

Destination Queenstown MEETINGS 2021

Report

June 2021

Destination Queenstown
PO Box 353, Queenstown 9348, New Zealand
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1. Introduction

MEETINGS is the only national tradeshow in New Zealand for the business events industry, organised by Business Events Industry Aotearoa (BEIA). Once a year, the conference, meetings & events, exhibition and travel incentive sector come together to discuss new business opportunities across the country.

Held over two days, MEETINGS brings together buyers and sellers of conference and incentive travel products, to grow mutual business opportunities and share knowledge and ideas. This year was the 25th anniversary of the show.

Over 500 pax attended the 2021 event at the ASB Showgrounds in Auckland. Queenstown Convention Bureau had two appointment streams, 1 for NZ buyers and 1 for Australian buyers.

2. Objectives

- Build the Bureau's database
- Facilitate new business relationships and thereby expand network of engaged buyers for the region
- Strengthen existing relationships
- Increase general destination & product knowledge of buyers
- Increase the number of leads

3. QCB Appointments/ feedback

QCB had two appointments streams, one for the NZ market and one for the Australian Market. The following is a breakdown of the appointments and leads generated:

- 22 pre-scheduled appointments, 2 walk ups, 1 no show from the NZ market
- 19 pre-scheduled appointments, 1 walk up from the Australian market
- Generated 10 leads from NZ
- Generated 5 leads from Australia

The NZ market had good knowledge about the destination and were ready to explore options for upcoming events with Queenstown as the host region. It is fantastic to see the confidence from the NZ market - after a year of marketing and sales activity into the NZ market we are starting to see great results with leads being generated and business being won. The leads we generated from the NZ market were primarily for conferences and meetings. Group sizes ranging from 50 – 250 pax.

PCOs all reported that they are busy and needing to hire more staff. They are seeing lots of business from the NZ market. Event organisers who usually take groups offshore are now seriously considering Queenstown for their 2021/22 programmes - they

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know that they can book with confidence whilst there is still a lot of uncertainty with other markets. A few of QCB's new NZ clients had never been to Queenstown before - they always took groups offshore and have now been to Queenstown several times with groups and had nothing but good things to say about their experiences.

We originally had 37 pre-scheduled appointments on our Australian stream, however we unfortunately lost 17 appointments due to Melbourne buyers not being able to attend Meetings. Meetings was great value and gave us the opportunity to reconnect with the Australian buyers face to face. Out of 21 appointments, 6 clients didn't have any groups for Queenstown yet. They all were given an update on Queenstown as well as information on the services the Bureau offers. Out of 21 appointments, we met with 4 clients who already had leads in the system.

In general, there is a lot of interest for Queenstown from the Australian Market. The general feel is that clients are eager to come to NZ for their conference or incentive trip. However, there is still a lot of uncertainty about the borders. The perceived risk of taking business to NZ is still high, therefore clients are still hesitant at the moment to confirm business for Queenstown. Lots of business got pushed out and most clients are still keen to bring delegates to NZ and push for Queenstown however confidence around borders still needs to grow especially after another lockdown in Melbourne & VIC. It might take another 3-6 months for the confidence to grow and business to convert as the travel bubble evolves.

4. Operator representation

- Ripple Experience
- Hotel St Moritz
- Sherwood Queenstown
- Tom Tom Productions
- Coronet Peak Venues & Adventures
- Heliworks
- Camp Glenorchy
- Oxbow
- Skyline
- Ziptrek Eco Tours
- Nomad Safaris
- Winehouse by in2food
- Millbrook Resort
- Shotover Jet & Dart River Safaris
- HQNZ
- Heritage

Queenstown operators who attended but not under the Queenstown stand:

- The Rees (luxury)
- Wayfare, AJ Hackett Bungy, Crowne Plaza (National stands)

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5. Post-Meetings Famil

QCB secured the opportunity to host a post-MEETINGS famil for 20 Australian buyers for MEETINGS 2020. This was rolled over to this year after the show was cancelled last year.

With support from Air NZ, we had huge demand from the buyers with close to 40 Australian buyers applying to participate. The Bureau qualified 20 buyers from the list, however the last-minute lockdown in Melbourne meant we ended up with 15 buyers plus representation from Air NZ (Kirstie Dyer-Grose) and BEIA (Sharon Auld and Lisa Hopkins).

The group experienced a jam-packed 48 hours in Queenstown and the Bureau showcased a range of new C&I products suitable for small to large groups, including some great luxury options for the incentive buyers.

6. Recommendations/ Summary

MEETINGS 2021 was a huge success. There were serious buyers in the room which was evident by the 15 leads generated. Queenstown is very popular with NZ buyers and there is opportunity to win more business this year while international borders remain shut. We need to keep in front of this audience and convert the business they have. There is lots of interest from the Australian market, but some businesses are still risk adverse. Most likely we will see group travel pick up in earnest from September 2021 onwards.

The Queenstown stand looks fantastic (images attached below). We had a large LED screen this year which added great impact and helped deliver our message that Queenstown is a world class destination.

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