



Rocky Mountain Division of the International Association for Identification

CONFERENCE PLANNING GUIDE

The objective of the RMDIAI is to associate persons who are actively engaged in the profession of forensic identification and scientific investigation into an organized body so that the profession in all of its branches may be effectively standardized and scientifically practiced. In order to keep all members apprised of the newest techniques and discoveries in crime detection, the RMDIAI sponsors an annual training conference, as well as other mini-conferences. These training conferences are made available to members and non-members who may be actively engaged or have some association with law enforcement and crime scene investigation.

The following conference guide is provided to the conference host in order to cover most of the details of any conference. The host chairperson or committee can use any leeway necessary to make the conference a success. It is mandatory that before any costs are incurred by the Division, all such expenses must be approved by the Board of Directors. The primary objective of all conferences is education, the other details such as the banquet, attendance appreciation awards, entertainment etc. are secondary and are only provided as an incentive for a good turnout. It is the duty of the RMDIAI vice-president to serve as host and chair the conference planning committee.

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Pre-Conference

- It is highly recommended that a conference committee be formed. The committee will assist in the planning, organizing and implementation of the conference. A minimum of two BOD members (including the Vice President) need to know all details of the conference.
- Determine a conference theme; decide on lecture format or workshops or a combination. Will the workshops be repeated, is there any additional costs or equipment needed for the attendees?
- Select a conference location; meet with hotel conference coordinator; obtain pricing, catering options and obtain a written contract; present the contract to the board.
- The BOD will set a budget; know the amount and the policy regarding expenditures
- Contact Speakers and Presenters (Include alternate speakers)
- Contact Vendors (see vendor sheet)
- Determine conference costs, add in a percentage to cover unexpected expenses. The proposed conference registration fee must be submitted to the BOD for approval (Policy #12).
- As early as possible submit a notice of the conference date, location and agenda to the editor of **The Silent Witness**; and to the webmaster for publication.
- Create a conference brochure and registration form for a special mailing to RMDIAI members, Chiefs of Police, Sheriffs and training departments of local police departments. Also send brochures to criminal justice programs at local colleges.
- Contact local businesses and vendors for attendance appreciation awards.

Conference costs

- Hotel meeting room, hospitality suite, vendor area.
- Cost of luncheon and banquet, to include a gratuity.
- Continental breakfast each morning.
- Afternoon break time snacks.
- Rental of A/V equipment.
- Snacks and beverages for the hospitality suite.
- Special mailing(s) printing and postage.
- Gifts for speakers and or attendees that have not been donated.
- Notebooks, paper, pens and any handout printing costs.
- Entertainment / speakers at the banquet.

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Registration form

Items to include

- 1) Registrant name (as it is to appear on the certificate)
- 2) Mailing address
- 3) Agency represented
- 4) Telephone number (work and or home)
- 5) Fax number
- 6) RMDIAI member Y or N, # _____
- 7) Conference theme or topics
- 8) Location of conference, hotel address and phone numbers
- 9) Conference dates and beginning time for registration
- 10) Registration options (mail in pre-registration, late registration or opening day.)
- 11) Refund policy (Policy #12)
- 12) Make checks payable to RMDIAI (Policy #24)
- 13) Mail conference registration to: (Treasurer)
- 14) Map
- 15) RMDIAI logo and hosting agency logo (if applicable)
- 16) Host (Vice President) contact information
- 17) Registration fee includes banquet, (choice of dinner including vegetarian option); additional fee for banquet guests (must be paid for in advance.

Hotel checklist

- Contact and interview hotel catering/sales representative, obtain price lists (food, room rental, guest rooms, A/V equipment) and tour facilities.
- Is there a government rate for guest rooms? Is there a discount on meeting rooms based on the number of guest rooms reserved per day of the conference?
- Is the meeting room(s) available for the proposed date of the conference based on estimated attendance (50 is a good starting point).
- Arrange for a meeting room for the Board of Directors meeting the night before the conference is scheduled to begin.
- Arrange for a hospitality suite.
- Arrange for late check out on the last day of the conference if the hotel will allow it.
- Arrange for the same daily rate to be available to attendees if they choose to stay extra days before or after the conference.
- Find out the time the meeting room(s) will be available for set-up.
- Decide on a seating arrangement (auditorium, classroom, workshop).
- Arrange for a podium, table and United States flag at the front of the room.
- Arrange for vendors to have one table and one chair at each vendor booth.
- Arrange for a secure room for vendor displays.
- Arrange for the historian to have two tables for displays and sales.
- Arrange for three display tables for the photography contest.
- Arrange for two tables at the meeting room entrance for registration on the first day of the conference.
- Become familiar with room lighting and heating controls.

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- Find out about hotel restrictions for smoking, outside food and beverage, where it is allowed and what can be brought into the hotel.
- Arrange for pitchers of water and glasses on the tables.
- Find out about hotel transportation provided.
- Find out if pens and note pads are provided by the hotel.
- Find out what hotel services are available to attendees and announce it at the beginning of the meeting.

Spouses/Guest Program

- Contact the Chamber of Commerce and hotel conference coordinator to obtain information on entertainment and local attractions for spouses, children and RMDIAI members attending the conference.
- What forms of transportation are required and available (is there a complimentary hotel shuttle, tour buses, etc.)?
- Lunch/dinner arrangements and fees made for spouses?

Speakers Checklist

- Contact potential speakers; determine their topic; which day they will be presenting; the amount of time they will have allotted for their presentation; what A/V equipment they require; what benefits they will receive (i.e., meals, rooms, honorarium, etc.) Once they have been booked reconfirm in a letter what arrangements have been made.
- Obtain an abstract or summary of each speakers presentation. Handouts should be obtained ahead of time for inclusion in the notebook. Obtain a brief biography for their introduction.
- The week before the conference contact each speaker and reconfirm the details of their presentation...date and time, equipment needed.
- Have backup presenters. Emergencies happen and speakers occasionally have to cancel. Have a backup plan.
- Have certificates of appreciation (RMDIAI pin or gift) to present after each speaker has presented.

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Vendors

- Mail invitation letters to numerous local and national vendors (prototype letter attached)
- When a vendor has accepted the invitation, reconfirm the date, times and locations with them in writing. Include in the letter exactly what will be covered (banquet, continental breakfast, business luncheon). Be certain to include them on your head count to the hotel for meals.
- Have certificates of appreciation made ahead of time to present to the vendors at the beginning of the conference, at the banquet, or whenever you choose.

Miscellaneous details

- A gavel plaque needs to be ordered for the outgoing president. If there is a hosting agency an appreciation plaque needs to be ordered and presented to Administrator or representative.
- Registration forms and checks payable to RMDIAI are provided to the Treasurer to be deposited into the division's checking account to cover conference expenses.
- Keep informed on hotel guest room registrations during the conference planning to assure any commitments to the hotel are honored.
- Make arrangements for someone to offer an invocation/blessing at the opening ceremonies and banquet.

Conference Day Checklist

- Meet with hotel conference coordinator to insure the meeting rooms are prepared, the audio/video requirements have been met.
- Arrange to have a minimum of three people to handle the registration table. This should include the treasurer so that late registrations and payments can be completed. Duties to include: welcome, late registration, receipt of money, distribution of name tags, binders, maps of local restaurants and questions answered.
- Registration should begin 1 to 1 ½ hours before the start of the conference. The registration table should remain open until at least thirty minutes after the start of the conference to handle any late arrivals.
- Issue tickets for the attendance appreciation awards.
- Have a laptop and printer available to create certificates for last minute attendees or to re-type any name changes or corrections.
- Meet with vendors to coordinate activities of conference, assist them with hotel contacts (copies, faxes, shipping); reconfirm with them the time assigned for the vendors to give a brief introduction and product description.

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Banquet Checklist

- Select a menu that will be appropriate for the general membership and be sure to include several vegetarian meals (must be ordered ahead of time.)
- Cash bar scheduled to open one hour before the banquet?
- Will there be a keynote speaker or entertainment scheduled? Be sure to include their meal in the head count.
- Is a podium or PA required?
- Table set aside for the winning photographs (photo contest winners)?
- Do you want a head table designated for RMDIAI officers and spouses, honored guests, keynote speaker?

After the conference

- Assure that all bills and monies are given to the Treasurer so that a summary of the conference costs can be tabulated.
- Send out letters of appreciation to gift contributors, speakers, vendors, hotel staff, etc.
- Make sure all attendance certificates have been distributed.
- Prepare a summary of the conference and forward for publication in THE SILENT WITNESS and the web site.

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