2021 Fall Board Report
Meetings, Events, and Education Department

2021 Marketplace - Baltimore, Md

Marketplace Dates and Convention Center Update

January 2020
The Baltimore Convention Center is currently being used as a field hospital, and the Governor has extended the order until December 31. The convention center must be converted from the field hospital to a working convention center, and we are waiting on that timeline to see if meeting in January is possible since our move-in date is January 25.

June 2021
We have alternate dates for both Marketplace and Busworld North America. Due to convention center space restrictions, both shows would run concurrently over the dates of June 18 – 22, 2021.

New This Year

Changes are being made for 2021 to help our members participate in Marketplace when many of them are facing shrinking budgets and travel restrictions.

Seller company fee instead of attendee fee: Organizations will pay one fee ($1595/$1695) for one set of prescheduled onsite appointments, one appointment-taking delegate and unlimited attendees from their company, all with business floor access.

Appointment-taking Buyer Rebate: Operator delegates will be eligible for a $500 rebate post-Marketplace if they successfully complete the following: register by January 8, complete their Marketplace profile survey, request onsite appointments, participate in virtual appointments, stay at a host hotel and attend all prescheduled onsite appointments.

Price freeze: Understanding the financial hardships in the industry, ABA is offering Marketplace 2020 registration and sponsorship rates for 2021 attendees.

One Day Appointments: All Sellers will have their prescheduled appointments on one day to help reduce travel and hotel costs:
- DMO/Receptive Operator/Charter Operator appointments are held on Sunday
- Lodging, Attraction, Associate & Allied Association Sellers will have appointments on either Monday or Tuesday

Virtual Appointments: ABA will be offering virtual pre-scheduled appointments pre and post Marketplace. These appointments will be by invitation only and in some cases, first come, first served, and will allow buyers and sellers to communicate prior to meeting in person.
Marketplace Profiles: More specific profile questions have been developed from member feedback for the research databases and are part of the online registration process.

Recommended Matches for Appointments: Appointment-taking delegates will be able to click a button and see a list of recommended organizations based on pre-determined fields from the Marketplace profiles.

Double Appointments: Buyers will be able to request a double appointment with seller companies who they want to have additional time with to conduct business.

Dedicated Networking Floor Time: The Marketplace schedule has been rebuilt to include multiple Networking Floor opportunities daily.

Online Discussion Boards: ABA will launch an online community board for discussions, best practices, and networking.

www.buses.org/marketplace: A new microsite for ABA’s Marketplace was launched in May.

Extended Recovery Rate: Early bird (Seller recovery rate) has been extended until September 18.

Flexible Cancellation Policy: Registrations can be cancelled for any reason and with no penalty, by September 18, 2020. For registrations cancelled between September 19, 2020 and January 8, 2021 there will be a reduced cancellation fee of $250.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols

ABA is actively engaging in conversations, implementing current safety standards and procedures, and following COVID-19 protocols throughout all interactions and event activities. From registration to meal functions, business floor booths to social functions, ABA is committed to safety as we get back to business.

ABA has not announced the exact safety measures that we will be following since the protocols are evolving daily. However, ABA is committed to providing a safe place to conduct business and is regularly working with the city, convention center and hotel professionals to address each safety area. Safety at Marketplace is our top priority. We will put out specific guidance as we get closer to Marketplace, so they reflect the current protocols established.

Visit Baltimore and the Baltimore Convention Center are taking big steps to ensure visitors feel safe and healthy. Visit Baltimore has partnered with the Global Biorisk Advisory Council to support these efforts and achieve the GBAC STAR accreditation. Facilities must comply with 20 elements to earn the accreditation. These include risk assessment strategies, sustainability (an ongoing program), the use of PPE, standard operating procedures, the consideration of new technology and tools and emergency preparedness.
#ABABaltimore
- 7 Pre/Post FAM Tours
- 13 Sightseeing Tours on Saturday
- Explore Baltimore on Saturday Night
- All Delegate Event on Sunday Night
- Dine Around Baltimore on Monday Night

BUSWORLD NORTH AMERICA
- Registration opened in July and is hosted on [www.busworldnorthamerica.org](http://www.busworldnorthamerica.org)
- Operator buyers and visitors can attend for free
- We have retained The Moery Company to sell exhibit space to North American exhibitors
- Busworld.org has a dedicated salesperson for the European market
- To date, 10 exhibitors have confirmed
  - Irizar USA (5,000 square foot booth)
  - 7 European exhibitors
- Registration to Busworld North America includes registration for the Busworld Academy Education Program, which is currently under development

WOMEN IN BUSES COUNCIL

Women in Buses partnered with BusRide to create an eBook that was sent to Congress: *How COVID-19 Has Killed Our Industry: Letters to Congress from the Women Who Power America’s Motorcoach Industry*. The book included more than 35 personal stories and is being used by ABA’s Government Affairs & Policy and Communications teams to advocate for the bus industry.

Since April, Women in Buses has been hosting weekly educational webinars on Wednesdays. The Summer Series Finale ran August 24 – 27 and included these topics:
- The Science of Storytelling
- An Introduction of DISC
- Pre-Employment Screening
- Setting Sail with Cruises

The Fall Wednesday series begins in September.

The Women in Buses Award nominations will open online in the fall. This year, we will allow the nominator to supply additional information on the nominee to better highlight the nominee. Leadership self-nominations will also open online in the fall and the new leadership team will be
announced at ABA’s Marketplace. Leadership has drafted a strategic plan to continue to grow Women in Buses into a more independent advocate of women in the industry.

There will be a 10th Anniversary celebration of Women in Buses with high visibility at Marketplace. Women in Buses will expand their programming to include a Women in Buses Day at Marketplace with education, networking opportunities and visits to Busworld North America. They will also staff a booth on the Networking Floor.