

# PCMA NORTHERN CALIFORNIA NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2021 ISSUE



## THE BRIDGE

### MESSAGE FROM CHRIS

#### Spring Has Sprung and Baseball is in the Air!

A new season brings new hope, further amplified with San Francisco and much of the Bay area moving into the Orange Tier of the state's reopening plan. This is a crucial step in the road to recovery, as we work towards meeting face-to-face safely again.

We hope you were able to join us for our Road to Hybrid program earlier this month. We were fortunate to hear from Industry Leaders from 3 unique perspectives -- Planner, Production & Platform -- about what's next for our industry and how we can collectively get there. This was a fantastic program, and our Chapter is committed to continuing to produce engaging and relevant content this year.

Global Meetings Industry Day is also fast approaching on Thursday, April 8, and we're pleased to present a Hospitality Grand Slam event in collaboration with SF Travel, Giants Enterprises, Hartmann Studios, Certain and a number of our partner Bay Area Meeting & Event Industry Associations. We hope you'll join us as we celebrate our industry and hear from some prominent Bay Area meeting planners about what's next. PCMA NCC will also be leading a Breakout Session discussion following the panel.

Lastly, our Education Team is furiously planning a fantastic program for LEAP (Learn.Engage.Act.Participate) for this May. Details are forthcoming, but I'm excited for how things are shaping and know you will be too. I'm more confident saying see you soon this time, and please don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to be more involved in PCMA NCC this year.

With Gratitude,

Chris Koenig  
PCMA NCC President  
ckoenig@giantsenterprises.com

#### WHAT'S INSIDE:

- *Message From Chris*
- *Singapore Hybrid Event Success*
- *Hybrid Tech Showcase Recap*
- *Sponsor Spotlight*
- *Volunteer and Sponsor Opportunities*
- *Calendar Update*
- *Member Spotlight*
- *Member Anniversaries*
- *The Work From Home Debate*
- *Thank you Sponsors!*

[PCMA NCC Website](#)



# Singapore reimagines the future of MICE events at PCMA Convening Leaders 2021

By Patricia Beaudoux, Director of International Sales – Asia, Sands

When it was first announced that PCMA Convening Leaders was to be held in Singapore and with Marina Bay Sands being the Global Broadcast Center in December last year, my first thought was "I cannot wait to see the recorded version!" Little did I know just weeks later, I would be hopping on my first flight in a year to fly to Singapore with intrepid clients, ready for their first long haul flight and site inspection since the pandemic began. Though I have traveled to Singapore over 25 times over the last 10 years but doing so during a global pandemic with cases surging here in the United States, candidly, gave me a moment of pause. Seven clients originally planned to attend; but four clients and I boarded our Singapore Airlines flight.

Since the borders between Singapore and the United States were closed, a special dispensation from the Singapore government for Americans to enter the country and attend PCMA Convening Leaders in person while conducting a series of site inspections was required. The journey travelling from the United States to Singapore was nothing short of interesting and a completely different experience from what we were used to pre-pandemic – one that included contact tracing and with numerous COVID-19 tests required to ensure the health and safety of everyone at the event and in the community. Let the Journey begin!

My clients and I all needed to provide a negative PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) test 72 hours before the flight. We were also required to keep our masks on for the entire duration of the flight, apart from eating/drinking, - which was approximately 21 hours in total – this included travel to and from the airport, and time at the airport.

Upon arrival at Singapore Changi Airport, we were immediately escorted to a separate customs area, where we had to undergo another PCR test at the airport's dedicated full testing facility. Testing there was quick and easy. A virtual check-in was completed before our arrival at Marina Bay Sands. Our quarantine time was 48 hours, or until our test results came back negative, although normal quarantine timing for Americans is 14 days. In true hyper-efficient Singapore-style, our negative test results came back by 4:00 pm on the same day as our arrival.



Throughout our stay, we were required to dine in private rooms in restaurants because protocols dictated that we were not allowed to take our masks off around locals. Fortunately, there are lots of great restaurants at Marina Bay Sands and throughout Singapore with private dining rooms.

On to PCMA Convening Leaders! All attendees comprising approximately 300 attendees were required to take the Antigen Rapid Test (ART), a pre-event safety measure for large scale activities in Singapore, at a sterile testing area specially set up within Sands Expo and Convention Centre. Results came back via text message in about 30 minutes. A negative result was required to access the conference. All delegates in attendance stayed within their dedicated zones, without any intermingling, throughout the event. The whole experience at PCMA Convening Leaders was just incredible – the content and the technology featured in Marina Bay Sands Hybrid Event Studio was highly informative and state-of-the-art. The use of holographic telepresence allowed Sherrif Karamat, to join us virtually and the resolution was so clear that it was hard to determine that he was not actually with us in Singapore. The industrial screens that "dropped in" and used to beam international panelists in virtually had such quality resolution that it was a pleasure to watch and listen.

And just like that our amazing opportunity to travel again and attend a major conference was ending. I can honestly say, hand on heart, this was the best PCMA event I have ever attended and under the circumstance that is quite incredible. One last PCR test before we head home (I now officially have PTSD if I see a QTIP, based on six tests in seven days!) but completely worthwhile. Singapore, I look forward to seeing you again soon!

# Road to Hybrid Tech Showcase - Event Recap

By Velia Amarasingham, Co-founder, Curated Entertainment

On March 11th, the PCMA-NCC Road to Hybrid Tech Showcase jump started the highly-anticipated conversation about the next stop on the road to our industry's recovery - hybrid events. And the excitement in the Zoom room was palpable.

We kicked off the event at full throttle with Andrew Verducci (DJ Ducci), CEO of Verducci Event Productions behind the turntables spinning feel-good beats from his company's live stream studio in Berkeley. Andrew's energy was contagious. Next, Chapter President Chris Koenig announced that we'd be hearing from three expert panelists, speaking from three different perspectives: Planner, Producer and Platform. The three Ps were slated to share lessons learned in the virtual event space to-date, discuss hybrid event trends, and provide key strategies for our planning toolkits.

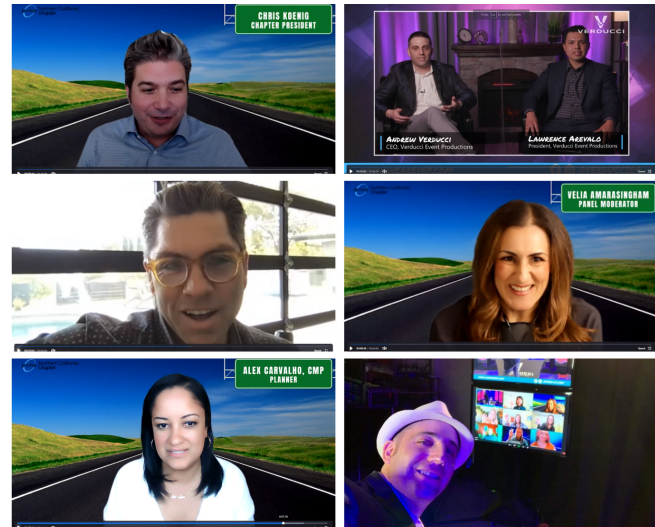
We ignited the discussion with PCMA-NCC Past President and Senior Meeting Planner at Kaiser Permanente, Alex Carvalho-Lukachova, CMP, VEMM. After successfully converting 40+ scheduled in-person meetings to virtual events in 2020, Alex learned that "curating content" was the key to driving attendee engagement. This meant keeping content to 30-minute increments, providing lots of opportunities for participant interaction, and planning ample breaks. Alex offered this advice for managing hybrid event costs: "Curate your in-person attendees. Plan for folks who are truly essential to be in person and for the majority of your attendees to participate virtually."

Our next guests provided observations and tips from the perspective of virtual event producers: Verducci Event Productions' CEO, Andrew Verducci and President, Lawrence Arevalo. Andrew and Lawrence stressed the importance of hiring quality emcees and speakers, and using top-notch graphics, lighting and different camera angles to capture audiences' attention. They also recommended guest engagement tools like games, polls and video, or chat-enabled breakout rooms. Their advice? "Research and choose the right virtual platform for your particular hybrid event goal, allow for programs to be readily accessible for attendees afterward, and collect data analytics to measure the success of your event."

Finally, from San Diego, CEO of JUNO, Josh Hotsenpiller joined the discussion. His company, a live and on-demand virtual event platform, was used at this year's PCMA Convening Leaders conference. Josh explained that at JUNO, hybrid means finding an "intersection of connection" for virtual and in-person event attendees. They specialize in replicating traditional meeting places (coffee shops, phone charging stations, hotel ballrooms) in the virtual world. Josh offered this advice: "Make sure your platform provider has a vision for the second screen [i.e. the cell phone of an in-person attendee]. Software can allow attendees to "define their story and connect with other people like them [in person or virtually]."

A spirited Q&A session followed with all of our articulate panelists in view, then DJ Ducci took to the turntables one last time, providing the perfect celebratory ending, to an informative and optimistic discussion.

Fasten your seatbelts, friends. We'll be on the road to hybrid in no time, and there'll be no stopping us!  
[Click here for a video recap!](#)



## Sponsor Spotlight

### Sacramento's Expanded Convention Center Opening Soon

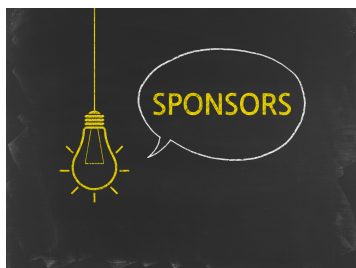
One thing 2020 didn't stop was the expansion and renovations of Sacramento's newly named SAFE Credit Union Convention Center. Reopening soon in the downtown core, the convention center will feature a brand new 40,000 sq ft ballroom, plus increased exhibit space, more meeting rooms, and reimagined outdoor space. [Check out this tour of the convention center.](#)

Planners can be assured that health and safety protocols are firmly in place. Sacramento-area hotels and facilities are pledging their commitment to Sacramento Accommodations For Everyone, or S.A.F.E., a Visit Sacramento program. The S.A.F.E. pledge informs planners that tourism and hospitality partners are following health and safety requirements as recommended by the CDC, and state and county officials. Many of the hotels and facilities have protocols developed by their brands and/or owners. Because the convention center has not been in use for more than a year, it will open with guaranteed level of cleanliness and safety. And ensuring that level is maintained once the facility opens, the center has received its GBAC certification.

As you look to the future for bringing your meetings and events to Sacramento, be sure to reach out to Betsy Longmire ([blongmire@visitsacramento.com](mailto:blongmire@visitsacramento.com)), your Sacramento destination expert. With a newly expanded and renovated convention center opening soon, new hotels opening over the next 12-24 months, and additional venues under construction or renovation, you will need the guidance and expertise of Betsy. Do not hesitate to reach out. [Click here to download this new recovery guide to assist you.](#)



## Volunteer and Sponsor Opportunities



Sponsorship opportunities are still available. Contact Maria Dempsey for more information:  
[maria\\_dempsey@yahoo.com](mailto:maria_dempsey@yahoo.com)  
(925) 250-2336

We are always on the lookout for great volunteers and chapter contributors. Contact Pat Swan for more details:  
[pswan@mvstaging.com](mailto:pswan@mvstaging.com)  
(415) 424-7917



# Calendar Update



## April 8: GMID - Hospitality Grand Slam!

Every April, the U.S. Travel Association promotes Global Meetings Industry Day (GMID) to showcase the value that business meetings, trade shows, incentive travel, exhibitions, conferences and conventions bring to residents, businesses and communities. Join San Francisco Travel, Giants Enterprises, Hartmann Studios, Certain, and numerous Bay Area meeting and event association chapters as we celebrate GMID with a Hospitality Grand Slam on Thursday, Apr. 8, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. (PDT).

Enjoy an exciting panel discussion featuring prominent meeting planners from Genentech, Pure Storage, and other local companies as we discuss the impending return to live events and the buzz around hybrid events. Moderated by Giants Multimedia Producer and Reporter, Amy Gutierrez, this discussion will be lively and insightful. Following the panel discussion, we welcome you to join one of our virtual breakout rooms, led by local meeting and event association chapters including MPINCC, GMIC, PCMA NCC, ILEA-NCC, and BABTA for extra content focused on an array of topics. [Click Here for more information and to register!](#)

## May 20: LEAP - Learn. Engage. Act. Participate.

LEAP is our Regional Educational Conference attracting meeting professionals from the entire West Coast for a unique meeting experience focused on cutting edge industry trends, out of the box thinking and creative ways to provide meeting solutions in our fast paced world. Will you take the Hybrid LEAP with us?

It's time to Learn. Engage. Act. Participate!

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for developing information about our 2021 LEAP program on May 20, 2021.



# Member Spotlight

## Deanna Zercher, CMP, Senior Event Specialist,

I am a new member to PCMA, but a long time industry planner. I have been a member of different associations over the years, and thought it was important to reveal my industry involvements during COVID. It's important for me to get networking and education out of whatever chapter I am involved with, and when I saw such an emphasis of the DES certification from PCMA I thought now would be a great time to join the group, and see what you have to offer. Although, I am still new to the chapter, and we aren't meeting in person yet I'm very excited to get involved on a volunteer level, and look forward to what the year has to bring.



## Chapter Member Milestones

Following are Chapter Members with membership anniversaries in the first quarter 2021.  
Congratulations!

<b>Lauren Siring</b> Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau	<b>10 years</b>
<b>Mark Feldman</b> Visit Santa Barbara	<b>5 years</b>
<b>Elizabeth Grigsby</b> San Francisco State University	<b>5 years</b>
<b>Betsy Longmire</b> Visit Sacramento	<b>5 years</b>

The following have been members for one year this quarter:

Loretta Adikhai	Marymount California University
Betty Aguilar	TPC Stonebrae Country Club
Jackie Alcantara	The St. Regis San Francisco
Hillary Bamont	Key Events
Shari Foresman	Syngenta
Emily Golding	West Texas A&M
Rachel Jacob Barnett	San Francisco Pride
Pavlina Latkova	San Francisco State University
Christophe Ley	California Academy of Science and San Francisco State University
Zoe Macinsky	Workday
Olivia Metivier	Dynamic Signal, Inc.
Kasia Mlynarski	The Clift Hotel
Jenny Padilla	Workday
Sophie Pfister	Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort
Andrea Reynolds, CMP	Key Events
Erika Richards	California State University, East Bay
Lee Richter	Event Planners Association
Juana Sanchez	California State University, East Bay
Megan Warzeniak	streamlineevents inc.
Kimberly Wong, CMP	
Tsu-hong Yen	Hospitality, Tourism & Event Management, San Jose State University

# The Work From Home Debate

By Jennifer Witherington, VP Global Accounts, HPN Global

Pre-COVID-19 was about sitting at a desk and getting work done. Post-COVID-19 has shown people can work in the office, at home, in the car or at the coffeehouse. As reported by Techno Advantage, in March 2020, in the United States, about 15% of the total workforce were working remotely 1-2 times a week, with 70% of those wishing to convert to full-time from home if given the chance. Then the pandemic hit, and suddenly everyone is forced to work from home.

In the last year, we have heard a lot of discussion on whether the Work-From-Home situation is going to become the new normal. Many Silicon Valley companies have decided their employees will work remotely moving forward. And some small businesses are also questioning if this is the future for them. Employees who work from home report they are happier and more satisfied with their work. They take less sick time and time off because they feel they have a better home and work balance. Slashing commute times are also a consideration and these factors can lead to employees staying with a company longer. So, it could be smarter and more cost-effective for companies to move to a remote workforce. It even opens the opportunity to hire from anywhere in the world, not just local or candidates who are willing to relocate for the position.

Yet, According to Forbes magazine, many Fortune 500 companies have stated they will not be allowing their entire workforce to work remotely and have revised their work-from-home policy with the main reason being Work-Life balance. They cited the division between work and personal time has been blurred during the shutdown, and employees are finding it more difficult to "turn off" the work. Rather than enjoying less commute time, they are adding more work hours. Employees, they realize, need face-to-face, real time interaction and a defined work balance to get real overall results.

The solution may be a hybrid work arrangement. Ford Motor company is one example of such a plan, which offers flexibility and choice for employees. A phased return allows for social distancing as required, though work spaces will be redefined, focusing on we space vs. me space. With adaptable and versatile interiors, furniture and walls can be easily moved or reused for multiple purposes and will be tech enabled to allow for digital and virtual inclusion for remote workers.

Clearly, there are decisions to be made and discussions to be had. Flexibility and communication remain the keys to success.



## Thank you to our Sponsors

### Platinum



### Gold



### Bronze



### Strategic

