SAP SAPPHIRENOW

6 VALUABLE TIPS
FOR ATTENDING
THE SAPPHIRE NOW
CONFERENCE

Clarkston Consulting has a long history as an SAP partner – in fact Clarkston has attended or sponsored every SAPPHIRE conference ever hosted in North America. As you prepare to attend this year – either for the first time or as a repeat SAP user - we wanted to share the information we have gained over the last few years to provide some valuable tips for attending the SAPPHIRE NOW conference.

1 REGISTER AND BOOK YOUR HOTEL EARLY

If you have ever been to the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando or if you have driven down International Drive, you might be surprised to know how hard it can be to get a hotel near the conference. Despite the large numbers of hotels that surround the convention center, attendees for SAPPHIRE take over the area and you will want to stay right in walking distance from the conference, if possible. The best way to ensure a great hotel is by registering for the conference early.

2 PLAN YOUR AGENDA IN ADVANCE

Time at SAPPHIRE moves very quickly. The best way to make the most of your time is to check out the planned schedule of activities ahead of the event. SAP selects the topic tracks they believe their users would get the most benefit from and then calls for presentations from the most knowledgeable SAP users in the world. There are so many valuable presentations to attend so you must make sure to prioritize them in advance. You can also hear from two of Clarkston's best consultants Victor Sison and Vijay Pal, who will be presenting on the Use of Combined CO-PA to Perform Gross-to-Net Analysis.

3 SCHEDULE MEETINGS IN ADVANCE

One of the best things about attending SAPPHIRE is the ability to personally meet other companies who have faced similar challenges and to speak with people who can share interesting lessons learned - there are probably thousands of people attending the conference who can teach you something new. That's one reason why making sure you schedule meetings in advance can be so important. Without a set time and place, it is extremely difficult to connect with everyone you want to meet. Although SAP doesn't provide attendee lists in advance, you can review the list of speakers, expo participants, and SAP employees. Any of these groups should be able to help you make a connection to the people you want to meet in advance.
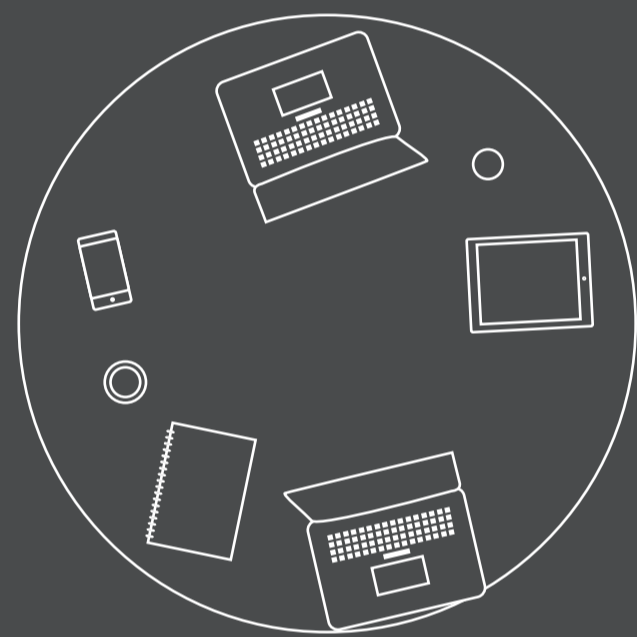
4 WEAR YOUR WALKING SHOES

The Orange County Convention Center is 7 million square feet. It's the second largest convention center in the United States. On a normal day at SAPPHIRE, you can expect to walk around 20,000 steps. That's a lot of walking – so wearing comfortable shoes is one of the most important pieces of advice for someone trying to get the most out of the event.

5 SCHEDULE ENOUGH TIME FOR THE EXPO

In addition to the cool new gadgets and delicious fresh baked snacks, the exhibitors have a lot to offer conference participants. There are easily more than 200 exhibitors at SAPPHIRE – and these sponsors can range from premier consulting partners (like Clarkston!) to specialized software solutions companies like OpenText, Red Hat, and Net App. These exhibitors are prepared to discuss case studies, best practices, and creative solutions to help meet your unique challenges. Although I'm sure they would love to sell you something, you shouldn't be intimidated by that. You can take advantage of their willingness to connect you with other customers and business partners facing challenges like yours.
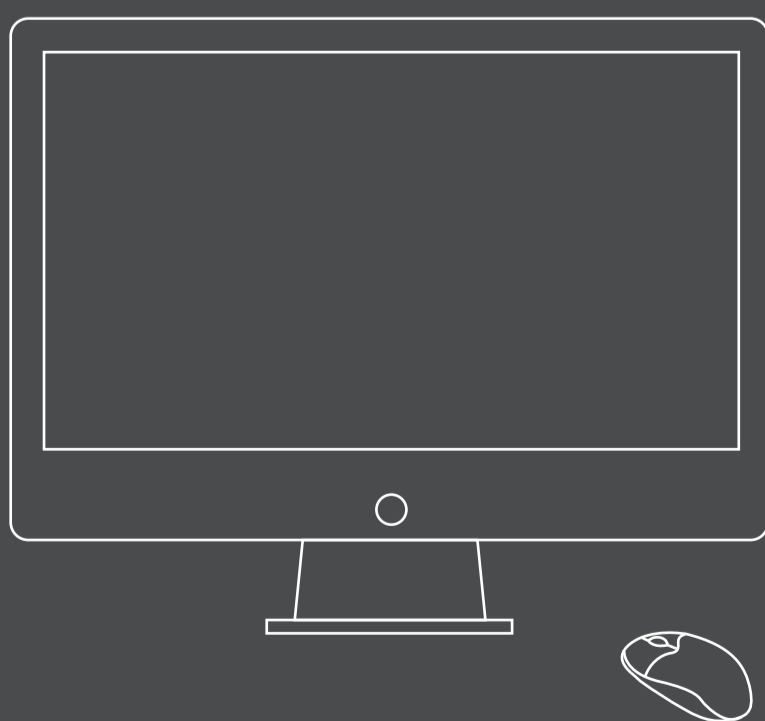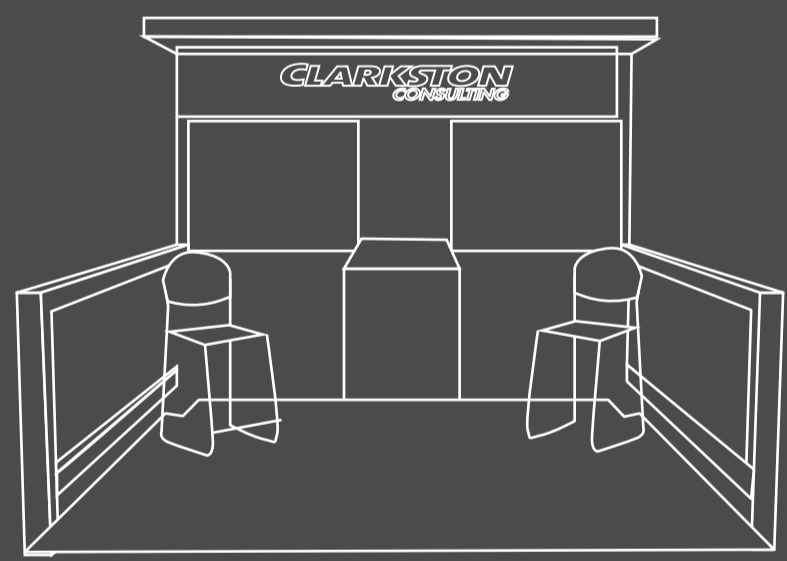
6 SHARE THE HIGHLIGHTS WITH COLLEAGUES WHO DIDN'T ATTEND

You were one of the lucky ones from your company to attend the conference. Why not be a hero to your colleagues and share back the highlights about the event with them? SAP makes it simple to view the keynote general sessions and many exhibitors post recaps to help you bring back the key messages to your teammates. A simple search can bring up a summary of the top announcements of the event, similar to this **recap Clarkston produced in 2018.** Make sure the learnings you gathered are not limited to just the team that attended, plan on spending a few hours the next week preparing a recap for your team and sending follow up emails to the interesting people that you met. Those two hours can be the most valuable time you invest in the conference!

As with any big conference, most people are exhausted on the last day of SAPPHIRE. But, if you follow these 6 valuable tips, you will be guaranteed to get the value you are looking to achieve at a user conference. Just like every other year, you'll find Clarkston Consulting at the 2019 SAPPHIRE NOW + ASUG Annual Conference. If you enjoyed these tips and would like to stay informed about all things SAP, please subscribe to our monthly SAP newsletter.

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