



Trade Show Report **Destination West – Tucson, AZ** **November 1 -3, 2022**

Montana Representation:

- Western Montana's Glacier Country

Overview:

- Destination West is put on by Northstar Meetings Group and is a hosted buyer, appointment-only, reverse trade show held in the Western U.S. to draw planners from and into the area and entice them to hold meetings in the western region of the U.S. I had never been to a NMG planned event but had heard great things about the quality of planners that they invite. I also thought it would attract planners interested in 3rd and 4th tier cities.
- NMG is a great job of vetting out active corporate, association, independent and third-party planners to attend the show. A total of 30 planners were there and 60 suppliers. They like a 2:1 ratio.
- Glacier Country Tourism was matched with 20 buyers (with 0 no-shows which is great in this day and age) for 10-minute appointments.
- Only 3 or 4 planners that I met with had ever been to Montana and only 1 for a meeting in Big Sky. I did hear, "I'm so glad you are here." It's nice to talk mountains in the desert."
- We increased our database with 20 new meeting planners.
- No RFP's were given to me at the show, but several will follow up with meetings that they think would be good fits.

Appointments and projected ROI:

This was heavily attended by Arizona and California DMOs and hotel/resorts. I connected with them on their corporate incentive needs with our luxury guest ranches and explained about our convention hotel properties for association business. Several appointments had regional meetings in the 50 – 100 people range which is perfect for most of our convention hotels in our three hub cities and three said they have associations that would be interested in the University of Montana conference space. This show has great networking outside of the appointments. I have followed up with all the planners via email and will have to see about ROI.

Recommendations for 2023:

- I will continue to attend different meetings shows to see which one produced the best ROI. It had a family feel to it that I haven't felt at the other smaller shows. I know they do a great job of making everyone feel welcome. I learned that they also have an independent planner and a small and boutique show that I might look into for future consideration.