

Show Manager – Certifiably Excels



On Wednesday, February 17, 2010 the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce's Show Manager, Nancy Milani, graduated from the prestigious International Association of Expositions and Events (IAEE) program of Exhibition Management in Mississauga, Ontario. Amongst her graduating class of only 7 students, Nancy has joined the select body of only 31 Certified Exhibition Managers in all of Canada.

In a brief interview, Nancy shares some of her experiences, insight and advice on the CEM designation she has obtained and how her acquired knowledge can benefit the Chamber of Commerce's shows.

1. Tell us a bit about the program you have just graduated from.

Canadian Association of Exhibition (CAEM) is partnered with the International Association of Expositions and Events (IAEE) to provide courses specific to the exposition industry. This professional designation is intended to provide an opportunity for individuals to share their knowledge, increase their overall awareness within the industry, and to be recognized for their achievements as professionals in the exposition management field. The CEM designation is recognized internationally. A total of nine courses plus minimum three years of experience is required to gain the CEM professional designation. Members that achieve this merit are recognized annually at the CAEM's Awards Gala: Celebrating the Stars, held in February of each year (of which I just attended).

2. What are some of the new tools and ideas that you have learned that you will now bring to your position at the Chamber of Commerce?

This really gave me an opportunity to look at the industry as a whole, not just from the management, sales and marketing side but from the suppliers, health and safety, and the venues etc.

3. How does this designation improve the work that you do and differentiate you from other local show managers?

As stated above the designation is recognized and respected internationally. It definitely adds credibility to you and your show and provides me with the latest information and contacts.

4. What did you gain from your experience?

Besides the educational factor and keeping current with industry issues and standards, one of the most important benefits was the networking. The

wealth of information from industry professionals in the room at any given time was staggering. I have formed relationships with a number of show managers and industry suppliers and now have a large network to feed from. Being from Thunder Bay this is extremely valuable. I have since gotten involved with CAEM and currently sit on the Membership Committee. I have also been invited to facilitate a session at the IAEE TS2 Annual Meeting and Conference in Boston in July.

5. What advice do you have for others entering this program? Or are looking to become a show manager of your calibre.

I highly recommend others in the events and exhibition industry to consider the CEM program. The dynamics of the industry have changed hugely over the past ten years and the learning modules were all relevant to today's issues. The courses were interactive and informative. In terms of advice, review your learning modules in advance, as many of the courses are intense and have a lot of information to cover. The exams can be quite challenging.

The Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce would like to congratulate Nancy Milani for all of her hard work, her effort and her great achievements over the past few years, culminating her CEM designation this past February. Come see Nancy at the upcoming Prosperity Northwest Business to Business Show on Wednesday, April 28, 2010 at the Valhalla Inn, to witness firsthand the skill and creativity that Nancy brings to Thunder Bay and its community.