

# HOW TO SMMP.

THE A-Z OF STRATEGIC MEETING MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS



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# HOW TO SMMP?

You have decided to make your meetings and events more efficient and are considering SMMP as a possible solution but you want to know what it really is and what it honestly involves. Let us take you through the steps you will need to make as a company in order to fully implement a successful Strategic Meetings Management Program.



# WHAT IS SMMP?

## **SMMP IS**

a strategic company wide program which structures your meetings and events so that you can increase transparency, capture spend, have clear reporting, manage suppliers, standardize procedures and conform with company and industry compliance.

## **SMMP IS NOT**

a one-size-fits-all program, it's a tailor-made solution crafted around your specific needs and environment, perfectly complementing your company's strategy. This 'how to' guide is a quick insight into the common steps all corporations need to navigate in order to develop a useful and cost effective program.

# STEP 1: WHY

## WHY CHANGE ANYTHING?

Meetings have been working, kind of, and the amount of effort to start this new meetings program is high. What is it that has led us to consider SMMP?

### IN DETAIL WE WANT...

Transparency of meeting spend

To unify the purchasing process, i.e. leveraging global spend

Consolidate a decentralized structure

Develop structures and processes to standardize event delivery

Analyze internal cost for meeting execution and planning, as well as staff overhead and among others

Achieve return of investment

Make events subject to Service Level Agreement (SLA) meetings policy delivery

Introduce a project management system, leading to meeting automation

Integrate compliance regulations into meeting planning and reporting in a transparent manner

Assure standardized meeting evaluation in terms of spend, attendee satisfaction, KPI delivery

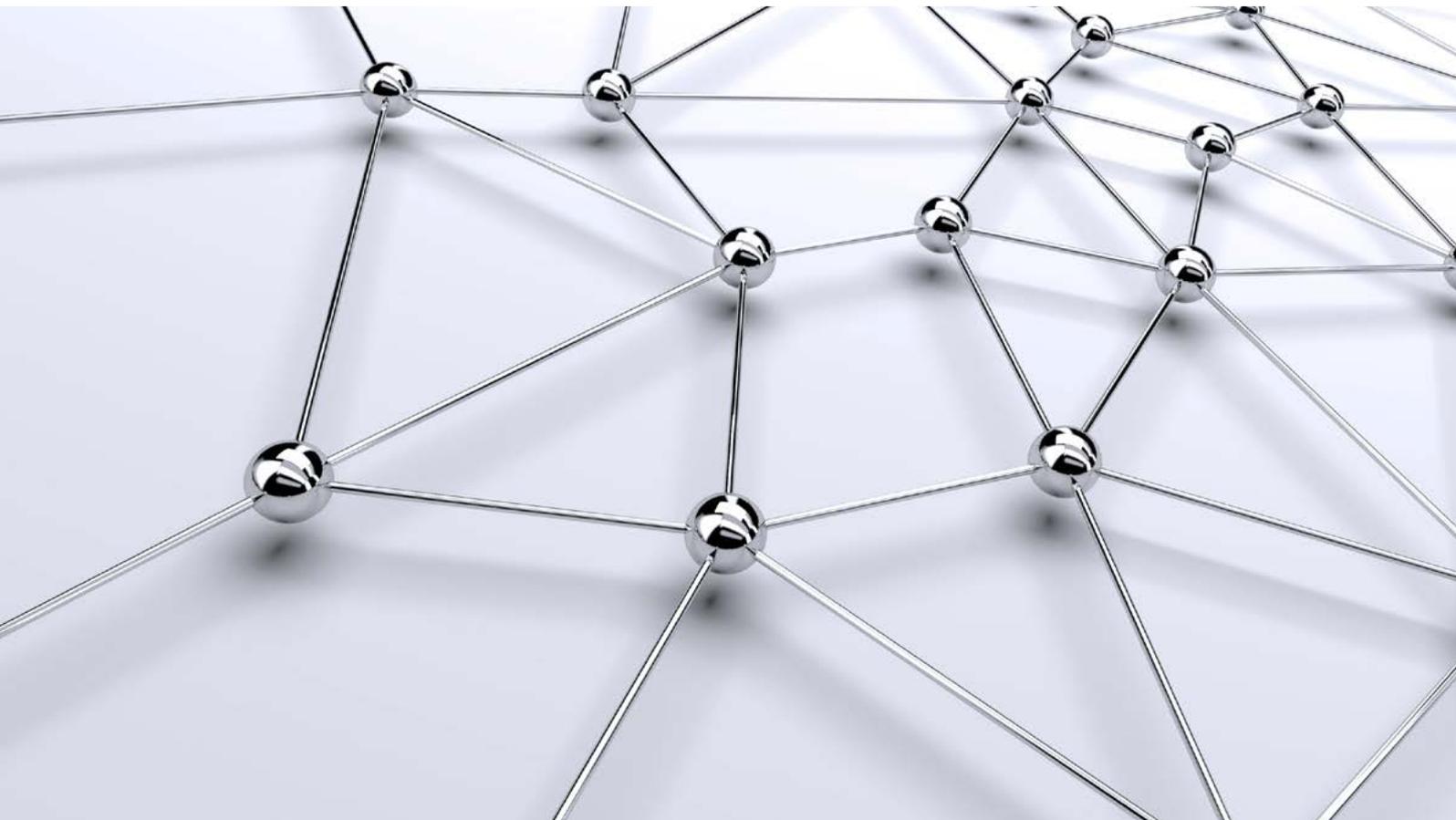
Use big data and analytics for smarter decision making

**WHY CONSIDER SMMP?  
SIMPLY, THE NEED TO INCREASE QUALITY,  
MINIMIZE COSTS AND INCREASE VISIBILITY.**

# STEP 2: ANALYSIS

Aligning your meetings with your corporate strategy requires a deep knowledge of where you currently stand. Firstly, analyze which areas and departments within your company are meeting budget owners and which organize meetings. Then you need to get your head around the total meeting spend that you have as an organization. This seems easy but unfortunately this spend is primarily split throughout different regions and verticals.

With such a significant meeting spend volume we need to delineate the total number of meetings, size, cost, number of suppliers used for each service. Who internally leads meetings and how many meetings do they handle per year? Are they considered meeting experts? Is this task in addition to their daily work? Is it a team of people or an individual responsible? Are all these meetings necessary? What is the competition doing?



**YOU NEED TO GET YOUR HEAD AROUND THE  
TOTAL MEETING SPEND THAT YOU HAVE AS AN  
ORGANIZATION.**

# ANALYSIS EXAMPLE

Accommodation; most meetings include room nights so this can be considered a key area for analysis. How can we find out total spend for hotel room nights? We can ask the department/individuals in charge of meetings which hotels they use. We can source total spend from regional and global accounting departments for hotel chains. We can ask our regional counterparts at the hotel chain for further information concerning total spend globally and regionally. When discussing with the hotel chains we can also receive information concerning preferred supplier agreements with the hotel itself. Have we already a negotiated contract with the hotel chain? If so, have we reached the minimum spend required and so on. Do we use agencies/partners to source hotel rooms or key venues? Don't bog yourself down in data but get an understanding of what's been happening and, more importantly, what is currently happening since you have begun your analysis. This is vital in establishing a functioning SMMP program.

# STEP 2: ANALYSIS

Rather than spending all your time dissecting and connecting past payments and the companies spend history make sure you collect all current data. What is happening right now, is valuable data, that provides you a reliable overview through which you can capture future meeting needs. At the end of this process you should have a good idea of the total company spend in this area, regional spend and number of suppliers utilized in any given area.

Now it's time to outline the big picture;

OUR COMPANY DID XXX NUMBER OF MEETINGS LAST YEAR  
OUR COMPANY SPENT €XX ON MEETINGS LAST YEAR  
WE USED XX TOTAL MEETING SUPPLIERS  
OUR NEGOTIATED SAVINGS EQUATED TO A TOTAL OF €XX  
WE SPENT €XX ON TIME AND HUMAN RESOURCE INTERNALLY

## ⊙ AND THEN ASK THE QUESTION

⊙ **HOW CAN WE DO THIS BETTER?**

# STEP 3: MAKE A PLAN

Collate and evaluate the results of analysis

**Determine overall SMMP goals and strategic approach  
Including basic timeframe**

Get executive level buy-in

**Determine corporate governance**

Formulate a risk mitigation plan

**Develop KPIs that allow you to monitor goals**

After receiving executive level buy-in be sure to include other stakeholders who have the opportunity to make or break your program in the future. These stakeholders include current meeting planners, travel departments, occasional planners, marketing, compliance, purchasing, audit and finance and other supporting functions.

**Get help from an external consultant, be it a consultancy house or agency specialized in SMMP design and implementation**

Create detailed project plan and timeline

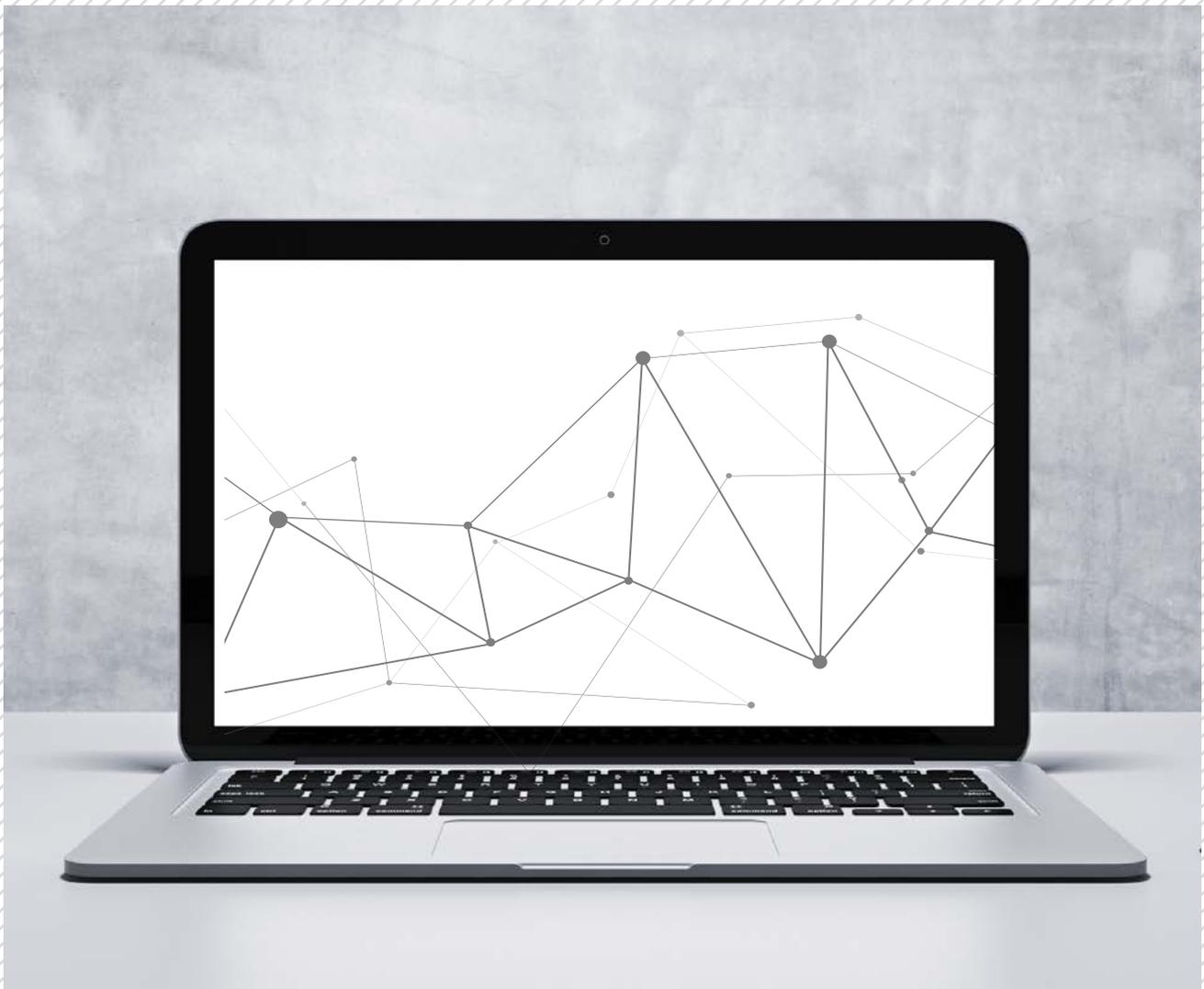
**Determine the resources required to facilitate the program both internally and externally**

Develop communication plan

**Pick the events agency who understands what SMMP is about, who has experience working with clients who have done it and can deliver on your SMMP goals**

# STEP 4: PROCESS DESIGN

Put simply, process design is deciding who works with whom and how they work together; which means defining all interaction between involved parties (internal stakeholders, budget owners, purchasing department and external suppliers).



# STEP 5: SUPPLIER SCREENING & APPOINTMENT

## CHOOSE A STRATEGIC SOFTWARE PARTNER FOR YOUR SMMP

This software will deliver you a unified solution for data analytics, capturing spend, supplier management, reporting, payment solutions, participant management, meeting technology and so on.

## CHOOSE STRATEGIC PARTNER FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF YOUR SMMP

The steps included in supplier screening and appointment contain:

- Market analysis of potential suppliers
- RFI delivery to pool of suppliers
- RFP from shortlist
- Evaluation process and face to face meetings with second shortlist
- Financial negotiation and appointment of chosen supplier(s)
- Preferred suppliers should be subject to SMMP aligned key performance indicators (KPIs)

# STEP 6: IMPLEMENT

Now, the idea is concrete and yet the program is only beginning for most of the company. It's the time to put your communication plan in to action and receive companywide buy-in to achieve optimal results. This process needs to be aligned and delivered with your chosen supplier throughout all levels of the organization.

- ⦿ Align and where necessary amend processes with external strategic partners
- ⦿ Develop standardized service level agreements (SLAs)
- ⦿ Deliver communication plan; communicate standard operating procedures (SOPs), communicate future meetings management process including overall companywide goals, communicate meeting management change into preferred supplier network (e.g. hotel chains, audiovisual suppliers, production partners, travel management company (TMC))
- ⦿ Implement internal trainings and supplier trainings
- ⦿ Implement according to predetermined roll out plan; this plan could be regional, by continent or departmental, depending upon company structure and goals



**NOW IS THE TIME TO PUT YOUR  
COMMUNICATION PLAN INTO ACTION  
AND RECEIVE COMPANY WIDE BUY-IN  
TO ACHIEVE OPTIMAL RESULTS.**

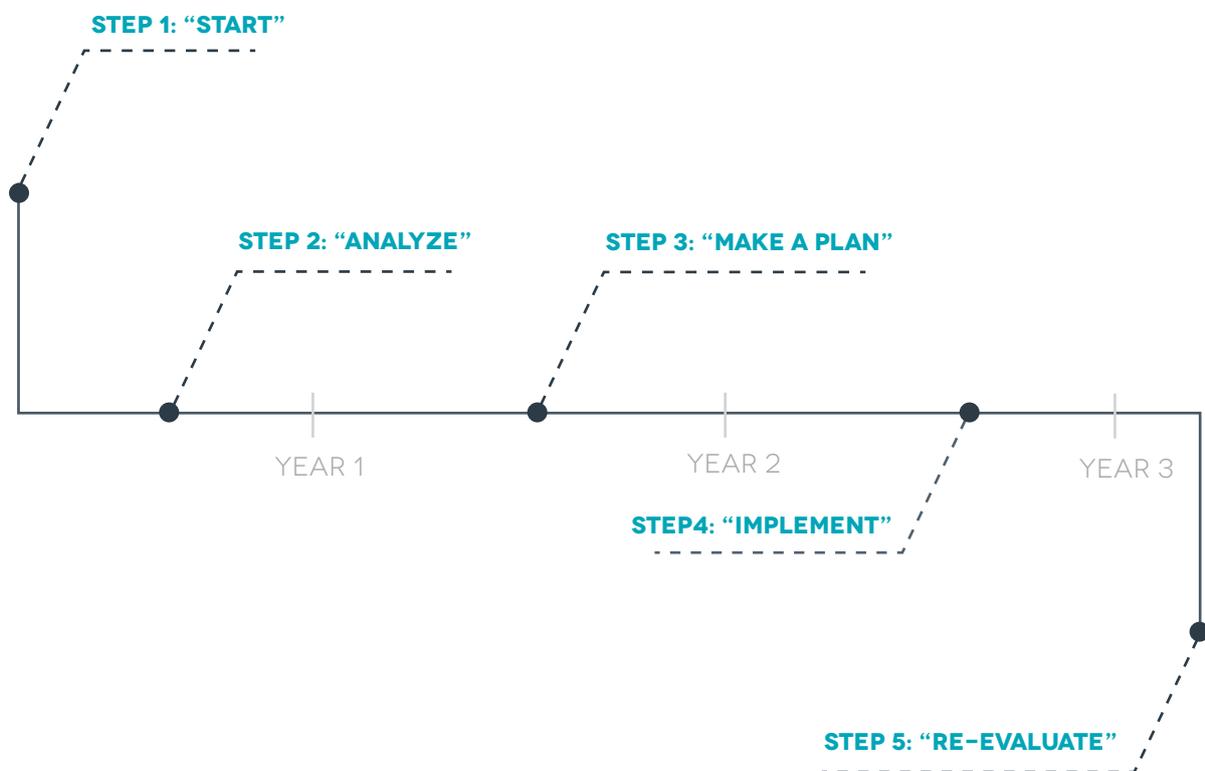
# STEP 7: CONTROLLING

It's important to know that after the implementation phase the job is not complete, now we have the opportunity to continually analyze and adjust the program to meet objectives. Always comparing the plan versus the reality, while staying flexible. When controlling the program you need to monitor defined deliverables, including but not limited to attendee satisfaction, spend capture, quality management, process adherence, project milestones.



# OVERALL TIMEFRAME

Be realistic with your timeframe and make sure that you give each step the attention it deserves. We've created a rough guideline below but as you know it needs to be adapted to your specific situation.



There is a continuous implementation and evaluation phase with defined milestones that can be "check-in-points" for your chosen suppliers and key stakeholders.

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