

THE MEETING TRENDS OF 2013



If you actually thought the old days of tug-of-war between staff teams and sweaty company sweatshirts are over, you are mistaken. According to the 'Top Ten Meeting Trends for 2013' by Benchmark Hospitality those days are back with a vengeance.

Benchmark Hospitality, a management company owning over thirty nine conference centers, has seen an increase in the demand for meeting centers within its establishments.

The company's CEO, Burt Cabanas said that he expects **the overall number of meetings in 2013 to be higher than those seen in recent years**. He even went as far as suggesting that the number of meetings this year may be higher than those witnessed during the pre-stimulus years in the United States.

He attributed this rise to the fact that most companies have now decided to hold meetings that they had previously deferred due to turbulent economic times. He was however quick to point out that the manner in which people held meetings then will be markedly different from how they will be held in 2013.

The top ten meeting trends that have been forecast for year 2013 are as follows:

1. There will be slow but nonetheless steady growth in meetings. This trend is informed by the steady rise in demand for meetings since the year began.
2. The group rates for holding meetings are set to rise. This anticipated rise in group rates are a direct result of the increased number of meetings. However, these group rates will not rise uniformly across the board. They will be determined by the attractiveness of the locations where the meetings will be held.
3. There will be an increased level of customization for meeting groups. It will be determined by the specific needs and budgets of the meeting groups.
4. The rate of bookings is set to go up. People would rather set up deferred meetings in 2013 than settle for abrupt meetings. This means that the levels of bookings for meetings will surely rise.
5. There will be an increased use of wireless technology in meetings. This technology will include iPads, laptops and live streaming between conference halls. It will be used to communicate and record proceedings at meetings.
6. People are expected to order more native delicacies in addition to food considered healthy. In other words, people will want native dishes from the location where they are in which should also be healthy dishes.
7. There will be more security procedures and personnel at meetings. This is due to the increasingly insecure and hostile nature of our world today in addition to the high profile nature of attendees at meetings.
8. Team building efforts and activities are set to receive a lot of attention. They will be undertaken to

liven up the mood of attendees in light of the hard economic times the world has faced this year.

9. Meeting professionals are expected to be a whole lot busier this year. They will be expected to do a lot of multitasking and a lot of delicate balancing of schedules as they try to cope with the rise in demand for meetings.

10. Certain key sectors are expected to be the driving force behind the increased demand for meetings. These sectors are medical, bio tech, financial services, education, nonprofit organizations, media and professional associations.

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