Bangerter
Tessa Baysinger
Royce Failner
Patrick Higgins
Annie Harrell
Steve Lindburg
Erin Litvack
Tyson Lybbert
Michael Mack
Ruth Naccarato
Todd Ness
Jeff Olson
Robert O'Neil
Sally O'Neill
Chris Peterson
Tori Piersante
Julie Rhoads
Joe Snarr
Allison Sheffield
Tina Stark
Shawn Stinson
Eric Thompson
Tamme Thompson
Angela Tyler
Diane Utley

Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Hotel Monaco
Salt Palace Convention Center
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Hilton Salt Lake City Center
Salt Lake County
Marriott Salt Lake City Center
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Snowbird Ski & Summer Resort
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Rare Method
Salt Lake City Marriott Downtown
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Sheraton Hotel
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
The Housing Connection
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau

Tuesday, May 12, 2009

Welcome

Board members, Salt Lake hosts and Gallery attendees made introductions. Several significant life events were shared including Shari Wilson's recent marriage, Shirlee Kyle's promotion to Associate Executive Director and Stephen Minor's promotion to Senior Vice President. Congratulations to all!

Opening Comments – Scott Beck and David Kliman

Scott and David welcomed the Board and thanked them for their time and commitment to Salt Lake. The Board was asked to speak honestly and openly on behalf of the meetings and convention industry as well as their respective organizations. The Board's role is to act as a sounding board; a highly relevant sample of Salt Lake's target meetings and convention audience. Salt Lake will listen and learn from the Board and appropriate action will be taken on its recommendations.

Scott provided an update regarding Salt Lake's performance and forecast:

- Society of American Military Engineers - 1,200 attendees now meeting in Salt Lake
- 2008 was second best booking year in SLCVB's 25 year history; booked 468,000 room nights for future years
- Convention Sales 1Q09 results were 122% of goal
- Success of www.meetinutah.com partnership was outlined including its print campaign
- Ski Salt Lake *Super Pass* helped Salt Lake County become the #1 Ski Destination on the Travelocity Network for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 ski seasons
- Downtown Rising \$2.4 billion project; first phase: Richards Court condos open in 2010, Main Street apartments and condos followed by retail complex opening in 2012; new "grand" boulevards being developed. Additional details regarding the project are found in a recent New York Times article:
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/13/realestate/commercial/13utah.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=salt%20lake%20downtown%20rising&st=cse
- Legislature revamped liquor laws to eliminate private club membership requirement effective July 1, 2009
- 7 new restaurants have opened in downtown area since January 2009
- Integration of CVB and Salt Palace websites has been completed
- TRAX service to SLC Airport slated to begin service in 2012
- MPI WEC July 2009 will be a major event
- APEX Green Meeting Council highlights:
 - Measurement and testing criteria with 9 sectors: AV Production, Accommodations, Communications, Destination, Exhibits, Food & Beverage, Meetings/Venue, Onsite Office and Transportation
 - Within each category, the following sectors will be evaluated: Energy, Community Partners, Staff Management Policy, Communications Policy, Procurement, Waste, Water and Air Quality
 - Each category has baseline scoring; compliance required across all categories
 - The Board commented that the system must be easy to use and cost neutral in order to gain widespread acceptance

Food Services – Robert Sullivan – Utah Food Services (UFS)

Sully reviewed food service trends; the following outlines the highlights:

- Small plates, action stations and well-executed high quality foods dominate
- UFS donates excess food to Utah Food Bank
 - Recommend creation of F&B "pick up" report; would help meeting professionals to better monitor events and plan for future functions

Event Management – Jed Hansen, John St. Martin & Carolyn Barney – Salt Palace

The Board and guest speakers were asked to discuss ways in which the Salt Palace can enhance its event management products and services; the following feedback was offered:

- Critical that Event Managers are effective customer "advocates" with full knowledge and ability to completely manage the service relationship
- Create working relationships defined by "no surprises"; effective communication is key to any successful program
- Develop mentor style educational programs which provide meeting professionals with tools to enhance their abilities to work effectively with Event Managers

- Load-in and load-out days are critical
- Performance clauses are key and must contain clearly defined methods to address issues in order to achieve successful outcomes and agreed-upon performance
- Most busy convention centers push timelines too close to the event dates, Salt Lake can differentiate itself by confirming services well in advance of the event date; 6 months was recommended
- Better communication between CVB and Salt Palace is needed in regards to individual meeting professionals' profiles and needs
- When asked which convention centers do a great job in managing customer relationships; the following were cited:
 - Salt Lake
 - Copenhagen
 - Birmingham (UK)
 - Providence
 - Indianapolis
 - Chicago
- Buyers gravitate to centers which offer flexibility; exclusive service contracts are bothersome to most meeting professionals
- The Advisory Board discussed site inspections; their comments are found in the Recommendations and Action Items section on page 7 of this report.

Economic Realities, Meeting Industry Trends and Industry Advocacy

The following outlines the Advisory Board's discussion:

- www.ustravel.org and www.meetingsmeanbusiness.com were cited as excellent resources for information related to government advocacy and information regarding ROI measurement and standards
- MPI Future Watch 2009 offers a comparative outlook on the global meetings market: http://www.mpiweb.org/cms/uploadedFiles/Research_and_Whitepapers/FutureWatch2009.pdf
- Face-to-face meetings will remain relevant; despite impact of technology. Social media and other technology tools are being used more to augment face-to-face meeting; webinars and video conferencing are sometimes used for smaller (typically less than 20 people); especially useful for continuing education and training meetings
- Business travel creates 2.4 million jobs; meetings and events are directly responsible for 1 million American jobs
- Business travel accounts for \$240 billion in spending and \$39 billion in tax revenue at the federal, state, and local levels
- Many organizations are experiencing massive drops in sponsorships; while others (Wind/Alternative Energy, Railroads) are experiencing significant growth in sponsorship and attendance, or are at least maintaining their sponsorships and steady in attendance
- Exhibit sales and pre-meeting attendance is down for many groups (market specific)
- Many city-wide groups are able to negotiate contracts with no (or limited) attrition clauses due to market conditions

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Under One Roof – Self-Contained and Convention Center Meetings

- Single point of contact (and contract) was cited as the overwhelming advantage of negotiating and managing a self-contained group; leverage of rooms and food and beverage revenue, lack of room rental and exclusive vendors (in hotels), no shuttle expense etc., trumps convention center business model
- “One-stop-shopping” is highly desirable

- Brand loyalty is much less important as a buying decision factor; many planners and attendees choose reduced cost over loyalty to a brand
- Younger meeting attendees are creating self-organized events, often planned with remarkably tight timelines (often within just hours); “Open Space” (‘in the moment’, attendee-generated agenda topics) meetings.
- “Blockless” city-wide meetings with thousands of attendees have been successfully managed in Bangkok and some other cities; this trend may become more popular, although generally, doubt was expressed as to whether this could be done in the U.S.
- When asked which destinations and suppliers are best in class for providing single source sales and service, Team San Jose and the Grand Hyatt San Diego were cited as successful examples offering “one-stop-shopping” and Event Manager “advocates”; combining to create an enhanced customer experience
- “Room Pirates” were discussed – see article for details:
<http://www.asaecenter.org/PublicationsResources/ANowDetail.cfm?ItemNumber=39139>

Customer Report Card – Brent Pribil & Elyce Jones – Omniture

Brent and Elyce outlined the highlights of their recent meeting; the following summarizes their comments:

- Omniture Summit February 17 – 20, 2009, 1,244 attendees representing 569 companies
- Hilton, Grand and Little America were HQ hotels (2,575 room nights), significant number of rooms booked outside the block
- All education and partner events took place at the Salt Palace
- Executive meetings took place at Grand America
- Parties: Grand America (Maroon 5), Apres Ski Party, After Party at Bliss with live karaoke band
- Hosted ski day at Snowbird
- Strong traditional and new media presence
- Online tools expanded attendees’ experience with Summit content
- Significant Salt Palace signage and AV production
- Good news:
 - “Excellent” relationship with the Salt Palace; the Center team is “outstanding”; staff went “above and beyond” and “truly earned the business”
 - Hilton agreed to reduce room block based on economic slowdown. Grand America and Little America did same; however, it required more negotiation time and energy
 - Utah Foods was “great”
- Opportunity Areas
 - Protect integrity of signage (competing in-house groups overshadowed some Omniture signage)
 - Value and cost of big name entertainment is questionable

Delta Air Lines – Norma Dean

Norma discussed Delta’s key issues, product and services including the recent merger with Northwest; the following outlines her comments:

- Delta is now the world’s largest airline with 70,000+ employees serving 66 countries
- 1,369 Delta daily flights; 4,571 Delta Connection daily flights
- Serves 170 million passengers annually

- State of the Airline Industry
 - Worst economic environment since 9/11
 - Average fares & hotel rates dropped 1Q09 (Amex Business Travel Monitor)
 - 9.2% drop in domestic yield in 1Q09
 - Volatile cost of fuel in 2008; jet fuel hedging had huge negative financial impact
 - Poor economy and erosion of demand are critical concerns
 - Aligning supply & demand - capacity reductions and new service
- Delta/Northwest Merger Benefits
 - Creates the world's largest global airline and a financially stronger company
 - Geographically balanced network, more global options/scope coverage
 - Revenue and cost synergies
 - Best practices improve the customer experience
 - Combats volatile fuel prices
 - Extensive new long haul international routes
 - Number 1 airline domestically
 - New product and services, onboard WiFi for all aircraft expected by end of 2009
 - Delta is dedicated to Salt Lake



Wrap Up

The Board was thanked for their commitment to the process of continuous improvement for Salt Lake. Their feedback is tremendously helpful; their candor and honest dialogue will be put to good use. Carbon offsets for all CVB staff and Advisory Board members' travel is being done in conjunction with Salt Lake County's One Million Trees program; trees are lovingly planted and cared for in Salt Lake by Tree Utah. Details at <http://www.visitsaltlake.com/visit/green/>

The next meeting will take place during 1Q2010; exact dates to follow. The meeting was adjourned. Recommendations and Actions Items are found on the following page.

Recommendations and Action Items May 2009

- **Convention Bureau and Salt Palace**
 - Train and equip Event Managers to be customer “advocates” with full knowledge of the destination and the Convention Center and the ability to completely manage the service relationship
 - Develop communication timelines to document and confirm contractual and event services well in advance of an event (typically 6 months)
 - Ask for prior-year event specs, decorator information and contact information of convention center event manager; use proactively to benefit the success of the program
 - Develop mentor-style educational programs which provide meeting professionals with tools to enhance their abilities to work effectively with Event Managers
 - Develop process for SLCVB to communicate meeting professionals’ needs and account-specific information to Event Managers
 - Utah Foods to create method to document excess food quantities; offer all clients an F&B “pick up” report
- **Site Inspections**
 - “Know Thy Client”; ask the right questions to truly understand planners’ needs and preferences. Don’t assume one size fits all, ask if civic leaders (the Mayor etc.) should ‘meet and greet’, attend meals etc.
 - Create a psychological style customer profile to help better understand their key issues
 - Include Event Managers on initial site inspections and use to develop stronger relationships between meeting professionals and Event Managers
 - Many planners want free time to experience the destination and the Center unescorted and on their own time table
 - No “red carpet clap lines” during site inspections
 - Don’t create a false sense of glamorous meeting professional lifestyles
 - Provide flow chart indicating who’s responsible for each area of importance
 - Show buyers the pragmatic, real-world workings of the destination
- **General Recommendations**
 - Create additional ways to engage the Advisory Board individually and collectively between meetings; focus individual connections on issues specific to members’ areas of expertise