

DEBBIE HUFF

C O N F E R E N C E / M E E T I N G P L A N N E R

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Seasoned Event Management Professional with over 10+ years of experience in orchestrating large-scale conferences and corporate events. Demonstrated expertise in strategic planning, team leadership, and cross-functional collaboration. Adept at delivering exceptional event experiences that drive brand recognition and business growth.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Brand Ambassador - Premium Donor Suites

KU Athletics Event Guest Services | Lawrence, KS

Oct 2025 – Present

Passionate about people, Personable Greeter, Excellent Listener, Clear communicator; Empathetic listener, Solutions provider to questions and concerns, Direction provider.

Senior Veterinary Department Coordinator

PURINA US, Division of Nestle | St. Louis, MO

Sept 2024 – Jan 2025

Manage meeting space execution including registration, badges, securing AV, electrical and catering requirements.

Senior Veterinary Conference Planner

Hill's Pet Nutrition, Division of Colgate-Palmolive | Overland Park, KS

July 2016 – July 2024

- Managed 30 conferences, ranging from 250 to 27,000 resulting in a 15% increase in attendee participation over five years. (National: VMX, WVC, Global Pet, SuperZoo; Specialty: ACVIM, AVMA; Regional: VET, Fetch)
- Implemented cost-saving measures that reduced event expenses by 7% annually without compromising quality.
- Led cross-functional team in developing educational marketing strategies, enhancing attendee engagement by 20%.
- Marketing, Sales & third-party vendors collaboration ensuring cohesive messaging/branding across event platforms.
- Proficient in event management platforms (Cvent and Passkey) enhancing registration efficiency and data accuracy.
- Skilled in virtual booth creation and interactive design, contributing to a 25% increase in virtual event participation.
- Conference Team responsible for strategy development, educational experiences, decision-making and oversight of sponsored education, VIP events, and exhibit hall booths.
- Collaboration with Marketing, Sales, Conference Association Management, and third-party vendors, ensuring cohesive messaging via collateral and educational booth experiences.
- Oversaw implementation of booths, live and virtual, signage sponsorship placements, and educational events.
- Managed external vendors to execute high-quality entertainment for sponsored Openings and specialty events.
- Provided exceptional treatment to VIP guests and Key Thought Leaders at Hill's sponsored events.
- Coordination of registration, lodging, transportation, and security/VIP logistics for conferences and events.

Key Achievements

- Demonstrated 8 years of experience as a highly organized and motivated Senior Conference Manager, with a proven track record in planning and executing innovative and successful meetings and sponsored events.
- Educational marketing strategies that provide a comprehensive Hill's educational experience for attendees.
- Led conference initiatives ensuring cohesive and enriching attendee education.
- Key Thought Leader management & collaboration with Marketing, Procurement, Vet Affairs, Accounting.
- Hill's Virtual Booth interactive design creation contributor and implementer.
- Led content and design management of Hill's Transforming Lives app for virtual conferences.
- Successfully managed tasks and projects while participating in a hybrid remote work arrangement, demonstrated adaptability and strong communication skills to ensure seamless collaboration with both on-site and remote team members.

Prior Experience: Conference Planner/Coordinator; Project Management, Logistics Management, Event and Communications Liaison, and Vendor Management, Budgeting

PRIOR PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Conference Planner Assistant

Hill's Pet Nutrition, Division of Colgate-Palmolive | Topeka, KS

July 2013 – July 2016

Assisted Senior Conference Planner with all aspects of Conferences including room blocks, badges, transportation, tradeshow asset ordering and logistics, securing meeting space, speaker management, AV coordination and budgeting.

Office Manager

Andrews Asphalt & Construction | Topeka, KS

Nov 2001 – July 2016

Communications, Marketing, Payroll, Accounting, HR, Fixed Asset Management, Insurance, Tracking Job Costing, Work Comp, Union and IRS Audits

Co-Owner

A-pack LLC | Topeka, KS

Nov 2004 – July 2012

Created and executed all aspects of a business startup including Communications, Marketing, Payroll, Accounting, HR, Fixed Asset Management, Insurance, Job-cost Tracking and Manufacturing ordering and inventory; Awarded KDOC Value-Added Loan.

Project Manager – Core Conversion for Y2K

Fujifilm – Sericol, Inc | Kansas City, KS

Dec 1994 – May 1998

Managed multi-million dollar implementation of JD Edwards Accounting, Distribution and Manufacturing software modules delivering on-time and on-budget; Tracked and managed KPIs to ensure on-time and on-budget implementation; Analyzed and streamlined business practices ensuring validation of business requirements; Lead weekly status meetings insuring on time deliverables; Tested to ensure Y2K compliancy; Developed end-user training materials; Lead training classes to ensure successful within the organization; Developed customer sales reporting and marketing database; planned National Sales Convention and Regional Meetings.

Brand Coordinator

Hill's Pet Nutrition, Division of Colgate-Palmolive | Topeka, KS

July 1993 – Nov 1994

Communications Administrator

Hill's Pet Nutrition, Division of Colgate-Palmolive | Topeka, KS

July 1990 – July 1993

KEY COMPETENCIES

Strategic Planning & Vision, Project Management & Organization; Budgets/Financial Management; Venue Selection/ Logistics Coordination; Stakeholder/Vendor Management; Marketing/Audience Engagement; Risk Management/ Contingency Planning; Technology/Innovation; Communications/Negotiations; Post Event Evaluation

Conference & Event Planning and Management:

Booth Creation, Booth Execution, Room Block Management, Project Management, Process Development, Problem Solving, Creativity, Organizational Skills, Leadership, Venue Selection

Administrative and Communication Skills:

Communications, Time Management, Event Logistics, Passion, Attention to Detail, Multitasking, Decision Making, Budget Management, Contract Negotiations, Vendor Relations, Hospitality Relations, Hotel Relations

Software:

Microsoft Teams & Office, Google Suite, SAP, Virtual Booth Creation, Web Registration, Cvent, Passkey

AWARDS

Chairman's You Can Make a Difference: Outstanding Conference Execution

Colgate-Palmolive

2017

Impactful Storytelling Award

AVMA

2023

Vetty Award: Hill's Veterinary Academy

NAVC

2022

22nd Annual Sizzle Award: Integrated Trade Show Exhibit Marketing Campaign EXHIBITOR Magazine	2019
Association of National Advertisers B2 Award: Excellence in Integrated Trade Show Marketing EXHIBITOR Magazine	2019
Most Interactive/Innovative Booth Award AVMA	2017

EDUCATION

Master in Business Marketing, Washburn University, 1994
Bachelor in Communications Public Relations, Washburn University, 1988

REFERENCES

Steven Middleton • KU Athletics, Director of Jayhawk Services • smiddleton@KU.edu • 913-980-8833
Tyler Nissen • Harvest • tnissen@harvestkc.com • 816-536-3210
Omar Farias • Hill's Pet Nutrition • omar_farias@hillspet.com • 816-533-4494
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