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The Seattle Convention Center Enters a New Era

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On January 25, 2023, the **Seattle Convention Center (SCC)** is debuting the completion of its expansion, known as **Summit**. The building, which has been under construction since 2018, nearly doubles the capacity of the convention center facilities. The existing building, **Arch**, features 432,988 total square feet, while Summit features 573,770 square feet, including a 14,000-square-foot Garden Terrace.

This addition is not your average convention center expansion; the state-of-the-art building was designed to connect visitors to the urban core of Seattle and its history and to provide an abundance of natural light, with features such as floor-to-ceiling windows and wood-centered design elements. One-of-a-kind attributes include various green and open-air spaces; a suspended staircase and escalator system, coined "The Hillclimb," that provides access from the street level to the ballroom level; and a 58,000-square-foot ballroom with 4,000 wormwood planks hanging from the ceiling, sure to create a "wow" factor for any meeting or event.

Summit is expected to achieve at least **LEED** Gold certification upon opening. Energy-efficient aspects of the building include rooftop solar panels, two large tanks to collect rainwater for use on site, and various sustainably sourced, recyclable, and recycled materials, such as reclaimed wood from the building that previously occupied the site.

The opening of Summit substantially increases the SCC's event capacity. Reportedly, while a number of events per year will occupy the whole facility, the SCC will be able to host different groups simultaneously at the Summit and Arch buildings. In reviewing lost business prior to the construction of Summit, the SCC estimates that more than $2.13 billion was lost for the region due to a lack of availability at the existing facilities. Thus, convention center events and associated demand are expected to grow substantially over the next several years.

The economic impact of the expansion will undoubtedly positively benefit hotels, restaurants, and retail shopping centers in the area. Specifically, in terms of hotels, HVS expects that the SCC expansion will cause a shift in the city's demand segmentation, and the meeting and group segment will become a larger portion of the market-wide demand base.

This year marks a new era for Seattle, a well-positioned meeting and group destination!

Learn more about the impact of the expansion on hotel demand by contacting **Kasia M. Russell, MAI** or your

Summary

On January 25, 2023, the Seattle Convention Center (SCC) is debuting the completion of its expansion, known as Summit, which nearly doubles the capacity of the convention center facilities. This addition is not your average convention center expansion, with numerous unique and energy-efficient design features. This article provides an overview of the new building and its expected impact on the Seattle lodging market.

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