

# Serving as Local Conference Host for a CPTSC Annual Conference

## General Duties of the Local Conference Host

The local conference host is responsible for all on-site activities relating to the conference, and the responsibilities of the local conference host usually includes the following items:

- Securing/Reserving all rooms related to all on-site conference activities (these include presentation rooms, banquet rooms, etc.)
- Identifying local lodging options (both on campus and near campus) for attendees and providing attendees with the contact information they need to secure lodging for the conference
- Creating and maintaining a conference website
- Working with the Program Chair(s) to produce the final, formatted version of the conference program
- Creating the final version of the conference program that is made available to conference attendees online
- Providing all registration-related information (e.g., maps of the location and the meeting and presentation spaces) and materials (e.g., name badges)
- Providing people to help with registration and conference logistics (e.g., helping people find their rooms, answering local questions)
- Providing attendees with travel information/information on how to get to the conference via air (e.g., closest airports), car (if driving), and bus and/or train (if applicable)
- Coordinating the Reception (typically Thursday night, but other options can be discussed)
- Providing refreshments for different conference-related events (e.g., coffee breaks)
- Working with the sponsorship coordinator to identify and contact vendors who might wish to advertise in the conference program, have a vendor booth at the conference, or sponsor a conference-related activity (e.g., sponsor one of the conference lunches)
- Deciding on and planning Saturday excursions

## General Schedule of Conference Events

CPTSC Annual Meetings usually take place over a three-day period (Thurs.-Sat.) and involve the following, general schedule of events:

### Thursday afternoon/evening

- Workshops from 12:00-3:00 (two concurrent)
- Opening Reception/Welcoming Event: A formal or informal event at which attendees can mix and mingle before the conference presentations begin on Friday (Generally from 6:00 or 6:30-8:00 or 8:30pm). This includes the announcement of awards
- Registration: In some cases, on-site conference registration opens a few hours before this event (e.g., from 4:00-6:00pm)

### Friday all day

- Presentations: All formal presentations and regular conference sessions take place during this day – Generally starting at 8:00 or 9:00 and going until 5:00 or 6:00pm (depending on the number of total conference sessions)
- Registration: Generally opens 30-60 minutes before the first formal conference presentations begin that morning and closes shortly before the last round of presentations begins (Generally from 8:00 or 8:30am – 3:30 or 4:00pm)

- The local conference host needs to work closely with the program committee to plan and to coordinate the presentations portion of that day's schedule

Saturday morning

- Additional workshops if necessary (e.g., grad student workshop or Women in TC Event)
- CPTSC Annual Business Meeting: CPTSC members meet as one large group and conduct the organization's annual business (Generally from 10:00am – 12:00 noon)

Saturday afternoon

- Excursions: The local conference host coordinates an outing for conference attendees, and such an outing is generally designed to highlight a particular aspect of the local setting, culture, etc. (Generally from 1:00-3:00 or 4:00pm)

## Submitting a Proposal to Host a CPTSC Annual Meeting (Conference)

Proposals to host an upcoming CPTSC Annual Meeting (Conference) must include information that addresses the following items:

### **Scheduling:**

*On what dates do you propose to host the conference/do you propose for the conference to take place?*

(Note: CPTSC conferences usually take place in late Sept. through mid-Oct./between the last week of Sept. and the second week of Oct.)

In selecting these dates, be sure to also note if these proposed conference dates overlap or conflict with any

- Religious observances/holidays during that time (e.g., Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Columbus Day, or Shemini Atzert)?
- Other on-campus or off-campus events in the area (e.g., other conferences being hosted by the related institution, athletic events hosted by the institution, etc.)?
- Other conferences in the field (e.g., the annual conference of the IEEE Professional Communication Society, the ACM-SIGDOC Conference, or the Annual Conference of the Association for Business Communication)?

Ideally, the conference should be scheduled to avoid such overlap, and if not, the related proposal must address how the conference organizers plan to address such prospective overlaps.

### **Location:**

*Where do you propose to host the conference?*

- In what city/town and state do you propose to host the conference?
- Will the primary conference activities (i.e., presentations and business meeting) take place on the grounds of a university or college campus, or will they take place at an off-campus/other local facility?
- What will be the related cost for reserving rooms for conference presentations and other conference-related activities? Please provide a tentative budget of room costs to address this item. In so doing, include tentative costs for
  - The meeting space for a Thursday half day (2 rooms) and an evening opening reception (generally, only 1 relatively large room needed)
  - The presentation space for Friday's conference program (price based on 4-5 presentation rooms for 4-5 consecutive presentations for the entire day); for this item, consider both the costs of the room and the cost of any associated presentation technologies. Generally, at minimum, each room needs Internet access and an ability to project via a projector system).
  - The meeting space for the Saturday morning business meeting (generally, only 1 relatively large room needed)
  - Rooms for Saturday morning workshops (if applicable)

### **Access/Transportation:**

*What options do attendees have for travel to the conference?*

- **Airports:** What is the closest airport (or airports)? How far is the airport (are the airports) from the conference site? What transportation options are available for attendees who need to travel from the airport(s) to the conference site or hotels (e.g., airport shuttles, taxi services, municipal busses, or will you, as local host, provide a shuttle service)? In presenting these options, note how often such services run, provide the relative cost of each service, and provide related contact information (e.g., URL for related website) for each option.
- **Ground Transportation:** What major highways/land routes can be used by individuals who wish to travel to the conference? What bus (e.g., Greyhound) or rail (e.g., Amtrack) offer service to the conference location?
- **Parking:** If individuals wish to use their own cars to travel to the conference, will they need to pay for parking at the conference site, or will free parking (or reduced parking) be made available to them?

### **Lodging:**

*Where can attendees stay while at the conference?*

- What hotels and motels are close to the conference site? In addressing this item, note
  - The names of the related nearby lodging options
  - The relative per-night cost of a room
  - How far each option is from the conference site and can attendees easily reach the conference site via walking?
  - If the option offers free local transportation to its guests
  - If the location offers a discount to individuals attending an event at the conference site (e.g., attending a university or college event)
  - If you need to sign a contract or commit to room blocks with a particular establishment. For example, many hotels will provide discounted room rates and reserve room blocks for organizations. However, hotels often require a contract to be signed that states if the room block isn't sold out that the organization pay the difference. This can be a potentially costly agreement if not negotiated correctly. CPTSC officers and/or past conference hosts can help with this so do not hesitate to ask questions.
- Are any on-campus lodging options available? If so, provide a related website or other contact information (e.g., a phone number or email address) for this option.
- How will attendees get from the hotels to the conference location? Will you provide a shuttle service that will pick up attendees at different hotels located a certain distance from the conference? If so, what will such a service costs, and will it run for all three days of the conference (Thurs. – Sat.) of just on certain days and at certain times?

**Food:**

*What refreshments/food and drink options will you provide for attendees during the conference?*

- Provide costs for heavy hors d'oeuvre for 100 people for the opening reception on Thursday. This can be done at the conference site or a local establishment. Get pricing for a cash bar.
- Provide nearby lunch options for attendees on Friday.
- Provide costs for two coffee breaks on Friday.
- Provide costs for coffee for the Saturday business meeting

**Website:**

*Who will provide and update the conference website?*

- Will you/a member of the conference team create and maintain the website for the conference? If so, will any costs be associated with this process? If not, who/what organization do you plan to use to create and maintain/update the conference website, and what will this option cost? This needs to be phrased so that there isn't a cost option. And point out that the conference website can be hosted for free on wordpress, googlesites, or a number of other options.

**Team:**

*Who/what individuals will be working on coordinating the conference?*

- Who will the primary contact person/coordinator for the conference be?
- What other individuals will be working with the primary contact person to coordinate the conference, and what roles will these individuals play (e.g., webmaster, registration coordinator, program layout and design person, meals/food/catering coordinator, etc.).

## **Timeline for Local Conference Host**

Throughout this process, it is essential that local conference host maintain close communication with the Program chair.

### **14-18 months prior (at time of proposal submission to host conference to executive committee)**

- Choose a date
- Determine availability and costs for:
  - ballrooms and conference rooms
  - hotels and on-campus accommodations
  - transportation plan for airports, hotels
  - Saturday Excursion
  - Registration system
  - Reception and coffee breaks (estimates only)

### **Once proposal is accepted (a year out)**

- Reserve conference rooms and identify Technology support and internet access—an IT group dedicated and responsive to your needs, as well as those of conference goers
- Reserve hotel room block
- Identify your local team

### **Six months out (March or April):**

- Create Website design and development—a usable website that includes a registration page and a design that can be reflected in the Conference program and materials. The website needs to include
  - Registration page
  - Schedule
  - Transportation and lodging
  - Excursion
  - Local info on restaurants and things to do
- Identify the timing for ordering Food and beverages for Thursday reception and Friday breaks
- Transportation options to accommodate to and from airports, as well as to and from hotels during the conference and for the Saturday Excursion—professional or volunteer
- Sponsorships from deans, provosts, and presidents

### **Summer**

- Add content to website
- Work with program committee on the conference program
- Work with sponsorship coordinator on securing ads
- Registration needs to be functional at least three months prior to the conference
- Confirm excursion details
- Send out notices and reminders to appropriate list serves, as well as to the list of accepted speakers

## **Six weeks to a month out from conference**

- Reminders to register and book hotels and any changes to schedule/program post its launch to key lists, such as CPTSC, ATTW, H-Rhetor, TechRhet, WPA-L, relevant facebook groups
- Find out if there is any information you need to provide IT to offer internet access to conference goers
- Alert Food Services to the Conference, get on their schedule, if you've not done so already, and look over possible menus
- Secure transportation providers, if applicable
- Begin to design, produce, and store print materials that will go into the Conference packets, such as brochures and maps, if applicable

## **A week or so before the Conference**

- Continue to update the Conference website
- Send reminders across communication channels (see above)
- Print name badges and other material such as maps, etc. (not programs)
- Confirm food/reception
- Confirm presentation rooms and technology
- Confirm hotels
- Confirm transportation
- Confirm parking
- Confirm IT support
- Secure nametages and any other conference materials
  - Stuff the Conference packets, if applicable
  - Assemble the Conference badges

## **Conference Day(s)**

- Prepare any informational announcements
- Thank Local Site Committee publicly
- Man onsite registration table