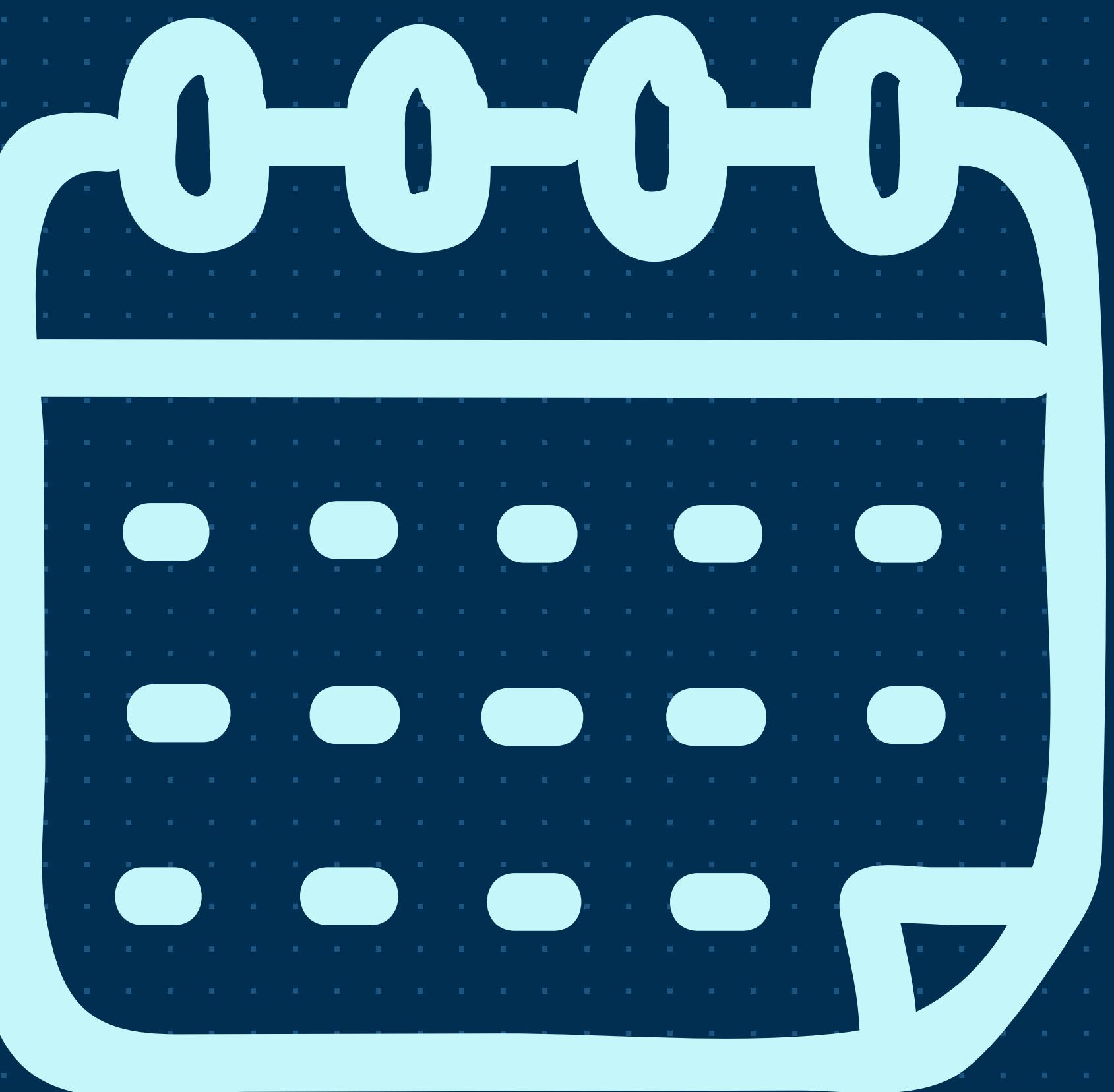


2025 - 2026

B2B Events Benchmark Report



BigMarker

The Evolving Landscape of B2B Events

By the numbers...

59%

are hosting more frequent, more targeted events

90%

are prioritizing targeting the right audience over a large audience

80%

list deeper integration between their events platform and their CRM/MAS as a top priority

Introduction

In the past five years, B2B events have undergone an amazing transformation. Today's event producers seamlessly blend in-person, virtual, and hybrid formats to engage audiences and meet strategic goals. While in-person events remain the gold standard for relationship building, brand immersion, and executive engagement, digital capabilities have opened new avenues to reach and activate global audiences. Hybrid events, in particular, offer the best of both worlds, combining high-touch in-person moments with the scale of virtual.

Fueling this evolution is the increasing role of event technology. Modern registration, badging, mobile apps and AI-powered personalization experiences boost engagement and drive impact. This report highlights key benchmarks and best practices for B2B in-person, hybrid, and virtual events to guide event leaders in refining their strategies for the year ahead.

Top priorities of B2B event producers

According to Forrester's Q1 2025 State Of B2B Events Survey (Source), event producers are facing more intense competition for attendees and sponsors, with more innovative strategies required to attract the best participants.

Finally, 80% of organizations have not fully integrated their primary event tech platform into their commercial tech stack, representing a large opportunity to drive value through data integration.

01

Event mix, seasonality & planning timelines

Rebalancing the event mix

As in-person events return to pre-pandemic scale, many are rebalancing their event mix to meet customers where they are—physically, virtually, or both. This section explores key event types and seasonality trends that drive audience attendance and engagement.



Annual planning cycles for B2B customer events

Annual planning essential to standing up a successful B2B customer events strategy. Spring and fall are dominated by annual customer

conferences, with roadshows and quarterly events slotted strategically to keep audiences engaged year-round.

Frequency and duration are critical to drive attendee satisfaction, dictating pacing, density and engagement throughout the year.

2-3 days

average duration for annual conferences

0.5 - 1 day

average duration for quarterly & field events

→ **Annual events** offer multi-track agendas, immersive networking, and high-profile moments, while giving attendees time to explore, connect, and celebrate.

→ **Quarterly events** prioritize efficiency and impact. Typically framed around a specific theme (or “franchise”), they deliver thought leadership in a way that fits busy schedules.

→ **Field events** are in-person gatherings hosted in regional markets, field events enable high-touch engagement through curated content and networking—without requiring significant travel or time away from work.

02

Registration and ticketing strategy

Best practices: registration experience design

The attendee journey begins long before the opening keynote. Audiences today expect online registration to be fast, seamless, and personalized, on par with the very best consumer tech experiences.

Meanwhile, event organizers must capture accurate and complete data. This section benchmarks registration & check-in, showcasing how top brands balance competing priorities to turn early touchpoints into delightful moments.

Custom registration microsites highlight pricing and access, like “\$499 In-Person” vs. “Free Virtual”, while countdowns and “almost sold out” alerts create urgency that drives action.

Compelling event branding is equally important. Turning key event series into sub-brands reinforces brand identity and signals value.

Top producers use dynamic registration journeys optimize the flows for each audience type—General Admission, VIP, or virtual—creating smoother, more intuitive sign-up experiences.

AI-driven personalization lifts performance using first-party data to tailor registration content by persona, making pages more relevant, targeted, and conversion-friendly. For global events, localization is essential. Localizing language and currencies increases accessibility, and significantly boosts international registration rates.



Best practices: ticketing & commercial strategy

Leading B2B event producers consider a number of different, and sometimes competing, objectives.

Generally, the primary objective of premium tiers is not to maximize event revenue, but instead to maximize the perceived value of attending the event, and in turn maximizing the total dollar value of pipeline influenced by the event.

- **Large annual conferences** typically cost \$300–\$800, with some topping \$1,000 in high-tech and finance sectors. Event producers often give commercial colleagues discount codes so prospects and customers can access premium tickets at reduced or no cost.
- **Field marketing events** are usually free but limited to targeted guest lists; select executive formats may charge up to \$500.
- **Quarterly and virtual events** are generally free, though premium summits can run \$500–\$1,500 for exclusive speakers, content, or networking.

For hybrid events, in-person tickets serve as the premium tier, while virtual access is usually free to maximize keynote reach.

Registration benchmarks by event size

Audience size influences choices around marketing plans, digital platform experiences, and engagement tactics. Understanding typical registration volumes helps organizers set goals, budget wisely, and plan the attendee experience.

These include in-person and virtual audiences, and are an approximation, with actual metrics varying. Variances are driven by different audience sizes and the breadth of personas targeted. For example, we commonly see more targeted field events hosting 50 key decision makers and annual conferences exceeding 100,000 total registrants for brands with broad audiences.

5,000+

benchmark registration count for annual customer conferences

1,000+

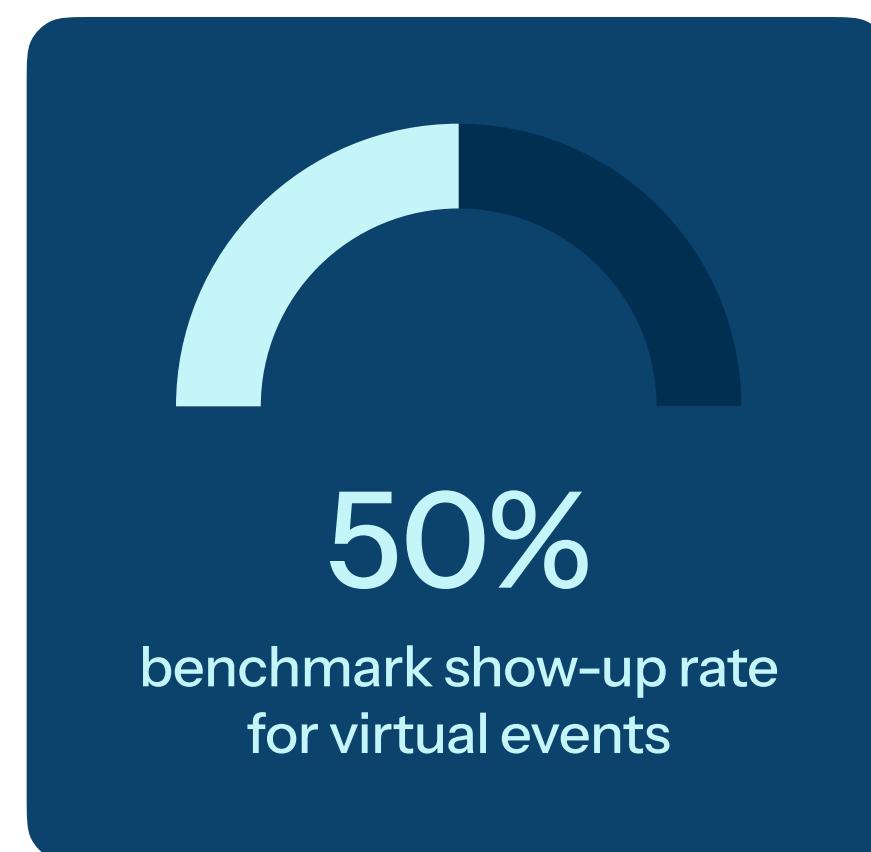
benchmark registration count for quarterly events

100+

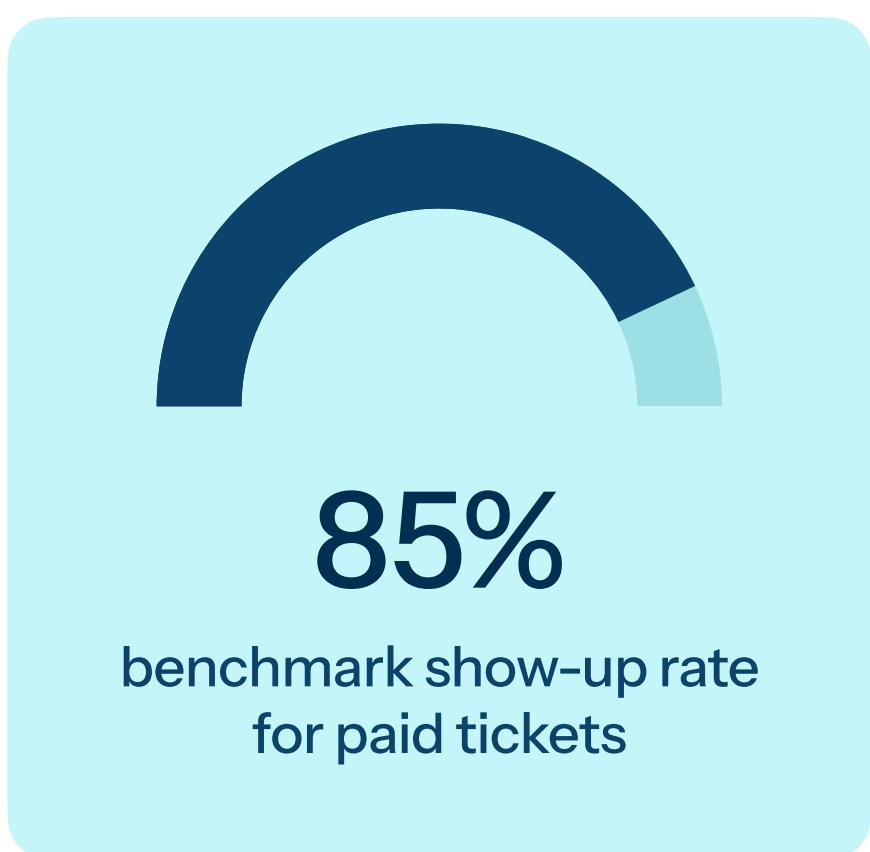
benchmark registration count for field marketing events

Benchmark show-up rates

In-person commands significantly higher show-up rates than virtual. But virtual is still crucial for maximizing reach (particularly for keynotes), as it gives event producers the ability to scale to tens—or even hundreds—of thousands of participants.



Paid, in-person events see significantly higher show-up rates, making pricing a key indicator of value. Despite exhibiting lower show-up rates, offering a virtual component is still a crucial element of maximizing the reach of event content, particularly keynotes.



Check-in & badging benchmarks

Mobile-first check-in experiences using personalized QR codes substantially reduce friction and maximize attendee satisfaction. Real-time badge printing and session-level enrollment through event mobile apps provide a smooth, modern experience.

Attendees increasingly expect fast, friendly, digitally-enabled technology experiences, so their expectations are higher than ever. In 2025, these expectations mean that event producers must focus on checking guests in quickly.

< 30 sec

benchmark time to
check-in each attendee

80/hour

benchmark attendees
checked-in per kiosk

Pro tip

Keep check-in lines short by encouraging attendees to have QR codes ready and checking IDs prior to each attendee approaching the kiosks.

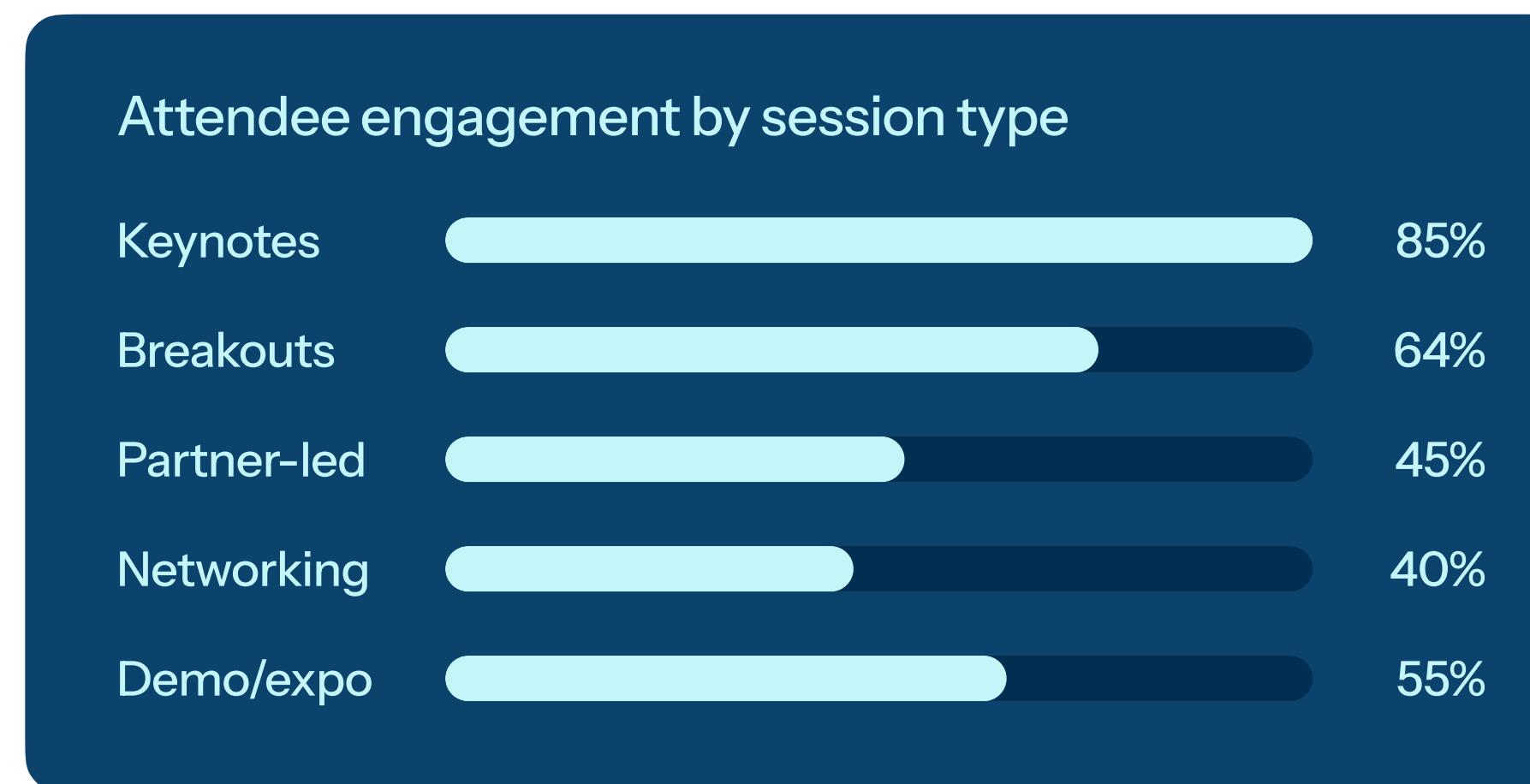


03

Agendas, tracks, sessions & speakers

Session planning

Well-crafted agendas are paramount to the success of B2B events, with topic, session structure, speaker credibility, and variety all critical drivers of engagement and results.



Not all session types are created equal. Participants are nearly 2x more likely to attend and actively engage with a keynote promising compelling speakers or announcements than they are to attend a partner-led or networking session.

- **Keynotes** are best placed at the beginning or end of the day, promoted with high-profile speakers and/or teasers of big announcements.
- **Breakouts** attract more attendees when aligned to roles or interests and surfaced via personalized tracks.
- **Partner-led sessions** perform best with well-known (or at least credible) speakers and relevance / audience overlap, boosted by main-stage and site promotion.
- **Networking sessions** are most effective when topic-driven on an, opt-in basis (or even incentivized); curated formats outperform open networking.
- **Demos/expo sessions** see higher traffic when scheduled between key sessions or gamified in an event mobile app.

Track strategy by event type

For large events, and especially annual conferences, multi-track agendas are standard and expected. The benchmark is 3-5 tracks, each tailored to a specific audience segment such as:

- **Thought leadership & industry evolution track** for executives, decision-makers, and VIPs
- **Theme- or role-based tracks** (e.g., marketing, product, ops)
- **Deep dive sessions** for power or technical users
- **Product updates** and/or demos
- **Partner or sponsored-led content**



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- **Deep dives** for power or technical users
- **Updates and/or demos**
- **Partner- or sponsor-led content**

Tracks allow attendees to build personalized agendas, driving session attendance. AI-powered agenda recommendations are playing a growing role in surfacing tailored content recommendations.

Roadshows, on the other hand, typically have single-track agendas, with attendance rates exceeding 90% for sessions, since the condensed format encourages attendees to stay for the entire event. These events typically feature a keynote followed by one or two tightly scoped breakout sessions and high-value networking.

3–5 tracks

benchmark for large annual conferences

1 track

benchmark for smaller roadshow events

04

Attendee engagement benchmarks

With B2B audiences more selective than ever, audience engagement is the KPI that has gained the most ground on the CMO dashboard. Top events use apps, live Q&A, polls, and gamification to deliver interactive experiences across all formats. This section benchmarks engagement, exploring how top organizers drive participation & ROI.

Mobile app adoption benchmarks

Mobile event apps are key to engagement at large, multi-day events, offering navigation, real-time updates, and personalized interactions that drive attendee satisfaction.

55%

benchmark adoption rate
all B2B events

80%

benchmark adoption rate
for performers

B2B mobile event apps typically achieve 5-10 total actions per user. And power users—the top ~20% of attendees—drive 3-5x more actions (20-50 actions per user) over a typical 2-3 day event.

Beyond empowering attendees to bookmark sessions, mobile event apps support attendance tracking, sponsor activation, matchmaking and one-to-one networking meetings, live Q&A for keynotes and AMAs, gamification, maps, and much more.

Mobile app engagement benchmarks

- **Top-performing events exceed 15+ actions per user**, often by layering in gamification and personalized content streams.
- **Push notification open rates average 55–60%**, with personalized reminders reaching 80%+, making them a critical tool for session attendance and behavioral nudges.
- **Networking features achieve 20–40% adoption** on average, increasing to 60%+ when meetups are topic-based or incentivized through app-based prompts.
- **Q&A submissions to keynotes and AMA sessions average 3.5 interactions per user**, particularly when question submission and upvoting are promoted on-screen.

Pro tip

Mobile app adoption reaches the highest levels when the app is promoted in emails leading up to the event, and with intentional signage at check-in.



Live polling and session surveys

Interactive tools like live Q&A, polls, and surveys turn passive viewers into engaged participants, driving two-way interaction and generating first-party data to personalize follow-ups, segmentation, and CRM profile enrichment.

Polls are particularly powerful during live sessions. They serve as warm-up activities, sentiment gauges, and drivers of engaging content, allowing speakers to react dynamically to audience input.

- For in-person audiences, polls and surveys are best delivered through mobile apps or digital hubs, allowing real-time feedback without disrupting the session.
- For virtual audiences, integrating polls and surveys directly into the stream keeps engagement seamless and on-platform.

Poll and survey benchmarks

Response rates vary based on when the poll or survey is triggered:

60-70%

benchmark response rate
for in-session polls

30-50%

benchmark response rate
for post-session surveys

Pro tip

Prompt attendees to respond to short surveys immediately after session to maximize participation and data accuracy.



Best practices for live Q&A and AMA sessions

Live Q&A and AMA sessions have become essential formats for real-time audience interaction.

- Across **keynotes and breakout sessions**, Q&A enables attendees to submit questions curated and published by moderators.
- In **dedicated AMA sessions**, executive speakers typically flip the script, giving attendees input into the questions they'd like to see addressed. AMAs consistently yield higher participation and longer watch times, particularly when positioned as unscripted.

To make Q&A formats a success, leading event producers typically launch question submission prior to sessions, while seeding the questions list to ensure that the most critical topics are addressed.

They also leverage on-screen integration to promote Q&A submission, moderation tools to ensure that only approved questions are published, and upvoting to democratically push the best questions to the top of the feed, so panelists can easily address the most popular questions.

Live Q&A and AMA session benchmarks

The results from live Q&A and AMA sessions vary depending on how event producers promote question submission, and how accessible they make it. Event producers aligning to the best practices can expect to exceed the following benchmarks:

- Q&A submissions to keynotes and AMA sessions average 3.5 interactions per user (including questions submitted and upvoted), particularly when question submission and upvoting are promoted on-screen as part of the session format.
- Top-performing keynotes and AMA sessions at marquee events can see up to 50-100 questions published, with thousands of upvotes across all published questions.

3.5

benchmark interactions
per user for live Q&A

50-100

benchmark questions
submitted per keynote

Gamification benchmarks

Gamification boosts engagement by turning key actions into point-earning challenges, tapping into attendees' drive to compete, complete tasks, and be recognized—especially at multi-day or large-scale events.

35–60% of attendees participate in games like scavenger hunts, trivia, or leaderboards when the experience is easy, rewarding, and aligned with event goals.

In-person games typically run through mobile apps or hubs, rewarding behaviors like session check-ins or sponsor visits. For virtual events, gamified prompts are embedded directly in the platform and tracked automatically.

35%

benchmark adoption rate
for gamification features

60%

adoption rate for high
performers

Gamification best practices

Gamification works best when it's tied to meaningful actions like checking into sessions and networking meetups, participating in Q&A, completing surveys, and visiting exhibitors. These not only drive exploration but also generate valuable behavioral insights.

To keep engagement high throughout the event, consider offering tiered rewards for ongoing participation and sprinkle in surprise prizes to create moments of delight and deepen attendee connection.

If your event has a merch table, freebies go a long way toward driving engagement when they're offered as a reward.

05

Attendee networking benchmarks

Social connection remains a key driver of attendee satisfaction, with growing expectations for structured networking across all event formats. However, the effectiveness of networking depends on how it's delivered. Top-performing events design networking as a proactive, personalized experience, not a passive feature.

20-40%

benchmark networking adoption rate

50-65%

benchmark adoption rate for topical meetups

Networking participation benchmarks

Well-designed networking features do more than connect attendees, they build community. By curating meaningful, low-friction introductions, events drive stronger engagement and impact.

- **20-40% of attendees typically participate in networking experiences across B2B events.**
- **Adoption grows to 50-65% when meetups are curated by topic, role, or persona, making networking more relevant and accessible.**
- **1:1 meeting scheduling adoption doubles** when driven by well curated and/or AI-powered matchmaking and proactive prompts based on shared traits.



06

Live streaming benchmarks

Where virtual attendees tune in for your event plays a decisive role in engagement, data capture, and overall impact. Events delivered within branded, purpose-built platforms consistently outperform those streamed via platforms like YouTube or LinkedIn Live.

The difference is measurable. In a recent example, one major B2B brand saw over 20,000 attendees engage with content embedded into a BigMarker-hosted digital event platform, compared to just 800 the previous year via YouTube (a 25x increase), despite similar content mix and promotional efforts.

What's the difference? When attendees land on an intentionally-designed and branded event platform and see the session streaming in front of them, they stay longer and are significantly more likely to participate in interactive elements. There's no friction, no need to click away, and no distractions from competing content.

20-40%

viewer duration increase
by designing the
streaming experience

15-20%

event revenue lift by
integrating sponsor
content into live streams



07

Net promoter score (NPS) benchmarks

While attendance and engagement metrics provide valuable snapshots of event performance, NPS offers an apples-to-apples comparison of attendee satisfaction and impact across different events and brands.

Benchmarking NPS for B2B customer events

The average NPS score for B2B customer events stands at 53, with 64% promoters, 26% passives, and 11% detractors.



If your NPS is between 35-55, it suggests strong customer advocacy and a well-executed event. If your NPS is above 55, it signals excellence that puts you among the top tier of B2B events.

If your NPS is below 35, it may be a signal that improvements are needed in content, relevance, logistics, or audience targeting.

Best practices to improve your event's NPS

- 1. Personalize the journey with AI:** Tailor session recommendations, on-page content, and follow-up emails by attendee behavior, title, and interests to make your event feel more curated, which is especially critical for brands with multiple personas.
- 2. Elevate executive-led content:** Executive keynotes, C-suite panels, and small-group roundtables give attendees exclusive access to strategic insights and senior perspectives, driving value and credibility. High-value networking opportunities also increase satisfaction, particularly for enterprise audiences.
- 3. Activate real-time engagement loops:** Deploy live Q&A and instant feedback surveys to ensure attendees are actively engaged and feel their input matters. Use real-time responses to adjust session pacing or address concerns immediately.
- 4. Close the loop with detractors and passives:** Don't let feedback go to waste. Use post-event insights to segment and re-engage detractors with more relevant content, or thank promoters with exclusive perks or early access to future events.
- 5. Leave a lasting impression:** Closing moments can leave a lasting impact. End with a high-energy session, clear next steps, or a personalized thank-you that reinforces the value of attending.

08

Emerging trends & next steps

As B2B events continue to evolve, several key themes are shaping the next generation. From AI-powered personalization and executive breakouts to gamification and opt-in networking, these trends reflect shifting audience expectations for more tailored, participatory, and value-driven events.

Key themes for 2026

We expect the following themes to be big discussion points for innovative event producers in the coming year:

1. AI-powered personalization of content, tracks, and networking
2. Executive breakouts in intimate forums
3. Gamification to drive not only engagement, but strategic data capture for CRM profile enrichment
4. Meetups and other small-format opt-in networking experiences
5. Live polling during keynotes to provide real-time audience input
6. AI-driven UX personalization within branded event environments to enhance engagement and minimize drop-offs

Conclusion

The bar for B2B events has permanently risen. Attendance alone is no longer enough, today's most successful events create lasting brand affinity by delivering personalized, high-value experiences that engage audiences before, during, and after the event.

Leading B2B brands are rethinking their event strategies to balance the reach of virtual, the depth of in-person, and the flexibility of hybrid formats. They're adapting to focus on smaller formats within big ones, so every attendee can find something of value. And they're using AI and data to tailor every touchpoint, from registration to post-event follow-up, while measuring success not just by who shows up, but by who engages, converts, and advocates.

The focus has shifted from event execution to experience orchestration. Marketers are no longer just hosting events, they're curating journeys, building community, and driving measurable business outcomes. By applying the benchmarks and best practices in this report, event teams can elevate performance, exceed expectations, and create experiences that drive impact well beyond the event itself.