

ROI WORKSHEET

We understand that professional conferences are expensive and not all budget managers understand their importance or the benefits derived by conference attendees. Use the information below to help you justify the expense of attending the GovSec 2012 conference.

In order to approve any allocation of resources to a given project or program, you need to understand two components to make decisions:

- Expense (the “investment”)
- Return on Investment

Here are some easy-to-use tools to help you calculate the investment and identify your return by attending the GovSec 2012 Conference.

Understanding Your Conference Expenses

Conference expenses are affected by a number of factors. Before you can even begin to justify conference expenses, you need to calculate what those expenses are. To do so, use the following Expenses Worksheet to develop a cost estimate for attending your selected conference.

Expenses Worksheet

| Expense | Guideline | Cost |
|----------------------------------|---|------|
| Conference Registration | | \$ |
| Flight | Try a web travel service for quick estimate | \$ |
| Lodging | Check GovSec room rates online for best rate | \$ |
| Transportation: Airport to Hotel | Taxi? Car rental? | \$ |
| Transportation: Hotel to Airport | Taxi? Car rental? | \$ |
| Mileage Reimbursement | Driving to conference or to the airport for your flight? Use MapQuest or Google Maps to calculate distances, then multiply miles by 51 cents/mile (standard 2010) | \$ |
| Parking Reimbursement | At airport for flight or the conference venue, Washington DC Convention Center, offers parking. DC Metro is also a viable option | \$ |
| Food Per Diem | Know your company’s reimbursement schedule or see IRS guidelines for conference locale rates. Remember, GovSec 2012 conference includes | \$ |

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| | breakfast and lunch on Tuesday and Wednesday | |
| | Subtotal | \$ |
| | Total # of employees going | |
| | Multiply subtotal by total number of employees going = total | \$ |

Understanding the Benefits

Let's face it: many benefits from conference attendance are hard to quantify. For example, many experts agree that the top benefit of conference attendance is networking value. Where else can you find so many industry contacts facing the same issues as your organization? Are there solutions you're not aware of?

Although networking is undoubtedly the most important aspect of a conference, it is also the toughest for which to quantify any value.

When you propose a conference for approval, don't focus on how much you want to go; focus on what you will specifically bring back to the organization as payback for the investment.

Some specific details you'll need to identify include:

- Session content. What sessions have particular relevance to your organization's work?
 - Specifically identify:
 - Tools
 - Technologies
 - Processes
- Vendor contacts. Will the conference showcase vendors with tools you use or are evaluating for potential future use? Is this an opportunity during which you'll be able to compare competing tools?
- Best practices. Will there be sessions in areas that will immediately benefit your organization?
- Training. Will there be workshops designed to teach attendees a special skill and/or help your team overcome current or future challenges?

Quantifying the Benefits

Although you might understand the benefits of the conference that interests you, your manager may not. Therefore, to be most effective in justifying the conference, you need to clearly articulate the connection between your organization's knowledge requirements and the conference program. DO NOT assume that your manager will be able to automatically make those distinctions.

To support this process, use the following Benefits Worksheet to help you focus on the benefits.

Benefits Worksheet

| Your Organization's Benefits | Specific Needs and the Conference Sessions |
|---|---|
| Networking Benefits | This conference will allow [specific team members] to network with other professionals and vendors in the industry. We will be able to take the pulse of what is happening for tools, technologies, and processes, and hear ideas we weren't even aware of. |
| Teambuilding (if sending a big part of your group) | This conference will help build our team, providing a forum for team members to discuss tools, technologies, and processes and how we might apply them in our company to improve our information products, workflow, and processes. |
| Current Tools | |
| Future Tools Exploration | |
| Current Technologies | |
| Future Technologies Exploration | |
| Current Processes | |
| Future Processes Exploration | |
| Vendors With Tools & Technologies You Are Exploring | |

