



[Atlantic City Means Business](#)

written by [Kate McClare](#) | Posted on May 13th, 2014



Tourism officials in Atlantic City have a million bucks that say planners should book a meeting in their town, and they're giving groups almost three years to do it. The [Atlantic City Alliance](#), a non-profit promotion group funded by local casinos, has \$1 million in incentives for first-time conventions or those that haven't visited "AC" in several years. Qualifying groups can earn rewards by booking through 2016 at the Atlantic City Convention Center or individual properties.

It's a sure sign that AC officials mean it when they say they want group business. The segment has grown 31 percent since 2009, according to Gary Musich, vice president of convention sales for the [Atlantic City Convention & Visitors Authority](#). "It's become a vital segment of business as Atlantic City matures as a destination," Musich says. "As gaming has expanded at a rapid pace nationwide, all of the partners in AC have put more resources into sustaining growth of the meetings segment."

Planners will have a second large venue next year, when [Caesars Entertainment Corp.](#) opens its \$126 million conference center—at 250,000 sf, the largest meeting and conference facility in the Northeast. New Jersey officials are banking on the center to capture more of the \$16 billion convention and meeting market in the northeast, of which Atlantic City now gets less than 1 percent.

The conference center will offer two 50,000-sf pillarless ballrooms, each divisible into as many as 27 separate breakout rooms, as well as additional breakout areas, grand promenades and dedicated banquet kitchens and support facilities. The new facility will be located on the southwest corner of the Harrah's Atlantic City property. Major trade shows will continue to book at the Convention Center.

More intimate experiences await at the city's hotels. [Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa](#) has taken the cocktail bar 28 West back to its origins as a fine-dining establishment. Now called The Dining Room at 28 West, it can host up to 120 pax for a private dinner. "As the venue itself once served as a fine-dining restaurant at Borgata, we're thrilled to offer this option," says Becky Schultz, vice president of food and beverage. "Guests can choose a limited menu for tableside ordering, which frees the event planner from having to collect choices prior to arrival."

The hotel is sweetening the dining pot with [Borgata Baking Company](#), opening at the end of May. Located inside The Retail Piazza, the 24-hour snack shop will serve savory and sweet items created by Executive Pastry Chef Thaddeus DuBois, who held the same position in the White House under President George W. Bush.