Annual Conference & Expo: Benefits of Attending

Your attendance at the IPMA Annual Conference & Expo is the most productive and cost-effective professional development opportunity of the year. **Here’s why you need to be there:**

Three days of unrivaled educational programming, peer networking, and one-on-one discussions with business partners makes the IPMA Annual Conference & Expo the industry’s leading event for legal practice support management professionals. Not only will you hone your managerial skills and talents, but your firm will benefit from your participation in forums where other professionals share their successes.

**EDUCATION**

The IPMA’s specialized content is developed by your peers and focused on the distinct challenges that affect how legal practice support professionals are managed. This year’s three-day educational program features hot topics, latest trends, and current issues, so whether you manage paralegals, litigation support, docketing, or other revenue-generating functions, you’ll find the information you’re seeking among programming on human resources, technology and innovation, communications, organizational management, and career development.

General sessions and workshop programming run over multiple tracks that allow you to choose the most fitting array of topics to meet your firm’s needs. These tracks enable you to tailor your experience and hear about what’s happening across the industry. Learn about the best practices developing at firms and corporations throughout the U.S. and Canada—a great way to find out what’s working and what’s not—and advance your career with the knowledge and tools you’ll take back to your office following the conference.

**EXPO**

Competing for business in today’s legal marketplace requires savvy management that promotes efficiency and innovation. Exhibitors at the IPMA Expo are industry experts and solution-providers in the fields of recruiting, deposition and court services, corporate services, translation, eDiscovery, and more. With scheduled expo time built into the conference agenda, there’s no shortage of opportunities to evaluate how your firm can benefit from the latest products, services, and technology—all under one roof!

**NETWORKING**

Every year, conference participants offer glowing reviews of the unique networking that takes place at IPMA. Connect with a community of people who understand the issues you face. Meet managers representing various firm sizes, practice areas, and corporations—providing a valuable, ongoing resource for problem solving and know-how.

When you meet with your peers, you have an opportunity to collaborate, hear new ideas, and validate (or change) your perspectives. You may hear what others are doing and be inspired to implement something similar, or you could hear another idea and realize you’re already on the right track!

**JUSTIFICATION CHECKLIST**

- **Plan early!** In addition to the IPMA’s early-bird registration discount, you can take advantage of low airfare rates and discounted overnight rooms within the IPMA’s room block at the JW Marriott New Orleans.

- **Formalize your request in writing.** Identify benefits your firm will realize through your attendance at the IPMA Annual Conference & Expo and support your request with specific reasons for attending. Think about what sessions meet objectives and learning opportunities that are important to your firm. Prepare a list of exhibitors that you’d like to meet to discuss their products and know the answer to the question, “Why?”
Prepare a budget for attending IPMA and be willing to contribute to your own education by personally absorbing a portion of the costs if necessary. Offset travel costs by using frequent flyer miles or sharing a hotel room with another IPMA member. Consider using vacation time for some of the days out of office. Be sure to note that most meals are covered in the registration fee or by exhibitor-hosted events.

Share your knowledge. Offer to present everything you learn to non-paralegal managers in your firm.

Share conference materials with your partners. Ask for input about which sessions and business partner meetings would most benefit your firm or company.

Present your plan to handle important business matters while you are away and arrange for backup.

If your organization has managers in multiple offices, the IPMA Annual Conference & Expo is a great opportunity to schedule a face-to-face meeting. Plan to discuss implementation strategies for the ideas you’ll develop at conference.

THE POWER OF A SINGLE IDEA

A single new idea, like introducing a new procedure, policy, or product, makes attending the IPMA Annual Conference & Expo a worthwhile investment. When you return to the office, be sure to:

- Emphasize the most important thing you learned as a result of attending IPMA.
- Demonstrate new skills or processes you learned that will save time and money.
- Keep in contact with other conference participants to build your network of resources.
- Provide an executive report that summarizes new ideas to implement or develop further.

Thank you for planning to attend this year’s IPMA Annual Conference & Expo scheduled for October 11-13, 2017. Please be sure to contact IPMA headquarters at info@theipma.org if you’re in need of additional information about the event. We look forward to seeing you in New Orleans!