



IN 2023, Visit Cincy witnessed an extraordinary year filled with remarkable achievements and growth in our tourism sector. This year was a testament to the potential of our industry, marked by significant milestones and exciting developments across the region.

The soon-to-open expansion of the Sharonville Convention Center, the approved funding for a \$240 million revitalization of the Duke Energy Convention Center, the anticipation of a new downtown headquarters hotel, and a feasibility study to find out the need and potential site of a new arena are transforming our landscape. These developments have not only reshaped our region, but have also introduced new dynamics into our daily operations at Visit Cincy.

In 2023, Visit Cincy put the “Power of We” to work in so many ways. The collective efforts of leaders and stakeholders across the region played pivotal roles in retaining key events like the Cincinnati Open tennis tournament and Black Tech Week in our region. The Visit Cincy team leveraged Taylor Swift’s concerts and the new British Airways direct flight from London, enhancing our visibility and appeal to global audiences through strategic promotions and partnerships.

The upcoming, temporary closure of the DECC for modernization will present short-term challenges, yet it also opens doors to alternative venues for our convention customers. We have been successfully navigating these changes by re-booking affected conventions for future dates and focusing on short-term bookings to maintain vibrant activity in our hotels and restaurants.

As we look forward to the growth opportunities ahead, we are immensely grateful for the partnerships and collaborations that have made our achievements possible. Together, we will continue to elevate the Cincy Region as a leading destination, enriching the lives of visitors and residents alike.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to our shared vision.

JULIE CALVERT
President & CEO



HOTEL PERFORMANCE

IS A TOP INDICATOR OF THE OVERALL HEALTH OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY AND IN 2023, ACROSS THE BOARD, THE CINCY REGION OUTPACED THE UNITED STATES. IN FACT, THE CINCY REGION RECOVERED TO PRE-PANDEMIC BUSINESS LEVELS IN 2023, A FULL TWO-YEARS BEFORE RECOVERY WAS ANTICIPATED.

- Hamilton County hotel average daily rate up 6%
- Downtown Cincinnati hotel room revenue up 18%
- Hamilton County hotel room revenue up 9%
- Average Visitor Spending up 23%



MEETING & CONVENTION SALES & SERVICES

WHILE ON PACE TO REACH ITS GOAL WHEN THE DUKE ENERGY CONVENTION CENTER'S SHORT TERM CLOSURE WAS ANNOUNCED, THE VISIT CINCY SALES TEAM PIVOTED STRATEGIES TO FIND SHORT TERM BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES OUTSIDE OF THE DECC.

- Modified strategies to align with new market reality in short term, while preparing long-term growth plan for redeveloped convention district. Reached adjusted sales and lead generation goals.
- Began sales and marketing push for expanded Sharonville Convention Center and added a dedicated room night goal for the Northern Hamilton County hotels in 2023. Achieved 102% of the goal.
- Re-booked several groups that relocated for the DECC closure for post 2026 dates, committing their return to Cincinnati.
- Continued to grow relationships with meeting planners at nearly two dozen key industry and leisure travel trade shows, including PCMA, Cvent Connect and Brand USA's Travel Week. The Cincy trade show booth was named "Best in Show" at RCMA and earned second place at ASAE.
- In partnership with meetNKY, hosted the 2023 Heartland Travel Showcase, a gathering of leisure group tour operators who book thousands of room nights each year.
- Hosted one of the most powerful third-party meeting professional organizations in the world – HelmsBriscoe – brought a dozen meeting professionals to Cincinnati in September 2023 representing hundreds of future potential meetings.
- Booked the Ohio Society of Association Professionals for June 2024 at the Sharonville Convention Center to leverage the expansion and hotels, restaurants and entertainment venues in north Hamilton County.





CONVENTION SERVICES

AS THE LIAISON BETWEEN LOCAL SERVICES AND CONVENTION GROUPS, THE VISIT CINCY CONVENTION SERVICES TEAM WOWED MEETING PLANNERS AND EARNED RAVE REVIEWS.

- Worked with 59 groups in 2023, representing 69,285 room nights.
- Meeting planner satisfaction score was 93.3 (out of 100).
- Net Promoter Score increased from +38 in 2022 to +78 in 2023, indicating that more surveyed planners would promote Cincy as a destination (in a scale from -100 to +100).

DIVERSITY EQUITY & INCLUSION

VISIT CINCY CONTINUES ITS COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY WITH A VISION TO MAKE THE REGION A WELCOMING DESTINATION FOR ALL. IN 2023, VISIT CINCY SPONSORED 33 EVENT ACTIVATIONS UNDER ITS DIVERSITY PLATFORM “VIBE,” UP FROM 20 IN 2022.

To strengthen our impact, Visit Cincy built a three-year plan to advance key goals that further integrate DE&I. Visit Cincy will achieve these goals by:

- Growing a culture of inclusion and belonging
- Refining our systems toward inclusion
- Expanding our share of the diverse meeting & tourism markets
- Building a diverse pipeline of future hospitality leaders
- Modeling “inclusive hospitality” for our region and the industry
- Leveraging the convention district development to “raise our game”

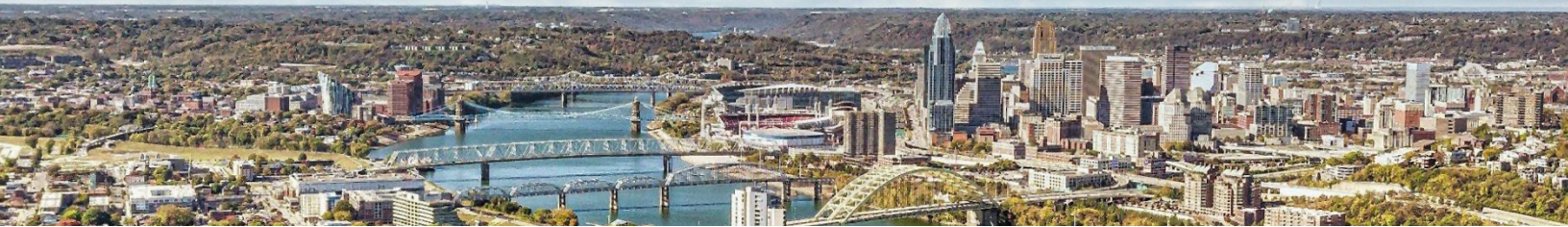
Successful execution of this plan will make Cincinnati a region that welcomes the world and provides unparalleled hospitality to all who visit.

Visit Cincy’s Dan Lincoln Institute for Hospitality Leadership (IHL) expanded in 2023. The program had classes from Withrow University High School, Oyster High School, Western Hills University High School, AchievePoint Career Academy and Talbert House.



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

VISIT CINCY BUILDS AND EXECUTES STRATEGIC MARKETING PROGRAMS TO DRIVE AWARENESS, BUILD REPUTATION AND GENERATE CONVENTION AND TOURISM REVENUE.



Leisure travel continued its strong upward trend in 2023, and Visit Cincy intensified its partnership with meetNKY to drive leisure travel dollars and visitors to the region. Key successes in 2023 include:

- Delivered a year-round integrated leisure campaign that reached 2 million unique, targeted travelers and produced more than 83 million impressions, 3 million web site impressions and 5 million Facebook engagements.
- Increased requests for the Official Visitor Guide 131%. There was also a 49% increase in email newsletter sign-ups.
- Optimized the newly launched regional tourism website, VisitCincy.com with engaging content focused on inspiring trips to the region and increased engaged time-on-site by 16%.

Communications

- Generated nearly 900 total media stories about the Cincy Region destination, delivering more than 1.4 billion impressions around the globe.
- Capitalized on the new British Airways direct flight from London by promoting the Cincy Region to European audiences. Media outreach drove more than 90 stories and 570 million impressions.
- Maximized the impact of two Taylor Swift concerts by creating a guide for visiting fans, staging a media room for visiting journalists, generating 302 press stories and delivering nearly 450 million media impressions. Campaigns also maximized visitation for events like the Bengals home playoff game, FC Cincinnati's championship run, and the Reds mid-season winning streak.

Marketing supported strategic sales efforts through near and long term strategies.

- Designed and executed advertising campaign to inspire local meeting planners and decision makers to keep events in Hamilton County, reaching 617,000 impressions and generating 2,000 clicks.
- Created new SkyNav aerial tours of convention-related facilities in the region as an online and trade show tool to highlight the destination's compact footprint and enhance the 360 degree tours of individual facilities.
- Optimized VisitCincy.com meetings-related content with updates about new facilities and tour features, generating nearly 30,000 sessions.
- Supported sales team with innovative trade show promotion, emails, contests, mailers and client outreach. Collaborated with meetNKY on regional activations at key show opportunities.
- Began strategic marketing and branding groundwork for revitalized downtown convention district, to debut as the DECC undergoes its redevelopment and new headquarter hotel details are announced in 2024.

The Cincy Region collaboration with meetNKY intensified international outreach to support direct flights from Europe.

- Expanded advertising into new and emerging direct flight markets including the UK, France, Canada, and Germany.
- Participated in BrandUSA marketing partner advertising programs to reach UK audiences.
- Represented the Cincy Region at international-based travel shows including IPW and BrandUSA week and sales missions.
- Hosted British travel writers and travel professionals on familiarization tours to experience the Cincy Region.



DESTINATION ENGAGEMENT

IN 2023, VISIT CINCY DEBUTED A NEW MEMBERSHIP MODEL DESIGNED TO OFFER TIERS OF PARTNERSHIP LEVELS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MEMBERS BUSINESSES POST-PANDEMIC. TO BOLSTER ENGAGEMENT, VISIT CINCY STRENGTHENED PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT LOCAL TOURISM BUSINESSES:

- Increased communication through weekly Three Things Thursday newsletter to give local tourism professionals access to quick news and updates about Visit Cincy and the industry.
- Hosted seven partner events with an average attendance of 40. The events give attendees a glimpse into new and different venues, while facilitating networking among the membership base.
- Debuted News & Notes email communication, designed to reach community stakeholders who may not be in the industry, but deeply affected by it. News & Notes updates monthly on development progress, comp set and trends.
- Continued the Cincy Tourism Ambassador Program, part of the internationally recognized Certified Tourism Ambassador Program®. Students from the Dan Lincoln Institute of Hospitality Leadership became certified, as well as dozens of other industry professionals.

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



Hamilton
County



CINCINNATI
EXPERIENCE



FINANCIAL REPORT

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AVAILABLE
UPON REQUEST.

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