



*feel the  
inspiration*

# Destination Queenstown Queenstown Convention Bureau IMEX 2018

## Report

October 2018

**Destination Queenstown**

PO Box 353, Queenstown 9300, New Zealand

+64 3 441 0700

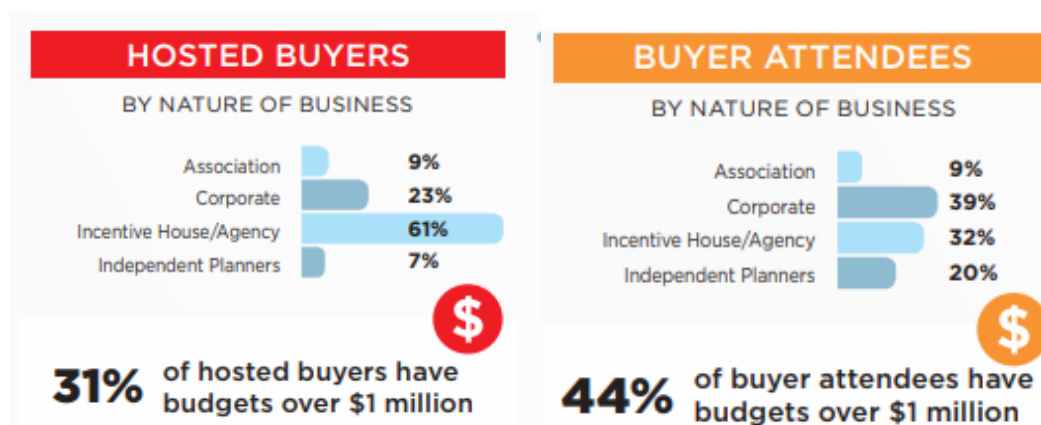
## 1. Introduction

### Event background/ dates and locations of event

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> time Queenstown Convention Bureau has exhibited  
Held at Sands Expo in Las Vegas, 16-18 October 2018

- 13500+ total participants including exhibitors
- 3,500 exhibiting companies representing 150 countries
- 70,000 prescheduled appointments (one-on-one, group appts and booth presentations)
- 3,327 hosted buyers from 63 countries
- 2,566 trade attendees from 62 countries

IMEX America is a unique international tradeshow attracting more than 4,000 qualified buyers from all industry sectors come to IMEX to plan and book everything from high-level incentives to huge association conventions. IMEX America is the largest meetings industry trade show in the United States, the country with the largest meetings market in the world. You meet with North American buyers handpicked for their interest in both international and domestic suppliers. As well as meetings and events industry buyers, they represent the insurance, banking, pharmaceutical and IT industries, plus many more. For more stats [click here](#).



## 2. Market Background

### Market background, size, trends, air connectivity.

The below table shows numbers consistently increasing with arrivals into NZ from the US. This is probably a reflection on the ease and choice of air connectivity. The new Chicago route provides a fifth gateway (already including LA, San Francisco, Houston and Vancouver) for visitors to fly non-stop from the United States to New Zealand and vice versa. It will be the first direct flight to New Zealand from the north-east, making the east coast of the USA more accessible than ever before.

As a direct result of more international visitors picking New Zealand as their preferred travel destination, we've seen an almost 20 percent reduction in the cost of international flights over the past 10 years, and a significant increase in the

number of airlines flying to New Zealand. The Auckland to Chicago route is the latest in growing USA airline capacity, which saw the addition of the Auckland to Houston route in December 2015.

### Key characteristics of visitors from the United States of America Year ended September 2014–18

Key characteristic	Year ended September					Change 2017–18	
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Number	Percent
<b>Total visitor arrivals</b>	<b>213,680</b>	<b>237,312</b>	<b>269,984</b>	<b>319,520</b>	<b>340,864</b>	<b>21,344</b>	<b>6.7</b>
<b>Travel purpose</b>							
Holiday	127,968	146,336	170,352	207,248	226,464	19,216	9.3
Visiting friends & relatives	43,344	46,096	52,400	58,800	59,216	416	0.7
Business	20,432	20,176	20,528	22,224	22,400	176	0.8
Education	6,944	7,328	7,824	8,608	8,688	80	0.9
Conferences & conventions	3,776	4,256	4,704	5,744	6,128	384	6.7

Source: Stats NZ, IVA, Sept 2018

### 3. Objectives

#### Why are we attending? What are we planning to achieve?

- Build the Bureaus database of US buyers
- Facilitate new business relationships and thereby expand network of engaged buyers for the region
- Increase general destination & product knowledge of buyers
- Increase the number of RFPs for business travel to New Zealand
- Provide assistance to those who already have business confirmed for New Zealand and Queenstown
- Brand exposure

### 4. Key messages

- Ease of access, direct flight to AKL, overnight flight
- Genuine hospitality, welcoming visitors from around the world
- Quality accommodation, meeting facilities and venue options set against a stunning natural backdrop
- Beautiful, clean and safe environment
- Unparalleled range of activities make it the perfect place to create unique and memorable experiences.

### 5. Appointments

#### Tradeshow format, number of days, number of appointments, breakdown of buyers?

3 day tradeshow with PSA

Destination Queenstown

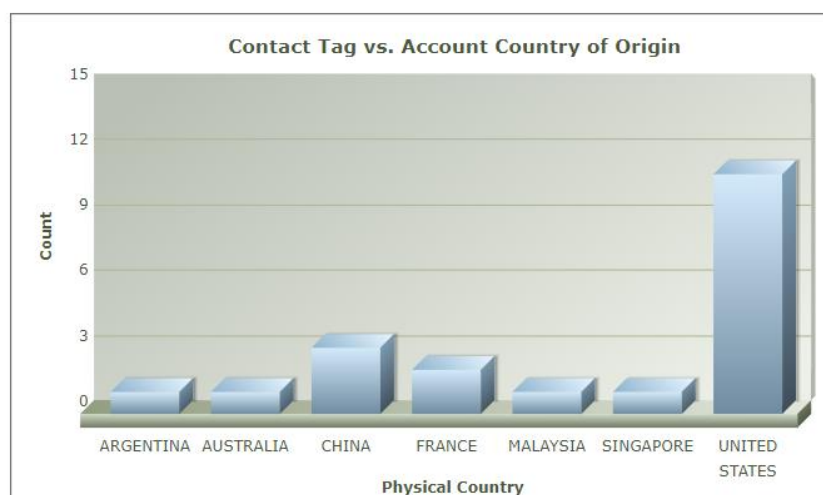
PO Box 353, Queenstown 9300, New Zealand  
+64 3 441 0700

17 fixed appointments, each 30 minutes in duration plus additional walk up business  
 TNZ held 12 x Korero and Kai group presentations as well as running 2 x appointment streams and recorded 175 contacts.

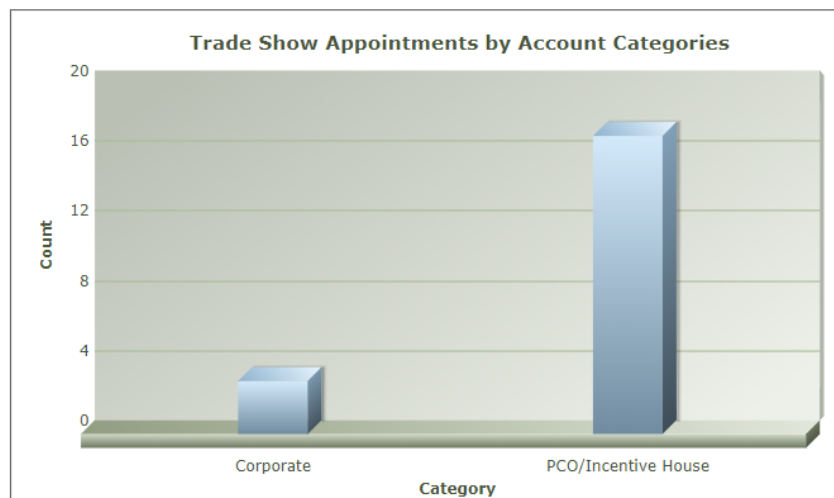
The table below summarises the business either confirmed or being pitched for Queenstown discussed during my appointments. This shows that over half of my appointments had some tangible business for Queenstown. The majority of business is Incentive but the range in numbers is considerable. It also clearly shows the demand for our shoulder season which is fantastic.

Time	Conference/Incentive	Pax#	Status	Location
2019	Conference	150pax	Pitching	Queenstown
April 2020	incentive	225pax	Confirmed	Syd/Cairns/Qtn
April 2020	Incentive	150pax	Confirmed	Akl/Qtn
Oct 2019	Incentive	110pax	Pitching	Akl/Qtn
Sept/Nov 2020	incentive	50pax	Pitching	Akl/Qtn
Feb 2020/2021	incentive	45pax	Pitching	Akl/Qtn
Sept 2019	Incentive	80pax	NZ Confirmed	Pitching South Island Only
April 2020	Incentive	150pax	Pitching	Queenstown
Feb/March 2020	Leisure	30pax	Confirmed	Touring
Feb 2019	incentive	60pax	Confirmed	Akl/Qtn
Sept/Oct/Nov 2021	Incentive	40pax	Pitching	Syd/Qtn
April/May 2019	Incentive	150pax	Pitching	Akl/Qtn

Below is a breakdown of the appointments by account category (PCO/Corporate) along with a breakdown of the country of origin of the client. It shows that the majority of appointments were with PCOs/incentive houses/third party planners, but a good mix business from around the world, with a clear skew of US business which is to be expected.



Physical Country	Contact Tag(s)	Grand Total
	IMEX 2018	
ARGENTINA	1	1
AUSTRALIA	1	1
CHINA	3	3
FRANCE	2	2
MALAYSIA	1	1
SINGAPORE	1	1
UNITED STATES	11	11
Grand Total	20	20



Category	Contact Tag(s)	Grand Total
	IMEX 2018	
Corporate	3	3
PCO/Incentive House	17	17
Grand Total	20	20

## 6. Outcomes/ Feedback

### Were objectives met? What have we learnt about the market?

General observations and feedback from the event:

- Most people liked the idea of dual destination (e.g Auckland/Queenstown) due to the distance travelled and wanting to experience more of the country.
- 2 nights Auckland and 4 nights Queenstown seemed to appeal the most.
- International programmes are typically 6/7 nights
- If looking at Akl/Qtn programme then they like the idea of working with accommodation that has presence in both destinations to negotiate more competitive rates.
- Groups generally want to travel in April/May or Sept/Oct which fits nicely with promoting the shoulder season

Destination Queenstown

PO Box 353, Queenstown 9300, New Zealand  
+64 3 441 0700

- The variety of activities available in Queenstown was a huge draw card as something to appeal to all demographics of traveller, really enjoyed seeing sample itineraries
- All buyers understand the benefits of the Bureau and use them very actively. They appreciate this service and also appreciate the anonymity of them.
- A couple of questions around the 'anti tourism' sentiment
- Most buyers preferred centrally located accommodation regardless of other hotels only being 20min drive/10min water taxi.
- The Amway effect was very positive from an Asian buyer perspective
- Distance to NZ did not seem to be such an issue at this show compared to the event I attended in LA.

## 7. Summary

---

### Recommendations, what follow up was completed, additional activity carried out?

Overall I feel this trip was very successful. I had a lot more fixed appointments than last year and from this there was a lot more follow up required. From a Queenstown Convention Bureau perspective we look at the US market as a great source of incentive business and that is definitely what I left Las Vegas with. There was a lot of business either already confirmed for Queenstown, with a lot of interest in 2020. This market definitely needs a lot of attention and just by attending this event and the Summit in LA in July there were buyers who stopped by with business opportunities and appreciated seeing people they recognised. These relationships are very important and need to be maintained. This year I also noticed a slight increase in interest from the European and S American market.

Auckland and Queenstown remain to be the most recognisable destinations within NZ for the US market in a MICE space and if we were not there then our messaging could get lost. Our presence assists our local DMCs and operators that attend and reinforces the dual destination message for larger incentive groups alongside the Auckland Convention Bureau.

Flight connectivity to the US is at an all-time high with the Chicago route coming on board in November. This is just increasing the potential of the US market and therefore the need for us to stay active in this space.

Destination Queenstown

PO Box 353, Queenstown 9300, New Zealand  
+64 3 441 0700



**Destination Queenstown**

PO Box 353, Queenstown 9300, New Zealand  
+64 3 441 0700



**Destination Queenstown**

PO Box 353, Queenstown 9300, New Zealand  
+64 3 441 0700