

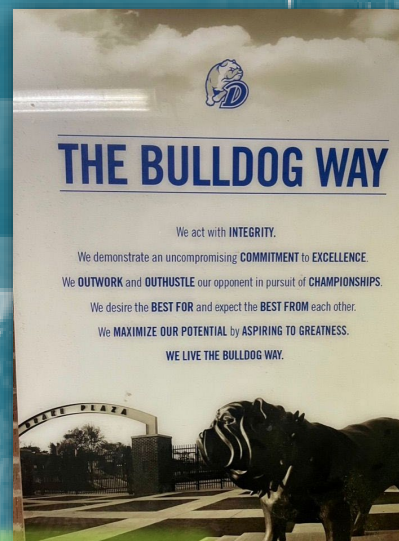
DES MOINES CUSTOMER ADVISORY BOARD

APRIL 24 – 25, 2023



**THE S'S ARE SILENT.
OUR CITY SAYS "WELCOME!"**

**CATCH
DES MOINES**



Meeting moderated and report authored by: David Kliman
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**THE
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GROUP**
COMMUNICATION CONSULTING SERVICES

Advisory Board in Attendance

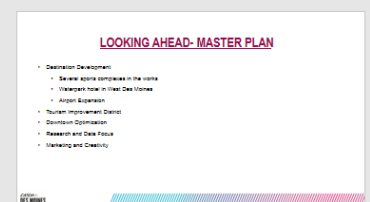
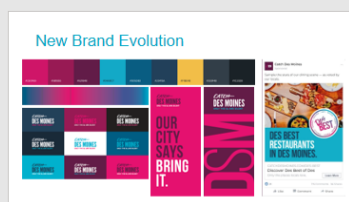
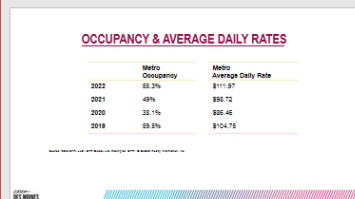
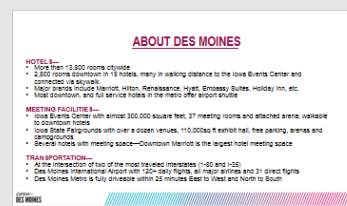
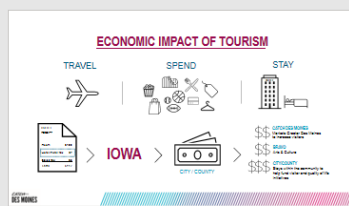
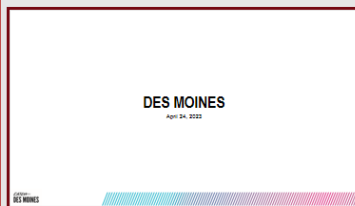
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|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jill Bartholomay ○ Mary Byrne ○ Teresa Cox ○ Kelly Cavett ○ Sara Haines ○ Bel Hanson ○ Jennifer Rush ○ Monica Russell ○ Jill Stone ○ Lauren Swanson ○ Scott Wunn | <p>ITA Group</p> <p>UnityPoint</p> <p>Corteva</p> <p>Maritz Global Events</p> <p>ITA Group</p> <p>International Society of Computational Biology</p> <p>NACADA - National Academic Advising Association</p> <p>American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials</p> <p>Helms Briscoe (Soil & Water Conservation Society)</p> <p>National Pork Producers Council</p> <p>National Speech & Debate Association</p> |
|--|---|

Catch Des Moines

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greg Edwards ○ Trina Flack ○ Carolyn Devine ○ David Kliman | <p>President & CEO - Catch Des Moines</p> <p>Vice President of Sales - Catch Des Moines</p> <p>Sales & Project Manager</p> <p>The Kliman Group</p> |
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April 24, 2023 Des Moines – Destination Updates Greg Edwards and Trina Flack

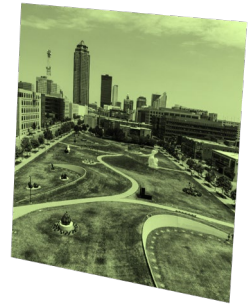


- Additional comments:
 - Realistic group room block committable size is approximately 800 rooms on peak spread among 5 hotels.
 - DMO is working on development of a Tourism Improvement District.
 - TIDs are an assessment on hotel room nights, not a tax.
 - Typically, TIDs assess \$1 to \$2 per night or 1-3%.
 - Funds are collected by hotels and are 100% dedicated towards marketing activities, destination development and providing financial incentives specifically focused on attracting new groups, festivals, meetings etc.

***Tamara Chubb, Hilton Des Moines Downtown,
Christina Cook and Brandon Danner, Marriot Downtown Des Moines and
Jessica Van Sloten, Iowa Events Center also joined this session.***



- A major challenge now is ensuring contracts are mutually binding
- Another challenge is widespread excessive and unpredictable internet fees
 - Planners are willing to pay for internet, but strong desire for more reasonable rates
 - Some planners are pushing back on internet costs by asking for concessions elsewhere
 - David Kliman shared that Encore has hired Amanda Armstrong as Senior Vice President, Community Engagement to help find solutions to planner discomfort with dealing with these issues
 - Omni Hotels are ending their contract with Encore and are creating a new in house supplier [PinnacleLive](#)
 - Some planners asking for prices locks for future year events
 - Bel Hanson made her 2026 meeting decision based on A/V pricing and the venue agreed to lock in 2023 pricing with a 10-15% increase.
 - Increased A/V specific questions asked in RFPs
 - Planners seeks A/V price guarantees during contracting, not after.
 - A/V and internet costs can be defining factor in placing a meeting
 - Costs for the same equipment vary widely from city to city.
 - Access to and price of internet is an equity and inclusion factor
 - Asking attendees to pay for their own internet may create inequities.
- Google meetings team is viewing access to Wi-Fi as an inclusion and belonging issue
 - They believe people have a right to be connected and are trying to make connections more accessible via internet development.
 - [The Neu Project](#)



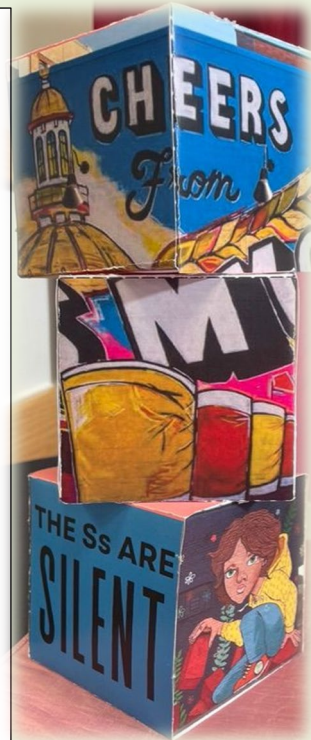
Meeting & Event Marketplace Realities

- “Normal” booking windows now
 - Some groups are booking very far into the future provided significant financial incentives are provided
 - Financial incentive notes: some cities tie incentives into room blocks
 - Salt Lake City has eliminated tracking room nights and has based incentive on overall economic impact.
 - Des Moines has a hybrid approach to this.
 - Some meetings are booking 30-60-90 days out and some are booking 2024 and beyond.
- Sourcing portal include
 - [ICCA](#) (International Convention & Congress Association) – primarily non-USA
 - [Cvent](#)
 - Many are using this platform to send leads, but not actually sourcing new cities that way. Will do a basic spec search if needed.
 - Many report pain points using Cvent
 - It can be challenging for citywide business and convention centers
 - Cvent is also used as a registration platform for some planners
 - Direct to brand (via hotel GSO/NSO)
 - [American Express Events](#)
 - Planner to planner recommendations are highly valued
- Planner expectation is not to pay meeting room rental. Willing to pay more for food and beverage instead.



Meeting & Event Marketplace Realities (continued)

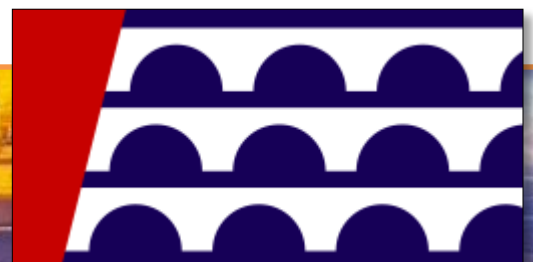
- Other pain points:
 - Still difficult to estimate attendance and room blocks post-COVID. Planners are asking for 10-15% attrition.
 - Hard to contract meeting space hotels; space to room ratios has become major issues in some properties.
 - Planners having a harder time negotiating, forced to offer increased F&B spend to offset rental and room to space ratios
 - Group Housing
 - [Catch Des Moines offers a housing bureau](#) that manages group housing, both in Des Moines and in any other cities
- Take advantage of referrals, groups in house and longstanding employees
 - **Scott Wunn**, NSDA, met with the bartender once on a site visit who provided very real feedback and references
 - Some of the planners will have a conversation with the meeting planner of the group in house during a site visit.
- Service levels are a current concern—expectation vs reality
 - This is a DEI issue
 - Important to address these issues in the moment and not let them go on all week

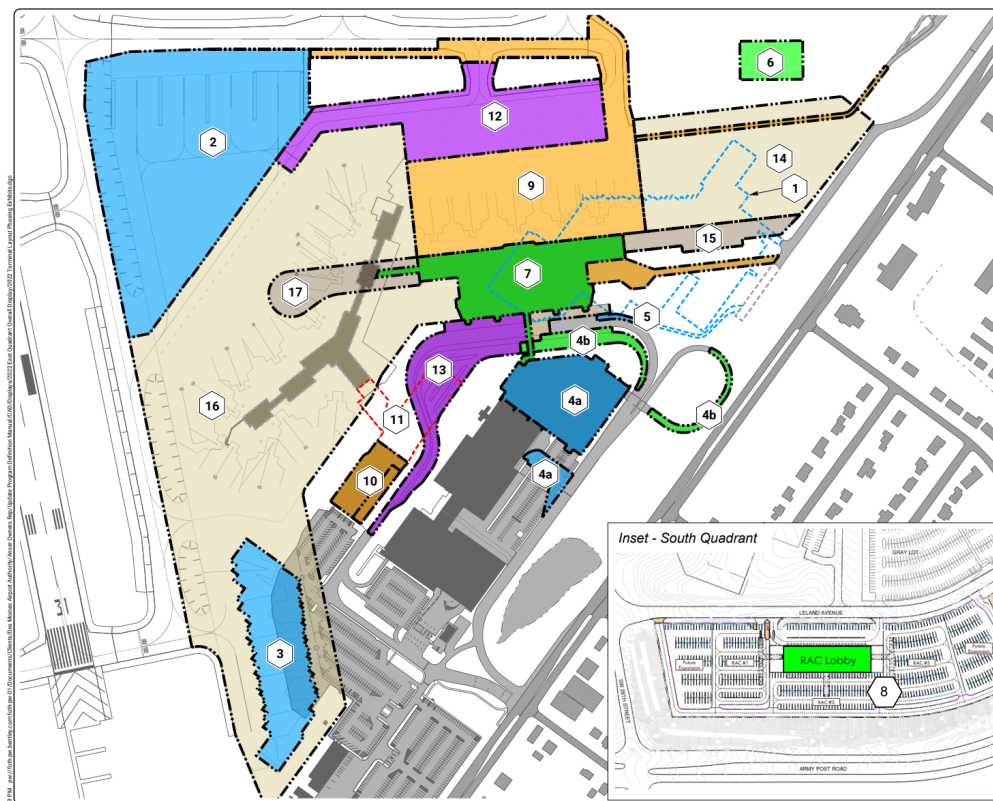


Legislation and Impacts on Meetings & Site Selection

[David Adelman](#) Principle - [Cornerstone Government Affairs](#) - Catch Des Moines' lobbyist

- Iowa legislators and the media are very reactionary
 - Iowa has passed a bill that introduces [new guidelines for child labor](#) which allows 17-year-old servers to bring an alcoholic drink to a table
- Iowa is enacting a new [transgender bathroom bill and ban on gender-affirming care for minors](#)
 - National Speech & Debate Association won't be able to use gender neutral multi-stall bathrooms
 - Due to the scope of this event (10,000 attendees) and the need for gender neutral restrooms, this creates a genuine problem due to inability to offer multi-stall facilities
- The DMO can't change laws; even documenting lost business doesn't influence radical law maker
- Des Moines is seen as a "blue island in a red state" and reactionary legislators may hold resentment over the resources Des Moines already receives, etc.
- Moving meetings due to legislature lets legislators you disagree with "win"
- DMO should take the approach of encouraging and finding ways to support at risk meetings, so they can meet and take policy action while site by meeting with lobbyist, legislators and key citizens.





Des Moines International Airport Expansion Project

- \$440 million expansion will be funded by bonds
- Includes development of new terminal starting at the end of 2023 and opening by the end of 2026
- Construction will include 6 new gates (additional to the current 12 gates in the existing terminal)
- Potential to build an additional 6 gates which could create a total of 22 gates
- Additional new 1,100 place garage

Behind the Scenes look at the [Drake Relays](#) and the [Beautiful Bulldog Competition](#).



April 25, 2023

The Fun Stuff

(event experience, marketing, etc.)

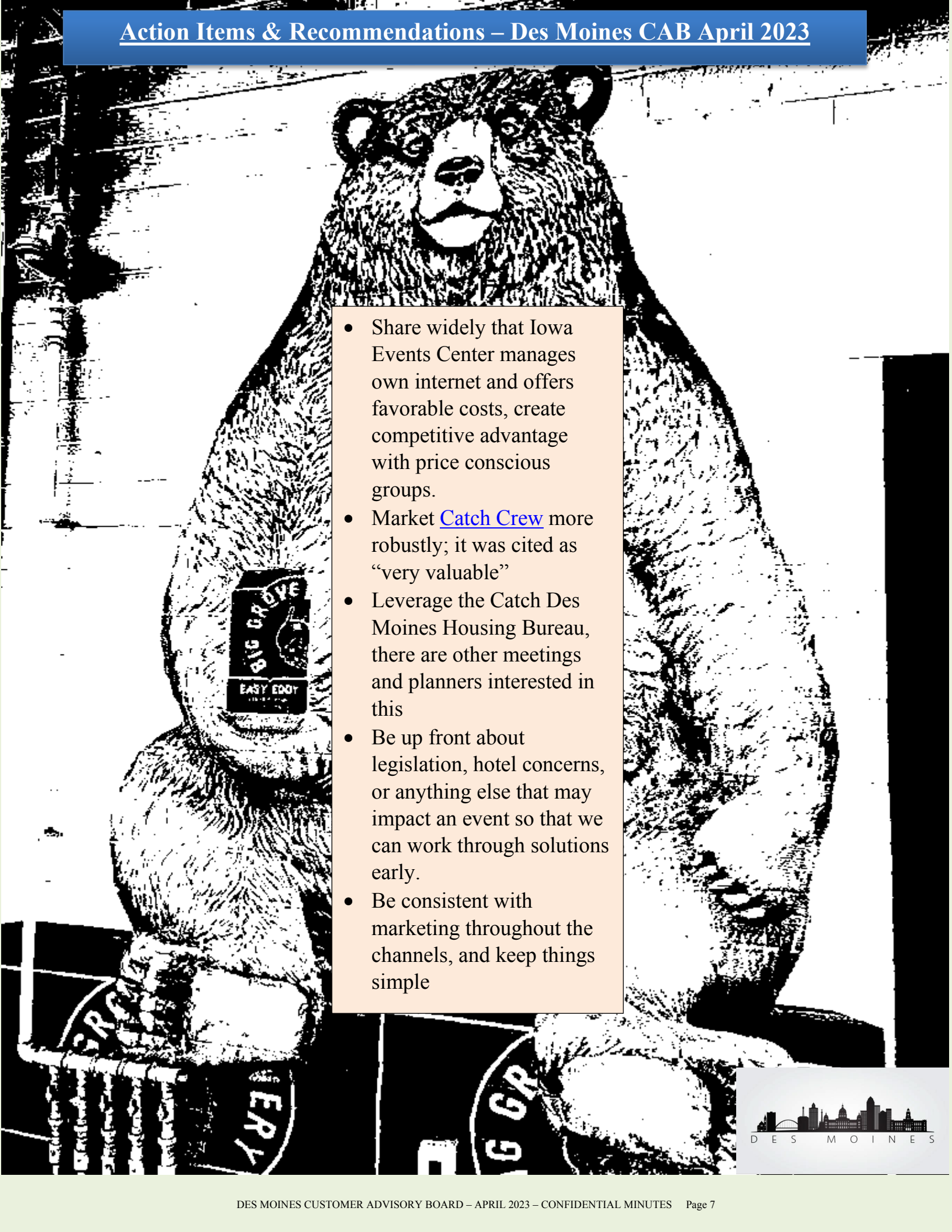
- What planners expect and want from DMOs after booking:
 - Microsites need to offer
 - “Getting here and getting around” information
 - Calendar of events for specific dates including things to do.
 - New York City and Montréal cited for good job in providing transportation details.
 - Group microsite is not necessarily needed
 - Could highlight sections of website that already have this information specifically for these attendees.
 - When groups are in town that have a heavy focus on DEI, promote the minority owned business blog post over others during that time
 - Planners seeking financial incentives scaled according to meeting size
 - Planners looking for local connections for sponsorship opportunities.
 - Helping vet local contacts so group isn’t wasting their time
 - Provide insight/expertise on potential sponsors timeline so it matches organizations’ fiscal calendar
 - Market [Catch Crew](#) more robustly (part time crew used to DMO to support events/meetings) and it was cited as “very valuable”
 - Strong volunteer pools accessible via the DMO cited as “meaningful”
 - Groups are looking for a local expert on things to get their attendees more excited about where they are spending the next X amount of days.
 - Recommendations and customer testimonials are more valuable than comprehensive listings or pay to play ads

• Marketing Assets

- It’s fine not to be specific in signage
- Map icons aren’t helpful if you aren’t from here unless it is digital and interactive, maps need more definition
- Overwhelmingly negative response to multiple “Os in “welcoooooome” and breaking the words up: “WE” “LC” “OME” on separate lines
- Videos make better attendance builders than traditional selling points
 - Most videos are “all the same and don’t have an impact”
 - Prefer vibrant scenes and upbeat music vs. “rattling off stats and numbers”
 - Examples of “cool videos” include: [Marriott Bonvoy](#), [Travel Portland](#), [Choose Chicago](#)
- Website are generally not used to source new meetings/events, but are used to obtain information after a new booking is contracted
 - Websites are considered “round 2” after contracts are signed
 - Website should offer:
 - Easy access to see other recent meetings/events
 - Interactive maps
 - Information regarding whether the city matches the organization’s core values, DEI hot spots, multicultural assets
 - Downloadable assets including photos, videos, maps, etc.
- Planners are OK with need to register to access assets
- Calendar of “blackout dates” and “core events” such as festivals and major meetings etc. may might help shift planners to alternative dates in your city.

• General Pain Points

- Rebooking and reselling clauses
 - many hotels/venues don’t provide flexibility and transparency
- Project Management Software to track contracts and provide additional technological project management tools
 - Most using Excel, Genial, Slack, Discord, OneNote, HelmsBriscoe

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- Share widely that Iowa Events Center manages own internet and offers favorable costs, create competitive advantage with price conscious groups.
 - Market [Catch Crew](#) more robustly; it was cited as “very valuable”
 - Leverage the Catch Des Moines Housing Bureau, there are other meetings and planners interested in this
 - Be up front about legislation, hotel concerns, or anything else that may impact an event so that we can work through solutions early.
 - Be consistent with marketing throughout the channels, and keep things simple

