



How to Use Appointment Booking to **Maximize Attendee Networking**

Introduction

The profiles of conference and event attendees have shifted over the last decade. New generations have now entered the workforce and technology is an integral part of our day-to-day lives. The goal of an event planner used to be simple - get the greatest number of attendees. Sometimes this was even regardless of their fit to the event content or brand. At the same time, only one overarching marketing message was used to garner interest.

Times have definitely changed. The economy is shifting, event budgets are being cut, and access to online resources is plentiful. So, it makes sense that attendees are more particular about the events they choose to attend.

As a result, event planners are more aware of how their marketing messages influence the decision for people to attend an event. They also understand that attendees are placing more emphasis on the value they receive by attending an event.

Attendees are consumers, too. The process for deciding whether to register for your event is the same as deciding to buy any other product. You're always going to have competitors in the market, so you need to differentiate your event. The best way to do that is to **provide the greatest amount of value for their financial and time investment.**

Who should read this ebook?

This ebook is for you - the event planner looking for ways to increase attendee networking before and during your event. You'll learn why providing networking opportunities will help you achieve event success, and how to take advantage of event technology.

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Attendee Networking Drives Event Attendance



[IAEE](#), [PCMA](#), and [The Experience Institute](#) conducted a study to determine the leading reasons why people decide to attend events. In “[The Decision to Attend Study](#)”, results show that *networking is one of the top three drivers for event attendance.*

76%

Across all generations surveyed (Pre Boomers, Boomers, Gen X, and Gen Y Millennial), 76% of respondents said it’s important that events provide them with opportunities to network and make connections. So, it goes to say that the potential for meaningful connection impacts their decision to attend an event.

84%

With 84% reporting it as a driving factor, networking opportunities are especially important for Millennials. The younger generations look at attending events as a way to grow their network and look for job opportunities.

84%

The majority of attendees (84%) also tend to register for an event 2-6 months before the event date. This means that once you start promoting networking opportunities related to your event, most of your audience will be ready to engage. If you're using an event app to promote networking, this is your chance to encourage attendees to download and explore the app.

Traditional vs Modern Approaches to Attendee Networking



The Old Way to Network

Interactions between attendees usually takes place on-site at events. They're usually random as people walk through the halls, talk to their neighbors during sessions, or sit next to someone new during lunch.

Some event planners are able to design networking activities within their event program. However, the process is very labor, resource, and time intensive, and without the guarantee of ROI . For example, post-event parties might be the main activities for networking. However, they take a lot of effort and time but in the end, there might be attendees who do not feel comfortable networking in those types of environments.

For sponsors and exhibitors, they have to rely on receiving an attendee list from event organizers. From there, they can send out cold emails to introduce themselves and cross their fingers that they'll get a response.

For attendees, they don't have any idea who else is going to the event. For them, there's no clear way to network leading up to the event and make the best use of their time.

The New Way to Network

Nowadays, face-to-face time is a significant factor in an event's success. Planners are looking for ways to provide attendees with more intentional and meaningful connections. It's very common for planners to take advantage of event technology to achieve this.

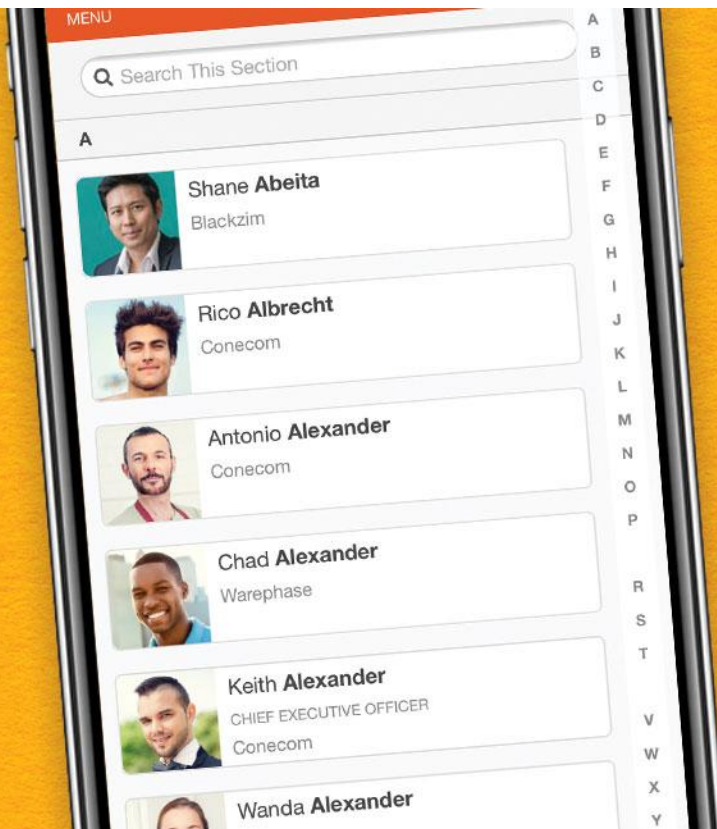
The biggest impact event technology has on networking goes beyond increasing on-site engagements. Technology allows attendees to connect with each other throughout the entire event lifecycle. Interaction is not limited to on-site anymore. The opportunity to build relationships and community exists at all stages.

Appointment Booking: Placing the Power of Networking in the Hands of Attendees

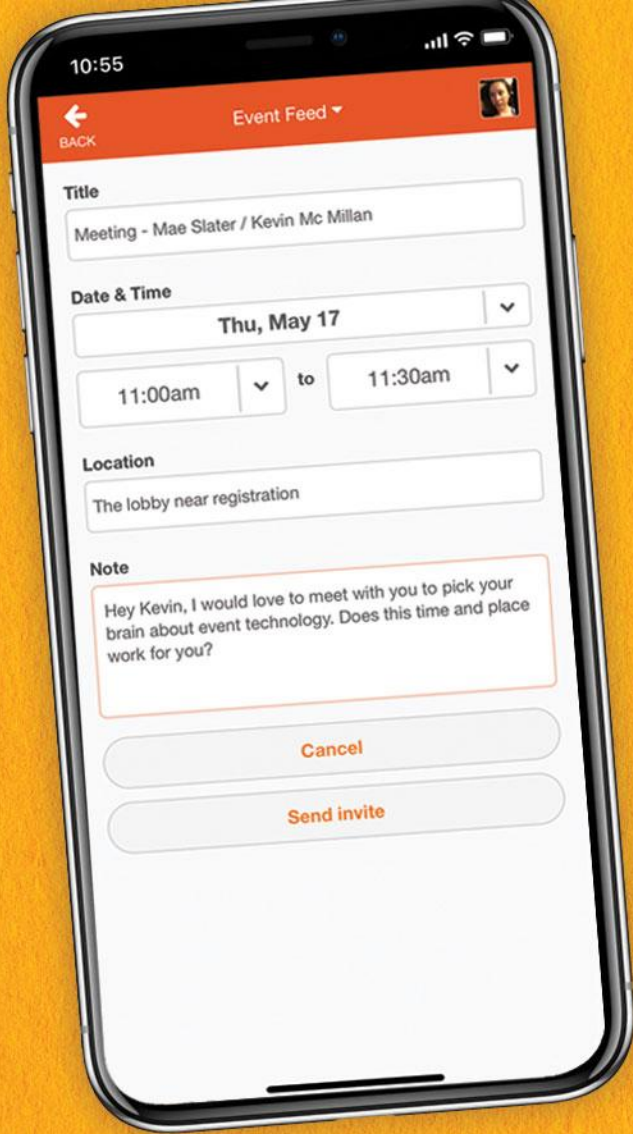
The [Meetings Mean Business Coalition](#) surveyed C-suite executives and found that face-to-face meetings drive the most positive business outcomes. In fact, nine out of ten executives said meetings improve their ability to network, close deals, and learn. A whopping 97% said face-to-face meetings produce a return on investment across industries.

One of the most popular event technology tools used to increase attendee networking is appointment booking. This is a game changer for event planners because it places autonomy in the hands of attendees. Attendees no longer have to wait for networking activities to take place at the event. They now have the ability to network with specific attendees at any time according to their own schedule.

The easiest event technology that can be used to enable appointment booking is an event app. A typical user flow looks like this:

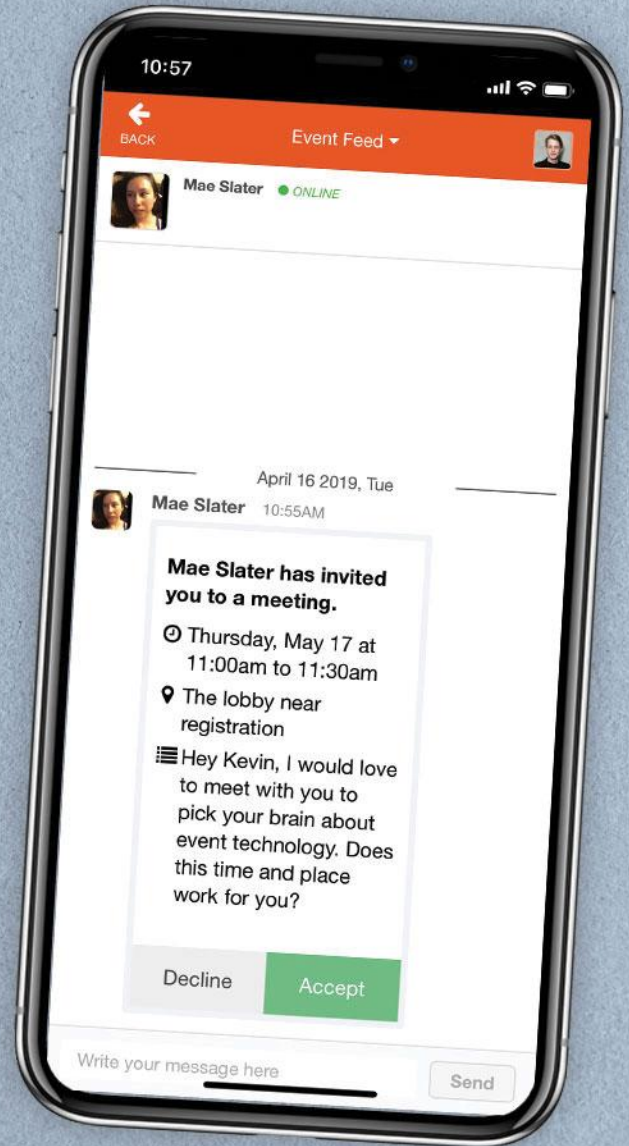


1. Attendees find each other through the event app's attendee list



2. A meeting request with details of date and time gets sent to the respective attendee

3. The recipient accepts or declines. If accepted, details are updated in each party's personal event app schedules.



In some tech platforms, the appointment booking tool gets combined with other product features to create an easier user experience. For example, with EventMobi's platform, appointments get managed through the chat function. This reduces the nuisance of going back and forth between emails to coordinate. Attendees also have the ability to accept or decline the meeting invitation through the chat feature.

How Event Stakeholders Benefit From Appointment Booking

Every person who attends your event has the potential to benefit from booking face-to-face meetings, including event planners, attendees, and sponsors.

Below are a few categories of stakeholders who benefit the most:

EVENT PLANNERS

Benefits include:



Boosting event app adoption: To use appointment booking features, attendees need to download the event app. This helps increase the adoption rate.



Increased engagement with the event app: Promoting appointment booking before the start of the event is a great way to get attendees comfortable with your event tech. Attendees will be able to start using the event app and familiarizing themselves with it before getting on-site.



Less on-site help required: Fewer resources will be required to manage on-site questions related to downloading and using the event app as pre-event downloads have increased.



Greater customer satisfaction: Enabling attendees to engage in high-quality face-to-face interactions increases the value they get out of the event.



Building a stronger event community: One-to-one meetings help build a sense of community. This keeps attendees wanting to stay in contact and meet again at future events.



Guidance on how to design the event space: Knowing that more attendees will be booking meetings helps guide the design of the event space. There needs to be plenty of meeting space and privacy.

Increase attendee loyalty and engagement by building your event community.

[Download eBook >](#)



ATTENDEES

Benefits include:



Enabling attendees to make the best use of their time: Time spent on-site gets maximized to its fullest potential. Pre-scheduled meetings mean less time spent coordinating during the event.



Providing a more convenient way to connect: Booking one-to-one meetings with targeted individuals provides a greater opportunity to build meaningful connections within the community.



Being able to find the right people to connect with: It's easy to search for specific contacts through the attendee list and find others by name, company, or job title.



An easier way to break the ice: Awkward in-person introductions get avoided since online communication is much less intimidating.



More efficiency in determining meeting details: Deciding on a time and location for a meeting is easy to coordinate through the chat feature.

SPONSORS / VENDORS / SALES TEAM

Benefits include:



Time efficiency: Time gets maximized by scheduling meetings before the start of the event. Potential buyers get contacted directly instead of searching for them during the event.



Higher likelihood of generating quality leads: Face-to-face meetings with potential buyers are great opportunities to generate qualified leads and build positive relationships for future follow-up.

RECRUITERS

Benefits include:



Finding specific people of interest: Being able to search the attendee list for specific candidates and book meetings prior to the event provides the best use of time for recruiters.



Greater ability to interact and build rapport: Recruiters get the greatest value in evaluating candidates and vice versa through face-to-face meetings.

INVESTORS

Benefits include:



Being able to target specific companies: The ability to send meeting invites allows investors to reach out directly to companies of interest and learn more about them.



Being able to build an organized schedule: Investors might be looking to speak to numerous companies, so being able to book appointments prior to the event helps them organize their schedule and make the best use of their time at the event.

EVENT PLANNER PROTIP:

Make sure to consider security, privacy, and control when researching appointment booking options.

Attendees need to have confidence in knowing that their communication gets delivered in a private and secure way. If they're messaging other attendees, they expect their conversations to be visible only to the meeting participants.

Additionally, attendees not interested in receiving meeting invites need an easy way to opt out of receiving appointment requests.

PRODUCT TEAM

Benefits include:



Getting customer feedback to improve product offerings: At an external company event like a user conference, the ability to book meetings is extremely helpful for an organization's Product Team to get feedback from their users.



Improving customer relationships: By scheduling meetings with specific users or customers prior to the meeting, the Product Team is able to build stronger relationships with power users of their product.

How to Get Your Attendees to Use Appointment Booking Technology



As the saying goes, “A tool is only as good as the person using it.” Even if you provide easy-to-use tools for appointment booking, attendees won’t take full advantage of the technology if they don’t know about it.

Here are some practical ways to promote appointment booking to your attendees before and during your event:

PRE-EVENT PROMOTIONAL TACTICS



If you send out a Know-Before-You-Go email or marketing campaigns to promote registration leading up to the start of your event, include a section about the appointment booking feature. Emphasize the benefits they will receive by using the tool to schedule face-to-face meetings.



If your event app is accessible on the web, include a link in your email so people can download the app and access the attendee list to start booking appointments.



Promote the ability to schedule face-to-face meetings through your social channels and other mediums where you are advertising.



Send push notifications through your event app so that attendees who have already downloaded your app can be reminded to book meetings.

ON-SITE PROMOTIONAL TACTICS



Set up a centralized space like a Help Desk at registration to assist attendees with event app and appointment booking questions, and show them how to download and use the technology.



Make sure there is print and/or digital signage promoting the event app and appointment booking tools, and guiding attendees so they know where to go for help.



Promote the event app and appointment booking tool during the opening remarks or during the keynote sessions. Use this opportunity to:

- Remind attendees about the appointment booking feature.
- Highlight when and where they can book appointments during the event.
- Give a demonstration of how to use the technology.
- Remind attendees to check their event alerts and personalized schedules in the event app to see booked meetings and approve pending invites.



If your venue has screens for digital signage, create advertisements to promote booking appointments at your event.



Give attendees reminders by getting speakers to make quick remarks before or after each session.



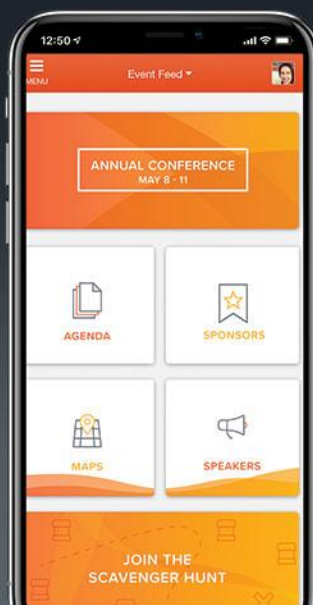
Set up a schedule of alerts and notifications promoting appointment bookings with messaging such as:

- When and where attendees can book appointments
- Why should attendees book appointments
- How to book appointments

Conclusion

In the past, achieving event success was focused on getting people to come to an event. Once attendees were at the event, it was out of the organizers' hands. But today's attendees have more demanding expectations for the value of their event experience.

The best approach is for event planners to empower attendees with modern technologies like an event app that create greater opportunities for networking and meaningful connections.



See how an event app can save you thousands of dollars in your event budget

[REQUEST A DEMO](#)

Thinking of investing in an event app?

Here's a guide that will help you decide if you should build or buy.

[DOWNLOAD NOW](#)

Get a first-hand look at how to create more engaging event experiences

[VIEW THE APP](#)





Since 2009, EventMobi's comprehensive feature set and elegant simplicity have been loved by 30,000+ planners and millions of attendees. EventMobi has powered events for top brands like Visa and TD Bank, and associations including the American Political Science Association and International Society for Heart and Lung Transplantations. One of the industry's first Mobile Event App platforms, EventMobi's comprehensive suite of event management tools now includes Registration, Check-in, Lead Capture, and Badge Design and Printing. Flexible pricing options, award-winning customer support, and a complete range of production services make EventMobi the preferred choice for organizers of meetings and conferences that demand high attendee engagement.

For more information, visit eventmobi.com