



Operate

## 5 challenges facing the meetings industry

by Chuck Dobrosielski | Mar 25, 2019 5:39pm



*The meetings industry today is facing a host of problems, according to meeting planners and hoteliers. Photo credit: Getty/Ridofranz*

After conducting a survey of 150 meeting planners and hoteliers, Teneo Hospitality Group came up with five challenges the meetings industry is faced with today. It also suggested solutions to each issue, mainly that meetings



## 1. Budgets

The first issue Teneo raised is budgets. Costs, especially food and beverage, have increased despite steady, and in some cases decreasing budgets. Attendees today also increasingly want more technical services, engagement and entertaining activities, which all add to costs. To deal with the issue, Teneo suggested those planning be transparent with the hotel from the beginning to receive an honest, realistic budget.

## 2. Time

From learning new technology to making long-term, strategic plans, hoteliers and planners say they simply do not have enough time. Teneo's advice: Planners need to be honest with their timeline upfront and flexible with dates early on. Also, if those organizing the event reduced the number of locations they contact, then those hotels will be more likely to take them seriously.

## 3. Technology

Those in the meetings business also are having trouble keeping up with technology that changes so quickly. Teneo advised that they work hard to stay up-to-date with the latest innovations and to engage with attendee devices.

## 4. Lack of creativity

Planners also complained about the lack of creativity, something Teneo attributed to big-brand hotels' corporate bureaucracy. To fix this, it suggested partnering with properties that offer innovative and original events, effective team-building exercises, new experiences and sustainable and healthy food. The best solution for this, according to Teneo, may be seeking out independent and small-brand hotels. The group added that planners can try partnering with destination-management companies to help make the destination more interesting to guests.

## 5. F&B

Teneo identified the increasing complexity and rising cost of food and beverage as the fifth problem facing the meetings industry. Food preferences, dietary requirements and wellness and sustainability issues have all made food and beverage more complicated. Teneo saw independent and small-brand hotels as the solution again, saying they would be more flexible and creative. Also vital, the group said planners need to be completely honest with budget constraints from the beginning.

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