



Trade Show Report

Meeting Today LIVE – Boise, ID

August 4 – 7, 2024

Montana Representation:

- Western Montana's Glacier Country – Debbie Picard

Overview:

- Meetings Today LIVE is a hosted buyer, appointment-only, reverse trade show. I chose to attend this one in Boise to meet with planners seeking new destinations in the Idaho and Montana regions of the US.
- Meetings Today does a good job of vetting out active corporate, association, independent and third-party planners to attend the show.
- Western Montana's Glacier Country was matched with 22 buyers for 10-minute appointments.
- Only three or four planners I met with had ever been to Montana before, so there was lots of education on airlift, venues, and weather.
- We increased our database with 19 new meeting planners.
- No RFPs were given to me at the show, but several will follow up with meetings they think would fit Western Montana well.

Appointments and projected ROI:

Quite a few planners were looking for smaller corporate incentives or retreat locations. I connected with them on their corporate incentive needs with our luxury guest ranches and resort towns. I explained that our convention hotel properties are great for association business. Several appointments had regional meetings in the 100-person range, which is perfect for most of our convention hotels in our three hub cities. This show has great networking outside of the appointments, with a wine tasting tour and social dinners. I have followed up with all the planners via email and will have to see about ROI.

Recommendations for 2025:

- Looking ahead to 2025, my recommendation is to evaluate the return on investment (ROI) from this year's show to determine whether it should be included in next year's plans. I will monitor the results and check the event's website to assess where future conferences will be held. My goal is to select a location that aligns with my schedule and offers the greatest potential for attracting high-quality meeting planners who can produce the best ROI for Western Montana. This approach will ensure that we continue to maximize our exposure and build meaningful relationships with planners who are interested in what our region has to offer.