



Trade Show Report

Connect PNW – Boise, ID

September 19 - 21, 2022

Montana Representation:

- Western Montana's Glacier Country
- Destination Missoula
- Averill Hospitality
- Great Falls CVB
- Big Sky Resort
- Sage Lodge – Columbia Hospitality

Overview:

- Connect PNW is a hosted buyer, appointment-only, reverse trade show held in the Pacific Northwest to draw planners from and into the area. I decided to go this year since it was being held in Boise and thought it would attract planners interested in 3rd and 4th tier cities.
- Connect PNW vets out active corporate and association planners to attend the show. A total of 40 planners were there and 80 suppliers. They like a 2:1 ratio.
- Glacier Country Tourism was matched with 28 buyers (however, 3 cancelled and were no-shows for our appointment) for 7-minute appointments which is never enough time to learn about what they needed and tell them about Glacier Country. More of a meet/greet and follow up later type of trade show.
- The real benefit at this show was the delegation from Montana that was there. I heard over and over from the planners, "Wow, Montana is here in force."
- We increased our database with 25 new meeting planners.
- I did hear at the reception that they were calling planners at the last minute to get them to come because they didn't have enough planners. I did have 3 or 4 promising appointments with RFP in hand potential.

Appointments and projected ROI:

There were several planners from the Idaho, Oregon, Washington areas so I didn't have to spend most of the appointment explaining how to get to Montana. 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. One was a regional trucking association and the other a beard and mustache program. This show did not have 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. I didn't like that this show was looking for qualified planners to attend up until the last minute. I did hear that they might combine this show with another and have it more west coast rather than PNW focused.