



Impacts of COVID-19 on
Convention & Visitor Industry
Presented June 22, 2020



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To Convention and Tradeshow Industry Professionals:

This is the fourth in a series of research memos prepared by CSL to provide insight into the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the convention industry. The first memo, issued on March 19, provided data as to the historic relationship between the convention industry and U.S. GDP in order to assess potential industry rebound timing. Follow up research focused on the results of surveys of convention and meeting planners regarding future event cancellation and postponement. Insight from surveys of 20 DMOs regarding COVID-19 impacts have also been issued.

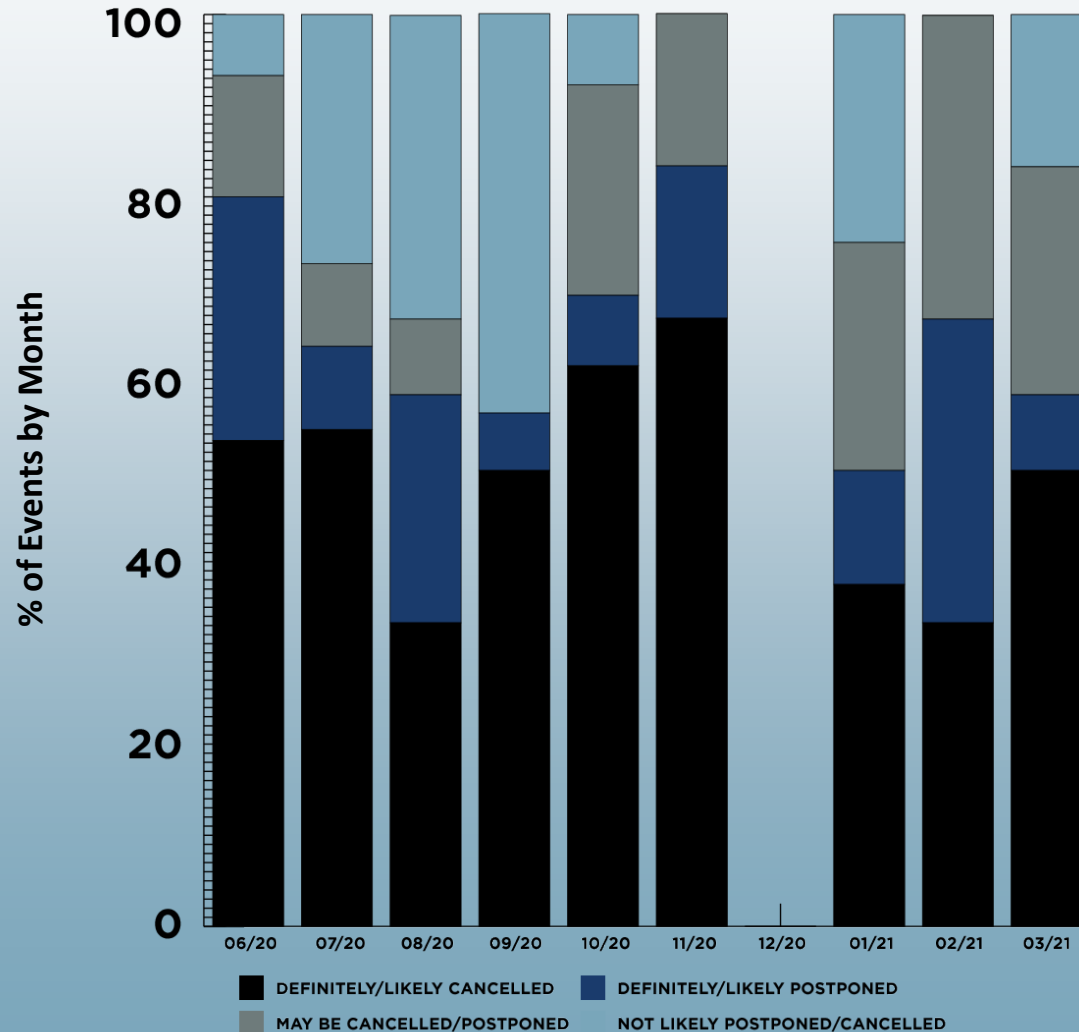
In this research presentation, we provide updated event planner insight into COVID-19 impacts, based on recent surveys of 435 planners of conventions, tradeshow and meetings held in convention centers, hotels, resorts and other event venues.

CSL will continue to provide research and insight into the convention tradeshow industry, including assessment of the near and long-term effects of COVID-19.

CSL International

Convention Center Event Cancellations

Expect a significant level of cancellations and postponements continuing through 2020 and in to 2021.



Convention center event planners, conditioned by an emerging understanding of the long term nature of COVID-19 impacts, see a significant level of cancellations and postponements continuing through 2020 and in to 2021.

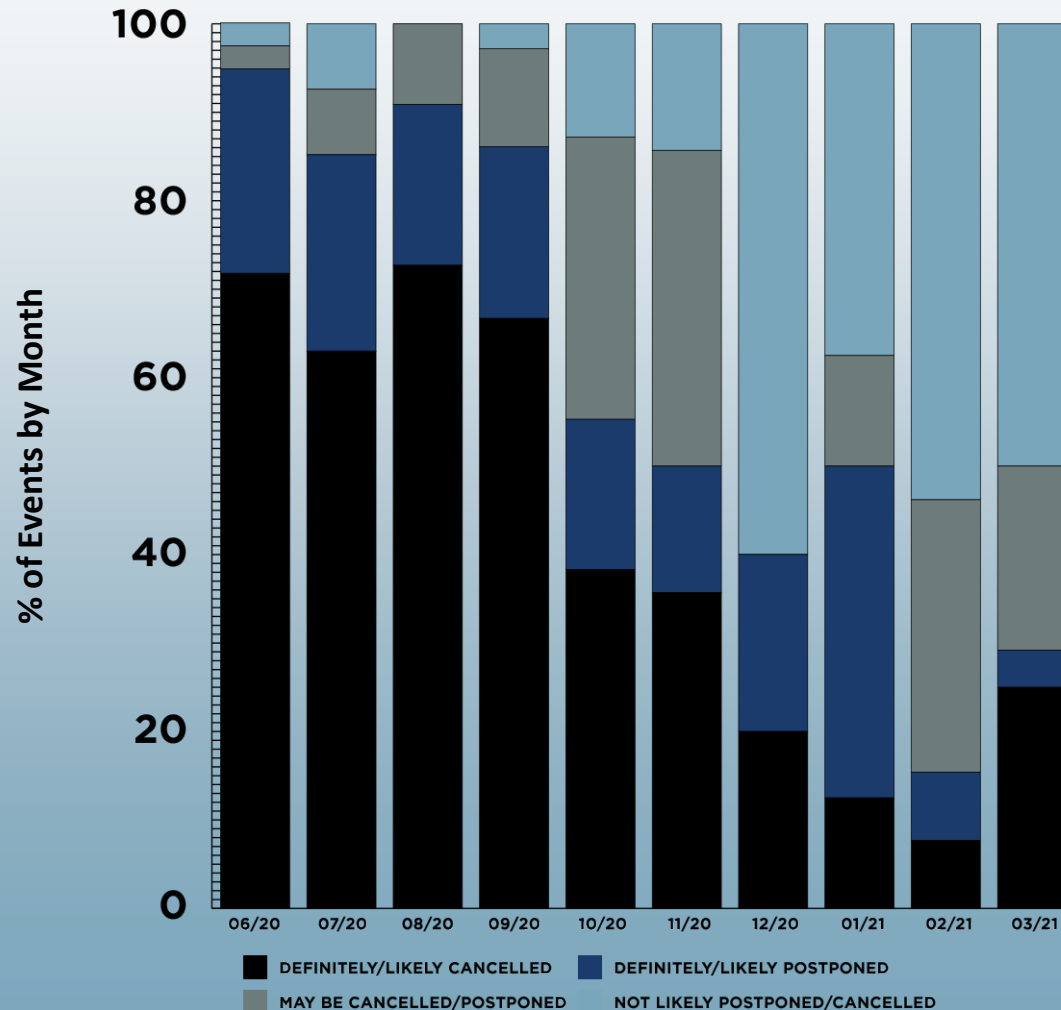
Recent CSL convention and tradeshow planner survey research indicates that combined event cancellation and postponement rates reach 83 percent by November of 2020, continuing at between 50 and 65 percent through March of next year.

These data suggest that convention center occupancy levels will be significantly and negatively impacted through the end of this year, continuing into 2021.

Note: December data reflects very few event responses.
Source: CSL International Survey Research, 2020

Outlook for Hotel and Resort Events

Less of a drop in events held at hotels and resorts.



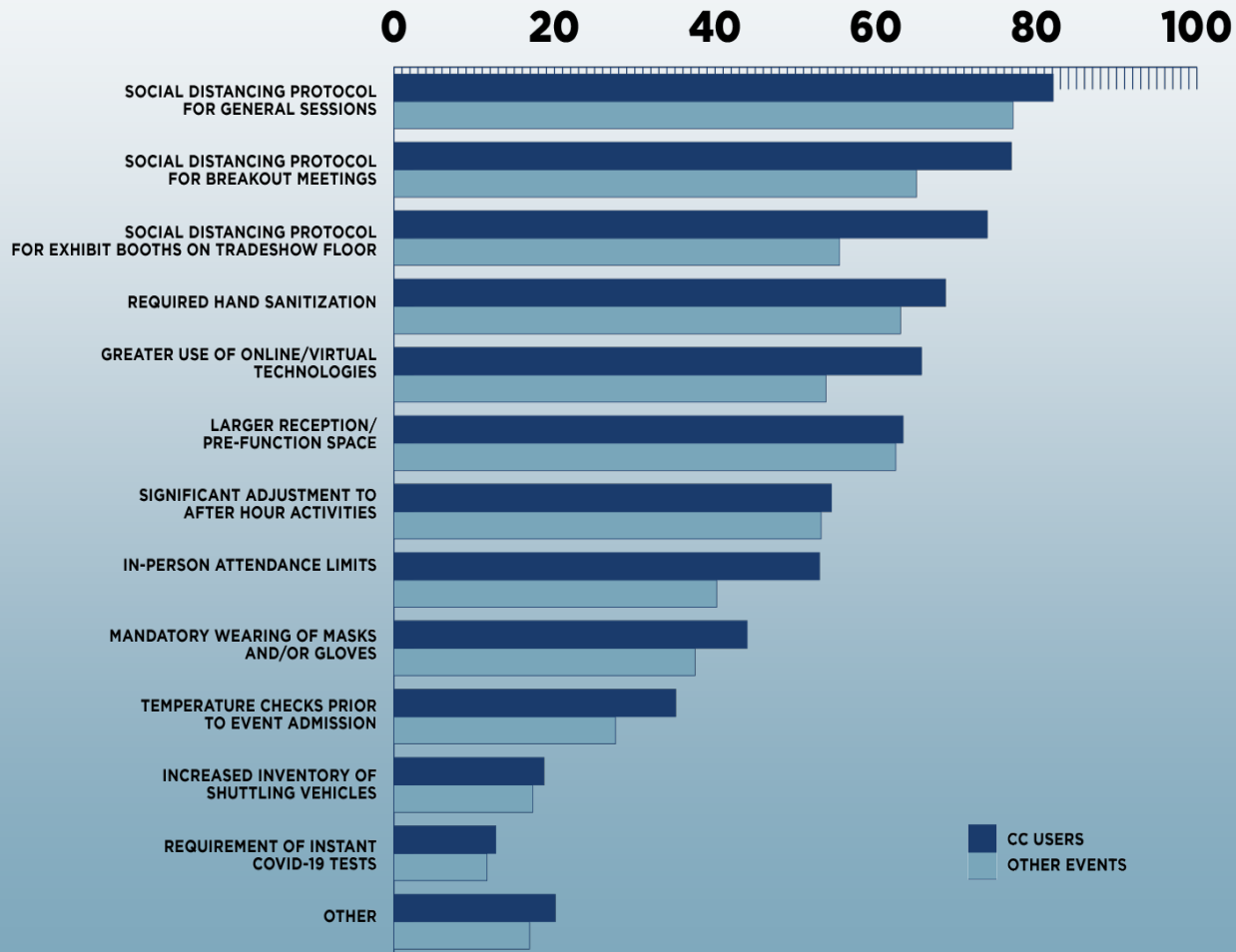
The cancellation and postponement outlook for events held at hotels and resorts is comparatively somewhat more optimistic, with expected cancellation/postponement rates dropping to 50 percent by November of 2020.

These data suggest that smaller meetings will likely experience a quicker rebound compared to larger events that typically use convention center venues.

Overall, the downward pressure on convention and meeting events will significantly depress hotel tax collections into 2021. This will have important implications on the financial resources for destination sales and marketing, as well as the financing of public event facilities throughout North America.

Event Production Impacts on Convention Centers

“Once conditions are declared safe enough to host large in-person gatherings, which of these procedures do you think you will likely employ for your event(s) during the initial convention “re-opening” period? Please select all that apply.”



Until a successful vaccine is established, there will be numerous impacts on how conventions and meetings are conducted.

Our recent survey research indicates that standard social distancing in general sessions and break out meeting areas will be a critical safety protocol. The need to distance exhibit booths on the tradeshow floor was also cited by a high percentage of surveyed event planners. Convention center, hotels, resorts and other event facilities will be impacted in terms of the size of events they can accommodate.

Greater use of on-line and virtual technologies will require event venues to adapt in terms of equipment and service. More standard initiatives including hand sanitization stations, wearing of masks, and in some cases temperature checks, will become prevalent.



This is the fourth in a series of research initiatives conducted by CSL International to provide updates as to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the convention, trade show and meetings sector. Additional research summaries will be forthcoming.

Please contact CSL International for copies of previous research memos:

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