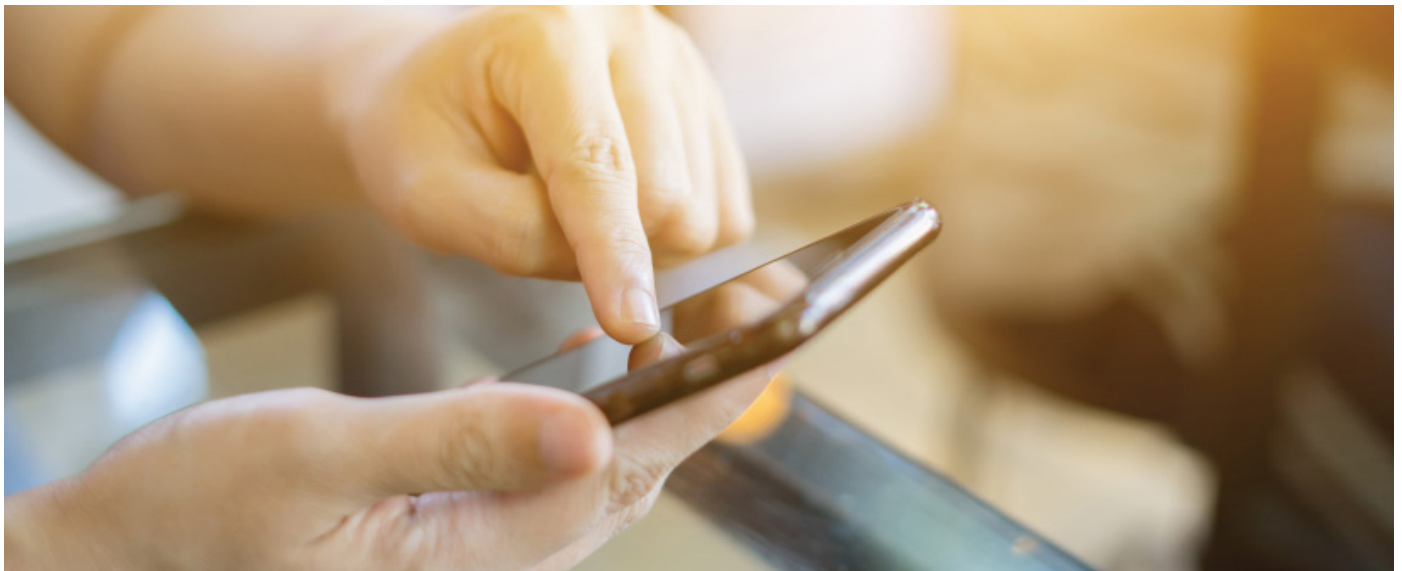


Bringing More Value To Your Association Chapter Event Registration Process



Association chapter members and other audiences see most of a chapter's value coming through their events, even though we all know a chapter is much more than just the events it holds. Being aware of that perception of value means that you need to pay extra attention to everything about your events, from the details – the speaker, food, location, etc. – to your marketing, while still focusing on all the other services you provide.



To meet that perception, you may focus much of your chapter's time and attention on the details of your events. That is important, of course, but it's just as important, maybe even more so, to engage potential attendees well before, and after, the event, reminding them how your chapter is much more than the sum of your events.

It's possible, and relatively easy, to improve chapter engagement through the administration piece of your event planning, specifically your association chapter online event registration. When someone is on your association chapter registration page, you have a "captive audience." Take advantage of that by adding a question or two to their registration experience that's specific to each of those audiences.

Your event emails, social media mentions, newsletter ads, etc. all point to a page on your association chapter website with the event description, where potential attendees find specific information and

the link to register. Once they decide they want to attend, their next step is to register and pay. What's your association chapter event registration process like? Do members, member guests, sponsors and other audiences have the same experience —they give their name and contact information, pay, say how many people are coming, maybe leave a question for the speaker, and choose beef, chicken, fish, vegan, etc.?

Collect the right information, to add value to your association chapter event registration

Think about how much you, your board and your volunteers are trying to accomplish at an event—doing in-person check in, focusing the speaker, checking the AV equipment, keeping the food hot, etc. It's not a great time to try to learn more about people.

But think about what you could do if you knew more about attendees before the event. If someone is purchasing a --

Guest ticket, add a question about association chapter membership. It could be as simple as “do you want to learn more about joining our chapter?” or more specific, with a question like “would you like to talk to a board member during the event to learn more about membership in our chapter?”

Member ticket, ask if they want to learn more about volunteering, either on a committee or your board. If they choose yes, you could have a follow up that asks them to choose from areas where you need volunteer help – events, marketing, website, etc. Think about all you need to get done before your next event. Or all the things you'd like to do for your chapter, like updating the website or writing blog posts or your newsletter. Getting volunteers can be difficult, but asking a question like this can bring volunteers to you, instead of hunting for them.

Both members and guests could be interested in association chapter sponsorship opportunities. But maybe they're not ready to join your more formalized association chapter sponsorship program. During registration, offer sponsorship opportunities for this specific event. They could sponsor the presentation, breakfast or even your check-in table. This brings you revenue to offset your event cost, or it can give you money for future programming. Sponsorship of a specific event can allow you to add a unique in person event experience, like a book signing or a Q&A with the speaker for special guests (like the sponsor). This initial connection to a single sponsorship opportunity allows you to stay in contact with attendees for future event sponsorship and build a connection that moves them to your formal sponsorship program.



Gathering this sort of information during your registration process gives you a lot of information you might not otherwise collect so easily. Instead of chasing down member guests and potential sponsors during an event, knowing this ahead of time gives you the chance to connect individually with people at the event; you already know who they are. You could follow up before the meeting to set up a specific time to talk during the event, or more easily follow up by phone or email after it.

Remember that feeling of seeing candy in the checkout aisle at the grocery store? It's right there, and if you walk out the door without grabbing a piece, you'll miss it. These people are already registering for your event. You know they're interested. Getting these questions in front of them before they leave increases the likelihood they'll provide this information. If you tell someone they must fill out a form to learn more, you're giving them another step to complete and potentially losing the chance they'll do it. Adding questions to association chapter registration is the perfect opportunity to grab sponsorship, potential members, volunteers and more, with people already focused on your organization.

Many association chapters are using this question feature to generate leads for members and sponsors. The opportunities are endless. What are some other areas of your association chapter you'd like to get people interested in?

