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**CONTACT:** Kaitlin Friedmann  
Creative Marketing Alliance  
(609) 799-6000 ext. 21  
[kfriedmann@cmasolutions.com](mailto:kfriedmann@cmasolutions.com)

**MANAGING HOUSING NUMBERS, THIRD PARTY PLANNERS AND NEW PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL HIGHLIGHT PANEL DISCUSSIONS AT ACOM'S 19<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE IN TORONTO, CANADA**

*Three-day Conference provides Networking and Optional Excursions for ACOM Membership*

**PRINCETON JUNCTION, NJ – January 29, 2007** — January 7, 2007, marked the end of the first three-day annual conference hosted by the Association for Convention Operations Management (ACOM) that was held outside the United States. The 19<sup>th</sup> Annual ACOM Conference in Toronto, ON, Canada included an inspiring keynote speaker, informative panel discussions, networking opportunities and optional excursions for its members.

ACOM members were treated to a one-of-a-kind opening reception at the Rogers Centre's *Windows* restaurant, located inside the world-renowned sports complex. The three-tiered venue offered an open-air view of the playing field where the first NCAA International Bowl football game between the Western Michigan Broncos and the Cincinnati Bearcats would take place the following day. Terry Evanshen, keynote speaker and member of the Canadian Football Hall of Fame, also opened the conference with an inspirational video and speech expressing his recovery from a devastating accident that left him in a coma, erasing his memory.

Over the three day conference, members learned from a series of panel discussions that included tips on creating green or ecologically sensitive meetings. ACOM showed its support for the green movement by supplying binders made of 100% recycled materials. In addition, ACOM provided a panel discussion on managing housing to stay in front of attrition issues. Other sessions included a panel of meeting planners that detailed a litany of ideas and suggestions to best advance preparations for an organization's upcoming meeting. A session was also held by

ACOM panelists representing both large and small CVBs on how the new and expanding use of e-promotional material can assist the planner in giving their members more and varied information on the city in which their next meeting will take place.

At the close of the conference, ACOM, in conjunction with *Successful Meetings* magazine, announced its CSM of the Year Award Winners. The award for Hotel CSM of the Year was presented to David Raymond, CMP, Senior Convention Services Manager of The Westin Charlotte; the Convention Center CSM of the Year was presented to Ed Pilecki, Client Services Manager of Shaw Conference Centre; and CVB CSM of the Year was presented to Sandra Daudlin, CMP, Manager, Client Services of Tourism Toronto.

ACOM also announced their own annual award winners. Robert Desautels, CMP, Indianapolis Convention & Visitors Association was awarded ACOM's President's Award; David Dvorak, CMP, Starwood Hotels Worldwide was awarded Member of the Year; Beth Stehley, Greater Boston CVB was awarded with Executive Excellence Award; and Pamela Troop, CMP, ASAE & The Center for Association Leadership was awarded Meeting Professional of the Year.

On the final day of the convention, ACOM members were encouraged to bring their meeting planner clients, arriving in Toronto for PCMA's Annual Conference, to the first-ever Comedy Pub for an afternoon of laughter and entertainment by award winning comedian, Simon B. Cotter. "Canada's Comedian of Year" was a huge hit with his storytelling and razor sharp wit, while ACOM convention service managers and PCMA meeting planners took advantage of valuable networking time.

For more information about ACOM and the 2008 Annual Conference, contact Lynn McCullough at (609) 799-3712 or email [LMccullough@acomonline.org](mailto:LMccullough@acomonline.org). Conference registration will begin in early September and details will be continually updated on the ACOM website, [www.acomonline.org](http://www.acomonline.org).

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#### **About ACOM**

The Association for Convention Operations Management (ACOM) was founded and incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 1988 by William H. Just, CAE, CMP and is dedicated to advancing the practice of convention services management in the meetings industry, and to preparing Convention Service Management professionals for their critical role in the growth and success of their organizations. ACOM members hold many positions in convention and visitor bureaus, convention centers, conference centers, hotels and resorts including: convention service managers, housing managers, operations managers, event service coordinators, directors of convention/trade shows, catering managers and directors, facility managers, attraction/entertainment facilities, audio visual companies and decorator management companies. For more information, please visit [www.acomonline.org](http://www.acomonline.org).