President’s Pen

Dear SITE Member,

In our industry, we know that results are key, but creativity and vision are essential in motivating, empowering and rewarding the people who deliver those results. As we continue to face challenges such as decreasing budgets and tight timelines, our professionalism and dedication are what make us successful and, ultimately, what transforms our clients’ goals into realities.

This year’s Crystal Awards Recognition Program includes new categories to reflect SITE’s heightened focus on the importance of business results and responsible programming. SITE itself is embracing these values; one example is our commitment to ensuring the 2007 International Conference is environmentally sensitive and that attendees have opportunities to reduce their carbon footprint.

After much deliberation, a panel of industry-diverse judges identified 12 programs that exceeded expectations in areas such as ROI, creativity and sustainability. The masterminds behind these incentives are the recipients of the 2007 SITE Crystal Awards. Take a few minutes to read about these effective incentives, which offer a glimpse into each planning team’s diligence and ingenuity — indispensable in helping clients create a unified vision and achieve critical objectives. The descriptions on the following pages are proof that incentive programs yield business results.

My sincere thanks goes to Michael Goldsmith, Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority, for serving as the Crystal Awards committee chair. Also on the committee were Charmaine Peterson, Progressive Incentives Inc.; Kevin Whitfield, Road West Destination Management; George Horney, Sportstour Turismo Ltd.; and Padraic Gilligan, Ovation Global DMC and SITE President Elect and board liaison.

Their hard work, and the work of volunteers who came before them, is the reason for the longevity and prestige of the Crystal Awards Program.

I offer congratulations to 2007 winners, and gratitude for their willingness to share knowledge and be a source of inspiration for us all. In addition, I thank IMEX and all of the Crystal Awards sponsors whose generous support helps make this program possible. And to all SITE members: plan now to submit an entry for the 2008 SITE Crystal Awards Recognition Program, and underscore your efforts to build better programs, advance the industry and help clients surpass their business goals.

Thank you,

Hugo Slimbrouck
SITE President

Judges

SITE established the Crystal Awards in 1980 as a means to recognize the unique blending of objectives and imagination that enable motivational programs to be successful in achieving business objectives. Incentive campaigns, special/motivational events or promotion campaigns held between 1 June 2006 and 31 May 2007 were eligible. Entries were evaluated by an independent panel of judges in the areas of return on investment, creativity and mechanics.

Judges evaluating entries were:

Jeff Kalpak
Partner, Barkley Kalpak Associates, Inc.

Diane DiMaggio
International Advertising Director, Nielsen Business Media

Colja Dams
CEO/President, Vok Dams Gruppe

John Touchette, CMP
Sr. Manager, Meetings & Special Events, Raytheon

Paul C. Eder
Vice President, Meetings & Incentives, Protective Life Insurance Company

Barbara Scofidio
Editor, Corporate Meetings & Incentives, Penton Media

Barbara Hollister
Sr. Director, Purchasing & Industry Relations, Carlson Marketing Worldwide

Valerie Grady
President, Progressive Incentives, Inc.

Sandra Eagle
Director of Content, Meetings & Incentive Travel Magazine

Andrea Michaels
President, Extraordinary Events

Tyler Davidson
Editorial Director, Meetings Media

Michael Anthony Waller
Chief Executive Officer, Dragonfly Africa

Dr. David Cox
General Manager, Relationship Marketing, CiEvents

Keely Hilton
HR/Operations Manager, Extra Mile Company

Jennifer C. Squeglia
President, RLC Events

Joe Lustenberger
Marketing Manager, Euromic, Inc.

Joanna Kavanagh
Sponsorship & Events Manager, O2 Ireland

Todd Black
Director, Incentive and Convention Sales, Windham Jade

Marcel Vissers
MIM Magazine, Meeting Media Company

David Felix
Director of Creative & Events, Planning the Globe
Impact Incentives Brings Sales Torque to Standard Bank Employees

Crystal Winner: Kathy Nel, Impact Incentives, Johannesburg, Gauteng, South Africa
Client: Standard Bank
Program: Sales Torque

Standard Bank’s Vehicle and Asset Finance Division wanted an incentive program for automotive dealerships in South Africa that was geared toward dealer principals, and finance and insurance managers. The major obstacle was re-entry into a market that Standard Bank had pulled out of in 1998. Within 60 days of that event, Standard Bank’s market share in the vehicle finance industry dropped 50 percent.

Six years later in November 2004, Standard Bank decided to re-enter the automotive industry, knowing it was going to be a difficult challenge. In addition to overcoming its lack of brand identity within the industry, Standard Bank discovered that numerous dealerships had established their own bank or credit facility that financed most of the dealerships’ business. Not only did Standard Bank need to re-establish trust and gain loyalty from the automotive industry, the company had to provide a strategy that their employees could be confident in communicating.

In February 2006, Impact Incentives launched Standard Bank’s incentive program, Sales Torque ’06, at large breakfast functions in the South African cities of Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Port Elizabeth. Eligible Dealer Principals received spectacular trips to New York and Las Vegas, both of which are desirable locations for South Africans. The Finance and Insurance Managers received trips to Indigo Bay, an exclusive beach resort in Mozambique, Africa.

Sales Torque ’06 was a huge success, and helped grow the Standard Bank’s share in targeted dealer groups by 71 percent. Plus, the number of financial deals put through Standard Bank’s Vehicle and Asset Finance Division increased from 800 per month to 2,100 per month.

In 2007, Impact Incentives was asked to again deliver a program that would carry the momentum forward and top the first edition of Sales Torque.

Sales Torque ’07 launched in September 2006. To keep Standard Bank top-of-mind with dealerships, Impact Incentives sent out teaser e-mails about the 2007 program and launched it before the departure of the 2006 winners. At the regional launch events, Standard Bank employees supplied dealerships with launch boxes that contained a brochure outlining the incentive program, a registration form, a DVD showcasing the reward trips and a teaser gift.

The program also had to keep dealerships motivated for a longer incentive period than the previous year’s program. Dealer sales were measured from September 2006 through the end of June 2007 — a 10-month period vs. six months in 2006. Impact Incentives inspired participants with the attractive reward trips, sent out regular communications and developed a monthly giveaway for the top dealership in each region.

The main goal of the incentive program for Standard Bank was to help re-establish its credibility and increase market share in the automotive industry in South Africa. The initial goal was to grow Standard Bank’s market share in the vehicle finance industry by 1 percent. Before Sales Torque ’06 and ’07, Standard Bank’s market share was 19 percent. By May of 2007, it had grown to more than 22 percent. It also gave Standard Bank employees an opportunity to present the market with an exciting business challenge, which provided the framework they needed to jump back into the automotive industry and earn its trust. Before Sales Torque, each Standard Bank employee was concluding 15 deals per month. Since establishing the incentive program, productivity has increased to 26 deals per month. And because Sales Torque was structured to be longstanding, Standard Bank will be able to build on it for many more years to come.
Avroy Shlain Cosmetics is the largest direct selling beauty house in South Africa. The company already embraced the value of employing a travel incentive reward through its annual Top 200 program but they wanted to design a program one level up – they wanted to reward the best of Avroy Shlain’s 34,000 consultants with a new program that was even more elite – they wanted to recognize the efforts of their Top 50 sales recruiters with an unthinkable trip – an unforgettable experience that would motivate these elite performers.

With this goal in mind they looked to Creative Incentives to design a program that would motivate performance and deliver this once-in-a-lifetime reward.

Avroy Shlain had a few special requirements: the destination had to be a five-star all inclusive stay at an African property; the reward had to fit within the timeframe and budget; and the trip had to be kept a complete mystery until departure. Creative Incentives was up to the challenge.

After discovering that a full moon eclipse would occur during the trip, Creative Incentives was inspired to develop a theme around this rare event and set out to find the perfect location. The team secured a resort on Bazaruto Island off the coast of Mozambique. The clear skies of Mozambique would provide an ideal setting and a special telescope guaranteed a spectacular view of the lunar eclipse. A charter carrier was hired to whisk the winners to Mozambique in luxury. Winners received instruction to bring only their passports and would learn about the destination once the aircrafts were in flight, at which point organizers would send loved ones contact information.

Once logistics were confirmed, the Creative Incentives team began working on details that would add panache to the all-inclusive event. They developed a logo that used the pansy shell, an integral part of Bazaruto Archipelago, as inspiration. The logo background showed a full moon reflecting in turquoise blue waters — a hint of what was to come. The logo would appear on all materials, and all participants would receive a silver pansy shell necklace. Other enhancements included red carpets and brass stanchions leading to the aircraft steps, five-star service onboard the private aircraft and themed dinners.

But this story is not only about the effectiveness of the program and the delight of the reward, it is also about the road to getting there. One week before departure, disaster occurred. The resort was struck by a Category 3 cyclone and was forced to close indefinitely. Because the client was unable to reschedule during peak season, Creative Incentives negotiated to get full refunds and began investigating alternative destinations. They shifted the event to the island of Mauritius, found accommodations at a five-star hotel and secured flights. The event logo was adapted to include the Mauritian frangipani flower, and all materials were altered and reprinted. The full moon eclipse would remain the central focus upon arrival.

But one more challenge awaited Creative Incentive’s diligent team: The airline refused to load the equipment needed to view the eclipse. The group had to depart without the telescope, yet the event was not lost because — against all odds — resourceful Creative Incentives staff managed to secure equipment on the island.

The hotel proved to be exceptional. The rooms were spacious and included personal butler service, and the hotel was able to accommodate the themes initially intended for Mozambique and served delectable meals. The group enjoyed a chartered catamaran with music, food and snorkeling in calm turquoise waters; later, the Gala Awards Dinner featured exotic cocktails on the beach. The trip culminated with a surprise Sega Dance Spectacular on the final night showcasing a seafood extravaganza.

In the end, the Unthinkable theme applied not only the program but also to the dedication of Creative Incentive’s staff who brought it all together. The ultimate success was measured in how the program supported Avroy Shlain Cosmetics business objectives. As a result of the six-month program the company realized a 60% growth in recruitment over the prior period. A phenomenal achievement for their organization that would be hard to “eclipse” again in the future. ●
Crystal Winner: Rajeev Kohli, Creative Travel Pvt, Ltd., New Delhi, India
Client: Tetra Pak
Program: A Journey to Remember

Tetra Pak is a global leader in the food packaging industry, and Tetra Pak Pakistan is a subsidiary of this global company. In 2006 Tetra Pak Pakistan won the much coveted internal Market Company of the Year surpassing companies across 146 countries. This award is considered a once-in-a-lifetime achievement and Tetra Pak wanted an incentive program that held the ROI of a unique team building experience creating bonding among the employees; a sense of belongingness and ownership; and of course to feed the morale and motivation of the employees.

India was selected as the trip destination and Tetra Pak turned to the talents of Creative Travel and Gerry’s Tours to design a once-in-a-lifetime event. As planning started, poor relations between Pakistan and India nearly ended the trip before it began. Several complications ensued, including the Indian High Commission’s warning that it would not issue visas for the Pakistani tourists. But despite all official rhetoric and propaganda on both sides of the border, the fascination and affection on a people-to-people level remained strong and the team was determined to deliver the employees of Tetra Pak their earned reward.

The group was unique in its composition. Unlike most incentives which involve just one segment of employees, or just the stars of the organization, this group consisted of each and every employee of Tetra Pak Pakistan, from the messenger boy right up to the managing director. The doors of the company were to be closed for the duration of the tour and that made this trip even more important.

Creative Travel began to work day and night on the largest roadblock: the visas. Numerous conversations and visits with the Minister of Tourism and the Indian High Commission occurred, and five weeks of intense supervision and exemplary public relations skills resulted in resounding success. The impossible became reality when all 252 employees at Tetra Pak Pakistan received tourist visas for the trip — the first time in the history of India that tourist visas were issued to Pakistani citizens.

Creative Travel and Gerry’s Tours developed an itinerary based on Tetra Pak’s motivation for traveling to India. The unanimous highlight of the trip was the welcome event that embodied the lively and vibrant Indian state of Punjab. An outdoor venue decorated with flowers, marquis, village market stalls and local performers recreated a traditional village atmosphere. One of the city’s top Punjabi pop singers entertained, and the event turned out to be a boisterous, fun-filled night.

This program has become one of the most talked about trips in Pakistani business circles, and has set a benchmark for future trips between Pakistan and India. This achievement will open new doors and avenues for peace and will allow other travel incentives to operate due to a precedence being set. This was a once-in-a-lifetime trip for much of the staff and for a majority of them it was the first time experiencing air travel and a rare opportunity to enjoy the finer things in life. The guests shared experiences with their senior colleagues that would never have occurred back at home.

During the same five weeks, Creative Travel and Gerry’s Tours had to line up services including airline, hotel and entertainment that met a strict schedule with no margin for adjustment (due to the company closing its doors). Yet because the trip depended on the securing of visas, planners were unable to make advance payments. Nothing could be finalized until the visas were approved. Once visas were issued, Creative Travel and Gerry’s Tours scrambled to confirm all arrangements, completing the process just one week before departure.

“...The guests shared experiences with their senior colleagues that would never have occurred back at home.”

Challenged by laws that restrict Pakistani citizens’ travel in India, the itinerary had to delight guests and show no sign of restriction. The guests might not have another opportunity to travel in India so the program needed to embody its theme: A Journey to Remember.

Creative Travel and Gerry’s Tours developed an itinerary based on Tetra Pak’s motivation for traveling to India. The unanimous highlight of the trip was the welcome event that embodied the lively and vibrant Indian state of Punjab. An outdoor venue decorated with flowers, marquis, village market stalls and local performers recreated a traditional village atmosphere. One of the city’s top Punjabi pop singers entertained, and the event turned out to be a boisterous, fun-filled night.

This program has become one of the most talked about trips in Pakistani business circles, and has set a benchmark for future trips between Pakistan and India. This achievement will open new doors and avenues for peace and will allow other travel incentives to operate due to a precedence being set. This was a once-in-a-lifetime trip for much of the staff and for a majority of them it was the first time experiencing air travel and a rare opportunity to enjoy the finer things in life. The guests shared experiences with their senior colleagues that would never have occurred back at home. Tetra Pak’s goal — to create team building experiences and foster a sense of belonging and ownership was undoubtedly achieved. 
King Pharmaceuticals asked Harith Productions to create and design an exceptional incentive program for its 2005 President’s Club winners. The program would recognize and motivate sales representatives in continuing to be the “best of the best” and exceeding sales goals for the year.

King Pharmaceuticals wanted a trip that was exhilarating, motivating and inspiring, and reflected the company’s sincere appreciation of top achievers’ efforts. The location needed to symbolize a professional apex and have Mother Nature as the focal point. Harith decided an Alaskan cruise would fulfill King Pharmaceuticals’ criteria and allow participants to see destinations that they may never have the chance to visit otherwise.

Though the objective of this trip was to reward top achievers, organizers also wanted to motivate those who did not reach the President’s Club. Realizing that objective meant building anticipation among winners before the trip began so they would share their excitement with co-workers. Harith Productions mailed custom packages to winners a few weeks in advance that included information about the trip, a brief history of Alaska, facts about the ports of call, an overview of Alaska’s flora and fauna, and custom luggage tags. The result was a loud buzz in the office that motivated the entire sales to work toward earning an invitation to the following year’s reward.

When President’s Club winners arrived to the Carnival Cruise Lines terminal in Whittier, Alaska, winners and guests received a warm welcome, checked in and were escorted aboard the Spirit to their balcony cabins. Inside, guests found several carefully chosen amenities such as L’Occitane skin care products, embroidered bathrobes, and a stainless steel coffee mug perfect for enjoying a hot beverage while taking in the panoramic views from the balcony. On the vanity in each cabin were chocolate covered strawberries and chilled champagne with a personalized note from King Pharmaceuticals’ CEO, and an invitation to a cocktail reception that evening.

The cocktail reception, hosted by company executives, included butlered libations and artistically designed edible treats. The next day, guests had time to explore the ship and enjoy the breathtaking sights of Prince William Sound and College Fjord. Following a relaxing day at sea, the group arrived in Sitka, eager to explore the town and enjoy excursions including beach walks, wildlife quests, biking, hiking and kayaking. The next stop was Juneau, where guests could dog sled on Mendenhall Glacier and take a helicopter flight over deep blue crevasses and glacier carved peaks.

The fifth day recognized the achievements of the year’s President’s Club winners. After arriving in Skagway, the entire group boarded the White Pass and Yukon Route train and set out for Bennett Station, deep in the wilderness of Canada’s Yukon Territory. Once at Bennett Station, guests enjoyed views of the surrounding panoramic vistas before a bright red floatplane bearing the new King Pharmaceuticals logo whirled past, giving everyone their first view of the company logo.

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation tribe performed a song and dance, welcomed the audience to the territory and gave a blessing for the guests and dinner to follow. As the guests finished their meal, Hobo Jim, Alaska’s Official State Balladeer, led the group in a fun sing-a-long. Midway through a song about the Iditarod, he introduced four-time Iditarod winner Martin Buser and his champion dogs. Martin mushed the dogs into view of the audience amid energetic applause from the group.

The small fishing town of Ketchikan was the Spirit’s last stop. There, guests had the opportunity to experience the city’s abundance of Native American culture, canoe the waters of Lake Harriet Hunt or take in the world-famous Great Alaskan Lumberjack Show. The final day was spent sailing the waters of the scenic Inside Passage. After seven fun-filled, exciting days, guests departed their Alaskan adventure with an experience they would never forget.

From the objectives set forth by King, through all the challenges and the incredible success of the event, Harith Productions, in conjunction with Carnival Cruise Lines and Alaska Destination Specialist, far exceeded their client’s expectations and ROI. The program focused on excellence, but also clearly expressed an appreciation for the environment. The Alaska and Yukon Expedition spoke to the values of the company, and its appreciation for the sales force — all while harnessing the power of a travel incentive reward to yield business results.
EVT Explores Adventure in Japan

Crystal Winner: Virginia Trautwein, EVT Marketing Group, North Parramatta, NSW, Australia
Client: Yamaha Australia & Yamaha New Zealand Pty Ltd
Program: Take a Bigger Bite

Yamaha incentive programs are designed to build brand awareness and loyalty in a highly competitive multi-branded reseller market. This past year Yamaha partnered with EVT Marketing Group to deliver its “Take a Bigger Bite” incentive program, a program that would recognize and reward Yamaha’s top performing motorcycle and marine dealers and their retail sales staff plus Yamaha’s top performing internal sales staff. But this program was not only about the ROI on the sales goals – it was to incorporate a visit to the company headquarters and factories to cultivate greater affinity to the corporation.

The program selected Japan as its inspirational destination and the design and delivery had to factor in delighting and meeting the needs of two different groups of Yamaha dealers (motorcycle and marine) from Australia and New Zealand.

“By obtaining sizing and skill levels of the guests in advance, EVT was able to provide proper ski equipment for pre-arranged private lessons for the entire group.”

Another challenge was that the majority of both groups had traveled to Japan before and had visited the typical incentive destinations of Tokyo, Kyoto and Atami. So EVT Marketing Group put together a trip that ranged from the very South of Japan to the very North, hot to cold, Okinawa to Hokkaido. As a result the dealers were very excited at the prospect of sitting on a beach one day and skiing down the slopes the next!

In Okinawa, all activities planned were exclusive to the Yamaha group. One of the main draws to the island is the wartime heritage, and EVT was able to secure private sessions in two of the museums with presentations from survivors of World War II. To showcase the sandy beaches of Okinawa, EVT worked with the hotel and a local helicopter company to organize fun beach activities including beach volleyball and karate sessions on the sand and group helicopter rides over nearby reefs.

For the main Okinawan event, EVT provided Hawaiian shirts for the men and leis and sarongs for the women and sent guests to a lush botanical garden where traditional dancers performed and sugar cane crushers demonstrated their art. Dinner was enhanced with an array of Okinawan entertainment including stick fighters, lion dancers, fisherwomen dancing and bingata dancing. As a finale, the entertainers formed a long dancing line and led the group back into the gardens for a spectacular fireworks display and an evening of dancing.

The next stop on the trip was the northern tip of Japan in Hokkaido where EVT managed to make a group of 160 people feel elite at a ski resort with a 2,000 person capacity (when 90% of the group has never skied before). By obtaining sizing and skill levels of the guests in advance, EVT was able to provide proper ski equipment for pre-arranged private lessons for the entire group.

EVT also arranged for exclusive use of the resort’s snowmobiles (Yamaha vehicles of course).

The hotel ran a shuttle bus and opened up a gondola that took them to the top of the highest peak where a Yamaha-engraved hot chocolate station was waiting to keep the guests warm as they took in the breathtaking views. On one of the afternoons, EVT reserved an area of slopes where they set up an unusual picnic with beer crates stuck in snow surrounding tiny grills for the group to BBQ meats and vegetables. For those who did not want to ski, EVT set up basketball and table tennis tournaments in the hotel’s gymnasium and conducted “snow Olympics.”

With 60 people dressed as baby polar bears and a snow man fashion parade, the group had surely outdone themselves.

The final destination was Tokyo, where at a Zen temple guests were taken through the basics of meditation, followed by a tea ceremony. For the final dinner the Four Seasons was transformed into a hi-tech, glitzy television studio for the night. Upon arriving in the ballroom, guests learned that they were going to be the live audience for “Tokyo’s Got Talent,” a local TV show. The evening finished with live music and dancing.

The extreme contrasts of Okinawa’s war time history and beach culture, Hokkaido’s skiing heritage, and Tokyo’s busy metropolis made for a trip that was filled with variety and excitement.

Based on Yamaha’s testimonial the program costs were less than 1 percent of total turnover. Incremental business derived from the overall program was $21.7 million, therefore the return on investment equated to a 10 percent cost on the overall growth gained. Yamaha also reported that warranty returns rose from 74.3 percent to 97.2 percent and a 26 percent growth occurred in finance contracts. This is one program that exemplifies the measurable business results that travel incentives can have in an organization.
World of Incentives Creates Tented Camp Fit for a Chief

Crystal Winner: Kym Thompson, World of Incentives, Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa
Client: Bytes Technology Group
Managed Services
Program Name: Chief’s Tented Camp

Bytes Technology Group needed an event designed to deliver exceptional service and to reward its internal service professionals. While all travel incentives are designed to provide an elite experience, this experience had to be custom-tailored to show this segment of Bytes’ workforce that they were vital contributors to the organization’s performance and achievement of goals as well as continue to promote the value of teamwork. In this they looked to the World of Incentives.

World of Incentives faced an immense challenge when they were tasked to create an ambitious adventure trip in Pilanesberg Game Reserve in Africa, in the heart of the “big five country.” World of Incentives managed to obtain permission from the National Parks Board to use the property but only on condition that the site remain “untouched” when they left, as if they were never there.

World of Incentives agreed and set to work. After addressing security and safety concerns, Chief’s Tented Camp emerged as a fully inclusive mobile safari-styled camp comprising several villages. But guests weren’t required to rough it. Each village included hot water showers, an ablution facility, fire place, and coffee station. Tents were carpeted and included rechargeable electric lanterns, hand wash basins, seating for two, and insect-proof gauze windows.

During their five days at camp, guests participated in several unique activities that helped them connect with the region. They experienced the adventure of game drives; enjoyed potjiekos, a South African cooking tradition; learned about the local San Bushman Tribe and the environment and wildlife on which they thrive; learned about the threat of fire and its effect on ecology; had opportunities to listen to experts discuss deadly snakes, and bush survival skills; and received a special glimpse of the universe through a South African vantage point during an astronomy presentation.

One of the trip’s highlights included a day of Survivor Africa team building activities. Challenges included a trivia competition, use of a traditional African slingshot, consuming mountain delicacies enjoyed by inhabitants of the Himalayas, Andes and Kilimanjaro, a memory game, piecing together a puzzle of the South African flag, and more. For the final evening dinner, the communal area was completely transformed into an elegant dining area for the client’s formal award dinner.

“There wasn’t much opportunity to get homesick. Guests were thrilled and surprised to find that the World of Incentives team had arranged a mobile satellite link, a data projector and a large projection screen to enable the group to catch up on the “super 14” rugby games that they would have otherwise missed and to watch the Cricket World Cup Final.

By exposing the group to all aspects of the bush — conservation, tracking and survival, animal behavioral patterns, the threat of fire and its effect on the ecology — World of Incentives managed to both entertain and educate guests on environmental issues.

To deliver this incentive the total equipment weight of the camp equipment brought in exceeded 50 tons. It took 30 crew members and 12 days to set up the camp an in excess of 40 tons of water was used during the incentive. The result was a closer bond through shared experiences for 120 people and, in the end, a game reserve space that was left untouched as if they were never there.”
Harith Productions Brings Ancient Mexico to Life Through Food, Art and Education

Crystal Winner: Harith Wickrema, Harith Productions, New York, New York, USA; Rocio Sedano, Westin Los Cabos; Carlos Aramburo, AM&I
Client: Endo Pharmaceuticals
Program: Mexico

Endo Pharmaceuticals looked to Harith Productions to create and design an exceptional, one-of-a-kind catered event for its 2006 President’s Club winners in Los Cabos, Mexico. The event was to be a destination-based culinary affair that would unfold the history of the ancient Aztec and Mayan civilizations. The planning team’s objective was to mesmerize and enthral each guest from the moment they entered the ballroom — and to appeal to all five senses. Endo Pharmaceuticals also wanted Harith to create an event that would be socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

Blending the theme of the event with the exceptional service of the Westin Resort & Spa, Los Cabos, “Myths and Legends of the Aztec and Maya” was designed to create an epicurean masterpiece that featured world-class culinary service while unfolding the story of the dynamic Mesoamerican people who settled in the Mexican lands centuries ago. Carrying through this the menu would provide Endo’s President’s Club winners with an epicurean journey of edible art featuring the unique natural resources and flavors indigenous to Mexico.

From concept to fruition, no expense or effort was spared to accomplish Harith’s goal of total customer satisfaction. The first challenge was establishing a menu that would appeal to a large group and stay fresh in a food line without compromising taste, temperature or visual presentation. Thus, the menu designer mixed items of distinct textures, aromas, tastes and temperatures. To complement the various courses, plates of different sizes were used to present each course of the meal, including a specially made Aztec calendar that served as a charger plate.

Another challenge was to ensure the service of the five-course dinner was efficient and elegant. The evening was tightly scripted to allow for entertainment, speeches and award presentations, and the banquet professionals — who contributed as an additional entertainment element — provided synchronized service at each table throughout the evening.

Creating a destination-based, culinary event that would tell the history of the ancient Aztec and Mayan civilizations was a multi-step process. First, planners researched native foods used hundreds of years ago by the Aztec and Maya people. They studied the agriculture, cultural and religious lifestyle of these people to learn more about their traditional foods. Most of the guests had little knowledge of ancient Mexican civilizations, which helped create a true learning experience through an exotic menu.

The next step was to create a menu that would incorporate the foods they had researched. The meeting planner worked closely with the hotel’s culinary team to create a five-course meal that would be pleasing to a large crowd, yet still feature several distinct and unusual elements. Each of the five courses included at least one indigenous ingredient.

Salad was tossed in delicate xoxonostle, a prickly pear cactus vinaigrette. The main ingredient in the soup was pumpkin, which was not only an important staple food to Mesoamerican people, but also a crop of great importance to their economy. Next, cleansing Jamaica flower sorbet was presented atop an ice sculpture replica of a Mayan step pyramid. It was accentuated by the Mayan liqueur Xtabentun, made with honey extracted by bees from Xtabentun flowers, which grow only in Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula. The main course was filet flavored with pulque sauce, a type of agave extracted from maguey cactus that in ancient times was an important part of people’s diets in the Mexican highlands and now is a traditional alcoholic beverage of Mesoamerica.

To create and design a catered event that would immediately mesmerize and enthral guests, the ballroom was filled with authentic Aztec centerpieces, lush native fauna and clear tables showcasing genuine artifacts. The printed menu, a three dimensional die-cut of the Chichen Itza step pyramid with a story-telling description of the courses, was placed at each setting. As servers presented each plate, the story of ancient Mexico unfolded.

To ensure the event was socially, economically and environmentally sustainable, and to support local economy, the team purchased room décor, plates and statues used for the gala awards dinner in Guadalajara, Mexico, as well as the villages of Tonala, Tlaquepaque and Chapala. Organizers also purchased locally made pewter, agave honey and mango marmalade to support a local women’s project.

Many of the fruits, meats and vegetables used for the meal were locally grown. And the evening’s entertainment — a “ballet folklorico,” or authentic Mexican dance troupe — showcased the positive efforts of several local communities that united and are committed to sharing their knowledge of ancient Mexican culture through their colorful and vibrant dances.

In the end, Endo Pharmaceuticals’ goals of increasing sales, improving employee morale and enhancing perception of Endo’s commitment to recognizing its top sales representatives were accomplished. From 2005 to 2006, sales have grown from $820.2 million to $909.7 million.

Endo also was able to leverage the extraordinary awards dinner as a recruiting tool. At the beginning of 2006, Endo’s sales force comprised approximately 360 representatives. By the end of 2006, it increased to about 610. ●

2007 SITE Crystal Awards

7
Harith Productions Showcases Natural Majesty During Environmentally-Sensitive Gala

**Crystal Winner:** Harith Wickrema, Harith Productions, New York, New York, USA; Char McClelland, Alaska Destination Specialists  
**Client:** King Pharmaceuticals  
**Program:** Alaska & Yukon Expedition

Deep in the wilderness of Canada’s Yukon Territory and accessible only by intermittent trains, Lake Bennett — surrounded by snow-capped mountains — was the site of King Pharmaceuticals’ President’s Club awards dinner. The dinner was the pinnacle event of an elite seven-day incentive trip and had to be the most memorable and cherished day of the week. In this breathtaking venue, Harith Productions, in conjunction with Alaska Destination Specialists, created an event that reflected King’s appreciation and desire for spectacular recognition of its top employees.

The night before the event, winners received a visit from a staff member dressed in train conductor attire who delivered a scroll invitation along with a pictorial book about the White Pass and Yukon Route and Lake Bennett. When they arrived at the Skagway Station, the group boarded train cars decorated with banners, balloons, streamers and company logos. Costumed train agents in period attire narrated the history of the Gold Rush, pointed out historic points along the route and answered questions. As the train approached Bennett Station, customized mile markers lining the tracks displayed each winner’s name. Once at Lake Bennett, guests relaxed in a lakeside tent.

To create a true, destination-based, nature-themed event, Harith used many materials indigenous to Alaska and the Yukon Territory for the décor design inside the tent. Native wildflowers including dwarf fireweed, western columbine, slunk cabbage, elegant paintbrush, wild snapdragon and Oeder’s Lousewort adorned tables; antique jars, cans, bear traps, railroad spikes, wooden boxes and buckets provided unique vessels for floral creations; and chair covers were painted with native totem pole designs.

Festivities began when a bright red floatplane bearing the new King Pharmaceuticals logo whirled past the tent, giving everyone their first view of the new company logo before making several dramatic loops and landing in full view of the guests. Then, four Royal Canadian Mounted Police escorted a special guest to the stage: the Honorable Larry Bagnell, a member of Parliament for the Yukon Territory. Next, the Carcross/Tagish First Nation tribe, in full ceremonial dress, welcomed the audience to their territory and gave a blessing for the winners, company and dinner to follow.

The meal served was an epicurean journey through the land and waters of Alaska and the Yukon. Alaskan king crab legs from the Bering Sea, wild Copper River salmon, Prince William Sound halibut, caribou, fresh Alaskan prawns and buffalo tenderloin were among the delicacies. A unique presentation of beef, blackened Kodiak scallops and roast rack of lamb tantalized the group, and a mouthwatering reindeer sausage, chicken and shrimp paella was among the most popular dishes. Dessert was displayed through a unique living buffet presentation, and a crackling log fire blazed lakeside so guests could roast s’mores.

As the guests finished their meal, Hobo Jim, Alaska’s Official State Balladeer, led the group in a sing-a-long. Midway through a song about the Iditarod, he introduced four-time Iditarod winner Martin Buser and his champion dogs. Martin mushed the dogs toward the audience before unzipping the sled to reveal a litter of his champion puppies. Guests spent the afternoon exploring the area, playing with the puppies and singing along to Hobo Jim’s original songs.

The naturally magnificent and positively unforgettable setting made for a truly memorable event. Harith also was dedicated to creating an awards recognition day that had minimal environmental impact. Planners selected an alternative tent flooring of fresh-cut cedar wood chips; chose a certified Green printing company; and purchased all locally produced seafood, meats and vegetables. In addition, the Carcross/Tagish First Nation tribe educated the group about the infinite products that come from the land and the how their tribe works to preserve these resources.

A well-executed incentive event allows a company to show its team members appreciation and exceptional service. For King Pharmaceuticals, it provided a shared experience that built relationships and solidified cohesiveness among the sales force.
Cantrav Services’ Onsite Flexibility Makes President’s Conference an Inspiring Success

Crystal Winner: Tom Ebner, Cantrav Services, West Des Moines, Iowa, USA
Client: ITA Group
Program: President’s Conference

When an insurance company decided to reward its highest achieving agencies with a five-day trip to Banff, Alberta, Canada, it looked to ITA for implementation. ITA, in turn, selected Cantrav Services to execute a spectacular travel incentive program that would evoke a high-end experience synonymous with European sophistication and Canada’s natural beauty, and would motivate the sales force to improve client service and increase sales.

The program also needed to create a positive and inspiring atmosphere to rebuild morale after a difficult year fraught with natural disasters, recognize a large sales force while sustaining excitement and interest and convey a consistent theme. Finally, because another subsidiary within the insurance company held an awards event in Banff the previous year, Cantrav Services had to not just top it, but to raise the bar for future events. This feat required something strikingly original, even for audiences who had recently visited the same destination.

“With a deeply rooted understanding of the insurance company’s goals, Cantrav Services and ITA were able to create a program that was innovative, experiential and inclusive.”

To that end, Cantrav Services featured typical Canadian sports by showcasing budding Canadian athletes during an extraordinary gala evening, and brought entertainers from Canada’s First Nations People who conveyed their deep sense of heritage in their performances. Outdoor activities included hell-sightseeing, Lake Louise tours, canyon biking and hiking, and boating and fishing expeditions. Providing guides for the tours ensured guests received an overview of the area’s rich history, culture, wildlife and geology.

Another goal of the incentive program was to find a unique and interesting way to award many nominees. Cantrav Services orchestrated a series of award banquets throughout the program and imbued each ceremony with a sense of pride and meaning. To convey the insurance company’s strong foundation and create a sense of confidence, Cantrav Services selected themes that mirrored the insurance company’s goals.

Historically, the first evening of the trip included the presentation of green jackets to Hall of Fame awardees in recognition of career achievements. To echo the tradition, the program included a medieval night that represented the insurance company’s deep roots and longevity. Cantrav Services also created a Journey through Canada, Evening at MountView, and Midnight in the Rose Garden receptions to express present-day success. To underscore the company’s bright future, the final evening was a winter wonderland gala, complete with an indoor ice skating rink where Olympic hopeful figure skaters performed and Cirque acrobats soared effortlessly high above.

After planning a flawless event, Cantrav Services had to show the best possible ROI for the insurance company. Organizers were adamant about using resources judiciously to prevent overlap and eliminate unnecessary spending. Cantrav Services juggled transportation logistics by maximizing the transport of goods, chose equipment that could be used for social events and business sessions, and hired a versatile and flexible production crew for all events, reducing overhead costs.

With a deeply rooted understanding of the insurance company’s goals, Cantrav Services and ITA were able to create a program that was innovative, experiential and inclusive. The business results of the program and the unsurpassable experiences for the attendees of the President’s Conference helped this insurance company achieve its goals in an unstable marketplace. As proof to the value of incentive travel rewards, the end-client signed on for another three years of reward program design — and now are ready to greet three more years of goals achieved.
USMotivation Captures Excitement with Pirates of the Pacific Bash

**Crystal Winner:** Jennifer Childress, USMotivation, Atlanta, Georgia, USA  
**Client:** Diebold  
**Program:** Pirates of the Pacific Party

**Demonstrating remarkable enthusiasm, most guests brought additional accessories or full costumes to wear to the event.**

The kit included a copy of the movie *Pirates of the Caribbean*, and costumes and accessories fit for Captain Jack Sparrow and fellow buccaneers. Also inside the kit, was a clue about the hidden treasure stashed away in a Diebold safe. Demonstrating remarkable enthusiasm, most guests brought additional accessories or full costumes to wear to the event. One representative from Argentina spent two weeks making a beautifully designed outfit for herself and her husband.

Once fully outfitted, guests entered the *Pirates of the Pacific* party, located on the beach, by walking underneath a Diebold-engraved “Enter at Your Own Risk” sign. The décor transported guests into a pirate underworld where they were surrounded by bamboo thatching, live parrots, large dock pilings with huge ropes, cargo nets and a Diebold treasure safe filled with jewels and surprise treats hidden away. Additional decorations incorporated barrels, crates, flags and live pirate characters. Activities included pirate jail photo opportunities and games such as peg leg pirate, Captain cut-out photo, skull basketball, wine bottle toss, treasure darts and a pirate doubloon pitch. The activities offered a chance to win real modern day pirate doubloons and other pirate treasures once guests obtained the secret clue to unlock the Diebold safe. In addition to the activities, a large projection screen played the “Pirates of the Caribbean” movie.

A bounty of goodies awaited the pirates at their place settings. The menu was sensitive to all cultures represented and a unique food allergy by one guest was accommodated. The dinner featured a seafood buffet that stretched for miles — Big Island lobster bisque, shrimp, snow crab claws and other sea-worthy dishes complemented by grilled vegetables, local-style fried rice, New York strip steak and red curry chicken with taro. Fresh fruit stations rounded out the delectable meal, and dessert included pineapple upside down cake, Waimea strawberry passion cheesecake, mango cream roulade and chocolate macadamia nut tartlets.

Diebold’s top performers would not have experienced the festivities without the crucial details, distinctive activities or luxurious accommodations associated with the Master’s Circle awards trip. Furthermore, post-trip evaluations distributed to participants were a good indicator of success. Diebold’s Master’s Circle and Circle of Excellence recipients rated every aspect of the program on a scale of 1 to 10 (one being poor and 10 being outstanding). The composite score for the *Pirates of the Pacific* party was 9.23 with more than 30 perfect 10.00 scores.

Through Diebold’s consistent vision and strategy and the employment of travel incentive rewards, 2006 delivered a 12.3 percent year over year increase in revenue for the organization. While the sales force may have donned a pirate hat — at their jobs they are delivering results. ●
Uwin Iwin Incentives Orchestrates
Once-in-a-Lifetime Botswana Research Mission

Crystal Winner: Huw Tuckett,
Uwin Iwin Incentives, Johannesburg,
Gauteng, South Africa
Client: Momentum
Program: Winners in Motion

Momentum’s incentive program’s requirements sounded similar to others — design a reward program that will increase sales, motivate participants and reward the top performers — but then working with Uwin Iwin Incentives took what started as a luxury weekend getaway and incorporated a socially responsible element of intrigue and excitement.

In the heart of Botswana bushveld the culmination of this once-in-a-lifetime experience included active involvement in placing tracking collars on two wild elephants.

“The immersion in environmental concerns and related research made a lasting impression on the participants.”

When brainstorming potential program designs, planners investigated a myriad of activities but had to discard them because of cost, safety factors or regulations. Then the group met an elephant researcher who mentioned that research funding was drying up and completing his group’s objectives was becoming a challenge. An extraordinary idea emerged.

Researchers collar elephants to track movement in the Limpopo Valley area and address the commonly held misconception that elephants are the major cause of habitat destruction. The two-day excursion would help prevent the culling of vast amounts of elephants blamed for environmental degradation and enable more than two year’s of data collection after their departure.

In planning the outing, the Uwin team had to address countless details and ensure the excursion complied with agency requirements.

Before venturing off, an elephant researcher spoke to the group about day-to-day challenges in researching elephant movements and expressed gratitude to Momentum for sponsoring the collars and the event. Planners also had to consider the possibility that the team would not be able to find and dart both elephants in one day, so the itinerary was flexible enough to give participants extra time for elephant searching. As a worst case scenario, the collaring would be completed after the group left, and a videographer would film the exercise.

Fortunately, the collaring went off without a hitch — no injuries or undue stress to the elephants, and both collars continue to transmit vital information on a regular basis. The team bonding experience was a success in all regards! The immersion in environmental concerns and related research made a lasting impression on the participants. A significant benefit of the tracking collars purchased for this event is that they can be tracked via the Internet and many attendees still log on to the tracking Web site to monitor the progress and movements of the elephants. This aspect has extended the life of the reward program beyond the weekend and into the culture of the company as the top performers have remained interactive with their incentive long after it has ended.

2007 SITE Crystal Awards
Oracle rewarded top sales personnel and their partners from more than 20 countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa by including them in the company’s Club Excellence program and inviting them on an elite group travel event. Oracle tasked Carlson Marketing with planning the travel event, and stipulated that an essential requirement was to incorporate elements that would give back to the host destination’s community.

Planning for up to 250 couples, Carlson and Oracle considered a number of destinations and ultimately decided on Cape Town, South Africa because of its supply of large upmarket hotels, cultural background, stunning scenery, large variety of tours and activities, ample options for trip extensions, reasonable flight connections from Europe, convenient time zone and pleasant weather. The Table Bay at the V&A Waterfront, a Conde Nast and Travel & Leisure award winner, met the quality, location and facilities criteria that Oracle was seeking.

However, when Oracle acquired an additional company and added 200 participants to the program, the total number of travelers increased from 500 to 700. To accommodate the larger group, Carlson added the award-winning Mount Nelson Hotel, which matched the quality of Table Bay and is a member of the Heritage Environmental Rating Program because of its continued efforts to benefit the environment.

The next day, Oracle employees took part in a team-building event dubbed the “Amazing Race.” Divided into 27 teams of 14 people, participants faced a series of challenges such as dancing with a local dance group, playing football with local children and finding the “egg man” in a busy marketplace. During the activities, outfits for the following night’s gala dinner were delivered to guest rooms — sarongs for ladies and Madiba shirts for men — all created by local township communities. Along with the gifts, participants received an invitation to dinner and a thank you letter from the community project that Oracle supported.

The next evening kicked off with an awards presentation where the top 20 achievers and winners of the team-building exercise received honors. An African band led guests along a lantern-strewn pathway to the dinner site, which was lit with marquees decorated in a rustic, African style with lanterns, bonfires and candles. Dinner was a sumptuous African buffet featuring foods from across Africa. The last days were filled with relaxing and sightseeing around Cape Town.

By sourcing local goods and supplies, the program not only helped provide employment opportunities in the host destination, but also saved on transport fees, packaging, import duties, insurance and other miscellaneous costs. A tiny garment manufacturing project run by a local church offered temporary employment for 27 women who worked around the clock for three months to produce the 326 African-print sarongs and 391 Madiba shirts that participants received. The ministry earned $29,000 for the order, and nine months later — thanks in part to that income — the group had built a sustainable business and provided full-time employment for 39 people.

In full, the four community organizations that helped source Oracle’s Club Excellence program yielded more than $73,000 in returned revenue but much more in long-term dividends — a reality that also held true for the 700 Oracle employees and partners who shared in this program.
SITE Chapter Challenge

SITE repeated its Crystal Award incentive program, Chapter Challenge for Crystals, for all SITE Chapters to participate in this year. The Chapter Challenge recognizes the chapter with the greatest number of members to enter the Crystal Award Recognition Program.

- $400 USD to be issued to support Chapter expenses or an upcoming meeting
- One (1) complimentary registration for the winning Chapter President (or his/her delegate) to attend the SITE International Conference 2007 in Monterey, California
- A press release highlighting the Chapter’s involvement in the Chapter Challenge for Crystals program to be used at the chapter’s discretion.

SITE is pleased to recognize the South Africa Chapter as the 2007 winner of the Chapter Challenge for Crystals. Congratulations!

Crystal Awards Sponsors

SITE would like to thank its generous sponsors:

Crystal Sponsor:

IMEX

Supporting Sponsors:

Extraordinary Events
DaVinci Fusion
Go West Events
Kosta Boda
Cloth Connection
That’s Cool Events
Incentive Magazine

Congratulations to the Crystal Award Winners from Incentive

Incentive brings you the subscribers you need to reach.
Total Circulation: 65,000

- 100% Qualified Direct Request¹
- 100% Recommend or Approve Motivation, Recognition and Reward Programs²
- 100% Fortune1000 Penetration³
- $202,700 Average Annual Budget for Incentives⁴
- $195.5 Million Average Annual Sales Volume

For more information, visit www.incentivemag.com or contact Publisher Daniel Corcoran at 646-654-5107.

¹ BPA Statement June 2007
² Nielsen Data Nov 2006
³ Nielsen Data Nov 2006
⁴ Equation Subscriber Survey, 2006
Turn over a new leaf.

There’s an energy about IMEX that rejuvenates you.
That’s why increasing numbers of exhibitors and buyers from around the world attend every year.
They go to be totally motivated by the IMEX agenda, by original thinking and new ideas. They go to be inspired, to do business. To make great contacts and do more business. “It is fantastic here” as one participant put it.
The show opens your mind to the full potential of the global MICE industry, making issues clearer, business easier and far more effective.
Unmissable reasons to make the trip to IMEX 2008.
Come and see the wood for the trees.
The essential worldwide exhibition for meetings and incentive travel.

www.imex-frankfurt.com

PRE-REGISTER NOW

www.imex-frankfurt.com