



2022

# SPEAKING INDUSTRY BENCHMARK REPORT



# AN INSIDE LOOK

## AT THE STATE OF THE SPEAKING INDUSTRY.

If the past two years have taught us anything, it's that the event industry is always evolving. Sometimes, the changes the industry experiences are massive and happen within mere weeks, like with the shift to virtual events at the start of the pandemic. But more often, events are going through smaller, incremental changes because of things like emerging technologies and new audience preferences.

The event industry has remained resilient in the midst of this ever changing landscape thanks to the ability of event organizers to pivot and adapt. We've seen first-hand how our clients have turned challenges into opportunities to improve their processes and elevate attendee experience.

Staying ahead in a dynamic industry depends on reliable, insightful data. In this 2022 Speaking Industry Benchmark Report, the first of its kind created by AAE Speakers Bureau, you'll find insights from event strategists and keynote speakers on the entire event planning process - from choosing a speaker to orchestrating an unforgettable event experience - as well as predictions and reflections on what lies ahead for our industry. Let's jump into the numbers!

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The **top three most important qualities of a keynote speaker**, according to event organizers, are how well they fit within their budget (75.5%), how relevant their speaking topics are (65.7%), and how compelling their story is (52.4%).
- The **two factors that make speakers most likely to accept an offer** are whether the topic is relevant to their speaking expertise (77.9%) and whether the event pays their ideal fee (68.4%).
- The **most important goals event organizers have for their booked speakers** are audience engagement (74.7%), education for the audience (58.7%), and increased attendance (47.7%).
- The **topics event strategists are prioritizing in 2022** are diversity, equity, and inclusion (58.1%), leadership and motivation (57%), mental health (47%), and the future of work (33%).
- 81.9% of event strategists said that **their budgets in 2022 were the same (57.4%) or higher (24.5%)** versus where they were in 2021. 4.8% said it is significantly higher.

*In our industry, we're always looking ahead and predicting the future. Thanks to our hundreds of participants, this 2022 Speaking Industry Benchmark Report gives event strategists and speakers a clearer picture of the coming months, equipping us all to make better informed, data-driven decisions about the best ways to enrich the experience of our audiences.*

— **Greg Friedlander**, CEO and Founder, AAE Speakers

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## TOP 3 QUALITIES OF A KEYNOTE SPEAKER:



HOW WELL THEY FIT  
WITHIN MY BUDGET



HOW RELEVANT THEIR  
SPEAKING TOPICS ARE



HOW COMPELLING  
THEIR STORY IS

## WHAT GOALS DO EVENT ORGANIZERS HAVE FOR THEIR SPEAKERS?



AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT



EDUCATION FOR THE AUDIENCE



INCREASED ATTENDANCE

## 2 THINGS THAT MAKE SPEAKERS MOST LIKELY TO ACCEPT AN OFFER:



IS THE TOPIC RELEVANT  
TO MY EXPERTISE?



DOES THE EVENT PAY  
MY IDEAL FEE?

## BUDGET CHANGES FROM 2021 TO 2022:

 **81.9%**

SAME OR HIGHER

## TOPICS EVENT STRATEGISTS ARE PRIORITIZING IN 2022

1. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI)
2. LEADERSHIP AND MOTIVATION
3. MENTAL HEALTH
4. THE FUTURE OF WORK

# PARTICIPANT BREAKDOWN

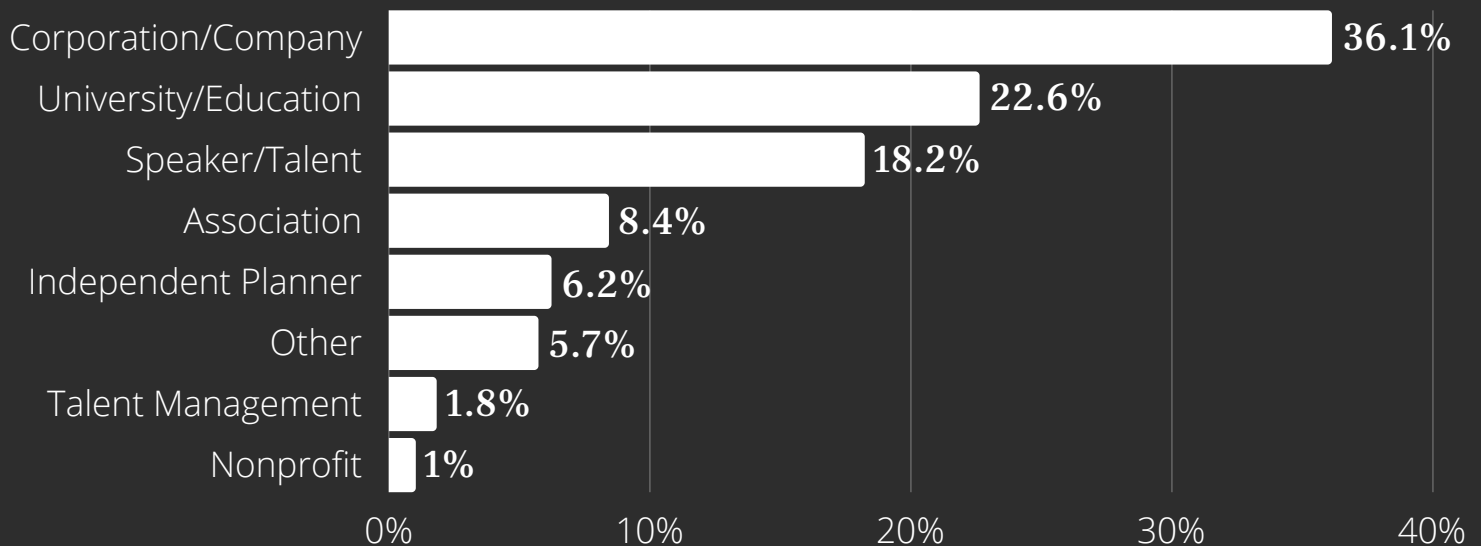
TOTAL EVENT  
ORGANIZERS:

541

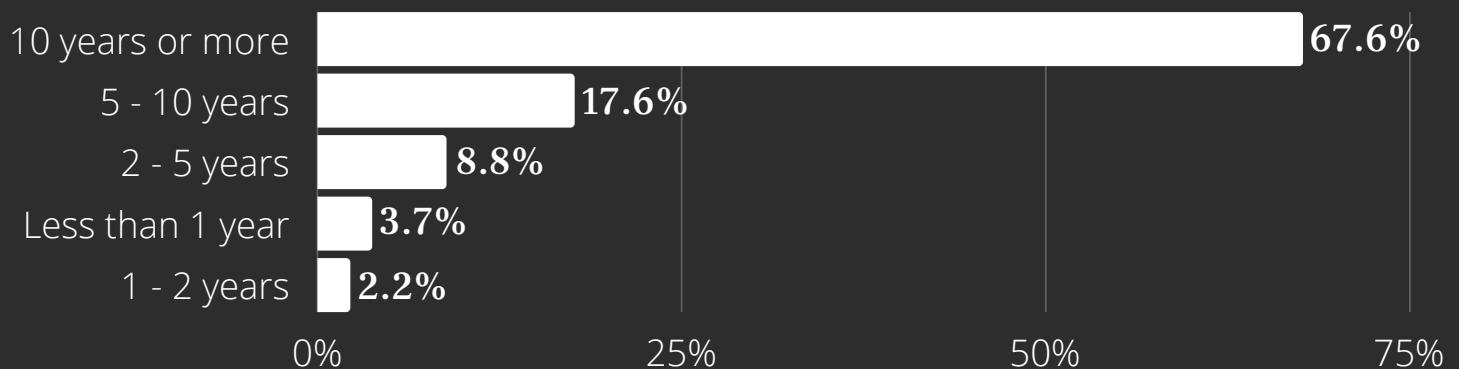
TOTAL SPEAKERS AND  
TALENT MANAGEMENT:

136

## CATEGORIES RESPONDENTS IDENTIFIED WITH



## YEARS OF EXPERIENCE KEYNOTE SPEAKER RESPONDENTS



# FOR YOUR NEXT EVENT, START WITH AAE.



AS SEEN IN:

**Forbes**

**Entrepreneur**

**Inc.**

**TRIANGLE BUSINESS JOURNAL**



Authority Magazine

THRIVE  GLOBAL

**BIZBASH**

All American Entertainment (AAE) is a full-service speakers bureau and talent agency that exclusively represents the interests of meeting and event professionals to select, book, and execute events with keynote speakers and entertainment to leave a lasting impact on their audiences. We work tirelessly for event professionals as their centralized, trusted, and impartial partner in the talent booking process.

With our expansive industry experience and exceptional customer support, AAE has connected thousands of live, hybrid, and virtual events around the world with their perfect speaker, host, celebrity, or performer since 2002. We have booked well over \$200M of celebrity talent on behalf of thousands of the most respected companies and organizations in the world.

If you have any questions related to this report, please contact Jennifer Best or Evan Owens at [jennifer@aaehq.com](mailto:jennifer@aaehq.com) and [evan@aaehq.com](mailto:evan@aaehq.com), respectively.

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