



# Media Outlook Survey 2021

MARCH 15, 2021



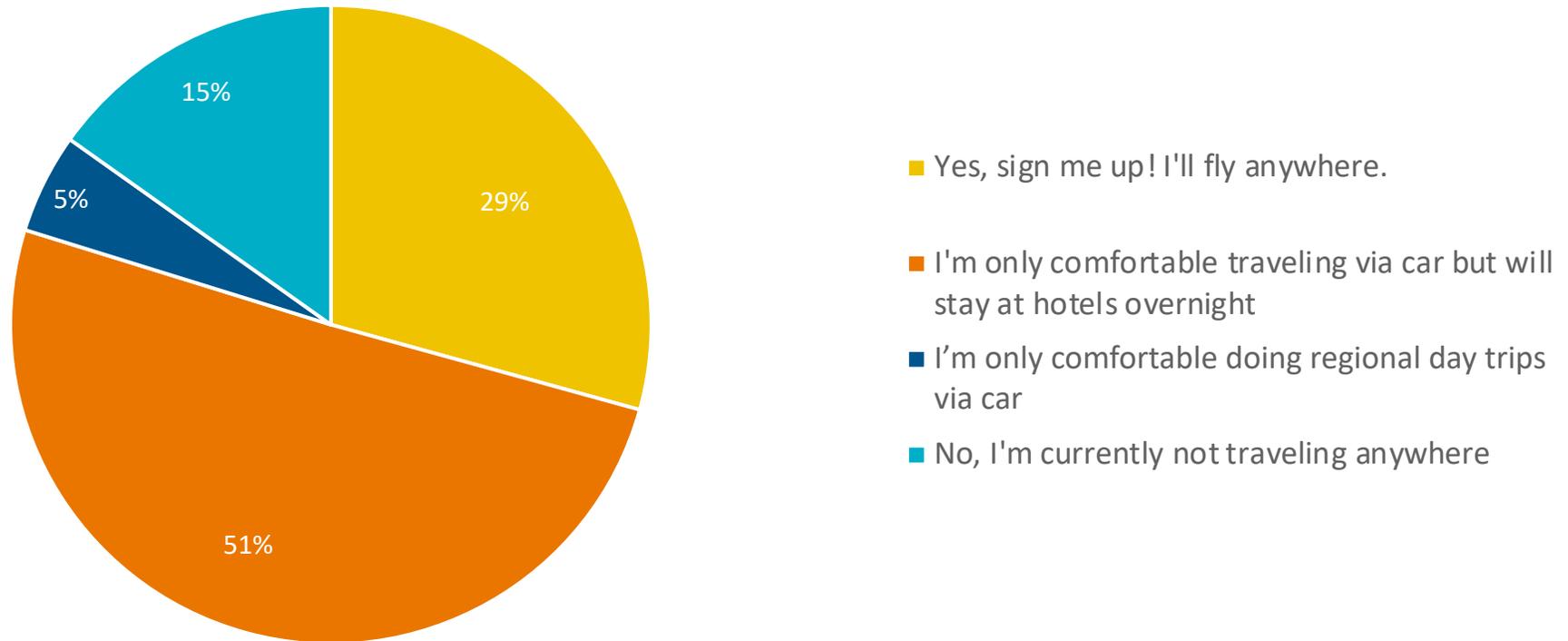
VISIT CALIFORNIA MEDIA OUTLOOK SURVEY 2021

# Travel & Lifestyle Media

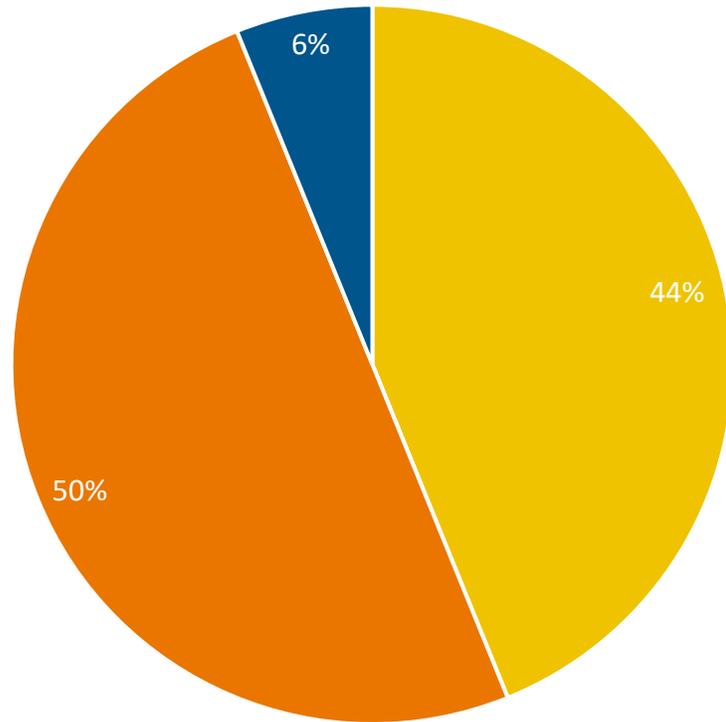
# The respondents:

- More than 100 total media responded
- All domestic media; approximately half based in-state
- 2/3 Freelance; 1/3 on-staff

# How are you feeling about traveling domestically right now?



## Coverage

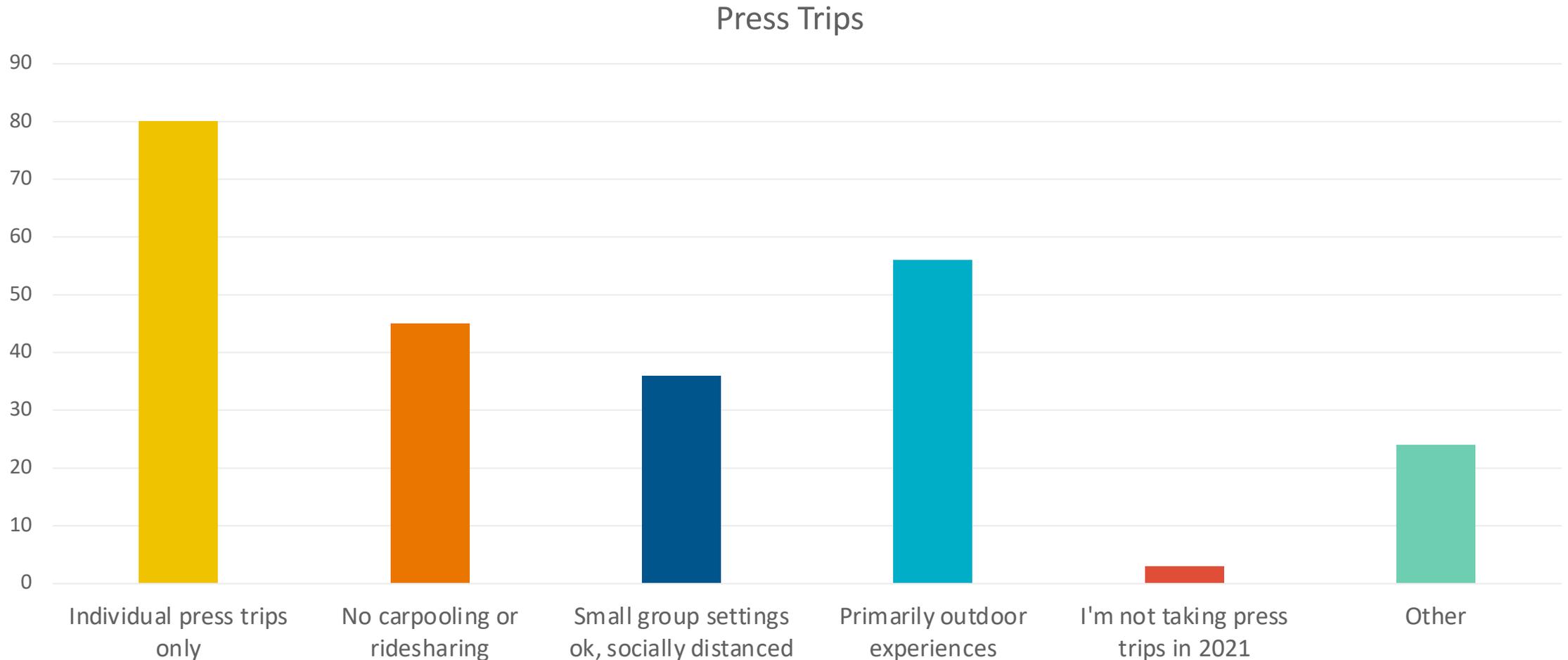


- I am covering all things travel-related now
- I am still taking a cautious approach to covering travel
- I am not actively covering travel until...

# What is your current sentiment about covering domestic travel?

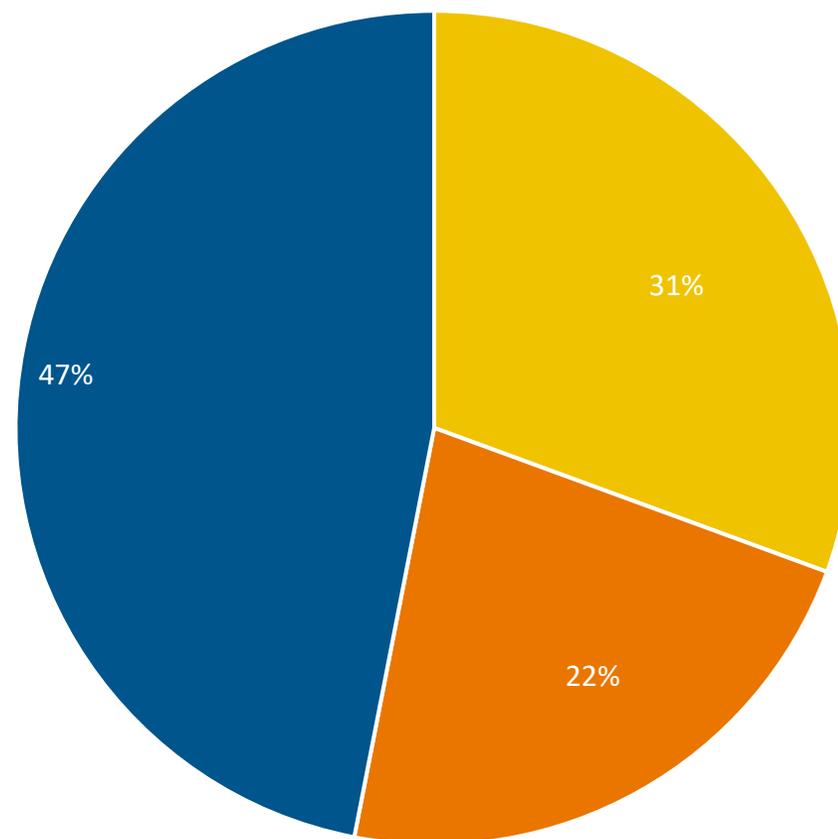
Widespread vaccinations or until readers feel safe

# For press trips in 2021, which modifications are important to you?



**In 2021, will you continue to rely on virtual events, meetings and/or desksides?**

- Yes, virtual will continue to be my preference
- No, I have Zoom fatigue
- I'd be comfortable with a blend of in-person & virtual



Has the past year caused a shift in your mindset regarding the need for in-person meetings & events?

A word cloud visualization of terms related to meetings and events. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern, with 'meetings' and 'person' being the largest and most prominent. Other words include 'experiencing', 'great meeting', 'experience', 'email', 'destination', 'travel', 'safe', 'virtually', 'or', 'zoom', 'hard year', 'experiences', 'calls', 'write time', 'important', 'phone', 'feel', 'events', 'virtual', 'people', and 'zoom'.

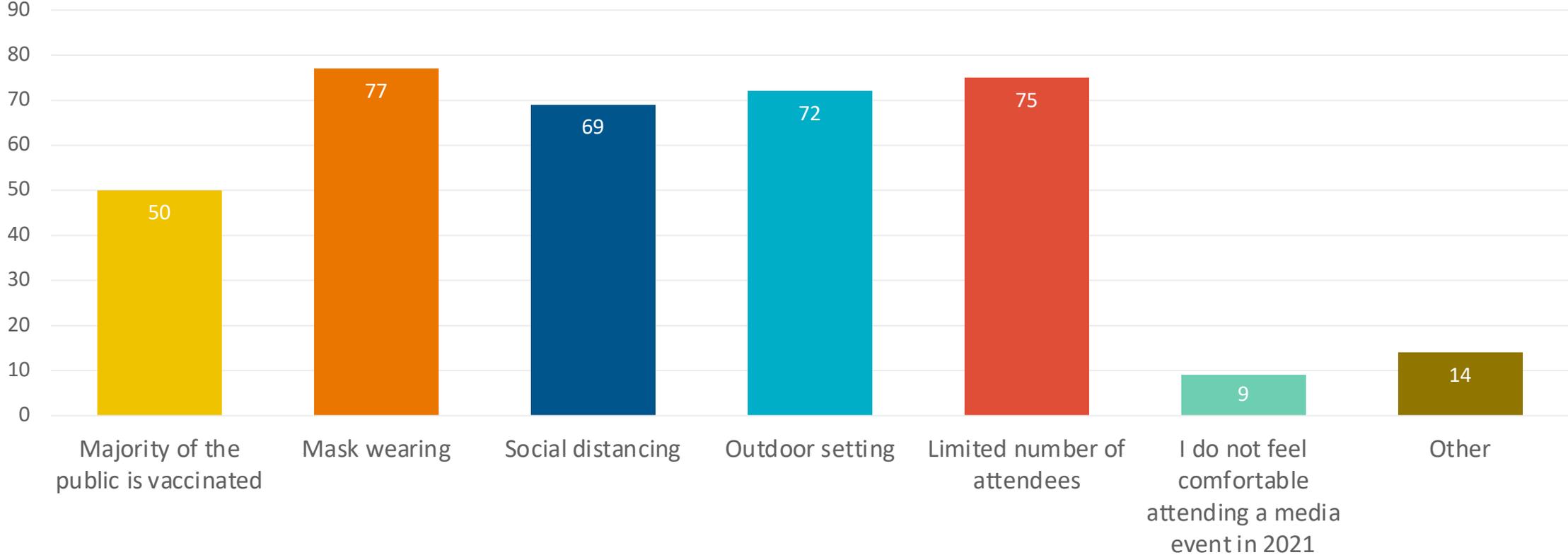
experiencing great meeting experience email  
destination  
travel safe  
virtually  
or  
person  
zoom  
hard year  
experiences  
calls write time important phone  
feel events

# And what type of business do you feel is most important to conduct in-person?

- *“I still feel that site visits in person are really important. I'm ok with virtual desk sides.”* - **Travel + Leisure, Nina Ruggiero**
- *“Most business meetings can be conducted virtually or by phone. I reserve in-person meetups for stories that require on-the-ground reporting.”* - **AFAR, Ashlea Halpern**
- *“...destination stories will be in demand -- and there's really no amount of virtual anything to replace that.”* - **Los Angeles Times, Mary Forgione**

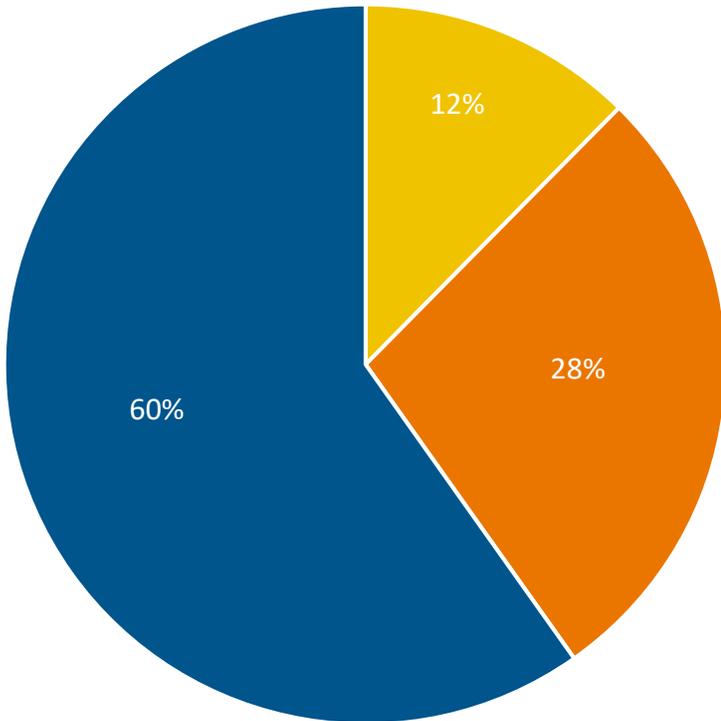
# What conditions will make you feel comfortable to attend an event in 2021?

In-Person Events



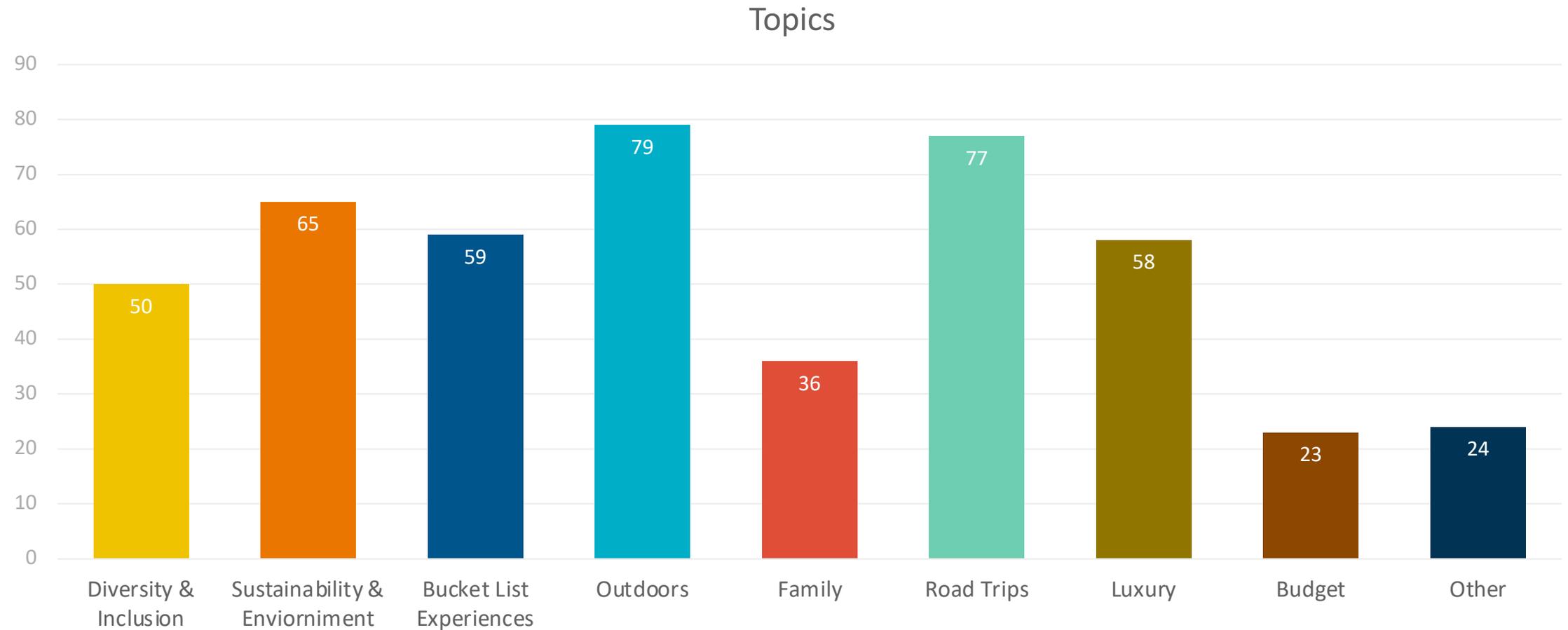
## 2021 Focus

- Primarily encouraging travelers to do regional trips
- Primarily domestic travel
- Blend of domestic and international



**In 2020, many publications focused primarily on regional or domestic travel. What will be your focus in 2021?**

# Aside from COVID-19, what travel story topics are a focus for you in 2021?



# How do you feel the pandemic has changed editorial coverage of the travel industry moving forward?

- Many respondents said they are hopeful that travel coverage will not be permanently impacted.

Trending response:

- Travel is a privilege not a right.
- Meaningful travel and sustainability will come back to the forefront.

*“People still want ideas and suggestions for trips to take, ways to get away and unplug, perhaps now more than ever! But those trips look a lot different. Less airplane travel to far flung places, more road trips to state and national parks. The coverage has followed suit - ways to creatively and responsibly quench the thirst for travel within people's comfort levels.”*

**- Outside, Megan Michelson**

*“Big question! I think going forward, editors will only travel when absolutely essential until the vaccine is fully rolled out. Also fewer FAM trips and fewer short trips when a virtual experience could showcase the same details. I think it also reminded editors to be more conscious of supporting small and family-owned businesses at destinations.”*

**- Martha Stewart Living, Erica Sloan**



# Which changes in the way you cover travel do you expect to last after the pandemic ends?

- **Deeper Dives** - instead of taking a multitude of trips in a year, journalists (and consumers) may take fewer trips, but focus on becoming more immersed in those destinations.

*“I think the pandemic has highlighted how important responsible and accurate travel coverage is, and I hope that will remain well past the pandemic.”*

**- AFAR, Michelle Baran**

*“We'll probably cover domestic spots more frequently now! I think this year has opened our eyes when it comes to realizing how much beauty the united states has to offer that's often been overlooked in favor of international destinations.”*

**- BuzzFeed, AnaMaria Glavan**



parks family national camping  
destinations or domestic beaten  
people trips big  
rentals list nature travel time  
private outdoor road  
bucket outdoors regional  
experiences adventure

**What travel trends do you foresee  
being big in 2021?**

# 2021 Travel Trend Predictions:

Popular trends seen throughout the pandemic are **here to stay:**

road trips, outdoors, vacation rentals, RVing, and private accommodations

**Emerging trends include:**

reconnecting families, bucket list trips to make up for lost time, wellness & detox vacations, “vaccinations,” re-do or “makeup” travel and sustainable travel

*“I think storytelling is more important than ever -- it keeps people dreaming.”*

**- Fodor's Travel, Jeremy Tarr**

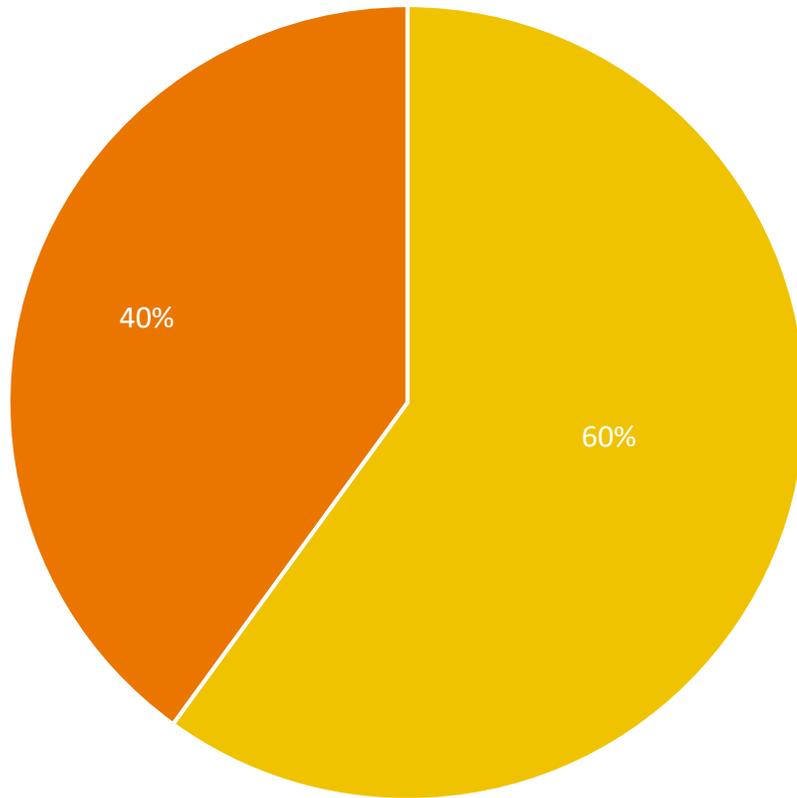
*“An emphasis on bucket list destinations because people realized how quickly the world could be taken away from them, more responsible travel, more in depth travel and multigenerational travel because everyone has been separated.”*

**- Forbes, Laurie Werner**



## Work with Freelancers

- Yes, we are still regularly working with freelance journalists
- No, we are primarily keeping stories in-house

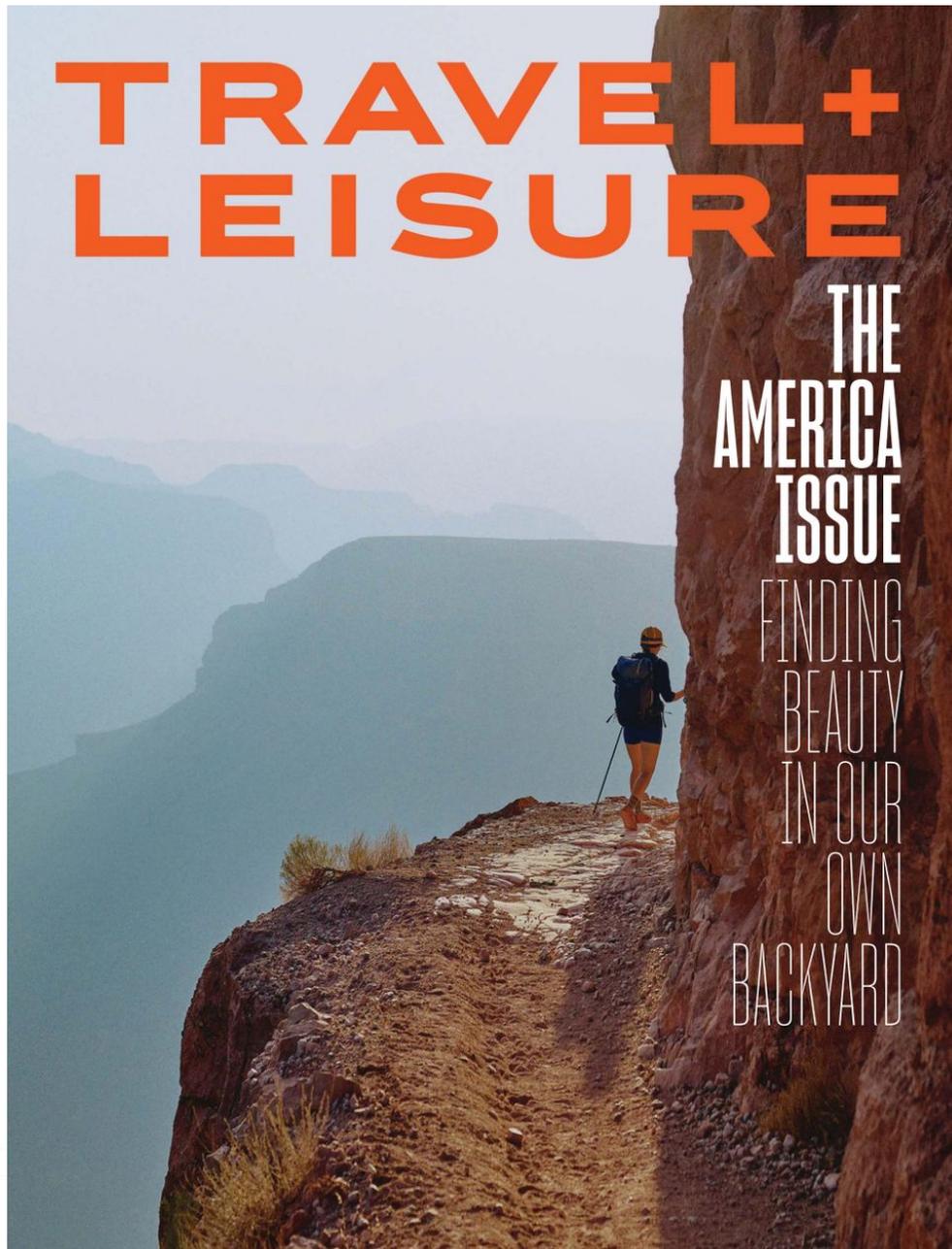


**Is your publication working with freelancers in 2021?**

# Condé Nast Traveler

- This year, editors foresee an emphasis on sustainable travel and community-driven stories.
- Aside from COVID-19, popular topics this year will include DEI, sustainability, bucket list trips, outdoors, family, road trips and luxury.





## Travel + Leisure

- Will always cover travel no matter what, but they are being cautious and flexible, with content lineups pivoting daily with the news.
- Readers are interested in getting back out there. For 2021 they will continue to cover virtual tours on occasion and are interested in doing more first-person coverage: “I Traveled to X and Here's What It Was Like”

# AFAR

- Primarily keeping stories in house.
- Mission: give travelers the most up-to-date info regarding where and how they travel in the world with an eye on health and safety.
- Story trends they anticipate: road trips, vacation rentals, private jets, safe reunions, health and wellness, nature and a slow return of air travel.



# Major Takeaways

1. The majority of media are not traveling far from their residence right now
  2. COVID trends are here to stay - outdoor travel, road trips and private experiences.
  3. Major topics to be on the lookout for – sustainability & responsible tourism, family travel, bucket list/make up for lost time.
  4. The answer to meetings, events and trips? - A blended approach is key! Zoom fatigue exists, but it has also opened up schedules to be able to take more meetings. However, in-person experiences have been missed.
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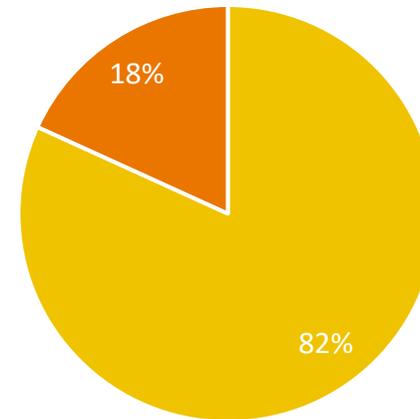
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# MICE RESULTS

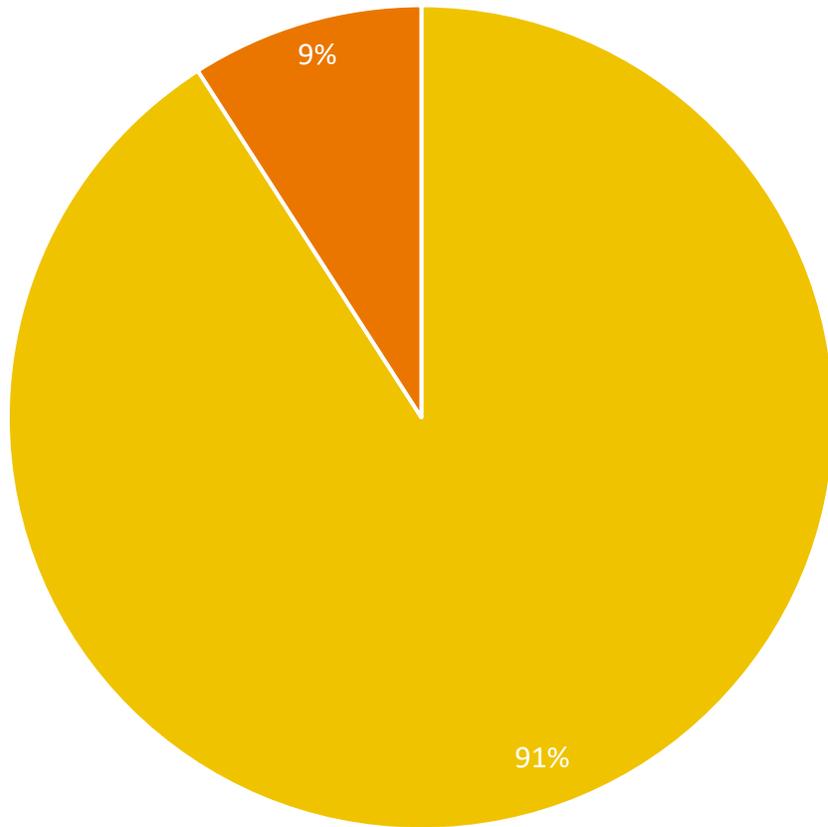
# The respondents:

- 11 media
- More than 80% on staff

■ On staff ■ Freelance



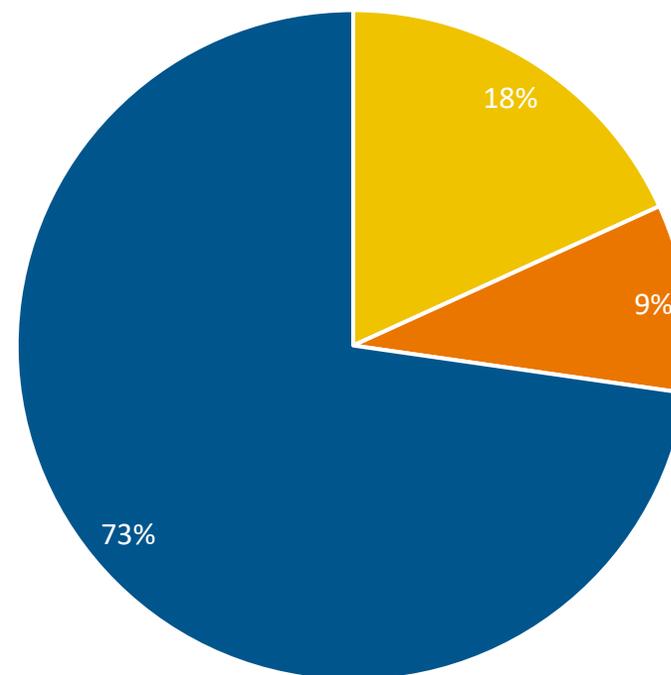
- I am covering all things meetings-related and never stopped during the pandemic
- I paused, but am now covering all things meetings-related



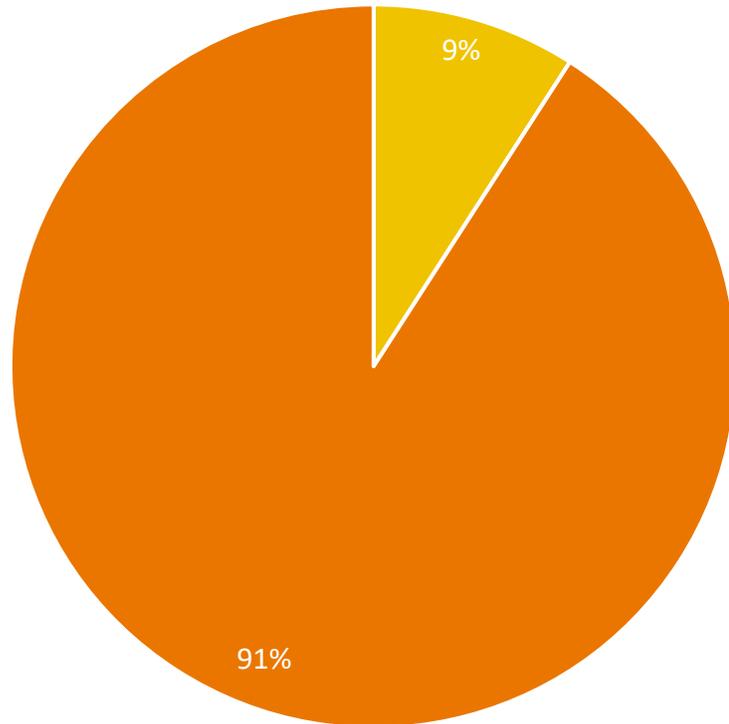
**What is your current sentiment about covering meetings and events?**

**In 2021, are you still interested in covering virtual meetings and conferences?**

- Yes, virtual is here to stay
- No, virtual has run its course
- I'll be covering a blend of in-person and virtual



- No, I have Zoom fatigue
- I'd be comfortable with a blend of in-person and virtual



**In 2021, are you still interested in attending virtual meetings and conferences?**

# Has the past year caused a shift in your mindset regarding the need for in-person meetings and events?

- Virtual conferences, meetings, etc. are a good alternative in the meantime, but they will not replace in-person events for good.
  - Some sectors like long-term relationship building with clients, representatives, investors, etc. cannot be done on Zoom in the long term.
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*“In-person meetings are critically important to networking and interacting with people to share specific information and make contacts. Virtual just doesn't do that well enough, no matter how many "breakouts" are included. People also don't tend to stick with virtual meetings, as work infringes. Nothing still compares to dedicating time to meet onsite and never will.”*

**- Meetings Today, Tyler Davidson**

*“I think people appreciate in-person more than ever and there is pent up demand, but audiences will be selective about what they travel to attend vs. what they stream.”*

**- Smart Meetings, JT Long**



# Have there been developments coming out of the pandemic you want to see become permanent?

Making meetings accessible to all depending on comfort levels (blending in-person options with virtual options). This also allows for larger audiences.

*“Virtual meetings have allowed educational content to be delivered to many more people and places that may not have traveled to meetings. The awareness of how meetings affect climate change, and food waste will be something I hope that will continue. The spirit of innovation in digital meetings is something I hope will continue.”*

**- Convene, Barbara Palmer**

# Aside from COVID-19, what meetings or events story topics are a focus for you in 2021? Anticipated trends?

Popular trends media are seeing include:

- event design

- DEI

- sustainability

- the rise of small companies

- strides in technology and more

# Major Takeaways

1. Despite meetings and events being on pause for so long, most respondents have continued to cover meetings throughout the pandemic.
  2. Major topics to be on the lookout for include event design, DEI, sustainability, the rise of small companies, strides in technology and more.
  3. Similar to the travel media survey, a hybrid approach to meetings is also the way of the future.
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