

**Leading the Charge!**  
**Planning Conferences to bring GIS practitioners**  
**together**

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## **Why take the time to organize gatherings, conferences, or group meetings?**

You build bridges to teachers across the curriculum

It gives pioneers hope

New people are introduced to this technology

A capacity for leadership in your community is built

It provides a great place for an exchange of ideas

Conference presenters create a sense of synergy

## **Formats**

After school meetings

Coffee clutch

Weekend conferences

User group

Summer conference

Technical sharing fest

Theme based: watershed, intelligence activities,  
field data collection, local history

## **Get help: Set up teams to spread the work**

Vendors

Speakers

Site manager

Advertising

Web materials

Registration

## **What types of settings can be used to bring together colleagues?**

Set up a local partner school

Work at a business with a training lab

Partner with a university

Museums

Summer camps

Hotel meeting rooms

Set up your own lab

## Finding presenters

Brainstorm with teachers who attend conferences

ESRI conference presenters

Read content magazines or watch educational tv

Advertise 1 year to 9 months before the conference

Look through the TED lecture series online

Get teachers in a region who use technology

Classroom teachers

Tech specialists at retail stores

Local professionals: *Engineers, Land use managers, public servants, real estate, 911 managers, water quality monitors, weather people, local park officials, energy companies, road network providers*

University or Museum faculty

Large Science facilities: *NASA, UCAR, TERC, SCRIPPS, NOAA*

## **Advertising**

Register for a booth at targeted trade shows

Mail contacts from past shows or past participants

Fax schools in the nearby area

Post invitations on interest level list serves

Get partner organizations to send material contacts (science museums, professor who does in-service, company contacts, subsidiary company contacts, go together and pool contacts with companies that may be similar in purpose)

## **Vendors**

Start with a list of providers you may be using at your school

Contact them early to leverage their participation in advertising

Make sure vendors get value in return for their sponsorship



## **Time line**

Secure facilities – two years ahead

Large draw speakers - 18 months for key note

Regional presenters – 9 months ahead

All call for other presenters 6 months

1 yr. Start contacting funding sources for the next class

9 months presenters

## **Intermediate Planning**

Set up web presence 9 mo before

6 month call for presenters to fill schedule

Have schedule of week up at least 6 months before

Send flyers and invitations to participants at both 6 months

Advertise at other conferences

Set up schedule 2 months before.

Draft a last push invite with most of the details 6 weeks before

Both students and teachers can be welcome

Capture digital cameras, ipod recordings of talks, video to post on web

## **Last Week**

Draft a presentation schedule by room

Capture pictures for future PR materials

Order food

Confirm rooms where out of town participants stay

Install all software needed

Organize the registration team

Print programs

Make a room by room technology needs list and make sure all software needed is installed





