

A man in a dark suit and tie is pointing at a tablet screen held by another man. They are in a crowd of people, some of whom are also looking at their devices. The background is slightly blurred, showing other attendees in business attire.

# Your Event Essentials

The digital guide to enhancing  
meeting and event success

# Table of contents

<b>Part 1:</b> Create your event	4	<b>Part 2:</b> Run your event	14	<b>Part 3:</b> Engage at your event	22	<b>Part 4:</b> Succeed & grow your event	31
<b>TIP 1: SOURCE YOUR VENUE</b>	5	<b>TIP 1: IDENTIFYING YOUR BRAND STRATEGY</b>	15	<b>TIP 1: THE ONSITE REGISTRATION EXPERIENCE</b>	23	<b>TIP 1: CREATING ACCESSIBLE EVENT SURVEYS</b>	32
<b>TIP 2: THE REGISTRATION PROCESS</b>	6	<b>TIP 2: ENGAGING ATTENDEES WITH EMAIL MESSAGING</b>	17	<b>TIP 2: DRIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUR EVENT MOBILE APP</b>	25	<b>TIP 2: ANALYZE YOUR EVENT REPORTS LIKE A PRO</b>	34
<b>TIP 3: BUILDING A WEB PRESENCE</b>	10	<b>TIP 3: STEP UP YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	19	<b>TIP 3: CREATING A MEMORABLE NETWORKING EXPERIENCE</b>	27	<b>TIP 3: UNDERSTANDING EVENT ROI</b>	36
<b>TIP 4: MANAGING EVENT ABSTRACT AND PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS</b>	12	<b>TIP 4: UTILIZING EVENT MOBILE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES</b>	21	<b>TIP 4: BONUS: ENGAGE WITH VR AND AR</b>	29		
<b>Conclusion</b>	37			<b>About etouches</b>	38		

# Introduction

The meeting and event industry is constantly changing as improvements in technology make it easier for planners to engage with attendees. But what hasn't changed is the importance of keeping your attendees engaged throughout your event lifecycle to increase ROI. From the registration process to receiving attendee feedback after the event, these event essentials can help any planner succeed.

This digital guide will take you on a journey through the event lifecycle from start to finish. Consider which essentials are most important to your event or meeting so that you can focus on the ones that meet your unique needs.

...what hasn't changed is the importance of keeping your attendees engaged throughout your event lifecycle to increase ROI.

# Part I

## Create your event experience



# Tip 1: source your venue

Planning can't truly begin without knowing where you will host your event. Once you pick an ideal city, selecting the exact venue can be a challenge. Luckily, new technology allows event planners to streamline the entire venue booking process, from creating and sending RFPs to negotiations and finally signing on the dotted line.

## Understand your event value

You'd be surprised how many planners go into negotiations without knowing what value their meeting will bring to the venue. Hotels base meeting value on a specific set of criteria. Focus on these key value generators, and your bargaining power grows:

- Booking window
- Date flexibility
- Catering spend
- Space-to-rooms ratio

## Be open to flexibility

Venues are constantly working to complete their occupancy puzzle. A minor adjustment to your dates may fit your group perfectly into one of the venue's holes. As an added bonus for you, the right hotel will often incentivize you by offering some special pricing and cost savings in return for your flexibility.

## Share your meeting history

Meeting history is an element of your sourcing and booking process that can often be overlooked. Make it a point to call out your past performances (ideally within the last two years or so), and you'll be surprised at how attentive your hotel partners will be – not to mention the offers that will come in as a result. This also increases credibility. Hotels receive hundreds of meeting RFPs a week, and they're constantly trying to find the meetings that not only have the greatest chance of booking, but also are most likely to perform to the original specs in the RFP.

### ITEMS IN YOUR MEETING HISTORY THAT DRIVE VALUE:

- Coming within 5% of your room block
- Exceeding the food and beverage minimum
- Making use of the full range of hotel services
- Booking meetings or events 30-90 days out

## Tip 2: the registration process

Creating a seamless registration process for your attendees is one of the most important parts of the event lifecycle. By registering for your event, attendees are clearly interested in what your event will offer them. Making the process as simple as possible will ensure that they complete the registration and attendees will head into the event with a positive impression. Not only does a clear and easy registration process increase the number of people who complete it, it also creates a level of trust between attendees and the event organizers.



## Tip 2: the registration process (cont.)

### Keep it simple

Once someone decides they want to attend your event, they want the registration process to be as quick and efficient as possible.

Keep the number of pages and forms to click through to a minimum.

Think about what information is truly essential for you during the registration process and what can be collected later.

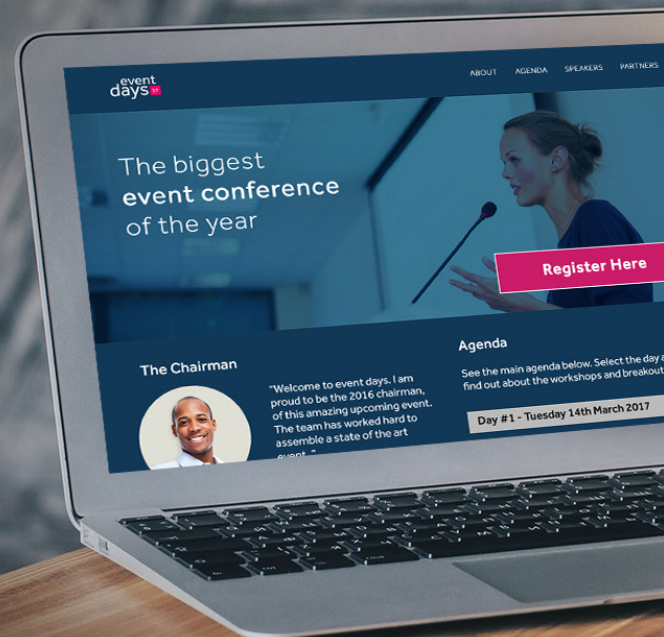
Make your registration fields pre-loadable for returning attendees. Once they type in their email address, all their basic information will automatically be filled in.

Only provide questions that are relevant to them. Customizing questions by attendee type (speaker, sponsor, basic attendee, etc.) will streamline the process by only showing questions that matter to them.

### Pay attention to details

Test and retest payment functions for your event, especially if you are accepting multiple currencies. Nothing causes more anxiety than when an attendee sees an error message after putting in their payment information.

Features such as confirmation emails and the clear display of refund and private policy information help build a level of trust between the organizers and attendees that will carry through the rest of the event process.





## Tip 2: the registration process (cont.)

### Make support and changes convenient

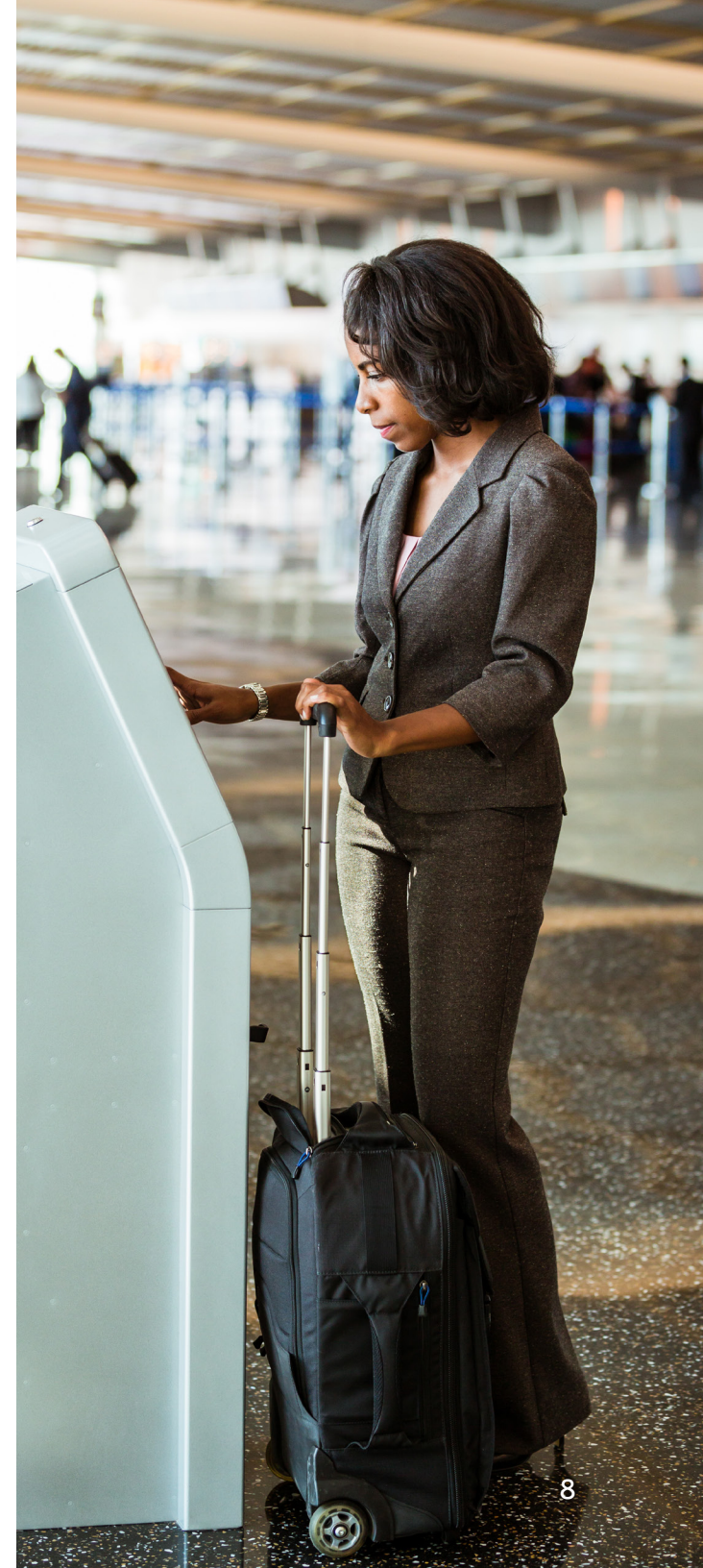
No matter how straightforward you think your registration process is, there are bound to be questions from attendees.

Provide contact information for support in an easily accessible area. Go even further by having a help chat window or include a link to FAQs on your event website.

Quickly and easily answering attendee questions can make the difference between having a committed attendee or one that finds an excuse not to register.

Consider linking your registration to your email marketing and send an email to someone who started a registration but didn't finish it. If they left the process, give them a reason to come back with a follow up email that highlights a popular keynote speaker or exciting networking opportunities.

When allowing attendees to edit their registration information, make sure they can't change details that have been solidified on your end, i.e. rooming information already sent to a hotel.





## Tip 2: the registration process (cont.)

### **Include hotel & travel booking options**

A simple way to make travel management easy is to include hotel booking options right in the registration form.

Things like room rates and room types should be presented in a clear and concise manner. For attendees who are not ready to make accommodation decisions while they're registering, allow them to go back in to add or edit hotel needs at a later date.

Go beyond typical options like hotel room block discounts and coupon codes to include selections such as room sharing. This can help make your event more affordable, as well as greatly reduce your housing budget.

Consider integrating your event registration software with a global distribution system (GDS). This will automate transactions between travel service providers and travel agencies, making it easier to offer your attendees the best travel accommodations and make all of your data seamlessly connect.



# Tip 3: building a web presence

As the common first touch point with potential and returning attendees, your website needs to be the central location for all event information. No longer is your event website the single form of online marketing – you have social media, videos, blogs, sponsors, media websites and more that are linking back to your event. That means that your website needs to be the hub that connects them all!

There are a few key things that you want your website to be: clear, informative and exciting.

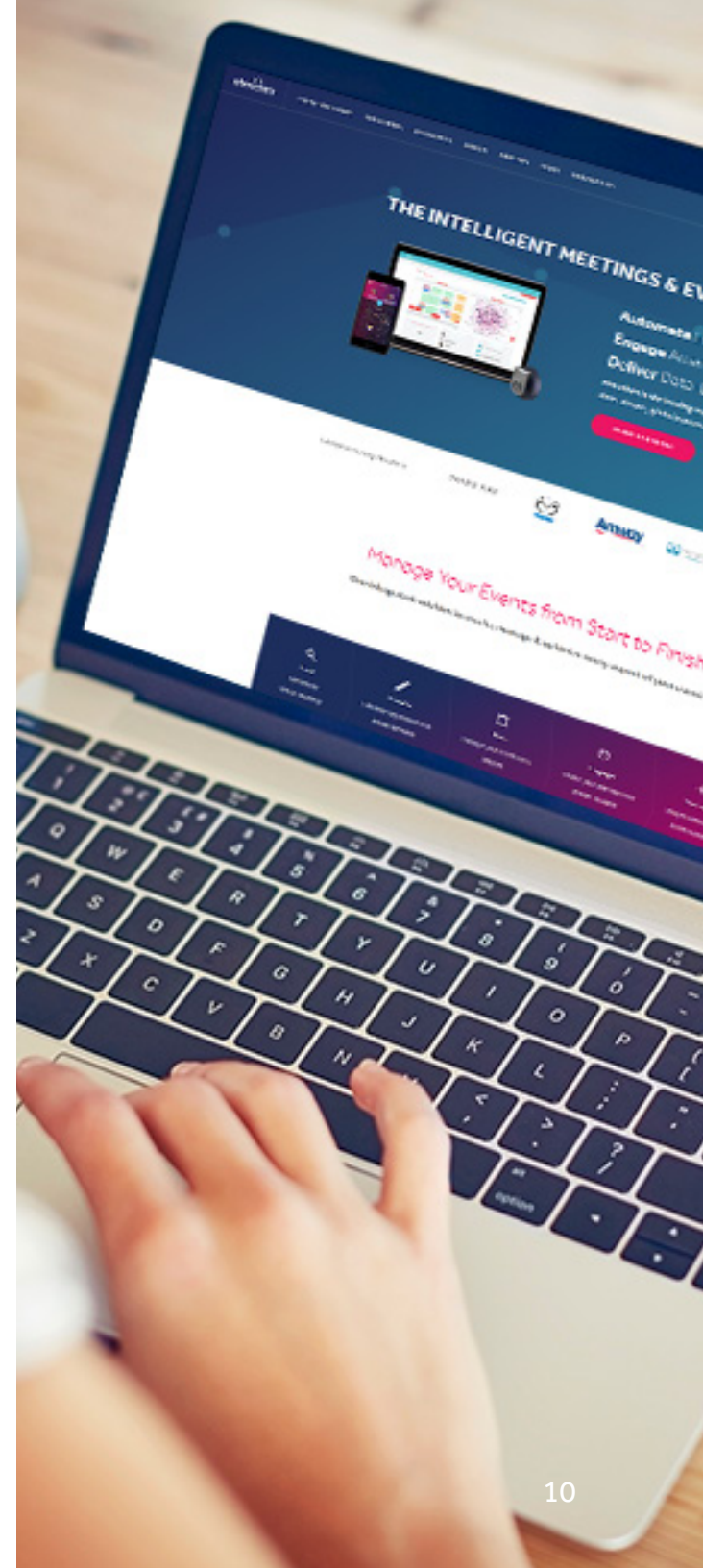
## Showcase important information

When a potential attendee visits your website, they're looking to find out more about your event. Include the information that will answer attendee questions in regards to your message, benefits, event info, registration and more.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- Who does this event benefit?
- Why should they attend?
- Where is it being held?
- When is it?
- How can they register?

Add widgets with information to register, location, date, keynote topics and social media icons. This can be a staple on every layer of your event website, so that no matter where they are there is always the option to register or continue the conversation within your event community.



## Tip 3: building a web presence (cont.)

### Make it appealing

Showcasing logos of notable attendees and sponsors on your homepage could be the right move to entice someone to register if there is a company present that they want to connect with.

Go into detail with your agenda by showcasing the different tracks, descriptions, takeaways and direct links to the speaker bios. Have one page with all the different sessions and tracks in a list with a short bio, and give attendees the option to read more by opening up a shadow box on the same page.

Add extra features to generate positive emotions before the event, such as video interviews with your keynote speakers. If this is an annual event, post a video from last year's event or testimonials of attendees who were attending.



### QUESTION TO CONSIDER:

- Why would someone want to attend your event over all others?



# Tip 4: managing event abstract and proposal submissions

From collecting and organizing proposals, to putting all the approved information on your event website, it's important to stay organized for your speakers and attendees.

Three things to consider when making your proposal management more efficient are to:

- Be consistent with your submission guidelines
- Create customized submission forms with specific permissions
- Automate proposal approval to your online event agenda.

## Be consistent with your submission guidelines

In order to get the best results from people submitting abstracts or proposals, be consistent with what you are asking them to include. You want all the information you need to properly compare and contrast prospective event content. This is also helpful when wanting to diversify your content.

Abstract management should be consistent, customizable, and automated.



## Tip 4: managing event abstract and proposal submissions (cont.)

### Create customized submission forms with specific permissions

Require that attendees will only be allowed to submit an abstract or proposal after registering for your event. You want them to be committed to attending as well as get any payment issues out of the way, instead of constantly reminding them to do so after you've selected their outstanding speaking session.

Keep in mind that not all abstract submission forms should be the same. Customize different forms with different content and information requirements. That way, the proposal submission process is easy and concise for attendees, encouraging more of them to complete the process.

### Automate proposal approval to your online event agenda

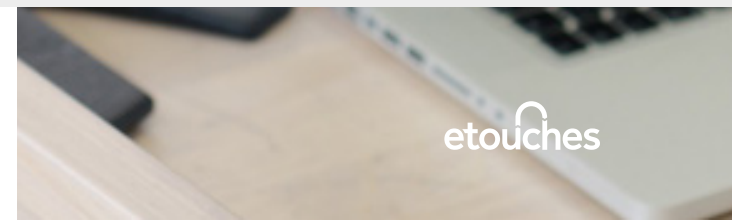
After selecting and approving your proposal submissions, you want to be able to publish your event agenda online as soon as possible.

Look for software that will automatically sort and publish approved proposals. Not only does that automate a tedious process, but you will be able to market your content faster, attracting even more attendees and grow your event.



### CUSTOMIZED TEMPLATES

Do you host an annual event? Or perhaps the same type of event several times a year? Building templates within your event software is the best way to add efficiency to your event planning. Whether you develop them yourself, or work with your software provider to build and customize them, you'll be saving you and your team lots of time and energy.



## Part 2

# Run your event

# Tip 1: identifying your brand strategy

From designing logos and selecting colors, to brainstorming mottos and key phrases, every detail listed will help set the tone for your event. No matter what type of event or meeting you are creating a branding motif for, it needs to be professional, high-quality and unique to your event's intended look and feel.



...it needs to be professional, high-quality and unique to your event's intended look and feel.

# Tip 1: identifying your brand strategy (cont.)

## Be consistent across your entire marketing strategy

When implementing your branding, consistency is the number one factor when wanting to look professional and appealing to attendees.

Your event website, registration pages, social media profiles and emails should be consistent, whether it's a new event, or you're updating branding for an annual event, build trust and positive expectations for your attendees. From researching your event, to typing in their payment information, you don't want to have attendees (especially new ones) second guess your credibility because something seems off or outdated about your event's representation online.

## Create and reuse templates with your branding

One of the easiest ways to keep up with consistency is to create templates with your branding, so that no matter who on your team needs to add a new webpage to your website or create a promotional email, your branding is already formatted to your preferences.

Along with increasing consistency, by creating templates you're also saving staff valuable time and money, as any important or urgent information that needs to be posted online or sent out via email can be completed in minutes.



**TIP: IF YOU HOST EVENTS REGIONALLY OR INTERNATIONALLY WITH DIFFERENT TEAMS, TEMPLATES CAN HELP UNIFY YOUR BRANDING ACROSS TEAMS AND DEPARTMENTS.**





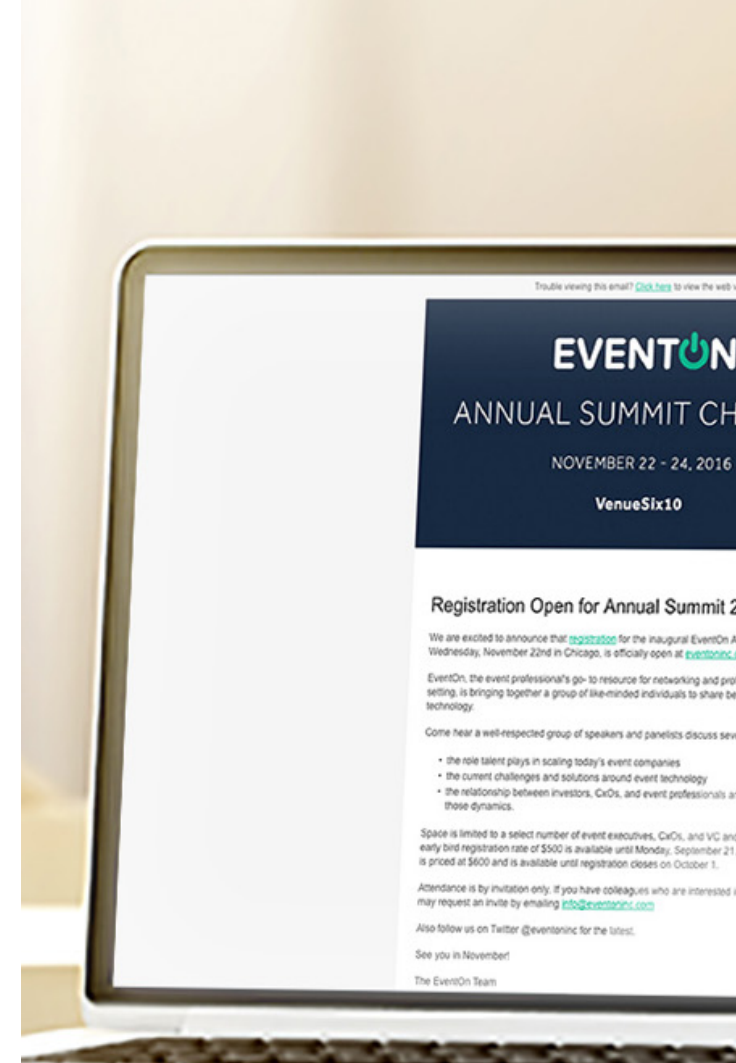
# Tip 2: engaging attendees with email messaging

Even though communicating with attendees can be done through a variety of channels (social media, phone, text, etc.), email is still a planner's go to throughout the entire event lifecycle. Whether it's used to promote registration, send important event updates or even just to say "thank you for attending" post-event, sending exceptional event emails is crucial to maintaining attendee engagement.

## Keep the design simple

When you design event emails, keep it simple and clean. Attendees won't know what to look at first if an email has an overload of graphics and information.

Consistency is important with design. Include your event's logo, colors and other design elements to tie everything together. Make important actions, like registering, utilizing a discount or even following social media accounts, easy and clear by including buttons and widgets.



**TIP: SENDING THE RIGHT EMAILS AT THE RIGHT TIME CAN HELP INCREASE REGISTRATION NUMBERS, AS WELL AS ATTENDEE PARTICIPATION; ALL OF WHICH BENEFITS YOUR EVENT ROI.**

## Tip 2: engaging attendees with email messaging (cont.)

### **Include content that is short and personalized**

Think about what information is crucial for your attendee to know in that moment and link to the website for additional info.

Use marketing automation to track your attendees' footsteps on your website. By tracking this information, you can figure out how to create personalized content for each attendee. For example, if they clicked on a session about registration, send them an email with the top registration exhibitors at your event.

Don't forget to include a captivating subject line. Along with looking to see who the sender is, attendees will also look at the subject line before even opening the email. Make the subject line a phrase or sentence that will make attendees want to open your email.

### **Maintain a proper timeline**

When it comes to scheduling emails, finding the right balance throughout your event timeline is critical.

Consider scheduling emails on a consistent weekly or biweekly basis. You want to send enough emails to keep attendees up to date, but also not so many that you're bombarding them with your messaging. You can always increase messaging the closer you get to the event. Use an email scheduling calendar that can be created through your marketing automation or email software to stay on track.

Use software that can track who has registered and who needs additional encouragement. There's no point in filling a committed attendee's inbox with registration emails if you can prevent it. Tracking clicks and open rates can help you find the email schedule sweet spot, which is beneficial for both you and your attendees.

Research has shown that including a recipient's name in your emails (i.e. Dear John Smith vs. Dear Attendee) has increased the amount of clicks and opens, so don't forget those little, personalized details.



**TIP: DON'T USE "FREE" OR EXCLAMATION POINTS IN YOUR EMAIL SUBJECT LINES BECAUSE SOME SERVERS MAY MARK THIS AS SPAM.**

## Tip 3: step up your social media

Social media allows event planners to reach their audience on a more personal level via platforms they regularly use and love. Now is the time to reevaluate your social media efforts to find new ways to connect with attendees, get them excited about your event and increase that FOMO (fear of missing out) factor.

### Have a thorough social media plan

A proper social media implementation takes a lot more planning than one would think. Meet at the beginning of your event planning cycle to discuss a strategy of who, what and when. Think of ways to use social media pre-event to drive registration, during the event to engage onsite and post-event to get attendee feedback. Update/create unique hashtags (and double check that your hashtag isn't already in use!) and decide on any themes or goals to carry throughout your plan.

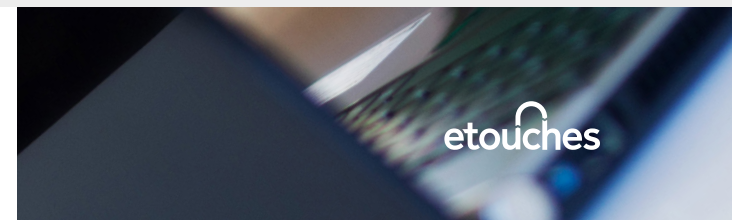
### Use social media as a customer service/feedback tool

While social media is extremely effective at being an informational tool to post updates, announcements and the like, don't forget about its role as a customer service and feedback tool. Have someone monitor your direct messages, comments or other channels to address any questions or concerns. Whether it's sharing the Wi-fi password or nipping a disgruntled attendee in the bud, they'll appreciate a prompt and friendly response, as will others witnessing the exchange.



### WHAT IS FOMO?

FOMO or "fear of missing out" started as phrase used by Millennials and later became a top trend for the events industry. After all, concern that one may be missing out on an informative, exciting or entertaining event is a great driver to get people to actually attend! Social media is the perfect avenue to increase event FOMO as users are often interested in what their friends or colleagues do and the events they attend.

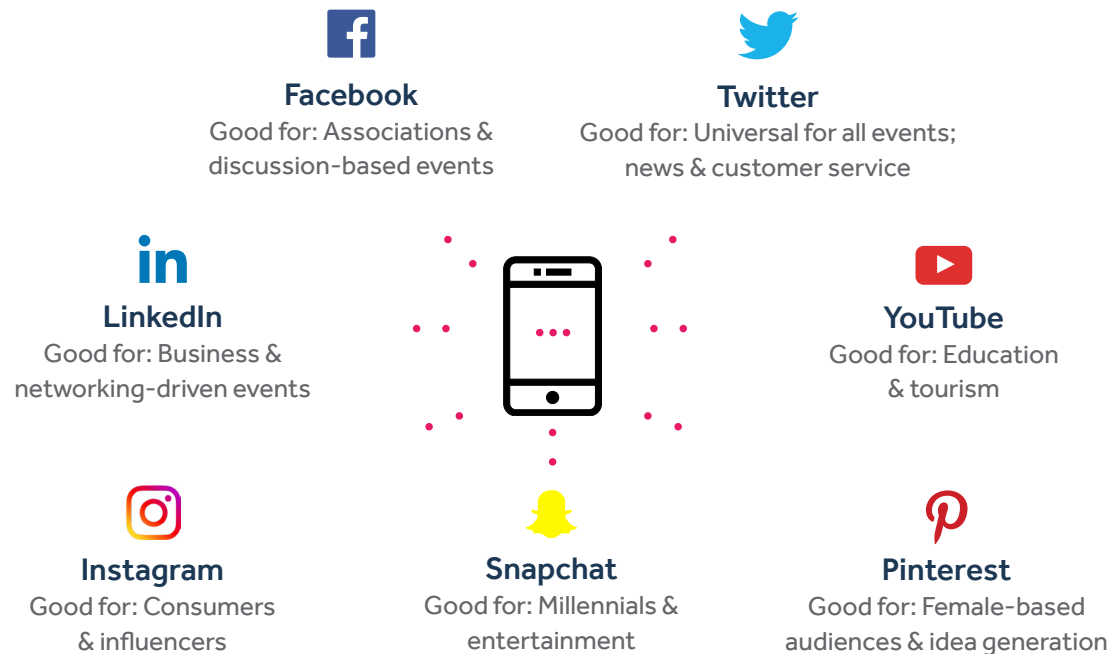


# Tip 3: step up your social media

## Explore the world outside the standard platforms

Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are staples, but consider using other mediums as well. It can be overwhelming as there are countless choices seemingly popping up every year, but before you jump on board, take a look at your audience first. What type of people attend your event and what platforms are they already using? For example, if your attendees are young and tech-savvy then Instagram and Snapchat (with a branded Geofilter!) are great options. If your event is more business-focused, having a strong LinkedIn presence is perfect.

## Which social media platform is right for your event?



## BONUS: ADD LIVE STREAMING TO YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY



One of the newest social media strategies is live streaming. Not only is it available on a variety of platforms (Facebook, Periscope, Instagram and more!) in some capacity, but the opportunities to live stream are endless; live Q&A, behind the scenes planning and setup, and keynote presentations, just to name a few. Plus, you can get feedback and analyze engagement in real time. Give live streaming a shot at your next event!



# Tip 4: utilizing event mobile sponsorship opportunities

With event mobile apps, sponsorship opportunities can be utilized with a variety of features that increase sponsor/attendee connections and generate valuable leads. And by increasing the number of ways you offer sponsorship, you make the sponsorship experience easier and more flexible.

## Enhance sponsorship listings to add extra visibility

If your sponsor has a booth, then one of their priorities at your event is attendee visibility. Along with standard banners and signage, make sponsors even more accessible by providing enhanced listings on your event website, as well as your mobile app.

Include logos, company descriptions, booth numbers, speaker sessions and more for each sponsor.

Link enhanced listings to an exhibition floor map. Not only will attendees be able to find the sponsors they already want to visit, but they can learn more about new companies and what they potentially have to offer.

## Provide sponsors with lead scanning features

Make your mobile event app a central location for sponsors, not just attendees. With the right app, and coupled with putting unique barcodes on attendee badges, sponsors can scan and review leads directly from their mobile devices. This allows sponsors to monitor leads and measure booth traffic throughout the event. Depending on your technology situation, you may need to offer additional scanning devices to help with the process. Either way, by offering a mobile lead management system, you'll make the sponsorship experience a seamless one.

## Send sponsored push notifications

Boost your app sponsorship game by exploring new technology that works with mobile devices. One example is using iBeacons, which are small devices that can be placed in each exhibit hall booth. iBeacons give sponsors the ability to send out customizable push notifications with messages, coupons and discount codes to attendee mobile devices when they pass by their booth, i.e. "Looking for a new event software? Stop by the etouches booth #123 to learn more!" Note that attendees must have your corresponding event mobile app downloaded for this to work, so promote your app whenever you can.

## Part 3

# Engage at your event

# Tip 1: the onsite registration experience

What's important at this stage of your event is to make a good first impression for attendees and stakeholders. And since onsite registration and check-in is one of the first things your attendees experience on day one, you want it to go as smoothly and quickly as possible. By creating an efficient process, you will help set a positive, professional tone for the rest of your event.

Three tips to keep in mind when creating an outstanding onsite experience for your attendees are:

- Offer self-service check-in/ registration
- Print badges onsite
- Keep track of data to make sure your attendees' needs are being met year after year





# Tip 1: the onsite registration experience (cont.)

## Offer self-service check-in/registration

Setup self-service kiosks near the registration desks where attendees can verify their own information and print their own materials.

If you allow last minute attendees to go through the entire registration process on the kiosks as well, make sure they can accept all proper payment methods.

To help the self-service process go even quicker, preload registrant data from previous events to further benefit your loyal attendees.

## Print attendee badges onsite

If you want to save time and money, print attendee badges and other credentials onsite instead of prior to the event. Your attendees will not have to wait while your staff flips through hundreds (or even thousands) of pre-printed badges, and any last minute changes or edits can be completed in-person.

## Track data

Think of the valuable data you can track during the check-in/registration process. For example, it could be the number of attendees who used self-service kiosks over those who checked-in in person, the number of day-of/last minute registrants or the highest number of registrations at a certain time. These numbers can help you decide the ratio of staff to self-service kiosks or to have a larger check-in space next year, but above it all it can help guarantee that your attendees are having the best onsite experience that you can provide.



**TIP: HAVE A DEDICATED STAFF MEMBER TO WELCOME ATTENDEES. THIS PERSON CAN MAKE SURE THAT PEOPLE WAITING TO CHECK IN HAVE THE PROPER INFORMATION READILY AVAILABLE OR THAT THEIR PHONE BRIGHTNESS IS HIGH ENOUGH TO ENSURE THEIR MOBILE BARCODE SCANS. NOT TO MENTION, IT'S NICE TO ADD A LITTLE HUMAN TOUCH TO THOSE WHO CHOOSE THE SELF-SERVICE ROUTE.**

## Tip 2: drive engagement with your event mobile app

Engagement is crucial to the attendee experience, from interesting speaking sessions to interactive exhibit hall booths, to fun contests and networking cocktail parties. But if there's one place to not forget about maintaining engagement, it's in your mobile event app.

Attendees use your event mobile app as the central place for event information, personal agendas, networking connections and more during your event, so it's the perfect place to continue your engagement efforts.

...if there's one place to not forget about maintaining engagement, it's in your mobile event app.

## Tip 2: drive engagement with your event mobile app (cont.)

### Use interactive elements like live polling, voting, etc.

Use an event app with live polling, voting and Q&A capabilities so that speakers can incorporate these interactive elements during their presentation; even better if you can display the results on a large screen so that attendees can follow along. Bottom line, if attendees are on their mobile devices to participate in your event instead of just passing time, you're doing it right.

### Provide communication tools

Sending push notifications will keep them informed on last-minute announcements such as program changes. Push notifications are also an effective way to inform attendees in case of an emergency onsite.

Since people are typically more comfortable meeting new people in a group setting, there's no better way for attendees to connect than through

your mobile app. Make it simple for them to interact with one another with private messaging features where they can chat and share photos and videos of the event.

### Get feedback every step of the way

While engagement with event speakers and fellow attendees is important, don't forget about using your app to maintain engagement with event organizers too. Getting feedback from attendees about session content, exhibitors and event logistics is crucial to your event success and ROI. Make attendee surveys and questionnaires accessible by putting them directly into your mobile event app. Not only is it easier than distributing paper surveys or directing attendees to a forgettable internet link, you will be able to collect and review feedback and data quicker than ever before.



**TIP: ADD YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA FEEDS DIRECTLY IN YOUR APP SO ATTENDEES DON'T HAVE TO LEAVE IT TO GET THE LATEST UPDATES.**



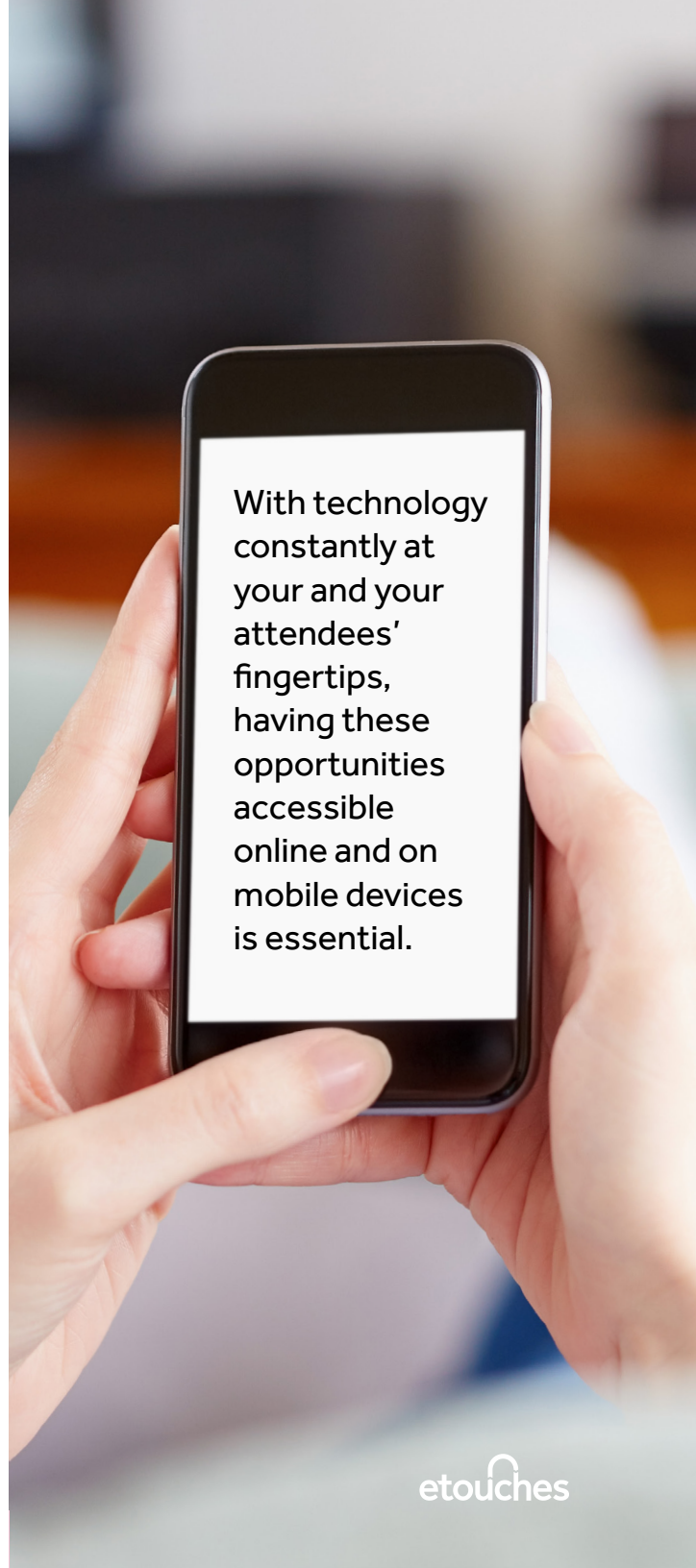
## Tip 3: create a memorable networking experience

Networking in some form or another is at the heart of almost all events, as it's often a top priority for event attendees and sponsors. If you find that's the case for your event, then it should also be a priority for you to help create and promote engaging networking opportunities for your audience.

With technology constantly at your and your attendees' fingertips, having these opportunities accessible online and on mobile devices is essential. Technology has also made it even easier to create personalized networking connections, as well as unique and fun activities for your entire audience.

There are three things to keep in mind when facilitating effective networking at your event:

- Make it an easy and convenient option
- Connect like-minded attendees through personalized content
- Create interactive and fun networking initiatives to promote engagement

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a black smartphone. The phone's screen is white and displays a paragraph of text in a black, sans-serif font. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor event space with other people and lights.

With technology constantly at your and your attendees' fingertips, having these opportunities accessible online and on mobile devices is essential.

## Tip 3: create a memorable networking experience (cont.)

### Make networking convenient

- Allow attendees to sign up for networking opportunities and events upon registration.
- Use a mobile app with several networking features, such as searchable attendee/ sponsor lists with contact information and in-app messaging.
- Highlight designated meeting spaces on your event floor plan (that's accessible on your website and mobile app).

### Work to connect like-minded attendees

- Ask attendees questions about themselves, their responsibilities and their networking goals.
- Use a matchmaking tool to auto-generate appointments based on matching various criteria.
- Post-event, allow attendees to get in touch with people they did not manage to meet onsite during the event through private messaging.

### Utilize gamification options

- One popular example is the scavenger hunt, which is especially great if you want to connect vendors with attendees. Attendees can earn digital badges, discounts or prizes by scanning QR codes when visiting a certain number and/or type of vendors throughout your exhibition floor.
- These games stimulate networking and engagement among attendees, but they also help increase booth traffic, making your sponsors happy.
- Display real-time results on digital signage to increase awareness and competition.

## Tip 4: utilize digital badges

Attendee badges are just one of the evolving technologies in the event space that planners can use to increase engagement, as well as gain valuable insights into attendee activity and behavior. The trick is knowing how to use them effectively to keep participation high, attendees interested and data collection accurate.

### A networking tool

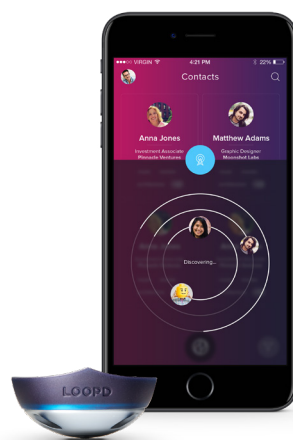
Digital badge technology today makes it easy for an attendee to exchange contact information with fellow attendees and sponsors alike. Get them excited at the prospect of doing so with the touch of a button and without having to carry extra paper, business cards and other marketing materials around for the rest of the event.

### Promote gamification

When paired with a mobile app, digital badges make a great tool to add a little competition at your event via gamification. From scavenger hunts around an exhibit hall to earning “event-related” achievements, a digital badge can make participating in these activities easy and fun. Plus, they can help drive traffic to specific sponsors or low trafficked areas.

### Collect data

The best part about tools like digital badges is the data you can collect from them. You can measure popular speaker sessions, the most visited sponsor booths and track individual journeys throughout your event. This allows you to understand what your attendees respond to most and helps you build an even better future event programs.



**TIP: OFFER EDUCATION CREDITS FOR YOUR SESSIONS. USE YOUR BADGES AS THE PASSIVE WEARABLE TO TRACK ATTENDANCE. NO LONGER DO YOU HAVE TO SCAN IN YOUR ATTENDEES AS THEY ENTER SESSIONS.**



## Tip 4: Bonus: engage with VR and AR

The event and meetings industry has seen an increase in technology over the last few years. New event tech like virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR), is changing the way attendees interact at events. Make your event an unforgettable one by bringing your attendees into a virtual world or get them engaged with an enhanced view of the real world.

### TRENDS IN VR\*

- Allow access to VR via a mobile device
- Use VR for venue tours
- Engage attendees with VR gamification
- Host 360-degree virtual meetings
- Allow people to participate at event as a robotic, VR attendee

### TRENDS IN AR\*\*

- Provide attendees with wearable AR
- Incorporate AR into an event app
- Sponsors can enhance their activations with videos and graphics
- Bring attendees into a three-dimensional, virtual environment with a transparent LED display

\* According to Event Manager Blog and Meeting Tomorrow

\*\* According to BizBash



## Part 4

# **Succeed** and grow your event

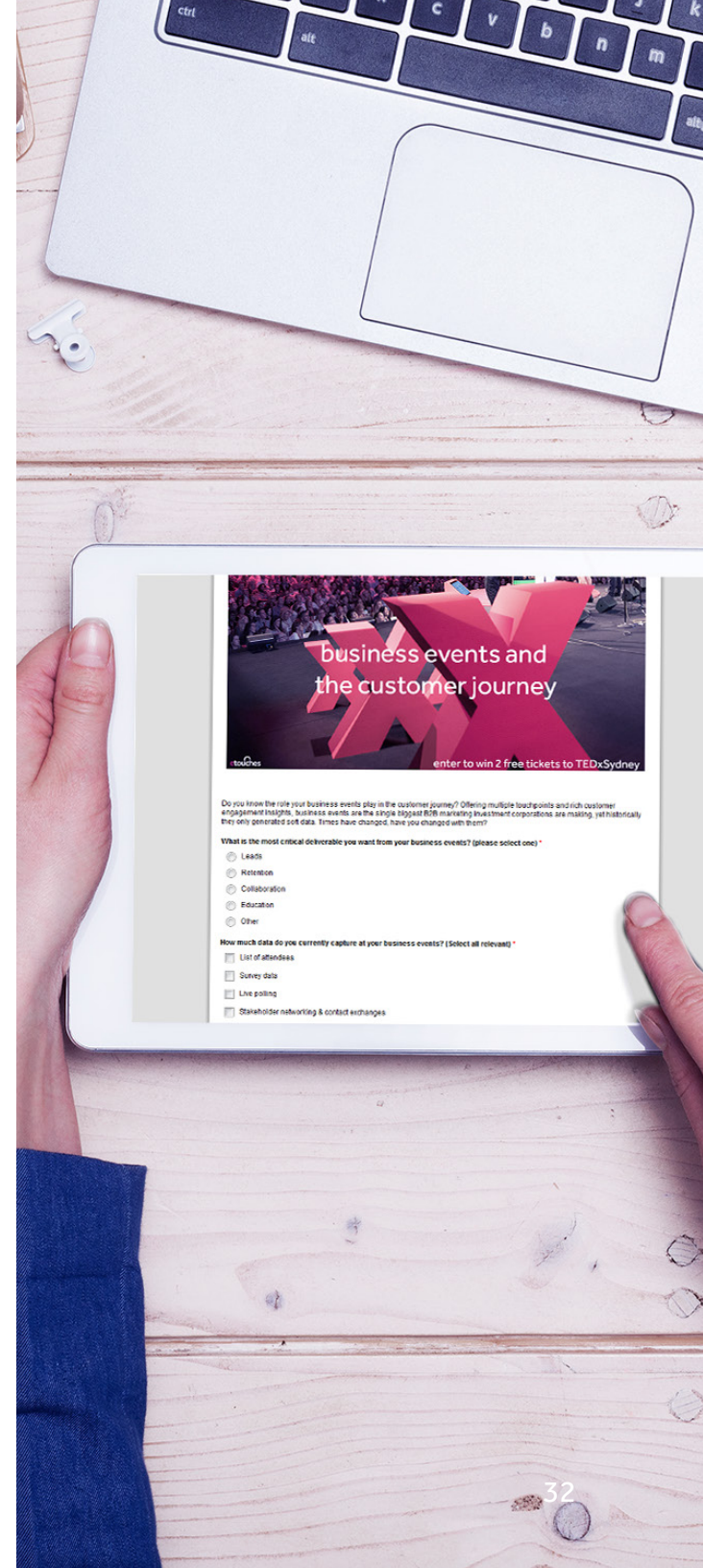
# Tip 1: creating accessible event surveys

Pre-, during and post-event surveys are the most common method used by event planners to collect attendee feedback. But let's face it – while surveys are essential to improving future events, they aren't always fun and exciting for attendees to fill out.

While using incentives like prizes and discounts can motivate attendees to start event surveys, its content and ease are equally important drivers to having them actually complete the entire thing. No matter what you create one for, event surveys should be timely, brief, and easy to use. If a survey is too complex and full of errors, attendees won't bother completing it and you will miss out on the valuable opportunity to get important, accurate data to improve your event in the future.

Three important things to remember when building your event surveys is to:

- Identify clear goals
- Ask the right questions
- Keep mobile technology in mind





# Tip 1: creating accessible event surveys (cont.)

## Identify clear goals beforehand

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- What do you want to get out of your survey exactly?
- Do you want to know attendee demographics, behavior or motivation?
- Are there new features or technologies you'd like to use during events?

Also make sure to include input from any and all event stakeholders about their goals. What's not important to you as the event planner, may be important to the person in charge of IT, social media or even catering.

## Ask the right questions to the right people

Consider creating different surveys for speakers, group leaders, sponsors and attendees. Each had a different experience at your event and their respective survey should reflect as such. Not only will these different groups feel like you care about their specific needs, you can use it as an opportunity to improve the event in as many areas as you can.

## Keep mobile technology in mind

As surveys are usually optional, making them mobile friendly is the key to making them convenient for attendees. When making your survey responsive, make sure to test and retest to ensure that everything works correctly and can be used on various devices. Remember that typing on a tablet or smartphone can be difficult, so create mandatory and important questions as either multiple choice or on a number scale. Don't forget other design features like fonts, imagery, and scrolling that can all make or break the mobile experience.

Put your attendee surveys directly into your event app. Not only will they be even easier to find, but your surveys will also flow better and look more professional.



## Tip 2: analyze your event reports like a pro

Data is crucial to analyzing your successes and recognizing your failures at each event you organize. All in all, it's the stuff that helps you create a better event experience for your attendees, as well as increase your event ROI. But if you're collecting all this data, you need to make sure you're reading it in the right way and often enough to get the most out of it.

You could be using the best reporting software, but if you're not taking the time to customize your data experience to your own unique needs and goals, then it could end up hurting your organization in the long run. Work smarter, not harder when it comes to analyzing your event data!

Three things to keep in mind when analyzing your event data are to:

- Make it easy to look at the big picture
- Create a schedule to share with stakeholders
- Benchmark your data year after year

Data is crucial to analyzing your successes and recognizing your failures at each event you organize.

## Tip 2: analyze your event reports like a pro (cont.)

### Make it easy to examine the big picture

- More often than not, you and your staff just need to look at the big picture to make sure everything is on track throughout the event lifecycle.
- Select an event software that not only tracks important data, but also displays it in an easy to use, customizable homepage or dashboard is something to consider.
- By having these numbers front and center whenever you access your reports will help your day to day operations run much smoother.

### Set a schedule to share with your stakeholders

- Many different people behind the scenes need to stay abreast of the latest data from your event. Instead of worrying about who has access to what, automatically send the latest reports via email to all your stakeholders.
- Schedule regular monthly, weekly or daily reports to be sent right to their email inbox however often they need it.
- You can customize what data is sent whom; that way no one has to dig through information to get exactly what they need.

### Benchmark data year after year

- Analyzing current data is always helpful, but in order to truly create better events and to meet your goals, set up reports that compare data to previous years' data.
- Figure out what your definitive goals are and how exactly you want to improve your event ROI. That way, when it comes to pulling older data to compare to your current event, you'll know exactly what you're looking for and have a better idea of when you want to accomplish your goals.

# Tip 3: understanding event ROI

Event ROI is important to event success, but it's often misunderstood. In fact, while a majority of event planners say they measure R.O.I. in some way, [only a few say they measure it well](#). Consider these three tips to successfully tackle getting measurable results from your event and to understand event ROI better.

## 1. Don't rely solely on surveys

Surveys are great, but they often don't dig deep enough into the successes and improvements needed for your event. Sure, an attendee may say they were satisfied with your event, but what does that really mean? To be successful in measuring event ROI, you need multiple touchpoints and measurement methods that go beyond the attendee satisfaction survey. Some other touchpoints may include event app usage, session check-in numbers, event email engagement, etc.

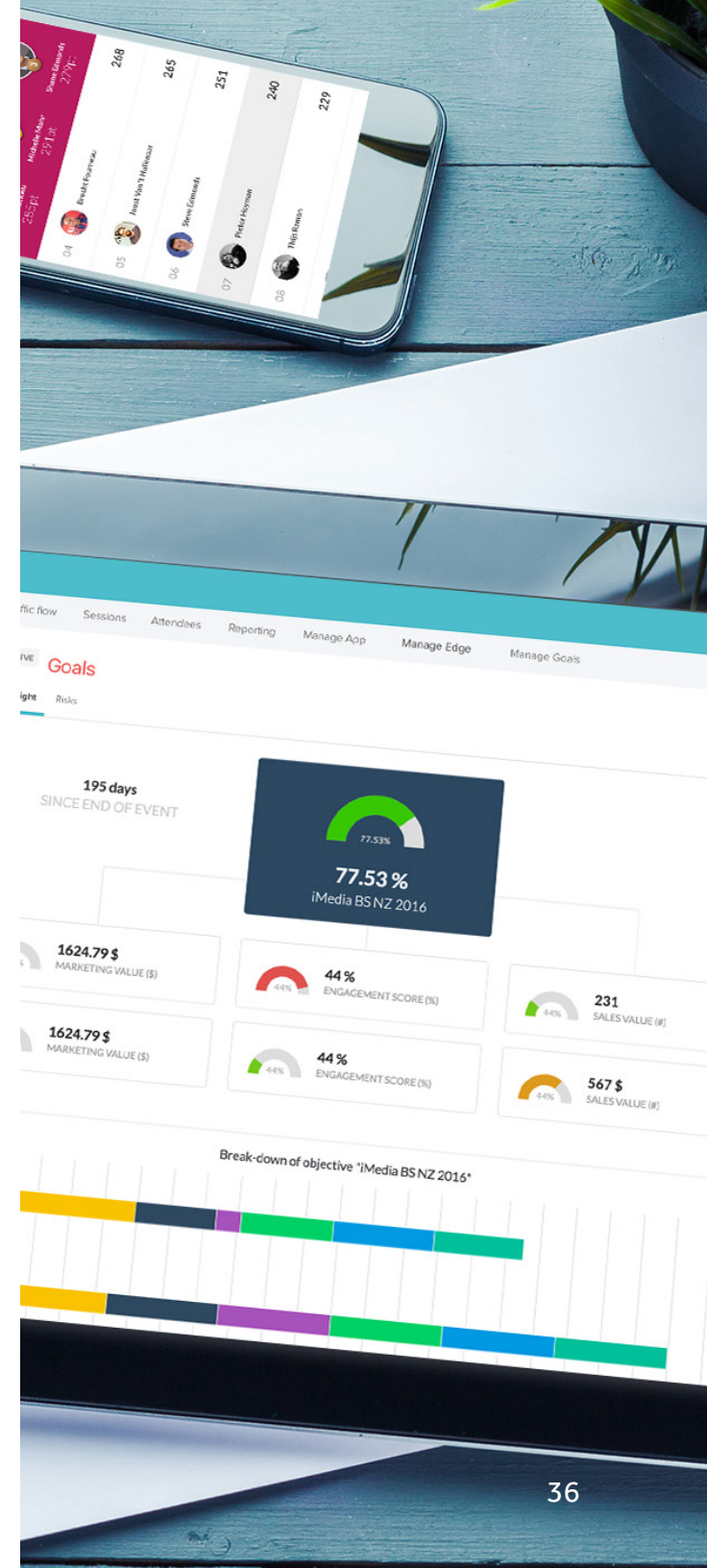
## 2. Select your KPIs

Deciding on your KPIs, or key performance indicators, is a crucial step for event ROI. Try picking at least

three that are most important to your event. Examples include booth traffic, sales leads, attendee demographics, etc. Picking different KPIs will help you improve in specific areas across your event.

## 3. Have a long-term plan

Remember that when you want to effectively measure event ROI, you're in it for the long haul. Don't expect to get useful data until at least after two years of measuring. That may seem like a long time, but being patient in your event ROI process is worth it. Knowing exactly how to improve your event and following up with your prospects, will only help your event grow and be even more successful.

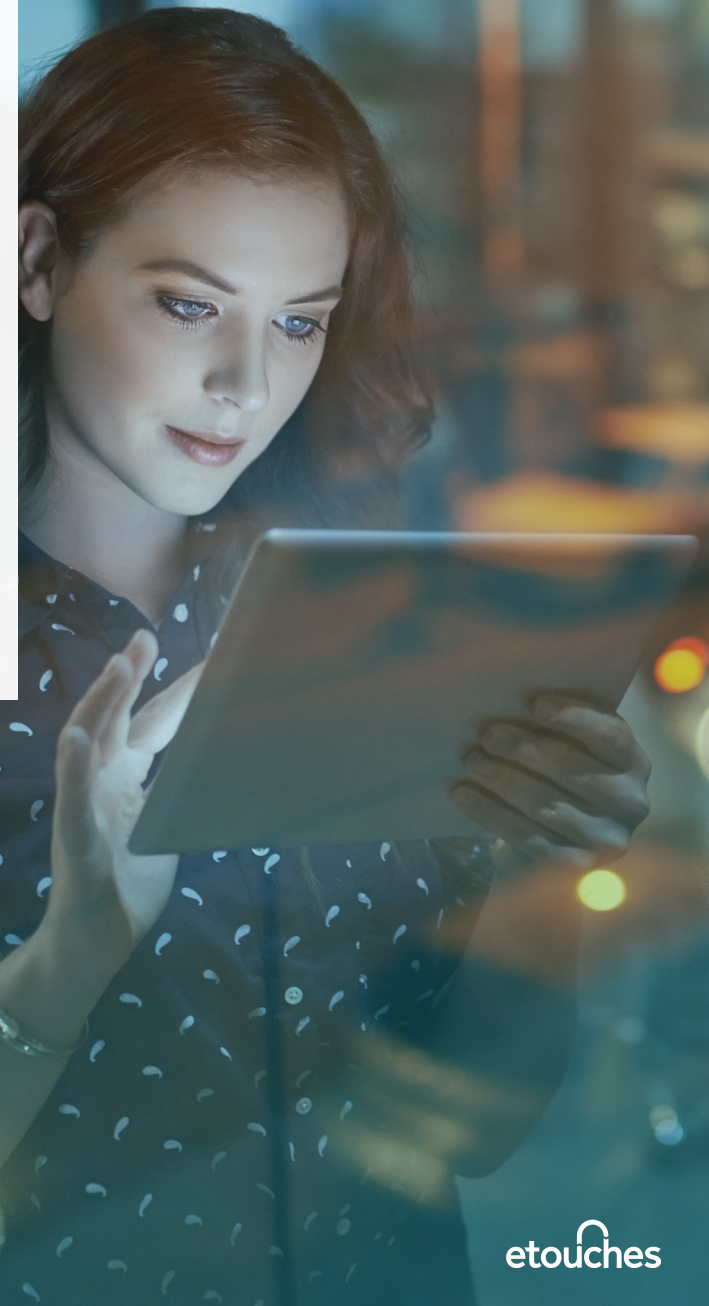




# Conclusion

While there are many consistencies throughout the planning process, it's important to remember that the event essentials will vary depending on the event planner and the type of events they manage. Along with following the essentials listed in this piece that are most important to your event, keeping your unique goals and audience preferences in mind will lead you to event success.

Create the event experience, market your event, engage with your attendees, and watch your event grow and succeed.





# About etouches

etouches is a global end-to-end management software solution. The success oriented and cloud-based platform delivers innovative technology solutions to streamline the event process and increase ROI.

Through etouches venue sourcing solutions, organizations and third-party planners are able to source, book and capture meeting/event data – all in one place. Its SaaS-based meetings management technology captures data on M&E spend, providing companies with visibility in this hard-to-track category.

The event management software solution has been able to serve more than 1,300 customers in corporations, associations, agencies and educational institutions, offering planners a full suite of industry-leading tools to assist in planning, executing and measuring events.



## Writers/Editors:

Samantha Almonte, Lauren Williams

## Project Manager:

Kristen Carvalho

## Designer:

Tamsin Hatton



The logo for etouches, featuring the word "etouches" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "e" is stylized with a small circular icon above it, resembling a stylized "e" or a small circle with a dot inside.

etouches

**VISIT US ONLINE**  
[etouches.com](http://etouches.com)

**FOLLOW US**  
🐦 [@etouches](https://twitter.com/etouches)