



## Program Review

### Executive Summary

The Business Exchange is a highly-effective association business networking event. In a sense, it's a reverse trade show featuring the association's primary members (multihousing owners, managers and developers) grouped together by company in one-place throughout the venue, while the association's associate members (product and service company vendors) roam freely in the room, meeting briefly with property owners and managers one-on-one throughout the course of the event. In other words, it's networking on steroids... association speed-dating!

Realized program take-aways can be significant for both participating groups. Casual business networking is frequently replaced by real-time purchasing decisions. Property owners and managers can focus on new and emerging industry product and service opportunities in one-place at one-time. And, as a bonus, a property owner/manager's investment of time attracts vendor-registrations, bolstering the association's ability to make strategic political campaign contributions. For associate members, there's absolute no more cost effective way to make direct contacts with such a large number of current and potential clients.

### Owner/Manager Member Benefits

- Free registration for rental property owners and or management company executives.
- Short, five to ten minute, face to face meetings with your associate (vendor) partners.
- Multiple meetings with associate members in one-place at one-time
- The Business Exchange is scheduled at the start of budget season; the perfect opportunity to gather new product or services information and or pricing data.
- Donate 2-3 hours of time and in return help make a huge contribution to NAAs political action committee fund; a large percent retuned back your own federal leadership campaigns.
- A prime opportunity to network with your executive-level industry peers.

### Associate Member Benefits

- A reasonable registration fee providing exclusive selling opportunities.
- Guaranteed, five to ten minute, one-on-one meetings with property management decision-makers.
- An effective return on your marketing investment.
- Registrations directly support the NAA PAC fund which in-turn supports the health of the entire multihousing industry.

## Owner/Manager Registration Recommendations

- Begin OM registration three to four months prior to the event.
- Have OM registrations open until the last minute.
- Keep the total number of OM attendees per company unlimited.
- Insist OM attendees be executive-level personnel with purchasing authority.
  - Include the following information on all OM registrations: Company name, number of units in the local market and attendee contact info, including name, title, phone, email and snail mail address.
  - Include a commitment from each OM company providing they agree to replace attendees if and when necessary, even if required at the last minute.

## Vendor Registration Recommendations

- Open vendor registration six to eight weeks prior to the event, one-month following OM registrations. This step provides the ability to market OM company commitments.
- Only allow for online registration on a first-come basis.
- Registrations must be accompanied by payment in full and must be made by a personal credit card. Absolutely no company credit cards allowed since this is a PAC fundraiser.
- Limit vendor registrations to three-people per company. This allows a greater number of associate companies represented at the event.
- During a two-hour event with fifteen, eight-minute appointment times provided and three-vendor representatives registered, a vendor company could meet one-on-one with as many as forty-five OM representatives. Shorter appointment times afford a larger number of scheduling opportunities.
- As soon as an associate member registers, send an email confirmation and NAA payment disclaimer.
- Once associate registrations begin, build excitement for the event by sending weekly email updates to all participants. Note that vendor members tend to be just as interested in competitor registrations as they are with OM registrations.
- One-week prior to the event, email a list of all participants to everyone.

## Event Basics

- AATC has found that eight-minute sessions are the best formula for our Business Exchange.
- Schedule enough time for vendors to move from one appointment to the next.
- Consider a random schedule for each associate member's first appointment with OM representatives. This first-appointment approach serves to get the ball rolling in a more organized manor and both honors and promotes early vendor registrations.
- Assign a member of the staff or Business Exchange committee the duty of announcing when it's time to change to the next appointment. Be sure to keep on schedule.
- Write the name of the vendor's first appointment on registration receipts or on the back of each name tag. Note that all subsequent appointments throughout the event are at the vendor's discretion.
- Consider the follow event schedule:
  - 6:00 – 7:00 pm Registration / Reception
    - Heavy hors D' oeuvres & Cash Bar
  - 6:45 – 7:00 pm Separate Event Briefings (OMs & Associate Members)
  - 7:00 – 7:08 pm Assigned First Appointments
  - 7:08 – 9:00 pm Balance of 8-Minute Appointments
  - 9:00 - 9:30 pm Optional Cash Bar Post-event Reception

## Event Management

- Closely monitor your OM to vendor registration ratio. AATC has adopted a 30% overage policy. It's not necessary to insist on the same number of OM registrations as vendor registrations. It's often not necessary for every vendor to spend time with every OM in the room, especially if you have multiple vendors registered for the event from the same company.
- Spend time during each event briefly going over the event rules. Encourage vendors to be courteous and move on to their next appointment when the announcement is made. Likewise, instruct OMs to politely conclude meetings when its time for vendors to move when the announcement is made. If they'd like or need more time for their presentation, suggest an exchange of business cards, a discussions at the post-event reception or that an appointment be scheduled at a later date.
- Create OM company signs for each OM company represented. Post the sign behind each corresponding OM table throughout the venue.
- Create and distribute a Business Exchange program, noting the schedule, rules and a listing every OM representative registered.

## Key to Success

- OM commitment. With the dedication of your owner and management company members, The Business Exchange will be an instant success.

*For more information regarding The Business Exchange, feel free to contact:*

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