

MPI Future Watch!

FutureWatch 2010 provides a compelling snapshot of an industry in transition, as meeting and event professionals develop the methods, markets and best practices that will enable them to survive and thrive in a uniquely tough economy.

This year's FutureWatch, produced by Meeting Professionals International (MPI) in partnership with American Express, drew responses from 1,832 MPI members representing 39 countries and 70 chapters and clubs, including 967 meeting and event planners and 813 suppliers.

The survey found initial signs of cautious optimism about the industry's prospects for 2010, combined with a sense of realism about the new realities that meetings and events will face.

Respondents predict that:

- Competitive pricing will be one of the main cornerstones of the business relationships that underpin a successful event and an effective industry.
- Planners and suppliers will both take a back-to-basics approach to meeting and event transactions, in which value and quality will consistently trump frills, extras, and special deals.
- With more meetings located closer to home, fewer participants can expect to travel long distances to get onsite.
- The return on investment (ROI) that organizations receive from the meetings they host will continue to be a major preoccupation for meeting and event planners.
- Corporate social responsibility will be a continuing interest for meeting and event professionals' organizations, and a potential differentiator for companies and associations that can demonstrate a strong commitment to effective CSR programs.
- Technology providers will find an enthusiastic market for affordable Internet access at meeting facilities, and for virtual and Web-based technologies that are becoming an increasingly important part of the meetings mix.