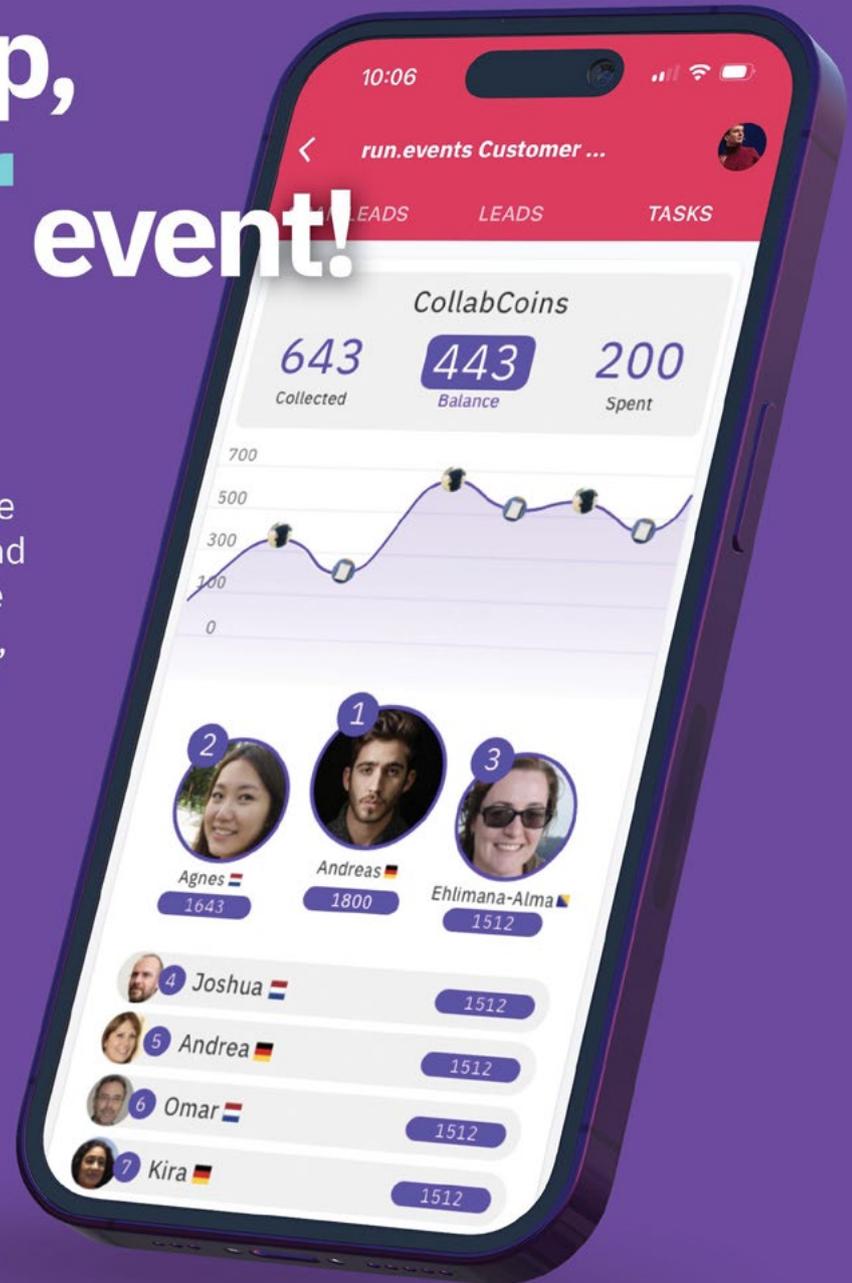# control

RUN.EVENTS MAGAZINE

Event technology
Event organizers
Event marketing
Case studies
Tips & tricks

It is your app, for **your** event!

run.events mobile app takes over the visual identity of your event, which significantly improves the attendee experience and boosts the identification between the event and attendees. Users can easily browse the agenda, speakers and sessions, connect with other attendees, chat with them, create private chat groups, or join public ones.

The home feed of the run.events mobile app displays upcoming sessions, important notifications, pending connection requests, and incoming messages from various chats.

You as an organizer can use the run.events app to send attendees mobile notifications, or to display in-app banners, which you can use for important announcements, or for promotion of your sponsors.

run·events

● Everything is Under Control – The Story of run.events

The first time I encountered the event industry was 22 years ago when Microsoft invited me to address a large audience about one of their products. As a software architect and engineer turned entrepreneur, my company and I were well-versed in software engineering. Yet, the allure of events has gripped me for over two decades. Since that initial invitation, I have spoken at over 500 events, primarily on business, technology, and software architecture.

Back in 2012, I took a leap and organized my first event. It was an undeniable success: 250 attendees, a stellar program, great networking, delicious catering, and a memorable party. For this event, we used one of the ticketing systems available on the market, manually curated an HTML page for the agenda, and managed sponsors through an Excel spreadsheet.

Realizing we wanted to repeat that event, it was clear that automation was essential. I developed a content submission form via WordPress, allowing speakers to submit their session proposals. This streamlined content selection and made it easier to display data on our website. A web application for managing sponsors soon followed, dramatically simplifying our keeping track of sponsorship negotiations and sponsorship contracts, as well as displaying sponsors on our web site.

Yet, there were dozens of exports and imports between different systems needed to make everything work.

As the years rolled by, our event scaled to 2,500 attendees, and we even launched a spin-off event with 1,200 attendees. Event organization transformed from a side hobby to a full-scale business, employing seven dedicated staff members. As we expanded, complexities arose. For instance, we now manage an expo featuring 75 sponsors and exhibitors. This is great, but at this scale, mistakes easily happen. For example, we have great booth-building partners, but they lack technological expertise and they handle all the purchases manually, which caused a few grievances here and there. To overcome these problems, we created a booth order subsystem, enabling exhibitors to choose booth layouts, furniture, and upload designs. This innovation was a revelation for our booth-builders, but it necessitated yet another export and import of our event data.

Our reliance on a myriad of tools, countless Excel sheets, and continuous data exports and imports severely impacted our team's efficiency and creativity. Rather than focusing on delivering exceptional events, we found ourselves engrossed in the intricate web of disjointed systems.

Though we explored established event management systems available in the market, they often fell short. Most of them lacked crucial features, especially around sponsors and content, and they mostly demanded exorbitant upfront costs. Given the post-pandemic state of the event industry, these approaches seemed impractical.

As mentioned before, we are also software engineers, and without false modesty – good ones at that. In 2021, we decided to take matters into our own hands and develop a comprehensive enterprise event management system that would encompass everything mentioned above and much more. It would be cool, fun to use, and by letting event organizers keep everything under control (as our slogan says), it would save them time and free their creative energy to make awesome events.

It would also save them money by eliminating costs they pay for different tools and by implementing a pay-as-you-go approach, which would enable them to grow without worrying about huge upfront costs.

So, here is run.events, the event industry's smoothest operating system, which helps event organizers to keep everything under control. With run.events, event organizers can streamline event management, enhance security, and cut costs by up to 50% compared to traditional methods described above.

And, here is the first edition of our run.events magazine, which we simply call "Control". Because, as mentioned before, everything is under control.

I hope you will enjoy reading it.

Warm regards,

Adis Jugo
President (Technology) at run.events
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run.events
MAGAZINE

EVENT
TECHNOLOGY

The rise and impact of Event Management Software

As the name suggests, event management software serves a wide variety of features at the disposal of event organizers. Choosing between high-end or lower-level event management software goes along with the individual needs of event organizers. As a general rule, select the right one based on the possibilities for integration and their depth.

Event management software constantly evolves

Event management software itself constantly evolves, but the go-to-market version must contain essential features to ease event organizers' day-to-day tasks. run.events platform's main focus is on the features that help event organizers with seamless ticketing configurations and sales, tickets and attendee management, customers and invoicing, customer relationship management (CRM), sponsors management, and speakers and agenda management.

Event Ticketing

Ticket sales generate the biggest amount of revenue in the event business. Maximizing revenue opportunities is a priority for any event management software currently available. These are some of its features: supporting easy ticketing and transparency about prices and discounts. In response to demand, run.events built its main features around tickets, attendees, finances, and payment processes. Here are some of its main features:

- Ticket type management, advanced ticket rules and options, ticket add-ons, and ticket options targeted to different audience groups
- Ticket sales, invoice issuing, and management
- Payments management, financial reporting
- Managing ticket refunds and cancellations, issuing cancellation documents
- Managing vouchers and corporate customers
- Conference badge design and printing for attendees, speakers, sponsors, and service providers
- Attendee check-ins and registration desk management

Lead scanning and retrieval services

Let's not forget that event sponsors and partners offer financial stability to event organizers firsthand and a great sense of credibility for future iterations by generating bigger ticket sales and growth in attendance. In general, sponsors are looking for power options when it comes to lead scanning and retrieval services and, at the same time, transparency inside sponsorship packages. In this area, run.events offer sponsors and partners multiple features:

- Global CRM: Ability to manage all sponsors, service providers, and other key customers in an easy-to-use CRM
- Manage sponsorship items, packages, and contracts per event and sponsor. Organizers are always aware of which sponsorships are closed, which are still in the acquiring process, and which are lost opportunities
- Seamless creation of sponsorship contracts, contract upgrades, and invoicing
- Automated creation of sponsorship tickets
- Self-service area for sponsorship management, lead management, and lead analytics

Fully automated control

High-end event management software must provide event organizers with completely automated control around speakers management and agenda management such as:

- Publishing and managing Call for Speakers (CfP)
- Managing the content team and automating the whole content selection process
- Schedule builder and agenda management
- Speaker management and speaker communications
- Automated creation of speaker tickets
- Team chat and team communications
- Document upload and document management
- Mobile app for attendees, networking, chat, agenda overview, personal schedule building, sessions overview, speakers and sponsors information
- Session check-ins and self-check-ins within the mobile app
- Lead scanning and lead management for sponsors within the mobile app
- Mobile app gamification

Driving conference organizers to a completely new level

Event management software has the ability to take your events or conferences to a completely new level. The difference between the run.events and other platforms on the market is in the event organizing experience of its creators, which has led to multiple solutions that allow running the business smoothly and without losing valuable time.

How to design an ecosystem for all event stakeholders

Every event organizer deals with great constraints today. From managing numerous details using multiple apps and tools to support decisions and planning processes to arranging the key aspects of an event. Unforeseen incidents, vendor-related issues, sudden bottlenecks in cash flow, last-minute tasks, or misalignments in short-and long-term plans are the tip of the event-organizing iceberg. These tasks are of great importance to event organizers but, at the same time, drain a lot of energy if tackled all at once. Event organizers have dreamed for a long time how to design an ecosystem for all event stakeholders.

Innovation-driven from professional experience

Based on a decade of experience in organizing one of the largest technology conferences in Europe, run.events has created an entirely new innovation-driven approach toward building an event management platform by offering a continuous ecosystem for all stakeholders (i.e., event organizers, attendees, sponsors, speakers, service providers). The system enables event organizers to run the business entirely without a set-up fee and upfront costs, with a practical pricing model based on a commission fee. The business and pricing model relies on sales commission and requires no upfront license costs.

## Key disruption areas

Event management software such as run.

events is looking to provide numerous solutions for all involved stakeholders inside the events industry by:

- Offering an enterprise management platform that will enable every event organizer to manage its entire business, including multiple events, over multiple years
- Offering a pricing model based on ticket sales commission, which eliminates financial and other risks for the event organizer
- Offering attendees to use one account with a simplified way to manage their business networks for all conferences they attend
- Enabling all event stakeholders (i.e., sponsors, exhibitors, speakers, and service partners in self-service areas) to gain insights into conference engagements, orders, deliverables, and due date

Event management platform for all event stakeholders

Understanding the status quo has led to the creation of an ecosystem tailored for all event stakeholders. This unique blend of subject matter expertise and technological know-how transforms the landscape, introducing much-needed innovation to the event industry.
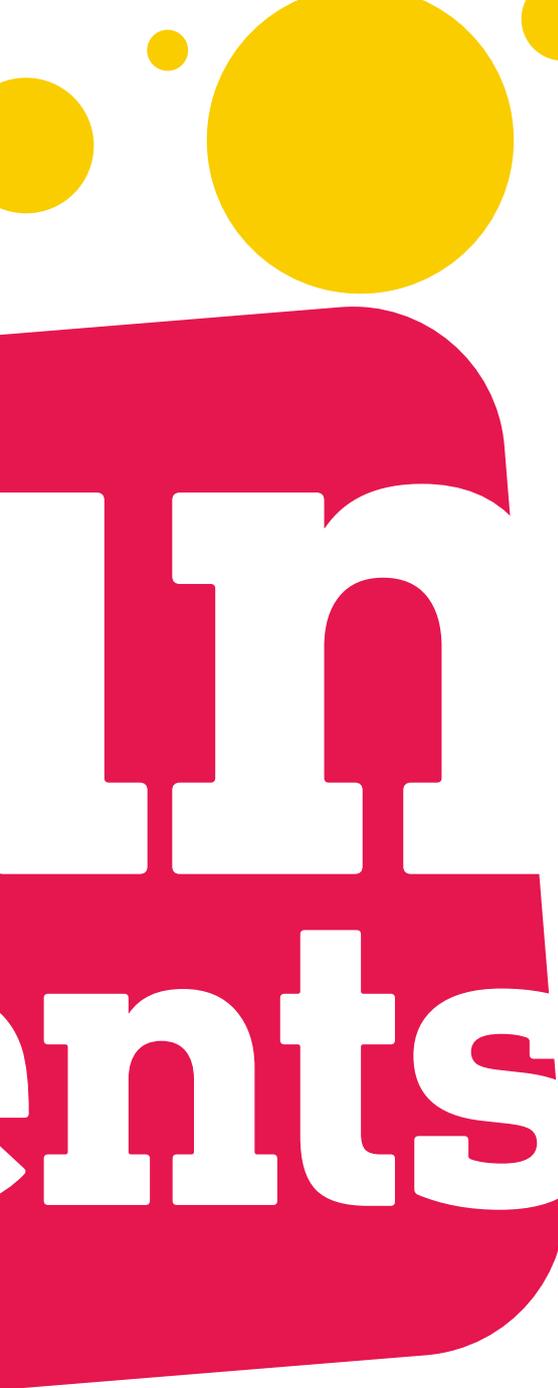
● Most common mistakes when choosing event technology

With revamped post-pandemic interest in onsite events, event technology has become a hot topic again. But before explaining how to avoid common mistakes when choosing event technology for your business, first, we must understand what it is. Event technology is the set of digital tools that help event organizers execute projects and run their events. Today, as it was regular in the past, event planners combine different sets of tools to manage their events. On the opposite side, we have event management software that combines all these tools under one roof. Usually chosen by professional event organizers. Alas, the predominant event organizers' preference still is to stick with a combination of various event technologies. Therefore, it's common to make mistakes using certain types of tools that are badly optimized or even unnecessary for the type of business.

Unsure how to use the latest event technology

Significant advances in event technology, such as importing and exporting data, gamification for attendees, event badge printing, or development of event management software, can make a difference in driving the audience to your events and enriching the overall attendee experience, not to mention boosting sponsorship relations for even greater event success. Unfortunately, event organizers are mostly unsure of how to use the latest event technology to optimize the engagement of their attendees. Knowing what not to do makes it easier to advance in cognition of event technology advancements. Let's see what common mistakes you should avoid when choosing event technology.

Ignoring the needs of your audience

In case you are just entering into the event industry, before diving into the world of event technology, it's essential to take a step back and understand the needs and preferences of your target audience. One of the most significant mistakes event planners make is selecting technology that doesn't align with their attendees' expectations.

Consider the demographic of your audience. Are they tech-savvy millennials who expect interactive event apps and live streaming? Or are they seasoned professionals who value networking opportunities facilitated by robust matchmaking tools? If avoided, it can lead to a mismatch between your target audience and the chosen event technology.

Failing to define clear objectives

A common mistake in event planning is not setting clear objectives for the event and, consequently, not aligning your technology choices with these objectives. Every event should always have a purpose.

Overlooking budget constraints

It looks like something that shouldn't be considered a mistake even by the rookie event organizers, but it commonly is by many. Event technology can be a significant expense, and one of the biggest mistakes event planners make when choosing event technology is wrong budgeting. Overspending on technology can eat into other crucial aspects of your event, such as marketing or entertainment. Set a realistic budget for your event technology. Consider the initial costs and ongoing fees for support, updates, and maintenance.
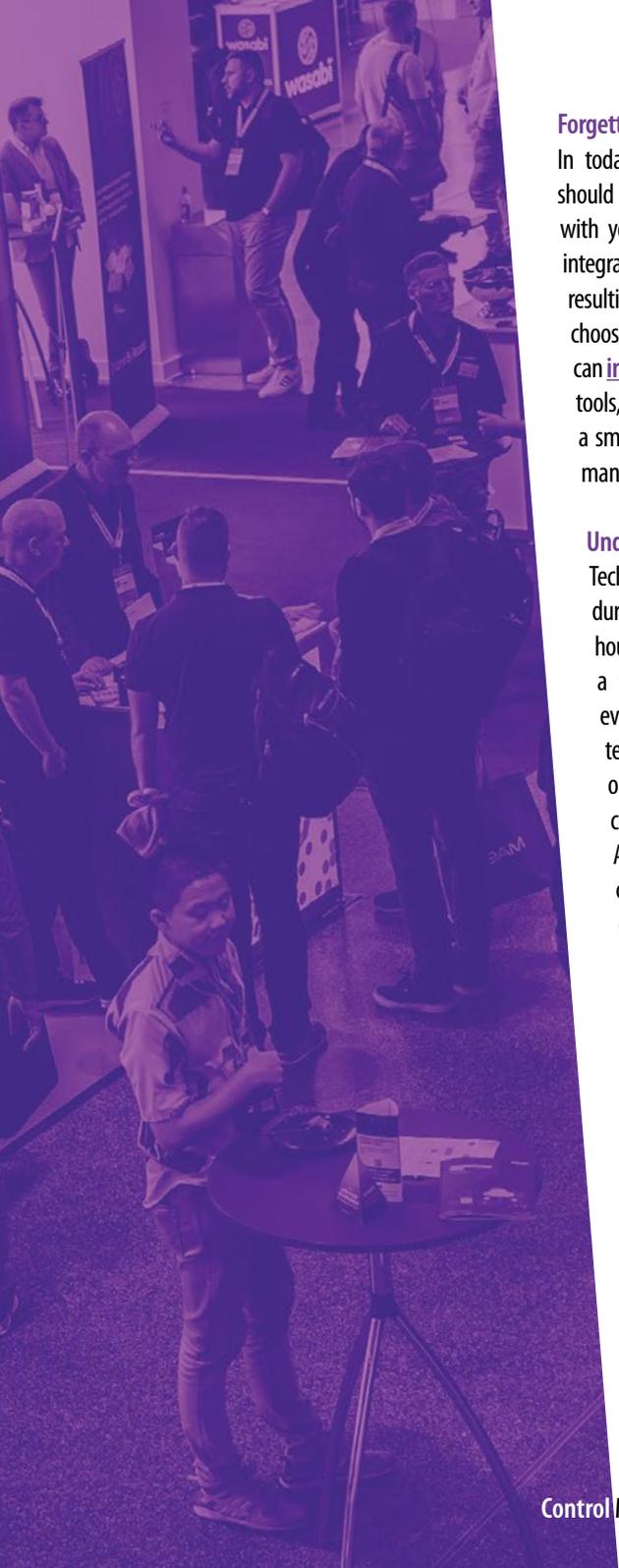
Forgetting about the upgrades

In today's digital landscape, event technology should complement and integrate seamlessly with your existing systems. Failing to consider integration capabilities is a common mistake, resulting in data silos and inefficiencies. When choosing event technology, make sure that it can **integrate with your CRM**, email marketing tools, and other essential systems. This ensures a smooth data flow and reduces the need for manual data entry.

Underestimating technical support

Technical glitches can be a nightmare during an event. Relying solely on your in-house IT team to handle potential issues is a mistake. Be absolutely certain that the event technology provider offers reliable technical support! This includes a helpline, on-site support during the event, and a clear escalation process for critical issues. A proactive approach to technical support can minimize downtime and frustration for organizers and attendees.

Overcomplicated user experience

While embracing the latest and most advanced event technology is tempting, overcomplicating the user experience is a common mistake. An overly complex interface can confuse and frustrate attendees. When choosing event technology, make sure it offers a user-friendly interface. Keep the user experience simple and intuitive.

Complicated registration procedures

Inefficient event registration leads to long lines, late start times, and anxious attendees. Get yourself familiar with various types of event technology, helping to smoothen up the registration process, but also don't hesitate to test it. For example, track the latest mobile printers for event badges and how to make them look great and more readable for scanning.

Misleading event layout

Event planners who rush through designing the physical setup of any event usually end up with confusing event layouts. It can create numerous problems for event staff and attendees (i.e., late activities, complicated setups for exhibitors or sponsors, getting lost in the venue, or decreased levels of attendee satisfaction). To avoid these mistakes, always create a floorplan for your event, it helps event planners to overcome and optimize the event experience throughout pre-event time, increase sales team performance levels, and bring more revenue from exhibitors.

Technology should be a helping hand, and not vice versa

Event planning techniques, insights, and technology constantly evolve, making choosing the right event technology necessary for the success of your event. Avoiding the above-mentioned common mistakes, such as neglecting audience needs, setting clear objectives, and overlooking budget constraints, makes a world of difference. Whether you opt to use standalone events or if your goal is to extract the most from professional tools such as event management software, event technology should always enhance the overall experience for organizers and attendees. Remember, technology should be a tool that simplifies and not complicates and frustrates.

EVENT
ORGANIZERS

● How to communicate with event speakers

It's often said that the speakers are the stars when it comes to conferences. With every year that your conference grows, so too does the demand for higher quality, influential speakers. Therefore, conference organizers dedicate a large amount of their time to defining who to communicate with event speakers to join their events.

When and how to communicate with conference speakers has become an art form, especially as organizers must pass on information effectively that goes beyond simple announcements (i.e., call for speakers, social media announcements, and email invitations). As an event organizer, if you want to do it right and grow your event speaker database, you should start by understanding who is the right fit for each event growth stage.

Finding event speakers starts with the selection process

Once you have defined the major topics with your planning team, it's time to think about your ideal event speakers. In addition to those who you already have in your network, you can start researching other conference speakers using different criteria (e.g., based on their social media network activity).

When you are satisfied with your selection, it's a good idea to provide them with event or conference guidelines. You should start with topic trends, presentation length, and general information about the Q&A session, slide formats, and best practices. Some organizers pay less attention to Q&A session dynamics, but as well as providing general guidelines to event speakers, this aspect helps attendees to understand the presentation better and clarify any questions they might have. Make sure to define how to communicate with event speakers on the phone or via email regarding organizing these sessions. Once event speakers accept the conference invitation, it's reasonable to ask for their help regarding promotion. It will save you time if you ask them this once you have produced their speaker cards and other promotional materials.

Pre-event communication with speakers

The Call for Papers is crucial as it sets the tone of your entire conference. Conference organizers use different event management software to simplify the organization process. Among their many features, these products successfully call for, collect and evaluate paper submissions. Event management software such as run.events

provides event planners with automated ways to communicate with speakers.

Before announcing the Call for Papers, you should always go through the following checklist:

- Announce the abstract deadlines on your website and in your event newsletter
- Provide accurate contact information within the Call for Papers
- Use product(s) that can automatically communicate via email to authors who have successfully submitted their abstract
- After the papers have been selected, be ready to announce the final agenda with all selected topics and request that authors provide speaker photos to be displayed on the conference website and converted into speaker cards for social media promotion

Remember, if you want effective speaker management, you must value and dedicate time to define how to communicate with event speakers. Check-in with confirmed ones well in advance about their needs for travel, accommodation, and any other requirements.

Post-event communication ensures quality future events

Communication with event speakers should continue after the event or conference has finished. Ensure your event app is active beyond the conference's final day, as it allows your attendees to continue to rate speakers, talks and follow-up events.

Remember to send thank you notes and emails to all your speakers. In addition, it's always a good idea to include online photo journals, as speakers like to talk about any event where they had positive interactions and experiences with the audience. You will easily increase your publicity reach and ensure you have happy speakers.

Collecting information to evaluate the event is important to professional organizers because it creates awareness of where to improve. This might be crucial for attracting your top targets later on. Feel free to use live polls or surveys as an integral part of event mobile apps.

Satisfied event speakers are looking for long-lasting professional relationships

Satisfied event speakers are usually the most engaged and regularly show interest in building long-term professional relationships. Taking your work as a conference organizer to the next level and defining how to communicate with event speakers through all event planning stages allows you to build a robust process for speaker management. This is vital because, after all, the speakers are what attendees look forward to the most.

How to manage event health and safety for everyone

Events change and develop over the course of time, but one aspect you shouldn't forget - making them safe for everyone attending. Whether it's a music festival or a business conference, prioritizing event safety is essential. Event planners should always be concerned about implementing various measures to make everyone attending safe, comfortable, and willing to return. Making events safe for everyone can't be achieved using a one-rule-fits-all approach. However, using our set of guidelines can be useful to create a small set of improvements directing you toward event success.

Pre-event planning and risk assessment

The foundations of health and safety at an event lie in meticulous planning and risk assessment conducted by event planners. It's a well-known fact that risk can manifest in everything, from equipment and power failures to food safety concerns or sponsors' withdrawal. Find your power to prevail over anything by considering all the aspects, from venue layout and infrastructure to emergency protocols.

Engage a dedicated safety team to conduct risk assessments to address health and safety concerns adequately.

Communication and education

Clear communication creates awareness and sets expectations for event attendees. Use various channels to disseminate crucial information about health and safety measures at an event, before, during, and after. For example, use event mobile apps that allow customers to create customized solutions, such as a standalone section dedicated to explaining important health and safety measures. Construct this section to emphasize the importance of personal hygiene and proper respiratory etiquette. Also, using your website, you can encourage attendees to stay informed about updates using the event app.

Crowd management at venues

Effective crowd management is a cornerstone of event safety. Always consider designing event layouts with crowd flow in mind, their entry and exit points, emergency exits, and accessible routes for those with disabilities. It might come in handy during the registration process to employ trained professionals when managing crowd movements or to anticipate potential bottlenecks that are beneficial to safety for everyone.

Sanitation and overall hygiene

When considering managing health and

safety at an event, maintaining cleanliness and promoting good hygiene practices can significantly reduce the spread of diseases. Provide a sufficient number of hand sanitizing stations throughout the venue and encourage their regular use. Arrange for regular cleaning and disinfection of high-touch surfaces, restrooms, and food service areas. Ensure that food vendors follow strict hygiene and safety regulations, and double-check again.

Medical support on-site

It's a standard measure, but never enough to remind ourselves again. Plan events to be ready to handle medical emergencies. Negotiate with the venue staff or on your own (depending on the occasion) for a medical-trained team or first aid stations staffed by trained professionals who can promptly respond to any health-related incidents.

Safety isn't an option but an obligation

Event planners should keep at the forefront of their efforts to create health and safety at an event for everyone. Following all our guidelines and implementing robust safety measures creates an environment where attendees feel secure, valued, and free to enjoy the event experience. In addition, it will make everyone attending safe, comfortable, and willing to come back again. Therefore, control measures and do the revisions so that your approach can be varied for the next event.

8 cost-cutting tips for your next event

With event costs on the rise and **inflation** striking all aspects of the global economy, organizing events becomes a challenging task. However, the booming need for in-person contact affects the event industry returning in full force. Demand for on-site events thrives continuously, making event organizers figure out ways to deliver engaging experiences to the next event while holding firm on the bottom line.

Organizing an event is costly, so take our eight cost-cutting tips for your next event to deliver without impacting success.

1. Start your plans early

One of the most effective ways to save money for your next event is to start planning early. In that sense, you can secure venues and vendors at lower rates. At the same time, you can carefully plan the right mix of event ticket types that will have a major effect on the event outcome. Additionally, planning early can help you avoid rush fees and last-minute expenses that could compromise your budget.

2. Venue selection

Venue selection is one of the biggest expenses and a valuable field where our cost-cutting tips for your next event will have an effect. You can save money on choosing a budget-friendly venue and think more creatively considering community centers or your office space for smaller events. These venues are usually more willing to negotiate lower rates. Therefore, allocate some time to go directly to event venues, scout, and speak to the venue team. As always, seeing is believing!

3. Equipment and facilities

Consider various event facilities included in the hire cost when looking for an event venue. Some venues will have everything you need, while some will demand to use third-party providers. Those offering in-house equipment will contribute to cost-cutting efforts for your next event. Also, make sure that the venue is close to city airports or major train stations, as it additionally lowers the traveling costs of your speakers or performers.

4. Flexibility on dates

Flexibility is one of the greatest cost-cutting tips for your next event that we can offer. If you can be flexible on dates, you can negotiate with venues and unlock lower rates. Asking venues about their low season or when they imply off-peak rates is a nice approach that should help you understand what would be ideal for placing your next event.

5. Social media presence

Of course, you can't completely focus your marketing strategy on social media, so try to use it as a powerful marketing weapon and a cost-cutting tip for your next event. When used strategically, it can help you engage with attendees throughout the lifecycle of your event. Social media is the perfect platform **for quick, impactful announcements**. Also, one of the most important benefits when using social media is to be one step ahead of your competition, knowing who is considering or coming to your conference.

6. Reduce the number of attendees

When nothing else contributes to cost-cutting efforts for your next event, reducing the number of attendees is one of the easiest ways to cut costs. However, it will simultaneously reduce the overall aura around your event or conference. Event planners must be very careful when considering actions like these, and it should be used as a last resort. Consider inviting only those essential for your event: minimum audience, minimal staff, stakeholders, and key customers.

7. Registration

Automation has become an important part of conferences and aligns well with conference badges. Badge printouts can be done on-site or remotely, which strongly affects processing speed and contributes to cost-cutting efforts for your next event. Platforms like run.events use high-speed, industry-leading technology to print branding and attendee information onto a blank badge in seconds. Using this technology can save up to 10% by permitting attendees to self-enter data or preload registrants.

8. Waste reduction

Reducing the waste of unused badges and other materials that need to be taken and deposited from the event venue is one of the best cost-cutting tips for your next event. Not only does it make organizing events easier for you, but it also eliminates the manual effort associated with entering leads into CRM. Professional management platforms with variable pricing methods offer enterprise-grade event management features **to those who would otherwise not be able to afford them**, allowing complete compatibility with the most reputable CRMs available.

Cost-cutting must never damage experience or event quality

Using our cost-cutting tips will help you maintain event plans throughout seemingly turbulent years ahead. By implementing our eight cost-cutting tips, you can reduce expenses without compromising the quality of your event. Otherwise, it shouldn't come at the expense of your guest experience or event quality.

EVENT
MARKETING

What it takes to build an event community

For any event organizer, simply having one-off success shouldn't be the main goal. Rather, professional event organizers seek ways to have year-round engagement with their audience. At some point, these efforts and great content nurture a loyal event community. Suppose your event brand is the one that gives year-round value to your industry. If so, it can create cohesion among your audience, build a loyal event community, and introduce your event organization as a market leader. To build an event community, event planners need to understand community wishes and their professional needs to be able to deliver content that should provide answers instead of raising more questions.

Building an event community takes time

To grow an event community takes time, and since there is no all-in-one solution, organizers need to use various techniques. One of the most basic mistakes happens at the beginning of the journey when conference organizers decide to charge less or give away free tickets. The idea is to get more people involved, but usually, it's counter-productive. Free events generally have higher 'no-show' rates and devaluing the event can create a less emotional investment for people to attend.

It doesn't mean setting ludicrous prices at the beginning of your project. You can give attendees options to pay a reasonable price and donate a small amount of money simultaneously. Make sure your social media posts look good and, in the case of a conference, involve star speakers. This can be achieved during event prep when developing conference content, as it is crucial in understanding your audience's needs.

During the first conference year, you won't build a loyal community instantaneously, but this shouldn't disappoint you. Engaging your audience is as much about targeting messages at the right time. Collecting data is a great way to start, and the first feedback you receive from your audience can be an eye-opener.

Setting different sets of values helps

Generating excitement and anticipation should be a priority for your team. There are several ways to get your community excited. One of the most proven ways is to communicate with forthcoming conference speakers. That's doable by creating speaker cards announcing the most prominent ones and those who bring new insights into the topics your conference will cover. Behind-the-scenes videos, images, press releases, or just a simple countdown to the event will also work. Still, you can also think of having community special offers (i.e., discounts, VIP passes, speaker area access passes).

Work that never stops

Once your event is over, communication and interaction with the audience mustn't stop. Continue conversations to extend event excitement and energy for as long as possible (e.g., bring online topics that have received much interest on-site). Networking plays a very important part at conferences and especially contributes to the growth of your community. Doing follow-ups with introductions and connections helps with growth, just the same as with feedback. But let's not forget that organizers need to collect as much feedback as possible from all stakeholders while the impressions are still fresh and recognizable. In that case, you can use an event management platform or standalone apps to send automated emails conducting surveys about conference quality and areas where you can improve (e.g., satisfaction with the registration desk waiting times or catering). Finally, organizers seeking to build loyal communities must think about memories. Providing video recordings from all conference stages, presentations and a wrap video helps build long-lasting relationships within your community.

● Pricing your conference in 2024

Planning a conference involves many steps, from content to technical aspects. One of these steps leads towards defining a crucial decision: how to price your conference. Discussions can go in many directions, but if the price is too small and doesn't clear the costs, your conference will make losses. If the price is too high, you risk attracting lower attendance. In short, the price of your conference should be low enough to attract attendees but high enough to reflect the value of the content and not compromise the fixed and variable costs of your conference. Before reaching a final decision, conference organizers must be aware of the main factors affecting pricing calculations.

4 factors that affect conference price

On-site conference costs are mainly related to the venue, equipment and catering.The selection of an event venue is strongly affected by knowing **what the rental includes**. It makes a significant difference knowing if the venue charges additional amounts for audio-visual equipment on top of the venue rental fee, whether the venue provides conference furniture (i.e., tables, chairs, podiums), or if certain items have to be rented separately. Knowing this factor helps to know how to price your conference, as the costs can double if you have parallel lines in the budget.

Before organizing a conference, you must know if the chosen venue can provide **in-house catering and refreshments** (e.g., costs included in the rental value). If so, this factor significantly affects how to price your event. If not, organizers must contact various suppliers, asking for at least three quotes for comparison.

If you consider using **professional conference software**, ensure you understand what event technology features are included. Event management software such as run.events provides features from speaker management, hotel accommodation, ticketing, registrations, payments, and abstract submissions. These features offer the unique benefit of an all-in-one solution with various tools built to work together, which means you avoid having to pay separate fees to multiple vendors. It helps make the challenge of organizing a conference a bit easier and cheaper.

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, on-site conferences are definitely back. However, most organizers are obliged to provide a **virtual experience** (hybrid events) for those who want to continue to participate from the safety of their homes. Forward-thinking conference organizers should constantly keep an eye on technology offering streaming services with basic tools for live streaming and advanced networking solutions to satisfy the different expectations of target groups.

Types of conference pricing strategies

Event organizers can choose between these four pricing strategies depending on the conference scale and topic complexity.

1) Retail pricing - This is the most basic approach where you calculate expenses and profit margins and divide the sum by the lowest projected attendance figure. It demands accuracy. Otherwise, it can be easily misleading on how to price your conference.

2) Market pricing - This approach can be favorable if you have information that can accurately assume what your target attendee group can afford. It is the opposite of the retail approach since it begins by setting the price of admission and then works backward to build the conference within the budget.

3) Limited access pricing - This model offers multiple features and benefits to those who pay more. Conference tickets are segmented into levels (i.e., basic, VIP, premium), bringing additional value. Success comes from creating enough value at each ticket level to generate sufficient demand.

4) Value-based pricing - One of the most comprehensive strategies available on how to price your conference, but it requires a lot of advanced understanding and research. Often, it can help generate the best return from your event.

How to price your conference based on its value

Three key components contribute to how to price your conference: perceived value, actual price and cost per ticket. Perceived value is the value customers think they will get from the conference. The actual price is what the customer pays, which can be more or less than the perceived value. Organizers want to make the actual price as close to the perceived value as possible. The last component is the actual cost per ticket. These three components give you a full picture of your event.

In the value-based pricing model, conference attendees compare perceived value and price, while event organizers use cost per ticket to determine the baseline price. If the attendees' perceived value is higher than the ticket price, then attendees will decide to purchase a ticket, and if the cost per ticket is lower than that price, the organizer makes money. Value-based pricing is all about getting into the heads of your attendees. Its complexity demands that you look at other events your customers might choose to attend. This can give conference organizers a sense of what their customers expect to pay. A good place to start is determining how many different ticket types you are going to offer to your audience.

TIPS & TRICKS

Designing and printing event badges

When it comes to printing event badges, you might find yourself at a crossroads. Should you preprint badges for distribution during registration, or should you opt for on-site check-in and badge printing? Are you wondering whether your staff should handle badge printing at the registration desk or if self-service kiosks are the way to go? Managing badge replacements and handling lost badges can also be a challenge. Plus, it's crucial to ensure that your event management software can seamlessly support your scenarios. Otherwise, you might risk data chaos from multiple exports and imports across different systems.

Pre-printing badges in advance

Efficient printing of event badges is crucial for streamlined registration processes. The fastest way to manage it is by distributing pre-printed badges. With proper preparation and sorting, it takes just 10-20 seconds per attendee.

Any alternative approach will invariably add 10-20 seconds to the registration time. Even if you allocate only 10 seconds for each badge's printing, an event with 2,500 attendees can result in an additional 7 hours of registration time. While this time can be spread over multiple days and queues, it won't make the queues move any faster. However, pre-printing badges has its drawbacks. Late registrations and unprinted badges are common issues. Sorting pre-printed badges into manageable queue sizes can be challenging, as printers may mix them up despite your instructions. Plus, there's a concern about data security. Sending badge designs and personal data via Excel files to the print shop can raise GDPR concerns.

An ideal solution is to pre-print the majority of badges with your print shop. Late registrants' badges can be printed on-site at a dedicated desk in the registration hall. To enhance data security, avoid sending Excel files. Instead, create a PDF file with all badges ready to print. This approach minimizes errors and safeguards your attendees' personal information, ensuring a

smoother event management software experience.

Printing the event badges by yourself

When it comes to printing event badges, the options are plentiful, but remember that cost doesn't always equate to quality. Your initial decision involves choosing between printing the entire badge in one go or using empty badge templates with attendee data printed on stickers later. Opting to print the complete badge at once can involve a significant investment, ranging from $2,000 for entry-level models to over $10,000 for professional machines. Price variations are due to differences in printing technologies, supported badge sizes (some consider even standard A6 size as 'oversized'), and the complexity of operation (you might even need specialized staff to operate them).

On the flip side, more economical thermal printers like Brother, Zebra, or Dymo offer a different approach. Models from all three manufacturers are fully supported by run.events. They print stickers that adhere to pre-printed badge templates swiftly, usually in just 1-2 seconds. These sticker rolls are cost-

effective, eliminating concerns about replacing inkjet or laser printer cartridges during check-in. However, there are some drawbacks to the thermal printer approach. You'll need to leave enough white space on the badge templates for the stickers. Applying these stickers can be a bit time-consuming, taking about 3 seconds per side, especially if you prefer double-sided badges. Nevertheless, the quality of modern thermal printers and stickers has improved significantly, making the sticker nearly indiscernible unless you scrutinize it closely. For efficient event badge printing solutions that suit your needs and budget, consider these options carefully. Integrating the right event technology and event management software can further enhance your badge printing experience.

Your software needs to be your ally

When you make the decision to handle printing event badges independently, whether you're inclined towards pre-printing or on-site printing, and whether you're considering high-end badge printing devices or cost-effective thermal printers, your event management software must empower you to design and print badges seamlessly, eliminating the need for data exporting. Ideally, your software should maintain a precise record of the badges already printed to prevent duplications during batch printing. Avoiding data exports is key to ensuring that you maintain a clear overview of printed and pending badges,

sparing you from the risk of confusion regarding who has received their badge and who hasn't.

Bonus point one: Accurate check-in data

When you decide to go with rented hardware for printing event badges, it often entails a data export and import procedure. Unfortunately, this process can lead to inaccuracies in your check-in data, making it challenging to keep track of who has checked in at your event and when. In the best-case scenario, you'll receive raw data from the badge printing machine, typically in CSV format, which you'll then need to integrate with your existing data. It can be quite a cumbersome process.

Bonus Point Two: Badge invalidation and replacement

We've all encountered the scenario where an attendee approaches the registration desk requesting a replacement badge. Yet, it's not always clear whether they genuinely lost their badge or have other intentions. What happens when a 'lost badge' is scanned during

room entry? Managing such situations can be quite challenging, especially when using rented badge-printing devices that often lack this crucial contextual information due to their disconnected data imports from the rest of your system. Exploring integrated solutions for printing event badges and adopting advanced event technology can help streamline these challenges, ensuring a smoother event management experience.

Printing premium event badges using an Epson CW 3500 printer and expo badge paper

The Epson CW 3500 printer is extremely popular for conference badge printing because it offers quick, on-demand badge printing, which is essential for managing large volumes of attendees efficiently. Its compatibility with specialized fan-fold paper sizes such as 96.5 x 134 mm (3.8" x 5.3") Expo Badge simplifies the badge issuance process with one-step printing and folding. The 96.5 x 134 mm (3.8" x 5.3") badge size is optimal for displaying all necessary attendee information clearly without being overly bulky. This paper size is produced by various manufacturers in Europe and the USA, including smart2b, Nakagawa, and many others. The reliability of the Epson CW 3500 printer, along with the professional-looking and easy-to-print expo badges, make it a hassle-free solution, reducing the likelihood of technical issues during events.

run.events platform is fully compatible with the Epson CW 3500 printer and all its common label sizes, including the expo badge 96.5 x 134 mm (3.8" x 5.3") fan-fold paper, offering a seamless experience for conference organizers.

This compatibility eliminates the need for any additional software, streamlining the entire badge printing process. There's no need to export data from your platform to any costly external systems, as the platform directly communicates with the printer for on-the-fly badge creation.

Setting up the hardware
When you first purchase the Epson CW 3500
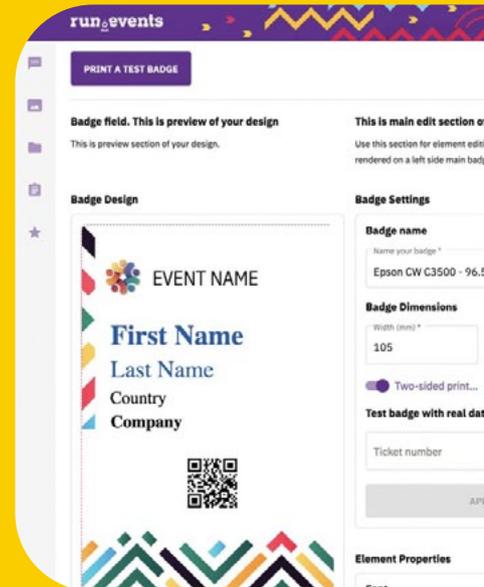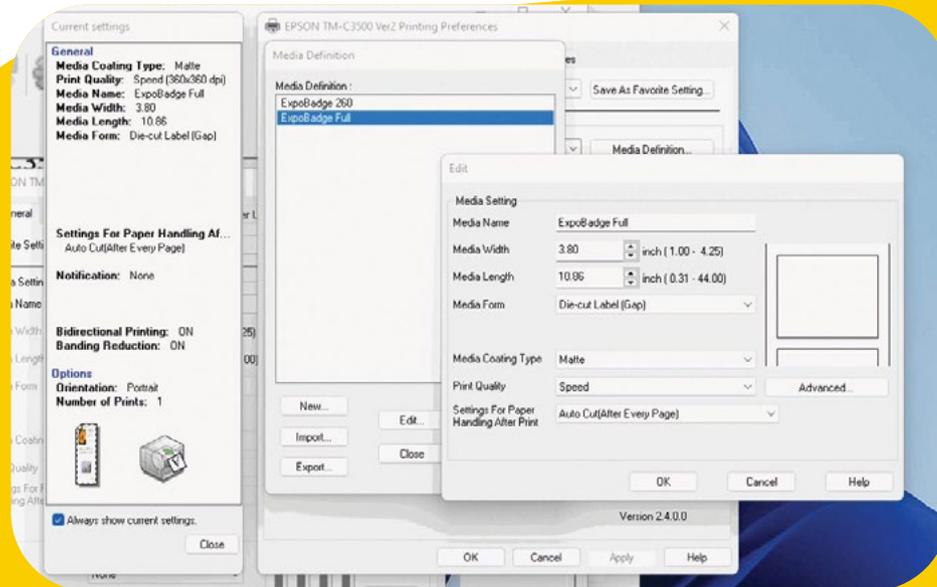
printer, it comes with a roll of sticker labels. You will want to replace these with expo badge fan-fold labels. The loading of these labels into the Epson CW 3500 is nicely explained in this video: **https://youtu.be/Qbvw8KDvyFA.**

Setting the Paper Size

Since the expo badge 96.5 x 134 mm labels are fan-fold, meaning they need to be folded and stuck together after printing, the Epson CW 3500 printer considers the full, double size as the paper size, including the cut-out margins. The destination paper size you need to set is 3.80" x 10.86". To make your life easier, we have prepared an XML file that you can import as a media definition.

Designing Your 96.5 x 134 mm (3.8" x 5.3") expo badges in run.events

If you choose to use run.events with the Epson ColorWorks CW 3500 and expo badge fan-fold paper, you can start with either a blank badge design or one of the three pre-designed templates currently offered within run.events. Whichever route you take, please ensure that you select both the "Two-sided printing" and "Fan-fold second page" options.

Then, you can design both the front and back sides of your badge.

How to print 96.5 x 134 mm (3.8" x 5.3") expo badges directly from run.events

Once you have designed your expo badges in run.events, you can print them the same way you would print any other badges from the platform. Go to either the "Tickets" or "Registration Desk" screens, select the tickets you want to print, choose your newly created badge design, and click the print button.
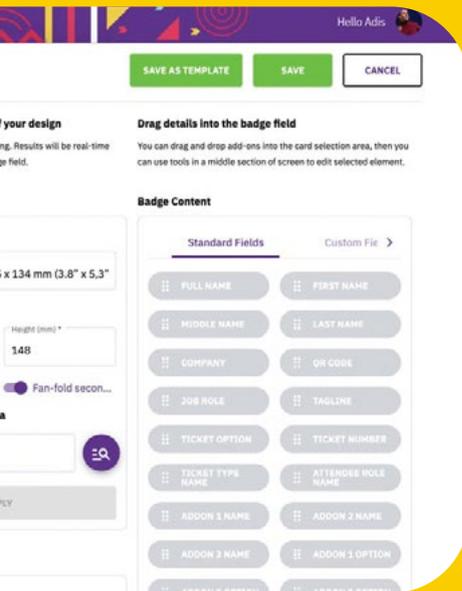
CASE STUDY

How to save money using run.events

Event planning can be a costly endeavor, but with run.events, you can expect substantial cost reductions. On average, event organizers can save up to 50% on their expenses by switching to similar systems. Let's walk through a real-life example involving a fictional event in Germany with 2,500 attendees and an average ticket price of 800€.

Ticketing

When it comes to event ticketing systems, Eventbrite is a popular choice for many, offering robust features like invoicing and refunds as part of their package. However, it's essential to consider the costs associated with Eventbrite's services. In the USA, they charge a 3.7% commission plus $1.79 per sold ticket, while in the UK, it's a 6.95% commission plus £0.59 per sold ticket. For our fictional event in Germany, Eventbrite imposes a fee of 5.5% plus €0.99 per sold ticket.

While Eventbrite is widely used, there are more cost-effective alternatives like ti.to, which offers fixed 3% service fees. But, it's important to note that these alternatives often lack comprehensive invoice management, including tax invoices, invoice corrections, cancellations, and tax statements.

Now, let's delve into a case study to demonstrate how you can save money and cut costs with event management software. We'll compare Eventbrite, ti.to, and run.events for our fictional event:

- Eventbrite: (2,500 x €800 x 5.5%) = €110,000 + (2,500 x 0.99) = €2,475. The total Eventbrite fee would be €112,475.
- ti.to: 2,500 x €800 x 3% = €60,000.
- run.events: €44,190 (2.21% service fee).

Potential savings for the event organizer using Eventbrite: 68,285€
Potential savings for the event organizer using ti.to: 15,810€

Event mobile app

Business events often rely on mobile apps like Whova or Hubilo, which typically come with a hefty price tag, averaging around €10,000 for events similar in size to our fictional example. However, there's a smarter way to manage your event and reduce costs. With run.events, not only is the mobile app included in the price, but it's also fully integrated into the system, eliminating the need for event organizers to export attendee data and send separate mobile app invitations. It clearly shows you how to save money using event management software through this case study!

Potential savings for the event organizer: An average of €10,000.

Content, speakers, and agenda

Sessionize is the market leader in tools focused on managing speakers, sessions, and the agenda. These tools aid in calls for speakers, managing content teams, fostering content selection, and ultimately, speaker communications and agenda publishing. Sessionize has a fixed cost of €444 (499 US$) per event. Not only does run.events provide the same robust features as Sessionize, but it also offers something extra – the key to saving money on your event management expenses. Plus, the integration of content, speakers, and agenda into the entire system eliminates the need to copy and import data to your event mobile app (or anywhere else for that matter).

Potential savings for the event organizer: €444

Sponsors and lead retrieval

Various lead retrieval systems on the market usually have a price range from €3,000 to €5,000. All these solutions require event organizers to purchase or rent special equipment, and setting them up involves a lot of data export and import. But don't get desperate because here is how to save money using event management software. run.events has complete sponsor and exhibitor management integrated into the system. Not only does it support lead retrieval and on-the-fly classification through the run.events mobile app and badge printing also enable event organizers to manage the complete sponsor lifecycle.

Potential average savings for the event organizer: An average of €3,000.

Badge printing, check-ins, and registration desks

Selecting the right badge printing, check-in, and registration desk management application for your event can be a daunting task. With a multitude of options on the market, each offering unique features and varying significantly in cost, making the right choice is essential.

Some event apps provide the flexibility for organizers to use their existing equipment, while others necessitate equipment rental. Certain systems even go a step further, requiring their personnel to be on-site to manage badge printing and registration desk operations. Additionally, there's a growing trend towards systems offering self-check-in kiosks and self-service badge printing, often at an extra cost. Some applications also offer lead retrieval functionality, which can offset the initial expense but typically comes with a higher price tag. It's worth noting that, in our search, we haven't come across any reliable badge printing, check-in management, and registration desk app priced below €8,000 for an event similar in size to our fictional example. In fact, some systems can go as high as €25,000, adding significant pressure on event organizers to find cost-effective solutions. Event organizers can design badges to their specifications, print them in advance or on-site, and execute attendee and session check-ins. Furthermore, stay tuned for even more cost-saving features, as run.events plan to introduce self-service check-in kiosks and badge printing in Q4 2023.

Potential average savings for the event organizer: An average of €10,000

Event organizers save €39,254

Total savings for our fictional event: €39,254€ (if ti.to is being used as a ticketing app). If event organizers use Eventbrite, this saving increases by another €50,000. The total savings in time, enhanced security (no need to ever export or import your attendee data to any external system), and process optimization are not explicitly stated here. Still, event organizers will indeed recognize the significant benefits they bring.

Module	App	Costs	run.events Costs
Event Management System	-	-	44.190 €
Ticketing	ti to	60.000 €	-
Event Mobile App	Whova	10.000 €	-
Speakers and Agenda	Sessionize	444 €	-
Sponsors and Lead Retrieval	Various	3.000 €	-
Badge Printing and Check-in	Various	10.000 €	-
Total Costs or Ownership		83.444 €	44.190 €

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