cvent

2015

GLOBAL EVENT INDUSTRY BENCHMARKS STUDY



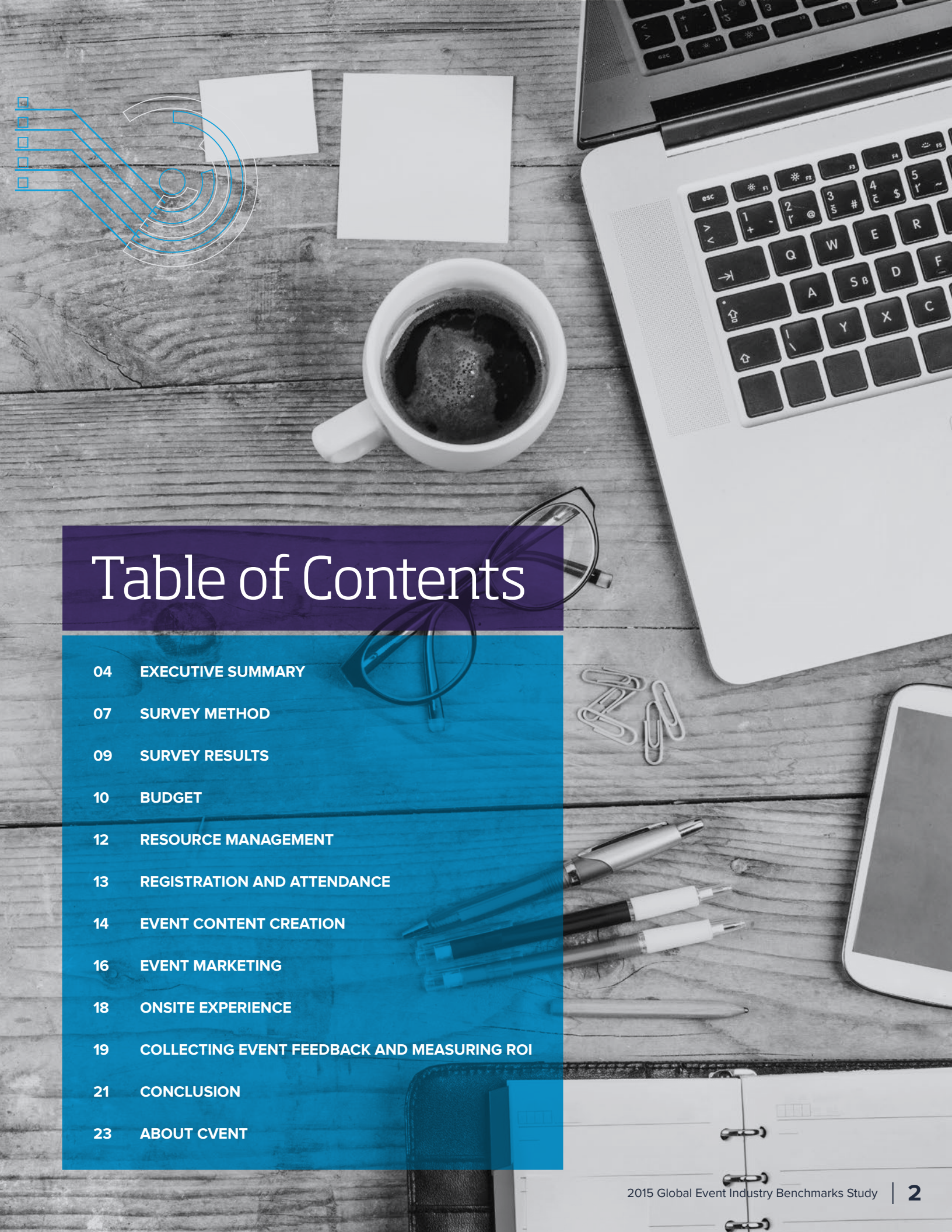


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Executive Summary

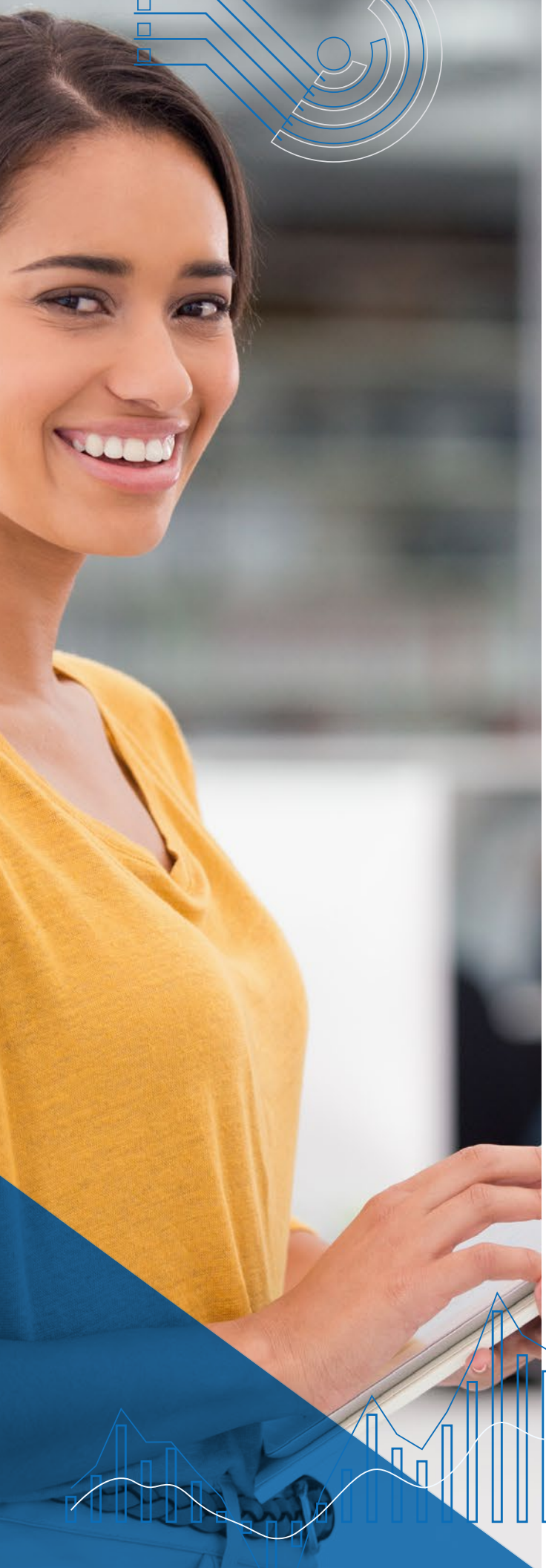
How do your meetings and events measure up against others? Do you share the same concerns, pressures, and roadblocks to success as other event planners and marketers?

A global survey was fielded by Cvent and Renegade in May 2015. The respondents included over 2,200 executives, planners, and marketers involved with planning or managing. This vast audience revealed many similarities, and a few surprises. Across the globe, planners and marketers have grown increasingly concerned with the same issues: tightening budgets and the need to increase attendance rates significantly, while working with fewer resources.

Marketing and planning events presents familiar challenges to meeting professionals in all industry types, specifically, achieving return on investment (ROI) year-after-year. This is a common theme among small, medium and large-scale events. As you review the results, you'll gain a clear perspective on the size and scope of meetings, conferences, events, and trade shows worldwide. What do fellow planners spend most of their time on? How are your peers managing registration and increasing attendance? How far out do they plan their events?

PLANNERS AND MARKETERS ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED WITH THE SAME ISSUES: TIGHTENING BUDGETS AND THE NEED TO INCREASE ATTENDANCE RATES SIGNIFICANTLY.





Here is a brief summary of our key findings regarding event planning, marketing, onsite engagement, and ROI:

PLANNING – SET ATTENDANCE GOALS

- Attendance plays a large role in event planning success. On average, 61% of the total cost of an event is ~~recoupled~~ through registration fees.
- When it comes to setting attendance goals, 56% of respondents said they aim to increase event attendance, with the majority of respondents setting their attendance goals at a 22% increase.

MARKETING – SPEND SMART

- Forty-five percent of respondents indicated that they allocate 6-25% of their annual marketing budget to meetings and events.
- When marketing events, 48% of attendees said email was the most effective channel for driving registrations.

ONSITE ENGAGEMENT – GET SOCIAL

- Sixty-five percent of respondents who host conferences and trade shows said they encourage attendees to post event-related content on social media by using a designated event hashtag.
- Of those respondents who host conferences and trade shows, 43% said they have used an event-specific mobile app. However, out of those respondents who did not have a mobile event app, 54% said they plan to use one in the future.



ROI – MAKE YOUR EVENT COUNT

- The top three metrics that respondents use to measure their ROI are: revenue from registration (37%), revenue from sponsorships (32%), and number of new leads (25%).
- When asked, an overwhelming 94% of executive respondents believed their meetings and events were effective.

Planners and marketers are becoming more strategic in their approach to live events. They are starting to utilize technology (both in the office and onsite) to save time and cut costs, go mobile, and employ best practices learned from industry peers. Despite ebbs and flows, the global meeting industry has never been more robust and the need for face-to-face meetings never so vital.

Cvent thanks all of the respondents for their participation and invaluable contributions to this study.

Survey Method

Over 2,200 people were surveyed for the Global Event Industry Benchmarks Study. Out of the total number of respondents, 97% indicated that they or team members they manage are involved in planning or marketing meetings and events.

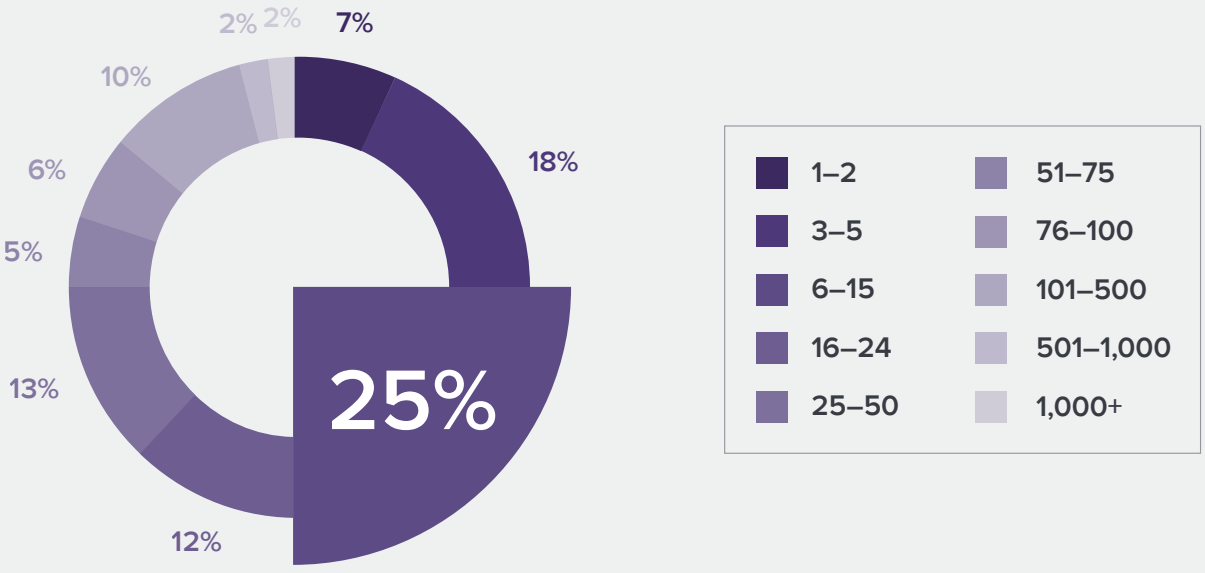
RESPONDENT PROFILE

Job Function: The sample population of respondents was made up of planners (58%), marketers (21%), and executives (21%).

Number of meetings and events per year: The highest percentage of respondents (25%) said their organizations host between 6-15 events per year.

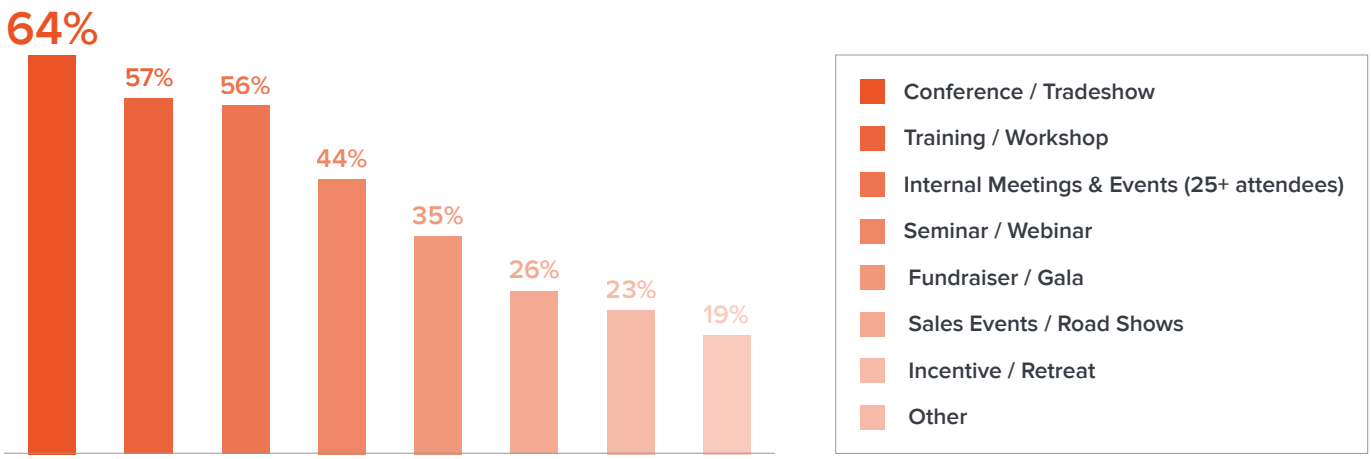
- Many meetings – Twenty percent of respondents said they host 75 meetings or more per year.
- A meetings majority (almost) – Forty-three percent of respondents said they hold between 3-15 meetings annually.

Number of Meetings and Events Per Year



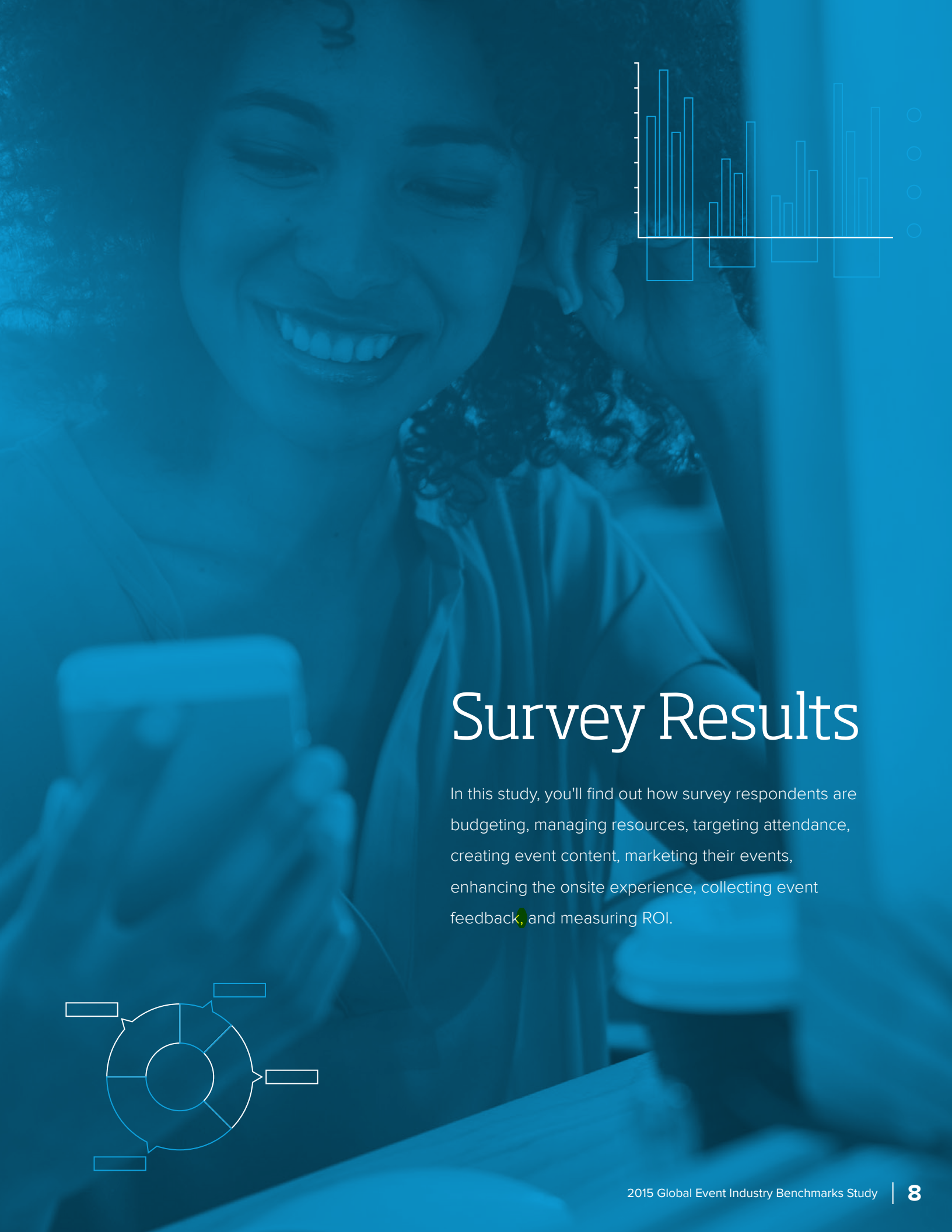
Event Type: When asked what types of events their organizations host, over half of the respondents answered conferences and trade shows; trainings and workshops; and internal meetings.

Event Type





THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS (25%) SAID THEIR ORGANIZATIONS HOST BETWEEN 6-15 EVENTS PER YEAR.



Survey Results

In this study, you'll find out how survey respondents are budgeting, managing resources, targeting attendance, creating event content, marketing their events, enhancing the onsite experience, collecting event feedback, and measuring ROI.



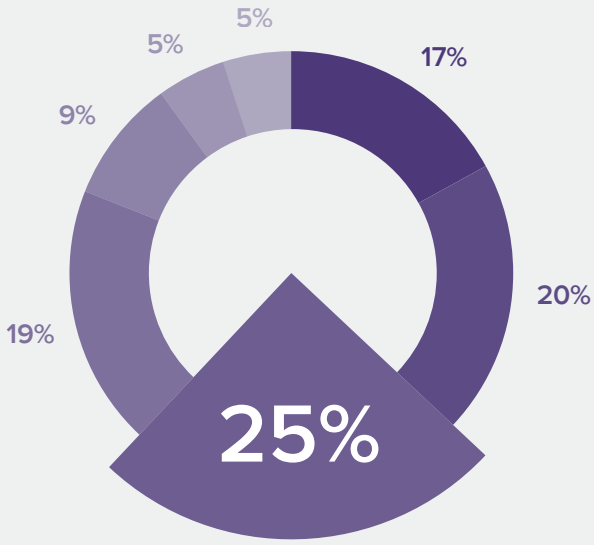
Budget

Let's start off with a factor that affects and guides all events: the budget. Budgets are an unavoidable and sometimes prohibitive component of event planning. But the good news is: Our findings can provide insights into an organization's average budget size and cost containment strategies.

FROM BOOTSTRAPPED TO BOUNTIFUL

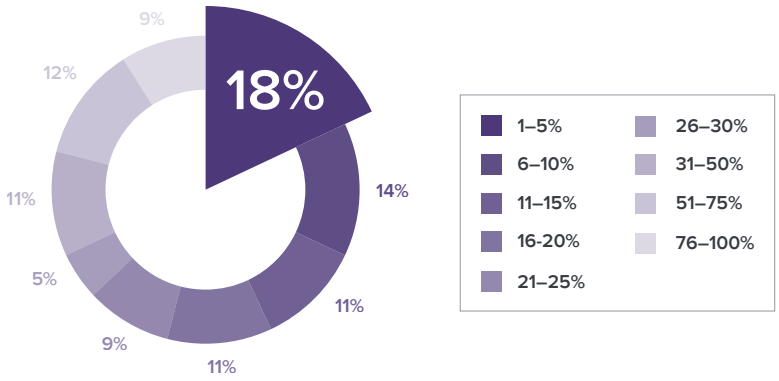
Survey results showed that overall meetings and events budgets vary greatly across the board. Respondents' annual event budgets ranged from less than $10,000 (17%) to more than $5 million (5%). The largest percentage of respondents, at 25%, spent $50,000-$249,000.

Annual Event and Meetings Budget



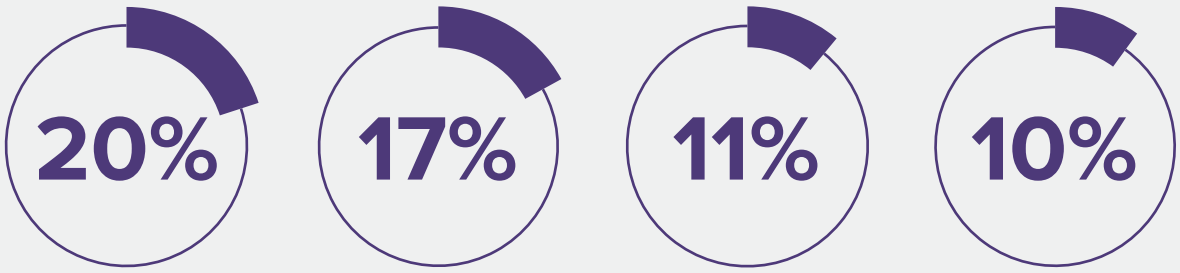
In reference to their overall marketing budget, 45% of respondents indicated that they allocate 6-25% of their annual marketing budget to meetings and events. Twenty-one percent said they spend more than 50% of their overall budget.

% of Marketing Budget Allocated to Meetings and Events



CUTTING DOWN ON COSTS

No matter how big your budget is, any organization can be at risk of the inevitable—going over budget. When this happens, you have to look for ways to make ends meet, while still delivering a great event experience. Here are the top four ways respondents reduced costs:



RECOUPING EVENT FEES

While events can be expensive to host, many organizations recover the costs through registration fees, sponsorships, and exhibitor fees. Here is a breakdown of the average percentage of total costs recouped by each:



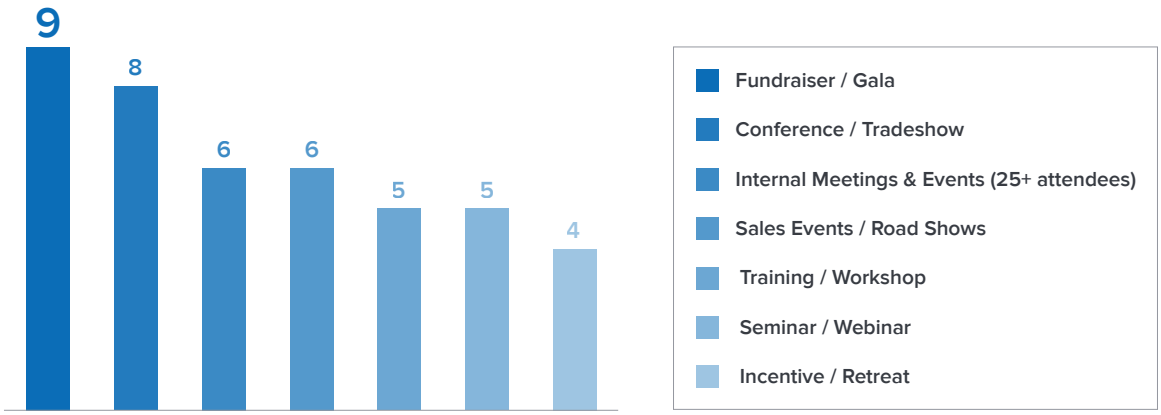
Resource Management

Managing resources is one of the trickiest aspects of event planning. In addition to making sure you have enough people in your organization devoted to planning tasks, you have to make sure you allocate the right amount of time to the right tasks. Here is a breakdown of how organizations manage their people, time, and tasks.

PLANNING COMMITTEE SIZE

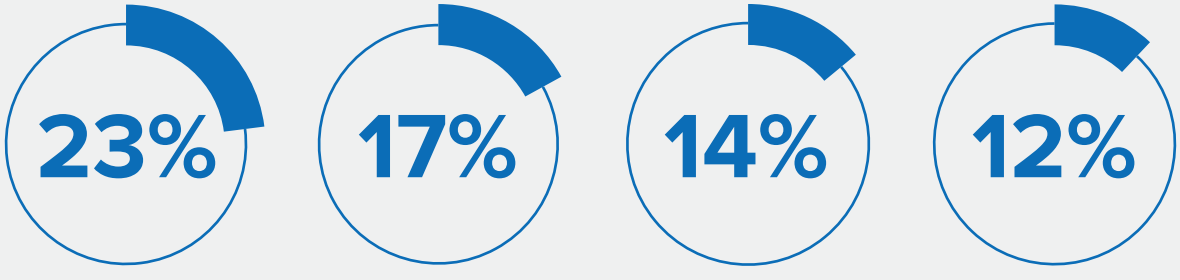
Respondents reported that their average planning committee size is seven people. When broken down by event type: conferences, trade shows, fundraisers, and galas had the largest committees, and incentive trips and retreats had the smallest.

Average Committee Size



TAKING YOUR PLANNING TO TASK

When asked how respondents' planning teams broke up their planning tasks by percentage, the top four areas were:



Registration and Attendance

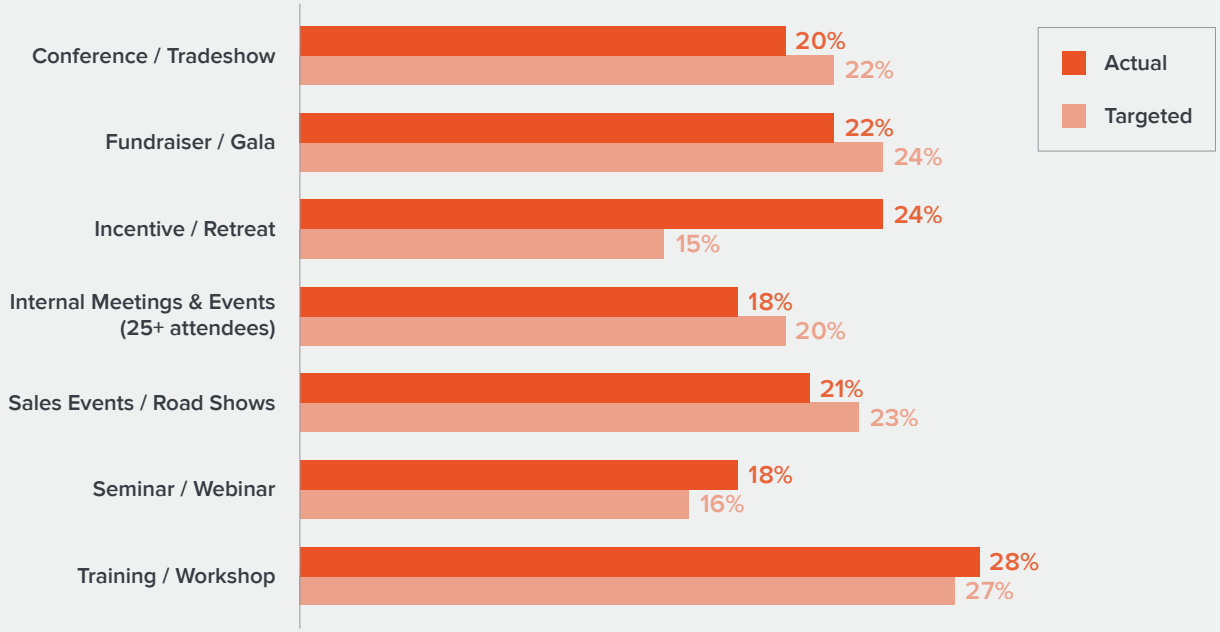
Setting and achieving your registration goals are necessary if you want to hold successful events that generate ROI. By setting ambitious but realistic attendance goals, you can accurately budget for venue fees, hotel room, and food and beverage guarantees. In this section, you'll gain insights into the types of registration goals set by other organizations and their rate of success.

AMBITIOUS ATTENDANCE TARGETS

Not surprisingly, an overwhelming majority of respondents said their organizations aimed to increase attendance (56%) or stay the same (41%). Just 3% of respondents said their organizations wanted to decrease attendance.

TARGETED INCREASE VS. ACTUAL INCREASE

For all event types, the average targeted attendance increase was 22%. The average actual attendance indicated that respondents are meeting their target attendance numbers. However, actual attendance increases fell slightly short by 2% for conferences and trade shows, fundraisers and galas, and sales events and roadshows.



Event Content Creation

An organization's ability to drive registration and deliver value to attendees rests on the event content itself. In order for attendees to commit their time and money to attending your event, you need to provide an educational, entertaining, and inspiring experience.

EDUCATING ATTENDEES

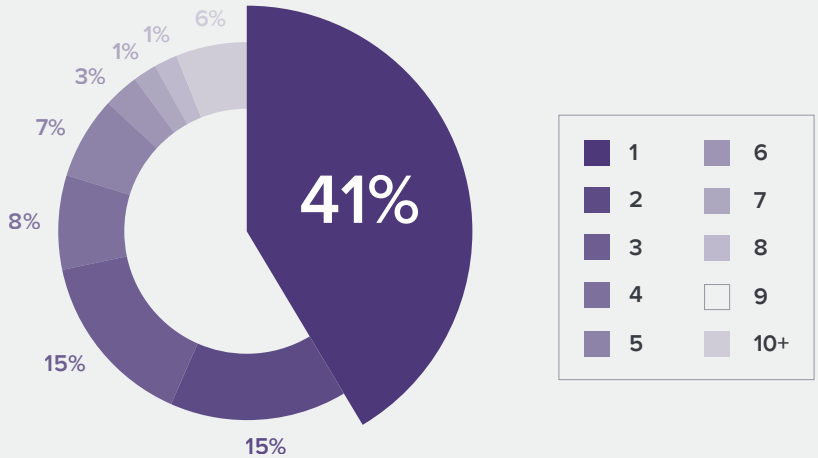
It's important to many organizations to be viewed as knowledgeable industry resources and at the forefront of new ideas and technology. In fact, 88% of respondents said it was their organization's goal to be thought leaders within their respective industries.

Subsequently, 36% of respondents said their organizations offer training and certification opportunities at their meetings for attendees. Out of those events that offered training and certification opportunities, an average of 71% of attendees took advantage of them.

AGENDA TRACKS

Offering multiple agenda tracks is important when you have different groups of attendees who are interested in learning about different subject matters. If the event has more general educational experiences for a similar group of attendees, often separate session tracks are not necessary. This study found that 41% of respondents do not plan more than one track, while 30% plan two to three tracks. When organizing the agenda, 36% break them out by topic, and 26% break them out by a mix of product, market, topic, and job type.

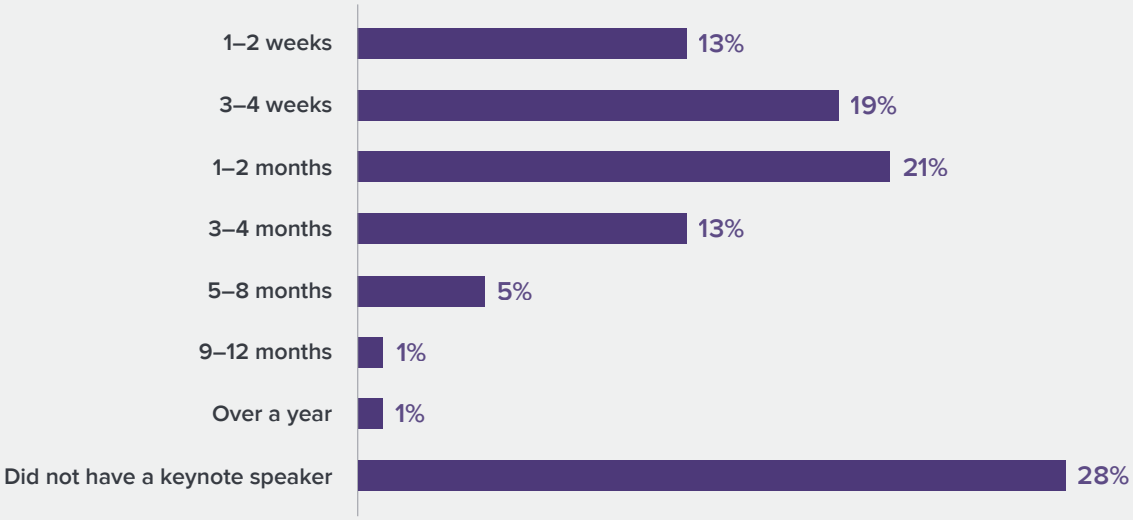
of Agenda Tracks



SPEAKERS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Although keynote speakers can serve as a draw for attendees, they can also be difficult to select and book. Twenty-eight percent of respondents did not have a keynote speaker for their events. For those respondents that did have keynote speakers, 31% said it took them one to four weeks; 21% said it took one to two months; and nearly 20% said it took more than three months to evaluate and decide on a keynote.

Length of Time to Select Keynote Speaker



When planning the agenda, the percentage of internal speakers is a common discussion point. Respondents said on average they had 44% of their sessions led by external speakers.

Sixty-three percent of respondents said they thought that scheduling pure entertainment, such as concerts and shows, for their events helped drive attendance.

EVENT MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGY

As technology continues to advance and replace manual, time-consuming practices with automated processes, more and more organizations are beginning to utilize event management solutions. Forty-six percent of respondents said they use event management software to plan, manage, and/or market their meetings and events. However, 60% said they still heavily rely on manual processes, such as Excel® spreadsheets, Outlook® emails, and non-integrated systems when they plan events.



AN OVERWHELMING 82% OF RESPONDENTS SAID THEY PREFER HTML INVITATIONS OVER RICH TEXT.

Event Marketing

An effective event marketing strategy helps organizations drive registration and reach their attendance goals. In this section, we'll discuss the findings of the study that focus on specific aspects of event marketing strategy, including timeline, pricing, and marketing channel effectiveness.

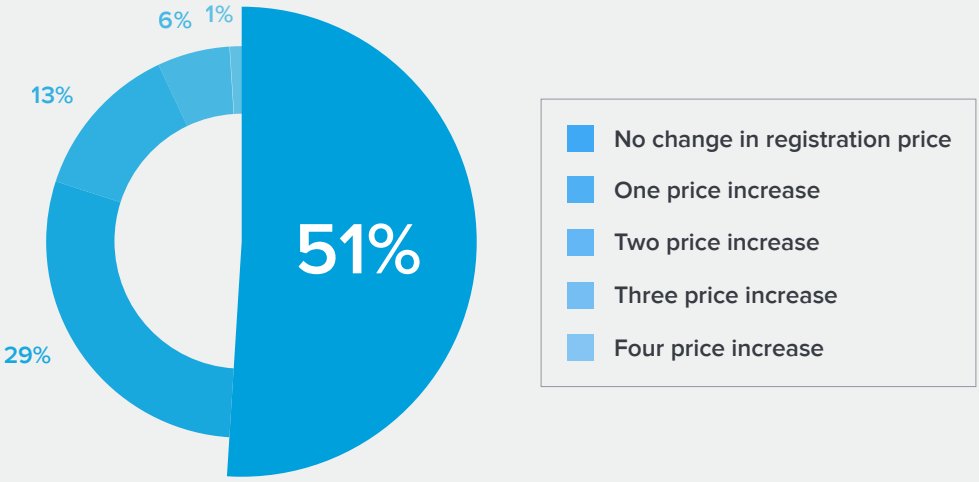
REGISTRATION TIMELINE AND PRICING TIERS

Although registration timelines vary slightly by event type, the majority of respondents opened up registration one to three months from the date of their event.

Timing of Opening Registration

	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	1 month	2 months	3 months	4 months	5 months	6 months	7 months	8 months	9 months	10 months	11 months	1+ year
Conference / Tradeshow	–	1%	1%	5%	17%	23%	16%	10%	13%	2%	3%	2%	1%	3%	4%
Fundraiser / Gala	–	–	4%	14%	32%	16%	10%	5%	14%	1%	1%	1%	–	1%	1%
Incentive / Retreat	–	3%	5%	8%	38%	24%	5%	3%	8%	–	–	3%	–	–	3%
Internal Meetings and Events (25+ attendees)	1%	5%	1%	26%	33%	18%	9%	4%	1%	–	–	2%	–	–	–
Sales Events / Road Shows	–	3%	–	30%	36%	15%	–	6%	6%	3%	–	–	–	–	–
Seminar / Webinar	–	7%	7%	22%	26%	9%	17%	4%	2%	2%	–	2%	2%	–	–
Training / Workshop	1%	4%	3%	14%	33%	17%	9%	2%	9%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	3%

Registration Fee Increases



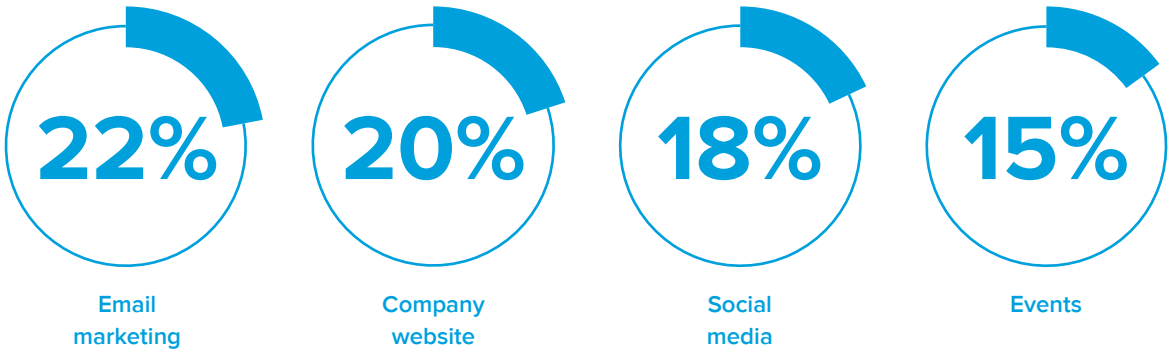
Of those that charged registration fees, 51% did not increase the fees and 29% increased their fees only once.

DRIVING REGISTRATIONS

Forty-eight percent of respondents ranked email as the most effective marketing channel in driving registrations. When it comes to formatting these emails, an overwhelming 82% of respondents said they prefer HTML invitations over rich text.

OVERALL MARKETING MIX

Events occupy a significant place in organizations' overall marketing mix. Here were the top four most effective channels cited by respondents:





Onsite Experience

Managing the onsite experience so that it is convenient and engaging for attendees helps ensure they leave your event satisfied. In this part of the study, we look at how respondents enhance the event experience.

SOCIAL MEDIA MAYHEM

Today's attendees are social media savvy and constantly connected to their mobile devices. Not only does having an event social media strategy ensure a modern experience, it also keeps attendees more engaged in your event. Sixty-five percent of respondents who host conferences and trade shows said they encourage attendees to post event-related content on social media by using a designated event hashtag.

MOBILE MOMENTUM

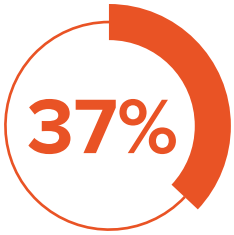
Since mobile phone usage is so prevalent among attendees, many organizations are using mobile event apps to keep attendees informed of event details and to keep them engaged before, during, and after the event itself.

Of those who host conferences and trade shows, 43% used an event-specific mobile app. However, out of those respondents who did not have a mobile event app, 54% said they plan to use one in the future. Additionally, out of those respondents who have a mobile event app, 49% said they use it to collect event feedback.

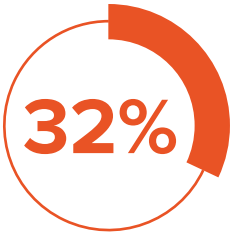
Respondents said, on average, 54% of their attendees downloaded the event mobile app.

Collecting Event Feedback and Measuring ROI

When measuring the success of meetings and events, many organizations look at their return on investment (ROI). A variety of different metrics can be used to analyze ROI. Here are the top metrics that our study's respondents used to measure their ROI:



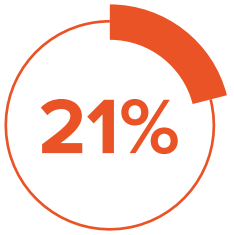
Revenue from registration



Revenue from sponsorships



Number of new leads

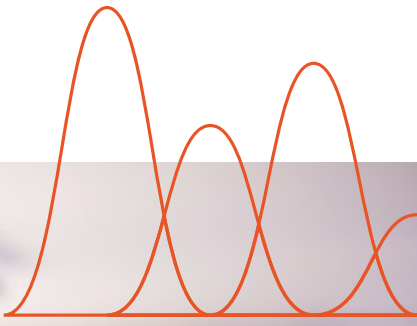


New business won directly



Customers retained

Note: 24% of respondents also used other measurements for ROI, such as attendance numbers and funds raised.

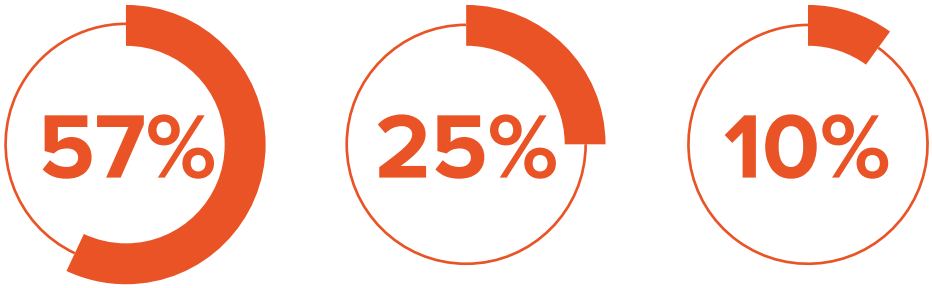


AN OVERWHELMING 94% OF EXECUTIVE RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THEIR MEETINGS AND EVENTS WERE EFFECTIVE.

EVENT AND SESSION FEEDBACK

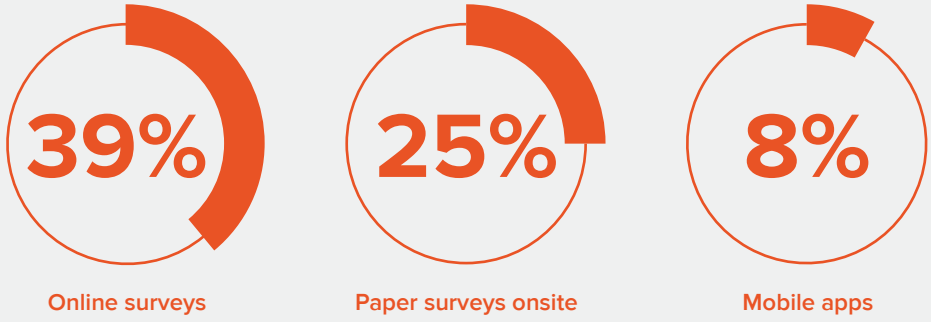
Collecting event feedback is an essential step in discovering what attendees liked and didn't like about your events. In order to improve their experience and keep them coming back in the future, getting insights directly from your attendees is key. Here are the top methods our respondents used to collect feedback.

Note: 14% of respondents did not collect event feedback



While it's important to collect feedback that captures attendees input on the entire event, session-specific feedback is helpful when determining future event content. Here are the top methods respondents used to collect session feedback:

Note: 31% of respondents did not collect session feedback



OVERALL EVENT SUCCESS

Ultimately, the final question of the 2015 Global Event Industry Benchmark Study emphasized why events continue to play an important role in many organizations. When asked, an overwhelming 94% of executive respondents believed their meetings and events were effective.

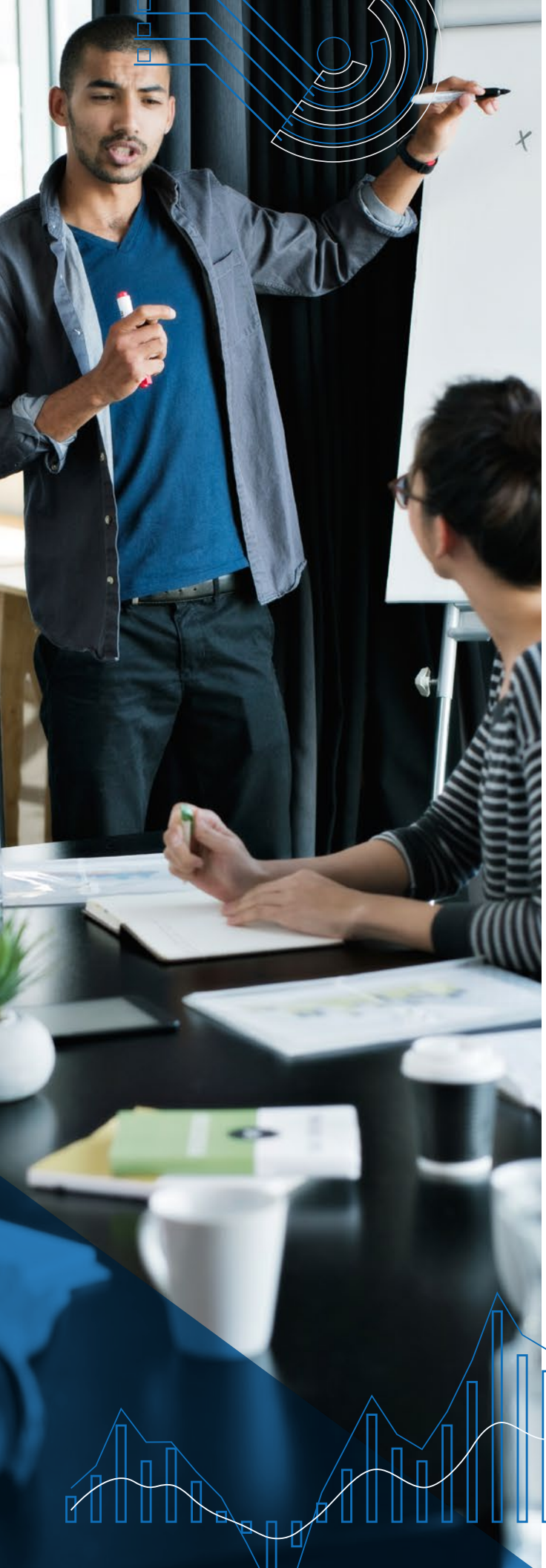
Conclusion

The 2015 Global Event Industry Benchmarks Study revealed some interesting industry trends and opportunities. Currently, with events taking up an average of 6-25% of annual marketing budgets, organizations have placed a heightened emphasis on increasing attendance, staying on budget, delivering engaging experiences, and generating ROI.

Respondents revealed that a majority of organizations seek to increase attendance by 22%—and for good reason. Sixty-one percent of respondents indicated that they rely on attendance to recoup event costs, while 37% of respondents said they measure ROI with revenue from registrations. This has placed an increased reliance on technologies such as email marketing software for driving attendance, mobile apps and social media for engaging attendees during the event, and online survey tools for collecting post-event feedback.



RESPONDENTS REVEALED THAT A MAJORITY OF ORGANIZATIONS SEEK TO INCREASE ATTENDANCE BY 22%.



When it comes to achieving event goals and churning out ROI, event management technology presents an opportunity for organizations. While 46% of respondents said they utilize event management software, 60% said they still heavily rely on manual processes, such as Excel® spreadsheets, Outlook® emails, and non-integrated systems when they plan events.

By switching over to a singular event management platform that can handle the entire event lifecycle, organizations can cut down on planning time; improve event marketing efforts; streamline registration and payment processing; easily track their event budgets; offer a mobile onsite experiences; and collect post event feedback.

46% OF RESPONDENTS SAID THEY UTILIZE EVENT MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE.

About Cvent

Cvent, Inc. (NYSE: CVT) is a leading cloud-based enterprise event management platform, with more than 14,000 customers worldwide. Cvent offers software solutions to event planners for online event registration, venue selection, event management, mobile apps for events, e-mail marketing, and web surveys. Cvent provides hoteliers with an integrated platform, enabling properties to increase group business demand through targeted advertising and improve conversion through proprietary demand management and business intelligence solutions.

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