



Switzerland.

Market situation North America.

Switzerland Convention & Incentive Bureau (SCIB).

MySwitzerland.com/meetings



1 MARKET SITUATION AND OUTLOOK.

1.1 Economic situation

1.1.1. United States

Entering September, the U.S. economy seemed to have stabilized and getting ready for a strong rebound through the Fall. The August unemployment rate was 5.2%, a decrease of .0.2% compared to the July figure. Many of the other economic indicators such as housing and consumer confidence also were trending in a positive direction. Unfortunately, in recent weeks there has been a great deal of concern that the progress that has been made may be undone due to an assortment of mostly political issues. The first is the ongoing negotiations of two major infrastructure bills, one totalling \$1 trillion dollars and the other up to \$3.5 trillion dollars. Secondly, there is the resistance in certain regions of the country to take advantage of the readily available vaccines. Another concern is the increase of the U.S. Debt Ceiling and finally the news that the Federal Reserve Board (similar to ECB) will start “tightening” and soon raising interest rates. The picture is a bit foggy, but also hopeful, as the resolution of some or all these issues will support the expected bounce back. If this happens, combined with the recent easing and clarity on entry and travel restrictions for fully vaccinated international travelers it is good news for the travel sector heading into 2022.

Freeman, a leading global event agency, conducted a survey and found that so far large in-person business events with proper protocols in place have been safe and did not increase local COVID-19 case rates. “Based on the data we’ve seen, attending an in-person event is no riskier - in fact, less risky - than essential daily activities,” says Freeman CEO Bob Priest-Heck. He adds, “Businesses and organizations want to get back to events for critical commerce, networking, and exchange of ideas. This research provides the framework for doing so safely.”

Lastly on September 27th, the Pfizer CEO also announced that normal life may return within a year and that we may need annual Covid shots. As per today, in the U.S. 55.8% of the entire population is fully vaccinated (185.1M) and 64.7% have received at least one dose. The booster shot is also being distributed to people aged 65 years and older and adults between 50 - 64 years with underlying medical conditions.

1.1.2. Canada

On September 21st Justin Trudeau's Liberal party won a closely contested victory in the Canadian Elections. Trudeau will remain Prime Minister and Chrystia Freeland will continue to serve as both Deputy PM and Finance Minister.

Trudeau is eager to get the Canadian economy moving again and laid out five post-election priorities for his government. All of them focus on the fight against the pandemic in some way and include vaccine mandates for public servants and travelers. It's important to note once again how integral full vaccination for both citizens and visitors is to the comfort of national governments to fully open. The ever-present concern is to try and limit the possible exposure of their domestic populations to “imported” infections. As the last year has shown, outbreaks don't help any industry or country from trying to reopen and stimulate business.



1.2 Travel industry in General

The Travel industry is poised for a tremendous comeback. There is a lot of pent-up demand and desire for travel in the U.S. markets. There have been several trade shows that have been successfully and safely conducted over the past few months. This is important because the more we can demonstrate our ability to conduct high quality and safe events the quicker we can get back to normal order of business.

As we all know, and as PCMA's Convene has recently put it, the Business Events recovery has been a roller-coaster ride of emotions and if you are interested in checking their recent dashboard survey on the tracking of the planners and suppliers emotions over the last year, you can check it out [here](#).

Further, Deloitte has also released [a study](#) saying that while corporate travels will regain momentum after its standstill due to Covid-19 and will pick up speed throughout the remainder of 2021, it will likely remain significantly below pre-pandemic levels for at least another year, and some types of travel may never fully return.

1.3 Situation of the Meeting Industry & Trends.

ASAE published [an article on the future of meetings](#) and how the pandemic upended expectations for association meetings. The future of meetings used to involve robots. The [ASAE ForesightWorks](#) "Virtualized Meetings" action brief, developed in 2017, forecasted that future meetings would need to account for telepresence robots that would allow attendees to navigate the event remotely. In addition, the brief forecasted that virtual and augmented reality platforms would offer attendees new engagement and networking opportunities. Society was in the early stages of moving toward that future, but the forecast was for rapid growth and acceleration.

On the agency front, BCD Meetings & Events have just published their 5th annual Global Trends Report examining three planning-department priorities that have come to the fore because of the ground-shifting pandemic. The full report can be downloaded [here](#) and it comes with some work-life balance tips.

Another positive news is that Maritz Global Events confirmed that as of August 2021, they re-hired more than 400 employees.

From a U.S. to Switzerland travel perspective, we had to remain agile and flexible with all the recent announcements in travel policy changes. It started on April 4th when Von Der Leyen announced the lift of potential travel restrictions, which the Swiss Government backed up on June 6th and eventually went into effect on June 26th. This resulted in more than 68K overnights out of the USA in July. Sadly, on August 30th the CDC classified Switzerland as level 4 travel country and EU put the U.S. on red list. In September we had back-to-back incentive groups in Switzerland and that's when on September 13th the new travel and certificate restrictions were announced, which caused a lot of confusion for the planners. Fortunately, the Swiss government has now found a solution which will simplify the handling of groups in the next few weeks.



Having said all this, SCIB NA continues to adapt to the market and is shifting from online to more in person activities, with IMEX America certainly being the biggest upcoming event. IMEX has already reported 3.600 registered buyers out of which 2,800 are Hosted Buyers. Other activities include:

- 6 October: SwissTalk #6 Basel
- 8 - 14 October: Pre Tour STM Zurich/Luzern & STM in Interlaken
- 18 - 21 October: Global Incentive Summit, Banff, Canada
- 27 October: SITE Education Day, Toronto, Canada
- 1 November: PCMA Education Day, NY
- 9 - 11 November: IMEX America, Las Vegas
- 1 December: SwissTalk #7 Ovation
- 9 December: Joint CVB Event in NYC
- 12 - 14 December: SITE SoCal, CA (tbc)

1.4 RFP situation in North America.

The RFP situation in NA remains challenging. The most primary challenge is due to the frequent disruption and unpredictable travel regulations. Given this unpredictability it is understandable that there is some hesitation on behalf of NA clients to commit or even consider overseas destination. Everyone needs and is waiting for clarity and definition regarding travel policies.

On a positive note, we are able to report groups having taken place in Switzerland over the last couple of weeks, despite all uncertainties. It has certainly not been easy to manage the last-minute changes by the Swiss government. We are hoping for planners to gain confidence and to start requesting/booking for 2022 and beyond. Flexibility from our side continues to be key.

1 January 2021 – 30 September 2021

38 RFPs received with a total of 62,575 overnights

- 5 RFPs carried out in CH with a total of 16,061 overnights
- 5 RPFs confirmed with a total of 1,370 overnights
- 24 RFPs pending with a total of 55,388 overnights
- 7 RFPs canceled with a total of 4,813 overnights
- 0 RFPs carried out foreign with a total of 0 overnights
- 1 RPFs postponed with a total of 500 overnights



2 TARGETS.

2.1 Qualitative.

- Reconnect with clients and begin to transition back to 'new' normal business
- Integrate the evolving travel outlook and adjust SCIB NA's strategy accordingly
- Seek out new strategic initiatives & partnerships given uncertain market dynamics
- Find the most efficient and new platforms to stay in contact with clients
- Elevate SCIB NA's presence on social media to proactively promote brand & stay connected to clients.
- Make necessary updates to the database and client's history
- Identify clients' primary concerns and work to resolve them. Be the go-to resource local market expert capable of providing accurate and helpful destination info
- Convert RFIs and RFPs into overnights and consistent ROI

2.2 Quantitative Goals

- Number of qualified contacts in the database: 5,800
- Qualified client contacts: 1,500
- Number of days with customers: 25
- Number of requests: 100
- Number of conferences, meetings and incentives in Switzerland: 20
- Number of directly influenced overnights: 10,000
- Web visits on meetings/incentives: 10,000
- Web visits destination weddings: 10,000

3 CURRENT DATABASE FIGURES.

Type	Contacts
Agencies	3,289
Corporates	1,755
Media	108
Associations	1,026
Wedding Planners	52
Others	6
TOTAL Qualified Contacts	6,236
Inactive	551



4 DETAILED MARKETING ACTIVITIES.

Further details of past, present and future marketing activities can be found on www.stnet.ch, which can be accessed by using your personal username and password.