



ANNUAL ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

We produced a multi-day conference in New Orleans to help our client's 500+ attendees learn and grow as business leaders.

AT A GLANCE



Creative
Budgeting



High-Profile
speakers



Unique Cultural
Experiences



"Loving New Orleans is almost a pre-req to working at Coterie Spark. There's so much to see and do, which can overwhelm inexperienced planners. I'm proud of our team for stepping up to create lasting memories for guests while lifting the pressure of choosing between countless iconic sites, venues, and entertainers off the client's shoulders!"

CANDACE HOELSCHER
Co-Founder and COO
Coterie Spark

THE PROJECT

When a long-time client mentioned New Orleans as its next host city, we cheered at the opportunity to produce something extravagant, culturally rich, and unique from previous conferences their attendees experienced. To achieve this, we focused on experiences and entertainment to energize attendees with New Orleans' iconic flair.

We explained to the client that planning and executing a conference in New Orleans is similar to producing one in Las Vegas. The amount of entertainment and iconic sites where attendees might stray creates immense distractions. We needed to plan a riveting program with top-tier speakers, crystal-clear signage, effortless transportation between venues, and entertainment every step of the way.

There was another challenge: The conference was originally slated to take place in 2020. The COVID outbreak made that impossible and, though we negotiated with venues and vendors to minimize impacts to the budget, the client still got tagged with a few last-minute cancellation fees. Those fees remained a line item in the budget once we got back to planning, tasking us with getting even more creative to build a similarly impactful event with a smaller budget.

As part of our negotiations, we were able to keep the conference at the Ritz-Carlton where it was originally slated. We then assisted our client in finding business leaders like Andy Fastow, Nando Parrado, and Jim Slater to speak. Retired Naval Officer Robert Ballard, and authors Ben Nemtin and Liz Murray also delivered inspiring sessions. New Orleans is a big performance city of course so we booked comedian Jeff Civillico, the Kinfolk Brass Band, Ashlin Park Trio, LB High School Band, and Dave Brandrowski to give attendees a taste of the New Orleans spirit.

But the fun didn't stay confined to the Ritz-Carlton! In grand New Orleans fashion, we took the party to the streets. Before dinner, attendees participated in a traditional New Orleans music parade, sometimes called "Second lining." It's a quintessential experience in The Big Easy and was the most memorable part of the conference.

Setbacks happen. Fortunately, our team is always ready to take on challenges and deliver. It took several years of planning after the setbacks of 2020, but we're proud to have helped our client provide a meaningful experience to their attendees. Filled with New Orleans' wonderful, magical, and unparalleled culture, this conference also offered a sense of returning to normalcy after years of navigating extensive, but understandable social and health guidelines.