

Branded Laptop Backpack Opens Team-Building Meeting for Banking and Credit Union Management-Consulting Firm, Cornerstone Advisors

- **Challenge:** To add an extra, practical dose of goodwill and care to a fun learning event.

Team-building meetings are all the rage for good reason. They help staff form and tighten bonds and develop more effective working relationships. They facilitate the sharing of knowledge, vital for developing deeper understandings among disparate teams and groups. Team-building meetings also give staff a greater awareness of how to make even good teams work better.

Cornerstone Advisors is a management consulting firm providing strategic planning, benchmarking, process reengineering, technology assessment and planning, and system selection and conversion services, among others, primarily to banks and credit unions. Cornerstone recently tapped a team-building strategy with a special, two-day corporate knowledge-sharing event.

This meeting would be above and beyond the regular annual shindig, where corporate strategy for the next year is typically introduced and discussed. First, it would be held at a new location—the Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain in Phoenix, billed as a luxury boutique hideaway with dramatic mountain and spa “casitas” and spectacular valley views. Second, it would carry a completely different feel from that of the regular corporate meetings. Instead, the Cornerstone team decided, this knowledge-sharing event would be dubbed “GonzoPalooza,” letting loose the spirit of the renowned “Gonzo Banker,” the firm’s alter ego and online information resource serving up a weekly reprieve from the necessarily dry and stuffy world of finance with “a good helping of irreverence to thousands of readers around the world.” To extend the GonzoBanker’s mission of learning, each employee would be charged with presenting on a topic of interest to them.

Two weeks before the event, management decided that a promotional gift was also in order, to get employees excited, to thank them for their work in preparing their presentations and to show an extra dose of goodwill and care. Because the team wanted a gift that would appeal both to frequent-flyers who travel with laptops (Cornerstone has very few local clients) as well as to more close-to-the-nest staff who love hiking, camping and the outdoors, a backpack quickly moved to the top of the list. The team landed on the ePromos’ website after a Google search for “logoed backpacks.”

- **Solution:** Branded deluxe super sonic compu-pack by High Sierra® with pockets galore.

They liked what they saw at our site, particularly the Deluxe Super Sonic Compu-Pack by High Sierra®. This backpack, constructed of mini-hexagon ripstop nylon, features a zippered rear compartment and padded sleeve large enough for a 17-inch laptop, a deluxe organizer with a zippered mesh pocket, pen pockets and key fob, a side mesh water-bottle pocket, a lined DVD/CD/Mp3 player pocket with custom headphone port, and an easy-access media pocket for a cell phone, smart phone or PDA.

- **Result:** Bags delivered on time and welcome staff to conference room for learning event.

The team connected with Promotions Specialist Amanda Ammirato, who immediately went to work to ensure their short-notice order would be produced quickly enough. The team was pleased with Amanda’s responsiveness, and thanked her for all the hard work that enabled their bags to be delivered in time.

Before the launch of the Sanctuary meeting, the team hung the bags on the backs of chairs so staff would see them when they first entered the conference room. The team reports that staff loved both the thoughtful, surprise gift and the (soon to be annual) “GonzoPalooza” meeting—according to the team, a silly name for a not-so-silly event.



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