

# GROUP BUSINESS

## ... Therapy ...

KEEP YOUR SANITY, SAVE YOUR BUSINESS



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Group Business Therapy, where all your group business questions will be answered and concerns alleviated.

Below you'll find four hotel professionals who, despite their best efforts, closed out last quarter in a slump. Group business was the worst category of them all, underperforming below all their predictions. These hotel professionals came together at Group Business Therapy to talk through the obstacles they've encountered and find actionable solutions. With our help, they'll rally and revitalize their group business in the next quarter.

Fellow hospitality professionals can learn from these hospitality professionals' struggles and take charge of your own group business strategy by making smarter decisions and using technology.

**"OUR GROUP  
BUSINESS HAS  
NEVER BEEN  
BETTER. THANKS  
DR. CVENT!"**



## CHAPTER 1: BRAND AWARENESS



### Director of Sales and Marketing

ORG TYPE: BOUTIQUE HOTEL,  
10,000 SQ FT OF MEETING SPACE

### PROBLEM

As the Director of Sales and Marketing at a brand new boutique hotel, I'm working hard to get the word out about our property's recent opening. Although we're located in a busy, bustling area, I'm afraid that no one knows we're here. This means we aren't getting leads we need to build up our group business revenue. Our 10,000 sq ft of meeting space has plenty of room for small to medium-sized groups, and we're ready to bring in local and visiting planners. However, because I don't have a ton of relationships with planners who source in this area I need an alternative solution for finding the right clients.



### SOLUTION

I agree that building deeper relationships at the brand level is crucial to creating a strong group business model. If you want to connect with planners, assert yourself as a strong property that deserves their loyalty. To do this, establish personal relationships with relevant planners at in-person events and reinforce your brand's recognition online and in print. Your personal relationships, in conjunction with brand recognition, will lead to more business and deeper engagement.

**\$9.8B+**

**SOURCED IN 2015 THROUGH  
THE HOSPITALITY CLOUD**

(50M in 2008)

**74K+**

**PLANNER USERS**

(Active CSN Event & Meeting  
Planner Users)

## CHAPTER 2: LEAD GENERATION



*Marketing  
Manager*

**ORG TYPE: CHAIN HOTEL, 25,000  
SQ FT OF MEETING SPACE**

### PROBLEM

At our hotel, group business leads have slowed down significantly. We need to attract and grow our group business revenue to hit our annual budget numbers. We've tried to get our brand out there using basic online profiles and through reputable advertising agencies, but we haven't seen much ROI to justify using them. While we know there are more opportunities to grow our group business, we can't seem to find or attract them. How can we track down new group business that fits our venue?



*Diagnosis:*  
**GENERALIZED LEAD  
GENERATION DISORDER**

### SOLUTION

Even industry experts know that reaching the right audience at the right time is one of the biggest struggles of a successful marketing strategy. But for hoteliers like you, you can depend on research and technology that points directly to qualified planners. In my 2015 study, I discovered that 38% of planners start with online sourcing tools to find meeting and event venues year round. My advice to you is to attract new planners with a stronger digital marketing strategy. If you want more leads from qualified planners, make the move toward smart digital advertising and get in front of them where they're already looking.

**600,000**

**PAGE VIEWS PER MONTH ON  
DESTINATION GUIDE**

**75%**

**OF RFPS SENT WERE AWARDED  
TO DIAMOND PROPERTIES\***

\*Diamond Advertising Packages increase listing placement and provide banner ads, enhanced profiles, and more.

## CHAPTER 3: LEAD MANAGEMENT



*Revenue  
Manager*

**ORG TYPE: CHAIN HOTEL, 50,000  
SQ FT OF MEETING SPACE**

### PROBLEM

Our hotel actively uses digital marketing to reach the meeting planners we want to attract. The sales and marketing teams are bringing in more leads than ever before, but they need a new way to manage the incoming demand. I've noticed that we're missing out on many qualified leads that would have been lucrative for our property, but we lost them to the competition. With greater RFP traffic, the response time among even our top group sales managers is too high, often exceeding 48 hours. Not only do we need to trim down that time, but we also need more insight into group pacing and production behind the scenes. We will not be able to drive better numbers with our current approach. Choosing leads based on gut feeling just won't work anymore – we need established processes to fill our revenue gaps. Transparency is the goal, but we don't know how to get there.



*Diagnosis:*

**DEMAND MANAGEMENT FATIGUE**

### SOLUTION

While I'm thrilled you're receiving the leads you want, we know the frustration behind clunky processes. In my research, I found that the number one complaint planners have during the venue sourcing process is a lack of thoroughness in venues' responses. This is followed closely by speed, beating out trustworthiness and brevity. My best advice is to work smarter, not harder. There are tools available that automatically manage, track, and prioritize all the leads in your sales funnel. Use modern technology to shorten RFP response times without sacrificing attention to detail. Since you can't be quick and thorough on every single lead, you have to prioritize which leads to pursue first.

**ROOM OCCUPANCY HOVERS AROUND 80%, BUT MEETING SPACE IS EMPTY APPROXIMATELY 70% OF THE TIME.**

## CHAPTER 4: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



*VP of  
Revenue*

ORG TYPE: OWNERSHIP GROUP,  
OWN SEVERAL HOTELS THAT HAVE  
AN AVERAGE OF 60,000 SQ FT OF  
MEETING SPACE

### PROBLEM

I have noticed a loss in group business market share among three of our top hotels. Since we're focused on the long-term success of all our properties, losing market share is a huge concern. While we have some guesses as to why planners are taking their group business to our competitors, we just can't be sure. If we lower our prices, we lose out on potential revenue without necessarily increasing demand. What is your recommendation for refining our sales and marketing strategy using tactics that help us outperform the competition?



*Diagnosis:*  
**CHRONIC DATA BLINDNESS**

### SOLUTION

To gain better insight internally and externally, there's only one place to look: the data. The hotel group sales landscape will continue to change whether you're keeping track or not. Keep a close eye on each property's comp set by using data to analyze your group business. With customized reports, the numbers will show you group business gaps and opportunities, which will enable you to easily make more strategic group business decisions right now and in the future.

DATA-CENTRIC MARKETING  
DECISIONS CAN GROW  
MARKETING ROI BY

**20%**

ORGANIZATIONS USING  
ADVANCED ANALYTICS ENJOY A

**32%**  
**HIGHER ROI**

# Our Recommendations



## BRAND AWARENESS DEFICIENCY

- Looks like you're suffering from Brand Awareness Deficiency. The best medicine for that is marketing in person and in print to spread the word about your property.
- Print magazines ([EMA](#), [CONNECT](#))
- In-person events ([EMA](#), [CONNECT](#))

## GENERALIZED LEAD GENERATION DISORDER

- We hate to say it, but you've got a bad case of GLGD. It's time to connect with corporate and professional meeting and event planners who are actively looking to book group space like yours. Put your property in front of the right audience at the right time with better advertising.
- [The Cvent Supplier Network](#)

## DEMAND MANAGEMENT FATIGUE

- Don't be weighed down by Demand Management Fatigue. Pick your team up by the bootstraps and show them how the best in the business handle a high volume of leads. Let technology help you sort, manage, and prioritize leads while you focus on the clients.
- [Lead Scoring](#)
- [SpeedRFP](#)

## CHRONIC DATA BLINDNESS

- Your hotel can't afford to ignore the numbers. See more clearly using our data and your own. You'll be able to stay ahead of the competition by analyzing where you're losing market share based on group characteristics, and where and how planners are sourcing.
- [Group Business Intelligence](#)

Still feeling the group business blues? Check out some additional content here.

[LEARN MORE](#)