

# Spring Break

## BTA Southeast hosts event March 17-18 in Orlando

by: Elizabeth Marvel, Office Technology Magazine

The 2023 Spring Break event, hosted by BTA Southeast, was held March 17-18 at Disney's Beach Club Resort in Orlando, Florida. The event featured a keynote address, four additional educational sessions, vendor showcase breakout sessions, plenty of networking time and a visit to a Walt Disney World theme park.

The keynote, "Unity Leads to Change: The Amazing Power of a Common Purpose," was presented by former U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy. The additional educational sessions: "Developing the Post-Pandemic Salesperson," by Derek Shebby, Modern Sales Training; "Building a Quality Organization" by independent consultant Mike Riordan; "11 Core Competencies in Sales to Dominate Your Marketplace in 2023," by Melissa Whitaker, Melissa Whitaker International; and "Why BTA?" by BTA General Counsel Bob Goldberg. The vendor showcase breakout sessions featured speakers from Brother, Modern Sales Training and Sharp Imaging and Information Company of America.

The exhibiting sponsors were: ACIDI, AgentDealer, Brother (lunch and vendor showcase sponsor), Clover, ConnectWise, Cranel, Crexendo, ECI, Epson, Equipment Brokers Unlimited, First Citizens Bank, FP (breaks sponsor), GreatAmerica, Hytec, IBPI, Intermedia, Keypoint Intelligence, Kodak Alaris (breakfast sponsor), Konica Minolta, LEAF, Midwest Copier Exchange, Miramar Copies, Modern Sales Training (vendor showcase sponsor), NA Trading and Technology, Ninestar, Printerpoint, SalesChain, Sharp (keynote and vendor showcase sponsor), Toshiba, Wells Fargo, White Cup, Xerox (reception sponsor), Y Soft and Zultys.

BTA's next event, Capture the Magic, will take place June 9-10 at the Gaylord Rockies Resort & Convention Center in Denver, Colorado. For more information, see the ad on pages two and three, the President's Message on page eight or visit [www.bta.org/BTADenver](http://www.bta.org/BTADenver). ■

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Clockwise from top: Former U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy presents the keynote address; Spring Break featured a keynote address, four additional educational sessions, vendor showcase breakout sessions, networking time, a welcoming reception and a Disney theme park ticket; Riordan; Goldberg; Whitaker; and Shebby.



*Clockwise from top: Shebby presents a vendor showcase breakout session; Kelly Hyde of White Cup Solutions visits with Brian (center) and Eric Charlton of BXI Consultants Inc., Tonawanda, New York, during a break between sessions; Mike Sullivan (left) of Mossmans Business Machines, Pomona, New Jersey, visits with Bryan Smith (center) and Joe Caruso of Brother during a break; Cranel's David Roquemore (left) and Tom Wright (center) visit with Gary Hyman of Hyman's Ink Center Ltd., Port St. Lucie, Florida, during a break.*



*Clockwise from above left: 2022-23 BTA Southeast President Jim Buck, Vice President Blake Renegar and President-Elect Mike Hicks serve as the Spring Break emcees.*



*Left: Attendees enjoy a welcoming reception at the Yacht Club Marina on the evening of the first day of Spring Break.*

## Unity Leads to Change

Spring Break's keynote address, "Unity Leads to Change: The Amazing Power of a Common Purpose," was presented by former U.S. Rep. Trey Gowdy. He received a standing ovation for his comments encouraging Americans to overcome their differences and unify in order to change their country and their lives.

He began the keynote with some well-received jokes about his family and members of Congress, and then moved into his thoughts on the state of the country and his goal for the speech. "We are divided," he said. "We are disunified. We are in a state of conflict ... And we figured out how to monetize fear and anger ... We are a 50/50 country. And you would expect there to be different viewpoints in a society as pluralistic as ours, and that's good. But when that contrast morphs into what I think we have now, which is conflict — sometimes manufactured conflict — it's debilitating ... So, what do we do? I'm going to try to persuade you of the value of ... an unlikely relationship."

Gowdy told the story of his friendship with Tim Scott, a senator from South Carolina who served in the U.S. House of Representatives with Gowdy at the beginning of their political careers. While the pair have many things in common — and are both Republicans — there are also significant differences in their childhoods, careers and lives in general. This led to him speaking about the importance of seeing the world through others' eyes.

"The differences always exist whether we see them or not," he said. "As a litigator, the last thing in the world I needed was to talk to a bunch of cops who saw my cases the same way I did. How does that help me? It doesn't even make me a better advocate for my side ... If you want to be a better advocate, even for what you believe, why would you not expose yourself to what other people believe, think and how they see the world?"

He encouraged attendees to thoroughly vet their beliefs as well. "I want you to just think about what you believe and why you believe it," he said. "Do you know why you believe what you believe? Have you vetted it? Have you put it through the cauldron of cross-examination? Have you analyzed it?"

He also asked the audience to consider how they communicate. "We're trying to move people we don't know," he said. "We don't know where they are in life. We don't know what their position is on this or that. So are we persuasive? Do we communicate in a persuasive way? ... So, [regarding] the manner in which we communicate, what works is ... sincerity, authenticity, having a relationship, expressing interest. What doesn't work? Hypocrisy doesn't work. Telling people to live their lives one way while you live your life another way doesn't work. Insults don't work ... They're not persuasive."

Gowdy's final point focused on how to "morph this conflict into contrast, to [create] something we can live with, something that doesn't feel so debilitating and so unsustainable. We need someone to deliver that message." He encouraged attendees not to depend on politicians, but on themselves, referencing the anonymous soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. "I can't name five people there, but I would ask you: Who founded and fought for and preserved and sought to improve this republic?" he asked. "They are the names you don't know ... Anonymous everyday Americans who find something a little bigger than themselves ... If you are waiting on politicians to do it, you will have a long, unfruitful wait. Politics reflects. It reacts. It doesn't lead. If you want leadership, it has to come from average, everyday Americans — and that means you." ■

— Elizabeth Marvel