

Hotel Business Review

Best practices, insights & trends

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How Unique is Your Venue?

By Lynn McCullough, Executive Director, ACOM



Ms. Lynn McCullough

Whether your guests are in town for a convention, an educational workshop or an awards event – professionals in the hospitality industry have a chance to make a lasting impression on a large group of people all at once with these special events. Guests and meeting planners respond well when the venue's staff pays extra attention to detail and goes above and beyond the call of duty to ensure repeat business.

Members from the Association for Conventions Operations Management (ACOM) shared with us some ways that they have experienced something special when facilitating conventions and meetings over the years. There are many ways that professionals in the hospitality industry can give their customers something extra that makes the experience personalized. A great way to make the venue stand out is to provide complimentary food or amenities that incorporate the regional flavor and culture.

ACOM's affiliates have shared with us their favorite giveaways and most popular hotel destinations. The Hotel Hershey in Hershey, Pennsylvania is always a crowd-pleaser because of its imaginative incorporation of chocolate in everything from cocoa scented shampoo to an abundance of Hershey Kisses around the hotel. Another hotel offering a sample of the local "flavor" is the Cliff House Resort in Ogunquit, Maine; their wild blueberry facials are popular with guests looking to relax and unwind Maine-style.

Doubletree, part of the Hilton Hotel chain, and The Eden Roc Resort in Miami both use sweet giveaways to make their guests feel welcome. Doubletree, in partnership with The Christie Cookie, provides a free warm chocolate chip cookie to each guest upon check-in. The Eden Roc Resort provides a similar treat by tapping into the classic 50's nostalgia by providing well-known

candies from that era to guests with turndown service. When it comes to providing comfort, maybe one can conclude that the best way to a guest's heart is through their stomachs. However, what matters most is the way the hotel staff shows pride in their regional culture and conveys the spirit of the city to their guests.

In order to come up with ways that hotels should take advantage of the uniqueness of their city, hotels should partner more with their local CVB's in order to brainstorm local experiences to prospective planner clients. Together, they can find budgeted ways to deliver entertainment both on-site and off-site.

Regardless of the program or career-related benefits of these events, planners know that attendance is at its highest when professionals have the opportunity to travel to an interesting destination offering a truly unique experience. Find out more from my article "[Selling Your Venue's Uniqueness](#)" in this week's *Hotel Business Review*.

Sincerely,

Lynn McCullough

Executive Director

Association for Convention Operations Management

609-799-3712

lmccullough@cmasolutions.com