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***FutureWatch 2011* indicates +8% meeting growth**

MPI research predicts smarter meetings with more focus on SMM, tech

Jan. 6, 2011 – Dallas, TX – The [FutureWatch 2011 study](#) issued by Meeting Professionals International ([MPI](#)) today clearly demonstrates that meeting volume, number of attendees and overall spend will see moderate increases throughout the global meeting and events industry. With strong statistical data to support trending predictions, the report indicates that the event industry will see a positive change in the coming year.

FutureWatch includes insight from more than 450 industry professionals in 20 different countries and from 67 MPI chapters – making it a globally relevant study applicable not only to MPI members, but for all businesses at large. Even in the face of challenging economic circumstances globally, the report projects an eight percent increase in the number of meetings planned for 2011 and a five percent increase in the average spend.

“After two challenging years for the business of our industry, we’re back with *FutureWatch 2011* responses indicating material real growth in activity of eight percent.” said Bruce MacMillan, president and chief executive officer of MPI. “*FutureWatch 2011* also indicates that this is the year where recent industry forays into virtual events and collaboration through social media will become increasingly mainstream. Thinking outside the room to drive performance through connectivity is becoming entrenched.”

Data and interviews within *FutureWatch* illustrate that technology has gone more mainstream in an industry that initially rebelled against what was once perceived as a direct threat to live events. The study also discusses how the global financial crisis forced industry practitioners to create more strategically oriented meetings that prove return on investment. Highlighted trends in strategic meetings management (SMM) comprise an entire section of this edition of *FutureWatch*.

FutureWatch readers will not only find “by the numbers” comparisons and trending data, but also interview excerpts, links to on-demand webinars, case study profiles and clear summaries of projected trends. The study discusses the four trends making meetings more strategic, followed by in-depth data on crisis collaboration amongst planners and suppliers, and finally addresses the five key areas of technology that are impacting the industry.

“The new iteration is shorter, smarter and connects the readers not only to the most recent and relevant data, but also resources that can help them use that data in their day-to-day business,” said Bill Voegeli, president, [Association Insights](#).

FutureWatch 2011 still provides trending data since 2006 as well as meeting and event projections for North America and Europe. It is available for [download online](#) at mpiweb.org at no-cost to MPI members and for

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purchase to non-members for USD \$299. Additionally, MPI is hosting a webinar led by Voegeli, Jan. 19 at 11 a.m. Central, which can be accessed through mpiweb.org/webinars. MPI will have more regionally specific education sessions about the research at upcoming live events such as the [European Meetings & Events Conference](#) in Dusseldorf, Germany Feb. 13-15 and at the [World Education Congress](#) in Orlando, Fla. July 23-26.

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Editor's Notes:

About *FutureWatch*: Since 2002 Meeting Professionals International has annually conducted this research supported by the MPI Foundation. The 2011 edition was also funded in part by an investment from the IMEX Group to the MPI Foundation. Research for this study was conducted by Association Insights, led by president and lead researcher, Bill Voegeli.

About MPI: Meeting Professionals International (MPI), the meeting and event industry's largest and most vibrant global community, helps our members thrive by providing human connections to knowledge and ideas, relationships, and marketplaces. MPI membership is comprised of more than 23,000 members belonging to 71 chapters and clubs worldwide. For additional information, visit mpiweb.org.