

WHITEPAPER

FRANCHISE EVENT TRENDS

Discover best practices and insights into other franchise events to help guide your own event planning.

PRODUCED BY

GoGather Corporate Meetings & Events
Fall 2024

GO GATHER

Executive summary.

Are you hosting events for your franchisees?

Want to know how you stack up against others in your space?

This whitepaper will give you the insights you need to host best-in-class franchise events, from average budgets to the best structure for your agenda.

The events industry.

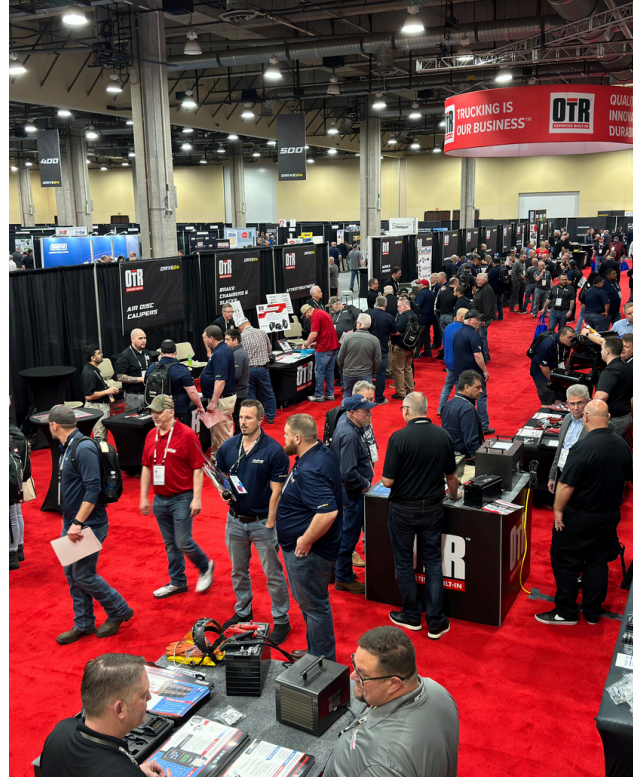
Events are a growing force for companies worldwide. Post-pandemic, more companies are seeing the value of hosting in-person meetings and events, especially with dispersed workforces and digital marketing noise.

- The global events industry market is expected to reach a revenue of 2.1 trillion by the year 2032.
- In 2023, 65% of companies experienced increased spending on meetings and events.
- Over 82% of B2B marketers consider attendee engagement an important KPI for determining an event's impact.
- The average ROI on events is 4.4 times the initial investment.
- 76% of marketers believe in-person events are the best way to create business relationships.

Events drive business results, and are a very important part of our clients' businesses. Let's dive into the franchise conference data now.

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expected growth of the event industry by 2032



The companies analyzed.

Who we analyzed.

All events included in this analysis are specific to franchise companies. Each company hosts at least one event per year for their franchisees.

The data included in this sample are anonymized and pulled from the budgets, hotel contracts, and timelines that GoGather manages. In some cases, this means that GoGather may have incomplete data about a particular program. Therefore, we aimed to provide information on the areas that we have the most visibility into.

The data set for this analysis includes conferences and incentive trips, with 72.7% of the data comprised of conferences.



Avg. # of employees.

2,614

Avg. \$ revenue.

\$1.17B

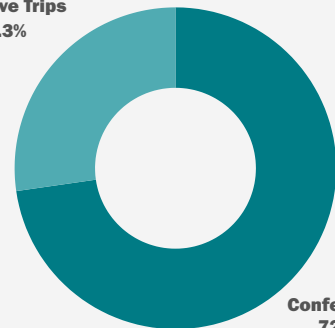
Avg. # of locations.

1,400

Avg. annual events budget.

\$935,000

Incentive Trips
27.3%



Conferences
72.7%

Events overview.

Type of events.

Each client approaches their events differently, but nearly all find the importance in hosting an annual franchise conference to gather their franchisees for education, networking, and motivation.

- 90% of clients host a franchise conference.
- 27% of clients host an incentive trip.
- 18% of clients host both an incentive trip and franchise conference.

Events budget.

Event spend varies quite a bit between companies. This is due to variables such as the size and length of the event, as well as location and overall goals. As you're planning your event, here are some benchmarks to keep in mind:

Average spend (total)

- Conferences: \$1.06M
- Incentive trips: \$260,000

Average spend (per person)

- Conferences: \$2,379
- Incentive trips: \$4,230

Attendee count.

Attendee count for franchise conferences often depends on the size of the franchise itself and who the company wants to invite. Our clients typically host their franchise store owners/managers and key partners.

Average: 382

- Conferences: 250 - 700
- Incentive trips: 60 (average)

For conferences, 87.5% of companies require franchisees to pay to attend.



Event locations.

Major markets.

Our clients host events all over the U.S. and abroad. Most franchise clients host their events in a cluster of U.S. cities:

1. Las Vegas, NV
2. Dallas, TX
3. Orlando, FL
4. Phoenix / Scottsdale, AZ
5. Napa California (incentive)



These are popular locations for the spring and fall, providing temperate weather and favorable rates.

Only 12.5% of franchise clients host their franchise conference within 100 miles of their company headquarters.

Property types.

90% of franchise events are held at a major chain property, including:

- Hilton
- Marriott
- MGM

10% of events are held at a boutique property (mainly incentive trips).

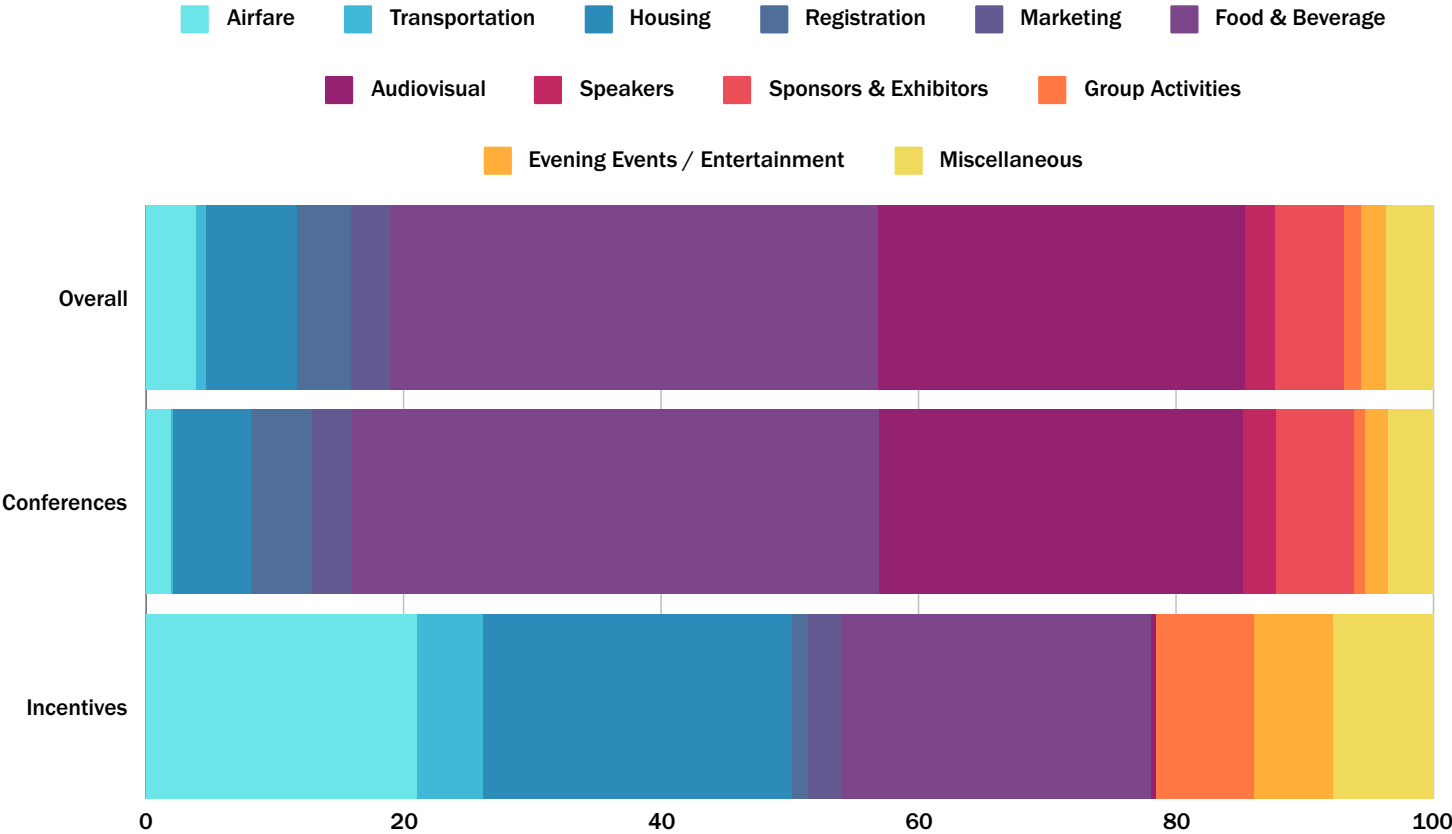
For all conferences, clients book a general session space and breakout rooms.



Budget drill down.

Budget allocation.

On average, clients spend the majority of their budget in key categories, including audiovisual production, food and beverage, and housing. Most franchise clients do not cover the cost of housing for their attendees for conferences, which is reflected in a lower housing cost within the conference allocation.



For conferences, 40% of budget goes toward food & beverage, while almost 30% is allocated to audiovisual production. For incentive trips, the emphasis is larger on airfare, housing, and food, and activities take up a much larger percentage of budget than they do for conferences.

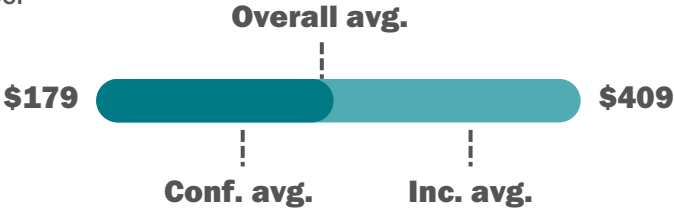
Budget drill down.

Room rates.

Depending on the type of event, franchise companies choose hotels with anywhere from just under \$200 per night to over \$400 per night for rooms.

Average: \$291

- Conference: \$259
- Incentive: \$356



Food & beverage.

Most franchise companies pay for all meals for their franchisees, regardless of the event. They will also typically host evening events with bars.

Average F&B budget:

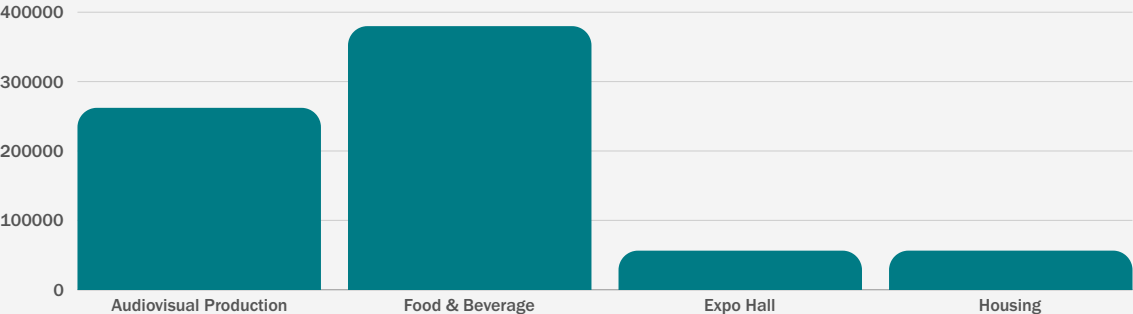
- Conference: \$379,929
- Incentive: \$53,239

Average per person:

- Conference: \$845
- Incentive: \$858



Average franchise conference budget - major categories.



Standard agenda.

Program length.

Although every franchise company approaches their events differently, most follow a standard pattern for their program length. All events occur over the span of 2 to 5 days.

Average:

- Conference: 3 days (2 nights)
- Incentive trip: 4 days (3 nights)

Time of year.

Time of year is an important consideration for any company. Similar to the wider portfolio of our clients, 45.45% of franchise events are in the fall (September through October), while the remaining 54.55% are in the spring (March through May).

- Conference: 62.5% occur in the fall
- Incentive: 100% occur in the spring

For our franchise clients, all programs occur annually.



Standard agenda.

Conference agenda outline.

While every conference is different, most of our franchise clients include these basics in their franchise conference agenda.

Day 1

- Registration
- Welcome reception

Day 2

- Breakfast
- General session
- Breakout sessions
- Networking lunch + expo hall time
- Breakout sessions
- Awards

Day 3

- Breakfast
- General session
- Breakout sessions
- Departures

What else is included?

- 100% of our franchise clients include awards in their franchise conference programming.
- 60% of our franchise clients include an expo hall in their conference programming.
- Several clients include pre-registration and pre-conference sessions for specific groups



Standard agenda.

Incentive trip agenda outline.

Incentive trips are a great opportunity to bring together your top performers and learn. For our franchise clients that host incentive trips, here is their basic agenda:

Day 1

- Arrivals
- Welcome reception

Day 2

- Group breakfast
- Morning meeting
- Free day with optional activities

Day 3

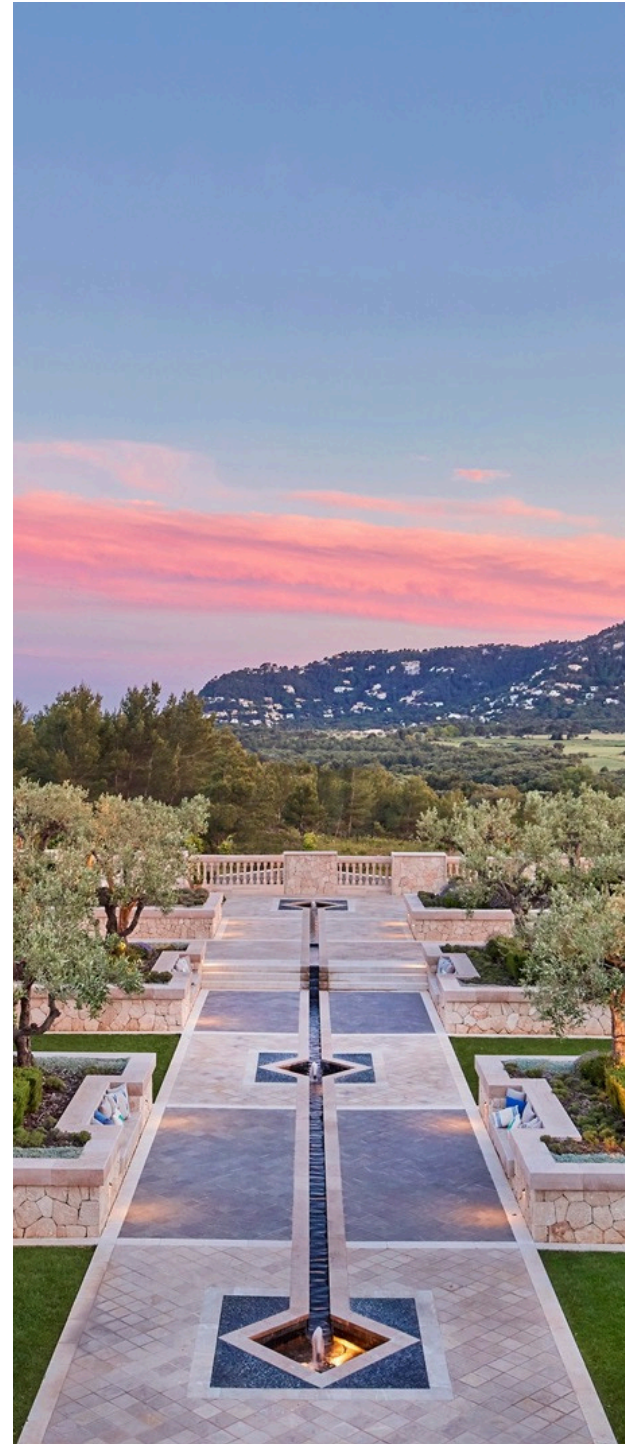
- Breakfast
- Group outing
- Free afternoon onsite

Day 4

- Breakfast
- Optional activities
- Farewell dinner

What else is included?

- **Activities:** All of our franchise clients host at least one group activity during their incentive trips
- **Networking:** All of our franchise clients host multiple opportunities for networking during their incentive trips, whether that's through group meals, evening events, or outings



Recommendations.

Recommendation 1.

Allocate enough money to the large categories that make a difference for your event: food & beverage, audiovisual, and networking opportunities. For conferences, make sure you're offering plenty of opportunities for your sponsors and vendors to interact with your attendees. For many clients, that includes offering more experiential sponsorships such as hospitality suites or expo hall learning sessions.

Recommendation 2.

Take notes from how others are structuring their conferences and incentive trips, but don't be afraid to take chances. Some of our clients are diving into gamification while others are looking for better ways to engage sponsors and vendors. If you need to attract more people to your event, explore new ways to liven up the event, rather than just using the same format every time.

Recommendation 3.

Choose a location that fits your attendees. This may mean somewhere close to your headquarters, or it may mean a destination. Take into account who is attending and what their interests are, then build your program from there. Also make sure to consider your content and agenda before choosing your venue, so you can have a better idea of how to allocate space.

Recommendation 4.

Make sure to include key partners and vendors in your events, whether that's through sponsorship, activations, or other means. More and more franchise clients are looking at unique ways to engage their key business partners, whether through separate incentive opportunities or larger sponsorship and exhibit hall activations.

About GoGather.

GoGather is a boutique corporate events management company that specializes in medium to large-scale corporate events such as conferences, meetings, executive retreats, channel partner incentive trips, and employee incentive trips. For more than 15 years, the company has provided best-in-class service to top clients, including franchise and Fortune 500 companies.

Combining technology solutions with event planning expertise, GoGather provides both strategic and efficient event management services to our clients. We help businesses not only put on world-class events, but also meet business goals while reducing the burden on internal teams.

LEARN MORE

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