

Trade Show Executive

NOVEMBER 2022

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Plus,
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Get the Skinny on Data Collection Trends and More

Ed McNeill,

Vice President, Informa Markets - Premiere Show Group

Banking on Beauty

What's Hot in Registration

Data collection at trade shows is more important than ever, and registration systems can help.

BY KATHY MONTE

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Trends come and go, but some trade show-registration basics remain constant, as the information garnered is your key to success. Event badge printing, lead retrieval and attendee tracking are must-haves.

Data became more robust during the pandemic when the world went virtual. Today, the same is expected, as it is essential for strategic planning and communications functions. Effective registration systems can capture just that — data.

It is also important to remember that a first impression is a lasting impression. On-site registration is the first touchpoint an attendee has with an event. The ease of use of a pre-show registration platform differentiates between a successful and not-so-successful experience.

One trend to come out of the pandemic is the popularity of attendees self-registering and printing their badges. A registration confirmation email can include a barcode that attendees can scan at a self-registration kiosk, generating a badge and everything the attendee needs. An on-site registration solution should be tailored to the needs of your show.

“Coming out of COVID, the focus now must be on looking deeply at the experiences and journeys of event attendees, exhibitors and organizers leading up to and throughout the event,” David Lawton, Chief Sales Officer at Convention Data



Easy Access. The ease of use of a pre-show registration platform can make the difference in a show's success, as on-site registration is the first experience attendees have with an event.

Services (CDS), said. “We are focusing on how we can look at each step of these customer journeys to augment, personalize and shape these three different experiences to help create more value.”

Attendee Acquisition

Attendee acquisition is more important than ever to every show organizer, yet has become that much harder post-COVID due to the Great Resignation, Baby Boomers retiring and Millennials not being as committed to the event industry as a marketing channel, among other reasons, according to CDS. Registration companies have the data needed to understand who is attending, who isn't, who's missing that participated previously, and where the opportunities are. “At CDS, we are focusing on working with each client to give them digestible, actionable intelligence in various forms —

dashboards and reports, infographics, personalized recommendations and strategy meetings with our other Freeman company, mdg — so organizers can create marketing campaigns that target the right prospects at the right time to drive attendance,” Lawton said.

The registration partner is a marketing arm and should be treated that way. “Attendees need to understand what value they're missing if they do not attend, and they also need reminders to attend via marketing campaigns that are created using proven best practices,” he said. “Because registration is unpredictable and some people wait until the last minute, data should be looked at and used all the way through the show for marketing. Registration data is still valid past opening day, and targeted communication should be happening to get people to attend on Day 2 and beyond.”

Today, personalization is expected in all aspects of a trade show, registration included. Make your attendee feel welcome in all email marketing. CDS offers a product called SendIt, an email marketing campaign tool used by the show organizer and exhibitors to engage attendees before, during and after the event. It helps reach previous attendees who haven't registered yet, as well as new attendees.

QR Codes Explode

QR codes existed long before the pandemic, but their use exploded in a touch-free world. They are included in confirmation emails to help registrants get badges, and are printed on badges for exhibitors to scan with lead-retrieval devices to capture registrants' lead information. Organizers utilize QR codes on signage to prompt visitors to register, download the show app, find an exhibitor booth and more.

CDS has been focusing on using mobile technology to shrink the registration footprint, spreading it out and moving away from the one traditional registration area onsite. Registration is unpredictable, especially post-COVID, as many people register in the last three weeks leading up to a show. However, that doesn't mean you have to have the same registration space and equipment as in years past.

CDS has a mobile app called Scan & Go that enables registration staff and temps to scan both attendees' and exhibitors' QR codes from their registration confirmation



Self-Serve. At the IMTS 2022 show at McCormick Place in Chicago, the Association for Manufacturing Technology (AMT) utilized Scan & Go apps on mobile devices in its registration halls to help badge pre-registered attendees.

emails or look them up by first and last name to print their badges quickly. Once the staff member clicks the “print” button in the app’s easy-to-use interface and the registrant walks over to the printer station, the badge has already been printed.

Recently at IMTS 2022, the International Manufacturing Technology Show, the Association for Manufacturing Technology (AMT) utilized Scan & Go apps on mobile devices in all four registration halls at McCormick Place to

capture and badge a large portion of pre-registered attendees, without them ever needing to stand in line or visit a traditional registration counter.

The Scan & Go mobile technology helps lower costs because the number of locations, equipment, counters and space needed are significantly reduced.

Advanced Registration Hub

Founded in 1996, eShow touts its advanced registration hub. From an attendee’s first visit to your website, through a flawless registration system, hotel room reservations and merchant processing, everything is in one system.

In addition, eShow helps with data collection. Data is collected from the landing pages on your event website to social

media, promotional posts, and the virtual event-management platform. Insights from in-person events are also collected using on-site technology like RFID tracking and analyzing online interactions that occur before, during and after the event.

According to eShow, some of the most pivotal information you can collect and use to shape future event decisions include number of repeat attendees, session choices, number of event booths visited and dwell time at each, number of workshops and sessions attended, number of questions asked during Q&A sessions, number of one-on-one meetings scheduled and number of mobile app downloads.

Registration Important Piece of the Puzzle

According to Cadmium, as trade show planners navigate the new normal in trade show planning, its technology optimizes attendees’ registration experience, pre- and post-event.

Registration is essential to a successful online, offline or hybrid event — so crucial that it’s now the core of Cadmium’s all-in-one event and learning management suite.

One of the most important things to remember is that every show is vastly different, so every registration solution should also be different.



Mobile Entry. Attendees can use their mobile phones for a touchless check-in process, using QR codes on signage to help prompt the registration process.

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