

THE NEW
COFFEE BREAK
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Connect

MEETINGS INTELLIGENCE

MAY/JUNE 2011



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GAMIFICATION: WHY YOU NEED IT

"If we don't do something to keep and grow engagement, we'll run the risk of undermining some of the value of the actual live events themselves."

—Gabe Zichermann, page 68

HOW TO

Choose Marketing Automation Software 36

Handle Conflict in Negotiations 38



Stephanie L. Bodanyi,
Research to Practice

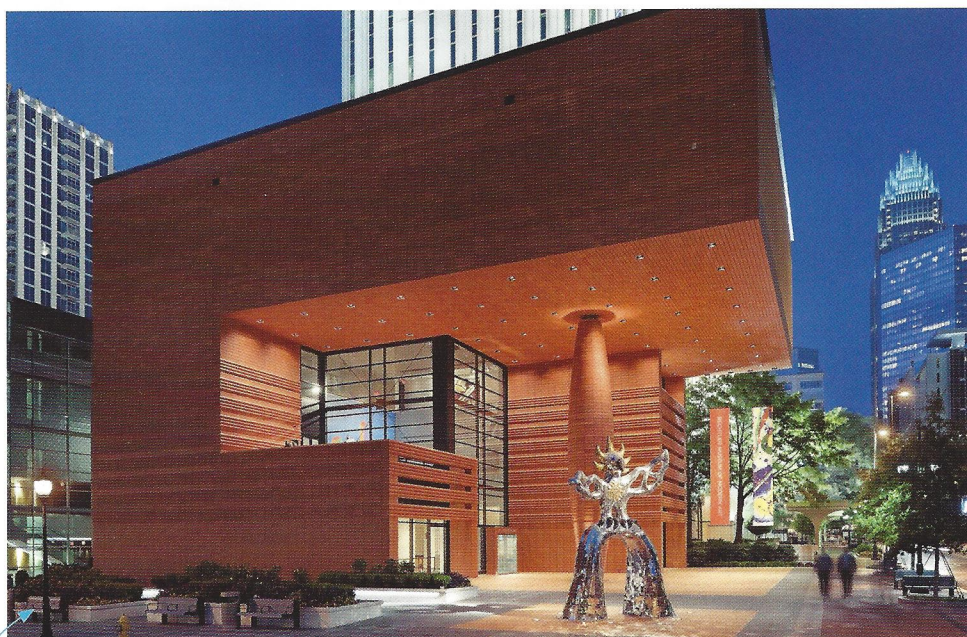
"SHE HAS DONE MORE IN THE EVENT INDUSTRY IN HER SHORT TENURE THAN A LOT OF PROFESSIONALS DO IN A CAREER. SHE IS THE ULTIMATE MEETING PROFESSIONAL AND VOLUNTEER LEADER."

Charlotte

North Carolina

When Charlotte hosted the Democratic National Convention in 2012, the entire nation saw what savvy convention planners have known for quite some time: Charlotte's "got a lot." The largest city in the Carolinas, Charlotte is accessible; has many memorable venues; and appeals to art lovers, outdoor adventurers and urban explorers alike.

By Christine Barrett and Michael J. Solender

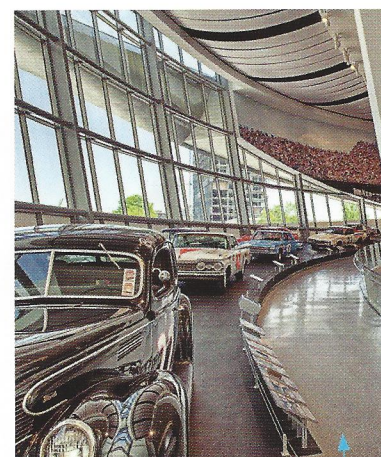


A Night at the Museum

Bechtler Museum of Modern Art is in Uptown's Levine Center for the Arts complex and has more than 1,400 pieces from some of the mid-20th century's most influential artists. The works were previously part of the Bechtler family's private collection, which was accumulated during a course of 70 years. The museum's lobby and second-floor sculpture terrace are available for private events, accommodating up to 225 and 35 attendees, respectively. A classroom can hold up to 30.

Also part of Levine Center and adjacent to Charlotte Convention Center, **Harvey B. Gantt Center** celebrates African-American culture through dance, music, visual and literary arts, film, educational programs, theater productions and community outreach. The museum features rotating exhibits and a permanent collection. It has three levels of event space, including the 747-sq.-ft. rooftop pavilion and the 1,397-sq.-ft. Performance Suite, fitting for presentations and lectures.

The Levine Center is also home to the uptown branch of the **Mint Museum of Craft & Design**. The museum's mission is to preserve important and historical pieces of art from around the world. The museum has five event spaces, including the 240-seat James B. Duke Auditorium; an atrium that holds 190 seated and 400 standing; a terrace that holds 225 seated and 400 standing; a boardroom; and a classroom. Exhibit galleries can also be rented for events.



Interactive Off-Site Venues

To experience an authentic part of Charlotte's culture, spend some time at **NASCAR Hall of Fame**. Take a ride along Glory Road 2.0, the site's signature exhibit. The Hall of Honor is where you'll find the Hall of Fame inductees. The venue can be rented for events of up to 2,400, including receptions surrounded by NASCAR memorabilia and retired cars.

Sea Life Charlotte-Concord Aquarium brings guests up close to more than 5,000 creatures including sharks, stingrays, jellyfish and seahorses. The "Tropical Bay of Rays" exhibit area serves as function space for special events.

Adventure seekers can get their thrills at **U.S. National Whitewater Center**. The one-of-a-kind Olympic training facility has mountain biking, rock climbing, a ropes course, zip lines, running trails, the 46-ft. free-fall Mega Jump, and a multiple channel whitewater river for rafting, canoeing and kayaking, as well as a large outdoor pavilion and indoor facilities.

Accommodations near the Action

A number of hotels are within walking distance of Charlotte Convention Center:

0.1 miles: The 700-room Westin Charlotte is across the street from the convention center. It is the city's largest hotel and has more than 40,000 square feet of flexible indoor event space, including a 16,000-sq.-ft. ballroom.

0.2 miles: Connected via walkway to the convention center, Hilton Charlotte Center City has 400 guest rooms and 30,000 square feet of meeting space. It is a AAA Four Diamond property, and Charlotte's Lynx Blue Line Light Rail stops there.

0.3 miles: Omni Charlotte has 374 guest rooms, 16,000 square feet of meeting space and 13 meeting rooms. Attendees can take in views of the skyline from the rooftop pool. The property connects via skywalk to the elevated Charlotte OverStreet Mall, which has shops and restaurants, and links 12 city blocks.

0.4 miles: One of the smaller hotels near the convention center, Aloft Charlotte Uptown at the EpiCentre has 175 guest rooms and 2,500 square feet of event space that can accommodate up to 200 attendees. It's located in Charlotte's EpiCentre, a complex of restaurants, shops, nightlife and entertainment.

0.5 miles: Charlotte Marriott City Center has 438 guest rooms and 20,000 square feet of meeting space. It's in the prime Trade and Tryon street area in Charlotte's business district, which is the largest U.S. banking center outside of New York City.



Entertainment Central

The 30-acre NC Music Factory has entertainment options for all attendees to enjoy on open night. Guests can laugh with comics on stage at the Comedy Zone; watch local bands perform at the Saloon; grab a local brew or play chess and pingpong in the game area at VBGB Beer Hall & Garden; dance to country music at Saddle Up; get an upscale experience at Ivory Lounge, a club inside The Label House; catch a concert at The Fillmore, Charlotte's premier venue for national touring acts; or order up one of more than a dozen margarita flavors at Wet Willie's.

Treat your guests to a night in the stands with one of Charlotte's sports teams:



NFL: Carolina Panthers
Bank of America Stadium



NBA: Charlotte Bobcats
Time Warner Cable Arena



MiLB: Charlotte Knights
BB&T Ballpark



PLANNER PICKS

Darrell McCook, meetings manager at Kellen Meetings, shares his Charlotte favorites:



Restaurant: Halcyon (shown)
Event Spaces: Charlotte Art Museum and NASCAR Hall of Fame
Neighborhood: Myers Park
Hotel: The Westin Charlotte
Hidden Treasure: Johnson & Wales Culinary School

Getting Around The Lynx Blue Line connects many attractions in Charlotte's South End neighborhood.

