

**SALT LAKE CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD
November 12- 13, 2010 Meeting Minutes
Confidential**

Board Members (in Attendance)

Lisa Astorga	Talley Management Group
Michael Brennan	Anthony J. Jannetti, Inc.
Lori Ionntiu	Episcopal Church
Elyce Jones	Jones Marketing
Nicolina Mangano	American Bar Association
Ross Mirmelstein, CMP	National Sheriffs' Association
Mike Morgan	Novell, Inc.
Shari Pontillo, CMP	Rotary International
Matthew Schermerhorn, CMP	AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah
Gary Schirmacher, CMP	Experient
Lil Shepherd	DoTerra Essential Wellness

Salt Lake Host Committee

Scott Beck	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Pat Holmes	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Mark H. White	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau

Facilitator

David Kliman, CMP, CMM	The Kliman Group
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Graphic Recorder

Sophia Liang	Graphic Footprints
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Guest Attendees

Cynthia Adams	Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Amra Elmore	Visit Baltimore
Jimmy Romo	Delta Air Lines
Shimo Shimasaki	DMAI

Gallery Attendees

Tyson Lybbert	Marriott Salt Lake City Center Hotel
Michael Mack	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Todd Ness	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Sally O'Neill	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Chris Peterson	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Tori Piersante	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Alison Gates	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Shawn Stinson	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Eric Thompson	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau

Angela Tyler	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Diane Utley	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Julie Rhoads	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
LaRee Devitt	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Tamme Thompson	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Cannon Tarbet	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Clorinda Holland	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Carey Fenn-Moses	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Eddie Canady	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Lauren Van Bergen	Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau
Dan Williams	Radisson Downtown Hotel
Steve Combs	The Grand America/Little America Hotels
Karen Osment	The Grand America/Little America Hotels
Marty Sandgren	Marriott Hotel Downtown
Olga Bahena	Shilo Inn & Suites
Mark Erekson	Snowbird Ski & Summer Resort
Tiffany Hampton	Sheraton Hotel
Steve Lundgren	Marriott Hotel Downtown
Alyson Jackson	Salt Palace Convention Center
Tessa Baysinger	Salt Palace Convention Center
Tina Stark	The Housing Connection
Ann Bangerter	Hotel Monaco
Kristofer Watson	University Park Marriott Hotel

Friday, November 12, 2010

Welcome

Board members, Salt Lake hosts and Gallery attendees made introductions.

Opening Comments – Scott Beck and David Kliman

Scott and David welcomed the Board and thanked them for their time and commitment to Salt Lake. The Board was asked to speak honestly and openly on behalf of the meetings and convention industry as well as their respective organizations. The Board's role is to act as a sounding board; a highly relevant sample of Salt Lake's target meetings and convention audience. Salt Lake will listen and learn from the Board and appropriate action will be taken on its recommendations. Scott expressed heartfelt gratitude for the Board's feedback and guidance regarding key issues such as ad campaign, social media, sales solicitation etc.

Scott provided an update regarding Salt Lake's performance and forecast:

- The on-going struggle for relevance is the biggest issue facing destination marketing organizations (DMOs) today; meeting professionals and visitors have unlimited choices
- Salt Palace Convention Center is installing the country's largest rooftop solar panel array; 1,100 panels will generate 30-40% of the Center's power

needs; scheduled for completion and online by mid 2011

<http://www.visitsaltlake.com/articles/index.cfm?articleID=289&menuID=114>

- Partnership with the Salt Palace/SMG is stronger than ever
- Deep connection to, and effective stewardship of Salt Lake's natural environment is part of the DMO's culture and DNA; Advisory Board has confirmed numerous times that a measurable sense of social responsibility is expected in a destination
- Hotel community has been through tough times; reduced transient room taxes effected the CVB's budget; 32% decrease in revenues in 2009 from 2008; forecast 4.5% increase in 2010 and continued positive outlook for 2011 and beyond
- Convention bookings are strong; 160% of pace over next five years; however, to return to pre-recession levels requires 200% of pace; increases are in occupancy, not ADR
- City Creek www.downtownrising.com development is on schedule for completion March 22, 2012; mixed use development directly across the street from the Salt Palace

Advisory Board General Comments

Site inspections

Meeting professionals welcome conversations which help suppliers better understand clients' business objectives, culture and meeting goals;

- Develop customized ways to uncover clients needs in advance of site inspections
- Allow free time during sites to change and customize on the go if/when needed
- "Believe what clients tell you" regarding preference and create experiences which match customers' expectations

Action Items Update from March 2009 meetings

See pages 11 - 13 of this report for complete report

Delta Air Lines – Jimmy Romo – General Manager, Specialty Sales

Jimmy discussed Delta's key issues, product and services including the recent merger with Northwest; the following outlines his comments:

- 2010 providing industry's best financial results in history
- Airline industry's economic impact \$1.225 Trillion annually; 10.9 million jobs
- \$731 Billion in US GDP equals 5.2% of US total
- Service metrics are improving significantly based on DOT reports
- New penalties fine airlines \$27,000 per passenger if aircraft sits more than 3 hours after taxing from the gate
- Price of most goods and services outpace inflation; price of air travel has remained basically flat since 2000 (0.4% increase); average one way ticket cost of \$145.17 in 2009
- Aviation greenhouse gas emissions predicted to account for 3-6% of worldwide total by 2050
- \$1.5 Billion in product investments
 - Mainline aircraft replacing regional jets
 - Regional Jets have first-class cabins (except CRJ-200)
 - Wi-Fi service; world's largest equipped fleet; more than 550 planes by year-end 2010
 - All international aircraft offer individual AV on demand
 - 10% of Delta's domestic system are First-Class seats; more than any other major U.S. carrier
- 160 million passengers flown in 2010
- Forecast 11-12% growth revenue in 2010 and capacity 2-3% growth
- New routes include:
 - DTW – Hong Kong
 - DTW – Seoul
 - SEA – Beijing
 - SEA – Osaka
 - JFK – Copenhagen
 - JFK – Stockholm
 - JFK – Abuja, Nigeria
 - ATL – Accra, Ghana
 - ATL – Monrovia, Liberia
 - ATL – Luanda, Angola
 - ATL – Brasilia
 - DTW- Sao Paulo
 - DTW/MSP – Punta Cana
 - MSP – Mexico City
 - JFK – Multiple Caribbean islands
- *Meeting Program Overview*
 - Domestic/International point of sale hub/non-hub fare discounts
 - Domestic routes zones; International zones pending
 - Minimum 10 flown passengers per event, originating from two cities
 - Domestic Travel +/- three days around event dates
 - International travel is bi-directional (point of sale U.S. only)
 - International travel +/- seven days around event dates
 - Single or multi-event agreements

Meeting Group program offers

- Round-trip discount fares, flexible terms (deposits, names & ticketing dates)
- One free name change per ticketed passenger (group block travel only)

- 10 person minimum; must travel together on same outbound flights/dates; deviation on return with applicable surcharge
- Block/feeder managed by Delta Specialty Sales support area

2010/2011 Enhancements

Technology

- Delta.com - soft launch of online meeting request form
- Online support via e-mail

Joint Delta/KLM/Air France Group Product

- Group booking/ticketing program through reservations' sales

Exclusive Discount Product (EDP)

- Online meeting solutions enhancing SkyTeam Global Meetings
- Customized links
- Load pricing programs for self-booking application and quality tracking

Customer Advisory Board feedback:

- Fee to check baggage is extremely frustrating to travelers
- Ancillary fees generate significant money, but airlines have done a poor job in communicating customer options
- High cost of non-stop fares from east coast to SLC have negative impact on group business (zone fares can help as they are accessible 16 months out)
- Don't allow Delta dominance of SLC to become a liability
- Work with cities to adjust schedules to accommodate for high demand during city-wide; not DL specific issue; but Delta could take a leadership position

Social Media – Pre-Meeting Survey Results

The results of the social media survey can be found online:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/Shared/SharedResultsPasswordPage.aspx?ID=L24LL4TJSL8H>

Customer Report Card – Andrea Reno - YMCA www.ymca.net

Andrea outlined the highlights of the YMCA's recent meeting; the following summarizes her comments:

- Meeting is held every three years and rotates geographically
- 2,970 attendees; down 2,000 from last conference due to the recession, decrease in numbers was not attributable to Salt Lake
- Attendees are senior YMCA paid and volunteer leaders
- Hotel package included nine hotels and used a total of 8,000 room nights
 - Renegotiated rates and room blocks during review periods; all hotels reduced rates except Grand America
 - Strong partnership with hotels
 - Quality service; few complaints
- Convention Center; used all Halls except Hall 5
 - HVAC issue; hot days and insufficient advance cooling

- Competing group; insufficient advance communication and ineffective security to maintain separation (Saturday night Roller Derby)
- Contract language regarding room re-set charges is ambiguous
- Utah Foods and Western Foods were “great”; provided a “true partnership”; suggest creation of electronic system for food vouchers
- AV – Cornerstone; “very happy with service and pricing”; could improve communication protocol; entertainer separately contracted videographer service which was not communicated to YMCA’s planners; “when the meetings team is surprised; that’s a problem!”
- GES – good experience
- Visit Salt Lake team was rated A+; customer-centric; always responsive; we “never waited for answers”
- Challenges
 - Significant communication failure with Utah Olympic Park regarding space hold resulted in last minute venue change; situation was entirely avoidable if the Olympic Park service team had just picked up the phone and contacted the client; YMCA was caught in the middle of an internal political fight
 - Visit Salt Lake should have more political clout to address this type of service failure

empowerMINT – Shimo Shimasaki – DMAI www.empowermint.com

Shimo engaged the members in a conversation regarding this new product; the following outlines her comments and the Board's feedback:

- **The opportunity:** exploit CVB assets, simplify the meeting search function and create greater visibility of the local expert relationship offered by DMOs
- **The vision:** empowerMINT is a catalyst for raising the collective brand and credibility of DMOs in the meetings market
- The product offers CVB search capability, ability to communicate directly and the creation of buyer profile
- Blue Ocean Strategy was discussed; see www.blueoceanstrategy.com for additional details

Marketplace realities include:

- DMOs have numerous brands; can be hard to find (inconsistent names)
- Members stated that about 2/3 used a DMO when searching for an annual meeting destination; the remaining 1/3 typically search using a hotel GSO or third party; several use both simultaneously
- Experience and peer-to-peer references are prime indicators to buyers regarding which DMOs are most effective
- Room pirates and attendees booking outside room blocks is a significant issue for many buyers, but members acknowledged that solutions are not controllable by DMOs

Ideas under consideration:

- Peer-to-peer testimonials
- Hotel map and aggregator of special offers

Advisory Board's Feedback:

- Listing all destinations is critical; not just subscribers
- List destinations' HQ hotels including major meeting space on search landing page (members acknowledged that this may be politically difficult in some destinations including Salt Lake)
- User-generated peer-to-peer testimonials are more valuable and have stronger efficacy than destination generated references; it would be a "huge competitive" advantage to create a site with unedited open information
- Ability to search special offers by date would be valuable
- All technology based tools must offer a real difference in order to be considered truly valuable
- Some believe empowerMINT is not powerful enough to compete with other similar search engines which already dominate the meetings marketplace
- Ability to transparently address searches to multiple destinations and copy hotel GSO/NSO is critical

Attendance Building Tools – Scott Beck

Scott outlined Visit Salt Lake's attendance building tools; the following summarizes his comments:

- Attendance building efforts are typically reactive and take place too late in the planning process
- Ability for a DMO to assist is a core value proposition and key component to its partnership with clients
- One size does not fit all; custom tools are key
- Moments of Truth
 - Realization that traditional efforts pull attendees away from their organization's website and into a destination's site
 - Need to create desire for attendees to pull information (opt in); and address issues of "not another email to my members" by leveraging the association's content and culture pre-, during and post-meeting
 - "Join the conversation" multiple options help create attendee experiences; more meaningful to create desire to self select content



The Board's feedback was unanimous that the DMO's strategy of providing contact for use "inside" a client's website/social media etc. is the absolutely right direction to take. Providing useable, current, relevant content is a "huge competitive advantage".

Buyer/Supplier Open Forum

Visit Salt Lake supplier members were invited to join the Advisory Board to engage in an open Q&A session; the following summarizes the session's key points:

Marketplace realities include:

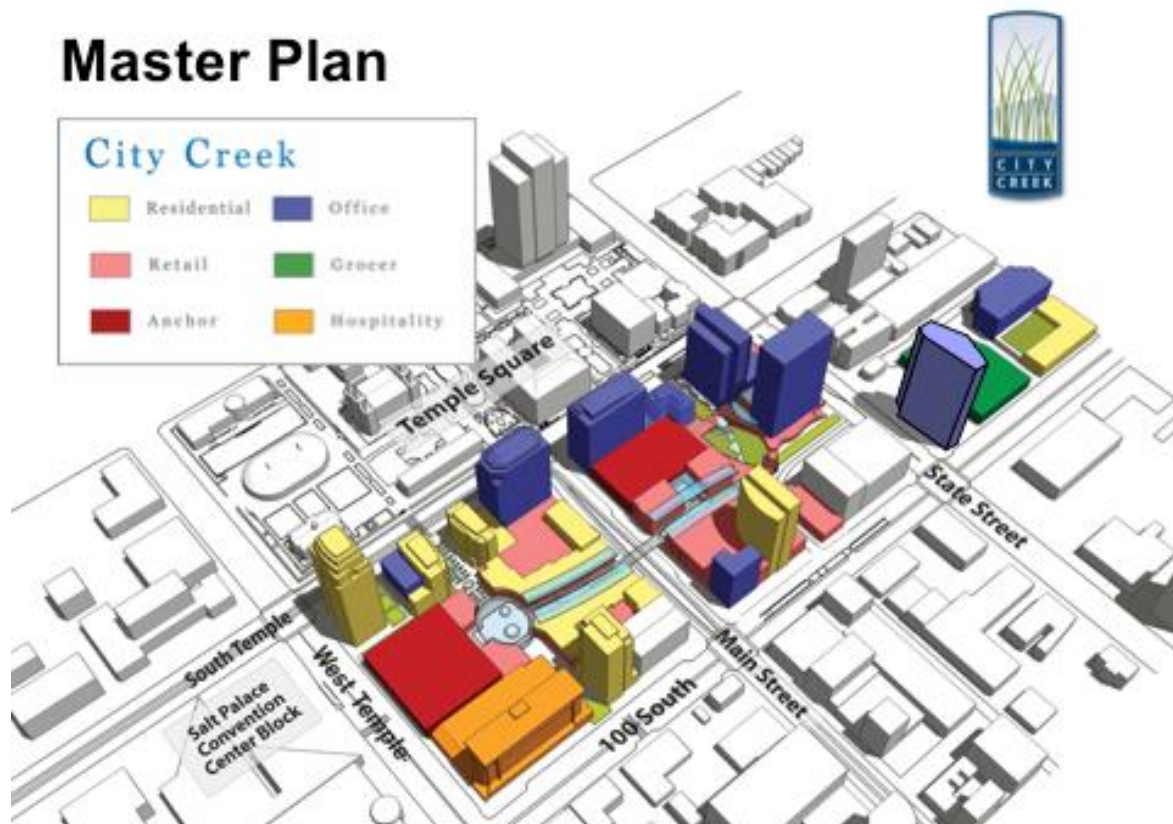
- Buyers advise that perceptions regarding negative value of meetings remains a concern; especially in high-end venues ("AIG effect"); this makes Salt Lake an even more attractive destination
- Significant economic volatility has created uncertainty in many organizations regarding their meetings; resulting in need for renegotiation, mediation etc. Planner supplier relationship more important than ever before
- Strong need to demonstrate value; planners are expected to push hard for the very best deal
- Free wireless access is now considered a basic "right" similar to clean air and water
- Suppliers experiencing planners' time compression; customers often demand immediate answers; suppliers sometime perceive they have one chance only to win business which inhibits their ability to fully understand

customers' needs; customers responded that they are almost always open to questions which will help suppliers better understand their needs

- Attendees want restaurant discounts; restaurant managers need better information regarding meeting flow, agenda timing etc.
- All agree that suppliers should take a harder stance on clients who hold space past deadlines
- Customer review websites (Trip Advisor, etc.) have an impact on vendor selection, but planners are adept at ignoring the "crazies" and focusing on realistic feedback; suppliers are advised to respond to customer feedback seriously

City Creek

Dale Bills, Director, Communications & Marketing for City Creek Reserve, Inc. reviewed the [City Creek Center](#) master plan; the following outlines his comments:



- Represents the creation of a new revitalized downtown for Salt Lake
- Project is a world-class urban development; largely formed and topped off
- Mix use combines retail, office and residential
- Enhances the legacy and history of Salt Lake and LDS Church Headquarters complex
- LEED certification is expected
- Innovative iconic architecture
- Privately funded, no public subsidies

- Project began in 2000 and will be completed March 22, 2012
- 2.1 million square feet of office space (almost fully leased)
- 900,000 square feet of retail anchored by Nordstrom and Macys; retractable roof galleria modeled after Milan Italy's Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II [City Creek Center - Taubman](#)
- 800 residential units www.citycreekliving.com includes 111 rental units
- Pedestrian centric; shortened city blocks making them more user friendly; sky bridge over Main Street
- Food Court with nine kitchens
- Restaurant row at 100 South and Regent Street will have option to serve alcohol
- 5,000 underground parking spaces
- Shopping outlets will be closed on Sundays; however, some restaurants will be open on Sundays
- Large group event space will be coordinated through Taubman's Retail Center Management

Open Topics

The groups discussed a variety of topics; the following summarizes key points:

New Convention Center Hotel

- Expansion of the Convention Center completed August 2006; Salt Palace offers 674,000 total square feet
- Potential financing caught up in politics of reduced government
- Business community remains committed
- All major hotel companies have expressed interest, but current economic environment is not conducive to major projects
- Last 11 convention center hotel projects in the US (except Las Vegas and Reno) have been some version of public private partnership
- Nashville new hotel deal may change the discussion; Omni private dollars combined with financing; Omni gets portion of hotel room tax over 30 years; may prove beneficial to Salt Lake
- Grass roots effort will be used to develop the hotel, following successes in Denver and Dallas

Visit Salt Lake General Issues

- Print advertising budget decreased from \$1.2 million to less than \$100,000 for meetings and \$325,000 for ski market; social media is integral part of DMO's present and future efforts
- Future is focused on being THE destination expert and voice; using "3rd screen" technology (TV is first screen, 2nd is computer and 3rd screen is mobile device) www.visitsaltlake.mobi
- Despite overall budget reductions; increased sales force from 7 to 11 in recognition of value of relationship selling
- Focus on site inspections and non-traditional buyer education trips; reduced trade show presence from 27 to 11 shows

- Legislative affairs success resulted in most significant change in liquor laws in last 50 years
- *Live in Utah, Work at Adobe* video was shared with the group:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9myvVWXRI8&feature=youtube_gdata_player
- Utah or Colorado? You decide....this video was shared with the group:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=utwX5zOtMol>

Boycotts

- Political and union-related boycotts were discussed briefly; some organizations are impacted, while others are not; no general consensus

Wrap Up

The Board was thanked for their commitment to the process of continuous improvement for Salt Lake. Their feedback is tremendously helpful; their candor and honest dialogue will be put to good use.

Elyce Jones, Ross Mirmelstein, Shari Pontillo and Lil Shepherd, who attended the meeting, have completed their terms on the Advisory Board and were thanked for their service.

The next meeting will take place in about one year; exact dates to follow. The meeting was adjourned. Recommendations and Actions Items are found on the following page.

Recommendations and Action Items November 2010

- Develop programs which customizes site inspections based on customers' needs and business objectives
- Develop increased political clout to address Utah Olympic Park services to meeting professionals
- Ask group contacts if they'd like increased uniformed police presence in and around downtown core during their meeting
- Combine Convention Center walk-through with new member orientation session at future CAB meetings

Action Item Update from March 2009 Meeting (progress noted in bold font)

Train and equip Event Managers to be customer "advocates" with full knowledge of the destination and the Convention Center and the ability to completely manage the service relationship.

Future plan is for the SLCVB services department to coordinate a "Services" seminar offered to SLC services staff (hotels, SPCC, CVB) to train all to be customer "advocates" able to manage this service relationship. Our recently launched mobile website and updated member offerings via our website we feel will be a great tool as economic pressure eases.

Develop communication timelines to document and confirm contractual and event services well in advance of an event (typically 6 months).

SLCVB VP of Services is meeting with SPCC event operations staff to discuss ways in which to accomplish this goal, including assigning Event Managers to accounts earlier than currently done. Updates as to progress in this area will be reported.

Utah Foods to create method to document excess food quantities; offer all clients an F&B “pick-up” report.

An F&B report is provided now, upon request. Utah Foods will make this a standard report to provide and, if appropriate, will include information on any excess food quantities for the specific event.

Ask for prior-year event specs, decorator information and contact information of convention center event manager; use proactively to benefit the success of the program.

SLCVB currently completes a booking form that includes event specs and convention center details that is then turned over to the SPCC. AV and decorator information has been added to this booking form.

Develop mentor-style educational programs that provide meeting professionals with tools to enhance their abilities to work effectively with Event Managers.

Exploring ideas and reviewing options

Develop process for SLCVB to communicate meeting professionals' needs and account-specific information to Event Managers.

SPCC Event Managers have been provided access to the SLCVB CRM so they may go into the account and review traces for more specifics as to the needs of the client/group. They have also been encouraged to create traces and detail their communications with the group/client.

Currently, SLCVB services department meets in a “file turnover” with SLCVB sales staff one year out from the convention to review convention needs and client profiles. They will now include the SPCC in the “file turnover” meeting.

Site Inspections

Know Thy Client”; ask the right questions to truly understand planners' needs and preferences. Don't assume one size fits all, ask if civic leaders (the Mayor, etc.) should “meet and greet”, attend meals, etc.

Currently, convention sales staff research each citywide account before contacting the client, making sure they know details of their meeting, contacting past cities/convention centers for further details. Going forward, emphasis will be placed on creating a strategic plan when approaching a specific client through targeted questions that help sales staff to know each client and their meeting. The questions will be focused to identify clients' “hot buttons”, problems in other destinations, local involvement with meeting and/or on site inspections, what Salt Lake can do to earn the business, etc. All interactions with the potential customer will be client-centric. This will enable the sales staff to plan pertinent site inspections that are customized and tailored to address the specific needs of each client/meeting.

Create a psychological style customer profile to help better understand their key issues.
Pending

Include Event Managers on initial site inspections and use to develop stronger relationships between meeting professionals and Event Managers.

A specific program is being discussed with the SPCC that will customize needs to the specific client's point of view, so there is no assumption that "one size fits all". This coincides with the need to assign Event Managers to accounts earlier than is currently done. Updates as to progress in this area will be reported.

Many planners want free time to experience the destination and the Center unescorted and on their own timetable.

Special attention will be taken to include free time on site inspections and Buyer Education Trip itineraries

No "red carpet clap lines" during site inspections. **Noted**

Don't create a false sense of glamorous meeting professional lifestyles - **Noted**

Provide flow chart indicating who's responsible for each area of importance.

SLCVB services department created a responsibilities/contact chart that will delineate SLCVB and SPCC responsibilities. This chart will be reviewed with the client when SLCVB services department has first contact with the client and begins servicing the convention.

Show buyers the pragmatic, real-world workings of the destination.

When possible, we will include in site inspection itineraries the opportunity to ride on TRAX, see first-hand the motor coaches available for shuttle, walk the loading docks, take a taxi to/from the airport...giving the client real-world examples of what others have experienced in Salt Lake. The goal will be to show the client that Salt Lake works for their meeting. Other ideas will also be discussed with the sales staff.

Create additional ways to engage the Advisory Board individually and collectively between meetings; focus individual connections on issues specific to members' areas of expertise.

SLCVB will utilize the members' expertise and Salt Lake experience to assist with specific vertical markets. CAB members will be requested to provide a peer-to-peer evaluation and recommendations with targeted SLCVB customers.

Budgets in 2010 were drastically reduced which impacted available resources and impacted ability to reach out to the Advisory Board as much as we would have liked.