

# THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY REVOLUTIONISING THE EVENTS INDUSTRY



HOW USING THE LATEST SOFTWARE CAN HELP SIMPLIFY ADMINISTRATION AND IMPROVE COMMUNICATION BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER AN EVENT.

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Organising any type of event nowadays involves using some type of technology to process data. However it cannot be underestimated the number of people in the industry who are still totally mystified or baffled as to what the latest technological developments are and more importantly how it impacts on them or their future business.

Most event organisers would consider themselves familiar with the Internet and perhaps use it on a daily basis. However few are taking full advantage and utilising web based technologies to improve their overall business efficiency and increase results. Searching for a venue on-line or offering web registration just scratches the surface of what is now possible.

## MAKING THE MOST OF THE INTERNET

Totally web-based solutions provide dedicated event websites to manage the whole event from start to finish using the Internet. This means no software installations on individual computers at the office relying on one person to do everything. The benefits of this type



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of approach are numerous as instead of just the event organiser having access to the data, anyone with the correct security password worldwide can either simply view or be allowed to edit the data. This could include other organisations and coordinators at different locations, hotels, speakers or abstract referees.

### DESIGNED FOR THE DELEGATE

For the delegate this type of web based system also has advantages, for example activities such as workshops, dinners and tours can be listed and anything the delegate signs up for can be incorporated into a final, personalised participant agenda. Again this is available for the delegate to view at their leisure any where keeping the profile the event constant in the delegates mind.

The allocated hotels or the event can be represented on the event website enabling full descriptions of the hotels and their activities as well as virtual tours etc. Individual hotel reservations, room block selling and automatic hotel booking per participant and room-sharing management all becomes easier to manage. Reservations can be modified or cancelled online and rooming lists forwarded to each hotel simply and quickly.

### PUSH ASIDE THE PAPERWORK

Other reports, such as participant and activity lists, transport, budget and billing reports, which can be time consuming

are constantly available and up-to-date. Evaluation forms and questionnaires can be created and arranged in different customisable folders. Statistics can be gathered and reports defined.

Another important element of many events which is difficult to coordinate is abstract handling. The full workflow from abstract submission to notation by referees, editing and the insertion of images, to publication of the proceedings can all be done online. Additionally and perhaps more importantly for the event organiser communicating with delegates or other participants in the event becomes easier automatic emails can be created and sent to one or a group of selected people and personalised. Text messages can also be personalised and sent to mobile phones.

### IMPROVING COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT THE EVENT

The key benefit of these type of web based solutions is that information can be constantly updated anywhere, subject to internet connection and is available 24/7.

The results lead to improved communications, better e-marketing of the event and easier data analysis or event organizer, delegate and supplier. The cost associated with organising an event in this way does not have to be astronomical as these types of solutions can be rented per event so they are available and affordable to everyone.

So what are the downsides to this alternative to traditional event organising methods? The

speed of the Internet connection seems to be the main concern as access to the event is solely based on this and as an organiser this needs to be quick and reliable.

### MANAGING YOUR MOBILE

Another exciting technology that is revolutionising the events industry is interactive mobile technology. Simply using your mobile phone as a means of communicating and participating throughout an event.

Today, 94% of the population of Western Europe owns a mobile phone, 66% uses it for text messaging and 32% accesses the internet through their mobile phone. The trend for mobile internet access is just beginning - this number is forecast to rise dramatically in the next 5 years.

The service work on any device such as a mobile phone, PDA or laptop on any kind of internet connection (i.e. W-LAN, Wi-Fi, GPRS or fixed line and regardless of the network operator) is therefore available for almost anybody. Not only does it provide delegates with all the information regarding an event they require via their mobile phone, it also helps to reduce operational costs by reducing staff numbers and paperwork. There is also the added benefit generating additional sponsorship revenue through mobile advertising.

### KEEPING ON TOP OF TECHNOLOGY

In an unpredictable and often difficult business environment, making use of all the available technologies can provide that margin that will make an organisation more efficient saving time and money. But more importantly the key is to be fully aware of what is currently on the market to decide whether that technology will benefit you. With a lot of high-tech jargon it is very easy to confuse the different options available and make a wrong investment which can be very costly financially and otherwise. Research the market carefully asking any unfamiliar terminology to be fully explained and always demand a demonstration.