

Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau Services

The Fox Cities CVB provides services to groups staying at hotels in the Fox Cities. Depending on group size, the following services are FREE.

Fox Cities Visitor Guides and Maps

Site selection assistance

Checking hotel availability

Distributing meeting specifications to hotels

Arranging site tours

Identifying vendors who provide services (entertainers, speakers, etc.)

Blank or pre-printed name badges

Delegate folders

Computer and portable printer to print name badges on site

Volunteer registration assistance

Itinerary planning for guest/youth/spouse programs

Housing bureau services

Arrange welcome letters and/or speakers from the community

News release assistance

Meeting Planner Timeline

Timelines can vary depending on the size and scope of your meeting.

18 Months Out

Set objectives, meeting/exhibit dates and location

Set preliminary budget

Set registration fees and policy

Conduct site visit

Assemble potential exhibitor lists

Prepare first calendar notices and press releases

Contact CVBs, hotels and conference centers

16 Months Out

Establish meeting theme and objectives

Negotiate hotel rates and blocks, sign hotel contracts

Produce exhibit floor plan

Establish exhibit space rates

Arrange insurance coverage

Contact speaker's bureau to check on availabilities/fees

14 Months Out

Prepare budget/receive approval

Invite and confirm key speakers

Determine preliminary food and beverage requirements

Prepare and mail first meeting announcements and promotional materials to prospective attendees

Prepare program agenda

Mail first exhibitor promotion

12 Months Out

- Select and contract audiovisual supplier
- Develop logo/graphics theme
- Get speaker's audiovisual needs
- Adjust exhibit floor plan
- Issue new media release
- Produce and mail new promotion to prospective attendees

6 Months Out

- Create checklist for all meeting segments
- Order and confirm delivery date of materials/giveaways
- Select photographer, entertainment and security vendor
- Arrange for on-site office and communications needs
- Begin processing registration forms
- Determine participants: facilitators, dignitaries, etc.
- Solicit sponsors and confirm in writing
- Book your headliner entertainment
- Develop meeting requirements and times for meal functions, receptions, special activities, exhibits and tours
- Mail next promotion piece to prospective attendees

4 Months Out

- Issue new media release
- Refine program agenda
- Determine materials shipping arrangements
- Order and confirm delivery date of giveaways
- Assign speaker locations/times
- Confirm audiovisual requirements
- Plan meeting sessions that include topics and rooms
- Determine transportation needs of participants
- Determine meal selection and pricing
- Finalize the specific meeting rooms and layouts required
- Have all decisions finalized in contractual form

3 Months Out

- Determine what materials need to be produced
- Obtain permission for any material you intend to copy
- Plan and arrange airport travel needs for meet-and-greet
- Mail new promotional piece to prospective attendees
- Send invitation letters to VIPs
- Determine materials needed in registration packet
- Determine meeting room setups and notify site
- Order necessary signs, banners and room signage

2 Months Out

- Adjust budget again
- Finalize session schedule and room assignments
- Produce and mail exhibitor service kits
- Finalize food and beverage schedule
- Determine on-site staff needs
- Determine security needs

- Compile exhibitor directory
- Review processing and billing activity with hotels
- Plan social events at local clubs and restaurants
- Confirm agenda with speakers and presenters
- Confirm presentation needs with site manager
- Mail speakers and/or presenters their travel and registration information and preliminary agendas
- Finalize meal selection/confirm site details
- Reconfirm with all external vendors
- Send attendees information regarding meeting attire, agenda, hotel and travel arrangements
- Mail final promotional piece to prospective attendees

1 Month Out

- Print final program and conference guide
- Print workbooks
- Check cut-off date for sleeping room bookings at hotel
- Request room pick-up list
- Submit daily schedule to hotels
- Produce badge and ticket stocks
- Contact all speakers to confirm
- Submit final room list to the site manager
- Arrange business center for participants, if appropriate
- Create tent cards that have daily agendas on the back
- Create name badges
- Create meeting handouts in hard copy and electronic
- Send attendees information about the meeting, participation requirements and facilities
- Mail final registration information, travel plans and updated agendas
- Cut off date for guarantee numbers for special activities such as golf outings or family tours
- Organize registration materials

2 Weeks Out

- Ship materials to meeting site and confirm delivery
- Prepare name badge for all attendees
- Make pre-event preparations onsite
- Prepare registration list with count of registrants
- Finalize food arrangements
- Mail press release to all local press
- Review any updates or changes with site manager
- Confirm number of attendees with hotel and caterer

1 Week to 1 Day

- Check inventory of materials shipped in advance
- Hold a pre-convention meeting: Review last-minute changes to conference resume, including guarantees, and remind facility staff of importance of meeting
- Meet with facility accounting department to confirm procedures for daily review of charges to master account and prepare final accounting and auditing report of all charges
- Confirm information to be posted on reader boards
- Meet with security and review procedures

Review rooming list with front desk and confirm all pre-registered attendees and procedure for check-in; inspect rooms assigned to VIPs and to attendees requiring rooms meeting ADA standards
Check weather reports for arrival delays and review alternate plans; coordinate airport meet-and-greet plans
Coordinate specific times for guest room delivery of any meeting materials and/or gifts for VIP
Set up private office space and separate registration area
Review any updates or changes with site manager
Set up registration tables with attendee materials
Re-check accommodations list and meeting room needs
Set up signage, banners and tent cards in the meeting rooms
Check audiovisual equipment

Meeting Day

Post direction signs and large posters outside rooms
Set up a registration table one hour before meeting
Appoint staff to greet speakers as they arrive
Appoint staff to greet press members
Appoint clean-up committee
Welcome attendees
Distribute name badges, final agendas and materials
Check audiovisual equipment before presentation begins
Distribute giveaways
Confirm meal timing
Plan separate post-meeting follow-ups with your own staff and facility staff and issue specific gratuities

Post Meeting

Reconcile finances
Do a post-budget performance review
Ensure all costs have been covered: food, printing, etc.
Finalize budget report, including actual costs and revenues
Complete payment for site, speakers and other services
Prepare invoices for sponsors and unpaid attendees
Pack and inventory materials
Have leftover materials shipped back to office
Send thank you notes to speakers and presenters
Send thank you notes to facility and to personnel that went above and beyond to ensure success of meeting
Send thank you notes to VIP's for their attendance where appropriate
Review meeting evaluations
Document meeting notes, prices, vendors and suggestions for future meetings
Print final registration list including onsite registrants
Request a sleeping room pick-up summary from hotel

Site Inspection Checklist

Things to observe:

How are you treated?

The (outside) appearance of hotel

Overall cleanliness

Adequacy of security and safety systems, including fire safety

The hotel's general maintenance

The condition of all rooms (sleeping, dining and meeting)

Is the hotel's general décor pleasing?

Is the size of the registration area adequate?

Do employees seem to take pride in and be cheerful about their work?

Are ice machines conveniently located and do they work properly?

Is there access to public transportation?

Is there sufficient, convenient parking?

Hotel amenities:

- In-house movies

- Gift Shop

- Bell service

- Safe deposit boxes

Things to ask:

What types of sleeping rooms are available (king size beds, doubles, or a mix of room types)?

Hotel's complimentary room policy? (Ask for a copy.)

Menu selection for meal functions? (Ask for a copy.)

Are the hotel's registration and reservations systems automated?

Will reservation cards be provided for your group?

Are special rates available during certain periods?

Is audio-visual support available?

Does the hotel offer shuttle service?

Is room service available 24 hours a day?

Can you bring in your own liquor? If so, is there a "corkage" fee?

If you want to be really thorough, ask to see the back of the hotel, such as the kitchen, engineering (power plant, heating and air conditioning units), etc.

Approach your inspection as though you were going to buy the hotel. You look at a hotel differently from this perspective than if you are going to stay only a few days.

Complimentary items you can request

- Complimentary welcoming cocktail party

- Free storage for supplies and materials shipped in advance

- Free recreational activities

- Upgraded amenities for your guests

- Complimentary room(s) for your hospitality suite

- Free parking

- Early check-in, late check-out

- Hotel limo for a VIP

- Signs for your registration area

- Menu items

- Flowers and table decorations

The following list, while not complete, is a guide for checking your contract.

- Total number of rooms blocked

For how long
Types of rooms and beds
Deposits
Reservations
Meeting space
Check-in/out times and dates
Taxes
Transportation
Complimentary rooms, suites
Master accounts
Services and equipment
Cut-off dates
Cancellation clauses
What happens to your members if the hotel is overbooked
A list of all the extras you agreed to in your meeting with the sales manager