

THE CAREER ISSUE

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**"Attendees
don't want
to just be
talked to—
they want to
participate."**

RICK HARRIS,
Association of Proposal
Management Professionals



the / **zimmerman** / agency

(continued)

FLORIDA

Meet in the Sunshine State

From candy-colored sunsets to white-sand beaches to year-round balmy temperatures, Florida has a lot going for it. So it's no surprise this vivid scenery gave the Florida Highwaymen, a group of famous landscape artists, inspiration for their legendary paintings. They depicted the brilliance of the red Poinciana trees, the elegance of the great egrets that roam the swamplands and the gentle sway of the towering palms. Florida is a place that lures many groups, and it's not hard to see why.

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Fort Lauderdale



Fort Lauderdale

Fort Lauderdale is a major beach town, and it's grown way beyond its status as a spring break location. Crowds of young people are still drawn to its nightlife scene, but Fort Lauderdale also has five beaches and a sophisticated vibe. And with the nearby Everglades, botanical gardens and beautiful beaches, Fort Lauderdale is a city that embraces its natural surroundings. So when it comes to building history, it's not surprising there is a focus on sustainability. In 2012, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Broward County Convention Center was awarded LEED Gold certification from the Green Building Certification Institute.

"This is the first convention center in Florida to be LEED certified on any level and one of only three in the nation to achieve LEED Gold certification for an existing building," says Christine Roberts, Executive Vice President of convention sales and services for the Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The building's green updates include the installation of a commercial organic waste decomposition machine known as the "Digester," which turns all organic kitchen waste into "grey water," a treatment landscape design that reduces irrigation needs by using certain plants and trees indigenous to South Florida, and a recycling program that turned an annual recycling from 8 percent to 33 percent.

Consider the Museum of Discovery and Science for an out-of-the-box meeting. It accommodates up to 2,000 for events in a rooftop area that gives guests the opportunity to experience Hurricane-force winds, big fish fossils, and being hit with bolts, lightning and plagues.

Hot New Venue!

Fort Lauderdale can be easily navigated by car, water-taxi, trolley or B Cycle shared bikes. The airport, water park, convention center, beaches and downtown arts and entertainment venues are within a 5-mile radius of each other.

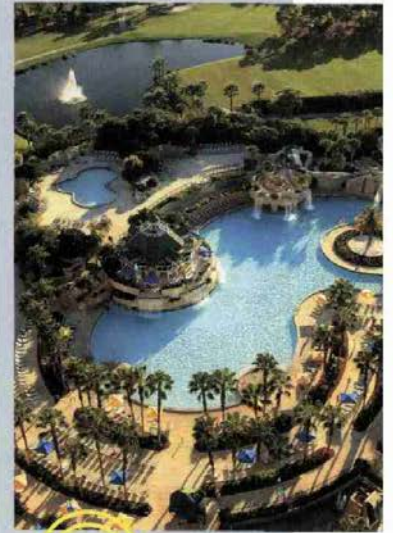
Quick Facts

Area served: 75,000 in Greater Fort Lauderdale-Broward County

Beachfront: 17 miles of Fort Lauderdale International Airport

Convention center: Greater Fort Lauderdale-Broward County Convention Center

Total meeting space: 100,000 square feet | **Meeting rooms:** 37



SPOTLIGHT

Orlando World Center Marriott

The 2,000-room Orlando World Center Marriott, which has 450,000 square feet of state-of-the-art, flexible event space, recently launched a new worldwide program called Red Coat Direct. "The beauty of Red Coat Direct is that the planner is in complete control of the meeting from anywhere in our complex," says Gary Dybul, director of sales and marketing for the hotel. "Room temperature can be changed, coffee can be ordered—all without having to contact an event manager."

Groups can get creative when it comes to entertainment. For example, consider mixology lessons where guests learn to whip up bourbon-bacon cocktails. The pool bar is a popular spot for corporate receptions, and the expansive pool deck accommodates up to 3,000 guests.