

Strategic, outside-the-box travel event facilitates cohesive teamwork, reinforces social responsibility commitment

MEETINGS & EVENTS NORTH AMERICA

THE CHALLENGE

A U.S.-based global architectural firm with a strong focus on environmental concerns and corporate social responsibility (CSR) asked CWT to help create a meeting opportunity where 220 senior executives could focus on big ideas, not tactics, raise questions, not solutions, and define and shape the future of its business. This required a setting that would diminish egos, erase titles, break language and cultural barriers, allow participants to grow personally and professionally, and support company values.

THE SOLUTION

To facilitate an escape from business-as-usual, the CWT Meetings & Events team created and sourced a fully “green” four day/five night meeting. The first day’s activities were designed to create a common goal among attendees: helping build a school in mountainous rural Puerto Vallarta, Mexico. This would set the tone for the remainder of the conference at a Puerto Vallarta hotel.

Carefully considering the need for all participants regardless of age or physical challenges to safely participate, and working with a destination management company, the event was broken into small team projects: interior and exterior painting; constructing a full classroom and jungle gym; gardening and landscaping; or helping with food and beverages. A local contractor prepared the site and provided necessary materials and equipment; a U.S. building supply company donated some equipment.

FAST FACTS

Industry: Global Architectural Company

Scope: Single event

Volume: \$800,000

Results at a glance:

- Savings of \$125,000
- Entirely “green” conference reinforced values
- CSR activities achieved internal, external goals

THE RESULT

With CWT handling all logistical and travel details, client leadership could focus on business strategy and enjoy a well-organized conference that also embraced CSR and green initiatives such as reuse and recycling, no plastic, reduced use of paper and fewer numbers of transportation coaches.

The project quickly moved attendees from their comfort zones and “local business unit hats” to getting to know one another on a very different platform and working in unison. Whether hand-painting a globe on the classroom wall, hand-digging to plant a garden consisting of local plants, pouring cement, welding, serving meals, or watering plants by passing buckets through a human chain, everyone contributed—often to the point of physical exhaustion—in the spirit of interdependence and mutual accountability.

This successful project achieved the client’s goals to reinforce company philosophy through a meaningful contribution to the children of Puerto Vallarta; break-down hierarchal barriers to improve global communications and build relationships; and enable creative and effective discussions that will continue to positively impact the firm’s future.

CONTACT

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