

# Navigating the State of Events:

Insights and Strategies for 2025



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# Letter from the CEO

At EventsAir, we've had the privilege of working alongside event professionals across industries, helping them navigate an ever-evolving landscape with confidence and creativity.

Our close collaboration with industry leaders and our commitment to understanding your unique challenges position us as a trusted partner in shaping the future of event management.

This report, [Navigating the State of Events: Insights and Strategies for 2025](#), embodies our dedication to supporting your success. Based on comprehensive research — including survey data from 370 event professionals — this report uncovers actionable insights and strategies to empower your event planning and execution.

The findings highlight a transformative moment for the events industry. While hybrid and virtual formats have expanded reach and accessibility, the enduring value of in-person events is undeniable. These face-to-face experiences remain critical for building trust, fostering deep connections, and driving meaningful engagement.

Yet, the challenges are significant. Budget constraints, attendee engagement, and sponsorship acquisition are recurring themes that demand innovative solutions. At the same time, the growing emphasis on sustainability and technology underscores the importance of adaptability in delivering impactful events.

EventsAir is dedicated to helping you overcome these challenges. Investments in cutting-edge technology and tools that streamline operations, enhance engagement, and deliver measurable ROI ensure we remain a catalyst for your success.

I encourage you to explore this report and leverage its insights to refine your strategies and elevate your events. Focusing on personalized engagement, seamless logistics, and sustainable practices will help you create memorable experiences that inspire and endure beyond 2025.

We are proud to be your partner on this journey and look forward to continuing to innovate alongside you, ensuring your events remain at the forefront of an ever-changing and thriving industry.

*Chris Ridd*



Chris Ridd  
Chief Executive Officer  
EventsAir  
[eventsair.com](https://eventsair.com)



# Events in Focus

**87.1%**

ranked conferences as the most significant event type



**63.5%**

cited budget constraints as their top challenge

**\$10K—\$30K**

is the most common annual investment in event technology

**IN-PERSON**

In-person events are vital, with 95.4% of respondents rating them as "very important" or "moderately important".

**79.3%**

of respondents use event management software

**79.7%**

rated content quality as the most important factor for event success



## Background and Methodology

This report draws on data gathered from a comprehensive survey of event professionals, along with in-depth interviews that provided qualitative insights.

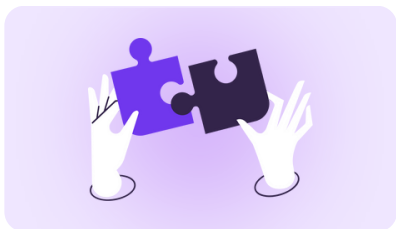
Our survey captured responses from professionals across the globe, representing a range of geographic regions and organizations. With 370 total participants, the survey offers a solid quantitative foundation, complemented by one-on-one interviews that explored the nuanced challenges and opportunities faced by professional event planners today.

Respondents were asked about key aspects of their event management practices, including event types, formats, budgetary considerations, and technology usage. This blend of quantitative and qualitative data provides a holistic understanding of current trends and future shifts in the event landscape.



# Why Events Matter

At their core, events bring people together in ways no other medium can. They build trust, create shared experiences, and offer unmatched opportunities for engagement.



Whether it's launching a new product, educating attendees, cultivating member loyalty, or showcasing industry leadership, events empower organizations to connect with their audiences on a deeper level.

The stakes in event planning are high. With tight budgets, growing attendee expectations, and increasing competition, event professionals face enormous pressure to deliver meaningful experiences. Effective event management requires balancing logistics, technology, and creativity to craft events that resonate long after they end. It's not just about executing a seamless event — it's about delivering value.

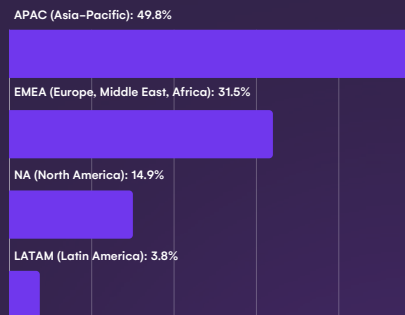
To remain relevant, event professionals must continuously adapt. In-person events remain the gold standard for fostering connections, while hybrid and virtual formats expand accessibility and reach. Sustainability, now a core attendee expectation, has reshaped how events are planned, forcing organizers to think creatively about reducing their environmental impact without sacrificing quality.

This report explores the challenges and opportunities shaping the future of events. Packed with actionable insights, it's a roadmap for creating events that inspire, engage, and drive results.

Let's focus on delivering value — whether through personalized experiences, seamless logistics, or innovative solutions — so you can elevate your events and position your organization for success.



# A Global Snapshot of Responses

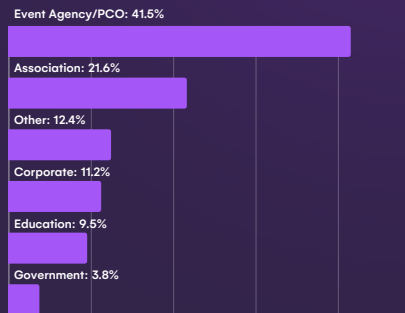
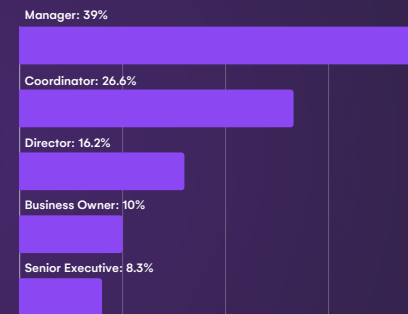


## Regional Representation

Regionally, APAC had the most contributions with 49.8% of respondents, reflecting the region's strong investment in the industry. EMEA follows at 31.5%, underlining its established presence in the global industry. North America (14.9%) and LATAM (3.8%) make up a significant portion, contributing diverse perspectives.

## Role Levels & Responsibilities

When it comes to roles, managers dominate (39%), supported by coordinators (26.6%) and directors (16.2%). Business owners (10%) and senior executives (8.3%) round out the group. This strong representation of mid-level professionals highlights their pivotal role in delivering high-impact events.



## Industry Breakdown

Industry representation spanned Event Agencies and PCOs (41.5%), Associations (21.6%), Corporations (11.2%), Education (9.5%), Government Agencies (3.8%), and Other (12.4%). This broad representation underscores the diversity and shared challenges of modern event professionals.

# Signature Event Types

What types of events dominate today's landscape? From conferences to workshops, each format serves a distinct purpose in advancing industries and connecting people.

## Conferences

Conferences stand as the most significant event type across industries, with 87.1% of survey respondents citing them as a priority. These events deliver unparalleled value by fostering education, collaboration, and professional growth. From keynote sessions to breakout discussions, conferences are designed to address diverse attendee needs and facilitate actionable outcomes.

## Award Nights & Gala Dinners

At 53.5%, awards nights and galas emphasize the importance of celebration and recognition. These events create moments of prestige and motivation, honoring achievements within industries, organizations, and communities. Their formal and engaging atmosphere strengthens bonds between attendees, while fostering a sense of pride and accomplishment.

## Workshops

Workshops rank second, favored by 55.2% of respondents. Known for their interactive and skill-based approach, workshops allow attendees to dive deep into specific topics. Their smaller, focused format fosters engagement and ensures participants leave with practical takeaways, making them a go-to choice for education and professional development.

## A Diverse Mix

Interestingly, 51% of respondents pointed to "Other" event types, reflecting the industry's adaptability and willingness to experiment.

From niche gatherings to unique formats tailored for specific audiences, these events demonstrate the creative breadth of event professionals in meeting evolving needs.



# Popular Event Formats



Event formats are evolving to meet the demands of a diverse audience. In-person gatherings still hold the highest value, but hybrid and virtual formats continue to gain traction, offering flexibility and accessibility to attendees.

In-person events remain unmatched in their ability to foster deep connections and memorable experiences. Rated as "Very Important" by 88.4% of respondents, these events excel in creating face-to-face engagement, immersive interactions, and meaningful networking opportunities. For many professionals, they are the foundation of impactful event strategies.

Hybrid formats provide the best of both worlds—engaging in-person interactions with the accessibility of virtual participation. With 19% of respondents considering them "Very Important" and 26.6% rating them as "Moderately Important," hybrid formats broaden reach and inclusivity. They remove geographical and scheduling barriers, enabling event professionals to connect with wider audiences without sacrificing engagement.

Cost-effective and scalable, live virtual events cater to global participants. These formats saw 21.6% of respondents rating them as "Very Important" and 22% as "Moderately Important." While they may not replace in-person experiences, they are invaluable for extending reach and providing more low-cost opportunities to engage in a budget-conscious environment.

Ranked lower in importance, on-demand formats were marked as "Very Important" by 13.7% of respondents and "Moderately Important" by 24.1%.

While on-demand content lacks the immediacy of live experiences, its popularity continues to grow, offering attendees flexibility while generating ongoing revenue for event organizers. As audiences increasingly expect the freedom to consume content at their convenience, we anticipate continued growth in this format, reinforcing its long-term value in event strategies.

In today's event landscape, success lies in striking the right balance by leveraging each format's strengths to create impactful experiences tailored to your audience.

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**The opportunity for growth lies in niche events—targeted gatherings that provide more value and connection for specific audiences, offering a more personalized experience.**



Sarah Markey-Hamm,  
CEO, ICMS

# Navigating the Future of Event Management

An Interview with Sarah Markey-Hamm



Sarah Markey-Hamm's insights underscore the importance of adaptability, collaboration, and innovation in the ever-changing world of event management. By embracing technology, understanding audience behaviors, and staying ahead of industry trends, event professionals can navigate challenges and seize opportunities for growth. Her dedication to delivering client-centered solutions offers a roadmap for success in this dynamic industry.

## Insights from the CEO of ICMS on trends, challenges, and opportunities for PCOs and Event Agencies.

In this exclusive interview, we spoke with Sarah Markey-Hamm, CEO of ICMS, a leading Professional Conference Organizer (PCO), to gain her insights into the evolving landscape of event management.

Drawing from her decades of experience, Sarah discusses the current challenges faced by event planners, the impact of technology, and emerging trends shaping the future of the industry. Her perspective offers a wealth of knowledge for professionals navigating this dynamic sector.

### **Q: What are the key trends you've observed in the events industry, and how do they impact Professional Conference Organizers and Event Agencies?**

Sarah: One major trend is the shift toward short-term business. Clients are approaching us with event plans only months before the proposed date, which presents unique challenges in logistics and planning. Additionally, attendee behavior has changed—people are registering closer to the event date, and the traditional incentive of early-bird pricing isn't as effective as it once was.

Another significant trend is the debate between insourcing and outsourcing event management. Associations are grappling with decisions about handling events internally versus engaging a PCO or an agency. Often, when they choose to insource, we inherit poorly negotiated contracts that require significant effort to optimize.

### **Q: What challenges are you currently facing at ICMS in today's rapidly changing landscape?**

Sarah: One of our biggest challenges is staying relevant amid constant industry changes. This includes balancing the demands of running a business while ensuring we carve out time for strategic planning and innovation. As a small business, it's essential to manage our resources effectively to deliver exceptional value to clients without overextending ourselves.

### **Q: How do you manage budget constraints while delivering high-quality events?**

Sarah: Budget management starts with defining what "high-quality" means for each client. It's not a one-size-fits-all concept. We challenge clients to think critically about their priorities and what they're willing to invest in to achieve their goals. Our role as PCOs is to collaborate closely with clients to align their vision with practical, budget-friendly solutions.

### **Q: How do you foresee technology evolving in event planning and management?**

Sarah: Technology has immense potential, but it must be relevant and strategically implemented. For instance, AI can be used to personalize attendee experiences, such as dynamic session recommendations or generating insights from discussions. However, the technology must align with the event's objectives rather than being implemented for its own sake.

We've also seen significant advancements in digital marketing tools, such as audience segmentation and targeted campaigns. These tools have revolutionized how events are promoted, but they require expertise to be effective. Investing in professionals who understand these technologies is critical.

### **Q: What opportunities do you see for growth within the event industry?**

Sarah: There's a significant opportunity in niche events. These targeted gatherings cater to specific industries or roles, creating more value for attendees. For example, B2B marketing events tailored for SaaS professionals have gained traction because they address unique challenges and opportunities.

Additionally, sustainability is becoming a core focus. Beyond simply offsetting carbon emissions, there's a growing push for tangible, environmentally responsible practices. Events designed with clear sustainability goals will resonate with audiences and open new avenues for innovation.

### **Q: How do you measure success for your events?**

Sarah: Success is ultimately defined by our clients. At ICMS, we view ourselves as partners in our clients' success. From the outset, we ask, "What does success look like for you?" This collaborative approach ensures alignment and helps us deliver results that truly matter.

# Top Challenges

The events industry continues to face unique challenges, from managing budgets to fostering engagement. Based on survey responses, professionals identified their top pain points, offering a glimpse into the hurdles shaping the future of event planning.

## Budget Constraints (63.5%)

Topping the list, 63.5% of respondents highlighted financial limitations as their biggest challenge. Rising costs in logistics, venues, and technology require creative problem-solving to maximize impact without overspending.

## Attendee Engagement (42.7%)

Creating dynamic, interactive experiences is essential to maintaining interest and delivering value. Strategies such as gamification, live polling, and AI-powered personalization are gaining traction, ensuring events remain compelling and impactful.

## Event Marketing and Promotion (25.7%)

Reaching target audiences effectively is a challenge for 25.7% of respondents. With increasing competition, professionals must develop innovative marketing strategies to boost registrations and awareness.

## Client Communication (24.5%)

For 24.5% of respondents, maintaining strong relationships with clients is a key focus. Clear communication and efficient collaboration are essential to ensure expectations are met.

## Sponsorship Acquisition (24.1%)

Securing and retaining sponsors is a challenge for 24.1% of professionals, reflecting the competitive landscape for ongoing partnerships.

Together, these challenges highlight the need for resourcefulness, creativity, and strong partnerships in navigating the complexities of event planning.

Addressing these pain points is key to achieving success in 2025.

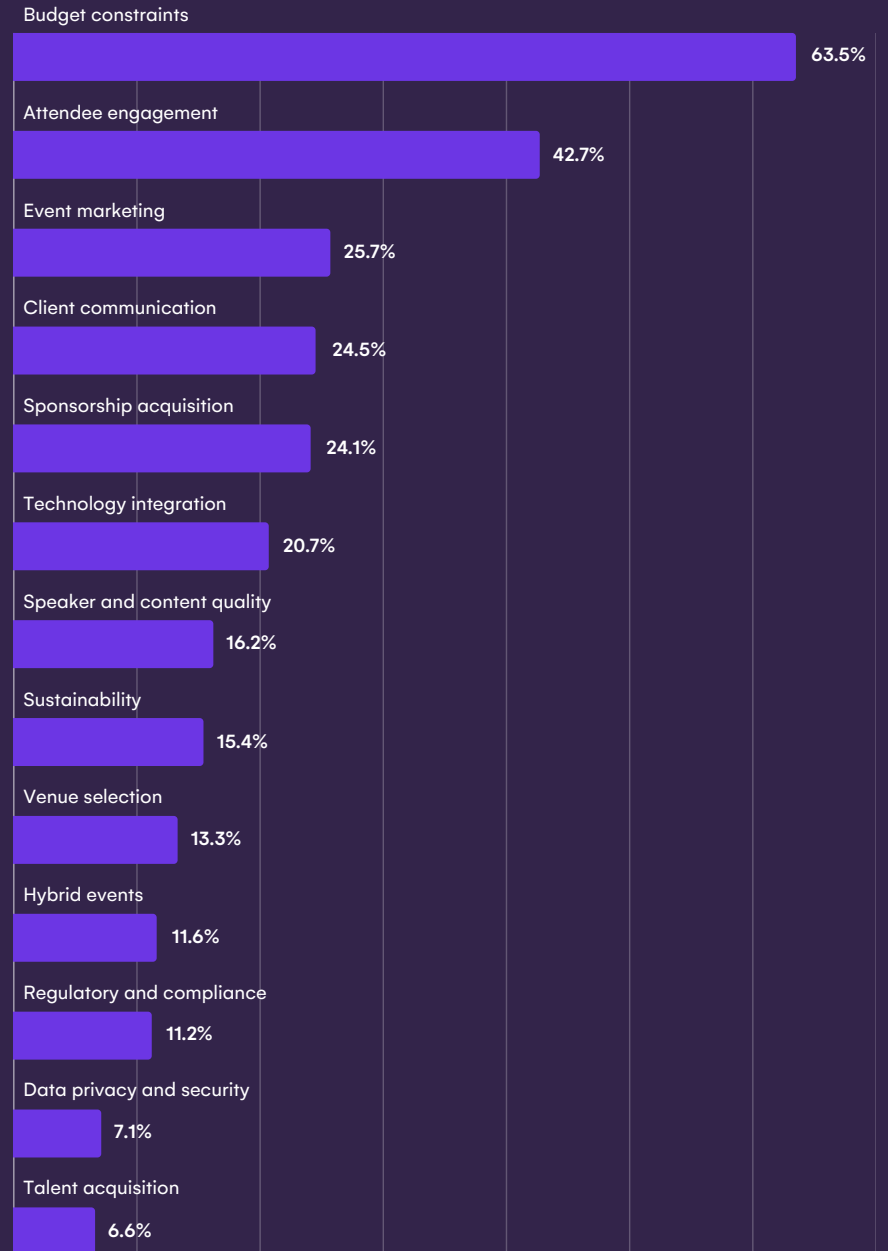


There's a growing emphasis on sustainability, casual dining, and integrating networking with wellness breaks. Event planners need to be more flexible and creative to adapt to these evolving preferences.



Claire Devine,  
Project Manager at Abbey  
Conference & Events

## What are the top 3 challenges you face when organizing events?



# Navigating Event Challenges

Behind every successful event lies a series of challenges that demand resourcefulness and adaptability. Let's look deeper into how professionals are navigating the most significant obstacles.



## Budget Constraints

With 63.5% of respondents identifying this as their top challenge, budget constraints require professionals to do more with less. Rising costs in logistics, venues, and technology call for innovative cost-management strategies. Platforms like event management software streamline logistics, from registration to post-event reporting, allowing teams to focus on high-impact areas.

Negotiating with suppliers has also become a critical skill, with many professionals building long-term partnerships to secure favorable rates and avoid last-minute surcharges. Virtual and hybrid formats are being used strategically to lower travel and venue costs while still reaching broad audiences. For instance, a corporate event may feature a hybrid keynote to reduce in-person attendance while maintaining global reach.

Cost-sharing with sponsors is another tactic, with professionals crafting co-branded opportunities that align with sponsor goals while offsetting event expenses. Together, these strategies ensure professionals can deliver impactful events within limited budgets.

## Attendee Engagement

In a world of distractions, keeping attendees engaged is a challenge for 42.7% of respondents. Event professionals are increasingly using interactive tools such as live polling, Q&A sessions, and gamification to create active participation. Beyond tools, event planners are experimenting with content formats, offering a variety of shorter sessions to offer variability in the agenda.

AI-powered tools are also gaining traction, helping event professionals with personalized recommendations. And, by analyzing specific attendee data, AI can go one step further to provide relevant suggestions to further enhance sessions, networking opportunities, and more to ensure participants feel valued.

Post-event engagement is also key. Many professionals now integrate follow-up webinars, exclusive content, and on-demand recordings to keep attendees involved beyond the event. For example, a workshop may include a personalized follow-up email suggesting further learning opportunities to produce lasting impact.

Creating immersive, content-rich experiences tailored to attendee needs helps event professionals maintain high engagement levels and drive satisfaction.

## Event Marketing and Promotion

Standing out in a crowded market is a challenge for 25.7% of respondents. Event marketing requires creative solutions to capture attention and drive registrations. Campaigns often include a healthy mix of social media, email, and speaker or partner collaborations to amplify event visibility and impact. Data-driven audience segmentation and a multi-channel mix is key here.

Video content has become a standout tool for driving early registrations. A teaser video showcasing key speakers or exclusive benefits generates excitement and creates a sense of urgency.

Collaborating with your speakers or industry influencers also extends reach and builds credibility, creating buzz that drives momentum. Tiered pricing, personalized invitations and multi-channel marketing remain effective tactics for securing commitments from attendees. These strategies ensure marketing efforts align with attendee preferences and event goals, creating a powerful foundation for successful promotion.

## Sponsorship Acquisition and Retention

Attracting sponsors remains a hurdle for 24.1% of respondents. Securing sponsorships requires delivering measurable value and fostering strong relationships. Many event professionals now craft tailored sponsorship packages that align with sponsor goals. Offerings such as branded content, premium exposure opportunities, access to attendee data, and offering first right of refusal for all future events make these packages highly attractive.

Sponsorship ROI is increasingly tracked through metrics like app engagement, booth visits, and lead generation. Providing post-event reports highlights these successes, ensuring sponsors see tangible outcomes. For instance, an event might provide sponsors with detailed engagement data showing the reach and effectiveness of their contributions. Alternatively, real-time lead management tools allow sponsors to instantly understand their brands impact and reach, even as the event is still progressing.

Fostering trust through consistent communication and early collaboration is also critical. Offering returning sponsors priority branding options or exclusive opportunities strengthens loyalty and ensures long-term partnerships. These approaches address sponsor expectations and build sustainable collaborations.



# Measuring Event Success

Defining and measuring success is essential for event professionals striving to demonstrate value and drive improvement. As expectations evolve, so do the metrics used to evaluate event outcomes, requiring a mix of both old, and new, approaches.

Event attendance remains the most commonly used metric, with 83.4% of respondents prioritizing it to gauge success. High attendance indicates effective marketing and the perceived value of the event's content and experiences. However, attendance alone only tells part of the story.

Feedback plays an essential role in understanding success, with 72.6% of professionals relying on post-event surveys and direct attendee responses. These insights reveal what worked and what needs improvement, helping refine strategies for future events.

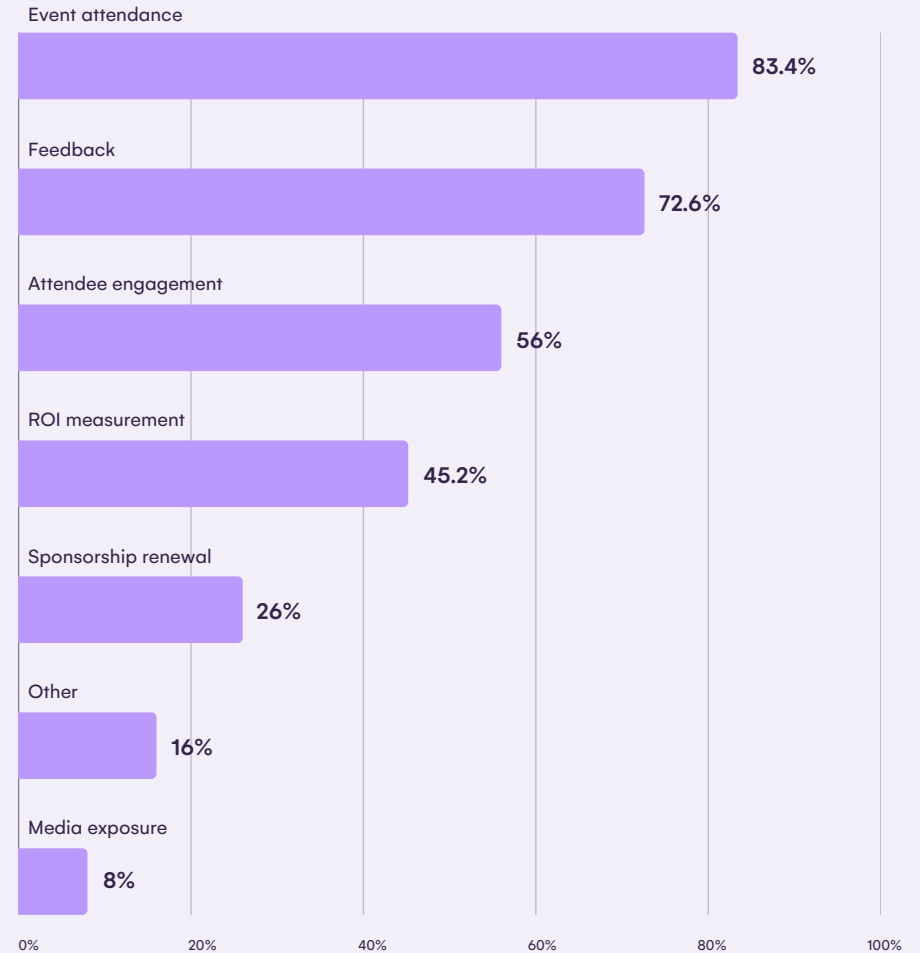
Attendee engagement, used by 56% of respondents, is gaining prominence as a measure of success. Professionals are analyzing participation in sessions, live polling, and networking activities to understand how engaged attendees were during the event.

ROI remains critical for 45.2% of respondents, with financial metrics continuing to serve as key indicators of success. New approaches, such as tracking long-term business outcomes and stakeholder relationships, are broadening how ROI is defined.

Best practices now emphasize a more holistic view of success, focusing on meaningful connections, sustained engagement, and the overall attendee experience. As technology evolves, professionals are integrating tools that measure engagement in real time, offering actionable insights to inform their strategies and demonstrate value.



## What metrics do you use to measure the success of your events?



At the core of all these success metrics is engagement. Whether measured through attendance, satisfaction, or ROI, the ability to meaningfully connect with members and provide valuable experiences is what ultimately drives event success.

# Creating a Successful Event

The success of any event hinges on several critical factors. Based on survey responses, professionals identified four key elements that consistently make or break events: content quality, logistics, technology, and networking. Each of these factors plays a pivotal role in shaping attendee experiences and achieving event goals.

## Content Quality: 79.7%

Nearly 80% of respondents emphasized content quality as the foundation of a successful event. Engaging, relevant content ensures participants feel their time is well spent and leave with actionable insights.

Curating expert speakers, designing sessions that address audience needs, and incorporating interactive formats such as Q&A or panel discussions are essential. For example, a technology conference might explore trending topics like AI and cybersecurity, paired with hands-on workshops to deepen understanding.

Personalization is also becoming essential. As mentioned previously, AI-driven tools now help organizers recommend specific sessions or tracks based on attendee preferences, enhancing relevance and engagement. Events that deliver dynamic, value-driven content leave lasting impressions and encourage future participation, solidifying their reputation in a competitive industry.

## Logistics 53.1%

Seamless logistics are essential, with over half of survey respondents emphasizing their importance. Poorly managed operations can overshadow even the best content, leading to attendee dissatisfaction.

Key logistical elements include venue selection, streamlined registration, and on-site management. Events offering mobile check-ins, clear signage, and accessible facilities improve attendee satisfaction and greatly contribute to a frictionless experience. For example, a corporate summit implementing self-service check-in kiosks can significantly reduce wait times.

Contingency planning is another critical component. Professionals mitigate risks such as technical failures or schedule disruptions by leveraging centralized planning tools and relying on experienced coordinators. Effective logistics transform events into well-organized experiences, allowing attendees to focus on learning and networking without distractions.



## Technology 50.6%

Technology was highlighted as a success factor by 50.6% of respondents, underscoring its critical role in delivering engaging experiences. Event professionals are leveraging tech at every stage of the event lifecycle to streamline operations and enhance attendee satisfaction.

Event management platforms simplify processes such as agenda management, registration, and post-event reporting, enabling organizers to focus on creating impactful moments. Integrated apps provide attendees with seamless experiences, allowing them to check schedules, navigate venues, and engage in real-time activities like polling or Q&A.

These centralized platforms also provide organizers valuable insights. Real-time updates and tracking tools enable adjustments during events, while post-event data, such as feedback and attendance metrics, helps refine future strategies. The right technology ensures events are efficient, connected, and tailored to both attendee and stakeholder needs.

## Networking 49.4%

Networking ranked as a key success factor, with 49.4% of respondents recognizing its importance. Events provide opportunities for attendees to connect, collaborate, and grow their professional networks.

Structured activities, such as speed networking, group discussions, or curated one-on-one meetings, ensure meaningful connections. For instance, a leadership summit might use matchmaking tools to pair participants with similar professional interests, fostering purposeful interactions.

Event apps further enhance networking by allowing attendees to schedule meetings, join interest-based groups, and participate in live discussions. These tools maximize opportunities, particularly in larger events where organic conversations may be harder to foster.

Follow-ups, such as post-event virtual sessions or access to attendee directories, help maintain connections after the event concludes. Effective networking strengthens the event's value and leaves participants with new opportunities and a lasting impression.

# The Evolving Role of Event Tech



Technology is revolutionizing how events are planned and executed. Event professionals are embracing tools that enhance productivity, engagement, and measurement, paving the way for more impactful experiences.

Event technology has become a crucial pillar of event strategies in 2025. Tools like event management software allow planners to automate workflows, track real-time engagement, and consolidate data for better decision-making. Event management software helps mitigate challenges like budget constraints by optimizing resource allocation and reducing inefficiencies. For instance, centralized systems minimize the need for multiple disconnected tools, cutting costs and improving team coordination.

AI and automation are emerging as key drivers of innovation. Professionals are using AI-powered tools to analyze attendee preferences, personalize experiences, and recommend sessions or networking opportunities. Automated insights into attendee behavior also allow event professionals to adapt in real time, ensuring maximum satisfaction.

However, too many disconnected systems can overwhelm teams, leading to inefficiencies. Event professionals are increasingly turning to a balanced approach, ensuring technology works cohesively to support event goals, not complicate them.

For this reason, organizations are investing in professionals who specialize in integrating technology to optimize every stage of the event lifecycle. These specialists ensure event data is aligned with broader organizational goals, creating a single source of truth for measurement and analysis.

Event professionals who embrace technology not only deliver better attendee experiences but also gain valuable insights to refine their strategies and future-proof their events.



**I foresee a shift towards a more digital era, with innovations like interactive badging, digital displays, and facial recognition technology becoming more prominent, enhancing attendee experiences.**



Claire Devine,  
Project Manager at Abbey  
Conference & Events

# Choosing the Right Technology Partner



As event planning becomes increasingly complex, the technology you choose must not only meet today's demands but also evolve with the expectations of your attendees, sponsors, and stakeholders.

Selecting the right technology partner is crucial to delivering seamless events that drive engagement, efficiency, and measurable results. The right platform should offer comprehensive solutions that streamline operations, enhance attendee experiences, and provide measurable value.

**Here are key questions to ask when evaluating a technology provider for 2025 and beyond:**

## How does the platform enhance attendee engagement?

Engagement is the cornerstone of successful events. The platform should offer features like gamification, personalized session recommendations, and advanced networking tools.

## Can the platform manage sponsorships effectively?

Strong sponsorship tools are essential for generating revenue and maintaining partnerships. Look for lead tracking, branding opportunities, and self-service options for sponsors.

## Does the platform offer flexibility for complex event formats?

Your tech partner must accommodate diverse event formats, from virtual, to hybrid to multi-day summits, with ease. A flexible platform ensures your events run smoothly, no matter the format.

## Is the tech stack scalable and integrated?

Integration and scalability are key for long-term success. The ability to scale ensures the technology evolves alongside your events, supporting growth and innovation.

The right technology partner is more than a provider — they're a collaborator who supports your vision and empowers your team to overcome key challenges you're facing. In turn, you can deliver more memorable experiences that resonate with audiences and stakeholders alike.

# How Event Planners Can Thrive in a Digital-first World

The world of event management is rapidly evolving, driven by technological advancements and changes in attendees' expectations.

To explore how event planners can navigate the evolving landscape of the industry, we spoke with Emily Biviano, General Manager at Membes, a leading Association Management System (AMS). Emily shared valuable insights into the challenges organizations face, with a distinct focus on associations, along with strategies to drive success and the transformative role of technology in shaping the future of events.

## Associations in the digital era

Historically, associations served as the central hub for industry information, professional development, and networking opportunities. However, the arrival of the digital age has significantly changed this dynamic.

"Before the internet, associations were the go-to source for everything industry-related," explains Emily. "Now, people can access a wealth of information with a quick Google or AI search, making it harder for associations to compete."

## Engaging the next generation

One of the most pressing challenges Emily identifies for associations is the need to reach and engage younger generations. As digital natives, they are used to accessing information and networking opportunities online, often bypassing traditional association channels.

This shift has prompted associations to re-evaluate their value propositions.

To stay relevant, Emily stresses the importance of offering unique value that cannot be easily found online. This includes fostering deeper, more personalized networking opportunities and offering tailored events that resonate with members' specific interests and needs.

"To capture the attention of younger members, associations must offer something beyond what they can find on their own — a sense of community, mentorship opportunities, and events that cater to their professional growth."

## Managing resource constraints

Beyond the need to build engaged communities, associations often operate with limited human and financial resources, making it difficult to manage the countless number of tasks involved in event planning and member engagement.

"Resource constraints can prevent a good event from becoming a great one," explains Emily. "This challenge underscores the need for associations to adopt efficient, automated solutions that can handle routine tasks, freeing up staff to focus on strategic initiatives."



## Leveraging data and technology in event management

According to Emily, technology plays a pivotal role in addressing these challenges. She highlights the importance of leveraging data to make more informed decisions, particularly in the context of event planning.

"Data-driven insights are crucial for understanding what members want and ensuring that events stay relevant and engaging. By analyzing past events and member interactions, associations can refine their offerings and create experiences that truly resonate with their audiences."

Emily also highlighted the importance of integrating AI and machine learning into association management systems (AMS).

"These technologies can help associations personalize member experiences, identify trends, and automate routine tasks, making operations more efficient," she says. "For example, an AI-powered AMS will be able to track member behavior, such as content consumption and event attendance, and associations can use this data to offer personalized recommendations and networking opportunities."

## The future of events: From hybrid models to data-driven decisions

Looking ahead, Emily sees a bright future for associations that embrace the right strategies and technologies. While hybrid events have gained popularity, she believes their long-term viability will depend on the association's ability to manage costs and resources effectively. More importantly, she sees a shift towards more targeted, personalized events that prioritize quality connections over quantity.

"The future of association events lies in the organizations ability to harness data and use it to create meaningful, tailored experiences for their members. By leveraging data and AI, associations can create more relevant and engaging events, build stronger member communities, and stay ahead of industry trends." Emily concluded.



Emily Biviano  
General Manager  
Membes

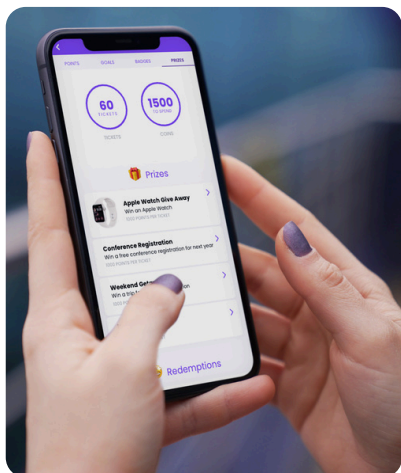
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# Event Technology Adoption and Investment

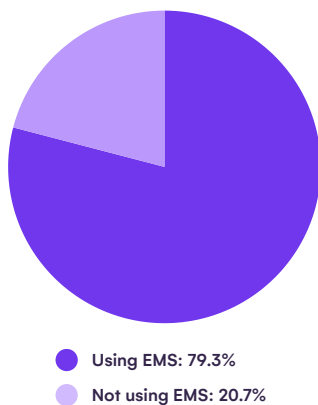
Event professionals are increasingly turning to technology to simplify planning and execution. Our survey highlights a strong reliance on event management software to streamline operations and improve attendee experiences.

According to our findings, 79.3% of respondents use event management software (EMS), demonstrating widespread adoption across the industry. These platforms are valued for their ability to integrate a myriad of helpful event management tools such as registration, attendee engagement, and post-event reporting into a centralized system, reducing administrative burdens.

However, 20.7% of respondents still rely on alternative methods, such as spreadsheets or standalone tools. These systems, while familiar, often lack the integration and scalability needed for complex events, leaving planners more vulnerable to inefficiencies and communication breakdowns.



What system(s) do you currently use for event management?



For many, the adoption of EMS addresses several key challenges, including budget constraints and attendee engagement. Automation reduces manual tasks, improving cost efficiency, while advanced analytics provide insights into attendee behavior, allowing for personalized and engaging experiences.

The growing reliance on EMS reflects a broader shift toward technology-driven event planning. As more professionals embrace these tools, their ability to track data, enhance productivity, and deliver seamless experiences is reshaping event planning for the better.

Technology investments are shaping the future of events. Professionals are prioritizing tools that drive efficiency, engagement, and ROI, with spending trends revealing the industry's evolving focus.

## Event Technology in Use

Our data reveals that event professionals are leveraging a variety of technologies, with specific platforms being chosen based on their unique needs.

Notably, EventsAir emerged as the dominant choice, with 75% of respondents who currently use EMS indicating they rely on this platform.

In addition to EventsAir, tools such as SurveyMonkey, Mailchimp, and Zoom are frequently integrated into workflows, reflecting the importance of seamless communication, data collection, and virtual accessibility.

The use of mixed or bespoke technology stacks underscores the need for compatibility. Professionals require systems that integrate smoothly, reducing inefficiencies and enhancing attendee experiences. Whether for survey distribution, email marketing, or virtual meetings, the ability to unify tools within a cohesive system is critical to streamlining operations and maximizing impact.

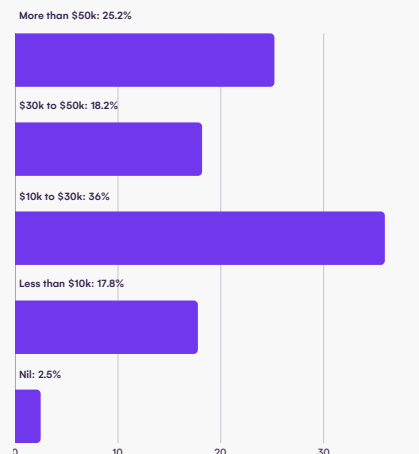
## Event Technology Investment

Our survey found that 36% of respondents invest \$10K–\$30K annually in technology, making it the most common range. Significant investments are also being made by 25.2% of respondents who allocate over \$50K to event technology each year. These figures reflect the growing importance of scalable solutions for both large-scale and more budget-conscious events.

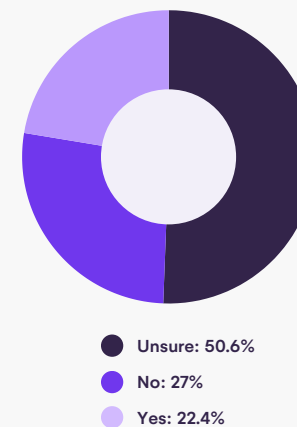
However, 50.6% of respondents remain uncertain about future tech budgets, indicating a cautious approach to spending. Still, 22.4% plan to increase their investment in event technology this year, signaling confidence in tools that enhance efficiency and attendee satisfaction.

Balancing budgets while ensuring event tech is integrated and flexible will be key to delivering successful, engaging, and efficient events in 2025.

How much do you spend on event technology per year? (In USD)



Are you planning to increase your investment in event technology in 2025?



# Looking to 2025 and Beyond

We asked respondents a simple question: "What trends do you see emerging in the events industry that you believe will impact your future events?" The answers revealed some exciting insights into the future of events in 2025.

## AI is Top of Mind

Artificial Intelligence is poised to transform event planning and delivery. Respondents emphasized its potential to automate workflows, personalize attendee experiences, and enhance engagement. From recommending tailored sessions to generating sponsorship proposals, AI is helping professionals address key challenges like attendee engagement and resource constraints.

Our survey aligns with global trends showing attendees expect event planners to adopt eco-friendly practices.

Initiatives such as carbon offset programs, digital materials, and waste reduction strategies are becoming standard. Planners who embrace sustainability not only meet attendee expectations but also position themselves as forward-thinking and socially responsible.

## Balancing Costs and Innovation

Despite the focus on innovation, cost concerns remain a significant challenge. Budget pressures remain a universal concern, driving planners to adopt integrated platforms and automation to do more with less.

Tools that consolidate registration, engagement, and analytics streamline operations, allowing professionals to allocate resources effectively. Cost-saving innovations, such as virtual components in traditionally in-person events, further address financial constraints.

The convergence of these trends highlights the industry's resilience and adaptability. The trends shaping tomorrow's events are all about finding the right balance — between innovation and budget, and technology and sustainability — all whilst remaining flexible and responsive to rising attendee expectations.

“

**AI is definitely a hot topic right now. We've started using it for things like generating event descriptions and even creating sponsorship proposals. It's amazing how much time it can save, and the results are often better than what we could have come up with on our own.**

Shari Bricks, Managing Director at Bond Association Management



## Sustainability as a Growing Priority

"Another trend is the push toward sustainability", confirmed Shari. "We're seeing fewer printed materials and more reliance on mobile apps, which is great for reducing our environmental footprint. Sustainability has been a big topic for years, but it's finally becoming more actionable with the technology available today."

# Final Thoughts

The events industry is in a state of rapid transformation, and with it comes both opportunities and challenges.

Staying ahead requires embracing new tools, adapting to shifting expectations, and navigating the complexities of budgets and resource constraints. It's not always easy — change can be daunting, and the challenges you face are significant.

But here's the thing: as event planners, you're some of the most creative, driven, and resourceful professionals out there. Whether it's solving last-minute issues or crafting unforgettable experiences, the work you do has a profound impact. Knowing that your peers are facing similar hurdles — whether it's engaging attendees, managing costs, or adopting new technologies — can be a powerful reminder that you're not in this alone.

Yes, embracing change takes effort, and challenges can feel like impossible roadblocks. But the key is to approach these shifts with an open mind and a focus on innovation.

This report is a reminder of what's possible. It's packed with insights and strategies to help you tackle the challenges ahead — whether it's designing engaging content, managing logistics, or embracing sustainability. Events have always been about connection and impact, and with the right approach, you can deliver experiences that inspire and endure.

## EventsAir: A partner for your success

At EventsAir, we're here to help. Our platform is designed to empower event professionals like you with the tools to overcome challenges, streamline workflows, and create impactful experiences.



Ready to explore how technology can transform your events?

Visit [www.eventsair.com](http://www.eventsair.com) to learn more today.

