

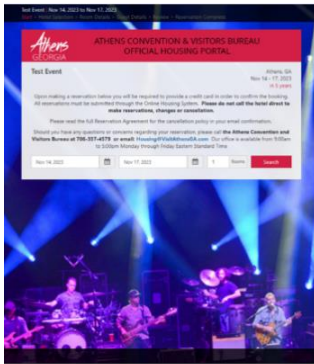


mmx meetingmax

Case Study

Success Story Athens Georgia

The Athens team was able to turn room block management into a profitable new revenue stream for their CVB, bringing in \$60,000 annually in new revenue.



SITUATION

The Athens (Georgia) Convention & Visitors Bureau decided to get into housing and licensed Meetingmax's room block management software. They quickly saw the potential to turn the platform into a profitable entity of the CVB, bringing in more than \$60,000 annually in new revenue.

SOLUTION

How did the team at the Athens CVB manage to achieve this success?

- **Research, Research, Research**
They took the time to analyze group trends, specifically the booking patterns of various groups from tech organizations, to sporting groups, to business students. Each group had distinct patterns with some booking as early as six months out, while others didn't see room pick up until one month, or sometimes even one week, out. This data allowed the CVB to better negotiate hotel contracts, having much closer cut-off dates for the groups who traditionally booked closer to the event. This data also helped reassure their hotel partners that the group blocks would indeed pick up based on the event history.
- **Defining Clear Goals**
"The trouble with not having a goal is that you can spend your life running up and down the field and never score." – Bill Copeland
By getting clear on what they hoped to achieve with housing, Athens was able to create a clear path to success. Their goals included:
 - **Alternative revenue stream:** They wanted to have a new tool to generate revenue for their organization.
 - **Remedy an issue that planners encountered:** Athens had worked with planners previously where room block management was a missing piece. Meetingmax offered them a solution they didn't previously have.
 - **Separate themselves from their competition:** By offering a value-added service to planners, they were able to distinguish themselves from other nearby destinations and win new business.

Meetingmax offers a sophisticated, yet simplified room block management system tailored to the events industry. Meetingmax's software is used by travel organizations in dozens of North American destinations and by organizers of high-profile events including SXSW, TED Conferences, Cisco Live, and Oracle OpenWorld.



DEEP UNDERSTANDING. AWESOME SOLUTIONS.
RIDICULOUSLY REMARKABLE SUPPORT.



ATHENS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Athens CVB is the official destination marketing organization of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia. The CVB is responsible for promoting the Athens community as an attractive travel destination and helping develop the community as a dynamic place to live and to work.

Travel's impact on Athens is large, strengthening the local economy, putting people to work, lifting people out of poverty and providing opportunity to start and grow businesses.

VisitAthensGA.com



SOLUTION *(continued)*

○ Hotel Collaboration

The Athens team knew that getting their hotel partners proficient in Meetingmax was a key factor to ensure success. They created a comprehensive plan which included virtual training, information sessions, and face-to-face meetings. They continued to offer these services on a consistent basis so that all hotel partners had a chance to become familiar with the new technology. By offering continuous training, they provided an ongoing opportunity to educate new hotel partners due to high staff turnover, a common scenario in most cities.

○ Game Plan for Hiccups

Athens was proactive at creating solutions for common issues. By knowing what pushback to expect from hotel and planner partners they were prepared to overcome any obstacle.

- **Hotels:** Washing of room blocks, declined reservations, invoice discrepancies, and limited communication with planners were common hiccups with hotel partners.
- **Planners:** Limited interest in housing, not understanding group patterns and cut-off dates, lack of communication with hotels, and not communicating clear expectations to attendees were common issues with planner partners.

Athens was able to create solutions and have clear protocols in place for communication, and resolution, should any of the above scenarios occur. This helped them tremendously as they were able to be proactive and provide user tips and tricks ahead of time to help curb these hiccups.

RESULTS

In their second year of licensing Meetingmax, the Athens CVB managed 23,000 room nights across 28 events, bringing in \$56,000.00 in new revenue. This year they have 27 events on the books totalling over 20,000 room nights. They are on track to make \$61,000.00 in revenue.