

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



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issues boards media stakeholders technology police ambassadorship government marketing employees drones opportunities millennials laws cash management tragedies assault ticketing venues economy volunteers boomers creativity guns trend men st

THE WORLD IS CHANGING

I just returned from our IFEA World and IFEA Foundation Board meetings in Las Vegas. During those meetings, a good portion of our focus is spent talking about the trends and issues, challenges and opportunities, that all those around the table – from every corner of the globe – have identified as something which is, may or will affect our mutual industry in the months and years ahead. Topics that we need to be aware of; perhaps provide training for; that need communicating or further discussions on a broader basis; and /or some type of intervention/ influencing on behalf of our membership and industry. The discussions are always informative, often eye-opening, sometimes surprising, but never dull.

At this particular meeting the discussions covered a plethora of insights, ranging from cash management and ticketing systems to police resource limitations; personnel challenges to drones; first amendment and gun control rights to international exchange programs and the ambassadorship roles of events. We talked about how to phase-out long-standing, non-performing event components (by choice) to the unplanned political destruction of an iconic festival. We discussed the definition and expectations

of internal, event organizational values, as well as how to control and maximize external social media conversations. New risk management conversations, such as sexual assault incidents, were raised, as was the role that our events can and should play in helping a community/country heal from unexpected tragedies. We talked about creativity, how to answer the never-ending media question of “what’s new or different this year,” and reconsidered approaches to reach and include the full spectrum of millennials to baby boomers and more.

The main take-away, not surprisingly, was that the world is changing. And it’s not going to stop. Our communities are changing; our volunteer base is changing; our city partnerships, boards and employees are changing. Government, media and sponsors are changing. Technology, venues and marketing mediums are changing. The economy is changing. Virtually every stakeholder group and how we serve/service them, partner with them or entertain them is changing. And our events must change as well.

The one constant in all of the above – other than ‘change’ itself – is the IFEA. While we are certainly affected by all of the above and much more, just like

each of you, the IFEA is here to help clear the pathways for our industry to best navigate and manage their way through the forest of challenges. From our IFEA Annual Convention, Expo & Retreat to our Event Management School; our Webinar Series to the *Event Insider* global industry news resource; our professional (CFEE) certification program to the most sharing, global and experienced professional network in ours or any other industry. The IFEA is here for you. To identify changing needs, initiate and moderate critical discussions, develop the resources to stay ahead of the game, and raise the bar for everyone.

I invite you to be an active part of the organization as we work to build, protect and further the brand and image of our industry that each of you has worked so hard to create. I encourage you to include your professional peers, staffs, boards, sponsors, cities and other stakeholders in becoming a part of and participating firsthand in all that we have going on. It is that inclusiveness, those common bonds, that natural expansion of our conversations that will strengthen the role that we play and the impact that our industry can have on the changing world around us.