

Justifying Your Attendance at the 41st ACUTA Annual Conference

Budgets are tight and, increasingly, higher education professionals must prove the value of educational conferences before attending. We've pulled together information that will help you demonstrate how attendance at the 41st ACUTA Annual Conference supports your institution's goals.

Why attend conference and trade show events?

Conference programming allows you to:

- Learn first-hand from industry and higher education experts who have successfully implemented technology solutions, avoiding costly and time-consuming mistakes
- Keep up-to-date on new and emerging technologies
- Create a professional network of peers and colleagues from other institutions
- Create talking points to communicate more effectively with vendors
- Get immediate answers and solutions to issues within your institution
- Participate in user groups specific to the technology in use on your campus

Trade Shows/Exhibitions allow you to:

- See the latest in technology and services
- Hear new product announcements
- Visit with current and prospective vendors in one location
- Discover new products that can decrease expenses and increase revenue
- Get answers directly from vendors on the exhibition floor
- Do some comparison shopping

The 41st ACUTA Annual Conference brings you both educational programming and an exhibit hall filled with nearly 100 companies -- delivering all the benefits noted above in one location!

Why should you attend?

In order to justify the time and expense of attending a conference, it helps to clarify the purpose of your attendance. Make a list of the things you would like to accomplish:

- What are the current issues at your institution for which you are seeking solutions?
- What projects do you anticipate in the future, that you'd like to get a head start on researching?
- Are there any developing technologies you feel would benefit your institution?
- Are there issues you would like to talk to your vendors about?
- Can you find one idea that will increase revenue and/or decrease costs?
- Is your campus looking at implementing a new technology? Is there a session available that will help you with this implementation?
- Would you or your institution benefit from contacts with other schools facing similar challenges?

Presenting to Your Management

You may wish to prepare a formal memo directed to the appropriate manager requesting attendance and why. *The memo will be most successful if it focuses on what you will specifically bring back to the institution in return for the investment.*

We have provided a sample memo and the following talking points that may assist you in making the case to attend. To view the sample memo in Word, click [HERE](#). For a pdf version of the sample memo, click [HERE](#).

Talking Points to focus on:

ACUTA has been hosting this conference for 41 years and it is regarded by its membership as a must-attend event

I am going to look for a solution for "this" problem

I believe "this new technology" could benefit the institution and I would like to learn more about it

The educational sessions at this conference are right on target with our institution's/department's current and future needs (review the conference agenda at

<http://www.acuta.org/wcm/acuta/donna2/indy/sc12educationalsessions.pdf>

Having approximately 100 vendors in one place at one time can reduce the time spent while at the office in researching and meeting with vendors, and I will share product information with you

and my colleagues in the department when I return. (Review the list of exhibitors and sponsors at

<http://www.acuta.org/listings/exhibitors.aspx?eID=SCE12>

I plan on meeting "x" vendors to discuss these issues

I am going to talk with several companies about "x" technology we are looking at.

Offer to share the handouts from educational sessions with co-workers when you return, and be sure to follow through on this commitment. (Handouts will be available online and can be shared with others in your office)

Offer to make a written report on highlights from the conference and your key takeaways at a staff meeting upon your return.

Join us for 4 days and you'll head home with a refined perspective on both current and future developments in information communications technology that will benefit your institution for years to come.

That's what we call ROI.