

FLOAT CONFERENCE

Board Meeting #3 October 29, 2018 | 1 pm - 2:15 pm PST

Quorum Present

Present:

- Ashkahn Jahromi (President) / Graham Talley
- Andy Larson (Treasurer)
- Gloria Morris (Secretary)
- Tom Fine
- Jake Resch
- Matthew Smith
- Sean Lavery
- Jeanine Bocci (Operations Team)
- Jocelyn Jester (Operations Team)

Absent:

- Kevin McCulloch
 - Jamie Phillips
 - Jesse Ratner-Decle
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Agenda:

1. Single Track vs Multiple Tracks
2. Adding new parts of the event
3. Order of Events
4. Shifting days of the week
5. Your photo and bio for the website
6. Pricing
7. Sponsorships
8. Videos

1 - Housekeeping

We are now legally a nonprofit. We are formed in the state of Oregon.

We need to sign a Board Consent form - will be sent electronically.

We have opened a bank and account and other accounts for the nonprofit. Ashkahn is working on transferring infrastructure over to Float Conference.

Jeanine and Jocelyn have the new floatconference.com emails. (jeanine@floatconference.com; jocelyn@floatconference.com). Those are the only two people I was planning to have Float Conference Emails. We also have admin@ and info@floatconference.com.

Moving forward, we will use Google Drive to hold our files. Ashkahn will share the Team Drive with the board for paperwork sharing.

We also use LastPass - which helps us with passwords. Float Conference has an account to share various passwords. Ashkahn will give access to everyone so they can see things like QuickBooks, MailChimp, etc.

Open for questions... No questions

Insurance - We are working on getting event cancellation insurance. Also looking into insurance for Board Members. *Suggestion from Andy* - liability insurance in the event that someone slips, etc. Ashkahn says he will look into General Liability Insurance and potentially AV insurance.

Reminder A doodle poll was sent out to find a set time/day for us to have regular Board Members.

Suggestion to make sure Board Members are set up receive emails if they have notifications waiting. On the helm, click the help wheel, then choose My Preferences to set this up.

2 - Single Track vs. Multiple Track

Structure of the Event - Over the past 7 years, we honed into a structure that was efficient for us. We have learned some things over the years. We need to keep in mind that any changes in structure do have some future changes like graphic design, etc.

A "track" is a group of presentations. Conferences often have a keynote speaker and then the sessions split up based on topic. So there are 2-15 sessions happening simultaneously and attendees choose which one to go to. This allows conference to appeal to a wider audience. For the Float Conference, Ashkahn thinks everyone is interested in everything (business, science, research, etc.) Do people think there is benefit/value to changing that.

General benefits include - allowing more presentations. Time constraints mean we have to say no to people, etc. This would give people some choice to attend different things (i.e. if someone didn't want to see scientific research)

General downfall - this would have a huge effect on schedule, website, printing materials, etc. Some people may be disappointed if they can't attend certain sessions. We would also have to take some guesses on how many people would attend each session.

Andy - Personally likes the single track - has been to conferences in which he had to choose between two sessions he really wanted to attend. And agrees with the fact that the audience does not have enough of a variety in interests.

Gloria- Similar comments. The industry is not at a maturity level that companies can divide and conquer effectively.

Tom - multiple tracks does allow flexibility. If we plan to do something like this, maybe just try a small time period to do so.

Ashkahn - in some ways, our Friday Activities act as that function. Instinct is to keep it as one track. Suggestion is to not do it this year, but keep it on the list for the future.

Andy - Agrees that we are already transitioning and short on time. Some things can be held off until next year. Maybe give a survey to attendees to look at things for future years.

Ashkahn - Feeling and comments seem like keeping at one track - Comments? (none)

3 - Adding new parts of events

Just a general moment to allow open comments for additions to the conference.

Float Conference has consisted of sessions, parties, and Friday Activities.

Jeanine wants to break a bunch of world records! (*General consensus*)

Open for comments on structural changes.

Ashkahn is interested in some sort of time/event after the conference as a chance to digest conference information. Some sort of structured roundtable type set up to allow people to discuss topics.

Jeanine - this could even be as simple as providing a space with maybe coffee and snacks to allow this to happen organically as people wait for their plane.

Jake - Something we have played around with doing at Rise, pairing a veteran conference go-er with newbies. Assigning people to help with this. Ashkahn really likes the idea of having Conference buddies. Putting it on the list.

Graham - Some sort of flash card system for internal staff. Jocelyn has done this for another event. It was really time consuming, but was really helpful for staff to recognize attendees. This goes back to having some sort of way to connect with attendees after the fact. Bringing the conference to life virtually in the off season.

Ashkahn added these things on our dream list.

4 - Order of Events

Ashkahn's suggested order is to mix the Friday Activities and Conference sessions to break up the time that attendees are sitting in the main room. So, Friday Activities on Friday morning, then starting main conference that evening for maybe two hours. Then Saturday is a mix of presentations and activities. (Either talks in the morning and sessions in the afternoon; or sessions in the morning, activities in the middle, and sessions again in the afternoon.) Then Sunday would be a lighter day of conference sessions. This keeps the same amount of session time and activity time and still ends around 5 pm on Sunday.

Benefits include having a higher draw for those putting on the events and some higher quality of the activities.

Downside is that this makes it more officially into a 3 day event. The Float Conference was traditionally technically 3 days, but it seemed more okay if people couldn't attend Friday. About 60% of our attendees seem to arrive on Friday. (these numbers are a bit skewed with sponsors, etc). About 100 people attend the Workshop. (We don't track who checks in on Thursday; our hotel rooms do double from Thursday to Friday) Jeanine says over 30% of Sponsors arrive on Thursday.

This might also cost us a little bit more money, with having to provide food on Friday.

Tom thinks its a good idea to start on Friday evening and that if we advertise it, people will be happy to get there. Perhaps they would leave a little earlier on Sunday. A lot of conferences Tom attends tend to start early on Thursday or Friday and then end earlier on Sunday so people can fly back.

Jeanine wonders if there would be another party. Ashkahn says that that is another benefit - there is a bit more formal introduction to the Welcome Party on Friday night.

Graham - worries that adding complexity into this year is an issue, but likes the idea in general. Andy agrees.

Ashkahn and Jocelyn have mocked up a theoretical schedule for this and they can post that on the helm and allow people to look at it. This gives us a few days to think about it.

This is something we have considered thoroughly and it will be a good decision either way.

5 - Shifting Days of the Week

When we started this event a lot of our attendees had day jobs outside of the industry, so we built the conference around allowing those folks to attend without having to take time off work. We kept that weekend schedule going forward because of things like the Farmers market, etc.

Now that we have more flexibility and are in a new location, we can talk about it again. A lot of conferences are during the week. We are a little different, since most float folks on their own businesses and don't work a traditional 9-5. We do still have about 50% attendees coming out for the first time. These people are generally still working normal jobs from which they have to take time off.

Ashkahn wants to discuss shifting the conference forward a day - this would allow people to fly home on Sunday, to be back home and at work on Monday. This shifts parties that make things easier in some situations and harder in others. Welcome Party would be easier to schedule on a Thursday. After party then would be on a Saturday night, which would be a bit harder. This is a little bit of a win when you balance it out. Another downside is that people would have to take another day off work at the front of the event. Workshop folks then would have to fly in Tuesday to be ready for workshop on Wednesday- Thursday.

Tom thinks shifting it is a good thing, but we might want to do a poll on it. Put it out to the attendees? Agrees that this would provide travel flexibility. Wants to know if we have a statistics on center owners, new to floating, etc. (We have a Master attendees list that Ashkahn will put on the shared drive; we have about 50% new attendees annually.)

Ashkahn likes the idea of doing a poll. However, our mailing list is probably mostly people who already have a float center and have attended many times.

Graham thinks a fifth to a quarter of our attendees do not own a center.

Andy likes the idea of shifting the conference a day earlier. It will make travel easier, especially to get home and be ready for Monday to start the next week off right.

Jeanine - logistically, is concerned with people bringing tanks. Tanks will not be able to be shipped out on Sunday evening.

Ashkahn will send a poll to attendees and invites people to send any more thought to the helm.

Several comments to leave it the same. (for those that can't take time off work, and for keeping it the same as previous years.) Gloria mentioned attendees with kids may have to get home for kids to go back to school. Ashkahn mentioned some centers having Monday as cleaning days.

Asked for preferred end days - 5 for Sunday, 2 for Saturday.

Does anyone have a totally different idea? (no comments)

Jeanine and Jocelyn are planning a trip to Denver to get the ball rolling. In mid-December hopefully we will have set dates. (Sheraton Hotel is our top choice so far. Convention Center is also an option. A couple other hotels are also in consideration, but need to be looked at again.) We are working with the CVB for help.

6 - Photos and Bios for Website

Ran out of time; moved to next meeting.

7 - Preview for next meeting

Next milestone is getting tickets online. What pricing should we have? In the past we have done a presale ticket, early bird rate, and a late rate. (Presale, limited by number, is for those that always come out and want to get a lower rate.) We also do a discount for a group - this allows people to bring both folks and encourages shops to bring their shop manager. Early bird rate allows us to lock in our numbers about a month out so our numbers can be more accurate. Then there is a huge price jump to encourage people to register early.

So we will talk next time about if this is the best way to do this or if we want to do something else. We can also discuss actual prices. Do we have room to raise the price? Next we will talk about sponsorship information, etc. We need to start getting on people's calendars.

Next Meeting TBD after Doodle Poll is completed.