

2022 Facilities & DestinationsTM SUPERBOOK

FOR ASSOCIATION & CORPORATE MEETING PLANNERS
& TRADESHOW PROFESSIONALS

Caesars Entertainment
"Ahead of pace" in Atlantic City
24

2 **Industry Leaders on**
Growth & Innovation
in Milwaukee 26

Moving Forward with GM
Karen Totaro at Huntington Place
50

*Actor William Shatner
speaking at a recent
Comic-Con convention*





EDITOR'S NOTE

1, 2, 3 & WE'RE BACK!

Ah, where to begin? Well, for starters, this year's *F&D SuperBook* has an amazing list of **Prime Site & Top Destination award winners** that will be of enormous interest to meeting and event planners everywhere — and just in time, too!

Just in time because, according to the **Center for Exhibition Industry Research (CEIR)**, face-to-face meetings are back and, with that, hotels, resorts and convention centers across the country are ready for the new challenges of our time. While some might say “not so fast,” CEIR recently reported that, **by the end of 2023, it expects the trade show and exhibition industry will have fully recovered.**

Such a claim would not surprise Bob Priest-Heck, CEO of Freeman, a leading global event production company. Recently, in an online article for *Fortune* magazine titled “**To Meet the Pace of Change, We Need to Meet in Person,**” the CEO claims that, in recent times, people have been strikingly polarized by various occurrences across the country that have divided people and disintegrated trust. While he does not dismiss the many merits of virtual conferences, the clarion call here is to “**bring out the defibrillator.**” By that, he means bring people together again within a common purpose — from concerts to conventions and everything in between. “Live events — create common ground — and it’s easier to feel that connection at in-person events,” he asserts.

Echoing similar sentiments are other industry leaders like **President/CEO Gregg Mervis** at the Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau and the John S. Knight Convention Center in Akron, OH. He states: “The majority of our clients are committed to bringing people back together with in-person events — **events that create the space for people to learn, network and collaborate.**”

Still another industry leader, **Mark Tester, executive director at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL**, sees evidence of an upward climb in that for the first quarter of this year his facility had already “welcomed 34 events... with approximately 304,405 attendees — evidence of a very strong economic recovery.” And, that activity continues at the center.

continued on page 6

CONTENTS

DEPARTMENTS

Editor's Note.....	2
In Brief	10-20

FORUM

Gregg Mervis, Pres./CEO, Akron/Summit CVB	22-23
Steve van der Molen, VP Meeting Operations, Caesars Entertainment	24-25
Marty Brooks, Pres./CEO, Wisconsin Center District & Peggy Williams-Smith, Pres./CEO Visit Milwaukee	26

FEATURES

2022 Prime Site & Top Destination Awards of Excellence	28
--	----

VENUE REVIEWS

The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas by Laura Janelle Downey	39
Park MGM by Laura Janelle Downey	40
Ocean Edge Resort & Golf Club by Philip Blass.....	41

SITE & CITY PROFILES	42-64
---------------------------------------	-------

ADVERTISER INDEX	6
-------------------------------	---

FACILITIES & DESTINATIONS

SUPERBOOK

For Association & Corporate Meeting Planners & Tradeshow Professionals

2022

Volume 29 No. 2

Editorial Director
Stella Johnson

Associate Publisher
Steve Lambert

Contributing Editors
Anthony Bilden
Philip Blass
Laura Janelle Downey
Debi Lander

Creative Direction & Design
AR Design

Business Operations
David Mermelstein

© Copyright 2022 by Bedrock Communications, Inc. All rights reserved. Opinions expressed in by-lined articles and advertising copy are not necessarily those of the publisher. Advertisers are responsible for all costs, damages and claims regarding advertising insertions.

Facilities & Destinations is published four times a year by Bedrock Communications, Inc., PO Box 1807, New York, NY 10150-1807. Telephone: (212) 532-4150.

POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Facilities, PO Box 1807, New York, NY 10150-1807. Printed in U.S.A.

Cover ad space is available by contacting a *Facilities* advertising account executive at (212) 532-4150.

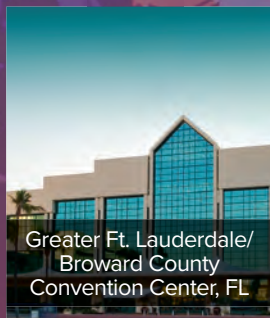
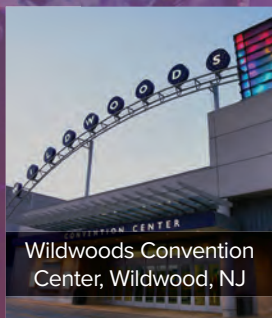
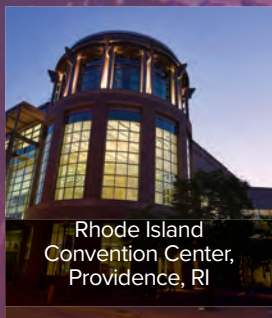


ON THE COVER

Comic-Con: It's a Family Affair

Comic-Con is a major event attended by comic/fantasy/sci-fi fans of all ages at various locations around the world. Last month, it was held at the Tampa Bay Convention Center. It marked a return-to-business and was attended by thousands of enthusiasts, especially since famous celebrities like William Shatner of Capt. Kirk-Star Trek fame were on hand for photo op and more. For instance, on the cover, Shatner is addressing a Comic-Con audience in his usual flair. This one in Greensboro, NC.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 33 2022 PRIME SITE AWARD WINNERS

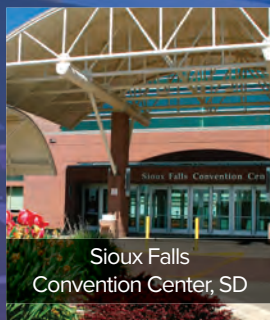


**TO INQUIRE ABOUT ASM GLOBAL MANAGED FACILITIES
CONTACT: CCSALES@ASMGLOBAL.COM**

For a complete list of available venues around the world, visit asmglobal.com



McCormick Place,
Chicago, IL



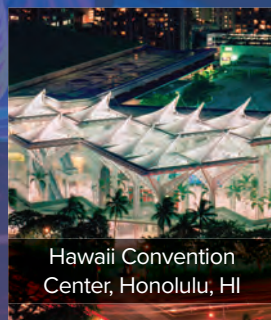
Sioux Falls
Convention Center, SD



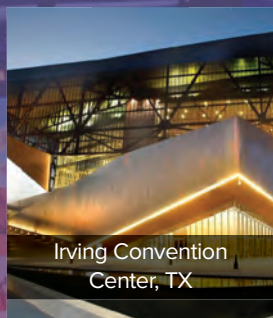
Albuquerque
Convention Center, NM



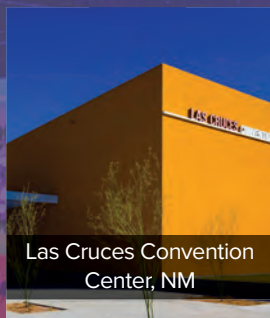
Colorado Convention
Center, Denver, CO



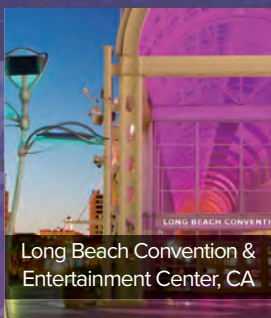
Hawaii Convention
Center, Honolulu, HI



Irving Convention
Center, TX



Las Cruces Convention
Center, NM



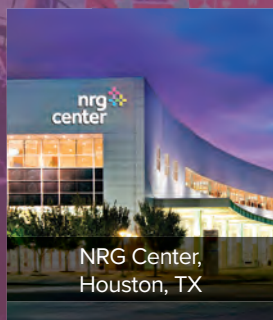
Long Beach Convention &
Entertainment Center, CA



Los Angeles
Convention Center, CA



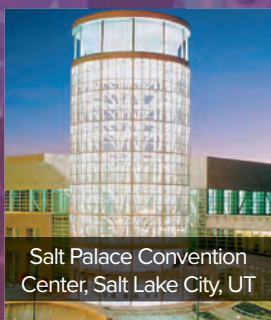
Moscone Center,
San Francisco, CA



NRG Center,
Houston, TX



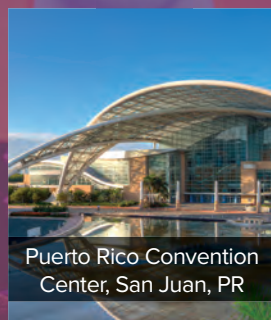
Palm Springs
Convention Center, CA



Salt Palace Convention
Center, Salt Lake City, UT



Tucson Convention
Center, AZ



Puerto Rico Convention
Center, San Juan, PR

WHERE THE WORLD CONDUCTS BUSINESS

98

**CONVENTION CENTERS
& EXHIBITION HALLS**

23M+

**SQUARE FEET OF
EXHIBITION SPACE**

5

CONTINENTS

THE WORLD'S LEADING PRODUCER OF LIVE EVENT EXPERIENCES

LEARN MORE AT ASMGLOBAL.COM





Continued from page 32

Owensboro Convention Center, KY
Savannah International Trade & Convention
Center, GA
Shreveport Convention Center, LA

Top Destination Award Winners

Athens CVB, GA
Birmingham CVB, AL
Explore Charleston, SC
Charlotte CVB, NC
Chattanooga CVB, TN
Daytona Beach CVB, FL
Greensboro CVB, NC
Visit Jackson, MS
Visit Jacksonville, FL
Visit Knoxville, TN
Little Rock CVB, AR
Louisville CVB, KY
Greater Miami CVB, FL
Visit Mobile, AL
New Orleans CVB, LA
Visit Orlando, FL
Discover the Palm Beaches, FL
Visit Savannah, GA
Visit Tampa Bay, FL

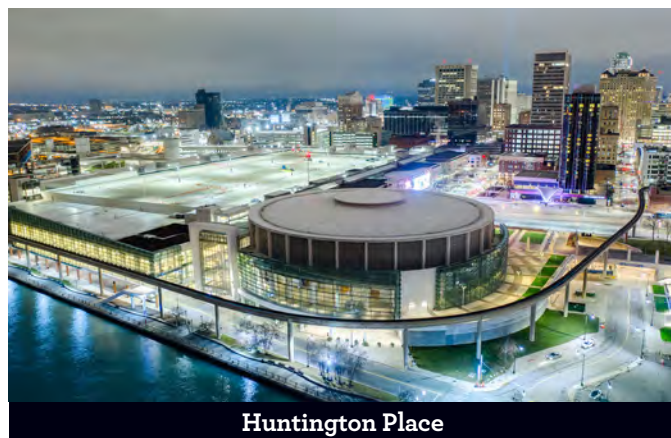


Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center

MIDWEST

Prime Site Award Winners

Alerus Center Conference Center, Grand
Forks, ND
Branson Convention Center, MO

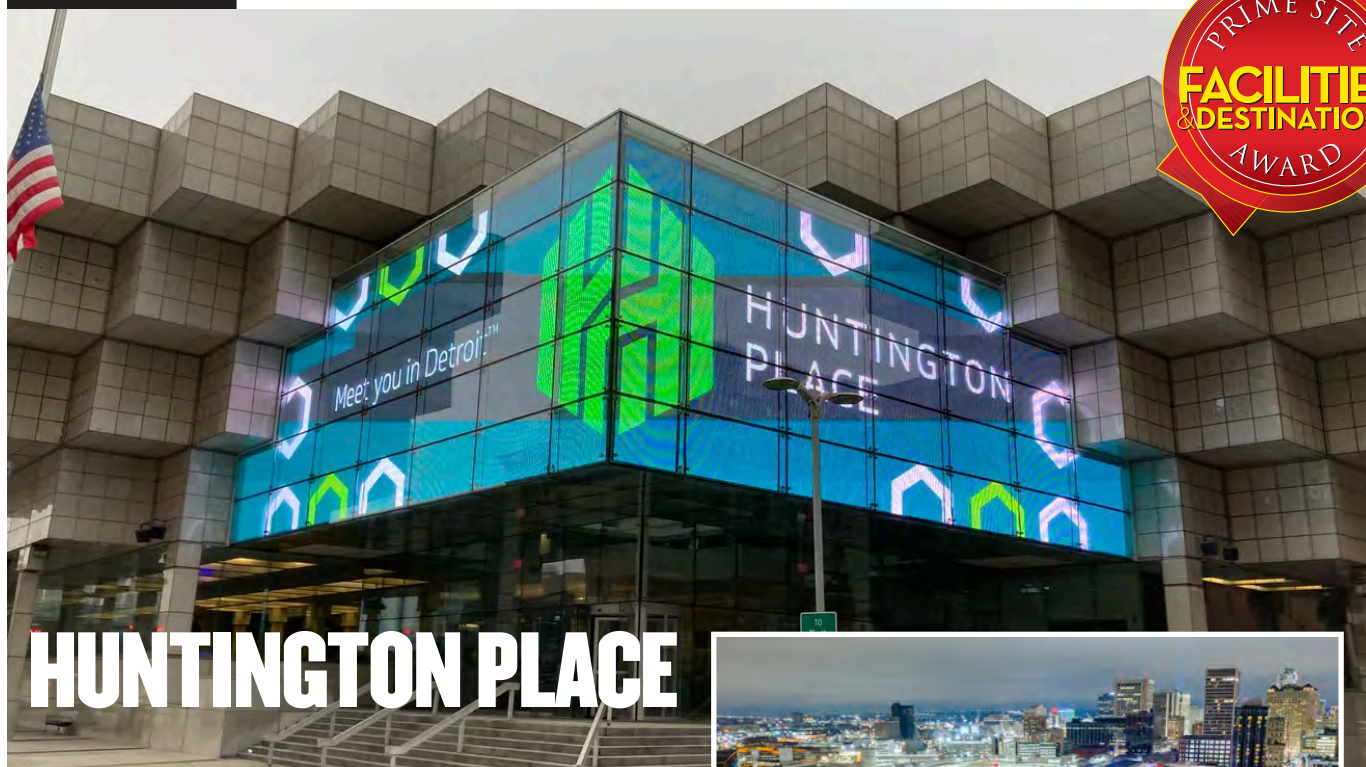


Huntington Place

Century Center, South Bend, IN
Greater Columbus Convention Center, OH
DeVos Place, Grand Rapids, MI
Duke Energy Convention Center, Cincinnati,
OH
Glass City Center, Toledo, OH
Grand Wayne Convention Center, Fort Wayne,
IN

Huntington Convention
Center of Cleveland,
OH/Global Center for
Health Innovation, OH
Huntington Place,
Detroit, MI
Indiana Convention
Center, Indianapolis,
IN
Iowa Events Center,
Des Moines, IA
Kansas City Convention
Center, MO

Continued on page 36



HUNTINGTON PLACE

Moving on from COVID

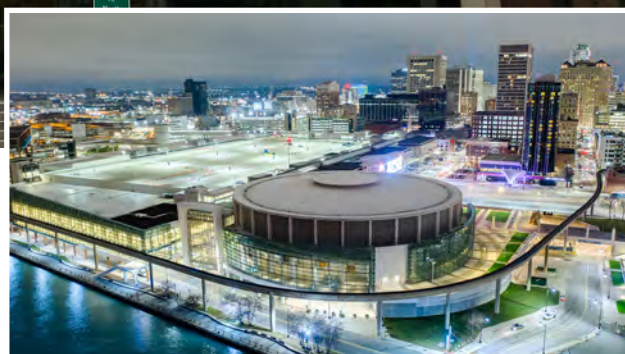
“At our convention center we have had to re-assess everything we do repeatedly as we move further away from COVID. It has become an opportune time for all of us to focus on three key elements: our people, our places and our clients.” – **Karen Totaro, General Manager**, who also talks about:

PEOPLE

Never have I ever been prouder of our team members than what I witnessed this last year as we had to pick ourselves up and prepare for an uncharted future. I am going to guess that is true for so many of us. It is never too late to celebrate those around us.

What has been working in our venue at Huntington Place in Detroit, Michigan, and could work for others are the following:

- **Authenticity:** When the going gets tough you cannot “fake” caring about your team members and what each individual may be going through in their personal lives. We have taken this word, authenticity, and put it into action every single day. We recognize active listening and compassion and spend the time we need with team members. We must trust our teams to have real conversations, hard conversations and the ability to find resolution.
- **Diversity is our Superpower:** We have an incredibly diverse and inclusive group of people at Huntington Place and I am most in awe of the “mindset” that trickles through every level of hiring. While diversity is our superpower, inclusion is the secret sauce. We all want to be seen for who we are and what we can bring to the table. By fostering inclusion and giving everyone an equal voice at the table, we have better ideas, better deliverables and better teamwork.



- **One Team!** The magic happens when we each take a moment to walk in another’s shoes. We had a crazy weekend in March with over 50,000 people in the venue. Parking was non-stop and it was freezing out. Our F & B General Manager took it upon himself to ensure carafes of hot coffee got sent out to our parking team - they still talk about it months later because someone thought about them when they were really struggling. Low cost, high reward, **ONE TEAM**.

PLACE

We are the communities we serve. We live and work in them and want to ensure they thrive. We need to look at our buildings with fresh eyes. Hybrid meetings continue to grow and we’re going away from a fixed studio structure and investing in the talent, equipment and options to create a studio in any location within 24 hours.

CLIENTS

So many of our creative solutions are coming from the staff working on the frontlines. They pick up quickly as to what the stress factors are for our clients and then we pounce and address them by offering options before it grows into something more. Our leadership team spends a great deal of time taking the show team out for fun, checking in on them throughout each day, doing all we can to ensure confidence. Everyone just wants to know it is all going to be ok....and it will be.

One Washington Blvd., Detroit, MI 48226 • (313) 877-8777 • huntingtonplacedetroit.com



Kyle Palm
Senior Network Specialist

It's the people that make the place.

When was the last time you received exceptional service?
It probably stands out, because it is rare. That's what makes
it memorable. Our goal is simple, to be the best convention
destination in the world. To do that, you need exceptional people
delivering exceptional service in every facet of the organization.
We invite you to see for yourself. HuntingtonPlaceDetroit.com



Meet you in Detroit™