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almost anything happen,
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Laurie Koch
Trek Bicycle

THE IDEAL LOCATION COULD BE CLOSER THAN YOU THINK.

They’d been to Breckenridge. And Santa Cruz. But with Madison practically in their backyard, Trek Bicycle, headquartered in Waterloo, Wis., decided to give the city—and Monona Terrace—a try for the company’s annual Trek World show. “It’s perfect for us!” says Laurie Koch of Trek, who directs planning for this momentous event. “Our retailers and distributors come from all over the world. And year after year, everyone is excited to be here again. Excitement and energy—that’s why people come.”

UNIQUENESS HAS A WAY OF ADDING UNIVERSAL APPEAL.

Naturally, the Trek group always takes advantage of the bike paths surrounding Monona Terrace, but that’s really just icing on the cake, says Koch. “We’re so dialed in here. This is a place that embraces our vision and where we can make almost anything happen, logistically and creatively.” For example, Trek held a between-session beer tasting on Monona Terrace’s picturesque rooftop garden. And one year, 1,200 attendees rode bikes to a nearby stadium and played kickball.

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ON THE COVER: DELLS BOAT TOURS. © WISCONSIN DELLS VCB.



EDITOR'S LETTER

The beginning of a new year marks a transition for many of us. Whether it involves resolutions, professional goals or the opportunity to launch into a new budget or refresh an event. And *Wisconsin Meetings* magazine is no different. We are excited to bring you a new resource that has been missing.

Now, when you visit WisconsinMeetings.com, you will find a new look and a new purpose. Our website features a comprehensive guide to Wisconsin meetings and convention venues, destinations, attractions, service providers and restaurants for groups.

As we continue to evolve the site over the next few months, you will find it to be a great resource for planning events in Wisconsin. No need to go to other sites where you must wade through hundreds of venues in other states, when you've already decided to bring your event to Wisconsin.

You will find room dimensions, square footage, hotel amenities, floor plans, photos, direct contact links and an RFP feature, among other tools and information.

Be sure to visit WisconsinMeetings.com and look around. This is a tool for you, so if you have any comments or suggestions to make the site work better, please share them with us. Feel free to contact me directly at bpeck@ntmediagroup.com.

In addition to our new planning tool, we are happy to share some great content with you in this issue. Event safety has been top of mind due to recent tragedies in Las Vegas and other locations. Ronnie Garrett addresses some of the most challenging issues planners face and offers suggestions on how to best plan for the unimaginable. In addition, we look at the Waterpark Capital of the World for your next meetings destination and we share the results of our annual Best of Wisconsin Meetings reader survey.

Thank you for your continued support of *Wisconsin Meetings* and we look forward to bringing you helpful resources and informative content in 2018.

Becky Peck
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meetings
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VOLUME: 16 ISSUE: 1

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Wisconsin Meetings is a publication of Nei-Turner Media Group, Inc. Gary E. Nei, Chairman; William Turner, President.

Wisconsin Meetings is distributed via direct mail, trade shows and conferences, four times per year to: Regional Professional Meeting Planners; Wisconsin Corporate Executives; Social, Military, Educational, Religious and Fraternal Organizations; Corporate Travel Agents; Sales and Marketing Executives; and Association Executives by Nei-Turner Media Group, Inc., 400 Broad St., Unit D, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. Vol. 16 Issue 1 is dated January 8, 2018.

Nei-Turner Media Group, Inc. publishes *At The Lake Magazine*, *Experience Wisconsin*, *Midwest Sports Planner* and custom publications about Wisconsin and other Midwestern states.

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IN THE NEWS

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KOHLER WATERS SPA TO EXPAND

An expansion is planned for the Kohler Waters Spa at the Destination Kohler location in Kohler. The renovations will include nine new treatment rooms, expansive common space with additional seating around the spa's relaxation pool and a luxurious bridal suite. The spa will remain open throughout the entire construction process, which will take place from February through June.

COUNTRY SPRINGS UNDERGOES REMODEL & REBRAND

The Country Springs Hotel, Pewaukee, will become The Ingleside Hotel in spring of 2018 following an extensive renovation. Renovations will include all ballrooms and meeting space, lobby, guest rooms, dining areas and the courtyard. In addition, a new coffee shop will be added. The property will remain open during construction.

Waukesha Hospitality, which purchased the hotel in February of 2017, is owned by Burwell Enterprises out of Minneapolis, Minn. The company also owns The Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club.

HILTON DEBUTS THE CONNECTED ROOM

Hilton is introducing technologically advanced guestrooms where guests will be able to control such features as room temperature and lighting from their mobile device. The Connected Room, currently being tested at a Memphis property, is expected to be rolled out on a larger scale in 2018. Other features include voice activated commands, the ability to choose a guest room and uploading personal artwork to be displayed in the room.

NEW EXHIBITION CENTER OPENS

A grand opening ceremony was held Jan. 11 to officially mark the opening of the \$32 million Fox Cities Exhibition Center. The 38,000-square-foot facility is located in downtown Appleton and is connected to the Radisson Paper Valley hotel. For more information, go to fcexhibitioncenter.com.

GREAT WOLF LODGE OPENS AT MALL OF AMERICA

Wisconsin-based Great Wolf Lodge has opened a new waterpark and resort in Bloomington, Minn. The company acquired a former water park and then renovated and rebranded a Radisson hotel. The \$30 million renovation includes 404 rooms, an adventure park, mini bowling alley, several new restaurants, an aerial ropes course, bowling alley, a MagiQuest live adventure game and a candy spa.

MPI UNVEILS MASTER'S PROGRAM FOR PLANNERS

Meeting Professionals International (MPI) and the L. Robert Payne School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at San Diego State University (SDSU) are collaborating to create the first graduate-level degree program offered in the country focused on meeting and event management for mid and senior-level professionals. In addition, they plan to develop a related academic certificate program for non-traditional students. Scheduled to launch in 2019, the master's degree program will incorporate experiential learning, simulations and industry partner mentoring, and will be delivered online with meet-ups on the SDSU campus to accommodate work schedules of students. It will be taught by faculty who have worked in the meeting and event industry, and feature guest lecturers from the industry as well. After successful completion of the program, students will be awarded a master's of science degree in meeting and event management from SDSU.

AIRLINE FOOD SURVEY RELEASED

Diet Detective has released results from its annual survey that looks at airline food, which includes the food served and available for purchase. Results include:

- Delta is the clear leader among the major carriers and is tied with Virgin America this year as the healthiest airline.
- The average number of calories per menu choice was 360 in 2012; in 2013 it was 388; in 2014 it was 397; in 2015 it was 400; in 2016 it was 392, and this year 405 calories, a 13 calorie increase over last year.
- American and Delta have once again started offering complimentary meals in economy class on domestic flights, something we haven't seen in more than 15 years.
- Airlines are eliminating oversized packages of snack foods and offering individual smaller packages or eliminating individual snacks altogether. www.wm.com



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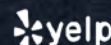
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INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

THE GREEN MOVEMENT

TIPS TO INCORPORATE GREEN PRACTICES INTO YOUR NEXT EVENT

BY CLAUDIA CABRERA

As a hotelier, I learned throughout my 10 years in the hospitality industry that you never stop learning about meeting trends and the “it” practices that meeting planners are doing when organizing their next big event.

Have you ever wondered what planning a “green” meeting really means, or what are the benefits of a green meeting?

According to the Events Industry Council (EIC), a green meeting or event incorporates environmental considerations to minimize its negative impact on the environment. Green or environmental considerations are one aspect of sustainability. Sustainability takes a “triple bottom line” approach that seeks to balance the social, environmental, and economic concerns against business needs.

What are the Benefits of Green Meetings & Events?

- The Economic Bottom Line: Planning and executing environmentally sustainable events isn’t just about being environmentally responsible, they can have economic benefits for the event organizer. In fact, many environmental activities can actually save money.

Example: Collecting name badge holders for reuse at an event of 1,300 attendees can save approximately \$975 for the event organizer.*

- The Environmental Bottom Line: Using recycled materials, recycling materials used, reusing items and reducing materials used can significantly lessen the environmental impact an event has.

Example: If a five-day event serves 2,200 people breaks, breakfasts, lunches and receptions using china instead of plastic disposables, it prevents 1,890 pounds of plastic from going into a landfill.*

Example: Not pre-filling water glasses at banquet tables during three days of served lunches for 2,200 attendees will conserve 520 gallons of water.*

Here are some simple green practices that are easy to incorporate into your events:

- Badge holders and lanyards made of recycled materials; ask attendees to return them when done
- Items in bulk rather than single serve, especially for condiments, sugar, creamer and beverages
- China, glassware and flatware instead of disposable
- Local food vendors rather than having food shipped; this also helps you support the local economy
- Locations and venues that are centrally located and within walking distance to hotels, restaurants and attractions
- Registration information available digitally, rather than mailed
- Limit exhibitor and speaker handout materials to only what is needed for attendees
- Eliminating plastic water bottles (provide a refillable water bottle)
- Do not set pre-filled water glasses at meals

This concept is the same anywhere in the world. And as meetings professionals, it’s important to think about how we can plan our events differently to reduce the negative impact our events have on the environment. [WM](#)

**Data provided by MeetGreen.*



Claudia Cabrera is the current MPI Wisconsin Chapter president and the corporate sales manager for the Marriott Madison West Hotel. She has been in the hospitality industry for over 10 years and has served on the MPI-Wisconsin Board of Directors for five years.

10 Secret Savings Tips

for your next meeting

Increase your ROI
Decrease costs



Go to **WisconsinMeetings.com** to download these tips.

Be sure you have this information before you negotiate your next event contract!



PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

READY, SET, GOAL!

REACH YOUR GOALS WITH THESE HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

BY MOLLY ROSE TEUKE

What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals. —Zig Ziglar

We set goals every day. Most of them are immediate and easily achieved: fix a great dinner, be on time for the quarterly sales meeting, call mom. Some are near-term: finish the annual report on time, plan a friend's birthday party—also pretty easy to achieve. For the most part, we know what to do and how to do it, and we have an external motivation for getting it done.

Then there are the long-term goals: save enough to buy a house, learn a new language, create a stronger business or social network, or maybe that old standby, get fit. Some of these goals we achieve with ease, while others become perpetual dreams that we eventually give up on.

How can we get better at getting what we want in life? Setting and achieving goals is an artful blend of common sense and science. Here are five best practices.

BE SPECIFIC

It starts with defining precisely what we want. Sounds simple, yet it's where many of us go wrong. How much is "enough to buy a house?" Does "learn a language" mean learn basic travel phrases, or do I need to be fluent? What, exactly, do I mean by "fit?" The likelihood of success diminishes if we can't adequately define what success means.

Quantitative goals are easy: "Save \$40,000 over the next seven years." "Run a marathon (26 miles)." Qualitative

goals are trickier, because you need a reference point. You might say, "I want to converse with ease when traveling in a foreign land." Sometimes, a simple 1 to 10 scale can help. "I'm at a 2 on the fitness scale today and I'd like to be at a 9." Our brains are like search engines. Once we input a specific phrase (the goal), our brain will begin searching for ways to make it happen.

It's also helpful to be clear on the time frame, because it lends urgency. Most of us are pretty good at cutting ourselves slack, and that's not helpful in goal pursuit. A timeline keeps us on track.

MAKE IT A CHOICE

Goals are easier to achieve when they mean something to us—when they have emotional clout. If you're pursuing a goal because someone else wants you to do it, it's important that you find a way to make it meaningful to you. If your doctor told you to get more fit—well, we know where that's likely to go. But if you get that message and decide you want to be around to play with your grandchildren, it becomes more meaningful.

When you set a goal, ask yourself "Why?" Repeat the question, peeling off the layers until you find a reason that sparks something in your heart. Making the goal into something you choose to pursue, with an outcome that energizes you, increases your likelihood of success.

CHUNK IT INTO A MANAGEABLE PLAN

We increase our chances for success when we break goals into smaller chunks. Saving a down-payment size sum can feel impossible; putting \$100 into savings every week might seem more doable, or trimming our dining-out budget by 20 percent this month. Chunking reduces overwhelm and lets us see how we'll achieve the goal, step by step, day by day, which helps us stay motivated. Chunking also lets us focus on the behaviors within our control. Perhaps you can't give yourself a promotion, but you can undertake the professional development that will make it easier for someone else to promote you. If your goal remains out of reach, consider what new behaviors might get you closer. Confucius wisely suggested that when a goal seems unachievable, you're better off adjusting the action steps than changing the goal.

SORT OUT THE IF-THEN

Believing you can achieve your goal is essential to your success—but it's not enough, not by a long shot. When you focus on the power of your optimism and confidence and ignore the potential distractions and upsets you're likely to encounter, you sabotage your success.

Heidi Grant, author of "Succeed: How We Can Reach Our Goals," says studies suggest that when we believe that achieving a goal will be a piece of cake, it increases the odds of failure. "Not only is visualizing 'effortless success' not helpful, it's disastrous," she says. "It is a recipe for failure." We need to be realistic so we won't give up at the first setback.



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Grant recommends thinking through all the things that could derail you and writing them down. Then think through (and write down) how you will overcome those challenges. If friends invite you to an expensive restaurant, how will you respond? Imagining how this scenario might play out increases the odds it will end in your favor. You might picture yourself suggesting an alternative restaurant that's more in your budget, given your dream of home ownership. If your intention is to get more fit and a friend suggests a movie at the the same time you'd planned to be at the gym, how will you respond? Picture yourself countering that you'd prefer to take a walk together. If you haven't worked out an if-then scenario, you're more likely to simply give in to the temptation or distraction in the moment.

When you do go off the rails—as we all do sometimes—don't beat yourself up over it. Give yourself permission to let it go and refocus. A formidable body of research suggests that guilt is a poor motivator. Guilt leaves you more likely to continue goal-sabotaging behavior instead of getting back on track.

NARROW YOUR FOCUS TO THE EVERYDAY WINS

When you commit to everyday actions and behaviors that lead to incremental progress, you gain traction. When you set a large goal—say you've set your sights on running a 10K—the pace of progress can feel frustrating. When you focus on the fact that you're running every day and increasing your stamina by 1K every third week, you're more likely to remain motivated and keep up the momentum.

There's another side to that coin, though. When you look back at how far you've come, it's easy to give yourself permission to slack off. Celebrate the ongoing wins, and at the same time, acknowledge how far you have to go. Be honest with yourself as you monitor your progress; it will help you stay motivated to choose behaviors that will get you to your goal. As Grant notes in "Succeed," when you are able to see the discrepancy between where you are and where you want to be, your brain will work hard to close the gap.

IN REACH

Most of our goals are more achievable than

we know. With a few tweaks to how you approach your goals, you might be much closer than you realize. As Thomas Edison famously said, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." **WIM**

RESOURCES

"Succeed: How We Can Reach Our Goals" ©2012 Heidi Grant Halvorson

"9 Things Successful People Do Differently" ©2012 Heidi Grant Halvorson

"Smarter Faster Better: The Secrets of Productivity in Life and Business" ©2016 Charles Duhigg



Molly Rose Teuke has an enduring curiosity about what makes our brains tick. She delivers a program for Nicolet College called Get Your Brain On Your Side, and delivers brain-based leadership training for the NeuroLeadership Institute, a global leader in the performance arena. She also hosts a weekly classical music program and a monthly audioblog called BrainWaves on WXPB-FM. You can reach her at mollyrose@mollyrosecoraching.com.

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FOUR WAYS TO MAKE YOUR EVENT VIDEO WORK FOR YOU

BY ROB LIPPS

The world's most cutting-edge conferences use streaming video to engage in-person and remote attendees before, during and after the event. That means meeting planners are required now, more than ever, to create content strategies that encapsulate ROI, metrics, engagement and more.

Companies and associations like Salesforce.com, Lanyon, Citrix, VMware, Autodesk and PCMA are already streaming their educational conferences, product launches, town-hall meetings, etc. to the world. They're engaging attendees from any location and creating lasting impact long after the events are over.

Take Citrix, for example. To extend the life of the hundreds of hours of content presented every year at Citrix Synergy, it created Citrix Synergy TV. By livestreaming the keynotes and breakout sessions, Citrix turned the in-person event into an online, live and on-demand destination that lives beyond the conference. Citrix captured more than 100 conference sessions from 10 different rooms and created an online experience with a registration portal, live chat and a custom video showcase. Citrix typically gets 5,500 attendees onsite, and in 2016 the captured content received more than 100,000 views. Pretty impressive results!

And content like that can be used throughout the year to promote future events, generate revenue by turning it into online courses, attract new members or customers, uncover interests and trends from viewers, etc. The possibilities are endless.

As technology has gotten smaller, easier to use and more affordable, the AV portion of a video strategy is the easy part. What takes strategic thinking is what you do with all the captured content.

With the right plan in place, it's easier than you think to get the most out of your experience at your next event. Consider these four proven ways to make event video work for you.

1. IF YOU'RE GOING TO STREAM SOMETHING, START WITH YOUR CONFERENCE.

Not only is it the most relevant content, it's the most comfortable for your speakers. They're going to present regardless, in a setting that is most natural for them. Why not stream their session? Your speakers won't have to do anything different, and your attendees will appreciate having the option to watch live or on-demand on their smartphones and revisit important content post-event.

If cost is a factor, start small with just your keynotes or main speakers and expand in future years.

The Society for Immunotherapy of Cancer (SITC) hosts an annual meeting where the cancer immunotherapy community can meet in person for scientific exchange, education and networking. SITC 2017 was its largest annual meeting to date with over 3,500 attendees, and for the first time it created a live online conference experience. Online attendees could watch highly-anticipated sessions online. All of the cutting-edge science discussed at the event lives in an online, secure video library for attendees to access. Plus, anyone who watched the sessions could receive continuing education credits.

2. PLAN YOUR VIDEO CONTENT STRATEGY.

Recording conference content with video broadens your reach to new audiences around the world, boosts member retention and brand recognition, generates revenue with online certification programs and gives you marketing content to promote year-long.

CME Science, for example, streams continuing medical education conferences for radiologists. Afterwards it turns that captured content into on-demand webinars and CME courses, reaching many more physicians by providing the option to complete CME courses online.

The best and most valuable information is shared at your events and is a potential gold mine for your organization. Many associations sell individual or bundles of content access. You can also sell sponsorship for ad space in a video player.

3. KEEP THE CONFERENCE EXCITEMENT GOING YEAR-ROUND.

Events never really have a start or end date if you stream them. Plan a rolling-thunder approach for your content with your customers or members. Share videos related to event topics throughout the year in marketing

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campaigns. It keeps people coming back and bridges the gap between one event and the next.

Educational services provider Pearson streams its annual International Conference on Technology in Collegiate Mathematics because it needs a video library of content to promote after the event to keep the conversations going and attract new audiences.

Video can feed your content marketing and social media strategies for up to a year. You can repurpose educational sessions into webinars, turn customer interviews into case studies and revive your e-newsletters and blog posts by embedding videos. Just make sure you include a call to action, such as a link to register for your next event.

4. USE VIDEO DATA TO PLAN FUTURE EVENTS.

Video analytics give you heat maps about what parts of the video are being watched most, helping to inform your conference content for the next year. Use ongoing and timely viewership data to better understand topic interest and presenter effectiveness.

Don't just look at clicks, though. Look at who is watching, how much they watched and what they watched. That will greatly help you plan your next conference by seeing what speakers and topics were the most popular. Maybe the ones who were really popular online should be invited back to present in a bigger room the following year.

As we begin a new year, make sure you're setting your organization up for the most success by creating a solid video strategy.

For more information about the video solution the above companies use, visit sonicfoundry.com/mediasite-event-services. www.wm.com

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SECURE SPACES

IDENTIFYING AND PLANNING FOR THE WORST

By Ronnie L. Garrett

In a world where mass shootings and copycat events prevail, event planners are currently grappling with how they might better protect event venues from mass terror without impacting the experience for their audience.

Gregg McManners, executive director of Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center in Madison, says, “The landscape of security in public venues had changed long before the Las Vegas shooting. We have an obligation to customers and employees to make sure our security systems and processes are geared toward today’s security threats. At Monona Terrace, like many other venues in the state and across the country, we have had to make significant investments in the building to update our security readiness. Today’s issues are much different than issues we faced in the late 1990s when Monona Terrace opened.”

Unfortunately, even with all the preparation McManners describes, the reality is that, as the recent Las Vegas shooting at a Jason

Aldean concert proved, no amount of planning and preparation is guaranteed to stop every lone wolf shooter.

Attorney Steven Adelman, who focuses on event security, says it’s impossible to plan for an emergency that has never happened before. “There is no previous shooting like this one. It is literally unprecedented in the world of live events,” he says.

IDENTIFYING THE RISKS

What are the reasonably foreseeable threats to which people should be paying attention? To this Adelman answers, “The same stuff as before the Route 91 festival shooting.”

When planning security for any event, there needs to be a site-specific analysis based

on geographic risks. Risk analysis should include the following:

- What types of disasters are most likely to occur at this venue (fire, bomb threat, etc.)?
- What type of weather related events could impact the event (snowstorm, tornado, etc.)
- What is the worst thing that could happen?

This discussion and analysis should begin as early as the site inspection. Planners should inquire about the venue’s security measures in order to gain a basic understanding. What is standard practice in terms of security

and why? Most likely the venue will have a security plan that you can start from and enhance as needed.

Other security protocols to inquire about and understand, include: how extensive is the video surveillance and monitoring and is it fully functional; are rooms secured by key

evacuation drills. Map out emergency routes and distribute to all involved.

Include evacuation and emergency information with all attendee materials and event apps, as well as all staff materials. Detail how they will be informed should something occur.

Creating a communications plan that details how critical information will be disseminated, by whom and to who is important. How will you reach emergency personnel? What about vendors and attendees on site or off site?

Many event organizers design apps to help people navigate and enjoy the festivities. These apps can also be equipped to push emergency messages to patrons, as well as notify people quickly on their cell phones about shots being fired and from where, and guide them to exit points.

Perimeter security is another area worthy of consideration. Event patrons now expect to have their bags checked before entering a venue; if they are even allowed to carry a bag in. They know that they will be wanded or asked to walk through a magnetometer for screening. "I think most people shrug these things off as the cost of living in the public in 2017," Adelman says. "These basic protections of an event perimeter should not change because of the Las Vegas shooting; the security perimeter in this case was not breached."

For those of you wondering how you can possibly protect your event from all of the unending threats we face in the world today, Adelman offers this advice: "I'm a realist. I don't think it's practical for most event organizers to consider these things.

There are lots of big ideas going around, and none of them are bad ideas; they all should get some consideration because we don't want this to happen again. But if we change much of what we do in response to something that in this case is literally unprecedented, then I think we will have reacted too much and created a new system that will then have to be fixed because it won't be well suited to the ordinary risks that we know happen on a regular basis."

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

In the case of a shooting, unfortunately the reality is that it's unlikely law enforcement would be able

“Event personnel need to be taught how to safely move people quickly and decisively toward a safe place.

- Steven Adelman,
Attorney & Event Security Expert

cards and can the property track everyone that accesses the room?

And don't forget to consider the area outside of the facility. What is the neighborhood like? What type, if any, recent crime has taken place in the vicinity? Consider reaching out to local authorities to gain a better understanding of any additional threats that exist in nearby areas where attendees may frequent, such as restaurants and attractions.

DEVELOPING YOUR PLAN

After planners understand the risks, next, clearly outline how you will handle each should they occur. Relationships and guidance from site security personnel and local law enforcement will be important. Reaching out to them as soon as you've committed to a venue is key.

Once you have a plan, educate all staff and volunteers. Review all security plans in preplanning sessions. Upon arrival at the site, include facility walkthroughs and conduct

Develop a detailed emergency contact list with emails, phone numbers, cell numbers and any other pertinent information. This list should include local emergency managers for medical, fire and police. You should contact each ahead of time to inform them of your event and ask any needed questions and give them one point of contact within your team should they need to reach anyone or vice versa.

ADDED SECURITY

While it's unlikely your event will be targeted by a terrorist, here are some additional security measures that can be employed if needed:

- Background and record checks on staff, and possibly vendors and attendees. (A good practice when bringing in a celebrity or high profile speaker, which may require a dedicated security team as well.)
- Full security sweeps of the meeting space prior to anyone arriving each morning and again at the end of the day when everyone has departed.
- Bag searches, metal screenings or canine units, such as those employed at concerts and sporting events.

“ The landscape of security in public venues had changed long before the Las Vegas shooting. We have an obligation to customers and employees to make sure our security systems and processes are geared toward today’s security threats.

- Gregg McManners, Executive Director,
Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center

to reach the threat in time to prevent it. So knowing what to do in the unlikely chance this could happen could save your life.

“The usual response is that we are all taught is run, hide, fight,” according to Adelman. “If you can run away from the shooter, do it, because it’s by far the best choice. If you can’t run away, hide behind whatever is available, and if neither of those is an option, fight the shooter with whatever you have.

Throw your coffee cup, your phone, a book. These are the rules; the problem is they are hard. They are many impediments to people running, hiding or fighting, particularly in live event spaces.”

“Event personnel need to be taught how to safely move people quickly and decisively toward a safe place. That’s ordinary crowd management. There is nothing active shooter specific about it,” says Adelman.

“But it’s really important. We need to teach the people working these events how to be shepherds, by first explaining to them how people react in emergencies, giving them active shooter training and then teaching them how to get people to safety.” [WM](#)



Ronnie Garrett is a freelance writer based in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.



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— DESTINATION — *Wisconsin Dells*

FROM HIGH-ENERGY
WATERPARKS TO TRANQUIL SPAS,
WISCONSIN DELLS IS READY TO
WELCOME YOUR GROUP

By Melanie Radzicki McManus

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The Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau (WDVCB) might have to rethink its moniker. Several decades back, the group dubbed itself a “VCB” instead of a “CVB” to emphasize its laser-like focus on visitors rather than conventioners. After all, the organization represents one of the most popular tourist destinations in the entire Midwest. But today, change is afoot.

Yes, tourism is still thriving in the Dells. Some 4 million visitors annually flock to the region, comprised mainly of the city of Wisconsin Dells and the village of Lake Delton. Just a few short years ago, those visitors would have been almost exclusively vacationers. Now, an increasing share are meeting and convention attendees.

Exactly where are they gathering? Tucked in among all of the area’s waterslides, go-karts and mini-golf courses are a variety of meeting and convention spaces. Tifani Jones, director of sales and services for the WDVCB, says the community is home to a whopping 400,000 square feet of meeting and event space, not to mention 8,000 guest rooms.

“A lot of people in the industry do understand we’re not just fudge shops anymore,” she says, “but we’re still delivering that message every day to people who are surprised. The Dells is still considered to be a hidden gem [in the meeting industry].”

The Dells’ nearly half-million square feet of meeting space is spread among facilities of varying size. On the larger end of the spectrum are sites such as



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WILD ROCK GOLF CLUB

the Kalahari, Chula Vista, Glacier Canyon Lodge and Ho-Chunk Gaming. On the intimate side are sites like Sundara Inn & Spa, Woodside Ranch Resort & Conference Center and the Inn at Wawanesee Point.

The soon-to-be largest conference center is the Kalahari. The facility currently has 100,000 square feet of flexible meeting space via two large ballrooms and smaller break-out rooms, and is in the midst of adding another 112,000 square feet. The new space will include a 57,000-square-foot ballroom, which can be subdivided, plus a wealth of pre-function space that can be used for exhibits, meals, receptions and more, says Kevin Shanley, corporate

director of sales and revenue management. "With the addition, we'll be by far the largest independent and/or hotel-based convention center in Wisconsin."

Besides a wealth of meeting space, the Kalahari also contains 750 guest rooms, restaurants, shops, a spa, golf course, an indoor theme park and, yes, indoor and outdoor waterparks, making it a fantastic spot for groups with spouses and families in attendance. In fact, Shanley says groups see a 20 percent spike in attendance when they hold their events at the Kalahari.

"We make what people had to go to in the past to what they want to go to now," he

says. "The Kalahari really drives attendance for meeting planners."

While attendees can easily be entertained for a day or two (or more) at the Kalahari, the resort encourages them to explore the entire Dells area. To help nudge them off the premises, all guests receive passes to the Tommy Bartlett Show and Timbavati Wildlife Park. The Tommy Bartlett Show has been a Dells staple for more than 60 years, entertaining millions with its waterskiing performances, stunt shows and comedy acts. Timbavati Wildlife Park is a newer attraction that quickly captivated guests. (How can you resist cuddly lion cubs, bouncy kangaroos and curious giraffes?)



Over at the Wilderness Hotel & Golf Resort, its Glacier Canyon Lodge facility is the designated spot for meetings. The building contains a 56,000-square-foot conference center, perfect for meetings in the 300- to 350-person range, says Shannon Timmerman, director of sales. The biggest perk to holding your event here, she says, is that Glacier Canyon Lodge is separate from the main Wilderness facility, although conveniently connected to it via a skywalk.

"This means guests still have the luxury of a fun waterpark atmosphere when they're not in meetings, but it's not right in their face when they're conducting business. It's the best of both worlds."

While the conference center lies within Glacier Canyon Lodge, attendees aren't limited to staying there. They can elect to stay at any of the 1,100-plus rooms spread around the extensive Wilderness property. That includes its cabins and condos, which Timmerman says are perfect for small groups seeking an intimate retreat experience.

Another perk of holding a meeting at a large resort like the Wilderness is that it's easy to put together team-building experiences, says Timmerman. The Wilderness can offer groups activities such as ziplining, escape rooms and laser tag right on-site. And if you're looking for something really creative, just ask; the resort recently put together an activity for one group based on the TV show "The Amazing Race."

Chula Vista, another major Dells resort, is popular among meeting planners because it sits in a secluded, wooded spot right on the Wisconsin River, just a few miles north of downtown Dells. In addition, it's home to 200,000 square feet of flexible convention and meeting space. Its Wisconsin Dells Center offers 90,000 square feet of meeting space, plus another 13,000 square feet of pre-convention space. There are also two 14,000-square-foot grand ballrooms on an atrium level, affording prime river views, an 8,000-square-foot conference area and more than two dozen additional meeting rooms. Executives especially enjoy Chula's boardrooms, which are equipped with recliners and fireplaces.

On the other end of the spectrum is Sundara Inn & Spa, tucked into 90 wooded acres behind the Wilderness. The facility has won numerous national accolades over the years for its serene spa and posh inn. Now, after many requests for corporate retreats, it's in the midst of building a 1,750-square-foot designated retreat space that can comfortably hold up to about 40 guests, in addition to more lodging via villas.

"We're still staying true to our spa nature," says Heidi Michel, Sundara marketing manager. "We won't be holding large, full-on retreats, but instead more intimate gatherings like yoga retreats, team-building events or motivational speakers."

Because the spa is focused on healthy living, Michel says retreat guests will definitely be

able to take advantage of wellness-based activities. Specific events are still in the planning stages, but she says options may include guided hikes, morning meditation cruises on the scenic Upper Dells, painting classes, and wine tasting and cooking demonstrations. And, of course, guests will always be free to experience the spa.

For groups who like to take chances, Ho-Chunk Gaming Wisconsin Dells is located just down the road. The facility offers 30,000 square feet of convention space, 302 guest rooms, plus onsite entertainment, dining and table games, bingo and slots.

Woodside Ranch Resort is located north of the Dells in Mauston. The more than 100-year-old dude ranch wows with home-cooked meals, cabins, horseback riding and a rustic, yet elegant meeting venue for smaller groups. One of the most intimate spaces of all may be the Inn at Wawanesee Point. Hidden in a wooded patch of land near Devil's Lake, the beautiful inn-home includes the Lombardi Conference Room, perfect for groups of about a dozen. When business is over, guests can relax in the sumptuous inn or enjoy hiking, birding or snowshoeing on the peaceful, wooded property.

While most of the Dells' conference facilities offer attendees various meal options, another draw to holding your event here is that the Dells is home to numerous popular restaurants such as Field's at the Wilderness, Ishnala, the Del-Bar and Monk's. Field's, housed in a Frank Lloyd Wright-styled building, is known for its



quality steaks and seafood, while the Del-Bar is a famous supper club dating to 1943. Ishnala, another long-time supper club that opened in 1953, sits on the edge of scenic Mirror Lake. Its claim to fame, in addition to great food, is that live Norway pines are growing through the roof. Monk's is known for its burgers—and for cooking them on the same seasoned grill for more than half a century.

The WDVCB's Jones says meeting planners shouldn't overlook the bureau when planning an event. While the local conference facilities offer plenty of programs for meeting attendees, the VCB is happy to put together packages as well. The group is often tapped to provide spousal activities; some of its popular packages are wine and craft beer tours, plus a visit to the International Crane Foundation, the only spot in the world where you can see all 15 crane species.

Sometimes, it's not even necessary to plan any events. Because the Dells is such a tourist hot spot, it's plenty easy for guests to explore the area on their own. After all, it's home to such notable entertainment options as the Original Wisconsin Ducks, the Dells Boat Tours and the Rick Wilcox Magic Theater.

Of course, every locale has its downside. For the Dells, the main drawback to meeting here is that it's 45 minutes away from the closest airport. That fact will always be a hindrance to some groups, but Timmerman believes that view is shortsighted. "Granted, we're 45 miles from the closest airport," she says, "but it's all Interstate driving, so it just takes 45 minutes to get here. Downtown Chicago might be only five miles away from your venue, but it may still take 45 minutes to get there!"

Touché. **WM**



Melanie Radzicki McManus often writes about Wisconsin from her home in Sun Prairie, Wis. In 2015, she received a Lowell Thomas Grand Award as Travel Writer of the Year, honorable mention. Lowell

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In today's meeting and events landscape, room blocks are under siege. It isn't necessarily a new threat, but one that continues to grow and change over time. In today's tech forward environment, meetings and event planners are currently contending with a new element that impinges upon the traditional accommodations room block—Airbnb.

Airbnb was started in 2008, and has clearly disrupted the accommodations market. While the concept of home-sharing is not new, companies like VRBO and Homestay have been around for years, Airbnb has become the brand standard for visitors who wanted something different from the typical hotel experience.

Leisure and business travelers alike have opted for Airbnb and perusing through the online listings, it is clear that Airbnb is rife with choice. And there is no question about its popularity. Since its inception in 2008, Airbnb has estimated that more than 150 million travelers have stayed in its more than 3 million listings in more than 191 countries.

Today's business traveler is a savvy one. Empowered by a wide range of choice and unprecedented access, and increasingly

DEALING WITH *Disruptors*

KEEP YOUR ATTENDEES FROM OPTING OUT
OF THE ROOM BLOCK FOR A HOME RENTAL

By Judy Frankel

used to customizing their own experience when they travel, many have extended this behavior to their work travel. Airbnb offers a wide variety of choice and price points. Initially, Airbnb's success engulfed the leisure traveler market but there is clearly growing demand for Airbnb accommodations from conference attendees.

WHY OPT OUT?

The threat to the room block is not a new phenomenon. In the meetings and events industry, there have always been elements that have challenged but not thwarted meeting planners.

Deb Archer, president and CEO of the Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau and Madison Area Sports Commission shares her perspective. "There are a wide variety of reasons that drive people to stay outside the block including the interest in a personal, preferred hotel for loyalty points, cost and privacy," she says. Now, experience has also become part of the equation and that has opened the door for options like Airbnb.

LESSONS OF THE PAST

Jason Ilstrup, general manager of Hotel Red in Madison and vice president of the Greater Madison Hotel and Lodging Association recalls when boutique hotels were perceived as the primary threat to traditional room blocks and the established brands by extension were afraid of the impact that this new way of "staying" would impact their business.

"Around 20 years ago, when boutique hotels were just coming onto the scene," says Ilstrup, "they were able to change the way people booked," he explains. Boutique hotels offered travelers something different and unique and could be considered the first foray into the hugely popular "local" movement that propels Airbnb's success today.

In both Madison and Milwaukee, the Airbnb phenomenon has impacted meetings and events. While there are no definitive statistics that any of the CVBs interviewed were able to provide, they agreed that consumers' habits are changing.

EMPOWER THE ATTENDEE

Gus Martinez, convention sales manager with Visit Milwaukee, while keenly aware

of the changing behavior of attendees, feels that there is much that can be done to preserve or even bolster your room block in the face of modern challenges. He suggests by educating the attendee you can empower them to make the right choice. By having materials and information that overstate the importance of staying within the block, you are subtly messaging how to be a good attendee.

"Education," says Martinez, is a key component of making attendees understand the importance of the room block to the overall health and success of the event. If the attendee is offsite, they will be missing out. "By committing to staying within the room block, attendees are naturally going to be more engaged in all the elements of the event," he explains.

Many meeting professionals are insisting on lower than otherwise published rates and holding hotels to respect the contracted rate with language clearly stating the hotel cannot offer lower, published rates; some planners are adding in other incentives for staying within the block like discounts in the bookstore, other merchandise areas or even exclusive access to special activities, early access to various attractions, explains Janine Wachter, director of Convention and Event Services for the Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Martinez suggests that having a mix of hotel options (including competing brands) is another way to attract attendees to book within the block. Hotel reward programs breed fierce loyalty and that just isn't an option with Airbnb.

Others have tried re-creating local experiences like pop up markets onsite as a way of keeping their attendees immersed in the event but still allowing them to experience local flair and culture.

THINKING OUTSIDE OF THE BLOCK

With ever-increasing expectations to manage, planners may opt to further empower the attendee with additional education of the impact of off-room block accommodations and the consequences to the event.

Professional event planners have faced the issue of booking outside of the block for many years—especially with the proliferation

of online travel agents reports Wachter.

"There are many ways meeting professionals are approaching this issue," says Wachter. Some offer discounted registration fees if individuals book within the official housing block; some are providing housing links first before registration or simply adding message strategies to their registration pages informing attendees that in order to keep registration rates low, it is imperative for attendees to stay within the housing block.

THE SAME BUT DIFFERENT

Nowadays, business travelers are not immune to wanting to experience the destination in unconventional ways. Airbnb can be perceived by the attendee as being the best equipped to answer that demand.

But is it the right choice for the event attendees?

While there are ample choices, Airbnb accommodations lack front desks, housekeeping and loyalty programs, which can be important to business travelers and conference attendees.

With no welcome desk or concierge to assist with other elements of your attendees experience such as making dinner reservations or providing additional information and resources about the destination, Airbnb falls short adds Martinez.

Attendees who opt to stay outside of the block would obviously miss out on additional networking opportunities with other attendees and more face time with conference goers adds Archer. Opting for Airbnb may also cause additional and unexpected transportation issues and costs for attendees.

While the overall success of the meeting or event is not dictated by room blocks, there is an important relationship between the two.

From a meeting planner perspective, the effect of booking outside of the block can also impact other key performance indicators of the event success. For example, out of the block bookings can hamper accurate economic impact reporting, which is often a critical metric for cities and event stakeholders to monitor.

While no planner is eager to be punitive



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towards their attendees, some have instituted a penalty, sometimes as high as an additional \$250 for booking outside of the block on registration fees to help keep the block robust.

IF YOU CAN'T BEAT 'EM, JOIN 'EM

In today's competitive meeting market, some planners are opting to work with Airbnb to incorporate this element into the menu of accommodation choices according to Skift, a popular hospitality news website. Recent high profile associations include partnerships with Airbnb at SXSW in Austin. Airbnb now offers a portal for corporate travel managers to see up to the minute reports on booking, spend and average daily rate attendees will pay for their Airbnb rental. There is also a map function that will all planners to see who is staying where. The tool is a real win for planners who are looking to incorporate Airbnb into their event.

TRENDING DOWN

There is some good news for planners worried about the onslaught of Airbnb and other home stay options. Some believe that the apex of the trend has passed and some meeting planners are seeing a return of those attendees who had once booked outside of the block. "People are more educated nowadays," says Denise Farrell, who handles procurement for Meetings and Incentives Worldwide, "and while they may have opted out previously, now the trend seems to be for people to book within the block."

Christopher Dyer from the Wisconsin chapter of Meeting Professionals International reports that in his experience, he has not seen a room block drop due to Airbnb. "For the majority of attendees, the social or networking components of the event are just too important to miss out on," and would stand to reason that they are staying away from Airbnb. [WM](#)



Judy Frankel is a freelance writer who loves to travel and writes frequently for Wisconsin Meetings.



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A quick glance around the trendiest restaurants or poring over photos in design magazines or on Pinterest and it's easy to see what's popular right now: minimalist design. This might include neutral colors (grays, whites and tans), few adornments and lots of raw materials (such as concrete, brick and metal). Light fixtures are typically crafted of industrial-era materials and lit by Edison bulbs.

If planning an event in a venue like this, your first impression might be that the blank canvas can make anything possible. The sky's the limit! You can adopt any color scheme, the company logo won't clash with the carpet pattern or wallpaper, and any vibe under the sun can be built out. But when it comes time to making actual decisions—such as, how will you develop a casino theme? A Great Gatsby-inspired holiday party? Create an inspiring environment for a strategy session?—stress creeps in because the reason you liked the space is now a problem. You are starting from scratch. Here's how to make the process of moving from a blank canvas to a gorgeous event space easy.

Start with the furnishings. Tables with 12 chairs are impractical unless you are serving food. Even if it's a room packed with hundreds of people, you want to encourage conversation in small groups. "What we see people using is the lounge-type furniture," says Collette Deterville, event coordinator at Gather on Broadway, which opened in Green Bay this past summer. Comfortably holding 300 people, the space has steel beams, exposed-brick walls, an upstairs area for between 10 and 20 people in a salon-type environment, and a curtain dividing the downstairs into two spaces. Doing away with tables and shifting to something more cozy and intimate helps carve out conversation areas within a space. After those big pieces are secured, Deterville has found when working with groups, there's often a sudden realization not much more is required. "The appeal of this space is you don't need a ton of stuff to decorate it," says Deterville. "You can come in and 'paint' the space as you like." Some groups will string twinkly lights from the steel beams to create mood lighting.

A group that rented the space this fall spoke to Deterville about a desire to move away from a black-and-white theme, which can



©THE LAGARET



©GATHER ON BROADWAY



Second's marketing director and event specialist. Also, everything is on wheels to add further flexibility in how to arrange the space. Edison bulbs, wrought-iron fixtures and warm woods contribute to the historical aesthetic that is currently trending in décor while paying homage to the neighborhood's industrial roots. Kaiser even hired a painter "to create a look that has a lot of texture but with a lot of wear," she explains. On warm days, two garage doors open out to a patio, expanding the available square footage. This industrial aesthetic helped create an ambitious design at a recent meeting of Re/Max's national sales team where acrobats were suspended from the ceiling and drinks were served while a DJ spun records.

Floral arrangements—or, for something simpler, fresh-cut flowers in a vase—can quickly liven up a blank canvas in an event space. Part of the appeal of these minimalist spaces are the use of natural materials like wood and brick. Flowers fit right in. The Lageret in Stoughton is an industrial warehouse (once a tobacco factory) built in 1885 and now owned by a floral designer whose studio (Flora by Jamae) is located in the venue as well. Often the two businesses go hand in hand, with event planners hiring her floral business for their event. Exposed Cream City-brick walls, natural sunlight thanks to tall windows and wood beams are charming for both weddings and group events.

A trick that event manager Jamae Ramsden has seen people do with her space to make it appear more intimate is to rent furniture—like tufted-leather sofas—from Event Essentials or A La Crate Vintage Rentals, creating a salon-style environment. Also, you can't go wrong with a soft glow: "Candlelight is beautiful in there," she says. Many opt to hang fabric pieces from the wood timbers because "it really changes the space," says Ramsden. And, finally, hiring a folk singer or acoustic guitarist instead of a five-piece band contributes to the vintage appeal that draws people to the venue in the first place. **WM**

come across as formal or dated. "They're going with champagne colored crinkled taffeta," she says. "A lot of our clients are going with the neutrals—golds and bronzes are really big." To introduce color, "they spice it up with the chairs and the linens," she says. This works well in spaces that are already minimally decorated.

In the shell of a 1930s warehouse, 13Thirteen in downtown Madison has a similar industrial-chic vibe to Gather on Broadway with its polished-concrete floors, brick walls and rusty metal beams running across the 18-foot ceilings. The space can hold up to 155 people, perfect for an intimate event. To coax the industrial-chic vibe even further, owner Mark Whalen sourced two old doors plus barn wood and wove those into the space. Retractable garage doors open to the outdoors.

"The walls we left as they were and we painted them. It's kind of rough looking and it looks cool that way," says Whalen. To decorate a space such as this, says

13Thirteen event director Angela Genin, 90 percent of it is in lighting, "not in actual 'stuff' or table settings you would normally see in a restaurant with average-height ceilings. This is what sets the atmosphere in a space so large. Table settings look good for pictures but you lose any impact in the space when you look beyond the table." She recommends focusing less on table arrangements and more on the curtains or drapes—the larger the better—and table linens "with either a soft sheen or a little metallic."

Making those micro-decisions easier for event planners was a top goal when Saz's Hospitality Group opened South Second in Milwaukee's Walker's Point neighborhood in 2015. The space includes a private/green room, a large open space and a mezzanine overlooking that main space. Up to 350 people can use the venue at once.

"It was designed with the idea that it could stand alone or be completely transformed," says Krystal Kaiser, South



Kristine Hansen is a freelance writer based in Milwaukee.

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THE **BEST** OF *Wisconsin* MEETINGS

Recognizing industry suppliers who exceeded expectations in 2017



Thank you to the hundreds of readers that contributed to our annual survey of meetings industry suppliers and venues. Each year suppliers have a tough task: provide innovative ideas, products and services with great customer support, all while meeting the ever-tightening budgets of planners. It's a delicate balance and those that we recognize in the following pages have proven their dedication to their customers and the industry by doing just that.



BEST LARGE CONVENTION CENTER: Grand Geneva Resort, Lake Geneva

Grand Geneva Resort is a popular choice among our readers. As one of the largest non-water park resort convention centers (62,000 square feet), it offers a variety of options for attendees after they clock out. An onsite spa and fitness center, horseback riding, ski hill, golf course and adventure center will keep your guests busy well into the night—not to mention its fascinating past as the Playboy Club. grandgeneva.com

BEST CONFERENCE CENTER: Heidel House Resort, Green Lake

The Heidel House often shows up in our survey and this year is no exception. With a stunning location on Green Lake, attendees can enjoy an excursion on the resort's *Escapade* yacht after dinner, relax at the onsite Evensong spa, connect with their peers at a lakeside bonfire after dinner or hit the links at any of several local golf courses. heidelhouse.com



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BEST RECEPTION FACILITY: Lambeau Atrium, Green Bay

While the Green Bay Packers may not have made the playoffs, meeting planners still find the Lambeau Field Atrium to be a huge win for their events. For the past six years, the Atrium has been the hands down winner as best reception facility in our survey. Offering space for up to 1,000, planners can add a private stadium tour or take guests through the hallowed halls of the Hall of Fame. packers.com

BEST GOLF RESORT: Geneva National Resort & Club, Lake Geneva

New to our survey this year, Geneva National Resort & Club earns a hole in one among readers for its scenic 54 holes located along the shores of Lake Como. Three championship courses designed by golf greats Lee Trevino, Gary Player and Arnold Palmer offer meticulously manicured bent grass tees, fairways and greens, plus five tee boxes. Onsite reception and dining space provides flexibility for your events. Plus, nearby, The Ridge Hotel offers an additional 30,000 square feet of flexible space. genevanationalresort.com





BEST BOUTIQUE HOTEL WITH MEETING SPACE:

Hotel Red, Madison

When planners want to step up their game, they take their event to a boutique property such as Hotel Red. Located adjacent to the University of Wisconsin, Hotel Red pays tribute to the university and its neighbor, Camp Randall, home of BIG 10 Badger football. Offering several spaces, the property can host groups of up to 100 comfortably. Balconies overlook the stadium and pets are always welcome! hotelred.com

BEST PROPERTY FOR A CORPORATE RETREAT:

Geneva Inn, Lake Geneva

Wanting to mix business with pleasure for your next corporate retreat? Our readers say you should consider the Geneva Inn. Offering one of the best views of Geneva Lake, this property, recently renovated, is a great destination for small groups. Host a cocktail reception lakeside after a day of meetings, break up your day with a boat cruise, or wind down with a hike on the Shore Path, just steps from the property. genevainn.com



BEST CASINO WITH MEETING SPACE:

Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, Milwaukee

Looking for a location that will keep your guests on site throughout your event? Potawatomi Hotel & Casino offers just that with an array of convention space, dining options, gaming and entertainment. And soon, they will offer even more when an expansion adding 119 guest rooms and more meeting space is completed early next year. paysbig.com

HOTEL WITH BEST SERVICE:

Glacier Canyon Lodge at the Wilderness Resort, Wisconsin Dells

Planners need a trusted partner when it comes to producing successful events. And according to our readers, you can find that support at Glacier Canyon Lodge. With 56,000 square feet of meeting space, 8 indoor and outdoor waterparks, several dining options, a golf course and more, your attendees are guaranteed to have a great experience wildernessresort.com





BEST LAKESHORE RESORT:

The Osthoff Resort, Elkhart Lake

Considering Wisconsin is home to more than 15,000 lakes, this is one of the most competitive categories in our survey! The Osthoff Resort is recognized by our readers once again for its scenic setting and superior offerings. The AAA four diamond resort offers 38,000 square feet of space, an onsite spa and culinary school, plus a variety of teambuilding opportunities. osthoff.com

BEST GROUP OUTING:

Lake Geneva Cruise Line

With a fleet of boats that (the largest able to hold up to 225 for a reception or 120 seated) your group will enjoy a memorable experience as they cruise Geneva Lake. Enjoy a narrated cruise that details the history of the beautiful mansions that line the lake, or bring your own entertainment on board for a unique experience. cruiselakegeneva.com



HOTEL WITH BEST OUTDOOR RECEPTION SPACE

The Ridge Hotel, Lake Geneva

Requirements for amazing outdoor space: a fire pit, scenic views and an outdoor bar! The Aspen Patio at The Ridge Hotel checks all of those boxes. The only thing out of your control is the weather. The comfortable space accommodates up to 150 and is the perfect space for groups to enjoy pre- or post-dinner. Network around the fire pit while enjoying views of Lake Como. It doesn't get much better than this! ridgelakegeneva.com

MOST HELPFUL CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU:

Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau

This year almost every Wisconsin CVB or DMO was represented in our survey, highlighting the connection planners have with their suppliers. However, only one stood out. "When we adopted our organization brand of Going > Beyond, our goal was to represent how and what we deliver to our partners and clients. To be recognized by our clients and peers is a fantastic honor and a tribute to our team, who embody and live our brand every day," noted GMCVB President/CEO Deb Archer. wm





RESOURCE GUIDE 2018

ACCOMMODATIONS



// COUNTRY SPRINGS HOTEL SOON TO BE THE INGLESIDE HOTEL //

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a: 2810 Golf Road, Pewaukee, WI 53072
tf: 800/247 6640
w: CountrySpringsHotel.com

DINING

- [720] RECEPTION CAPACITY
- [540] RECEPTION WITH DINING
- [YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
- [YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

- [40,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
- [20] # OF MEETING ROOMS
- [NO] OPEN CATERING
- [YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

- [YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
- [YES] FITNESS / POOL / WATERPARK
- [NO] SPA



// THE EDGEWATER //

First-class meeting and banquet facilities. Dedicated and creative experts to assist with planning. A dramatic water location and a long list of venue options with over 40,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor meeting space. The Edgewater is Madison's Place for any event, any size. Located in the heart of the city, on the shores of Lake Mendota, the urban resort offers a newly renovated, historic property re-imagined to include unique and flexible meeting and event spaces, distinct restaurants, a full-service spa and wellness center and the most creative culinary team offering the best in Modern Midwestern cuisine.

a: 1001 Wisconsin Place, Madison, WI 53703
t: 608/535 8200
w: theedgewater.com

DINING

- [780] RECEPTION CAPACITY
- [250] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
- [400] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
- [YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
- [YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

- [20,650] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
- [7] # OF MEETING ROOMS
- [500] MEETING CAPACITY
- [NO] OPEN CATERING
- [YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

- [YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
- [YES] FITNESS / POOL
- [YES] SPA



// GRAND GENEVA RESORT: THE MIDWEST'S PREMIER MEETINGS DESTINATION//

Grand Geneva Resort & Spa is well established as one of the most spacious layouts in the Midwest with 355 guest rooms at its main lodge, and 29 secluded, upscale new villas. A 4-season destination, Grand Geneva offers unique spaces, alongside seasonal dining and team-building adventures.

a: 7036 Grand Geneva Way, Lake Geneva, WI 53147
tf: 800/558 3417 **f:** 262/249 4585
w: www.grandgeneva.com **e:** SalesTeam@GrandGeneva.com

DINING

[1,000] RECEPTION CAPACITY
[72] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
[750] RECEPTION WITH DINING
[2,500] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
[YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
[YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[62,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
[35] # OF MEETING ROOMS
[1,200] MEETING CAPACITY
[NO] OPEN CATERING
[YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

[YES] GOLF
[YES] INDOOR WATERPARK
[YES] OUTDOOR WATERPARK



// HEIDEL HOUSE RESORT & SPA //

Conveniently located on 20 wooded acres in southern central Wisconsin, this full-service lakeside resort welcomes business and leisure guests to experience timeless hospitality in an unforgettable setting. Heidel House Resort & Spa features 180 guest rooms ranging from lake view suites to private vacation rentals. Groups enjoy diverse spaces with 18,000 square feet of indoor meeting space and a spacious outdoor tent. Green Lake sets a breathtaking backdrop for a general session or dinner reception, complete with on-site A/V equipment and support. Recreation abounds with the 60-foot Escapade yacht, luxurious Evensong Spa and 99 holes of golf within minutes. A knowledgeable and attentive team helps plan memorable events during any season.

a: 643 Illinois Avenue, Green Lake, WI 54941
tf: 800/444 2812 **f:** 920/294 6128
w: heidelhouse.com **e:** info@heidelhouse.com

DINING

[600] RECEPTION CAPACITY
[340] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
[450] RECEPTION WITH DINING
[1,360] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
[YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
[YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[18,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
[16] # OF MEETING ROOMS
[270] MEETING CAPACITY
[NO] OPEN CATERING
[YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

[YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
[YES] FITNESS / POOL
[YES] SPA



// KALAHARI RESORTS & CONVENTIONS//

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a: 1305 Kalahari Drive, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965
tf: 855/411 4605
w: KalahariMeetings.com

DINING

[5,200] RECEPTION CAPACITY
[2,300] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
[1,300] RECEPTION WITH DINING
[2,300] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
[YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
[YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[212,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
[45] # OF MEETING ROOMS
[5,200] MEETING CAPACITY
[NO] OPEN CATERING
[YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

[YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
[YES] FITNESS / POOL / WATERPARK
[YES] SPA



// THE KIMPTON JOURNEYMAN //

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a: 310 E. Chicago Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202
tf: 888/536 9008
w: journeymanhotel.com

DINING

[350] RECEPTION CAPACITY
[18] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
[68] RECEPTION WITH DINING
[108] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
[YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
[YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[9,417] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
[7] # OF MEETING ROOMS
[448] MEETING CAPACITY
[YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

[YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
[YES] FITNESS



// LAKE LAWN RESORT //

This full-service convention facility boasts 2 miles of shoreline and 250 acres in Wisconsin's Geneva Lakes region. 90 minutes from Chicago. Within 60 minutes of Milwaukee, Madison, and Rockford. Custom team building, myriad meeting rooms, expansive guest rooms, award-winning on-site dining, spa, 18-hole golf course, pools, marina, and more.

a: 2400 E. Geneva St, Delavan WI, 53115
t: 262/728 7950 **f:** 262/728 7976
w: lakelawnresort.com **e:** sales@lakelawnresort.com

DINING

[600] RECEPTION CAPACITY
 [320] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
 [450] RECEPTION WITH DINING
 [2,400] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
 [YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
 [YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[32,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
 [22] # OF MEETING ROOMS
 [300] MEETING CAPACITY
 [NO] OPEN CATERING
 [YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

[YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
 [YES] FITNESS / POOL
 [YES] SPA



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a: 1 West Dayton St., Madison, WI 53703
tf: 800/356 8293
w: concoursehotel.com

DINING

[1,800] RECEPTION CAPACITY
 [1,000] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
 [700] RECEPTION WITH DINING
 [2,000] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
 [YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
 [YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[27,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
 [27] # OF MEETING ROOMS
 [1,500] MEETING CAPACITY
 [NO] OPEN CATERING
 [YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

[YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
 [YES] FITNESS / POOL
 [NO] SPA



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a: 333 W. College Ave., Appleton, WI 54911
t: 920/733 8000 **tf:** 800/242 3499
w: www.radisson.com/appletonwi
w: fcexhibitioncenter.com

DINING

[1,500] RECEPTION CAPACITY
 [1,200] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
 [1,000] RECEPTION WITH DINING
 [1,200] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
 [5] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
 [YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[40,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
 [26] # OF MEETING ROOMS
 [1,750] MEETING CAPACITY
 [NO] OPEN CATERING
 [YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

[YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
 [YES] FITNESS / POOL
 [NO] SPA



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a: W4240 State Hwy 50, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin 53147
t: 800/225 5558 **f:** 262/249 3856
w: ridgelakegeneva.com **e:** groups@ridgelakegeneva.com

DINING

[350] RECEPTION CAPACITY
 [300] PRIVATE DINING CAPACITY
 [300] RECEPTION WITH DINING
 [410] TOTAL DINING CAPACITY
 [YES] ON-SITE RESTAURANT
 [YES] LOUNGE / ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[10,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
 [6] # OF MEETING ROOMS
 [NO] OPEN CATERING
 [YES] ON-SITE CATERING

OTHER

[YES] GROUP TEAM BUILDING
 [YES] WATER ACTIVITIES
 [YES] GOLF
 [YES] SPA



DESTINATIONS



// ELKHART LAKE, WISCONSIN //

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a: 41 E. Rhine Street, P.O. Box 425, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020
t: 920/876 2385 **tf:** 877/355 4278
w: elkhartlake.com/meetings **e:** Kathleen@elkhartlake.com



// FOX CITIES CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU //

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a: 3433 W. College Ave., Appleton, WI 54914
t: 920/734 3358 **tf:** 800/236 6338
w: foxcities.org **e:** akaras@foxcities.org



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c: Carrie Stollenwerk, Director of Convention Sales
tf: 920/923 3010, ext. 104
w: FDLMeetings.com **e:** cstollenwerk@fdl.com



// JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN'S GREAT OUTSIDE WISCONSIN'S GREAT MEETING PLACE //

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a: 20 S. Main Street, Suite # 17, Janesville, WI 53545
t: 608/757-3171
w: janesvillecvb.com



// MEET IN MIDDLETON //

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a: 1811 Parmenter Street, Middleton, WI 53562
t: 800/688 5694
w: meetinmiddleton.com



// MAKE IT MILWAUKEE! //

Discover how easy, fun and affordable Milwaukee is the right choice for your next meeting. Check out the Wisconsin Center, connected by skywalk to three hotels, and only blocks from downtown nightlife and restaurants. Stroll the charming RiverWalk along the Milwaukee River, connecting the city's German heritage district to the Milwaukee Public Market in the trendy Historic Third Ward. Major attractions like the Harley-Davidson Museum, Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, and the stunning lakeside Milwaukee Art Museum all double as impressive event venues. And a renowned culinary scene and entertaining brewery tours combine with excursion boats, professional sports, and lakefront festivals to guarantee fun for all. Look for a new streetcar system and \$500 million new sports/entertainment complex opening in 2018.

a: 648 N. Plankinton Ave., Suite 220, Milwaukee, WI 53203
tf: 800/576-6466 **f:** 414/273-5596
w: visitmilwaukee.org **e:** jlbaryenbruch@milwaukee.org



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a: 14015 Washington Ave, Sturtevant, WI 53177

t: 262/884 6407

w: realracine.com **e:** eileen@realracine.com



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a: 701 Superior Street; P.O. Box 390, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965

tf: 888/339 3822 ext. 345

w: MeetInTheDells.com **e:** sales@wisdells.com

ATTRACTIONS



// NOAH'S ARK WATERPARK AMERICA'S LARGEST WATERPARK® //

Break out of the ordinary and think big for your group outing! Experience 70 acres of fun for everyone including two lazy rivers, two wave pools, four kids areas, a 4-D theater and our brand-new slide Raja™ – The World's Largest King Cobra. Exclusive meeting spaces and custom catering options are available for groups of all sizes.

a: 1410 Wisconsin Dells Parkway, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965

tf: 800/222 6624

w: noahsarkwaterpark.com **e:** jarod.prescott@noahsarkwaterpark.com



VENUES



// ALLIANT ENERGY CENTER //

The Alliant Energy Center is located at the gateway to downtown Madison, WI. This multi-venue campus offers facilities for sporting events, trade and consumer shows, as well as conferences and banquets. As a full service provider we customize our expansive menu of equipment and services to fit your specific needs. Accommodations available for groups of 10 – 10,000.

a: 1919 Alliant Energy Center Way, Madison WI 53713
t: 608/267-1549
w: alliantenergycenter.com **e:** kaltenberg@alliantenergycenter.com

DINING

[4,000] BANQUET CAPACITY
 [4,000] RECEPTION CAPACITY
 [YES] ON-SITE CATERING
 [YES] LOUNGE/ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[120,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
 [10,000] MEETING CAPACITY
 [21] # OF MEETING ROOMS

OTHER

[YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
 [YES] HOTEL



// MADISON, WISCONSIN: WHERE INSPIRATION MEETS FOCUS. //

Striking that perfect balance between flowing energy and laser focus is at the heart of every great meeting. Leave it to the experts at Monona Terrace to ensure that at your next meeting or convention, your attendees are both dialed up and dialed in. From our concierge-caliber service to the Frank Lloyd Wright design, Monona Terrace provides a springboard for great ideas and frees you from worrying about the details. Call Monona Terrace today to book your next meeting, conference or convention or visit mononaterrace.com to fill out a request for proposal.

a: One John Nolen Drive, Madison, WI 53703
t: 608/261.4000
w: mononaterrace.com

MEETING SPACE

[85,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
 [3,300] MEETING CAPACITY
 [21] # OF MEETING ROOMS

DINING

[2,000] BANQUET CAPACITY
 [YES] ON-SITE CATERING

TRADE SHOWS

[85,000] FUNCTIONAL SPACE (SQ. FT.)
 [40,000] EXHIBIT SPACE (SQ. FT.)



// POTAWATOMI HOTEL & CASINO //

The Midwest's Premier Entertainment Destination is also your best bet for full-service meetings—everything from an intimate get-together or a conference for 3,000 guests.

Make an unforgettable impression in Milwaukee with the most hotel event space under one roof, free covered parking, free Wi-Fi, state-of-the-art AV and professional catering managers to customize every detail of your event, all just steps from nonstop gaming, dining and luxury accommodations.

Visit paysbig.com or call 414-847-8600 to see how we can help bring your vision to life.

a: 1611 West Canal Street, Milwaukee, WI 53233
tf: 800/ PAYS BIG
w: paysbig.com/meetings

DINING

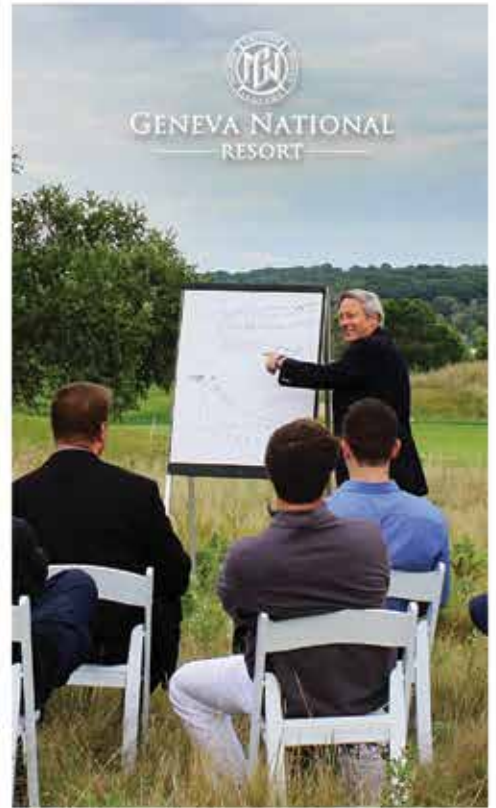
[1,200] BANQUET CAPACITY
 [2,750] RECEPTION CAPACITY
 [7] # OF RESTAURANTS
 [YES] ON-SITE CATERING
 [YES] LOUNGE/ENTERTAINMENT

MEETING SPACE

[60,000] MEETING SPACE (SQ. FT.)
 [3,000] MEETING CAPACITY
 [9] # OF MEETING ROOMS

OTHER

[YES] HIGH-SPEED WIRELESS
 [YES] HOTEL



GETAWAY OR GET DOWN TO BUSINESS?

The choice is yours.

Whether you are planning an inspiring breakaway, classic conference or intimate retreat, we have the Wisconsin venue for you. Lake Geneva's contemporary Ridge Hotel, all-suite Cove of Lake Geneva and clubby Geneva National Resort each offer shoreline settings, versatile event space, and on-site planners -- plus the rare opportunity to golf 54 legendary holes designed by Palmer, Player and Trevino.

Even better, have it all at a fraction of the cost of a city stay.

LAKE GENEVA
MEETINGS

MeetingsLakeGeneva.com

Meeting photography courtesy Ideal Impressions Photography and Matt Mason Photography

MEET

BETTER.

EVENTS THAT WORK

The Midwest's Premier Entertainment Destination is also your best bet for full-service meetings—with the most hotel event space under one roof, free parking, free Wi-Fi, state-of-the-art AV and professional catering managers to customize every detail of your event—all just steps from nonstop gaming, dining and luxury accommodations.



POTAWATOMI
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