

Part 2- MAX review by Liz Frederick

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Entry at 7:15pm, September 29th

Noon on Saturday I find out my flight is delayed 1 hour, then 2 hours, then 3 hours. Ugh.... Enough said. I started thinking that some CFUnited attendees must have the same experiences traveling to DC. Well, I feel for you. I've been traveling since I was 6 years old but now that I'm a conference go-er all on my lonesome I find traveling to be boring and a pain in the rear. Just something I have to get through to get to the end of the rainbow. Arriving in Chicago, I picked up my luggage and pack myself into a shuttle on my way to the Hotel I'm staying at and not but 1 minute into the ride do I bump into 2 people on the same ride going to MAX as well. Tells me I'm going to be bumping into a lot of designers and developers this week. I love it! See, I adore developers but did you know I'm a designer by nature? Yup, I attended University of Maryland for my degree in Art Studio Graphic Design. I'm obsessed with design and I'm so excited for this year's MAX conference because I'll not only be learning what CFUnited should cover in 2008, but I get to learn about my own love in life. I recently installed my CS3 and I am ready to find out what I can do with it.

Entry 10:05pm September 29th

I'm finally here. I can't wait to have a beer. Chicago is amazing. Beautiful city. Lots to see and eat. Eat. I'm so hungry. Found cute little Ma and Pop places.

Entry September 30th:

The Welcome reception wasn't a welcome for me because I stood in line to check-in, seemed like forever. While everyone was at the reception, I was in the longest line of my life. I bumped into some Adobe people along the way and got some hot tips on who to talk to. Thanks guys! I saw there were almost 2 dozen people behind the counter in a mad ciao, I had to laugh. It is hard to perfect conference check-in. With only 5 people at CFUnited, we busted through 700 people in 1 hour. I'll be working to still improve that process. Maybe play a movie or some music, cause it really sucked just standing there (I won't say how long cause I stopped counting after a while).

I made it to the reception with 15 minutes left. I grabbed a glass of wine and started reuniting with my speaker buddies and CFUnited fans. It was nice to relax. I found out early on that the place to be after hours was the nearest hotel to the conference center. It was wear all the Adobe Staff and Speakers were staying and it was networking heaven. I really got a chance to hear and be heard. I never realized how people have misperceptions of our speaker picking, sponsor processes, and generally how CFUnited is created.

Speakers are chosen in a selection process including about 10 or so Advisory Members. We allow them to vote, then we create track chairs who help arrange the topics by popular vote to complete track sessions. NOt everyone gets in, but they have the opportunity to submit whitepapers or become a backup speakers. We are working to improve the process. The Call for Speakers is open really early so we can get some topics committed. A lot of people want to register early to spend training budgets from their companies. Also, just to plan early over all. The sponsor process is very simple and there are so many opportunities. We provide the booth structure for silver and gold, tables for bronze. CFUnited is created by myself and Michael and a team I've hired to help me. I can't give away all my secrets and I can tell you I'm not a big fan of third parties.

I always want to hear suggestions on how to improve. Some will tell me "I suggested something last year and you did it! Thanks!".

Read my next blog entry about the rest of my time in Chicago on Monday. :-)