

## Executive Summary

### Final Report: 2015 OLA Conference Committee to the OLA Board

Steve Silver, Conference Committee chair

- **Registrations:**
  - Total: 468
  - Pre-conferences: 268
  - PLD banquet: 79
  - Conference banquet: 75
  - Exhibitors/vendors: 29
- **Budget net profit:** estimated (as of 6-1-15) net \$37,000 (original budget: \$16,986)
- **Volunteers:**
  - 22 volunteers, in addition to the 21 conference committee members
  - Average 1.5 hours per volunteer
- **Creativity spaces:** A few comments related to the Creativity Spaces were submitted on the conference evaluations. Those comments were mixed. Reports are that the spaces were in use. Many enjoyed the opportunities. Some did not or saw problems with how the spaces were implemented.
  - Required using exhibitor table spaces to implement. Involved direct costs to the conference for the space and indirect potential cost of lost space for exhibitors. Future conferences will need to determine if worth the logistics and costs, or if this is just a one-time offering related to this year's conference theme.
- **Virtual sessions:** Two virtual sessions provided as a pilot.
  - Technology issues provided a less-than-ideal experience.
  - Poor promotion resulted in very low virtual attendance.
  - This concept needs further exploration to determine what would be viable on a continuing basis or if there is even an adequate audience to be worthwhile.
- **Statement of Appropriate Conduct at OLA Conferences:** Received no questions, complaints, or reported violations.
- **Evaluation results:**
  - Most important factors for attending are networking and programs
  - Programs and networking with colleagues are by far the most factors in decisions to attend the conference
  - On a 5 point scale:
    - Pre-conference (4.69), quality of programs (4.39), posters (4.22), registration process (4.2), and the conference website (4.09) all rated above good.
    - Exhibits (3.62) and conference facilities (3.43) rated good.
    - Conference meals rated satisfactory (3.11)
  - Largest number of complaints related to
    - Inadequate session room size

- Excessive noise from nearby session rooms and/or service corridor in some sessions
    - Poor quality of meals
  - Two highest attended programs were both related to privacy issues
- **Successes:**
  - Attendance was high
  - Energy was good
  - Keynote was great (thanks to Candice Watkins for a great theme and for landing our keynote speaker David Krakauer)
  - Despite challenges exhibits/sponsorships came in above budgeted revenue
  - Including association manager Shirley Roberts on the planning committee
  - GoToMeeting use for conference committee meetings
  - Using Dropbox to manage/store conference documents
  - Hilton staff were easy to work with
  - Routing registration checks directly to association manager Shirley Roberts
- **To improve**
  - Conflicting info about parking procedures was provided by the Hilton
  - Hilton staff were not always good about follow through on details.
  - Hilton's parking garage fills up. Have a back-up parking plan in place before the conference
  - Awareness of responsibilities for sponsoring units
- **Recommendations:**
  - No price increase for 2016 (price increased \$10 for 2015 over 2014, though it did not seem to hurt attendance).
  - Clarify pre-conference fees paid to the conference (\$50 admin fee PLUS \$10 tech fee. Not all units understood to include the \$10 tech fee when setting their registration prices)
  - Continuing purchasing one or two projectors for association use each year to reduce the number of borrowed projects needed. Long term storage of these projectors still needs to be determined
  - Ensure ALL unit heads are fully aware of the *conference planning 101* document (<http://www.olaweb.org/assets/Financials/conference%20planning%20101.pdf>), either through careful review at the board retreat or in follow-up with heads not present at the retreat.
  - Consider carefully the extra logistics involved in hosting the Virtual Reference Summit as a pre-conference. Their needs and wishes far surpass the usual pre-conference needs. Not impossible to do, but extra planning and consideration (and charges?) needs to be prepared for.
  - Continue to consider the issue of OASL non-attendance at the OLA conference.
  - Continue with an earlier exhibitor/sponsorship registration deadline
  - Provide an OLA-sponsored/owned cloud storage space (e.g. Dropbox, OneDrive, GoogleDocs, etc.). Current Dropbox account owned by Elke Bruton, technology coordinator.

- Provide a dedicated photographer for the awards ceremony, with proper spelling, library names, etc. provided ahead of time to the info can be posted to social media right away
- Continue social media hashtag format #ORLibXX where XX represents the last two digits of the conference year.
- Have a biweekly conference email newsletter from about February through the week following the conference. Any updates or announcements from conference units will be collected together into that weekly missive. Tip: use MailChimp to track email success and subscriptions. Details: <http://mailchimp.com/pricing/entrepreneur/>
- Continue to explore virtual session options
- **Considerations for future conferences:**
  - Offer full-color ads in the printed program?
  - Provide a conference app or similar mobile friendly web presence (e.g. sched.org)?