

JANUARY 2009

# AMPS NEWSLETTER

ASSOCIATION OF MEETING PROFESSIONALS

*Happy  
New Year!*

2009

# FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As we enter a new year, we do so with a certain amount of trepidation, given all the economic signals we have seen lately. But 2009 is a New Year and we must approach it with renewed vigor. Accordingly, the following taken from folks much wiser and more creative than I: from the Michael Menchel collection:

"If you want to be successful at keeping your New Year's resolutions, make sure your goals match your values, be realistic, visualize them as done and take action." *James Mapes, Author, "Quantum Leap Thinking"*

"Don't keep your resolutions a secret! Talking about them with others not only gives you a greater stake in keeping them, it also makes them more real and meaningful for you — so you'll keep them because you want to." *Geoff Colvin, Senior Editor at Large, "FORTUNE"*

"I've found that the best way to keep your resolutions is to always set SMART goals — ones that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely. My SMART resolution is to be more giving of my time with friends and family." *Joe Theismann, Former Star Washington Redskins Quarterback*

"PLAY more this year! A few words to live by for George Bernard Shaw — 'We don't stop playing because we grow old!; we grow old because we stop playing.'" *Kevin Carroll, "Katalyst": Inspiring Others to Turn Creative Ideas into Reality*

"Make a resolution and by the end of the year — whether you succeed or not — you will have learned something about yourself." *The Hon. Tom Ridge, First Secretary of Homeland Security and Distinguished Statesman*

So, among other things let's keep laughing in 2009. Laughter helps your body produce natural painkillers. AND it has the power to help you relax, and it can make it easier to get through difficult circumstances.

Have a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

**Hank Roeder**

National Business Travel Association

## AMPs Staff/Contact Information

### Association of Meeting Professionals

2025 M Street, NW • Suite 800 • Washington, DC 20036

Tel: 202.973.8686 • Fax: 202.973.8722

AMPS@courtesyassoc.com • www.ampsweb.org

#### Executive Director

Regina Mohr, CMP

#### Membership/Meetings Coordinator

C.J. Stermer

#### Association Coordinator

Kelly Ruest

#### Golf Tournament Coordinator

Chezka Solon

## AMPs Board Members 2008-2009

### Chair

#### Hank Roeder

National Business Travel Association

703.684.0836 x120

hroeder@nbta.org

### Vice Chair

#### Annemarie Selvitelli

ASFE

301.565.2733

annemarie@asfe.org

### Treasurer

#### Russell McKinnon, MAM, CAE

International Theos Foundation

703.765.0887

russ.mckinnon@verizon.net

### Secretary

#### Joan Greene

Experient

703.960.8008

joan.greene@experient-inc.com

### Immediate Past Chair

#### Roselle Foley, CMP

National Association of Chemical Distributors

703.527.6223 x112

rfoley@nacd.com

#### Kim Allison, CAE, CASE

Baltimore Area Convention & Visitors Association

571.970.6041

kallison@baltimore.org

#### Cameron Curtis

Association of American Medical Colleges

202.828.0400

ccurtis@aamc.org

#### Lisa L. Dyson, CMP

TESOL

703.518.2515

ldyson@tesol.org

#### Susan Haning, CEM, CMP

NAILBA

703.383.3068

shaning@nailba.org

#### Beth Melanson

San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau

202.466.4400

bmelanson@sfcvb.org

#### Christine Nord

Hershey Resorts

757.565.3457

cnord@hersheypa.com

#### Gary Onorio

Gaylord Hotels

703.671.2301

GOnorio@GaylordHotels.com

#### Laura Weaver, CMP

Society of American Florists

703.836.8700

lweaver@safnow.org

### Newsletter Design & Layout

Romain G. Falloux • El Vikingo Design, Inc.

240.398.3600 • www.elvikingo.com

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## AMPs Committee Chairs 2008-2009

### **Awards**

**Susan Haning, CEM, CMP** • NAILBA  
703.383.3068  
shaning@nailba.org

**Kim Allison, CAE, CASE** • Baltimore CVA  
571.970.6041  
kallison@baltimore.org

### **Community Services**

**Laura Shelton, CMP** • Fusion Meetings & Events  
703.303.5261  
laura@fusionmeetings.com

**Brooke McGahey, CMP** • Experient  
703.525.8333 ext. 3355  
brooke.mcgahey@experient-inc.com

### **Golf**

**Michelle Malloy, CMP, CAE** • NARUC  
202.898.2214  
mamalloy@naruc.org

**Beth Bushman** • Orlando CVB  
540.720.0333  
beth.bushman@orlandocvb.com

### **Hospitality**

**Nell Chadwick** • Philadelphia CVB  
703.533.5500  
nellc@pcvb.org

**Alisha Waid** • LXR Luxury Resorts  
703.799.0434  
awaid@luxuryresorts.com

### **Membership**

**Jason Lusk, CMP** • Denver CVB  
571.527.0360  
jlusk@denver.org

**Scott Williamson, CHSP, CMP**  
saw03xy@yahoo.com

### **Newsletter**

**Kristin Goen, CMP** • El Vikingo Design, Inc.  
301.602.4873  
kristin@elvikingo.com

### **Nominations**

**Kim Lord** • Anaheim VCB  
703.719.7684  
klord@anaheimoc.org

### **Programs**

**Sheila Faulkner** • Global Strategies Group  
703.532.6411  
bopenyan@aol.com

**Blanche Powell** • Powell Kohne Associates  
703.866.9307  
blanche@powellkohneassociates.com

**Angela Rios, CMP** • Experient  
703.525.8333 ext. 3328  
angela.rios@experient-inc.com

### **Public Relations**

**Rick Bethea** • Savannah Area CVB  
912.644.6416  
rbethea@savannahvisit.com

**Gail Swift** • Hilton National Sales  
703.704.9891  
gail\_swift@hilton.com

### **Special Events**

**Ryan Barth** • Indianapolis CVA  
703.684.4876  
rbarth@indianapolis.org

**Maria Vogel, CMP** • Meeting Management Svcs.  
202.624.1781  
mariav@meetingmgmt.com

# TIPS FOR TAKING THE CMP TEST

Tom Dozier, CMP, AIM Meetings and Events, Inc.



**W**ith the Washington, DC, 2009 CMP Exam just around the corner (Saturday, January 10, 2009), here are a few last minute tips to help you during the final countdown.

## **Make and Use Flash Cards**

I found they were the most time effective way to remember all of the definitions and formulas needed.

## **Take Advantage of Practice Exams**

I was able to learn about the areas I needed to brush up on, but more importantly, I got comfortable with the way the exam questions are written.

## **The Evening Before the Exam, Stop Studying**

Do whatever you enjoy doing to keep your mind off of the test; have a cocktail, take a long walk, or go to a movie. If you don't know some of the material the night before the exam, it is probably too late. You might as well get some rest so you're fresh the next day.

## **Set Aside All Items Needed for the Test**

Have #2 pencils, erasers, the CIC form required for admission and all your usual necessities (wallet, drivers licence, purse, keys, cell phone, et cetera). This prevents a frantic rush to find everything the morning of the test.

## **Get a Good Night's Sleep**

I set two alarms for the next morning to make sure I woke up. Be sure at least one alarm will work in case of a power outage.

## **Plan Your Trip to Arrive at the Convention Center Area 30 to 60 Minutes Before the Test Starts**

I took the Metro to the Gallery Place/Chinatown stop and grabbed a Starbucks coffee on my walk up to the exam.

## **You Will Get Randomly Seated for the Exam by the Exam Proctoring Team**

However, you may request a certain area. I asked to sit in a front corner. Being in front, all persons finishing the exam before me were behind me and did not bother me when they left. Being in the corner, got me away from the exam proctor. There are exam runners who collect the exams at your seat, and bring them to the exam proctor as you finish.

## **You May Write Formulas Down as Soon as the Exam Starts**

While I did not do this, many people find it helpful to write the pertinent formulas down on the back of the exam sheet.

## **Don't Overanalyze the Questions**

I found that my initial gutt feeling was usually correct.

## **Don't Spend Too Much Time on Any One Question**

There is a time limit to the exam, and spending too much time on one question may cause you to rush near the end.

## **Make Sure to Clearly Mark Any Skipped Questions**

This ensures you are marking the answers to the following questions in the correct spots.

## **If You Are Unsure of an Answer, Take an Educated Guess**

I was usually able to narrow questions down to two answers based on my personal work experience. I found this worked best for me when taking practice exams.

## **Finally, Don't Hold Your Breath Waiting for the Results**

They are meant to send them to you within 6-8 weeks. I'm sure it took at least all of the 8 weeks before I received the results, which seemed like an eternity! *Good luck!* ■

Dear Gabby ...



Dear Gabby is coming back in February to help you deal with some of your workplace drama! Please submit your questions ahead of time to [Kristin@elvikingo.com](mailto:Kristin@elvikingo.com). All questions will remain anonymous.

# 25 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR CUSTOMERS FOR LIFE

Arnold Sanow, MBA, CSP

In today's fast-changing and competitive environment, excellent customer service is essential for success. In fact, the only way to differentiate yourself and to become less of a commodity in the marketplace is through good customer service. The strategies for keeping customers for life can be honed down to some basic steps that any business owner can use. To get customers, keep them and to get enthusiastic referrals follow these 25 proven techniques:

1. Reward your customers. Send them a gift, provide them a lead, generate business for them, etc.
2. Use your customers' services and buy their products. If you want to increase loyalty, there is no better way.
3. Send thank-you cards. Make sure they are handwritten and sent promptly. Peter Drucker attributed much of his success to the fact that he sent out 12 thank-you cards every day.
4. Return phone calls promptly. Since so many people don't return calls, you automatically look good when you do.
5. Do what you say you are going to do.
6. Do things when you say you're going to do them.
7. Underpromise and overdeliver.
8. Be accessible. Make sure you are available and willing to help customers whenever there is a problem. Your business should be open to meet the convenience of your customers and not only for your convenience.
9. Be credible. If you can't establish that trust right away, customers may start to look at your competitors.
10. Appearance counts. Perception is reality, and the reality is that people do judge a book by its cover.
11. Show empathy. Remember the best customers are your current ones. Stay in touch and continue to service their wants and needs.
12. Have a "Goof Kit." If you make a mistake, it's not enough to say, "I'm sorry."
13. Promote customers' products and services. By getting business for your clients, you ensure you will have a customer for life.
14. Do things for the customer's convenience not yours. Make it as easy as possible for your customers to do business with you. The easier you can make it for your customer to do business with you, the more business you will have. Determine all the ways you can eliminate the hassle factor.
15. Send an invoice periodically with a "no charge" on it. This will help your customers remember you. And if it is unexpected, it will have a much larger impact.
16. Have a customer advisory panel. Only by knowing your customers' wants and needs can you successfully grow your business and be totally customer-oriented.
17. Hire mystery shoppers. To really find out how good your customer service is, hire someone to go out and use your service from start to finish.
18. Be a resource. No matter what your customer needs, try to find it for them -- even if it has nothing to do with your business.
19. Shower customers with kindness.
20. Speak your customers' language. If you use jargon your customers can't understand, they won't use you.
21. Have a great attitude.
22. Treat your employees well. If they are treated poorly, there is a good chance your customers will also get poor service.
23. Give your customer what they want, when they want it and how they want it.
24. Give back to your best customers. If you run a special price or product offer for first-time customers, ensure your current customers are offered the same opportunity.
25. Don't show an attitude of indifference to your customers. In a recent study on why people give up on a company, 68 percent quit because of an attitude of indifference toward the customers by the owner, manager or employees — 68 percent!

## Conclusion

Customer service is more than just smile training — it's about treating people the way they wanted to be treated. It's also about giving the client what they want, when they want it and how they want it. It really comes down to the fact that good communication and human relations skills equals good customer relations.



For more information or to book Arnold Sanow, please contact Blanche Powell (703.866.9307, [blanche@powellkohneassociates.com](mailto:blanche@powellkohneassociates.com)) or Maggie Kohne (703.278.8058, [maggie@powellkohneassociates.com](mailto:maggie@powellkohneassociates.com)) at Powell Kohne Associates, LLC. ■

# JANUARY COMMUNITY SERVICE UPDATE

Brook McGahey, CMP, Experient

A special thank you to those who donated gift cards for the Carpenter's Shelter at the AMP's Holiday Party. We collected \$395 in gift cards from a variety of stores including Target, Wal-Mart, CVS, American Express, TJ Maxx, Foot Locker and Payless Shoes. The shelter greatly appreciates our continued support, especially.

## 2009 Carpenter's Shelter Dinner Schedule

- January 29th, 2009
- April 30th, 2009
- July 30th, 2009
- October 29th, 2009

The next AMPs sponsored dinner at the shelter on Thursday, January 29th, 2009. If you are interested in donating an item or volunteering for the dinner, please contact Lisa Dyson at [ldyson@tesol.org](mailto:ldyson@tesol.org).

If you are involved in a community activity that you would like your fellow AMPs members to know more about, we would love to hear from you. The next Community Service Committee meeting is tentatively schedule for February 10th (prior to the AMPs monthly meeting).

For more information about the community service committee and how you can get involved, please contact the co-chairs Brooke McGahey at [brooke.mcgahey@experient-inc.com](mailto:brooke.mcgahey@experient-inc.com) or Laura Shelton at [laura@fusionmeetings.com](mailto:laura@fusionmeetings.com). ■

# FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Tom Dozier, CMP, AIM Meetings & Events, Inc.

The first meeting of the AMP's Investment Committee was held in late October. In attendance were the Chair Hank Roeder, Vice Chair Annemarie Selvitelli, Treasurer Russell McKinnon, MAM, CAE, Past Chair Roselle Foley, CMP, a representative from Smith Barney our Investment Company, and two representatives of the AMPs staff.

Short and long term investment guidelines were established a few months back by Russ and staff. The committee met to discuss the current financial goals for the Association and allocate monies as we see best adhering to the guidelines. We have executed this and plan to meet as a committee 3 times a year to review. ■



**We need YOU!** Join the fray and submit an article for publication in the *AMPs Newsletter*. It is a rewarding experience, and for those of you working toward your CMP, a great way to accumulate points!

Email your articles to Kristin Goen, CMP, Newsletter Chair at [kristin@elvikingo.com](mailto:kristin@elvikingo.com).

# PHOTO TIPS & TRICKS

Charles A. Fazio, chuckFAZIOMEDIA

A serious amateur photographer was a bit frustrated because, he said, some event shots he took looked like they were taken by a 'soccer mom with a point and shoot.' Since this column is geared to people with point and shoots, I'll share with you what I did with him: After you shoot the picture comes the time when you can take an ordinary photograph and make it extraordinary.

You've all heard of Photoshop, a very professional and capable software program for manipulating photos. For most of you, Photoshop is far more capable and expensive than what you need but PS's baby brother, Photoshop Elements, at \$79, is the perfect solution for just about anyone who wants to take their photography to the next level.

Photoshop Elements gives you some basic tools (and some advanced ones) that'll very easily help you to turn 'snap shots' into riveting photographs. So to enjoy the rest of this column, you'll need to run out and get a copy. I'll wait.

Ok, the most used, most essential tool and this the first tool we're going to talk about is the CROP tool (which you can actually find in most photo editing software). The CROP tool allows you to cut out unwanted portions of an image. I crop every one of my shots — so should you.

Take a look at one of my favorite shots that I used in the FedEx-Field Backstage Tour I just finished producing for the Washington Redskins. As part of the tour, over 60 of my photographs line the halls of FedExField's Field Level during public and private tours.

This photo of the Redskins defender just about to break up a long pass reception was taken from way across the field. Because of that distance, the main action takes up only about 10% of the frame so you can't really see what's going on.

But look what happens when I use the crop tool. I cut out all the stuff in the shot that adds nothing and kept just the important part, the two players going for the ball. Notice how I also turned a horizontal into a vertical. Big difference, eh?

Here's another example from the last AMPs meeting. (To see all the photos from the last AMPs meeting, [www.chuckfazio.com/amps1108](http://www.chuckfazio.com/amps1108).) When cropping, the question you should ask as you determine how much to crop out is, "does what you're thinking of cutting out add anything to the picture?" If the answer is no, crop it.

For more examples, [www.chuckfazio.com/crop](http://www.chuckfazio.com/crop). Start using the crop tool and start turning ordinary pics into special ones. Feel free to email me with any questions you may have at [chuck@chuckfazio.com](mailto:chuck@chuckfazio.com).

A quick thanks to everyone who made it to the Carlyle Club in Alexandria for the AMPs Holiday Extravaganza. You can see those photos at [www.chuckfazio.com/TCC](http://www.chuckfazio.com/TCC). The Club is a client of mine, so call or email me to book all your events there!

*Chuck Fazio is a 30 year veteran still photographer, producer and music impresario. Email him at [chuck@chuckfazio.com](mailto:chuck@chuckfazio.com). ■*

