

June 2021

The Newsletter of SITE Chicago

Recover, Rebuild, Rejuvenate, and Reward



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summer

Season is Here!

Summarized by Christopher Rost

Summertime in Chicago is the time of year when the Windy City gets wind in its sails again and really comes alive. While Chicago proper offers many world-renowned attractions and events for all ages, the greater Chicagoland region also boasts experiences that every local and tourist alike should consider when deciding where to go and what to do during this time of year.

Are you a music lover? Look no further than Milwaukee's Summerfest which promotes itself as "The World's Largest Music Festival" with 11 stages of live music over 9 days! If that isn't enough, Ravinia in Highland Park, IL opens in July with more than 60 events including the 85th annual residency of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. And do not forget about Hollywood Casino Amphitheatre in Tinley Park, IL hosting 18 concerts this season including KISS: End of the Road World Tour.

Summer Season is Here! Continued

Are you looking for some excitement? Be sure to visit Six Flags Great America theme park in Gurnee, IL which boasts over 45 rides for thrill seekers of all ages. Your next stop should be Arlington International Racecourse in Arlington Heights, IL which is your destination for Thoroughbred horse racing. Mark Arlington Million on your calendar, a day that draws horses, owners, trainers, jockeys, and fans from every corner of the world. Should you want to feed your equestrian kick even more, head to Temple Lipizzans in Old Mill Creek, IL to witness the art of horsemanship set to classical music in a lovely country setting. Check out The Summer Spotlight performances which bring you the best of the best when it comes to their talented stallions.

Do you have kids and are looking for other kid-friendly options? Look no further than the Brookfield Zoo in Brookfield, IL. This is one of the top 10 largest zoos in America and this summer is featuring over 40 animatronic dinosaurs that measure over 100 feet! If the heat outside is too much for the kiddos then head inside to Legoland Discovery Center in Schaumburg, IL to find millions of lego bricks, over 12 attractions and rides, and a two-story Lego experience!

But since it is the best time of year in Chicagoland, make sure to head outside to find serenity at The Morton Arboretum in Lisle, IL or the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, IL. Both are hosting plenty of activities from concerts & music series to beer & wine tastings. If you want more Lake Michigan in your life then look no further than Indiana Dunes National Park in Chesterton, IN where you can explore 20 miles of incredible sand dunes that line the southern shoreline.

There really is something for everyone this summer in Chicagoland!



2021 SITE Chicago Upcoming Events

- An Evening with the Spicy Grasshopper - Thursday, July 15th, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm Central
- SITE Chicago Road Show - Tuesday, September 28th through Thursday, September 30th
- 7th Annual Holly Trolley - Thursday, December 16th, 4:00 pm to 10:00 pm Central

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter! We will continue to keep you updated on all things SITE Chicago.

Sustainability Certificate - SITE Global Initiative

Summarized by Rose Hippert, CIS, CITP

SITE Chicago is proud to be one of the many chapters working towards the Sustainability Certificate through SITE Global this year. Sustainability is one of the most important issues currently facing our world. SITE Chicago recognizes that to adopt better practices and become more sustainable, we must first change the way we think and approach our decision making.

There are many ways to tackle sustainability, so SITE Chicago has decided to focus our attention in 2021 to addressing Consumer Waste. Our goal this year is to provide a mix of educational and hands-on learning that focus on reducing consumer food and product waste. Join us for our first event:

An Evening with the Spicy Grasshopper

Date: Thursday, July 15

Time: 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm

[Register Today!](#)

Next Events:

Sustain-A-Crawl (Lincoln Square, Chicago)

A Truly Green Holiday (Virtual)



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SAVE THE DATES...SITE Chicago is hitting the road!

September 28-30, 2021

Summarized by Lorraine Bellas, CIS, CITP

We are very excited about our very first Road Show and thrilled to bring our Chicago Board of Directors, our wonderful sponsors, educational sessions (and prizes) TO YOU!

This is a complimentary event for all buyers – whether you are a member of SITE or not! We would love to meet you!

Suppliers, if you are interested in joining us and sponsoring either 1, 2, or all 3 cities, please reach out to Lorraine Bellas, President SITE Chicago at sitechicagosponsorship@gmail.com, or call 630.479.4998.

AGENDA

Wisconsin: Tuesday, September 28th

Chicagoland: Wednesday, September 29th

Michigan: Thursday, September 30th

3:30 pm - Registration

4:00 to 5:00 pm - Speaker / Education Session

5:00 to 6:30 pm - Cocktail Reception and Trade Show

6:30 to 7:00 pm - Prize Drawings

We will be releasing the final location and venue information very soon. Registration will open following the location announcements.

Join us at this inaugural event!

CITP Week is Coming: October 4 - 8, 2021

What You Need To Know For Now:



- If you are interested in sitting for the CITP Exam (or retaking the exam) please let us know NO LATER THAN JULY 21 so we can start to plan
- The location will be in the Chicagoland area
- Discounted Exam Price of \$200 for Members (regularly \$675 for Members)
- Price remains \$895 for Non-Members
- If you are not currently a Member of SITE, Membership Dues are currently pro-rated = great time to join to take advantage of this.

This pricing is a special Membership benefit offered as a courtesy due the effects of the pandemic on our industry - exam will not to be discounted in the future.

If you are interested, or have questions, please send an email to: sitechicagobod@gmail.com and we will respond to you asap!



SITE Chicago Swing & Sip Networking Event

Held IN-PERSON on Thursday, June 24th, 2021

Summarized by Marcella Zuniga, CIS, CIP

Thank you to everyone who joined us in Schaumburg at Topgolf! It was our first in-person event of the year and we couldn't have asked for a better turnout.

- Two Night Stay with Breakfast for Two plus Four Golf Certificates at The Grand Hotel donated by Patti Elliott, Director of National Accounts
- One Night Stay in a Luxury Room at the Don CeSar donated by Cheryl Grimes, Associate Director of Sales
- Two Night Stay with Breakfast for Two Guests in a Standard Ocean View with Breakfast at the Conrad Punta Mita donated by Fernando Delgado, Sr. Sales Manager of Resorts of the Mexican Pacific
- Two Night Stay with Breakfast for Two Guests in a Deluxe Ocean View Room at The Hilton Los Cabos Beach & Golf Resort donated by Fernando Delgado, Sr. Sales Manager of Resorts of the Mexican Pacific
- Two Night Stay in Tuscany Tower with One (1) 50-minute Class Massage at Peppermill Resort & Spa donated by Travis O'Donnell, Regional Sales Director of the Midwest
- Two Night Stay in a Standard Room at Langham Huntington Pasadena donated by Steve Layton, Assistant Director of Group Sales
- Two Night Stay with Breakfast for Two Guests, One Golf Cart for Transportation within the Resort, Use of the Fitness Center, and Two Rounds of Golf at Teeth of the Dog, all at Casa de Campo in La Romana, Dominican Republic donated by Jason Kycek, Senior Vice President of Sales & Marketing
- Two Bleacher Tickets to the 1:20 pm Cubs Game on Saturday, July 24, 2021 against the Arizona Diamondbacks compliments of McCartney Partners
- \$100 Visa Gift Card compliments from Ruby Serra Associates Inc.

Thank You Sponsors



I have a side hustle that turned into a business. Now what?

Held via Zoom Meeting on June 9th, 2021

Summarized by Marcella Zuniga, CIS, CIP

We welcomed 25 SITE members from across the globe to our Spark and Speak session about side gigs that have turned into businesses on Wednesday, June 9. Emily Shields of Emily Alex and Anthony Kelly with Measurable Marketing Consultancy joined us from across the pond to share their insights as they have embarked on side gigs that have turned into full-time opportunities and businesses. In the midst of a lively conversation, here are a few nuggets of wisdom to share for those that might be looking to start their own side gig, or support someone else's side gig.

Overall it was a great conversation with a lot of exchange among the attendees and finally, supporting each other through these new opportunities is always appreciated.

For more information on Emily Alex's services, please visit <https://www.emilyalex.com>

To get in touch with Anthony Kelly, email him at anthony@measurablemarketingconsultancy.com.

Nuggets of Wisdom

- Be passionate about what you want to do. "Would you do it if you weren't getting paid?" is a good question to ask yourself.
- Build and lean on your network - often the best place to start and may create the initial opportunities for supporting your business.
- Find someone (colleague, mentor, etc.) that will be honest with you, and also be ok if you don't take his/her advice.
- Talk about what you do for your business with everyone. The more you share, the more others may be able to connect you to new contacts and opportunities.
- Consider exchanging skills instead of cash. Cash flow can be tight early on, so this is a way to continue to grow and learn without having to pay for services.
- In terms of marketing, it's not about what you want, it's about what your client (or the market) wants.
- With social media and online marketing, follow the 80/20 rule. 80% should be curated information that is useful and helpful with tips/tricks from you and others. 20% should be sales-related in selling your brand/services.

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SITE Chicago Young Leaders - Virtual Escape Room

Held on May 18th, 2021

Summarized by Alexandra Bakalis

SITE Chicago would like to thank Onyx Offsites & Trainings, a new brand and division created by the team behind Positive Adventures, for sponsoring our Young Leaders-powered virtual escape room program!

The event included three teams of our Chi Connections mentors & mentees as well as a guest team from SITE Florida & the Caribbean. Our host was engaging and the event was energizing & fun!

The Virtual Escape Room activity is a team-building program with a classic take on the fun, exciting, and challenging Escape Room phenomenon. Groups are divided into teams and each team is tasked with unlocking challenges from unique clues. Onyx Teams offers company retreats, trainings, wellness and team-building programs for businesses of all sizes around the US and virtually. Their mission is to create meaningful culture, connection, and change.

Onyx—thank you again for your support of SITE Chicago. Onyx has also been a wonderful supporters of SITE SoCal and Mtn West. Let's show this SITE partner some love by visiting their website: onyxteams.com!



SITE Chicago Spark & Speak: I'm An Independent Contractor - or Should I Be?

Held via Zoom Meeting on May 19th, 2021

Summarized by Colleen Brzozowski CIS, CITP

As our industry rebounds of the pandemic, we have found that a number of our Members have considered starting their own business, becoming an Independent Contractor or working side gigs until full time employment returns. With each of these roles, several questions arise, and SITE Chicago decided to bring together some experts for an interactive Spark & Speak discussion to help shed some light on the topic.

Jonathan Howe kicked off the conversation by stating a question which everyone should ask themselves first: "Are you a person in the incentive industry doing business or are you a businessperson doing incentives?" He encouraged everyone to be a businessperson first by handling the preliminary steps to establish your business. You can't just hang a shingle and not address the other legal requirements of operating a business. Having a business plan will allow you to establish credibility and long-term commitment to the endeavor while also addressing any potential challenges or liabilities before they happen.



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Melissa Barreiro made a great point in that you may be great at your trade, but if you are going to start your own business, you need to realize that there is a lot more you need to know; it's far more than just your service. You are now responsible for all things relating to the business such as marketing, sales, accounting, operations, HR, etc. including how you structure the business, what you charge and how/when you get paid, etc. Being an expert in your industry is just a small portion of the job you are taking on. To be a successful business owner, you will need expert advice and insight to build a business plan. The most successful business owners talk to others and learn from those who have done it before. Using these mentors to network will help you get the word out and grow your business successfully and smartly. Keep in mind that starting a business will take time, at least 2-4 years, and is not for the faint of heart or those not willing to commit to the long-term process. There is anxiety and concerns when starting a business or being an Independent Contract. Are you ready to take on and manage the risk, nerves, and fear? Are you able to advocate for yourself by being able to speak confidently about what your need and demand? Do you have the mindset to be able to constantly evaluate and adjust as your business plan to evolve and change based on the current economic environment?

Leah Jacko had worked for a third-party organization as an employee and then decided to go out on her own by starting her own business. She stressed that she took a lot of time to mentally prepare for this and that she truly had to understand the pluses and minuses. It was more than the event work she was doing; it was running a full business. She had to evaluate the ebbs and flow of the work and adjust to the change of no consistent pay, self-monitored vacation, no benefits, etc. and how that compared to structure she had previously. Both she and John shared that it's important to be able to say "No" to opportunities that don't make sense for your business plan; not all business is good business.

It's important to understand your personal budget and what you minimally need to make in order to survive to make it a worthwhile venture. Being honest with your yourself about how much you have in reserves to support the startup and operation until money starts coming in is extremely important. How you design your business model and pricing needs to take into consideration as you have to pay for benefits that would typically be covered under full time employment like vacation, retirement account, insurance, etc. Also, it's important to think about getting short term and long disability insurance...what happens if you can't work and make your income?

One of the biggest shifts for her was thinking about risk management and liability. It's hard to adjust your mindset, but you have to really think about the liability of working for a company to working for yourself. For instance, if you are driving a client around on a site visit and get in an accident, who is liable? As a business owner or independent contractor, you really need to think about the implications whereas when working for a company, this was covered, and you didn't really think about it. John suggested that you sit with a knowledgeable Insurance Broker to discuss your business services and what type of insurance you need. Comprehensive general liability is certainly one you want to have; an errors and omissions clause could be another. In addition, contracts can shift the liability and outline the risk and who is assuming liability.

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Many people were inquisitive about how to determine what you charge for your services and our experts all agreed that you need to use your network to determine what the market currently supports. In addition, you need to determine what your service is worth as a benefit to the organization you are working for. Keep in mind that they aren't paying for your typical benefits as an employee, so you need to account for those additional expenses in your overall business operation. Remember you are selling your skill and knowledge which is even more valuable than your time. Everything has a cost and the activity you do on their behalf is worth something. And, while you want to get some business in the door, you need to consider the long-term effect of doing things for free or at a discounted price. If they haven't paid you anything or paid you a low amount, what changes with your service that to make them willing to pay more next time? It's difficult to go back to clients and increase prices dramatically so it's important to keep in mind from the beginning. It's also crucial to use your network to get insights on best practices regarding details of the contract. You want to make sure that expenses such as mileage, meal reimbursement, etc. are taken into consideration. If doing a daily rate, figure out how this works out to an hourly rate and if you worth that or more if the scope of the project changes. Don't bid without really knowing the whole scope of the program – ask all the questions. There was also discussion about having a cancellation clause for Independent Contractors since so many people lost so much work without repercussions during the pandemic and now people want to protect themselves from that. It was suggested that you consider pricing in segments - creating the program, implementing, and planning and operating – to ensure you receiving payment for work done as it happens rather than losing out entirely on your time and energy if a program cancels prior to operation. Travel Directors could try an upfront, non-refundable deposit because you are a selling a perishable commodity (your time and availability) that you can't resell if it isn't used at the time it was scheduled for, a booking fee of sorts.

The Independent Contractor has been recognized as a legitimate form of doing business and has evolved greatly over time, however, it is becoming more difficult for individuals and employers to prove that they are truly "independent" as government prefers them to be an employee. It's important to understand this and be prepared for the implications involved. For instance, you could clearly start work as an Independent Contractor and as you do great job and get hired back enough times that it becomes a much more regular job which could mean that you become more of an employee than a contractor. How often a person works a particular role for a company can be a factor as to how the government looks at these jobs. An example is trip director work or managing a registration desk, etc. A company needs to consider how the government looks at them using the same person for job 1 or 2 times or if they use same person for similar job for 20 programs. To the government, that can be looked at as more of an Employee than Independent Contractor and that could change how the government will consider this for taxes. If you make more than \$600 in a calendar year from someone, you should be receiving a 1099 from them. If you are doing a side gig, you may have to estimated taxes on a quarterly basis (4x a year). This is where having a trusted tax expert can help you to ensure you aren't hit with any surprises.

In closing, the Experts shared that there are many benefits to having your own business or being an Independent Contractor and, there are also many caveats to understand to ensure that what sounds like a promise of flexibility and opportunity truly makes sense for you and your bank account. It shouldn't be an easy decision and utilizing your network to gain insights and best practices will be key in your success.

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Notice:

The views and opinions included in this session belong to these respected industry experts and do not necessarily mirror the views, law, or final legal options and opinions of SITE Chicago.

The presentations made by the speakers, or the sponsor are made with the understanding that they are not engaged by way of their presentations in rendering legal, accounting, or professional services through their presentations.

If legal, accounting, or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional should be obtained.

Experts:

Jonathan Howe, President and CEO of Howe & Hutton, Ltd Law Firm

Wendy Davids MA, SPHR and Melissa Barreiro M. Ed. - Executive Partners Balanced HR Solutions

Leah Jacko, CMP Meetings LJ, LLC

Resources:

[Independent Contractor \(Self-Employed\) or Employee? | Internal Revenue Service \(irs.gov\)](#)

[The IRS 20 Factor Test: Employee Or Independent Contractor? \(taxreliefcenter.org\)](#)

[12 Entrepreneurial Truths Working Parents Should Embrace | SUCCESS](#)

