

**TTRA Past Presidents Council**  
**Thursday, May 14, 2009 at 1:00 PM EDT via Teleconference**  
**Call In: 866-740-1260**  
**Passcode: 7088872**

Committee Members:

<u>Present</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Name</u>
√	Chuck Goeldner, 74 Gordon Taylor, 76		Ruth Trojan, 02
√	Stewart Tenner, 78 Joanna Caproni, 81 Peter Williams, 92	√	Rich Carollo, 04 Dan Erkkila, 06 Noel Sweeney, 07
√	Suzanne Cook, 94 Blair Stevens, 95	√	Brian Ruf, 08 Rick Cain, 09
√	Donna Larsen, 98	√	Dee Ann McKinney, 10
√	Ed McWilliams, 99		

Staff:

<u>Present</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Company</u>
√	Kyle Koehs	Treeline Associates
√	Michael Palmer	Treeline Associates

**Agenda**

- I. Introductions and Overview Brian Ruf
  1. Brian Ruf thanked everyone for their past service to TTRA and for their dedication and passion which has helped shape TTRA into a magnificent organization and why TTRA endures. We value you.
  2. Brian Ruf indicated his sadness when the Morgan's decided to move on after 10 years but recognizes that nothing lasts forever and also that this is an opportunity for TTRA to get a fresh start with a different team structure.
  3. Since we recognize the importance each of you play in our TTRA family, Brian stated that he wanted to give you all a personal and advance introduction to that new team, address any questions or concerns, and receive any input you may have on TTRA's future directions.
  4. Brian Ruf discussed the selection process for the new management team and indicated that strong response was received to the RFP with 20 proposals. Brian also discusses the assistance of a selection committee which included at least one past president

which helped narrow the list and the selection of Treeline by the Board in a unanimous vote.

II. Overview of Treeline Michael Palmer

1. Michael explains the reasons for the call, most importantly that we are looking to continue the feeling of “family” that is so prevalent in TTRA.
2. Michael also mentions that the “virtual doors” of the Treeline office are always open and that we would be happy to hear from any of the past presidents with ideas, concerns, suggestions, etc.
3. Michael discusses the importance of including strategic leaders when looking towards the future of any association, for TTRA that means Past Presidents, Chapter Presidents, etc.
4. Michael offers an overview of Treeline, including our history of association growth, our AMCI accreditation and our involvement in the travel industry in general. Michael also mentions Treeline’s strength in sponsorship sales and membership growth.
5. Michael briefly describes the roles of each of the TTRA Management Team partners.
6. Michael discusses TTRA’s charge to Treeline, specifically reaching out to the membership through a “partnership” with the chapters.
7. Michael asks if there are any immediate questions/issues/concerns
  - a. Dee Ann McKinney asks Past Presidents to become as involved as they would want to be.
  - b. Dan Erkkila mentions that the entire concept of communication is something that needs to be revisited/recreated.
    - i. Rick Cain agrees with idea of communication, mentions that Treeline is already pushing this agenda.

III. 2009 TTRA Conference Kyle Koehs

1. Fantastic schedule – lots of great speakers.
2. Added more time specifically for networking as requested by previous conference attendees.
3. Added academic sessions at the request of our academic members.
4. Both Dee Ann and Kyle offered pleas for registration – if you are NOT signed up, why not.
5. Dee Ann offered a wonderful praise of the skills of Kathy Palmer.

IV. Website Update Kyle Koehs/Michael Palmer

1. Kyle discusses the upcoming changes to the website, describes that the development is working from the inside → out; items are being changed rapidly behind the scenes.
2. Michael describes why we needed a “band-aid” fix to the website in the first place,

V. Visions/Strategic Plan Overview for TTRA and Feedback Michael Palmer

1. Brian Ruf offers a brief introduction to the development of the strategic plan before Michael begins discussion.

2. After we have a strategic plan in place, one of the management team's first jobs is to set up a plan to drive the association to meet that plan.
3. Suzanne Cook: Make sure that the strategic plan and mission/vision addresses recruiting/retaining the "marketing professionals" and/or marketing community (i.e. the "users" of the research). This is a group that we have lost a great deal of membership from over the many years that she has been involved and why we don't see as much from the corporate level. One of the aspects of TTRA that many of us valued was that TTRA offered a meeting place for research providers and users/marketers in part so that research was being done that was responsive to the industry's needs. We are not representing as much as we once did the people who many of us are doing the research for.
4. Chuck Goeldner: I agree with Suzanne and added the word "User" to page 3 [of the Strategic plan] as well. The organization used to include hotels, cruise lines, airlines, ad agencies with tourism accounts, publishers, etc. all of whom were users of research and we seem to have lost some of those over the years.
5. Ed McWilliams: I would echo we had the sponsorship from the sellers to those people as well so you had media companies etc. that were interested in providing money. The user element is virtually non-existent in the organization.
6. Rick Cain: You are going to have to look at our offering to make sure that it is appealing to those people.
7. Suzanne Cook: We have to decide that that is still what we want to be because we seem to be moving away from it with an emphasis on the academic community which is fine but as we move more and more to that are we leaving out the users? -- And maybe a conscious decision has been made to move that direction.
8. Brian Ruf: No there has not been a conscious decision along those lines. Every since I have been involved in the Board and Exec. Committee for the last 7 years it has been an effort to try to get users -- consumers of research.
9. Dee Ann McKinney - We need to figure out how we can get them back. If you get the ad agency people the media people will show up. I am not sure why we lost some of the groups in the first place.
10. Ed McWilliams: We lost them because there were competing offerings which provided a better value and more targeted experience.
11. Suzanne Cook: Remember that ATME came along at that time because they found that we were not serving that community.
12. Chuck Goeldner: Also we lost our New York chapter which basically kept the media and the ad agencies as a part of TTRA.
13. Suzanne Cook: all of those people in addition to providing membership and coming to the conference they also were very big in the sponsorship category. These issues have been a long time in developing.
14. Rick Cain: There just aren't that many of them any more. There are only 6 airlines and 5 hotel chains.
15. Suzanne Cook: The airlines have pretty much defected from being involved in anything these days but what about doing some interviews and talking to some of the representatives we know in who are the leading researcher people in the hotel community or cruise lines and see if there is anything we could do that would be attractive to them?
16. Rick Cain and Dee Ann McKinney: Good Idea

17. Dan Erkkila: Discussed some of the contributing factors with the different needs of academics vs. practitioners and that that has been some of the strength of our organization.
18. Stewart Tenner: There must be a connection between the producers of travel research and the users of travel research and those are the marketing people. That is where the expansion of TTRA can come from - reaching out to the marketing folks. My view of TTRA for some time has been that it is an academic organization for the most part and that does not appeal to practical marketing people. There are a number of segments including tour operators, travel agents, hotels, sightseeing developers, etc. that could be members of TTRA provided they see the practical value of the research that is being developed. How can they use it to increase their sales, profits, etc?
19. Ed McWilliams: That has largely been removed from our program offerings. We need to understand the problem better and understand the competitive space and how best to adjust the product service mix.
20. Dan Erkkila: How well has the Mission Statement really defined our existence? Is it something that Joe-TTRA could spew as the guiding principle of our team? How well have we really fleshed out the point of our existence *today* (i.e. 21<sup>st</sup> century)?

VI. Additional Questions and Answers and Wrap Up All

1. Brian Ruf thanked everyone for participating and for their valuable feedback and encouraged follow-up with any additional feedback at any time.
2. Brian Ruf expressed excitement for the future of TTRA with the new management company and with continued involvement from all.