

MATSO SPECIALITY SESSION @ EXPO! EXPO!

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Key Takeaways from 06 December 2023

What is Growth? Hot Topics

This was an interactive session for the MATSO session. Here are the questions posed to the group.

- **What is one word to describe 2023:**
 - Exciting. Chaotic. Amazing. Growth. Challenging. New. Fast. Better. Busy. Rough. Exhausting. Engaging. Hopeful. Change. Dynamic. Quick. Successful. Rebound. Enlightening. Transformation. Adventure. Evolving. Empowering. Impactful.
- **Ranked Topics by Group for Discussion in Roundtables:**
 1. What shifts are you seeing in exhibitor and/or attendee behavior? How have/will you adapt to these changes? What is a new revenue source you have developed (this is your time to brag), or how are you attempting to grow revenue?
 2. What learnings do you have in delivering an event while dealing with exceptionally rising costs?
 3. What is your biggest hinderance to growth today? Has it changed? How are you adapting?
 4. What is a new revenue source you have developed (this is your time to brag) or how are you attempting to grow revenue?
 5. What strategies have you developed/employed any new strategies to increase exhibitor ROI?
 6. Are you doing anything innovative to begin to grow/attract the next gen of attendees/Gen Z?
 7. Where have you had success, if any, in dealing with the growing problem of poachers, beyond the Cease and Desist?
- **Question and discussion for the roundtables for the groups: What is your biggest hinderance to growth today? How has it changed? How are you adapting?**
 - Request for more meeting space over exhibit space.
 - Attendee companies are sending fewer/senior people to events for fewer days because everyone is so busy. How do we keep them at the entire center for longer?

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- Manufacturer or brand owner companies who want to attend, yet do not want to exhibit because they want to reach consumers, not retail. How to handle them on a case-by-case basis, so they feel involved in the community without a disservice to the exhibitors.
 - Solution: Pricing is higher for a company who could/should exhibit. Case by case basis will offer specialty discount rates to a company who is small/regional or start-up or only reaches consumers, not retail space.
- Exhibitors want larger or smaller booth spaces.
- Planning the numbers, and then, having late registrations and more numbers than planned. Early Bird savings versus regular registration. Charge for reprints for badges? Or do not have reprints. Late booking is a change in attendee behavior.
- Need to provide attendees with more justification, so they can make the case with their management. Some attendees have been asked to be paid out of pocket. Provide them with a tool kit over email and on website.
- **What is your biggest hinderance to growth today? Has it changed? How are you adapting?**
 - Getting more space and the inability to get more space.
 - Rising costs. No sign of a decrease or plateauing.
 - Use data in decision making to drive growth. Behavior, attributes of our customers – exhibitors and attendees, and needs to inform decision making.
 - Where is growth coming from and how to sustain it? International. Global.
- **What learnings do you have in delivering an event while dealing with exceptionally rising costs?**
 - Adapt to rising costs. Reuse pieces/sets from previous exhibitions.
 - Increase revenue – restructured attendee pricing. Offered discounts to the standard price for the badge. Focused marketing and Call to Action. This is different than Early Bird pricing.
- **What is a new revenue source you have developed (this is your time to brag) or how are you attempting to grow revenue?**
 - Current pricing for sponsorships if renewed within 30 days. 20% to 30% price increase because of rising costs, so it helped book 75% of business, and the sales team can focus for 11 months on new business growth. Also, a sponsor can use up money in their budget leftover from this year.
 - Pushing the onsite registration rate up a month earlier versus close to the meeting.
 - Created a stream for new beginners – education track with a lower fee.
 - Generation Z will not come to the event alone, so buy one, get one free.
 - Selling slots in the business suites.

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- Advertise private events on the mobile app as a session and got paid for it.
 - Rent out rooms to do a job offer ceremony.
 - New exhibition products – turnkey kiosks and mini-booths, in addition to regular booths and tables.
 - Look at venues and shows and then, look at sponsorship brochures for new ideas for shows for sponsorship.
- **What is one word to describe 2024:**
 - Complicated. Bullish. Expensive. Optimistic. Growth. New. Concerned. Challenging. Hopeful. Busy. Excited. Cautious. Progress. Inspired. Rejuvenating. Momentum. Excitement. Optimism. Empowering. Better. Revamp. Unsure. Apprehensive.

A special thanks to Maritz for sponsoring this important session that allows large show organizers to learn about key issues affecting shows larger than 200,000 NSF while providing a forum for open dialogue and exchange.

