

EXCLUSIVE: Get Ready for CS+TSE (p. 10)
27 Positive Predictions to Start Your Year Right (p. 100)

SPECIAL EVENTS

State of the
Industry 2023

WINTER 2023

GET TO KNOW
THIS YEAR'S GALA
NOMINEES
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2024 WEDDING
TRENDS YOU
WON'T WANT
TO MISS
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EDITOR'S PAGE

Pushing the Boundaries of Customer Experience

Over the past decade, I've become an "okay" cook. My friends marvel over my knife skills (which my chef friends would still cringe at), and I've become fairly creative with the "this and that" in my refrigerator, though I'm more content with cheese, crackers, and a whiskey sour for dinner than much else.

A few days ago, however, I received a small holiday-decorated box from some good friends in the New York/Connecticut area. Inside were three 50ml bottles of Scotch paired with three accompanying recipes, a bag of Arborio rice, an apron, a logoed wooden spoon, and a recipe with a QR code. I had been sent an experience.

Amanda Ma had it right in her "positive prediction" via our feature beginning on page 100—transformational experiences will leave attendees (or in this case, gift recipients) not only entertained but also changed in some meaningful way. Brands will join forces to create synergy and cross-promote their products. I cooked along with Marcia Selden Catering & Events via the QR code and produced a meal that was so delicious, I'm planning to put it on regular rotation. This gift didn't just find a place on my shelf—it entertained me, made me feel capable, and transformed the way I approached my kitchen for one night—with care and supreme attention. I infused simple syrup, I bought the mascarpone, and I completed my mise en place hours prior to cooking so that everything went as smooth as the unsalted butter melting in my sauté pan.

As for the brand positioning, Compass Box Scotch is now on my shopping list—the cocktail recipes provided were divine.

As Jeniffer Bello states (also in our *Positive Predictions* feature), "It's not just about conveying information, but creating immersive, personalized experiences that linger long after the event concludes."

This is also what we are hoping for you at Catersource + The Special Event this year in Austin, TX: to provide you with a transformational experience that will change you in some meaningful way and linger as long as that recipe will in my kitchen file. We hope you take home insight into how to operate your business more efficiently and effectively, and new ideas and products to execute events that will delight your clients for years to come. Brands will join forces with us to create synergy, too, and of course—as with every good event—delicious and trending food ideas will be available.

As we move into 2024, it is my great hope that we see you in February in Austin, TX but for now, from all of us at *Special Events* magazine, we wish you the happiest of the holiday season.

Kathleen

Kathleen Stoehr
Director of Community & Content Strategy

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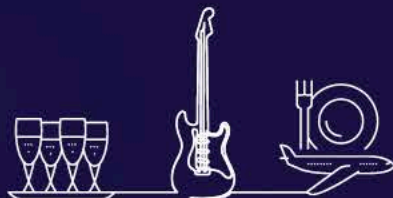
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EVENT®**

FEBRUARY 12-15, 2024

AUSTIN CONVENTION CENTER • AUSTIN, TX
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AUSTIN



See Michael Cerbelli's: The Hot List™ LIVE

At the Closing General Session on the Keynote Stage, Michael Cerbelli will bring back his ever-beloved Michael Cerbelli's: The Hot List™ on **Thursday, February 15th, at 8:00 a.m.** after a two-year hiatus.

Celebrating its 21st year of production, Michael Cerbelli's: The Hot List™ takes the most cutting-edge event and entertainment ideas and places them on the forefront of the event industry. Combining his quick wit, natural charisma, and decades of event production experience, Cerbelli makes The Hot List™ presentation an exclusive experience to be enjoyed by planners and industry partners alike. As a 90-minute non-stop presentation, The Hot List™ is equally entertaining as it is educational: it allows event professionals to gain priceless insight into the new and upcoming trends. Don't miss this popular inspirational session!



See Michael Cerbelli's: The Hot List™ live

Michael Cerbelli's: The Hot List™ will wrap up the 2024 Catersource + The Special Event conference and tradeshow on Thursday morning, February 15th at 8:00 a.m. This is your chance to elevate your events and uncover top vendors and performers first-hand, preparing you for unforgettable events in 2024 and beyond. The Closing General Session is included in the purchase of any pass, from All Access to tradeshow only.

Get ready to be struck with creative ideas for 2024 and beyond. This year's lineup features classes that will spark creativity in all aspects of your business. With topics focusing on sustainability, trends, event tech, marketing, DEI, and weddings (and much, much more) you'll leave Catersource + The Special Event full of ideas and ready to innovate!

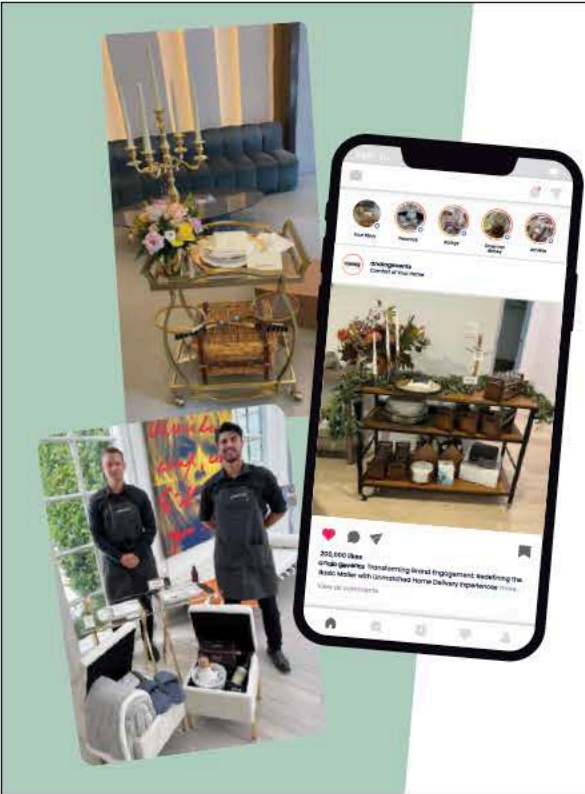


The room was packed for David Merrell's annual trend session in 2023. Photo courtesy WASIO Faces/SpotMyPhotos

Register Now!



CS+TSE gathers industry leaders for inspiring panel discussions, like [Marketing Masters](#), where marketing pros like (from left) Clint Upchurch, Laura Cardo, Christie Osborne and Jamie Lee Quickert share insights and strategies for success. Photo courtesy WASIO Faces/SpotMyPhotos



Turn basic mailers into unparalleled brand experiences, delivered right to the doorsteps of clients, influencers, and talent.

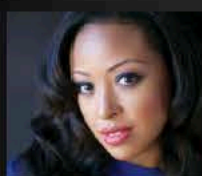
Featuring bespoke, high-end products and custom partnerships with esteemed local restaurants and florists, our service is elevated with a white-glove touch.

Analog EVENTS & MARKETING www.AnalogEvents.com



Adrienna McDermott, Owner, *Ava And The Bee*

"The Blogging Blueprint for Wedding Vendors"
8:30 a.m. Tuesday, February 13



AJ Williams, President & Executive Producer, *AJ Events*

"Inside the World of Charitable Events"
1:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 14



Alyson Zildjian, Owner, *Zildjian Catering and Consulting*

"Fast Chat: How to Have Fun Creating Green Events & Sustainable Business Practices"

12:00 p.m.
Thursday, February 15



Armando Seledon, CSEP, CTA, Associate Director of Member Engagement, *Visit San Antonio*



Randi Steinhart, CSEP, Owner & Event Producer, *RS Event Productions*



Stacey Hoyt, CMP, CSEP, Director of Events, *KMFA Classical*

"Fast Chat: Boost Your Marketability with the CSEP Certification"

11:15 a.m.
Wednesday, February 14



Brit Bertino, Owner, *BRIT BERTINO EVENT EXCELLENCE*

"Embracing Diversity & Inclusion in Wedding Planning: Creating Unforgettable Moments that Honor Love in all its Forms"

11:15 a.m. Tuesday, February 13



Cazoshay Marie, Speaker, *Divine Intervention Design*

"Beyond Barriers: Unleashing the Power of Inclusive Events"

3:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 13



Cristian Hernandez, Director of Business Development, *Rosendale Events*



Carlos Madrigal, Director of Operations, *Rosendale Events*



Kimberly McKnight, Event Coordinator, *Rosendale Events*

"The Art of a Room Flip"
4:15 p.m. Tuesday, February 13



David Adler, CEO, *BizBash*
"Trends in Setting the Stage for Serendipity"

11:15 a.m. Tuesday, February 13



David Egan, Consultant, *DavidEgan.com*

"Help! Handling Medical Emergencies at Events, for Event Professionals"

2:30 p.m.
Wednesday, February 14



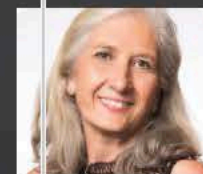
David Merrell, CEO, *ADO Events*



Susie Perelman, Owner, *Mosaic*

"David Merrell & Susie Perelman Present: Current Trends in the Event Industry"

10:00 a.m.
Tuesday, February 13



Dona Liston, President, *Lambertmont Events*

"Micro Weddings: How to Make Them Profitable!"
8:30 a.m. Tuesday, February 13



Emily Malaya, CEO, *The TapRoot Hospitality Collective*

"Hospitality & Health"

1:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 13



Gary Bordman, CSEP, Chief Creative Officer, *AE&ES JustCallGary*



Bobby Bradley, President, *Texas Entertainment Group*



Kelly Smink, President, *Amusement Masters*

"Working Post Pandemic with Coopetition not Competition"

3:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 13



JC York, President & COO, *Classic Entertainment / Wise Guys InterACTIVE*



Aaron Price, National Director of Creative, *Access Destination Management*



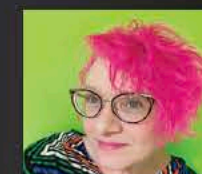
Art Menchaca, Director of Business Development, *Rosemary's Catering*



India Rhodes, CSEP, Partner & Creative Director, *Wilkinson Rhodes*

"Design Roulette: Spinning Client Visions into Captivating Event Experiences"

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, February 13



Jen Sulak, Wedding Photographer, Artist and Inspirational Speaker, *Pink Light Images/Weirdo Weddings*

"Fast Chat: Awkward Networking - Making Relationships Count!"

10:30 a.m.
Wednesday, February 14



Joel Olandesca, CEO & Co-Founder, *SOS Charging Solutions & SimplAR*



Sébastien David, President, *Sénik The Event Agency*



Jonathan Jow, Director of Strategy, *BoothEasy Photo Booth Company*



Cindy Lo, CEO & Chief Event Strategist, *RED VELVET*

"Talking Tech: Guest Experience, Trends, and AI"

10:30 a.m.
Thursday, February 15

Register Now!



Keri Miller, Partner & Chief Creative Strategist, e=mc² events

"Pink Poodle Theory 3.0: Harnessing The Power of Your Creative Brain"

1:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 14



Mary Delia Allen, Author/ Speaker, Mary Delia Events

"Transportation & Hospitality: Five Tips for High Touch Event Transportation"

1:00 p.m. Thursday, February 15



Meagan Culkin, Owner, Magnolia Collective

"Ensuring Inclusive Events for All"

1:45 p.m. Tuesday, February 13



Meggie Hess, Director of People Services, Veterans United Home Loans

"Beyond the Party: Creating Meaningful Moments and Connections through Events"

2:00 p.m. Thursday, February 15



Randi Bushell, Owner, Merri

"An Insider's Look into Today's Intentional Consumer"

4:15 p.m. Tuesday, February 13



Renée Sabo, Owner & Lead Wedding Consultant, Urban Soirée

"A Guide to Creating A Process-Driven Approach to Wedding Planning"

1:00 p.m. Thursday, February 15



Rob Barber, Vice President, Modular Systems + R&D, ATOMIC

"From Napkin Sketch to Show Day: What 14 Years, 12 Product Lines, 110 Products & 28,802 Shows Have Taught Me"

2:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 14



Robin Selden, Executive Chef & Managing Partner, Marcia Selden Catering



Jeffrey Selden, Managing Partner, Marcia Selden Catering



Elizabeth Meyer, Former Head of Events & Programming for Bridgewater Associates, EAM Experience Solutions, LLC



Michael Cerbelli, President, Cerbelli Creative

"Feasts & Fetes: A Savvy Guide to Mastering Corporate Event Planning & Catering Collaborations"

8:30 a.m. Tuesday, February 13



Ron Ben-Israel, Owner, Ron Ben-Israel Cakes

"A Candid Conversation with Ron Ben-Israel"

10:30 a.m. Thursday, February 15



Tara Melvin, Founder, President & CEO, National Society of Black Wedding and Event Professionals (NSBWEP)



Andre Howell, Vice President of Operations, Multicultural Foodservice and Hospitality Alliance (MFHA)



Jen Bertolino, Director of Sales, Destination Management, Czerlonka Productions



Jonathan Jow, Director of Strategy, BoothEasy Photo Booth Company



Lucas Mendieta, President & Co-Founder, Cutting Edge Elite

"Diversifying Your Workforce: From Back of the House to the Boardroom"

10:00 a.m. Tuesday, February 13



Teri Jakob, Associate Director, Special Events, UPMC Pinnacle Foundation

"Unleash Your Creative Superpowers: The Art of Themeology!"

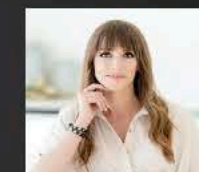
3:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 13



Troy Peters, CTS, Chief Experience Officer, SEAS Productions

"Show Calling and Stage Management for Live Events"

1:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 14



Vanessa Joy, Photographer, Vanessa Joy Photography

"The Newest Ways to Maximize Marketing with Photographer Vanessa Joy"

4:15 p.m. Tuesday, February 13

Register Now!