

3 New Ways to Engage Your Sponsors

Like any good team, a strong relationship between you and your sponsors will drive success. Make sure your events keep them coming back!

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Use Technology to Bridge the Gap

The relationship you have with your event sponsors and exhibitors is changing: with the now-indispensable mobile apps that help your attendees explore the event, you can promise—and deliver—compelling, measurable benefits for your sponsors.

It's easier all around to drive an event's success using mobile app technology. And that success is propelled by the coordinated work you and your sponsors perform together. In this white paper we'll show you how to get your sponsors and exhibitors to engage with attendees, taking advantage of the features in your mobile app. It makes a better experience for everyone!



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Set Your Sponsors up to Work (by giving them data)

Your approach to event sponsors, in the early days of your relationship, probably looks a lot like old-fashioned sales. You propose the benefits of a presence at your event and work with a sponsor to hash out the details of the relationship.

But your mutual success is in both of your hands. When the doors open, the sponsors expect foot traffic to their booths and eyeballs on their ad banners. If you can motivate sponsors to help achieve this goal through specific actions during the conference, everyone will be happier with the results.



i You have a powerful tool to get sponsors in the mood to engage with attendees: With basic data from your mobile app, you should be able to tell prospective sponsors and exhibitors how many views and clicks a banner in your app has historically been able to deliver, and to show foot traffic and engagement in various areas of the floor plan.

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Digital data like this gives you leverage when you're selling, and to make your vision come to fruition (which is the secret to building a loyal sponsor base who will come back to every event, buying bigger packages) you will need to set the expectation that the sponsor will put in some effort.



People are comfortable with being held accountable.

Tell your sponsors that you'll need their help to hit these goals—and then wow them with the features your mobile event app has to support their efforts.

Pro-Tip #1

Gamify your event with an in-app scavenger hunt

How Would You Like to:

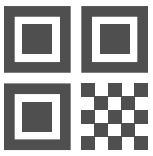
- Drive measurable traffic to sponsor booths?
- Lay out easy ways for attendees to interact?
- Increase session audiences?
- Push attendees to share event details on social media?
- Motivate your audience to consume your sponsors' content during and after the event?
- Get more people to use your mobile app, and get them to use it more?

i With gamification, you tap into various human motivation strategies developed and tested in game play, specifically in the video game industry. These strategies appeal to more than just gamers, though—they touch on **elemental human incentive** and, when executed well, can be very effective to influence behavior.

(And gamification is fun!)

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Adding a gamification component to your event is easy with built-in features in mobile event apps. You can use a scavenger hunt to prompt visitors to network, learn, interact with sponsors and exhibitors, and move throughout the physical space.



It can work like this: You hide QR codes around the event, including exhibitor booths, the rooms where panels and presentations will be, and even on moving objects (like a hat worn by a sponsor representative). Your attendees are challenged to find and scan the codes, and their success in doing so wins them a prize.



This is about as basic as it gets.

This type of scavenger hunt can be very effective in moving attendees around and encouraging them to interact. Most importantly, it gives your sponsors a chance to connect with visitors, which is exactly why they're partnering with your event!

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A Quick Case Study



Guidebook worked with **PAX Prime**, a large expo held annually in Seattle, to develop a gamified in-app scavenger hunt sponsored by Mountain Dew and Doritos.

110 QR codes were hidden around the conference, worth varying amounts of points. Visitors could spend points in a "marketplace" and collect t-shirts, sunglasses, skateboards, headphones and more.

Attendees who saved up all their points until the end were able to attend a party with a pro auctioneer and bid on Xbox Ones with their points.

(30 lucky attendees went home with Xboxes!)



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i Mountain Dew and Doritos succeeded in sending visitors all over the event and getting them really excited about the brand and the expo. Over 6,000 people participated in the game, and the sponsors gave away thousands of goodies.

Even if you're not running a big consumer event like PAX Prime you and your sponsors can benefit from gamification.

For a successful scavenger hunt that appeals to as many attendees as possible, consider these tips:



Tips for a Successful Scavenger Hunt

- **Make it clear.** Make sure the rules of the game are clear, and that you deliver on the promise. Your attendees are playing along, so keep the rules fair
- **Make it worth it.** When deciding what types of prizes to offer, consider your audience and the level of effort to win the game. The reward should be something worth playing for, and ideally it should appeal to an individual, not a company. For example, at a professional event the prize may be a free drink at the event bar or some cool sponsor swag—not a discount on an expensive software package.
- **Push social.** Your sponsors want buzz outside of the walls of the conference center, and they want the conversation to continue after the event has ended. Pre-fill an (editable) game-related or sponsor hashtag in the Twitter text field of your in-app social media portal. Encourage attendees to tweet when they collect points and when they collect a prize.
- **Measure your game's success.** If you execute well, the promise of a game should be a big selling point for your next event.

Pro-Tip #2

Share feedback so sponsors can optimize

You and your sponsors have a complementary two-way relationship. If your event brings them value, they'll look forward to signing up next time—and there's a good chance you're registering next-event sponsors right there on the show floor. You're expecting more than just dollars from your exhibitors, so look to them to increase the value of your event in a measurable way.



Collecting attendee feedback is an important way for you to understand how aspects of your event are performing, then communicate this to your sponsors so they can adapt to create a better attendee experience.

Using the feedback feature in your event's mobile app, prompt attendees to weigh in on exhibitors' promotions, their booth representatives' approaches, and the organization of the event as a whole. Because feedback is collected in real-time, you can use what you learn to help your exhibitors be more effective at engaging with visitors now.

If the feedback indicates room to improve, your sponsors and exhibitors will appreciate the heads up. If it's positive, make sure your sales team references the success your event has brought for your sponsors when you're signing up slots for the next event.

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Push messages can be used to convey real-time urgent information, but use them sparingly. No more than 2-3 messages should be sent to your attendees in a given day—any more than that, and your messages become less important (plus, your attendees won't like it).

i Don't inundate your attendees with too many questions. Gather feedback that will help you react to immediate situations and optimize your events in the future.

Strong Sample Questions

- How long did you wait in line to have your photo taken in the [Sponsor] booth?
- How would you rate your experience interacting with the [Sponsor] team members?
- How would you rate the lunchtime keynote speaker?



Pro-Tip #3

Get the most out of banner ads

Traditionally, your event sponsors wanted visual real estate on handouts and programs, and within the physical location of the event. Bidding for various types of prominence was something of a science.

Now your attendees' attention is focused on their mobile apps. Visitors will interact with the app to look up schedules, make to-do lists, find their way around on interactive maps and explore the area outside the venue.

You'll still be selling physical ad space, but mobile app banners and launch pages have incredible benefits to your sponsors. You can make late-in-the-game changes easily (try that with a vinyl banner or a stack of 10,000 flyers) and you can measure an ad's success with metrics about impressions, clicks and user engagement.



Best of all, as an event director you may be able to recoup the costs of your mobile app just by selling a few sponsor app banners.

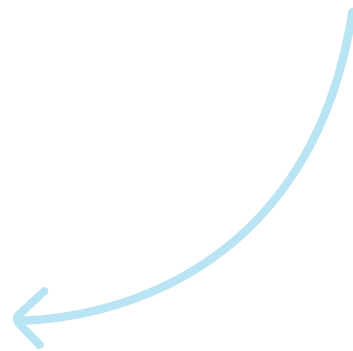
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To help your sponsors get the most out of this type of ad space, help them understand that delivering clicks is only part of the equation. They'll want to engage with the attendees they collect through banner ads in a very specific way. Coach your sponsors to use targeted, event-specific follow up for leads collected, and potentially even a real-time follow-up to schedule meetings on-site before the event ends.

You can look to the discipline of display advertising for cues about how to make your sponsors successful with an in-app banner campaign. **Here are some of the basics:**

Display Advertising 101

- **A clean, clear call-to-action:** If you have a button on your banner ad, a user should have a compelling reason to click.
- **Simple design** that will communicate a lot on a small screen.
- **Metered repetition:** Don't sell more than 3 ad banners. Your sponsors want exclusivity, and your banners will be more successful when they're seen multiple times.



If you have more ideas, we want to hear them!

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