

Monday, September 14, 2026 | 11:25 – 12:25 PM

Would YOU Do Business With YOU? Becoming Your Member/Customer- What Do You See?

Bob Pacanovsky, Speaker & Chief Hospitality Officer | Black Tie Experience

Have you ever put yourself in your members' shoes? When was the last time you experienced your business from their perspective? This interactive seminar will transform you into a member/customer, guiding you through the customer journey and highlighting the critical "Impact Points" that shape their experience, which may now be one of the most important elements in creating this first-class (or Black Tie) experience. By understanding the little details that can make a big difference, you'll gain valuable insights into how your members/customers perceive your organization. From the moment they first interact with your brand to the after-sales service they receive, we'll explore how every Impact Point can influence their decision to do business with you.

The Attendee Engagement Journey

Mark Mallchok, CMM, Sr. Event Strategist | Brella Productions

In-person events are in high demand! And along with that demand, associations are expecting much more for their budgets.

- More strategic support for engaging their audiences.
- More solutions for transforming their events into immersive experiences.
- More services for extending an event's impact beyond the meeting itself.

In short, more Return on Event (ROE). For association meeting owners and planners, this is a superhero moment-in-the-making. An opportunity to enrich member relationships and delivery on those expectations of more engaging meetings

Meetings that Are Good for People and the Planet

Missy Stults, PhD, Director of Sustainability & Innovations | City of Ann Arbor

Discover practical strategies you can incorporate into meetings and events to advance sustainability and create a more environmentally responsible experience for attendees. In this session, the Director of the City of Ann Arbor's Office of Sustainability and Innovations will share how Ann Arbor is taking action to ensure that everyone—residents and visitors—can contribute to the community's movement toward a just transition to community-wide carbon neutrality.

Monday, September 14, 2026 | 1:10 – 2:10 PM

Practical Applications of AI for Events and Event Planners

Jason Schemmel, Owner | Get Social Done, LLC

Social media can be a powerful tool for building relationships, engaging your audience, and driving business. This session will explore best practices for event planners and associations to create content that earns attention, strengthens connections, and generates sales through both organic content and paid advertising. We'll also explore how popular AI tools—both free and paid—can help streamline content creation, from generating ideas and writing copy to saving time while maintaining your brand and voice.

Beyond the RFP: Hotel Sourcing, Contracts & Strategic Partnerships

Rachel Jurgens, Manager of Global Accounts | HelmsBriscoe

Today's hotel market has changed dramatically. Rising costs, compressed booking windows, staffing shortages, and evolving contract language have created new challenges for meeting professionals. This interactive session explores current hotel sourcing trends, negotiation strategies that protect organizations, and practical insights for securing better outcomes. Participants will also discover how strategic sourcing partners, including HelmsBriscoe, can simplify the process while delivering measurable value.

Wearing Many Hats, Growing One Organization

Kelly Quinn, Vice President, Business Development & Strategic Partnerships & Kelly Cusick, Chief Growth Officer, Holmes Corporation

In small-staff associations, everyone is busy—and responsibilities rarely fit neatly into one job description. The same person may be managing membership, promoting education programs, supporting events, and pursuing sponsorships, all while keeping daily operations moving. With so much overlap, it is easy to focus on completing the work without stepping back to see where programs, member engagement, and revenue could grow together. This practical working session helps participants identify where opportunities are being missed, duplicated, or unintentionally dropped. Through real-world examples, attendees will explore how membership, education, events, marketing, and sponsorship efforts can reinforce one another—even when they are managed by the same few people.