



68th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference
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Madison, Wisconsin
December 9-12 2007

Registration

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Summary

The registration committee for the 68th Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference (MFWC) consisted of 2 co-chairs who were responsible for conference registration, conference apparel, and local information. The largest responsibility for the committee was oversight of the registration services contractor. A request for proposals was developed (Appendix 4) and bids were received by December 16th, 2006 (Appendix 5). Based on pricing and references, Registration Technology was selected as the vendor (<http://www.registrationtechnology.com/>). The company is owned and operated by Tom Haney (708-383-5950, regtcnlgy@aol.com) who was our primary contact.

Online and mail in registration were offered for the conference. Registration Technology created a secure web link to the Midwest Conference web site for the registration process. Registrants could either register online using a credit card or print off and mail in a hardcopy form with a check (Appendix 6). The online credit card transactions were processed through a merchant account with First Data. The vast majority of attendees registered using the online process.

Registration fees were \$200 Professional, \$95 Student prior to November 9th, and \$300 Professional, \$150 Student after that date. Online registration was closed on December 3rd. In addition, due to demand, we offered an on-site one day registration for \$150. This was unadvertised but provided on-site to those who asked. Total registration was 1,374 including exhibitors, presenters, and volunteers (1,035 early, 151 late, 36 exhibitors, 152 on-site). All refund and cancellation requests were required to be submitted prior to December 3rd (Appendix 7).

During the conference, staffing of the registration booth included one person from Registration Technology and two temporary staff hired by the contractor to process on-site registrations. Volunteers and WI DNR staff were utilized to hand out badges and consisted of four on Sunday and Monday, two on Tuesday, and two on Wednesday until 2:00 PM. Thanks to the “no clutter” policy of the conference, we did not need to stuff registration materials but rather placed stacks of the Program at a Glance on the shelf in front of the booth and instructed attendees to take one when issued their badge.

The Local information booth consisted of maps and brochures for the immediate area around the Monona Terrace provided by the Greater Madison Visitors and Convention Bureau. In addition, we had a large 3' X 3' aerial photo of the Downtown Madison area showing restaurants and other points of interest. On the key, we also identified a price range for each of the restaurants. This area was staffed with one volunteer during the entire conference. We also ended up selling extra volunteer T-shirts, conference patches, and conference vests through this booth.

Positive aspects

- The vendor was very receptive and flexible to changes during the entire registration period.
- Maximum wait time for registration was five minutes.
- Vendor software and hardware for on-site registration was easy to use and functioned well.

Problems/issues

- The initial secure web page had a glitch that occurred if someone used the “back” button on their web browser or if their internet connection was severed prior to completion of all of the data, specifically their credit card information, the registrant received an “Error, duplicate registration” message when they attempted to complete their entry. This resulted in significant confusion and excessive correspondence between the vendor, the registrant and MFWC volunteers. This took two weeks to resolve and created extra work dealing with the many people who encountered the problem.
- The vendor arrived on site and over 150 badges had typos resulting from a bug in the data entry software that allowed one line to be printed on top of another line. This showed that the badges were not proof read prior to arrival at the venue. The vendor had to re-print these badges the night before the event.
- The badges were supposed to arrive pre-loaded in badge holder trays for distribution. About 1/3 of the badges did not arrive loaded or did not have the elastic neck band attached and this had to be completed by the volunteers.
- The badges were supposed to be in alphabetical order in badge holder trays for easy distribution during the event. Some trays were alphabetized right to left and some left to right and some badges were not in alphabetical order at all. This caused delays and confusion with the volunteers at the start of the event when they were distributing the badges. Once volunteers took the time to re-order the badges this problem was solved and the process worked extremely smoothly.

Recommendations for future conferences

- The conference committee should develop a consistent policy on registration rates for various “special” attendees, such as workshop attendees who do not attend the rest of the conference, workshop teachers, speakers who are only coming for their talk, etc. A simple solution to this would be to have them all pay the one-day registration fee. We offered various “deals” to various people which resulted in some consistency issues.
- Utilizing similar software and registration procedures, two terminals for on-site registration should be sufficient.
- Four staff to hand out badges for pre-registrants should be sufficient.
- The registration vendor should keep a database of receipts that can be easily emailed/faxed to attendees after the conference. There were over 100 attendees who needed duplicate receipts to reconcile their payments after the conference.
- The penalty for late-registration should be high, encouraging attendees to pre-register.
- We initially decided not to offer a one-day registration but many people asked for it. In the interest of customer service, a one-day registration fee should be offered, however it should have a split rate for early versus late registration.

Appendix 4. Registration Bid Specifications

The American Fisheries Society (AFS) is soliciting bids to provide registration services for the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference to be held at the Monona Terrace in Madison, Wisconsin from December 9-12, 2007. It is estimated that there will be 600 attendees who will pre-register and 400 who will register on-site. Potential contractors should provide an itemized bid addressing the following items:

- 1) Contractor will set up a link on the existing conference web site (<http://midwest.ncd-afs.org/index.asp>) to accept registrations and process the applications on-line.
- 2) Contractor will set up and accept mail registrations.
- 3) Contractor will set up and accept toll free phone registrations.
- 4) Contractor will accept credit card, purchase order, and personal check as payment for registration.
- 5) Contractor will set up a database (name, address, affiliation, phone, email, meals, tours) of registrants in Microsoft Excel or Access (or other format to be approved by the AFS) to be provided to AFS after the conference. The database should be accessible during the conference at the registration desk so that other attendees may determine which of their peers are attending. This data will belong to the AFS and may not be sold by the contractor without express written permission of the AFS.
- 6) Contractor will begin accepting registrations by March 1st, 2007.
- 7) Contractor will direct deposit registration fees to an AFS bank account every two weeks initiating with the start of the contract and provide a registration summary to the conference committee at those intervals.
- 8) Contractor will mail or e-mail letters of receipt/confirmation to all registrants.
- 9) Contractor will provide name badges and meal/tour tickets to registrants, presenters, and exhibitors.
- 10) Contractor will provide two (or more) staff members during the conference to coordinate registration with the hotel, set-up and staff the registration desk, conduct on-site registration, and answer general inquiries. Wait time for on-site registration shall not exceed 20 minutes. AFS will provide two (or more as needed) volunteers to assist with the registration desk each day during the conference.
- 11) Contractor will provide a detailed finalized conference income statement.

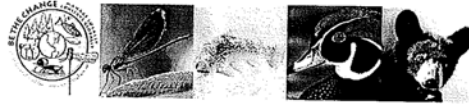
Please submit bids via email by December 14th, 2006 to: timothy.lizotte@wisconsin.gov

For any questions regarding this bid, contact Tim Lizotte at the email above or by phone at 920-424-7886.

Thank you for your interest in providing registration services for our conference.

| Appendix 5. 2007 Midwest F&W Conference Registration Service Bids | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-------------------|
| Company | Bid | Full Service | Online Reg | Address | City | State | Zip | Phone |
| ABC Signup, JTC Technologys, LLC | \$3,300 | | X | 4801 Sherburn Lane, STE 211 | Louisville | KY | 40207 | 866-791-8268 X202 |
| Regonline | \$4,000 | | X | 4888 Pearl East Cir., 3rd Flr West | Boulder | CO | 80301 | 888.351.9948 |
| 123 Signup | \$6,000 | | X | 2480 North First Street, Suite 150 | San Jose | CA | 95131 | 877-691-9950 |
| Registration Technology | \$8,500 | X | | 1131 Lake Street, #134 | Oak Park | IL | 60301 | 708-303-5950 |
| Madison Conv and Visitors Bureau | \$11,000 | X | | 615 E. Washington Ave. | Madison | WI | 53703 | 800-373-6376 |
| TCM-The Conference Managers | \$13,260 | X | | P.O. Box 7276 | Bismark | ND | 58507-7276 | 888-310-8900 |
| iPlanIt | \$18,000 | X | | 1332 Cumberland Dr. | Longmount | CO | 80501 | 303-325-3531 |
| Meet With Success | \$21,000 | X | | 71 Country Club Way | Ipswich | MA | 1938 | 978-356-7144 |
| Total Event Resources | \$29,250 | X | | 1920 Thoreau Dr., Suite 105 | Schaumburg | IL | 60173 | 847-397-2200 |
| *3-5% will be charged against all registrations that use credit card for payment | | | | | | | | |
| **If we go with an Online Registration Company, we would have to rent computers, printers, and provide name badges as well as process all on-site and mail-in registrations ourselves | | | | | | | | |
| Rental of 6 laptops and 3 printers | \$1,600 | | | | | | | |
| Name badges and Holders | \$800 | | | | | | | |
| | \$2,400 | | | | | | | |
| Bottom Line (does not include 3-5% credit card fee and bank merchant account set up fees): | | | | | | | | |
| Cost for "Do it Yourself" Online Registration | | | \$5,700 | | | | | |
| Cost for Using Low Bid Registration Contractor | | | \$8,500 | | | | | |

Appendix 6. On-site Registration Form



68th Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference On-Site Registration Form

First Name (please print) _____
 Last Name _____
 Nickname for Badge _____
 Organization Name _____
 Street (primary address) _____
 City _____
 State/Province _____
 Country _____
 Postal Code _____
 E-Mail Address _____
 Phone (Daytime) (____) - _____
 Fax (____) - _____
 Guest Name (if attending) _____

| Workshops: | Length | Date | Cost | Amount |
|---|----------|------|---------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fish Bioenergetics Modeling | Full Day | 12/9 | \$75.00 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aquatic Invasive Species HACCP | Full Day | 12/9 | \$20.00 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hydro-Acoustic Tools | Full Day | 12/9 | \$75.00 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Road and Stream Crossings | Full Day | 12/9 | \$50.00 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stream Restoration | Full Day | 12/9 | No Cost | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conversations – Sunday AM | Half Day | 12/9 | \$30.00 | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conversations – Sunday PM | Half Day | 12/9 | \$30.00 | _____ |

Registration Options and Costs:
 Professional Registration: \$300 (Includes Sunday and Tuesday Social) _____
 Student Registration: \$150.00 (Includes Sunday and Tuesday Social) _____
 Guest Sunday Social \$25.00 _____
 Guest Tuesday Social \$25.00 _____
 Total Amount: _____ Total: _____

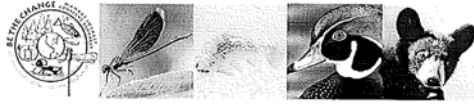
Designations: (please select all that apply)

Conference Host
 Presenter
 Are you willing to judge student papers? Yes No
 If yes, do you prefer to judge fisheries or Wildlife related papers?
 Are you willing to be a student mentor? Yes No
 Are you a student and planning to attend the student/professional mixer,
 Monday @ 6:30 in the Grand Terrace Yes No

Make checks payable to: American Fisheries Society - Wisconsin Chapter

Mail check and completed registration form to:
 Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference
 C/O Registration Technology
 1029 Lake Street, Suite A
 Oak Park, IL 60301

Appendix 7. Refund Request Form



68th Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference Refund Request Form

First Name (please print) _____
Last Name _____
Organization Name _____
Street (primary address) _____
City _____
State/Province _____
Country _____
Postal Code _____
E-Mail Address _____
Phone (Daytime) (____) - ____-____
Fax (____) - ____-____

Payment was made by:

- Check
- Credit Card. If by credit card, please give the last 4 number of the credit card that was used: _____

Reason for refund: _____

To request a refund, please complete all sections of this form and mail to:

Midwest Fish & Wildlife Conference
C/O Registration Technology
1029 Lake Street, Suite A
Oak Park, IL 60301

or fax to: 708-383-5953

All refund requests must be faxed or postmarked by December 3, 2007.