



2014



INDUSTRY ADVOCATE

HSMAI president aims to leverage organization's strengths to further boost membership

By MICHAEL GOSSIE
Photo by COURTNEY PEDROZA

Lynn Casebere is the 2014 president of the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International Arizona Chapter and director of catering for The Clubhouse at Tonto Verde. Az Business caught up with the hospitality industry leader for a Q&A.

AB: What was your first hospitality job?

LC: In my 20s, I found myself living and working in New York City as a meeting planner for a Fortune 50 company. It was incredibly exciting and rewarding as I was able to travel the world. Back in those days, everything was hands on. You didn't Google a destination to find out about

it. You boarded a plane and experienced it. I loved being able to combine my sense of adventure with my creativity and my attention to detail.

AB: What are the biggest changes you've seen in the hospitality industry?

LC: As with most industries, technology has changed the way the hospitality industry does business. The brick-and-mortar travel agency is almost extinct. You now have to pay a premium to talk to an airline ticket agent and social media is revolutionizing feedback on everything we do the industry. Didn't like your restaurant meal? Surly bellman at the hotel? Sitting on a runway too long? Everyone knows it instantly. That front desk manager can apologize to the guest and go above and beyond to make amends, but the blogosphere may never know. It makes our job much more difficult.

AB: What has been your biggest challenge in the hospitality industry?

LC: Developing relationships is very important to me and building trust takes time. Because of the transient nature of the hospitality industry, I had struggled with building long-term relationships. Membership in HSMAI has afforded me the opportunity to stay connected with former co-workers and vendors. Through its educational programs, HSMAI has also given me the tools to be better able to meet my clients' needs. In turn, I continue to foster those business relationships.

AB: How do events like the upcoming 2015 Super Bowl impact the industry in Arizona?

LC: An event like the Super Bowl has





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The Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International Arizona Chapter's 2014 board of directors: (Top row, from left) **Karen Davis**, CTA, Mesa Convention Center; **Sandy Rimmer**, Ranger Resources; **Erik Dorr**, Interactive Sites; **Angela Prestinario**, Stratum Laser Tag; **Lynne Wellish**, CMP, CHSE, Scottsdale Community College; **Joanne Winter**, HSMIA executive director; **Barry Nakano**, PacRim Marketing Group. (Bottom row, from left) **Michelle Huebner**, CMP, Visit Mesa; **Lynn Casebere**, Clubhouse at Tonto Verde; **Penny Allphin**, CHME, Hassayampa Inn Prescott. (Not pictured) **Charlotte Cluff**, The Enchantment Group; **Richard Emmerling**, Prescott Resort & Conference Center/Grace Hospitality Group; **Nicole Krekeler**, Toby Keith's I Love This Bar & Grill; and **Kim Pfeifer**, Pointe Hilton Resorts.

broad-reaching impact on the host city. It generates revenue for every aspect of the hospitality industry – from air-lift to hotel room nights to the pedal cab owner taking people from the stadium to a nearby restaurant and everything in between. It also gives international exposure to a city that can generate future business for years to come from both corporate and leisure visitors.

AB: What do you think Arizona needs to do to attract more convention, meeting and event business to the state?

LC: Arizona is an amazing destination with so much to offer — a newly expanded Phoenix Convention Center, a revitalized downtown area, neighboring hi-tech event venues, endless greens and fairways, as well as beautiful hotels and resorts — not to mention the weather. There are many other reasons to bring your event to Arizona — Mesa has the new Cubs Park, the Commemorative Air Museum and its own Convention Center; Glendale boasts the Arizona Cardinals and the Phoenix Coyotes; there's skiing in Flagstaff and hiking at the Grand Canyon as well as Vineyard Tours in Sonoita. Political decisions have negatively impacted us in the past as have over-publicized corporate excesses. We need to stay true to who we are and show potential clients the beauty, the warmth and the value that will always make Arizona a great destination.

AB: How did you become involved with HSMIA?

LC: HSMIA is a group of people who truly care about one another and their community. After moving to Arizona and getting back into hospitality, I did my due diligence with many of the related

associations and found that HSMIA was a good fit for me. They had a welcoming collegial spirit that I embraced. Their educational programs have helped me grow in my career and whenever I need assistance, I can always reach out to a member for advice.

AB: Why is giving back to the community so important to HSMIA?

LC: The HSMIA Community Outreach Committee plans and coordinates volunteer projects throughout the year. Its Charity of the Year is Kitchen on the Street, which provides "Bags of Hope," the primary food source to hundreds of children when school is not in session. In addition to our Charity of the Year, HSMIA also embraces many programs that allow its members to give back to our community. Our members feel very blessed and want to share their time and resources with those less fortunate.

AB: What are your goals as president of the Arizona Chapter?

LC: I am humbled to be in the company of so many amazing past presidents and hope that I can make a difference. I want to increase our membership by being more inclusive of professionals in hotel-related companies, as well as targeting graduating hospitality students to keep them involved. I have a wonderful leadership team that I will continue to rely on to show value to our members through innovative educational programs, fun networking events and community programs. My theme this year is "Grow where you are planted." I want HSMIA as an organization and all of its members to blossom into better people and better leaders. **AB**

What is HSMIA?

Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International is committed to growing business for hotels and their partners and is the industry's leading advocate for intelligent, sustainable hotel revenue growth. The association provides hotel professionals and their partners with tools, insights, and expertise to fuel sales, inspire marketing, and optimize revenue through programs such as HSMIA's MEET, Adrian Awards, and Revenue Optimization Conference. HSMIA is an individual membership organization comprised of more than 7,000 members worldwide, with 40 chapters in the Americas Region. Connect with HSMIA at hsmia.org. Active since 1968, the Arizona Chapter is HSMIA's third-largest chapter. *For more information, contact Executive Director Joanne Winter at 602-240-5552 or visit hsmia-az.org.*

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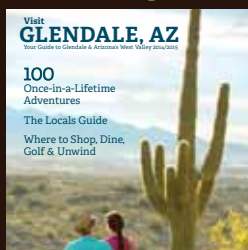
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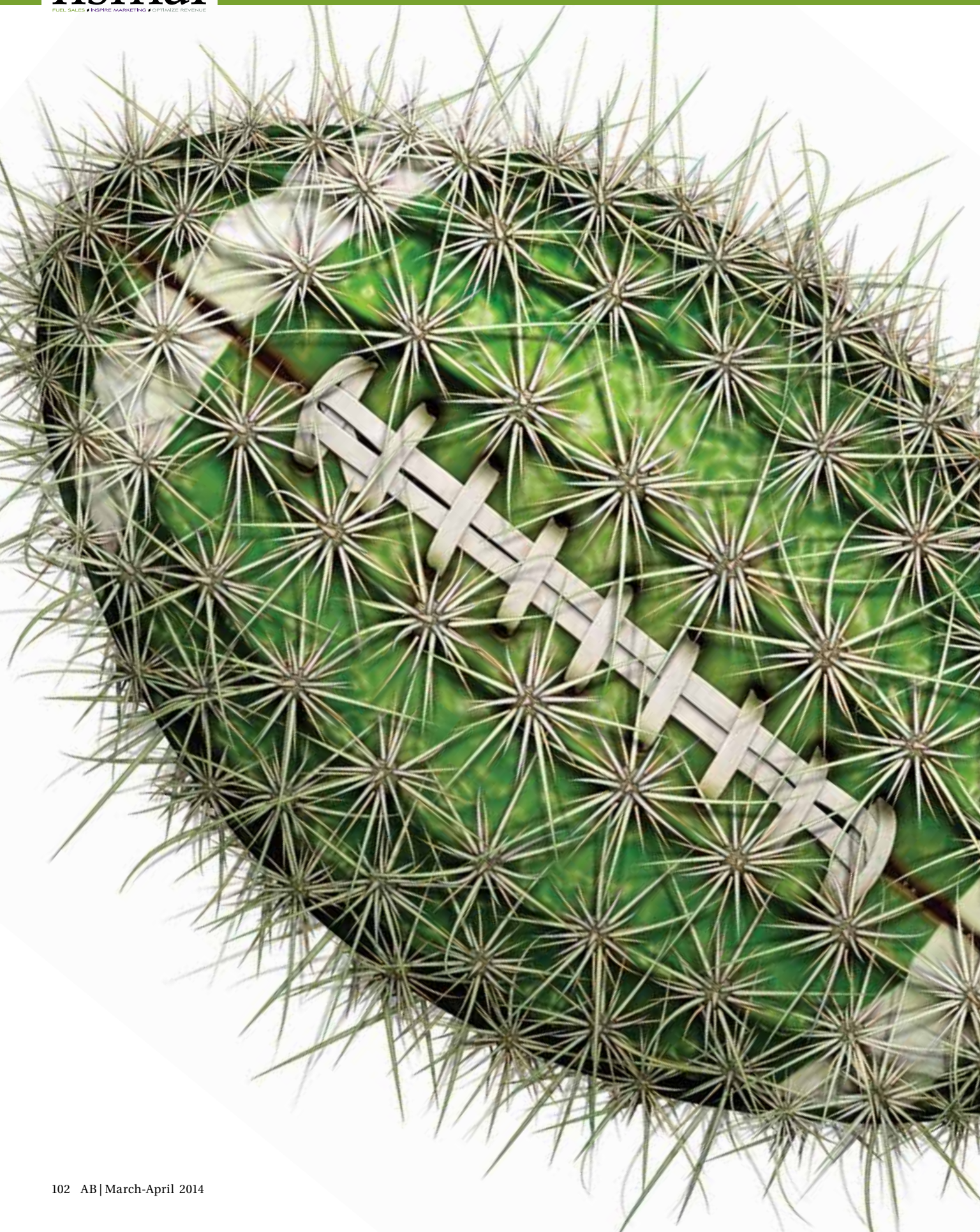


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GAME FACE

Arizona's hospitality industry takes steps to make sure the 2015 Super Bowl packs the biggest economic punch possible

By MICHAEL GOSSIE

We already know the winner of the 2015 Super Bowl.

It's Arizona. Not necessarily the

Cardinals, but the host state, which will reap an economic impact that few events can generate.

"High-profile sporting events bring international exposure to Arizona," said Debbie Cotton, director of the Phoenix Convention Center. "And being in the international spotlight draws more tourists and convention groups to our state, which increases tourism revenue for the state and local economies."

Not only does an event like the Super Bowl draw bodies, it draws bucks ... big bucks. According to the W.P. Carey School of Business, which performed an economic impact study after Arizona hosted the Super Bowl in 2008, the game generated \$500 million of economic impact for the state, attracting more than 91,000 out-of-state visitors who spent \$218 million during their stays. Breaking down 2008 even further:

- Super Bowl visitors stayed in Arizona an average of 3.9 nights and spent \$617 each day on hotels, food, transportation, recreation, shopping, etc.

- During the four days leading into the 2008 game, Greater Phoenix's lodging industry experienced a 22 percent increase in occupancy, a \$32 million increase in total room revenue and a 157 percent increase in revenue per available room (RevPAR) over the same four days the previous year.

- According to the City of Phoenix, sales-tax collections from the city's hotels and motels increased 25 percent in February 2008, compared with the same month the previous year.

"The night before the 2008 Super Bowl brought the Scottsdale area its second-highest recorded occupancy in the history of our community," said Rachel Sacco, president and CEO of the Scottsdale Convention & Visitors Bureau. "The first and third-highest recorded occupancies are from the game nights of the national college football championship games in 2007 and 2011, respectively."

To gear up for Super Bowl XLIX in Glendale, the hospitality industry has planned ahead so it can derive the greatest economic benefit for not only the venues that will host Super Bowl Week events, but also for the greater communities surrounding them and the state as a whole. The planning started before the Valley was awarded the game and will continue until after the coin toss. Some examples:

Kiva Couchon, director of communications and public information officer, Arizona Office of Tourism: During the 2014 Super Bowl, AOT had 30-second commercial spots running on a digital board in Times Square and also wrapped a truck and an Airstream travel trailer with marketing images promoting Arizona. "Our efforts have marketing images that reflect our current National Campaign, 'Let Yourself Go,' already running in major markets throughout the U.S."

Liz Franzese, director of sales and



Debbie Cotton



Liz Franzese



Steve Hart



Michelle Oden-Huebner



James Jessie



Lorraine Pino



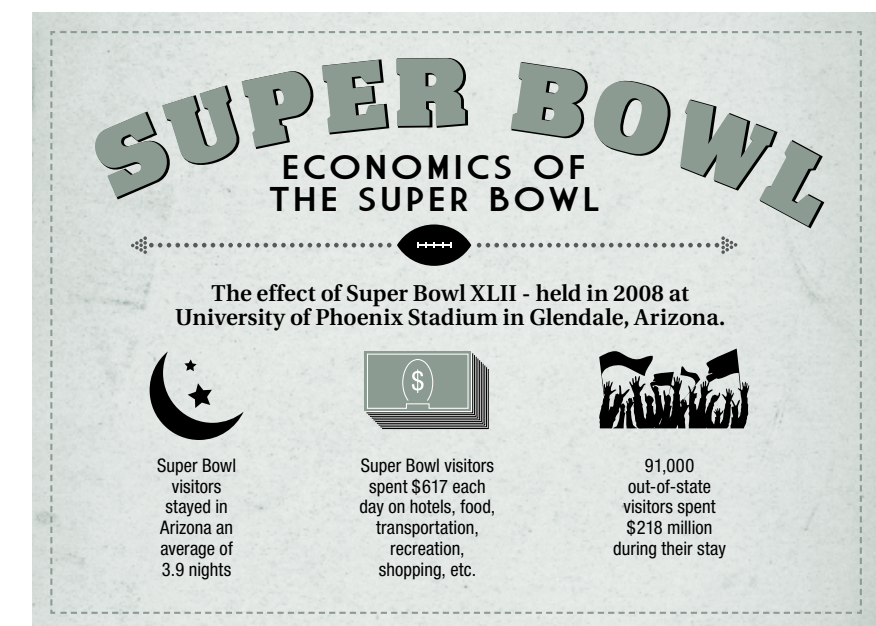
Rachel Sacco

marketing, The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa: “We have started the process of meeting with groups who will be attending Super Bowl as they consider us for their stay in the Valley. The Super Bowl is one of those unique opportunities that allows us to showcase our amenities to potential clients who may have never previously considered our resort and who may bring us business during Super Bowl weekend and hopefully long after.”

Steve Hart, Marriott area vice president for Arizona and general manager, JW Marriott Desert Ridge Resort & Spa: “Marriott is hosting more than 10,000 hotel rooms in more than 21 hotels. We’re gearing up at JW Marriott Desert Ridge with a Big Game package so our guests will enjoy our luxury accommodations, gourmet food and crafted beverages celebrating the Super Bowl.”

James Jessie, senior vice president of sales, Visit Phoenix: “In November 2013, we Valley CVBs participated in a familiarization tour of the city that showcased the Convention Center and other event venues to vendors, sponsors and NFL staff. The Super Bowl brings with it numerous NFL-sanctioned and sponsor-affiliated events and parties, and each of these events needs a home. So we joined our local partners in showing off venues as big as Chase Field and US Airways to spaces as elegant and intimate as the Orpheum Theater and MonOrchid gallery.”

Michelle Oden-Huebner, national sales manager, Visit Mesa: “Visit Mesa already pulled out all the stops and hosted NFL planners last November to a site visit of the (new Cubs) stadium and has continually communicated to corporate sponsors and event organizers the attributes of our city’s venues. These new locations are already setting the stage for high-profile concerts and festivals and bringing in crowds. We have a prime location at the intersection of Loops 101 and 202 allowing for easy access, and the



proximity to Mesa and surrounding area hotels simply can’t be beat.”

Lorraine Pino, manager, Glendale Convention & Visitors Bureau: “It starts with preparing information and introducing new tools including a Glendale Mobile App that will help tourists plan the ultimate fan experience. Working with national and international media puts Glendale and the West Valley in the spotlight and increases exposure to all the attractions, businesses and amenities the region offers.”

Sacco: “The Scottsdale CVB joined the Arizona Super Bowl Host Committee in New York/New Jersey for this year’s Super Bowl to help promote the Arizona game in 2015. We also had additional exposure through Scottsdale ads rotating on 50 digital boards placed over the entrance stairs leading into the subway stations throughout Manhattan during the week leading up to the game. Images of Scottsdale’s sunshine and Sonoran Desert setting will encourage New Yorkers and Super Bowl fans alike to

escape to Scottsdale.”

While the short-term economic impact of hosting the Super Bowl will be significant and all the planning and preparation will pay off, experts said over the long term, hosting the Super Bowl gives Phoenix unparalleled national and international exposure that cannot be quantified.

“Assuming media coverage and television viewership mirrors recent Super Bowls, the game will attract more than 1,000 journalists from across the globe and be watched by more than 100 million TV viewers in the U.S.,” said Jessie. “According to the NFL, the potential worldwide audience for the game is 1 billion people. So, the Super Bowl not only generates hundreds of millions of dollars of visitor spending for our community, it places Phoenix in the national media spotlight for all the right reasons. For a week, the world gets to see our city for what it is — a warm, welcoming, beautiful destination that can accommodate mega events with aplomb.” **AB**



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MEET MARKET

More business leaders are seeking atypical solutions when planning corporate meetings and events

By MICHAEL GOSSIE

Competitors always seek an edge over an opponent. That's especially true in business where corporate meetings and team-building events are taking competition to a whole new level.

"We will do more than 1,000 corporate events this year," says Scott Sanders, founder and president of Octane Raceway, which offers high-speed kart racing on an indoor-outdoor track in Scottsdale.

Octane is part of a growing trend that has seen a growing number of companies move away from staging their corporate events at the nearest airport hotel meeting room and evolving their events into more unique, fun and fresh environments.

"Companies are looking for different ways to engage their employees," Sanders says.

"One of the things we pride ourselves on is creating a memorable event. It's not like people leave and say, 'We went to a meeting and accomplished our business objective.' When they come to Octane, they get to go off site, experience something together and get their competitive juices flowing. Companies are starting to recognize that team building not just as a line item on their budget, but something that has a true return on investment when it comes to having productive teams and having employees who feel appreciated."

Octane Raceway isn't the only place in the Valley where business leaders can effectively mix business with pleasure and team building. Here are just a few options:



Casino del Sol: In addition to its 18,000-square-foot ballroom that divides into five smaller rooms to allow meeting planners to hold multiple events side-by-side throughout their stay, Casino Del Sol Resort offers its corporate visitors world-class gaming, a Ty Butler- and Notah Begay-designed golf course, scenic hiking trails, mountain bike trails and horseback riding. casinodelsolresort.com



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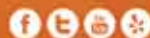
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Dave and Busters: With all the amenities of a hotel plus customized team building options, D&B guests attend an experience, not just a meeting. By-products of a D&B event result in building team cohesion, melting strong personality types and re-energizing your strongest asset – your employees. Now that's a way to justify your meeting dollars. daveandbusters.com

Hard Rock Cafe Phoenix: The Hard Rock is the perfect venue for parties and special events, large and small. Located in the heart of downtown Phoenix, Hard Rock can host a variety of events, from corporate meetings to elegant galas, each with a custom design to fit clients' specific needs. The venue provides guests with a legendary culinary experience, along with a one-of-a-kind memorabilia collection, giving each event its own built-in vibe. hardrock.com



Hot Air Expeditions: Hot air balloon flights and tethered rides are fun and unique activities for meetings and events. Tethered rides are a great addition to an event and balloon flights are perfect for bonding outside of the office and showcasing the beautiful Sonoran Desert. Post-flight gourmet cuisine and optional teambuilding events and activities are available. hotairexpeditions.com



Mastro's: Mastro's private dining space offers corporate clients an exclusive, fine dining experience in a business-minded atmosphere complete with audio-visual capabilities and high-level service. Options include Mastro's Steak House, Mastro's Ocean Club and Mastro's City Hall. mastrorestaurants.com



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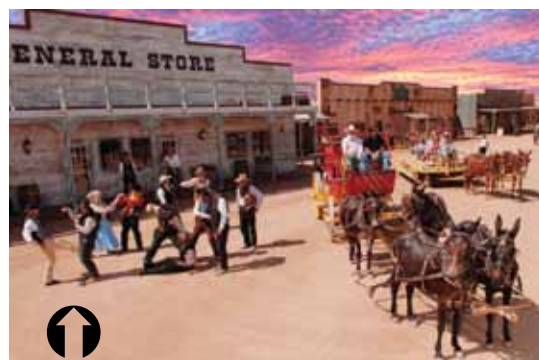


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Rawhide Western Town and Steakhouse at Wild Horse Pass:

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TPC Scottsdale: TPC offers world-class golf accommodations for all corporate groups. Besides golf, TPC offers post-event function spaces, private meeting spaces and banquet areas that allow for corporate groups to enjoy a round of golf while including business activities. This can include a power point presentation before teeing off or a large post-event function area to entertain clients before or after their round. pgatourtpc.com



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