

A neon sign with the text "DSM STATE OF MIND" in a bright green, glowing font. The "DSM" is in a large, stylized script, while "STATE OF MIND" is in a smaller, sans-serif font. The sign is mounted on a dark, textured background.

DSM STATE OF MIND

Des Moines Customer Advisory Board
<https://www.catchdesmoines.com/cab/>
June 11 - 13, 2025

CATCH
DES MOINES



Meeting moderated by and report authored by:

David Kliman, CMM

President The Kliman Group & Co-Founder Event Leaders Exchange

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**THE
KLIMAN
GROUP**
COMMUNICATION CONSULTING SERVICES

WELCOME and INTRODUCTIONS

Advisory Board members were welcomed; thanked for their commitment of time and feedback. Meeting goals and objectives were outlined. Members and Catch Des Moines hosts were introduced. Attendees were encouraged to speak openly, candidly, and constructively regarding ways in which Des Moines can make it easier for event professionals to do business with all suppliers in the destination.

Greg Edwards is retiring on August 1, 2025. His decades of leadership and extraordinary service to Catch Des Moines service was celebrated as was Trina Flack's promotion to President & CEO effective same day.

Confidentiality Agreement

Chatham House Rule applies to all aspects of the meeting including the contents of this report. Participants are free to use the information received, but may not share the names of speakers, participants or organizations.

The slide deck from the meeting is attached to this document as a PDF.



CAB Members in Attendance

- Ashley Bohnenkamp
- Lysa Byous
- Tonya Cameron
- Teresa Cox
- Glen Ellwood
- Lisa Garcia
- Shallee Keenan
- Christine Quah
- Monica Russell
- Jennifer Rush
- Mandi Sieren
- Kim Sarkady
- Lauren Swanson

ITA Group
American Public Works Association
United Women in Faith
Corteva
AMR Management Services
International Association for Food Protection
Kemin
HelmsBriscoe
AASHTO
NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising
US Custom Harvesters
American Trucking Association
National Pork Producers Council

Catch Des Moines

- Greg Edwards
- Trina Flack
- Chris Baker
- Amber Smith
- Kelly Smith
- Carolyn Anderson
- Ryan McCall
- Caylie Hickman

President & CEO
Vice President of Sales (President & CEO - effective August 1, 2025)
Director of Event Experience
National Sales Manager
Director of Convention Sales
Sales & Project Manager
Sales Manager
National Sales Manager

Meeting Moderator

- David Kliman

Co-Founder ELX & President - The Kliman Group

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CAB & Catch Des Moines Superpowers:

- Ability to understand issues
- Connecting people
- Staying calm under pressure
- Empathy
- Activator
- Ability to talk intelligently
- Managing information for large teams
- Personality translator
- Creating memorable experiences
- Ability to “read” people
- Inquisitive
- Connects ideas and voices from diverse team/stakeholders
- Ability to find new ways to execute events
- Adaptability
- Ability to see and advocate for all sides
- Getting Convention Services Manager to say yes
- Making people feel comfortable so they all work together well
- Excellent negotiator
- Multitasking
- Strategic thinking
- Connecting people and ideas

Catch Des Moines Leadership Updates

Greg Edwards & Trina Flack

MISSION STATEMENT

The Greater Des Moines Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Des Moines Area Sports & Tourism Commission market the region as a visitor destination increasing economic growth and enhancing the visitor experience.



VISION STATEMENT

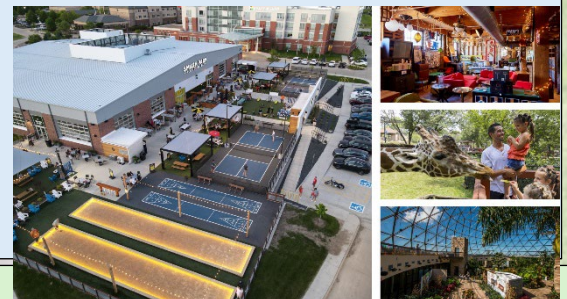
Our vision is to be the leader in regional destination development through strategic partnerships to advance tourism and economic growth.

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Catch Des Moines Funding Structure

Iowa State and local hotel taxes = 5% state tax and 7% hotel tax

- Percentage of hotel tax funds the DMO
 - Reduced to 25% (from 28%) effective July 2025
- DMO has \$7.5 million budget
 - \$800,000 reduction in budget FY25/26
- Tourism supports 19,000 jobs metropolitan Des Moines
- Des Moines' competitive set includes Tulsa, Omaha, Madison and Lexington KY
- Creation of a [Tourism Improvement District](#) was proposed, but did not prevail in the Iowa State House in 2025



Meetings and Sports Marketplace

- Des Moines group business is split: 60% conventions and 40% sports
- [Wells Fargo Arena. Renamed to Casey's Center](#) effective July 1, 2025
- [OVG360](#) manages Iowa Events Center
- 2027 is group sales opportunity period

Des Moines International Airport

- [New terminal under construction](#) and will open in 2027
- Currently offers 30 nonstop destinations



CATCH DES MOINES

ONLY THE Ss ARE SILENT



Convention Center Practices & Trends

- Some clients want alternatives to convention centers
 - [Scissortail Park](#) Oklahoma City cited as good example
- Center rental fees are accelerating and are “more painful”
 - If there is going to be a rental, planners like to see this as a sliding scale tied to F&B and sleeping rooms
- Mutual indemnification desired by clients, but not usually available especially for city owned/managed center
- Multiyear agreements used to lock in costs

Decorators

- Many groups travel with own decorator teams
- Planners would like more quality vendors based in Des Moines

Budgets

- Meeting budgets are increasing for all but 3 CAB members
- F&B costs are increasing greatly

A/V Production suppliers

• Several CAB members travel with their own AV company
The following AV Production suppliers were cited as high-quality trusted partners by CAB members

- [M Squared Onstage](#)
- [Bright AV](#)
- [EventLink](#)
- [Hartmann Studios](#)

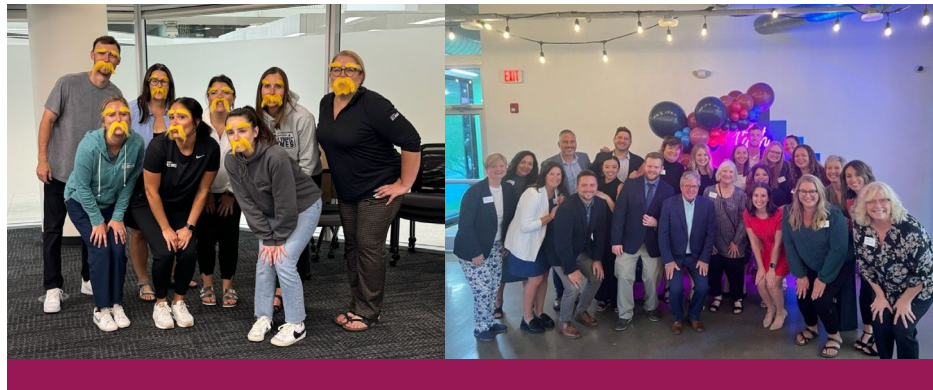
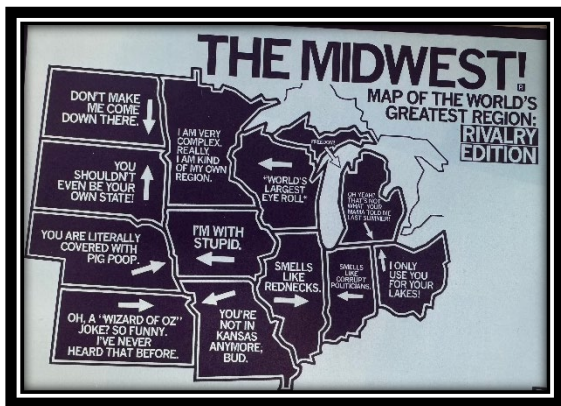


General Comments

- Convention Center booking guidelines, only some include F&B component
- Des Moines is reviewing their guidelines
- ICW (in conjunction with) business drive some revenue to hotels
 - Planners need to show historical data to prove ancillary spending
 - Des Moines cited for effective DMO/hotel working relationships
- Arlington TX and Kansas City cited for providing financial subsidies to hotels for F&B group spending at Center
- Parking fees are a challenge when using a Center, because these are high and many also have a hotel parking charge.

CAB members cited the following favorite venues and centers

- Pittsburgh - Center is great, but attendees found it remote and long walk
- Nashville Music City Center - looks like hotel not a center but has challenging booking policies
- Philadelphia – offers abundant natural light, but F&B and cleaning services were disappointing
- Vancouver - beautiful
- Milwaukee - great from attendee perspective - natural light and nearby hotels
- Hartford - needs more hotel rooms, but nice center and good F&B
- Tampa - easy to work with and great waterfront location
- Grand Rapids - good for small groups and great F&B and natural light
- Hot Springs AK - Anchored by two hotels
- Phoenix
- Columbus
- Seattle's new center is great



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Marketing, Event Experience and Sales Assets

- Sales tools must be in electronic format
 - Floor plans must be easy to print and color coding enabled
 - Must be editable format
 - Not CAD drawing
 - Prefer one “brochure” that includes map, floorplan and room capacities
- All room design tools must be easily printable and editable
- Different level floors must be shown in an intuitive format suitable for first time viewers (attendees). Planners would like to see the levels stacked to better understand flow.
- Do not print on glossy paper
- [Social Tables](#) is used by some CAB members; some CAB members do their own layout, others rely on their AV provider or decorator.
- Online planners guide is desired – with pages that can be printed, and including room charts

Sales Assets & Tools

Site visit coordination ideal practices

- DMOs should ask planners how deeply involved they should be based on planners' needs
- Always provide clear documentation including, but not limited to:
 - Contact headshots, cell phones and emails, transportation phone and emails etc.

Site selections sourcing tools

- Trusted peer relationships
- Cvent
- RFP responses/grids
- IMEX contacts
- AI for inspiration and information
- Once booked:
 - DMO reaches out to have an in-depth interaction to determine customized needs

Destination videos and photos

- High-resolution photos and provide planner access to collection
- Planner don't mind registering on portal for photos and videos
 - Rights to photos must extend to others on planner's team (marketing etc.)
- Provide Information regarding what planners don't know
- Good video library is important to showcase the destination – make these accessible from DMO website

General DMO best practices

- Share what's coming next i.e. sustainability, carbon impact, walkability, food sourcing distances and impact
- Best DMOs ask the questions to understand what planners want - every planner is unique
- Customized post event sustainability and economic impact report
- Airport signage and welcome person (Catch Crew)
- Local experts at reg desk
- Street banners for center users
- For groups booked several years out, hand off should be about 14 months out and DMO should attend year prior meeting
- Offer virtual search restaurant guide by geographic area and by radius of a chosen address

Destination Management Company (DMC) for Des Moines

- Limited use for a DMC in DSM
- Some services offered by a DMC are already being provided by the DMO.
 - DMO should consider charging for some DMC style services
- DMC is not sustainable as a standalone business in Des Moines

Event Measurement Data

- Economic impact calculation for groups cited as very useful for some groups
 - Community sustainability
 - Minority owned businesses
- Some CAB members get sustainability data from [Meet Green](#)
- [Zenus AI](#) measures attendee insights using facial analysis

Peer to Peer Topics

Contract pain points

- Seeing more force majeure and daily attribution clauses in hotel contracts; mostly able to delete it
- Some hotels demanding higher comp rooms ratio (i.e: 1 per 60)
- History of events no longer relevant or accurate

A/V

- Encore Global cited as pain point
- Music licensing clauses often not explained
- Paying for internet in meeting space continues to be a pain point

Trump Administration budget/travel/visa restrictions

- US visa requirements inhibit number of foreign attendees
- Multinational meeting planners seek destinations with easier visa requirements
- Many government employees unable to travel due to budget cutbacks; meetings are deemed not mission critical
- US Travel is estimating a \$12.5 billion impact based on legislation

Long-term political and economic uncertainty creating shorter booking windows

- Education sectors strongly impacted by government cuts in funding
 - Some groups seeing 50% attendance decreases and 100% drop in international attendees
 - School budgets are frozen
 - Some planners include subset of conditions under force majeure to protect against attrition fees demands
 - i.e.: if 25% are unable to travel due to lack of funding, attrition is waived
- Meetings that are tied to grant funding are being impacted, across all segments

Food Trends

- Less protein
- More dietary requests
- "Build your own" deconstructed meals
- GLP1 medications are impacting food choices and consumption



Shared tools, articles:

Event Apps used by CAB members

- [Bravura](#)
- [Stova](#)
- [Swapcard](#)

Trends/Articles/Tools cited

- [Marriott CEO comments regarding DEI&B](#)
- [Cleveland Convention Center Farm](#)
- [Allianz Travel Insurance](#) for travel interruption insurance
- [How US Event Planners can Navigate Global Challenges](#)

Contract clauses

- Suggest including clause addressing any ownership or management changes, renovation and construction.
- Renovation clause can include milestones and a cancellation option if those milestones don't hit

Hotel Blocks

- Seeing more "pre meeting day" bookings, cited as new shift in travel patterns
- Some hotel charging for room audits
- Most CAB members are including their own rebates on hotel rooms, not tied to offsetting rental or direct destination expenses
- It is not typical to require exhibitors to stay inside meeting blocks, but it is standard to require registration before sharing the room block link

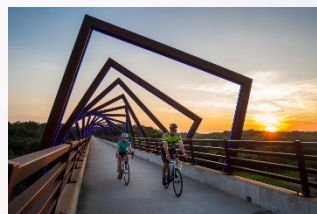
Recommendations & Action Items

- Add sustainability commitment to DMO Strategic Plan
- CAB asked to advocate Federal lawmakers to preserve funding for Brand USA efforts:
<https://www.ustravel.org/programs/travel-action-network>
- Seek permission to share Speech and Debate ICE emergency plan with CAB members
- CAB requested to send any examples of any memorable/great sales and marketing assets to Trina Flack

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DES MOINES CAB MEMBERS JUNE 2025

First Name	Last Name	Company	Title	Phone	Email
Ashley	Bohnenkamp	ITA Group	Senior Manager - Event Solutions	515.326.3743	abohnenkamp@itagroup.com
Lysa	Byous	American Public Works Assn	Senior Exhibit Manager, Meeting Planner	816.595.5243	lbyous@apwa.org
Tonya	Cameron	United Women in Faith	Assembly Business Manager	513.454.4690	TCameron@UWFaith.org
Teresa Glen	Cox Ellwood	Corteva AMR Management Services	Event Program Manager Assistant Director, Education & Events	515.689.2957 859.559.6445	teresa.cox@corteva.com glen@amrms.com
Lisa	Garcia	International Assn for Food Protection	Executive Director	515.276.3344	lgarcia@foodprotection.org
Shallee David	Keenan Kliman	Kemin ELX & The Kliman Group	Global Events Manager Co-Founder and President	515.559.5271 415.713.2650	shallee.keenan@kemin.com david@klimangroup.com
Christine	Quah	HelmsBriscoe	Senior Director, Global Accounts	480.628.2814	cquah@helmsbriscoe.com
Jennifer	Rush	NACADA: The Global Community for Academic Advising	Assistant Director - Institutes	785.532.5717	jlrush@ksu.edu
Monica	Russell	AASHTO	Director of Meetings and Membership Services	202.624.3696	mrussell@aashto.org
Kim	Sarkady	American Trucking Associations	Manager, Event Services	703.838.1988	ksarkady@trucking.org
Amanda Lauren	Sieren Swanson	US Custom Harvesters National Pork Producers Council	Operations Manager Director of Meetings and Events	620.200.1381 515.864.7985	office@uschi.com swansonl@npcc.org
Scott	Wunn	National Speech & Debate Assn	Executive Director	920.748.6206	scott.wunn@speechanddebate.org



Sample Force Majeure Contract Clause

Either party may cancel the Agreement without liability upon written notice to the other party should any cause beyond the control of the Hotel or Group including, but not limited to, acts of God; war; curtailment or interruption of transportation facilities; strikes (except those involving Hotel's employees) or the imminent threat thereof; threats or acts of terrorism or similar acts; disease; any restrictions, regulations and regulations (including, but not limited to, those regarding travel, self-quarantine and gathering size) imposed by any state within the United States of America; State Department or other governmental or international agency travel advisory; full or partial government closure; prohibition or limitation of travel by any government employees, corporate and educational institution travel restrictions; civil disturbance; or any other cause beyond the parties' control (each a "force majeure event") which, in the party's reasonable judgment, would:

- make it commercially impracticable to hold the Event or for either party or its members to perform their obligations;
- cause twenty percent (40% or more of Group's attendees to cancel their attendance at the Group's Event;
- make it illegal for either party or its members to perform their obligations under the Agreement; and/or
- make it impossible for either party or its members to perform their obligations under the Agreement.

Notice of cancellation may be sent at any time prior to the Event provided the cancelling party has met the requirements of this provision. Group's ability to invoke force majeure under this clause shall not be prevented even if the parties were aware of the force majeure condition at the time this Agreement is signed or dated, and such condition shall not be a restriction of Group's ability to invoke this clause. In the event Group decides to hold its Event despite such circumstances, the Hotel shall waive any fees related to a reduced- sized Event (including any room and food and beverage attrition fees and any function space rental fees) and shall offer the Group's guests any lower room rate offered to guests during the contracted dates.

Also, following force majeure we have a state restrictions clause. Not sure if this is something you're needing but is something we also include.

State Restrictions

Group has determined that it is not commercially impractical or feasible to hold the Event if one-third (1/3) of the attendees are unable to attend because of documented state emergencies or travel cutbacks. Group Event attendees are state and government highway transportation officials whose attendance at meetings may be affected by state emergencies and/or travel restrictions imposed by state governors. Group has no control over these agencies and, as such, Group may cancel this Agreement without liability, reduce its Total Room Nights without liability, or rebook the Event (on mutually agreeable dates) without liability.

Sample Room Block Contract Clause:

No later than (*insert date*), Group may release up to 5% of the Room Night Commitment without penalty or the payment of any fee, by written notice to the Hotel. The Room Night Commitment, after any such reduction, is the "Adjusted Room Night Commitment". If Group reduces the Room

Night Commitment by more than the above stated percentage, then the Hotel may adjust any concessions previously offered in this Agreement, including those concessions offered on a complimentary basis, prior to any concessions being removed or adjusted, Hotel will inform Group of the proposed reduction. Both parties will mutually decide which concessions will be released and/or purchased by Group and may also mutually agree to adjust the Function Space in direct proportion to the reduction in the Room Night Commitment. If block is decreased, Attrition will remain at the 80% based on the Adjusted Room Night Commitment.

HOTEL AUDIT CLAUSE

At the Group's request, the Group will forward to the Hotel its registration list by the close of registration. One time, and at no additional charge, the Hotel will compare its in-house guest list, which shall not be disclosed to the Group, with the Group's registration list, and any guest room occupied by an attendee on the Group's event registration list, but not booked through the Group's room block (an "Out of Block Attendee") will be credited to the Group's room block pick-up regardless of rate paid or method of reservation. Out of Block rooms occupied in the Hotel will be credited toward the Group's room block. These rooms will be non-commissionable and applied to the room night calculations for special considerations and complimentary rooms. The Hotel will maintain the confidentiality of the registration list, provided any Out of Block Attendee may be treated, for the Hotel's marketing and other purposes, like any other Hotel guest.

State Restrictions

Group has determined that it is not commercially impractical or feasible to hold the Event if one-third (1/3) of the attendees are unable to attend because of documented state emergencies or travel cutbacks. Group Event attendees are state and government highway transportation officials whose attendance at meetings may be affected by state emergencies and/or travel restrictions imposed by state governors. Group has no control over these agencies and, as such, Group may cancel this Agreement without liability, reduce its Total Room Nights without liability, or rebook the Event (on mutually agreeable dates) without liability.

