

# Attendance Change for Conventions Held in Vancouver in 2014



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect on attendance of relocating a convention to Vancouver. To understand the impact the following analysis was conducted:

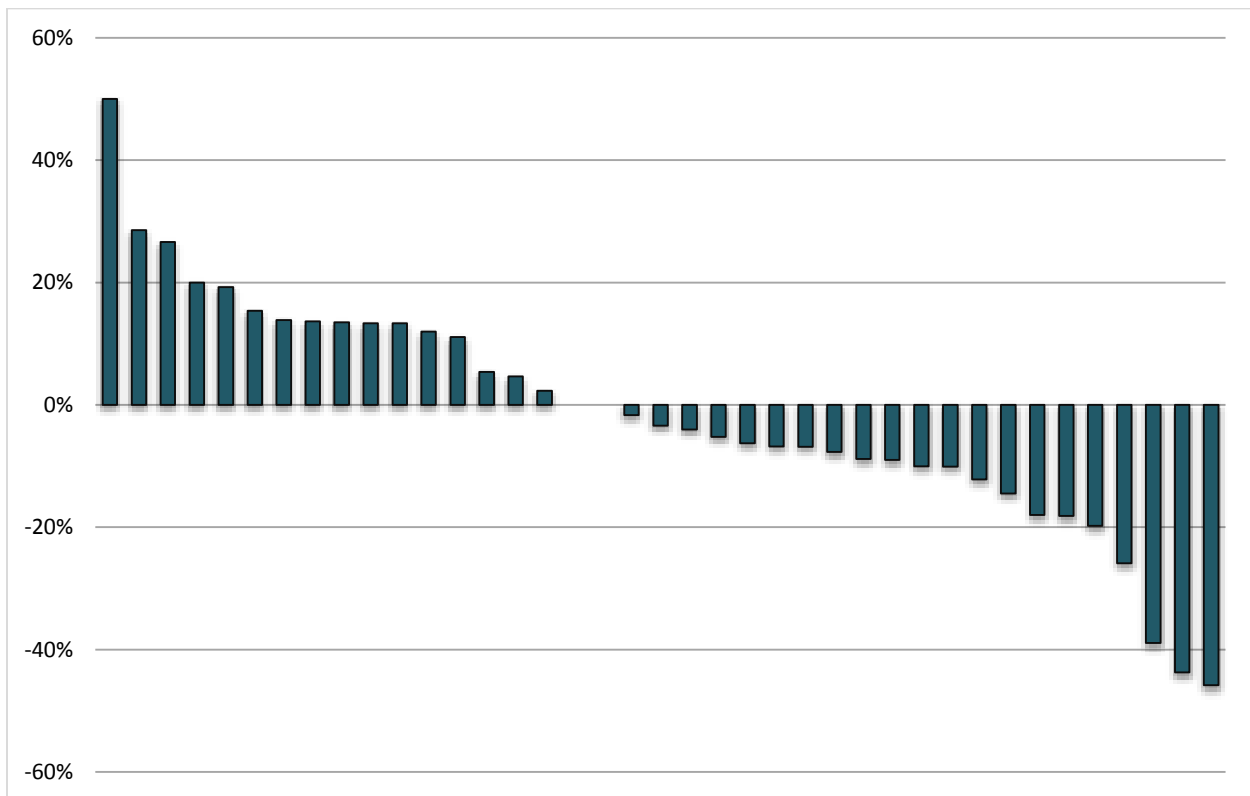
1. A sample of conventions was identified. Each of these conventions was held in Vancouver in 2014 but was held elsewhere in 2013.
2. The percentage change in attendance between 2014 and 2013 was calculated for each convention in the sample. The conventions were then classified into groups according to the location and size of the previous convention and the overall change in attendance was calculated for each of the given categories.
3. The average change in attendance was calculated for conventions held in Vancouver during the past five years (2010 through 2014). The results were reported by location of previous convention.

## 2. DATA ANALYSIS

### 2.1 PERCENT CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS CONVENTION

Attendance data were collected from 39 conventions held in Vancouver in 2014. The data were then used to calculate the percentage change in attendance from 2013 to 2014 for each convention. Figure 1 displays the percentage changes for each convention arranged in order from the largest positive change to the largest negative change. Information on the conventions included in the analysis can be found in the appendix.

**Figure 1: Percentage Change in Attendance from Previous Convention<sup>1</sup>**



The reported changes in attendance for the 39 conventions in the sample ranged from +50% to -46%. On average, there was a slight decrease in attendance from the previous year of just over one percent (a 1.4% decrease).

<sup>1</sup> Note that looking at percentage changes alone can be misrepresentative. For example the convention that had a 50% increase in attendance only had an additional 40 delegates. For another convention an 18% decline in attendance corresponded to 3,117 fewer delegates in attendance.

In the table below, the conventions are categorized into five groups based on the size of their change in attendance, as follows:

- (i) Conventions with a substantial increase in attendance (i.e. greater than 20% increase in attendance);
- (ii) Conventions with an increase in attendance (i.e. an increase between 10% to 20%);
- (iii) Conventions whose attendance essentially did not change (i.e. smaller than 10% increase or decrease);
- (iv) Conventions with a decrease in attendance (i.e. a decrease between 10% to 20%); and,
- (v) Conventions with a substantial decrease in attendance (i.e. greater than 20% decrease in attendance).

**Table 1: Attendance Change by Category for Conventions in 2014**

| Attendance Change    | Conventions | %            |
|----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| Substantial Increase | 3           | 7.7          |
| Increase             | 10          | 25.6         |
| No Change            | 15          | 38.5         |
| Decrease             | 7           | 17.9         |
| Substantial Decrease | 4           | 10.3         |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>39</b>   | <b>100.0</b> |

This table indicates that 33.3% of conventions experienced an increase or substantial increase in their attendance, while 28.2% of conventions experienced a decrease or substantial decrease. The remaining 38.5% experienced little or no change in their attendance.

## 2.2 ANALYSIS BY LOCATION OF PREVIOUS CONVENTION

The conventions can be categorized according to the locations where they were held in 2013, as follows:

- (i) Canada: conventions that were held in other parts of Canada in 2013;
- (ii) US: conventions held in the US in 2013;
- (iii) Other: conventions that were held outside Canada and the US in 2013.

The results are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2: Attendance Change by Location of Previous Convention**

|              | Conventions | 2013          | 2014          | Difference     | % Change      |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Canada       | 18          | 27,592        | 29,082        | 1,490          | 5.4%          |
| US           | 14          | 50,734        | 45,268        | (5,466)        | (10.8%)       |
| Other        | 7           | 8,311         | 6,426         | (1,885)        | (22.7%)       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>39</b>   | <b>86,637</b> | <b>80,776</b> | <b>(5,861)</b> | <b>(6.8%)</b> |

Of the conventions held in Vancouver in 2014, the majority (82.1%) were located in a city within Canada or the US in the previous year, while roughly one-sixth (17.9%) were held in other parts of the world. Conventions that were held in Canada in 2013 witnessed an overall increase in attendance equal to 5.4%, while attendance for conventions previously held in the US decreased overall by 10.8%. Lastly, conventions held outside Canada and the US in 2013 saw the largest decrease in attendance equal to 22.7%.

### 2.3 ANALYSIS BY SIZE OF PREVIOUS CONVENTION

The conventions can also be grouped according to size. In this section conventions fall into one of the following groups based on the number of delegates reported for their 2013 meetings:

- (i) Very large: conventions with attendance of 2,000 or more;
- (ii) Large: conventions with attendance between 1000 and 1999;
- (iii) Small: conventions with attendance between 500 and 999;
- (iv) Very small: conventions with fewer than 500 delegates.

The results are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Attendance Change by Size of Previous Convention**

|              | Conventions | 2013          | 2014          | Difference     | % Change      |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Very Large   | 12          | 66,044        | 60,028        | (6,016)        | (9.1%)        |
| Large        | 10          | 13,594        | 13,747        | 153            | 1.1%          |
| Small        | 7           | 4,813         | 4,760         | (53)           | (1.1%)        |
| Very Small   | 10          | 2,186         | 2,241         | 55             | 2.5%          |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>39</b>   | <b>86,637</b> | <b>80,776</b> | <b>(5,861)</b> | <b>(6.8%)</b> |

Very large conventions experienced the largest decrease in overall attendance of 9.1%, while small conventions experienced a decrease of only 1.1%. Large conventions experienced an increase in attendance equal to 1.1%, while very small conventions gained 2.5% in the number of attendees.

## 2.4 FIVE YEAR HISTORICAL AVERAGE

The 2014 conventions can also be grouped with data collected from previous years. In this section we report on the historical five year average change for all conventions held in Vancouver between 2010 and 2014 that were held elsewhere the previous year.

The results are summarized in Table 4 and are reported by location of the previous convention.

**Table 4: Five Year Average Change in Attendance by Location of Previous Convention**

|              | <b>Conventions</b> | <b>Average % Change</b> |
|--------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Canada       | 70                 | 8.6%                    |
| US           | 87                 | (1.3%)                  |
| Other        | 56                 | 3.5%                    |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>213</b>         | <b>3.2%</b>             |

Over the five year period of analysis, conventions that were held in Vancouver experienced an average increase in attendance over the previous year equal to 3.2%. Of these conventions, those that were held in Canada the previous year saw the largest average increase in attendance equal to 8.6%, while conventions previously held in the US experienced an average decrease of 1.3%. Lastly, conventions held in Vancouver during this period and held outside Canada or the US the previous year saw an average increase in attendance of 3.5%.



### 3. CONCLUSIONS

The following are the key findings of the study:

1. Conventions held in Vancouver in 2014 reported, on average, a small decrease in attendance over the previous year (a 1.4% decrease).
2. Conventions held in other parts of Canada in 2013 experienced a 5.4% increase in attendance in Vancouver in 2014, while conventions held in the US in 2013 reported a 10.8% decrease. Conventions held in other parts of the world in 2013 experienced a decrease of 22.7% in attendance in Vancouver in 2014.
3. Very large conventions (2,000 or more delegates in 2013) reported a 9.1% decrease in attendance in 2014 and large conventions (1,000 to 1,999 delegates in 2013) reported a 1.1% increase. Small conventions (500 to 999 delegates in 2013) had a 1.1% decrease in attendance in 2014 while very small conventions (less than 500 delegates in 2013) observed an increase of 2.5% in 2014.
4. Between 2010 and 2014, conventions that were held in Vancouver experienced an average increase in attendance over the previous year equal to 3.2%. Of these conventions, those that were held in a city within Canada the previous year saw an average increase in attendance equal to 8.6%, while conventions previously held in the US experienced an average decrease of 1.3%. Conventions held in Vancouver during this period and held outside Canada or the US the previous year saw an average increase in attendance of 3.5%.

## 4. APPENDIX

### LIST OF 2014 CONVENTIONS

| Organization   | Conference Dates        |
|--|-------------------------|
| Canadian Association of Pharmacy Students & Interns    | 01/08/2014-01/12/2014   |
| Weed Science Society of America                        | 02/03/2014-02/07/2014   |
| Canadian Produce Marketing Assn                        | 04/02/2014-04/04/2014   |
| Canadian Association of Gift Planners                  | 04/09/2014 - 04/11/2014 |
| Urban Land Institute                                   | 04/09/2014-04/11/2014   |
| Canadian Society of Nephrology                         | 04/23/2014-04/26/2014   |
| Pediatric Academic Societies                           | 05/03/2014-05/06/2014   |
| Inter-Pacific bar Association                          | 05/10/2014 - 05/12/2014 |
| Canadian Institute of Mining, Metallurgy and Petroleum | 05/11/2014-05/14/2014   |
| BC Land Summit Society                                 | 05/14/2014-05/16/2014   |
| Canadian Radiation Protection Association              | 05/25/2014-05/29/2014   |
| Couples for Christ Foundation for Family & Life Canada | 05/26/2014-05/28/2014   |
| Union of Canadian Transportation Employees             | 05/26/2014-05/28/2014   |
| Canadian Tourism Commission                            | 05/27/2014-05/30/2014   |
| Canadian Society for Chemistry                         | 06/01/2014-06/05/2014   |
| Special Libraries Association                          | 06/08/2014-06/10/2014   |
| Society of Automotive Engineers                        | 06/09/2014-06/12/2014   |
| International Society for Stem Cell Research           | 06/18/2014-06/21/2014   |
| Canadian Gaming Association                            | 06/22/2014-06/25/2014   |
| International College of Neuropsychopharmacology       | 06/22/2014-06/26/2014   |
| Academy of International Business                      | 06/23/2014-06/26/2014   |
| IEEE Communications Society                            | 07/01/2014-07/04/2014   |
| Special Olympics Canada                                | 07/07/2014-07/13/2014   |

|   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| American Association of State Colleges and Universities   | 07/12/2014-07/15/2014   |
| Victorian Epicure   | 07/17/2014-07/19/2014   |
| Soroptimist International of the Americas   | 07/23/2014-07/26/2014   |
| SIGGRAPH  | 08/10/2014-08/14/2014   |
| Permanent International Committee of the World Congress on Genetics Applied to Animal Livestock | 08/17/2014-08/22/2014   |
| Pacific Nuclear Council   | 08/24/2014-08/24/2014   |
| Intellectual Property Owners Association  | 09/07/2014-09/09/2014   |
| International Society for Diseases of the Esophagus   | 09/22/2014-09/24/2014   |
| Assn of Forensic Quality Assurance Managers   | 10/13/2014-10/17/2014   |
| Geological Society of America   | 10/19/2014-10/22/2014   |
| The Association of Frontotemporal Degeneration  | 10/22/2014 - 10/25/2014 |
| Canadian Cardiovascular Society   | 10/25/2014-10/28/2014   |
| Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness   | 11/03/2014-11/05/2014   |
| Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry   | 11/09/2014-11/13/2014   |
| American Association of Gynecological Laparoscopists  | 11/17/2014-11/21/2014   |
| Canadian Tax Foundation   | 11/30/2014-12/02/2014   |