Top Five Trends in Event Planning

By CAROLINE GIBSON

The expectations of an event, meeting or conference are ever evolving with technology and shifts in our cultural. The newest trends are all aimed at the individual and not overtly showcasing the brand or company. Rather the message is all hidden in content and the memories of a feel good experience.

PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Whether your event is social or corporate, your guests expect to get something out of it. Not just the information or witnessing a ceremony but to learn something new, be changed or enlightened in some way. Content, speakers, entertainment, and a special class can all fulfill this requirement. How about a break out meeting where your team has the choice to make their own salsa or take a yoga class?

“EXPERIENCE” AREAS

For many, their lives are chronicled through social media posts. How will they remember themselves at your event and will they share it? Try creating a photo set, a fun recreational room, and/or wellness activity. Event venues are all working on ways to make a unique experience available from transforming a loading dock into an “Under the Sea” cave for break out sessions to having a chef host a 10 minute tutorial.

CUSTOMIZED PERSONALIZATION

This is a way to give your guests as little or as much control as you want with your event. It may be something as simple as allowing your staff to choose one of the meeting topics or break-out sessions. Utilize apps that allow your guests to request songs and other interactive experiences in real time. You can even create an AI personality like Siri to interact with your guests and become the star of your show.

GOING GREEN

Vegan, organic and “social responsibility” are all concepts that started as an elite convenience and have now become mainstream expectations. Your menus need to have vegan options. The more socially responsible one can be at your event or meeting the better your organization will be valued. Showcase a puppy or two from the shelter the event raised money for. Use as many recycled products as possible. The list can go on and on.

LIVE STREAM IN

According to LiveStream.com, 67% of the people who watched a live streamed event, attended the following year. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are great platforms to share your event with the world. You can choose to showcase the entire event or just a much anticipated moment.

Online shopping, working from home etc. leave us with a longing for human interaction. Events and their planning are starting to play a greater role in our lives that is no longer frivolity but necessity. Events and conferences are more important than ever and that is a trend that is not going away.

Caroline Gibson is Executive Director at the Simi Valley Chamber Tourism Alliance. For more information, visit simichamber.org
From brainstorm spaces to breathtaking views, Ventura County Coast offers a most memorable meeting location.

Inspire your team by hosting an off-site meeting set in natural beauty and year-round pleasant weather. The region has 200,000 square feet of conference space and meeting rooms to choose from, and more than 5,000 guest rooms in 60 hotels and inns.

Ventura County Coast is a string of four communities located off Highway 101 between Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. Along with the amenities it offers to businesses, Ventura County Coast contains 22 miles of beaches, historic downtowns, a range of outdoor activities, award-winning wineries and farm-to-table restaurants.

Here, business retreats are a unique combination of professional development and unforgettable team building. The meeting rooms accommodate groups from 10 to 1,000. Whether you’re looking for the salty breeze of a beachfront location or a full-service hotel conference center, you’ll find accommodations that match your team’s needs. Plus, lodging is affordable and welcoming to large groups.

To keep inspiration sustained, Ventura County Coast has a culinary experience all its own, created from an abundance of fresh and local ingredients. The region’s artisan chefs, locally grown produce, fresh seafood and rich farming heritage make the Ventura County Coast dining scene uniquely delicious. Be sure to try a local craft brew at the end of a hard day’s work.

In your team’s down time, complete the experience with leisure activities from the four unique but complementary cities that make up Ventura County Coast.

CAMARILLO

In Camarillo, you’ll find the latest fashions at one of the nation’s best Premium Outlets, with brands like Banana Republic, Coach, Michael Kors, Polo Ralph Lauren, Tory Burch, Tommy Hilfiger and much more. Minutes down the road, visitors can savor the sights and smells of a delicious agricultural tradition and rediscover how sweet and inspiring fresh-picked fruits can taste.

For golf enthusiasts, Camarillo is a dream destination with incredible year-round weather and two pristine public golf courses. Those who simply want to relax and rejuvenate can enjoy indulgent spas, captivating art galleries and an enchanting old-town brimming with history.

VENTURA

Ventura synthesizes surf culture, historic buildings and a bustling downtown scene in a way that makes visitors feel at home and on an adventure at the same time. Visitors to Ventura enjoy outdoor adventures, a lively arts scene and an oceanside proximity that makes it a chef’s paradise.

Get the whole team together for beach activities in the style of a true Californian getaway. Surfers, kiteboarders and water enthusiasts will enjoy winter swells and summer whitecaps at Ventura’s beaches. And for those who prefer to enjoy the surf culture from a distance, the oceanside Ventura Promenade is a festive place to watch the action, take a stroll or ride bikes.

OXNARD

In the casual seaside city of Oxnard, you’ll find an active boating harbor, the nation’s largest kosher winery, the world-class Mullin Automotive Museum and a historic downtown bursting with multicultural flavors and architectural treasures. You’ll quickly discover why a tasty array of authentic Mexican cuisine and new eateries are putting Oxnard on the culinary map. Also in downtown Oxnard, Heritage Square is an amazing collection of magnificently restored homes and beautifully landscaped gardens.

Oxnard’s serene harbor provides access to Channel Islands National Park. The natural and cultural resources of its five different islands have been steadfastly preserved here. This national park is known as “America’s Galapagos,” and is just a short boat trip away for a one-of-a-kind team-building excursion.

PORT HUENEME

Stroll wide sandy beaches alongside a history-rich Naval Construction Battalion Center in Port Hueneme, a seaside community located between Oxnard and Ventura. Its original Chumash Indian name, Wenemu, means “resting place.” And it doesn’t take much time at the fifty-acre Hueneme Beach Park to discover that this city is a place for refreshing the mind and soul. Port Hueneme Beach Park’s expansive sandy beaches, south-facing surfing waves, volleyball courts, and walkable beachside promenade promise satisfaction for every kind of beachgoer—sunbathers and surfers alike.

BRING YOUR TEAM TO A PLACE OF INSPIRATION

Whatever your needs are, Ventura County Coast is big enough to meet them and it’s closer than you think. Invite inspiration into your workplace, and plan your most memorable meeting at venturacountycoast.com.
Make your next business event a success in Simi Valley.

We have large indoor and outdoor venues that are great for all types of events. If you require a stage or want to deliver a multimedia experience, Simi Valley offers it all and is ready to welcome your next meeting or business event.

- Unique venues with more than 125,000 square feet of flexible meeting space.
- More than 670 comfortable guest rooms.
- Gorgeous Southern California climate year-round.
- Convenient to Los Angeles International Airport, Van Nuys Airport, and Bob Hope Airport.
- Plenty of dining options, things to do, golf courses, and outdoor activities in Simi Valley.
- Quick access to the best attractions in Los Angeles and Southern California.
Convention Industry Council Rebrands

The Convention Industry Council earlier this year announced that it is now the Events Industry Council, and revealed a new logo to correspond with its name change. As a leader in the business of events, the Events Industry Council represents a collaborative industry of innovators and thought leaders who drive the profession forward. After a rigorous process to understand the needs of all organizations represented, the Events Industry Council recognized the value and relevance it provides to its members is being the global champion for event professionals and event industry excellence.

“As the leading organization representing the wide variety of professions and professionals in the events industry, the Board of Directors recognized a need to refresh and refine our brand to better serve our members and members’ constituents,” shared Susan Robertson, CAE, Events Industry Council Chair. “Guided by a highly-skilled Brand Task Force, the process has been incredibly thorough. We reached out to leaders and influencers on a global level to ensure everyone was aligned with the direction of the Council.”

The Events Industry Council will continue to power the Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) program, driving and advancing the education, certification and professionalism of the industry. Event professionals with the CMP designation represent the best and the brightest throughout the world, and will continue to proudly display their accomplishment of the CMP milestone.

“Our industry is an exciting one, and it’s an honor to represent so many strong organizations and professionals with the CMP designation,” states Karen Kotowski, CAE, CMP, President and CEO, Events Industry Council. “The new look of our CMP logo represents the fresh ideas and quality that each Certified Meeting Professional brings to his/her employer and clients. Our CMP designation is powered by the Events Industry Council, and we are proud to have that clearly displayed in the new look.”

The brand also includes signature programs — Sustainability, Industry Insights, Knowledge, and Leadership — represent the key initiatives, assets, services and products for the Events Industry Council. Learn more at eventscouncil.org.

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New Horizons: More Than Just a Place to Meet

The New Horizons Conference Center Banquet Hall, affectionately known throughout the community as Sam’s Café, is an 11,000-square-foot facility ready for your next business or social event. Along with video and sound capabilities, it boasts a full professional kitchen, facilities for up to 250 guests, Wi-Fi, ample complimentary parking, and affordability. It is the perfect location for wedding receptions, quinceañeras, holiday parties, service club and business meetings. Sam’s Café is also the home of New Horizons Cookies. These famous treats can be purchased at Pavilions at 6334 Platt Avenue in West Hills and at 1110 W. Alameda Avenue in Burbank. They can also be bought online by visiting New Horizons’ website at www.newhorizons-sfv.org. These cookies can be shipped nationwide as corporate gifts, and shared at special events.

More than a Venue
Since 1954, New Horizons has been fulfilling the dreams of thousands of individuals with special needs, and providing business services to hundreds of local and national businesses. As a long-standing member of the San Fernando Valley business community, the organization provides services including, but not limited to: Employment Services, Travel Training, Sponsored by METRO, Banquet Hall Rentals, Residential Services and Mobile and On-Site Day Programs which extend into the Greater Los Angeles Area. The campus is located at 15725 Parthenia Street in North Hills. Everyone is invited to tour the agency and book a special event, giving New Horizons the opportunity to partner with you on behalf of the more than 1,800 individuals the organization serves each year. Learn more about the programs of New Horizons by visiting www.newhorizons-sfv.org.