

The New NTA Convention— Designed by YOU

SINCE ANNOUNCING THE FIRST draft of a new Convention model this past November in Pittsburgh, NTA has been busy listening to what you had to say. There have been Webinars, surveys and one-on-one conversations about what buying and selling atmosphere works best for the way you do business.

All of this was taken to the Meetings & Events Committee in February, and NTA is happy to announce that in Reno, a new Convention will be unveiled that takes the best of both worlds—the parts you love about the current format and parts of the proposed format that are sure to increase your productivity—and put it together in a Convention that is more affordable than ever before!

Here's how it will work:

- Saturday will be all about the tour operator. This will be a day filled with operator specific education, the Buyer-to-Buyer session where operators can partner with each other and a full schedule of sightseeing tours.

- Sunday is DMO appointments in a regional format. The Convention floor will have a newly designed regional format where the DMOs will take 10-minute prescheduled appointments in private stations. The operators will walk the floor, with DMOs seated, having ample time to shop for enhanced product development.

- Monday everyone comes together for open shopping and selling. The enhanced regional format will be open, allowing DMOs and suppliers the chance to highlight all that their destination has to offer, while giving

operators a chance to shop the floor, look for new product ideas and meet with more potential partners.

- Monday also introduces a new rapid business exchange for the tour suppliers. This session will be 5-minute prescheduled appointments—supplier request only—giving suppliers the chance to get their information in front of the operators and perhaps schedule longer appointments later in the week.

- Tuesday and Wednesday, the floor reverts back to the current Tour & Travel Exchange. Tour suppliers will have their 10-minute prescheduled appointments just as they have been in the past—operators sitting and the suppliers walking.

- Open floor and longer appointments. The floor will be open, as always, and prescheduled appointments will now be 10 minutes instead of seven, with the exception of the supplier rapid business exchange, which will be five minutes in length.

- More affordable than ever before! Perhaps the best news is that all of this will be available at last year's rates! Suppliers will be able to lock in 2008 registration fees if registrations are received by the early-bird deadline of June 16. Plus, NTA has negotiated lower room rates than ever before to help ensure that your marketing dollars go further. Suppliers and DMOs will see rates as low as \$59, and operator rates are as low as \$55 per night! And, with a new schedule that moves the sightseeing tours to the opening day, you've got four days of nothing but

business—maximizing your time out of the office and your budget dollars. It's truly a win, win, win!

Your feedback has created a new NTA Convention that will expand your opportunities for new and better business. For operators, you'll have the ability to shop regionally with greater flexibility in appointment schedules and enhanced product development. And, the new tour operator day at the onset gives you a chance to get more of the operator-to-operator partnering and operator-specific education you've asked for.

DMOs and suppliers will benefit from the streamlined schedule allowing for more business in fewer days, expanded 10-minute appointments and the opportunity to reach operators in the enhanced regional format, with your partners, to sell your destination/products even more effectively.

For everyone, there are a number of available sponsorships to enhance your presence even more at Convention. For more details on being a sponsor in Reno, contact Karla DiNardo at karla.dinardo@NTAstaff.com. Members can also go to www.NTAonline.com and click on the Convention link from the homepage for even more details on the format.

Put it all together and the NTA Convention in Reno has added benefits for everyone. We thank each and every one of you for your time and commitment in helping design the most effective and efficient Convention that answers all of your needs. Stay tuned to *Courier, Tuesday* and your e-mail inbox for more details on NTA Convention '09 in Reno—we can't wait to see you there. —Lisa Thompson