

How to convince your employer to send you to the STMA conference

By STMA Editorial Staff

It's time to begin planning your trip to the Annual STMA Conference. How can you convince your employer to send you?

Continuing education and industry connections are crucial to your success and the success of your sports facility. Here are some suggestions to help your employer understand how your attendance at the Annual STMA Conference and Exhibition can add value to the overall operation of the facility. At the end of the article is a one page document you can present to your employer that outlines the costs and benefits of your attendance.

Educate yourself on the Conference and Exhibition

- Provide an overview of the size and scope of the Conference. It may be helpful to give your employer a copy of the brochure.
- Pinpoint specific sessions you plan to attend, and tie their relevance to your sports facility.
- Highlight the trade show hours you plan to attend.
- Cite the suppliers and equipment manufacturers you plan to meet.
- Discuss the networking opportunities you will have with peers who share challenges similar to the ones you have.
- Detail the CEUs you will receive toward recertification.
- Explain how innovations in products, new research, and cutting edge management techniques continually change, and why it is important to stay abreast of those changes.
- Reinforce how the success of your sports fields ultimately depends upon the continued professional development of you and your staff.

Know the Cost

- Make a case for efficient and effective use of your facility's training dollars. By attending the STMA Conference and Exhibition, you will be exposed to the most relevant education and technology available in one place, making it the most effective use of training dollars.
- Show how the conference registration fee includes almost all your meals.
- Research airfares and drive times. Orlando has very low airfare costs from almost anywhere in the U.S. You may be able to beat the cost of airfare while spending a reasonable amount of time in the car.

Have an Action Plan

- Develop a plan for how operations will continue in your absence. Make sure you are accessible by phone or by pager to address any concerns that might arise in your absence.
- Promise to prepare and present a report on the information you learned and how you plan to put it into practice at your facility.
- Demonstrate how you will share the technical information learned with your staff for their continuing educational development.