Leonardo Hotels

Using Venue Directory and Cvent to reach more event planners and simplify the booking process

Introduction

When event planners source venues, a top priority is convenience and accessibility for their delegates travelling to the meeting. According to the 2025 Cvent Planner Sourcing Report, 25% of event professionals rate the location as having the greatest influence on their decision to submit an RFP to a hotel or venue. Leonardo Hotels has properties in some of Europe's most iconic and popular destinations to meet this need. With 110 hotels in city centres across 10 European countries and 48 destinations, the brand is frequently considered by local and international planners while sourcing. At the heart of the brand's mission is putting guests and their individual needs and wishes first, whether they're there for business or leisure.

To become that top-of-mind hotel chain and attract high-quality leads for valuable MICE business, the sales teams at Leonardo needed a way to maximise the brand's online visibility, which led them to Venue Directory. "We use Venue Directory to target certain planners," says Nikki Cubitt, group M&E manager for the UK and Ireland. "A lot of UK-based agents use Venue Directory, so it's a really important channel for us. We use it as a shop window as well as a lead generator."

Leonardo Hotels is the European division of the Fattal Hotel Group, founded in 1998. To build a strong MICE business pipeline, they needed streamlined methods available to all of their hotels, efficient technology to respond to enquiries, and communication methods to build relationships with event planners. From Leonardo Royal London St. Paul's with 1400 square metres of event space to the g Hotel & Spa with just 370 luxurious square metres of meeting space, each property requires a flexible methods of attracting and winning MICE business that helps them meet their goals.
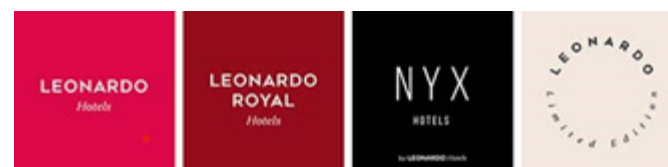
68%
decrease in response time

44%
of demand originates from Venue Directory

Leonardo Royal Hotel London St. Paul's has 33 diverse meeting rooms, including the Wren & Shakespeare, with a capacity of up to 1,200. The flagship four-start hotel attracts more than 3,000 enquiries each year through Venue Directory. In 2024, the value of these enquiries increased by 53%.

> **"** Our planners expect us to have a level of technology as we all move forward to help them plan their events. Any way that we can make it easier for a planner will ensure that they want to work with us. So it's within our interest to make sure that we're up to date with the latest technology to really help our planners and therefore, gain their business. Instant Book is going to transform the way we work. **"**

Nikki Cubitt
Group M&E Manager UK & Ireland

Standing out in a crowded market and managing demand efficiently

The hospitality and MICE industry is fast-paced and competitive, particularly in major cities like London. Venues are constantly updating their marketing strategy and vying for attention. For Leonardo Hotels, capturing the eyes of event planners has been time-consuming. "Our biggest challenge with planners is the visibility of our brand because there are so many of us about, particularly in London and the big cities," says Nikki. "Trying to stand out, giving them something different compared to our competitors is critical."

In addition, managing the volume and quality of incoming leads is a complex task. While a steady stream of enquiries is essential, not every lead is the right fit for the requested hotel. For Nikki and her team, balancing quality with quantity requires a meticulous understanding of the hotel space and smart filtering strategies. Nikki and her team needed technology to help them sort through the leads they receive daily and prioritise the most valuable ones.

Meanwhile, the need to meet planners' expectations for advanced, intuitive technology is growing. From faster response times to seamless event planning tools, staying ahead of these demands is essential for ensuring customer satisfaction and securing future business.

Showcasing the brand and simplifying lead management

Leonardo Hotels uses **Venue Directory** to attract event planners, manage enquiries, and simplify how they work with clients.

Venue Directory

Being visible to event planners while providing up-to-date, poignant information is critical. Venue Directory is a "shop window" and a lead generator, showcasing the chain's properties in the best possible light. "It's really important that we are showcased in the right way on Venue Directory," explains Nikki. "That means making sure all our photos are up-to-date and that the language we use is informative for agents sourcing venues for their clients." Nikki and her team make sure to include as many details as possible, including sustainability accreditations, room diagrams, and more.

Venue Directory is more than just a marketing tool; it's also integral to how the chain handles enquiries. "It helps us manage and respond to our enquiries in a really simple way," Nikki shares. "It's such a good system to use—it's quick, efficient, and allows us to pull data whenever we need it." This efficiency is vital for a team handling high demand. Their goal is to respond to RFPs as

quickly as possible. With the help of Venue Directory tools, the portfolio reduced its response time by 68% in 2024 and increased its response rate to 95%.

Venue Directory also makes training new staff easier. As Nikki notes, "All of our new starters begin with Venue Directory because it's the easiest portal we use. If there's an enquiry on Venue Directory versus another channel, our team always prefers to handle the Venue Directory one."

Showcasing the brand and simplifying lead management

Instant Book

Leonardo Hotels looks to Instant Book, a tool designed for small, simple meetings, as its answer to a quickly evolving events industry, adding speed and simplicity to venue sourcing. "Instant Book is really important, not just to us but for the whole industry," says Nikki. "It's exciting to see how it can transform how we handle leads."

Event planners use Instant Book to schedule smaller events directly online, allowing the hotel teams to focus on larger, more complex opportunities. Since 52% of the RFPs received by Leonardo Hotel properties are for groups of 25 attendees or fewer, this is a great option to accelerate the booking process and allow event planners to confirm their event space without the cumbersome proposal process. "If we can get agents using Instant Book to book on behalf of their clients, it allows us to be more efficient," Nikki explains. "Our teams can prioritise converting bigger bookings instead of spending man hours on smaller events that could be handled instantly."

Increasing demand and improving staff efficiency with Venue Directory and Cvent

Adopting Venue Directory and Cvent technology has been instrumental in achieving the portfolio's MICE goals. Using Venue Directory, the chain has significantly increased its visibility among UK-based planners, with 44% of total demand now coming through the platform. "It's a major channel for us," says Nikki. "We've seen our demand grow, and we rely on Venue Directory not only for leads but also for managing them efficiently." The brand has seen a 5% increase in enquiries over the past year on the platform.

Technology like **Cvent Event Diagramming** enables the team to communicate clearly with planners and deliver professional, accurate visuals that win business. "Cvent Event Diagramming is a tool we use to send out professional documents to clients. We can trust the information, and our clients can see that it's accurate," said Nikki. Instant Book is another piece of the puzzle, helping Leonardo Hotels optimise its operations. "The biggest change we see is efficiency," Nikki explains. "We can focus our resources on larger bookings while smaller events are handled instantly online. It's a win for both planners and our team."

The results speak for themselves: improved lead generation, faster response times, and greater efficiency in managing demand. "It's about working smarter, staying visible, and giving our clients exactly what they need to make their events successful."

Increasing demand and improving staff efficiency with Venue Directory and Cvent

600+
Average number of enquiries per enhanced listing venue

19%
Increase in enquiry value

5%
2024 increase in RFP enquiries

18%
2024 increase in awarded bookings

Cvent products Leonardo Hotels uses:

Venue Directory Enhanced Listing

Cvent Event Diagramming

Venue Directory Instant Book

Cvent Transient

CSN Advertising

Planner Navigator

cvent | venue DIRECTORY

Venue Directory is a leading venue sourcing solution in the UK and Europe.

Venue Directory connects meeting and event planners with a diverse range of worldwide hotels and special venues to search, find, and book perfectly matched properties. Event planning agencies, corporate meeting planners, and convention bureaus use Venue Directory's data and exclusive software, GRATIS, to search, book, invoice, and analyse their MICE business. As a crucial distribution network, Venue Directory helps simplify the sourcing and booking process for all stakeholders in the meetings and events ecosystem.

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