

Springing Forward

By Ginny Stengel, SSA Vice President, Education & State Programs



Another SSA Spring Conference & Trade Show has come and gone. You've enjoyed the chance to catch up with old friends, learn new ideas, talk to vendors about new and innovative products on the market, and enjoyed a one-of-a-kind venue on the banks of the Potomac River.

But now your real work has begun. It's time to apply what you've learned in the educational sessions, at the roundtables, at the concurrent sessions, in the trade show hall, and from your self storage colleagues. You've invested your time and money to go, so make sure you haven't

wasted the experience.

Start by going through the business cards and brochures you picked up in the exhibit hall. Call some of the vendors who offer that lock, security gate or software program that you've been thinking about since you got home. Make sure you do this while the information from the conference is still fresh in your mind.

You'll receive a copy of the presentations and an audio recording of the sessions shortly after the conference. Listen to these. Read through the presentations. Contact the speaker. Even if it's a topic that is only of slight interest to you, you'll likely pick up something that you or a colleague can use in your business. It won't be a waste of your time.

Write an email to the new people you met along the way. I've always found that the most interesting and informative moments at a conference are the informal interactions with other attendees. And remember, social media is your friend. Use Twitter and other social media platforms to connect with attendees after the conference. (You can follow the SSA via @SelfStorageAssn to get the latest news on the Association and the industry.)

And lastly, get involved. We are always looking for the best, most relevant and most thought-provoking ideas for our educational sessions. Our goal is to offer attendees the tools and knowledge to do their jobs more effectively and to make their companies more successful.

Do you have a new idea or a new twist on an old idea that would help self storage owners and managers examine and evaluate their current practices? Would you like to discuss a unique solution to help your colleagues with issues they face in their day-to-day operations? If so, we'd like to hear from you.

We recently sent out a call for 2015 fall conference speaker proposals. If you're interested in speaking at this or any other future SSA conference, contact me at gstengel@selfstorage.org to submit a proposal. Another way to get involved is by sitting on the Education Committee. If you're interested, please let me know. This committee meets before and after every spring and fall conference and determines the programming for the conferences.

Thanks again for a great Spring Conference & Trade Show! ❖

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