



Catch Des Moines Customer Advisory Board

Catch Des Moines via Zoom
Monday, December 7, 2022

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introduction
 - a. Attendees: Lauren Swanson, National Pork Producers Council; Scott Wunn, National Speech and Debate Association; Valerie Smith, United Church of Christ; Teresa Cox, Corteva; Tonya Cameron, United Methodist Women, Sarah Haines, ITA Group, Kelly Cavett, Maritz
2. Des Moines Update
 - a. Des Moines is seeing higher than projected occupancy for the year—nearly back to where we were in 2019. ADR is high, occupancy is just a little lower than 2019, but we have many more hotel rooms than in 2019.
 - b. Catch Des Moines hosted the Nursing Organization Alliance the week before Thanksgiving, supposed to host in 2020 and was rescheduled until this year. NOA is made up of medical associations—from meeting planners to CEOs.
 - c. The team is doing lots of travel this fall—attending tradeshow and hosting events. We will be at US Sports Congress this week and will be in Washington DC for the CVBReps Holiday Party next week.
 - d. Lots of planners are doing site visits this fall—both site selection and planning visits for upcoming events.
3. Update- Around the Room: 2022 Recap and 2023 Outlook
 - a. Scott Wunn (NSDA): Things are going really well. The online format that was created has increased access and also has led to more in person activities. 2023 Tournament is in Phoenix; anticipating highest attendance ever. All of that pointing towards two record breaking years in Des Moines (will host in 2024 and 2025, after 2021 was cancelled). Lots of teacher shortages, etc. so they are working on supporting new staff and coaches – enhancing their mission.
 - i. Not requiring any restrictions or documentation moving forward; at this point the responsibility is back on the attendee for what level of vaccination, masking, etc. they want to do. Unless something significant happens that would stop schools from being allowed to attend without requirements, they will not make requirements.
 - b. Teresa Cox (Corteva/Pioneer): Meetings pretty much back to normal, Q1 had a little lower attendance, but after Q1 it picked back up and back to normal. Employees are in office 3 days a week. More in person meetings, and bringing customers on site for tours. Global leadership meetings have some challenges with vaccine mandates, but mostly back to normal.

- i. Airfare, F&B, A/V, etc. has significantly increased. Flight has almost doubled and accommodating flight problems has been a challenge. US is requiring proof of vaccination for foreign visitors, so there are some hiccups with that.
- c. Lauren Swanson (National Pork Producers Council): Never really stopped meeting, had some smaller attendance for a while, but back up. Had no issues with most recent meeting, will be in Orlando for national meeting in March and expect normal 400-500 people. Business travel is back to normal, farm visits, etc. For board/leadership meetings still incorporating some virtual component.
 - i. Budget is challenging—room rates are up, A/V costs are astronomical, (Ex. \$11k for A/V for a day and a half meeting at a hotel in DSM. Very small hybrid component to that meeting, but even without hybrid component hotels were close to \$10k.)
- d. Tonya Cameron (United Methodist Women): Things are not back to normal, had first in person meeting since COVID in May in Orlando and attendance was about half of normal (around 3,000 and about 1,000 were virtual). Have to offer a hybrid component at everything now. This meeting will happen again in 2026 in Indianapolis. Leadership meetings are virtual and will likely stay that way for a while. National office in NY has only about 30% of people back in the office and only part time. Lots of smaller annual meetings have cancelled or gone virtual. Most attendees are 65+ and there are not a lot of new members at this time, due to various reasons.
 - i. Budget has been impacted greatly—donations are way down; they charged a fee for virtual attendance (there was a little pushback but once they understood what the costs went to, people mostly understood); did require proof of vaccination for their event, which was a lot of work. In regards to AV, it's sometimes cheaper to fly in A/V companies, but it requires a clause in the contract to allow outside A/V. Started putting it in every contract stating they can bring in outside A/V.
- e. Sarah Haines (ITA Group): 2022 will end up being bigger than pre-COVID and 2023 will be bigger. Incentive travel has come back the fastest. Events are using virtual elements—not streaming live, but making content available after the event, as an example. International is picking back up. ITA is back in the office.
 - i. Budget wise, in the last 30-45 days even, there has been a stall (some of that is EOY things) but some people are worried about recessions, etc. Decisions have slowed a little bit due to hesitancy.
- f. Valerie Smith (United Church of Christ): Have a meeting currently happening in Atlanta, with 140 people, which is the largest group they have brought together in 2022 in-person. Around 100 are joining in a hybrid capacity. They are using Crowd Pass as a COVID check-in. Participants are required to upload a vaccination record, if they do not upload they are contacted. It's their first time using this, so interested to see what the feedback is. UCC has an older membership base. Several hybrid meetings done this year – people want to come together. Not a lot of employees in the office. Main event will be in Indianapolis for 2023, hoping for 1,500 attendees (normal would be 2,800 attendees). Contracts were signed pre-COVID so not a lot of wiggle room.

- i. Had “sticker shock” in Indianapolis. In 2017 Wi-Fi was 30k for a buyout, in Milwaukee it was 20k for a buyout, in Indianapolis it was 105k for a buyout.
 - ii. She’s seeing a very slow response time for RFPs, and finding it hard to get people to return calls.
 - g. Kelly Cavett (Maritz): Around mid-May things started to pick up a lot. The volume of contracts for this year and future years is back to 2019 numbers. Very few events are doing hybrid options and if they are it is on a small scale. People are feeling more comfortable being in person. .
- 4. Updates on Development in Greater Des Moines:
 - a. Large [waterpark hotel](#) in the works in western suburb, which would include a significant amount of rooms and space
 - b. [Water Trails](#) project is still moving forward
 - c. Stadium District, which the Advisory Board heard about in May, is still on track
 - d. Iowa Hall of Pride, an interactive exhibit inside the Iowa Events Center has relocated. The IEC is developing plans to repurpose that space in to a junior ballroom or other meeting space
- 5. In Person Meeting for 2023
 - a. The group is interested in meeting in person.
 - b. Discussion on timeframe—CVB will send date options.