

Summit of the Americas to be live event in 2022

In another piece of continued good news for the industry, IAADFS President Michael Payne has announced that the Summit of the Americas will take place live and in person next year from April 10 through 13 at the Palm Beach County Convention Center, West Palm Beach, Florida.



IAADFS President and CEO Michael Payne has announced that Summit of the Americas will be a live, in-person event in 2022, taking place at the Palm Beach County Convention Center, West Palm Beach, Florida

While the event will have the goal of serving the needs and offering something valuable to delegates from all over the Americas as it has in the past, Payne immediately stated that the event would not be the same, adding in a subsequent conversation: “In other years we had a large exhibition hall, with many exhibitors and booths. We do not feel the time is right for that, currently, so our model will be different. There will be a heavy emphasis on executive learning and networking, with face-to-face interactions.”

While there will not be a trade show floor, there will still be opportunities to exhibit — just not on the same scale. “Some companies will have private suites, which has already been the case,” he says. “And there will be the opportunity for exhibitors to have booths, but a limited number, and in different locations.”

Payne says rather than one session lasting the entire day, sessions will take place on parallel tracks, covering a multitude of topics. He would love for people to end the event saying they wish they’d been able to attend all.

He won’t speculate on how many attendees they expect. “At events pre-Covid we had 1800-2100 delegates, and I’d be happy to see it reach anywhere close to those numbers, but who knows what will be happening by that time in terms of travel?”

At this point, the Associations are looking into a couple of areas they have yet to decide on, such as whether sessions will be in Spanish and English, or whether there might be a hybrid model where people can attend virtually. For many of these decisions the biggest factor is cost. “To present an event virtually is not inexpensive,” he says. “We need technology, cameras, operators ... we are considering whether to tape the sessions as opposed to presenting them live.”

As with the industry at large, associations have been in a challenging spot the past couple of years. They have year-round responsibilities lobbying, advocating and looking after the best interests of their members. When asked what the industry can now do to support the associations, Payne says: “Step up, get engaged, contribute. Clearly in these times all companies are not able to take part in all events; they have their own budget constraints and travel constraints. But we do need people engaged.”