



November 17 & 18, 2025

Presented by:

Georgia Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus and

Host Sponsor: Discover DeKalb

Agenda

Monday, November 17, 2025

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| 1:00 pm - 1:15 pm | Welcome to Group Sales & Marketing Symposium
Amanda Dyson-Thornton, Executive Director - GACVB |
| 1:15 pm - 1:30 pm | Welcome to DeKalb
James Tsismanakis, CEO, Discover DeKalb, the DeKalb Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Sports DeKalb |
| 1:30 pm - 2:45 pm | Opening Session
<i>Game On: Leveraging FIFA to Elevate Georgia's Destinations</i>
Aligning campaigns with soccer themes, international fan travel, cultural exchange, and global sports tourism trends. Working with local, national, and international media covering FIFA to spotlight Georgia's diverse destinations.
SPEAKERS: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mary Beth Gibbs, Business Development and Marketing Manager for the Atlanta Sports Council |
| 2:45 pm – 3:15 pm | Afternoon Break Sponsored by Georgia Entertainment |

3:15 pm – 4:00 pm

General Session

Advocate Now: CVB 101 & Shaping Georgia's Tourism Future"

Ready to make your voice heard and show lawmakers why Georgia tourism matters? Join **Dr. Tyler Reinagel**, State & Local Government Leader, Economic Development Pro, Public Policy Expert for a high-energy, no-fluff session on CVB advocacy 101. He'll break down the Senate Study Committee meetings, what we're asking for, and why now is the time to act. You'll also get the inside scoop on **Tourism Day at the Capitol**. Why it's so important, how it drives real results, and why 2026 is shaping up to be bigger and better than ever. Walk away with three key takeaways you can put to work immediately to boost your advocacy game and make a tangible impact on Georgia's tourism future.

4:00 pm - 4:45 pm

Breakout | Sales

Level Up: Esports as a Tourism and Engagement

Esports isn't just gaming — it's a rapidly growing tourism and economic driver. Join us for an inside look at how esports events are attracting visitors, engaging younger audiences, and creating new opportunities for Georgia destinations. This session will explore strategies for leveraging esports to boost local tourism, host major events, and connect with both collegiate and professional gaming communities.

4:00 pm - 4:45 pm

Breakout Session| Marketing & PR

PR Campaigns Around FIFA: Driving Community Engagement Through Partnerships & Activations

With the FIFA World Cup bringing international attention to Georgia, destinations have an unprecedented platform to tell their stories. This session will highlight how well-crafted PR campaigns can amplify visibility, spark community pride, and attract visitors. Learn how to collaborate with restaurants, attractions, sports venues, and local businesses to create share-worthy activations such as themed events, watch parties, and fan experiences that capture media attention and drive tourism. Hear from **Deborah Stone**, Owner of Pineapple PR, as she shares proven strategies for developing impactful campaigns and maximizing exposure on the world stage.

4:00 pm- 4:45 pm

Breakout | Services

5:30 pm- 6:30 pm	Evening Reception sponsored by Discover DeKalb Transportation Shuttle loop begins
6:00 pm- 9:00 pm	Evening Dine Around
9:00 pm	Shuttle loop ends.

Tuesday, November 18, 2025

8:00 am - 9:00 am	Coffee and Conversation Sponsored by PineapplePR
9:00 am - 10:00 am	General Session <i>CRM 101</i> Panelists Pholeta Alexander, Vice President, Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau, Brent Foerster, Executive Vice President, Tempest & Granicus Partner Engagement Manager
10:15 am - 11:15 am	Breakout Sales- CRM Deep Dive
10:15 am - 11:15 am	Breakout Marketing/PR
10:15 am - 11:15 am	Breakout Services

Georgia Connections: Unlocking Hidden Partnerships for Service Teams”

Want to make your visitors’ experiences seamless and keep tourism dollars in Georgia? Join us to hear from local service providers about why building strong local partnerships matters and how CVB service teams can tap into resources and connections they may not even know exist. Learn practical tips, insider tricks, and real-life success stories to elevate your services game while supporting Georgia businesses. Panelist: **Mary Dart**, with Dart Services, **Hoss Oskouie** with Atlantic Transportation and **DMC** perspective. Moderated by **Amanda Hughes**, Director of Partnerships, Cobb Travel & Tourism.

11:30 am- 12:45 pm	Luncheon Roundtable Roundup Peer Table Leaders Join your industry peers as you share best practices, obstacles, and successes.
1:00 pm- 2:00 pm	General Session AI

AI, Web Crawlers, and Your Destination: What You Need to Know

Artificial intelligence is changing the way travelers discover destinations — and AI-powered web crawlers are at the forefront. Join LearnTourism for a deep dive into how these technologies impact your destination's online visibility, why managing crawler access to your website matters more than ever, and practical strategies to protect and optimize your digital presence. **Presented by: LearnTourism**

2:15 pm- 3:00 pm

Breakout | Sales - AI Deep Dive

2:15 pm- 3:00 pm

Breakout | Marketing/PR - AI Deep Dive

2:15 pm- 3:00 pm

Breakout | Services- AI Deep Dive

3:15 pm- 4:00 pm

Closing Session

Adapt. Evolve. Repeat: Leveraging Traveler Insights for Destination Marketing

Discover the latest trends in traveler behavior, including a growing interest in outdoor adventures, cultural experiences, and personalized itineraries. This session will show how Georgia CVBs and DMOs can use these insights to craft compelling marketing strategies, connect with today's travelers, and drive increased visitation and engagement. **SPEAKER: Scott Caufield**, Senior Principal Client Partner, TripAdvisor

4:00 pm

Closing Remarks & Adjournment