Welcome to the Year End edition of ‘sitelines’ your Site Canada Newsletter

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‘sitelines’ is published six times a year to keep you informed of what’s happening in Canada and around the World, what’s new, upcoming events, and linkages to members and other Site Global Chapters.

published December 19, 2011

President’s Message
Reflections on 2011

Site Canada continues to be a very busy Chapter. At the outset of 2011, I had three goals in mind:

• Member ROI
• Young Leaders
• Corporate Social Responsibility

As I think about these three items, I realize that once achieved they are not goals you mark as complete and move on to the next task. These were more guiding principles that were used as a measure of what we were doing.

In reviewing the Chapter activities, I feel that Site Canada has gone a long way to providing members with a stimulating, educational and productive year.

As has been the case for the past few years, we started with a board retreat. It is here that the activities for the coming year are developed. We had a fantastic session and, again with the help of Doug Bolger of L(earn) we were off with renewed energy and plans.

The Chapter Meetings were a tremendous success this year. Under the leadership of Pam Graham, this portfolio continued to break attendance records for Site. Pam embraced the notion of motivational events and tried to inject something unique, or something not normally attainable into these events. A couple that spring to mind:

September Chapter Meeting: Inside the Inside Scoop with Chad Kaydo, Editor in Chief of Biz Bash Magazine

March Chapter Meeting: Puttin’ on the Ritz, a unique spin on the site inspection.

The Triple Crown of Site Canada events is the Summer Social, Site Canada Golf Tournament and the Education Day. I am thrilled to say that each of these events was a tremendous success again this year.

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The Summer Social was held at the Islington Golf Club and was a break from the traditional format of a sit down dinner. The evening proved to be a tremendous success with over $5,000.00 being raised for Childhood Cancer Canada. In addition to the money raised for this worthy charitable cause, and with the generous donation provided by Westin West Coast, we were also able to raise over $1,300 to support the community of Slave Lake, Alberta which suffered a devastating forest fire that destroyed most of the town. We were particularly thrilled to do this, as Slave Lake was the childhood home of one of our own members.

The Site Canada Golf Tournament continues to be the highlight of the season. A "Sold Out" event again this year, the tournament delivers. The Golf Committee pays close attention throughout the planning process to deliver the highest level of ROI to everyone involved, coupling a tight ratio between planners and supplier partners with the most effective use of time on the course. The goal is to ensure a minimum of a 1:1 ratio of planners to suppliers each year. This year we are pleased to report another successful breakdown. The tournament hosted 52% buyer/planners; 3% media and 45% supplier partners.

Education Day was held a little off the beaten track. If you call the Don Valley Parkway the beaten track. Evergreen Brickworks was the venue this year and what an experience. We were pleased to welcome Mary MacGregor, President Site Global to this event. Mary provided a global overview at the outset of the day and then facilitated an engaging panel discussion later on. Based on the reviews, this day was a tremendous success.

Student Scholarships have been a part of Site Canada for the past few years. This year we received a number of submissions and new for this year, submissions came from across the country. We were thrilled to recognize the two scholarship award winners at Education Day, as attendance was part of the scholarship. Congratulations to Tyler Lovenuk of Peterborough and Jaleh Fotoohi of Vancouver. Part of their award includes membership in Site for 2012. I look forward to seeing these two young people at our events next year.

Scholarships are also awarded to our members. The scholarship is for attendance at the International Conference. This past October, International Conference was held in Las Vegas, and Site Canada was well represented. In addition to the 4 scholarship winners, Site Canada had many other members in attendance, in fact, coming second only to Site Southern California in attendance numbers. We are pleased to offer scholarships to the International Conference as this is a tremendous opportunity to network on an international level, leading to long term business relationships. This year, Site Canada was recognized for the Award of Excellence in Membership. This is the second year in a row for this award. This award is due in large part to the great work of Liz Akey and her membership committee, but also the other volunteers in the Site Canada Chapter. It is the combined effort that kept the membership numbers up. Thanks to all.

As I mentioned earlier, Young Leaders were a focus this year. Although, Young Leaders have been a part of the international Site organization, we never really had much focus here in Canada. Again, with the tireless efforts of Liz Akey, and former Site Canada President, Rachael Streek-Buma, the Young Leader program has taken off in leaps and bounds in Canada. We have a core of talented young, professionals who now meet on a regular basis, to participate in Site activities and discuss issues of importance to them. Site Canada is at the forefront internationally, offering a reduced membership rate to Young Leaders. This is a tiered program that exchanges reduced membership rates for active participation in the chapter. I am thrilled that this program is being so well received and I look forward to working with these individuals in the coming years.

The only event left this year, and I am sure it will have taken place by press time, is the Holiday Social. I look forward to welcoming everyone to a relaxing evening of networking and reflection, while raising a few more, much needed dollars for Childhood Cancer Canada.

I would like to close by saying thank you. Thank you to the 2011 Board of Directors, who all demonstrate the values and vision of Site Canada. Thank you to the committee members who put in countless hours to deliver the many activities of Site Canada. Thank you to our many sponsors, without whom, many things just could not happen. And thank you to the Site Canada members for your enthusiasm and participation in chapter events.

I send you all my best greetings for a wonderful holiday season.

Joe Orecchio, President Site Canada

Welcome New Site Canada Members

A very warm welcome to our newest Site members: Karen Varik, Fairmont Canada Western Mountain Region

The 2011 Site Global conference was held at the Bellagio Hotel in Las Vegas, a great way to kick off the incentive experience. The attendees’ spirits ranged from ‘fresh off the plane energized and raring to go to too many days on the IMEX show floor to see straight’. The program content thread was “Dialogue not Monologue”, encouraging collaborative and interactive sessions. In my opinion, it worked well for some sessions and poorly for other sessions. The outdoor opening event at the Mandalay Bay Beach was the perfect way to clear the mind and renew relationships in the fresh air.

There were two sessions that stand out from the brief program: “The New Era of Business” and “Business Relationships of Tomorrow”. Both sessions consisted of senior level executives speaking as honestly to the audience as if we were in their own staff meetings. The Presidents of Carlson Marketing’s Business Loyalty, BCD Meetings and Incentives, Maritz Travel Company; and MCI Group shared their successes, their short term vision and their long term visions showed confidence in a different but strong future.

The Emerging Markets specialists from India, China and Brazil were fascinating, as they shared with us what their outbound incentive travelers are looking for in an incentive program. These huge markets are on our doorstep, ever growing, and the future of our market.

The meals and networking event venues were carefully chosen to introduce us to the some of the many wonderful offerings in Las Vegas. In my opinion, the most impactful was the Crystal Awards lunch at the Aria. The hotel showcased its property with a long walk through some of its lobbies and function space. The simple and elegant entertainment by MASS (Music, Architecture, Sound, Sculpture) took our breath away. I can’t wait to return to Las Vegas to hire this group.

For the Site Canada chapter, winning the Membership Award was a proud moment. Liz Akey has raised the bar for all chapters to follow. It appears that we missed the overall Chapter of the Year Award by the smallest of margins. We were sooooooooooo close!

The final session was for Chapter Leadership designed for existing and incoming chapter board members. I wish this session had been offered before the conference, instead of the end of the conference when people were tired of sitting – and had yet to soak in a minute of desert sun. If it had been held at the beginning, our new found best friends would have been more interactive throughout the conference. I was hoping to hear best practices from my counterparts in other chapters, but there were very few other Education or Chapter Meeting portfolios in attendance. We were introduced to the very helpful Site Global staff and some of the chapter mechanics were described to us. There is no doubt that the Canada chapter is a leader. Our newest venture in partnering with the Site Florida Chapter is seen as an excellent model.

I think that there is a huge gap between the Site Global Board of Directors and the chapters. It will be one of my goals when I am Chapter president to keep connected with the Site Global Board – to listen and also to be heard.

In my opinion, in summary, I think some of the sessions were well developed, and many were not. The advance information was minimal and incomplete. The content for many of the sessions was old and tired. There was only 1.5 days of content, which is just too little for all the travel that is required. The Leadership Session was also weak and conveyed minimal information.

The best sessions are presentations from the leaders in the industry, and the industry awards which showcase the superior work that our members are capable of. We need to provide visionary, future focused programs and learn about our colleagues’ successes to be more effective in our own jobs.

Pam Graham, DMCP, President, Congress Canada

Upcoming Events...

Wednesday, February 22, AGM & Volunteer Reception
Wednesday, March 21, Chapter Meeting
April - TBD, Montreal or Vancouver Event
Tuesday, April 17, Chapter Event - Site Global 40th Anniversary
Wednesday, May 16, Chapter Meeting
Tuesday, June 12, Site Canada Summer Social Event – Ignite Business Expo
Monday, August 20, Golf Tournament
September 14-17, 2012 Site International Conference - Beijing
Wednesday, September 26, Chapter Meeting
Wednesday, November 14 Education Day
Wednesday, December 12, Holiday Social
Site Education Day at Evergreen Brickworks

Site Canada's annual educational event was another resounding success with over 100 industry buyers and suppliers in attendance. Fun, informative and interactive sessions included Innovation, Creativity vs Efficiency and Balance; Procurement - Friend or Foe?; Presentations – It's NOT a dying art form; Communication Between the Generations – Young Leader's Rule; Panel Debate – Suppliers took the stage to tell you their side of the story.

Sincerest thanks to all our Education Day sponsors for making the event possible... JPdL; Speakers Spotlight; EMA Marketing–Regent Palm, Turks & Caicos Tourist Board, The Wickaninnish Inn; AVCanada, Tourisme Quebec, Stratus, The Image Commission, Meetings Niagara-on-the-Lake, and the Ignite Business Event Expo (iBE).

Richard Elliott

Communication Between Generations

The great generational divide is a hot topic in just about every industry today. For the first time in history there are four distinct generations of people in the workforce, each with very different upbringings that have shaped their life and work mentalities. At the Site Canada Education Day in November, industry veterans and Young Leaders were given the opportunity to share their perspectives with each other on how this divide impacts our industry.

As the YL at my table, I was fortunate to collaborate with a fantastic group of industry experts from a few generations including Tracey Brenneman from Allied PRA, Mayte Albaladejo from Visit Orlando, Vlad Haltigin from PDM(i) and Walter Galvao from Décor With Grandeur. The question posed to us focused on how important it is to consider generational differences when sourcing gifts and/or prizes for incentive programs. We discovered in our discussion, perhaps not surprisingly, that regardless of age, our tastes are very similar. We agreed that everyone enjoys products and services of the highest quality and that trinkets are something we want less of. With tighter budgets, money is better spent on enhancing the experience than on a gift that may be perceived as low quality. We also agreed that a keepsake with our company logo has less impact and value than one with a well known, high quality brand. This was true for each generation represented at the table.

In my life in general, I usually prefer an experiential gift over a material one. In discussions with other Young Leaders, I have found that this is the case for many people in my age bracket. This preference is directly transferrable to incentive programs as the best incentives involve experiencing things you cannot do on your own. In our discussion on this topic, my group found that each generation represented felt the same way, that experiences trump gifts. The key difference for us was what those experiences are in that some participants are more active than others, but this could be true not only based on age, but on lifestyle as well.

Other questions posed around the room encouraged discussion on how each generation feels about communication preferences with the number of options available today, the importance of education versus experience in moving up in our industry, examining the benefits and challenges of collaborating across generations, and the importance of teaching and practicing proper professional ethics in our industry, among others.

One statement that had a great impact on the conversation with the group at large came from the session facilitator, Rachael Streek-Buma, who suggested that perhaps our differences are not entirely generational, but behavioural instead, which was seconded by Site Global President, Mary MacGregor. I was excited that this idea was voiced as I believe that we spend far too much time analyzing the differences between generations and not enough time on how similar our behaviours can be regardless of when we were born. The best way, in my opinion, to elicit the most significant contribution from each other is to ensure that all parties know what is expected of them through open communication. For example, if you are an experienced person who gets frustrated at your new (young) colleague’s salary expectations, it will benefit you both to discuss your company’s compensation plan including key measurable indicators and time lines. Conversely, if you are a Young Leader who wants to be given more responsibility, it is important to communicate that with your leaders and identify your personal goals so they can help you to achieve them.

Whether our differences are generationally or behaviourally based is a great spin on this topic and I expect that everyone at Education Day left with a different perspective on the other generations at their tables. The format of this session fostered a great spirit of sharing and collaboration and provided a great opportunity to voice our sometimes conflicting opinions in a productive way.

Diane Alexander
Education Day… a Student Scholarship Viewpoint

The SITE Canada Education day was one of the most interesting conferences I have ever attended. For those of you who were unable to make it to Education Day you definitely missed out. It was an awesome experience to meet new people who shared their wealth of knowledge. The day was planned at the Evergreen Brickworks in Toronto, we had a series of sessions with people who have a great knowledge of the industry. They provided insight to new and innovative ways of dealing with the day to day “stuff” that we all go through. Throughout many of the sessions held during the day, whether it was Vittoria Wikston’s “Innovate or Die” or Lindsay Leese’s “Life’s a Pitch” I learned all sorts of new ideas that I can now apply to my new career in the hospitality industry. All the speakers were inspiring in their own ways. An example of what we went through was learning to be quick on your feet when you have to discuss all sorts of topics, from hamburgers to Zimbabwe on whim. I can attest that it was not an easy feat! No matter how difficult these sessions were, when we all worked as a team in finding the answer, we were unstoppable. That is probably what I will take away the most from this day; teamwork. No matter how big or small a task may be, with a team you can tackle anything thrown your way. I believe this is really important for hospitality professionals that we work as a team. Because we work in such fast-paced jobs in all aspects of the industry, it takes a team to deliver the unparalleled experience to the guest. I want to finish by thanking all the members of Site Canada who made this day possible. Without the people behind the scenes, we would not have been able to enjoy the excellent day.

(L-R) Joe Orecchio, President Site Canada; student scholarship award recipients Jaleh Fotoohi and Tyler Lovenuk; Mary MacGregor, President Site Global; Cathy O’Connor, Immediate Past-President, Site Canada
Finally, the members of the Site Canada Student Scholarship Committee, I cannot thank you enough. Through your generosity on behalf of all the members of Site Canada, you have enabled me to continue on with my education. I can only hope one day that I will be as successful as you have all become. Once again thank you!

Tyler Lovenuk

My name is Jaleh Fotoohi. I am an Event Management student from The Art Institute of Vancouver. I had the privilege of winning the student scholarship from Site Canada in October 2011. I was invited to attend Site Canada Education Day on November 8, 2011 in Toronto. Although I was in the middle of writing my mid-terms I organized a one-day trip to Toronto. I truly did not want to miss this great opportunity. Today, I can say, Site Canada Education Day was one of the greatest experiences that I have ever had in my life. From my first impression of the venue, the Evergreen Brick Works, to the amazing presentations of great speakers, to the outstanding food and beverage services, the event definitely exceeded my expectations. I had the pleasure of meeting many industry professionals as well as many great people from Site Canada. Having said that, I must say that my favourite presentation was by Victoria Wikston who spoke at the beginning of the event. Her enthusiastic and energetic personality and passion for what she does, gave me a different insight into my own future career. I learned to make sure to enter the class with my wet soil (brain) every time so the seeds can be planted and grow eventually. What great advice! Not only will I use this philosophy in my life, but also I will make sure to pay it forward as I continue in the industry. The scholarship gave me more than financial assistance. It gave me a sense of pride, accomplishment, and confidence. I am proud to be part of Site Canada.

Jaleh Fotoohi

Updates from the Young Leaders Committee

The Site Canada website will soon be home to new material and programs for our Young Leaders. Those who are a part of the committee and anyone interested in joining should check the website at the end of December for:

- Updates on the new tiered membership for Young Leaders
- Information on how to make Site Canada work for you
- Details about the 2012 Site Young Leaders Academy
- New scholarship opportunities in 2012

It’s a great time to get involved with our dynamic chapter! If you would like to suggest a Young Leader for the Committee or if you are a YL and want to join, please contact Liz Akey at liz@emamarketing.ca

Diane Alexander

Advertising now offered on the Site Canada website

Site Canada is now offering advertising on the Site Canada website to both members and non-members.

Get your message in front of the people who are making the decisions with a banner ad on our website. Space is limited so the sooner you sign up the more options you will have. Reserve a space for 30 days, or sign up for 90 days and save.

**MEMBER ADVERTISING RATES:**

- Small Home Page Vertical Ad:
  - 30 Days - $295
  - 90 Days - $750

- Large Horizontal Ad All Pages:
  - 30 Days - $325
  - 90 Days - $900

**NON-MEMBER ADVERTISING RATES:**

- Small Home Page Vertical Ad:
  - 30 Days - $350
  - 90 Days - $900

- Large Horizontal Ad All Pages:
  - 30 Days - $395
  - 90 Days - $1005

For more information, please see the page on our website http://www.sitecanada.org/ or call Jason at the Site Canada office 905-812-7483.