

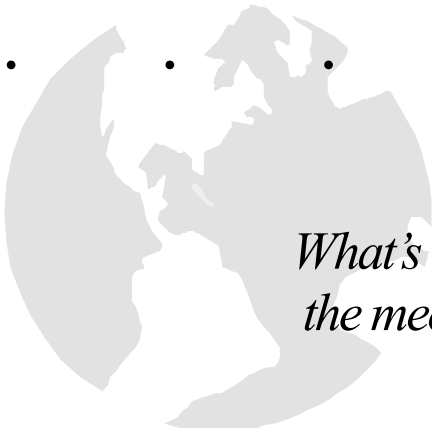
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To obtain a 40 minute video of Jim's presentation to MPI on "The Power of Partnership," contact the speakers' bureau that provided you this article. You can also watch the video online at <http://www.speakersbureau.info/video-mpi.htm>

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Jim Carroll

# The Power of Partnership



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*What's in store for  
the meeting industry?*

*Observations from a keynote presentation by Jim Carroll  
to a chapter of Meeting Professionals International.*

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# The Power of Partnership

*What's in store for  
the meeting industry?*

*Recently, Jim Carroll provided the closing keynote address for a chapter of Meeting Professionals International (MPI). He was asked to provide, as an expert on innovation and trends, his thoughts and observations on the future of the meeting industry, and his perspectives on how partnerships could play a key role in the future of the industry.*

*This article was prepared by MPI as a follow-up to his keynote presentation.*

*A full, 40 minute video of his keynote with his remarks is available on request.*

*Contact Jim Carroll, or the speakers' bureau that provided you this article, to arrange for a copy.*

## Observations from Jim Carroll's keynote for an MPI Chapter

Partnerships are the key to successfully bringing businesses through these “dire times,” said Jim Carroll, innovation and trends expert

“We are all in this together,” he told the closing plenary of The Power of Partnerships. All aspects of the meetings industry—speakers, planners, AV experts, hotels, destinations, and suppliers— have felt the impacts of what he called the “collective hangover” of the economic downturn and global events.

Following September 11, there were predictions that the U.S. economy would be devastated, that people would emerge with a new sense of values to live healthier lives, and that conferences would go virtual. In reality, Carroll said, the U.S. economy ended up in better shape than predicted, liquor sales increased dramatically, and face-to face conferences and events have proven to be even more important today than ever before.

“We are social creatures,” he said. “It’s important to bring sales people together and educational people together. However, at the end of the day, it’s even more important to walk out of the meeting together, have a drink, and network.”

“We are all in this together,” he told the closing plenary of *The Power of Partnerships*.

At the same time, the meetings industry has to readjust to new business realities. “We now live in an ‘idea rut,’” said Carroll. There are no more business heroes, organizations are spinning their wheels, innovation appears to be dead, and all of this has led to a time of “aggressive indecision” in the meetings industry.

### **Learning to live with aggressive indecision**

“Decisions are being deferred until the last possible minute,” and the compressed lead times mean the industry must learn to cope with a faster world.

The need to deal with continual surprise and unanticipated events will make meeting professionals into contingency experts, he said, and those who can present alternative scenarios will continue to meet the expectations of their clients.

### **The need for just-in-time knowledge will drive the meetings industry**

A number of trends are having an impact on businesses.

The rapid growth of information has sped up the pace of knowledge. “The knowledge we have today is predicted to be 1% of the knowledge we will have in the year 2050,” explained Carroll.

The Internet — which he described as a “global Petri dish for knowledge exchange” — plays a huge role in the way business is evolving. Businesses can face new competition from anywhere on the globe, but technology can also help to build electronic partnerships and keep businesses current with their competitors’ changes.

### **Specialization and the skills exodus will drive the meetings industry**

Carroll stressed the value of this kind of “just-in-time knowledge.”

We now live in a world where we need to educate ourselves on a dime, and educate others. The conference has become critical to these learning events, as people continuously refresh their skills.

More and more knowledge means more and more specialization, which increases the need for events that are tightly focused on specific areas of knowledge exchange.

Similarly, the skills exodus caused by upcoming retirements will mean that constant knowledge transfer becomes a key component of any organization.

### **Business partnerships and outsourcing will play a major role**

He added that successful organizations focus on core competencies and partner or outsource what they cannot or should not do. But business process outsourcing involves massive workplace and cultural change, and as such, must be introduced into an organization — often through an event.

And partnering may be just as critical in meeting the demand for the kind of events that help clients solidify their partnerships. The meetings industry itself is heading toward record numbers of online delegate registration, Carroll said, and in a drive to focus on core competencies, it may make more sense for planners to outsource some aspects of the work.

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## People are disconnected — & off-site events help to solve the problem

Carroll noted that despite—or perhaps because of—the speed at which communications now take place, there is less human contact than ever before in the workplace.

*“... there’s an even greater need than ever to bring people together, to create and share the passion, and build relationships.”*

“We feel disconnected, miss out on any passion, and can lose focus by being out of touch.”

It’s all too easy to lose sight of important corporate objectives, and that’s why there’s an even greater need than ever to bring people together, to create and share the passion, and build relationships.

Finally, the march toward commoditization means that customers want business solutions, not just products. Clients are looking for the value added that a service can bring. “In an era of rapid business changes, you have to work to sell the benefits and build the business case. You need to learn to sell solutions to emerging problems.

For many, this might involve a change in the way you market yourself.” Carroll explained how he now takes the time to prepare customized responses and customized presentations.

“That’s what the business world demands,” he said.

## Insight, an open mind, trust, and innovation

Successful partnering calls for insight, an open mind, trust, and innovation.

Noting that “nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm,” Carroll promised that with positive energy and the ability to put things into perspective, the opportunities for success are endless.

## Jim Carroll, FCA

As a leading international futurist, innovation and trends expert, Jim dedicates his time & expertise to making organizations and their people ready and able to adopt tomorrow, today.

Since 1992, Jim Carroll has spoken to tens of thousands of people as a conference opening and/or closing keynote speaker, or a workshop/seminar leader. His clients include many of the world's leading organizations, such as Microsoft, American Express, Taiwan Semiconductor Mfg. Co. VISA, Electronic Transaction Assn, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, KPMG, and more.

Jim has written 34 books that have sold in excess of 750,000 copies worldwide, as well as over 600 articles for a wide variety of national and international publications.

