

# Digitization of trade fair stands



ExpoCloud®

## Digitization: curse or blessing?

Digital transformation – a term that is often used. Often with an outlook on new possibilities as well as new potential, but sometimes it is also connected to fears. The latter applies to the world of trade fairs especially, because something you hear repeatedly, is that the internet repressed real trade fairs. But is that even the case? Or are trade fairs still justified in the digital age?

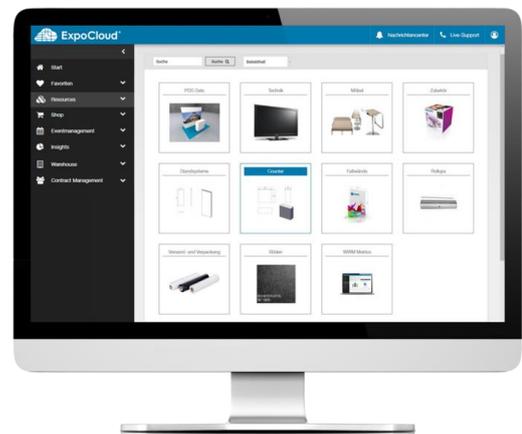
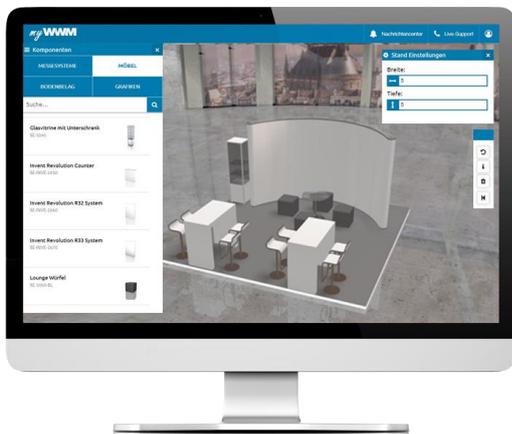
Yes, of course are they still justified. Especially in times where most of the communication runs digitally (sometimes also anonymously), people yearn for personal contacts, a handshake and products, that are tangible. Even more than that, trade fairs have a benefit the internet doesn't has: they can be experienced with all senses. That way, the experience is much more intense than their online pendants, so they are better to be remembered.

So, if digitization does not repress real trade fairs, then what meaning does it have for the world of trade fairs? This question will be answered within this whitepaper. Digital transformation gives trade fair world the chance to expand the trade fair experience. Also it creates new opportunities for a trade fair stand's layout in the form of digital conception of design mediums and the processes behind it.



## Planning

The whole planning and organization of a trade fair stand can run digitally today. That starts with the planning of your trade fair stand, that you can plan with online tools such as Studio. From user- and event management over the order of giveaways, flyers, brochures, etc. to Event-Resource-Management.



## Studio

With Studio you can virtually put your trade fair stand together – from furniture over flooring to individual graphics. All you have to do is, choose the needed equipment, then drag and drop it on the right position. Doing that, you can use your own furniture as well as our extern partners' furniture. Another thing you can do is, save your concept and then edit it at a latter time. That way you stay flexible during the planning process.

## Event-Resource-Management

Event-Resource-Management makes agile collaboration possible. As an ecosystem it supports your success by optimizing your processes. The platform provides you with innovative and safe solutions on topics from article administration to user- and event management. You determine the speed, scalability and agility, with that your company will be positioned and presented on the market.

## First contact before event start

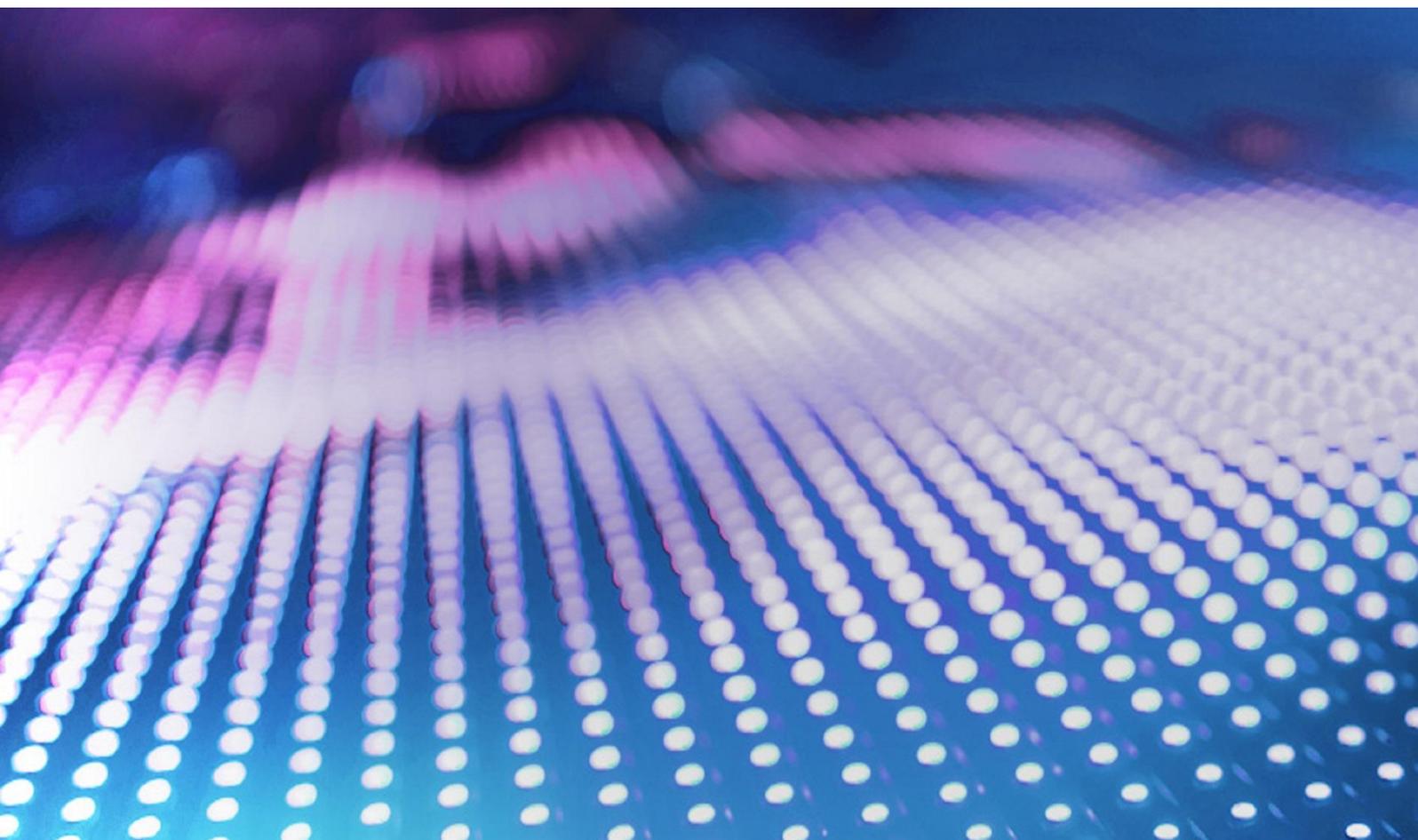
The first contact can be difficult sometimes. Especially with people that don't know your company yet, the first moments can be rough. But digitization provides you with possibilities on expanding the trade fair experience, or rather more to let it start earlier. That, you can use for the first contact. Use all your mediums (website, social media, e-mailings, etc.), to bring attention to the fact, that you are exhibiting at a trade fair. That way, you contact your already existing customers, to give them an invitation for meeting you in person. But that way you can also reach people, that don't even know your company yet. How? For example, publish a website on your attendance at the event. If this site is search engine optimized, you can generate traffic with it. People, that want to visit the trade fair, are looking for information about it online, and see your website in the search engine results. Maybe they click on your website and read it and that way they will already know your company, when talking to them at the trade fair.



Besides the easier first contact, digital transformation provides you with much more possibilities that you can take in action prior to the event. For example, you can send your contacts an e-mail with a voucher for free tickets for the event. You could also give your contacts the possibility, to make an appointment with you or your team at the trade fair.

## LED video wall

The usual way of making your trade fair stand individual, is to use simple print graphics when it comes to design. You design a graphic, give it to someone who prints it and then you have a graphic, that is ready for your trade fair stand. But is there a more innovative way to design your trade fair stand? Yes, there is. Again, you can use digital transformation. Instead of printed graphics, you can use screens to announce your message. For example, a LED video wall is perfect for an individual and diversified trade fair stand. With that you have the possibility to play presentations, product videos or your company's image film. Nowadays, it is hard to imagine a trade fair stand without any digital element. Use them, moving pictures attract much more attention than print designs, visitors will watch your LED video wall and increase their length of stay doing so. But the LED video wall has more than just optic benefits. From a long-term perspective it is cheaper as well as much more sustainable. Printed graphics are thrown away after the event, that they were made for. The LED video wall you can use on and on again, because the hardware stays the same. The only thing that you have to adjust is the content and that you can do digitally. That way you can reduce costs and work input.



## Measuring success

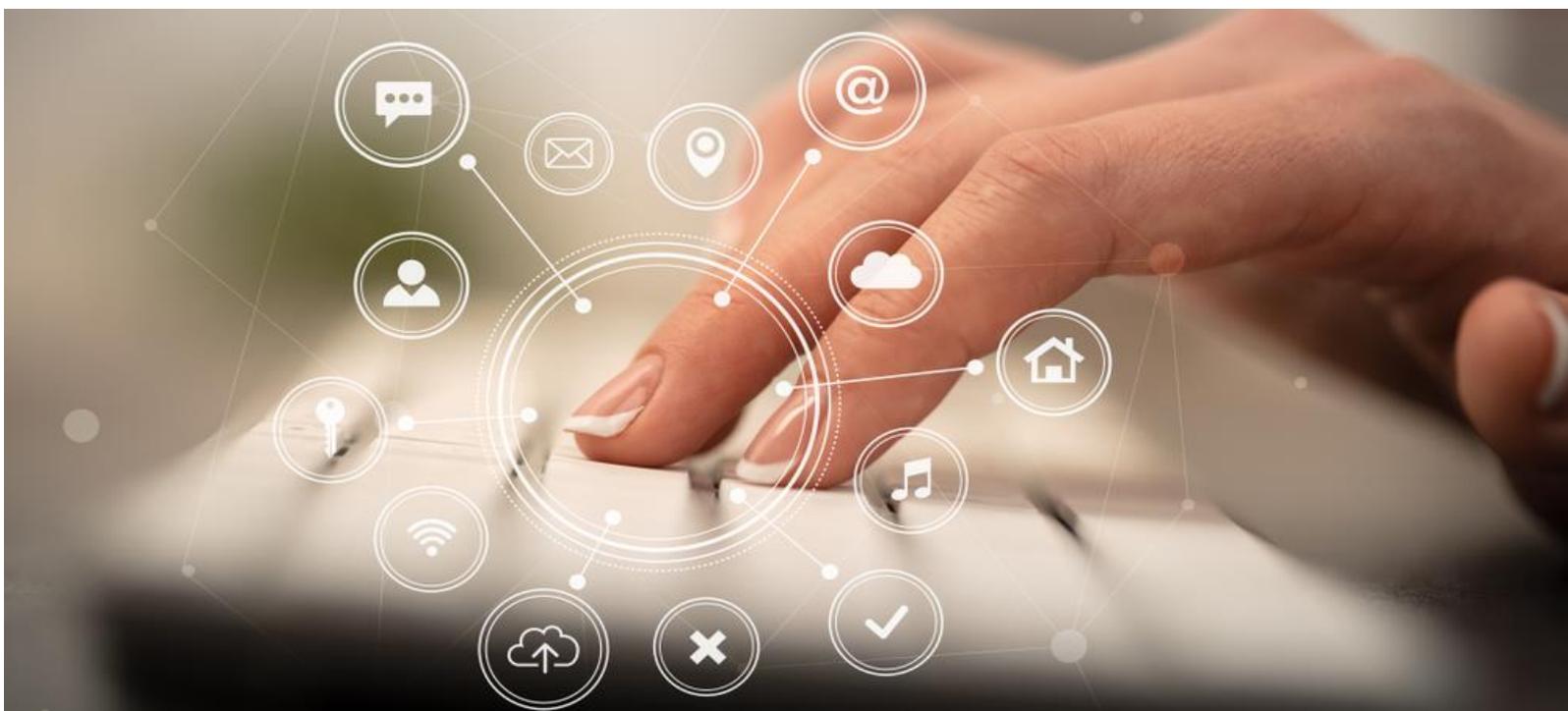
Because trade fairs are a marketing instrument and by that a step to achieve your goals, it is important to measure their success. The ways to do so have also been influenced by digitization. In the earlier, analogue times the most often used instruments were clickers. Someone who worked at the trade fair stand had to count the visitors by clicking the instrument. Because of that he or she couldn't fully concentrate on the conversation with a customer but instead pay attention to what was happening around the trade fair stand. After that you had an approximate number of visitors.



Digitization brought new instruments for measuring success, that are more reliable, don't restrict the personnel's attention towards the visitor and that provide a higher quality of measuring results. An example for digitally transformed success measuring is the Event Metrics technology. Therefore a small sensor will be placed at your trade fair stand. The sensors measure using Wi-Fi-technology. For that smartphones' probe requests are used. Wi-Fi-capable devices that have an activated Wi-Fi-function send so-called probe requests when searching for a Wi-Fi hotspot. During that data is transmitted. On basis of the data transmitted during the process, a combined value (so-called fingerprint) is created. Based on that individual visitors can be tracked. That way you will get data for analysis on the number of trade fair and stand visitors, about their length of stay and on the numbers of returning visitors. So, the meaningfulness of the results is bigger than the meaningfulness of the clicker's results. With Event Metrics analysis data you can evaluate your trade fair stand concept and also make it better.

## Lead management: print to digital

In the field of lead management it has become more sustainable too. It isn't necessary anymore, to print sheets of papers just to write a visitor's data on it and stick his business card to it. Just publish a landing page. Most exhibitors are using a laptop or tablet at their stand anyway. Why not use it to load the landing page to insert the customers' data online. That way, you're not only saving paper, but time also – especially after the trade fair. One thing that you will always hear when it comes to lead management, is that one of the most critical factors is time and that you should contact your leads as fast as possible. But before that you have to digitalize the paper sheet and create the customer's account in your system. But if you just fill in the form online, all of that has already happened, so that you can immediately start with contacting your leads once the trade fair or event is over. By the way, what was that thing about contacting again – GDPR? You are only allowed to contact someone with a message, that might be commercial, if you have his or her double opt-in or if he or she might have legitimate interest in that message. If he gave you his business card, it might be correct to think that he is legitimately interested in your products, but the safer way is a double opt-in. That way you also have it protocolled. That is another benefit of the online form. Just insert a box, that the lead should tick, if he is interested in receiving the newsletter. If the person is currently talking to you – face to face – he or she is more unlikely to decline the offer of a newsletter. In that same moment prepare him or her that they have to confirm their e-mail-address in an extra mail and just like that, you'll have an opt-in.



## Digitization trade fairs

Lastly, digitization and digital transformation do not only expand the trade fair experience from a perspective on time, but they also create a new sort of trade fairs. An example for that are digitization trade fairs. No, not digital trade fairs, that take place in the internet, but real trade fairs, that lay their focus on the digital transformation of various aspects and fields of branches and aspects of living. An example for that is the DMEXCO (Digital Marketing Expo & Conference) or the Digital Future Congress that both carry the digital aspect in their names. Klaus Dittich, chairman of the Messe München's management, said "On trade fairs we see today, what will change our lives from tomorrow on." When you take a closer look at that sentence, two things become clear. First, it is more than logical that there are already numerous digitization trade fairs today. Second, it can be anticipated that there will surely be more trade fairs, that set their focus on digitization. And that is because digitization becomes more and more important in our day to day lives.



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