

SuiteTalk

OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



your partner in planning.

Hi Kristi,

As we step into a new season, we're excited to bring you a fresh edition of SuiteTalk! The days are getting longer, the world is coming back to life, and with it comes a wave of new opportunities. March is all about fresh starts, and we're here to help keep your event planning game ahead of the curve!

Things are already in full swing at SSS and Sandbox Events, with no signs of slowing down—especially for Sandbox Events, as they gear up for one of their busiest spring seasons yet. This season has us out and about, and we can't wait to share what's in store!

In this edition, we're serving up:

- U.S and Canada's Tariff Tensions
- Destination Report
- Who Said Venue Sourcing was a Piece of Cake?
- Out and About with SSS

... And so much more!

Spring also marks the start of planning for our Annual Last Call event on **August 11th!** While the venue and theme are still under wraps, we promise an unforgettable celebration in honor of SSS's 20th anniversary. Be sure to **SAVE THE DATE**—we can't wait to celebrate with you!

And of course, April 11th brings **Global Meetings Industry Day**, a moment to recognize the strength and impact of our industry. We're so grateful to be part of this incredible community and look forward to marking the day with you all.

Wishing you a season full of fresh ideas and exciting opportunities!

How U.S. - Canada Tariffs Could Impact Your Meetings & Events



How U.S.- Canada Tariffs Could Impact Your Meetings & Events

If you are planning corporate events in the U.S. or Canada, you'll want to keep an eye on the latest trade tensions between the two countries. New tariffs could shake up the meetings and events industry in ways you might not expect. Here are some key factors to consider as you plan for 2025:

Increased Operational Costs for Hotels

With the U.S. imposing a 25% tariff on Canadian goods—and Canada responding in kind—hotels are already preparing for higher costs. Many essential supplies, especially food and beverage, are sourced internationally. As costs go up, hotels will likely pass these increases on to guests through higher room rates, service fees, and catering costs.

Reduced Cross-Border Business Travel

We foresee trade tensions, the associated economic uncertainty and the rise in costs making businesses rethink travel plans. A survey by Corporate Traveller Canada revealed that 85% of small businesses would reduce cross-border travel if trade restrictions were imposed. This anticipated decline in business travel will cause us to have to make changes to perspective travel plans for 2025 to accommodate the shift.

Altered Perception and Planning

Some companies are already adjusting budgets and rethinking how they invest in meetings and events. We're seeing a shift toward more localized gatherings and a cautious approach to long-term event planning.

Potential Supply Chain Disruptions

Tariffs can disrupt supply chains, leading to delays and inefficiencies—especially for hotels that rely on imported goods. This could mean higher costs, longer lead times, and even potential shortages for event essentials like catering supplies, decor, and AV equipment.

Impact on Consumer Behavior

Economic uncertainty tends to influence spending habits. If travel and event costs keep rising, companies and attendees alike may become more selective about which events they attend. This could lead to lower demand for hotel venues and shifts in how corporate events are structured.

The good news? We can help you stay ahead of these challenges. As these changes unfold, working with an experienced meetings and events partner can help you navigate pricing shifts, optimize budgets, and secure the best venues.

At Strategic Site Selection, we're keeping a close watch on these developments to ensure our clients get the best possible outcomes. Let's talk about how we can help you plan for 2025.

Exploring Remarkable Venues & Top Global Destinations



Punta Cana, Dominican Republic | Midtown, Singapore | Kyoto, Japan

Exploring Unique Destinations: A Glimpse into Our Recent Venue Highlights

As we wrap up the first quarter of the year, we're reflecting on some of the incredible destinations we've sourced for our clients so far. At Strategic Site Selection, we know that selecting the right venue is more than just finding a meeting space—it's about creating memorable experiences in unique and inspiring locations.

This month, we're taking a closer look at three standout destinations that have caught our eye, offering a perfect blend of functionality, luxury, and cultural charm.

Punta Cana, Dominican Republic

Hotel Highlight: [Dreams Macao Beach Punta Cana](#)

Hotel Description: Snuggled along the scenic shores of Playa Macao, Dreams Macao Beach Punta Cana offers an idyllic retreat for those who need a break from the hustle of daily life. This all-inclusive resort boasts 500 luxuriously appointed suites, each designed to provide a serene escape amidst tropical surroundings. Guests can indulge in limitless luxury with access to multiple gourmet restaurants, vibrant bars, and a range of recreational activities.

Why We Love It: Set along the stunning Macao Beach, this all-inclusive luxury resort offers a tropical paradise for corporate retreats, incentive trips, and conferences. With **over 8,000 sq. ft. of meeting space**, it provides a seamless balance between business and leisure.

Standout Features:

- Multiple oceanfront venues for meetings & events
- Private beach cabanas & infinity pools for post-event relaxation
- World-Class Spa

Group Activities in the Dominican Republic:

- Catamaran Cruises and snorkeling adventures
- Cultural Excursions to the local villages to experience music and cuisine
- Adventure Sports such as zip-lining, ATV tours and so much more!

Midtown, Singapore

Hotel Highlight: [Andaz Singapore](#)

Hotel Description: Situated in the heart of Singapore's dynamic Midtown district, Andaz Singapore blends

modern design with local culture. The hotel features 342 contemporary rooms with floor-to-ceiling windows offering panoramic city views. Guests can savor diverse culinary delights across its seven dining venues and enjoy easy access to the city's vibrant attractions.

Why We Love It: Andaz Singapore's versatile event spaces are ideal for hosting corporate gatherings, seminars, and social events. The Garden Studio, with its residential-style ambiance and adjoining terrace, provides a unique setting for intimate meetings and receptions.

Standout Features:

- Rooftop bar Mr. Stork offers 360-degree views of the city skyline
- Unique Glasshouse ballroom with natural light
- An outdoor infinity pool overlooking the cityscape offers a relaxing retreat

Group Activities in Singapore:

- Explore iconic landmarks such as Marina Bay Sands, Gardens by the Bay, and Chinatown.
- Garden Rhapsody show at Gardens by the Bay
- Sunset cruises along the Marina Bay waterfront

Kyoto, Japan

Hotel Highlight: [*Hilton Kyoto*](#)

Hotel Description: Located in the cultural heart of Kyoto, the Hilton Kyoto offers a harmonious blend of traditional Japanese aesthetics and modern comforts. The hotel features elegantly designed rooms, multiple dining options serving authentic Japanese and international cuisines, and a serene atmosphere that reflects the city's heritage.

Why We Love It: A fusion of modern elegance and Japanese tradition, Hilton Kyoto is the ideal setting for corporate retreats and international conferences. Its state-of-the-art meeting facilities complement the city's rich cultural offerings, making it an unforgettable venue.

Standout Features:

- Experience authentic Japanese tea ceremonies within the hotel's dedicated tea room.
- Zen-inspired conference rooms for a tranquil work environment and their Zen Garden
- Grand ballroom with Japanese design elements

Group Activities in Kyoto:

- Private tours of historic temples, including Kinkaku-ji (Golden Pavilion)
 - Stroll through Gion, Kyoto's historic geisha district
 - Participate in activities like ikebana (flower arranging), calligraphy, or kimono-wearing sessions.
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Who said venue sourcing was a piece of cake?

we did.



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your partner in planning.



Venue sourcing is one of the most crucial elements of event planning, but it's rarely a simple task.

Beyond just securing a location, it involves balancing availability, budget, logistics, and unique event requirements—all while ensuring a seamless experience for attendees.

The Challenges of Venue Sourcing

Availability Constraints – Finding the right venue can be tough, especially during peak seasons or for large-scale events. High-demand spaces book up quickly, leaving limited options if sourcing isn't done early.

Budget Balancing – Event planners are often tasked with stretching budgets to cover venue costs while still delivering a high-impact experience. Finding a venue that meets financial constraints without sacrificing quality is a challenge.

Logistical Hurdles – The venue must fit the event's needs, from accessibility and layout to accommodation options for attendees. Factors like transportation, parking, and room configurations all play a role in making a venue a perfect match.

Contract Complexities – Negotiating contracts can be overwhelming, especially when dealing with terms around pricing, attrition, and cancellation policies. Understanding the fine print is essential to avoid unexpected costs.

Unique Event Requirements – No two events are the same. Some need breakout rooms, exhibition spaces, or high-tech AV capabilities, while others prioritize ambiance and guest experience. Finding a venue that checks all the boxes requires expertise and industry knowledge.

How Strategic Site Selection Makes Venue Sourcing Seamless

At Strategic Site Selection, we take the guesswork out of venue sourcing by offering tailored solutions to match your event's specific needs.

Industry Expertise & Insider Knowledge – Our extensive network gives us access to a wide range of venues, from hidden gems to top-tier conference spaces, ensuring we find the best match for your event.

Creative Problem-Solving – When availability is tight or budgets are constrained, we think outside the box to present alternative venues and solutions that align with your goals.

Expert Negotiation & Contract Support – We advocate for our clients, securing the most favorable terms and ensuring you get the best value while avoiding costly pitfalls.

End-to-End Support – From initial research to final contract signing, we handle every detail, so you can focus on creating an unforgettable event.

The right venue lays the foundation for event success. With Strategic Site Selection as your partner, you can navigate the process with confidence, knowing every detail is taken care of. Let's work together to



Global Meeting Industry Day - GMID
April 3, 2025
MPI's - [International Online Event](#)



Ottawa Meet Week in a Nutshell

This month we had the pleasure of attending Ottawa Meet Week—one of the industry's most anticipated gatherings. It was an incredible opportunity to reconnect, strengthen relationships, and celebrate the power of face-to-face meetings.

One of the highlights of the week was an intimate client appreciation dinner hosted by **Accor Hotels** and our **Fairmont** hotel partners in the beautifully renovated Drawing Room in **Fairmont Château Laurier**. The elegant setting provided the perfect atmosphere for meaningful conversations, laughter, and shared moments.

To our valued clients—your trust and partnership mean everything to us. This evening was about celebrating you and the strong relationships that make what we do so rewarding. We are grateful for the friendships we've built and the successes we've shared, and we look forward to many more years of

collaboration.

A heartfelt thank you to Accor Hotels and our exceptional Fairmont hotel partners for hosting such a wonderful evening. Special appreciation goes to the outstanding team at [Fairmont Château Laurier](#) for their attention to detail and warm hospitality—it was truly an unforgettable experience!

Wrapping Up In Style

Beyond our client dinner, the entire week was filled with exciting moments. From insightful conversations on the trade show floor to reconnecting with industry peers, every interaction reinforced the strength of our community. The MPI Ottawa Chapter Charity Auction and Gala was the perfect finale, bringing us all together to support meaningful causes while celebrating another successful week in the industry.

A sincere thank you to everyone who made Ottawa Meet Week so memorable! We're already looking forward to next year and continuing to create impactful event experiences along the way.



We're Hiring! Join the Strategic Site Selection Team!

Exciting news—we have three amazing opportunities available for talented professionals looking to grow in the meetings & events industry! If you're passionate about building relationships, driving business growth, and making an impact, we'd love to hear from you!

Key Account Manager – [Apply here](#)

Business Development Manager – [Apply here](#)

Director, Business Development – [Apply here](#)

At Strategic Site Selection, we connect people and create meaningful experiences. If you're looking to grow your career with a team that values innovation and collaboration, we'd love to hear from you!

Know someone who'd be a great fit? Tag them or share this post!



The Countdown to Last Call Has Begun!

At Strategic Site Selection, preparations are in full swing for our annual Last Call event—one of the most highly anticipated nights in the industry! This year is extra special as we celebrate 20 incredible years in business, and we're planning an unforgettable evening for our clients and partners.

Sponsorship Opportunities Available!

Looking to elevate your brand and connect with top professionals in the meetings and events industry? We're currently welcoming sponsorship partners for this milestone event.

Interested in getting involved? Contact us:

- ✉ Mark Dosman – markd@strategicsiteselection.com
- ✉ Kristi Piukkala – kristip@sandbox-events.com

Join us in making this year's Last Call the best one yet!

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