

CHIEF COMMERCIAL OFFICER

Explore St. Louis | St. Louis, MO





St. Louis

Your Next Great Memory Starts Here

Urban explorer, outdoor adventurer, aficionado of family fun – no matter your travel persona, you'll find plenty to see and do in St. Louis. Explore iconic attractions, discover unique shops, and experience luxurious spas. Take a tour of museums and historic sites, attend performances at state-of-the-art venues, cheer on our sports teams, and delight your taste buds at award-winning restaurants, coffee shops, breweries, wineries, and distilleries.

St. Louis is brimming with free attractions and boasts an arts-and-culture scene that's second to none. Plus, fans of fresh air will be surprised and delighted by our flourishing public parks, miles of trails and exhilarating waterways. Sprinkle in a bit of our secret sauce – the warmth and hospitality of the residents – and you'll discover that St. Louis dishes up undeniably epic travel experiences. Don't take our word for it, though. See for yourself.

[Arts & Culture](#) [Entertainment & Nightlife](#) [Outdoors](#) [Shopping](#) [Sports](#) [Tours](#) [Wellness & Spas](#)

Dine & Drink

Welcome to the next great food city!

As the region's food-and-beverage scene continues to grow, innovate, diversify, and delight, there's talk of St. Louis becoming a tastemaker in the culinary world. We're fortunate to have a plethora of excellent restaurants, coffee shops, and confectioners alongside award-winning breweries, distilleries, and wineries throughout our neighborhoods.

On [South Grand Boulevard](#) alone, you can dine on Turkish kebabs, Ethiopian injera, Italian arancini, Indian curry, Cantonese steamed buns, all-beef hot dogs, plant-based pizza and vegan tacos, just to name a few delicious bites. Wash it all down with craft beers, French wines, gin cocktails and spicy margaritas. A scrumptious assortment of Bosnian and Vietnamese restaurants also dots the culinary landscape, and new establishments continue to push boundaries and define local flavor.

While we highly recommend dining and drinking at creative, contemporary spots, it would be remiss of us not to encourage you to taste our [emblematic eats](#), as well. From toasted ravioli to St. Louis-style pizza to gooey butter cake, every iconic dish comes with its own history, tradition and irresistible flavor. Whatever you're craving, St. Louis has it. Let's dig in!

Stay

There are more than 40,000 welcoming rooms throughout the metro area, making it easy to find a hotel or bed-and-breakfast that conveniently fits into any itinerary.

Believe it or not, the St. Louis region also has campgrounds – plus flourishing public parks, miles of trails, and exhilarating waterways – for the outdoor adventurers among us.



Explore St. Louis

The St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission (DBA Explore St. Louis) is the official destination marketing organization responsible for selling St. Louis City and St. Louis County as a convention, meeting and leisure destination, and the operator of the America's Center Convention Complex. Explore St. Louis works to attract citywide conventions, one-hotel meetings, sporting events, group tours and individual leisure travelers to St. Louis in collaboration with more than 750 regional Partners including hotels, restaurants, attractions and service providers.

History

The St. Louis Tourism Bureau was founded in 1909 by a group of local business leaders, after seeing the success of the 1904 World's Fair. In 1984, the Bureau was restructured and combined with the St. Louis County Office of Tourism to form the St. Louis Convention & Visitors Commission (SLCVC), a regional commission of the State of Missouri. Dedicated funding for the SLCVC and the Regional Arts Commission through a new tax on hotel rooms was implemented. The SLCVC's board was reorganized in 1991 to reflect the organization's new role in managing the expanded America's Center Convention Complex including the 67,000-seat Dome at America's Center, 1,400-seat Ferrara Theatre, a 28,000 square-foot ballroom and the St. Louis Executive Conference Center. (Prior to the expansion, the convention center had been operated by the City of St. Louis.)

The SLCVC's 11-member Board of Commissioners is headed by a chairman appointed by the Governor of Missouri. Five Board members are appointed by the Mayor of the City of St. Louis and five are appointed by the St. Louis County Executive. According to the organization's enabling legislation, three of each official's appointees must be actively engaged in the St. Louis hotel industry.

Explore St. Louis at a Glance

- A 3.75 percent tax paid by visitors on transient lodging in St. Louis City and County provides the funding for the Explore St. Louis, 11/15 of which is used by Explore St. Louis for its sales and marketing programs and operations. The remaining 4/15 of the tax supports the programs of the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission.
- According to a study conducted by the University of Missouri-St. Louis, the activities of Explore St. Louis directly contribute more than \$5 billion to the local economy on an annual basis.
- St. Louis welcomes 28.2 million annual visitors for leisure, conventions, meetings and business travel
- Visitors spend \$5.9 billion in St. Louis and tourism provides jobs for 90,000 area residents
- St. Louis area tourism workers earn \$3.4 billion in wages yearly and the industry generates \$1.1 billion in local, state and federal taxes each year
- Travel and tourism ranks among the top 7 industries in St. Louis City and County
- Each household in St. Louis City and County receives \$1,201 a year in tax savings as a result of travel and tourism
- Download the Explore St. Louis [Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report](#).

St. Louis is your gateway to meeting success!

St. Louis is a hub of innovation and entrepreneurship right in the heart of the country. The energy in the St. Louis region is palpable and extends beyond our burgeoning medical and tech centers to our vibrant arts scene, award-winning restaurants, craft breweries, and artisan distilleries that define the flavor and vibe of this great city. With excellent lift and a light rail system that connects visitors seamlessly to Lambert International Airport, St. Louis is easy to get to and even easier to get around. And with world-class attractions – many of them free – hotel options at every price point, and classic Midwest warmth and hospitality, St. Louis is an ideal location for your next meeting or convention.

Convention Package

St. Louis features a tight package for city-wide meetings and events in the heart of the re-developed downtown central business district. The [America's Center Convention Complex](#) offers 502,000 square feet of exhibit space in six contiguous meeting halls, 80 meeting rooms, the 67,000 seat [Dome at America's Center](#), and much more in the middle of downtown. There are more than 7,500 hotel rooms within a mile of America's Center and more than 41,000 throughout the metro area.

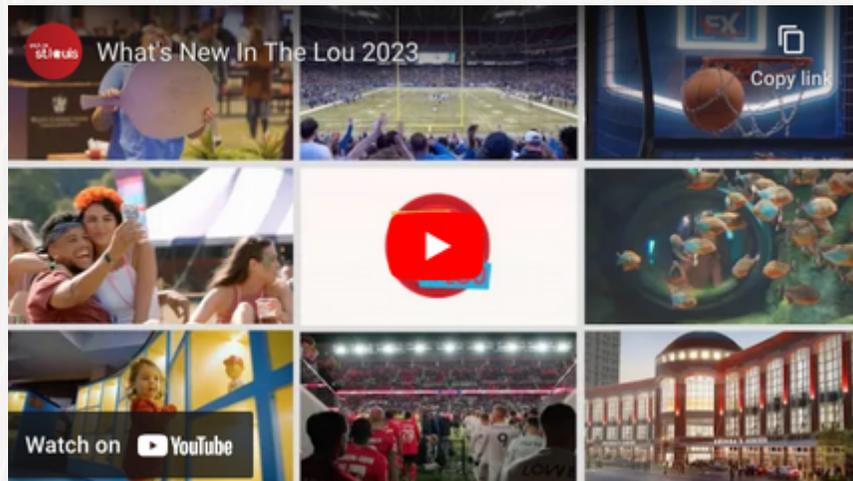
If your meeting space needs are a little smaller, more than 20 hotels throughout the St. Louis area offer at least 10,000 square feet of meeting space that can fit any need. Looking for something a little different? Our [St. Louis Venues](#) can accommodate groups of 10 to 10,000 or more in flexible, convenient venues. From the sleek and stylish to fresh air and fun, we've got you covered.

St. Louis offers a convenient, central location for meetings of all sizes. St. Louis Lambert International Airport provides non-stop service to more than 70 destinations with more than 500 daily arrivals and departures, making getting here easy. Once on the ground, the MetroLink light rail system connects the airport to Downtown St. Louis with stops at the convention center and near many hotels and attractions.

What's New in St. Louis

With \$10 billion of new development flowing throughout the region, St. Louis is ready to take your event to the next level.

- America's Center Convention Complex
- Ballpark Village
- City Foundry
- City Park
- Gateway Arch National Park
- Hotel Development
- St. Louis Union Station
- The Armory





POSITION SUMMARY

In line with Explore St. Louis' vision, mission, and core values, the Chief Commercial Officer holds the pivotal responsibility of shaping crucial decisions and guiding strategies across marketing, sales, product development, and guest experience. This leadership role is central to driving business expansion and securing a stronger market presence for Explore St. Louis. The Chief Commercial Officer is instrumental in ensuring the organization's comprehensive commercial triumph.

We're seeking an ideal candidate who deeply comprehends consumer behavior within the tourism and hospitality sectors and carries a track record of brand development. This individual should blend a data-centric approach with a knack for innovative thinking, consistently showcasing their ability to conceive and implement effective strategies. Furthermore, adeptness in team development and management is key to fostering high-performing teams.

The scope of sales operations encompasses meetings, conventions, amateur sports, reunions, leisure groups, international leisure, and film offices. On the services front, responsibilities span overseeing large and small groups, visitor centers, and volunteer recruitment. In the realm of marketing, focus areas include communications, public relations, advertising, research, and partnerships.

The position reports to the President & CEO and will have 6 direct reports, including Chief Sales Officer, Chief Marketing Officer, Directors of Meet. St. Louis (convention services), Partnership (membership), Leisure Travel Sales/Film Office, and Visitor Services.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Develop Commercial Strategies:

- Devise and implement commercial strategies aligned with organizational objectives and financial targets.

Leadership and Team Management:

- Provide leadership and direction to Explore St. Louis' CSO and CMO.
- Build and lead large teams within marketing, sales, services, and communications.
- Collaborate with HR to develop community relations programs, including workforce recruitment marketing campaigns.
- Participate actively in professional societies related to hospitality and marketing.
- Ensures that all staff are trained, supervised, and evaluated.
- Provides inspiration, leadership, and empowers others to ensure that the objectives of Explore St. Louis are achieved.
- Act as a productive member of the senior leadership team at Explore St. Louis.

Sales and Marketing:

- Drive the growth of leisure tourism, meetings, and conventions.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to ensure the development and execution of effective marketing, sales, and engagement strategies and plans with associated financial projections.
- Manage comprehensive communication and public relations programs to enhance the organization's image.
- Oversee reputation management strategies, including online review responses and social media engagement.
- Industry Engagement: Engage with the National Customer Advisory Board and industry societies to evaluate practices and competitive landscapes.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Financial Management, Reporting and Analysis:

- Oversees the creation and execution of the sales and marketing annual budget.
- Able to read and understand financial measurements and forecasting using data tools from CBRE, STR Data, and others, along with a general sense of market performance compared to the budget.
- Performance Measurement and Optimization: Establish benchmarks and KPIs, ensuring alignment with industry standards and best practices.
- Create a comprehensive reporting function for commercial operations to track, measure, and analyze performance.
- Market Analysis and Adaptation: Monitor marketing, financial, and demographic trends to seize opportunities and respond to competitive activities effectively.
- Oversee the CRM team for effective data capture and integration, enhancing personalized customer experiences and revenue.

Product Development and Launch:

- Work with leadership to innovate and introduce new products and guest experiences, conducting research and analyzing profitability.
- Business Optimization: Develop strategies maximizing pricing components for sales opportunities, enhancing market share, and benefiting organizational and partner interests.
- Continuously improve consumer-facing communication platforms, optimizing visuals, technical integrations, and user experience.
- Monitor and enhance the organization's presence on third-party sites and distribution channels.
- Integrate Visitor Services into sales and marketing strategies for consistent customer experiences.

QUALIFICATIONS

- An advanced degree in Business, Marketing, or a related field is preferred.
- 10+ years' experience with commercial and revenue responsibility, preferably leading sales and marketing for a major convention hotel or regional sales and marketing leadership experience for a hotel brand with significant meeting and convention space.
- Demonstrated experience managing revenue and expense financials and budgeting/forecasting.
- Strong organizational, leadership, and project management skills are required. Must be able to lead a large team, think strategically, and handle multiple projects.
- Demonstrated ability to drive the achievement of business goals through aligning people, processes, structure, information, and communication systems in a rapidly growing/dynamic market(s).
- Excellent communication skills (verbal and written) are required.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Strategic thinker and strong executor, “big picture” mentality, but comfortable immersing in details.
- Astute, pragmatic business professional; business-fluent and purposeful.
- Innate intelligence and common sense.
- High level of energy, passion, and enthusiasm.
- Insatiable appetite for information; well-read and informed in regard to industry and consumer trends.
- Confident and self-assured; willing to initiate dialogue with anyone.
- Positive attitude, creative, and problem solver.
- Highly communicative and a great listener.
- Open-minded, approachable and supportive.
- Self-directed and disciplined at working independently.
- Focused and well-organized; able to prioritize; flexible/multi-task and delegate effectively.
- Proactive, action-oriented; works smart.

TOP PRIORITIES

- Develop a thorough understanding and ongoing assessment of Explore St. Louis’ current sales and marketing plans and deployment of strategies, research, and data and make changes to achieve short and long-term goals.
- Understand the budget and funding sources.
- Understand “[The Future of America’s Center](#)” expansion and facelift and the marketing and sales strategies in place.
- Begin to develop strong and meaningful relationships with customers, hospitality leaders, partners, and vendors.
- Access the sales and marketing organizational structure, team deployment, and goals/accountabilities to ensure they are aligned to the overall mission and strategies of Explore St. Louis.
- Ensure that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are woven into the fabric of the sales and marketing division and strategic plan.



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If interested in learning more about this great opportunity, please send your resume to our SearchWide Global Executive, Mark Gnatovic.

SearchWide Global is a full-service executive search firm primarily for companies in the travel, tourism and convention, and hotel and lodging industries. We specialize in C-Level, Director and Management level executive searches for companies ranging in size from Fortune 500 corporations to mid-sized public and private companies.