

GROUP SALES SYMPOSIUM 2021

November 30 – December 2, 2021

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Atlanta-Roswell
1075 Holcomb Bridge Rd, Roswell, GA 30076
(770) 992-9600

Presented by:
Georgia Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus and
Southeast Tourism Society

Host Sponsor: Visit Roswell



Agenda

Tuesday, November 30, 2021

STS Board of Directors Meeting

Lunch on your own: Enjoy the cuisine of Roswell
[Visit Roswell – Eat & Drink](#)

1:00pm – 1:15pm

Welcome to Group Sales Symposium
Monica Smith, President & CEO - STS
Jay Markwalter, Executive Director - GACVB

1:15pm – 1:30pm

Welcome to the City of Roswell
Roswell City Official
Andy Williams, Roswell CVB

1:30pm – 2:30pm

Opening Session
Michael Dominguez, President & CEO - ALHI

The Need to be Decisively Indecisive: Understanding Behavioral Changes for the Meetings & Event Industry

The Pandemic forced all of us to experience so many learnings, twist, and forks in the road. As we start to emerge into a clearer future, there has never been a greater need for you to be Decisively Indecisive. “Affective Forecasting,” the psychological study of how one feels into the future is front and center after 2020. The experience of 2020 has absolutely been unexpected, uncertain, and devastating in many ways. We now face a world, country, economy, and industry traveling a road much less traveled as we begin to restart our global commerce engine and hospitality industry.

What will be the long-term changes in our industry? What were the silver linings to come out of this challenging time? It is important to know where to look and more importantly to not overthink what may or may not be structural in change.

This session will help identify the questions we should be asking as we know the next 18 months will set the course on where end up with permanent behavioral changes to the Meetings & Events Industry.

- **Takeaways:**

1. Update on the current situation regarding the Global state of COVID19 and Vaccine distribution
2. Meeting environment expected changes for the remainder of 2021
3. Current state of the economy and expectations for 2021 and 2022
4. A review of travel experience changes and expectations
5. The need to engage – still ever present
6. Adoption of technology and process in a “Fast Forward” society

2:45pm – 3:45pm

General Session

Casandra Matej, Visit Orlando

Cleo Battle, Louisville CVB

Joe Marinelli, Visit Savannah

Moderator: Monica Smith, Southeast Tourism Society

Lessons from the CEOs: How DMO Sales Prepared Me to Lead

Successful sales professionals and leaders must possess and utilize a variety of skills and flexibility in the everchanging DMO environment. Learn from three CEO how their previous roles in convention sales prepared them to lead DMOs, and what tools and techniques you can use today to become even more successful in your role and to support your leaders.

- **Takeaways:**

1. Communication styles, skills, and tools essential for success in sales roles
2. Transferable skills and tools that help salespeople achieve success and lead effectively
3. Potential pathways to sales and DMO leadership

3:45pm – 4:15pm

Afternoon Break

4:15pm – 5:15pm

Roundtable Roundup

Peer Table Leaders

Pivoting Post Pandemic

Join your industry peers as you share best practices, obstacles, and successes.

Seven Topics / (2) 30-minute rotations: *Goal setting – Sales tracking and reporting – Knowing your market(s) – Impact calculation – Selling with local partners – Sports market – Group Tour market*

5:15pm – 5:30pm

Day One – Wrap Up

Monica Smith & Jay Markwalter

Announcements and Housekeeping Notes

5:30 pm – 6:00 pm

Evening Reception (*Pre-function Area*)

Hosted by DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Atlanta-Roswell

6:00 – 9:00 pm

Roswell Dine Around - <https://www.visitroswellga.com/dine-around/>

Find an amazing variety of cuisines from one corner of the world to the other. Roswell has become a culinary destination just north of Atlanta. Stroll through the historic district to find your dinner spot for the evening. The hard part will be choosing which one. Here are a few suggestions ranging in price and cuisine:

[1920 Tavern](#), 948 Canton St., Roswell, GA 30075

[Little Alley Steak](#), 955 Canton St., Roswell, GA 30075

[Lola's Burger & Tequila Bar](#), 944 Canton St., Roswell, GA 30075

[Osteria Mattone](#), 1095 Canton St., Roswell, GA 30075

[Rock N Taco](#), 928 Canton St., Roswell, GA 30075

[Salt Factory Pub](#), 952 Canton St, Roswell, GA 30075

[Table & Main, a Southern Tavern](#), 1028 Canton St., Roswell, GA 30075

Wednesday, December 1, 2021

7:00am – 8:00am

Breakfast

8:15am – 9:15am

General Session

Sophia Hyder Hock, Founder & CEO – Papilia

How to Cultivate the Hospitality Gene

Travel Sales Professionals are fundamental to the growth of a destination, yet the role of this position is ever-evolving especially in a post COVID-19

environment. This session will provide you with practical tools and tips to succeed in this role and shift the way you do business with existing and new clientele.

- **Takeaways:**

1. Learn how to foster genuine relationships with your colleagues, current clients, and prospective clientele (in virtual and in-person settings)
2. Develop new ways to craft your competitive advantage
3. Gain insight on how to create a welcoming experience for a diverse range of clientele.

9:30am – 10:30am

General Session

Shawn Grenley, STR

Hotel Industry Update

In 2020, the hotel industry was caught in the crossfire of the pandemic response, ranging from complete national shutdowns to conditional border reopening's to mandatory quarantines. Group hotel demand fell sharply as meetings and group events were cancelled and international travel came to a halt. Fast forward to today and transient demand is very healthy meanwhile group recovery is slowly underway. This session will examine the hotel performance of the Total U.S. and Southeast region, state of the meetings and group industry today and provide an outlook for the future.

- **Takeaways:**

1. An update on hotel industry performance
2. Discussion on current travel trends and headwinds
3. Outlook for the future

10:30am – 11:00am

Mid-Morning Break

Wednesday Wellness Break with Sophia Hyder Hock

Wellness by Design

Simple ways to cope with stress throughout your day whether at home or traveling

11:00am – 12:00pm

General Session

Mark Vaughan, Executive VP & Chief Sales Officer - Atlanta CVB

The 2022 Outlook for Meetings & Conventions: Preparing your Partners for the Months Ahead

- **Takeaways:**

1. Strategies for effectively communicating the short-term and long-term impact of COVID-19 on your group business
2. Recommendations for Leading a Destination Sales Recovery Effort with Confidence
3. Expectations of meeting planners in working with CVBs, and their partners, in planning for upcoming events

12:00pm – 1:00pm

LUNCHEON

1:00pm – 2:00pm

General Session

Patricia Byrd, Director of Group Sales – OneSpartanburg, Inc.

Karen Morris, Director of Sales – Visit South Walton

Kristin Schneider, Director of Sales - ATL Airport District

Moderator: Bruce Johnson, Director of Sales – Explore Gwinnett

Sales Administrative Panel

DMO sales leaders discuss strategy, management, and measuring success

2:15pm – 3:15pm

General Session

Soulaima Gourani, CEO/Founder Happioh

Sponsored by Simpleview

Improve Internal Cooperation

We are witnessing the most extensive and most rapid change in how we work, live, and study. It is both an evolution and a revolution at the same time. It is time to find and create solutions both employers and employees can live with. There is an urgency for a more dynamic talent and work model. Successful collaboration requires optimal mental and system alignment of people, process, information, technology, facilitation, and leadership.

• **Takeaways:**

1. This practical talk will guide you through the human nature and desire behind collaboration and competition.
2. How to implement the 30/70% rule and the 50% rule
3. Learn about the "PERMA" approach for successful relationship building.

3:15pm – 3:30pm

Closing Remarks & Adjournment

Monica Smith & Jay Markwalter

7:30pm

GACVB Board of Directors Dinner

Thursday, December 2, 2021

8:30am – 10:00am

GACVB Board of Directors Meeting