

# PULSE SURVEY

## **THE FUTURE OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS IN THE ERA OF COVID-19**

March 31, 2020



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- No major changes were seen in the distribution of cancellations, postponements and virtual event alternatives. This week there's a slight shift to cancellations from postponements, as more meetings have been cancelled outright, with an increased interest in virtual meetings as an alternative to a live event.
- As more planners have cancelled and/or are cancelling their events, fewer planners are experiencing difficulties doing so as the crisis persists.
- A similar favorable shift can be seen as planners postpone/reschedule their events. Last week, 64 percent of the respondents reported their experience was easy to neutral, while more than 71 percent reported their experience rescheduling/postponing as easy to neutral this week.
- Like last week, well over 75 percent of all planners reported their rescheduling has not impacted their contract terms, across all key considerations (attrition, space, costs and concessions).
- As time passes, more planners have rescheduled or intend to reschedule their postponed meetings to later in the year. Last week, 53 percent of respondents reported rescheduling their events to September, Q4 '20 and Q1 2021. This week, more than 57 percent reported doing so.
- These verbatim comments show what some of the respondents are experiencing these days.
- "As for working with hotels, all but one were easy and compromises were met on both sides," said one planner.
- Another said finding dates was easy, but renegotiating was hard: "Our hotels don't want to reduce liability for reschedules. We have scheduling conflicts with attendees and we anticipate a drop in attendance. There is also the fear factor of people not wanting to travel, or firms restricting business travel."
- One planner already had an event in place for next year, so rescheduling wasn't an option: "It took extreme circumstances for the hotel to agree to allow us to cancel without penalty."



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- "Our biggest challenge is determining when we are comfortable hosting events in the future," said another planner.
- The contract held firm for another planner. "We had to cancel outright with force majeure being enacted and accepted with no liability," they said.
- And every experience is different. "It's been dependent on the property. Trying to postpone our May event, one hotel would require us to pay all the losses they would incur. We will keep trying to reason with them. On the other hand, for an event scheduled for July, our hotel is happy to work with us for a win-win," said another planner.
- Going online continues to be an option: "We're not looking to postpone or reschedule. We're doing a condensed virtual format over the same dates that the live event was to happen."
- As the industry continues to shift with developments related to the crisis, so too will our PULSE Survey. We will be posting a new survey with new questions shortly. Thank you to all of the hundreds of planners who continue to participate in the PULSE Survey. Your participation provides guidance to industry professionals as we seek to work our way through our current challenges.

**UPDATED**

PULSE SURVEY



# **CANCELLING OR RESCHEDULING MEETINGS? HERE'S HOW IT'S GOING**

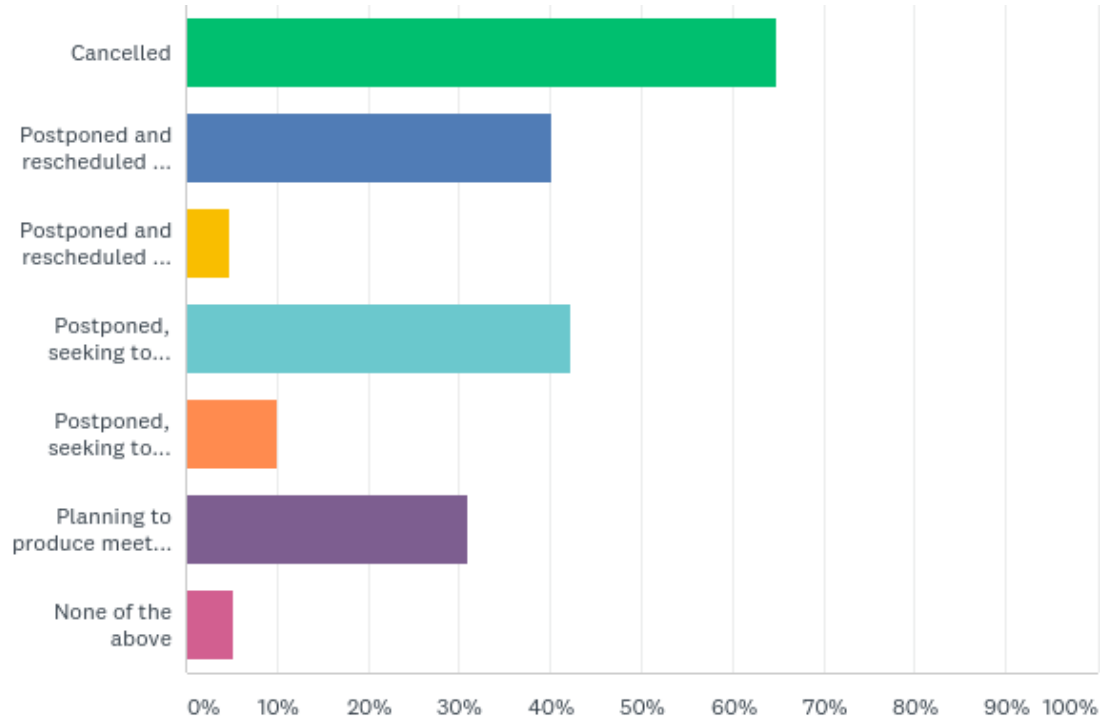
TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 2020



**NORTHSTAR**  
MEETINGS GROUP

# Q1: Have you cancelled, postponed and rescheduled meetings or events due to COVID-19? (Select all that apply if you are managing multiple events.)

Answered: 534 Skipped: 1



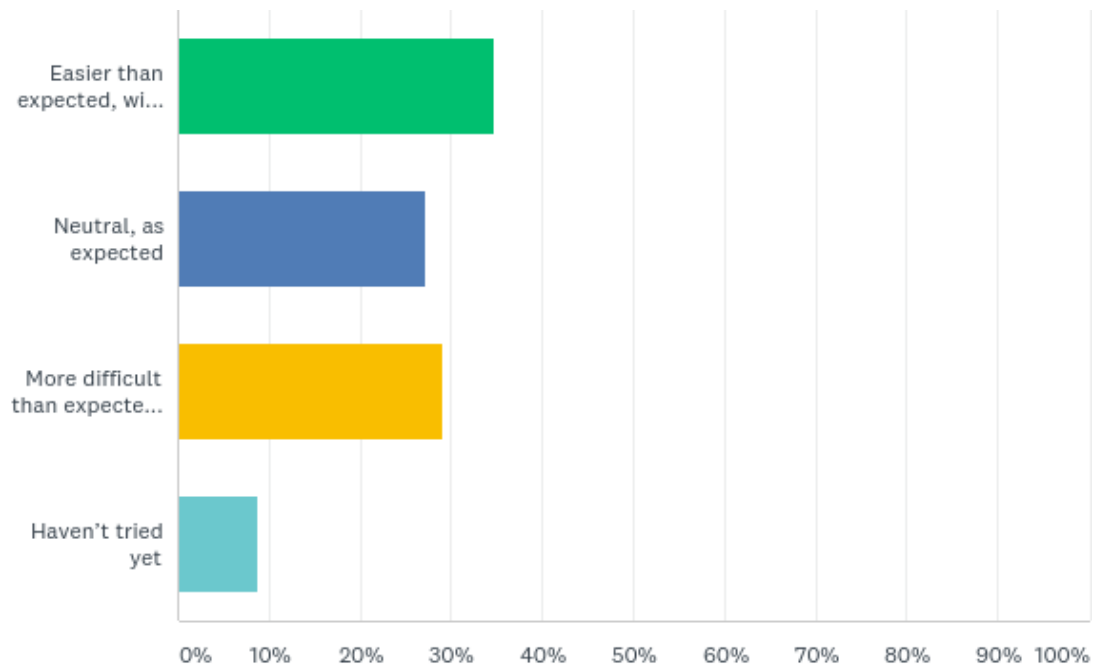
# Q1: Have you cancelled, postponed and rescheduled meetings or events due to COVID-19? (Select all that apply if you are managing multiple events.)

Answered: 534 Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Cancelled	64.79% 346
Postponed and rescheduled at same venue and location	40.07% 214
Postponed and rescheduled at different venue and/or location	4.87% 26
Postponed, seeking to reschedule at same venue/location	42.32% 226
Postponed, seeking to reschedule at different venue and/or location	10.11% 54
Planning to produce meeting virtually	30.90% 165
None of the above	5.24% 28
Total Respondents: 534	

## Q2: If you have canceled your event or are working on doing so, how would you describe that process?

Answered: 405 Skipped: 130



## Q2: If you have canceled your event or are working on doing so, how would you describe that process?

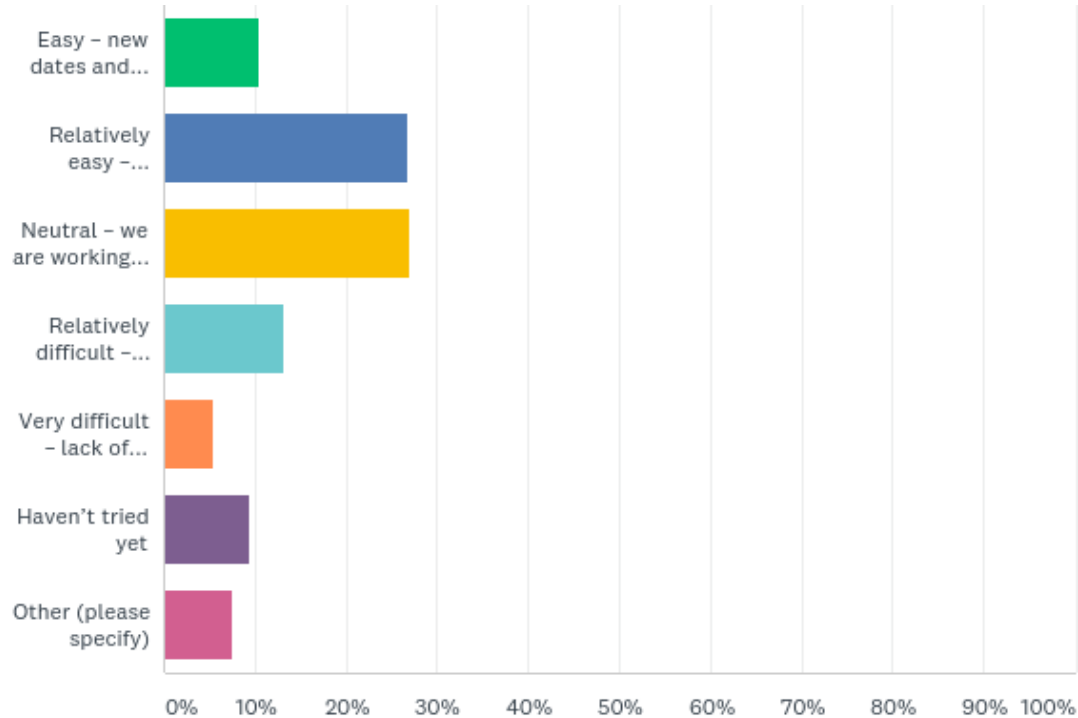
Answered: 405 Skipped: 130

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Easier than expected, with mutually agreeable terms	34.81% 141
Neutral, as expected	27.16% 110
More difficult than expected, as we expected more flexibility given the circumstances	29.14% 118
Haven't tried yet	8.89% 36
TOTAL	405



### Q3: How would you describe your circumstances in seeking to postpone and reschedule your events?

Answered: 410 Skipped: 125



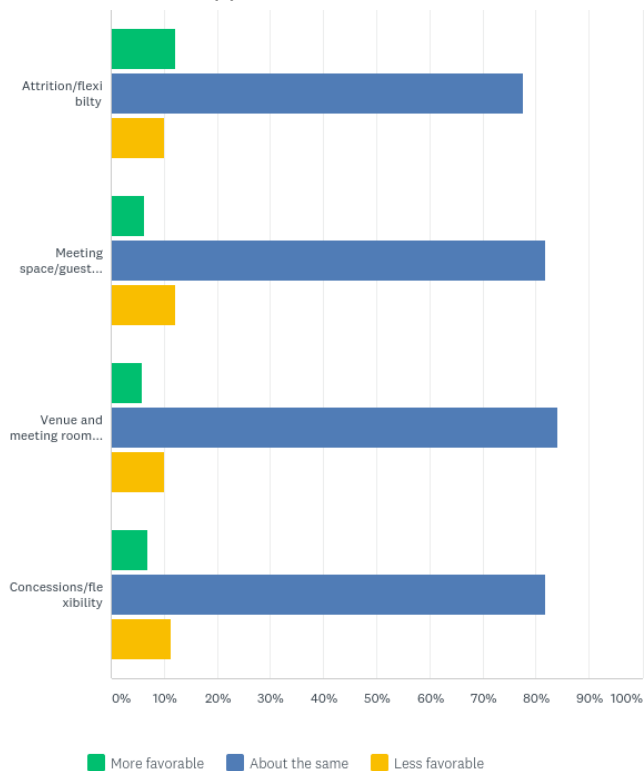
### Q3: How would you describe your circumstances in seeking to postpone and reschedule your events?

Answered: 410 Skipped: 125

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Easy - new dates and obligations were/are easy to accommodate, and we expect a favorable outcome	10.49% 43
Relatively easy - compromises were/are needed but our objectives were/will be met	26.83% 110
Neutral - we are working through challenges, with no determination of outcome, good or bad	27.07% 111
Relatively difficult - lack of availability and limited flexibility in our contractual obligations require us to make concessions	13.17% 54
Very difficult - lack of availability and no flexibility in our contractual obligations preclude a mutually favorable outcome	5.37% 22
Haven't tried yet	9.51% 39
Other (please specify)	7.56% 31
TOTAL	410

## Q4: Considering the current circumstances, if you rescheduled, were your new agreements more favorable than in your original contract, about the same or less favorable?

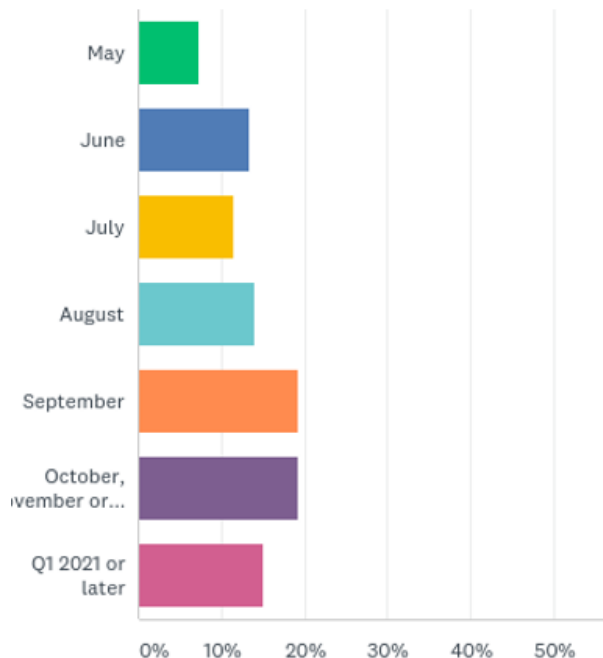
Answered: 335 Skipped: 200



	MORE FAVORABLE	ABOUT THE SAME	LESS FAVORABLE	TOTAL
Attrition/flexibility	12.23% 40	77.68% 254	10.09% 33	327
Meeting space/guest room availability	6.17% 20	81.79% 265	12.04% 39	324
Venue and meeting room costs	5.90% 19	84.16% 271	9.94% 32	322
Concessions/flexibility	6.88% 22	81.88% 262	11.25% 36	320

## Q5: In what month, at the earliest, will you reschedule or plan to hold future meetings or events?

Answered: 398 Skipped: 137



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
May	7.29%	29
June	13.32%	53
July	11.56%	46
August	14.07%	56
September	19.35%	77
October, November or December 2020	19.35%	77
Q1 2021 or later	15.08%	60
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>398</b>