



MEETING PROFESSIONALS INTERNATIONAL



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MPI study identifies benchmarks, takes data to next level

Business Value of Meetings study revealed at AIBTM prepares industry for advancement

June 22, 2011 – Dallas, TX and Baltimore, MD – Today at AIBTM in Baltimore, Meeting Professionals International (MPI) released the [Business Value of Meetings](#) study which identifies key benchmarks in the measurement of the business value of meetings including: percentage of businesses who measure, barriers to implementation, crucial programming elements for organizational success and key skills needed for personal success.

“This research enables our members and industry colleagues for the first time to assess their own practices against established, global benchmarks,” said Bruce MacMillan, president and CEO of MPI, “We now have the critical data to direct the development of tools and resources our professional community needs to speak the language of business and advance best practices in value measurement.”

The study, conducted by Association Insights, was funded through an investment by AIBTM into the MPI Foundation’s Thought Leadership program last year. The initiative produced the [Meetings Deliver](#) report and tactical implementation kit that aggregated market research from multiple sources in 2009. Based on the findings in the study released today, MPI will develop an extensive set of business tools that professionals can use to immediately introduce meeting value measures to their events and communicate the value in relevant business terms.

“We are proud to have this study revealed at AIBTM during America Meetings Week,” said Steve Knight, Project Manager with AIBTM. “This definitive research provides up to date information that enables our industry to have a better understanding of the value of meetings. We look forward to the resources that this Thought Leadership Initiative will deliver in the future.”

After interviewing 261 corporations in 27 countries, researchers found that globally less than 10 percent of meetings are currently measured for business value. The deciding factor of whether to measure or not depends primarily on whether the meeting business goals focus on specific return on investment (ROI). The study identified that many businesses rely on the current marketplace definition that there is implied business value if participants are satisfied with the meeting or event objectives.

While the establishment of clear business objectives for the meeting or event is identified as the most important element in successful measurement of business value, it is also the number one barrier to establishing a measurement practice. When faced with meetings or events that do not have clear financial objectives, often meetings are dismissed as immeasurable, when in fact this research found business value of meetings can be measured whether relying upon ROI or not.

The report, now available at mpiweb.org, explores the impact of implied ROI, often articulated as “we wouldn’t have the meeting if it wasn’t valuable,” and outlines many of the successful elements of active measurement programs associated with high expense events. While the research indicates that tradeshows, sales meetings and marketing events draw the most scrutiny on business value, researchers

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discovered that the key tactics used measuring these types of events can be applied universally.

The three most common traits of successful measurement initiatives include:

1. clearly defined meeting and event objectives,
2. appropriately designed data collection methods
3. thorough evaluation of results

Interviews with senior planners that contributed to the study identified two core skill sets that are vital to successful programs. Those skills in their simplest definition are design and analysis. Properly designing surveys to align with objectives and analyzing data in order to make statistically reliable suggestions for improvement make planners more valuable and marketable business professionals.

“The ability for planners to immediately to use this research is incredibly important,” said MacMillan.

Another important finding within the research describes that regardless of current business climate or perception of meeting value, planners who intend to pursue business value measurement processes can begin to incrementally implement certain tactics that are not disruptive to business operations.

Detailed information about the study released today, other initiative deliverables, upcoming webinars and the toolkit for industry professionals is available at mpiweb.org/bvom.

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Editors’ Notes: A comprehensive fact kit for media is available at the MPI Press Center on mpiweb.org/about/press.

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.

About MPI Foundation: MPI Foundation is passionately committed to bringing vision and prosperity to the meetings and events community worldwide by investing in results-oriented initiatives that shape the future and bring success to the meetings and events community. MPI is the meetings and events industry’s largest and most vibrant global community comprised of more than 23,000 members representing 84 countries worldwide. For more information, visit www.mpifoundation.org.

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