



THE CONVERGENCE OF INCENTIVE TRAVEL AND MEETING PLANNING ACTIVITIES

jointly sponsored by the

Site International Foundation **Site** | International Foundation and the **MPI Foundation** 

This collaborative research project conducted by the Foundations of the major incentive travel and meeting associations—Site and MPI—is an excellent illustration of the power of teamwork. Sensing a growing convergence between incentive travel and meeting functions in areas of planning and program delivery, the two associations joined forces to document this trend for the first time.

Utilizing combined databases of the *Site Index* panel and the *MPI Business Barometer* panel, the study asked participants to comment on how their respective role as either meeting planner or incentive program planner was changing or potentially overlapping.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE PAST

More than a third (37%) of planners in both incentive travel and meeting planning roles said their personal involvement in the other field had increased. The remainder (63%) said their participation had either decreased or remained the same. Of the 37% who said their involvement had increased, the vast majority (74%) came from North America with 20% from Europe. The rest are from other parts of the world.

Has the convergence of responsibilities impacted destination selection (use of resorts, city destinations, cruises, international vs. domestic programs, etc.)? Respondents were almost evenly split with 49% saying yes. Eighty-five percent of the positive respondents were meeting planners; the remainder were incentive planners. Only 11% said that the merging of responsibilities and programs had an effect on the time of year for their meetings and incentives.

The reason for the convergence of responsibilities appears to be tied to the economic environment. Almost 52% cited budget considerations as the cause for this merging, and nearly 47% claimed that public perception was driving the change.

Twenty-three percent of respondents told us there has been a change in who now has the responsibility for determining the need for an event and for purchasing services. This is a development that should be of interest to all suppliers.

When asked about an effect of this convergence on terms and conditions offered by hotels and other providers, almost a quarter (24%) said they saw such an effect.

The areas of program planning that have been most impacted by the convergence of incentive and meeting responsibilities are:

Program Design	25%
Procurement of Services	19%
Interactive Elements	16%
Method of ROI/ROO Measurement	16%

THE FUTURE

Respondents were asked to predict if there would be a change in the practice of including business meetings and other similar components in incentive programs. Almost 61% believe there will be an increase and only about 6% felt the opposite.

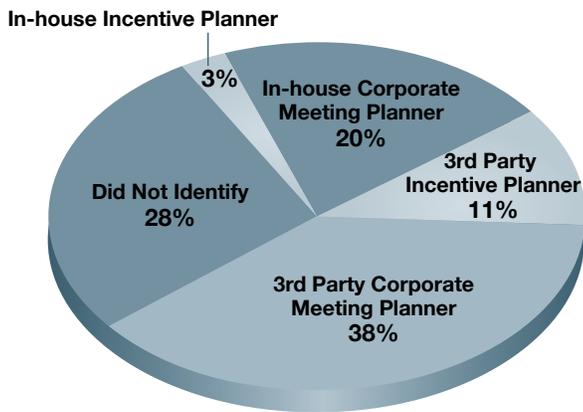
Sixty-seven percent of respondents expect more convergence of the incentive and meeting functions in the next year while 33% expect no change.

The responses to the question “How has the convergence of incentive and meeting responsibilities been reflected in your program planning?” clearly indicate that there is recognizable improvement to the effectiveness of programs under this convergence. The impact on program design, procurement of services, and the method of results measurement demonstrates the improved efficiency and, hence, the reason for continued increase of convergence.



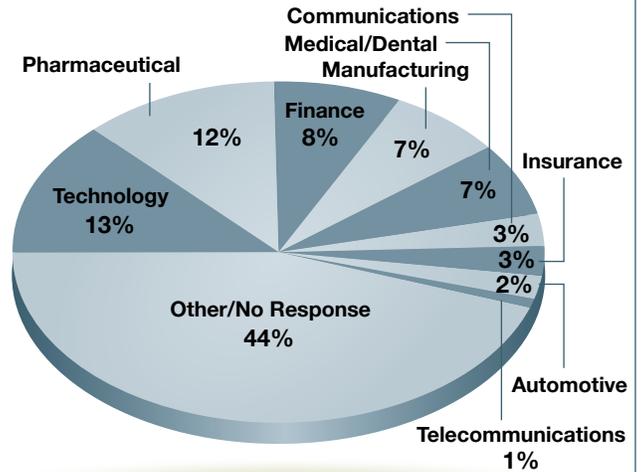
Question 1:

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE IN MOTIVATIONAL EVENTS OR MEETING PLANNING?



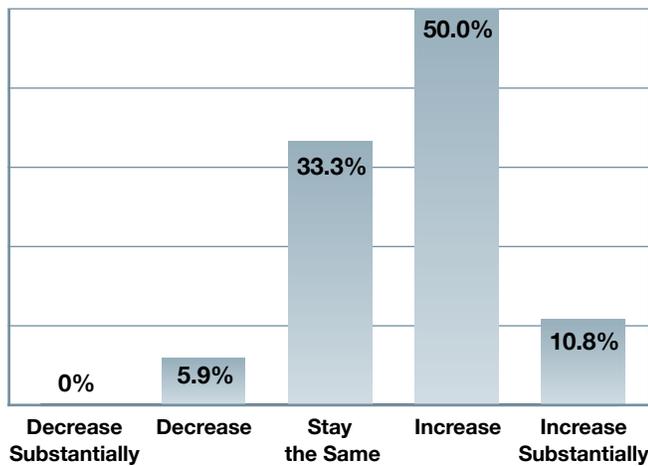
Question 2:

WHICH INDUSTRY ARE YOU IN OR WHICH INDUSTRY DO YOU PRIMARILY SERVE?



Question 3:

IN THE NEXT YEAR, DO YOU THINK THE INCLUSION OF BUSINESS MEETINGS AND OTHER SIMILAR COMPONENTS IN INCENTIVE PROGRAMS WILL:



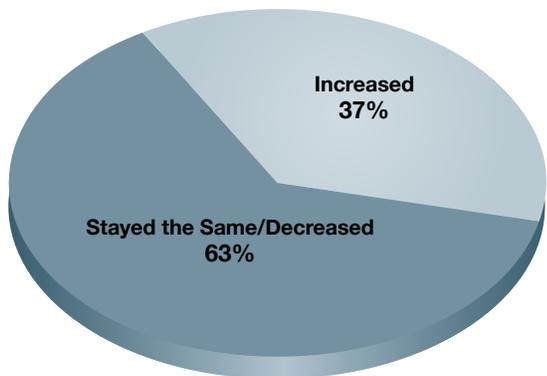
Question 4:

WHY DO YOU BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING?



Question 5:

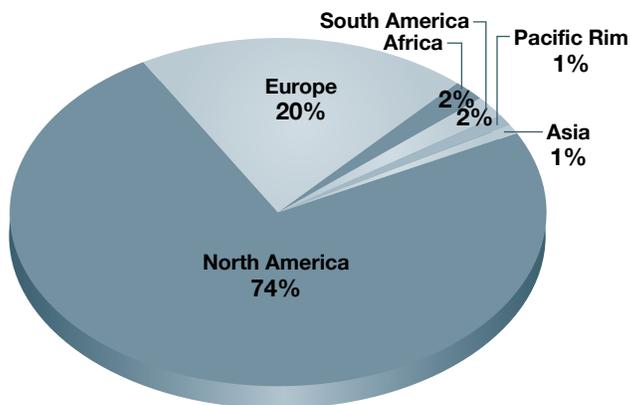
IN YOUR ROLE PLANNING EVENTS (EITHER INCENTIVES OR MEETINGS), HAS YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN PLANNING THE OTHER:



Question 6:

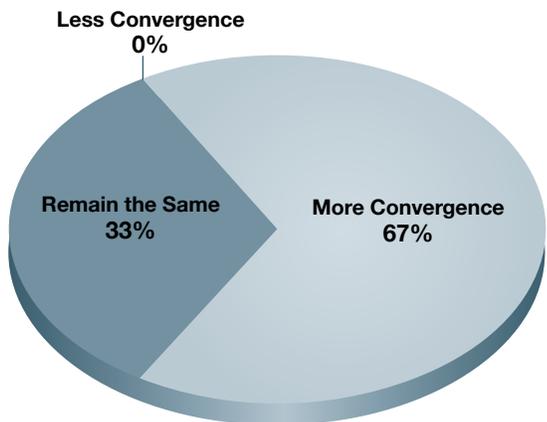
If in answering question 5, you said that your role planning events (either incentives or meetings) has increased please answer the following questions.

WHERE ARE YOU LOCATED?



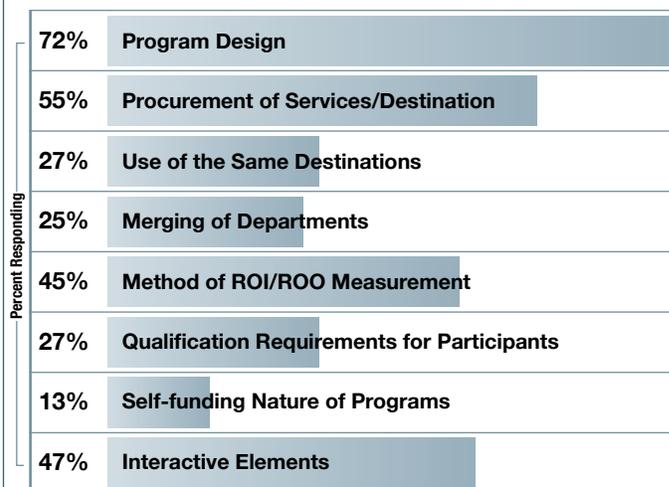
Question 7:

WHERE DO YOU SEE THIS TREND TOWARD CONVERGENCE GOING IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS?



Question 8:

HOW HAS THE CONVERGENCE OF INCENTIVE AND MEETING RESPONSIBILITIES BEEN REFLECTED IN YOUR PROGRAM PLANNING?





The Convergence study results reflect that 37% of planners in both incentive travel and meeting planning roles said their involvement in the other field had increased. Recognizing this, the *Site International Foundation* and the *MPI Foundation* will focus joint efforts on the education of professionals who straddle both disciplines and may be faced with new and unfamiliar responsibilities.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCHERS

All registrants in *The Site Index* database and those in an MPI Foundation database—a total of 3,826 contacts—were invited to participate in this survey. There were 199 respondents. Fifty-eight percent identified themselves as meeting planners,

15% as incentive planners, and 27% declined to identify themselves as either.

The survey was supervised by Scott A. Jeffrey, Ph.D., Monmouth University, and Marion Joppe, Ph.D., University of Guelph.

THE SITE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Site International Foundation has provided research and educational programs that assist business executives, practitioners, and professionals since 2006. The Foundation is the research arm of Site, a membership community that represents 90 countries and professionals who deliver best-in-class solutions and insights to maximize the business impact of motivational experiences regardless of industry, region or culture.

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THE MPI FOUNDATION

A future of opportunity, prosperity and limitless possibility. This is the passionate vision of the MPI Foundation for the global meetings and events community. A community with enormous strength and vibrancy. MPI's 23,000 worldwide members represent buying power of \$16.9 billion, but the Foundation's impact extends beyond to the entire industry. It is a vision we are powering with the generous support of our partners through leadership initiatives, research, grants and scholarships to ensure the success of our members today and the sustained growth of our industry as we move forward together.

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