

IPMS 2025 National Convention Survey

Report prepared by Nate Pollock

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Executive Summary

There was a 20% response rate of the registered attendees for the 2025 IPMS National Convention which is low but acceptable. The overall rating was very good with most of them are planning to return to next year's convention in Ft. Wayne. Just being at the event to see the models, check out the vendor area and visit with friends seemed to be the best part of the experience. The finale banquet and awards ceremony was disappointing and frustrating for many.

Comments indicate that the format change to a slide show for the category awards was acceptable, but they ran too fast and many were missed because they had their back to the screen or were eating. Anyone who didn't pay for the banquet did not get to see the awards because the time was moved and they were not allowed in the room during the banquet.

The timing of when they could remove models from the display room was not acceptable to a few people.

The Convention Journal was appreciated but didn't always get attention during the show. There may have been some confusion between that and the September/October regular issue because of the timing of the survey.

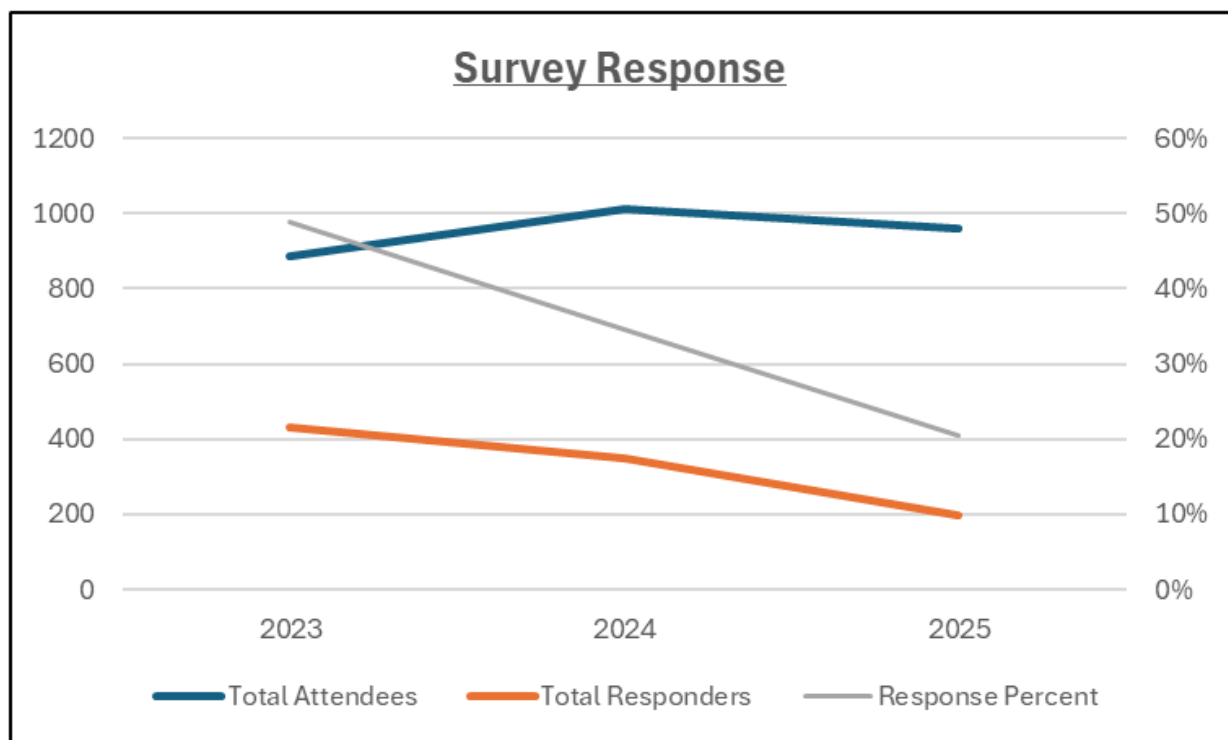
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Convention Trends

Charts in this section show the trends of the national convention for the last three years.

The survey response chart shows fewer respondents and a lower percentage each year. The survey for the 2025 convention was sent in October, three months after the event. Not sure of the timing of the previous surveys. Consistent timing of the surveys to follow soon after the completion of the convention along with prompts during the convention and awards ceremony may increase the response rate and maintain a consistency.

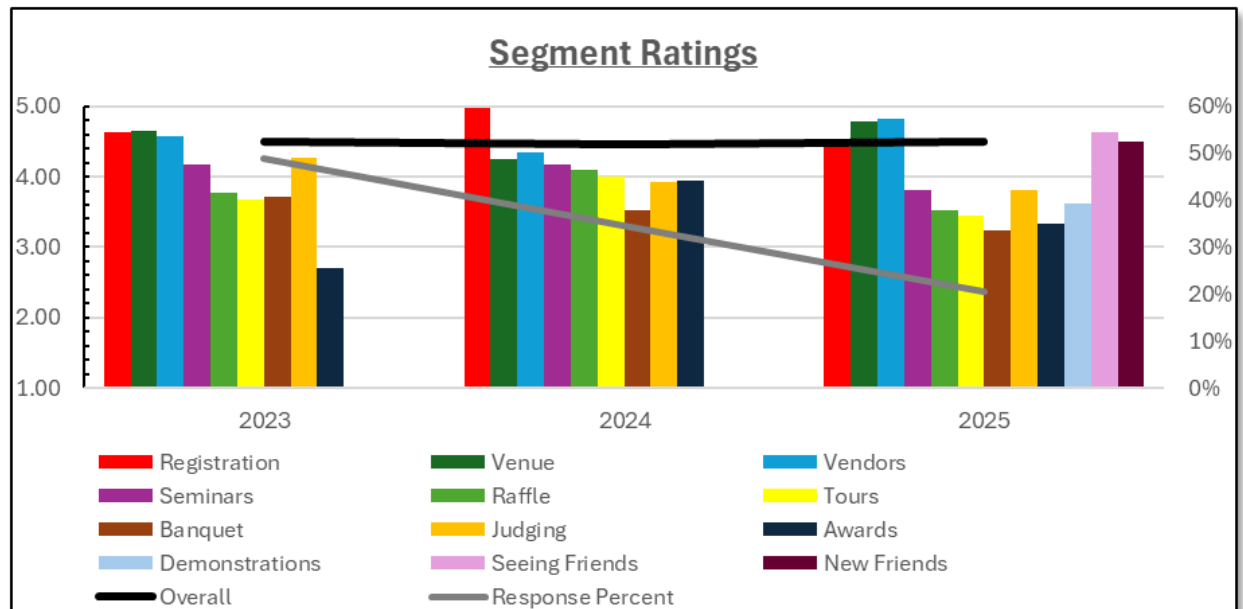


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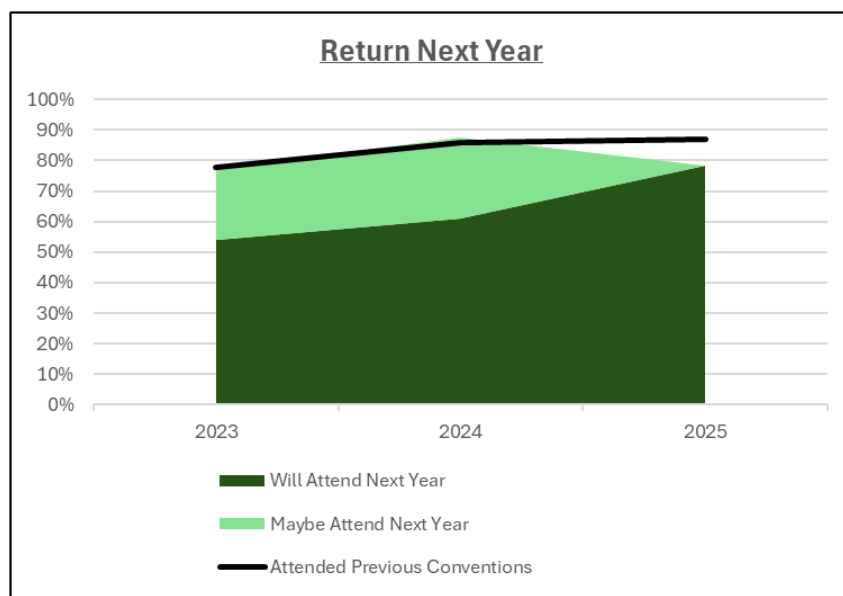
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The overall convention rating is consistently high for each of the last three conventions.

The segment ratings show some fluctuation from year to year and relative ranking shows some change. The vendors, venue and registration consistently rank high. The awards ceremony and banquet have the lowest rankings.



Assuming those who respond “maybe” is likely a “Yes”, then attendance at previous conventions is a strong correlation to returning next year. That question in the 2025 survey did not include the choice of “Maybe”.



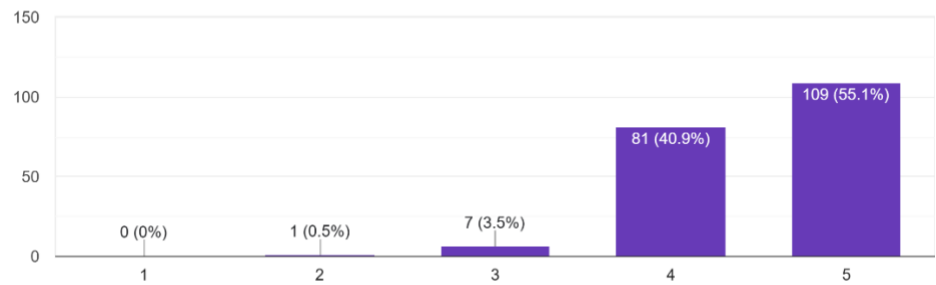
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Google Summary Charts

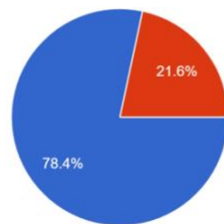
Overall, how would you rate the convention? 1 being Poor and 5 being excellent.

198 responses



Are you planning to return to next year's event?

194 responses



Was this your first national convention?

198 responses

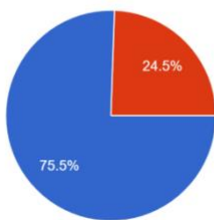
● Yes
● No



● Yes
● No

Did the new Convention Journal provide added value at this year's convention?

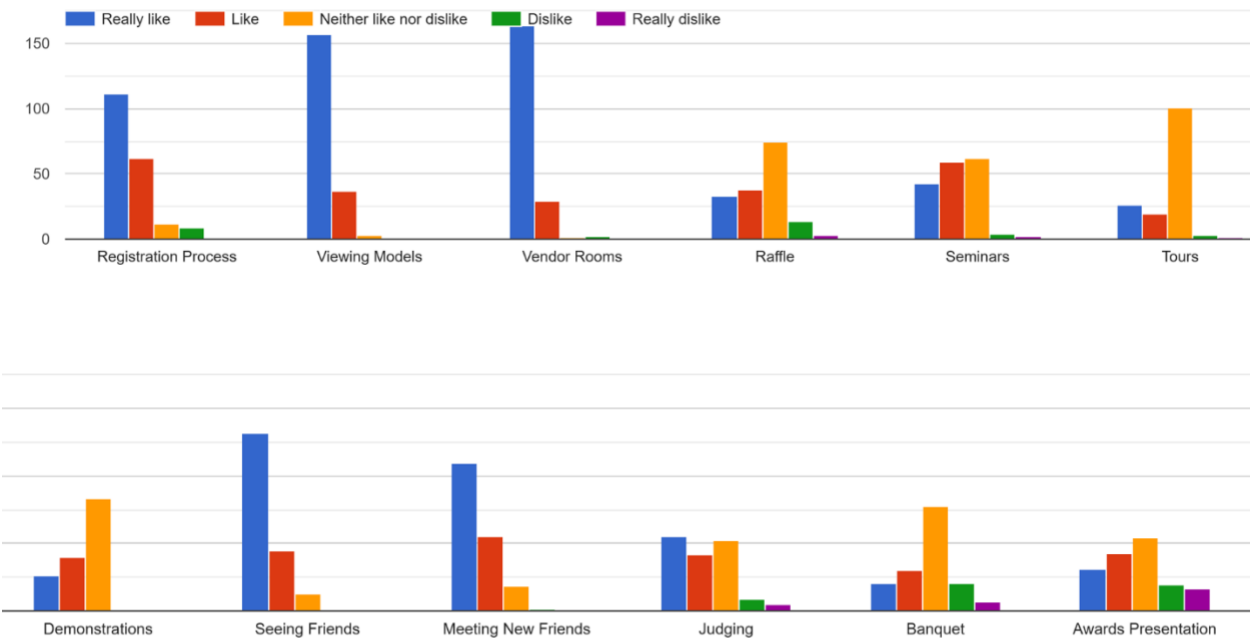
184 responses



● Yes
● No

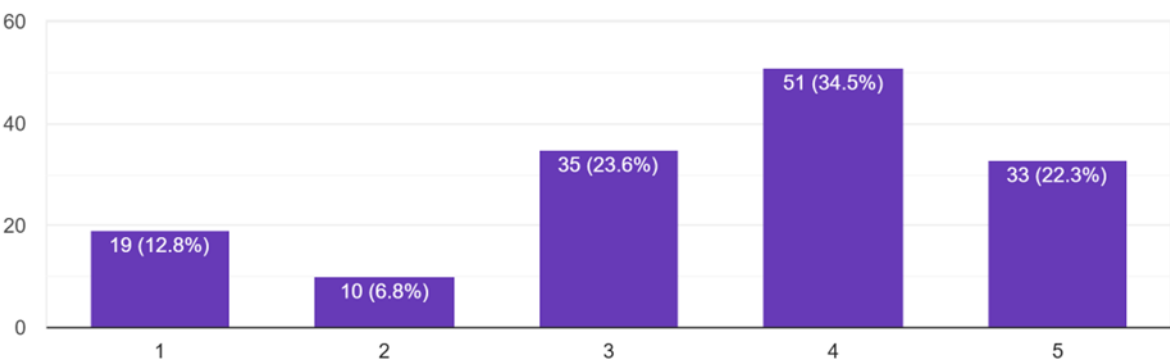
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The award show at Hampton was updated based on feedback from previous surveys. How would you rate the changes?

148 responses



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Survey responses – Convention Participants

Survey was sent to all registered convention participants.

- 2025 National Convention Participants = 962
- 2025 National Convention Survey respondents = 198 (21%)
- Overall rating responses
 - 1 = 0
 - 2 = 1
 - 3 = 7
 - 4 = 81
 - 5 = 109

Who will return next year?

Overall score only

Most people who gave an overall high score plan to return next year.

Overall Score	Return Next Year	Count
5	Yes	90
4	Yes	59
4	No	19
5	No	18
3	No	4
4		3
3	Yes	3
5		1
2	No	1

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Overall score and if this were their first convention

It appears that attendance at previous conventions has a significant influence on returning to next year's convention.

First Convention	Overall Score	Return Next Year	Count
No	5	Yes	79
No	4	Yes	53
No	5	No	16
No	4	No	14
Yes	5	Yes	11
Yes	4	Yes	6
Yes	4	No	5
No	4		3
No	3	Yes	3
No	3	No	3
Yes	5	No	2
Yes	3	No	1
Yes	2	No	1
No	5		1

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Overall score and rating of award changes

Most people who gave an overall high score plan to return even if they gave a low score on the award changes.

Award Change Score	Overall Score	Return Next Year	Count
4	5	Yes	25
	5	Yes	22
5	5	Yes	20
4	4	Yes	19
3	5	Yes	16
	4	Yes	12
5	4	Yes	9
	5	No	8
3	4	Yes	8
1	4	Yes	7
3	4	No	7
	4	No	6
2	5	Yes	4
2	4	Yes	4
4	5	No	4
5	5	No	3
1	5	Yes	3
1	3	No	3
1	4	No	2
3	5	No	2
4	4	No	2
5	4	No	1
	5		1
1	2	No	1
2	4	No	1
1	4		1
3	3	Yes	1
4	3	No	1
1	5	No	1
2	4		1
	3	Yes	1
3	4		1
1	3	Yes	1

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Convention Segments

Segments with the highest scores:

- Vendor rooms
- Viewing models
- Visiting friends
- Meeting new friends
- Registration process

Segments with the lowest scores

- Awards
- Banquet

Remaining segments received lower, but still positive average scores.

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Charts & Ratings

Charts were generated separately based on overall ratings of 3, 4 & 5. This is looking for similarities or differences between these groups.

Category ratings chart:

The colored line shows the average score for that group and lists the segments in order from highest rating to lowest rating along the horizontal axis. The vertical axis on the left side has a high value of 2 for a positive response of “Really Like” and a low value of -2 for a negative response of “Really Dislike”. The line transitions to red for an average negative response.

The grey line shows the number of responses for each segment and is illustrated on the right-side vertical axis. This will help us see if a score is determined one loud voice or a group chorus.

Favorite / least chart:

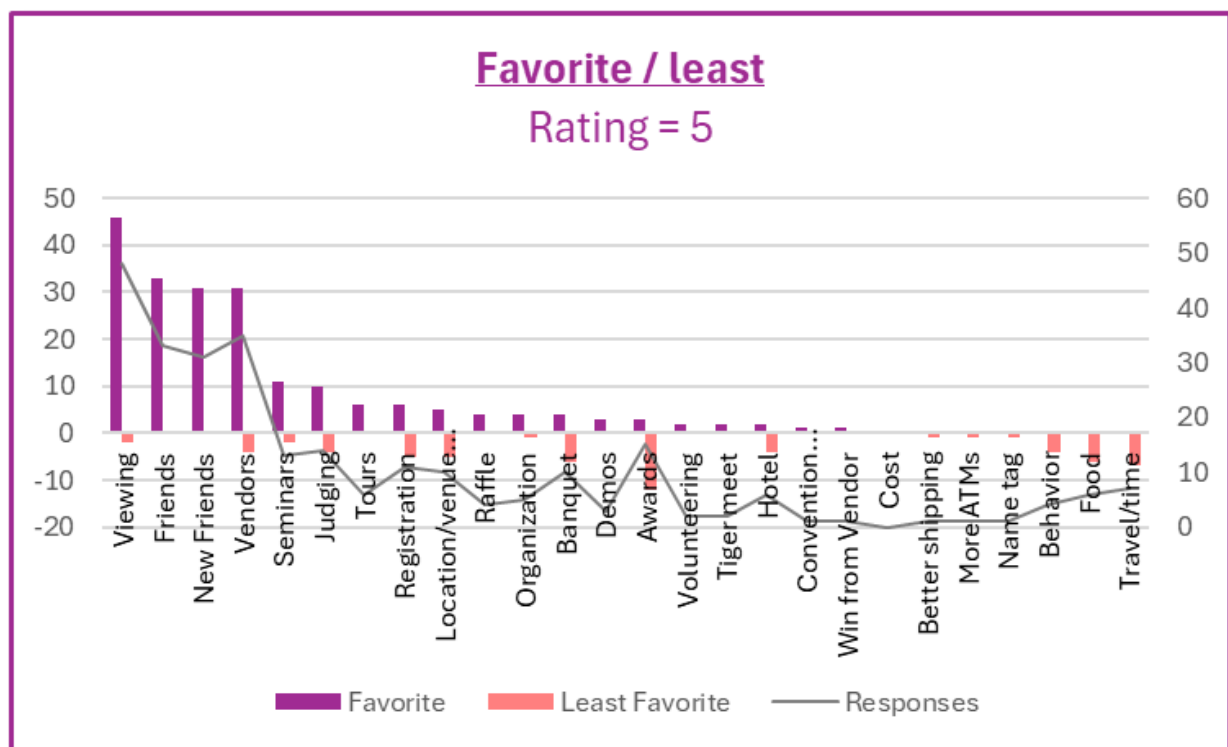
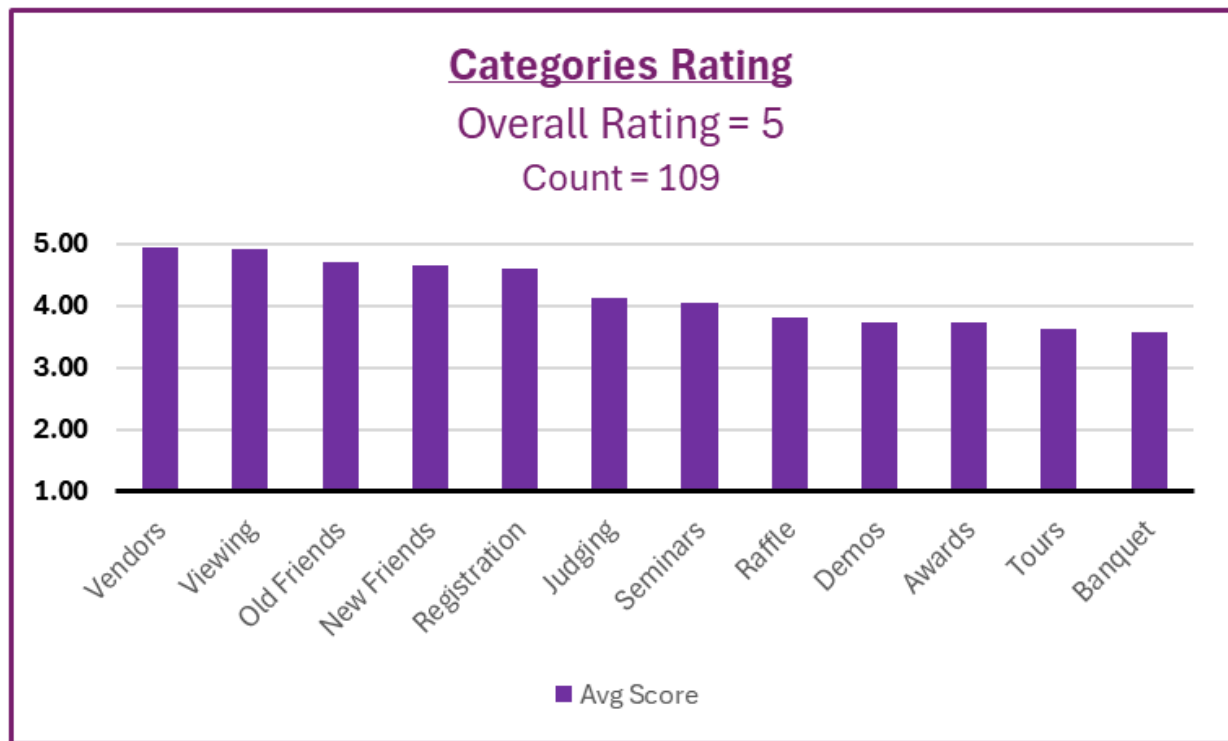
The colored bars on the top half of the chart represent how many comments listed this as their favorite part of the convention and list in order from high to low. The colored bars on the bottom half show how many negative comments listed this as their least favorite. This continues in order from few to more comments.

The grey line shows the number of responses for each segment and is illustrated on the right side vertical axis. This will help us see if a score is determined one loud voice or a group chorus.

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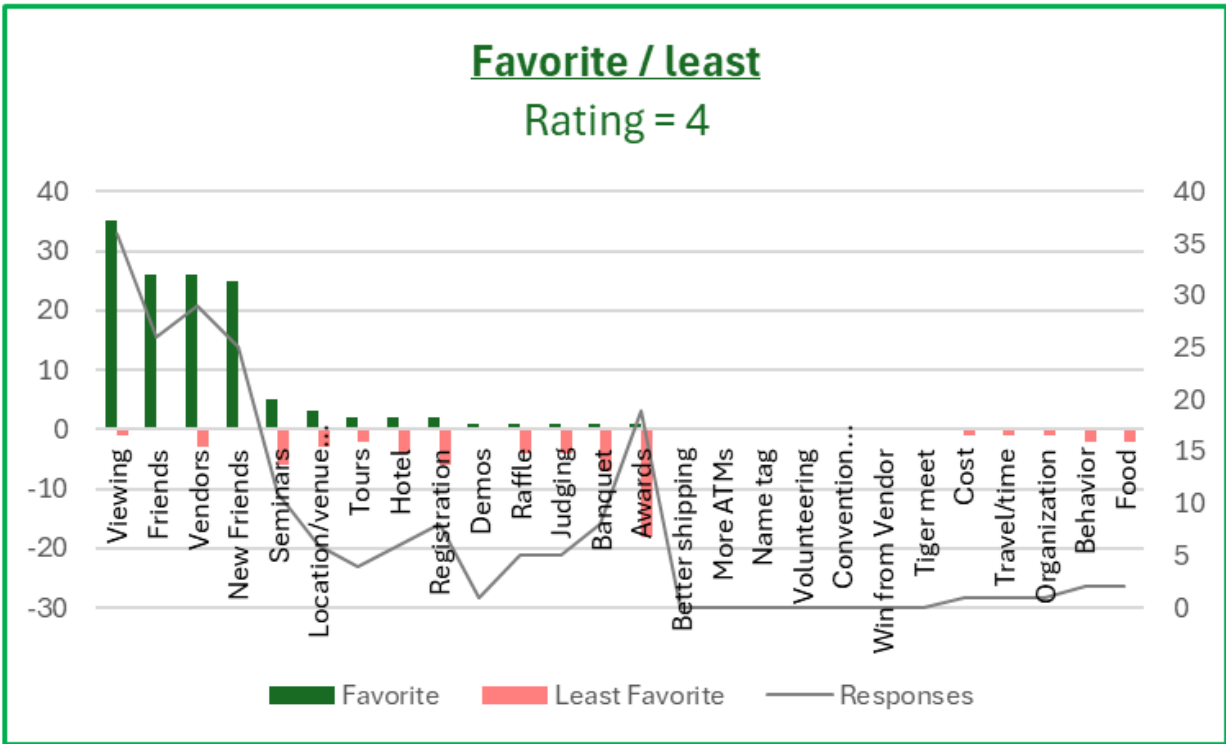
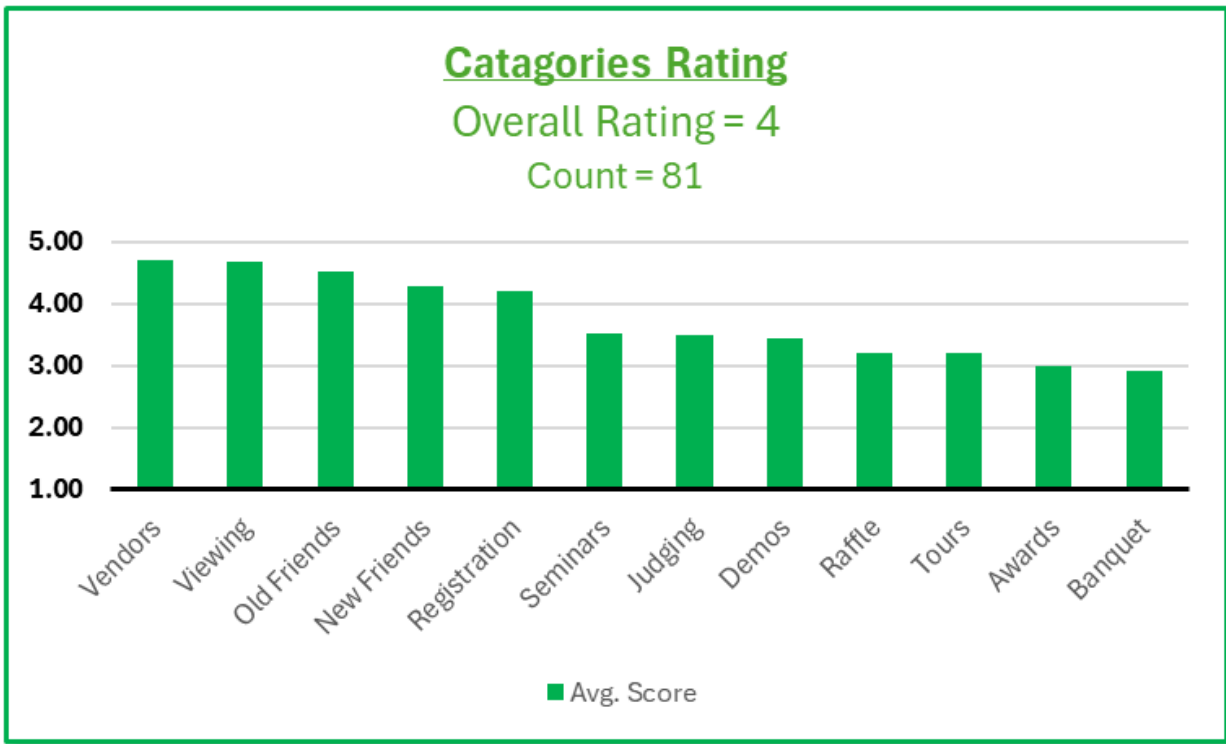
Overall Score = 5



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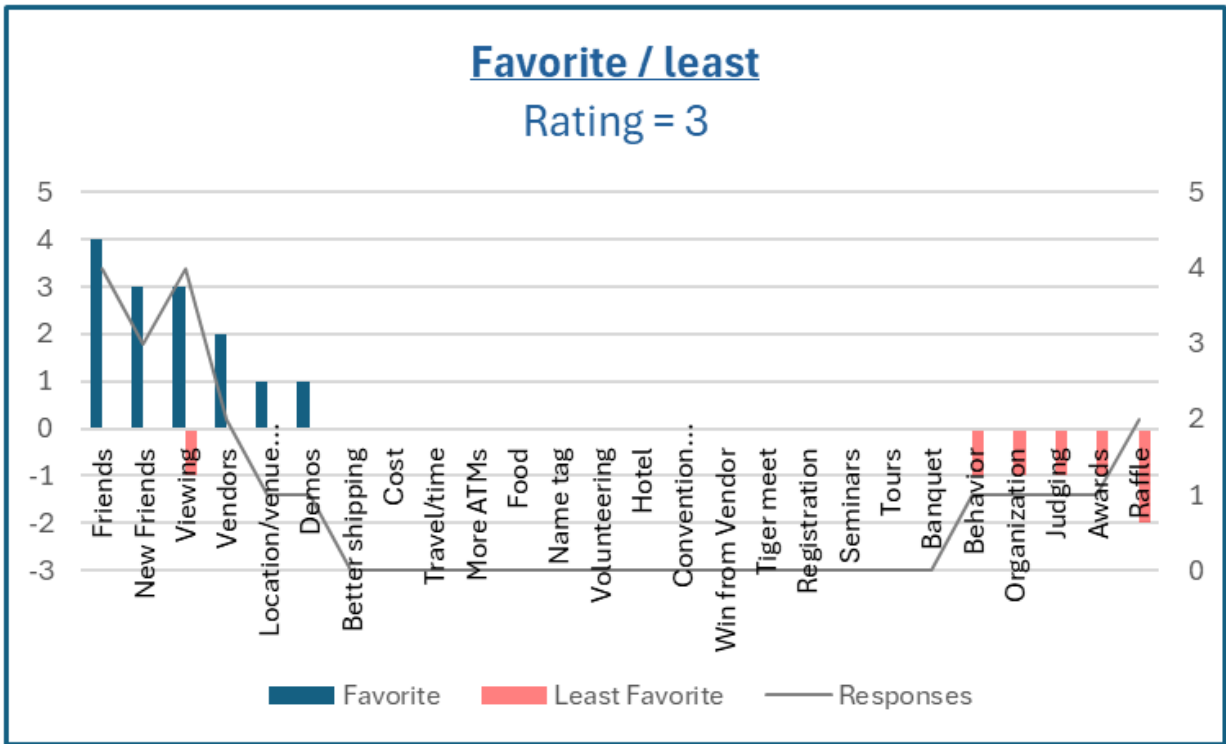
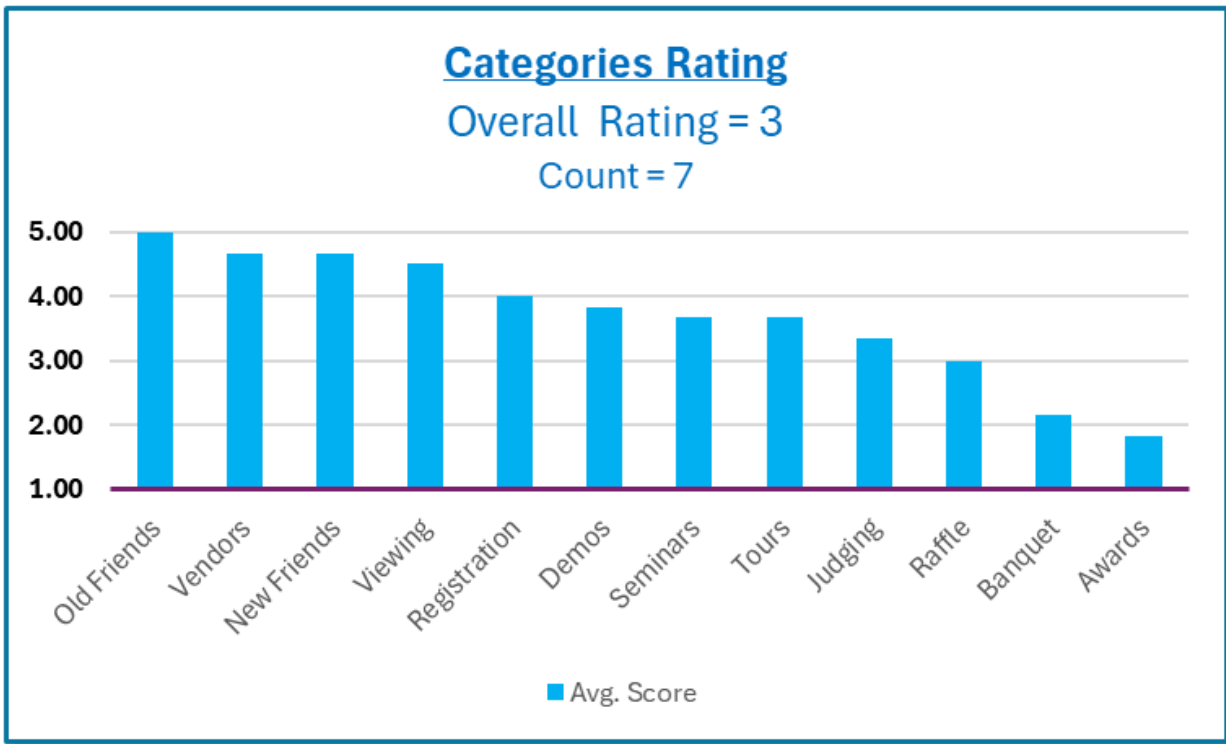
Overall Score = 4



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Overall Score = 3



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Overall Rating = 5 (109 responders)

Summary:

- Need better signs for seminars and demo updates
- Need better handicap accessibility to seminars and demos
- **Need more and better raffle items, don't include non-hobby items**
- **Difficult to watch award slides and are too fast**
- Need better public speakers at award event
- **Clearly communicate awards schedule and follow it**
- **Registration web site confusing, difficult**
- Need more seminars and demos
- Need more input from judging
- Need more people for initial checkin
- **Not happy with seminars**
- **Award dinner was bland, waste of money, too expensive**
- **Need more seminars on more topics**
- **Tables in model room need to be raised and have better lighting**
- **All should be able to attend award ceremony, not just those who paid for banquet**
- **Need better judges familiar with categories**
- Have awards ceremony earlier
-

Comments:

- Better signage and updates for the seminars and demos. The website did not work at all and there was one sign tucked into a corner.
- "For a national event I thought the raffle was rather meager. Some reginal events have better raffles.
- Also, the set up for the seminar rooms left much to be desired for those with mobility issues. The doors were heavy to open and there usually was no room inside for a wheelchair or scoter."
- Doing the awards while you eat really takes away from being able to see what won. You look down to take a bite and you miss a couple awards. Multiply that by the number of bites and you miss half the winners! A large number of attendees missed

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the awards all together because they weren't at the dinner, planning to watch after the meal.

- More succinct speakers. Stay on schedule. More time for awards-either to be announced or, at least, more time on screen and more than once if they are not going to be announced. Choose better public speakers, for God's sake. More time and better preparation to announce the annual awards. They sounded like an afterthought this year.
- Don't let any vendor charge for demonstrations or attendance. Schedule changes made me miss the one presentation I wanted to see. I thought I registered for the convention and models on line, only to find out I only registered my models. Not clear.
- For awards ceremony at banquet, have pictures of category winning models run slower and repeat at least once. Also, have viewing screens positions around the banquet hall.
- The raffle was smaller than usual compared to previous Nationals that I have been to. Also, they had some high end kits (Wingnuts, for example) that should have been in the \$5.00 category.
- Provide as many seminars as the venue can handle.
- Slide show needs to move a little slower, just a few seconds more per model.
- More input from judging
- Awards ceremony started early due to the slide presentation that ran too fast./
- For a national convention I thought the raffle prizes were lacking. I also did not like the fact that I had to pay \$5 for a raffle ticket for what descent prizes they had.
- I was the convention raffle master
- Make more openings for demonstrations and seminars
- Low scores were for options not taken so do not really count
- "I am not sure of the best way to deal with the initial rush of folks picking up their registration packets on the first day, but perhaps add more staff for the first few hours. This was not a bad experience, and I have dealt with worse during other years, but just my suggestion.
- Regarding seminars, I had a bad experience with a paid seminar. This was the first time I paid for one and will probably be the last, unless I make an attempt to get in one with Mig in the future. The presenters were not very prepared, did not understand the hazards of working with resin, and I got a figure that probably sells for a couple of bucks in exchange for what I paid. Huge letdown!"

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- More succinct speakers. Stay on schedule. More time for awards-either to be announced or, at least, more time on screen and more than once if they are not going to be announced. Choose better public speakers, for God's sake. More time and better preparation to announce the annual awards. They sounded like an afterthought this year.
- The food at the awards banquet was sub-par.
- Higher tables and more space for dioramas
- In my very humble non volunteer opinion I thought "some " judging categories were off. I realize it's a tough job and we all have different criteria , and it's very technical. Maybe more value on just what plain looks good . I thought the poker chips from different groups that showed their appreciation were more in line with my amateur opinion, than the actual awards themselves. I do not know the cause but maybe things get lost in the weeds of over complication . Some of the categories were spot on too - I realize this is such an impossible subject. Take it for what it's worth , and I am not sure I could do better.
- The awards slide show could run a little slower so it's easier to follow. However it was good to get out early and have plenty of time to pack up our models and chat with others.
- I like the idea of the awards banquet, my wife looks forward to the fellowship, but the cost and quality in trying to feed so many people is frustrating.
- I did not answer a few questions because I didn't partake.
- Make sure that the time for the awards presentation goes on time as stated.
- make the award presentation more accessible
- My suggestion for next years event would be to have the awards presentation earlier in the day.
- Raffle was OK but it is nice when you see newer kits or books in the raffle line up.
- Be sure participants are aware of awards presentation schedule. I arrived at 7:00 for 7:30 awards to find only the Juniors and Best of being presented. Was very pleased the winners list was quickly posted, but not knowing any of this ahead of time wasn't helpful. Need to post this plan and make sure a spare room is available for those not at the banquet.
- If the awards are going to be presented on a monitor at least allow more than three seconds for people to identify if their entry won and what award it was. I think 6 to seven seconds should be fine.
- I did not participate in the activities not rated

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- I think you can improve the registration process by forwarding all pre-registered guests their nametags electronically through the IPMS/wild apricot system instead of having them wait in line. You already do that with the membership ID card. They can go right to the vendor spaces and pick up their registration packets at their convenience. This may incentivize more attendees to pre-register and take some of the pressure off the host chapter during the registration process.
- Continue to simplify and speed up the awards presentation.
- The revised awards process at the banquet was a big step in the right direction, but need to slow down the slide show to allow absorbing the info.
- My wife and I were not able to stay for the entire convention-just for 1st and 2nd days.
- My low score for awards presentation is based on IPMS' usual drudgery marathon of mispronounced names, insider 'jokes' & tech glitches and utter boredom. Please follow Hampton's brevity model & use tech to satisfy those who want to see their names up on the screen.
- I did not pre register my model entries electronically. The 21st century is hard for me. With help from folks at registration It took over two hours to get my three models registered and into the contest. Please have a fallback all paper filled out by hand option for old guys like me. I am not alone here.
- If you don't attend the banquet, provide a means to view the winners slideshow during the banquet. Was there an overflow room? i may have missed that since i ate out with friends and didn't get back till 7:15p-ish.
- The awards ceremony did not stick to the schedule and the slide show of winners were missed by those in the satellite room since it was over too soon.
- Better food, or just skip the banquet. Worst banquet food I've ever had at any function I've ever attended.
- I was disappointed that you didn't raise the model display tables to a more comfortable height. I thought this was going to be SOP for all future conventions.
- None, really. Every aspect that I was a part of was great.

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Overall Rating = 4 (81 responders)

Summary:

- Improve safety
- **Clearly communicate awards schedule and follow it**
- Don't need to announce awards for 200+ categories
- **Difficult to watch award slides and are too fast**
- **Award dinner was bland, waste of money, too expensive**
- End 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and replace with evaluation award
- Consistent awards ceremony from year to year
- **Need more raffle items, don't include non-hobby items**
- Need more guidance placing models in contest room
- **All should be able to attend award ceremony, not just those who paid for banquet**
- **Organize so there is time and easier to remove models, do not want to wait**
- **Need better judges familiar with categories**
- **Not happy with seminars**
- Need more convention t-shirts
- Preregister for seminars not convenient
- Data entry process for contest judging inefficient – waiting for photographs
- It's bad form for the host to keep any unclaimed raffle prizes
- Requirement to be present for some raffle prizes not clear
- **Registration web site confusing**
- Structured way to meet folks in other cities with similar interests and for clubs
- Need more variety of vendors, over heavy on military
- Announce award winners with the slide show
- Better directions and display to judges meeting room
- **Need more seminars on more topics**
- Judging rewarding trendy weathering and paint effects over craftsmanship and technical detail
- **Tables in model room need to be raised and have better lighting**
- Separate banquet and awards ceremony into two separate events
- Award juniors first

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Comments:

- Check area safety. We witnessed an attempted murder a few blocks from the convention.
- Be crystal clear about the plan for announcement and presentation of awards, including the timing of the start of the proceedings. Then stick to what is announced.
- Don't need to announce awards for 200+ categories. It takes far too long and it's mostly the same names over and over.
- Don't mix dinner with award ceremony, many had their backs to the presentation and you can't enjoy dinner and pay attention to the awards.
- The dinner was pretty bland-I think Ft. Wayne will let us eat on our own which would bring a better meal
- It wasn't made clear at all that the awards presentation would start during the banquet. I didn't buy banquet tickets and came for the "Awards Presentation" that was supposed to start 30 minutes afterward only to find that I had missed most of the presentation already. Was happy to see slide show was eventually made available, but that was days later. Very, very frustrating to not know what beat me in categories where I didn't place.
- Banquet is a waste of money.
- same format, slower display, not during banquet
- The first, second, third award system needs to end. In my opinion modelers would benefit more from having their model(s) evaluated. Too many really great models received no recognition for their efforts, or understanding of where their model excels or falls short. I'm sure there are some who like 1st, 2nd, 3rd, but I don't know who they are anymore.
- Open doors to the banquet room EARLY. Form a permanent Nats committee devoted to the Awards Ceremony to iron out all of the kinks and make it flow from year to year.
- Raffle could do with more items, it was pretty small.
- Mostly it was fine, but there was three things I felt should could be improved. When I arrived and entered the contest area there was no guidance or help available to help. I had to wander around to find the categories in which I was competing. I appreciate that there was a separate viewing room via video link for the attendees who were not dining with the rest, but when I won a significant award, (newsletter of the year), I was not able to receive my award until after the ceremony was over.

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Seems to me that there should have been standing room available for contenders for a prize who not seated at dinner. Also, the fact that there might have been an hour's wait to pick up our models after the ceremony ended, (had not another attendee going postal about the delay), was an unnecessary and inexplicable complication.

- You need more competent judges for your head category judges. These judges (category heads and crew chiefs) should be thoroughly screened for competency. They should at least be familiar with the rules of the contest. At Madison, we had a head judge who did not know the instructions were supposed to be with the build in open box, and it was too late to move them to another category. So, they didn't get judged. Every effort must be made to judge a model. At Hampton, a head category judge was not familiar with category criteria and erroneously moved models into other categories.
- It would make sense to have more convention t-shirts available. A friend of mine wanted a medium size and they were on Wednesday.
- Preregistering for seminars was inconvenient; I might go to a seminar on a whim at the moment. I don't really plan my day at the show very much ahead of time
- "Regarding seminars - I went or tried to go to 5. One was excellent - Modeling Civil War Railroads. The presenter was on-point. The others were not good. There was one on PE for ships. I didn't realize it was about making PE, not using PE. I have no interest in messing with those chemicals. Another was labeled Rigging for Ship Models. When I got there, it was actually about kit-bashing ships. I paid \$25 for an intro to 3D printing, and it was a waste. The presenter was very disorganized and focused on resin printing despite the fact that filament is more common and accessible. I still don't know why it cost \$25. Last, there was a Stuart tank talk originally on the schedule. When I got there. The room was empty.
- Regarding judging - I volunteered to help with data entry for the contest. First, I don't know why they called for volunteers - they seem to have a team that has a procedure and at first I felt like a 5th wheel. When I had a better chance to observe the procedure, it seemed inefficient. Before data entry, they required that winners be photographed. Then, if an issue was found with data entry, the judges were queried. IMHO photography should come after data entry. That would allow any issues to be sorted out early, and also, would allow the data entry to end early - photography is the long pull."
- Not interested in the banauet

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- The schedule change for the award presentations was not communicated. We missed all but the very end and we were not alone. Fort Wayne will not be an issue as the presentation is its own stand alone event.
- Pre-registered Mars. shouldn't have to wait in line for their stuff longer than walk-ins.
- "Prototype the slide show so it flows better. Don't set it up where half of the people can't see it because they have to face the table to eat. Keep to the announced schedule.
- It's bad form for the host to keep any unclaimed raffle prizes."
- lower the price of the banquet, was not clear when the awards were going to be announced. Lot of people, myself included thought it was going to be after the dinner not during. Was told afterwards that it was on the web site, but I did not see it.
- The split process between convention registration and model registration. The websites were very confusing and hard to get to.
- I was disappointed somewhat with the raffle this year. Specifically announcement of the pull times and the fact that the unclaimed prizes were not subject to a speed raffle but instead they were kept by the host chapter. This should have been clearly stated upfront. I entered with the anticipation that all prizes would be raffled off. Also if there was an announcement beforehand for the quilt raffle pull time I didn't hear it and when I went there it was all done and you needed to be there in person to win. Not good!
- Some structured way to meet folks in other cities with similar interests and for clubs to find brother/sister clubs (in my case I'm trying to start a club).
- Have some oversight on raffle items. I won a paperback fiction book - not model or hobby related. I also won a DVD - who even owns a DVD player these days? I don't even have a computer with a DVD drive. I also won some small obscure photo etch set - that would only be relevant for one particular model.
- Barcodes for registration to speed it up, better system for raffle drawing/displaying winners, don't have the awards presentation during the banquet so more people can attend.
- Do not lie about the start time for the awards ceremony.
- In my case the only reason for low scores are because I didn't do tours or banquets. So I can't really comment on them.
- Better communication on when the awards video was to begin.
- Vendors need to have more selections . Over heavy with military models.
- Great seafood and seeing old friends and meeting other modelers

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- The awards should be called out with the slides of the winning models. Sitting at round tables with your back to the screen made seeing the winning models difficult and many times missed. Also, people not attending the banquet should have had an area to come in and sit for the awards presentation/slide show.
- Directions to Judge's meeting room could be better displayed.
- The seminar options was very limited. I was hoping there would be a lot of breakouts on many different topics. This is the biggest event of the year. If anyplace would have a lot of options or would be this meeting.
- Don't start the award announcements until attendees have a chance to eat, slow down the slides a bit.
- Don't skip scheduled drawings and make it easier to see the numbers drawn
- Judging has devolved to rewarding trendy weathering and paint effects over craftsmanship and technical detail.
- My only comment would be is that you really need to raise up ALL of the model contest tables. Lighting could be improved as well.
- Awards Presentation did not go off at the scheduled time, and the slide show went too fast
- My low scores reflected not participating in that event
- Open the awards presentation to all members and not base entry on purchasing a banquet ticket. This was very poor and really below expectations. I heard this same feedback from many other members.
- I would like more seminars or demonstrations
- Shorter awards presentation and more time afterword to view winners.
- rethink how the raffle is done and find people that want to do it
- "I think the junior awards should've been announced first as has been done in previous years. I think an announcement stating that the video of the award winners was starting. There should've been a slower slide presentation, giving everyone a chance to applaud and at least read the names. It was way too fast.
- This is a bit subjective, but the meal did not measure up to previous years'. The meat was very dry and cold.
- we missed the awards ceremony!
- Separate the awards ceremony and banquet into two events, with access to all for the awards ceremony instead of splitting the attendees into "haves" and "have nots" based on a meal ticket to see the awards in person. Have an individual awards program on the last afternoon and follow it with a separate dinner for the national

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awards and reveal of next year's site. People who are not staying for the dinner can then pick up their models and head for home.

- Hold the awards as a free for everybody event
- My friends and I never go to a banquet any more. Too much for hotel rubber chicken.

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Overall Rating = 3 (7 responders)

Summary:

- **Need better judges familiar with categories**
- Spend more time recognizing the winners of the contest
- Banquet was too expensive
- Eliminate banquet
- Time for awards not communicated clearly
- **Organize so there is time and easier to remove models, do not want to wait**
- Better recognition for category sponsors
- Didn't like raffle
- **Clearly communicate awards schedule and follow it**
- **Difficult to watch award slides and are too fast**
- **Need more raffle items**
- Improve seminars
- Improve model display area
- Give better awards

Comments:

- I know it's hard to find judges fluent in newer topics such as gunpla, but one of the judges who did the gunpla category did not know what he was talking about when a model did not place for reasons that did not make sense. he tried to convey his thought process but it did not make sense, almost as if he did not know anything about modeling. some of the people who entered started to argue with him
- The national convention is THE contest of the year for many scale modelers. We ALL go to extraordinary lengths of time and effort to put our finest, hand-crafted creations on the tables for all to see. We seek to have our "body of work" critiqued by judges who are supposed to be objective and who also know what the heck they're looking at! In my opinion (and those of others as well), it is shameful NOT to take the necessary time needed to recognize those who have managed to win. That, ladies and gentlemen, is the HIGHLIGHT of the entire convention, and time should be allotted to make sure that all who are fortunate enough to win are accorded their brief moment of victory. Also, over the past several years, the price for a banquet ticket has gone out through the roof! This has forced a lot of entrants to forgo the banquet entirely. They would rather go out and enjoy an inexpensive meal with their friends and get back in time for the awards presentation. This year's awards

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presentation was a cluster!!! There was no mention whatsoever of an exact starting time for the announcement of the awards. Entrants who ate at locations other than the venue, found themselves coming back to a short-shived, very rapid presentation that was very difficult to see (and READ for that matter), even if they made it back in time for the start of it. A LOT of entrants did NOT make it back in time because everything had been truncated to get everybody outta there as soon as possible! I think it is high time to get rid of the banquet! Period! Make arrangements with the venue so that modelers don't have to break their necks (or their models) trying to get everything out of the model room(s) before they lock the doors! Without an over-glorified banquet, you could have everyone in the same room -- those with deep pockets as well as the great unwashed. Start the proceedings at 5 p.m. After all the thank yous, recognition, etc., jump right into the awards, and take the time necessary to cover ALL of the awards adequately, instead of fast-forwarding to the end! The four-day event goes by very quickly as it is. One should be allowed enjoy every single minute of it without having to rush like hell to leave!

- your raffle was bad spent \$50.00 on raffle the next day the had it down then the next day it was back i only got one kit i had my tickets it was auto the kit i won was a ship what is going on
- If you're going to shorten up the award ceremony, you need to make up the lack of recognition to the category sponsors that aren't getting announced. Bigger and additional signage on the contest tables in the appropriate categories. Poster or larger signage in the hallways, at least something for their money.
- The awards were schedule for 7:30 and when we got to the room set for viewing at 7:10 they were already in progress and we only saw the Best of Awards and none of the Power Point presentation on all the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place winners.
- "I cover these issues in the responses below but:
 - Improve communications
 - Polished, National level deserving presentations regardless of how mundane we think it is.
 - Banquet has to go...or be modified. This 1970's left over "gotta have it" feature has to be modified.
 - Compress the display area some, align categories better. AC were jammed up and other cats had, for example, 10 1/72 Armor models across 3 tables.
 - My kids got better participation trophy's. Improve the awards CONSIDERABLY. Make it something you want to strive for. It's a National Show. They were bad for every show I've been too...its not a lot, but mannn

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- More volume of raffle items.
- Improve the seminars- hands on demos

Suggestion Comments

Overall Rating = 2 (1 responder)

Summary: Very upset about not being able to retrieve his models from the contest room until a certain time. **Organize so there is time and easier to remove models, do not want to wait.**