Case Study: Academic Orthopaedic Consortium

CEO and self-imposed annual conference planner experiences large-scale hotel booking success with GroupSync

AOC CONNECT
ORTHOPAEDIC BEST PRACTICE & PEER NETWORKING

INDUSTRY

Healthcare

ORGANIZATION SIZE

5,000+

BACKGROUND

The Academic Orthopaedic Consortium (AOC) is a peer organization that serves its 5,000 members through best practice education. Creating efficiencies at a national level and shining the spotlight on those best practices is a large part of the AOC's annual symposium curriculum, which means its events need to reflect that mission by taking care of its own. In part, ensuring attendees have an excellent experience at every stage of the event helps them feel prioritized and cared for.

CHALLENGES

- Time constraint
- Sourcing was hard to scale
- Finding hotels with specific features
- Lacked accessible hotel & market data

Summary

While planning an event for his 5,000-member organization, Michael Gagnon knew there had to be a better way. When hotels responded to his RFPs—when they were actually able to respond—he combed through pages upon pages of documentation to find the information that mattered most for his needs. Even with decades of professional experience in negotiating, he wasn't able to easily find the hotel information needed to make a smart deal. And he soon found that the time involved sourcing and booking a hotel for his conference was not time well spent.

Once he used GroupSync, his hotel booking task became manageable. He was no longer bogged down by the heavy lifting of compiling RFPs and receiving unnecessary information—GroupSync enabled him to specify exactly what he wanted, then only review hotels matching that criteria. GroupSync dramatically cut his manual work and sped up hotel responses. In a new negotiating landscape, Michael had found a solution that made the sourcing and booking process second nature.

groupSYNC

Number of Rooms

100

Avg Daily Room Rate

$200

Weather in F°

83

Direct Flights From

BNA

Miles from Airport   **Point of Interest**

2   5   10   20   San Diego Convention Center

Onsite Amenities

- ☐ Golf
- ☐ Valet Parking
- ☐ Outdoor Pool
- ☑ Fitness Center
- ☐ On Site Restaurant(s)
- ☑ Business Center
- ☐ Indoor Pool
- ☐ Spa/Salon

✓ 1 of 200 with availability

Grand Hotel and Resort
Guest Rooms **240**   Total Meeting Space **97,000ft²**

Challenges

TIME CONSTRAINT

The manual work of researching and calling individual hotels required time that Michael, as AOC Connect's founder and CEO, didn't have. Frustrated with the hotel sourcing process and weighed down by stacks of hotel documents containing superfluous information, he couldn't ascertain if he was getting the best deal without dedicating months to the effort.

SOURCING WAS HARD TO SCALE

As AOC Connect continues to grow, Michael wouldn't be able to scale hotel sourcing. It's impossible for one person or even a small team to plan a large event with so much time wasted separating the wheat from the chaff.

FINDING HOTELS WITH SPECIFIC FEATURES

Upon a highly respected colleague's referral, Michael approached industry expert Groups360 with specific location preferences: Having chartered boats and organized dinner cruises for attendees in the past, he sought a city with water access. He also wanted to be within 30 minutes of an airport with a lot of direct flights, secure a $269 or lower price point, and access a meeting space with a specified square footage baseline.

LACKED ACCESSIBLE HOTEL & MARKET DATA

Michael found it difficult to access reliable hotel market data as a planner alone, and the data that was available took time to acquire.

> " **Using GroupSync, I secured bids from hotels within a day at rates I couldn't have negotiated without the software's data.**

How GroupSync Solved the Problem

GroupSync is a unique searching, sourcing, and booking solution for groups with hotel market data for the top 70-100 U.S. cities. When accessing more than 200,000 worldwide properties, Michael got specific about his needs, budget, and amenities. GroupSync matched him with destinations and hotels meeting his criteria. He explored pricing fluctuations and occupancy, with GroupSync's streamlined system classifying and codifying his options

He then figured out a negotiation plan and value for his symposium in his desired market over a set of dates. That meant he found a city near the country's center that also had access to water.

"I entered my criteria into the solution—airport access, the price range I wanted, a meeting space that's the right size for us, water access, a central location—and got a range of vetted choices fitting my needs," he said.

Before GroupSync, Michael's strongest frame of reference for the value of a deal is how well a hotel's rates stacked up against a random selection of others. But with market data at his fingertips and a solution designed to highlight his best options, Michael gained the advantage of negotiating based on bids from other vetted hotels.

The GroupSync difference

RELEVANT RESULTS

GroupSync Marketplace dramatically cuts hands-on sourcing time for planners by filtering out irrelevant results.

STREAMLINED RFP's

Search results are ranked by their relevance to an event's criteria, so planners don't waste time on hotels that can't accommodate their business.

FASTER RESPONSES

RFP sourcing shouldn't require months of wait time. GroupSync delivers proposals to the most qualitied properties, resulting in quicker hotel responses.

EASE OF USE

Comprehensive property summaries delivered in a clean visual layout. Designed with the busy organizer in mind, our snapshots highlight key takeaways without hours of reading time.

Results

SOURCING TIME-SAVER

On average, GroupSync saves more than 60 days of time spent sourcing solutions. That's a huge price tag for Michael's level as well as for someone hired hourly.

GroupSync's intuitive interface and digital format is easy to review and compare, also cutting down the time it would take to review comprehensive search results without the software's simplicity.

"The way the platform is laid out visually makes complete sense. The information that's included for properties and destinations—from rates to menus to amenities—is all very easy to walk through," Michael said. "Imagine the difference between reading pages of documentation to find a few short answers versus receiving a beautiful spreadsheet that contains a perfect snapshot of what you want and need to know about a property. Why would anyone opt for that misery when it could be so simple with GroupSync?"
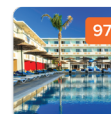
| 98	The Edge Palace		
	Rooms 652	Total Space 110,000 ft²	SELECT
97	Royal Inn		
	Rooms 220	Total Space 75,050 ft²	SELECT
95	Downtown Suites		
	Rooms 300	Total Space 92,100 ft²	SELECT
91	Highland Resort		
	Rooms 198	Total Space 63,100 ft²	SELECT
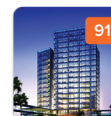
RELEVANT HOTEL RESULTS

Wearing many hats in his organization, Michael's daily to-do list is maxed out. He got specific about what he wanted, and GroupSync delivered a breadth of relevant choices within minutes.

"Using GroupSync, I secured bids from hotels within a day at rates I couldn't have negotiated without the software's data, at beautiful facilities that fit my needs, offering menus I said I wanted, at specific prices I'd never been able to negotiate before. Within 36 hours, I had a list of venues perfectly matching my criteria."

80%
$198

Sa Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su Mo Tu We Th Fr Sa Su

My Dates
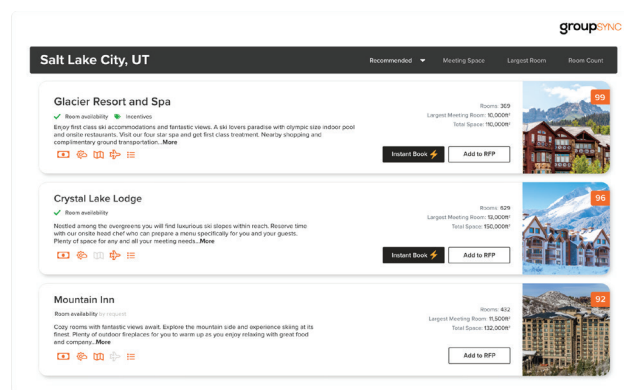
CONFIDENCE IN THE BEST DEAL

While experienced in negotiating, without a meeting planning background, Michael didn't have a reference point for if he was getting a good deal. GroupSync streamlined everything for him by uncovering market data. Hotels returned superior rates and better-priced menus that he couldn't have gotten without GroupSync—the software's partnership with the hotel industry data pipeline Smith Travel Research equipped him with necessary knowledge to take his powerful negotiation skills to the next level.

"There comes the time when you don't know if you're getting the best deal—as hotel meeting rates and concessions are different beasts—and also, is this the best use of my time? GroupSync solves those concerns."

> **For people who plan large meetings, there's nothing they can ever do personally that can ever remotely approach what GroupSync can do.**

-Michael Gagnon, CEO
Academic Orthaepedic Consortium

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Search, source, and book hotels with your free **GroupSync** account. Whether you're booking large or smaller groups, GroupSync makes the process easier.