

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR SESSION TRACKING

Practical Advice for Event Organizers

The report covers how attendance information and intelligence can expand the reach and value of events and drive ROI.

You'll learn:

- How the events industry is moving from a qualitative to more quantitative marketing and educational medium.
- Information on what attendee data is currently collected by show management and how this data is provided to exhibitors.
- Trends impacting attendees and exhibitors.

Today, exhibitors have replaced tradition (i.e., exhibiting at the same shows each year) with reviewing attendee demographics as their most important event selection criteria. For events to remain competitive with other media, both exhibitors and attendees will need to access more “hard data” to help them with their event planning and follow-up.

Show producers must prove who attends and quantify attendees' purchase power and influence. This is driven by the rise of the web. Part of the value of online marketing is the ability for real-time tracking.

Increasingly, show producers must provide more data on past and projected attendees along with demographic and psychographic information.

Show managers were asked “What would improve the overall educational session tracking process or systems you are using now?” Below in their own words are some of the things show managers are looking for:

- “Greater ease of use and accuracy.”
- “Looking for technology to ease the on-site process.”
- “Moving from self-reported to 100% accurate, verified attendance.”
- “Real-time updates.”

In the past, session tracking for medium to large shows often required the use of costly 2D barcodes and an onsite technician. Advances in technology have made session tracking easier to set up and manage, even by non-IT staff, and allows show managers to handle their own session tracking

Information is power

The convention and exhibition industry continues to move from a qualitative to quantitative marketing and educational medium. This trend has been driven by the rise of the internet and digital marketing. One of the key trends impacting the convention and exhibition industry is the increasing connection between the qualitative, and sometime random, nature of face-to-face marketing with quantitative strategies, information gathering and technology. This is an evolving process.

The core value of events will always be rooted in the unpredictable. But event producers, exhibitors and attendees need more information before deciding to launch and participate in events – and more data and analysis is needed to make events successful.

The premise behind the report is this: The event industry’s primary value proposition will always be face-to-face, personal interaction. But increasingly technology and enhanced information gathering and analysis will become more important to all event industry participants.

Convention and Exhibition Evolution

Conventions and exhibitions are evolving. According to *Tradeshow Week* studies, some of the key issues impacting this evolution include the following:

- The need for more data collection and analysis – the focus is on audience, buyer and seller intelligence to inform strategic planning and to add value to exhibitors and sponsors.
- Events are becoming more closely tied to web sites – the two primary business-to-business marketing and information mediums are expected to be the web and events.
- Providing services and opportunities that are not available on the internet – enhanced educational sessions and networking opportunities; bringing buyers and sellers together to create a market.

The Session Attendance Tracking Opportunity

The value of session tracking includes the ability to rank topics, speakers, and sessions; the ability to provide enhanced lead information to exhibitors and sponsors; and data to inform internal event strategic planning and marketing. Tracking who attends “off-floor” events such as educational sessions and then cross-referencing these names with specific booth visitors adds an additional layer of information and analysis. Those that visit booths of certain suppliers and then attend related session topics are likely the most motivated buyers.

Looking beyond speaker ratings typically captured after the keynote, there is an opportunity for event managers to utilize attendance tracking as a sales and marketing tool. Corporate marketers are looking more closely at their return on sponsorships, but few event organizers track attendance at events and activities that are commonly sponsored.

Using a session tracking app, consider gathering this data at your events:

- Total attendance numbers
- Traffic activity by minute, hour, and day
- Attendee demographics
- Individual session attendance
- Speaker rankings and popularity
- Session rankings and popularity
- Attendee participation with the exhibits that he/she visits

Session tracking apps are an affordable way to access data. With an app you can:

- Track session attendees using a smartphone, tablet or iPod touch
- Instantly scan popularly used barcodes and monitor attendee activity in real time
- Receive 100% accurate, verified attendance data
- Generate informative, useful real-time reports

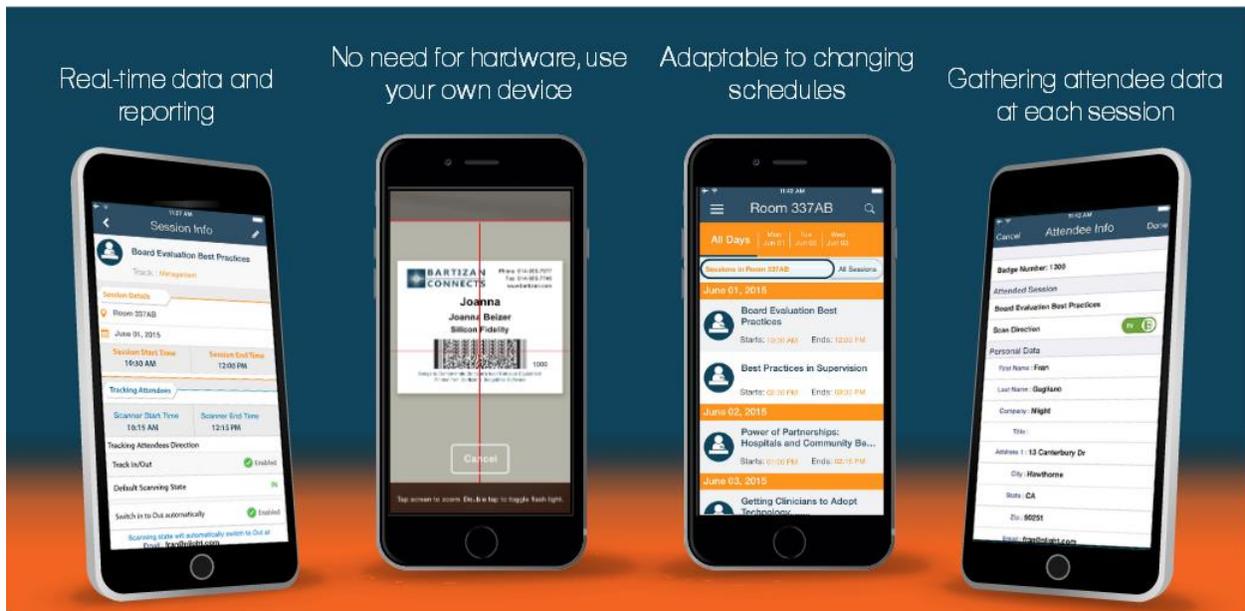
What this could mean for event organizers:

- Easy set-up and deployment typical of an app
- Real-time monitoring of all session activity via an online dashboard.
- Instant access eligibility verification to conference sessions or functions based on individual session/function purchased, an entire track of sessions or any session on specific days.
- Accurate and easy automation of Continuing Education Units (CEU) calculations with the capability of designing and distributing award certificates.
- At a glance, knowing who is attending. Not enough chairs? You'll know that, too.

Start Getting Session Data with iSessions:

Track session attendees using a smartphone, tablet or iPod touch.

[Learn more about iSessions](#)



Click [here](#) to get a free demo code to explore **iSessions**.

If you get a chance, check out our tradeshow [resources page](#) that will suggest ideas on how to be more successful as an event organizer and exhibitor.

