

# PCMA PROFESSIONAL MEMBER INTERNATIONAL MEETING SURVEY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## Overview:

A growing number of PCMA professional members are planning international meetings. PCMA is committed to providing solutions to help members achieve success when conducting business in the global marketplace. Hence, the PCMA Professional Member International Meeting Survey was created by the 2008 International Task Force.

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## Purpose:

The survey was initiated to gather information about PCMA Professional Members that hold meetings outside of the United States in order to enhance international education, products, services, and solutions. Additionally, this survey was generated to provide a blueprint for social and on-line networking of International Meeting Planners.

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## Design:

The 2008 International Task Force Survey Subcommittee created a 14 question survey which included quantitative and qualitative questions.

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## Methodology:

The PCMA Professional Member International Meeting Survey was conducted in August of 2008. The survey was sent to all PCMA Professional Members using Zoomerang, a web survey software tool, and all responses were uniquely tracked. This method allowed PCMA to identify individual professional members who responded.

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## Data Analysis:

125 completed surveys were received from an overall invite list of 2,315. Based on research knowledge that approximately half of PCMA professional members conduct international meetings, the estimated response rate for this survey is 11%. The results were analyzed by PCMA staff.

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## Results:

65% of PCMA Professional Member respondents plan 1-3 international meetings per year, 20% plan 4-6, 5% plan 7-9, 3% plan 10-12, and 7% plan over 12 meetings per year. For their largest meeting, 19% of respondents generate an attendance of over 3,000, 23% draw 1,000 – 2,999, and 22% draw 400 – 999.

45% of respondents are seeing an increase in their overall number of international meetings per year. 50% state the number remains the same, and 5% are seeing a decrease. For their largest meeting, 42% observe an increase in the overall attendance, 49% are staying steady, and 9% are seeing a decrease.

PCMA Professional Member respondents note Canada, China, Mexico, and France as the most frequent destinations for past meetings. Other top destinations for past meetings include: Germany, Japan, Italy, Australia, Spain, Brazil, Czech Republic, United Kingdom, Bahamas, Belgium, Singapore, and Switzerland. Canada, China, and Mexico remained the most frequent destinations for future meetings with the addition of India. Other top destinations for future meetings remain the same as for past meetings with the addition of Greece, Portugal, and Egypt.

54% of respondents use a DMC and 28% use a PCO when planning their meetings. Respondents also work with CVBs, local members, hotels, partner organizations, affiliated associations or work independently.

The top challenges for respondents in organizing international meetings are related to finance, culture, customs, time, contracts, and language. Most frequent responses in these categories were: Finance (currency fluctuations, VAT, rebates, taxes, economy); Culture (service levels, expectations, business practices); Customs (visa, freight, security); Time (delay in response due to time zones, more overall time required); Contracts (negotiations, format, flexibility); Language (communication, terminology, interpretation).

Relating to PCMA products and services, 72% of respondents think PCMA should offer more international education at the Annual Meeting. Also, 57% are interested in being involved in an online network of PCMA international planners and 58% are interested in an online network of both planners and suppliers.

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#### Conclusions:

PCMA believes there is a positive trend in the number and size of international meetings for PCMA Professional members. PCMA planners hold meetings in a wide variety of locations around the world and need 21<sup>st</sup> century resources and tools to achieve success. Many utilize the assistance of local partners, but are still looking for solutions to the everyday challenges especially related to culture, language, and finances. PCMA is committed to providing relevant and timely education, tools, and resources to international meeting professionals and offering a Global Meetings Community, both face-to-face and online.

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#### Recommendations:

1. Distribute survey results to membership
2. Share survey results with International Think Tank (September 11, 2008)
3. Propose article in *Convene*<sup>®</sup> Magazine
4. International Task Force and PCMA staff will support further development of PCMA international offerings through educational sessions, products, and services.