

NEW YORK, Nov. 12, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- [Destination Hotels & Resorts](#) (Destination Hotels & Resorts), the fourth largest hospitality management company in the U.S., forecasts major meetings trends to watch for in 2014, in the company's second annual "State of the Meetings Industry" survey. Based on input from more than 180 corporate, association, independent, and government planners nationwide, the report provides insight on a number of key topics:

budget

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lead time; location; technology; culinary; teambuilding; and environmental sustainability.

Money and Time 26 percent of the survey participants forecast expenditures to be greater in 2014, an expected increase from the 20 percent who forecasted the same for 2013 funds, while 55 percent expects the budgets to remain the same in the New Year. This is where Destination Hotels & Resorts sees an opportunity to continue to focus on added-value while delivering quality service. Another core change is longer lead time, expected to range between two and six months in advance for 2014 bookings.

Location The survey results indicate that 'rate' is no longer the clear-cut feature in determining which hotel to pick for a meeting. Although still not an overwhelmingly dominant factor, 43.4 percent of the survey participants lists 'location' as the top priority, suggesting a steady switch towards increased interest in what the destination has to offer. Meeting planners also expect the location to be successfully complemented by the high-level quality of the overall experience, which is exemplified at properties like Lansdowne Resort in Washington, D.C., where meetings can be combined with golf, spa and regional wine tastings.

Flexible Meeting Spaces Planners seek out meeting spaces, as well as public areas, that can be utilized creatively in different ways for varied functions, from sit-down gatherings and ice breakers to brainstorming sessions. Exemplifying this flexibility, Terranea, a Destination Resort in Palos Verdes, California, has recently hosted an experiential learning summit throughout its 135,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space, even including

parking lots.

Technology Destination announces that a major change from last year's survey results is the increased need for a more encompassing technology service, to suit the needs of globally-expanding companies and organizations. 48 percent of this year's respondents note that 2014 meetings will have more of a technological footprint than in the past. Many properties under the Destination portfolio have already put 100 mbps in place, as higher bandwidth availability will be expected in meeting facilities, guest rooms and leisure areas.

Food and Beverage Diverse culinary offerings, from local products to healthy choices, are paramount to groups. To strengthen the memory of a meeting through an authentic culinary experience, Destination's Skamania Lodge in Washington State has developed an agreement with local Native American tribes to purchase wild salmon from the territory along the Columbia River. Other Destination properties also incorporate local markets and farms, and also grow their own fruits, vegetables and spices within the hotel premises, making it even more personalized.

Teambuilding As supported by the 92 percent of the survey participants, teambuilding continues to be a strong industry trend. Unique locations of Destination properties broaden the possibilities for teambuilding, as showcased at The Woodmark on Lake Washington near Seattle, where recent meeting attendees participated in an Iron Chef-type of cook-off under the tutelage of the Executive Chef.

In addition, planners will also seek unique locations where there is an opportunity to link corporate social responsibility with teambuilding activities, not only to benefit the meeting group but the community in which the meeting takes place. An industry leader in this space, Destination has partnered with The Odyssey Group, a philanthropic organization dedicated to customized teambuilding programs that integrate into an organization's corporate social responsibility philosophy. The collaboration includes a variety of efforts, ranging from building bicycles and skateboards for donation to local children's homes, to creating paintings on canvas that are then placed in the halls of a nearby children's hospital.

Over 180 meetings planners in the U.S. provided responses to the Destination Hotels & Resorts' "State of the Meetings Industry" survey in September 2013. For more information or to review the full version of the whitepaper, visit

www.destinationmeetings.com

About Destination Hotels & Resorts Destination Hotels & Resorts is the country's fourth largest hospitality management company with a portfolio of extraordinary resorts and hotels that span the nation, from exhilarating alpine adventures to stunning beachfronts to vibrant urban destinations. Celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2013, Destination manages 40 independent, luxury and upscale hotels, resorts and golf clubs, each offering authentic, enriching experiences for the discerning traveler. The company's award-winning collection features 113 unique restaurants, lounges and bars, 18 golf courses, 17 full-service spas and six IACC certified conference centers. Destination Hotels & Resorts properties are located in premier locales in metropolitan and resort markets including Miami

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and

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. Headquartered in
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, the privately owned company is a subsidiary of
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-based investment, development and management firm Lowe Enterprises and the Lowe Hospitality Group. For more information on Destination Hotels & Resorts, visit

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