

FRIDAYS AT FOUR
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News from GF Strategies

As we attend the annual IAVM meetings in Phoenix, the major topics will be discussions around social media, and where does all of that fit into the business model for events.

Here are just a few of the things that will be talked about at the upcoming show based on our readings over the first half of this year:

- Cashless payments—How and when...and when will there be a measurable return on investment for the investment in the hardware and software. The Diamondbacks just rolled out a mobile ordering feature at their stadium that was designed as an app for ordering in advance from your seat.
- NFC—that is not the National Football Conference. It stands for near-field communications. Right now only two smart phones have this built into the phones. Expect it to be in most phones within two years. This will allow you to pay by tapping your phone, rather than swiping a credit card. Those who follow this say there is a long ways to go before acceptance of this by the general user. (Business Week July22)
- QR codes and Microsoft Tag—this is a new breed of bar codes that consumers can read with their camera phones to get discounts and information. According to one marketing firm leader at MGH Inc, ‘these codes may not exist in two years. But they are a temporary solution to the problem of, “how do you connect people to online things in the real world?”’—(Wall Street Journal)
- Google Wallet—another payment system tied to the smart phone. According to Stephanie Tilenius at Google “we want to create **tomorrow’s best shopping experience and bring online and offline together**”. (Google press release)
- Mobile browsing and mobile ad spending. Will venues be using the mobile device to advertise their venues? Here are some statistics. US mobile ad spending is predicted to grow from \$743 million dollars in 2010 to \$1.5 billion by end of 2012 and to \$2.5 billion by 2014. So venues that are finding ways to advertise via the mobile device are likely to see more customer purchases. (Media Week)
- Ticketmaster and Live Nation. How is that going? What are the major changes since the merger? Is the competition that was supposed to emerge as part of the Justice Department decision growing its share of the market? Is dynamic pricing the hot trend or something that is going to stick? On line ticketing. Paperless tickets...
- Sports team lockouts. With the NBA likely to not start on time, what kind of challenges will the arenas face in replacing that revenue? How will they do it? What are the plans in place at this time?
- Las Vegas and Los Angeles...two markets talking huge stadium construction. Will either get momentum and more importantly the public funding support needed to make it happen?

- Food concessions. Is the move towards locavore, local sourcing, healthier menu options leading to a better net operating margin, and how? What are chefs doing to bring this to the customer yet maintain the profit margins?
- Digital out of home or DOOH- What is the latest in digital signage? How digital signage changing and what is the return on investment for making the change?
- Amphitheaters—what is the latest news from these venues. Have they come back yet? Is there more touring shows out there this year? What are the guarantees?

Look for us at IAVM. WE will be discussing all of these trends with our customers, and letting you know our plans for bringing more revenues to venues by use of the smart phone. See you next week.

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