



DEDICATED AND EDUCATED TO DELIVER CREATIVE EXCELLENCE AND PROFESSIONALISM IN SPECIAL EVENTS

in plain**words**

Report from the Trenches: Greening the Rental and Decor Sector

By Lori Hill

I try to live and work in the most environmentally friendly manner possible and encourage my clients to hold green events. After spending countless hours researching the subject, I found there is not much information circulating for event specialists in the rental/decor discipline who strive to be green.

By its nature, the rental industry is green. Not only are items used over and over again but



many other green practices are at work as well. In order to find out what is going on in the trenches, I contacted my rental and decor friends in the

Washington-Baltimore area to learn more about their green initiatives.

MULTIPURPOSE METHODS

When I'm bagging up my linen after an event, I make a point to pack the hangers they come on and return the hangers to the rental company.

Dulany Noble, of Gala Cloths by Dulany in Reisterstown, Md., is considering launching a rewards program for clients who return linen hangers. When it comes to put too much in the dumpster."

Instead, she holds an annual sale of leftover products, which are snatched up by church groups, the general public and

painters who use them for dropcloths. When making table linen, Gala Cloths uses leftover fabric to create fancy cocktail napkins and table runners, which are then provided as gifts to clients, for ISES and NACE meetings, and at silent auctions for charities.

SALVAGE AND RECLAIM THE USED

To get the most out of every bit of fabric, Barbara Grazzini of Washington-based Perfect Settings doesn't throw away linen. Staff members take home fabric samples to make pillows; other unused or damaged linen is put up for auction to churches or sold to smaller caterers. Grazzini embraces battery-operated candles instead of petroleum-based votives, and she repairs and restores any wood-based products, such as chairs, instead of discarding them.

Peter Grazzini of Perfect Settings notes that when the company moves to its new facility in Hyattsville, Md., it will use a water-reclamation system for washing items, where the final-rinse water will be deposited into a tank used for the next load. The system should save a whopping 5,000 to 7,000 gallons of water per week.

Over at Capital Decor in Beltsville, Md., Kelly Jenkins reports that instead of using petroleum-based plastic wrap or shrink wrap when packaging and transporting props, the company uses leftover decor fabric to make bags for storing props as well as

using old material when packing props.

GREENING YOUR ACT

What else can the rental and decor industry do? How about only offering beeswax or battery-operated votive candles instead of the traditional petroleum-based candles? Beeswax candles with cotton wicks burn cleaner and produce less soot. They are 100 percent natural and a renewable resource. Most candles are made with paraffin, a petroleum byproduct that is not only unnatural but also unhealthy because burning paraffin emits black soot and pollutes the air.

Another strategy for rental companies is to switch their fleet to hybrid vehicles or use biodiesel fuel if it is readily available in your area. Companies can also save on fuel and carbon dioxide emissions by ensuring their fleet has regular tuneups, properly inflated tires and a no-idling policy because 10 percent of all fuel is wasted on idling.



Name: Lori Hill
Company: Lori Hill Event Productions Inc.
Address: 15003 Pine Top Lane
Burtonsville, MD 20866 USA
Phone: 301/549-3249
E-mail: lori@lorihillevents.com



This little old light of mine: Environmentally friendly beeswax candles, like these votives and tea lights from the Beeswax Candle Co., burn cleaner, produce less soot and are 100 percent natural.



Strolling Menus Feed a Moving Crowd

By Denise Pugh Malo and Nicolas Nevares

Tired of standing in buffet lines at a party? Want to let your guests get the most time to network and have face-to-face interaction? Bored with the typical food setup at an event? If the answer is “yes” to any of these questions, we have the solution for you.

Strolling menus are an innovative and space-efficient way to feed your guests without the potential traffic snarls of a buffet line. Instead of stationary stations, turn individuals into moving buffets. Swap elaborately arranged vegetable platters for small skewers of roasted vegetables. Although simple, it is highly effective on-site. The service style increases labor cost but maximizes space, leaving more room for guests to network.

Hip venues that lack the best flow options—think narrow industrial sites with high ceilings—benefit from strolling menus. The design leaves greater space for decor and furniture.

Like the menu, attendees continue moving, which boosts interaction and networking. The Return on Investment reaches a higher level when attendees interact with a larger audience without the stress of lines. Knowing that the food will come to them will relieve the hassle of “finding” the food.

The menus are not necessarily the ordinary “silver tray with white-gloved waiters.” Serving food can be indicative of your creativity, from a roaming buffet of entertainers in dresses to slow-moving acrobats with food trays to stiltwalkers whose pant legs have pockets with food items sticking out for people to grab and go.

Be original when encountering typical elements such as food,

Don't miss ISES Eventworld® 2008

An Institute for Professional Development

ISES
Eventworld®
2008

August 21-23, 2008

Renaissance Vinoy Resort & Golf Club
St. Petersburg, Florida, USA



Name: Denise Pugh Malo
Company: BBC Destination Management
Address: 832 Baronne St., Second Floor
New Orleans, LA 70113 USA
Phone: 504/523-9700
E-mail: dmalo@bbcdmc.com



Name: Nicolas Nevares
Company: BBC Destination Management
Address: 832 Baronne St., Second Floor
New Orleans, LA 70113 USA
Phone: 504/212-2053
E-mail: nnevares@bbcdmc.com

which every event will have in some form. When you combine elements that attendees don't expect to see, you will ultimately keep attendees coming back for more year after year.



Entertaining hors d'oeuvre: Strolling menus are not limited to a waiter and tray—a roaming buffet dress is one way to serve with style.

New Year, Fresh Ideas

By Connie Riley, CSEP

Every new year brings new ideas, new plans and, most of all, new goals to incorporate into our strategic plan at ISES. The ISES International Board of Governors and I entered 2008 with this outlook. We discussed ideas about how to build on ISES' primary strength—supplying members with special event industry education and advancement. Six months ago I entered into my presidency, and it has been six months of innovative planning.

The ISES Board shares a common vision: We are dedicated to creative excellence and professionalism. We are 12 individuals who hold a single goal. As I write about the agenda for ISES in 2008, our plans reach far beyond that time frame. We operate on a five- to 10-year plan of work, striving to grow ISES' 41 current chapters and three chapters-in-formation.

So much good comes out of ISES membership. I've found great joy in meeting new colleagues during events and exchanging best business practices. These are unforgettable moments. Celebrating others' successes, as well as working together to solve challenges, allows for camaraderie and long-term relationships.

We're growing domestically and internationally and becoming better recognized in the industry. Event professionals are clamoring to learn more about ISES, understand our principles and abide by the ISES Code of Ethics. To capitalize on the interest, 2008 marks the third year ISES has worked on its branding initiative.

Several objectives fall under further defining the ISES brand. Above all, the focus is on

raising ISES' public profile as *the* definitive organization and resource for event professionals working to enhance and advance a career in the special event industry. We

are the single best source for quality event services that consistently deliver Return on Investment.

Along with branding, 2008 welcomes other initiatives:

ISES WEB SITE

The ISES Web site offers a user-friendly redesign that debuted in February. Take advantage of new, practical functions such as a searchable, downloadable membership directory. The move from a printed directory to an online version not only ensures the directory stays current but also saves paper.

EVENTWORLD 2008

Our industry is transitional. Every change and trend calls for us to step outside our comfort zone and produce original work. At an event like ISES Eventworld, individuals network in an intimate, yet international, setting. In 2007, 400-plus professionals gathered in Montreal. St. Petersburg, Fla., will host Eventworld 2008 Aug. 21-23 for a "green"-focused conference. ISES recognizes the importance of creating a conference that encourages sustainability and is gentler on the environment. This is part of a dedicated move by ISES to focus on resource-consumption awareness.

Green events are good for business and good for the earth. You will see these principles incorporated throughout the event; for instance, we'll offer an abbreviated advance program on recycled paper and an abridged



All smiles: Connie Riley, CSEP, and husband, Frank Sleeman, pose at Eventworld 2007.

pocket guide on-site. This also will be our second Eventworld conference with no hard-copy speaker handouts.

The planning committee is vetting speakers to once again assemble an institute for professional education. We're building on the success of Eventworld 2007 and focusing on fresh business strategies and unique selling propositions. Attendees can look forward to an event with hands-on learning, off-site educational sessions and a "Business Owner Executive Track."

COLLABORATIVE MISSION

Partnerships are the backbone of great organizations. We at ISES pride ourselves on our cooperative alliance with *Special Events* and *The Special Event*. With the mutual mission of increasing the quality of industry education, ISES members always have local, chapter

and regional level event-service education at their fingertips. We have many ideas in progress. I wish you the same success for your personal goals in the new year. Keep an eye out in future issues of the "ISES Pages" for more information!



Name: Connie Riley, CSEP
Company: T. Skorman Productions Inc.
Address: 5156 S. Orange Ave.
Orlando, FL 32809-3020 USA
Phone: 407/895-3000
E-mail: connie@tskorman.com



The woman who is president: Connie Riley, CSEP, accepts the gavel from past president Marty Janis, Atlantic Services Group, at ISES Eventworld 2007.

did you
know?

Beyond the Paper Resume: How to Staff Your Company with Rock-star Interns

By Cindy Y. Lo

As owners of a boutique event management firm based in Austin, Texas, we have to get creative when it comes to staffing. We want to tackle the larger events but can't always afford to fire full-time employees. Our answer has been using interns.

I'm the first to admit that the goal here is not to hire just any intern or to saturate a team with interns. Instead, it's pinning down rock-star interns. For employers, here's help with identifying the rock stars from the duds, and for interns-to-be, here's information on passing that crucial interview and rising to the top.

FOR EMPLOYERS: FINDING THE ROCK-STAR INTERN

1. Be clear about your expectations. Specify the work hours, if the position is paid or unpaid, the work load, and the type of work involved. Besides looking for someone that can answer all questions "correctly," we're also looking for someone with the right attitude and work ethic.

2. Meet them face to face. Our in-house process is to conduct a minimum of two interviews. The first is an initial phone screen, and the second is face to face. If time permits, interviewees will have two face-to-face interviews: one with the employee that he or she will report to and the final with me because I make all hiring decisions.

3. Ask them questions as if you're looking to hire them full-time. Don't ask interviewees standard questions such as, "What's your biggest weakness?" Instead, ask what his or her career aspirations are. Most importantly, ask why the individual wants to work for you versus the competition.

4. Have them do a trial run. If time permits, we generally ask

potential interns to work an event with us—unpaid—to test out their on-site problem-solving skills. This is a metric we can't seem to measure during an interview process alone.

5. Check their references. After the initial interview, call their references. Then ask yourself if he or she fits your company's culture and work ethic.

Once you've hired someone, thank your intern for working hard.

FOR INTERNS-TO-BE: STAND OUT IN THE INTERVIEW CYCLE

1. Mock interviews. If you have never done a formal interview, consider doing a mock interview with someone who can honestly critique your interview skills. Do you sound confident, or are you rambling?

2. Review your resume. I can't decide what bothers me more, poorly formatted resumes or resumes containing spelling errors. These mistakes make you look sloppy and, remember, first impressions do matter!

3. Follow up. We all work in a fast-paced environment, with the Internet fueling how quickly we expect people to respond. E-mails and voice-mails can go into a black hole by accident. Follow up if you don't hear back from a prospect in a timely manner after you've interviewed.



Name: Cindy Y. Lo
Company: Red Velvet Events
Address: 5926 Balcones Drive, Suite 290
Austin, TX 78731 USA
Phone: 512/380-9688
E-mail: cindy@redvelvetevents.com

the credits

ISES EDITORIAL TEAM AND STAFF

Ronnie Jayne
Volunteer Editor
A Song For You Productions
ronniejayn@aol.com

Romaine Pereira
Volunteer Editor
International Corporate Events
Pty Ltd.
romaine@cci-ice.com.au

Jamie Devins
Membership Services Coordinator
jdevins@smithbucklin.com

Kevin Hacke
Executive Director
khacke@smithbucklin.com

Kristin Prine
Operations Manager
kprine@smithbucklin.com

Lauren Rini
Education Coordinator
lrini@smithbucklin.com

Jenny Schooley
Editor/Coordinator
jschooley@smithbucklin.com

ISES
INTERNATIONAL
SPECIAL EVENTS SOCIETY

401 N. Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611 USA

T: 800.688.4737
T: 312.321.6853
F: 312.673.6953
E: info@ises.com
W: www.ises.com

