

## Dove Awards moves back to Nashville, switches to October

Written by Eric Tiansay

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The Gospel Music Association (GMA) is moving the Dove Awards back to Nashville after a two-year run in Atlanta, and switching its marquee event from April to October.

"We have spent a lot of time talking to our members and industry leaders across the board in an effort to assess our environment and create a plan to meet current needs," GMA Executive Director Jackie Patillo wrote in a letter sent to association members just before Christmas. "Many of you have inquired about the 44th Annual GMA Dove Awards, and I am happy to report that it is coming back home to Nashville. In order to maximize its potential, the Dove Awards will be moving to a new October date in 2013. We are in discussion with strategic partners that will bring needed strengths to the table."

Patillo told *Christian Retailing* that "in order to maximize the potential of the Dove Awards, it was necessary to make the moves."

"It's necessary for all businesses to not play to the status quo and do things the way they've always done it," added Patillo, noting that the specific Nashville location has not yet been finalized. "We want to be effective for the current economic climate. GMA is doing a lot of retooling right now and this is just a part of it."

Held for the first time outside of Nashville in April 2010 at Atlanta's historic Fox Theatre, the Dove Awards sold out in record time, attendance was up 50% from the 2009 show and the event garnered its highest ratings on the Atlanta-based Gospel Music Channel—with more than 1.5 million viewers, GMA officials said.

The organization's showcase event was again held at the Fox and televised on GMC in 2012.

GMA has been working to bounce back since the association experienced a financial crisis in

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2009 that threatened its very existence. The association posted a profit in 2010 for the first time in three years, reduced a total debt of \$921,000 to a manageable amount and sold its Nashville facility for \$697,000 in October 2010.