

**Business Events Market Insights Report
Destination Queenstown
November 2020**

TMS have liaised with over 140 + organizations during the month of November and the following insights have been noted.

Many corporates are still working from home some since March 2020. They have truly little knowledge on what their conferencing plans will be in the New Year, so their role is to stay tuned and be ready to research and plan something very last minute. So short lead will be the trend.

Many clients have had to cancel their plans during the year to only book it again later in the year and closer to home. Many are having smaller regional meetings rather than holding large events further away. In future this will result in short lead plans on an adhoc basis, as too much time is spent in the planning for things to cancel last minute. Flexibility of the airlines and venues is critical, especially to drive repeat business.

Some new appointments have been made after company changes and new roles established. These appointments are requiring more guidance and assistance in the Business Events field so the services of TMS is becoming broad in order to assist them in their planning, we are adding real value to the buyer. They are particularly interested in new product available and different conference solutions on offer.

Feedback from PCO/Client – “Our domestic market has a lot of potential NZ business and feedback was given on how bad response our industry’s times are from a number of NZ venues/operators some up to two weeks” They felt COVID has meant a great loss of knowledge and experienced personnel. So it will be important to get back to clients in a timely manner to avoid frustration and retrain operators now working in the business events sector.

Many PCO’s have had a tough time, with several companies with no business for some months now. Others have pivoted into the virtual hybrid space and are busy with this new adjustment. Once again imperative we stay close to these operators and collaborate with them to provide their clients with the appropriate solutions.

Some frustration from association planners regarding isolation hotels unable to advise when they will be available for conference bookings (many associations holding deposits so need to book the same venue)

Several planners are not looking at 2021 until 2021. They are keen to get the year over and see how things are looking when they get back in January before committing.

Some associations opting to organise conference themselves to save costs (rather than use a PCO).

One client used to run events in 42 locations, now centralised in Wellington or online since COVID-19.

Some organisers report numbers at events are lower and there is a risk that they may lose money, so they tend to take risk averse stance.

Some clients report that they do not want to hold their conferences in Auckland or Christchurch due to COVID-19 hotels and that they would rather be in the smaller regions.

Despite some nervousness in the market we have noted that a number of organisations are looking at next year positively and booking venues (or thinking of booking venues). They are keen to get back face to face in most cases.