

Justifying Your Attendance to the 2024 NACUMS Conference

Each year more colleges and universities across the country are reducing or eliminating travel and professional development budgets and much discussion is focused on the value of attending conference programs. Research continues to show that attending educational conferences is the most cost effective method of obtaining industry-specific knowledge, gaining insight into best practices, gathering information on cost reduction and revenue generation and establishing a professional network. NACUMS delivers industry leaders with years of experience that know and understand the mail and shipping industry. You will have the opportunity to learn from the best in the business!

It's not always easy justifying attendance to a conference, especially when budgets are tight. We've put together some ideas and key points to assist you in justifying your attendance at the 2024 NACUMS Conference. We've even put together a sample justification letter you can modify to fit your needs and present to your manager.

Why Attend the In Person 2024 NACUMS Conference

Program Benefits

- The NACUMS Conference is specifically designed to help meet the needs of college and university mail operations
- Learn to successfully implement best practices from proven industry experts
- Discover and share new ideas for generating revenue
- Learn solutions and get answers to issues facing your mail and shipping operation
- Discover emerging and specific technologies relevant to higher education mail centers
- Create and expand your professional network
- Gain professional certification relative to the college and university mailing industry

Trade Show Benefits

- Visit multiple business partners who specialize in products for the college and university mailing industry – all in one location
- Find solutions through quality discussions with business partners
- See and learn – even with hands on experience – about new products and technologies
- Compare products and services especially for your mail center

Purpose of Attendance

Cost justification for attending the NACUMS Conference. List the things you would like to accomplish:

- We are experiencing (issue) to which we need a solution.
- We are looking for idea(s) that will increase revenue and/or decrease costs
- Learn latest developments from the USPS and other delivery entities that may impact your operation
- Learn about emerging technologies that will benefit and effect your operation and potentially will affect your institution
- Expand your personal and professional network which will help you in become an industry leader and THE expert for mailing and shipping information on your campus

Steps for Justifying Your Attendance

Be Prepared—Know the Facts

- Determine the total cost to attend - registration, hotel, airfare, ground transportation and meals
- Study the agenda - know what sessions will be of benefit to you and your operation
- Explain what you expect to gain from the in-person conference experience and more importantly, how it will benefit your institution
- Be able to demonstrate what aspects of your operation will improve from your newly found knowledge, such as improvements in productivity, increased revenues or other quantifiable results
- Align your institution's goals with the conference program

With your facts in hand, communicate those in a formal letter directed to your manager requesting attendance for the stated reasons.

Be persistent! Schedule a follow-up in-person meeting with your boss to discuss your request. After all, you want to be able to pave the way to attend future educational forums! Besides, the total cost of this multi-day event is far less than many one-day conferences on any particular topic. Additionally, the benefits for your attendance may be innumerable – even for years to come!

Presenting to Your Manager—Focus on Issues Relevant to Your Institution

- Highlight what you will bring back to your organization as a return on their investment
- I am going to look for a solution for “this” problem
- I believe information about “this” is beneficial to our institution and I would like to learn more about it
- The educational training and experience is excellent. Presenters are experienced and well versed in their topic of discussion
- I am going to explore revenue enhancing opportunities for our mail center as well as ideas on how to reduce costs in “these” areas
- I will talk with several companies and industry leaders about “this” technological need

Post-Conference—Take Your New Knowledge Back to the Office

- Create and present a report (written and/or PowerPoint) for your manager of ideas you gathered at the conference, perhaps compare products/services showing how these will effectively improve your operation. Also, include contacts you made while at the conference who use other products/services you are considering
- Lead training session(s) for your co-workers or interested university groups concerning products/services/procedures you will be using/upgrading and, if known, how these changes or enhancements will improve their workflow processes and goals
- Create comparisons of products or services you learned about at the trade show and show how they will decrease expenses or improve efficiencies

