

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chattanooga Convention Center | Chattanooga, TN





Chattanooga Convention Center

Where Big Events Come to Life

Convenient location, top-of-the-line amenities, and the fastest fiber optic Internet around– that’s just the beginning of what our space has to offer. Situated within a day’s drive of more than half the country’s population, Chattanooga makes the perfect backdrop for a variety of event types, from conventions and banquets to meetings and trade shows. A beautiful and walkable downtown plays host to plenty of lodging, dining, and attractions to ensure your guests have an enjoyable experience.

What is the recipe for a great event? We’d say proper planning and the right setting. Modern, convenient, and highly customizable, the Chattanooga Convention Center makes an ideal setting for a wide variety of events. Our facility offers 185,000 square feet of adaptable space flexible enough to work for essentially any style event. That means our knowledgeable team can help you create custom layout configurations designed to work best for your specific function. The wide-open exhibit hall also allows exhibitors the freedom to get creative with their booth setups and presentations. Whether you’re planning a large-scale expo or an intimate meeting, our facility is equipped to comfortably accommodate you and your guests. View a facility map [here](#).

Exhibit Halls

We offer four column-free exhibit halls totaling 100,800 square feet. This space features natural lighting throughout including spacious pre-function areas, nine loading docks, and two large drive-in access ramps making it easy for load in and load out.

Ballrooms

We offer six ballrooms with 19,000 square feet of divisible space flexible enough to accommodate events of any size.

Meeting Rooms

With 21 meeting rooms available, our space makes the perfect location for a variety of functions and client meetings, with access to every amenity you could need to be topped off with the fastest internet around.

Our facility also offers:

- A highly experienced and helpful staff.
- In-house catering service with a farm-to-table approach.
- State-of-the-art connectivity and fiber optic network internet with speeds up to 1 gig per second.
- Just minutes from the Chattanooga Airport.
- More than 3,500 nearby parking spaces.

About Chattanooga

It’s no wonder the New York Times named Chattanooga “one of the top 45 places to go in the world.” Forbes also included our city in their list of Best Places to Travel in 2023. Famous for many things, from the 1941 hit song “Chattanooga Choo Choo” to Rock City to the fastest Wi-Fi in the country, the Scenic City has become a southeast staple destination for business people and vacationers alike. Click [here](#) to learn more about what makes this place beloved by so many.

[Hotels](#) [Restaurants](#) [Things to Do](#) [Transportation](#)

POSITION SUMMARY

The Executive Director is responsible for the overall day-to-day management, promotion, operation, and strategic planning of the Chattanooga Convention Center. This includes ensuring successful event hosting by coordinating with sales, marketing, event services, and food & beverage teams while maintaining high service standards to enhance the guest experience as well as overall facility management. The GM manages financial performance through budget planning, revenue optimization, and cost control and develops strong relationships with stakeholders, including clients, community leaders, and local businesses.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Stakeholder and Community Relationships

- Navigate and strengthen relationships with city and county officials as well as the board to align strategic objectives and enhance collaboration.
- Foster open communication and build strong partnerships with the hotel community, Chattanooga Tourism Co. and local business leaders.
- Engage with stakeholders regularly to address common goals, industry challenges, and opportunities for mutual benefit.
- Actively participate in community and industry forums to ensure the Chattanooga Convention Center is well-integrated and a leading participant in local economic and social initiatives.
- Collaborate aggressively with the Chattanooga Tourism Co. to promote the facility and maximize utilization.

Sales & Marketing

- Manage the venue sales team and determine short and long-term strategies to improve occupancy, maximize space, and increase revenue.
- Work closely with the Chattanooga Tourism Co. and the Hotel Community to ensure alignment with strategic sales and marketing plans to maximize Group Room Nights for the greatest economic impact.
- Develop and execute strategic sales and marketing plans to enhance the convention center's visibility and utilization.
- Collaborate with marketing teams to create promotional materials and campaigns that effectively communicate the center's offerings, as well as implement and oversee a social media strategy to boost engagement and promote events.
- Establish KPIs and annual goals to drive performance and track success.
- Develop monthly and annual reports to assess progress and refine strategies.
- Implement creative new revenue strategies to attract high-profile events and maximize booking opportunities.

Operational Management

- Organize and direct activities and personnel for facility maintenance and operation.
- Streamline operations to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and enhance the overall guest experience.
- Implement or reinforce standard operating procedures (SOPs), training programs, and quality assurance measures.
- Coordinate training, development, quality assurance, and emergency procedures in compliance with corporate directives.
- Evaluate practices for improvements to meet client and facility needs, comply with policies, and improve operational efficiency and safety.
- Conduct employee interviews, hiring, training, performance appraisals, and disciplinary actions in collaboration with Human Resources.
- Lead the development of the operating calendar, activity schedules, and attendance/revenue projections.

Financial and Administrative Management

- Develop the financial strategy for annual operating and capital budgets, working closely with the Board.
- Develop and activate a capital improvement plan for both short-term and long-term renovations.
- Prepare and maintain necessary monthly, quarterly, and annual reports.
- Approve all Center contracts with suppliers and partners.
- Direct the development and execution of financial plans, including revenue and expense budgets and capital expenditure plans.
- Review all vendor/partner agreements and participate in negotiations to ensure the facility's best interests.
- Ensure accurate and clean audits and financial reporting to the board, stakeholders, and county/city officials.
- Ensure timely and effective responses to directives and requests from various organizations and maintain the integrity of communications.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership and Strategic Planning

- Develop and implement goals in line with the board's expectations and the city/county's expectations as the collective goals of the Chattanooga Tourism Co. and key hotel partners for the benefit of driving Group Room Nights and economic development to Chattanooga.
- Understand the feasibility study conducted by CSL and develop a strategy plan and secure buy-in and support to activate the plan.
- Work closely with the board to plan and secure funding for future renovation and expansion projects.
- Cultivate the mission of the convention center, build consensus in the community, and develop strategic partnerships with stakeholders.
- Recruit, train, supervise, and evaluate administrative staff, Event Managers, and other areas within the Center.
- Maintain effective relationships with clients, employees, and the public.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's Degree in business or public administration or related fields.
- At least 7 years of experience in managing a facility of similar size or equivalent education and experience.
- Skilled in contract negotiation, finance, business law, purchasing, and personnel supervision.
- Strong financial acumen with a proven record of success in budget management, forecasting, revenue generation, and capital improvement funding.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills to foster relationships across departments, stakeholders, and the community.
- Demonstrated knowledge of sales & marketing, event solicitation, presentations, public relations, and marketing.
- Proven ability to implement strategic initiatives and enhance guest service standards.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Strong communication, interpersonal, and organizational skills.
- Ability to foster a cooperative environment among varied interest groups.
- Knowledge of and proven experience with conference and venue facilities management.
- Problem-solving and conflict-resolution capabilities under pressure.
- Knowledge of safety regulations and laws.
- Customer service orientation for the conference and entertainment industry.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office, financial, procurement, and sales CRMs.
- Personable, accountable, and results-oriented.
- Strong focus on revenue generation, marketing strategy, guest experience, and operational excellence.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Collaborative and inclusive leadership style.
- Embraces change and drives innovation.
- Strategic thinker and passionate about driving new revenue opportunities. Exceptional customer service focus with a concierge-like approach.
- Financially astute and strategically driven.
- Personable, accountable, and results-oriented.
- Strong focus on service, guest experience, and operational excellence.
- Talent-driven leader who is driven by building high-performing teams.

TOP PRIORITIES

- Arrive with a spirit of learning, listening, and observing.
- Understand the organizational culture, build trust and rapport with the team, learn the venue and facility structure, and assess the operation and business processes.
- Evaluate customer service surveys and understand, engage, and build relationships with key customers, as well as vendors and partners.
- Understand the City of Chattanooga, Hamilton County, Chattanooga Tourism Co., The Chattanooga Area Chamber, River City Company, and Carter Street Corporation.
- Engage with the Board and develop a strategic plan that aligns with the center's long-term goals, economic impact, and community values.
- Be a community leader and engage with the city and county officials, community leaders, and local businesses.
- Establish strong partnerships with The Chattanooga Tourism Co. and hotel partners to integrate plans to sell the destination and the convention center.
- Evaluate existing sales and marketing strategies and guidelines to identify opportunities for increasing group room night bookings and expanding market reach.
- Collaborate with the marketing team and The Chattanooga Tourism Co. to enhance the Convention Center's brand visibility and attract high-profile events.
- Understand the Chattanooga Futures Study and develop a strategy for additional funding or revenue generation, including public-private partnerships or grants to activate the capital improvement plans for the convention center.
- Review and manage the budget, focusing on optimizing revenue streams while controlling costs and deploying an annual preventative maintenance plan.
- Be the Chattanooga Convention Center champion for the internal team, the customers, and the community.



Andrea Christopherson

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

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