With the help of Cvent’s Competitive Set Dashboard, The Wink DC successfully navigated its move away from Marriott. Now it has eyes on making a strong and independent statement of success.

99% Response Rate  
77% Bid Rate  
$1.6M Awarded Value

After changing from the Renaissance Dupont Circle to the Wink DC
INTRODUCTION

The Start of a Brave New World

Managed correctly, leaving a major hotel chain like Marriott can be the start of something special. But it takes hard work. Strong communication. And a strong brand that’s based on a signature and unique event experience.

No problem there. The Wink, formerly known as the Renaissance Dupont Circle, set out on its own on January 10, 2018 — and it hasn’t looked back. The hotel reflects the emerging DC personality of eclectic sophistication, driven ambition, and connectivity.

Events with Flair and Proven Expertise

At The Wink, event venues are all about “getting down to business” within a fast-paced and think-smart environment. Situated in the heart of DC’s Dupont Circle neighborhood, the hotel hosts a healthy mix of events for groups 200 seats or smaller: 25% associations, 20% corporate business, with a mix of social groups, government meetings and university confabs making up the rest.

It’s a meeting mix that includes its share of exceptional events and high-maintenance guests. From diplomats to politicians and industry leaders, the most high-powered people in the world call the capital home. As such, The Wink team is comfortable with meeting the highest demands from the most demanding event attendees. So with all that going for it, The Wink was strongly positioned to boost its event group business as an independent.
Leads? What Leads? Starting Over

Deflagging from a brand as powerful as Marriott — especially the renowned Renaissance Dupont Circle — is a risky, high-pressure power move. For Julia Quinn, it meant a new challenge, and one the director of sales and marketing was eager to take on. The crux of the issue was volume, as in a stunning 40% drop in leads coming to the hotel as a Marriott brand, almost overnight. “It was a change in the year…for the year,” said Quinn. “And we really had no preliminary marketing or prep. It was like, we’re The Wink — now start producing.”

In addition, there was the problem of brand: After living in the relative comfort of a big brand for so long, and after having established a local brand experience in Dupont Circle, shifting the customer eye line to a new, unique experience was daunting and a little scary. Business and careers were at risk. Quinn got to work selling a new experience — and building a new brand story.

“It was a change in the year…for the year. And we really had no preliminary marketing or prep. It was like, we’re The Wink – now start producing.”

- Julia Quinn, Director of Sales and Marketing, The Wink DC
You Just Lost 40% of Your Leads. What Now?

If you’re Julia Quinn, you don’t panic. Instead, you take a breath and then start building a program based on analytics and communication.

“When our leads went down, it was pretty scary. But we realized that with the right tools, we could convert more group business with what was already sourced to us,” said Quinn. “We also realized that we could find areas of opportunity for our brand of event, just by watching our KPIs and analyzing the data story.” To do that, Quinn used the Cvent Competitive Set Dashboard to optimize communication with ownership, motivate her team, and gain actionable insights.

Motivating the Sales Team

“I use the report for every single ownership presentation,” said Quinn. “It's great to have the ability to show them we're doing the work – and the results.”

Quinn can look at her Comp Set Dashboard to see where the team is improving. It’s especially valuable when it comes to key metrics like response time. “The summary report helps me focus on the total picture,” she said. “I want to make sure they're encouraged, and I want to create an incentive. How are we doing compared to the market overall? It's good to compare to see how we're performing.”

Response Time. That’s the biggest metric. We should never be below a 92% on response rate, and I am constantly challenging my team to do better.”

- Julia Quinn, Director of Sales and Marketing, The Wink DC
Quinn’s team is, perhaps, among the few teams in the DC area who see the reporting on a consistent basis. “It makes us very competitive. I challenge my team constantly to do better at response time. I say...I know we’re not responding fast enough. So let’s beat the time and get better.”

“We have this conversation on a weekly basis.”

“When our leads went down, it was pretty scary. But we realized that with the right tools, we could convert more group business with what was already sourced to us and begin to build our own organic leads. It made us better.”

**Strategic Planning, Successful Tactics**

Overall, Quinn’s use of the Comp Set Dashboard helps her plan strategically and execute relentlessly. It also serves as an early warning system about potential issues. “I can see eight out of ten metrics to work on,” said Quinn. “And that helps us stay on track to our goals.”
Lead Growth. And Quality.

When The Wink lost the Marriott flag in early 2018, the volume of RFPs dropped significantly. Cvent’s Business Intelligence Competitive Set Dashboard gave them visibility into how to execute around important “controllable” stats such as Response Rate, Bid Rate, and Average Response Time. That led to an increase in awarded RFPs and value.

“With the Cvent Competitive Set Dashboard, we can identify weak areas compared to the competitive set and act immediately. So far it has been working well, and converting into RFPs!”

- Julia Quinn, Director of Sales and Marketing, The Wink DC

After changing from the Renaissance Dupont Circle to the Wink DC...

- 99% response rate
- 77% bid rate
- 39 awarded RFPs
- $1.6M in awarded value
Cvent Competitive Set Dashboards

Competitive Set Dashboards help hoteliers understand how group demand, response patterns, and awarded business compare with up to 10 competitors in real time, enabling confident, data-driven group business decisions.

- Measure your property’s RFP performance vs. the competition
- Define your competitive pool and view aggregate performance data
- Analyze your future lead opportunities using Event Start Dates