

Customer Advisory Board Notes 1/21/2021

State of the City- Des Moines

- Welcomed in US Custom Harvesters Annual Convention this week
- Airport traffic is down 58% from last year. Leisure travel is still happening, but almost no corporate traffic.
- Per an update from UnityPoint and MercyONE CEOs, they are hopeful for vaccines across Iowa by the end of April
 - Iowa is leading the nation in vaccines per capita
- Tourism should be one of the earlier industries to recover, people are hungry for travel
- 2021 Calendar of Events includes:
 - Principal Charity Classic (Senior PGA)- May
 - National Jr High Rodeo Finals- June
 - Certified Piedmontese IRONMAN 70.3- June
 - World Pork Expo- June
 - US Youth Soccer President's Cup- July

State of the Industry- Planner Experiences

- **Events on the books for the summer, venues closed through spring but holding out hope they will be open for summer events.**
 - David Tharp, International Association for Food Protection: International Conference scheduled for July in Phoenix, but their convention center is closed through March.....typically has 3,800+ people, expecting closer to 1,000, with a hybrid element—Board will make final decision by early May ~ 10 weeks out.
- **Still seeing RFPs**
 - Morgan Basham, Conference Direct: has a client meeting scheduled in Puerto Rico in May, and a few other meetings
- **Sports are doing alright, unless they operate out of schools**
 - Teresa Parmenter, Iowa AAU: basketball has been fine because they operate out of independent facilities, but volleyball and wrestling have struggled finding space since schools will not allow outside athletes in
- **Holding on to the event as long as possible makes cancelling/rescheduling a little bit more flexible**
 - Lauren Swanson, National Pork: had to reschedule March event to 2022, waited until 60 days out and was able to negotiate—Kentucky is still only open at 50%; April meetings in Vegas and D.C. will likely fall-- D.C. still not hosting meetings, Vegas poses “higher risk” for attendees; World Pork Expo still on for June-- being held at fairgrounds so there is more outdoor space to accommodate
- **Non-office based organizations are more willing to meet.**
 - Sarah Haines, ITA Group: franchise groups are excited to travel, their lives haven't changed much so they have no issues meeting
 - Has a group meeting in Mexico in February, saw some drop off with travel bans and guidelines, but holding fairly strong
 - The summer has a handful of smaller events each month
- **Companies have budget holds for meetings in the second half of the year**
 - Staci Perpich, Principal: Registration to go live soon for Principal Charity Classic, but larger meetings won't happen until late 2021 or 2022

- **Some groups are really willing to travel, but their companies have travel bans (lots of July 1 dates on travel bans)**
 - Seeing some push back here and there regarding meetings rescheduled even when planners can show that their attendees are on travel bans
 - Teresa Cox, Corteva: they are waiting until tier 3 to come back to the office, and if they aren't even in the office they definitely aren't travelling
- **Some struggles sourcing RFPs for future years, because those years are now being help for 2020/21 reschedules**
- **Testing may be a part of future events**
 - Sarah Haines, ITA Group shared their partnership with Eurofins:
 - This company is approved for testing within the Marriott portfolio. It's a rapid antigen test with ~\$100 or less per attendee. They have the LPGA contract.
- **Methods of contact and communication remain similar**
 - People are understanding of the state of the industry and are more patient and gracious about waiting longer for a response, etc. because they know hotels and more are understaffed right now
 - Working with new contacts just the same.
- **What can Catch Des Moines do to make this easier?**
 - Keep making "dumbass" videos – corny is good, people want to feel good about the PEOPLE they are joining at the end of this 😊