

The **MVP** Destination
MOVEMENT | VISION | PASSION



CINCINNATIUSA
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM CHAIR AND PRESIDENT

Movement, Vision and Passion. Those are the MVP ingredients that defined Cincinnati USA in 2014 and continue to capture the spirit of our region. From unprecedented positive national media coverage to significant convention wins to destination-shaping research and analysis, the CVB continues to successfully lead the proactive strategic marketing and promotion of our destination.

Movement: Our hospitality industry, corporate, civic and government partners continue to move the region forward with purpose and energy. Together, we've shown that dynamic economic development, community pride and collaboration, and high-quality customer service can make all the difference. Strong room night generation and visitor spending in 2014—and the upcoming 2015 Major League Baseball All-Star Game, the return of the NAACP Annual Convention in 2016 and many more high profile wins—mark a region on the move.

Vision: The CVB is leading Cincinnati through a convention Future Study, and in partnership with the Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network and Meet NKY - Northern Kentucky CVB, through a Destination Assessment. These projects will evaluate the state of our destination and determine future direction. As a region, we'll be equipped with invaluable data to drive economic development, hospitality industry expansion and other improvements that will maximize Cincinnati USA's potential and cultivate growth.

Passion: As the positive buzz and accolades about our region continue, community pride, advocacy and energy continue to surge. And our community, fueled by passion and purpose, will continue to seek out opportunities, expand horizons, and share our Cincinnati story around the country and across the globe.

That's significant momentum, and 2015 has all the makings to be another banner year. Thank you for your partnership and support as we work together to spark growth and success for our MVP destination.



Delores Hargrove-Young
Board Chair



Dan Lincoln
President and CEO

PARTNERSHIPS

In 2014, the following community partners were pivotal in the success of the local hospitality industry and CVB, strategically building the region's future.

- 2014 marked the fifth year of a five-year agreement by Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati to invest excess hotel/motel tax revenue in the CVB's sales and marketing initiatives
- The CVB—in partnership with Meet NKY - Northern Kentucky CVB—continued to invest in the Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network, attracting thousands of leisure visitors to the region who visit more frequently and stay longer

- The CVB and Meet NKY continued their investment in the Greater Cincinnati Sports Corporation, which delivered an economic impact of \$13.6 million from more than 45,000 room nights
- Delta Air Lines, as the official airline of the CVB, continues to be a critical partner in the region's success



VISITOR CENTER

In only its fourth year of operation, the stream of visitors passing through the Cincinnati USA Visitor Center on Fountain Square in 2014 increased 16% over 2013, and volunteers donated 4,851 hours of their time educating and assisting visitors to the region. The Visitor Center provided assistance to local residents, leisure travelers, convention delegates and event attendees from across the country and around the world.

MVP STAT

9,047 people helped at the Visitor Center in 2014

VISION

CONVENTION SALES

To address the growing needs of the Cincinnati USA meetings, events and conventions industry, the Sales team embarked on an aggressive 2014 room night lead generation strategy designed to increase demand for the destination's growing number of hotel properties. Efforts included the integration of new business tracking technology and bolstering the strength and capacity of the sales team, including satellite offices in Washington D.C. and Chicago.

- Booked 228,791 hotel room nights representing more than \$68.2 million in future visitor spending
- Finished 2014 with 1,030,800 room night sales leads, a 36% increase over 2013
- Overall hotel revenue increased from \$29.3 million to \$30.7 million
- The average daily room rate for all CVB hotel room nights increased 0.6%



KEY FUTURE CONVENTION BOOKINGS

CONVENTION	DATE	ROOM NIGHTS
Kroger Company	2015	18,659
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)	2016	10,090
Improved Benevolent Protective Order of Elks of the World	2016	5,833
Christian Booksellers Association	2016	5,555
International Association of Venue Managers, Inc.	2021	5,028
Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers	2018	4,635

MVP STAT

Generated more than 1 million future room night leads, a 36% increase over 2013

KEY CONVENTIONS HOSTED IN 2014

CONVENTION	DATE	ROOM NIGHTS
Educational Testing Service	6.1-18	21,017
International Association of Fire Fighters	7.14-18	12,422
National Urban League	7.23-26	6,709
V Twin Expo by Easyriders	2.4-10	6,244
National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners	11.12-15	1,179
Nature's Sunshine Products, Inc.	3.26-29	4,143
United Supreme Council	5.22-29	3,534

MULTICULTURAL AFFAIRS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



2014 National Urban League Annual Conference in Cincinnati

MVP STAT

Hosted National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners—41 total organizations representing the potential to bring 110,000 room nights and \$31.8 million in future impact

In 2014, the Multicultural Affairs team solidified Cincinnati USA's position as a sought-after destination for national ethnic meetings and conventions. This continued growth is important not only for the economic impact these conventions bring, but for the ongoing transformation of the destination.

Highlights include:

- Coordinated a week-long celebration of diversity and multiculturalism in Cincinnati USA as part of the welcome and programming for attendees of the 2014 National Urban League Annual Conference. Programming included live music performances, concerts, fashion shows, and more
- Attended several high-profile multicultural trade shows including Rejuvenate, Religious Conference Management Association, and Diversity Summit
- Continued strong sales within the influential multicultural meetings market, including bookings with: NAACP Annual Convention (2016), Church of God in Christ (2016), Christian Booksellers (2016), National Baptist Convention of America (2016) and Delta Sigma Theta (2018)

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

By capitalizing on the growing awareness of Cincinnati as a great place to meet, visit and work, the Marketing and Communications team focused on enhancing perceptions of our region by telling the stories of people, events and places that make us fresh, attractive and preferred. **2014 highlights include:**

MARKETING

- Unveiled a new CVB brand look in 2014, including a new logo and updates to the *Look At Us Now* national meeting planner-focused advertising campaign for a more dynamic brand presence



- Homepage traffic to the new CVB website increased 34% over 2013, including increased traffic to meeting-planner specific pages



- Social media efforts soared with Twitter, Instagram and MTG PLNR Blog all showing significant increases in followers and traffic. Instagram followers increased more than 2000%, and the blog's most popular post leveraged the knowledge of a CVB member to assist planners



- Hosted a webinar series for meeting planners in partnership with *Successful Meetings* and the CVB sales team, attracting more than 471 viewers

MVP STAT

Marketing & Communications received 6 MIDDY Awards from the Ohio Association of CVBs, including 1st place in Website and 1st in B2B Advertisement

COMMUNICATIONS & STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

- Local, national, and trade media coverage generated by the CVB's media relations program increased 68% over 2013 results, including more than 917 million media impressions
- Increased trade media placements 48% over 2013 by leveraging the Cincy in NYC initiative, major convention wins, and new and renovated hotels
- 300% increase in articles generated during second year of the Collaborative Travel Journalist Program (with Regional Tourism Network and Meet NKY). 85 journalists were reached for custom press trips or media assists, with nearly 100 high-profile stories in regional and national travel publications representing 275 million impressions

NEW YORK

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVELER

Smartmeetings
The Intelligent Way to Plan



MVP STAT

300% increase in articles generated by the Collaborative Travel Journalist program over 2013

SOURCE CINCINNATI

The CVB deepened its partnership with Source Cincinnati, a new national and social media initiative dedicated to amplifying stories about Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. In its first year, Source earned more than 200 million media impressions in nearly 40 national media placements, including:



Forbes

THE HUFFINGTON POST



FORTUNE

The New York Times



Other highlights include:

- The launch of the Digital Amplifiers program, a group of 100+ regional influencers who help spread positive news about the region via social media

MVP STAT

200 million media impressions in nearly 40 national media placements

- Planning and execution of multiple media missions, journalist visits and other media facing activities, including desk-side briefings with national outlets like CNN and Fox News during 2014's Cincy in NYC initiative

SUPPLIER DIVERSITY PROGRAM

The Supplier Diversity Program made great strides in 2014, delivering on procedures and guidelines instituted in 2013 to ensure diversity and inclusion are a CVB priority in all purchasing, communication and partnership decisions. In 2015, the CVB will continue as a Goal Setter for the Regional Chamber's Minority Business Accelerator, committing to an annual spend goal with diverse suppliers.

2014 program advancements include:

- Focused spending with minority-owned, women-owned, small, and other disadvantaged businesses, ultimately increasing 2014 spend
- Creation of an internal supplier list containing more than 625 certified and non-certified minority-owned, women-owned, and small businesses
- Diversifying our spend with more than 275 different minority-owned, women-owned, and small businesses
- Developed sales collateral for attracting potential participants, and communicated updates and opportunities available with the program's organizations to CVB members

MVP STAT

2014 spend included more than 275 minority-owned, women-owned and small businesses across the region



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

DECEMBER 31, 2014

	2014 (unaudited)	2013 (audited)
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$1,796,909	\$1,131,864
County Lodging Tax Receivables	\$1,477,418	\$1,265,579
Program Receivables	\$16,464	\$360
Membership Receivables	\$131,667	\$16,089
Other Receivables	\$119,322	\$36,294
Prepaid Expenses	\$62,793	\$47,253
Total Current Assets	\$3,604,573	\$2,497,439
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant and Equipment	\$711,274	\$646,067
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(\$614,292)	(\$564,749)
	\$96,981	\$81,318
Total Assets	\$3,701,554	\$2,578,757
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Accounts and Grants Payable	\$984,608	\$648,723
Other Accrued Liabilities	\$500,578	\$524,683
Deferred Subscription Income	\$203,382	\$25,436
Capital Lease Obligation	\$0	\$46,870
Total Liabilities	\$1,688,568	\$1,245,712
Net Assets	\$2,012,986	\$1,333,045
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$3,701,554	\$2,578,757

CONVENTION SERVICES

Organizations meeting in Cincinnati USA during 2014 repeatedly praised Convention Services' responsiveness, commitment to client satisfaction and attention to detail. These qualities netted the team its second consecutive Platinum Choice Award from *Smart Meetings* in 2014, selected by the magazine's editors and industry experts.

Highlights from 2014:

- 21st straight year as a *Successful Meetings* magazine Pinnacle Award recipient, 19th *Meetings & Conventions* Gold Service Award
- Earned an excellent 4.9 out of five satisfaction rating on all post-convention meeting planner surveys
- Provided full convention services to 71 groups in 2014, and customized unique, full-service Convention Welcome programs to 14 organizations

MVP STAT

Second consecutive prestigious Platinum Choice Award

Smartmeetings
2014 PLATINUM CHOICE
 AWARD WINNER



2014 Enactus United States National Exposition

"They were probably the best CVB . . . proactive and had everything I needed beforehand. Great team!" - ENACTUS 2014

MEMBERSHIP

With 72 new members in 2014, including new businesses from revitalized Over-the-Rhine and the Banks entertainment district, strong partnerships continued to make Cincinnati USA shine as a top-tier destination. Membership achieved 100% of its revenue goal, creating a strong foundation for new membership and growth. The dedication to serving our members and providing value was executed through numerous member orientations, networking events and membership opportunities shared in the Beyond newsletter.

MVP STAT

New members include businesses from downtown through northern Hamilton County



September Member Mixer at Nicholson's

LEISURE TRAVEL

The CVB's mission to deliver regional tourism marketing manifests itself in the Cincinnati USA Regional Tourism Network. The CVB and Meet NKY's annual investment makes our model for travel and tourism promotion unique and highly effective—one of the only programs of its kind in the country. With these dollars, the RTN leverages relationships with regional attractions, dining, hotels, the Cincinnati Reds and many others to drive leisure travel to the region.

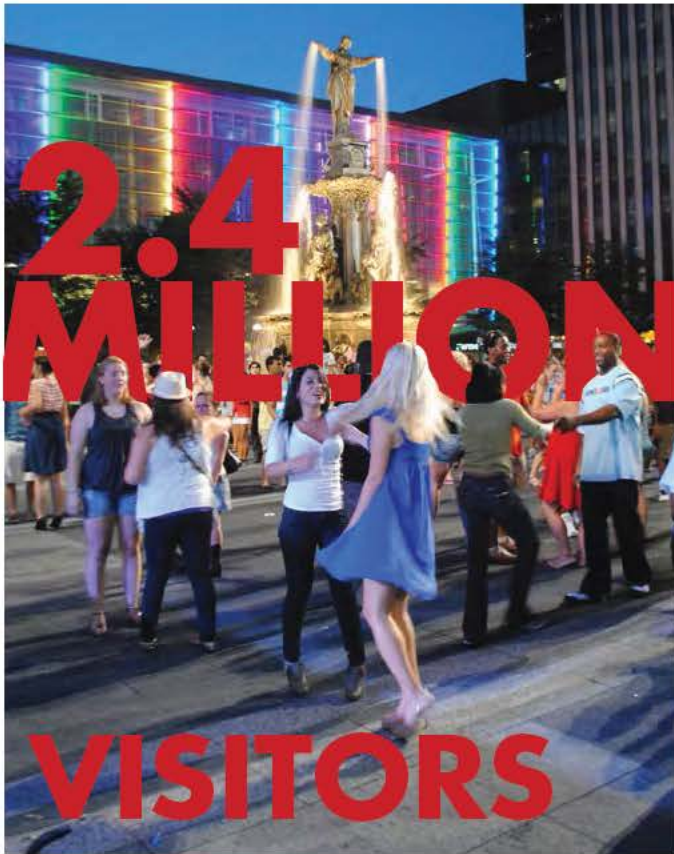
The RTN's leisure-focused travel website, CincinnatiUSA.com, which was fully redesigned in 2014, saw a record 2.4 million visits, an increase of 12.8% over 2013. This year more than half of visitors to CincinnatiUSA.com accessed the site on a smart-phone or tablet, staying in line with trends toward mobile viewing.

The RTN's 2014 Annual Visitor Profile showed positive growth in multiple areas:

- Increased visitor length of stay to 2 nights as well as spending per party to \$453
- Attracted visitors with a higher household income and 91% indicated a strong intent to return to the region

MVP STAT

Visitors are staying longer with 91% of visitors indicating a strong intent to return



National media at Collaborative Travel Journalist Program's August FAM



Fans at a 2014 Reds Caravan stop

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CincyUSA.com



Travel Cincinnati USA



Cincinnati USA Convention & Visitors Bureau



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