

Five Ways Registration Vendors Add Value

Written by Dave Wuethrich, Chief Operating Officer at Convention Data Services. Dave has more than 15 years of experience providing client services, quality control, web development, and integration solutions for show managers.

Many show managers only spend a small percentage of their time on registration yet need to be certain the process runs smoothly for all attendees. Choosing a registration partner who manages registration, shares best practices, and makes recommendations—before the show, onsite, and post-event—is essential to any event’s success. Here are five ways registration vendors can add value to your event.

1

Provide Advice and Best Practices

Registration companies with significant experience listen closely to your show challenges then provide options for you to implement the best possible solutions. Ask your registration partner to give you best practices so you can take advantage of experiences from other shows to improve your event. You want solutions that are practical and customized specifically for your show with a track record of working onsite. Your registration company should create a detailed timeline for the event.

For instance, if your event wants to promote conferences or sessions to boost attendance, then ask your registration vendor for examples of how other events have addressed this challenge. Creating an alert or recommendation within a registration page, adding an incentive, or sending out a promotional email campaign to upgrade are all possible solutions.

2

Leverage Relationships

Most registration companies have developed broad networks that can help you throughout the course of your event. Your onsite manager is the key contact for leveraging relationships. Knowing onsite and local people such as temporary staff, venue staff, or the fire marshal can help your show run smoothly.

Your registration company should have relationships with multiple temporary staffing agencies in the major convention cities. Ask your registration partner to recommend specific supervisors and staff who they have worked successfully with in the past. When the temporary staff has experience working with your registration vendor’s system, it minimizes training time and allows your staff to focus on the event’s program and policies.

3 Offer Business Intelligence

Your existing data can be analyzed to make registering easy for attendees and benefits show management. Be sure your vendor has a flexible and user-friendly business intelligence tool that allows information to be reviewed and presented in a variety of formats. Reports that detect registration trends and compare events should be simple to create. For example, having live access to session rosters is invaluable when preparing for room setup, food and beverage, and speaker preparation.

4 Help Exhibitors

Your show's success is clearly tied to how many attendees come to the event. Use a registration company that helps exhibitors draw people onto the show floor by providing tools such as an exhibitor portal with access to resources to maximize their investment. Having an exhibitor portal and other tools for drawing attendees into the booth is essential.

Giving your exhibitors the ability to invite their customers as well as prospects using a unique promo code is something that should always be included in an exhibitor portal. This gives your exhibitors a chance to help make the event successful. Show managers could track promo code usage for each exhibitor and add an incentive for the exhibitor with the most invites or converted registrants.

5 Manage Security

Every event has significant security considerations. This can include physical security of the building, credit card/payment security, website security, and data security. Ask your registration vendor to share all security plans with you—and assume that if the vendor does not want to share the plan, then one probably does not exist. Consider all methods, such as using photo badges, for ensuring a safe event.

Show managers are always looking for ways to make their event grow. Establishing a strong working relationship with your vendors can contribute to the event's success. Partnering with the right registration vendor is an important factor in producing a successful show.