



# 2021 PCI Convention a hybrid success

We all did it, and it was so great to see people in person again! We held the 2020 PCI Convention just before COVID-19 shutdowns and successfully conducted the 2021 PCI Convention this May in New Orleans, La. The Precast Show 2021 was one of the first large equipment shows to be held this year. And thanks to the hard work of the PCI staff and the dedication of our members, we were able to successfully hold the PCI Convention as a live hybrid event (members both in person and online), as one of the very first organizations to do so. Although there were some glitches along the way, generally we received many positive comments on how well the hybrid equipment and staffing worked. Along the way, we followed Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, state, and city safety guidelines for the convention and Precast Show, bringing the best result of all: after three weeks, not a single case of COVID-19 from attendance has been reported to either PCI or the National Precast Concrete Association (NPCA).

Here are some of the numbers. We had 816 participants, down about 8% from 2020 in Ft. Worth, Tex. Of those, 476 were in person, about 65% of 2020 attendance. Attendance at The Precast Show was also about 65%. Both were much higher than either organization was planning when the decision was made to go ahead back in February. I want to commend the boards of NPCA and PCI for looking at the data and trends and making the decision to go ahead with the events. It was no sure thing at the time, but it sure paid off.

I also want to compliment PCI members for all their support to the charity we chose in New Orleans, The Roots of Music. The organization provides music history and theory as well as instrumental instruction to children ages 9 through 14 from low-income households and provides students with hot meals and round-trip transportation to reduce common barriers to participation. Together we raised \$5000 for this worthy cause, including a generous matching challenge from High Concrete Group. Thank you to those who contributed. If you have not donated yet, please consider helping this organization continue its work in empowering the youths of New Orleans. You can visit The Roots of Music at [TheRootsOfMusic.org](http://TheRootsOfMusic.org), and be sure to put PCI in the comment section.

Although the PCI staff demonstrated the ability to successfully conduct hybrid committee and council meetings, the overwhelming feedback is that it just is not the same experience as being there in person. In response to this feedback and a unanimous recommendation from the PCI council chairs, the PCI board determined at its summer meeting that all future conventions and PCI Committee Days meetings will be held in-person only. Committee members will be required to attend regularly, as before the pandemic. We encourage committees to continue to use Zoom and other tools to meet between these events. PCI staff members have been asked to investigate how we might be able to let people who are not committee members listen in remotely without interaction so people who cannot attend physically can see the work of the institute in action, but our experiment in hybrid meetings is over. As one board member put it, "It got us through what we needed to get through, but it's time to get back together." I could not agree more. Have a great and safe summer! 🎉



Bob Risser, PE  
PCI President and CEO