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## Meetings Mean Business . . . Even at Resorts



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Chief Sales Officer

There's no denying the word "resort" has become a hot topic among meeting planners, media and corporate executives this past year. In fact, even a few companies are not allowed to bring group or incentive trips to a property with the "R word" in its name (yes, AIG effect).

It's important for the hospitality industry to lead the charge and break the negative resort connotation. How? Underscore the benefits of a holding a meeting at a destination resort.

The travel industry has helped to spread the word that gathering at hotels/resorts is not only helpful, but essential to a company's success. The U.S. Travel Association's campaign says it best: "Meetings Mean Business." Off-site meetings and events are key components to a business's growth, fostering networking and idea sharing, and helping to retain key talent through motivation.

Destination resorts, like Horseshoe Bay Resort, provide an ideal setting for doing business and rewarding employees (and sometimes good customers) simultaneously. Attendees are together in a controlled setting, with excellent meeting and accommodation options, a myriad of activities for teambuilding and relaxation and few outside distractions. It can also be a cost-effective option since resorts are self contained and in most cases there's no need to travel off property for special event venues.

Resorts offer countless on-site activities that might otherwise need to be arranged through an outside agent at an additional cost. Golf is a key draw for many corporate meetings and events, and resorts in warm-weather destinations, such as Texas, offer multiple award-winning courses, often with celebrity names attached. As I elaborated on in my last article, the greens provide unparalleled networking opportunities, within walking (or golf cart) distance if you're staying at a golf resort (again, no pricey transportation).

Another major plus with a resort site is the variety of outdoor venues that act as picturesque backdrops to execute any vision. From a simple welcome cocktail party to the most elaborate themed event, planners can create a "wow" with the help of the resort's talented event planning and culinary teams. At Horseshoe Bay Resort, for example, a favorite for private events and group functions is our impressive dining yacht. With an 80-foot-long deck, climate-controlled dining room, open-air observation deck and two full-service bars, it's a unique, fun and memorable networking opportunity, right on property!

There is also the intangible value of an unforgettable experience for attendees. Relationships forged and strengthened at the company event will last well beyond the retreat. And, for companies that include their best customers, the resort environment is ideal for connecting, networking and rewarding your best clients.

Instead of looking at the word "resort" as a six-letter word, we should share the long list of benefits that a destination resort can provide. Remember, "Meetings Mean Business."

Jack Bickart is the chief sales officer at Horseshoe Bay Resort in the Texas Hill Country. For more information, please visit [www.hsbresort.com](http://www.hsbresort.com).

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