



MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL

# DEFINE

MPI  
OHIO CHAPTER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL OHIO CHAPTER

**OCT — DEC 2017**



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# Meetings Truly Help!

Pictured: MPIOH 2017 Auction benefiting Out of Darkness

# President's Column

Amanda Stredney  
Account Executive, Marriott International



## Congratulations MPI Ohio!

We received some exciting news this past month from MPI Global recognizing MPI Ohio as a Top Performing Chapter from this previous year!

As some of you may know, each year, the MPI chapters are measured by achievement of specific metric goals. A Top Performing Chapter is a chapter that achieves 4-out-of-5 metric goals. Those include our percentage of members who are engaged and volunteer on committees, our satisfaction scores with regards to our chapter leadership and educational content, our conversion of non-members to members, our overall financial health, and our overall total membership number. As volunteers ourselves, it's humbling to see that our business decisions as meeting professionals are impacting our chapter so much that we would be recognized globally! Way to go MPI Ohio!

In the first few months of my presidency, I've learned how vital it is to have the support of your membership and also your board. I do hope you continue to engage yourselves and have a voice through our chapter and also know that you, as members, are supported! There is a saying by Henry Ford that I love and have found to be rather true: "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." Please ask as many questions as you want to learn the "Ins and Outs" of our chapter.

Speaking of questions, guess what?! We have exciting events coming up!

- We've upgraded the REACH program and are now offering the morning sessions rather than the luncheon, all based on your feedback. I promise you REACH is a huge member benefit! You have the opportunity to share best practices with your peers at a roundtable discussion, and you can also earn CE credits! Please notice that the locations of our REACH meetings are different than our chapter meetings – this is on purpose!
- In December, we have our In-depth Education Day! Gear up and get ready for some major takeaways from the amazing speakers – December 13th at the Embassy Suites in Dublin.
- And don't forget about our CMP Program! If you're interested in advancing your career, talk to Adriane Cesa about getting your certification. We've got a great program in place and we want to be sure our members take advantage of it.

As I'm sure you all know, our world has been hit with tragedy in the last few months, both from Mother Nature and other factors unknown. Each of these events has majorly impacted the meetings & events industry from hoteliers to independent business travelers to meetings occurring during these tragic moments. It's imperative for us all to keep our priorities in line. Take time for your family, friends and those you hold dear. And most importantly, take time for yourself. Happy Fall!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amanda Stredney". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and legible.

Amanda Stredney

# Confessions from an IMEX Newbie

By Ashley Lawson



This year marked my first time as a Hosted Buyer at IMEX, a worldwide exhibition for incentive travel, meetings, and events that is held each October in Las Vegas. I was very lucky to receive the in-demand invite from our partners at Caesars Entertainment. And I'm so grateful I did. From the moment they extended the invite, I received the royal treatment from the luxury meeting and entertainment company.

As a newbie to the industry, I didn't quite know what to expect for the conference. But I quickly learned that events planned for meeting planners aim to exceed all expectations. And as such, IMEX was filled with awe-inspiring surprises, on-time events, and drinks that

flowed as naturally as the unbounding energy.

Each day I entered the conference, I would scan in my badge and walk into the world. Every country, state, city, CVB, hotel and DMC on the planet was represented inside one room. Animated conversations in Spanish, French, Japanese, and Dutch were heard at every turn. Irish sorcerers, lei-making Hawaiians, Argentinian tango dancers and even the hobbit feet from New Zealand's Lord of the Rings movie set, freely roamed the aisles.

After absorbing the daily excitement, I would rotate through quick-fire meetings to learn about new hotel properties, global cultural events, and the growing meetings industry trends. While the days were a bit daunting, racing from one meeting to the next, I found the nights to be the perfect time to build friendships out of my newfound business relationships. Thanks to Caesars, I spent my evenings eating endless pasta at Giada's, and attending incredible events like SITE Night and "Rendezvous," which was sponsored by both MPI Foundation and Caesars Entertainment. SITE Night was an enchanted evening miraculously combining acrobatic creatures with boozy bowling and Rendezvous was the knock-out finale event, where everyone came together to dance under the stars at Drai's Nightclub.



Through this experience, I've learned that IMEX is an absolute must for meeting planners. It is a fun, high-energy, fast-paced conference that is essentially the United Nations of meetings & incentives. In a few short days, I developed new partners from every corner of the globe, in one convenient place. Most importantly, I became a much more knowledgeable and valuable resource for my clients. Thanks to the learning seminars and endless introductions, my planning tool belt is full of new destination, event, and venue ideas for our future incentive trips.

## My experience at IMEX was so fantastic that I wanted to share my Top 10 Lessons Learned:

1. Find yourself a new friend at Caesars Entertainment. Trust me, the Caesars IMEX experience is a first-class, jam-packed whirlwind you won't want to miss.
2. Respect the fact that you're being hosted. Book your meetings in advance and be intentional about where you can create business partnerships.
3. Be a YES person. There are endless invites to booth happy hours, parties, dinners, and shows. Make the most of your time and say "yes" to as many events as you can.

4. Wear the comfiest shoes you can find. The Sands Expo is the size of 34 football fields. So seriously – find shoes that make you feel like you’re walking on clouds because you never stop running from meeting to meeting.
5. Visit the MPI booth. The association is always running membership promotions and great giveaways like complimentary professional photo sessions. Plus, they like to see their valued members!
6. Hydrate often. Between constant conversations, hustling to meetings, and let’s be honest – the late-night parties, you’ll want every ounce of H2O you can get.
7. Write notes on the business cards you receive and follow up with everyone you meet. You’re going to meet a lot of people so mental notes will easily be lost. The whole world is under one roof so take advantage of the opportunity to build long-standing industry relationships.
8. Make time for a ride on the High Roller and then book it for a group. This observation wheel (across from Caesars Palace) is a must do for your next Vegas trip. The view is amazing!
9. If you can, take Friday off. You’ll need it to recuperate from both Vegas and from many days of speed-networking.
10. Put the 2018 IMEX on your schedule, right now. October 16-18, 2018 is already marked on my calendar and I hope to see you there!

Ashley Lawson

#### Achieve Incentives & Meetings

Ashley recently joined the MPI OH Chapter after moving to Cleveland from Washington, DC, where she worked with Fortune 500 companies to build out their corporate social responsibility initiatives.



## PRINT, MARKETING & SIGNAGE SOLUTIONS

### YOUR BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION IDENTITY

- Logo Design
- Branded Apparel
- Branded Promotional Products
- Visual Graphics and Signage

### YOUR PRESENCE

- Website Design, Email, Hosting
- Social Media
- Web Ordering Portals/Storefronts
- Business Cards, Stationery
- Print Communications
- Vehicle Graphics

### YOUR CUSTOMERS AND PROSPECTS

- Customer Demographic Profiling
- Targeted Prospect List Procurement
- Traditional (still effective!) Targeted Mail Campaigns
- Email Prospecting Campaigns
- Email Newsletter Design and Deployment
- Loyalty Programs

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