Five tips to take you from data to discovery

Richard John, chief operations officer, Realise, lists five ways to utilise data for more event success

In case you didn't get the memo, the obsession is data; deciding what you need to know, how to ask for it, process it and present it.

I'm going to give you five tips that show you how to use data to delight your event delegates and discover new business opportunities.

Returning visitors:

You have visitors' data! Pre-populate their registration forms. The changes in their world may not be dramatic since they last attended your event. So put a smile on their face and save them time.

Your opportunity to realise more is to use their time to emphasise what's new at the event. Then, go one step further. Use algorithms and AI to make relevant recommendations for this year's event.

Reward loyalty

What else can you do to reward your returning delegates? I'm a regular visitor at many industry events, but I'm frequently disappointed by the lack of recognition. The airline that transports me, and the hotel where I stay for the duration have worked hard to create innovative loyalty programmes. How can you translate loyalty to the conference floor?

Create that 'I'm special' feeling

A separate entrance, a badging system that reflects the number of previous events attended, free coffee vouchers, a 'loyalty lounge.' All these things also offer excellent opportunities for sponsorship and yet more data capture points.

Charge for special options:

Your data mining allows you to offer tailor-made attendance experiences. First, you need to know what people want. For example, I never buy airport Fast Track (I get there early and head to a lounge); I never pay for Priority boarding (I pack smartly with carry-on and board last, knowing that my seat awaits). I'm never going to buy an airline sandwich.

So, if you're armed with the right data, you could consider charging for access to a lounge; for a guaranteed seat at a popular session; for a CPD [Continuing Professional Development] certificate; for a "meet and greet" with your keynote speaker. By thoughtfully analysing your data, you can identify these and more revenue-generating options.

Make it easy to grow your "community":

I'm more likely to go to an event recommended by a trusted colleague than an unknown organiser, aren't you? Community marketing systems are perfect for getting your delegate to do your marketing through their social media channels. That means a huge reduction in attendee acquisition costs.

But don't just throw this in as a last-minute offer at the end of the process; integrate it from the start. With the right planning, your registration form can be designed to be promotion friendly as well as functional.

Every touchpoint creates data gold: Your delegates don't disappear when you turn off the lights at the end of the event. You can continue to have conversations, online "birds-of-a-feather" sessions, "what's important to you now?" polls.

As an organiser, you need to make sure you can build a real picture. It starts with the data your delegate gives you at registration. Now enhance that with details of every seminar they attended, every exhibitor they met, every sponsor they engaged and every meeting they held.

At Realise, we call that D+C=Ai^{TM} or Data + Context = Actionable insights. We can help you optimise every step of the way. Let's chat.

Get in touch for your event registration strategy and delivery

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