

Association Meeting Planning Challenges & Best Practices

Welcome & Introductions!



Michele Pearce, Senior Conference Sales Manager, See Monterey



Diane Niggli, Senior Director, HelmsBriscoe



Touda Bentatou, Director of Customer Onboarding, Novi AMS

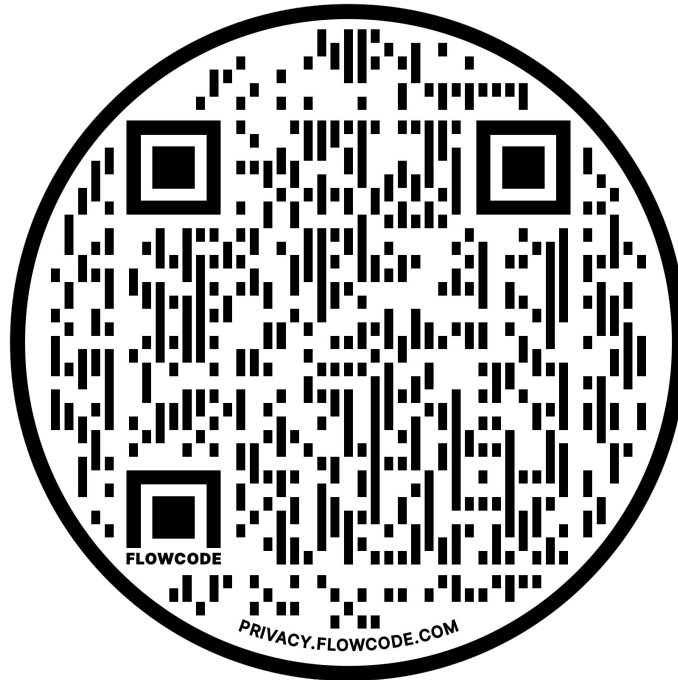


Threasa Hernandez, Event Manager, CITE



Sign in

- Stay connected with us! We'll send links to resources afterward.

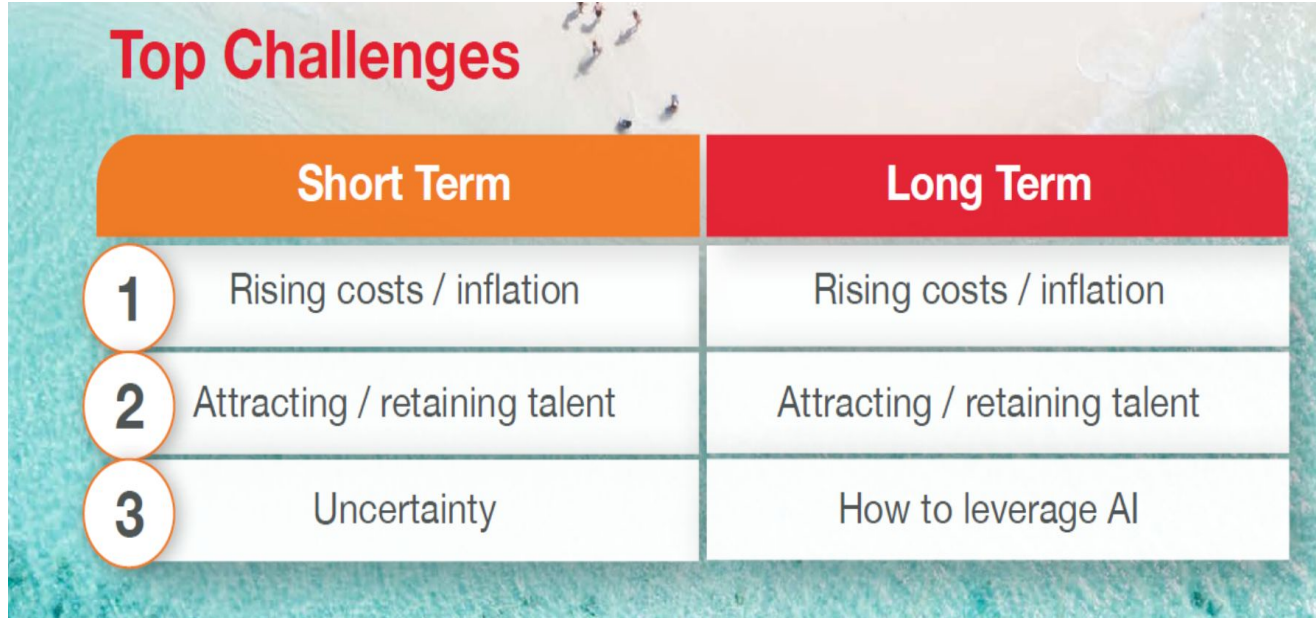


Session overview

- Review Trends
- Share hot topics and vote
- Discuss the topics with the larger group
- Reminder - this is a safe space. Be a thought partner.
- Conclude

Event Industry Trends

Rising Cost is the #1 Challenge in both the Short & Long Term



The image shows a table titled 'Top Challenges' comparing short-term and long-term challenges. The table has two columns: 'Short Term' (orange header) and 'Long Term' (red header). There are three rows of challenges, numbered 1, 2, and 3 in circles on the left. The challenges are: 1. Rising costs / inflation, 2. Attracting / retaining talent, and 3. Uncertainty (Short Term) vs. How to leverage AI (Long Term). The background of the table is a light blue textured surface with a small group of people in the top left corner.

Top Challenges	
Short Term	Long Term
1 Rising costs / inflation	Rising costs / inflation
2 Attracting / retaining talent	Attracting / retaining talent
3 Uncertainty	How to leverage AI

Food & Beverage

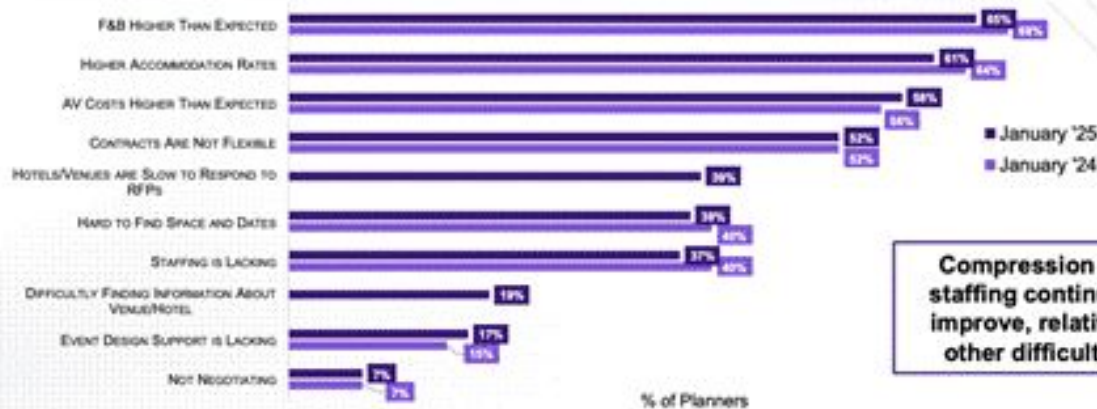
Northstar⁺ **BTN** + cvent[®]
MEETING DESIGNER



F&B Costs and Room Rates Top the List of Planner Difficulties

WHILE DIFFICULTIES ABSORBING HIGHER AV COSTS GROW,

If you are working with hotels and venues for future meetings or events, are you experiencing any of these difficulties? (Select all that apply.)



Compression and staffing continue to improve, relative to other difficulties.

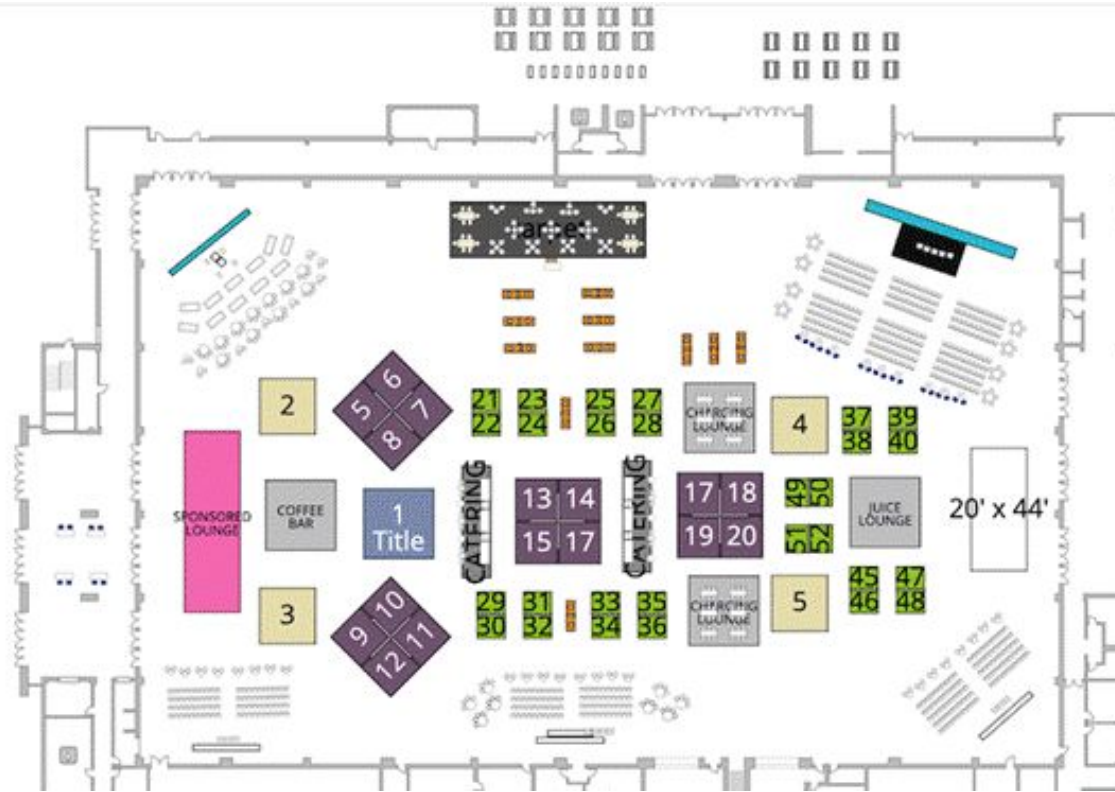
Food & Beverage

- Inflation
- Less Flexibility in Creativity and Menu Design
- Higher Food and Beverage Minimums
- Additional Fees
- Some venues can no longer offer 10% off menu prices or lock in rates
- Leveraging food trucks and Visa Gift Cards

Unique Venues & Space Reinvention

- Smaller events under 200 people
- Networking events that keep the conversation going
- Turning spaces into an “experience”
- Reduce footprint/square footage
- Rethinking food and beverage

Unique Venues & Space Reinvention



Unique Venues & Space Reinvention



Site selection priorities



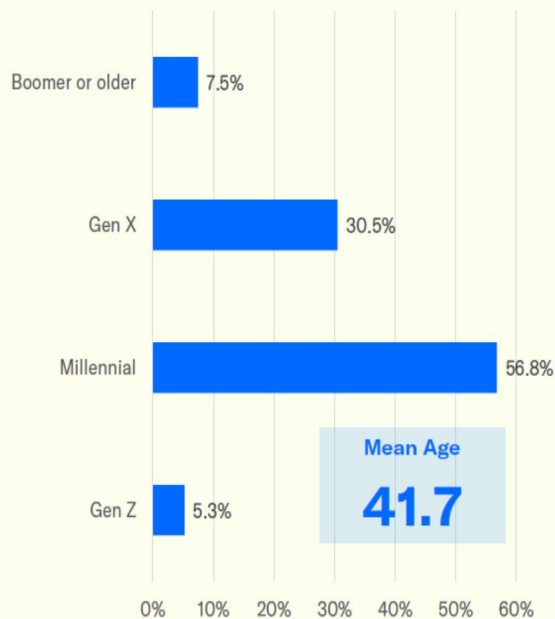
Figure 1 – Destination selection criteria rankings, IT&ME Survey (SITE), March 2024

Health, Wellness, & Accessibility

- Quiet spaces for neurodivergent attendees
 - Fidget toys/Coloring books
 - This spaces can be sponsored
- Supporting Invisible Disabilities
 - Closed Captioning
 - Setting up rooms to accommodate wheelchairs
 - Being mindful that color blindness is a common challenge
 - Hiring sign-language or language interpreters
- Offering Networkings Walks
 - Teaches them about the local area and they meet new people



Industry Demographic Changes



	Corporate	Association	Third Party	Sports/ Athletics	SMERF
Baby Boomer	4.5%	7.9%	8.1%	0.9%	5.7%
Gen X	28.4%	33.3%	33.3%	36.3%	28.7%
Millennial	64.8%	50.8%	53.2%	57.5%	60.0%
Gen Z	2.3%	7.9%	5.4%	5.3%	5.7%
Mean age	40.3	42.7	42.6	39.4	40.6
Base	176	63	111	113	265

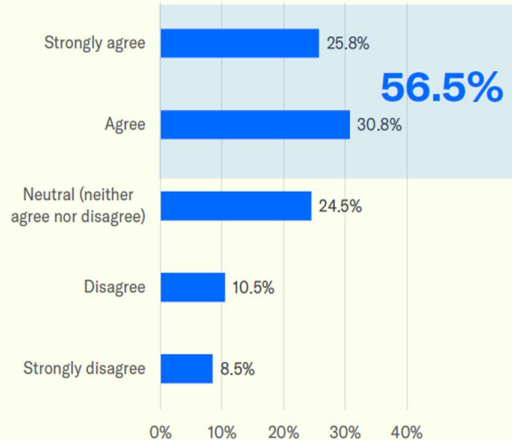
Which generation do you belong to? Base All respondents. 400 responses.

The Generational Shift

- Emerging Professionals
 - How are we preparing the next generation of meeting professionals
 - Historical knowledge transfers
- Battling the “but we have always done it this way”
- Communication methods
- Templates
- Personalization

AI in the Event Space

AI Tool Use for Destination Inspiration



	Corporate	Association	Third Party	Sports/ Athletics	SMERF
Top 2 Box	58.5%	46.0%	61.3%	69.9%	59.2%
Strongly agree	23.9%	19.0%	31.5%	37.2%	27.9%
Agree	34.7%	27.0%	29.7%	32.7%	31.3%
Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	28.4%	19.0%	22.5%	18.6%	24.9%
Disagree	9.1%	17.5%	9.0%	6.2%	9.1%
Strongly disagree	4.0%	17.5%	7.2%	5.3%	6.8%
Base	176	63	111	113	265

Statement: I often use AI tools like ChatGPT for inspiration around meetings destinations. Base All respondents, 400 responses

AI in the Event Space

- Tools
- Trip Planners
- Destination Selection
- Attendee Data - use it
- Personalized agendas
- Content generation
- Attendee support with Chatbot
- Survey summerizations

Activity: Your Turn to Share!

Activity Instructions

- Pick a poster to start at - spread out!
- First Round (5 mins): On a sticky note, write a response to the prompt on the poster
- Second & Third Round (5 mins each): Read through what's on the poster. Add a mark to the ones that are top priority for you. Write a response on a sticky note if your response isn't listed already
- Fourth Round (2 mins): Go back to your original poster to add hash marks to the responses that are also your priority
- Discussion

Questions?

Resources

- Convene - How event planners can use AI in 2025, posted December 11,2024.
- Cvent - Great Events, A podcast by CVENT
- PCMA Convene - Annual Industry Forecast and Meetings Market Survey
- Freeman's Event Organizer Trends Report
- 2025 Hilton Trends Report Special Section, The Meetings Maximizer
- Skift Meetings, Event Design
- Northstar/Cvent Meeting Industry Pulse Survey
- IT&ME Survey (SITE) - March 2024

Sign in

- Stay connected with us! We'll send links to resources afterward.

