



Timesaver's guide to the ARMA Conference

For the 4,000 records and information management professionals making their way to Orlando, Florida on October 15-18, the 54th annual ARMA International Conference & Expo will be a hectic four days. To take full advantage of this event, attendees will need to plan their sessions, roundtables and networking events carefully, not to mention the after-work social activities that are sure to keep all in attendance entertained and refreshed.



The venue

We're not in Kansas anymore... The Orlando World Center Marriott, the hotel company's largest and flagship property, is generally a good deal sunnier than ARMA headquarters in Lenexa, Kansas, so be sure to bring your bathing suit, and make sure you check out the hotel's six swimming pools and 106-foot-long waterslide. If you're not fully chilled out after that, book a massage at the spa to loosen up for those networking sessions. And if golf is your thing, you'll even find a professional-standard 18-hole golf course on the site.

Bonus tip: There's a 'relaxation station', where you can book massages, on the Expo floor.



Who's who

ARMA International's new president Doug Allen, who's also Global 360's business development manager, will kick things off with a keynote address on industry trends. But there will be plenty of other industry bigwigs on hand to offer their insights, including Randolph Kahn, co-author of *Information nation warrior: information management*

compliance boot camp. The industry luminary will deliver the closing keynote address on Sunday.



Network nation

Don't be late: the conversation starts early. Get to know colleagues from your neck of the woods at the regional receptions held the night before the official conference kickoff - a can't-miss, especially for people who are new to their areas. Then get ready to boogie on down: following the regional sessions is the fabled Welcome Party, a mass mingling of all conference participants. Instead of a band, this year there'll be a DJ who is 'very interactive', promises Wanda Wilson, senior conference manager.



Kickoff convocation

Get up to speed on industry best practices first thing Thursday with those most in the know at a panel discussion facilitated by Gartner analyst Debra Logan. She'll head up a who's who of the information management world, consisting of the same experts who helped encapsulate ARMA's industry best practices: Jim Coulson, managing director of the Huron Consulting Group; Patrick Cunningham, director of records management at Motorola; Galina Datskovsky, senior vice president of CA; Lenore Greenberg, executive director at Ernst & Young; John Montaña, vice president and general counsel at PelliGroup; Fred Pulzello, managing director of Recvizio; and Rick Stirling, president of Western IM. They will dig deeper into their recommendations with advice on how to tailor those practices to your organization, and how they expect the principles to evolve.



Hot topics

What are the regulations governing electronic records? How long do you have to store documents for? What is discoverable in court? Those are among the questions conference organizers say are on your minds this year. If they're not, they should be. 'Everybody wants to know what to do with their email; the sheer volume is overwhelming people,' says Wilson.

Email is, in fact, just the tip of the iceberg. What about so-called Web 2.0 social networking sites like LinkedIn and Facebook? And how do discovery and records retention apply to instant messaging? Conference organizers will attempt to answer these questions and more with a suite of sessions under the information technology banner.



Early bird special

You don't have to wait until the conference's first official day to start digging into these issues. Hit the pre-conference seminar on email management on Tuesday, October 13, or the first ever conference seminars spelling out e-discovery and regulations governing electronically stored information on Wednesday, October 14.



Hope for the best, prepare for the worst

Risk management is another hot topic this year. With Hurricane Katrina and 9/11 still ingrained in the public consciousness, disaster planning and recovery retain their urgency. 'There are companies that can help you in the event of a disaster and there are steps you can take right away to protect yourself,' Wilson says. Run-of-the-mill computer security, of course, is always hot.



Worldly ways

At least three workshop leaders are flying in from different corners of the globe. Xiaomi An, a professor at Renmin University of China, will explore the challenges of integrating management systems globally. Anne Thurston, director of London's International Records Management Trust, will explore challenges to records management in the developing world and efforts to bring records management standards to governments and companies in more poorly resourced countries. Trish O'Kane of Left Field Solutions flies in from Wellington, New Zealand to highlight new record-keeping metadata standards

developed by Australasian record keepers and the International Organization for Standardization.



Double duty

With more than 80 educational sessions to choose from and 150 exhibitors competing for your attention, it's easy to miss a key event. No worries, though: this year, 12 of the more popular workshops will be repeated so that participants can get the most out of the conference.



Exhibition extravaganza

Don't want to pay the \$75 registration fee? Enter the show floor for free to access networking opportunities and check out the 150 exhibitors - spread out across 50,000 square feet of exhibition space - ranging from software, records management and enterprise content management companies to firms specializing in physical storage such as box vendors and shelving companies.



Educational opportunities

This year the exhibition floor will have two educational rooms with three different kinds of offerings. 'Industry intelligence' will explore industry trends such as proactive and reactive records management, and large enterprise email archives. A second series of sessions will consist of a 'Solutions showcase', where exhibitors will present their latest offerings. And in the 'Exclusively IT' area, analysts from Forrester, Gartner and CMS Watch will moderate panel discussions with up to three vendors at a time speaking on different topics relating to IT.



Talk shop online

Each year, industry-specific roundtables spark dialogues that continue long after the conference ends. This year, ARMA is facilitating those discussions even before the conference starts with web pages devoted to issues concerning pharmaceutical, legal, utilities, financial services and energy. These discussion forums will continue for months after the event. Check them out at <http://iconference.arma.org>.



Spend for a good cause

Don't forget the silent auction that benefits ARMA's educational foundation. You can bid on jellies and jams, wine, iPods, a Cannon camera and a Dell mini-notebook. ☑