



## **e4 2015 Express Cafes**

### **TRADESHOWS/EXHIBITIONS**

#### **Effective Exhibitor Communication**

Getting timely information to exhibitors and maximizing the likelihood they'll read it can help avoid disconnects and enhance relationships, but too often the channels fail and issues that could be avoided turn into fires that must be put out on-site. Diane Vidoni and Susan Bennett, Vice President of Operations for National Trade Productions and Vice President of Account Management at Experient, lead this conversation about the most effective ways to ensure exhibitors receive and read critical show information in advance.

#### **Notes:**

- Personal assignment instead of general person determined as poc
- Person owns the show versus dividing it up
- Created marketing style guide separate from organization or meeting organization
- Email communication includes consequences especially around deadlines
- One pager with dates and poc - came out of survey
- Email communication includes outlook meeting can use
- Side nav consistent to show deadlines while content can change
- Targeted communication first timers or international
- Archive newsletters so they can read when they are ready
- You tube videos prospectus
- Use quick videos can be attached to chat and can be on the fly based on questions in real time
- No longer doing print prospectus

## Sponsors and Exhibitors: Bundle or Unbundle?

Recently, many organizations have bundled traditional sponsorship benefits and fees with other offerings, such as exhibition space and advertising, with differing levels of success. Brian Duckett, Director of Strategic Accounts at Experient, leads this discussion of the pros and cons of bundling benefits and how to pursue a new path.

### Notes:

- Trying to bundle event and association 365 day sponsors
- Some bundle singly and some pre, onsite, and post
- One reward is increasing exhibitor priority points
- Create custom packages non exhibitors
- Bundle as much non hard cost to increase actual profit
- Some bundle with magazine ads, banner ads, social media, to increase reach rather than just relying on the eyeballs at the show
- One group sells product category specific theater presentations
- One group bundles magazine ads as well as the printed directory
- One includes concession comp rooms
- One trying to get non endemic sponsors such as Google and Starbucks.
- Trends seems to be to unbundle....
- Idea: a la carte, but at spend level makes them a "xxx" level sponsor
- Unbundling- resourcing and fulfillment gets tougher, but more customer friendly
- Sponsorship in apps: hard to sell, end up giving it away. Way to combat- provide metrics, show click throughs.
- Technology sponsor- charging station, email, wifi
- Sell- Shout out "mini commercial," 1-2 times during 30-45 minute break
- Outsourcing- works better for large tradeshow
- Sponsor debriefs
- Give sponsors access to the CEO for a meeting at the conference
- Third party for fulfillment once sponsorship is signed
- Attendee experience: Making reservations at local restaurants "Italian on Monday night," sign up at registration
- Swag bag room- put sponsor items in the room

## “Customer Centricity” Applied to Conferences & Tradeshows

Many organizers spend the vast majority of their staff’s time focusing on ALL event “customers,” or an AVERAGE attendee or exhibitor, rather than focusing on the needs the RIGHT customers; those who will impact profitability most, now and in the future. Donna Kastner, Vice President of Expo/Sponsor Sales and Activation for Velvet Chainsaw Consulting, leads this discussion about identifying the right attendees and exhibitors to focus on in a customer centric approach that delivers long term business results.

### Notes:

Most saw this as focusing on needs for all customer – improving overall customer satisfaction levels. If customer satisfaction scores go up, Customer Centricity is working.

I challenged the group to apply a different definition to Customer Centricity, fostered by Dr. Peter Fader, professor of marketing at Wharton Business School. Fader’s definition rests on two key metrics:

1. Lifetime value of each customer
2. Impact on profitability

Applying the 80/20 rule (Pareto Principle), Customer Centricity is delivering over-the-top experiences and service to the 20% of customers, give or take, who are likely delivering 80% of revenue. All customers are served – but some more than others, based on financials.

We then applied this same dynamic to better understand Attendance Centricity.

- Understanding the attendance justification for loyal and targeted segments
- Economic Buyers – discussion centered on:
  - Company loyalty – which companies are regularly sending multiple people to event?
  - Individual Loyalty – who attended and paid multiple times?
  - Which exhibitors and sponsors are investing at high levels and repeatedly?
  - What do these economic buyers value most about your event experience?
  - How much time are you investing in the “once and done” attendees and 10x10 exhibitors who come and go?
  - How does conference and tradeshow participation impact customer or member retention? Spend for other products and services?

Discussion was lively, especially as we explored this scenario – How do we advance more good customers (attendees) into the great segment? How do we keep the “Meh” from depleting resources?



### Leads Qualification and Follow Up

As exhibitors seek more and better ways to measure ROI and prove value, it behooves organizers to help them in any way we can, including lead qualification/scoring and follow up. Join Mary Bukovic, Director Meetings & Events, Association of Equipment Manufacturers, and Susan Bennett, Vice President of Account Management at Experient, to discuss how show managers can help train and encourage exhibitors to effectively prepare for the leads they'll collect on-site, and then follow up in a prioritized fashion afterward.

#### **Notes:**

- Exhibitor Engagement Campaign & free materials - call and talk them through it and what's available
- Marketing materials prepped for post show and send immediately
- Tool with Marketing Assn to let them ROI compare to other like groups (AEM paying as part of beta test). Identified 10 companies
- Some savvy exhibitors have standing timelines thru CRM tool to auto follow up
- Challenge with less than 3 months visibility from time lead is collected
- Trying hosted buyer vs traditional booth
- Corporate program does networking dinner and allows exhibitors to pick who they sit with. Attendee not part of decision - assigned table event