

TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025

7:30 AM - 9:15 AM	Registration & Coffee
9:15 AM - 10:00 AM	OPENING PLENARY BREAKFAST Welcome from Lt. Governor Driscoll; Kate Fox, MOTT; Mary Kay Wydra, Explore Western Mass Updates on MA250 and More! LOCATION: Rooms A & B, Floor 2
10:00 AM - 10:10 AM	NETWORKING BREAK: Catch up with your peers and visit our exhibitors!
10:10 AM - 10:55 AM	BREAKOUT SESSIONS
	Creating Memorable Moments: Redefining Marketing Through Experience In today's fast-paced, content-saturated world, traditional marketing strategies no longer cut through the noise. To truly connect with audiences, brands must shift from telling stories to creating unforgettable experiences. This session will explore how experimental marketing can elevate your brand by immersing audiences in experiences that resonate on a deeper, emotional level. From pop-up events to interactive digital campaigns, discover how thinking outside the box can transform your marketing approach and build lasting relationships with your audience. Moderator: Heather Munnell, VDA <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shana Bryant, <i>Shana Bryant Consulting</i>• Maddie Ogren, <i>Access TCA</i>• Rachel Strauss, <i>CSI Boston</i> LOCATION: Rooms 2 & 3, Floor 1
	AI Tools to Explore for Tourism: Work Smarter, Not Harder Ready for a tourism tech update that won't break the bank? Join us for a fast-paced tour of practical AI tools that are transforming destinations. See how artificial intelligence is helping tourism businesses work smarter, not harder. Perfect for the tech-curious who want to stay ahead of the curve while keeping the human touch alive. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tess Vismale, <i>Dahlia + Agency</i> LOCATION: Rooms 4 & 5, Floor 1
	Beyond the Noise: Creating Content that Breaks Through In a world where media channels are saturated with content, how can PR professionals ensure their messages not only rise above the noise but also connect with their audience? This session will explore how to craft PR content that stands out in a crowded media landscape, delivering impactful messages that resonate, build trust and drive action. From media pitches to social media campaigns, learn strategies for creating authentic, relevant and newsworthy content that captures attention, learn how to use storytelling, timing and media relations to your advantage, while navigating the ever evolving digital and traditional media world. Moderator: Sandy Lish, <i>The Castle Group</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kim Knox Beckius, <i>Yankee Magazine</i>• Ryan Hutton, <i>DCR</i>• Angela Prout, <i>Shored Up Digital</i>• David Zimmerman, <i>Spirit Magazine</i> LOCATION: Room C, Floor 2

10:55 AM – 11:05 AM	NETWORKING BREAK: Catch up with your peers and visit our exhibitors!
11:05 AM – 11:50 AM	<p>BREAKOUT SESSIONS</p>
	<p>Host Region Spotlight From Concept to Ceremony: How to Create an Outstanding Hospitality Awards Ceremony</p> <p>Want to build brand awareness in your community in a meaningful way? Hospitality awards offer a powerful way to connect your brand with the local community, elevate the tourism industry, and celebrate outstanding front-line hospitality professionals. In this seminar, Explore Western Mass will showcase the success of its 28-year-strong Howdy Awards for Hospitality Excellence and provide a step-by-step blueprint to help you implement a similar program in your market. Learn how to recognize top hospitality talent, strengthen community engagement, and enhance your region’s visitor experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Kay Wydra, <i>Explore Western Mass</i> • Michele Goldberg, <i>Explore Western Mass</i> <p>LOCATION: Rooms 2 & 3, Floor 1</p>
	<p>Unlocking Global Potential: Strategies for Capturing Your Share of the International Market</p> <p>International tourism to Massachusetts is on the rise, offering incredible opportunities for businesses to attract travelers from around the world. However, targeting this segment requires a strategic approach that goes beyond traditional marketing. In this session, we’ll focus on innovative strategies that you can use to thrive in the competitive global market, learn how to adapt your offerings to different cultural preferences, effectively reach international travelers and position your business to succeed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michele Cota, <i>Discover New England</i> • Amanda Davis, <i>Brand USA</i> • Alyssa Dion Rodning, <i>Marriott Boston Back Bay Hotels</i> <p>LOCATION: Rooms 4 & 5, Floor 1</p>
<p>Break Down Silos and Boost Results: Tapping The Power of Connections Between Social, Influencers, and UGC</p> <p>Are your marketing and PR teams stuck in silos, leaving big opportunities untapped? This session with Development Counselors International is your chance to change that. Discover the travel trends reshaping consumer decision-making and learn how to harness them through cutting-edge content creation and social media strategies. This isn’t your typical 101-level session—it’s a game-changer. By the end, you’ll walk away with a practical, action-ready plan to take ideas off the “someday” list and into your refreshed communication strategy. We’ll kick off by diving into today’s most important travel trends, followed by a no-nonsense overview of the state of social media—think daily algorithm shifts, emerging platforms, and more. Then, we’ll get to the core of it all: 5 Things You Tourism Entity Should Do in 2025 to ensure your influencer marketing fully aligns with your brand’s social strategy. Don’t miss this opportunity to elevate your approach and stay ahead of the curve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laura Cyrille, <i>DCI</i> • Hanna Gbordzoe, <i>DCI</i> <p>LOCATION: Room C, Floor 2</p>	

11:50 AM - 1:00 PM	<p>LUNCH & KEYNOTE SPEAKER</p> <p>Kate Fox, MOTT; John Doleva, <i>President & CEO</i>, Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame</p> <p>The Power of Sports in MA!</p> <p><i>Presented By:</i> John David, President & CEO, Sports Events & Tourism Association</p> <p>Discover the transformative impact of sports tourism and gain exclusive insights into the latest trends, all anchored by the groundbreaking findings of the Sports Events & Tourism Association’s State of the Industry Report, crafted in collaboration with Tourism Economics. Led by John David, President and CEO of the Sports ETA, this dynamic session will explore the unparalleled influence of sports tourism, exploring how it can serve as a catalyst for community development, economic impact, and enhanced civic pride.</p> <p>LOCATION: Rooms A & B, Floor 2</p>
1:10 PM - 1:55 PM	<p>BREAKOUT SESSIONS</p> <p>Film Tourism: Exploring the Impact of Screen Locations on Travel & Tourism</p> <p>In this session, the Massachusetts Film Office will explore the dynamic relationship between film and television locations and the tourism they generate. We’ll dive into how towns, cities and iconic sites featured on screen can transform into must-visit destinations, drawing travelers eager to experience the magic they’ve seen on screen. From the impact of iconic scenes to the role of local culture in shaping the visitor experience, you’ll gain a deeper understanding of how to capitalize on the global popularity of film tourism.</p> <p>Moderator: Meg Montagnino-Jarrett, <i>Massachusetts Film Office</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erica Ashton, <i>MVY Chamber of Commerce</i> • Michael DeKoster, <i>Maritime Gloucester</i> • Taunya Wolfe-Finn, <i>Wolfe Adventures & Tours</i> <p>LOCATION: Rooms 2 & 3, Floor 1</p> <p>AI Tools to Explore for Tourism: Work Smarter, Not Harder</p> <p>Ready for a tourism tech update that won’t break the bank? Join us for a fast-paced tour of practical AI tools that are transforming destinations. See how artificial intelligence is helping tourism businesses work smarter, not harder. Perfect for the tech-curious who want to stay ahead of the curve while keeping the human touch alive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tess Vismale, <i>Dahlia + Agency</i> <p>LOCATION: Rooms 4 & 5, Floor 1</p> <p>The Road to 2026: Leveraging FIFA, MA250, Sail Boston & More</p> <p>As we approach 2026, Massachusetts is gearing up for an exciting lineup of major events that will put the state in the global spotlight. In this session, we’ll explore how these landmark events offer tremendous opportunities for local businesses, tourism and community engagement. Join us as we discuss strategies to harness the economic, cultural and tourism potential these events bring.</p> <p>Moderator: Undersecretary Sarah Stanton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tricia Fenton, <i>FIFA Boston 2025</i> • Dusty Rhodes, <i>Conventures, Inc./ Sail Boston</i> • Sheila Green, <i>MA250</i> <p>LOCATION: Room C, Floor 2</p>
1:55 PM - 2:05 PM	<p>NETWORKING BREAK: Catch up with your peers and visit our exhibitors!</p>

<p>2:05 PM - 2:50 PM</p>	<p>BREAKOUT SESSIONS</p> <p>Journey Without Limits: Accessible Travel Solutions Join us for an inspiring and informative session on accessible travel. Learn ways to break down the barriers that often prevent people from experiencing the world. In the session we'll dive into practical solutions and innovative technologies designed to make travel more inclusive for all. Learn ways that the travel industry is evolving to meet the diverse needs of travelers.</p> <p>Moderator: Julie Arrison-Bishop, <i>MOTT</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom McCarthy, <i>DCR</i> • Jessica Doonan, <i>Museum of Fine Arts</i> <p>LOCATION: Rooms 2 & 3, Floor 1</p> <hr/> <p>Museums 250: How to Engage Museums across our state serve as custodians of our history, they are educators, sources of inspiration. Museums are an economic driver for visitors and tourists alike. Hear how three museums are engaging and embracing our history and inspiring the public with their art, objects and exhibits.</p> <p>Moderator: Sheila Green, <i>MA250</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexis Goodin, <i>The Clark Art Institute</i> • Lisa Krassner, <i>Concord Museum</i> • Ethan Lasser, <i>Museum of Fine Arts, Boston</i> <p>LOCATION: Rooms 4 & 5, Floor 1</p> <hr/> <p>Beyond the Noise: Creating Content that Breaks Through In a world where media channels are saturated with content, how can PR professionals ensure their messages not only rise above the noise but also connect with their audience? This session will explore how to craft PR content that stands out in a crowded media landscape, delivering impactful messages that resonate, build trust and drive action. From media pitches to social media campaigns, learn strategies for creating authentic, relevant and newsworthy content that captures attention, learn how to use storytelling, timing and media relations to your advantage, while navigating the ever evolving digital and traditional media world.</p> <p>Moderator: Sandy Lish, <i>The Castle Group</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angela Prout, <i>Shored Up Digital</i> • Ryan Hutton, <i>DCR</i> • David Zimmerman, <i>Spirit Magazine</i> • Kim Knox Beckius, <i>Yankee Magazine</i> <p>LOCATION: Room C, Floor 2</p>
<p>3:00 PM - 4:00 PM</p>	<p>CLOSING PLENARY A conversation with Governor Maura Healey and Elin Hilderbrand Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism Awards Presentation And more!</p> <p>LOCATION: Rooms A & B, Floor 2</p>
<p>5:30 PM - 8:00 PM</p>	<p>RECEPTION Enjoy a networking reception at the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame</p>