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NEW ORLEANS' LONGEST-STANDING DMC BECOMES ONLY CERTIFIED VIRTUAL EVENT SPECIALIST IN THE STATE

nocci becomes the only Louisiana company certified for virtual events and meetings and pivots to showcase the state's unique culture virtually nationwide

NEW ORLEANS – nocci, the longest standing New Orleans destination management company (DMC) providing event planning services to the association, hospitality and meeting community, has become the first and only company in the state of Louisiana to be certified a Virtual Event & Meeting Management Specialist. The certification was presented to nocci by the Event Leadership Institute in partnership with Meeting Professionals International (MPI), the largest meeting and event industry association worldwide.

“In today’s changing world, event and meeting management professionals are expected to have the skills necessary to plan and execute both live and virtual events,” said Dottie Belletto, President, CEO and Founder of nocci. “As the only company in Louisiana with such a certification, this proves that we have the needed fundamentals and expertise to plan and manage virtual events in the state and nationwide.”

This certification acknowledges nocci’s comprehensive experience and training to plan, manage, and provide any Virtual Event or meeting completely turnkey. The certification specifically qualifies nocci as the only one in Louisiana to be able to:

- Articulate the key differences between planning a live event and virtual event
- Develop a virtual event strategy that includes key components unique to planning virtual events
- Explore requirements for human resources, vendors, public relations, digital platforms, related technology, data collection & analytics, and data security
- Develop a virtual event plan and program that provides return on investment to key stakeholders while providing an engaging digital experience for attendees

“The world of virtual events is expanding dramatically given the times we currently live and, as any growth of a new technology, it has its challenges,” said Nicole Tusa, Vice President of Sales & Marketing for nocci. “We have seen the good and the bad that can happen when you go virtual with your convention or meeting and nocci pursued this certification so that all know we are trained and experienced to bring any meeting virtually and avoid the missteps many are having as they experience this new technology.”

Recent events that nocci has brought to fruition with much success virtually include the St. Bernard Economic Development Foundation - Start-Up Pitch, the 2020 CityMatCH Leadership Conference and MCH Epidemiology *Virtual* Conference and the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce’s Inaugural Women's Leadership Conference.

In addition to certification, nocci has expanded its programming offerings to bring the culture and spirit of New Orleans virtually anywhere in the world. With conferences and meetings not able to be onsite, nocci builds programming into conferences and meetings that celebrate the experiences of New Orleans.

“We bring New Orleans culture to the virtual conference world,” added Belletto. “Our clients may not be able to visit in person but they will have the experience through New Orleans chefs preparing their notable dishes, the finest musicians and on-location filming in the historic French Quarter and the Mississippi River.”

Just recently, nocci created programming for a conference that went virtual that included classes from the city’s mixologists and local chefs. Also, the company developed a New Orleans entertainment showcase for a conference booked for New Orleans that had to go virtual. The brass band and other New Orleans entertainment were used for the rescheduled conference to promote the 2021 event in New Orleans.

“Our culture is the most unique in the world and while many can’t experience it in person, we have created a virtual showcase of New Orleans that provides much-needed revenue to the city’s cultural ambassadors while allowing the city to market itself as a place for future business,” said Belletto. “New Orleans will rebound from this pandemic and its New Orleans’ culture – that is like no other – that will help us rebook and welcome our conference and meetings back home soon.”

The success of nocci’s virtual meeting services has also expanded to the classroom. This month, the University of New Orleans’ Division of Professional and Continuing Education will launch a program that provides graduates a “Certificate in Virtual Events Planning Fundamental.” The 14-week program is led by nocci’s Tusa and will include instruction from all of the nocci leadership team. More information on this program can be found at <https://pace.uno.edu/>.

About nocci (www.nocci.com)

Founded in 1987 by CEO Dottie Belletto, nocci is the longest standing New Orleans DMC and has dedicated over 30 years of service to the association, hospitality and meeting community. nocci has been the top tier choice for event management and logistics for conventions, festivals, galas, and so much more. With changes due to the pandemic, nocci has evolved quickly to become the only Certified Virtual Event & Meeting Management Specialists in Louisiana.

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