

AC ⚡ BC

AFTER CORONA / BEFORE CORONA

MEETINGS INDUSTRY ZEITGEIST SURVEY

POWERED BY TOLERANCA MARKETING RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

Survey time frame: 30 June – 14 September 2021

In one of our most extensive surveys so far, we wanted to find out what events will look like AC (After Corona), and what they were like BC (Before Corona). This will also be the central theme of the 2021 Conventa Crossover conference. The theme is a logical response to one of the greatest social and environmental changes we are witnessing. We believe in the co-responsibility of all stakeholders in the meetings industry to co-create better and, above all, more sustainable events.

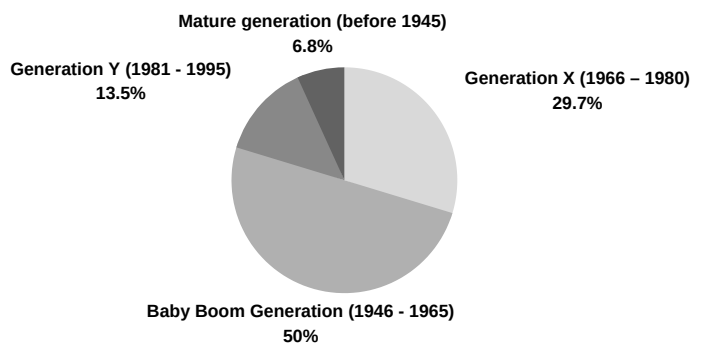
The questionnaire consisted of 26 questions and a random sample of 278 meeting planners responded to the survey, which was distributed through social media, direct newsletters and on the Kongres Magazine website. A further 2,067 organisers viewed the survey. As it was a more complex survey, it took on average 12 minutes to complete.

Summing up the research perfectly is the answer to the question of whether digital elements of events will remain with us after the crisis. **88.9%** of respondents believe so. This is why radical change and the acquisition of new skills is urgently needed to remain competitive.

MEETINGS INDUSTRY SECTORS:

27,7 %	Agency (PCO, DMC)
22,3 %	Event agency
12,8 %	Destination Management Organisation
11,5 %	Consultancy
5,7 %	Digital event organiser (DCO)
3,9 %	Marketing
3,8%	Conference hotel
3,7 %	Convention / exhibition centre
3,4 %	Independent meeting planner
2,7 %	NGO
2,5 %	Other

DEMOGRAPHIC:



PRIMARY JOB FUNCTION:

57,78 %	Owner / General Management
16,67 %	Sales / Business Development
8,89 %	Operations / Event Logistics
7,78 %	Other
6,67 %	Communications / Public Relations
1,11 %	Human Resources / Recruiting / Staffing
1,11 %	Finance / Accounting / Legal / Administrative

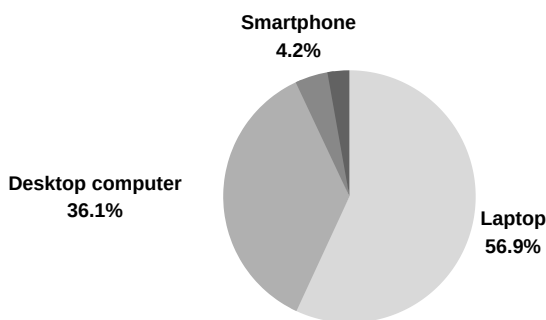
1. What types of events do you primarily organise?

- 54,8 % Organises all types of events
- 42,5 % Primarily organises B2B events
- 5,5 % Primarily organises B2C events
- 2,7 % Primarily organises B2I events

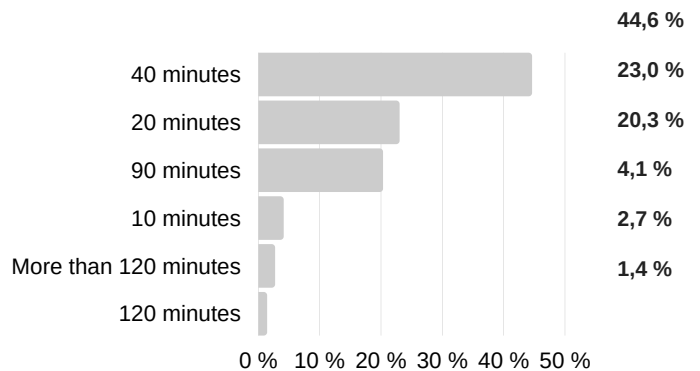
2. If a hybrid event is available, in what format do you prefer to attend?

- 77,0 % Attend in person
 - 10,8 % Attend online
 - 6,8 % Other (please write)
 - 5,4 % Receive a recording and watch later
- Face2Face is the only way we can do business
 - Depends on location
 - Depends on the event
 - Depending on the topic

3. What device do you usually use to access digital events?



4. How long do you feel you can concentrate on an online event without taking a break?



5. How many events did you personally attend before the corona crisis and how many events are you planning to attend after the crisis?

BC (Before Corona)

6 - 10 per year	32,00 %
More than 20 per year	24,00 %
11 - 20 per year	18,67 %
3 - 5 per year	16,00 %
1 - 2 per year	9,33 %

AC (After Corona)

3 - 5 per year	25,76 % (+16,43)
1 - 2 per year	36,36 % (+20,36)
6 - 10 per year	18,18 % (-13,82)
More than 20 per year	9,09 % (-9,58)
11 - 20 per year	10,61 % (-13,39)

FEWER EVENTS ARE ATTENDED

25.33% attended between 1 and 5 events before the crisis and 62.12% after the crisis.

6. In which format were most of your events carried out before the crisis and in which format are you planning to carry out future events?

BC (Before Corona)

Live	81,40 %
Hybrid	9,30 %
Digital (online, virtual)	2,33 %
Multihub events	6,98 %

AC (After Corona)

Live	38,14 % (-43,26)
Hybrid	30,93 % (+21,63)
Digital	21,65 % (+19,32)
Multihub events	9,28 % (+2,3)

DECREASE IN NUMBER OF LIVE EVENTS

The number of LIVE events has drastically decreased by nearly half (43.26%).

7. When did you organise most of your events before the corona crisis and when are you planning to carry out future events?

BC (Before Corona)

September – November	35,67 %
March – May	31,21 %
December – February	19,75 %
June – August	13,38 %

AC (After Corona)

September – November	44,62 % (+8,95)
March – May	23,08 % (-8,13)
December – February	17,69 % (-2,06)
June – August	14,62 % (+1,24)

SWITCHING TO WARMER MONTHS

There is a trend of events moving to warmer months

8. The ideal duration of a professional conference:

BC (Before Corona)

2 days	53,01 %
Full day	24,10 %
Half day	15,66 %
2 hours	3,61 %
1 hour	2,41 %
I don't know	1,20 %

AC (After Corona)

2 days	23,81 % (-29,20)
Full day	25,00 % (+0,09)
Half day	16,67% (+1,01)
2 hours	16,67 % (+13,06)
1 hour	7,14 % (+4,73)
I don't know	10,71 % (+9,51)

SHORTER DURATION OF EVENTS

The number of people, who believe that 2 days is the ideal event duration has decreased.

9. Based on location, what types of events did you attend the most:

BC (Before Corona)

Global events	40,88 %
National events	22,63 %
Regional events	20,44 %
Local events	16,06 %
I don't know	0,00 %

AC (After Corona)

Global events	26,83 % (-14,05)
National events	21,14 % (-1,49)
Regional events	24,39 % (+3,95)
Local events	22,76 % (+6,70)
I don't know	4,88 % (+4,88)

REGIONALISATION OF THE MEETINGS INDUSTRY

The total number of regional, national and local events is increasing. Before the crisis, the share was **59.13%**, after the crisis it was **68.29%**.

10. What types of venues did you use the most for your events:

BC (Before Corona)

Special venues	26,92 %
Congress hotels	23,63 %
Convention centres	19,23 %
Boutique hotels	12,64 %
Academic venues	8,79 %
Outdoor	7,14 %
Other	1,65 %

AC (After Corona)

Special venues	26,18 % (-0,74)
Congress hotels	19,37 % (-4,26)
Convention centres	13,09 % (-6,14)
Boutique hotels	15,71 % (+3,07)
Academic venues	7,85 % (-0,94)
Outdoor	16,25 % (+9,11)
Other	1,05 % (-0,60)

TREND OF OPEN AIR VENUES

Interest in outdoor venues among meeting planners has increased by **9.11%**

11. Where did you search for information about event venues:

BC (Before Corona)

63.0 % - Trade Shows	52.1 % Venue website
56.2 % - Recommendations	52.1 % Fam Trips
54.8 % - Convention Bureaus	37.0 % Search Engines
	16.4 % Venue Directory
	16.4 % Venue Finder
	16.4 % LinkedIn
	15.1 % Social media blogs
	6.8 % Cvent

AC (After Corona)

59.5 % - Recommendations (+3,3)	1.4 % Trade Shows (-11,6)
55.4 % - Convention Bureaus (-0,6)	48.6 % Fam Trips (-3,5)
55.4 % - Venue website (+3,3)	35.1 % Search Engines (-1,9)
	20.3 % Venue Finder (+3,9)
	18.9 % LinkedIn (+2,5)
	16.2 % Venue Directory (+0,2)
	16.2 % Social media blogs (+1,1)
	8.1 % Cvent (+1,3)

MARKETING DIGITALISATION

Digital marketing tools are becoming very important (LinkedIn, websites, etc.)

12. The main reasons for attending events:

BC (Before Corona)

85.1 %	Networking
68.9 %	Content
43.2 %	Live seminars or educational session
39.2 %	Speakers
35.1 %	Being with friends and colleagues
32.4 %	Community bonding
32.4 %	Social programme
31.1 %	Teambuilding
27.0 %	Live entertainment or activities
14.9 %	Energy from crowds
8.1 %	Sights and sounds
8.1 %	People-watching
8.1 %	Other (please specify)
4.1 %	Staying active or fit

13. Please rank the most important criteria when choosing a destination for your events:

BC (Before Corona)

Comfort and accessibility	10.5
General and health safety	9.8
Value for money	9.3
Professionalism of local meetings industry	7.6
Climate	7.2
Attractive natural or cultural location	6.5
Consideration of sustainable principles	6.2
Image of the destination	5.4
Economic stability	4.6
Less crowded destination	4.5
Visa requirements	3.7
Entertainment and nightlife	2.6

14. What is your forecast for the state of the meetings industry next year (2022)?

1 - star = extremely negative
10 stars = extremely positive



Number of stars

5.8/10

15. Will elements of digital events remain with us even after the end of the corona crisis?



16. Once you begin organising in-person events, how will your event format change?

52.8 %	Shift to hybrid format (live & online)
44.4 %	Smaller in size
36.1 %	Same size and format as usual
26.4 %	Shorter in time
25.0 %	More local/regional

17. What are the main reasons for attending HYBRID EVENTS

- 60.6 %** To meet experts in your field in-person
- 56.3 % To meet exhibitors in person
- 54.9 % Opportunity to forge deeper business relationships with connections made online
- 45.1 % Other business opportunities in the destination
- 7.0 % Other

18. What are the main reasons for NOT attending HYBRID EVENTS?

- 48.6 %** Cost of fees, travel and/or accommodation
- 42.9 % Time commitment
- 38.6 % Health or personal barriers
- 21.4 % Concerns regarding environmental impact
- 14.3 % Other

19. Which skills should meeting planners possess after COVID-19?

- 78.9 %** Flexibility
- 64.8 %** Organisational (ability to explain tech in user-friendly terms)
- 62.0 %** Event planning
- 62.0 % Customer services (ability to explain tech in user-friendly terms)
- 46.5 % Digital-user interface
- 40.8 % Online marketing
- 14.1 % HTML skills
- 2.8 % Other

20. How will your event planning budget change this year?

- 45,83 %** Decreased
- 31,49 % Increased
- 22,22 % Same as 2020

21. How far do you agree with the following statement:

The corona crisis has highlighted the need to organise events with greater responsibility towards the environment, participants and our whole community. The future of the meetings industry is sustainable, green events that need to become the new standard.

**AVERAGE
GRADE:**

3,85

(1-Strongly disagree / 5-Completely agree)

22. How do you feel about the following types of participant interaction at events:

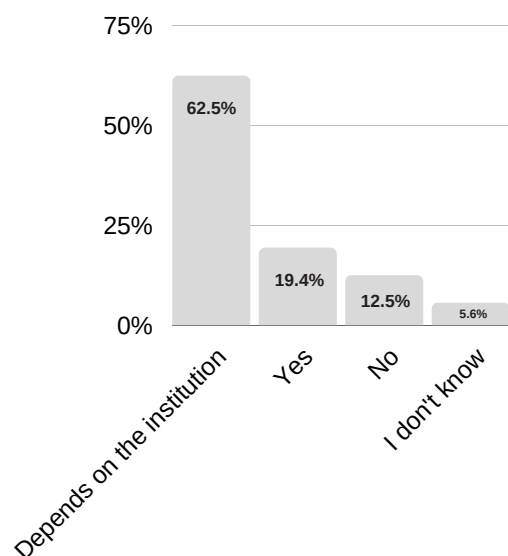
(1 - Strongly dislike / 5 - Strongly enjoy)

- 4.19 One2One appointments
- 3.98 Q&A with questions asked during event
- 3.67 Breakout rooms
- 3.62 Submitting questions before event begins
- 3.60 Polls
- 3.49 Social media
- 3.36 Quizzes
- 3.26 Using reaction symbols (e.g. thumbs up, heart symbol)
- 3.09 Video chat speed-dating
- 3.05 Text chat
- 2.95 Audio chat
- 2.90 Asking questions as avatar
- 2.87 Text-based forum discussion

23. How will prices (registration fees) for events change AC (After Corona)?

	Same prices as before	Lower prices than before	Higher prices than before
LIVE:	45.8 %	20.8 %	29.2 %
HYBRID:	22.2 %	33.3 %	36.1 %
DIGITAL:	25 %	33.3 %	27.8 %
MULTIHUB:	29.2 %	25 %	25 %

24. Do you trust green event certificates issued by different institutions?



25. How well do you know the following GREEN EVENT certificates?

- 2,74 ISO 20121 – Sustainable Events
- 2,19 LEED: Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
- 2,00 The Austrian Eco-label Guideline 62
- 1,97 The BS:8901- British Standard Sustainable Events
- 1,95 Green Globe
- 1,91 EIC Sustainable Event Certificate
- 1,88 Green Meeting Standard
- 1,82 SEPC Sustainable Event Professional Certificate
- 1,78 IACC Green Star
- 1,73 SMPP Sustainable Meeting Planners Programme
- 1,69 Green Key Meetings
- 1,65 A Greener Festival Certificate

(1 I have never heard of it / 5 – I am completely familiar with it)

26. What are your thoughts on the future of the meetings industry?

What advice would you give fellow colleagues for the future?

- **Optimism**
- **Take advantage about technology**
- **No boundaries in digital events world**
- **Start again and do flexible**
- **Be strong and hopeful for the future**

- Nothing to worry about. Things will improve soon but we should have all kinds of skills to manage our events for business based on the crisis. We can't just sit around waiting for the good days. Of course, there is no substitute for a physical (personal) business approach and business meetings and events. Things will change a bit but cannot completely replace our approach digitally.

- I hope that after pandemic period the meeting will be in person

- Use lessons learned from challenging, difficult pandemic times. Organise events live, hybrid and also online - depending on the format, duration and potential participants. E.g. if you want to reach globally use online tools.

- Quality of content and production will be more than ever the core subject. Events will absolutely have to make sense.

- I certainly hope Hybrid Meetings are not the wave of the future as my clients have seen it as outrageously expensive. Similar to hosting two meetings cost-wise

- Create a strong United industry to face adversity and be able to talk to government as a unique voice and industry

- Try to ride waves between corona limitations.

- Most of the corporates will be conducting digital and online meetings as the companies save a lot of money in travel and accommodation. Except for a few which will host physical incentives for motivating the employees for higher production. Pharma industry may host few events for scientific reasons

- To remain vigilant to health and environmental issues and follow health protocols and standards.

- Be flexible and empathetic. Always try to put yourself in the other person's shoes to understand their needs from their perspective without prejudices and false beliefs.

- Prepare for hybrid options. Some attendees will take advantage of both live in-person and hybrid capabilities depending on their comfort level and business schedules during the event.

- The new forms of meetings certainly have their justification, but they cannot replace personal contact.

- Invest in soft skills as much as technical skills

- Event planners have to be digitally savvy

- People born after 1990 - our "new customers" have consumed most of the information/education through screens (not by reading books) we need new ways to organise content for them

Kongres Magazine's Surveys

POWERED BY TOLERANCA MARKETING RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

Ever since the epidemic started, the editorial board of Kongres Magazine has been carrying out in-depth research on the impacts of COVID-19 for the meeting industry, studying the ever-changing needs and expectations of meeting planners. As the owner of Kongres Magazine, Toleranca Marketing agency was entrusted with the logistics of carrying out the research.

Need an in-depth market research?

Get in touch with our team of creative thinkers

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We would like to thank everyone, who has taken part in the research so far. With your contribution, we are one step closer to overcoming the new pandemic reality.