



Virtual F2F Meetings Think Tank **Getting Back To Business**

Date: May 14, 2020

Time: 3:00PM ET

Discussion Summary

As states and counties open up and loosen restrictions, we are all on different timelines. That said, face to face meetings will return and we are starting the conversation now to be prepared for when our clients are ready to meet again. In surveying many of our clients, it is clear that the number one concern in meeting again is safety and therefore that is at the front of every discuss we are having. Due to the current environment, we have been only meeting virtually. However, starting next month, we have face to face meetings that we are eager to prepare for in our new “normal” considering social distancing as well as all CDC recommendations for gatherings and taking into account safety above all else, Many of our meetings moving forward will be hybrid with some in person attendance and some virtual attendance as we adapt to each individual’s unique situation. Whatever lies ahead, we will be meeting face to face again. So, now is the time to begin visualizing what our meetings will look like, to ensure a safe, healthy, and positive experience. Shifting this period of uncertainty into a chapter of reimagination and innovation was the focus of our virtual F2F Meetings Think Tank and below is the outcome.

1. PPE and Screening Policies

a. PPE Requirements and Hygiene Products

- Continue to monitor local, state, and government guidance on the requirements and best practices.
- Hand sanitation stations throughout the hotel or rent additional handwashing stations.
- Sanitation and disinfection of all common and high traffic areas through hotel.
- Provide amenity bags at check in or in guest rooms that include face masks, hand sanitizer, and gloves.
- Use masks as branding opportunity by personalizing them for your event/hotel.
- Use face masks as name badges.
- Use face masks as sponsorship opportunity.
- Guests rooms left vacant for 24-48 hours in between stays.
- UV lights or electrostatic sprayers to disinfect rooms and meeting space.

b. Screening Measures

- Thermal imaging or temperature guns can be used as guest enter the hotel to monitor temperatures.
- If guests do have a temperature over 100 degrees, consider having a procedure or an isolation area where they can be taken for further evaluation.
- Mixed opinions on regulating temperatures as there is concern it may violate personal privacy.

c. Additional Items

- No valet parking options likely for a while.
- No bell services likely for a while.
- Attendees sign waivers.
- Larger aisle ways and directional aisle ways.



- Digital menus and/or mobile application to see menus and agendas.
- Use apps that allow guests to check in through their phones and keyless entry to their room.
- App or Alexa based in room hotel operations.
- Increased cleaning measures including not renting rooms until it has been unoccupied for 24 hours.
- Signs discouraging handshaking and reminding of social distancing, use of tissues, washing hands, etc.
- If temperature or sick, attendees/staff should NOT go to a work or attend a meeting.
- Consider plans for an onsite doctor or pre-arranged medical personnel.
- GBAC offers guidance for hospitality businesses to begin reopening.
 - o <https://gbac.issa.com/about/>
- Purchase plexiglass for front desk check in, information fair, registration, etc.
 - o XYBIS sells Plexiglas specific for office stations <https://www.xybix.com/plexiguard>

2. Food & Beverage

a. Food and Beverage Service:

- No contact F&B services is the goal.
- No more buffet service; at least not for a while.
- Menu only options for prepackaged food in bags/boxes for all meals.
 - o Salads, wraps, sandwiches, yogurts, etc.
- If plated meals are done, cover them in the kitchen and do not remove covering until given to guest.
- Provide bottled water rather than water stations.
- Use prepackaged disposable silverware.
- Roll silverware and allow it to sit in a designated area for three days so the virus can die off.

b. Additional Items:

- Avoid cross contamination by ensuring that wait staff is not also bussing tables.
- Use the guidelines provided to restaurants to assist with creating F&B procedures and learn from their reopening practices.
- Consider that there will be more trash from prepackaged items and additional trash service may be needed.

3. Meeting Room Set Ups

a. Meetings will be significantly more space intensive than previously.

- One person per 6 ft table or two people per an 8 ft table with them sitting on each end of the table.
- Theater sets with increased number of aisles by setting up columns of two chairs each within six-foot aisles in between, while also increasing distance between chair rows.
- Put tape down on the carpet to indicate how far apart attendees are for standing in a queue.
- Shared a 3D diagram example for approx. 250 ppl at 72-inch rounds with 4 per round for individuals and 6 per round if two family members. Set was accommodated well with approx. 10,000 sq. ft.
- A calculator for a rough estimate for room capacity while adhering to social distancing.
 - o <https://www.banquettablespro.com/social-distancing-room-space-calculator>
- When possible rotate speakers through rooms rather than attendees as that is safest.



- F&B minimum, room rental, space limitations: hotels need to figure out how to cover their costs in this social distancing timeframe.
 - Regional meetings happening simultaneously where speakers are at one location and all other locations are virtual with everyone from that region sitting in a meeting room.
 - Use sleeping rooms as breakout rooms using virtual technology with the General Session accommodating the group.
 - o General session could be split into to half with half in virtual breakout rooms and other half in general session and rotate.
 - General session could be broken down into smaller groups in different rooms with speaker being broadcasted from one of the general session meeting rooms.
 - o Groups alternate joining in person or virtually from their hotel room. Swap at lunchtime.
 - o General Session is in person, Breakouts are virtual.
 - b. Audiovisual Equipment**
 - There will be a need for additional sanitization of AV equipment.
 - Hotels may consider a meeting package that would include a virtual option with all the equipment as part of the package.
 - Additional equipment may be needed as many meetings move to a hybrid format.
 - c. Hybrid Meetings**
 - As we transition, these combination (in person and virtual) is key to success as not all of us will feel the same way about traveling or attending an in-person meeting for a while.
 - Offer opportunities for remote participation in meeting.
 - Consider alternate meeting set ups as outlined above.
- 4. Meeting Flow**
- a.** There will be more need for collaboration between hotel, planner, and client to craft and develop agendas. Agenda crafting will begin during contracting to determine appropriate size space for breaks and meals as well as evaluating other groups in house and their schedules.
 - b. Eliminating Gathering Points**
 - Have guests enter meeting space at staggered times and dismiss guests from rooms by table or row to avoid crowding.
 - Consider alternating break or information fair times.
 - Have speakers move between breakouts rather than attendees move between breakouts
 - Consider using more outdoor meeting space.
 - Broadcast meetings to guest's hotel rooms to reduce the amount of people in the physical space.
 - Use taped lines on the floor to demarcate six-foot distances.
 - c. Registration and Meeting Materials**
 - Mail out meeting materials to attendees prior to the meeting.
 - Mail out name badges ahead of time or have them available for pick up at the front desk during check-in to the hotel.
 - Provide digital meeting materials online or through an app.
 - Assign registration times prior to arrival.
 - d. Networking events may be more limited than in past.**
 - Consider exhibit fairs with appointments only and social distancing measures including Plexiglass.



- Widened aisles and fewer booths.
- Assigned exhibit entry times and limited capacity.

Additional Information: COVID-19 Resource Links and Example Clauses

<http://www.meetings-conventions.com/News/Features/meeting-event-hotel-contract-Sample-Force-Majeure-Clause/>

<https://www.northstarmeedingsgroup.com/News/Industry/Force-Majeure-Coronavirus-COVID-19-Insurance>

<https://www.northstarmeedingsgroup.com/Planning-Tips-and-Trends/Event-Planning/Contracts-and-Legal-Issues/coronavirus-meetings-hotel-contract-event-china>

<https://www.bizbash.com/production-strategy/opinion-experts/article/21127789/readers-forum-what-advice-do-you-have-for-event-pros-negotiating-contracts-for-cancelled-or-postponed-events>

Additionally, below are a couple clauses we have received recently.

CLAUSE #1

Impossibility: If unanticipated events beyond the reasonable control of the parties (including, but not limited to: acts of God; declared war in the United States; government regulation, including, but not limited to, government regulations prohibiting travel to the city in which the Hotel is located over the Event dates and/or the issuance of a “Level 3 Travel Warning” by the Centers for Disease Control that specifically advises travelers to avoid all non-essential travel to the city in which the Hotel is located and which travel advisory is in effect over the Event dates; terrorist attacks in the city in which Hotel is located; or curtailment of transportation either in the city in which Hotel is located or in the countries/states of origin of the attendees that prevents at least 40% of the attendees from arriving for the first peak night of the Event) make it illegal or impossible to perform under this Agreement, the affected party may terminate this Agreement, without liability, upon providing written notice to the other party within ten (10) days of the occurrence.

Additional COVID-19 Termination Right: The parties acknowledge and agree that as of the time of signing this Agreement, currently there is a pandemic taking place involving COVID-19, as announced by the World Health Organization in March 2020. Given that currently there is no reliable information or data available to provide any reasonable expectation as to when the COVID-19 pandemic will likely subside in and around the Hotel’s location (or elsewhere), the parties wish to memorialize the terms of the following additional Group termination rights related solely to COVID-19:

1. If the parties mutually agree that the COVID-19 pandemic has continued such that there are government (local or national) imposed restrictions or recommendations on maximum meeting size and such restrictions or recommendations would apply to Group’s Event over the scheduled Event dates, or if there are recommendations or travel advisories issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advising against non-essential domestic travel within the United States that would materially impact Group’s Event, then the Group may elect to terminate this Agreement upon providing written notice to the Hotel.
2. If the notice of termination is delivered to the Hotel at least 30 days prior to the first arrival date, then the Group shall not owe the Hotel any cancellation damages otherwise owed by Group to Hotel if the Event were cancelled by Group for reasons unrelated to COVID-19.
3. If the notice of termination is delivered to the Hotel between 29 days and 14 days prior to the first arrival date, then the Group shall pay one-quarter (25%) of the applicable agreed liquidated cancellation damages (plus applicable state and local taxes if required by law) that would otherwise be owed by Group to Hotel if the Event were cancelled by Group for reasons unrelated to COVID-19.



4. If the notice of termination is delivered to the Hotel 13 days or less prior to the first arrival date, then the Group shall only owe the Hotel one-half (50%) of the applicable agreed liquidated cancellation damages (plus applicable state and local taxes if required by law) that would be otherwise be owed by Group if the Event were cancelled by Group for reasons unrelated to COVID-19..
5. Regardless when the cancellation notice is delivered, Group agrees to negotiate promptly and in good faith with the Hotel in an effort to rebook the cancelled Event, which must take place within one year of the original Event dates, based on space and rate availability at the Hotel.
6. If Group elects to terminate the Event due to COVID-19 concerns, then Hotel shall automatically be excused from having to provide any resale credit and/or rebook credits (if any) to Group as may otherwise be agreed to elsewhere in this Agreement.

CLAUSE #2

COVID-19 Provision:

If, within 14 days of the event (i) government imposed restrictions or recommendations regarding maximum size of group gatherings or (ii) CDC recommendations restricting travel to the city in which the Hotel is located, are in place, and either of the foregoing would materially impact Group's event, then Group shall have the right to negotiate in good faith to rebook an event of equal or greater value within one year of the original events dates, based on availability, and Hotel will apply deposits paid to the Master Account of the rebooked event. In the event that the Group elects not to have the event and the parties cannot agree on the terms of rebooking the event, after undertaking good faith negotiations to do so, the Group shall not be responsible to pay any additional funds due under the Agreement.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE VIRTUAL F2F MEETINGS THINK TANK LEADERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS DISCUSSION AND ALL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS AND PEOPLE WHO ARE WORKING TO SHIFT THIS PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY INTO A CHAPTER OF REIMAGINATION AND INNOVATION.

Michelle Harty	Danielle Ledezma
Jessica Pearson	Alyssa Bunting
Jennifer Simpson	Kevin Harty
Erika Welling	Veronica Rivera
Rita Moore	Sylvie Rothenberg
Sheri Swan	Cornelia Jung
Kimberly Montoya	Betsy Bondurant
Lynne DiFrancesco	Carlos Marillo
Ioana Vladescu	Erin Tierney
Kristin Olsen	Kristen Elgo
Leo Lopez	Tim Cloonan