



CANADIAN COUNCIL *of* CHRISTIAN CHARITIES  
ADVANCING MINISTRY TOGETHER

# PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**Review Committee:**

John Pellowe  
Sarah Rush

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Confidential.

### PURPOSE

At CCCC, we strive to provide the very best programs and services to help our members. Program evaluations provide the opportunity for us to examine our offerings to determine how we are doing and how we can improve. The CCCC Annual Christian Leadership and Stewardship Conference was chosen for evaluation for a number of reasons:

- The Conference was CCCC's original program, alongside the Bulletin newsletter.
- This program has been an important part of our history at CCCC and with its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary approaching, the Conference is due for an extensive review.
- Overall, the Conference program accounts for 14% of our expense budget and 8% of our staff time. On average, the Conference costs just over \$200,000 to run in Toronto, and just over \$250,000 to host out-of-province, including staff salaries, overhead and direct Conference costs.
- The only program to exceed the Conference in use of our resources is the provision of general technical support for CCCC members.
- The Conference provides enough revenue to cover its direct costs, with some money left over to put towards our time and overhead for putting on the Conference.
- Despite the success of the Conference over the years, attendance is not as high as would be expected given our membership. Less than 6% of our members send a representative to the annual Conference.

The purpose of this program evaluation is to examine the Conference as a whole and address the rationale behind the existence of the Conference. The evaluation will determine whether or not the Conference is effectively assisting us in fulfilling our mission. Based on the results of the evaluation, our Conference program will be revised and updated accordingly. We developed the following research questions to assist us in the review process:

- Is the conference program helping CCCC fulfill its mission? It is only fulfilling our mission if it is helping our members fulfill their missions. We need to examine what the attendees do with what they learn at our conference.
- If it is helping CCCC fulfill its mission, then how can the conference program better meet the needs of ministry workers? How can it attract more of them? We need to dig into what they think of conferences in general – how they learn and why they attend.
- What assumptions have we made about our members' needs and about how to put on conferences? Do they stand up to scrutiny? We need to understand what is going on in the life of a Christian worker and how that relates to attending a conference.
- What is the state of conferences today? What are the trends and new developments? What does research show? Are there viable alternatives as replacements?

## BACKGROUND

At CCCC, we hosted our first Conference from October 17-19, 1973, with just over 40 charities represented by 76 registrants. The topics on the agenda included Estate Planning, Tax Implications of Giving, and Making Wills and Trusts. At the end of the first Conference, CCCC's Board of Directors decided to make the Conference an annual event as a resource to members. Since then, the our Conference has run every year, with our 40<sup>th</sup> Conference coming up in 2012.

Today, the Conference is an event running from a Monday evening to Thursday morning at the end of September each year. The Conference agenda includes daily worship time, a "Spiritual Challenge" devotional session and plenary sessions with keynote speakers. There are 10 tracks of workshops, including the following areas of focus:

- CEO
- Charity Leadership
- Governance
- Church
- Media & Technology
- Human Resources
- Legal Issues
- Finance
- Stewardship (2 tracks)

Additional Conference events include a Coffee House networking event, a CEO Breakfast and a Banquet dinner.

For our members, the full Conference registration is priced at \$545 for the Early Deadline, and \$645 for a regular registration. The Conference package includes lunches, a Banquet ticket and access to all sessions during the Conference. A one day registration can be purchased for \$335. Additionally, a registrant's spouse can attend the Conference for an additional \$200 and extra Banquet tickets are available for \$60 each. Prior to the Conference, we also host a Church Administrator's Day, which is an extra one-day workshop for \$125.

At the Conference, our staff members are available at a registration and information table. Upon arrival, we provide attendees with a binder containing the following materials:

- a Conference agenda;
- general information regarding the Conference;
- a Conference Evaluation Form;
- a Conference Speakers Proposal Form;
- space for taking notes during the Plenary and Spiritual Challenge sessions;
- workshop descriptions and locations;
- a list of all Conference attendees; and
- information about CCCC resources and membership.

We provide each Conference attendee with a nametag with their name and organization on it, as well as with meal tickets. There are handouts of the workshop sessions distributed at each of the workshops, which are also available online after the Conference. Audio recordings of many Conference sessions are available for purchase at the Conference, and can be ordered online after the Conference.

## PROGRAM RATIONALE

We developed a Theory of Change and a Logic Model for the Conference as the first step in the

program evaluation. These models help us to document the rationale behind the Conference as a program provided to our members. Upon completion of these models, we used this information in developing more detailed questions to examine through a literature review, surveys and the collection of both internal and external conference-related data.

## **Theory of Change**

The Theory of Change is an essential model for the Conference program evaluation, as it will assist us in understanding the reasons why CCCC has hosted an annual Conference. This model documents why we believe that the CCCC Annual Conference will result in changes and outcomes that help fulfill CCCC's mission. The model also helps us find assumptions that we may not even be aware that have been made about the Conference. The entire model is attached in Appendix 1 and the main components of the Theory of Change are described below.

### ***Desired Impact***

Since CCCC should only be providing programs and services that fulfill our mission, the starting point for the Theory of Change is our mission statement. The mission statement should be the impact that we want to have on the outside world. Seeing as CCCC is simultaneously doing a strategic review that will develop a new mission statement, a statement has been used that reflects the general idea of what CCCC is about. Our desire at CCCC is to help ministries become strong and healthy so they can fulfill their own missions. That is our mission as well as the impact that we assume our programs, including the Conference, will have.

### ***Assumed Problem***

"Why hasn't CCCC's mission already been fulfilled? Why hasn't the positive change we want to see through CCCC already taken place?" The next step is to consider what is holding beneficiaries back from experiencing the fulfillment of our mission. The reason that relates to the Conference is that a lack of organizational knowledge in ministries requires a shift in focus, energy and resources away from their core missions into non-core areas, such as administration and finance. One main assumption has been highlighted in the Theory of Change. It is the premise that if people had the knowledge of how to do something or knew who could help them, most problems could either be avoided or quickly solved so that more focus could be given back to the core mission. They would then perform better and fulfill more of their mission.

### ***Assumed Causes***

"Why does this problem exist? What is going on in the lives of our beneficiaries that they have this problem?" In the case of CCCC's members, there are four underlying causes we have identified. First, people don't know what they don't know, and so may be quite unaware that there even are regulations and fundraising practices they should be knowledgeable about. Second, even if they know they should be knowledgeable on a topic, many people are too busy to keep up-to-date with rapid changes. Third, some ministries can get by without direct knowledge by using expert consultants, however others cannot afford consultants and so make do without this knowledge. Finally, many people do not have contact with their

peers at other ministries, and so they do not have the opportunity to learn from their peers.

### ***Corrections***

After the statement of the assumed problem, the corrections for the causes mentioned previously are outlined in the Theory of Change. The corrections are the external change that CCCC must affect if we are to solve the problem and fulfill our mission. For each cause, a possible correction has been listed in the model.

### ***Assumed Assets***

Individuals who attend the CCCC Conference bring certain characteristics and qualities with them. These are assets; what our attendees bring to the table. At CCCC, we assume that our Conference beneficiaries can communicate in English, as we do not provide translation. We assume that our beneficiaries have the time to travel and attend a conference. The other assets are outlined in the Theory of Change model. During the Conference program evaluation, we need to check that our assumptions about their assets are true.

### ***Other Attendee Needs***

In addition to our attendee's assets, it is important to recognize that our beneficiaries have other things going on in their lives. When we understand their other needs, we may be able to design a program to meet those as well. If their other needs intersect with the Conference as a program, we will have the chance to modify the Conference so that it not only meets their job-related needs, but their personal needs as well.

### ***Interventions***

In the Theory of Change model, the interventions outlined are the actual activities that are carried out through the Conference. These interventions document what this program actually involves and what happens at the Conference. Each activity ties back to either a beneficiary's need or a correction for a cause.

### ***Outcomes***

There are many outcomes that arise out of the Conference, both short and long term. Outcomes are external to CCCC and our programs. They are the changes that our beneficiaries make as a result of attendance at our Conference.

### ***Logic Model***

The Theory of Change outlines the connection of the Conference to our mission. The Logic Model outlined in Appendix 2 helps us determine how efficient the Conference program is and whether we are doing things right with regards to the Conference. There is a linkage between the two models, as the interventions for both models are the same.

### ***Inputs and Interventions***

The Logic Model documents the inputs to the Conference that make it work. These inputs include

physical assets (buildings), time and money. In addition to the inputs, the interventions highlight the actual activities at the Conference, as in the Theory of Change.

### ***Outputs***

The Conference produces many outputs, which include our workshops, networking opportunities, take-home resources etc. The outputs represent the completion of the program. In order to examine how CCCC also benefits from the Conference itself, the bottom darker boxes in the Logic Model highlight the outputs that benefit us, including new content for our publications.

### ***Outcomes and Impact***

There are many short and long term outcomes, but attendees will only realize them if they reflect on their learning experience, review their conference materials and are able to apply what they have learned. If they do, then they will more capably perform their jobs. In the longer term, ministries would be able to devote more focus, energy and resources to their core missions. At CCCC, we also experience benefits from the Conference, such as being able to make use of the content in additional ways after the Conference is over. If all of this is achieved, then the impact mentioned in the Theory of Change will be fulfilled.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Prior to the collection of primary research, we conducted a literature review of existing research related to conferences. This research outlines motivations for conference attendance and trends that can be seen with conferences. We researched other relevant areas of interest after examining the research questions, Theory of Change, and Logic Model.

### Why Do People Attend Conferences?

It is important for us to understand why people attend conferences in the first place, given that there are numerous ways of obtaining information in the world today. Motives for attending conferences have been organized into the following categories: Professional Benefits, Social Interaction and Convenience Factors. Another reason may be a requirement by an employer to attend a conference.

#### ***Professional Benefits***

There are many personal benefits from attending a conference. An attendee may want professional development and learning, or to build their skills and technical expertise. Conferences can provide an opportunity to “learn best practices; learn new skills; learn about new trends; [and] get new ideas”<sup>1</sup> through interaction with peers and experts in the industry. Attendance at a conference can also be a way of meeting continuing education requirements. Many professional bodies require continuing education for those seeking or holding a professional designation, which can often be earned through conference attendance. Also, some individuals may attend purely out of a love for learning and a desire to broaden their knowledge base.

#### ***Social Benefits***

Conferences are often an excellent opportunity for attendees to interact and network with those who have similar jobs, interests and experiences. A conference can allow attendees to “re-connect with old friends; meet new people; [and] meet with like minded people”<sup>2</sup>. The social aspect is what sets a conference apart from other means of learning. Conferences bring people together, which provides a level of personal interaction that does not exist in other contexts. There are greater opportunities for communication and discussion between peers, industry experts, keynote speakers and exhibitors. In addition, conferences can provide a source of motivation and inspiration for attendees, as attendees may leave with new ideas and direction to take back to work. Some individuals may see a conference as an opportunity to “gain inspiration from networking with peers in the industry”<sup>3</sup> and may be energized through the conference experience.

#### ***Convenience Factors***

A commitment of time and effort is required on the part of an attendee when attending a conference. There are many factors that they consider when making a decision whether or not to attend a conference. Attendees consider the full costs involved with attendance, especially when they are required

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<sup>1</sup> “20 Reasons Delegates Attend Conferences”. 2009. *Interactive Meeting Technology*.

<sup>2</sup> “20 Reasons Delegates Attend Conferences”. 2009. *Interactive Meeting Technology*.

<sup>3</sup> “20 Reasons Delegates Attend Conferences”. 2009. *Interactive Meeting Technology*.

to cover some of the costs themselves instead of their employer paying for the conference. These costs can include the conference fees and travel expenses. In addition to costs, attendees consider time to be another factor, as the time spent attending a conference takes away from other areas of an individual's life.

The location of a conference is also a factor that an individual evaluates when deciding to attend a conference. The distance required for travel and the destination of the conference play a part in determining how attractive the location is to an attendee. The accessibility of a conference location is also important, as participants may choose to attend a conference because it is close to an airport, interesting attractions or to their home. Climate is also considered by many, as some destinations may be more appealing to travel to than others.

A conference attendee will consider costs, timing and location when deciding if a conference is worth attending. There may be other factors that are used, such as evaluating how the conference will impact family commitments or whether they personally want to attend the conference when other alternatives may exist. The decision will vary from person to person, and an individual will be more likely to attend a conference that has the most added benefit for them.

## **Conference Trends**

Several trends can be seen within the conference industry. Conferences have traditionally been lecture-based and in a classroom-like setting. Overall, there is movement away from the lecture format for conferences. Trends in the conference industry are outlined below in the areas of technology, format and venues.

### ***Technology***

Many technological options are being incorporated into conferences. Conferences are now being seen as a "another channel of content that attendees, non-attendees and sponsors expect will be available rapidly, on-demand and with an increasing array of distribution and social networking opportunities"<sup>4</sup>. It is now assumed that materials will be available in a digital format in some way or another at a conference, instead of it being an added bonus.

Some specific technology trends related to conferences are as follows:

- Online software is being used more frequently for conference planning and conference-related online collaboration.
- Digital and online resources are being added to conference materials.
- Web collaboration tools are being used for online meetings.
- Mobile applications are available for participants to use during conferences.
- Social media is being incorporated into conferences, both by participants and by planners.
- Personal devices, such as the iPad and mobile devices, are being used at conferences.
- Options for cross-referencing conference publications with other materials, such as exhibitor and sponsor information are being created and made available.
- Development of a virtual conference attendance option for those who do not physically attend a conference, including live streaming of conference sessions.

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<sup>4</sup> Merrill, Jonathan. 2011. "Electronic Trends in Conventions and Conferences: Webcasts, Mobile, Social Networks." *Jonathan Merrill's Blog*.



The inclusion of technology into a conference can help reach a wider audience than those who physically attend. Providing digital options for attendees “can complement the investment that an attendee is making in the conference”<sup>5</sup>, which can encourage attendance in person. Conference attendees will likely pay for added digital options if they feel that the options provide enough added value.

### ***Format***

While traditional lecture-based conferences still exist today, there is a trend towards adopting alternative formats for conferences. The majority of new conference styles fall under the category of an “unconference”, which is described below. There is a trend towards smaller meeting groups with fewer attendees. Many organizations will choose to deliver both an in-person and virtual conference experience to access a wider audience.

### ***Unconference***

In contrast to a traditional conference format, an “unconference” is designed to be more collaborative and interactive, with less focus on an agenda. This type of conference arose from low participation and interaction at traditional conferences. With an unconference, the agenda is not set ahead of time; participants can suggest topics that are voted on at the event itself. This method is referred to as Open Space Technology. Participants can assist in leading the sessions, which involve a high level of discussion and interaction. An unconference facilitator can use a number of different facilitation formats, a few of which are outlined below.

- *Unpanel* – This type of session differs from a panel discussion. Instead of having the panel of individuals seated at the front of the room, they sit in a circle in the middle of a room and the audience sits in circles around them to allow for more engaging discussions.
- *Speed Geeking (or Lightning Talks)* – This format involves presenters each doing a five minute presentation. Numerous presentations occur back-to-back for the entire length of the session, providing an alternative to a single speaker at each session.
- *World Café* – With these sessions, small groups gather to discuss a topic, after which they rotate to another table and group. The discussions are recorded and shared with the group.

### ***Multiple Speakers in One Room***

Another new conference style is one that includes multiple presenters in one room presenting simultaneously on different topics. Many speakers are situated around a large room, each with their own projectors and presentations. Participants are provided with headphones that can be tuned to whichever speaker they want to listen to and they can switch between speakers as desired. This format provides participants with the freedom to change topics without having to leave the room.

### ***Venues***

Conference venues are also adapting to new changes in the conference industry. Demographic changes in the workplace include the presence of many different generations in the same work environment. In order to accommodate the different needs that these generations have, conference venues

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<sup>5</sup> Merril, Jonathan. 2011. “Electronic Trends in Conventions and Conferences: Webcasts, Mobile, Social Networks.” *Jonathan Merril's Blog*.

are being updated or newly constructed to “cater to a diverse clientele”<sup>6</sup>. New convention centres are being designed in a way to include more accessible locations, “more collaborative work areas”<sup>7</sup> and a more open atmosphere. These new centres are designed to “take the meetings out of the meeting rooms”<sup>8</sup>, differing greatly from older hotels and convention centres with narrow hallways and less open space.

Conference venues are also adapting to the trend towards environmental consciousness, as society is focused on being environmentally friendly and ‘green’. Individuals attending conferences look for environmentally friendly options at conferences. Additionally, there is now a focus on promoting health and wellness at conferences, through the inclusion of healthier meal options.

## Networking

There is a trend towards individuals building a network of people surrounding them that they can turn to for advice and support in various situations. Conferences can be one place where many of these valuable connections are formed and can “provide a forum to meet the kind of like-minded people who can help [one] fulfill [their] mission and goals”<sup>9</sup>. There are many situations where individuals make contacts at a conference and as a result, take valuable connections back to work with them. Networking opportunities exist at coffee breaks, meals and in the time between sessions.

Some conferences may have designated networking times on the agenda, such as networking events and coffee breaks, however participants themselves can be proactive in networking regardless of the conference format. Some ways in which an attendee can make the most of a conference’s networking opportunities are by:

- preparing for networking ahead of time by determining the types of people that they would like connect with at a conference;
- making an effort to introduce themselves to the people around them at the conference; and
- being a good network contact and being willing to follow-through with the contacts they make.

Conferences provide successful networking opportunities when attendees and conference planners work together to make the most out of every minute of the conference.

## Adult Learning

Conference planners must understand adult learning since learning and professional development are key reasons why people attend conferences. Adults learn and respond to learning environments differently than children. An adult brings a series of past experiences and prior learning that can dramatically influence their learning of new information. As adults go through life, they build upon what they have previously learned every time they encounter a new learning opportunity. Adults are able to think in an abstract way, combining new knowledge with their prior experiences to continually build their knowledge bank. An adult can experience pressure related to life circumstances, family and work that can impact their ability to learn and apply new knowledge. Each individual adult learner will have a specific

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<sup>6</sup> Angela Kryhul. 2009. “Convention Centres Change with the Times.”

<sup>7</sup> Angela Kryhul. 2009. “Convention Centres Change with the Times.”

<sup>8</sup> Angela Kryhul. 2009. “Convention Centres Change with the Times.”

<sup>9</sup> Keith Ferrazzi with Tahl Raz, 2005. *Never Eat Alone and Other Secrets to Success, One Relationship at a Time* (Toronto: Currency Doubleday), 110.

learning style; one that they find to be the most effective and that they understand well.

It is important to note that the learning environment plays a role in how adults learn. It has been shown that "adults learn best when they are stimulated... or motivated"<sup>10</sup> and will learn better in a situation where they can evaluate new information to determine where gaps exist between their prior knowledge and the new information. Additionally, adult learning is most effective in "environments that provide opportunities for developing interpersonal relationships... [and] for demonstrating their mastery and understanding of the content to be learned"<sup>11</sup>. The environment is not only important for helping adults retain information, but also in helping them to apply it in the future.

Learning is not a one-step process for adults, where content is learned by simply hearing it one time. Adults will not be able to apply or use information they have obtained until they have evaluated it. This evaluation adds value and meaning to the raw information, after which an adult can develop an action plan for using the information. Feedback from others is important, so that they can continually build upon the knowledge and take it into their next learning experience.

### **Are Conferences Dying Off?**

We conducted the literature review with the following question in mind: "Are Conferences Dying Off?" It can be concluded that traditional lecture-based conferences are dying off to some degree, however the value of face-to-face meetings has not diminished in the midst of our digital and modern society. Today, conferences are adapting to societal changes, taking on new forms and incorporating new methods. With the abundance of free information that is available, there are numerous ways that one can learn besides attending a conference. There is still significant value in the face-to-face experience that a conference offers. Learning is not necessarily the primary motivation for conference attendance; networking opportunities and personal interaction with other attendees can be a strong motivator for attendance. Face-to-face meetings are not just adapting to our world; the successful ones are eagerly embracing new technology, ideas and innovations. The organizations and conferences that will truly thrive are the ones that do not succumb to falling behind the times, but rather make the commitment to stay at the leading edge of conference innovation.

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<sup>10</sup> Dorothy Mackeracher. 2004. *Making Sense of Adult Learning* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 129.

<sup>11</sup> Dorothy Mackeracher. 2004. *Making Sense of Adult Learning* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 44.

## METHODOLOGY

### Survey Research

We designed two surveys to gain insight into what CCCC members think of the Conference.

#### *Survey to Conference Attendees*

We sent an online survey via email to a group of individuals who have attended the CCCC Conference since 2005. This survey asked a series of questions about their impressions of our Conference, as well as about their conference attendance preferences in general. We asked structured questions, as well as provided opportunity for open-ended comments. The survey was sent to 780 individuals and out of that group, 105 individuals completed the survey with a response rate of 13.5% (a typical survey response rate is between 10–20%<sup>12</sup>).

#### *Survey to Non-Attendees*

Our second survey was sent to a group of individuals who have not attended a CCCC Conference since 2005. These individuals have been members for a number of years, yet have not personally attended a Conference in recent years. This group was limited to those from parachurch agencies and denominational offices. We sent the survey to a total of 1,613 individuals, and 183 completed the survey (response rate of 11.3%).

### Internal Research

We also gathered CCCC's internal Conference-related information, including:

- statistics related to the Conference and attendance patterns;
- financial information from past Conferences;
- estimated staff time and expense allocated to the Conference;
- a summary of past Conference evaluation form comments; and
- information on how we promote our annual Conference.

### External Consultation

We conducted additional research to gather external information, by the following means:

- Internet research on a number of other associations and their conferences;
- telephone conversations with other associations hosting annual conferences;
- Internet research on possible alternative venues for our Conferences in the Toronto area;
- research on options for outsourcing conference planning; and
- information on planning an effective conference.

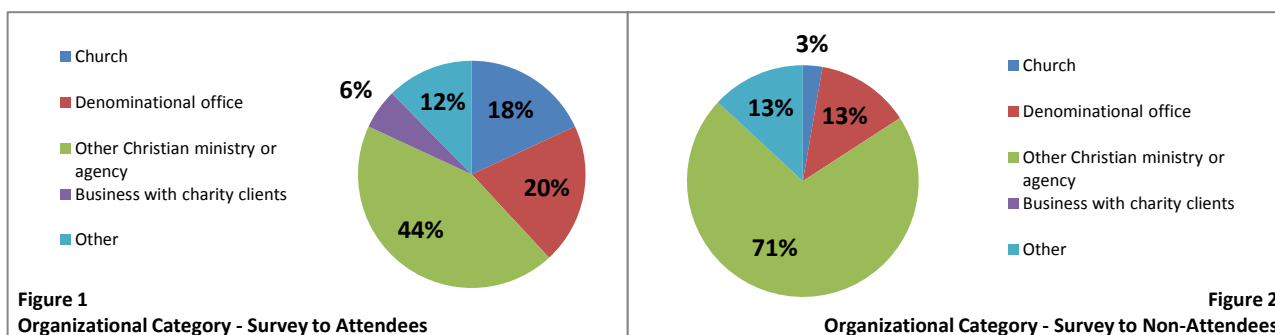
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<sup>12</sup> "Predicting Survey Response Rates." 2011. *Constant Contact*.  
[http://constantcontact.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/2965/~/\\_predicting-survey-response-rates](http://constantcontact.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/2965/~/_predicting-survey-response-rates)

## SURVEY ANALYSIS

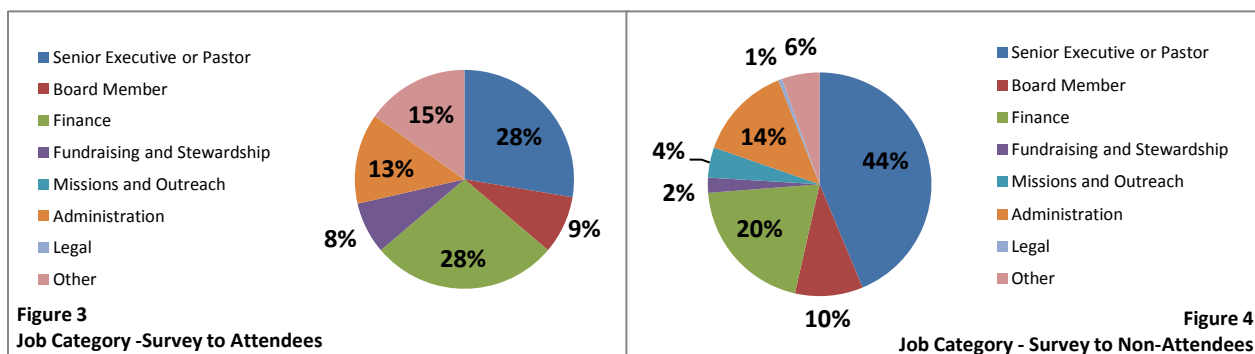
### Organizational Category

Both surveys asked participants to outline the type of organization they are connected with: church, denominational office, other Christian ministry or agency, or a business with charity clients. The survey to non-attendees was limited to denominational office or other Christian ministry or agency, although some reported being connected with a church. "Other" responses included camps, Christian schools and universities and private foundations for the survey to attendees. For the survey to non-attendees, the "other" responses included camps, Christian schools and universities, consultants and Christian retirement communities.



### Job Category

Both surveys asked participants to select which category best represented their job or functional area. For the survey to attendees, "other" job categories included Human Resources, Vice President, Department Head, Member Care and Partner Relations, Relief and Development/Justice Director, and Grants Management. Those who selected the "other" option for the survey to non-attendees reported the following job categories: Field Staff, Fellowship Coordinator, Community Development and Planning, and Regional Director. Both surveys showed that the greatest percentage of participants classified themselves as "Senior Executive or Pastor" or "Finance".



### Membership

The vast majority of the respondents for both surveys are CCCC members.

## Enjoyment of Conferences

Both surveys asked a question regarding the participant's enjoyment of conferences in general. The survey to attendees shows that all of the survey respondents said that they enjoyed attending conferences, with 50% "greatly" enjoying conferences and 50% "somewhat" enjoying conferences. No one from this survey reported that they did not enjoy attending conferences. For the survey to non-attendees, 60% reported that they "somewhat enjoy" attending conferences, while only 31% said they "enjoy" attending conferences and 9% "did not enjoy" attending conferences at all.

## Continuing Education Requirements

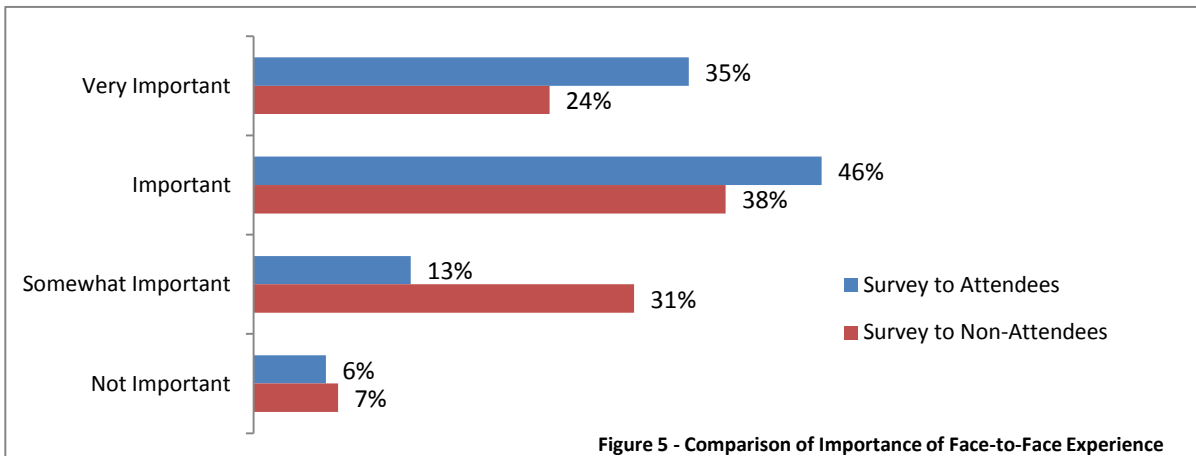
70% of attendees do not need professional continuing education credits, while 86% of the non-attendees do not require them. Respondents who require professional development credits need them for the following professional organizations:

- Advocis – The Financial Advisors Association of Canada
- Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP)
- Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP)
- Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA)
- Canadian Institute of Financial Planning (CIFP)
- Certified General Accountants (CGA designation)
- Certified Professional Accountants (CPA designation)
- Chartered Accountants of Ontario, British Columbia (CA designation)
- Church of the Nazarene – Global Ministry Center
- Financial Planners Standards Councils
- Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA)
- Institute of Internal Auditors (CIA designation)
- Institute of Chartered Accountants – Ontario, British Columbia
- Seventh-Day Adventist Churches and Conferences
- Society of Management Accountants (CMA designation)

The majority of the professional bodies are related to accounting, gift planning, financial planning and fundraising. While most of the individuals who would attend the CCCC Conference are not likely to require credits, accreditation with these professional bodies may boost attendance.

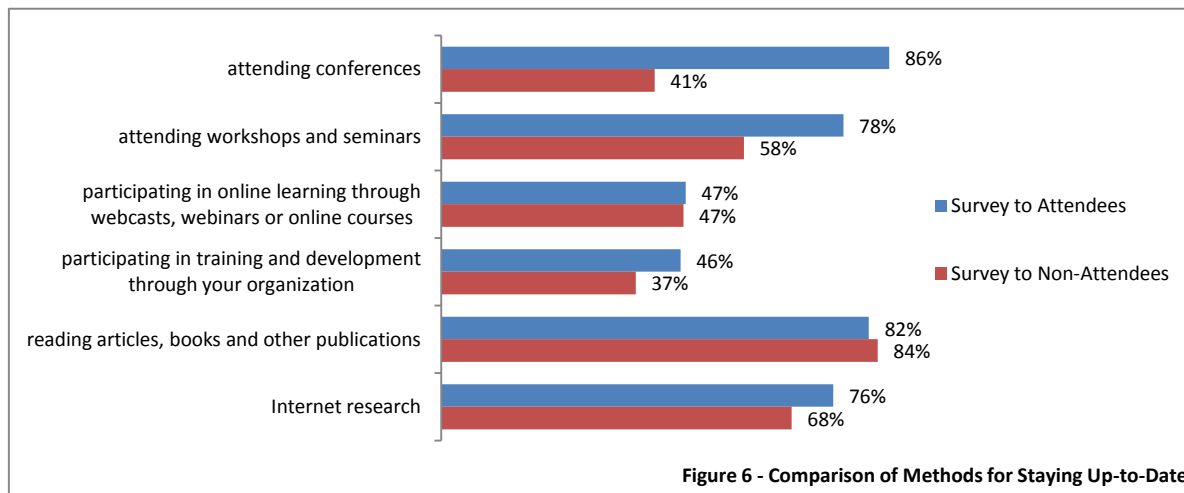
## Importance of Face-to-Face Conference Experience

In both surveys, only a small proportion of respondents reported that they consider the face-to-face value that a conference provides to be “Not Important”, but a higher percentage of attendees at our Conference chose the “Very Important” and “Important” rankings. Non-attendees were much more likely to rank the importance of the face-to-face experience as only “Somewhat Important”.



## Methods of Staying Current and Up-to-Date

For the survey to attendees, “attending conferences” and “reading articles, books and other publications” were the most highly rated options. These were followed closely by “attending workshops and seminars” and “Internet research”. The non-attendees rated “reading articles, books and publications” the highest, followed by “Internet research”.



## Motivations for Conference Attendance

The most highly rated (72%) reason the non-attendees gave for attending a conference was "acquiring new knowledge, both technical and conceptual". The next most highly rated options were "meeting new people and networking with others" and "gaining motivation, inspiration and encouragement". Similarly, 76% of the attendees rated "acquiring new knowledge, both technical and conceptual" as "Very Important", with "listening to speakers and industry experts" also rated as "Very Important". In both surveys, "earning continuing education credits" had a low rating.

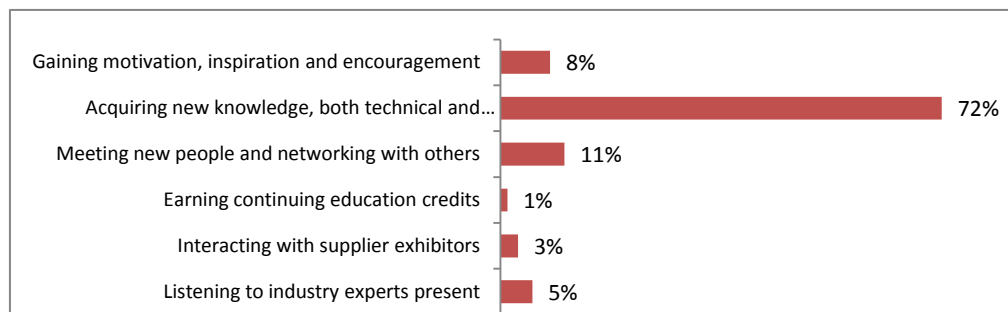


Figure 7 - Survey to Non-Attendees Attendance Motivations

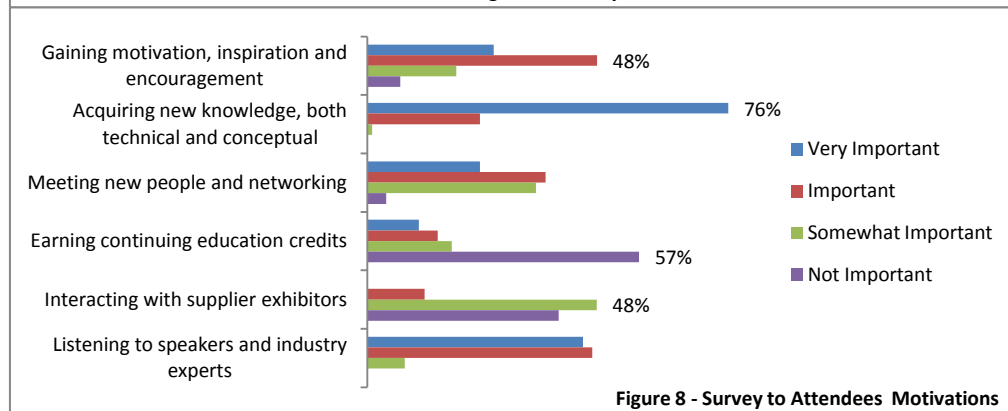


Figure 8 - Survey to Attendees Motivations

## Conference Length

The following graph shows the preferences for conference length. Overall, the most preferred length for conference attendees was 2 days, followed by a conference between 2 and 3 days. The non-attendees said the same, but also suggested a one day conference with no overnight stay required.

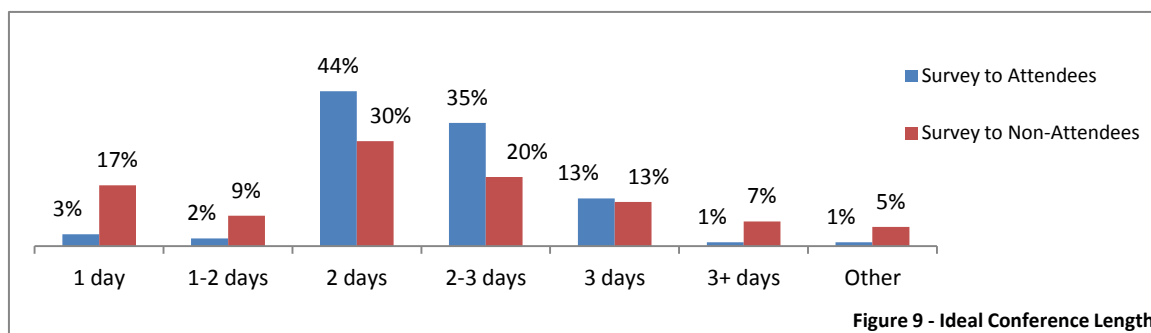


Figure 9 - Ideal Conference Length



## Conference Timing

The survey to non-attendees asked about preferences for when a conference is held. The results indicate that the most preferred months include February, March, April, May, October and November. There is a fairly even distribution of the results for these months.



## Conference Location

Based on the results of the survey to attendees, Toronto is the most preferred location for a conference and it is the location that is closest to the majority of respondents. Vancouver and Calgary ranked next in terms of the frequency of responses for preferred location and the city closest to respondents. Further analysis of the results indicated the following results:

- 62% - able to travel to Vancouver, Calgary, Saskatoon or Winnipeg
- 74% - able to travel to Toronto, Ottawa or Montreal
- 34% - able to travel to Halifax, Saint John or St. John's
- 24% - able to travel to any of the cities

Comments from survey respondents reported the following:

- traveling from Western Canada to Eastern Canada can be expensive and requires a full day of travel, given the distance and time zone changes
- Edmonton was mentioned as a suggestion for a location
- flights from Winnipeg, especially to Eastern Canada, can be costly
- there was a suggestion for hosting the Conference in a variety of cities across the country, instead of just the same ones

## Results Specific to Attendees

### *Number of Conferences Attended per Year*

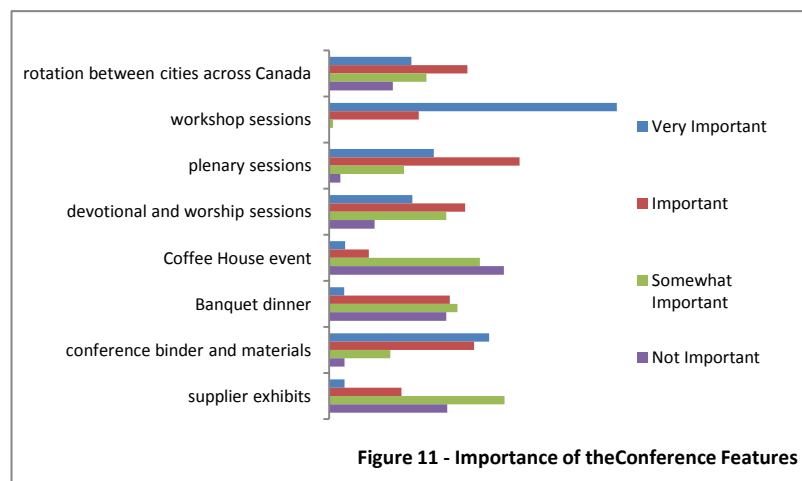
- 37% - attend 1 conference per year
- 38% - attend 2 conferences per year
- 22% - attend 3 or more conferences per year

### *CCCC Conference Attendance*

- 32% - attended the 2011 Conference in Mississauga
- 13% - attended the 2010 Conference in Winnipeg
- 22% - attended the Conference in both 2010 and 2011
- 33% - did not attend our Conference in the last two years

### *CCCC Conference Preferences*

- The workshop sessions were reported to be "Very Important" by the majority of respondents.
- The conference binder and materials were ranked by most to be "Very Important" as well.
- The Coffee House and the Banquet were rated "Not Important".



## Missed Sessions at the CCCC Conference

Attendees were asked to report if there any parts of the CCCC Conference that they did not attend. The following was reported:

- 41% did not go to the Coffee House event
- 33% did not attend the Banquet dinner
- 25% reported missing some of the worship sessions
- 24% missed some of the workshop sessions
- 22% missed some of the devotional sessions
- 15% reported missing some of the plenary sessions
- 34% did not miss any parts of the Conference
  - Reasons as to why some sections of the Conference were missed included:
    - Personal time, including resting and health reasons
    - Conflict with another event
    - Flight delays

- Worship sessions missed because the music was considered too loud
- Some attended only the sessions of interest to them
- Banquet – not valued by some
- Meetings – both work-related and meetings with other individuals at the Conference
- Work-related commitments
- Some reported missing workshops because the workshops they wanted to attend occurred in the same time block as others they wished to attend

### ***Post-Conference Behaviours***

- 88% of respondents have referred to their notes since the CCCC Conference but not on a regular basis (6% have used their notes regularly and 6% have not used them at all).
- 61% have not listened to any session recordings from the Conference.
- 67% have been able to implement the ideas they developed at the Conference, while 27% developed ideas, but have been unable to implement them yet.
- 79% of respondents intend to attend in the future, while the rest are unsure at this time.

### ***Organizational Information***

- 89% of survey respondents believe that their organization benefits from sending representatives to CCCC Conference.
- Survey responses indicated the follow about the strategies used by their organizations to decide who will attend the CCCC Conference, in terms of percentage of respondents:
  - 66% – Job Relevance – The staff with jobs that are relevant to the conference topics attend.
  - 38% – Professional Development – The staff with professional development needs are sent.
  - 29% – Preference – The staff that desire to attend have the opportunity to choose.
  - 22% – Proximity – The staff located the closest to the conference are sent to conferences.
  - 6% – Rotation – The staff take turns attending conferences.

### ***Other Conferences Attended***

The survey respondents were asked to name any other conferences that they attend or have attended in the past. The conferences and/or associations hosting them are outlined in Appendix 3.

### ***Reasons for Not Attending***

Those who reported that they have not attended a CCCC Conference in the past two years were asked an additional question: "For what reasons have you not attended a CCCC Conference in the last two years?" Their responses are summarized as follows:

#### ***Schedule and Timing***

- "too many work commitments"
- "I haven't been able to take the time away from the office"
- "scheduling conflicts with other major meetings we had at the time – the fall time especially is problematic"
- "I was occupied with another volunteer position for the past two years"

- "not available on dates of Conference", "was not available in the country"
- "not enough time", "time needed to travel", "was on vacation both times"

#### *Agenda*

- "not quite enough relevance to my needs at the time", "workshops not applicable"
- "there was nothing on the invites that appealed to me", "not particularly interested"
- "not sufficient new topics to warrant cost"
- "topics offered did not suit role/responsibility"
- "all seminars were introductory level content... would have been very helpful to me previously, but I am looking for more advanced/technical information"
- "my vocational focus has changed making the learning and networking opportunities at CCCC less urgent"
- "there were no workshops that spoke to my need"

#### *Costs*

- "too expensive", "cost", "budget", "financial"
- "budget is the primary reason"
- "there is not enough cost/benefit ratio"
- "price too high given pressure on department budgets... substituted with other less expensive seminar/courses"
- "I send two staff and cannot budget another"

#### *Location*

- "too far to travel", "too far away", "distance"
- "convenience of location, travel restrictions"
- "proximity from the West Coast causes longer work absence and some fatigue"

#### *Other*

- "other colleagues attended instead", "not asked to by employers"
- "cost - allow others in office to experience conference"
- "small size of our ministry"
- "very loud music... needs to become more conservative"

All survey participants were asked what has prevented them from attending a CCCC Conference in the past. The following are the percentages of respondents who selected each reason:

- 48% - Timing - The dates of the Conference were not ideal for my schedule
- 48% - Costs - The costs associated with attending were too much for me or my organization
- 41% - Location - The location was not accessible enough for me to attend.
- 26% - Alternatives - I have used alternative methods of learning besides the Conference
- 23% - Content - The topics at the Conference were not relevant for my job
- 13% - Organizational Decision - My organization has specific criteria for deciding who will attend

- 8% - Length – The Conference was too much of a time commitment for me
- 8% - Awareness – I was unaware of the CCCC Conference

Overall, we can be seen that the most commonly reported reasons for not attending our Conference were due to timing, cost and location.

### ***Criteria for Deciding to Attend a Conference***

Survey respondents were asked to outline what criteria they use to determine whether or not they want to attend a conference. The survey respondents reported basing their decisions on the following:

- what content is being presented
- professional development benefits of attending
- Conference location
- cost-benefit ratio
- learning and gap analysis
- who is hosting the conference
- will the conference help to achieve goals?
- how practical, applicable and relevant the content is
- will it meet an organizational need?
- growth potential – personal and organizational
- connection to organizational mission
- does the conference fulfill training needs?

### ***Criteria for Determining if a Workshop Session Was Successful***

Additionally, the participants were asked to describe the criteria they use in evaluating a workshop to determine whether or not the workshop was worth attending. The responses are summarized below:

- the immediate takeaway value of the content
- how applicable the content is to job and organization
- presentation of new information they were not currently aware of
- opportunity to engage and interact with those in the sessions
- speaker qualifications, experience, professionalism and ability to present
- new or reshaped perspective as a result of the session
- reinforcement of a currently held position on an issue or topic
- professional growth and development
- ability to communicate content to staff back at work
- can the information be obtained in a less expensive way?
- personal connections made during the section
- quality of the take-home materials and notes
- if questions prior to the workshop are answered during the workshop
- if information adds to the success of job or organization
- does the content help meet a need?

- how current and up-to-date the information is
- If expectations of the workshop are met
- How well information is retained after the session
- How the content is delivered

## **Results Specific to Non-Attendees**

### ***Preferences and Opinions***

- 73% of respondents believe that conference attendance is worth the time and money involved.
- Those who did not feel that Conferences are worth the time and money indicated that:
  - They cannot take time off work.
  - Have better things to do with time and it is not seen as best stewardship of time and resources.
  - Learning can be done in other ways.
  - It is hard to get the value needed out of conferences.
  - There is minimal return on investment.

### ***Organizational Information***

- 51% reported that their organization has sent staff, board members or volunteers to a CCCC Conference.
- 85% indicated that their organization makes use of CCCC resources other than the Conference.
- 72% feel that their organization would be willing to pay the costs involved with attending a CCCC Conference.
- Those whose organizations would not cover the costs reported the following:
  - Lack of resources to cover the costs.
  - Budget restrictions and financial difficulties.
  - They are required to pay for conference attendance out of own pocket or expense account.

### ***Reasons for Not Attending***

In the survey to non-attendees, two questions were asked to determine the reasons why respondents have not attended a CCCC Conference. One question was open-ended and asked "What would you say are the primary reasons why you have not attended a CCCC Conference? Is there anything preventing you from attending a CCCC Conference?" The survey responses were similar to the survey to conference attendees, so the reasons that are unique for this survey are highlighted below:

- "prefer local 1 day events – not 2 days with overnight"
- "'x' dollars allocated – have to choose based on specific questions we have in either US or Canada"
- "volunteer... time at conferences would be my own vacation time, plus with limited resources"
- "no longer in position of prime responsibility in organization"
- "not enough topics on a given day that relate to what I do"
- "topic information can be accessed online"
- "can't get away from work during the week and have too many family responsibilities in evenings"

and weekends – would like to go but can't"

- "my previous experience is that much of the content is discussed from the church context"
- "most topics in finance are at a parish level and don't deal with some of the complexities I need"
- "repeating topics from year to year"
- "the topics tend to focus on governance issues and are specific for organizations"
- "never felt the need to – our staff by-and-large has a high level of competence already"
- "seems like a lot of the CCCC Conference is geared towards churches which we are not, and to volunteer staff which we do not employ at this level"
- "it is not as pertinent to my life as other conferences would be"
- "almost all of the information that can be obtained at the conference is also available online, and if not, the recordings can be purchased after the conference"
- "presenters are not advanced enough in category to move me/the organization forward"
- "not as current as US Conferences"
- "the CCCC conference is not as focused on fundraising as others and it does not supply the educational credits for my CFRE"
- "info too basic... I don't need the networking. It is too maintenance oriented and not fresh and forward thinking enough"
- "we have felt that the topics that would be applicable to us are covered through local seminars offered"
- "the administrative focus is not my role. The leadership or organizational track you sometimes offer does not hold the value for me to spend the money on it. Because of the spectrum of non-profit organizations represented, the networking component is of questionable value"
- "I must use vacation days from work in order to attend"
- "was not aware there was an annual conference... would be interested in information about it"

### ***Changes to CCCC Conference***

The survey asked respondents to answer the question: "Is there anything about the CCCC Conference that could be improved upon in order to make the Conference more accessible for you?" The responses are outlined below:

#### ***Schedule and Timing***

- "more frequent with shorter time frames"
- "different time of year"
- "don't hold it in September"
- "I have often wanted to go but could not escape a conflict in timing"
- "timing"
- "it just doesn't seem to meet my schedule"
- "better timing"
- "conference should be one day max"

### *Content*

- "stick with legal, ethics, Canadian context issues (demographic shifts/trends for churches and general population)"
- "widen its mandate to include non-administrative components"
- "once again, content"
- "focus on leadership development"
- "webex options"
- "web access to the conference"

### *Costs*

- "they are very well done but as I have already mentioned, finance or lack thereof, make it difficult"
- "reduce costs"
- "cost is always the main factor we have to weigh"
- "price is always a factor"
- "the cost"
- "sometime the location requires air travel which is pricey for our budget"
- "a cost category for small ministries"
- "reduced costs"
- "once again cost only... cost is the problem"
- "just not in the budget"

### *Location*

- "in the Maritime provinces"
- "in general, local venue is always more easily attended than more distant ones"
- "local"
- "location"
- "local accessibility (through technology"
- "if the conference is held in another country or outside Nova Scotia is very unlikely anyone from our camp could attend"
- "possibly being closer to where I am located, I would attend a few"
- "distance is a problem for those living in the north – we send a board member"
- "one out west and one in Toronto each year"
- "closer to 'home'"
- "hold them in the west periodically"
- "one held in Winnipeg recently, so that is very accessible to me (I live in Winnipeg)"

### *Other*

- "the content is fine... perhaps take the conference on the road and do a couple of stops across Canada or a multi-site conference approach like the Willow Creek Summit model"
- "strategy and networking conferences with organizations with similar goals and like mindedness towards partnerships for a common good"
- "Christian charities are really struggling with marketing and promotion issues, given their limited



resources. They also often can't afford a 'high-end' leadership trainer but if a few CCCC members got together, perhaps they could bring in someone like Global Legacy Strategies to provide topnotch teaching at a reduced cost"

- "the webinar and one day trainings nicely supplement the training from our denominational conference and fulfill our needs to stay current on board training, child safety and charitable laws"
- "instead of just one major conference covering many subjects, would be interested in a one day conference dealing with issues that relate to my responsibilities"
- "should have more other non-profit emphasis than church, colleges, other presenters than the TO group"
- "lift the level of the content and the attendees"
- "one day event with top-notch speakers"

Similar to the survey to attendees, the results of this survey indicate again that the top reasons that have prevented Conference attendance are costs, timing and location. This can be seen through the responses to the questions as listed above, as well as through the changes that could be made to make the Conference more accessible.

### ***Other Conferences Attended***

Both surveys asked participants to outline the various conferences that they attend or have attended in the past, which are outlined in Appendix 3. In the survey to non-attendees, participants were asked to provide the name of the best conference that they have attended as well as a description about what they valued in that conference.

Confidential.

### ***Features of An Ideal Conference***

For those individuals who could not determine the best conference they have attended, an option was provided to describe what they would consider to be a "best" or "ideal" conference. The responses are organized into categories as outlined below.

#### ***Conference Sessions and Features***

- "challenging & inspirational"
- "acquiring knowledge"
- "opportunity to acquire new knowledge"
- "'outside the box' presentations that stimulate ideas"
- "2 or 3 nuggets of gold to take away and apply"
- "good information on the topics presented"
- "have practical advice that is useable"
- "a spiritual challenge"
- "choice in the schedule"
- "good discussion"

- "new knowledge"
- "informative and relevant topics"
- "feel welcome... care about the individual who comes, not just the crowd or numbers as a whole"
- "smaller workshops where you can choose to attend themes that can offer valuable information/assistance..."
- "information coming from different viewpoints"
- "leading edge topics"
- "lots of topics to choose from"
- "level of technical expertise"
- "workshops that are very practical"
- "inspiring times of worship"
- "choice of training / workshops works better than large "lecture" settings"
- "practical information that can be acted upon/applied immediately following the event and on an ongoing basis"
- "technical as well as the inspirational/motivational"
- "workshops on various topics of interest"
- "well organized"
- "little details such as welcoming delegates, reminder texts and well laid out agendas"
- "excellent meal and entertainment"

### *Speakers*

- "presenter – knowledgeable, approachable, engaging"
- "knowledgeable speakers that speak in lay terms"
- "stimulating speakers"
- "speakers on different topics"
- "time to ask speaker questions and small group discussions"
- "excellent speakers"
- "well balanced group of speakers"
- "knowledgeable presenters"
- "intelligent, articulate speakers"
- "knowledgeable, articulate speakers"
- "presenters with current and useful information"
- "good, intelligent speakers"
- "receiving encouragement and direction through the seminars and discussions and one to one conversations with other leaders"

### *Conference Materials and Exhibits*

- "pertinent hand-outs"
- "ability to access notes and resources online afterwards"
- "relevant material as hand-outs"
- "information for the attendees at the conference"

- “product displays”
- “technological displays”
- “good displays with knowledgeable reps”

#### *Cost, Time and Location*

- “proximity and time”
- “close to home... not require flying or driving”
- “not too long”
- “not too expensive”
- “no wasted time”
- “reasonable registration cost & lodging”
- “respectful of my time and schedule”
- “fast paced”
- “sessions of a reasonable length”

#### *Personal Interaction*

- “opportunity to interact with presenters”
- “opportunity to network and connect with like-minded individuals and organizations”
- “time for personal interaction with others”
- “lots of time for connecting with others”
- “ample free time for networking”
- “networking”
- “lots of interaction between participants”
- “personal Interactions are always good”
- “good opportunity for interaction with the presenters”

## INTERNAL DATA COLLECTION

### **Conference Statistics**

A number of statistics were gathered for the CCCC Conference for attendance numbers and patterns over the last few years. These statistics are outlined below.

#### ***Conference Attendance***

The following chart outlines the location of each CCCC Conference since 2006, along with the number of individuals in attendance and the number of organizations that attended the Conference. The membership numbers for CCCC are also outlined, indicating that less than 6% of our members have attended in the last number of years.

Year	Location	Attendance		CCCC Membership	% of Membership
		<i>Individuals</i>	<i>Organizations</i>		
2011	Toronto	331	178	3,104	5.7%

2010	Winnipeg	246	155	3,003	5.2%
2009	Toronto	311	169	2,917	5.8%
2008	Calgary	404	197	2,872	6.9%
2007	Toronto	368	205	2,774	7.4%
2006	Vancouver	328	160	2,552	6.3%

### ***First Time Attendees***

The years 2004 and 2005 were used as a representative sample of Conference attendees in order to determine the proportion of attendees who attend for the first time and return to the Conference within two years. The following was determined:

- 34.7% of the first time attendees in 2004 returned within two years, and
- 23.5% of the first time attendees in 2005 returned within two years.

### ***Number of Representatives Sent By Organizations***

For the years 2006-2011, the number of representatives sent by organizations were examined to determine the number of organizations that choose to send either one, two, three, or more than four representatives to the Conference. On average:

- 61% of the organizations attending the Conference send only one attendee
- 20% of the organizations send two attendees to the Conference
- 10% send three attendees
- 8% send more than four attendees

These statistics indicate that it is most common for an organization to send only one representative to the CCCC Conference.

### **Staff Consultation**

A discussion among staff at a meeting regarding the Conference program evaluation provided an opportunity for staff to give input into the process. The following points were raised, which are important considerations for future Conference planning efforts:

- Learning and education may not be the only reason that individuals attend the CCCC Conference.
- There are many instances where Conference attendees are volunteers, such as for a church. This should be noted, as these individuals have to consider both their paid jobs and their volunteer positions.
- Personality may affect whether individuals decide to attend the Conference. More exuberant, high energy individuals may choose to attend and keep returning to the Conference, and yet there may be individuals who are more restrained and may never desire to attend, no matter how engaging and beneficial the CCCC Conference may be.
- Each charity's own culture may influence the organization's choice to send someone.

### **Conference Financial Information**

As mentioned previously, the Conference program accounts for 14% of CCCC's expense budget. Each Conference requires over \$200,000 to organize and deliver, and despite the revenue earned, there is minimal revenue left over to cover staff time and overhead for the Conference. In order to examine the financial situation surrounding the Conference program, financial information has been gathered for the years ended March 31<sup>st</sup> of 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012, outlined in Appendix 4.

### **Conference Time Allocations**

The Conference accounts for 8% of our staff time. We completed an analysis to get an idea of the full scope of the staff time involved in the Conference. The following information was used for the basis of the analysis:

- Estimates were made based on the 2011 Calendar Year.
- For the dollar amount, a summary number was used to calculate an estimate in order to keep salary information confidential.
- Staffing during the Conference was estimated at 40 hours/person each year for the staff involved in pre-Conference planning and administration. The number of hours spent at the Conference were used for staff not involved in pre-Conference activities.
- Planning Time is considered any activity beyond 40 hours staffing at Conference for those involved in Conference planning.
- Administrative Support is considered anything beyond 40 hours of staffing time at Conference for the staff members who are involved in Conference administration activities.
- Development time is not allocated to the Conference, but it is estimated that 1.5 weeks of time is spent researching a topic, preparing handouts and rehearsing for a workshop.

<b>Conference Time Allocation Analysis</b>					
	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Weeks</b>	<b>Dollar Amount</b>	<b>% of Hours</b>	<b>% of Dollar Amount</b>
Planning Time	145	4	\$8,275	8%	12%
Administration Support (pre-Conference)	1,111	32	\$36,145	60%	52%
Conference Staffing	584	17	\$24,940	32%	36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,841</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>\$69,360</b>		

This analysis shows the amount of time and money required for planning and delivering the CCCC Conference.

### **Conference Evaluation Forms**

There are a number of suggestions and comments that our Conference attendees have provided when filling out the evaluation forms at the end of the Conference. We have made improvements to the Conference based on these evaluation forms each year. Overall, our attendees have been impressed with the Conference, its preparation and deliverance. The suggestions that they have made over the years have been summarized and categorized, as outlined below.

#### ***Sessions***

- Plenary, Devotional and Worship Sessions
  - consideration for the music – ensuring a balance between energetic and calm, contemporary and traditional, familiar and new music
  - better gender balance represented in the plenary and devotional sessions
  - devotional sessions – more devotional and less like a lecture
- Workshop Sessions
  - opening up the CEO track to aspiring CEOs
  - including more interactive and experiential learning
  - making sessions more practical for attendees
  - providing a variety of speakers in terms of experience levels, ages etc.
  - attaching a rating to each workshop – beginner or advanced

#### ***Networking and Social Opportunities***

- providing more focus or an agenda at the CEO Breakfast
- intentionally linking the first-time attendees with seasoned attendees
- introduction of staff at events such as the Banquet
- possibility of a social night out or a social event on the Tuesday night
- opportunity for speakers to meet up during the Conference

### ***Conference Materials***

- reusable bags for Conference attendees
- clips for the attendee nametags
- lists for attendees of the workshops they have signed up for
- ability to download handouts, preferably prior to the workshops
- provision of wireless Internet connection for attendees with laptops
- addition of job titles to the nametags, instead of just the attendee's name and organization
- ensuring that all handouts are hole-punched ahead of time
- more promotion of the availability of the handouts online after the Conference

### ***Meals***

- provision of healthier meal options
- availability of a snack at the coffee breaks or throughout the day
- inclusion of a beverage with meals – coffee, tea, soft drinks or juice
- choice of meal at the banquet and smaller portions
- consideration for vegetarians
- possibility of providing a breakfast buffet each morning

### ***Timing/Schedule***

- providing a break between the morning sessions, so that sessions are not back-to-back
- Thursday morning – either lengthen the Thursday or condense the Conference
- possibility of providing workshop options on Thursday morning

### ***Pricing***

- banquet pricing is potentially too high
- less cost for purchasing CDs
- price of the conference is too high for some

### ***Other***

- including a special project or event instead of the banquet dinner
- increasing the number of exhibitors
- inclusion of the ability to purchase books recommended or produced by speakers
- option to donate to CCCC to assist with covering costs
- a better quality hotel for the Toronto sessions

### **Conference Promotion**

We gathered information to examine the promotion that is done for our Conference each year. We promote the Conference through a brochure that is mailed out to our members, as well as through email “Eblasts” sent out during the time leading up to a Conference. Additionally, there is information available on our website about the Conference, including registration.

Our Conference brochures were sent out to all members as well as some non-members. In 2010, two batches of mailings went out, one on May 20, 2010 totaling 8,407 copies and again on June 9, 2010 with 8,132 copies of the brochure. In 2011, one mail batch went out on May 25, 2011 with a total of 9,872 brochures.

Eblasts are sent out to provide general information about the Conference, remind members of the Early Deadline for registration, remind them that it is "not too late" to register, and there is a "don't miss out" Eblast sent out just before the Conference.

<b>Conference Promotion Analysis</b>				
<b>2011</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Number Sent</b>	<b>Registration Count</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
First Eblast(s)	19-May-11	15,469	4	2%
	25-May-11			
	21-Jun-11			
Early Deadline Eblast	26-Jul-11 4-Aug-11	7,071	51	22%
"Not Too Late" Eblast	23-Aug-11	10,981	138	59%
"Don't Miss Out" Eblast	13-Sep-11	6,876	220	93%
<b>Total Registered for Conference</b>			<b>236</b>	
<b>2010</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Number Sent</b>	<b>Registration Count</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
First Eblast(s)	21-May-10	12,549	0	0%
Early Deadline Eblast	28-Jul-10	13,217	48	26%
"Not Too Late" Eblast	23-Aug-10	13,347	107	58%
"Don't Miss Out" Eblast	8-Sep-10	12,608	162	88%
<b>Total Registered for Conference</b>			<b>185</b>	

Based on the information collected, we can see that the incremental increase in registrations coincides with the dates that the Eblasts went out. Registrations were minimal prior to the initial Eblast in both years. By the Early Deadline Eblast, registration increased to around 20% of the total registration. By the date of the "Not Too Late" Eblast for registration, registration jumped to nearly 60% for both 2010 and 2011. Registration increased to around 90% after the "Don't Miss Out" Eblast went out.



## EXTERNAL INFORMATION COLLECTION

### Research on Other Association Conferences

In order to examine what other conferences are like, we conducted research on several different associations and their conferences, both secular and Christian. This information will allow us to benchmark how our Conference compares with other groups that host conferences.

#### *American Society of Association Executives*

##### *Annual Meeting and Exposition, 2011*

<http://www.asaecenter.org/education/eventdetail.cfm?eventid=626731>

[http://www.asaeannualmeeting.org/conference\\_schedule.cfm](http://www.asaeannualmeeting.org/conference_schedule.cfm)

The American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) offers an annual meeting and exposition for its members, which ran from August 6-9, 2011. The conference consisted of a combination of different learning sessions, including Learning Labs, half-day intense workshops and large general sessions. There was an exhibition hall for attendees as well as opportunities for networking through organized events, such as a golf classic, a 5K run and numerous receptions. There were lounges open during the conference, based on themes such as Online Communications & Engagement and Business Connection lounges. Social Media was incorporated throughout the conference.

##### *Tech and Work – Technology Conference and Exposition, 2011*

<http://technologyconference.org/>

In addition to their annual meeting, ASAE provides a technological conference, which ran from December 6-8, 2011. There were 50 education sessions, as well as general sessions, plus an exhibit hall with additional mini-sessions. Blog and Twitter rolls were accessible for participants and handouts are available on the website for download. Networking breaks and extra events were also part of the schedule.

##### *Marketing, Membership and Communications Conference, 2012*

[http://mmconference.org/education\\_sessions.cfm](http://mmconference.org/education_sessions.cfm)

The ASAE also hosts marketing and communications conference with a format similar to the Tech and Work Conference. This conference will run from May 23-24, 2012 and will include a combination of general sessions, workshops and half-day sessions. Participants have the option of voting on the session topics prior to the conference, via the conference website.

##### *Great Ideas Conference, 2012*

[http://www.greatideasconference.org/registration\\_information.cfm](http://www.greatideasconference.org/registration_information.cfm)

The Great Ideas Conference will be hosted by the ASAE from March 25-27, 2012. The conference is full of engaging sessions, including Deep Dive sessions to tackle tough challenges, half-day workshops to explore issues in depth and Next Generation Learning sessions for association executives to learn new methods and models for association education. There are also general sessions with keynote speakers. There is an additional Executive Leadership Program running throughout the conference.

There is a complex pricing grid, with options for registrants based on their association size, membership, or if they are a consultant or industry partner. Additional fees are charged for the optional

events, session recordings and guest tickets. The basic pricing is as follows:

	<i>Early Registration</i>	<i>Regular Rate</i>
Member (Association Executive)	\$895	\$995
Non-Member (Association Executive)	\$1,095	\$1,195

### ***Canadian Society of Association Executives***

*National Conference, 2012*

<http://www.csae.com/CoursesEvents/NationalConference2012.aspx>

The Canadian Society of Association Executives (CSAE) offers an annual national conference, running from October 31-November 3, 2012. There will be pre-conference activities including a pre-conference workshop and a Governance Summit. There are workshops and educational sessions available on the conference days, as well as keynote addresses. The conference kicks off with an opening ceremonies event and a welcome reception. There is a Gala Reception & Dinner, a Showcase Breakfast and an Honours & Awards Luncheon during the conference.

Prices are as follows (there are additional charges for the pre-conference activities):

	<i>2011 Rate</i>	<i>Early Registration</i>	<i>Regular Rate</i>
Full Conference	\$695 Member \$895 Non-Member	\$795 Member \$995 Non-Member	\$895 Member \$1095 Non-Member
Companion	\$395		
One Day	\$199		
Conference Recording	\$99		

### ***Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners***

*Annual Conference, 2012*

<http://www.kitservices.ca/CanSpep/home.html>

The Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners (CanSPEP) runs an annual Conference for meeting planners. In 2012, the conference will be from February 23-25, 2012. There are general sessions and concurrent workshops on a variety of topics. Attendees will have the opportunity to network with others at meals and at a Networking Reception. An awards reception takes place on the Friday and there is a late-night social event each night. A unique feature of the conference is the incorporation of a Conference Charity. Attendees are encouraged to bring along clothing, household and personal items to donate to Bethlehem Housing and Support Services. Each donation allows attendees to receive tickets for a prize draw.

Prices for the conference are as follows:

	<i>Early Registration</i>	<i>Regular Rate</i>
CanSPEP Member Planner	\$299	\$374
Non-Member Planner	\$424	\$499
Supplier	\$399	\$474
Companion	\$100	

## **Christian Leadership Alliance**

*National Conference, 2012*

<http://www.claconference.org/index.php>

The Christian Leadership Alliance (CLA) in the United States provides an annual conference for their members and Christian non-profit leaders. The conference will run from April 10-12, 2012. There are a number of different learning opportunities, including over 100 workshops, 25 full-day intense seminars, a technology summit and a number of general sessions. The workshops are 1.5 hours each and include the following tracks: Executive Leadership; Spiritual and Professional Life; People Management and Care; Financial Management; Church Leadership; Mission and Strategy; Tax and Legal; Revenue and Stewardship; Communications and Marketing; Risk Management; and Board Governance. The Full Day Intensive Training Institute Seminars are designed to be in-depth on a particular topic and are available in varying degrees of complexity, from basic to advanced. The summit is a series of sessions specific to technology and innovation, in the place of workshops. There are evening sessions and events, an exhibit hall and designated networking opportunities throughout the conference.

The pricing of the conference is as follows:

	<i>Early Registration</i>	<i>Regular Rate</i>
Intensive Training Institutes	\$189 Member \$209 Non-Member	\$199 Member \$219 Non-Member
Conference	\$499 Member \$629 Non-Member	\$569 Member \$699 Non-Member
Spouse	\$209	

## **Phone Conversations with Other Associations**

In order to further accumulate information, discussions took place over the phone with representatives from two other associations. In return, we provided them with information about our own conference, in terms of attendance and planning efforts.

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## **Alternative Venues**

In terms of venues, attendees have commented on the post-conference evaluation forms about the hotels that the CCCC Conference has been hosted at over the years.

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## **Research on Outsourcing Conference Planning**

We conducted some research on conference planning and outsourcing in order to assist in presenting possible alternatives for planning our Conference. Based on the information in the Conference Time Allocation Analysis, a significant amount of time and money is allocated to Conference planning and design. If the Conference is not able to produce enough revenue to cover all overhead and staff time involved, there may be alternative ways to plan it in a more cost-effective way.

### ***Considerations for Outsourcing Conference Planning***

There are many resources online that provide information about the benefits of using a conference planning company instead of in-house planning. It is important to note that these companies “will never completely replace staff association planners. However, they can be an integral part of your team, reduce your administrative workload and help ensure the success” of a conference<sup>13</sup>. These benefits include:

- Outsourcing enables you to “expand your resources... increase your staff” beyond what you are capable of planning in-house<sup>14</sup>.
- Event management companies provide “senior staff with broad industry experience” who have connections within the industry, the ability to negotiate contracts and are experts in location selection<sup>15</sup>.
- These companies are up-to-date with the “latest technology and flexible, customized software tools” for conference planning and delivery<sup>16</sup>.
- Outsourcing can save on “precious volunteer time and effort” by allowing “association leaders to focus on industry related issues and decisions rather than the basic administrative tasks of planning and running the event”<sup>17</sup>.
- Conference planners can provide “cost-effective solutions to personnel, equipment, facilities and budget considerations” and make sure that the “event stays on budget”<sup>18</sup>.

In order to benefit the most from outsourcing, the following points should be kept in mind:

- It is important to “be clear on what it is you want the event management company to handle” and “have clear expectations” for the conference and the management company<sup>19</sup>.
- Caution should be taken to “choose a management firm that has been around long enough to establish good connections and resources” and that “has a good reputation in the industry”<sup>20</sup>.
- Remember that “the success of the event management company is dependent on the success of the event(s) they are contracted to handle”, so the company will make every effort to ensure the event is successful<sup>21</sup>.

### ***Canadian Conference Planners***

There are numerous event management companies across the country that specialize in planning meetings and conferences, for both corporate companies and for associations. A conference planning company could be chosen by conducting Internet searches, inquiring with other associations that outsource their conferences, and by searching the databases available on websites such as the Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners. Also, there are both secular event management companies available across the country and Christian companies who plan events as well.

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<sup>13</sup> “Should My Association Outsource Its Meeting Planning?”. 2009. *Best Association*.

<sup>14</sup> “Why Should I Outsource?”. n.d. *ConferenceWorks*.

<sup>15</sup> “Why Should I Outsource?”. n.d. *ConferenceWorks*.

<sup>16</sup> “Why Should I Outsource?”. n.d. *ConferenceWorks*.

<sup>17</sup> “Why Should I Outsource?”. n.d. *ConferenceWorks*.

<sup>18</sup> “Is Outsourcing Conference Management a Good Option For your Association?”. 2010. *McPherson Management*.

<sup>19</sup> “Why Outsource Your Conference and Other Meetings?”. 2010. *McPherson Management*.

<sup>20</sup> “Why Outsource Your Conference and Other Meetings?”

<sup>21</sup> “Why Outsource Your Conference and Other Meetings?”

*Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners*

<http://canspep.ca/Membership/database.asp>

The Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners (CanSPEP) has a feature on their website to search for independent event planners that have a membership with CanSPEP. There are options available to narrow down the search, such as selecting "Full Conference & Meeting Management" or "Registration Services". This tool would be useful to find reliable event planners and conference management companies. Each entry provides company information, as well as the principal event planner and their contact information. There are many of these meeting planning companies that focus on association conference planning as well as the non-profit sector, rather than having only a corporate clientele.

### **Research on Planning Innovative Conferences**

There are numerous resources that provide tips and suggestions for how to ensure the effectiveness of a Conference and how to plan a truly innovative conference. One book that is full of useful information and resources is "Seven Rules for Designing More Innovative Conferences" by Ed Bernacki. This book outlines seven rules of thumb to keep in mind when planning a conference.

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## **RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS**

**Is the conference program helping CCCC fulfill its mission? It is only fulfilling our mission if it is helping our members fulfill their missions.**

The mission of the Conference program, as outlined in the Theory of Change, is to help ministries become strong and healthy so that they can fulfill their own missions. The Conference is helping us accomplish our mission because 67% of our attendees have implemented ideas they developed at our Conference and 89% believe their organization benefits from their attendance. Those who attend say they are benefitting from their Conference experience. The attendees are able to develop ideas at the Conference through the workshops and general sessions, which they take back to work with them.

With that in mind, there is an untapped group of individuals who do not attend the Conference and therefore do not benefit from this program. This group do not attend either as a result of barriers that prevent their attendance or due to a perception that the Conference does not provide what they need at the time. A substantial percentage of our members are not able to tap into the resources that are provided through our Conference program.

While the Conference may be helping those in attendance fulfill their missions, there is room for improvement in the Conference program and design. With changes, the Conference has the potential to meet the needs a larger proportion of our membership.

**If it is helping CCCC fulfill its mission, then how can the conference program better meet the needs of ministry workers? How can it attract more of them?**

From the research, we can see that those who attend the Conference do value the experience that they have. Conferences were reported to be among the methods that Christian ministry workers use to stay

up-to-date in their fields. A primary motivation for attending conferences is to acquire new knowledge, both technical and conceptual. Some individuals attend conferences additionally in order to network with those around them. Keeping this in mind, an improved CCCC Conference could be a valuable source of information and encouragement for many members.

### **What assumptions have we made about our members' needs and about how to put on conferences? Do they stand up to scrutiny?**

The survey results consistently showed that barriers exist that prevent many individuals from attending our Conference, even when they desire to attend and would benefit from the Conference. Christian ministry workers are busy with their jobs and commitments, have limited resources and are often required to make choices about how best to use their time and resources. The attendee needs outlined in the Theory of Change have proven to be accurate in portraying the needs of Christian ministry workers among our member organizations. Based on the research, our members desire to attend a Conference that provides them with the most added value, taking attendee's needs and circumstances into consideration.

### **What is the state of conferences today? What are the trends and new developments? What does research show? Are there viable alternatives as replacements?**

Today, there are still many conferences that run in the traditional form, including the conferences run by the American Society of Association Executives, Canadian Society of Association Executives, Canadian Society of Professional Event Planners and Christian Leadership Alliance. Each of these organizations provide a conference with general sessions and workshops, as CCCC does. All are association-based conferences provided to members as both an education tool and an opportunity for networking with other association members.

Although traditional conferences do exist today, there are many new developments that have been noted in the literature review, concerning how conferences are evolving today. Trends towards a greater incorporation of the latest technology, and increasing participant interaction can be seen in the conference industry today. It is important to have an understanding that conferences exist today for both educational purposes and for the face-to-face experience of interacting with peers and industry experts.

In terms of alternatives, there are possibilities for outsourcing conference planning, either only certain components of planning or the entire conference. New methods for delivering conference workshops and sessions can enhance conferences today, which include more engagement and participation among attendees. The research throughout this program evaluation highlights that face-to-face interactions are still highly valued in spite of the advances in technology. In-person meetings will likely continue as long as these meetings can adapt and change to provide the most value-added experience for attendees.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

This program evaluation is being released to the board and the staff at the same time, so no decisions have yet been made regarding the recommendations. As we discuss the results, staff may come up with additional recommendations.

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**Recommendations for *Both Attendees and Non-Attendees***

Confidential.

**Recommendations to Engage *Non-Attendees***

Confidential.

**Recommendations to Increase the *Value* of the Conference to Attendees**

Confidential.

**Recommendations to Improve the Conference *Experience* for Attendees**

Confidential.

**Recommendations to Help CCCC**

Confidential.

**The Potential**

Confidential.

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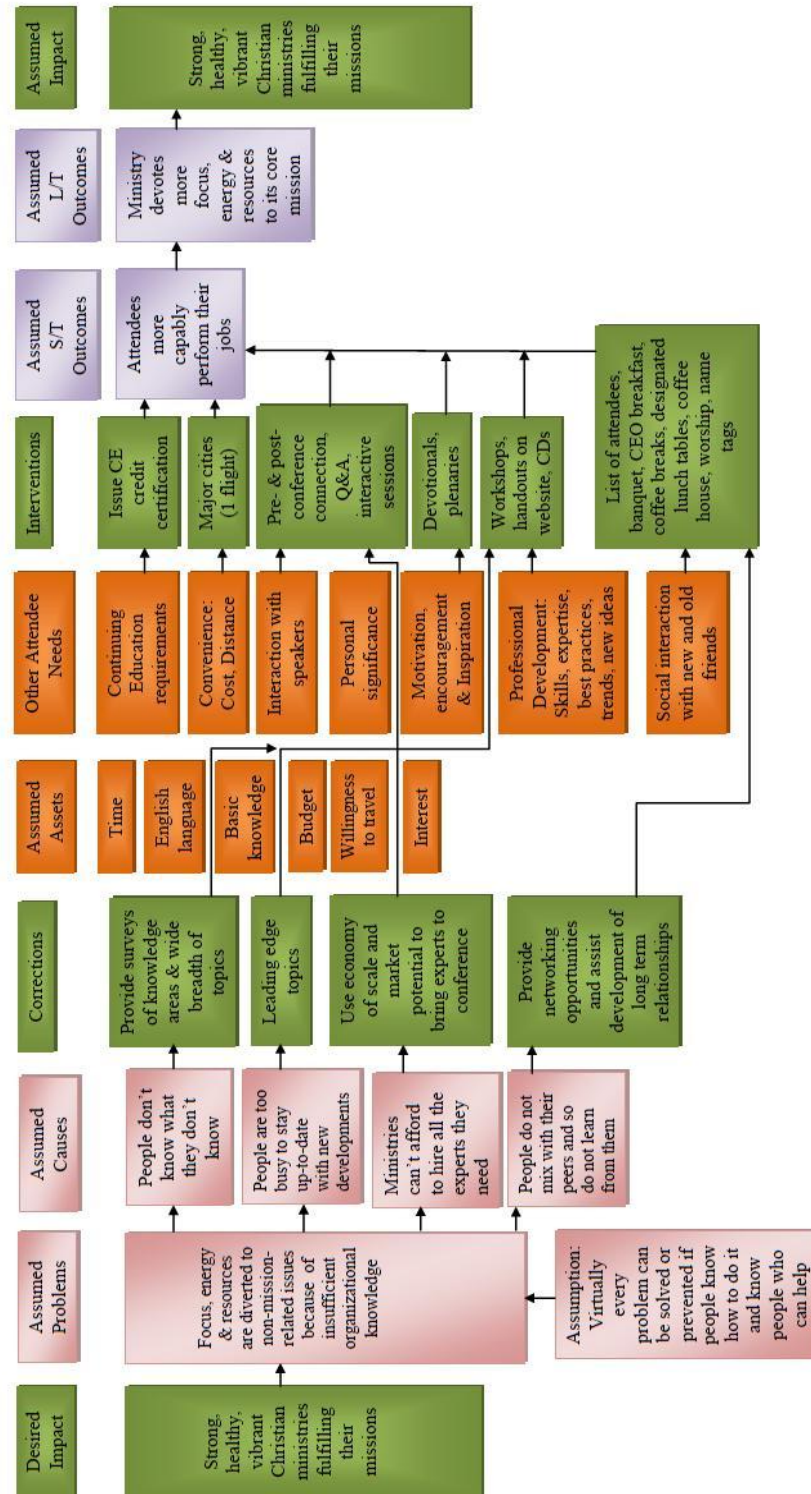
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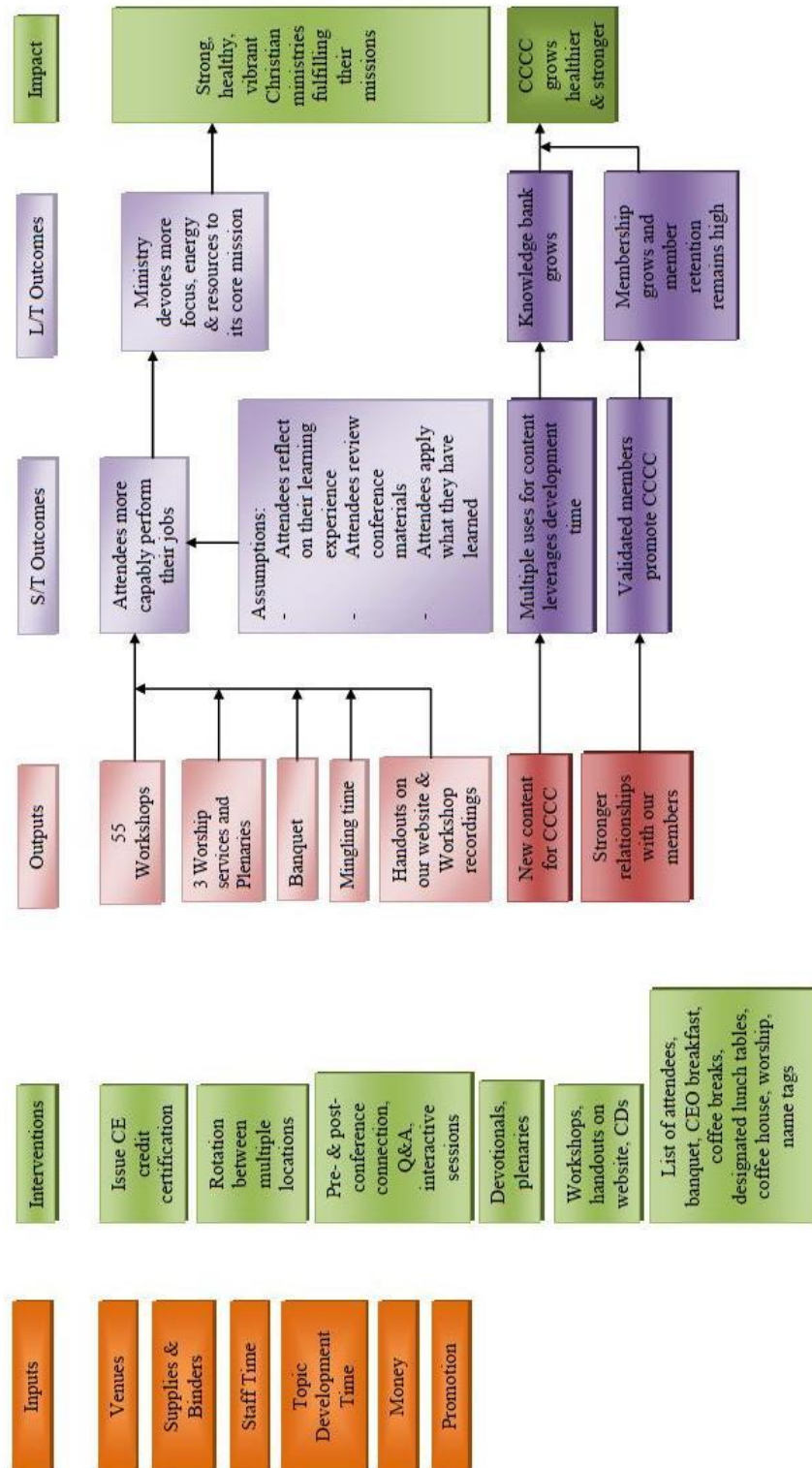
## APPENDIX 1 - THEORY OF CHANGE

CCCC Conference: Theory of Change



## APPENDIX 2 – LOGIC MODEL

CCCC Conference: Logic Model



## APPENDIX 3 – ADDITIONAL SURVEY INFORMATION

### *Other Conferences Attended – Survey to Attendees*

Survey respondents reported the following conferences, or associations that host conferences, as ones that they have attended before.

Canadian	American
Advisors with Purpose	American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
Banff Pastors' and Spouse Conference	American Constitution Society for Law and Policy
BC Non-Profit Housing Association	Association of Business Administrators of Christian Colleges
Breakforth Canada	Association of Fundraising Professionals
Canada Revenue Agency	Association of Fundraising Professionals
Canadian Association of Gift Planners	Blackbaud
Canadian Association of Pregnancy Support Services	Catalyst Conference
Canadian Business for Social Responsibility	Christian Management Association
Canadian Christian Relief and Development Association	Christian Stewardship Association
Capacity Builders – Charity Law Information Program	Echo Conference
Carter's Church and Charity Law Seminar	Ecumenical Stewardship Center
Certified General Accountant – Practitioners' Convention	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
Certified Management Accountants – Manitoba	International Churchill Society
Church Planting Canada	Jack Hayford School of Ministry
Evangelical Fellowship of Canada – Hinge Conference	Kindgom Advisors
Grant Thornton LLP	Multnomah University – Bible College and Biblical Seminary
Human Resources Professionals Association	Perry Noble – Unleash Conference
Imagine Canada	Rotary International
Insight Canadian Non-Profit and Carity Law Conference	SRI International
Institute of Chartered Accountants of BC	The Mission Exchange
Loewen Kruse Chartered Accountants	Willow Creek – Global Leadership Summit and Youth
Lutheran Church–Canada	
Mennonite Central Committee Ontario	
Mennonite Church Canada	
Mennonite Economic Development Associates	
Next Level Leadership	
Ontario Employment Law Conference	
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada	
Prairie Association of Christian Schools	
Society of Christian Schools in BC	
Street Level Conference	
The Canadian Institute of Financial Planning	
The Governance Coach – Administrative Conference	
Volunteer Action Centre	
Waterloo Wellington Fund Raising Executives	
Young Life of Canada – National Conference	
Youth For Christ – National Conference	

## ***Other Conferences Attended – Survey to Non-Attendees***

<b>Canadian</b>	<b>American</b>
Alberta Camping Association	Advancing Churches in Missions Commitment
Alberta Funeral Services Association	American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy
Associated Gospel Churches	Association for Biblical Higher Education
BreakForth Canada	Association for Experiential Education
Brethren in Christ Church	Association of Fundraising Professionals
British Columbia Camping Association	Association of Gospel Rescue Missions
British Columbia Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches	Catalyst Conference
Canada Revenue Agency	Chick-fil-A Leadercast
Canadian Association of Curriculum Studies	Christian Camp and Conference Association
Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec	Cross Global Link (formerly IFMA)
Canadian Payroll Association	DMA Nonprofit Federation
Canadian Youth Workers Conference	Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference
Carter's Professional Corporation	Eblen Charities – On Track Leadership Development Program
Catholic Health Alliance of Canada	Emotionally Healthy Spirituality
Christian Camping International Canada	Finishers Project
Christian Higher Education Canada	Internet Ministry Conference
Christian Legal Fellowship	Intervarsity Christian Fellowship – Urbana Conference
Emergency Relief and Development Overseas	Love and Respect Conference
Evangelical Fellowship of Canada	National Association of Church Business Administration
Indexing Society of Canada	National Communication Association
Kingston Churches on Human Trafficking	National Religious Broadcasters
Manning Centre	North American Christian Convention
Missions Fest	Orthodox Church in America
Mississauga Crime Prevention Association	Society of Biblical Literature
Ontario Association of Non-Profit Homes and Services for Seniors	The Mission Exchange (formerly EFMA)
Ontario Camps Association	The Wesleyan Church – The Gathering, General Conference
Ontario Hospital Association and Ontario Long Term Care Association	Willow Creek – Global Leadership Summit
Promise Keepers Canada	
Redeemer University College	
Regent College	
Russ Reid	
Society of Christian Schools in BC	
StreetLevel Conference	
Taking the Next Steps Conference	
Tyndale University College and Seminary	
United Way	
Vision Ministries Canada	
Women Alive	
Write! Canada Conference	
Young Life of Canada	
Youth for Christ Canada	

## **APPENDIX 4 – CONFERENCE FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Canadian Council of Christian Charities

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