



How CVBs Support Event Planners

Get the support you need
for planning events, sourcing
venues, and learning about
destinations



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Introduction

As an event planner, you know just how challenging the event planning process can be. You are also aware of the overall competitiveness of the meeting and event landscape. That's why, when it comes to planning events, it only makes sense to use whatever tools are available to simplify things—bonus points when those tools are free.

Enter Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs). CVBs can make your job as an event planner so much easier, and they offer their services at no cost to you.

Whether you're looking to hold an event locally, across the country, or even on the other side of the globe, a CVB is your ultimate event planning ally. It can give you the inside track when it comes to finding just the right venue. It can help you navigate complications and provide you with insights about a location, enhancing your event and making your attendees happy.

According to [ConventionSouth's 2025 CVB & Planner Relationship Survey](#), almost 63% of responding event planners use CVBs to plan most or all of their live events. Those responding to the [2026 Event Planner Sourcing Report](#) shared a similar sentiment, with 75% stating that they work with CVBs at least some of the time. If you're not among that group of event planners, read on to find out more about why you should be.

Learn about what CVBs are, how they view meetings and events, and just what they can offer you and other event planners to make their jobs easier. You will also find out more about how and when you should contact and partner with a CVB.



Chapter 1: What Is a CVB?

You may hear comparisons made between [Convention and Visitors Bureaus \(CVBs\)](#), [Destination Marketing Organizations \(DMOs\)](#), and [Destination Management Companies \(DMCs\)](#). While these types of organizations share similarities, there are also some notable differences.

CVBs exist to promote tourism and travel to their destinations, and they offer an array of materials and expertise to that end. They tend to be non-profit or local government organizations that work with businesses within the region to promote their destination. CVBs differ from DMOs in that they tend to focus their destination marketing on travel and tourism professionals and event planners.

A DMO offers the closest comparison to a CVB (close enough that the terms are often used interchangeably); they are **usually non-profit organizations that work with local businesses, government agencies, and media to market their destination**. They tend to cater to a broad travel market, encompassing both recreational travelers and professionals. In terms of verbiage, a DMO would be the more accurate term for an organization that functions in a city without a convention center.

DMCs are usually for-profit. They offer event planners and other clients full-service destination concierge services, for a fee that depends on the extent of those services. In serving tourism and travel clients, they focus on promoting their partnering businesses.

What services do CVBs provide?

CVBs are destination insiders. They offer encyclopedic, up-to-date knowledge of a destination, including things like business openings, events and festivals, weather conditions, and even road closures; anything, really, that could affect travel or event planning.

CVBs also aim to have close relationships with local hotels and venues, restaurants, recreation centers, and other businesses. CVBs are familiar with these establishments and know exactly how and when to matchmake between them and incoming group business.

In other words, CVBs are the places where you want to go to get the real inside scoop about a destination, and where you can get the information and connections you need to make an event go well, even if you don't know the area. (We'll get into more detail about all the services CVBs provide event planners in Chapter 3.)



Chapter 1: What Is a CVB?

How are CVBs funded?

CVBs are funded via a mix of sources. These include items such as membership fees, hotel and occupancy taxes, and allocations from regional and state governments. This diverse array of funding sources means that services to event planners and other clients are usually free.

What professionals work at CVBs?

Since CVBs exist to promote their destination, the professionals who work there have backgrounds and expertise in marketing, events, and tourism. They understand the travel market, know how to communicate their message, and recognize their target audience effectively. Working at a CVB also often means that these professionals are enthusiastic about their roles and experts about the destination.



“Dates, rates, and space we have in abundance, but they can get that anywhere. Our planners want to come to San Antonio and have an experience that couples with their meeting or convention. They look to us as the DMO to be that professional who knows the destination in a way that can guide them to successful events in an incredible place.”

—TYLER ORWIG, VICE PRESIDENT OF SALES

[VISIT SAN ANTONIO](#)

Chapter 2: How CVBs Think About Meetings and Events

If something can bring revenue and good publicity to their locale, a CVB will likely support it. Moreover, they will do everything possible to help facilitate that increased revenue and publicity. Bringing meetings and events to their city is a great way to do just that.

In a CVB's view, meetings and events:

- Have a positive economic impact
- Support local business
- Bring new visitors to the city

Positive economic impact

Meetings and events are known as money makers for a destination on several levels. First, you have revenue coming in for everything that's required for the event itself, like hotel rooms, convention center rental fees, and F&B. Additionally, you have revenue from event attendees when they engage in activities during their downtime that are not directly related to the event, like eating at a restaurant, shopping, or visiting tourist attractions.

Support local business

The chosen venue is the clear focal point of an event, and an obvious benefactor of incoming meetings and events. But it doesn't stop there. Other local businesses also benefit from conferences and events. Hotels, transportation companies, nearby restaurants, retail outlets, and entertainment centers can experience increased business due to an event nearby.

A CVB further supports local businesses by marketing and recommending those businesses to event planners and attendees. It can also encourage businesses, such as hotels and restaurants, to collaborate and develop enticing room/dining packages for attendees, to increase revenue for both.

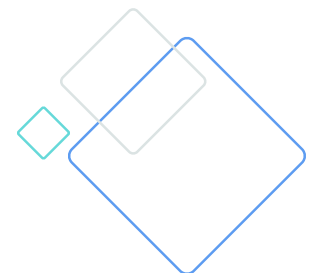
Bring new visitors to the city

People are what give cities their energy. When people are new to a city, that energy is heightened by curiosity and a sense of discovery.

Suppose they like what they see and experience; every new person who comes into a city for a professional meeting or event has the potential to return as a tourist and bring their friends and family.

Word of mouth can lead to even more new visitors, who will then spend their money and support local businesses.

Then there's what happens if the event itself is successful. If it goes well and everyone is satisfied with the outcome, that can lead to repeat business and, yes, attract more new people. And the cycle of success continues.



Chapter 2: How CVBs Think About Meetings and Events

How CVBs measure success

Because CVBs receive government and public funding, they usually need to prove to those sources that what they're doing is successful. There are a few key metrics that CVBs use to determine if their destination marketing efforts are working:

- **Number of travelers and bookings.** This figure will include both returning visitors and new ones. Year over year or month over month, have room night numbers increased? [Gathering this data](#) daily will reveal patterns in bookings and any growth opportunities.
- **Amount of revenue from tourism and travel.**
More incoming group business should lead to increased revenue at hotels, venues, restaurants, and other attractions that attendees frequent. CVBs will, therefore, gather data that shows just how much people are spending and where they're spending it.

- **Feedback.** This can come from both event planners and the local businesses that benefit from their relationship with their local CVB. Event planners can share their own impressions, as well as any feedback they might get from attendees.

Local businesses may be very pleased with the amount of foot traffic an event has generated for them. Alternatively, some may feel the increased foot traffic did not translate into greater sales. Either way, such feedback is helpful, as it can influence future planning and promotional efforts by the CVB.

- **Referrals.** The CVB may find that a successful event results in more requests from other event planners. That is largely due to the event planner providing referrals to others

So, if you've had a great experience with a CVB, be sure to share it with others. It will help your colleagues know that a CVB is good to work with, as well as benefit the CVB with more group business connections.



“We are judged on bringing business into the city in terms of creating jobs and keeping all of our hotels and venues alive and kicking.”

—FIONA PLUMPTON, HEAD OF CONVENTION
BUREAU SERVICES, [LONDON & PARTNERS](#)

Chapter 3: Services CVBs Offer to Event Planners

So, what can a CVB do for you and other event planners like you? A whole lot, really. When you confer with a CVB when planning an event, you can get:

- Intricate local knowledge of a destination
- Support and guidance with site visits
- A negotiation partner
- Discounts at venues, hotels, restaurants, etc.
- Logistics planning
- Transportation tips
- Marketing tools
- Vendor connections

Local knowledge

This is a CVB superpower that's worth repeating; [they know everything about a destination](#). They can provide you with in-depth, honest information that can be helpful at every stage of event planning. And they can answer all your questions about a location like: *Yes, this venue is a great size for your event. No, that restaurant will be closed for renovations.* And so on.

CVBs are, of course, useful when planning events in remote locations. However, they can also be surprisingly helpful for local events. Even if you think you know your own city inside and out, a CVB probably still knows more.

Site visits

Suppose you're an event planner working remotely. In that case, technology has made it easier than ever to source venues and obtain in-depth details about specific spaces through digital images, [3D modeling](#), and virtual tours. However, there is still a benefit to having someone there in person who can really get a feel for a space and obtain answers to questions in real-time. A CVB can act as your in-person representative for onsite visits to potential venues.

Even if you're local to a destination or can visit venues yourself, it can help to have an insider available. That's just what a CVB is, and they can grease the wheels to move things along and give you access to venues that might be of interest to you in a timelier manner than you might expect. If the local CVB plans your site visit, you can expect to discover hidden gems that you wouldn't read about in online summaries of the destination. They will ensure that you understand how far away the convention center is from the hotel, what transportation options are available from the airport, and great spots for after-hours meetings or drinks.



Chapter 3: Services CVBs Offer to Event Planners

Negotiations

The same insider status makes CVBs a great negotiating partner. After you've sent out a request for proposal (RFP), are you not hearing back as quickly as you would like? Not getting timely responses to follow-up questions? Engage a CVB to help keep the negotiation process moving smoothly.

Perhaps you're finding it challenging to get the amenities or vendors you want. Or a hotel or venue isn't willing to discount their rates when you think they should. In cases like these, a CVB can step in to find a workable solution for everyone. At the same time, a CVB can be honest with you and tell you if other events are happening at the same time or if venues are planning remodels. They can suggest alternatives that could make both you and your potential venue or vendor happy.

Discounts

CVBs can save you money. Need we say more? As an advocate for local businesses, a CVB is generally able to negotiate special rates that can be offered to event planners when the terms are favorable (such as minimum attendance numbers or the use of preferred vendors). Many CVBs have an engaged and active cohort of local businesses that are eager to offer discounts to attract new guests. The CVB in Istanbul, Turkey, is a great example. "Through the ICVB's broad network—which includes Turkish Airlines, Governorship of Istanbul, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, TURSAB (the Association of Turkish Travel Agents), TUROB (The Hotel Association of Türkiye), and the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce—organizers can access unique incentives such as discounted flights, accommodation support, and local transportation solutions."

Logistics planning

During the venue sourcing process, it can be challenging to schedule site visits or tours and keep track of all the various emails and other communications from multiple hotels or venues. So, let the CVB take care of all of that for you. The CVB can be your single point of contact. They can be the ones to handle all the logistics of scheduling site visits and communications from all the various players.

When the time comes to set up and tear down an event, a CVB can also help you prepare for the most expedient install or takedown schedule for presenters and vendors. At your chosen venue, they can also make note of things like location and number of loading docks, ceiling heights, the availability of moving equipment, and so forth, so you can plan accordingly. Particularly if you are using the local convention center, the CVB team has mastered the process of loading equipment, scheduling vendors, securing entrances, and scheduling entertainment or food and beverage.



Chapter 3: Services CVBs Offer to Event Planners

Transportation

Related to logistics, a CVB can help you figure out the best modes of travel to and from an event venue and lodgings, the airport, and other points of interest. Only a local can tell you the fastest or most efficient ways of getting around a city. It takes a special kind of local to know how to coordinate the movement of hundreds of people through a town, nearly all at once. With a CVB's expertise, you know that if attendees stay here, they can eat here and shop here when they're not at the venue.

Does the destination have a train or subway? Is there a bus line that travels between hotels and the venue? Perhaps it would be more efficient to have dedicated private transportation available through a taxi, rideshare service, or shuttle. A CVB can help you coordinate the right transportation solution to get everyone to where they need to be quickly and without stress.

Marketing

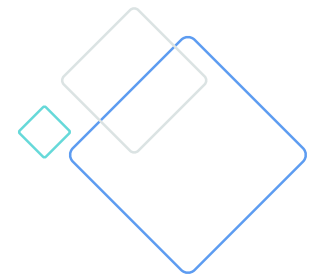
Again, a CVB wants events in its city to succeed. So, they are likely to be very enthusiastic and willing to do what they can to help you promote yours. First, CVBs and their teams of marketing professionals have a range of destination marketing tools that they are happy to share with you, so that you can then share them with stakeholders and event attendees. Why a destination is great for an event, all the amazing things to see and do there, how easy it is to get there and get around—a CVB will have such information already beautifully prepared and ready for you to use to help present your case.

[CVB marketing](#) efforts for your event can also include utilizing their regular marketing channels (social media, email, and so on) to help spread the word among local businesses and other followers. The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism, Investments & Aviation understands that attendees are excited to come to the Bahamas and will provide planners with the marketing materials they need to build on that anticipation. “We provide customizable event planning kits, high-resolution images and video assets, and co-branded promotional materials to help you easily pitch and promote your event to stakeholders and attendees.”

Vendor Connections

95% of planners said they use on-site support vendors for at least some of their events. And just as with venues, CVBs are knowledgeable sources for finding the vendors needed for each event. Whether you are looking for AV, translation, attendee engagement, entertainment, or gifts, CVBs can point teams in the right direction.

They are most likely to know what production company specializes in large conferences, where to get locally produced food gifts, or fresh flowers for table settings. Cities like St. Louis, Missouri, make sure their event planners are well-equipped. “Explore St. Louis connects event planners with a curated network of trusted vendors and partners, providing access to a wide range of services, from cutting-edge audio-visual solutions to unique off-site venues.”



Chapter 3: Services CVBs Offer to Event Planners

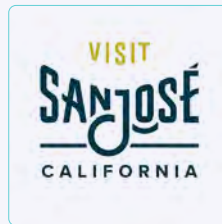
Examples of what CVBs offer to event planners

We've described what CVBs can offer in general terms. But here are a few examples of some specific things that CVBs are doing to assist event planners:

Visit San Jose

In its efforts to work collaboratively with hotels and event planners and improve visibility for citywide events, [Visit San Jose](#) started offering [Cvent Passkey](#) as a complimentary service. By automating and centralizing the room block process, both hotels and planners can access the data. When multiple hotels are available, attendees can view all their hotel options in one place.

"Passkey is super user-friendly," says Karla Guitierrez, the Visit San Jose Housing Sales and Services Manager. "The hotels and planners love it. It's easy to learn and maneuver in. We can customize each event, and it has capabilities that continue to grow. It's so beneficial for me and for clients."



Amsterdam Convention Bureau

While Amsterdam is well-known as a travel destination, the travel tends to be for leisure purposes. To capture a larger share of professional group business, the [Amsterdam Convention Bureau](#) determined that the city needed to tailor its marketing efforts to international event planners. To help do that, the bureau invested in [Diamond advertising](#) on the Cvent Supplier Network.

"Now we can provide more details about what to see and do in Amsterdam, as well as the facilities at each event space," says Bart Antonissen, Account Manager at Amsterdam Convention Bureau. "This helps planners during the research process because it gives them a better idea of how great a function could be here." This support has created real results for the CVB. They were ranked number four on [Cvent's Top Meeting Destinations](#) in Europe list in 2025.

**amsterdam
convention
bureau**



Chapter 3: Services CVBs Offer to Event Planners

Sonoma County Tourism

The Sonoma region of California doesn't have a local convention center, but it does have facilities that can serve large meetings and conventions. To help spread the word, [Sonoma County Tourism](#) shows off everything the area has to offer in its listing on the [Event Supplier Network](#). Having so much information centralized also helps address what the team has identified as a top concern for event planners: time.



"We hear all the time that meeting planners are incredibly busy— busier than they ever remember being. Hotels are also very busy. Everyone is overworked, understaffed, and out of time. But meeting planners still need these answers quickly. They need to make decisions quickly," says Jonny Westom, Vice President of Business Development.

"The more Sonoma County Tourism's team talked with meeting planners and learned about their constraints, the more we looked at ourselves and asked, what can we do as a destination, as an organization, to address some of these concerns and constraints that clients face today?"

In further efforts to save planners' time, Sonoma County has also created one-minute videos of hotels and venues. These are essentially "elevator pitches," with all the information that planners need to understand their options and make decisions quickly. The videos are frequently updated, ensuring planners always have the most current information.



"We can help meeting planners, not just to source the hotel, but with everything that happens after hotel selection. We can connect them with the community if they're looking for a speaker, a CSR project, maps and guides, and gifts for your VIPs. We also arrange site visits. Our bureau hosts over 200 site visits a year. "

—MARIYA BAKER, DIRECTOR OF SALES,
[LOUISVILLE TOURISM](#)

Chapter 4: How Planners Can Get in Touch and Work with CVBs

Now that you know [how a CVB can help you](#)—and that they want to help you—it's up to you to make contact and establish that partnership.

When to reach out

We recommend bringing a CVB into the event planning process as soon as possible. This can be when you're vetting locations for your event or, if the location is predetermined, as soon as you're given the green light to start planning and sourcing venues.

In fact, you can add the local CVB right to your RFP when you are sourcing on the [Cvent Supplier Network](#). You can also contact a CVB directly through the Destinations Guide, which provides information about local venues, average rates, transportation options, weather conditions, and attractions. A reliable CVB will respond to messages promptly and make themselves available to provide information or assist you at any time during the planning process.

Before location selection

Take advantage of a CVB's insider status to get the real inside scoop on a venue and its location. You can get a lot of information about venues via their individual sales teams and websites. But you also want to know about the things hotels and venues like experiences other businesses have had there, and the best times of year to book.

Before moving forward with an RFP, confer with a CVB to discuss any venues you're considering. They can help you determine which ones are or aren't the right choices for your event. They may even be able to suggest other venues that you might not have considered, but could actually be a great fit.

Copy CVBs on RFPs

If you've already made introductions and have a pre-existing relationship with a CVB, you can give them a heads-up about the venues you're thinking about sending an RFP. At the same time, you can discuss your expectations when it comes to RFPs and request the CVB's assistance to help move things along. If the city is new to you, including the CVB from the start allows the city to plan for your event alongside your event team.



Chapter 4: How Planners Can Get in Touch and Work with CVBs

During the event planning process

To help your event succeed, CVBs will be more than happy to act as intermediaries between event planners and local venues and vendors. This can be especially useful if you're working remotely. Are you curious how long it will really take your attendees to get from the airport to the convention center during rush hour? Do you have a question or concern about logistics? Contact the CVB to get an answer to your question and put your mind at ease.

Staying up to date on the destination

Suppose any sudden and/or unexpected happenings around town might affect your event. In that case, it's helpful to have boots on the ground that can both keep you informed and make smart recommendations on ways to work around or with any last-minute issues. A CVB will keep you in the loop when it comes to any upcoming road construction or closures, other competing events, business closures or renovations, new businesses opening, and so on.

Because the CVB you're working with is prepared and knowledgeable about its destination and what's happening there, you will be too.

Curious what the top destinations are in the regions you typically source?

Check out [Cvent's Top Meeting Destinations](#) list for the popular and emerging destinations that can accommodate your meetings and events in every area.



“Travel and tourism are absolutely essential to the future of Puerto Rico. Meetings and conventions have become an important anchor in that strategy, but we find ourselves constantly challenged to explain what we’re doing, how we’re investing, and the results we’re achieving not only internally but to external stakeholders—our board members, our hoteliers, elected officials, and partners both on and off the island.”

—BRAD DEAN, CEO, [DISCOVER PUERTO RICO](#)



Cvent is the global meeting, event, travel, and hospitality technology leader.

Cvent provides easy-to-use, integrated technology solutions to maximize the impact of meetings and events of all sizes. We help organizations plan and market events, execute onsite, engage audiences, and measure and analyze results.

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