

Conference Planning Checklist

By Jake R Brady

- 9 Months Before
 - Seek co-sponsorship.
 - Prepare a planning calendar.
 - Recruit volunteers.
 - Check budget and provide a cost projection sheet.
 - Determine publicity/advertising schedule and call for papers.
 - Determine which hotel your guests will be staying during the conference.
 - Create a website for your conference.
 - Set-up the registration link on the conference website.
 - Create advertising brochures and call for papers.
 - Advertise conference to potential exhibitors of interest.
- 6 Months Before
 - Begin to finalize the Program Schedule.
 - Determine number of brochures needed for handouts and mailing.
 - Contact speakers and request vita, address and phone number, biography and head shot photo for publicity of.
- 4 Months Before
 - Meet with catering, facilities, media services, and conference services to go over the final details.
 - Consider hiring students to staff your events.
 - Finalize the Program Schedule.
 - Draft Conference Program.
 - Update budget.
 - Finalize A/V equipment needs with media services.
 - Announce the conference.
 - Go live for online registration and payment.
 - Determine the types of giveaways if any.
 - Order your gifts.
- 2 Months Before
 - Finalize guest list.
 - Confirm needs for registered exhibitors.
 - Produce printed program and get schedule to PR.
 - Produce conference poster, if appropriate.
 - Schedule all table and chairs needed.
- 1 Month Before
 - Finalize details and administrative responsibilities for the conference.
 - Obtain local maps and information.
 - Confirm catering, facilities, and media.
 - Request honorarium for speakers.

- 2 Weeks Before
 - For main speakers - email/letter should include complete, specific schedule of the speaker(s).
 - For registered participants - include map, shuttle schedule, and registration times for the participant's arrival at the conference.
 - For session chairs/introducers - include time of session, CV of presenter(s).
- 1 Week Before
 - Assemble name tags.
 - Assemble registration listing of participants.
 - Consider sending welcome letters and agenda to the hotel for distribution upon check-in.
 - Double check arrangements: confirm room reservations, particularly for afterhours or weekend times.
- After the Conference
 - Send thank you notes to all who helped with the conference.
 - Finalize financial settlements for all speakers.