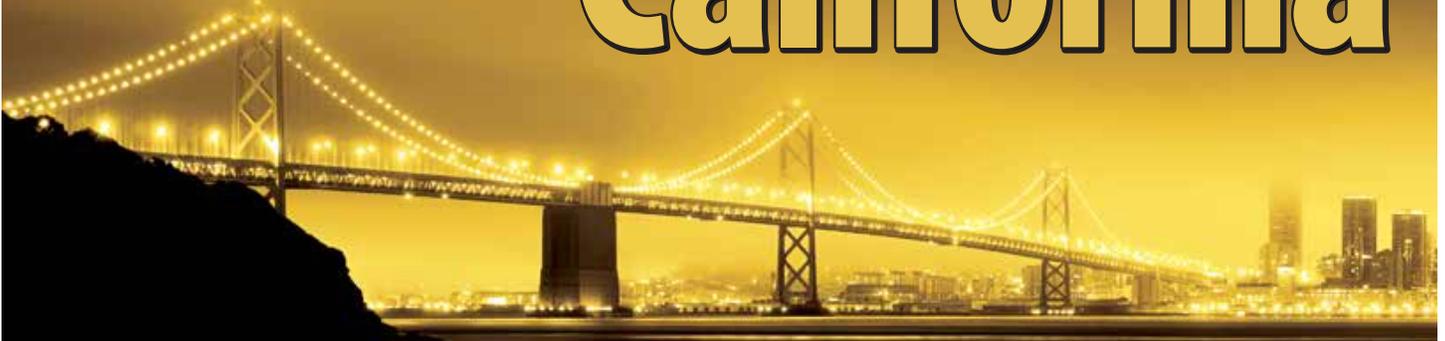


## Destination

# The California



## Meeting Success Is Almost Guaranteed in the

Perhaps no state in the union has the allure of the aptly named Golden State. And though every region of California has its own appeal, the state's more than 1,200-mile coastline is in a class of its own.

It has starred in some of Hollywood's most famous movies, celebrated in literature and in evocative ads, and it has drawn dreamers and doers to its shores since before California formalized statehood in 1850. It's no surprise that many of the meeting destinations below are set along California's Pacific coast, bays, marinas and beaches.

### San Francisco

The city and bay have been immortalized in literature and song, but that alone would not be enough to bring savvy planners to San Francisco. With nearly 34,000 hotel rooms

and more on the way, diverse culture, an inherent romance, renowned attractions, excellent transportation and meeting space galore, the city is a natural for meetings.

"Downtown San Francisco is a great place for international events due to location and airlift for attendees coming from all over the world," says Stefanie Ordoveza, global events manager with OSIssoft LLC, a California-based software company.

In April 2018, 2,600 attendees participated in the company's PI World 2018 event. "With our event at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square, it's an easy BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) ride from local airports and is located in an area with plentiful entertainment options for those interested in exploring one of the most beautiful cities in the world," Ordoveza says. "It also provides many options for you to grow your group in the space. We started with 1,000. Now we are over 2,500!"

San Francisco, she adds, "offers a wide range of options depending on what is important to you and your meeting, especially in terms of size, cost and atmosphere. The Hilton San Francisco Union Square is the largest hotel in the city that can accommodate our room block as well as meeting space needed to host our 2,600+ attendee conference without having to move to a convention center. Not to mention that its sister property, the Parc 55, allows us to do even more while providing the same quality service and feel."

Like other planners, Ordoveza notes

"The Hilton San Francisco Union Square...is located in an area with plentiful entertainment options for those interested in exploring one of the most beautiful cities in the world."

STEFANIE ORDOVEZA, Global Events Manager  
OSIssoft LLC, San Leandro, CA



# Factor



## 31st State Because Attendees Want to Be There

By Christine Loomis

that it is people that make the real difference. “What we love most about hosting our event at the Hilton is the hotel’s team. The event services team is truly top-notch and each individual on that team becomes an extension of our own leading up to the event and onsite, making our lives a little bit easier

when the event gets going. It’s always nice to see familiar faces who know pieces of our program as well as we do,” she says. “And that team continues to deliver exceptional results without forgetting a touch of hospitality or service. That goes a long way once the conference is in full swing and you’re running on fumes.”

For those who may not know the hotel as well, Ordoveza notes it’s important to be strategic. “The hotel has many different spaces in different locations, so it is important to share your ground plans with the hotel staff well in advance to ensure that you’re using the space in the most effective manner for your attendees.”

### Sacramento

Affordable and accessible, with more than 2,000 hotel rooms within walking distance of the city center and a convention center currently being expanded, along with other meeting-friendly transformations in the works, Sacramento is an excellent option for meeting planners.

Mike Testa, president and CEO of Visit Sacramento, puts

“You will be blown away at how high your meeting attendance will be due to being at Paradise Point in San Diego! We’re already looking forward to going back in 2020!”

**GRETA BARKER**, Global Communications  
Ben & Jerry’s, South Burlington, VT

it this way. “Sacramento has undergone a major transformation in the past few years. The Golden 1 Center, the cornerstone of the city’s downtown redevelopment, opened in 2016. The new Kimpton property, the Sawyer, was completed in 2017 adjacent to the arena. The new home of the NBA’s Sac-

ramento Kings is the most technologically advanced arena in the country and sources 90 percent of its food within 150 miles — a given in America’s farm-to-fork capital.”

In addition to sports, he points out, “the arena showcases concerts, theater and meetings. And adjacent to the Golden 1 Center is Downtown Commons, nicknamed DOCO, a three-acre outdoor plaza featuring concerts, entertainment, innovative restaurants, boutiques and a stunning \$8 million Jeff Koons sculpture. Large murals brighten outdoor spaces in the central city and visitors sample and relax at the many craft breweries, coffee bars and wine-tasting rooms. And *Money* magazine recently ranked Sacramento International Airport (SMF) fourth among the top 80 U.S. airports.”

### Santa Monica

When it comes to Santa Monica, it’s hard to beat its accessibility to one of the world’s busiest airports while simultaneously providing “away-from-it-all beach-town” appeal.

Misti Kerns, CEO and president of Santa Monica Travel & Tourism, describes the town’s dual personality.



Credits: Visit Sacramento

(Top) A Jeff Koons sculpture at the Golden 1 Center in downtown Sacramento. (Above) Hornblower Cruise on the Sacramento River.

"With fresh ocean breezes, 300-plus days of sunshine, with iconic beach vibes and 40 hotels, Santa Monica offers corporate meeting attendees the perfect balance between meet and play. They will want to extend their stay. Our charming seaside town is full of unique venues and beautiful beachfront settings. It's home to more than 100,000 sf of creative and unique event space and nearly 500 restaurants. All that," she says, "and we're located just eight non-freeway miles north of Los Angeles International Airport and well-connected to the greater Los Angeles area, making Santa Monica an ideal Southern California base for corporate meetings."

### Marina del Rey

Marina del Rey sits just south of Santa Monica, and though it's tiny — less than two square miles — it's a highly valuable piece of real estate in Los Angeles County and a superb meeting destination. It's home to the largest man-made small craft harbor in the world, among other assets.

Debby DuBose, CEO and event spe-

cialist with Los Angeles-based Conference Solutions International, worked with a group of 260 for a meeting in Marina del Rey in December 2017.

"Marina del Rey is a unique destination as it's within close proximity to the airport and is also near the beach," DuBose says. "And there are lots of offsite activities close by, such as bike rentals, parasailing and paddleboard."

The group was based at The Ritz-Carlton, Marina del Rey, which DuBose calls "a beautiful property located right on the marina surrounded by yachts. They have great meeting space with natural light and one of the best club lounges I've ever seen. The rooms are very spacious with balconies providing incredible views of Los Angeles. The meeting space is very private and has a nice flow for prefunction and meeting rooms."

The group did not use meeting or function space outside of the hotel, and DuBose adds that in addition to multiple food options and incredible views, the club level at the hotel has "an amazing staff."

If planners are looking at beach destinations such as Santa Monica and Laguna Beach, DuBose encourages them to "add Marina del Rey to the list. The Marina del Rey CVB offers a lot of incentives to planners looking to save money, and the value at the hotels is much better compared to a lot of other cities."

### Newport Beach

According to Visit Newport Beach, the town's convention and visitors bureau, "A big reason to host a meeting or convention in a destination location is that when you remove yourself from your everyday surroundings, magic happens."

That magic is augmented by more than 200,000 sf of flexible space and a diverse selection of hotels to choose from.

Experian chose Fashion Island Hotel for its EITS Annual Leadership Conference in June 2018. Patricia Trimarco, executive assistant to the CFO, and Yvette Ferencik, executive assistant to the CIO, worked together on planning the conference.

Ferencik says proximity to both John Wayne Airport and LAX were among the reasons for booking Fashion Island Hotel, but not the only reasons.

"They also offer recommendations for car transfer service,



**"The Marina del Rey CVB offers a lot of incentives to planners looking to save money, and the value at the hotels is much better compared to a lot of other cities."**

**DEBBY DuBOSE**, CEO and Event Specialist  
Conference Solutions International, Los Angeles, CA



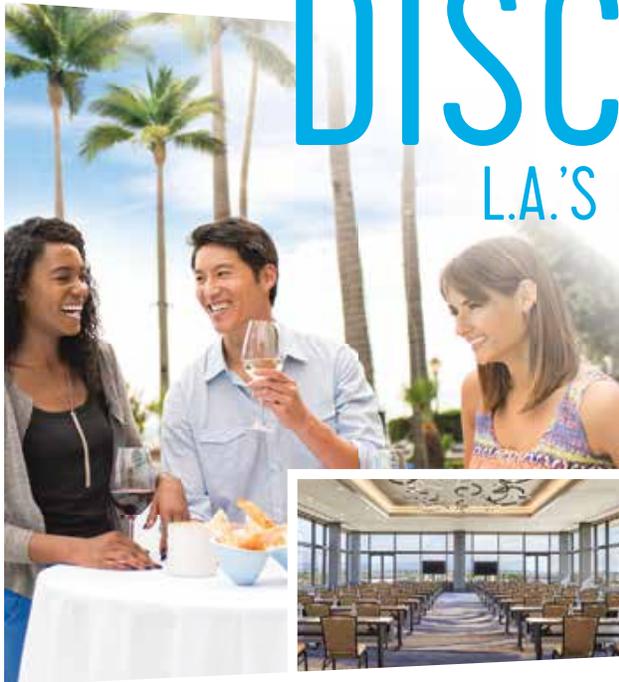
Besides its 245 acres of sandy beaches, Santa Monica is home to 40 hotels, nearly 500 restaurants and more than 100,000 sf of event space.

first-class rooming accommodations at competitive rates, a restaurant with a top-rated chef, spa service and a variety of meeting rooms and catering service on- and offsite. Also, the hotel is located within walking distance to the renowned Fashion Island Shopping Center. Fashion Island," she adds, "provides an all-inclusive destination, which is critical to any conference."

Trimarco notes that there was no need to book conference

or function space outside of the hotel because, "Fashion Island Hotel has a variety of room sizes to accommodate every need." In addition, she says, "We gave the hotel event coordinator our idea of doing 'The Great Gatsby.' He took our vision and brought it to life. He showed us a venue that was so perfect for our event. It was amazing. Our team is still raving about it. Job well done!"

But this wasn't the first time the hotel came through for



# DISCOVER

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Credit: Visit Newport Beach

Busy Newport Harbor in Newport Beach.

the Experian team. “We had our prior year’s conference at the Fashion Island Hotel and we were blown away by how they exceeded in all areas. It was a no-brainer to choose them again,” Trimarco says.

“We were very impressed with the sales team; they listened to what we wanted and made sure they delivered what was promised. We were introduced to the lead for each area of the hotel and they all exceeded our expectations. The view was spectacular and the hotel was very clean. We were impressed with the amazing food, service and accommodations.”

Ferencik agrees. “Our three-day conference encompassed all areas of the hotel, from dinners, meeting space, AV, cater-

ing, offsite special events and overnight accommodations for 100 people. The Fashion Island Hotel team worked closely with us on every detail and executed with perfection.”

The hotel, she adds, “offers a destination that includes all requirements for a high-level conference, which enables meeting planners to coordinate with ease.”

All in all, it amounted to “excellent service provided by delightful employees,” Trimarco says. “There were no challenges and every detail was met.”

## San Diego

Like much of California’s southern coast, San Diego offers exquisite beaches, sailing opportunities and year-round idyllic weather, making it a destination for any month

of the year. It’s a city where attendees and planners want to be, a place with attractions that draw visitors from around the world and that easily augment a conference schedule for groups of all kinds. Among its extensive selection of hotels are historic properties, beachside hotels, golf and tennis resorts and boutique options for smaller groups. According to the San Diego Tourism Authority, there are more than 135 conference hotels to choose from.

Additionally, the San Diego Convention Center features 2.6 million sf and is within walking distance to 11,000 hotel rooms as well as excellent restaurants and shopping, and the airport is a mere three miles away.



Credit: The Ritz-Carlton, Marina Del Rey

The Ritz-Carlton, Marina del Rey where the accommodations overlook the marina.

When the Ben & Jerry's team from Vermont was looking for a spot for Ben & Jerry's Global Franchise Meeting, January 2018, they chose Paradise Point Resort & Spa, set on a 44-acre island in Mission Bay.

"There was so much we loved about Paradise Point, but what stood out the most for our group was the lush island feel of the resort," says Greta Barker, with Ben & Jerry's global communications team. "The ideally located casitas were a great break from a 40-plus-story hotel. The beach bonfires were a great way for our group to continue networking after our official events."

All of the company's meeting events were held at Paradise Point, which features 80,000 sf of space. There was one off-property event, a one-day community project in San Diego, which Barker says was to "help give back to the local community."

Barker calls the San Diego meeting "one of our highest attended and rated events ever. We can attribute that to an affordable hotel rate, a lot of flight options, ease of transportation from the airport and to the fact that it's a family friendly resort with many tourist attractions nearby."

Barker says she initially met with Paradise Point representatives several years ago. "I had met one of their sales agents at a Connect Market Place conference. At the time, they didn't have enough large ballroom space to fit all of our events, but we continued to stay in touch. We had received a contract for another hotel out of the country for our 2018 Global Franchise Meeting, but even with the contract in hand we weren't excited about returning to a

venue we had previously been. We figured if we weren't excited our attendees wouldn't be either, so we picked up the phone and called Paradise Point out of the blue. Our sales rep informed us that they had just added a new pavilion space and that we would now be able to fit all of our large events. The rest is history."

From the start, the planning process was a positive one. "Leading up to the event, we had very positive experiences with our meeting planner and the reservation teams," Barker says. "Onsite, we were very pleased at the flow of our events due to the layout of the conference center. Our group is also made up of a lot of foodies, and the chef and his team really delivered! It was the best conference center food we have ever had."

Barker worked with the in-house PSAV team for au-



Credit: Paradise Point Resort & Spa

Paradise Point Resort & Spa is set on a 44-acre island in Mission Bay.

dio-visual needs. "They really knew the space and best options to maximize our look and feel but still stay within our budget," she notes.

To other groups considering Paradise Point, Barker says, "Make sure you have enough rooms in your block since you will be blown away at how high your meeting attendance will be due to being at Paradise Point in San Diego! We're already looking forward to going back in 2020!"

In terms of challenges, there was just one — not surprising when construction and renovation come into play — but Barker says the hotel rose to the occasion. "They only issue we had was that the planned renovation fell behind schedule a bit and not all the rooms in our block were updated prior to our arrival. But the team did an outstanding job of making sure our group was all in renovated rooms once people checked in."

Barker credits the San Diego Tourism Authority with getting things started on the right track from the beginning.

"We worked closely with the San Diego Tourism Authority when originally looking at the San Diego market. They were fantastic at scheduling visits to the hotels, tourist attractions and alternative venue options for special events. It really helped our planning process to understand the area. It also helped confirm that we were on the right track of picking the right hotel for our group."

Wherever you look in California, there's a destination that offers a sublime mix of views, attractions, service and an enviable choice of hotel and meeting options. In addition, it likely also offers that quintessential something that only the Golden State has, and that attendees and planners want. **C&IT**

**"Fashion Island provides an all-inclusive destination, which is critical to any conference."**

**YVETTE FERENCIK**, Executive Assistant to the CIO  
Experian, Costa Mesa, CA

# Destination



The 3,044-room Mirage features The Beatles Love by Cirque Du Soleil.

**T**he numbers don't lie. With 950 flights arriving daily at McCarran International Airport, and more than 150,000 hotel rooms on offer — most of them dedicated to the meetings and conventions market — it's not hard to understand the appeal of Las Vegas as one of the world's top conference and incentive destinations.

By David Swanson

### Rewarding Experience

"Las Vegas offers an amazing opportunity to hit our clients' experiential and financial targets for their customer audiences," says Colleen Hardy, vice president, sales and marketing for RT Travel & Incentives (RTTI), a San Juan Capistrano, California-based meeting planner. "We steered our client Golden Harvest toward Las Vegas, because of the tremendous value in luxury accommodations, airlift and entertainment it affords."

For a rewards trip offered by Golden Harvest to its seed advisors, RTTI selected The Mirage to host the 350 attendees last February.

"RTTI has shared a successful partnership with The Mirage in

Las Vegas for over 10 years," adds Hardy. "We have confidence their team will work seamlessly with ours. Together, we have provided exceptional value, executed top-notch experiences and delivered huge ROI for clients again and again."

The MGM Resorts-owned casino, which cost a record-breaking \$620 million (in 1989 dollars) for Steve Wynn to build, was a game-changer for The Strip, replete with an erupting volcano that stopped traffic on Las Vegas Boulevard. It broadened the gaming-focused revenue base for hotels to encompass dining and entertainment, and Wynn lured illusionists Siegfried and Roy with a \$50 million contract. The success of The Mirage launched a two-decade building boom for the city, as one hotel after another was built, each aiming to cash in on or eclipse Wynn's winning streak.

Some of them did, but three decades later The Mirage still occupies a prime position near the center of The Strip action, and continues to shine as one of the leading "second-tier" properties on The Strip, maximizing bling for buck.



The Central Terrace at the new Park MGM.

Credit: Park MGM

Hardy also praised The Mirage sales, convention and catering crews.

“They were all by our side every step of the way and truly served as an extension of our team,” adds Hardy. “Their specialized expertise and tenure at The Mirage confirm the hotel’s commitment and dedication to the meeting, conference and incentive industry. The Mirage offers a solution for clients looking for uncommon value, quality and consistency of experience wrapped in a casually elegant package. It really hits the mark for clients, who might ordinarily have concerns about bringing their audiences to Las Vegas.”

### Major New Developments

Other news from MGM Resorts International includes a lighting of the new marquee and signage for Park MGM, the new hotel concept stepping into the shell of the former Monte Carlo. The building is receiving a head-to-toe makeover that introduces a boutique feel to guest rooms, along with the intimate, customizable Madison Meeting Center. When the project is completed later this year, two products will emerge — Park MGM and a distinctly Las Vegas version of NoMad, a 292-room property on the tower’s top four floors.

In April, MGM Resorts and subsidiary CityCenter Holdings sold the 392-room Mandarin Oriental Las Vegas to an undisclosed buyer, and recently announced that the 47-story property will be rebranded to Hilton’s Waldorf Astoria label in August. The location is one of only two on The Strip without gaming, but the Aria Resort & Casino is immediately next door. The hotel will receive a renovation, with Waldorf Astoria brand touches and improvements in mind.

New York developer Witkoff and Marriott International announced that the languishing, blue-tinted Fontainebleau tower, opposite Circus Circus, is finally getting a new lease on life. The 60-story high-rise has remained unfinished since the 2008–2009 recession hit Las Vegas, but a decade later the Fon-

tainebleau structure will be recast as The Drew Las Vegas — with almost 4,000 hotel rooms along with more than 500,000 sf of convention and meeting space. The Drew will be Marriott’s first Edition brand hotel in Las Vegas and the tower also will include The Strip’s first JW Marriott.

Other projects planned for the north end of The Strip include an \$860 million expansion of the Las Vegas Convention Center (taking over the former Riviera land); the Chinese-owned Resorts World project, slated to open in 2020; Wynn West, a 2,000- to 3,000-room project penciled for the land opposite the current Wynn hotels; and \$1.5 billion Paradise Park, a 47-story hotel tower that began construction in January behind Wynn-Encore.

The Cashman Center, an exhibition space near downtown Las Vegas, was shuttered at the end of 2017. However, the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* reports that plans are afoot to build another expo center downtown — this time, next door to the existing World Market Center, the large building immediately next to the I-15 freeway, heading north into downtown. The expo center will spread 350,000 sf and represents the largest construction project downtown for several years.

In May, Caesars Entertainment revealed completion of a \$125 million redesign of the 2,052 guest rooms at Bally’s Las Vegas. Nearly every guest room at the 2,800-unit property has been renovated within the last four years. Measuring more than 440 sf, Bally’s guest rooms are already slightly larger than



**“The associates were excited to come to train on new techniques while also feeling rewarded by staying at one of the nicest properties in Las Vegas.”**

**Lauren Andrews, Director of Site Selection and Contract Services, Meeting Expectations, Atlanta, GA**



is standard on The Strip. And, as part of Caesars’ Code Green initiative, which aims to reduce landfill waste, the company donated a majority of the furniture from the renovation — more than 2,000 rooms’ worth — to charitable organizations such as Habitat for Humanity Las Vegas and the hurricane relief efforts in Houston, Texas.

New residency acts have been announced by Caesars Entertainment, including multi-platinum recording artist Gwen Stefani at Planet Hollywood’s Zappos Theater. The new show, “Gwen Stefani — Just a Girl,” opened June 27 and is currently scheduled to run through March, 2019. And Mariah Carey is winging into Vegas with her all-new show, “The Butterfly Returns,” opening July 5 at The Colosseum at Caesars Palace. Also at Caesars Palace, the adults-only, tented show “Absinthe” has extended its run, with a long-term deal in place through 2028.

Just down the road, Caesars Entertainment also revealed plans for a new, Southeast Asian-themed entertainment zone called Kind Heaven, a partnership between Caesars, Lollapalooza founder Perry Farrell, and the team behind Hollywood



franchises such as “Star Wars” and “Indiana Jones.” Set to open in 2019, the \$100 million project will be located across the street from Caesars, between Harrah’s and the Flamingo and connected to the Linq Promenade. Guests will wear devices to track food and drink purchases and the multiple themed areas will include virtual games, a faux forest and stages where bands will perform. The venue will be open to all during the day, but segues to adults-only after 8 p.m.

Located immediately behind (east) Linq, a groundbreaking for Caesars Forum is taking place this month. The \$375 million project will build a LEED Silver-certified conference center featuring 300,000 sf of flexible meeting space, including two 108,000-sf ballrooms. A 100,000-sf outdoor plaza will connect directly to the Linq Promenade and to the Las Vegas Monorail. Caesars Forum is set to open in 2020.

Later this year, the 3,027-room Cosmopolitan will complete its year-long project to renovate most of its guest rooms, emphasizing modern design and comfort. Wraparound terrace suites and city rooms emulate the feel of an urban penthouse, with neutral colors and splashes of bright accents. All rooms will have a virtual concierge to book dining reservations, purchase show tickets or automate the lighting and temperature, and groups will be able to utilize iPads to alert guests to plans and events.

The Cosmopolitan is also getting a refresh on dining and entertainment, including this summer’s debut of Red Plate, featuring a sophisticated, modern take on Cantonese cuisine. And this fall, Block 16 Urban Eatery & Bar is set to open and will offer six distinct food experiences, including District: Donuts Sliders Brew, a New Orleans-based chain renowned for its breakfast sandwiches; the Southern chicken joint Hattie B’s Hot Chicken; and Tekka Bar, a Japanese handroll and sake concept that originated in Las Vegas. Other recently opened dining options at Cosmopolitan include the first West Coast outpost for noodle bar Momofuku; the New York dining destination Blue Ribbon; and the Southern California hot spot Eggslut.

### Built-in Value

Meeting costs can add up, but many planners find that some expenses — airfare, entertainment, transfers — allow

Las Vegas to stay competitive with other destinations. Such was the case for Lauren Andrews, director of site selection and contract services for Atlanta-based event management firm Meeting Expectations. Andrews booked a 600-person event for Encore at the Wynn Las Vegas for a Bay Area software company.

“Typically, this event is hosted near the client’s headquarters in San Francisco, however, we found there was a cost savings by hosting the event in Las Vegas,” Andrews explains. The software company chose Encore for its January 2018 gathering in part due to the availability of the resort’s theater for a general session. The 2,034-room Encore also has a 20,650-sf ballroom, along with the usual breakout rooms, totaling 60,000 sf overall.

“Generally, we spend a good portion of our budget on general session production. Fortunately, Encore has a built-in theater for high-end entertainment, equipped with the lighting and staging necessary for this part of the program. There was a rental fee per day for the theater but it was a significant cost savings compared to what we spent in previous years, which included the buildout of the stage and lighting within a hotel ballroom.

“Encore is considered one of the top resorts in Las Vegas,” Andrews adds. “Keep in mind, we were coming from a city where it was a cost savings to move the event to Las Vegas and Encore. However, if you are coming from another first-tier city where the prices are not as high, be prepared to think through your AV, food and beverage, and other major line items.

“The Encore Theater was the base for our general session and it elevated the event to the next level. It felt like a true production. While most would think, ‘Wow, this cost a lot of extra money,’ in fact, we saved on budget by hosting the event outside the company’s headquarters city.

“From the quality of sleeping rooms and meeting space, to the food and beverage provided by the banquet staff and in-house restaurants and the entertainment — everything was under one roof with a consistent, well-maintained feel. We did not need to pay to transport our team offsite — everything our client needed was under one roof.

“We liked having the option of having an offsite venue onsite,” says Andrews. “There are two nightclubs at Wynn En-



core that we had the option of using for breakfast, lunch or reception-dinner-after party. We did use one of them for an evening function and our attendees appreciated not having to take transportation to and from the locale — instead they could walk up to their room whenever they desired. In addition, the venue was already themed so no additional décor was needed. Our evening event was a big success.”

Andrews did note there were some challenges during the contract negotiations, that the resort did not have much flexibility with the terms. But otherwise Encore delivered the needed components at a price the company could afford.

“The purpose of the Revenue Kick-Off Meeting is to motivate and educate the sales team, and Encore was a great fit to host this event,” she explains. “The associates were excited to come to train on new techniques while also feeling rewarded by staying at one of the nicest properties in Las Vegas. In the end, the quality of the experience was that of a first-class event.”

### The Reno Alternative

While Las Vegas is the drawing card for corporate and incentive groups looking to set a meeting in a city with all the bells and whistles, planners with small and medium-sized events also should consider looking 400 miles north, to Reno and nearby Lake Tahoe. Sure, you’ll trade a desert backdrop for one defined by the Sierra Nevada mountain range, but costs are usually less, and there are still gaming tables for those who want them.

“Reno has many options for team events, food venues and entertainment,” suggests Kelli Cavallaro, marketing operations manager for Reno-based Hamilton Robotics. In April, the company held its 75-person Operations Meeting in Reno, hosting the event at the new Renaissance Reno Downtown Hotel.

The Renaissance is the year-old reincarnation of the former Siena Hotel. Set alongside the Truckee River, the 214-room Renaissance is the first non-gaming, branded, full-service luxury hotel in the city’s history. Following an extensive renovation inside and out, the hotel now features upscale restaurants showcasing local flavors and offers 13,198 sf of event space, composed of eight rooms (the largest has a capacity of 650). The hotel also has a full-service spa, fitness center and pool, targeting both business and leisure guests.

“I wanted a non-casino hotel in Reno, and the location in the heart of downtown and the lodging was excellent,” Cavallaro explains. “The Renaissance is for small to medium groups, making the experience more intimate. It offers state-of-the-art features and the guest rooms are beautiful — the décor is a nod to Reno history.

.....  
**“Reno has many options for team events,  
 food venues and entertainment.”**

**Kelli Cavallaro, Marketing Operations Manager  
 Hamilton Robotics, Reno, NV**

.....



The Encore Beach Club was named 2018 Las Vegas Day Club of the Year by the Southern Nevada Hotel Concierge Association.

Credit: Wynn Las Vegas

“The meeting rooms are all located on the same level, and they provided an excellent room layout with natural lighting. Catering was very good and the food was always on time, with a nice selection — they also customized menus for us.” Cavallaro says the hotel’s AV department was very responsive and that signage was adequate throughout the property. The hotel needed to accommodate several breakout groups, and Hamilton Robotics organized offsite events.



Credit: The Renaissance Reno Downtown Hotel

The hotel also has an unusual facility for receptions or teambuilding: an event space dedicated to Bundox Bocce, with seven indoor and two outdoor courts. The indoor space features a sports bar with dining and large screen TVs, shuffleboard and skeeball, while the outdoor courts are regulation size, 90 feet. The outdoor space also includes seating for dining and drinking, as well as fire pits with seating, darts and ping pong tables.

“They helped us plan a great teambuilding event here, including setting up a video gaming room,” says Cavallaro. “All of the event staff went above and beyond to provide an excellent meeting experience and they were extremely responsive to any special requests and needs we had before and during the meeting.

“This hotel wants everyone to appreciate all that Reno has to offer and helped us plan and coordinate offsite events,” she adds.

Planners who want to impress stakeholders with budget-friendly site selection and still give attendees something to write home about know Las Vegas and Reno will hit the mark every time.

**C&IT**