

### Introduction

In your meeting planner role you have your hands full with the organization of the conference, let alone having time to research all the ins and outs of your destination. This is where the Convention and Visitor Bureau (CVB) comes in handy. Here are eleven compelling reasons to contact these bureaus when planning your next meeting

Source: <https://www.holland.com/global/meetings/article/11-reasons-why-a-cvb-is-your-best-friend.htm>

### 1. Free advice

Local CVBs are a very good, mostly free source of useful information. As they are usually government funded, they can give objective advice about the possibilities in their city and the surrounding area. They have the best knowledge about the area and about opportunities for meetings and ancillary programs. Top of your checklist should be to engage them early on in your destination selection and organising process.

### 2. Quick orientation

A quick tour along the CVBs of your potential destinations, whether by email, phone or just a visit to their websites, will help you to gather relevant information about possibilities, price levels, and other details. This allows you to quickly compare and draw up your shortlist.

### 3. Checking your dates

There is nothing worse than finding out that on the same dates on which you have planned your event another large event is taking up a big chunk of the capacity in the city. This can impact on room availability and other facilities, with higher price levels as a result. You cannot always expect an individual property to know all this kind of information, but the local CVB is always in the know. They are happy to advise alternative and budget friendly dates.

### 4. Best network

The CVB staff are the ultimate specialists of their city. They know all the accommodations and suppliers, and they can connect you with the most relevant suppliers for your event. Whether you need a conference venue, hotels, information on social events and supporting suppliers, they know the players in the market, with their specialties. This includes the ones you will not easily find on the web!

### 5. Site inspection

### 7. Subsidies & promotional schemes

Various cities offer attractive promotions, discounts and sometimes subsidies. These may mean substantial savings on your conference or meeting budget. Make sure to check with the relevant local CVB.

### 8. City cards & free public transport

Several Dutch cities offer special arrangements that allow delegates free or considerably reduced travel on the city's public transport systems, simply by showing their conference badge.

The City Cards of various cities, offer a range of discounts on museums, attractions, restaurants, public transport, and more, through the CVB. Your participants will thank you if they find a City Card in their conference materials, or if they can purchase the cards at attractive rates.

### 9. Transport killers

In addition to advising on transportation options available, the CVB knows what road works, detours and other situations are up in the city at the time of your meeting. They are an important link in preventing your programme from running out of the scheduled time frame. Imagine the frustration with you and irritation with your delegates if your buses become stuck in traffic for an hour. Based on up-to-date information, the CVB can advise on routes as well as on alternative means of transport.

### 10. After care

You probably have a ton of things to take care of regarding your conference, while you are already back home. It is great to have a local partner that can help you wrap up loose ends.

### 11. Wealth of Experience

The last, but not least important reason to contact the CVB is their wealth of experience with congresses and events in their city. Over the course of many years they have seen scores of best and worst practices, and just about every question has already been asked. Being able to tap into all this knowledge and expertise is invaluable for an organiser, and can literally bring in a lot of money in savings and because pitfalls are circumvented.

Along the way you will also get many tips that will help you to raise the bar for your conference from good to great!

Even if you manage to make a good pre-selection, how do you next organise your site inspection? The CVB knows exactly what is happening where, how much travel time is needed to get from A to B, and which combinations of suppliers are useful to plan an efficient visit. They will also be able to discuss the best suitable time for you to visit venues, in order that you are not inspecting an empty room, but a setup that gives you a good reference with respect to what to expect for your meeting.

## 6. Hotel bookings

Many of the Dutch CVBs offer a hotel booking service, which is usually not a free service. This allows you to quickly and easily contract the required amount of rooms, while all handling and negotiations are taken out of your hands. In addition, the CVB monitors the deadlines, and because they know what other meeting requests are in, they can help prevent cancellation costs, by rebooking the released hotel and meeting rooms for other clients.



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