



# 2017 Annual Report

## Visitor Services

The CVB's Visitor Center on Fountain Square continues to help travelers (and often local residents) get the most from their visits. Staffed entirely by trained volunteers, the Visitor Center served nearly 10,000 visitors in 2017.

The Cincy USA Certified Tourism Ambassador Program has now certified more than 1,179 front-line workers and volunteers since its launch in 2015. CTAs are trained on the importance of the visitor economy to Cincinnati and how to improve each visitor's experience.

## Membership

The CVB counts on nearly 500 member and partner businesses to accomplish its mission. Networking events, education sessions and orientations keep partners connected to the industry and each other.

## Financial Report

The CVB finished 2017 better than budget. The most recent finalized audit was presented without comment or exception and accepted by the Executive Committee.

	2017 (unaudited)	2016 (audited)
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets:</b>		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,593,913	\$ 1,545,521
County Lodging Tax Receivables	1,618,100	1,628,319
Program Receivables	43,404	20,556
Membership Receivables	31,283	57,190
Other Receivables	364,867	503,139
Less Allowance for Doubtful Accounts	(71,737)	(71,737)
Prepaid Expenses	42,747	55,478
Total Current Assets	3,622,577	3,738,466
<b>Non-Current Assets:</b>		
Property, Plant and Equipment	890,025	851,123
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(468,728)	(379,654)
	421,297	471,469
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 4,043,874</b>	<b>\$ 4,209,935</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
Accounts and Grants Payable	\$ 964,129	\$ 864,067
Other Accrued Liabilities	534,999	606,434
Deferred Subscription Income	120,946	8,859
Capital Lease Obligation	0	7,082
Total Liabilities	1,620,074	1,486,442
Net Assets	2,423,800	2,723,493
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 4,043,874</b>	<b>\$ 4,209,935</b>

## Investments & Partnerships

The CVB, as Cincinnati's Destination Marketing and Management Organization, fulfills its responsibilities to increase visitor spending through innovative strategies, including investing in partnerships to strengthen results.

The CVB and meetNKY have renewed our commitment to drive collaborative, strategic destination marketing by investing in the Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network and Cincinnati USA Sports Commission.

The CVB also continued — along with co-funders REDI Cincinnati and the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber — its investment in Source Cincinnati. In 2017, these partners collaborated on a regional positioning platform to drive cohesive strategic destination marketing.

## Celebrate what's great. Create what's next.

In 2017, the Cincinnati USA CVB set a new benchmark for the power of travel and tourism in our region. We co-commissioned an economic impact study that revealed the depth of our collective success:

**26 MILLION ANNUAL VISITORS TO CINCINNATI**

**\$5 BILLION IN ANNUAL VISITOR SPENDING**

**77,000 JOBS SUPPORTED BY TRAVEL AND TOURISM**

We not only saw significant increases since 2015, but the Cincinnati region also outpaced average growth of all U.S. destinations in nearly every metric. As an industry, the CVB and our travel and tourism partners comprise a thriving economic engine for our region. We're adding jobs faster than other sectors, and we're actively connecting businesses with visitors to create a ripple effect of community impact.

Reaching these success milestones didn't happen overnight. It's been more than a decade of setting ambitious growth goals and exceeding expectations. More than a decade of elevating our national reputation as a world-class destination. More than a decade of landing and hosting high-profile meetings and conventions and delivering memorable visitor experiences.

In 2018, we celebrate the culture of collaboration that's led to our regional track record of success. We also honor the extraordinary leadership of Dan Lincoln, who led the CVB with a tireless passion for Cincinnati and a spirit of teamwork that ran through everything we achieved. Dan retired as the CVB's president and CEO at the end of 2017, but his legacy will be felt for generations to come.

This year, we'll continue to position our destination, connect our assets, and drive economic impact by showcasing the people and places that make our destination so attractive. Thank you for helping us celebrate what's great and create what's next.

Michael J. Laatsch  
Interim President & CEO

James J. McGraw, Jr.  
Chair, Board of Directors

THE CVB IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH ORGANIZATIONS ACROSS THE REGION TO PROMOTE ECONOMIC VITALITY:



**CINCINNATIUSA**  
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

# A N N U A L 2017 R E P O R T

## Meeting & Convention Sales

In 2017, the CVB reached its annual sales goal for future hotel room night bookings and the visitor spending they generate. Sales highlights include:

- Booked 192,224 hotel room nights representing more than \$57 million in future visitor spending
- Finished 2017 with 954,698 room night sales leads, with an 11 percent increase in total leads over 2016
- Surpassed goal with a 22 percent conversion rate of tentative meetings turned definite
- Hosted Connect Meetings, which showcased the Cincinnati region to more than 400 professional meeting planners who represent more than 130,000 future hotel room nights
- Hosted Service Club Leaders, a group of executives from national organizations. Cincinnati won a future Moose International Convention as a result of hosting this event

### KEY FUTURE CONVENTIONS BOOKED IN 2017

Convention	Room Nights	Year
International Wesleyan Youth Convention	4,913	2019
International Moose Convention	14,327	2021
Educational Testing Service Advanced Placement Reading	21,922	2022
Educational Testing Service Advanced Placement Reading	21,904	2023
International Wesleyan Youth Convention	4,913	2023

### KEY CONVENTIONS HOSTED IN 2017

Convention	Dates	Contract Room Nights
Paralyzed Veterans of America National Wheelchair Games	July 15-22	4,900
National Square Dance Convention	June 21-24	5,814
National Association of Pastoral Musicians Convention	July 6-16	6,963
National Baptist Convention, USA Inc. Annual Session	Sept. 4-8	9,822
Educational Testing Service Advanced Placement Reading	June 1-18	23,174

## Convention Services

Organizations meeting in the Cincinnati region during 2017 praised our Convention Services team's responsiveness, commitment to satisfaction and attention to detail. The CVB assisted 52 groups and earned a rating of 4.9 (out of five) on post-convention meeting planner surveys. As the liaison between local services and convention groups, the team assists on anything the clients need to make the event successful. In the summer of 2017, the team helped coordinate the efforts of 3,000 local volunteers who contributed to the success of the National Wheelchair Games.



Photos courtesy of Paralyzed Veterans of America



## Multicultural Affairs

In 2017, the CVB continued our commitment to make the Cincinnati region a more welcoming destination. We established a dedicated multicultural development team that will focus on expanding our reach and sales production among ethnic, religious and diverse organizations. This strategic move will more fully leverage our past successes and firmly establish the CVB as a national leader in multicultural tourism.



The CVB's Vibe platform continued to showcase our region's multicultural depth through art, music, food and immersive experiences. Vibe events brought visitors and local residents together during both the National Baptist Convention USA, Inc. and the Cincinnati Music Festival presented by P&G, among other signature events. The CVB hosted our second Multicultural Travel and Tourism Forum, and also engaged with meeting planners through Vibe Lounge networking opportunities at local and national meetings and hospitality events.



The Cincinnati USA Institute for Hospitality Leadership (IHL) was created in partnership with the Santangelo Family and Cincinnati Music Festival to develop a more highly skilled, diverse workforce for our regional travel and hospitality businesses. In 2017, the IHL attended career expos and began offering job shadowing and mentoring opportunities for middle and high school students. New curriculum is being created to reach even more students in the years ahead.



## Supplier Diversity Program

As part of our commitment to diversity, the CVB tracks annual spending with small, minority- and woman-owned businesses, as well as those owned by veterans, LGBT and people with disabilities. The program has grown every year since it was launched in 2014, and the CVB is one of just 40 businesses named a Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber Minority Business Accelerator Goal Setter for a fifth straight year.



## Marketing & Communications

The CVB builds and executes strategic marketing programs to drive awareness, build reputation and generate tourism revenue across all audiences.

Convention Sales B2B	Leisure Visitors Outreach	National Earned Media and Reputation*
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased targeted marketing to 5.4 million impressions</li> <li>• Doubled total clicks and click-through rates for online advertising campaigns</li> <li>• Increased social media engagement by 56 percent</li> <li>• Won a Pinnacle Award from the Cincinnati chapter of the American Marketing Association for our Cincinnati USA Virtual Reality Experience</li> <li>• Earned coverage in convention trade and local media: 774 stories; 547 million impressions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Placed 377 stories in regional travel media; earning 630 million impressions</li> <li>• 17 percent increase in new customer names for future remarketing*</li> <li>• Drove ROI to \$133.74 in total tourism revenue for every dollar invested in regional tourism marketing, up 26.5 percent over 2016*</li> <li>• Received Cincinnati Chapter AMA Pinnacle Award for legacy in marketing leadership and industry peer awards of excellence for the new Cultural Tourism Campaign.*</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.05 billion year-end impressions (up 22 percent from 2016)</li> <li>• Ad equivalency of \$11.3 million</li> <li>• Placed 103 stories, a 63 percent increase from 2016</li> <li>• Connected with 30 journalists face-to-face</li> </ul> <p>Key Media Earned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Travel + Leisure</i> "50 Best Places to Travel in 2017"</li> <li>• <i>The New York Times</i> "36 Hours in Cincinnati"</li> <li>• <i>Wall Street Journal</i> "The Transformation of a Cincinnati Neighborhood"</li> </ul> |
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\*Results from CVB's Regional Tourism Network collaboration

\*Results from CVB's Source Cincinnati collaboration

