



## CWRT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT SURVEY SURVEY ANALYSIS

This survey was inspired by Chris Mackowski of the Emerging Civil War when he asked about the development calendar for CWRT programs. As you will discover from this survey analysis, there are some things that CWRTs nearly universally adhere to. And, there are others that are all over the map. From this survey analysis, we hope CWRTs will find both confirmation and inspiration to improvement.

This survey had an N = 91 with a 77% completion rate. The responses were not culled in terms of duplicated responses from the same CWRT. We noted that when the respondent didn't have actual experience in the area, they tended to not answer the question or used the "Don't Know" response

### **SUMMARY**

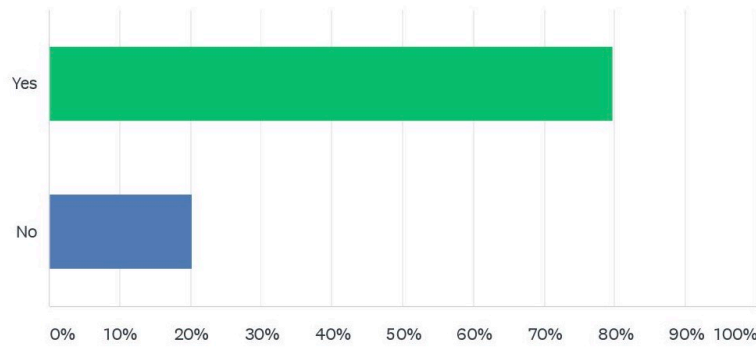
This survey provides the following PROVEN PRACTICES for CWRTs and the development of their seasonal programs:

1. Dispersal of responsibilities within the governance of a CWRT is a fundamental axiom to follow. Although some CWRTs devolve the responsibility for program development on the president, that practice should be abandoned whenever practicable.
2. The minimal planning horizon for program development should be six months and should either follow the calendar or seasonal year of the CWRT.
3. As identifying "good" speakers is an important component of program development success, these critical factors should be considered:
  - a. Development and implementation of a speaker review process;
  - b. Reliance on other CWRTs about their speaker experience; and
  - c. The use of published speakers lists, i.e., CWRT Congress Speaker Registry and ECW Speakers Bureau.
4. Remaining in contact with speakers who are scheduled for a future date is vital including the use of reminders.
5. Continue to suggest "5-Star speakers" to the CWRT Congress Speaker Registry. Those recommendations are important to speakers AND CWRTs.

6. CWRTs would do well to avoid repetitive topics and speakers while including the “best” speakers in their program lineups. If cost is a factor, the special fundraising efforts listed below should be considered.
7. For CWRT program improvement to occur, members, the board of directors/officers and other leaders should develop specific program proposals, defend them to the board and help to implement them.

# Q1 Are you now, or have you been charged with developing your CWRT's annual program agenda?

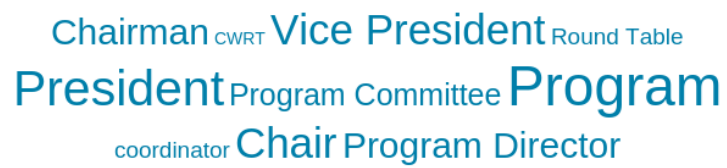
Answered: 89 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	79.78%	71
No	20.22%	18
TOTAL		89

This question was designed to disqualify those who have not hands-on experience booking CWRT speakers.

Q2 Please name the program development position in your CWRT.



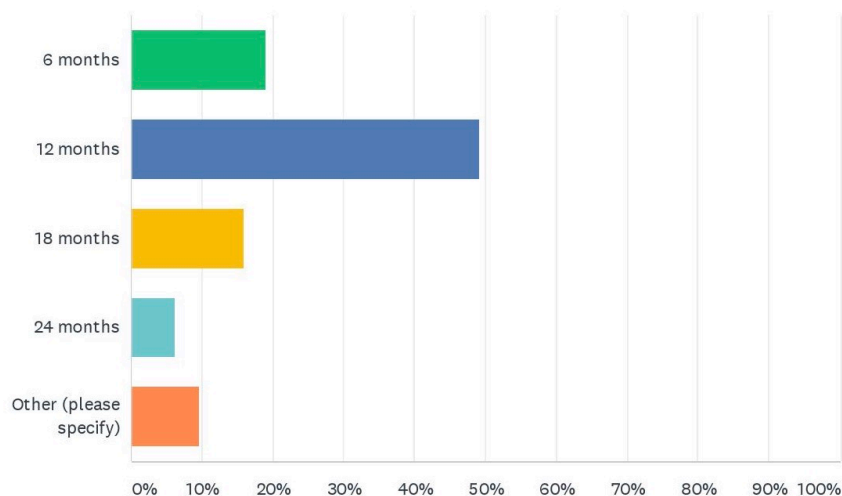
A word cloud of program development positions. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern. The largest word is 'Program', followed by 'Chairman', 'Vice President', 'President', 'Program Committee', 'Chair', 'Program Director', and 'coordinator'. The words are in shades of blue and black.

Chairman<sub>CWRT</sub> Vice President<sub>Round Table</sub>  
President<sub>Program Committee</sub> Program  
coordinator Chair Program Director

This is called a Word Cloud. The larger the word, the more often it was the response. As you can determine, CWRTs most often term their program person the Program Chairman. It's interesting that many CWRTs rely on their President to develop the program.

### Q3 How far in advance do you begin scheduling?

Answered: 63 Skipped: 28



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
6 months	19.05%	12
12 months	49.21%	31
18 months	15.87%	10
24 months	6.35%	4
Other (please specify)	9.52%	6
TOTAL		63

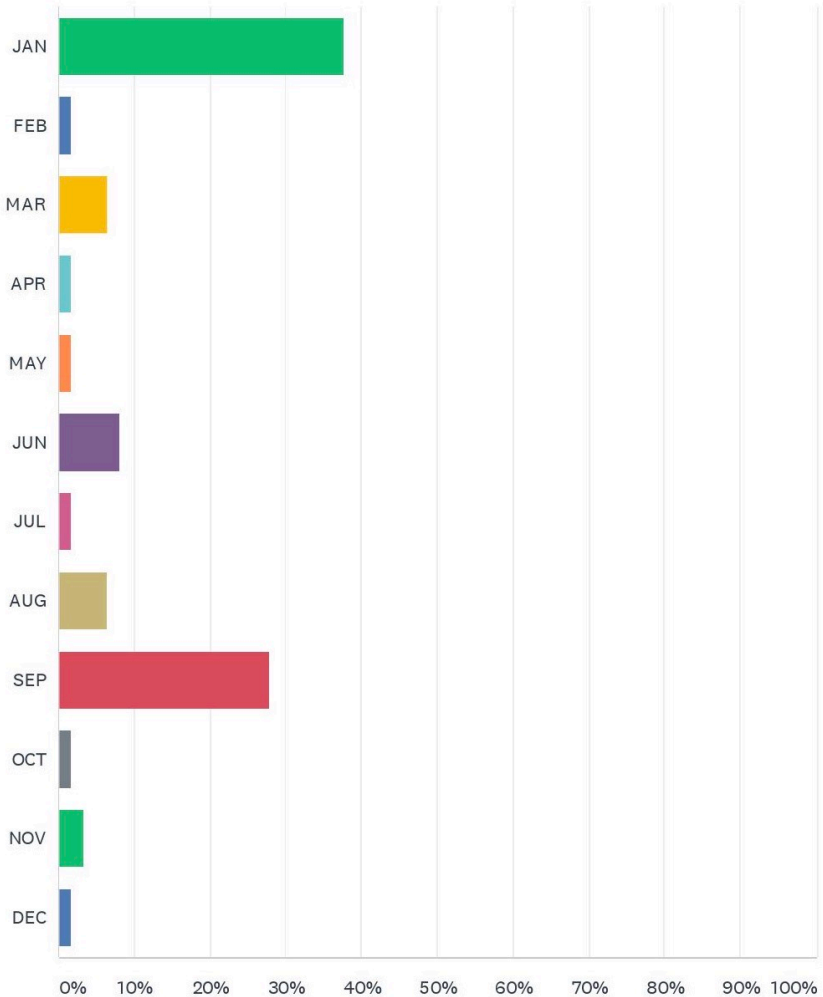
As you can see, the majority of CWRTs begin scheduling their program speakers a year in advance. Several plan 18 to 24 months in advance while the second largest cohort feel their planning can begin 6 months out.

Those who responded to “Other” said:

- 12 months
- 6 to 8 months out
- I try to schedule 12 to 18 months, so I would say both are correct.
- Usually a year, this year we began scheduling two years out.
- 12-18 months

# Q4 In what month do you regularly begin calendaring your speakers?

Answered: 61 Skipped: 30

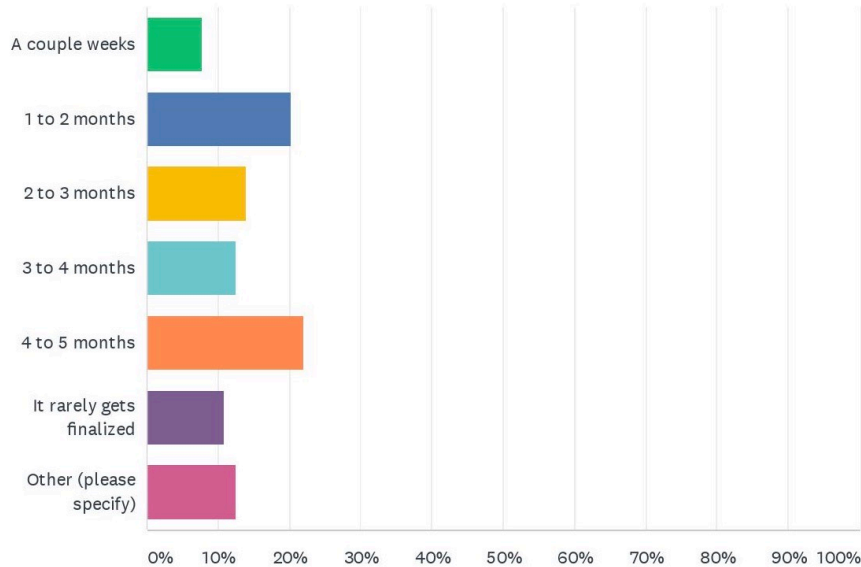


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
JAN	37.70%	23
FEB	1.64%	1
MAR	6.56%	4
APR	1.64%	1
MAY	1.64%	1
JUN	8.20%	5
JUL	1.64%	1
AUG	6.56%	4
SEP	27.87%	17
OCT	1.64%	1
NOV	3.28%	2
DEC	1.64%	1
TOTAL		61

There are obviously many schools of thought when it comes to beginning the planning process for CWRT programs. However, a majority of CWRTs have a planning horizon that begins with the calendar year (January), while the second largest cohort has a planning horizon that begins with their program season (September).

## Q5 How long does it typically take for you to get your calendar for the upcoming season finalized?

Answered: 64 Skipped: 27



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
A couple weeks	7.81% 5
1 to 2 months	20.31% 13
2 to 3 months	14.06% 9
3 to 4 months	12.50% 8
4 to 5 months	21.88% 14
It rarely gets finalized	10.94% 7
Other (please specify)	12.50% 8
TOTAL	64

Finalizing a CWRT program seems to be as much art as it is science. As you can see, that part of program administration is all over the map with most saying one to five months. Much of the response data is dependent on if the CWRT always has local speakers or if they are dependent on speakers from out of town. And yet, a solid 10 percent seem to have taken a realistic step forward stating that “it rarely gets finalized”.

The 12.5% with “Other” responses said:

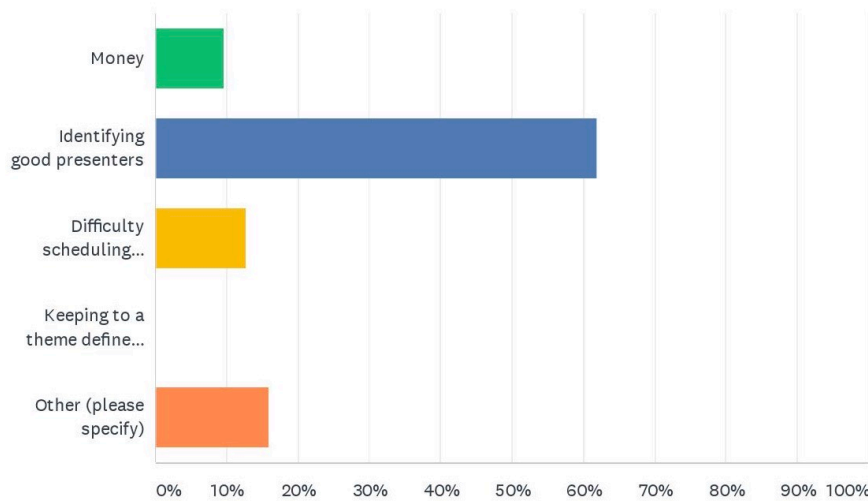
- We don't plan an annual schedule, but usually work a few months ahead to book speakers
- We work with Chicago, so the time varies depending on how many prospective speakers each group provides. They usually take the lead.
- We attempt to keep a rolling calendar of 12 or months



- It is ongoing
- I do not set a finite calendar or season. I work with a rolling 6-8-month window.
- there is no timeline at this time
- It varies.
- It's an on-going process, but always 12-14 months out

## Q6 What are your biggest challenge in developing that annual program?

Answered: 63 Skipped: 28



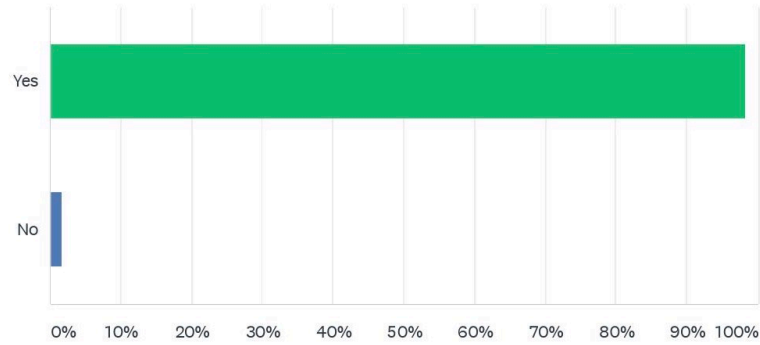
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Money	9.52% 6
Identifying good presenters	61.90% 39
Difficulty scheduling around so many calendars	12.70% 8
Keeping to a theme defined by the board	0.00% 0
Other (please specify)	15.87% 10
TOTAL	63

As one can readily understand, the biggest challenge those responsible for CWRT programs is identifying good presenters. The 15.8% who responded “Other” said:

- Securing input from board
- Being okay with the speakers the other RT proposes. If not finding reasonable replacements.
- Negotiating switches when weather (and now, health) cause speakers to ask for changes of date, or we have to cancel meetings.
- Out of town speakers
- Finding local speakers
- Limited budget to pay speakers.
- All of the above since this is a new CWRT and bringing in speakers from a distance may be somewhat costly. Time will tell.
- No major challenges.
- Trying to locate speakers from relatively nearby.
- Having to get responses for presenters.

### Q7 Once scheduled, do you continue to remain in contact with your speakers?

Answered: 63 Skipped: 28



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	98.41%	62
No	1.59%	1
TOTAL		63

Nearly every CWRT program stays in contact with their speakers once scheduled.

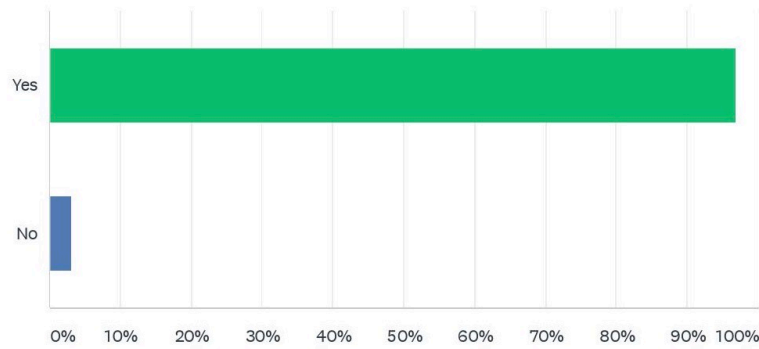
Q8 If you answered YES to Q7, how do you maintain contact? (Check all that apply)

Q9 If you answered NO to Q7, why do you NOT remain in contact?

These must have been trick questions as there were no responses. It may also have been a matter of the survey logic not having worked properly.

## Q10 Do you send out reminders to your speakers?

Answered: 62 Skipped: 29

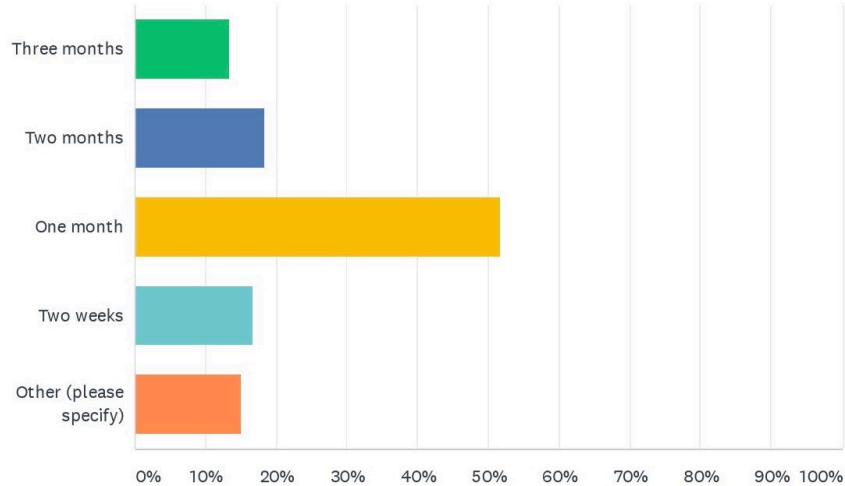


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	96.77%	60
No	3.23%	2
TOTAL		62

The practice of sending reminders to speakers seems to be nearly universal as 96.7% said they do send reminders.

## Q11 When do you send reminders out in advance of the scheduled presentation?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 31



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Three months	13.33%	8
Two months	18.33%	11
One month	51.67%	31
Two weeks	16.67%	10
Other (please specify)	15.00%	9
Total Respondents: 60		

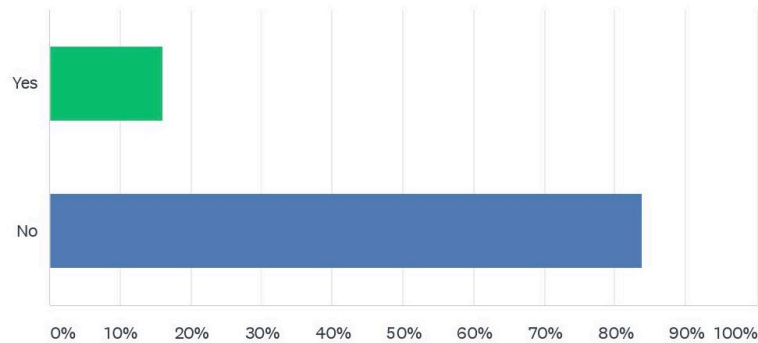
Over one-half of respondents state that they send out speaker reminders a month in advance of the CWRT engagement. An almost equal response said, Two months and Two weeks.

The 15% who responded “Other” said:

- Perhaps six months and then again one month out
- No uniform practice (depends on Prog. Comm. Chair making contacts)
- One week
- 6 weeks, and again at 1 week out.
- Email, text and/or phone starting a month out.
- both about 3 months and then about one week.
- usually I call a week in advance just to touch base with the speakers
- When making the annual schedule flyer and then two months out, and then early the week of the program.
- Monthly newsletter along with annual brochures

## Q12 Do you have a special fundraiser to pay for the more expensive speakers?

Answered: 62 Skipped: 29



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	16.13%	10
No	83.87%	52
TOTAL		62

Only 16% of respondents said their CWRT holds a special fundraiser for the “more expense speakers”. There are plenty of reasons why a majority DO NOT hold such a fundraiser including that they don’t engage with the more “expensive” speaker group and that they budget for that kind of expenditure.

### Q13 Briefly explain your special fundraiser

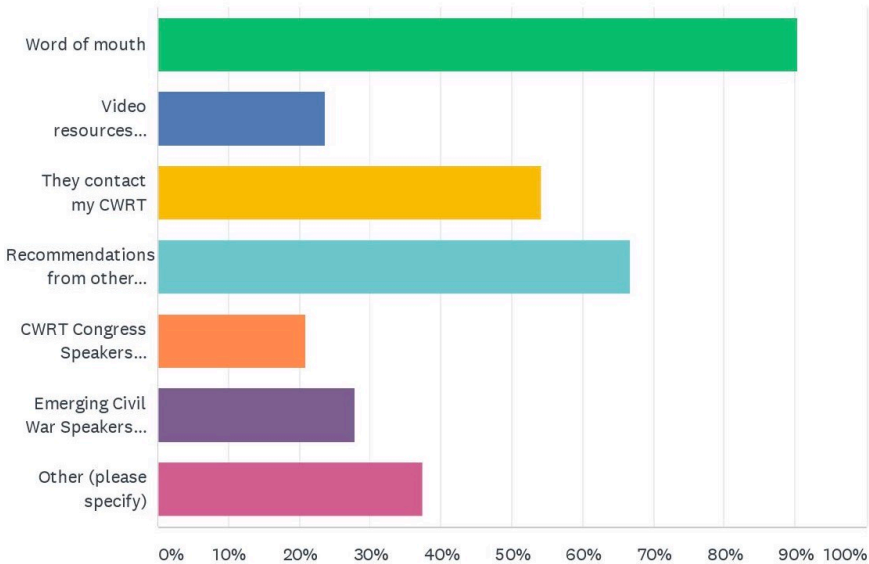
Those who responded "Yes" to Q12 said:

- Silent Auction using books, artwork, and memorabilia donated by members.
- We had a special live/silent auction fundraiser in 2014 to start our Speakers' Fund. Since then, our "Patron" program has funded it. Members pay amounts over their annual dues to be recognized on our website as a Patron. That money goes to the Speakers' Fund to pay for out-of-town speaker travel expenses.
- It is a separate fund to which members can make donations.
- Donated book sales
- Purchase of admission tickets and small grants
- Presidential Dinner @ \$25.00 each
- Our Annual Banquet hosts and pays for the expensive speaker.
- We have an annual "holiday dinner and auction" to raise funds that go directly to support paying for better speakers
- We don't have one. We collect annual dues, and we have a volunteer honors program (dues + \$100). It more than covers our needs.
- Book sales
- Semi-Annual Field Trips



# Q14 How do you identify good speakers? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 72 Skipped: 19



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Word of mouth	90.28%	65
Video resources (YouTube, C-Span, etc.)	23.61%	17
They contact my CWRT	54.17%	39
Recommendations from other CWRTs	66.67%	48
CWRT Congress Speakers Registry	20.83%	15
Emerging Civil War Speakers Bureau	27.78%	20
Other (please specify)	37.50%	27
Total Respondents: 72		

CWRTs use a variety of resources available to them when tasked with identifying “good” speakers. Most rely on Word of Mouth, although we didn’t seek to determine with whom they were conversing. All of the responses are interesting. A growing number are using the CWRT Congress “Speaker Registry” and an even larger number are employing the ECW Speakers Bureau.

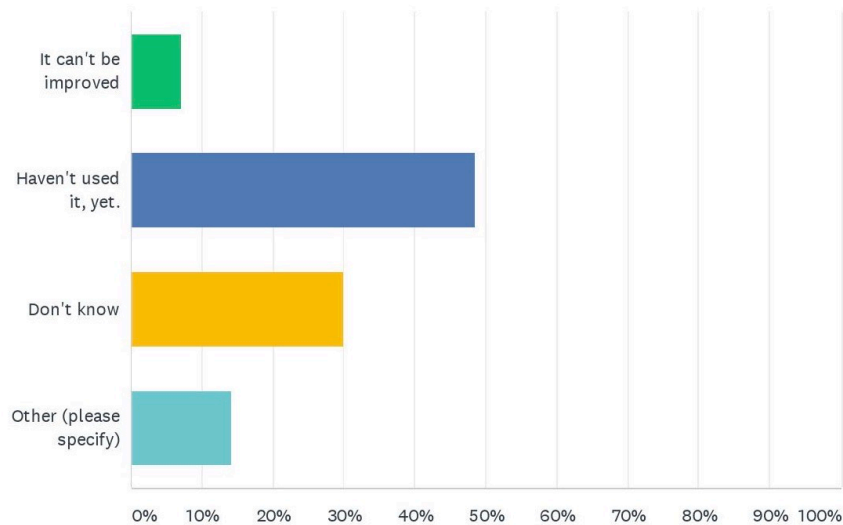
Those that responded “Other” said:

- I am not involved in this process.
- From going on tours with them or hearing at conferences
- Google alerts and speaker’s bureaus
- People I know
- Publisher

- I preview each presentation and speaker in advance of offering an invitation to speak.
- Recommendations
- recent book releases
- contact local universities, selected authors
- I have seen and heard them elsewhere.
- reusing past speakers
- Facebook
- contact at CW Reenactments, etc.
- Contacts in the academic community, but also from those who contact us.
- Savas Beatie contacts me re speakers
- Publishers, personal research
- I personally hear them speak at Conferences, etc.
- Publishing companies
- All of the above
- Author Scott Mingus is well connected within the national CWRT community and often recruits speakers while out on his own speaking engagements
- I also speak to numerous civil war historians as well and they make great recommendations.
- I use a list that was put together by a coalition of CWRT in Northern Illinois and that is housed by the Kenosha Civil War Museum
- Personal experience. I know or have been on tours with the speaker or have read their book.
- As a historian, I know many of our speakers.
- Go see them speak somewhere/other CWRT's.
- My own/other Board Members' contacts around the country.
- Keeping my eyes open for locals involved in Civil War studies.

## Q15 How can the CWRT Congress Speaker Registry be improved?

Answered: 70 Skipped: 21



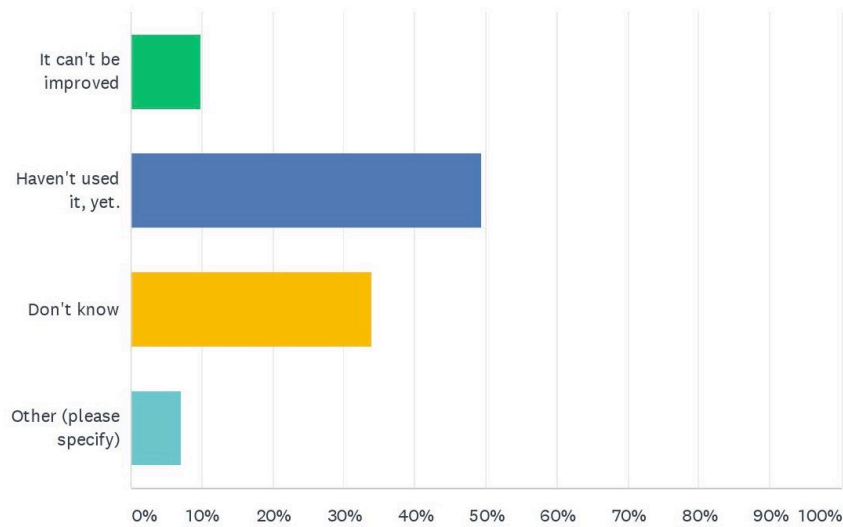
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
It can't be improved	7.14%	5
Haven't used it, yet.	48.57%	34
Don't know	30.00%	21
Other (please specify)	14.29%	10
TOTAL		70

Most of those who are responsible for CWRT programs have not used this resource (48.5%) and another 30% don't know. Those who responded "Other" said:

- Add additional speakers.
- Broader participation and frequent updates.
- It's a great resource but could use more West Coast speakers.
- Give it more time to "get off the ground".
- Some speakers have knowledge in many areas. It would be helpful, but maybe tedious, to list them all in the Registry.
- Keep adding speakers.
- My only suggestion would be to update the registry often, otherwise, it is fine.
- it's a work in progress.
- Continue to update.
- Seek more input from CWRTs in Western and Trans-Miss. "theaters"

## Q16 How can the ECW Speakers Bureau be improved?

Answered: 71 Skipped: 20



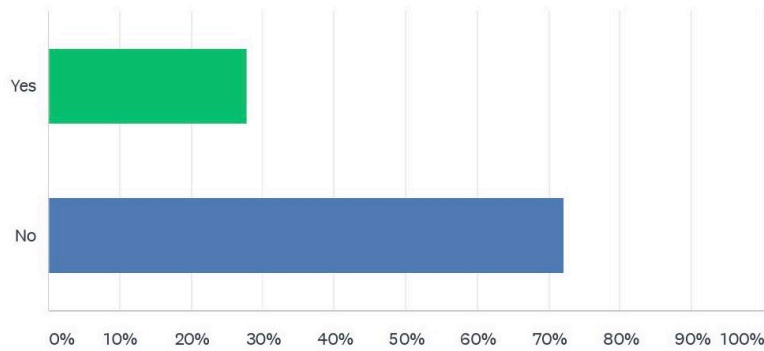
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
It can't be improved	9.86%	7
Haven't used it, yet.	49.30%	35
Don't know	33.80%	24
Other (please specify)	7.04%	5
TOTAL		71

Again, the vast majority either haven't used this resource or don't know how it can be improved. Those who responded "Other" said:

- Continue to add speakers
- Broader participation and updates
- Could use more West Coast speakers
- As I mentioned before it's a work in progress. Make changes when needed
- Continue to update.

### Q17 Do you have concerns about your CWRTs annual program lineup?

Answered: 72 Skipped: 19

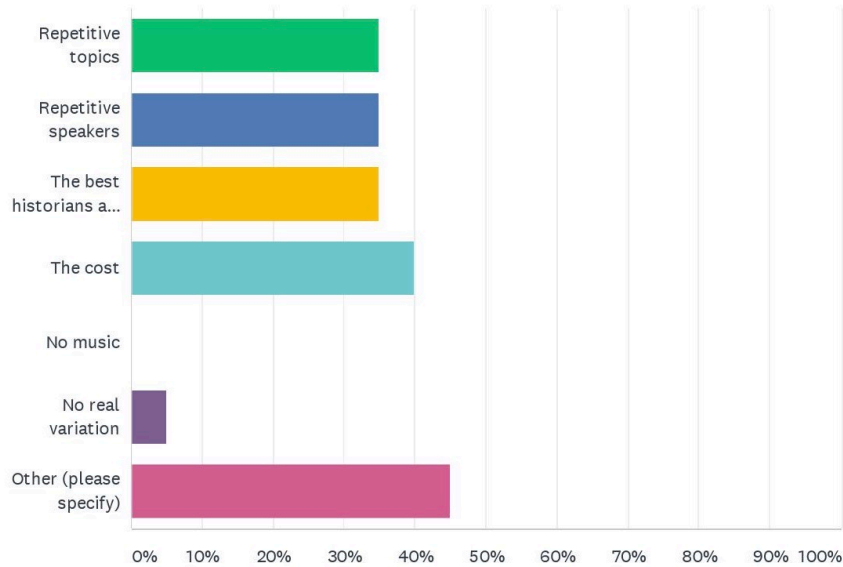


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.78%	20
No	72.22%	52
TOTAL		72

Most respondents have no concerns about their CWRT's program lineup. However, a troubling 27.7% said they do.

## Q18 What are your concerns about your CWRTs program calendar? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 20 Skipped: 71



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Repetitive topics	35.00%	7
Repetitive speakers	35.00%	7
The best historians are not included	35.00%	7
The cost	40.00%	8
No music	0.00%	0
No real variation	5.00%	1
Other (please specify)	45.00%	9
Total Respondents: 20		

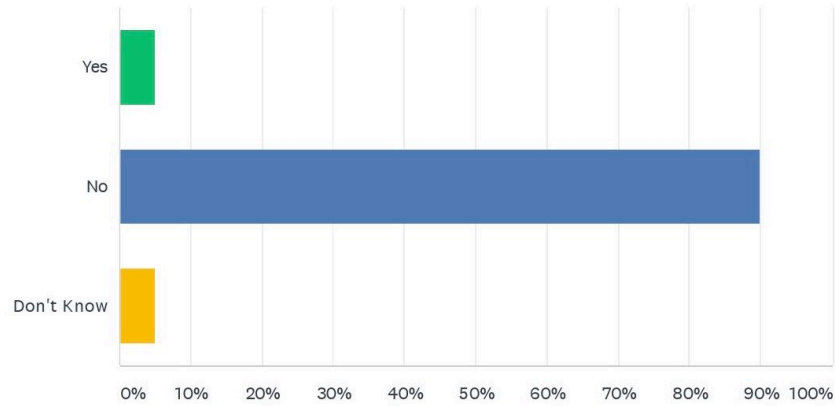
Those that have concerns list cost, the best historians are not included, repetitive speakers, repetitive topics and no real variation. Those who responded “Other” were also in the majority and they said:

- Quality of speaker
- Finding quality speakers willing to come speak to us
- All of the above. It remains a constant challenge
- Setting the annual schedule before October the year before
- Finding good speakers. Limited budget to get out of state speakers
- I cannot get other members to help
- Attendance

- Can't always get some speakers due to the active they live too far away or your schedules do not allow them to appear
- Unforeseen schedule conflict/illness

### Q19 Has a proposal to improve program development been prepared or submitted?

Answered: 20 Skipped: 71



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	5.00%	1
No	90.00%	18
Don't Know	5.00%	1
TOTAL		20

Although some have serious concerns about their CWRT's program, most have not developed and submitted a proposal to improve the situation and/or allay their concerns.



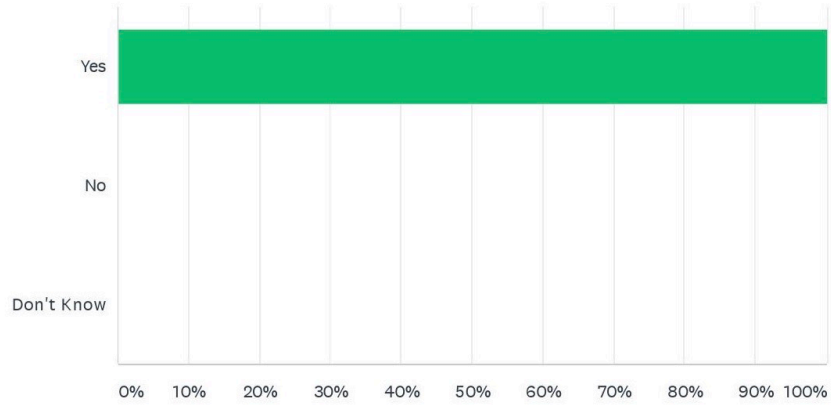
Q20 If a proposal to change the program has been developed, briefly describe it.

We received only one response:

- Past presidents

### Q21 Was the proposed change adopted?

Answered: 1 Skipped: 90



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	1
No	0.00%	0
Don't Know	0.00%	0
TOTAL		1

And despite the terse description, it was adopted.