

NYRA Does Give a Hoot

The Belmont Stakes, one of the American "triple crown" horse races sparked a new controversy this year; one that pitched the New York Racing Association (NYRA) against sponsors. A restaurant chain announced shortly before the race that it had signed a secondary sponsorship deal and intended to advertise its logo on leading contender, Big Brown.

The restaurant chain, Hooters, famous for its orange-shirted waitresses had even organised a photo shoot in advance of the race at the stables, featuring several leggy models - and race jockey Kent Desormeaux with a Hooters logo on his riding pants.

NYRA, the authority overseeing the racetrack and the Belmont Stakes, had a sense of humour by-pass and rejected the deal, threatening to fine Desormeaux if he sported the restaurant's logo during the race.

Gavin Landry, NYRA's senior vice-president of sales and marketing, described the situation as "A conflict with one of our sponsors", although he was unable to name the organisation. "We haven't released that. The sponsor wanted to remain anonymous." Have you ever heard of a sponsor wanting to remain anonymous? The Hooters folk were equally confused.

Mike McNeil, vice of marketing for Hooters of America, said in a statement. "NYRA makes statements to the media that they are concerned about the Hooters sponsorship and then a little more than 24 hours before the race, a new sponsor is suddenly found that is in conflict. I never had heard of something like this happening". Big Brown was asked to comment, but said only "Neigh".

John Francis named President of AMC Institute

AMC Institute, the trade association that represents the association management company (AMC) industry, recently announced the election of 10 board members for the 2008-2009 term. John P. Francis, president of The HARRINGTON Company in Minneapolis, has been named the 41st president of the board of AMC Institute.

An AMC Institute board member for 10 years and an AMC professional for more than 20 years, John Francis is president of The HARRINGTON Company. One of Minnesota's largest association management firms, the company offers professional management and consultation services to state, regional, national and international associations, societies and foundations, as well as event planning for a number of for-profit groups. John is an active member of the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) and the Midwest Society of Association Executives (MSAE).

www.association-executive.co.uk

Putting the corkscrew in!

The modern wine industry guards its professional reputation with suitable rigour but sometimes finds the need to defend itself against itself. Recently the international association representing Professional Sommelier Associations worldwide, the Association de la Sommellerie Internationale (ASI) issued a statement disassociating itself from a group of former colleagues.

As of 2007, a splinter group of associations from 3 countries decided to resign their membership in ASI, and proceeded to set up a body called WSA and began to organize international sommelier competitions for their members. The newer organisation, the Worldwide Sommelier Association, has since held "The Best Sommelier in the World" competition in Rome which has upset the ASI.

A spokesperson for the ASI said that they would like to make sure every stakeholder in the wine, service and hospitality industry is well aware that there is no link whatsoever between the 12 best sommelier of the world contests organized by ASI and the event recently hosted in Rome by WSA. They recently have held their own "Best Sommelier of Europe" contest in Sofia, Bulgaria, which included candidates from 36 European member associations.

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AMC Institute At Imex Exhibition In Germany

AMC Institute and IAPCO Experts Lead Seminar on the Similarities and Differences of AMC and PCO Management Models

AMC Institute and the International Association of Professional Congress Organizers (IAPCO) recently co-hosted a presentation on the similarities and differences of the Association Management Company (AMC) and PCO management models, as part of the 2008 IMEX exhibition in Frankfurt, Germany. The session drew more than 100 attendees.

"In the past few years, we've seen an increase internationally among association leaders partnering with AMCs and PCOs to help meet their association goals. Because many meeting planners and volunteer leaders are not always aware of the nuances that exist between the two management models, we saw a need to provide clarity," said Sue Pine, Executive Vice President of AMC Institute, the trade association that represents the global association management industry. "Co-presenting a session with IAPCO at IMEX was the perfect forum to educate nonprofit leaders worldwide on the respective strengths of AMCs and PCOs, and explore avenues for collaboration."

Both AMCs and PCOs have a strong international presence. More than 670 AMCs worldwide offer day-to-day association management and specialized association services, including strategic planning, meetings management, communications and advocacy. AMC Institute boasts more than 150 AMC member companies throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe and Asia (who all receive IAE Magazine).

Meanwhile IAPCO, now in its 40th year, represents nearly 100 PCO members in 34 countries, specializing in the organization and full-service management of national and international congresses, conventions and special events. In 2007 alone, PCOs represented 4,000 meetings, among them trade association meetings as well as medical, professional and governmental meetings.

Planning Role

On behalf of AMC Institute and the AMC business model, Pine outlined the scope of AMC services and called attention to the most visible AMC business model – meeting and event planning – that is shared in common with PCOs.

Presenting for IAPCO was Philippe Fournier, Council Member overseeing IAPCO International Relations. Fournier is also Directeur Général of MCI France. As he detailed, PCOs accompany associations in many phases of their activities, first and foremost the organization of congresses and exhibitions.

"In the course of the session, it became increasingly apparent that AMCs and PCOs offer related management services of the highest standard. So as more and more international associations are outsourcing management services, and more large U.S.-based



▲ Pictured L-R: John Francis of The Harrington Company, President of the Board of AMC Institute; Susan Cabrera of Association Mgmt. Resources, AMC Institute Board member and International Task Force Co-Chair; Gregg Talley of Talley Management, AMC Institute Board member; Sue Pine, Executive Vice President of AMC Institute; and Michael Majdalay of LoBue & Majdalay, AMC Institute Committee member.

organizations with international operations look to AMCs and PCOs to serve members in various regions of the world, it makes good business sense for AMC Institute and IAPCO to tap one another's resources and experience," Pine said.

She continued, "Our AMC Institute member AMCs greatly value the international expertise of PCOs, while IAPCO members have communicated an interest in continuing to learn more about the AMC management model. We look forward to the opportunity to partner on international meetings and management projects."

About AMC Institute

A trade association headquartered in Philadelphia, AMC Institute represents the association management industry and boasts more than 150 AMC members throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe and Asia. AMC Institute promotes service excellence among association management companies, and strives to raise awareness of a burgeoning AMC industry by establishing its member companies as the recognized and preferred choice for quality association management and professional services.

For more information, visit www.AMCInstitute.org.

About IAPCO

The International Association of Professional Congress Organizers (IAPCO) represents professional organizers and managers of international and national congresses, conventions and special events. Currently there are 97 IAPCO members in 34 countries. IAPCO is committed to raising standards of service among its members and other sectors of the meetings industry by means of continuing education and interaction with other professionals. As a result, IAPCO membership offers a unique quality assurance recognized by congress clients and suppliers all over the world.

For more information, visit www.IAPCO.org



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News

Larger assns turning to AMCs, industry claims

80% of managed groups say they are national or international

Nearly one of four assn management company clients (24%) has annual revenues surpassing \$1-million. Nearly half, 47%, of assns and not-for-profit organizations managed by AMCs have annual revenues more than \$500,000, according to a survey by the [AMC Institute](#).

"This new information shows our industry is managing larger assns and not-for-profit organizations with members around the world. No longer are AMCs only representing local and state groups. More national and international organizations are seeking services from AMCs and achieving significant results," AMCI elected president John Francis said.

The survey found that 49% of assns and not-for-profit organizations managed by AMCs include more than 500 members per assn, and 23% include more than 1,500 members per organization.

Nearly 8 in 10 nonprofit organizations managed by AMCs that responded to the survey report they are national or international.

A survey conducted by AMCI in 2007 found that assns and not-for-profit organizations managed by AMCs are similar in size and scope to self-managed assns and not-for-profit organizations: 66% vs. 67% (c)6s; 39% vs. 34% individual membership societies; 31% vs. 29% trade assns; by 24% vs. 37% combination company/individual membership.

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Tony LeClerc has been with The Harrington Company, an association management firm serving associations, societies and foundations at all levels, for more than 30 years. In that capacity, he currently serves as the executive director of a 1,000-member state association and executive director for a 400-member international association.

MM+E: What trends are you seeing in meetings and events as it relates to associations?

TL: We are very reliant on the volunteers who make up our association committees, so the challenge there is time. In my experience, it used to be easier to get a group together. As departments shrink and responsibilities increase, people have become less available. We used to all fly in to some city and do a pre-planning meeting and then do another one four months later and that just doesn't happen now; it's all e-mail and phone calls, which puts a different spin on things.

At the same time, most of our events have gotten more sophisticated. There's more for a planner to do and that is a good thing. We are the pros and our clients have become more cognizant of what we do. We want to make sure that the members of the association committee get the credit, but it's appreciated when people value our skills.

MM+E: How is the economy affecting what you do?

TL: The events I work really haven't changed as substantially as we thought they might. We are spending more time on budgets and using care and caution in our projections and maximizing the final results, but events are still happening, and we're seeing record attendance. The biggest change is the amount of time we're spending with venues on contracts and clauses. The language has gotten a lot more precise which really raises the stakes. If care is not taken in the early stages, it doesn't matter what happens in the last month or so.

For example, it is shocking to me how much the extras have risen in cost. Ten years ago, we didn't really worry about audio-visual costs or the lighting; now you need to be thinking about the number of amps you're using in a ballroom.

MM+E: Apart from meticulous budgeting, how else are you combating the tightening economy?

TL: We're keeping quality up while trying to keep attendee costs down. It's hard to charge as much or more for less, and our committees want their events to improve. We have seen instances where companies might have sent five employees in the past but now they are sending three. We're rescheduling conferences when we can take advantage of off-peak room rates.

The need for the peripheral, non-registration dollar has risen as well. We're more reliant on exhibitor revenue, whereas before it seemed more like a bonus. We're very aware of our sponsors and appreciative of them.

"IN MY EXPERIENCE, IT USED TO BE EASIER TO GET A GROUP TOGETHER. AS DEPARTMENTS SHRINK AND RESPONSIBILITIES INCREASE, PEOPLE HAVE BECOME LESS AVAILABLE."



NAME: TONY LECLERC, CAE, CMP JOB: CO-OWNER AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, THE HARRINGTON COMPANY