

Survive and *Thrive*

What does the economic turmoil mean for our industry — and more importantly, what do we do about it? ES asks experts around the industry for their solutions

68

Percentage of event pros who think AIG was right in canceling its risk-management conference at the Ritz in the wake of public outcry

32

Percentage of event pros who think AIG didn't make the right choice

Real Speakers, Real Solutions

ES is offering an unprecedented number of bottom line-focused seminars at the 2009 Conference & Tradeshow. So we got in touch with our expert speakers to ask for actionable solutions to all your economic woes. Here's what they told us.

Position your event or company in multiple places in cyberspace so you can be found. Use the same keywords and phrases that online searchers do — you'll come up when they look online for services you provide. Social media can be a big help, because many of these sites rank very high due to their size.

Cris Canning, CMP, Head Instigator, Hospitality Ink, San Diego

Seminars: Do You Know your Audience? Hitting the Bull's-Eye with your Target Marketing | Marketing 2.0: Promoting your Business in a Web-Savvy World

Yard sales, antique shops, flea markets, etc.!

Play the high-low game. Mix less expensive items, furniture for example, with a couple of more expensive ones. Or just move a hotel's furniture around and then add some of your own pillows to add texture and color! As long as the look is cohesive, nobody will question the value.

Evan Carbotti, Event Design/Concept Development, and Jordan Carbotti, Concept Development, Perfect Surroundings Inc., Newport, R.I., and Miami Beach, Fla.

Seminars: Event Design: Generation Next | Form and Function: Take your Branding — and Style — to the Next Level

Utilize décor companies for general assembly stage sets. Since they are initially designed for décor, the stage sets are less expensive and more flexible.

Tina Wolpow, Director of Event Development, Art of the Party LLC, Orlando, Fla.

Seminar: Lower Stress, Increase Sales — Even in a Tough Economy ▶



Around the Industry with Terry Singleton

{independents} Independent planners and production companies haven't seen a loss in accounts. We're not seeing that clients are eliminating events, because they're attempting to continue morale. But there are very strong budget slashes into programs. Last year's \$100,000 budget is \$60,000 this year.

{social} We're seeing a decline in social business — the corporate holiday parties have been cut or cancelled. The sales meetings continue, but with less money spent.

{corporate} A lot of my friends who are corporate planners are wondering what they're going

to be doing because they're not planning a whole lot of events. I'm a total proponent of being proactive versus reactive. Proactive means, "We're not planning in-house events, so how do I remodel my job to pick up other responsibilities so I stay valuable to the company until the economy turns around?"



Singleton is secretary of the International Special Events Society's board of governors and president of Atlanta-based CCP Events Inc.

ultimate textile



Extreme Mixed Metal

A Dynamic to-the-point tableware that commands attention. Cool conglomerate of fine fabrics with mitered precision corners for the cutting-edge party planner.



Harlow

Our sensational 22" round napkin design is bound to capture the attentions of its audience. Spun polyester/satin fabric in alluring colors sure to set the stage for a night of glamour.



Regular
Price List

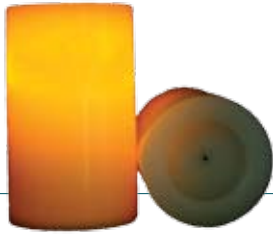
Buy the Case
and Save!



\$ Your
avings

90x90" Square	\$40.00	18 pc	\$540.00/case	25%
22"R Napkins	\$24.00	35 pc	\$560.00/case	33%

Harlow 22" Round napkins are available in Black/Black, Black/Copper, Black/Gold, Black/White, Ivory/Ivory, White/White, Black/Line, Black/Orange, Black/Hot Pink and Black/Electric Blue.



Cross-utilize items, such as by painting them. Buy smart: LED candles, for example, might seem pricey, but they can be used in countless ways. Make simple but dramatic statements. Instead of a huge expensive centerpiece, sell a minimalistic design using cost-effective single-stem varieties like orchids and tropicals.

Dwayne Ridgaway, Perfect Surroundings Inc., Newport, R.I., and Miami Beach, Fla.

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In challenging economic times, it is cost effective to consider outstanding second-tier cities like St. Louis, Nashville, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, Louisville and others that have top-notch hotels and convention centers at often deep discounts from more traditional cities.

Jennifer Brown, CMP, Partner, Meeting Sites Resource, Irvine, Calif.

Seminar: Strategic Hotel Contract Negotiations: How Hotels Value your Meeting

Photo: Gary Layda
Courtesy: Nashville Convention & Visitors Bureau



Redirect your business strategy and focus your event sales on markets that are flourishing despite the current recession. CBS News recently reported the booming alcohol and cigarette business in response to the crumbling economy. Savvy planners should analyze flourishing industries and redirect their sales to acquire the excess business.

Christy Bareijsza, CMM, CMP, The Red Carpet Events, Jersey City, N.J.

Seminar: Getting Down and Dirty with Venues: The Secrets of Contract Negotiation



Recession Kit

As president of Special Event Business Advisors, Sharon Jansen coaches event professionals every day on how to grow their businesses and careers. Here are her tips for riding out the down economy.

Broaden your focus. In a recession, you're reaching out to unknown territory. When we're back on the upswing again and seeing another crest coming along, then you're refocusing and pulling back into your niche market because everyone's going to be entering business again.

Don't cut your ad budget. It's very important to let people know you're still out there. Keeping your message out there shows people that you're alive and well and ready to do business.

Attend industry conferences. This is a time to get a different perspective and invest in professional development or continued education to show supervisors that you're in it for the long haul. Rejuvenate by attending conferences and trade shows and encouraging others in the industry — it's infectious.

Be a problem solver. It is such a good time for good planners to prosper because they're problem solvers. If they can position themselves as someone to be able to solve a corporation's problems, that will help.

The Rental Perspective

The sky isn't falling, says Fred Hageman of Hageman, Stansberry & Associates, a mergers and acquisitions firm specializing in event rentals. "Long term, it's a very resilient industry," he says. "Within 12 months, the stimulus package, the credit crunch, a lot of uncertainty with the election — I think the dust is going to settle." He sees an opportunity, not a threat. "There is a very strong correlation between companies that are doing well and those that aren't, and that is, how well do they manage and understand their financial health?" he says. "It's a 'what doesn't break us makes us stronger' type of mentality."