

## NEWS

## Association Update

By Melissa Mercer

IAEE Services, Inc., the for-profit subsidiary of the **International Association of Exhibitions and Events** (IAEE), has partnered with IndustryConnect to provide its members - especially large event show organizers - with a new option for an online community experience for their own events and throughout the year. "We are pleased to partner with IndustryConnect to promote the value to our members of having a focused e-Media strategy for their events," said Cathy Braden, CAE, CMP, executive director of IAEE Services. "IndustryConnect is very pleased to partner with IAEE to provide their members with the online technology and specialized staff necessary to execute an effective and profitable e-Media strategy," said Dave Elzlig, CEO of IndustryConnect. "Now more than ever, trade show managers need to launch new e-newsletter and web site services to engage their audience online, promote and add value to their events and discover significant new revenue channels." As part of the partnership, IAEE members receive discounted pricing or adjusted revenue share formulas. For more information, visit [http://www.iaee.com/about\\_iaee/iaee\\_services\\_partners](http://www.iaee.com/about_iaee/iaee_services_partners).

**The Association for Convention Operations Management (ACOM)** will hold its Annual Conference, Jan. 9-11, 2009 at the Westin Canal Place in New Orleans, La. ACOM's annual conference will be held in conjunction with Professional Convention Management Association's (PCMA) Annual Meeting, scheduled for Jan. 11-14, 2009.

Both the PCMA and ACOM Annual Conferences will include educational sessions geared toward building and improving strategies to enhance a meeting's success, such as

- Engaging Your Community;
- Learning about ADA Compliance;
- Overcoming Adversity: Disaster Planning;
- Technology Trends Affecting the Meetings and Events Industry;
- Green Meetings;
- Marketing and Branding Your Destination at The Hospitality Frontline.

The event will also offer attendees Certified Meeting Planner (CMP) training, a two-part program scheduled for Jan. 9 and 10 that is designed to help professionals learn how to achieve the points needed for the application, as well as learn methods of preparation for the exam.

"We are very excited because we've got a great program and we feel like New Orleans has always been a great draw for ACOM," said Tina Stark, president of ACOM and director of housing and registration sales for The Housing Connection, in an interview with USAE. "We've never held our annual conference there but we've held various summer conferences and we're hoping for high numbers despite the state of economy."

The **AMC Institute** has announced

that Sue Pine, former executive vice president of AMC Institute, has been recognized by the AMC Section Council of the American Society of Association Executives & The Center for Association Leadership (ASAE & The Center) as the first recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award. Pine, who retired in September after serving for 30 years in the association community, helped streamline programming efforts and grow awareness of the AMC management model. As a result of her efforts, both industry organizations now work together to provide members with resources and support to more efficiently manage



Sue Pine

associations and not-for-profits.

"We are privileged to have worked closely with Sue throughout the years," said Bob McLean, chairman of the ASAE AMC Section Council, who established the award. "Her distinguished career and tremendous leadership is responsible for advancing the association industry. Sue's record-breaking success in recruiting new AMC Institute members is a testament to her commitment to exceed expectations and expand the association community."

Pine led AMC Institute to join forces with ASAE & The Center to establish a Single Accreditation Agreement. Because of Sue's hard work, AMC Institute—with the support of ASAE—now administers the sole AMC accreditation program.

Pine began her career in 1975 as a clerk in the accounting department at Fernley & Fernley, an association management company. She worked her way up to executive vice president of the firm in 1998 before joining AMC Institute in 2005.

"I decided to retire in order to take some time for myself and my family," said Pine. "I look forward to spending more time with my family, but will miss working alongside my colleagues and interacting with AMC Institute members. AMC has grown to become my second family."

The **George Fern Company**, a convention and exhibition service contractor, has announced the opening of an office in San Antonio, TX. A major convention destination, San Antonio's location—just 70 miles from the state capital of Austin—will open the door for the company to service

the many state associations as well as other clients. The new office opened in April and has produced several successful events to date.

For more information about the George Fern Company, please visit the company's Web site at [www.georgefern.com](http://www.georgefern.com).

The **Air Transport Association of America** (ATA), has issued the following statement in response to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) issuance of the Secure Flight Final Rule.

"We welcome the announcement by Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and TSA Administrator Kip Hawley regarding the Secure Flight Final Rule. Based on many months of work by the administration and the airline industry in moving Secure Flight to this point, we soon should be in a position to begin actual implementation," said James C. May, president and CEO of ATA. "While we expect there will be details in the rule that need attention and clarification once the Final Rule is published and available for review, the airline industry is committed to working through this process as efficiently and cooperatively as possible. The common goals that we all share continue to be greater levels of seamless security combined with greater customer convenience."

**Amtrak** has launched a new website—[www.Amtrak.com](http://www.Amtrak.com)—that offers passengers more choices and flexibility when making travel plans online. Powered by iSeatz, visitors to Amtrak.com are able to book more than just rail tickets, including lodging, rental cars, entertainment and other amenities, via a single shopping cart and checkout process. To further enhance the overall travel booking experience, the site features iSeatz OneView, a tool that synchronizes a passenger's multiple reservations and cancellations in real-time and enables passengers to manage all of the components of their trip, both on- and offline.

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"At Amtrak, we understand that there are a myriad of transportation

and travel options available online," said Kathleen Gordon, senior director, E-commerce. "With the use of iSeatz's technology, we can now offer travelers another reason to visit Amtrak.com with thousands of travel options to choose from."

As the American economy struggles, international interest in visiting the United States is highlighting a potential economic boon, according to the **Travel Industry Association** (TIA). The group believes that a key indicator of this interest is that TIA's newly launched travel and tourism Web site—[DiscoverAmerica.com](http://DiscoverAmerica.com)—logged nearly one million minutes of research by travelers worldwide and more than 1.1 million page views in its first three months of operation.

"Welcoming more international visitors - who spend as much as \$4,000 per traveler, per visit - is critical to strengthening the American economy," said Roger J. Dow, president and CEO of TIA. "DiscoverAmerica.com's early success points to its usefulness and demonstrates that there is an appetite for visiting the United States. It's time for our country to take advantage of this opportunity."

The website—actually six sites tailored for English- and French-speaking Canada, Mexico, the U.K., Japan and Germany—includes content on dozens of popular U.S. cities, all 50 states and five U.S. territories, attractions, activities and restaurants, and booking options.

DiscoverAmerica.com's Japanese-language site has garnered the highest use (36 percent), followed by the German site (21 percent), the Canadian sites (16 percent), the U.K. site (14 percent) and the Mexican site (13 percent).

DiscoverAmerica.com was launched in target countries between May and July 2008 following its development as a result of a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Travel Industry Association. Launch markets are the five nations that generate roughly 75 percent of all inbound travel to the United States.

The **Exhibit Designers and Producers Association** (EDPA) and the Exhibit Designers and Producers Association Foundation (EDPAF) have announced a new headquarters team, naming Jeff Provost, former membership services manager at the Event Marketing Institute, as executive director. EDPA also named Kimberly Wilson as member services coordinator, and Andrea Quirk as sales and development associate. MaryBeth Gieser will continue serving as EDPA president.

"I'm honored to be EDPA's new executive director," said Provost, according to *Exhibitors Daily*. "I've worked with many nonprofit organizations before, but never have I seen the kind of dedication on the board level that I've witnessed here over the last few weeks. Their energy and desire for new growth and rededication to EDPA's core values is more than impressive. I'm thrilled to be part of the administrative team here at EDPA's new headquarters helping to implement that vision."