

## CASE STUDY

### ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016

#### Background and challenge

Centrevents has organised the annual conference for the College of Occupational Therapists Specialist Section Independent Practice since 2013 with an original brief to take on the management from the organising committee as well as increasing the number of delegates attending, widening the delegate base professional background and increasing size of the exhibition and number of sponsors. In 2016 we were tasked with organising the Medico-legal Conference, Look Before You Leap and Business Clinic events on day one as well as a drinks reception and dinner before bringing everyone together for the Expanding Horizons conference on day two, as well as an exhibition over the two days.

#### Our Approach

As part of policy of locating the conference in different areas of the UK each year, in 2016 Centrevents sourced a recently refurbished hotel in the QHotel chain in Nottingham to provide a quality venue and space to accommodate the conference, provide networking space. Centrevents uses its judgement to decide on venues for each client to suggest venues appropriate for the conference and budget and this venue was extremely well-received. Centrevents worked with COTSS-IP groups to compile the four event programmes and then took over all organisation including venue sourcing and liaison, delegate marketing and administration, finance, speaker liaison, accommodation booking, exhibition and sponsor sales. We commissioned effective design and production of marketing and event materials as well as an impressive stage, set backdrop and AV.

Marketing to membership and external attendees was conducted through print, digital – web and email campaigns, advertising and social media. We maintained communication with confirmed and prospective delegates with programme and exhibitor updates and reminders on discount period deadlines through email broadcast and social media.



#### Results

Growth of attendees to around 160 per day and 30 exhibitors and corporate sponsors over the two days. A strong repeat attendance from delegates from previous years and comment that conference has become an important part of their CPD and annual networking. Exhibitors returned very positive evaluations and commented that the conference provided excellent ROI.

*"Centrevents have provided conference management for many years for the COT Special Section Independent Practice (COTSSIP). However this was my first opportunity to work closely with the team as Conference Chair. My life was made easy as they had everything arranged beautifully and it all went as planned. The team executed their plans with ease and were very pleasant and accommodating of my inexperience. Centrevents set a very high bar for event management and I have no hesitation in recommending to others "*

**Lin Henry, Chair, COTSS-IP**