

# At ACOM's Annual Conference, Attendees Have the Last Laugh

**T**HIS IS THE TENTH year the Association for Convention Operations Management (ACOM) has co-located its annual conference with PCMA's Annual Meeting. The timing of ACOM's conference was geared to provide convention service

managers an opportunity to learn and enjoy enhanced networking opportunities with meeting planning professionals.

Ever since ACOM and PCMA began collaborating conference efforts in the mid 1990s, professionals in the hospitality industry have benefited from both associations by establishing

new business relationships, developing innovative ideas, sharing expertise, and implementing joint ventures. Not only has it afforded ACOM and the service community a higher profile, it has allowed both groups to work together to tackle industry challenges they have in com-

mon. ACOM's 19th Annual Conference, Jan. 5-7 turned out to be among the organization's most successful and well-attended events in its history.

ACOM members and guests ended their 19th Annual Conference on Jan. 7 with a smile on their faces with the first-ever ACOM Comedy Pub sponsored by Tourism Toronto. The event wrapped up the conference's final day with an evening of refreshments and lots of laughs. Award-winning comedian, Simon B. Cotter, named Canada's "Comedian of the Year," kept the audience entertained. Cotter's popularity is due in part to the fact that he doesn't go for the cheap laugh based on vulgarity, race, or gender. Instead, he relies on his storytelling gifts, entertaining audiences with his razor-sharp wit and unique perception of life's many absurdities.

While a good time was had by all, more than jokes and punch lines were on the agenda at this event. The ACOM Comedy Pub provided the venue for ACOM members to bring along their meeting planner clients who were arriving in Toronto for PCMA's Annual Meeting. Convention service managers (CSMs) from hotels, resorts, convention centers, and convention and visitors bureaus relaxed and networked with meeting planners while experiencing one of Canada's biggest exports — comedy.

"We think this was a great opportunity for our members to show their clients some appreciation," said ACOM Executive Director Lynn McCullough. "It's rare that you get to network in this type of laid-back setting and we felt it would boost the camaraderie between the two professional worlds." ■

## PCMA's 51st Annual Meeting

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