



## *Catch Des Moines Customer Advisory Board October 22 – 23, 2019*



NEW BRAND CAMPAIGN 2019-2020



Meeting moderated and report authored by:  
David Kliman, CMM  
The Kliman Group  
415.339.0237  
[david@klimangroup.com](mailto:david@klimangroup.com)

**THE KLIMAN GROUP**  
COMMUNICATION CONSULTING SERVICES

## *Customer Advisory Board Attendees*

Morgan Basham  
Mary Byrne  
Tonya Cameron  
Dan Cataldi  
Teresa Cox  
Teresa Paramenter  
Naomi Romanchok  
Monica Russell

Brenda Shaver  
Valerie Smith  
Lauren Swanson  
David Tharp  
Scott Wunn  
Meghan Wulster-Radcliffe

ConferenceDirect  
UnityPoint Health  
United Methodist Women  
Iowa Soccer Association  
Corteva Agriscience  
Iowa AAU  
Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs  
American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials  
American Public Works Association  
United Church of Christ  
National Pork Producers Council  
International Association for Food Protection  
National Speech & Debate Association  
American Society of Animal Science/American Dairy Science Association

## *Des Moines Leadership, Speakers and Hosts*

Greg Edwards  
Angela Connolly

Trina Flack  
Ben Handfelt  
Carrie Jackson

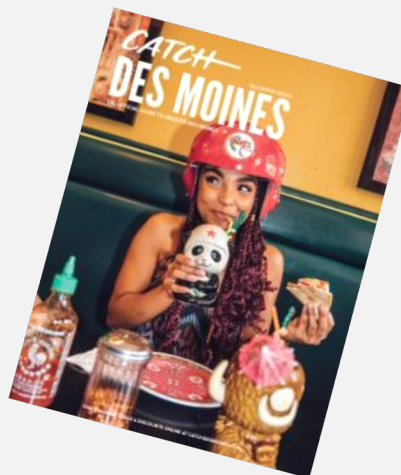
Christina Cook  
Patrick Miller  
Tamara Chubb

President & CEO, Catch Des Moines  
Chair of Board of Directors, Catch Des Moines; Polk County Board of Supervisors  
Vice President of Sales, Catch Des Moines  
Director of Creative & Communications, Catch Des Moines  
Assistant General Manager and Director of Sales, Iowa Event Center  
Destination Sales Executive, Des Moines Marriott  
General Manager, Des Moines Marriott  
Director of Sales, Hilton Des Moines Downtown

## *Social Media*

@catchdesmoines  
#CATCHdsm

**CATCH**  
**DES MOINES**



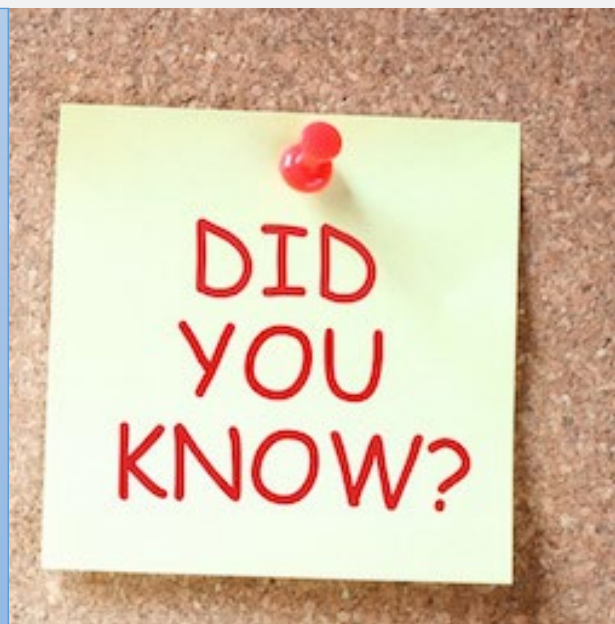
**Greg Edwards** welcomed the group and thanked them for their time and commitment to Des Moines. The following summarizes his comments:

- Catch Des Moines' mission is to market the region as a visitor destination increasing economic impact and enhancing the visitor experience.
- The DMO is a Sales and Marketing organization
  - Marketing department has grown to 7 people focused on spreading awareness of the destination
  - Sales team has 7 people and focused on all sales activities



## Interesting Des Moines Facts

- Des Moines is Iowa's capital city.
- Iowa leads the nation in the production of ethanol, the main component of E85 fuel.
- Iowa is second in wind energy production among the 50 states.
- Des Moines is the world's 3<sup>rd</sup> largest insurance center, home to 85+ insurance companies.
- Major employers include: Wells Fargo, Principal, Nationwide, Corteva, John Deere, Wellmark and Firestone.



## *Additional Facts*

### **Iowa Event Center**

220,000+ square feet of meeting/exhibit space

- 29,000 square foot ballroom
- 35 breakouts
- 150,000 square foot exhibit hall

### **Wells Fargo Arena**

- 17,100 seats

The venues are tax-exempt

### **Headquarter Hotel**

- The new Hilton is open, attached to the Center and offers 330 rooms and 14,000 square feet of meeting space





### Iowa State Fairgrounds

- 445 acres, including 160 acres of shaded campgrounds
- Located just minutes from downtown Des Moines
- 14 different venues to choose from ranging from 1,824 to 110,400 square feet
- Facility is tax exempt; this offers a 7% savings
- 1+ million people attended the Iowa State Fair over 11 days in August

### Hotel Inventory

- Nearly 2,500 hotel rooms downtown, many within walking distance of the Iowa Events Center and most connected via skywalk
- More than 13,500 hotel rooms citywide including 22 full services hotels and 107 select service hotels
- Product includes Marriott, Hilton, Renaissance, Hyatt, Embassy Suites, Sheraton, Holiday Inn and Element
- Des Moines Marriott is largest hotel with 417 rooms

### Transportation

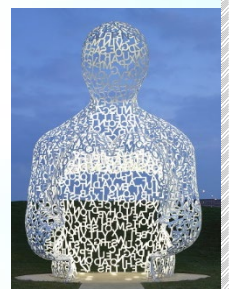
- Des Moines is at the intersection of two highly traveled interstates in country: I-80 (east/west, coast-to-coast) and I-35 (north/south, Canadian to Mexican border).
- One-fourth of U.S. population can drive to Des Moines in one day (700 miles).
- Des Moines International Airport (DSM) offers 90 daily flights, 9,500 seats & nonstop flights to 22 cities
- Major airlines including Allegiant Air, American Airlines, Delta, Frontier Airlines, Southwest Airlines and United Airlines.

### Catch The Ease

- Transportation around Des Moines is easy, accessible and eco-friendly using free shuttles, "BCycle", skywalks, Uber, Lyft, Yellow Cab and DART
- Walkable downtown hotels, 100+ restaurants and 20+ attractions within blocks of the Iowa Events Center
- Four miles of skywalks offers climate-controlled downtown access  
[https://www.iowaeventscenter.com/assets/doc/Downtown\\_Des\\_Moines\\_Navigation\\_Map\\_-499e92f76d.pdf](https://www.iowaeventscenter.com/assets/doc/Downtown_Des_Moines_Navigation_Map_-499e92f76d.pdf)
- Complimentary airport shuttle to/from downtown Des Moines and full-service hotels and free D-Line shuttle.
- Metropolitan Area is drivable within 25 minutes from east to west or north to south

### Arts & Culture

- The \$42 million John & Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park, located in the middle of downtown, was listed as one of *Midwest Living's* 45 Best New Midwest Spots to Play, Eat & Stay  
<https://www.desmoinesartcenter.org/visit/pappajohn-sculpture-park>
- Des Moines Art Festival was the 2016 recipient of the Grand Pinnacle Award reflecting the best overall festival and event in the world <https://www.desmoinesartsfestival.org/>
- Art Route is a new art path connecting 87 works of public art downtown. Green circles and pink chevrons, along with 14 painted crosswalks connect 6.5 miles downtown <http://www.artroutedsm.com/>
- Home to the 80/35 Music Festival and Hinterland  
<https://www.facebook.com/8035musicfestival/>
- Performing arts including Hoyt Sherman Place, Des Moines Civic Center, Stoner Theater, Community Playhouse, Temple Theater and more



## Culinary Excellence

- 1,000+ locally owned restaurants
- 11 James Beard Award Winners
- 20 local breweries and wineries
- Des Moines ranked #5 Best Midwest Food Town by Midwest Living <http://www.midwestliving.com/travel/around-the-region/best-midwest-food-towns/>

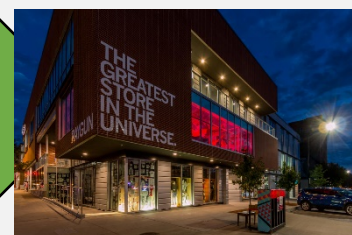
## Farmer's Market

- <https://www.dsmpartnership.com/desmoinesfarmersmarket/>
- Downtown Des Moines Farmers' Market ranked #2 Best in America according to multiple media outlets.
- The Market supports nearly 300 vendors and an average of 25,000 visitors every Saturday from May to October



## Shopping

- Des Moines ranked 4<sup>th</sup> best city in America by Forbes Magazine for the "Best Bang-for-the-Buck" <https://www.forbes.com/2009/11/30/cities-affordable-cheap-lifestyle-real-estate-housing-foreclosures.html#6054d2323c67>
- Experience department stores, name brands and boutiques at Jordan Creek Town Center <https://www.jordancreektowncenter.com>
- Explore one-of-a-kind treasures in the East Village and Historic Valley Junction shopping districts



## Downtown YMCA Aquatic Center

<https://www.dmymca.org/locations/wellmark-ymca>

- 50-meter indoor Olympic-size pool
- Above-deck spectator seating for 1,200
- Centrally located, attached to the skywalk system, within walking distance to many hotels, restaurants and amenities
- The facility also features a gym, indoor track, racquetball and handball courts, indoor cycling studio and wellness center



## Lauridsen Skatepark <https://dsmskatepark.com/>

- 88,000 square feet of "skateable" terrain is the country's largest skatepark
- Lower plaza with pedestrian walkway and shaded bench seating.



## WATER TRAILS



**The next BIG thing!**  
Making the waterways safer and creating water recreation in three locations.

DES MOINES

**CATCH  
DES MOINES**

## Event Successes

- American Cheese Society
- Disciples of Christ International Convention
- Junior High National Finals Rodeo
- Wizard World Comic Con
- Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival
- P.E.O. Sisterhood International Convention
- National Governor's Association
- World Pork Expo
- BMW Motorcycle Owners Association
- American Chamber of Commerce Executives
- American Motor Vehicle Administrators
- AAU Junior Olympics
- Ladies PGA Solheim Cup
- NCAA D1 Men's Basketball Tournament 1st and 2nd Rounds

## Future Events

- National Speech and Debate Association
- State Games of America
- USA/Canada Lions Forum
- IRONMAN 70.3 North American Championships
- American Meat Science Association
- US Academic Decathlon
- National Association of County Agricultural Agents
- National Rural Electric Cooperatives

## Economic Impact

- Catch Des Moines generated \$112.2 million in economic impact by bringing meetings, conventions, sporting events and leisure travelers to the community last year.



## Washington Post article about Des Moines

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/lifestyle/vacation-ideas/things-to-do-in-des-moines/>

**CATCH  
DES MOINES**





# Destination Master Plan

(This plan is a draft currently under review)

## Destination Master Plan Process



**GOAL:** Develop a Destination Master Plan capable of guiding Catch Des Moines' future tourism growth efforts through 2025.



**Driving Stakeholder Consensus**

15 municipalities  
40 focus groups/interviews  
98 individuals  
374 stakeholder survey responses  
19 person steering committee



**Assessing Tourism Assets**

Hotel Business Mix  
14 destinations compared  
Event matrix  
293 regional attractions & venues  
7 development zones



**Determining Destination Development**



**Developing Strategic Recommendations**

6 strategic priorities  
18 strategic concepts  
CDM future actions  
Municipality future actions  
Partner future actions

Optimization of Iowa Events Center

Review of CDM Partnership model



## Strategic Priorities

1. Coordinate events across the year
2. Connect destination assets
3. Set a shared future destination vision
4. Advocate for quality of place investments
5. Leverage authenticity
6. Strengthen and transform Catch Des Moines

## DESTINATION MASTER PLAN

### Connect Destination Assets



**CATCH**  
**DES MOINES**

**Competitive Destinations:**

- Grand Rapids
- Kansas City
- Louisville
- Oklahoma City
- Omaha
- St. Louis

**Comparative Destinations:**

- Lexington
- Madison
- Spokane
- Tulsa

**Aspirational Destinations:**

- Denver
- Indianapolis
- Milwaukee
- Minneapolis

**CAB Feedback:**

- Hotel rate affordability in Des Moines is a highly effective competitive advantage
- List of competitive set aligns correctly with academic and student group markets which were cited as critical to Des Moines
- Hard sellers' market is driving more attendees to use shared economy accommodations (AirBnB etc.) and creates reduced demand for and use of traditional hotel rooms
- Critical to maintain and increase airlift in order to maintain and increase attractiveness as a meetings destination
- Food and Beverage costs in hotels are generally increasing, resulting in some groups hosting functions in non-hotel outlets. Des Moines F&B costs cited as "more economical" than most other cities
  - Some food industry groups bring in donated products which impacts F&B negotiations and "corkage" agreements at hotels
  - Food safety laws are often cited by hotels restricting this practice; hotels need to be more flexible

When asked which cities offer great Convention Center Districts, the following were cited:

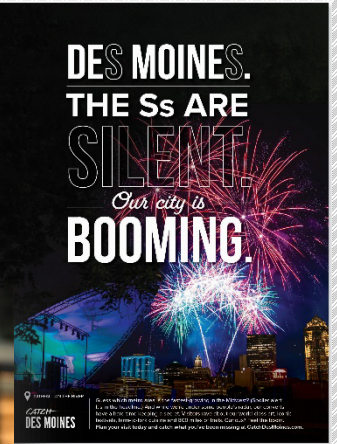
- San Diego's Gaslight District cited an "outstanding asset" and acts as an "anchor" for meetings
- Falls City Market at Omni Hotel Louisville was cited as "great"  
<https://www.omnihotels.com/hotels/louisville/dining/falls-city-market>
- Anaheim, but it's located 10 – 15 minutes from convention plaza
- Marriott Chicago offers a "downtown marketplace" which is an example of services which should be offered in hotels in a new district
- Marriott Houston and Philadelphia food halls cited
- Indianapolis Convention Center has great proximity to food
- Top Golf or similar style venues combined with a food hall would be highly desirable
- Des Moines Social Club cited as having potential for similar type development
- Important to offer multiple options in food outlets



### Marketing - Ben Handfelt, Director of Creative & Communications Catch Des Moines

Ben outlined the new Catch Des Moines marketing campaign.  
The following summarizes his comments and the CAB feedback:

- Branding Greater Des Moines
- Infuse creativity into messages
- Content is customizable by market or group
- Des Moines. *The S's are silent. The city is anything but*



#### CAB Marketing Campaign General Feedback:

- “Fun, kicky, lively” and “inspires me to find out more”
- The paragraph of information offers “just the right amount of information” to allow planners to qualify or disqualify the destination by showing capacity overview
- Diversity is shown and feels authentic

#### Video Feedback

- The S's Are Silent 30 second commercial
- The S's Are Silent - Things to Do
- The S's Are Silent - Food and Drink
- Des Best - Raygun [www.raygunsite.com](http://www.raygunsite.com)



#### Print Ad Feedback

- Locator tag in the new DMO print ads cited as “very effective”
- Most planners don't look at print ads or read industry magazines
- A few skim magazines and then go to websites when more information is needed
- When asked about potential impacts of ceasing print ads:
  - Print presence has no impact on most planners; print ads were cited by most as “not relevant”
- Consumer travel magazines (Travel & Leisure etc.) are read by some planners because they're also read by attendees; content can have an impact on key stakeholders
- Airline magazines articles such as United's “Three Days In...” and American's “One City, Two Ways” are read by some during flights (captive audience)

#### Digital Feedback

- Some planners redirect all promotional emails into junk folder and delete them without review
- “Top Ten” meeting industry lists are read by some
- Facebook sponsored ads only are effective with active Facebook users; they're “predisposed to being in a clicking mood”
  - Facebook is used primarily by Boomer generation
- “Catchy, funny” email subject lines can get readers' attention
- Important that DMO emails are sent from a “known, trusted” contact, not from a generic DMO email address
- Don't make customers click again after email opens



*CATCH*  
**DES MOINES**

### Attendance Building Tools

- All channels are required: digital, video and print

### Mediums and Messaging

- Mailers
- Some won't even open an envelope unless "it's really easy"
- Most will open a box or an interesting envelope
- Des Moines is "famous for unique, memorable and clever mailings"
  - One person thought the cost to mail these clever promotions is too high and wasteful
  - DMO spends \$3,000 annually on these mailings
- Digital "pre-roll" was cited as "irritating"
  - Humor is the most successful method to get planners' attention

### Social Media

- LinkedIn is used by some planners to connect to sales contacts
- Facebook is generally used by "wealthy Boomer generation" with kids
- Instagram is used by some "to follow select DMOs" and was cited as used for "inspiration"
- Snapchat is used by a few for onsite messaging at meeting
- Pinterest is used by a few for brainstorming and curating ideas
  - Banner ads have "no impact"
  - Most planners are "immune to ads", because they're "overloaded" and barraged by ads
  - Some planners pay attention to paid media articles and magazine stories
  - Some read or scroll through industry and DMO newsletters such as BizBash, M&C Hot List

### Equity and Inclusion

- Des Moines not well known for diversify, equality and inclusion, but there are great examples that can be shared, "don't lose the social battle"
- Tell real stories about events and real people
- Don't use token images

### Sustainability

- Some include sustainability issues and rankings in decision making grid
- Most focused on reducing single use plastics

***Bid Book recommendations are found at the end of this report***



### Industry Tradeshows

When asked which shows are important planners and why, the following comments were offered:

- Some send junior ranking planners for professional development
- Some attend MPI WEC for continued continuing education and continuing education credits for CMP renewal
- Limited experiences with Destinations Showcase in Washington D.C. produced by Destinations International
- Many planners' organizations require documentation of "significant education" value in order to attend any show or industry meeting
- C2 Montreal was cited as a highly effective non-traditional "transformational" and innovative show <https://www.c2montreal.com>
- Catch Des Moines is currently active at Connect, PCMA and ASAE

### Housing, Room Blocks & Shared Economy

The CAB was asked to discuss the current and expected future state of group room blocks, housing and shared economy accommodations; the following summarizes their feedback:

- AirBnB impact will continue to grow
- Savvy planners ask DMO to provide AirBnB saturation rates in every city
- Marriott now competes with AirBnB  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/29/travel/marriott-airbnb-homeshare-luxury.html>
- Convention Center rentals are typically based on room blocks; this measurement criteria was cited as becoming outdated
- Embassy Suites Des Moines was cited as an "outlier and not easy to work with" on group blocks
- Successful DMO services used to incent attendees to book in room blocks
  - Dedicated shuttle service
  - Exceptional services
  - Find mutually agreeable solutions when something goes wrong
- Some hotels attempt to go around Third Parties and attempt to get end clients to book directly at lower rate; this was cited as short sighted
- Room with a View service was cited as interesting <http://www.aroomwithaview.net/>





Eat Greater Des Moines <https://www.eatgreaterdesmoines.org/>

**Aubrey Alvarez**, Executive Director at Eat Greater Des Moines spoke about food donations; the following summarizes her comments

- Eat Greater Des Moines is a central Iowa-based non-profit organization that facilitates and builds connections to strengthen the area's food system.
- Its mission is to unite the community by providing quality food access for all
- They build community through food by empowering partners in Des Moines to connect, support one another and move ideas into action through information sharing, building relationships and providing education on urgent food related issues
- Strong focus on food recovery
- Chow Bank app <https://www.chowbank.io/>
- Partnership with Senior Meals on Wheels <https://www.wesleylife.org/rides-and-meals/meals-on-wheels/>
- Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Act <https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Liability%20Protection%20Food%20Donation.pdf>
- One in 5 children in Greater Des Moines are food insecure
- Member of Food Rescue Alliance <https://foodrescuealliance.org/>



### Destination & Convention Services

The following people from Catch Des Moines joined the meeting:

- Bailee Arnburg, Housing Coordinator
- Maggie Davis, Destination Services Coordinator
- Jayne Durnin, Housing & Event Coordinator
- Ben Handfelt, Director of Creative and Communications
- Mary Ann Moore, Sales Coordinator
- Laura Smidt, Sports Event Coordinator

The CAB was asked to discuss best practices and ideal scenarios starting with the hand-off from sales to services up to and including the final point of contact after the meeting. The CAB's recommendations are found at the end of this report.

### Pre-Con for Large Citywide Events

- Three Weeks Out for large citywide with a complete schedule run through, followed by series of one-on-one meetings with department leaders. Tasting takes place at this time, followed by pre-con during move-in
- For some planners, extent and timing depends on their comfort level with the overall process

### Pre-Cons for self-contained meetings

- Local planners want to be involved in supplier pre-cons with the DMO
- "Catch Crew" meeting with planners typically takes place one week before the event
- Advance work by phone or email often replaces pre-con for self-contained meetings

### Post Meeting

- DMO welcome planners to contact them to assist in reconciliation of billing issues
- Many hotels don't offer post-cons; some planners don't feel they're needed for self-contained groups
- Internal management post-cons are typical and are attended by organizational staff only (no destination or supplier attendees)
- Some planners want high resolution photos from DMO to include post event reports
- Planners are "overloaded" by supplier surveys and most don't respond to them
- Planners are "done" when the meeting is over and aren't receptive to providing feedback
- Some planners only sign contracts and aren't responsible for on-site logistics, but they are sometimes still asked to provide survey feedback regarding logistics
- Some planners will do post-con with "anyone they did a pre-con with"
- Surveys are considered unproductive because they don't ask the right questions
  - DMO could develop new satisfaction metrics such as: measure percentage of disputed bills which are signposts to service deficiencies

### Wi-Fi

- Free Convention Center Wi-Fi can strongly influence site selection decision
  - Chicago and Vancouver offer free Wi-Fi
  - Austin offers free Wi-Fi, but for one group, Austin's bandwidth wasn't sufficient to accommodate their needs
- Planners feel "nickel and dimed" by cost of Wi-Fi
- Impact of 5G may replace Wi-Fi in near future
- Some groups now use mobile responsive websites to house meeting information instead of using native apps

### Attrition

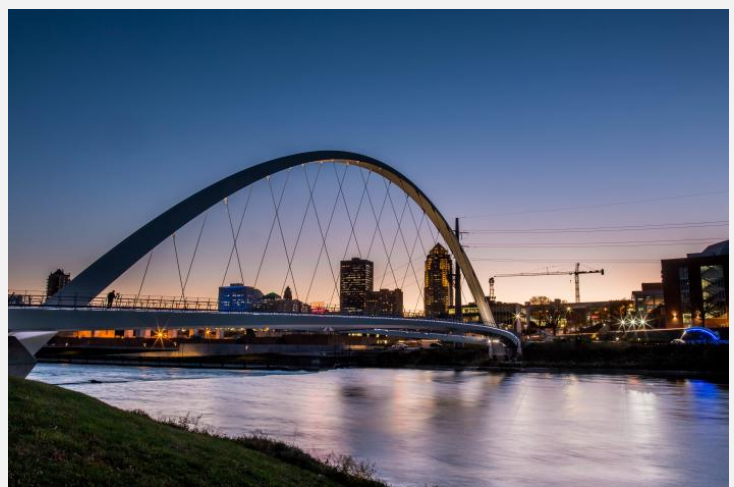
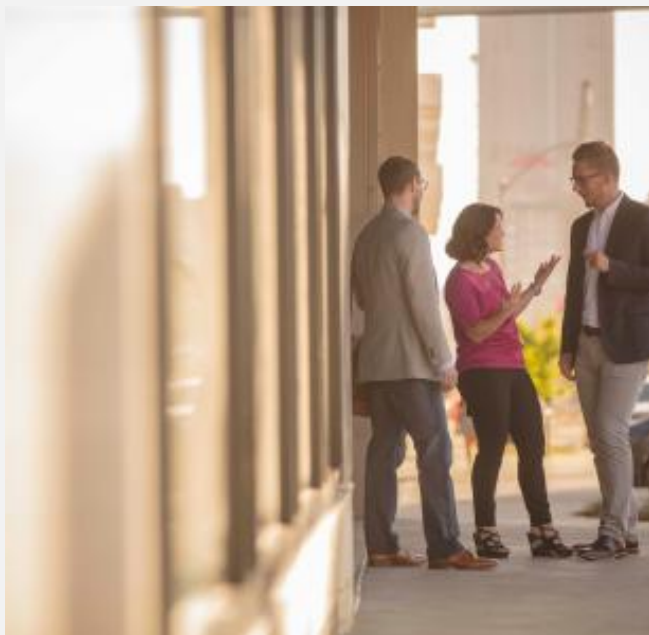
- Some hotels are increasing attrition demands to 85% or more
- Many suppliers holding firm in negotiations, "suppliers wait for planners to get angry and then give in; this wrecks relationships"
- Industry consolidation
  - Marriott's purchase of Starwood has created a dominant industry powerhouse
  - Hotel contracts are very seller centric and "pushes some planners to use more boutique hotels"
  - Hotel consolidation cited as favorable for planners whose site selection is fiercely loyal to Marriott

### Industry Trends

- Convention Centers
  - Planners want ease of interface with Convention Center and not multiple points of contact
- Destinations International Future Study 2019 Key Findings
  - <https://destinationsinternational.org/reports/destinationnext-futures-study>
  - Safety, security, climate change, and political/economic realities are now top considerations for choosing destinations, especially for meetings
  - Weaponization of Travel <https://destinationsinternational.org/reports/weaponization-travel-study>
  - Iowa ruling on Transgender Medicare coverage <https://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/investigations/2019/03/08/iowa-supreme-court-transgender-people-medicaid-ban-surgeries-transition-lgbtq-aclu-civil-rights-ia/3098963002/>
- New reality: planners' awareness of state regulations and travel embargos which could impact attendance
- Harder to differentiate what makes a destination and local experiences unique
  - Tailor site inspections to unique assets

### 2020 Forecast

- Planners expect about the same number of meetings in 2020 as in past years
- 2020 is a "need year" for Des Moines
- CAB advises that short term availability can be advantageous and the DMO should market that
- Booking incentives:
  - Some groups have limited or no date and location flexibility, so incentives don't matter unless dates and city align
  - Referral credits gets planners attention
  - Incentives need to be tangible (money)
  - Incentives are "noise" if planner isn't specifically looking at the moment
  - Comp breaks, comp opening receptions, hosted board receptions get planners' attention
  - Incentives must benefit the group, not the planner



*CATCH*  
**DES MOINES**



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

### General Issues

- Revise confusing location names at the Iowa Event Center to ensure they're logical and attendee friendly
- Share list of sustainability services and partners with planners
- Draft letter to support organized food recover program for CAB members to sign
- References provided to planner for vendors should be specific, including person and contact details
- Create program targeted at airline personnel to train them to pronounce Des Moines correctly
- Consider planning "in market" customer events in partnerships with other DMOs and/or suppliers; consolidated events are favored by planners (time management)
- Share sustainability ideas with planners
- Share economic impact report with planners after their meeting
- Develop outreach to CAB to write letters of support for political issues that aligns with organization

### Convention Center District

- Develop markets, grocery store, drug store and convenience store including "Grab & Go" items
- Attract Farmers Market
- Improve wayfinding signage in Skywalks, currently very limited visual references, install enhanced signage listing all nearby services
  - Electronic touchscreens found in Minneapolis and Cleveland skywalks cited as effective
  - Skywalk app requires enhancement including more effective wayfinding
- Increase residential population, this is key to making the district viable long term with markets and restaurants etc.
  - Des Moines is perceived as a weekday city, even though 20,000 people live downtown, but most live south of the Event Center
- Invite Food trucks
- Pop Up Drug Store would be good solutions to accommodate economic peaks and valleys created by meeting business
- Install vending machine similar to those found at Iowa State Fair with a variety of supplies
- Develop family friendly food outlets and activities
- Develop more venues suitable for community events
- Develop and activate the river banks and open areas along the riverfront
- Create solutions to address parking problems for dually truck and larger vehicles
- Review potential to develop area south of Wells Fargo
- Development of a new hotel is mission critical, must be contiguous or very near the Convention Center
- Good examples to review include:
  - Kansas City Power & Light <https://powerandlightdistrict.com/>
  - Ballpark Village St Louis <https://www.stlballparkvillage.com>

### Planner Guide

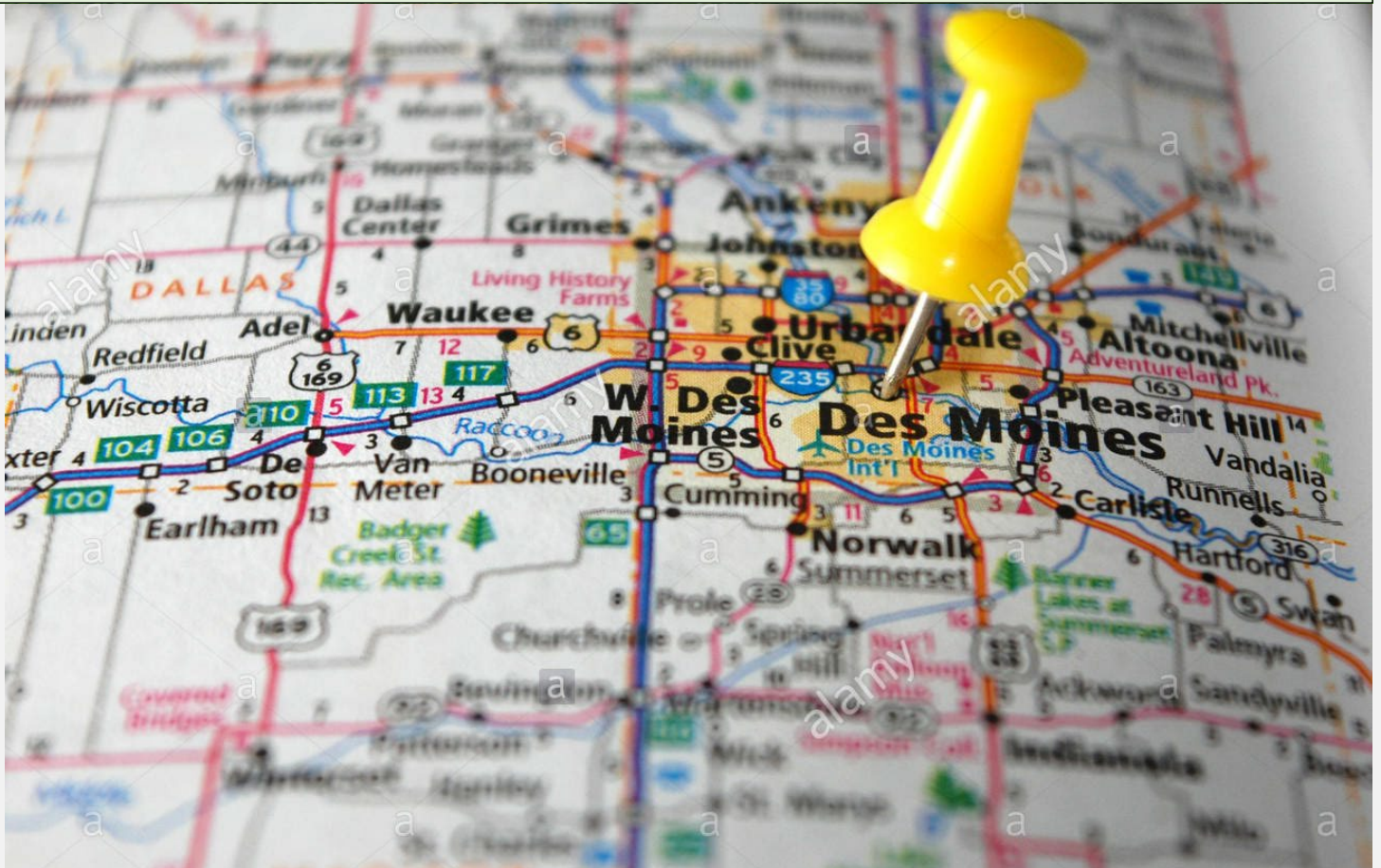
- Develop a "great digital guide" (not paper) and ensure floorplans are easily printable in PDF format
- Offer price guidelines in format similar to restaurant guides

### Bid Book

- Provide exact comparison for Third Parties (“apples-to-apple”)
- Train suppliers must follow the RFP exactly and provide response in the client’s template
  - Many suppliers don’t accurately answer the entire RFP; many suppliers don’t follow clients’ request for information in their RFPs and submit incomplete responses
  - Coach hotel to respond fully, some reply with limited information (room rate only)
  - Coach suppliers to be transparent about all costs; planner “hate surprises”
- Create Bid Books as historical document accessible years later; often Dropbox settings won’t allow access after a certain date
  - Cvent is used by many planners for bids
- Ensure suppliers are aware that their “best effort” responses may not make the “cut” or “make it through the clutter”

### Food Donations

- Invite CAB members to opt in to a letter of support to advocate local hotels and other venues to participate in food donations



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS - Continued

### Destination & Convention Services

- Provide marketing support as soon as sales hand the group over to services
- Provide assets planners' marketing department to promote the meeting
- CSM is the conduit to connect the planner and their groups' marketing department to DMO marketing support
- Provide summary of all free services such as raffle prizes, gift baskets, small items, coupon books etc.
- Offer contacts and connections to all services
  - Clients are willing to go to vendors directly after reference from DMO
- Provide links to registration staff to augment volunteers
- Educate planners, some planners don't know what to ask for
- Provide a broad overview of CSM's schedule so a mutually workable and agreeable schedule can be established
- Offer outreach to local restaurants to match groups' needs or focus (i.e.: Pork Council)
- Provide airport signage and greeters
- Provide information regarding major events, changes and activities taking place in Des Moines
- Develop "Show Your Badge" discount program
  - Columbus, Providence, Hartford, Cleveland, Portland, Grand Rapids, Washington D.C., Louisville and Anaheim offer this service and it's highly desirable
- Create and share one-page local services document outlining discounts and special services
- Share group schedule with local vendors so they can anticipate needs and prepare for specific times when attendees could use their products and services
- Provide personalized itinerary for all site planning trips
- Commit to candid, open and honest communication
- Train all contacts to understand each group's history, organizational values and culture
- Capture and share best practices for convention services
  - Develop an "Idea Portfolio" of all aspects of Convention Services
  - Become the Des Moines events and community knowledge hub
  - Portfolio should be destination and venue focused
  - Become true event consultants
  - Share with planners
  - Customers don't want to "wade through an entire guide", allow planners to pinpoint and access whatever is needed for their specific focus
- Create new floorplans for the Iowa Event Center that more accurately depicts maximum occupancy based on real world room sets (not fire marshal maximum numbers)
- Wheelchair accessible seating should be staggered; not limited to one or two areas
- Focus on importance of "intentional relationships" between planners and CSMs; candid, open, transparent and timely
- Offer connections to, and assistance with, local Press and Media
  - Salt Lake cited for "doing this well by providing a dedicated and well-connected media consultant" to planners
- Monitor potential impact of Geo Tagging and 5G for potential to impact heat mapping and delivery of personalized offers in near future