

2016 Event Disruption Study



Prepared for
Incentive Research Foundation

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August 20, 2016

Acknowledgement - This study was funded by Incentive Research Foundation (IRF). In addition to the funding, the input and feedback of the IRF staff during the research process are greatly appreciated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
INTRODUCTION	4
1. Goals	4
2. Definitions of Terms	4
STUDY DESIGN	6
1. Secondary Research	6
2. Personal Interviews	7
3. National Survey	7
FINDINGS	9
1. Type of Disruptions Experienced or Anticipated	9
2. Frequency of Disruptions Experienced or Anticipated	13
3. National Survey Sample Characteristics	14
4. Causes, Sources, or Origin of Disruptions	15
5. Impact of Disruptions	16
5.1. On the Success of the Event	16
5.2. On the Company's Image and Brand Reputation	17
6. Disruption Mitigation Strategies	18
7. Partner Readiness and Performance in Disruption Handling	24
8. Implications for Future Industry Actions	29
APPENDIX 1. Personal Interview Script	46
APPENDIX 2. The Survey Questionnaire	49
APPENDIX 3. Additional Personal Interview Results	65

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 2016 Event Disruption Study reports broadly on the state-of-the-art of event disruptions, from the event planner's point of view, and their impact on the event planning business.

The study also aimed to develop suggestions for future industry practices in handling disruptions.

Disruptive incidents do occur and they are happening in an increasing frequency these days. They include many weather-related phenomena, public enemy such as wars and terrorism, the business partner's mistakes, and the client's lack of cooperation.

Eighteen planners participated in a preliminary personal interview study, and 266 planners participated in a nationwide survey in 2016.

- 59% of planners reported that they had experienced any disruption that affected the overall outcome or success of at least one event in the past 12 months. They estimated that about 23% of all 2015-2016 events they planned were impacted (negatively) by a disruption.
- The two most frequently occurring disruptions are weather-related events (38%) and vendor failures (28%). Planners also discussed these two categories of disruptions most frequently when planning events.
- For the most recent disruption, contract hotels were responsible for handling it (47%).
- In general, of the business partners, airlines present the most frequent cause of disruptions through cancellations, delays, and overbooking (61%).
- Among the partners, hotels were most helpful in handling disruptions, perhaps because more disruptions occurred within the responsibility of hotels.
- Among the partners, hotels were best prepared to handle crises or disruptions, followed by DMCs, and airlines. Nonetheless, there was room to improve significantly in the partners' overall preparedness to handle disruptions.
- 43% of planners or their companies have experienced one or more disruptions causing a financial loss. The amount of the most frequent financial loss fell between \$10,000 and \$99,999.
- 19% of the planners with one or more disruption experiences in the past 12 months reported that those disruptions damaged the company's reputation or brand. This implies that approximately 4.4% of all events in the past 12 months experienced some disruptions to the extent which they affected the company's reputation.
- 41% of the planners have experienced some increase in the time and effort to plan for disruptions in the past two years. 39% of the planners expect that their time and effort to plan for disruptions will increase somewhat in the next two years.

- 54% of the planners require inclusion of contingency plans in all contracts they enter.
- 68% of planning companies provide guidelines or assistance for planning for disruptions.
- When planning for disruptions, the Internet is the most frequently used resource, followed by vendors and company manual.
- 49% of planning companies or planners actively communicate to their attendees about potential disruption situations and suggested actions.
- Hotels were the most frequently switched partner (26%) for failure and poor disruption handling.
- 68% of planners have changed the destination at least once because of perceived risks or disruptions.
- Limitation of liabilities is the most frequently included legal protection in contracts with both vendors and clients.
- Overall, planners perceived their partner's disruption handling to be about 76% to excellence, consistent with their overall satisfaction with their partner's disruption handling rated to be about 74% satisfactory. There is room to improve in disruption handling by partners, which will improve the planner's satisfaction.
- The level of confidence held by planners about planning for disruptions is about 79%. Much room to improve through additional training and assistance.
- The planners listed strong relationships and cooperation with partners and vendors as the most needed resource in their disruption planning.
- Most companies require contingency plans in contracts and provide assistance in disruption planning, regardless of specific disruption experiences.
- A financial loss due to disruptions tends to cause heightened prevention measures, more frequent partner switches, and more frequent communications about disruptions to clients.
- The partner's event-specific cooperative and creative offerings are more critical determinant of partnership trust than the resources the partner has.

INTRODUCTION

Recent disruptive incidents such as the terrorist attacks in Brussels and Paris, the shooting in San Bernardino, CA, and the spread of the Zika virus urge event planners to develop detailed and focused event plans for their clients' safety as well as their company's business success. Today, the travel and hospitality industry is experiencing various disruptive challenges. Most disruptions are unpredictable and thus uncontrollable, often broadly impacting the planning and operation of group incentive travel and offsite corporate meetings. These disruptions can include weather delays, natural disasters, technology outages and hacking, participant or attendee security, medical outbreaks, and terrorism, to name just a few. Disruptions can negatively affect the company's brand or image as well as the event business model when a disaster or situation is captured unfavorably on social media or by the news media.

In recent years, both the frequency and severity of disruptions have escalated to a point, for example, of forced cancellation of the entire event. Already in 2011, about 43% of planners surveyed for the State of the Industry experienced cancellations as a result of unpredicted disruptive issues (Ibrahim, 2011). Such disruptions relate frequently to weather, full/overbooked flights (lack of flight capacity for rerouting), terrorist attacks, geopolitical unrests, and global-scale virus activities. While disruptive situations have always been a factor for incentive event and meeting planners, their occurrence, and more seriously their growing magnitude of impact on the company's brand in more recent years, is of critical concern due to today's unstable geopolitical environment, 24/7 news cycle, social media, and volatile brand and societal image environment. The increasingly disruptive event environment creates intensifying risks, which need to be mitigated and/or require appropriate industry-wide strategies and efforts to deal with for successful meeting and event businesses.

1. Goals

In this industry-wide project, we attempt to tackle some urgent questions and issues related to disruptions in event planning and operations. Specifically, we investigate among others:

- a. Type of disruptions encountered or anticipated by planners;
- b. Frequency of disruptions experienced;
- c. Causes, sources, or origins of disruptions;
- d. Impact of disruptions on;
 - i. the success of a planned event and
 - ii. the company's image and brand reputation beyond the event
- e. Strategies or actions used by planners to mitigate/manage disruptive situations
- f. Evaluations of partner readiness for and performance in disruption handling; and
- g. Implications for future industry actions

2. Definitions of Terms

The term *events* mean off-site, overnight meetings, corporate events, and/or incentive group travels.

Disruptions in this study includes, but are not limited to, various predictable and unpredictable accidents, delays, and/or failures caused by both natural and human acts compromising the success of an event. Among disruptions, *acts of God* relate to inclement weather, natural disasters, medical outbreaks, etc., while *public enemy* includes terrors, wars, security threats, traffic accidents, flight delays, etc. *Vendor failures* could mean overbooking by partner hotels, facility/equipment malfunctions, strikes, technology failures, lack of cooperation, contractual breaches, service failures, etc. *Client (or attendee) failures* cover no shows, lack of cooperation, cancellations, attrition, social media, etc.

Planner(s) in this study is a professional continuously engaged in planning various events, meetings, and group travels. Depending on the context, the planner may represent their company in responding to the company's policy, procedures, and practice questioned in this study.

Partner(s) means vendors, suppliers, and other business operators that are in partnership relations, either contractual or informal, with the planner for an event, such as hotels, destination management companies (DMCs), airlines, other planners, etc.

Client(s) are mainly the contracting organizations or their representatives (e.g., executives and decision makers of customer organizations), while *attendees* of an event typically indicate those are general customers attending the event on site. These two terms could be used interchangeably in some specific context.

Qualified by the screening questions, the respondents to this study were in a position in their company to influence decisions related to site selection, registration housing, event logistics, and execution of meetings and events in connection with their sales force, employees, channels, or customers.

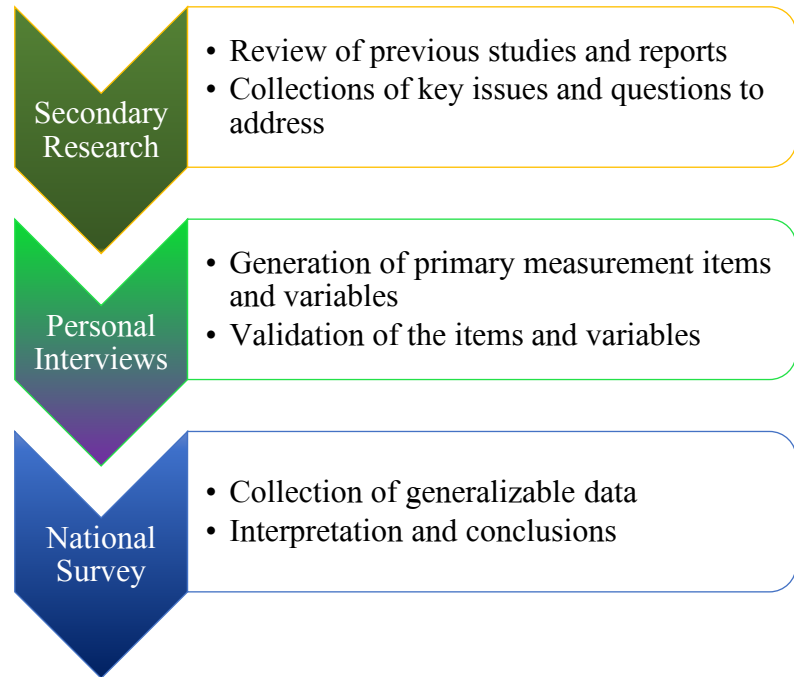
STUDY DESIGN

This project consisted of three stages of studies in sequence: secondary research, personal interviews, and a national survey.

1. Secondary Research

The secondary research focused reviewing recent scholarly papers, research reports, and other relevant materials on the topic of the project. We covered various hospitality and tourism research journals as well as some trade journals. We also reviewed available research reports on the related topics. As a result, we concluded the following:

- a. Scholarly research on disruptions in event planning and execution is scarce and the published studies are fragmentary. In particular, little research has been reported in recent years addressing the increasing outbreaks of terrorist acts and global scale medical crises such as Zika virus and bird influenza.
- b. Few studies provided either a broad conceptual framework or a reliable measurement tool to investigate the impact of disruptions on event outcomes.
- c. Some private companies provide research results, but their reports are more descriptive of focal disruptions or of type and frequency of disruptive events than projective into the consequences of disruptions for event success.
- d. Few reports touched on detailed measures used by planners to avoid or prevent potential disruptions and, hence, there is a serious void of understanding about the industry's best practice in disruption prevention and management.
- e. Most reports were limited to, by and large, a description of disruption incidents without identifying the locus of responsibility among the partners.
- f. There is an absence of both tracking (e.g., longitudinal) and benchmarking studies as a disruption management practice, which could provide valuable reference information for the industry.



We designed our study to address some, if not all, of the issues we discovered through our secondary research as well as through many rounds of discussions with incentive and event planning practitioners and other industry experts. We also used the findings from our secondary research to validate the findings from our personal interviews in an effort to assure that our subsequent national survey eventually addressed the industry's most pressing issues around event disruptions.

2. Personal Interviews

Through our secondary research, we found no consistent framework and measurement variables to investigate disruptions and their impact on events. Therefore, we conducted personal interviews to build a necessary foundation for a subsequent national survey.¹ We randomly drew 25 planners from a national directory of planners for a personal phone interview. We recorded, with notification to and agreement by the participant, the entire interview for each participant and later transcribed each interview for the purpose of content analysis. We stopped interviewing additional planners after completing the first 18 interviews because we judged that additional interviews were not adding any significant, new information for the project.

The specific goals of the personal interviews were to:

- a. Generate the types of risks or disruptions that the planners have encountered in the past two years;
- b. Identify the types of contingency plans, methods, or tactics to mitigate the risks the planners listed; and
- c. Identify the types of resources used in the contingency plans and financial estimates.

Based on the findings from the personal interviews, we verified the face validity of (a) the identified risks, (b) contingency methods, and (c) type of resources used by planners through discussions with eight planning practitioners/experts. We further reconciled these findings with those reported in the previous relevant studies we reviewed in the secondary research phase. The summary results of the personal phone interviews appear in the next section of this report.

3. National Survey

We conducted an electronic survey with planners nationwide, with a goal of collecting 200 response sets. The measurement variables we developed from the previous stages of the project were operationalized into survey questions. Seven professionals reviewed and provided feedback to refine the survey draft between several revisions.² We used Qualtrics™ to place the survey on the web and contacted planners via email by using the directories available through IRF, our professional network, and a planner panel retained by a third party organization. Data collection took place over about a four-month period in the mid-2016.

For the national survey, we specifically targeted the planners who:

- (1) Had at least some influence on decisions related to events at their organization;
- (2) Would complete planning and executing one event in the 2015-16 period;
- (3) Would conduct an event that involved at least 10 room nights; and
- (4) Experienced any disruption that affected the overall outcome or success of their events in the past 12 months.

By targeting this type of planners, we attempted to achieve a high degree of sample relevance for the study as well as secure rich sources of information. To this end, we placed four screening

¹ A complete personal interview script we used appears in Appendix 1.

² The final version of the survey appears in Appendix 2.

questions in the beginning of the survey; the respondents who did not qualify by any of these four questions were sent to the end of the survey for immediate termination of their participation.

FINDINGS

1. Type of Disruptions Experienced or Anticipated

We summarize the [findings of our personal interviews](#) in a table below, based on the transcribed interview contents. The summary focuses on the type of disruptions with some necessary elaboration and examples. The interview sample included 18 planners, 11 of whom were female, with the majority (83.4%) aged 41-60, 95% having worked in event planning for at least five years, and 67% planning at least 10 events per year. The range of event sizes they plan is between as low as 10 and as high as 5,000 attendees. They were based in more than 16 different cities of 13 states and Canada. In terms of the event size by the number of attendees, 28% of the respondents indicated that they had planned events of 10 to 500 attendees. Another 28% indicated 2500 to 5000 attendees, followed by 1000 to 2500 attendees (22%). Additional information about the interview sample appears in Appendix 3.

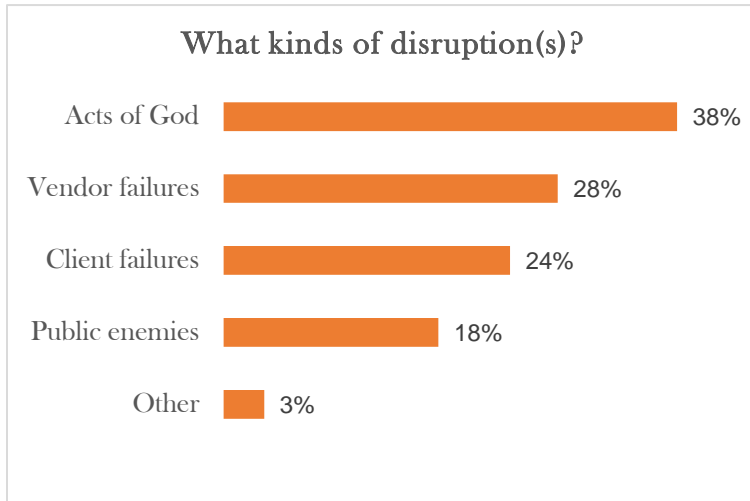
Type of Disruption	Elaboration & Examples
Medical issues	A heart-attack on premise; someone who actually fell out of a wheelchair or fell out of a motorized chair who needed medical attention right away A person who was drunk at a particular location and fell off a cliff An attendee at a ski event once that broke his leg People forgetting their medication at home, especially if they're overseas Swine flu, bird flu, SARS, international outbreak, and travel restrictions for health reasons (before or DURING the event already in the outbreak area) Food problem, bumps and falls, or people not taking the proper medication
Diet, food and beverage, health, and wellness issues	Food poisoning, with people getting sick E. coli or some outbreak, redoing the menu Allergies Food running late Ethnic diversity related to dietary constraints, vegetarian, kosher, & pork-free. Food poisoning Food contamination, trips, and falls
Attrition	Event attendees that are not checking into the contracted hotel Attendees taking too long to come back from breaks Guests buying outside of the room block through third party vendors Attrition policies not enforced enough, affecting the relationship with hotels.
Suppliers/transportation issues/guests or speakers no show	An accident to the truck transporting the production equipment Flight delayed or cancelled Unexpected strikes, weather, overbooking, and charter planes Can't get materials to venue, overpromising and under-delivering, and poor staff management
Terrorism, political crisis, or travel safety/security	Terrorist acts in cities like Paris Regional, political conflict such as in Ukraine and in Russia Travel advisories frightening people to stay away from destinations or

	<p>causing delays</p> <p>Safety in transporting people around the globe</p> <p>Gun threat, panics, protests (e.g. Ferguson), and concerns for overall health</p>
Construction or management issues	<p>The Baja Mar situation, where its construction or management went wrong</p> <p>A construction not underway when contracting, but taking place by the time the meeting happens</p> <p>Chain-link fences found during site visit too late to switch venues</p> <p>Change in venue availability or condition of the program</p>
Strikes and protests	<p>Strikes in the venue cities like Athens and the DMC's lack of contingency plan</p> <p>Long Beach Harbor on strike so nothing from China could get in, affecting their swag/merchandise availability</p> <p>Someone that wants to disrupt the meeting</p> <p>Some people having an issue that they want to tie back to the company</p> <p>Unavailable contingency plan with the hotel to deal with protesters</p>
Program and facility operations	<p>Anything going wrong in the hotel such as power outage, Internet outage, AV, unavailable tech support, flooding, guest suicide, etc.</p> <p>Subcontracting of AV to a third party company lacking responsibility</p> <p>Technical incompetency of the staff for tech problems on site</p> <p>Slow and malfunctioning Internet connectivity</p> <p>Projector or lights not working, audio out, clicker not connecting, mics sounding bad, etc.</p> <p>Things that work in rehearsal but not during the show time</p> <p>Third-party production companies need strong Internet, song cues, microphones working, and projector light exploded.</p>
Weather and natural disaster (heat, hurricanes, tornado warning, rainout, snow storms, volcanoes, etc.)	<p>Many natural events affecting travel conditions: power and electricity; flight delays and cancellations; wind at outdoor venues; cancellation of outdoor events especially at picturesque destinations like Hawaii; most frequent, but inability to plan in advance</p>
Social media	<p>Negative publicity</p>
Vendor follow-through	<p>Signage made on wrong material so it was too heavy to use</p> <p>The band cancels and comedian misses the flight.</p> <p>The hotel doesn't follow through with the contract or exploits loopholes.</p> <p>The hotel rearranges meeting/sleeping rooms, undercutting hotel rates so attendees buy outside of the room block (happens when a late cancellation in the other rooms of the hotel causes the hotel to scramble for guests to fill the vacancy)</p> <p>The hotel becomes a union property affecting contracts.</p> <p>Hotel staff changed between event contracting and launching</p> <p>Vendors/venues not providing the correct food, rooms, servers, not having what was specified</p>
Last minute changes	<p>Client wanting an additional meeting room right before the trip</p>

	<p>Having to reconfigure a restaurant Agendas and some technical details</p> <p>Presenters won't always be as prepared as the rest of the team, so they'll need a different projector or travel arrangement</p>
Co-location	Any trade show or concert happening near hotel affects transportation, dinner, rates, and hotel overcrowding (e.g. Electric Daisy Carnival in Vegas).
Exchange rates/currency	Time of contract signing has a different rate than time of payment, affecting budgets and client willingness to book/travel.
Social acceptance	Traveling to the countries that restrict LGBT rights can alienate the attendees, and companies may prefer more liberal destinations.
Personnel/staffing/change in personnel	Experience levels, language, and vocabulary barriers (internationally) New relationships with vendors; on-site managers must be established.
Hotel sells space that is too small	Need room for AV set up and meals Corralling them back from break in a timely manner can be a struggle.
Destination	Country's political instability (e.g., Turkey, Zimbabwe, Egypt, Germany, etc.) Venue: Flood, leaks, overbooking, power cuts, fire alarms, fire drills in the middle of the night, etc. Tax laws in Latin American countries
Transportation	Language barrier and unreliable car and bus services Not showing up on time or with enough room Getting staff and supplies around, if there is a reason that city streets might be shut down (e.g., a marathon)
Hotel Overbooking/Hotel rooms	Affects guest satisfaction Being sold out or not sold enough; maintaining room blocks The previous group overstayed their welcome so less prep and move-in time. A competing company isn't also in the hotel. Hotel trying to fill space to OTAs have cheaper room rates than the planner agreed upon
Catering	People don't get the correct order, especially a worry when VIPs don't get their order.
Additional insurance	High costs for celebrity guests
Contract amendments	Can lead to budgetary concerns and cranky venue management

Findings of the national survey (explained later in further detail) indicated that planners seemed to **experience disruptions quite often** for their events. Of the 266 survey respondents (planners), 59% reported that they had **experienced** at least one disruption that affected the overall outcome

or success of their event in the past 12 months. Their disruption experience related to acts of God (38%), vendor failures (28%), client failures (24%), and public enemies (18%). A small fraction of them (3%) reported other disruptions such as a car accident for the speaker, a VIP's family emergency, rate and service interruptions by Airbnb and/or Uber, client work stoppage by sudden mergers and acquisitions of their company, exchange rate, and widespread sickness affecting almost 18% of the group.



Two disruptions most concerned about when planning events.

Weather and natural disaster (heat, hurricanes, tornado warning, rainout, snow storms, volcanoes, etc.) topped the list (35%). Vendor failures (16%) ranked as number two disruption most concerned.

Change of destinations due to disruptions.

Most planners indicated the disruption that caused change of destination was weather and natural

disaster (10%), followed by medical crises such as Zika virus (8%). Planners also changed their destination because of terrorism or political instability (8%). About 6.5% of the planners changed their destination due to vendor failures.

2. Frequency of Disruptions Experienced or Anticipated

The 18 planners from the personal interviews reported on the most frequently encountered disruptions. Weather was the most frequent disruption (8%) in the last two years, followed by terrorism (5%), unreliable vendors or vendor failures (5%), and medical crises (5%). Facility or technology problems as well as on-site emergencies including security emergencies appeared next disruptions to various events in lower frequencies. The planners also reported client failures and attrition as the most frequently experienced disruptions.

According to the 18 interview participants, the most frequently used type of contingency plans was to have all the responsibilities and solutions listed in detail in contracts. Onsite emergency plans were most frequently included in contracts. Flight cancellation plans also catch the planner's attention frequently, while many planners seemed to use pre-event meetings to discuss possible disruptions and backup

plans. Others cited as frequently used contingency plans having facility experts, researching the destination well, having alternative sites ready, and finding reliable vendors.

More than half the 18 personal interview participants or their company (55%) have not experienced any disruption that caused a financial loss.

What kind of disruption was most frequently discussed in event planning? A quarter of the planners who participated in the personal interviews chose weather and natural disaster and then vendor failures (12%). Besides, 7% of the planners reported that they discussed flight delays or cancellations most frequently, while about 4% discussed client failures most frequently.

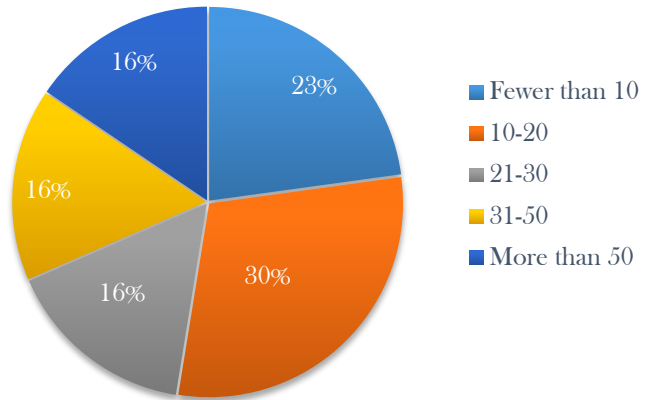


3. National Survey Sample Characteristics

A total of 266 planners participated in this study. They included 46% female and 58% with a college degree, followed by 23% holding a postgraduate degree and the rest holding either an associate degree (13%) or high school diploma (5.7%). Age of the respondents had a broad representation with 18% in their 20s, 30% in 30s, 22% in 40s, 21% in 50s, and 9% in 60s or elder.

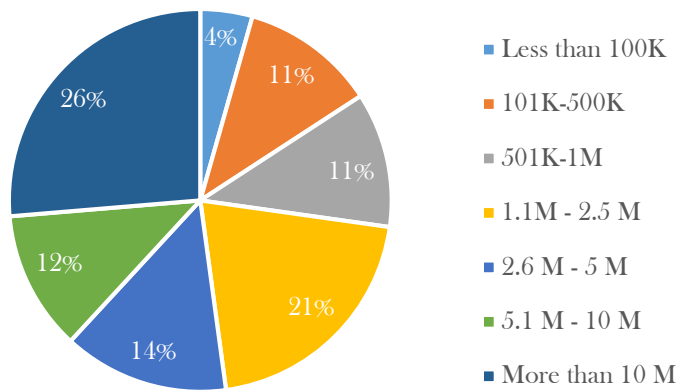
The largest proportion of the respondents (30%) conducted 10-20 events in the past 12 months, followed by 23% conducting fewer than 10, 16% 21-30, and 16% 31-50; also, 16% conducted more than 50 events in the same period. Their position included variously owner, president, vice president, sales manager, IT director, purchasing manager, director of events, etc.

The total number of events planned in the past 12 months?



The respondents' business locations (and branch offices) represented at least 159 cities, 46 states (largest 21 from California), and 11 countries including Australia, France, Italy, Jamaica, and Ireland among others. More than half their companies (53%) have been in operation for more than 10 years, while 27% in 6-10 years and the rest in fewer than five years. Nearly one half their companies (47%) had more than 50 employees, followed by 16% employing 26-50 people, 14% 10-25, and 17% fewer than 10. Self-employment or self-ownership accounted for about 5%.

The FY2014 total revenue before tax



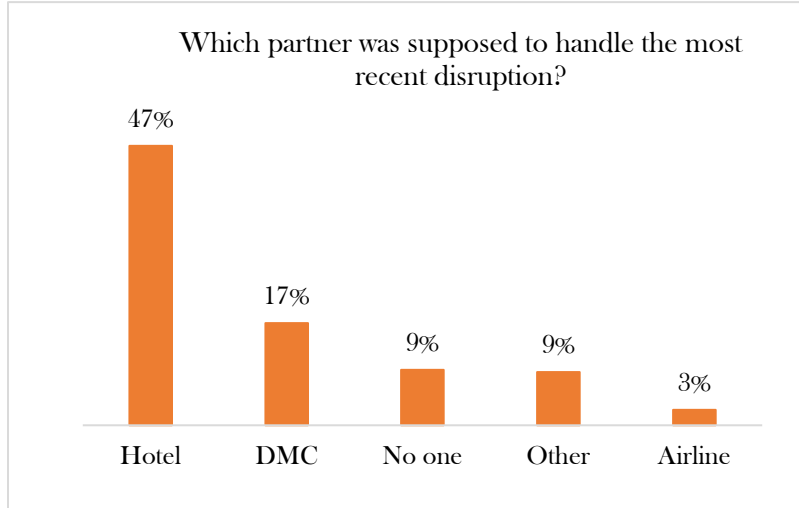
The respondents' companies were best characterized as corporate (i.e., internal event planning department for a corporation) for 50%, followed by incentive house/third party such as ITA, BCD, Maritz, etc. for 26% and independent planner (e.g., independent or boutique planning group) for 16%. The primary job or assignment focus of their business was incentive planning for 15%, meeting planning for 36%, and both incentive and meeting planning for 44%.

For their industry focus, 37% were the high tech industry, 35% the finance/insurance, 15% the automotive industry, and 13% the pharmaceutical/medical/ life science industry. The FY2014 total revenue before tax for their

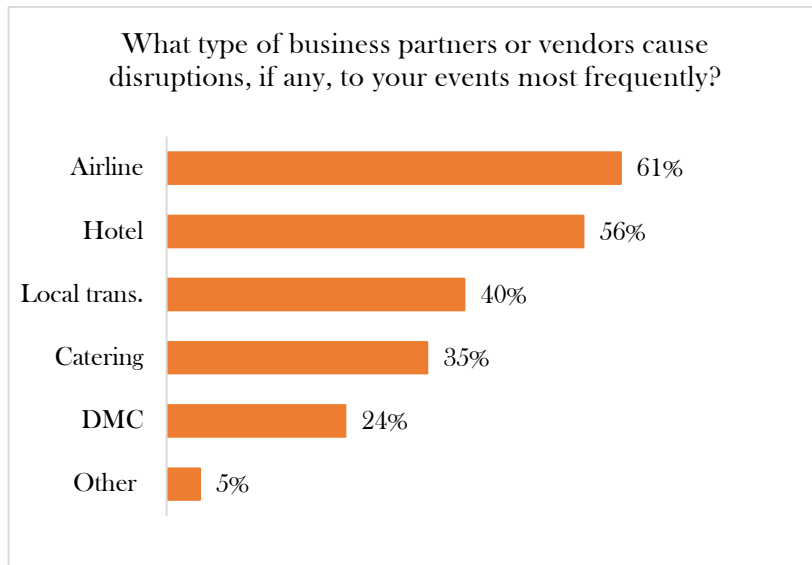
company was more than \$10 million for 26%, \$1.1 – 2.5 million for 21%, \$2.6 – 5 million for 14%, and less than \$100,000 for 4.4%.

4. Causes, Sources, or Origin of Disruptions – *Results from the National Survey of 266 Planners*

For the most recent disruption experienced by planners as described earlier, we also asked the planners about **which partner was supposed to handle the most recent disruption** if the disruption was supposed to be handled by their partners. The planners chose hotels as most responsible (47%), followed by DMCs (17%) and airlines (2.6%). About 9% of the respondents listed both hotels and DMCs, their own company, security companies, and event venues as most responsible. In general, the party responsible for handling disruptions depended on the type of disruptions as each disruption tended to involve different business partners or vendors.

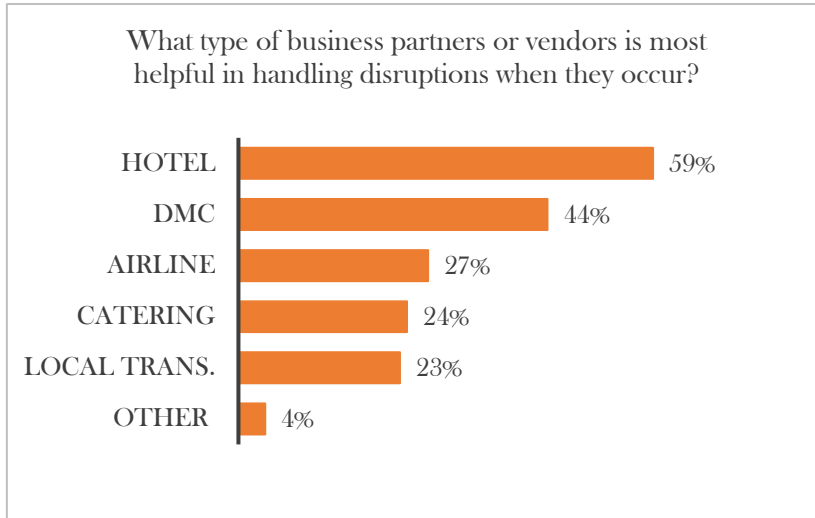


Among various business partners or vendors, **airlines appeared as the most frequent cause of disruptions** to events. Almost 61% of the respondents chose airlines as causing disruptions to



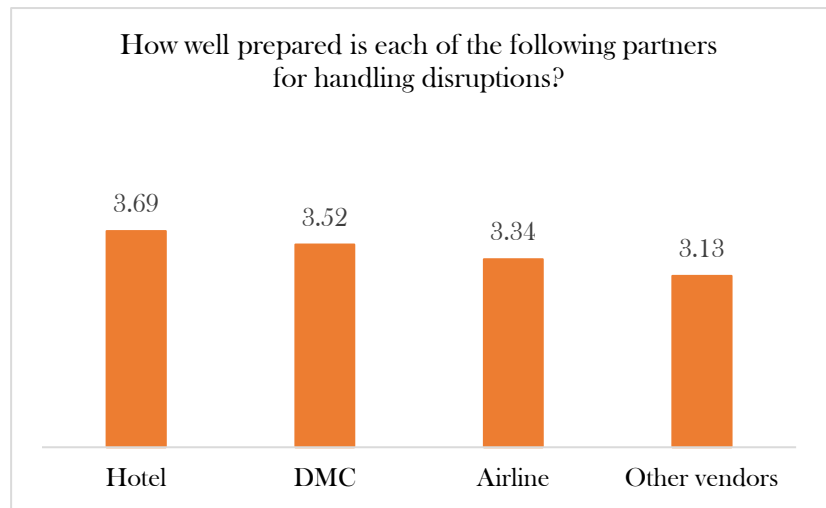
their events most frequently. Hotels were the second most frequent cause as chosen by 56% of the respondents, followed by local transportation companies other than airlines (40%), catering companies (35%), and DMCs (24%). A fraction of the respondents (4.5%) listed as the most frequent partner causing disruptions companies like third-party hotel sourcing companies, cruise lines, equipment or support vendors, floral suppliers, and union labors.

In contrast, when asked which business partners or vendors were **most helpful in handling disruptions**, 59% of the planners listed hotels as most helpful, followed by DMCs (44%), airlines



(27%), catering companies (24%), and local transportation companies other than airlines (23%). A fraction of the planners (4%) mentioned other partners or vendors such as local convention and visitors bureaus (CVBs) and security companies as helpful.

Planners perceived hotels as **best prepared to handle disruptions** among their partners. To the question of how well prepared each partner was for handling disruptions, on a scale of *1=not at all prepared, 2=somewhat prepared, 3=prepared, 4=well prepared, and 5=very well prepared*, hotels scored 3.69 (standard deviation, $sd = .99$) followed by DMCs (3.52, $sd=.98$), airlines (3.34, $sd=1.12$), and other vendors (3.13, $sd=1.02$). While generally positive, there seems to be room to improve the degree of preparation for handling disruptions across event industry partners.



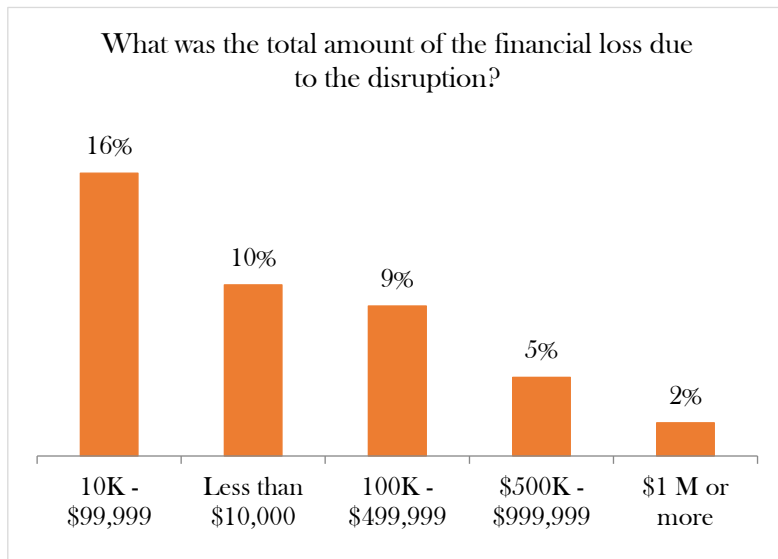
5. Impact of Disruptions

5.1. On the Success of the Event

Disruptions appear to be an enduring issue **impacting the success of events**. The survey participants reported that, on average, 23% of their 2015-2016 events have been impacted by a disruption. About 50% of them reported the percent of their 2015-2016 events that were impacted by a disruption was somewhere between 10% and 30%.

Many disruptions often resulted in a **financial loss** to the event and company. Of the 266 planners, 43% reported that they or their company had experienced one or more disruptions

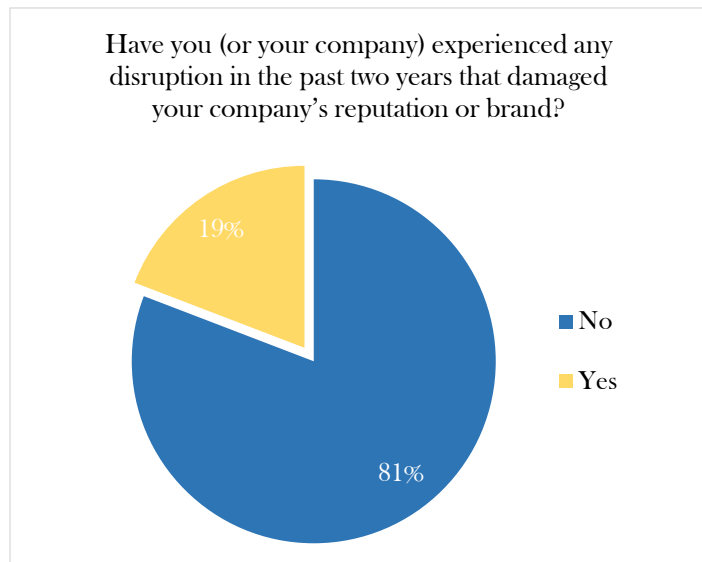
causing a financial loss for an event. The largest proportion of them (16%) reported that the



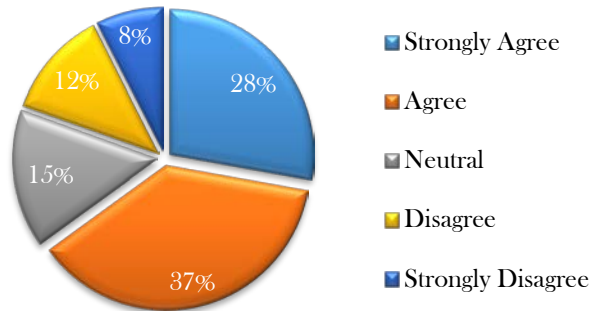
financial loss ranged from \$10,000 to \$99,999, followed by 10% reporting it to be less than \$10,000, 9% between \$100,000 and \$499,999, and 5% between \$500,000 and \$999,999. Five planners (2%) reported it was \$1 million or more. Types of disruptions causing such financial losses varied widely including operational mistakes by hotels, inclement weather, air traffic disruptions, bomb threats and terrorism, client no shows or cancellations, healthcare issues, etc.

5.2. On the Company’s Image and Brand Reputation

Once they occur, disruptions seem to **damage the company’s reputation**. While the respondents reported that 23% of their recent events experienced one or more disruptions, 19% of all respondents estimated that disruptions damaged the company’s reputation or brand. The type of disruptions damaging the company’s name value varied widely. For example, the respondents quoted as the most damaging disruption some case-specific disruptions such as cancellations, client no-shows, terrors in Europe, false ads, food poisoning, hurricane, flight delays, late deposits, noise, storm, and service failure. Similarly, the second most damaging disruptions also included highly incidental disruptions such as accidents, no shows, inclement weather, booking failure, sickness, information technology system crashes, and miscommunication, to list just a few. Overall, these damaging disruptions were associated mostly with the failures of vendors, partners, or clients.



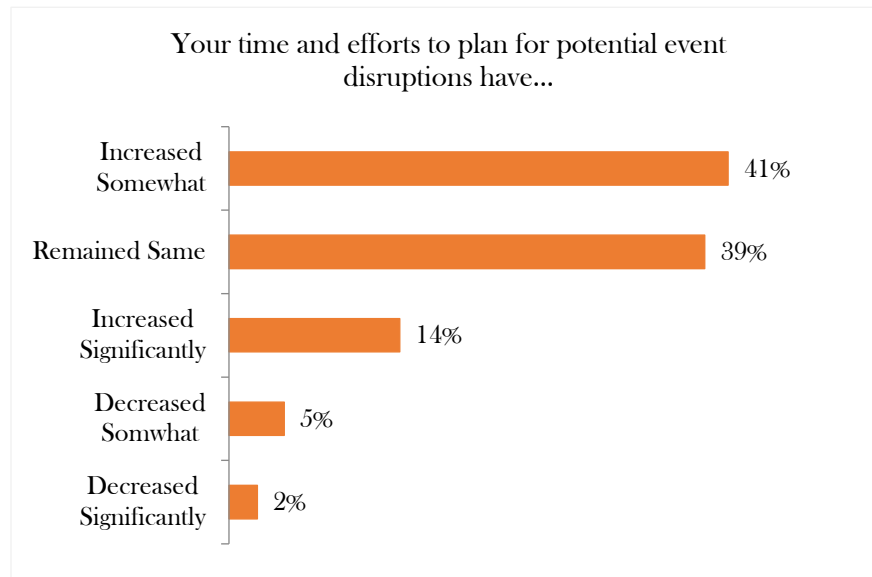
When planning for an event, you are very much concerned about disruptions that may damage your or your company's reputation.



The negative impact of disruptions on the company's reputation was a general concern to the planners. With the statement that, when planning for an event, they were very much concerned about disruptions that might damage their or their company's reputation, 65% of the planners either agreed or strongly agreed, while 20% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The remaining planners neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

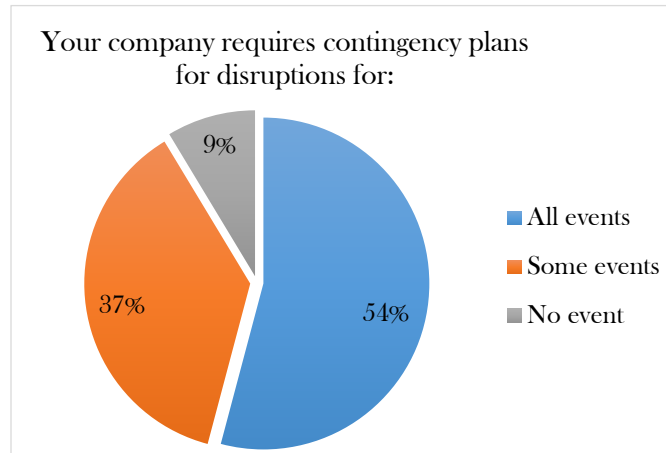
6. Disruption Mitigation Strategies

Planning for potential disruptions appeared to be fairly significant in overall event planning. On an 11-point scale ranged from 0=*not at all significant* to 10=*very significant*, the mean significance score was 7.3 (sd=2.2) with the median and mode of 8, respectively. More than two third (67%) of the planners estimated they spent up to 25% of their event planning time on



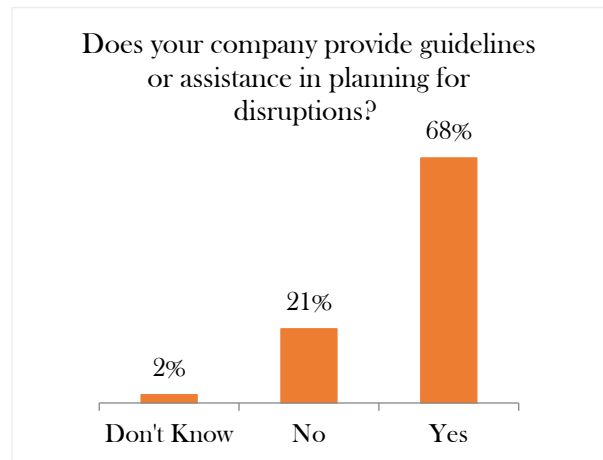
planning particularly for potential disruptions. Their estimated amount of time and effort spent on planning for disruptions in the past two years has increased somewhat (41%), remained about the same (39%), increased significantly (14%), decreased somewhat (5%), or decreased significantly (2%).

The majority of planning companies require **inclusion of contingency plans for disruptions**. Specifically, 54% of them required contingency plans for all events they planned, while 37% required for only some events. Twenty-three planners (9%) reported that their companies never required any contingency plan for disruption. To determine which events require inclusion of contingency plans, companies used various criteria such as number of participants or size of event (most common), company's expense, client expectations, economic impact to the company, guests of honor, importance of the event, location, level of risk, timing of event, and nature of the event (e.g., indoor vs. outdoor).

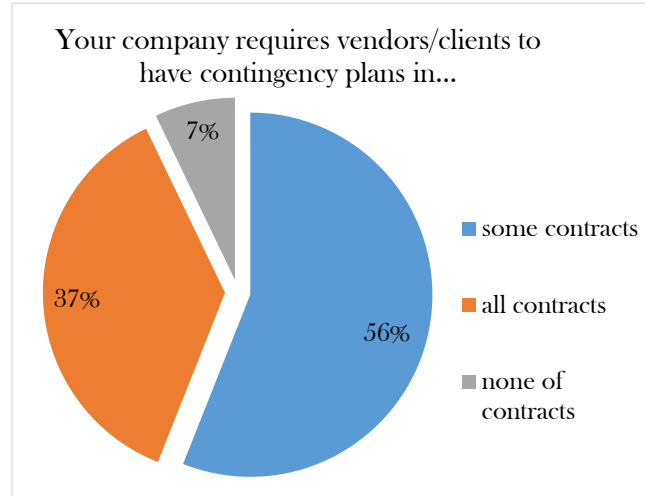


Once the company requires inclusion of contingency plans for disruptions, the majority of them (68%) provide guidelines or assistance, although 21% of the companies still do not provide any. The **type of assistance** varies from company to company and some examples include:

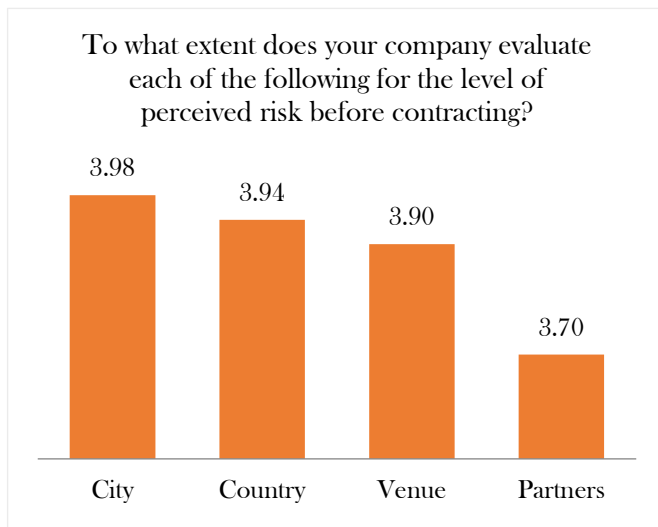
- 24-hour access to call centers, emergency services, and corporate travel agency
- List of other vendors available
- Additional insurance
- Advertising
- Backup or contingency plans for no shows, transportation, suppliers, speakers, Wi-Fi, and airline reservations, etc.
- Checklists, standard operational procedures (SOPs), policies, procedures, and crisis management (safety and security) manuals
- Classroom training and online workshops
- Consulting and advising
- Dedicated resources for contracting, legal review guidance, and counseling
- Extra staff, employee assistance, and fail safe team
- Financials and funding



- Security assistance, especially global, and security training
- Media relations
- Registration with US Embassy and state department in case of international events and participation
- Risk assessment
- Travel advisory information
- Negotiation with vendors
- Reimbursement
- Strategic planning

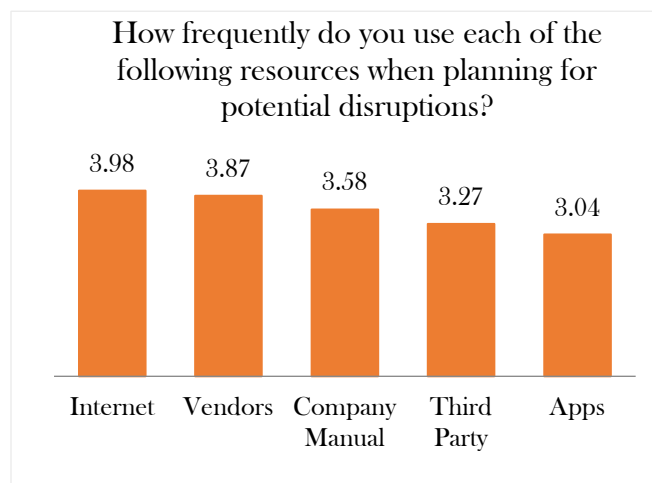


Not only do companies **invest in contingency plans** for disruptions in event planning, but they also demand their vendors and clients to have contingency plans before contracting. Nearly 93% of the planners or companies require such plans for all or at least some contracts. Only 7% of planners or companies did not require contingency plans in any contract.



Planners (and their companies) evaluate the **level of perceived risk** including disruptions and disruption handling before contracting. When asked of the degree of such risk evaluation on a 5-point scale ranging from *1=not at all* to *5=to a great extent*, they scored 3.98 (sd=1.08) for the destination city, 3.94 (sd=1.22) for the destination country, 3.90 (sd=1.01) for the destination venue, and 3.70 (sd=1.07) for potential program partners.

The Internet (websites) was the **most frequently used resource** when planning for potential disruptions. On a 5-point scale ranging from *1=never*, *2=seldom*, *3=sometimes*, *4=often*, to *5=always* for an assessment of usage frequency in planning for disruptions, the Internet resulted in 3.98 (sd=.98), followed by vendors and partners (3.87, sd=.99), company's guidelines or manual (3.58, sd=1.23), third party consultants or companies (3.27, sd=1.14), and application software (3.04, sd=1.18).

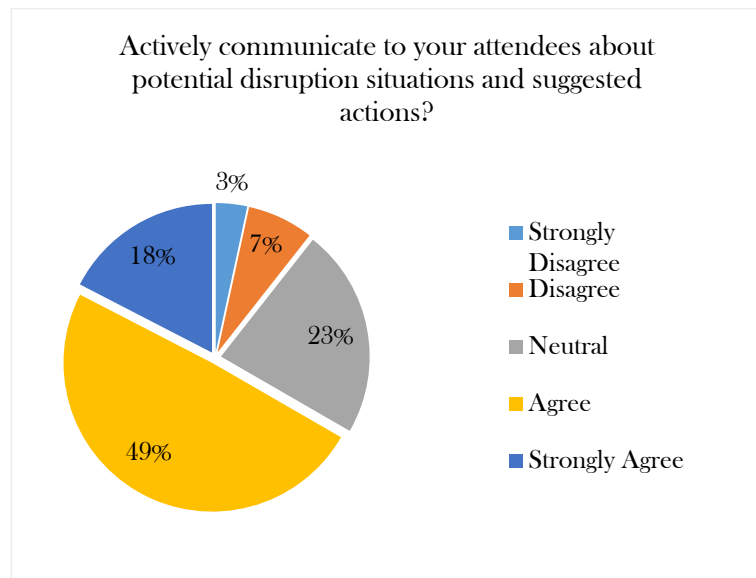


Contingency plans for disruptions seem to be part of regular discussions between the planner and their business partners. The question of how often they discuss potential disruptions and contingency plans with their business partners resulted in a mean value of 3.79 (sd=.94), on the same frequency scale as above. The **type of contingency plans** discussed included variously:

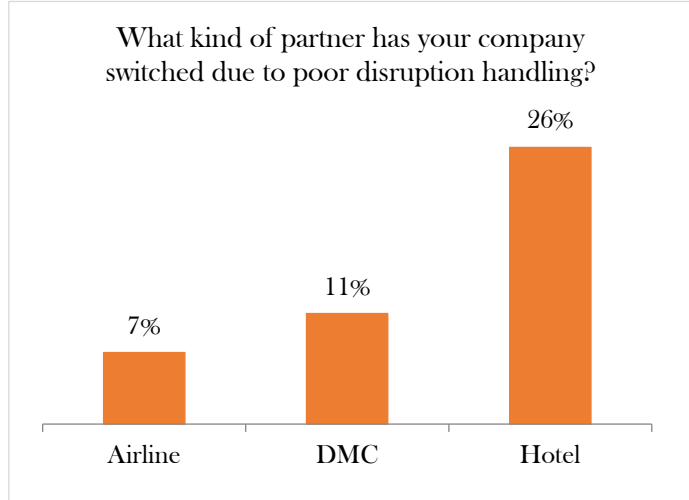
- 24/7 emergency assistance
- An alternate hotels/locations/destinations, speakers, routes, vendors, dates, travel routes, schedules, events, and/or general backup plans (“Plan B”)
- Ability to cancel with no penalty and contract options to avoid attrition
- Additional ground transportation
- Agents on call to rebook cancelled flights
- Force majeure clause and its specific terms such as “travel to or along the way”
- Data privacy and security
- Safety precautions
- Emergency and business continuity, emergency evacuations, and emergency plans and procedures.
- Extra staff and fail safe team
- Language help
- Medical services for weather and natural disasters

Communications. Planners or their companies actively, albeit not active enough,

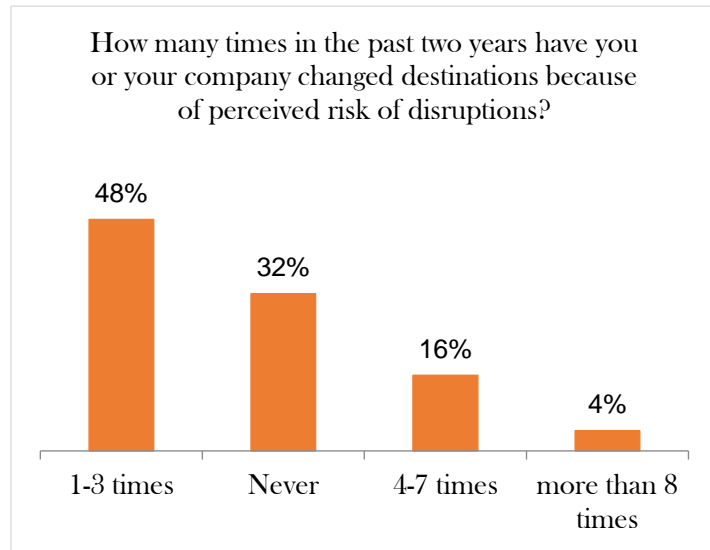
communicate to their attendees about potential disruption situations and suggested actions. To the statement “I or my company actively communicates to my attendees about potential disruptions and suggested actions,” planners gave an average score of 3.7 (sd=.95; 74% to strongly agree), on a 5-point scale ranging from 1=*strongly disagree*, 2=*disagree*, 3=*neutral (neither agree nor disagree)*, 4=*agree*, and 5=*strongly agree*. There seems to be room to improve in communications to clients about disruptions to avoid additional financial and reputational losses.



Partnership loyalty. Poor disruption handling by business partners cause planners or companies to switch partners. Almost one half the planners (49%) have **switched at least one business partner due to the partner’s poor handling of disruptions**. Among the switched partners, hotels were most frequent (26%), followed by DMCs (11%), and airlines (7%). Other switched partners included in a much lower frequency third party hotels sourcing, caterers, housing providers, security partners, speakers, suppliers, tech partners, transportation companies, and other vendors.

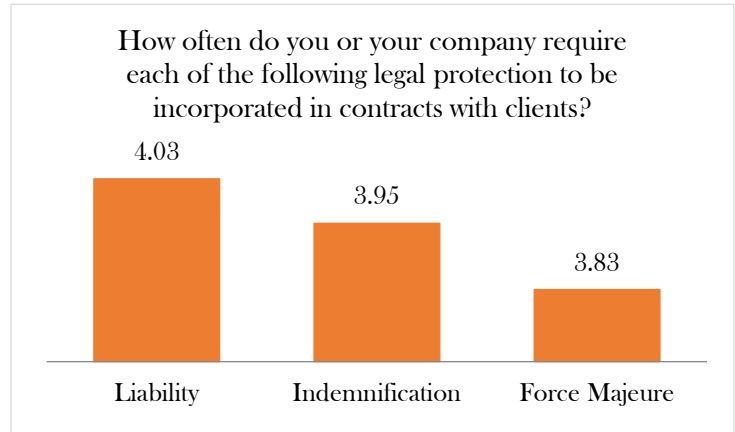
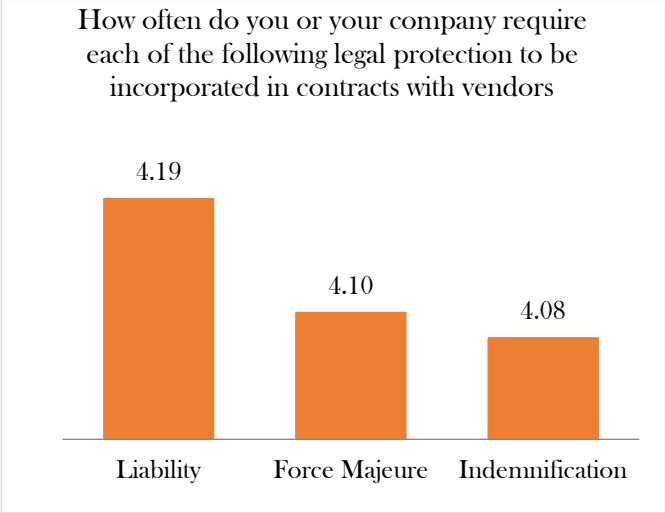


Changing the destination was also common among planners or companies to avoid risks or disruptions. In the past two years, 48% of the planners or companies changed destinations one to three times because of perceived risks or disruptions. Another 16% changed destinations 4-7 times, while a small fraction of them (4.2%) changed 8 times or more. The planners who never



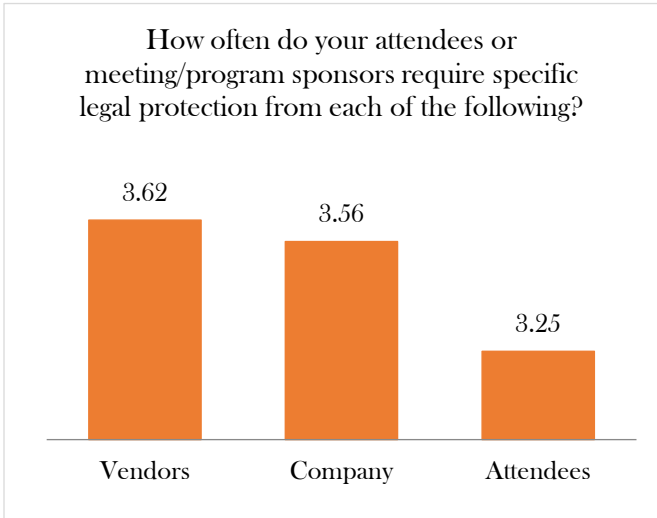
changed destinations were about 32%, perhaps because they did not anticipate or experience disruptions. The changed destinations included, internationally for example, Africa, Austria, Bangkok Thailand, Cancun and Los Cabos Mexico, Caribbean (Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico), some European capitals, Greece, Istanbul, Japan, Paris, and London. The domestically changed destination, for example, included Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Jacksonville, Las Vegas, Miami, Naples, Nashville, New York, Orlando, Seattle, St. Louis, Tampa, and Washington DC.

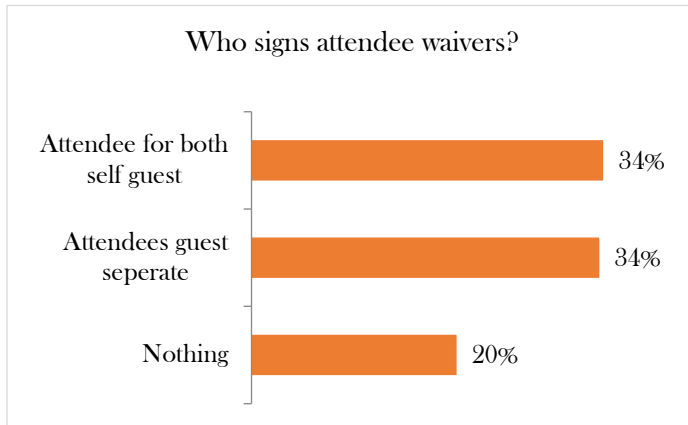
Questions concerning **some legal protections** such as limitation of liability (e.g., waivers, disclaimers, notification, etc.), indemnification, and force majeure could be critical in recovering from disruption impacts. Indemnification is defined as guarding or securing against anticipated loss through compensation agreement with the partner, while force majeure refers to an unexpected and disruptive event that may operate to excuse a party from a contract. On a 5-point frequency scale (*1=never, 2=seldom, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=always*) with a *6=don't know* option, limitation of liability scored 4.19 (sd=1.05), indemnification 4.08 (sd=1.09), and force majeure 4.10 (sd=1.11) as to how often the planners (n=253) or their companies required in contracts *with vendors*.



The same **legal protections** were less often required to be in contracts and varying more *with clients*. On the same scale as above, limitation of liability scored 4.03 (sd=1.30), indemnification 3.95 (sd=1.29), and force majeure 3.83 (sd=1.31).

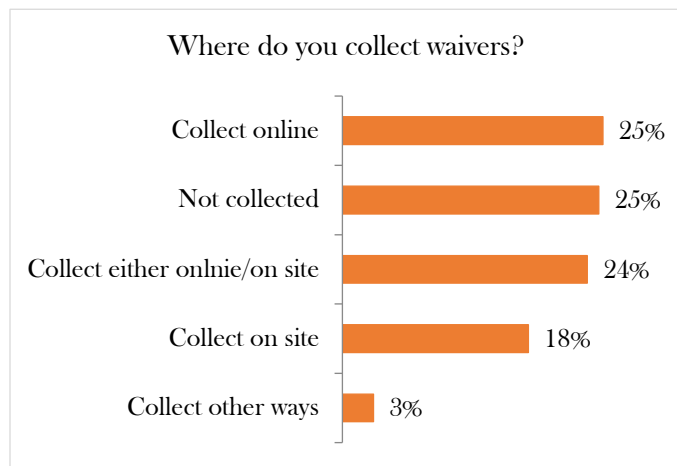
Seen from the standpoint of attendees or event/program sponsors, legal protection was of less an issue. Based on the same frequency scale, attendees or event sponsors required legal protection *sometimes* or *often* from the planner or his/her company (3.56, sd=1.51), from the vendors or partners of the planner (3.62, sd=1.47), and from other attendees (3.25, sd=1.54), respectively.





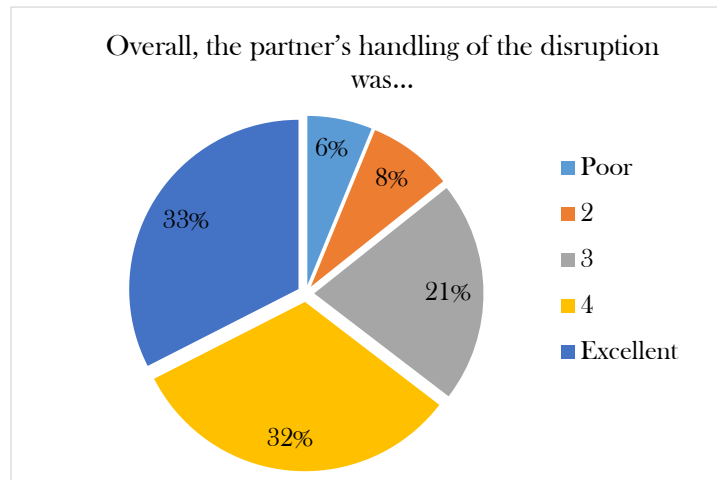
Who signs attendee waivers? An equal number of planners (34%) reported that either (1) the attendee signs waivers for both himself/herself and his/her guest or (2) both the attendee and the attendee’s guest sign waivers separately. Twenty percent of them reported that they required nothing (no waiver).

Collection of attendee waivers was divergent as well. About 25% of planners collected waivers on line, while about the same proportion of planners never collected waivers. Collection of waivers on line or on site, whatever is convenient, accounted for 24% of the planners, while onsite collection represented 18%. Other ways of collecting waivers included, in a much lower frequency, attendees on line/guest in person, fax, and online with no signature but checking a box for agreement.



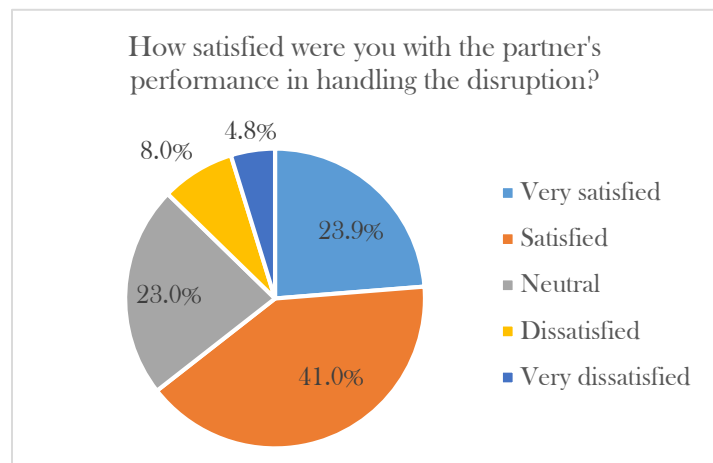
7. Partner Readiness and Performance in Disruption Handling

As part of the national survey with planners, we asked [a series of questions addressing the readiness and performance of their business partner/vendor](#) that was supposed to handle any recent disruption that affected their event. The results reflect the state-of-the-art of the event industry suppliers’ practices and performance in crisis management while pointing to directions for industry-wide improvement in such practices.



Planners evaluated **the partner's overall handling** of the recent disruption on a 5-point scale with 1 indicating poor and 5 excellent. The mean was 3.8 (76%) with a standard deviation of 1.17. More than half the respondents gave either 4 or 5 on the scale, showing general satisfaction with their partner's disruption handling even if there still was some room to improve.

Planners' satisfaction with the partner's performance in handling disruptions was moderately high, still with room to improve. On a 5-point scale anchored with 1=*very dissatisfied*, 2=*dissatisfied*, 3=*neutral*, 4=*satisfied*, and 5=*very satisfied*, the mean score was 3.71 (sd=1.06, 74%). About two third of them (65%) reported they were either satisfied or very satisfied, while 13% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

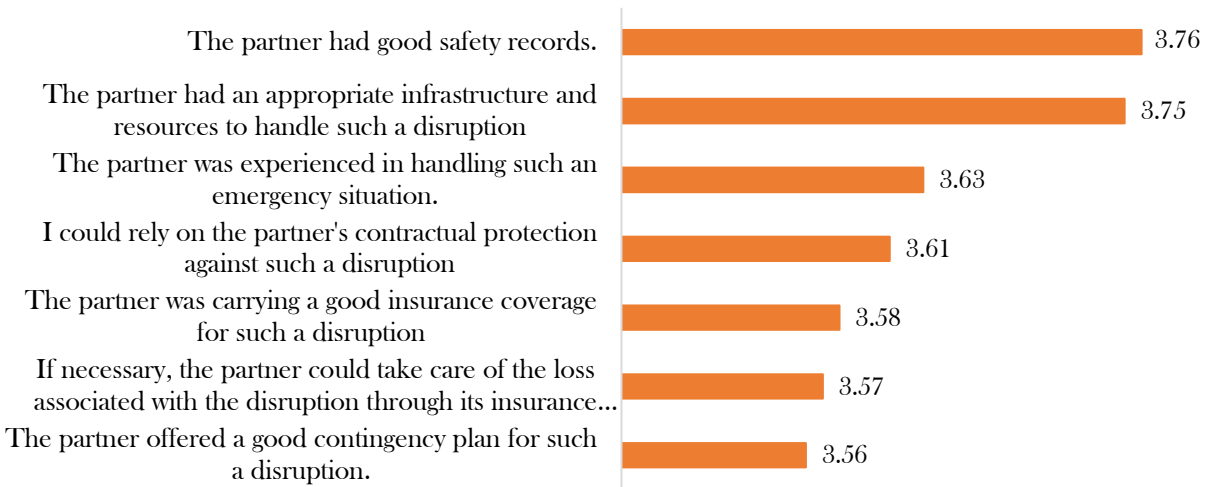


Planners' evaluations of **the partner's readiness or capacity to handle disruptions** were positive, but not strongly positive enough leaving some room to improve. On a 5-point scale ranging from 1=*strongly disagree*, 2=*disagree*, 3=*neutral (neither agree nor disagree)*, 4=*agree*, to 5=*strong agree*, planners gave 3.58 (sd=.92, 72%) to the statement that the partner was carrying a good insurance coverage for the disruption the partner was supposed to handle. About 57% either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with the statement while 12% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*; 31% remained neutral.

For the statement that "If necessary, the partner could take care of the loss associated with the disruption through its insurance plan," the planners marked an average of 3.57 (sd=.96, 72%). About 56% either *agreed* or *strongly agreed*, whereas 11% *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*. About one third (33%) of them stayed neutral.

Could planners rely on the partner's contractual protection against such a disruption that affected their event? The mean score was 3.61 (sd=.95, 72%); 59% either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* while 31% were neutral and 10% were either *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*.

Indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the partner based on this recent disruption that affected your event.



The partner's resourcefulness. When necessary, planners needed the partner to take care of the loss associated with the disruption through the partner's insurance plan and coverage. For such a possibility, the planners rated their partner at 3.57 (sd=.96, 72%). About 56% *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their partner would do it, while 33% remained *neither agreed nor disagreed*. The planners who *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* was 11%.

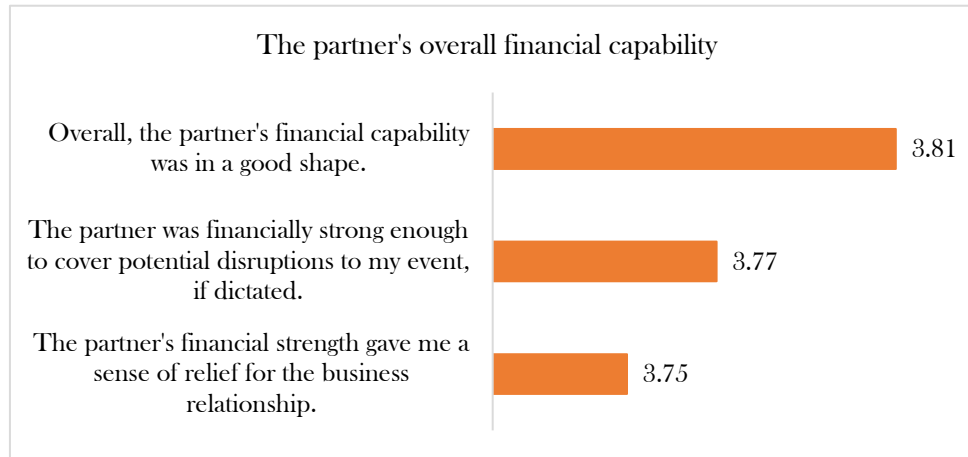
Whether the partner had an appropriate infrastructure and resources to handle such a disruption resulted in a mean score of 3.75 (sd=1.03, 75%). Roughly two third (66%) of the planners *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with the statement, while 22% were neutral and 12% either *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*.

The partner's experience in handling such an emergency situation was rated 3.63 (sd=1.11, 73%). Almost 60% of the planners rated their partner positively (i.e., *agreed* or *strongly agreed*), while 14% negatively (i.e., *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed*) and 27% neutral.

For the statement "The partner offered a good contingency plan for such a disruption," the mean score was 3.56 (sd=1.11, 72%). The planners who *agreed* or *strongly agreed* accounted for 58%, while those who *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* were 17% and the rest (25%) neutral.

The fact that the partner had good safety records was rated at 3.76 (sd=.92, 75%). The *agreed* or *strongly agreed* planners constituted 65%, the *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* 8.1%, and the neutral 27%.

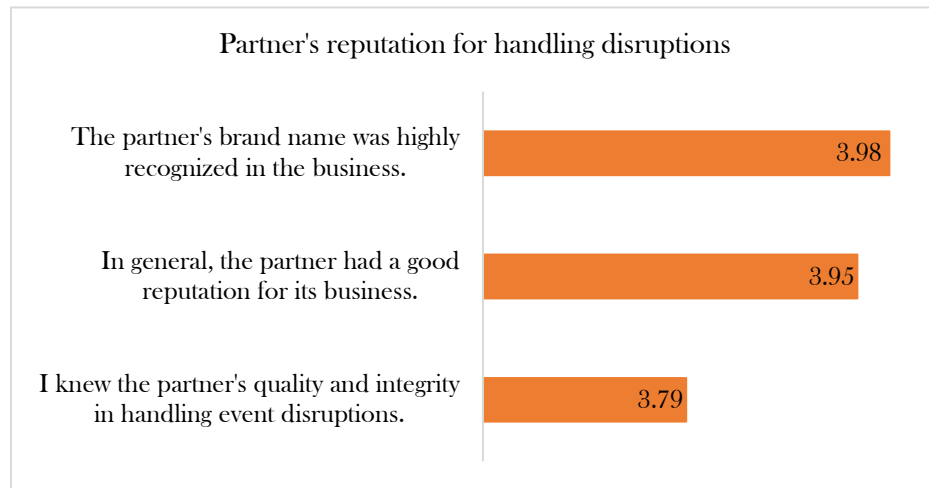
The partner's overall financial capability may be an important factor in forming a business relationship for a variety of reasons. Planners rated the partner's—the partner that handled the most recent disruption affecting their event's outcome—financial capability to be in a good shape overall (3.81, $sd=.91$, 76%). More than two third (69%) either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with the partner's financial strength in a good shape, while only 7% denied it and 24% were neutral.



The partner's financial strength seemed to give planners some sense of relief for the business relationship (3.75, $sd=.91$, 74%). Only 8.6% of the planners were negative, while 65% were positive and 28% neutral about it.

Planners were weakly positive (3.77, $sd=.89$, 75%) about the partner's financial strength to, if dictated, cover potential disruptions to their event. Almost 66% of them were positive, while 27% neutral and 7.1% negative.

Three questions measured **the partner's reputation** for disruption handling. First, to the statement "In general, the partner had a good reputation for its business," the planners gave 3.95 ($sd=.85$, 79%); 75% were positive, 17% neutral, and 6.6% negative. Second, the partner's brand name



recognition was moderately positive (3.98, $sd=.88$, 80%), with 73% being positive, 22% neutral, and 5.6% negative. The partner's quality and integrity in handling event disruptions were rated at 3.79 ($sd=.90$, 76%), based on 66% affirming, 25% neutral, and 9.1% disaffirming.

The partner's cooperative performance was also measured with three questions. First, whether the partner was cooperative for the success of their event, planners affirmed their partner's cooperation to be 3.81 (sd=1.02, 76%); 67% were affirmative, 21% neutral, and 11% disaffirming. Second, the helpfulness and willingness



to assist of the partner's staff were somewhat weakly affirmative, with 66% being positive, 23% neutral, and 11% negative. The planners' satisfaction with the cooperative business relationship orientation the partner demonstrated was rated at 3.76 (sd=1.07, 75%), derived from 66% expressing positive, 20% neutral, and 12% negative.

Five questions tapped trust in partnership, which turned out to be generally positive. For the question whether the partner could be trusted or not, the planners affirmed (3.91, sd=.95, 78%) with 77% being positive, 16% neutral, and 7.2% negative. The second question of whether the



partner could be counted on to do what was right resulted in a weak agreement (3.80, sd=.98, 76%), based upon 67% affirming, 23% neutral, and 10% disaffirming. The partner's level of integrity resulted in 3.89 (sd=.98, 78%); 70% agreed or strongly agreed with a high level of partner integrity, 21% rated neutral, and 8.6% neither agreed nor

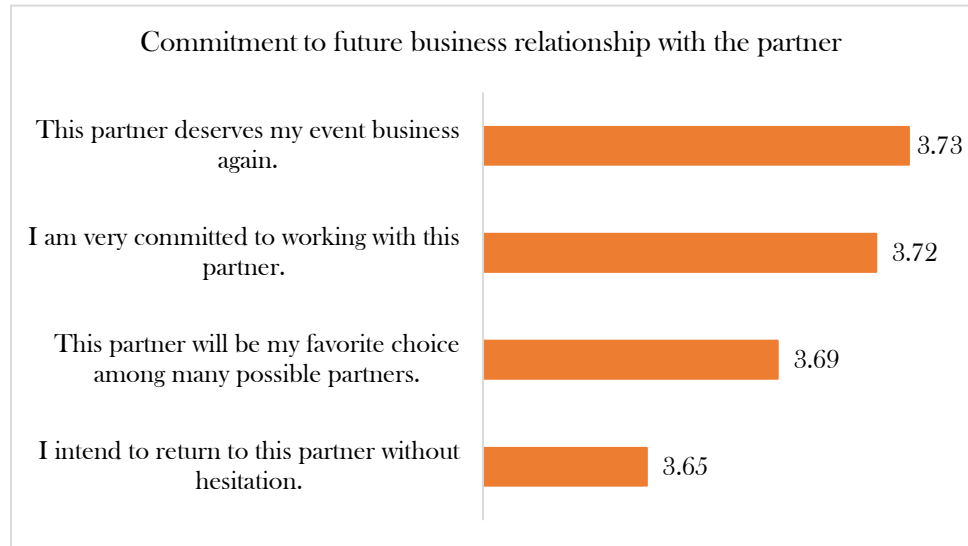
disagreed. The planners gave 3.88 (sd=.95, 78%) to the statement "This partner is a very reliable supporter of my event planning business," which derived from 72% being affirmative, 19% neutral, and 8.6% disaffirming. The last trust question was whether the partner was consistent in the manner they conducted the business with the planner, which resulted in a mean score of 3.90 (sd=.86, 78%) from 72% confirming, 21% neutral, and 6.6% disconfirming.

The partner's creativity was measured in three questions. First, whether the partner was creative offering unique programs was rated at 3.67 (sd=1.05, 73%); 60% was affirming, 27% neutral, and 13% disaffirming. Planners rated the partner's resourcefulness in suggesting different ideas for their event programs to be 3.70 (sd=.99, 74%), with 62% either agreeing or strongly agreeing,

27% being neutral, and 11% *disagreeing* or *strongly disagreeing*. The partner’s innovativeness in adding fresh aspects and values to the event was rated at 3.60 (sd=.99, 72%); 59% affirmed, 27% remained neutral, and 15% disaffirmed.

Based on their evaluations of the various aspects of their partner’s capabilities above, planners expressed their **commitment to their future business relationship** with the partner in the case they had a chance to conduct another similar event in the same destination.

Four questions gauged their relationship commitment. The statement “I am very committed to working with this partner” resulted in 3.72 (sd=1.09), with 65% *agreeing* or *strongly agreeing*,



22% being neutral, and 13% *neither agreeing nor disagreeing*. The intent of planners to return to the same partner without hesitation was 3.65 (sd=1.13) strong; 63% were positive, 19% neutral, and 18% negative. Planners gave 3.73 (sd=1.09) when asked as to whether the partner deserved their event business again; 66% affirmed, while 15% disaffirmed and 19% stayed neutral.

Finally, the same partner was not likely to be the planner’s sole, strong favorite choice among many possible partners as reflected in the mean score of 3.69 (sd=1.12, 74%); 64% affirmed, 19% remained neutral, and 17% disaffirmed.

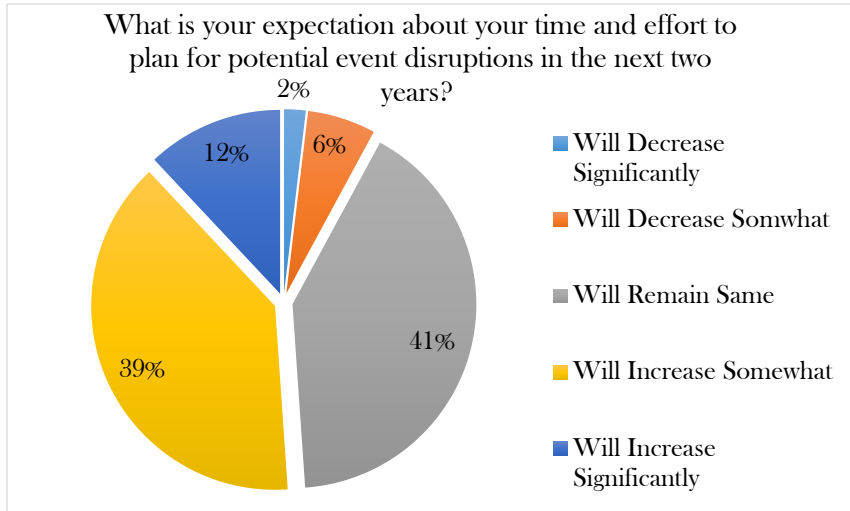
8. Implications for Future Industry Actions

In terms of **the resources that planners usually use or additional resources** that they wish to have, seven of the eighteen personally interviewed planners indicated

technology including online communication/monitoring systems, conference apps, or better Internet connectivity would be helpful in addressing possible disruptions. Four of the eighteen interviewees mentioned a comprehensive website that included everything from weather to hotel information of the destination was or would be very helpful. Three planners mentioned the additional resources should be well-trained staff members who were especially experienced with new conference apps and other supportive technology. Two planners indicated experience was one of the key resources that helped them address the previous disruptions. Other resources mentioned included better vendors, strong legal department which could help with examining the contract, extra suppliers, and partner review steps.



Results from the national survey with 266 planners...

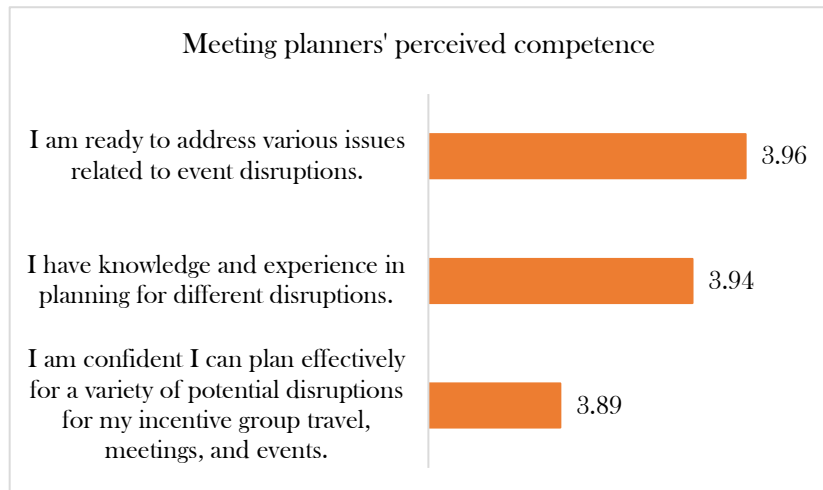


More than one half the planners (51%) expect that their **time and effort to plan** for potential event disruptions will increase either significantly or somewhat in the next two years. Only 7.9% expect a decrease, while 41% expect no change.

Planners' **perceived competence** in planning for disruptions was good. Three

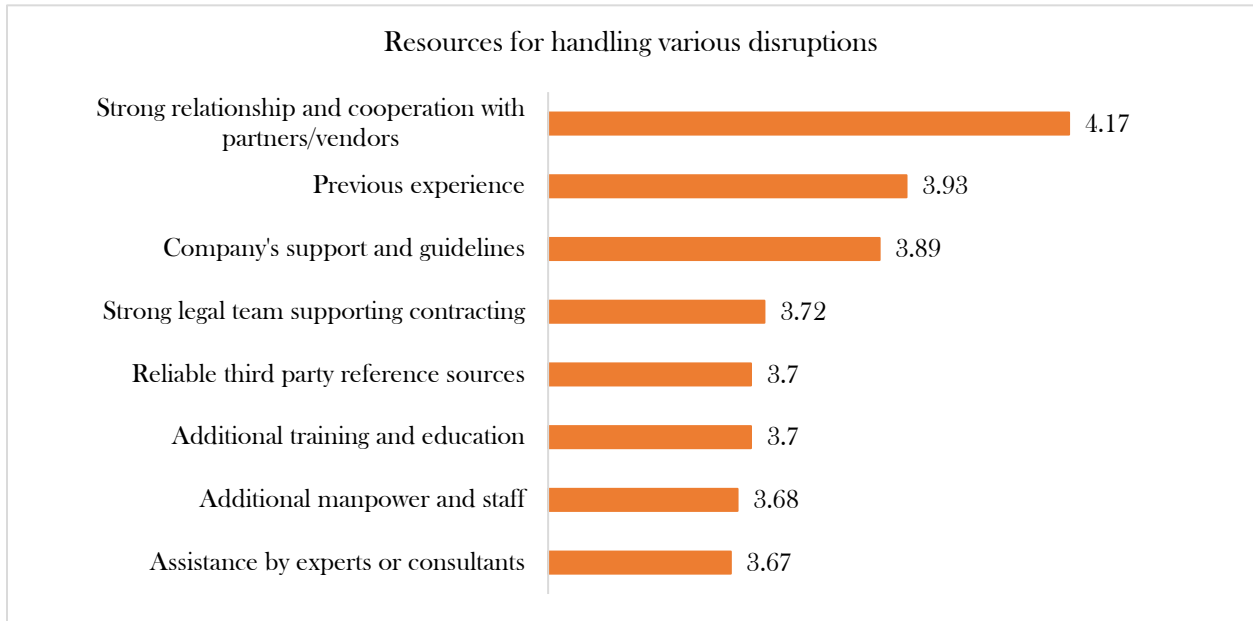
questions measured it on a 5-point scale anchored with *1=strongly disagree*, *2=disagree*, *3=neither agree nor disagree*, *4=agree*, and *5=strongly agree*. The statement, "I am confident I can plan effectively for a variety of potential disruptions for my incentive group travel, meetings, and events," scored 3.89 (sd=.89, 78%), with 77% affirming (i.e., *agree or strongly agree*), 15% neutral (i.e., *neither agree nor disagree*), and 7.5% disaffirming (i.e., *disagree or strongly disagree*).

Planners were ready to address various issues related to event disruptions (3.96, sd=.86, 79%); 81% affirmed, 12% remained neutral, and only 6.8% disaffirmed. They also felt they had knowledge and experience in planning for different disruptions (3.94, sd=.95, 79%); 78% were positive, 14% neutral, and 7.9% negative.



Planners indicated the extent to which they needed several **resources for handling various disruptions** they anticipated, on a 5-point scale ranged from *1=not at all*, ..., *5=to a great extent*. The mean scores (sd; % scaled against 100%) were 3.70 (1.06; 74%) for additional training and education, 3.93 (.97; 79%) for previous experience, 3.68 (.99; 74%) for additional manpower and staff, 3.70 (1.11; 74%) for reliable third party reference sources, 3.89 (1.01; 78%) for the company's support and guidelines, 3.67 (1.08; 73%) for assistance by experts or consultants, 4.17 (.94; 83%) for strong relationship and cooperation with partners/vendors, and 3.72 (1.13; 74%) for strong legal team

supporting contracting. Apparently, relationship quality with their partners appeared to be a resource in a greater demand for planners.



In general, 55% of the planners reported that their internal and external clients set **expectations or criteria for crisis (disruption) planning**, while 43% reported no such partner demand. According to the former group, those expectations or criteria included variously:

- General disruption prevention and handling plan
- Backup and (medical) emergency plans (Plan B, with alternate options)
- Advance notice
- Bi-monthly security calls with CMO and security partner
- Cancellation policies
- Chain of command
- Communication strategies and procedures
- Compensation
- Contract and terms (clauses that mitigate risk and minimize damages) and obligations
- Down payment
- Exit strategy
- Extra help, staff, team, etc.
- Full risk assessment
- Government involvement for security
- Service guarantee
- Predetermined operations manual for disruption handling
- Knowledge and contracts regarding potential issues
- Planning and policy documents
- Refund policy
- Reviews and safety plan
- Setting up emergency fund

- 100% availability at all times
- Partnership with other vendors
- Awareness of vendor planning
- Budget allowance
- Destination advisory policies
- Education
- Email
- Fees
- Financial auditing practice procedures
- Honesty
- Hotel rooms ready on arrival
- Incentives
- Individual meeting with security
- Insurance and sufficient coverage
- Leadership presence
- Manpower
- No loss of revenue
- Trained staff
- Transport
- Venue relocation
- Vendor vetting

Preventing the negative impact of disruptions to any event tends to prevent damage to the company’s reputation or brand name. The planners who experienced any disruption that affected the overall outcome or success of their events in the past 12 months tended to report (20% correlated) that their companies also experienced disruptions in the past two years that damaged their company’s reputation or brand, or vice versa. Although small, there was a tendency that disruptions, once they occurred, tended to affect not only the outcomes of the event itself but also the overall reputation of the company. Of course, in general disruptions tended to affect the event’s outcome itself more (59%) than the company’s reputation (19%).

			Experienced reputation-damaging disruption in past 2 years		
			Yes	No	Total
Experienced disruption in past 12 months affecting event outcomes	Yes	Count	41	116	157
		% of Total	15.4%	43.6%	59.0%
	No	Count	10	99	109
		% of Total	3.8%	37.2%	41.0%
Total		Count	51	215	266
		% of Total	19.2%	80.8%	100.0%

Disruption experience gives learning effects to the planners in terms of disruption prevention and planning. We compared two groups of the planners on various planning activities and perceptions: (1) one group that reported they experienced any disruption that affected the overall outcome or success of their event in the past 12 months (“**the disruption group**”), vs. (2) the other that reported no such an experience (“**the no disruption group**”). These comparisons accounted for statistical sampling errors. Following is a summary of the comparisons:

- Both groups are equally concerned about disruptions that may damage their or their company’s reputation when planning for an event.
- Both groups equally require legal protections such as limitation of liability, indemnification, and force majeure to be incorporated in contracts with both vendors and clients.
- The disruption group considered their planning for disruptions as part of their overall event planning to be 13% more significant than did the no disruption group. Apparently, disruption experiences seem to make planning for disruptions a more important part of overall event planning.
- Before contracting, the disruption group evaluated destination venue (16% greater) and potential program partners (13% greater) to a greater extent than did the no disruption group for the level of perceived risk including disruptions and disruption handling. Previous disruption experiences seem to make planners be more careful in assessing disruption risks associated with the event venue and partners, perhaps because most disruptions were attributable to the venue and partner. Nonetheless, both groups evaluated destination city and country to the same extent for such disruption risks.
- The disruption group discusses potential disruptions and contingency plans with their business partners 14% more often than the no disruption group does. Also, the disruption group communicates to their attendees about potential disruption situations and suggested actions 10% more actively than the no disruption counterpart does.

Preventing any damage to the event should be the focus in disruption planning as a damage to the company’s reputation produces less learning effects. Similarly, we compared two groups on the same planning activities and perceptions: (1) the one group that reported they or their company experienced any disruption in the past two years that damaged their company’s reputation or brand (“**the damaged group**”), vs. (2) the other group that reported no such a disruption or damage (“**the no damage group**”). The damaged group communicates to their attendees 14% more often than the no damage group does about potential disruption situations and suggested actions. However, the two groups were equal on:

- The level of their concerns about disruptions that might damage their or their company’s reputation;
- The significance of their planning for potential disruptions in overall event planning;
- The extent to which they evaluated destination country, destination city, destination venue, and potential program partners for the level of perceived risk (including disruptions and disruption handling) before contracting;
- The frequency of discussing potential disruptions and contingency plans with their business partners; and
- The extent to which they required both their vendors and clients to incorporate into contracts legal protections such as limitation of liability, indemnification, and force majeure.

Planning for disruptions required more time and effort in the past two years and it will continue requiring more planning time and effort in the near future. The significance of planning for potential disruptions to overall event planning has a small positive correlation with (a) the increased amount of time and effort the planners spent to plan for potential event disruptions in the past two years (24%) and (b) the amount of time and effort that the planners think will increase in the next two years for planning for potential event disruptions (20%). In other words, the more time and effort the planner spent in the past two years or anticipated to spend in the next two years to plan for event disruptions, the more significant he or she considered planning for disruptions was to overall event planning.

In addition, the increased amount of time and effort spent in the past two years to plan for event disruptions has a fairly strong correlation (61%) with the amount of time and effort predicted to increase for the same purpose in the next two years. That is, the planners who reported an increased amount of time and effort spent recently on disruption planning tend to expect an additional increase in time and effort they need to spend in the near future on disruption planning. Clearly, **the planners who are mindful of and actively engaged in disruption planning expect to spend even more time and effort in the future on the same planning activities.**

Regardless of previous disruption experiences, event planning companies are trending to require contingency plans for the events they plan. Whether planners have experienced any disruption that affected (negatively) the outcome or success of their event was an important determinant of whether their company required inclusion of contingency plans for at least some events. While 59% of the planners experienced such a disruption in the past 12 months, more than 91% of their companies required contingency plans for at least some events. Having not experienced any such event disruption in the past 12 months, 34% of the companies still require inclusion of contingency plans for at least some events. Only 6.8% of the planners have not experienced such a disruption and their company does not require contingency plans for any event.

			Experienced disruption in past 12 months affecting event outcome		Total
			Yes	No	
Company requires contingency plans for	All events	Count	97	47	144
		% of Total	36.5%	17.7%	54.1%
	Some events	Count	55	44	99
		% of Total	20.7%	16.5%	37.2%
	No event	Count	5	18	23
		% of Total	1.9%	6.8%	8.6%
Total		Count	157	109	266
		% of Total	59.0%	41.0%	100.0%

Most companies require contingency plans for their events regardless of whether they have experienced reputation-damaging disruptions or not. When planners (or their company) have experienced any disruption that damaged the company’s reputation or brand, their company

tended to require contingency plans for disruptions for at least some events. In contrast, a small proportion (8.6%) of those that have not experienced any such disruption tend to require no contingency plan for any event. While 81% of the planners (or companies) have not experienced any reputation-damaging disruption in recent years, 91% of the planners required inclusion of contingency plans for at least some events.

			Experienced reputation-damaging disruption in past 2 years		Total
			Yes	No	
Company requires contingency plans for	All events	Count	31	113	144
		% of Total	11.7%	42.5%	54.1%
	Some events	Count	20	79	99
		% of Total	7.5%	29.7%	37.2%
	No event	Count	0	23	23
		% of Total	0.0%	8.6%	8.6%
Total		Count	51	215	266
		% of Total	19.2%	80.8%	100.0%

Most companies provide guidelines or assistance for disruption planning regardless of whether they have experienced a disruption affecting the outcome or success of the event. The planners who experienced any disruption affecting the outcome of their event in the past 12 months tended to report that their company provided guidelines or assistance in planning for disruptions. Almost 63% of them experienced such a disruption in the past 12 months; yet, three quarters of them confirmed that their company provided necessary guidelines and assistance for disruption planning. While 25% affirmed the availability of their company’s guidance or assistance with no particular disruption experience in the past 12 months, 11% reported the unavailability of such assistance even if they experienced a disruption in recent years.

			Experienced disruption in past 12 months affecting event outcomes		Total
			Yes	No	
Company provides guidelines and assistance for disruption planning	Yes	Count	122	60	182
		% of Total	50.2%	24.7%	74.9%
	No	Count	27	28	55
		% of Total	11.1%	11.5%	22.6%
	Don't Know	Count	3	3	6
		% of Total	1.2%	1.2%	2.5%
Total		Count	152	91	243
		% of Total	62.6%	37.4%	100.0%

A small number of companies experienced a damage in their reputation due to disruptions and it does not seem to affect resource decisions for disruption planning. Whether the company experienced any disruption damaging its reputation or brand had nothing much to do with whether it offered guidelines or assistance in planning for event disruptions. That is, the proportion of the companies providing or not providing guidance or assistance were balanced between those that had experienced any reputation-damaging disruption and those that had not.

			Experienced reputation-damaging disruption in past 2 years		Total
			Yes	No	
Company provides guidelines and assistance for disruption planning	Yes	Count	37	145	182
		% of Total	15.2%	59.7%	74.9%
	No	Count	13	42	55
		% of Total	5.3%	17.3%	22.6%
	Don't Know	Count	1	5	6
		% of Total	0.4%	2.1%	2.5%
Total		Count	51	192	243
		% of Total	21.0%	79.0%	100.0%

Companies are providing guidance and assistance for disruption planning. The demand for disruption planning tended to coincide with the company's support for disruption planning. The planners who reported that their company provided guidelines or assistance for disruption planning also considered disruption planning was a more significant part (13% higher) of their overall event planning than those who reported no company assistance, or vice versa. Similarly, those with company assistance said their time and effort to plan for disruptions had increased 9% more in the previous two years and would increase 14% more in the next two years.

	Company provides guidelines and assistance for disruption planning	N	Mean	Std.
				Deviation
Significance of disruption planning	Yes	182	7.69 (70%) ^a	2.029
	No	55	6.82 (62%) ^a	1.992
Increased time and effort to plan for disruptions in past 2 years	Yes	182	3.71 (74%) ^b	.889
	No	55	3.42 (68%) ^b	.762
Time and effort expected to increase to plan for disruptions in next 2 years	Yes	182	3.66 (73%) ^b	.862
	No	55	3.22 (64%) ^b	.738

^a Measured on an 11-point significance scale ranged from 0 to 10.

^b Measured on a 5-point scale anchored with 1=decreased significantly, 2=decreased somewhat, 3=remained about

the same, 4=increased somewhat, and 5=increased significantly.

Disruption experiences tended to require vendors and clients to have contingency plans in business contracts. The planners reporting that they had a disruption affecting the outcome or success of their event in the past 12 months also reported that their company required vendors and clients to have contingency plans in some or all contracts. Although 59% experienced such a disruptive event recently, nearly 93% of their companies required their vendors/clients to have contingency plans in at least some contracts. Moreover, 37% of the planners who reported experiencing no such disruptive event in the past 12 months still reported that their companies required their vendors and clients to have contingency plans in some or all contracts.

			Experienced disruption in past 12 months affecting event outcomes		Total
			Yes	No	
Company requires vendors/clients to have contingency plans in	All Contracts	Count	63	35	98
		% of Total	23.7%	13.2%	36.8%
	Some Contracts	Count	87	62	149
		% of Total	32.7%	23.3%	56.0%
	None of Contracts	Count	7	12	19
		% of Total	2.6%	4.5%	7.1%
Total		Count	157	109	266
		% of Total	59.0%	41.0%	100.0%

Recent reputation-damaging disruptions motivate companies to require contingency plans by vendors and clients. The companies that experienced any disruption in the past two years that damaged their reputation or brand tended to require their vendors and clients to have contingency plans in some or all event contracts. Although only 19% of all planning companies experienced

			Experienced reputation-damaging disruption in past 2 years		Total
			Yes	No	
Company requires vendors/clients to have contingency plans in	All Contracts	Count	24	74	98
		% of Total	9.0%	27.8%	36.8%
	Some Contracts	Count	27	122	149
		% of Total	10.2%	45.9%	56.0%
	None of Contracts	Count	0	19	19
		% of Total	0.0%	7.1%	7.1%
Total		Count	51	215	266
		% of Total	19.2%	80.8%	100.0%

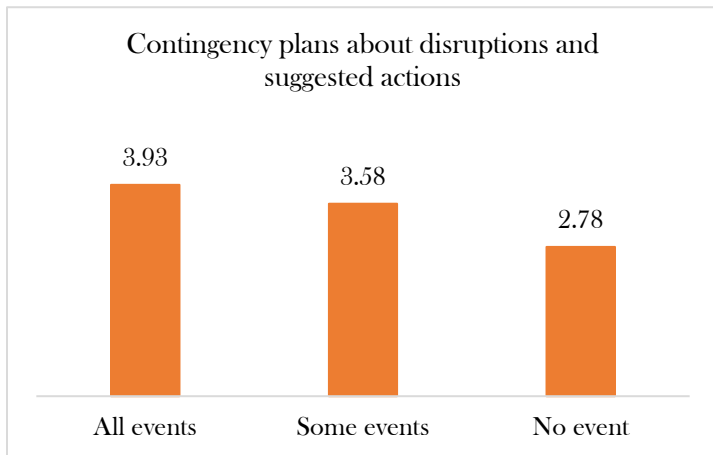
such a disruption in the past two years, nearly 93% of all companies required their vendors and clients to have contingency plans as part of at least some, if not all, contracts. Only 7% of all companies did not experience a reputation-damaging disruption in the past two years and they also did not require their vendors/client to have contingency plans in any contract they entered.

Companies tend to require contingency plans both for events and in contracts. The planning companies that required contingency plans to be included in the events they planned also tended to require their clients/vendors to have contingency plans in some or all contracts. For example, 91% of all companies required contingency plans for some or all of the events they planned, while 93% required their vendors and clients to have such plans in some or all contracts.

		Company requires contingency plans for			Total	
		All Events	Some Events	No Event		
Company requires vendors/clients to have contingency plans in	All Contracts	Count	75	19	4	98
		% of Total	28.2%	7.1%	1.5%	36.8%
	Some Contracts	Count	65	71	13	149
		% of Total	24.4%	26.7%	4.9%	56.0%
	None of Contracts	Count	4	9	6	19
		% of Total	1.5%	3.4%	2.3%	7.1%
Total	Count	144	99	23	266	
	% of Total	54.1%	37.2%	8.6%	100.0%	

The more significant disruption planning is, the more often the planner discusses potential disruptions and suggested actions with their business partners. The significance of disruption planning in overall event planning significantly correlated (47%) with the frequency of discussions about potential disruptions and contingency plans between the planner and the business partner. That is, the more significant disruption planning was to overall event planning, the more often the planner and the business partner discussed potential disruptions and contingency plans.

The more competent the planner feels about disruption planning, the more often s/he discusses potential disruptions and suggested actions with the business partners. The frequency of discussions on potential disruptions with the business partner is also modestly correlated with the planner’s perceived competence in disruption planning. That is, the more competent and ready the planner is, the more often the planner discusses with the partner on potential disruptions. Measured with three questions reflecting (a) disruption planning confidence (33%), (b) readiness to address various disruption-related issues (47%), and (c) disruption handling knowledge and experience (39%), perceived competence has an average correlation of 40% with the frequency of discussions.



The more the company requires contingency plans of its business partner, the more actively it communicates to its clients about potential disruptions and suggested actions. The companies that require contingency plans for the events they plan tend to communicate more actively to their clients about potential disruption situations and suggested actions. For example, the companies that require contingency plans for all events engage 10% more in

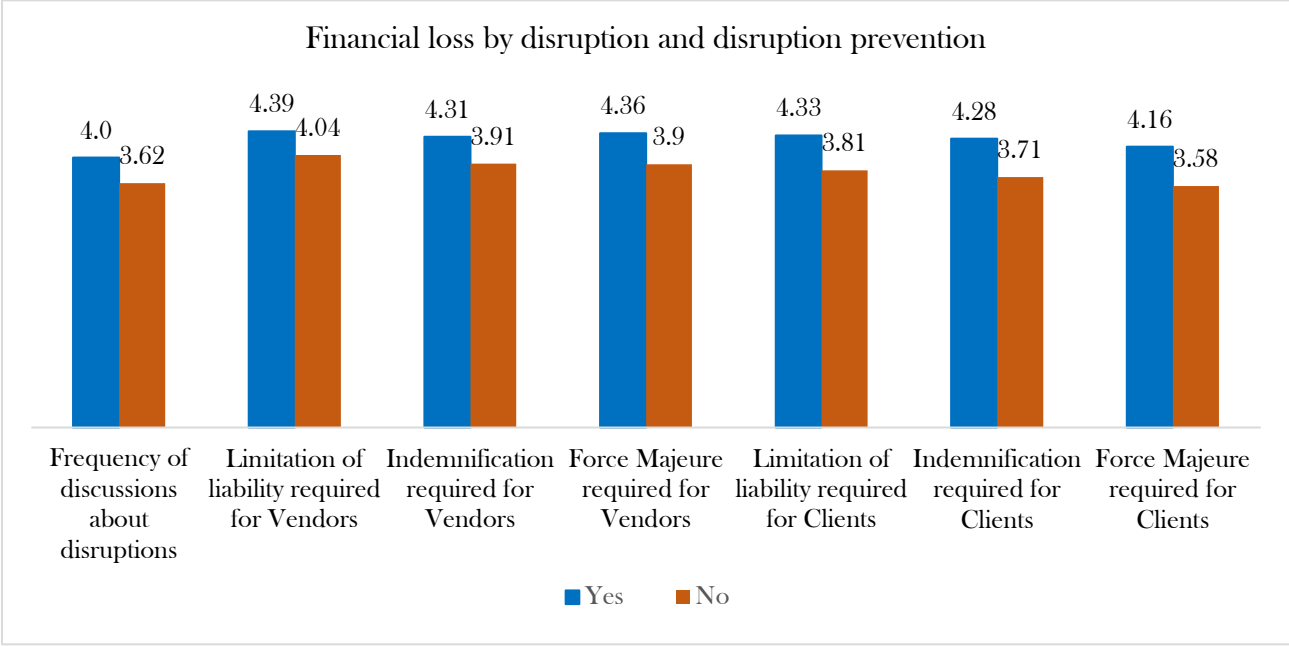
communicating potential disruptions and suggested actions to their clients than those that require contingency plans for only some events. Compared to the companies not requiring contingency plans for any event, the companies requiring contingency plans for all events communicate 41% more actively to their clients about potential disruptions. Similarly, companies requiring contingency plans for only some events communicate 29% more actively to their clients about potential disruption situations and suggested actions.

Chances are that disruptions will cause both a financial loss and a damage to the company’s reputation simultaneously. Although nearly 50% of the planners reported that the recent disruption they experienced resulted in neither financial loss nor damage to the company’s reputation, 13% said the disruption damaged the company both financially and in reputation. Almost one third (31%) of the planners reported a financial loss but no damage to the company’s reputation, whereas 7% reported a damage to the company’s reputation without causing any financial loss.

			Disruptions Causing Financial Loss		Total
			Yes	No	
Experienced reputation-damaging disruption in past 2 years	Yes	Count	33	17	50
		% of Total	12.6%	6.5%	19.1%
	No	Count	82	130	212
		% of Total	31.3%	49.6%	80.9%
Total		Count	115	147	262
		% of Total	43.9%	56.1%	100.0%

Disruptions causing a financial loss motivate heightened disruption prevention measures. Companies with an experience of a disruption causing a financial loss (“Yes”) tend to be more sensitive to prevention strategies. For example, compared to the companies that have never experienced a disruption of financial loss, they discuss 11% more often potential disruptions and

contingency plans with their partners. They also tend to require in contracts with their vendors and business partners incorporation of legal protections such as limitation of liability 9% more often, indemnification 10% more often, and force majeure 12% more often. Similarly, they also tended to require in contracts with their clients incorporation of limitation of liability 14% more often, indemnification 15% more often, and force majeure 16% more often.



Disruptions causing a financial loss result in a higher tendency to switch the partner, or vice versa. Planning companies with an experience of a financial loss due to disruptions tended to have switched their business partners more often (28%), while those without such an experience also tended less to switch (i.e., stay with) their partners (34%). Of the 262 companies, 22% have switched their business partners without a disruption experience causing a financial loss, while 16% had a financial loss due to disruptions but still did not switch their partners.

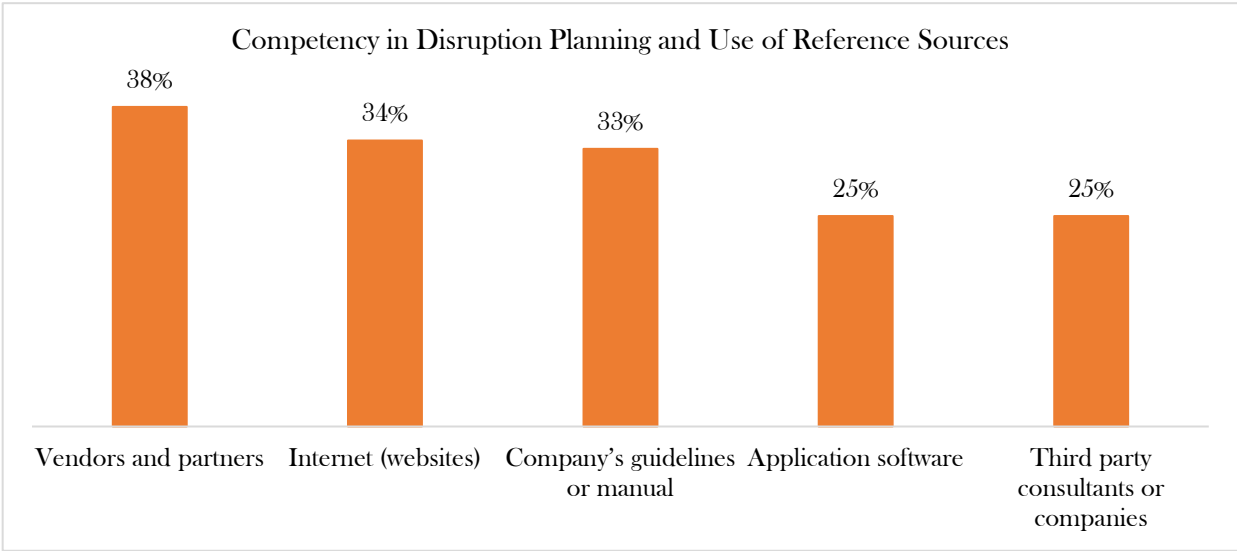
			Financial Loss by Disruption		Total
			Yes	No	
Switched Partner	Yes	Count	73	58	131
		% of Total	27.9%	22.1%	50.0%
	No	Count	42	89	131
		% of Total	16.0%	34.0%	50.0%
Total	Count	115	147	262	
	% of Total	43.9%	56.1%	100.0%	

As the amount of a financial loss due to disruptions goes up, so does the tendency to switch the partners. The number of planning companies that switched their business partners was

consistently larger in all categories of financial loss amounts. For example, 17 companies reported that they lost less than \$10,000 due to a recent disruption and switched the partner causing such a loss, while only nine (9) companies lost the same amount but stayed with the same partner.

			Total Financial Loss Amount					
			100K -					
			Less than \$10,000	10K - \$99,999	\$499,999	\$500K - \$999,999	\$1 M or more	Total
Switched Partner	Yes	Count	17	24	16	10	3	70
		% of Total	15.6%	22.0%	14.7%	9.2%	2.8%	64.2%
	No	Count	9	19	7	2	2	39
		% of Total	8.3%	17.4%	6.4%	1.8%	1.8%	35.8%
Total	Count	26	43	23	12	5	109	
	% of Total	23.9%	39.4%	21.1%	11.0%	4.6%	100.0%	

The more competent the planner was in disruption planning, the more frequently the planner uses vendors and partners. The planner’s disruption handling competency was measured in three questions addressing his/her (1) overall confidence in planning effectively for a variety of potential disruptions, (2) readiness to address various issues related to event disruptions, and (3) knowledge and experience in planning for event disruptions. More competent planners tended to use vendors, partners, the Internet (websites), and the company’s guidelines or manual, in that order, followed by application software and third-party consultants or companies.



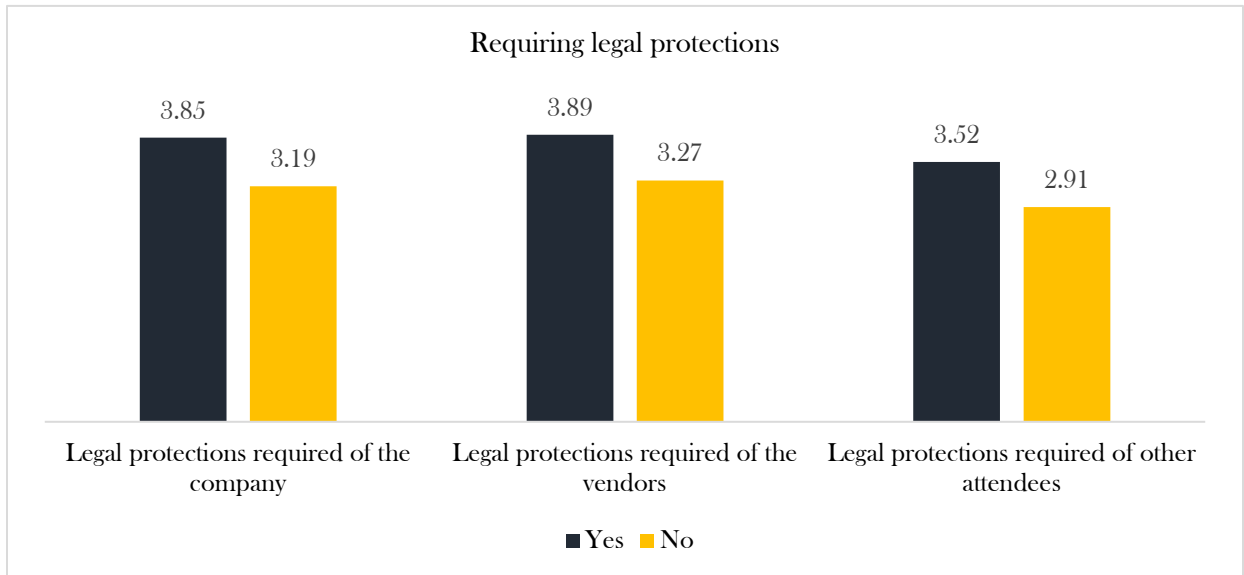
Poor partner performance in disruption handling is a likely cause for more frequent discussions about disruptions with business partners, stricter legal protections in contracts, and more negative evaluations of the business relationship. The planners who switched their business partner tended

to discuss potential disruptions with their partner 11% more frequently and require legal protections in their business contracts 8% more often than those who did not switch their business partner. In contrast, their evaluations of the partner that was responsible for handling the most recent disruption were more negative than the evaluations given by the planner that did not switch the partner. The negative evaluation gap was approximately 6% for the partner's disruption handling, 8% for trust in the partner, and 12% in their commitment to the business relationship with the same partner.

Planning Behavior and Partner Evaluations		Switched		Mean ^a	Std. Deviation
		Partner	N		
Discussion about disruptions	Frequency of discussion about disruptions	Yes	131	3.98	.81
		No	131	3.59	1.02
Legal protections	Limitation of liability required for Vendors	Yes	128	4.28	.94
		No	125	4.10	1.15
	Indemnification required for Vendors	Yes	128	4.23	.94
		No	125	3.93	1.21
Force majeure required for Vendors	Yes	128	4.31	1.00	
	No	125	3.88	1.18	
Disruption handling	Overall disruption handling	Yes	112	3.68	1.24
		No	97	3.87	1.09
	Overall satisfaction with partner's handling	Yes	112	3.59	1.10
		No	97	3.86	1.00
Trust in the partner for the business relationship	Trust in partner (relationship trust)	Yes	106	3.78	1.03
		No	90	4.07	.83
	Counting on partner (relationship trust)	Yes	106	3.66	1.07
		No	90	3.96	.83
	Partner's integrity (relationship trust)	Yes	106	3.78	1.06
		No	90	4.02	.86
	Reliability of partner (relationship trust)	Yes	106	3.71	1.06
		No	90	4.09	.76
Consistency in partner (relationship trust)	Yes	106	3.81	.98	
	No	90	4.01	.70	
Intent to repeat with the same partner	Commitment to relationship with partner	Yes	106	3.55	1.23
		No	90	3.92	.86
	Intent to do business with same partner	Yes	106	3.45	1.20
		No	90	3.88	1.02
	Partner deserving my business again	Yes	106	3.51	1.18
		No	90	4.00	.90
Partner as my favorite choice again	Yes	106	3.52	1.24	
	No	90	3.89	.94	

^a Measured on 5-point scales with, in general, lower numbers meaning negative and higher numbers meaning positive (3 was the scale middle point). Refer to the survey questionnaire in Appendix 2 for detail.

The client’s expectations or standards for disruption prevention/handling also mean requiring legal protections from the planner, vendors, and other attendees. Once they set expectations or criteria for crisis (disruption) planning for planners or companies (“Yes”), the clients also tended to require specific legal protections from the planning company 21% more often, from the vendor or business partner 19% more often, and from other attendees 21% more often.



Finally, we examined how planners would have built a **trusted and committed relationship** with their business partners, with a focus on the latest disruption they experienced. We used a basic process model borrowed from the relationship marketing literature. In short, planners would build trust in their partners based on a variety of input factors such as, used in our examinations, the partner’s insurance coverage, resources, financial capability, reputation/brand name, cooperation, creativity, and performance in disruption handling (especially, recent ones). Trust is known to build the planner’s commitment to the partner and partnership. This **mental process model** looks like this:

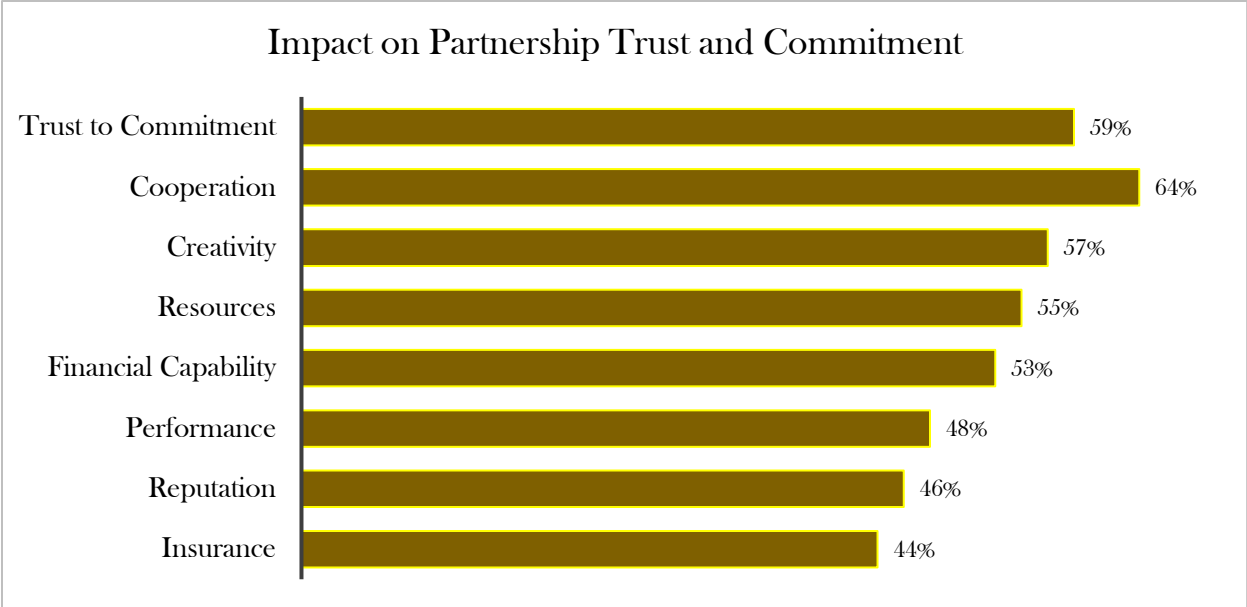


Since each input variable we examined was a broad concept, we used a few questions to capture the variable’s range of meaning. The following table summarizes the variables and their measurement question items.

Variable	Measurement Question Items
Insurance	The partner was carrying a good insurance coverage for such a disruption. I could rely on the partner's contractual protection against such a disruption. If necessary, the partner could take care of the loss associated with the disruption through its insurance plan.
Resources	The partner had an appropriate infrastructure and resources to handle such a disruption. The partner was experienced in handling such an emergency situation. The partner offered a good contingency plan for such a disruption. The partner had good safety records.
Financial capability	Overall, the partner's financial capability was in a good shape. The partner's financial strength gave me a sense of relief for the business relationship. The partner was financially strong enough to cover potential disruptions to my event, if dictated.
Reputation or brand name	In general, the partner had a good reputation for its business. I knew the partner's quality and integrity in handling event disruptions. The partner was cooperative for the success of my event.
Cooperation	The partner was cooperative for the success of my event. The partner's staff was always helpful and willing to assist. I am satisfied with the cooperative business relationship orientation the partner demonstrated.
Creativity	The partner was creative offering unique programs for my event. The partner was resourceful in suggesting different ideas for my event programs. The partner was innovative in adding fresh aspects and values to my event.
Performance Satisfaction	Overall, the partner's handling of the disruption was... ¹ How satisfied were you with the partner's performance in handling the disruption? ²
Trust	This partner can be trusted. This partner can be counted on to do what is right. This partner has high integrity. This partner is a very reliable supporter of my meeting planning business. This partner is consistent in the manner they conduct the business with me.
Commitment	I am very committed to working with this partner. I intend to return to this partner without hesitation. This partner deserves my event business again. This partner will be my favorite choice among many possible partners.

¹ Measured with a 5-point scale ranged from 1 = poor, 2, 3, 4, to 5 = excellent; ² Measured with a 5-point scale labeled as 1=very dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=neutral, 4=satisfied, and 5=very satisfied; all the other questions were answered on a 5-point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree (neutral), 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

Our examination focused on comparing the **impact of each input variable on trust in the partner or partnership**, in an absolute sense (i.e., each variable’s independent, not relative, impact scaled against 100%). The partner’s cooperative behavior appeared to be the strongest determinant of partnership trust (64%), followed by the partner’s creativity (57%), resources (55%), financial capability (53%), and so on. Of the seven input variables compared, insurance coverage was the weakest determinant of partnership trust. Interestingly, the partner’s performance in handling the latest disruption was not as powerful a determinant of partnership trust. Overall, the partner’s event-specific helpful behaviors such as cooperation and creativity seem to be more instrumental to building partnership trust than rather what the partner has in business conditions such as resources, financial capability, reputation, and insurance coverage. Trust in the partnership alone could determine 59% of planners’ commitment to the partnership for future event businesses.



APPENDIX 1.

Meeting Planner Disruption Study Interviews with Meeting Planners

GOALS: Identify a sample of disruptions in meeting planning and executions in all stages such as sales, site visit, event, and post-event activities.

Identify a sample of contingency plans to either prevent or recover from each disruption.

Identify resources used and needed to prevent disruptions and, once happening, implement contingency plans

Rank order each of the three above preliminarily

LOGISTICS: Each assistant will interview 13 randomly selected meeting planners by using the interview grid (based on consent, use a speaker phone and record).

Complete all interviews before end of the semester, except for the Thanksgiving week.

Complete each interview within 20 minutes.

INTRODUCTION TO INTERVIEWEE

Hi, my name is _____. May I speak with _____?

I am a graduate student assisting professors in a research project on the disruptions that can happen in meeting planning. The results of this study will be released nationally next year to help improve meeting planning practices in the future. You were randomly selected from a meeting planners directory to participate in this study. I will be asking 7-9 general questions regarding how you prepare for potential disruptions in your meeting planning. This interview will take no more than 20 minutes. Upon completion of this interview, we will offer you a \$25-worth gift card usable for any purchase as a small token of our appreciation. Your participation is voluntary and will be completely anonymous and confidential. Would you like to help us?

{IF YES} As I need to take a memo for the information you will provide, may I put you on a speaker phone (if necessary). Also, I do not want to miss any suggestion provide, so would you allow me to record our interview? {immediately} As soon as we complete gathering answers to our questions, we will completely destroy the records and all opinions will be mixed with those of 20 other interviewees. {If s/he does not allow any, do not implement but dictate as best as you can}

Thank you for your willingness to help. Let me begin with the first question:

1. How many meetings do your plan per year? _____ (if none, thank the person and finish the interview)
2. What is the range of meeting sizes you plan by the # of attendees? _____
3. When you plan various meetings, you may often consider some possible incidents or disruptions threatening the success of your event. Please think about such possible disruptions, and tell me one at a time but as many as possible (use the prompts below to help them recall and use the table on the next page to record what they say).

Prompts: Some disruptions may be related to ...

- a. Health and wellness
- b. Delivery of service - Service Level Agreements (SLA)
- c. Security (physical, technology, data/information)
- d. Brand
- e. Corporate Values
- f. Company Policies
- g. Compliance (*regulations*) - local, regional, national
- h. Financial
- i. Natural

- 3.1. Can you rank them by the frequency of their occurrence? (read out the list provided)
4. In general, what are the contingency plans you typically consider or incorporate into your meeting planning to prevent or recover from a disruption? Please tell me one at a time as many as possible. {It is likely s/he says it depends on the type of disruption. If so, match the plans to the list of disruptions above.}
 - 4.1. Can you rank the contingency plans you just mentioned by the frequency or popularity of use in your meeting planning?
5. What are the resources (1) you usually use or (2) you wish to have available to address the disruptions you normally anticipate happening in your meeting execution?

A few demographic questions:

1. How many years have you been in this meeting planning profession? _____ yrs.
2. What age year are you in? 20s ____ 30s ____ 40s ____ 50s ____ etc.
3. What is the city and state you work? _____ city _____ State
4. How many employees does your company have in total? _____
5. What is your estimated % of all meetings you have planned that experienced any disruption that mandated some resources to fix? _____%
6. (You record) Male _____ Female _____

Disruptions, Contingency Plans, and Resources

Disruptions	Rank	Contingency Plans	Rank	Note

Resources to Intervene Disruptions

You usually use	You wish to have available

APPENDIX 2.

The Survey Questionnaire



**Meeting Disruption
Study**



Dear Meeting and Incentive Planner,

We are conducting a national study in collaboration with Incentive Research Foundation (IRF) to understand the industry's best practices in planning and handling event disruptions. Your participation in this study will help meeting and incentive planners like yourself have useful reference information about managing disruptions effectively.

While your participation is voluntary, we'd appreciate it if you would share your experience and opinions in this survey to help the industry improve disruption handling practices. The survey will take about 15 minutes of your time.

Please be assured that your participation is confidential. Data will be analyzed only in aggregation across all participants. If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us any time.

We thank you in advance for participating in this study.

Sincerely,

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PQ1. At your organization, to what degree do you influence decisions related to meetings and events? This could include site selection, registration-housing, event logistics, and execution of meetings and events -- for your sales force, employees, channel, or customers.

You have:

- A high degree of influence
- Some degrees of influence
- No influence at all

PQ2. How many meetings and events will you complete planning and executing in the 2015-2016 period?

- None
- 1-3
- 3-5
- 6-10
- More than 10

PQ3. How many room nights are associated with your largest meeting/event in 2015-2016?

- Fewer than 10
- 10-20
- 21-50
- 51-100
- 100 or more

Q1. Have you experienced any disruption that affected the overall outcome or success of your events in the past 12 months?

- Yes
- No

If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Block.

If Yes is selected on Q1,

Q2. What kind of disruption(s) was it? Please check all that apply.

- Acts of God (weather related, natural disasters, medical outbreaks, etc.)
- Public enemies (terrors, wars, security threats, traffic accidents, flight delays, etc.)
- Vendor failures (overbooking, facility/equipment malfunction, strikes, technology failures, lack of cooperation, contractual breaches, service failures, etc.)
- Client failures (no shows, lack of cooperation, cancellations, attrition, social media, etc.)
- Other (please specify) _____

Q3. What percentage of your 2015-2016 events have been impacted by a disruption? _____%
Please enter a percentage number below.

If Yes is selected on Q1,

Q4. For all disruptions experienced by you (or your company), what percent of each of the following makes up the total? Please write the frequency of occurrence in percentage for each; the numbers must sum to 100.

Acts of God or natural disasters	_____ %
Public enemies	_____ %
Vendor failures (including transporters)	_____ %
Client failures	_____ %
Other	_____ %
Total	100%

Q5. In general, what are the two disruptions that you are most concerned about when planning events?

1. _____
2. _____

Q6. Have you (or your company) experienced any disruption in the past two years that damaged your company's reputation or brand?

- Yes
- No

If Yes is selected on Q6,

Q7. Write the two disruptions that damaged your company's reputation or brand most.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

Q8. When planning for an event, you are very much concerned about disruptions that may damage your or your company's reputation.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Q9. As part of your overall event planning, how significant is your planning for potential disruptions?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10

Q10. On average, what percent of your planning time is spent particularly on planning for potential disruptions? _____% Please enter a number below.

Q11. In the past two (2) years,

	Decreased significantly	Decreased somewhat	Remained about the same	Increased somewhat	Increased significantly
Your time and efforts to plan for potential event disruptions have...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q12. What is your expectation about your time and effort to plan for potential event disruptions in the next two years?

	Decrease significantly	Decrease somewhat	Remain about the same	Increase somewhat	Increase significantly
They will...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
- I am confident I can plan effectively for a variety of potential disruptions for my incentive group travel, meetings, and events.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
- I am ready to address various issues related to event disruptions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
- I have knowledge and experience in planning for different disruptions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q14. Your company requires contingency plans for disruptions for:

- all events
- some events (i.e., not all events depending on the event's significance)
- My company does not require contingency plans for disruptions for any event.

If Some events is selected on Q14,

Q15. If your company requires contingency plans for disruptions for at least some events (i.e., not all events), what criteria are used to determine which events require such planning?

1. _____
2. _____

If My company does not require contingency plans for disruptions for any event is selected on Q14,

Q16. Does your company provide guidelines or assistance in planning for disruptions?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

If Q16 selects Yes,

Q17. What kind of assistance does your company provide?

1. _____
2. _____

Q18. Your company requires vendors/clients to have contingency plans in...

- all contracts
- some contracts
- none of contracts

Q19. In general, what type of business partners or vendors cause disruptions, if any, to your events most frequently?

- Airlines
- Hotels
- Destination Management Companies (DMCs)
- Local transportation companies other than airlines
- Catering companies, if applicable
- None of the above
- Other (please specify) _____

Q20. In general, what type of business partners or vendors is most helpful in handling disruptions when they occur?

- Airlines
- Hotels
- Destination Management Companies (DMCs)
- Local transportation companies other than airlines
- Catering companies, if applicable
- None of the above
- Other (please specify) _____

Q21. To what extent does your company evaluate each of the following for the level of perceived risk (including disruptions and disruption handling) before contracting? Choose one to indicate the extent.

	Not at all	(2)	(3)	(4)	To a great extent
Destination country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Destination city	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Destination venue	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Potential program partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q22. How frequently do you use each of the following resources when planning for potential disruptions?

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
Internet (websites)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Application software	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vendors and partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Company's guidelines or manual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Third party consultants or companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q23. When contracting,

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
How often do you discuss potential disruptions and contingency plans with your business partners?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If Q23 selects Sometimes, Often, or Always,

Q24. What kind of disruption is most frequently discussed? Please write:

If Q23 selects Sometimes, Often, or Always,

Q25. What kind of contingency plan is most often discussed? Please write:

Q26. You (or your company) actively communicate to your attendees about potential disruption situations and suggested actions.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

If Q26 selects Agree or Strongly agree,

Q27. When do you (or your company) communicate most to your attendees about potential disruptions and suggested actions?

- Prior to the event
- During the event
- As needs arise (based on timing and seriousness of the disruption)
- Both before and during the event (multiple times)

Q28. Please indicate to what extent you need to have each of the following resources for handling various disruptions?

	Not at all (1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	To a great extent (5)
Additional training and education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Previous experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Additional manpower and staff	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reliable third party reference sources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Company's support and guidelines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assistance by experts or consultants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong relationship and cooperation with partners/vendors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong legal team supporting contracting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q29. In general, how well prepared is each of the following partners for handling disruptions?

	Not at all prepared	Somewhat prepared	Prepared	Well prepared	Very well prepared
Hotels	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Destination Management Companies (DMCs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Airlines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other vendors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q30. Have you or your company switched a partner due to poor disruption handling?

- Yes
- No

If Q30 selects Yes,

Q31. What kind of partner was it? (Choose all that apply.)

- Hotel
- DMC
- Airline
- Other (please specify) _____

Q32. How many times in the past two years have you or your company changed destinations because of perceived risk of disruptions?

- Never
- 1-3 times
- 4-7 times
- 8-12 times
- More than 12 times

If Q32 does not select Never,

Q33. If you have changed destinations, which destination was the most recently changed one? Please write:

If Q32 does not select Never,

Q34. If you have changed destinations, what was the kind of disruption causing such a change?

Q35. Have you or your company experienced any disruption that caused a financial loss for an event?

- Yes
- No

If Q35 selects Yes,

Q36. What kind of disruption was the most recent one? Please write:

If Q35 selects Yes,

Q37. What was the total amount of the financial loss due to the disruption?

- less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 - \$99,999
- \$100K - \$499,999
- \$500K - \$999,999
- \$1 million or more

Q38. In general, do your clients, both internal and external, set expectations or criteria for crisis (disruption) planning?

- Yes
- No

If Q38 selects Yes,

Q39. What do they require? Write two:

1. _____
2. _____

Q40. As a planner, how often do you or your company require each of the following legal protection to be incorporated in contracts with vendors (e.g., business partners)?

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't know
Limitation of liability (e.g., waivers, disclaimers, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indemnification (i.e., guarding or securing against anticipated loss through compensation agreement with partner.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Force majeure (i.e., an unexpected and disruptive event that may operate to excuse a party from a contract.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q41. As a planner, how often do you or your company require each of the following legal protection to be incorporated in contracts with clients (attendees)?

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't know
Limitation of liability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Indemnification	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Force majeure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q42. How often do your attendees or meeting/program sponsors require specific legal protection from each of the following?

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always	Don't know
From your company	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
From your vendors or partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
From other attendees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q43. Who signs attendee waivers?

- Nothing required
- Attendee signs for attendee and attendee's guest
- Both attendee and attendee's guest sign waivers separately
- Don't know

Q44. When do you collect waivers?

- Not collected
- Collected online (with electronic signature)
- Collected on site (with original signature)
- Collected either online or on site, whatever is convenient
- Collected in other ways: Please specify _____

Q45. Think about the most recent disruption that occurred to any of your events which your partner such as a hotel or DMC was supposed to handle for you.

- a. Please describe the disruption in 2-4 words:
- b. Which event was affected by the disruption?
- c. I have never experienced any disruption for my event. (Please write "None" in the box.)

If c on Q45 has None, then Skip To End of Block

Q46. Please answer the questions below based on the most recent disruption you described above. Which partner was supposed to handle the disruption for you?

- Hotel
- DMC
- Airline
- Other (please specify) _____
- No one

If Q46 selects No one, then Skip To End of Block

How Please answer the following series of questions about the partner (you just wrote down above) that was supposed to handle for you the most recent disruption to your event.

Q47. Overall, the partner's handling of the disruption was... (choose one to indicate the degree.)

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

Q48. How satisfied were you with the partner's performance in handling the disruption.

- Very dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Satisfied
- Very satisfied

Q49. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the partner based on this recent disruption that affected your event.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The partner was carrying a good insurance coverage for such a disruption.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I could rely on the partner's contractual protection against such a disruption.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If necessary, the partner could take care of the loss associated with the disruption through its insurance plan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner had an appropriate infrastructure and resources to handle such a disruption.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner was experienced in handling such an emergency situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner offered a good contingency plan for such a disruption.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner had good safety records.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q50. Please continue answering the following questions about the same partner.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Overall, the partner's financial capability was in a good shape.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner's financial strength gave me a sense of relief for the business relationship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner was financially strong enough to cover potential disruptions to my event, if dictated.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, the partner had a good reputation for its business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner's brand name was highly recognized in the business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I knew the partner's quality and integrity in handling event disruptions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner was cooperative for the success of my event.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner's staff was always helpful and willing to assist.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with the cooperative business relationship orientation the partner demonstrated.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q51. Please continue answering the following questions about the same partner.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
This partner can be trusted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This partner can be counted on to do what is right.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This partner has high integrity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This partner is a very reliable supporter of my meeting planning business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This partner is consistent in the manner they conduct the business with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner was creative offering unique programs for my event.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner was resourceful in suggesting different ideas for my event programs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The partner was innovative in adding fresh aspects and values to my event.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q52. If I have a chance to conduct another similar event in the same destination,

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am very committed to working with this partner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I intend to return to this partner without hesitation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This partner deserves my event business again.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
This partner will be my favorite choice among many possible partners.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Final A few more questions about you and your business. All information will remain strictly confidential.

Q53. Which city and state (or country) is your business headquartered?

City:

State or Country:

Q54. How long has your business been in operation?

- Fewer than 2 years
- 2-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

Q55. What is the size of your business?

- I conduct this meeting planning business all by myself.
- Fewer than 10 employees
- 10 - 25 employees
- 26 - 50 employees
- More than 50 employees

Q56. How many events did you (not company) conduct in the past 12 months?

- Fewer than 10
- 10-20
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- More than 50

Q57. What was the total annual revenue in FY2014 of your business (unit) before tax?

- Less than \$100K
- \$101K to \$500K
- \$ 501K to \$1 million
- \$1.1 million to \$2.5 million
- \$2.6 million to \$5 million
- \$5.1 million to \$10 million
- More than \$10 million

Q58. Which of the following best characterizes your business?

- Incentive house/third party (ITA, BCD, Maritz, etc.)
- Corporate (i.e., internal meeting planning department for a corporation)
- Independent planner (e.g., independent or boutique planning group)
- Other, please specify: _____

Q59. What is your current job position title? Please write:

Q60. What is the primary job or assignment focus of your business?

- Incentive planning
- Meeting planning
- Combination (both)
- Other, please specify: _____

Q61. Which industry is the focus of your business? (Check all that apply)

- Automotive
- High tech
- Finance/ Insurance
- Pharma/ Med/ Life sciences
- Other, please specify _____

Q62. You are:

- Male
- Female

Q63. Your age:

- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- Over 60

Q64. Your formal highest education:

- High school or less
- Associate degree (e.g., 2 year college)
- College degree (e.g., 4 year college)
- Post graduate degree (e.g., Master's or PhD degree)

Thank you for your participation!!!

APPENDIX 3.

Additional Personal Interview Results

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	11	61.1	61.1	61.1
Male	7	38.9	38.9	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
51-60	10	55.6	55.6	55.6
41-50	5	27.8	27.8	83.3
31-40	2	11.1	11.1	94.4
61 and more	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Number of Employees

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
10 and less	8	44.4	44.4	44.4
11-100	4	22.2	22.2	66.7
501 and more	3	16.7	16.7	83.3
101-200	2	11.1	11.1	94.4
201-500	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Years in Meeting Planning

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
11-20	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
21-30	5	27.8	27.8	55.6
6-10	4	22.2	22.2	77.8
31 and more	3	16.7	16.7	94.4
5 and less	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Number of Meetings Planned Per Year

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
10 and less	6	33.3	33.3	33.3
101-200	6	33.3	33.3	66.7
11-100	5	27.8	27.8	94.4
201 and more	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Size of Meetings Planned

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
101-500	5	27.8	27.8	27.8
2501-5000	5	27.8	27.8	55.6
1001-2500	4	22.2	22.2	77.8
100 and less	2	11.1	11.1	88.9
501-1000	1	5.6	5.6	94.4
5001 and more	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

City of Business

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Dallas	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
Toronto	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
Baltimore	1	5.6	5.6	27.8
Chappaqua	1	5.6	5.6	33.3
Chicago	1	5.6	5.6	38.9
Cincinnati	1	5.6	5.6	44.4
Davie	1	5.6	5.6	50.0
Irvine	1	5.6	5.6	55.6
Lincoln	1	5.6	5.6	61.1
Memphis	1	5.6	5.6	66.7
Miami	1	5.6	5.6	72.2
Minneapolis	1	5.6	5.6	77.8
Richmond	1	5.6	5.6	83.3
Salk Lake City	1	5.6	5.6	88.9
San Pedro	1	5.6	5.6	94.4

Spartanburg	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
Total	18	100.0	100.0	

State or Country of Business

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	California	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Canada	2	11.1	11.1	22.2
	Florida	2	11.1	11.1	33.3
	Texas	2	11.1	11.1	44.4
	Illinois	1	5.6	5.6	50.0
	Maryland	1	5.6	5.6	55.6
	Minnesota	1	5.6	5.6	61.1
	Nebraska	1	5.6	5.6	66.7
	New York	1	5.6	5.6	72.2
	Ohio	1	5.6	5.6	77.8
	South Carolina	1	5.6	5.6	83.3
	Tennessee	1	5.6	5.6	88.9
	Utah	1	5.6	5.6	94.4
	Virginia	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	