



IASE
International Association of
SERVICE EVALUATORS

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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Greetings IASE Members, I trust the New Year is off to a great start for you and your business.

The IASE Executive Board has been meeting to plan for an EXCITING year for our organization. We are in the process of updating the content on our website. The changes will continue to send the message of IASE being an association that offers support to our current members and encourage prospective members to JOIN.

As you go about your day to day business encourage your vendors to consider the IASE as a resource to grow their business and lend support to our great association.

We are excited to look forward

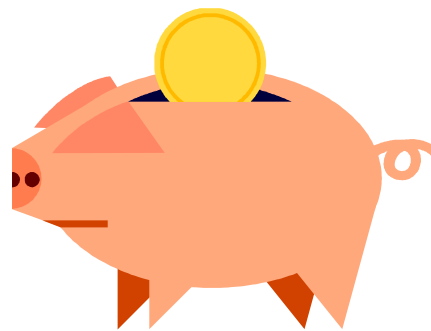
to our conference in October and encourage all of you to make plans to attend this event. For those that have attended in the past, we all feel uplifted and motivated coming away with ideas that will assist us in our business growth. By attending you too will feel motivated as well as contributing to the success of your fellow IASE friends.

The IASE Executive Board is

here to be of service to you. Please do not hesitate to call on each of us to assist.

We look forward to a FANTASTIC New Year!

Janet Fitzgerald Sipe
President, Service Connections, Inc.
IASE President



Don't forget to pay your dues to enjoy another issue of IASE news!

WWW.IASEMYSTERYSHOP.COM

- **President—Janet Fitzgerald Sipe**
- **Treasurer— Nova Sipe**
- **Communications Director— Angela Megasko**
- **Membership Chair— Kim Stever**

UPCOMING IASE CONFERENCE

In preparation of the upcoming IASE conference, we will be discussing having the conference in the following cities:

1. **Atlanta, Georgia**
2. **Chicago, Illinois**
3. **New York, New York**
4. **Philadelphia, PA**

We thought it would be fun to include some "fun facts" from these bustling cities. Something to strike your interest and help you decide where you might want to conference this year! All references come from www.wikipedia.com.

Atlanta, GA

Atlanta (pronounced /

æt'ləntə/) is the capital and the most populous city of the US state of Georgia, and the core city of the ninth most populous metropolitan area in the United States. It is the county seat of Fulton County, although portions of the city extend into DeKalb County. As of July 2006, the city of Atlanta had a population of 486,411

UPCOMING IASE CONFERENCE CONTINUED....

and a metropolitan population of 5,138,223, making it the nation's ninth-largest metro area. Residents of the city are known as Atlantans.

Atlanta has in recent years undergone a transition from a city of regional commerce to a city of international influence. Between 2000 and 2006, the Atlanta metropolitan area grew 20.5%, making it the fastest growing metropolitan area in the nation. Atlanta is often considered a poster child for cities world-

wide experiencing rapid growth and urban sprawl.

Atlanta's skyline is punctuated with highrise and midrise buildings of modern and postmodern vintage. Its tallest landmark – the Bank of America Plaza – is the 29th-tallest building in the world at 1,023 feet (312 m). It is also the tallest building in the United States outside of Chicago and New York City.

The city's highrises are clustered in three districts in the city—Downtown, Midtown, and Buckhead. (there are two

more major suburban clusters, Perimeter Center to the north and Cumberland/Vinings to the northwest). The central business district, clustered around the Westin Peachtree Plaza hotel – the tallest building in Atlanta at the time of its completion in 1976 – also includes the newer 191 Peachtree Tower, SunTrust Plaza, Georgia-Pacific Tower, and the buildings of Peachtree Center. Midtown Atlanta, farther north, developed rapidly after the completion of One Atlantic Center in 1987.



<http://www.iasemysteryshop.com>

UPCOMING IASE CONFERENCE CONTINUED....

Atlanta hosts a variety of museums on subjects ranging from history to fine arts, natural history, and beverages. Prominent among them are the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, the Atlanta History Center; the Atlanta Cyclorama and Civil War Museum (a huge painting and diorama in-the-round, with a rotating central audience platform, that depicts the Battle of Atlanta in the Civil War); the Carter Center and Presidential Library; historic house museum Rhodes Hall; and the Margaret

Mitchell House and Museum. Along with St. Louis and Los Angeles, Atlanta is one of three cities in the United States to have hosted the Summer Olympic Games.

Chicago, IL

Chicago (IPA: /ˈtʃɪˈkɑːɡoʊ/), is the largest city in the state of Illinois and the largest in the Midwest. With a population of nearly 3 million people, Chicago is the third largest city in the United States. It is the

anchor of the Chicago metropolitan area, commonly called Chicagoland, which has a population of over 9.7 million people in Illinois, Wisconsin and Indiana, making it the third largest metropolitan area in the U.S. Rich in history and renowned for its innovative and influential architecture, Chicago is classified as an alpha world city.

The City of Chicago is located almost entirely in Cook County, with a small portion of O'Hare International Airport overlapping into DuPage

A business that makes nothing but money is a poor kind of business.

“Henry Ford”

UPCOMING IASE CONFERENCE CONTINUED....

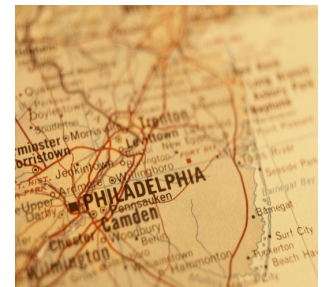
County. The metropolitan area extends over several counties. Located at the site of a portage between the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River watershed, Chicago was incorporated as a city in 1837. It rapidly became a major transportation hub, as well as the business, financial, and cultural capital of the Midwest. Since the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, the city has been regarded as

one of the ten most influential in the world.

New York, NY

New York City (pronounced /njuːˈjɔːk/) (officially The City of New York) is the most populous city in the United States, with its metropolitan area ranking among the largest urban areas in the world. For more than a century, it has been one of the world's

major centers of commerce and finance. New York City is rated as an alpha world city for its global influences in media, politics, education, entertainment and fashion. The city's cultural centers for arts are among the nation's most influential. The city is a major center for foreign affairs, hosting the headquarters of the United Nations. Residents of the city are known as New Yorkers. The current mayor of New York



Will we meet in Philadelphia, PA for our conference?

UPCOMING IASE CONFERENCE CONTINUED....

City is Michael Bloomberg.

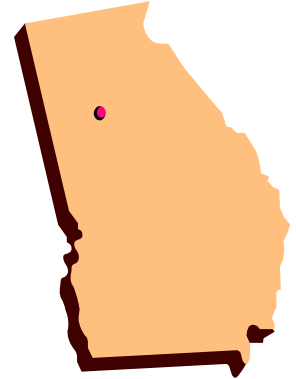
New York City comprises five boroughs, each of which is coextensive with a county: The Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island. With over 8.2 million residents within an area of 322 square miles (830 km²), New York City is the most densely populated major city in the United States.

Many of the city's neighborhoods and landmarks are known around the world. The Statue of Liberty greeted millions of immigrants as

they came to America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, at Ellis Island. Wall Street, in Lower Manhattan, has been a dominant global financial center since World War II and is home to the New York Stock Exchange. The city has been home to several of the tallest buildings in the world, including the Empire State Building and the twin towers of the World Trade Center, which were destroyed in the September 11, 2001 attacks.

New York is the birthplace of many American cultural

movements, including the Harlem Renaissance in literature and visual art, abstract expressionism (also known as the New York School) in painting, and hip hop, punk, salsa, and Tin Pan Alley in music. In 2005, nearly 170 languages were spoken in the city and 36% of its population was born outside the United States. With its 24-hour subway and constant bustling of traffic and people, New York is known as "The City That Never Sleeps;" it was first linked with "Gotham" by Washington



UPCOMING IASE CONFERENCE CONTINUED....

Irving in 1807.

Philadelphia, PA

Philadelphia (pronounced /ˌfɪləˈdɛlfiə/) is the largest city in Pennsylvania and the sixth most populous city in the United States. It is conterminous with Philadelphia County, and serves as the county seat. It is colloquially referred to as "the City of Brotherly Love" (from Greek: Φιλαδέλφεια, [pʰi.la.ˈdɛl.pʰeː.a], Modern Greek: [fi.laˈðɛl.fi.a],

"brotherly love" from philos "love" and adelphos "brother"). Residents often informally call the city "Philly."

In 2005, the population of the city proper was estimated to be over 1.4 million, while the Delaware Valley metropolitan area, with a population of 5.8 million, was the fifth-largest in the United States and the 45th-largest city in the world.

A commercial, educational, and cultural center, the city was once the second-largest

in the British Empire, and the social and geographical center of the original 13 American colonies. During the 18th century, it eclipsed New York City in political and social importance, with Benjamin Franklin taking a large role in Philadelphia's early rise to prominence. It was in this city that some of the ideas, and subsequent actions, gave birth to the American Revolution and American independence. It was the most populous city of the young United States and served as its first capital.

**Atlanta, GA—
Conference site for
IASE? Keep it in
mind!**

INSIDE STORY HEADLINE

I am pleased to announce the International Association of Service Evaluators Executive Board members for the 2008 calendar year.

President: Janet Fitzgerald Sipe, Service Connections Inc.

Communications Director: Angela Megasko, Market Viewpoint LLC

Membership Chair: Kim Stever, Consumer Eye

Treasurer: Nova Sipe, Sipe and Associates LTD

Great organizations demand a high level of commitment by the people involved.

"Bill Gates"

Mystery Shopping and the Romanian banking industry

The banking industry in Romania is currently booming. At the end of 2007, the number of bank branches open in the entire country was revolving around 5200, an almost 20% raise compared to the end of 2006. Also, due to the recent relaxation of the conditions imposed by the National Bank of Romania, the offered products have become better and more accessible. At this time, the main thing differentiating the banks revolves more around the quality of employee service rather than the actual offered products.

Our company develops Mystery Shopping programs for some of the most important banks on the Romanian market, but also an independent annual Mystery Shopping study, tracking the most successful fifteen banks in Romania. This experience has allowed us to appreciate the high and low points of the banking industry, but also to note the points that make a difference for the customer, when deciding upon a certain bank.

One of the most interesting factors we have noticed was the difference between the bank expectations regarding its employees and the actual customers' expectations. When developing a Mystery Shopping questionnaire, our company uses the bank's procedures, in order to determine to what degree the employees respect them. At the end of the questionnaire, however, we always place a Customer Satisfaction section, where the Mystery Shopper is required to give his/her honest opinion regarding the services (s)he received while inside the bank – regardless

of the bank procedures. In the end, our Mystery Shopping report includes the grade the bank received based on its procedures and expectations and the grade the bank received from the Mystery Shopper – as a customer. To our clients' surprise, the two grades don't always match.

Most of the time, the bank procedures focus not just on the employee's politeness and general attitude, but also on details that are sometimes not relevant to an actual customer (like the number of times an employee has mentioned the customer's name, the request of the customer's personal details, etc.). This can lead to the difference mentioned before.

This raises an interesting point. The whole purpose of servicing customers should be satisfying them so that they return to make an actual transaction. The branch may receive a good score as performance, but as long as the customers do not return, it's all for nothing.

One might wonder where the point of equilibrium between pleasing your customers and the compliance with banking procedures should stand. The experience, however, shows us that while the branches usually score high on the Product Knowledge and Visual categories, the Sales Performance and Employee Attitude categories are usually much lower, with the Sales Performance average usually below the acceptable level of 50%. The two categories mentioned are precisely the ones that have most of the influence on the cus-

tomers' decision: while a good product knowledge and presentation is important, the capitalist economy system guarantees that most banking products have similar quality levels and the deciding factor usually resides in marketing, image and employee attitude.

Unfortunately, the current Romanian market development is focused on quantity rather than quality. Raiffeisen Bank alone plans to open 220 new branches in Romania in 2008. This enormous stretch sometimes takes its toll on the quality of offered services: the strong need for employees affects the recruiting and training process – leading to a lower level of employee quality.

So far, this has little effect on the banks themselves – most banks declare huge profits, based on the growing need for banking products in Romania. There's enough for everyone to get a piece of a considerably big pie. However, in a few years, when the boom will slow down, clients will become more and more pretentious and the more customer-friendly banks will probably win the larger piece.

Future Marketing

Founded in 2004

Future Marketing is a Romanian market research company established in 2004. Focused mainly on Mystery Shopping (but not only), Future Marketing has developed an important client portfolio, mostly in the banking industry but also retail, transportation and HoReCa.

In the end, all business operations can be reduced to three words: people, product and profits. Unless you've got a good team, you can't do much with the other two.

“Lee Iacocca”



New York City—A possible conference spot for us!

Mystery Shopping and the Romanian banking industry Continued....

Future Marketing was founded by Ioana Bostina and Ciprian Dumitru, two experienced marketing managers who decided that the Romanian market needed more companies offering quality market research services. They were proven right by the company's quick development into one of the most important Mystery Shopping providers in the country, gaining up to 10% of the Mystery Shopping market in Romania.

Future Marketing's reports provide a detailed insight into a company's business, with the help of detailed, descriptive questionnaires filled by experienced collaborators. From the start, the company's strong point was its personalized approach - the

first priority being the understanding and perfect adaptation to the client's needs.

Managing Partner

Future Marketing

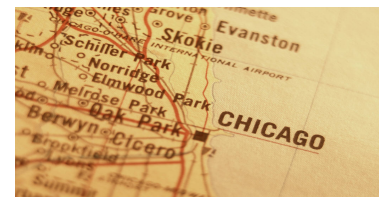
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Chicago- another great city to conference in!

SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS-CAN WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

HI ALL! Hope you are off to a good strong New Year! My article this time doesn't pertain to the MS industry, but rather to some issues that can affect our businesses.

I recently attended a Regional Meeting of the US Women's Chamber of Commerce. I have been active with the group since it's founding and watched it grow from a few people in Phoenix to over 50,000 members nationwide in just a few short years.

As all meetings about business seems to go, there was a brief discussion about the current Presidential race. Since all of us are small businesses, I wanted to pass this along. Of course, the economy came up, but one small business owner asked if any of us had heard anything during any of the candidates speeches or debates as to what they were going to do to help small businesses, if they became president. No one in the room had heard any one say anything. The CEO of the USWCC, Margot Dorfman, who testifies before numerous committees on Capitol Hill on a regular basis on behalf of women owned, and small businesses, said that was not a topic that she had heard any of the candidates address. Her suggestion was to start contacting our Senators and Congress as well as the candidates, and ask the question. I have contacted both my State and National

Representatives on a variety of issues and with a few exceptions, I've had very pleasant conversations with their staff. I have e-mailed and called, depending on the issue and the timing of the vote. Many times, I was told how the Senator or Representative was planning to vote. If they were undecided, I was given that information, but that my opinion would be passed on to the Senator or Representative. One Representative replied to my phone call with a long letter.

The other bit of very distressing information, that may apply to other states as well, was that Arizona has a policy in place that all contracts for goods and services, has to go to the lowest bidder. Sounds good, until you find out how much of the states tax dollars are going to other countries. It is one thing for your tax dollar to go to another state, it is quite another for your tax dollar to go totally out of the country when a small business in the state can provide the same goods or services for a few dollars more. This affects us as both small businesses and as tax payers!

One last issue I would like to mention. I work with the woman owned business certification pro-

gram for the USWCC. I have been processing the application packets and setting up the site evaluations for a couple of years. At first, it was just government agencies on all levels that were requiring certification. Recently, I have been working with a variety of companies that are getting their certification to do work with the private sector. Most national companies have a business diversity screening that vendors have to go through just to be added to their vendor list. They are asking for the certification before they can be added to their vendor lists. Many industries want to have certified women owned and minority-owned businesses so they can report their diversification numbers to the government and other businesses that they do business with.

When I was first looking at certification a few years ago, I blew it off because it was just governmental agencies that asked for it and I did not think I would ever need to do business with them. Now the private sector is asking for it also.

Nova Sipe of Sipe and Associates

Customer Service Evaluations

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Member of:

-Marana Chamber of Commerce

-U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce (USWCC.org) The driving force of the women's ownership movement.

-International Association of Service Evaluators (www.iasemysteryshop.com)

We are on the web!

<http://www.iasemysteryshop.com/>

ORGANIZATION IS THE KEY BY KIM STEVER

We all know the importance of organization and planning. I found this interesting article on keeping you and your business organized in a simple way we sometimes forget about using.

Getting Organized: Plan Your Work and Work Your Plan

One-third of American workers never plan their daily work, and while 45% may plan weekly, only 9% accomplish everything they set out to do.

The higher the income, the more likely a person is to make a written schedule and prioritize tasks. Coincidence? Hardly. Keeping a written schedule and a list of tasks with priorities is one of the first steps to success.

A planner is the most essential item you should carry. A planner allows you to look forward toward appointments, meetings and travel, keeps your list of important telephone numbers, and is also a retrospective tool. Keeping good records will validate an appointment, or notes from a prior meeting, and can be extremely useful when you need to go back weeks, months, or even years to look up a vital detail.

Of course just owning a planner doesn't assure organization or success. You will actually need to use it. Here are a few organizational tips for success:

1. Reduce Information To One Page. Reduce basic information needed for your planner to one page, purchase a special hole punch for your planner, then insert pages into your planner as needed.

2. Handle Paper Once. Deal with every piece of correspondence just one time. Delegate, Read, Act, File or Toss (DRAFT). If it belongs in the "act" category, note it in your planner.

3. Do It Now. Take action immediately on virtually every issue of your life and you won't be putting out so many fires later on. Cross items off your planner or plan them forward in your planner. You will see progress this way. Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today (if it

makes sense relative to what else is happening at that moment).

4. Keep All Notes In Your Planner. Reminders on scraps of paper make life worse. Keep everything in one place. Your planner is your single source of appointments, notes, contacts, and much more. Use it correctly, and it will become an extension of you.

ConsumerEye is a customer satisfaction service provider specializing in Mystery Shopping since 1998. We provide you valuable feedback from your actual customers. Our "Mystery Shoppers" review your businesses customer satisfaction policies, from the minute they arrive in the parking lot, until the final "Thank You!"

We help you measure the effectiveness of your operation as well as give you suggestions for developing recognition and incentive programs that will help your staff and workers in the field to perform consistently at higher levels! Some of the industries we have served include: Apartment complexes, Automotive Industry, Casinos, Financial Institutions, Furniture Stores, Grocery Stores, Housecleaning services, Medical Facilities, New Home Builders, and Restaurants.

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"Which brings us to my next point."

