

Destination Queenstown MEETINGS 2022

Report

June 2022

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.

Over 600 pax attended the 2022 event at the new Te Pae Convention Centre in Christchurch. This is the first time the event has been in Christchurch since before the earthquake. 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:

- 29 pre-scheduled appointments – NZ stream
- 29 pre-scheduled appointments – Australian stream
- Generated 7 leads from NZ
- Generated 10 leads from Australia

NZ market

It is evident that confidence in the NZ market has continued to grow after disruptions to 2021 & 2022 corporate event calendars due to Covid 19 Traffic light framework restrictions. The NZ market continues to have strong knowledge about the destination, and many approached appointments with solid leads that they were considering Queenstown as the host region.

Due to the strong sales efforts in the NZ market over the last three years, paired with said confidence back in the industry, a fair amount of NZ appointment leads was from those that already had an event confirmed for Queenstown due to previous postponements but needed last minute assistance in organising social venues and activities. While those that came with full leads (accommodation, meeting space and venues required) are consistent to last year in type (conference and meetings) and the lead times are shorter for immediate dates within 6 months or being considered for next rotation 2023/24.

Consistent to 2021, PCOs all reported that they were at capacity with inquiries and were now desperate to hire more staff, but still hesitant to do so until more income was generated. They are still seeing lots of business from the NZ market, often with short lead times and need to act quickly. Although many of the key PCOs are still around, they are scaling up staff that will need significant training on our region and education on how we can help as a bureau. We may see a lot more PCOs use our RFP services in the near future for ease and efficiency.

Australian market

This was the first time in 3 years we had a full contingent of Australian buyers after the Melbourne buyers were unable to attend at the last minute in 2021 and cancellation of the show in 2020. MEETINGS gave us the opportunity to reconnect with the Australian buyers face to face. The quality of the buyers was excellent – close to 180 applicants for 90 positions. Out of 29 appointments with Australian buyers, only a few were “fact finding”. The rest either had firm leads, confirmed business or potential leads with briefs to come shortly.

In general, there is a significant interest for Queenstown from the Australian Market. This is translating into a struggle in some months to find space for groups. Two years’ worth of events are being pushed into 2022/2023 so clients are needing to be flexible with their dates to secure space in Queenstown. There seems to be very little resistance to this as the desire to travel to Queenstown is high. However, with NZ slow off the mark in opening borders, and most countries now open to inbound travel, we will find competition from competing international destinations will increase in the coming year.

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4. Operator representation on the DQ stand

- Ripple Experience
- Hotel St Moritz
- Tom Tom Productions
- Coronet Peak Venues & Adventures
- Heliworks
- Oxbow
- Skyline
- Ziptrek Eco Tours
- Nomad Safaris
- Millbrook Resort
- Shotover Jet & Dart River Safaris
- HQNZ
- Heritage
- Holiday Inn Express & Suites
- QT Event Collective
- Millennium Hotel Queenstown
- Ramada Queenstown Central
- Gibbston Valley
- KJet
- Hotel St Moritz and Sofitel Queenstown

This was the largest contingent of Queenstown operators to ever exhibit at MEETINGS.

5. Pre-Meetings Famil

QCB secured the opportunity to host a pre-MEETINGS famil for 10 Australian buyers for MEETINGS 2022. Unfortunately, there was not an option to purchase additional seats due to capacity constraints.

Demand from the Australian buyers was huge with 41 of the 90 hosted for MEETINGS 2022 applying to participate in the Queenstown famil. The Bureau qualified 10 buyers from the list, as well as a key journalist from Mash Media in the UK.

The group experienced a jam-packed 3 days 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.

We also hosted a networking function with approximately 40 C&I operators at Cargo at Gantleys giving a much wider section of our membership the opportunity to engage with these buyers.

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6. Other engagement

VIP Dinner – the Bureau hosted 7 key Australian buyers plus BEIA at an exclusive dinner on the Tuesday night after the welcome function. This was held at Inati Restaurant.

Media presentation – the Bureau was one of 5 destinations given the opportunity to present to the media contingent – the focus of the presentation was on the huge investment that has taken place in Queenstown over the past 4 years and the increase in accommodation capacity by 40%.

TNZ Regional Showcase presentation – the Bureau presented the latest products and new initiatives to hosted buyers.

Operator networking drinks – the Bureau hosted drinks for our exhibiting members, other regional exhibitors and key industry partners on the Wednesday evening. This was attended by approximately 40 pax.

Post-famil for Tourism NZ Business Events Managers – the Bureau hosted 4 BE Managers from TNZ offices in the US, Singapore and NZ for a 3 days famil after MEETINGS 2022, showcasing a wide range of Queenstown operators. Included was a networking function at Holiday Inn Express & Suites attended by 25 operators.

7. Recommendations/ Summary

Overall MEETINGS 2022 was a huge success for both the Bureau and the members exhibiting with us. The sentiment on the show floor was extremely positive and showcasing Te Pae Convention Centre was beneficial for the NZ Business Events industry overall. The Bureau took advantage of all opportunities presented to extend our reach and developed a number of other opportunities to engage with buyers, industry partners, presenting added value for our members.

Preference would be for the show to be in Auckland next year for two main reasons:

1. Number of day buyers – foot traffic was not as heavy as past year
2. Accessibility of flights for buyers coming into NZ and for familis

The Queenstown stand looked fantastic (images attached below). Even though we have used this stand for 5 years now, it still has a great visual impact and is very user friendly. A few minor cosmetic issues will need to be rectified for 2023.

The LED screen provided the capability to showcase our excellent digital assets and assisted with presenting to the media.



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