

Event organisers reveal how Australian events can bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic

Summary - A survey of regional event organisers reveals the financial impact of the ban on public gatherings - Half of event organisers (57%) believe a Government support package for the sector would be the most realistic solution to assist their event to bounce back after the COVID-19 crisis - While only 5% of event organisers predict their event will go bankrupt and be lost forever, a further 30% are unsure if their event will survive or not. A survey of Australian event managers is revealing the kind of support Australian events and festivals believe they will need to survive the cancellation or postponement of their events as required by the COVID-19 ban on public gatherings. The survey is being run jointly by regional tourism consultancy Tilma Group and event management trainer rEVENTS Academy. The majority of respondents are event organisers who host events of fewer than 5,000 attendees in a regional or rural community. As of 5pm Sunday March 22, 95 Australian event managers had completed the survey. 36% of respondents have cancelled their 2020 event or postponed until 2021. 20% will postpone their event to later in 2020. 28% are waiting for further information before deciding their course of action. Only half of respondents (55%) predict their event will find a way to survive and bounce back in 2021. One third are still unsure of their event's future, while 5% predict their event will go broke and never be held again. 70% will lose up to \$100,000 by cancelling or postponing their event. 22% will lose up to \$500,000, and 5% will lose up to \$1 million, with a couple of events losing several million dollars. There are many sunk costs prior to the event being held. Depending on what stage event planning is up to, events could have spent the majority of their budget without yet earning any revenue. Events who purchased event cancellation insurance will not receive any compensation because the cause of the cancellation was a pandemic. Further to the loss to events directly is the economic loss to the regional host communities on top of the impact of bushfires and severe drought when they particularly need the economic and social stimulus that events provide. 63% of survey respondents estimate their community will lose up to \$1 million in economic benefit from the loss of their event, while 29% estimate up to \$5 million. One event manager estimates up to \$13 million will be lost by communities across the Outback region their attendees travel through. 39% of respondents will refund pre-purchased tickets in order to look after their customers and protect their reputation, despite the lack of clarity around refund legalities. Half of event organisers (57%) believe a Government support package for the sector would be the most realistic solution to assist their event to bounce back after the COVID-19 crisis, while 28% believe a combination of Government support and widespread support from ticketholders such as ticketholders holding onto their tickets until the event is next held would allow them to bounce back in 2021.

--END-- About Tilma Group Tilma Group provides strategic tourism development planning support to local governments across regional Australia.

About rEVENTS Academy rEVENTS Academy provides event management training to support the long-term viability of regional Australian events and festivals.

Contacts

Linda Tillman
0439 192 193
mailto: linda@tilmagroup.com.au