



For Immediate Release

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What We've Learned from 40 Years of Meetings

One of the First Dedicated Conference Centers in the US, Ushered in a New Industry

Glen Cove, Long Island, New York, June 30, 2010... The award-winning Glen Cove Mansion Hotel and Conference Center has been servicing serious corporate meetings for longer than just about any other conference center in North America. It's actually been hosting important business meetings for a century as the country estate of Standard Oil executive John Teele Pratt, whose father's petroleum company merged with John D. Rockefeller's empire in the 19th Century, creating enormous wealth for the family. Mr. Pratt's father also founded and endowed the renowned Pratt Institute in New York City.

Originally opened as a country house estate in 1910 on Long Island's legendary North Shore Gold Coast, in the 1960s the Mansion was transformed into one of the nation's very first dedicated conference centers – a new concept in meetings that came over from Europe. Ever since, Glen Cove Mansion has played a historic role in the nation's now multi-billion dollar conference center industry.

Today Glen Cove Mansion Hotel and Conference Center is an award-winning, International Association of Conference Centers-certified property with 55 wooded acres, 29,000 square feet of dedicated meeting space, 187 deluxe guestrooms, complete fitness and recreation amenities, and a nearly flawless service record.

Glen Cove Mansion Hotel and Conference Center helped establish the small meetings industry within the United States," said Tom Bolman, executive director of the International Association of Conference Centers, "and was a Charter member of our organization. There are very few properties in the country that offer such a strong multi-decade legacy within the conference center industry as Glen Cove Mansion does." Mr. Bolman continued, "We also applaud the Mansion on the Centennial of its opening as the original country estate of New York's storied Pratt family.

What We've Learned from 40 Years of Meetings

Recently, General Manager Ata Kashanian talked about the Mansion's role in the meetings industry, its role as one of the nation's first dedicated conference centers, and what they've learned about meetings through the years. His answers were revealing.

Have meeting facility requirements changed over the past 40 years?

The 24 hour meeting space is still a must for serious corporate gatherings, as it was when we started in 1968. Groups need to know they can meet late into the night, if necessary, and not break their meeting's momentum.

Today corporate groups have condensed meeting length as well as leisure time, so every minute invested in a conference really counts - and the space is theirs to use into the night, if called for.

Groups still love the benefit of natural light in meeting rooms, a conference center innovation, and "outdoor meeting rooms" are a huge plus. Terraces, gardens, spacious lawns and even wooded glens serve as meeting rooms today as sometimes a change in environment reinvigorates a group.

As cliché as it sounds, ergonomic chairs remain a must for ongoing comfort and support - especially for those meetings that linger well beyond 5 pm. I think the suburban experience so many conference centers offer remains critically important too - close to major transportation arteries yet at a distance from urban distractions. With condensed meetings today, not a second can be misspent on a night out in the city - or its aftermath.

Have service requirements changed for the meetings industry during the past four decades?

Anticipatory service and immediate response has always been important and a characteristic of conference centers. Planners need to know that if equipment malfunctions, it's immediately corrected or replaced so meeting pace isn't impacted. If they have unanticipated needs that arise during the conference, these are seamlessly addressed.

This was an important truth about conference centers in the beginning and it's doubly true and important in 2010. Customers are extremely demanding and rightfully so - that's why they're here, that's why they've chosen a conference center. If they are not receiving a high standard of service, there is another property waiting in the wings to win their business.

Food & Beverage ... has the way conference centers serve meeting guests -- and their nutrition requirements – changed since 1968?

Customers still like the idea of buffets, as they offer high perceived value and enable meetings to break for meals when it fits the timeline of the conference. When bottom line pricing is being scrutinized, a la carte meals just don't make sense to most customers today. A buffet offers flexibility to guests, allowing them time to check in with the office, with home, etc. and respond to emails, phone calls, etc.

In demand today are healthy meal options on buffets, with many more requests to accommodate vegetarians and vegans, so conference centers have responded with lighter, less caloric selections, more greens and greater low-fat protein choices. Sugary beverages are a thing of the past.

How has technology changed over the years?

Gone forever are the days of overheads and slide projectors. Yet meeting groups are still looking for the basics in the conference room, such as LCD projectors, flip charts, TV/DVD players and a podium with microphone. These items are included in the CMP, whereas they weren't initially 40 years ago.

In the conference center and throughout the hotel component of the property, though, groups are demanding the most up-to-date wireless Internet technology on the market. And strong cell phone reception is also key, which suburban or even more remote centers need to be constantly mindful of. NO ONE today can afford not to be connected to the office, to customers, or even to family while away at a meeting.

How has the meetings customer changed over the past 40 years?

Senior level programs that may have opted for resorts in the past are staying closer to home due to cost and time savings. On the other hand, entry level managers receive more intensive and longer training than in the past. The mid-management level has reduced its frequency of corporate meetings and training.

How has the customer mix changed at conference centers during the previous four decades?

Forty years ago, we were an exclusive corporate meetings facility seven days a week. Today, with changing lifestyles and fewer executives willing to be away from family on

the weekend, we now welcome transient guests and social groups, including weddings, which we do a lot of here on Long Island's historic Gold Coast. I think you'd find this to be the case at most IACC facilities today ... this change is not unique to the New York area.

Whereas our restaurants were available only to corporate guests in the beginning, we now welcome the public throughout the week to our Pub 1910, which has been designed to appeal to all guests and offers a view to Long Island Sound as well as billiards and music. Interestingly, it's located in the former servants' quarters of the Mansion, which people enjoy learning about.

How has the meeting planner changed over the past decades?

Today's meeting "planner" very likely doesn't own the title of Planner. They may be administrative, or an executive who has had these responsibilities added to their workload.

Gone are the days that we worked exclusively with Meeting Planners. Those professionals in charge of planning are more demanding today than in the past -- as they need assurance that their event or conference is in skilled hands, and that it will be managed flawlessly so they can get on with a worry-free meeting.

As business persons, they also come with strong negotiation skills and concessions are expected to increase the value of the CMP. We and our conference center colleagues have learned to respond accordingly.

How has the Complete Meeting Package changed in 40 years?

The \$64,000 question ... The CMP was an innovation of the conference center industry and for many years was sacrosanct - not to be altered. But times and business conditions change and the CMP has had to adapt and become more flexible ~ especially over the past decade. Today, modified CMP's are offered to accommodate tight budgets and changing corporate needs. Deletions and additions can be made to the CMP to accommodate an individual group's requirement.

We still feel, though, that all things considered the CMP offers customers the best value for the meeting experience, and we try to stay true to it while adjusting to our customer's needs.

Teambuilding ... how has this component of meetings changed in the last 40 years?

Teambuilding is an interesting phenomenon in our industry. It has gone from the high & low ropes courses, to unique teambuilding programs such as team-bonding sessions on the racetrack, to socially responsible initiatives with groups cleaning up neighborhoods or helping build Habitat for Humanity homes, to being incorporated into the daily meeting agenda at the conference center when budgets are incredibly tight.

Overall, though, teambuilding is still a highly respected initiative and our experience teaches us that as budgets come back, so do teambuilding programs. Corporate groups universally see the value in bringing people together as a unified team.

A Glance at the Complete Meeting Package of 2010:

- * Deluxe Overnight Accommodations
- * Healthy and bountiful Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner Buffets
- * Dedicated Meeting Space with Ergonomic Seating & Non-Glare Conference Tables
- * Audiovisual Package, including screen, flipchart and markers, VCR/DVD and monitor, LCD projector, whiteboard and markers, and podium
- * Sound Package, including amplifier and speakers
- * Wireless High Speed Internet Access
- * Conference Planner Office Supply Kit
- * Continuous Refreshment Breaks
- * 24-hour access to Executive Business Center
- * Conference rooms set to the customer's specifications, with specially designed chairs, pads, pens, water and candies
- * Continuous refreshment / coffee breaks served in permanent break areas
- * Dedicated Conference Planning Manager to assist in all aspects of planning and executing a program
- * On-site Parking
- * All Food and Beverage Gratuities related to the Complete Meeting Package

For more information on Glen Cove Mansion Hotel and Conference Center's century of hospitality and more than 40 years as a leader in the conference center industry, please visit

www.glencovemansion.com/about_us/History.asp.

For additional information on Glen Cove Mansion's meeting, lodging, dining and catering services, please access www.glencovemansion.com/, or call 516-671-6400.

About the International Association of Conference Centers

The International Association of Conference Centers (IACC), founded in 1981, is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting understanding and awareness of the conference center industry. Active members meet a stringent set of Universal Criteria and agree to a Code of Ethics. Currently, the association includes approximately 400 members from the United States, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Sweden, France, England, The Netherlands, Germany and Japan.

For more information on IACC, visit www.iacconline.org

About Glen Cove Mansion

The award-winning Glen Cove Mansion Hotel is situated on 55 secluded and landscaped acres on Long Island's historic Gold Coast, 30 minutes from New York City by car and rail (Long Island Railroad, Oyster Bay line, Glen Cove Station), and close to JFK International and LaGuardia Airports. The spacious Georgian-style mansion features stunning vistas of Long Island Sound and was once part of a prestigious collection of gracious country estates, later becoming one of the nation's first dedicated conference center hotels. Today the elegant property features 196 richly appointed guestrooms, including four suites, the Garden Room Restaurant with magnificent views of the terraces, a large and comfortable Pub 1910, private dining rooms ideal for social and corporate occasions, as well as vast outdoor reception areas overlooking the mansion's Gilded Age gardens. The property offers 29,500 square feet of event and meeting space, with 27 dedicated conference rooms accommodating from 10 to 280 guests, advanced meeting technology, an executive business center and conference concierge services. Wireless Internet access is available throughout. Also provided are complete fitness and recreational facilities, including a sauna, steam and massage rooms, indoor swimming pool and whirlpool, garden swimming pool, racquetball courts, bowling alley, lighted tennis courts, jogging trail and a sports field. Golf is available nearby. Ideal for executive retreats, corporate meetings and social gathering, the Glen Cove Mansion is masterfully designed to integrate gracious accommodations, superb cuisine and attentive service with contemporary comforts and the latest technology.

For more information on the Glen Cove Mansion Hotel, visit www.glencovemansion.com.

*History * Harmony * Hospitality*