

A background image of a business meeting, overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. In the foreground, a man and a woman are looking at a tablet together. In the background, other people are seated at a table.

## Better Together:

Digital + In-Person Strategies =  
Greater Return for Businesses  
and Customers

# Introduction

In a digital-first world, it's easy to lose sight of the power and relevance that face-to-face communication still holds. Emails and text messages are our go-to ways of connecting with one another, and person-to-person contact is dwindling as more people find themselves interacting with the likes of Alexa and Siri.

With business moving at the speed of a click, marketers often leverage communication technology to get things done faster, with more ease and efficiency. And, while such means of communicating—emails, text messages and chat bots—certainly serve their purpose in the right situations, the importance of in-person communication still holds true.

A **recent study** published in the Journal of Experimental Social Psychology found that a face-to-face request is 34 times more successful than an email. And, beyond being effective in getting things done, in-person communication also reveals more about what a person is truly saying and feeling through non-verbal cues. **One study at UCLA** indicated that up to 93 percent of communication effectiveness is determined by such nonverbal behavior; when communicating digitally, we miss out on this insight.

However, technologically-driven and in-person strategies are not an either/or situation for today's businesses. Like peanut butter and jelly, digital tools and face-to-face communication are stronger when used together. This whitepaper explores best practices for how marketers can leverage tech tools and in-person situations—like events—to impress prospects and increase customer loyalty.

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# Hand-in-Hand:

## Leveraging Tech and In-person Strategies for Success.

For companies today, events—whether large user conferences, field events or trainings and internal team offsites—are one of the best ways to bring people together and build meaningful relationships “the old-fashioned way.” But, for an event to be successful and provide long-term benefits such as conversion and leads for companies past launch date, businesses must be equipped with smart digital tools that do the following:



**Allow for quick and seamless digital registration**, offering attendees suggestions on which sessions and activities they should attend based on their preferences.



**Create unique, branded event websites**, and let businesses schedule communications with attendees ahead of the event (for example, event reminders and session information).



**Make the most out of attendee insights** by tracking the sessions attended and utilizing live polling for real-time feedback.



**Initiate hyper-personalized follow-up**, sending personalized communications or offers based on the sessions and content each attendee engaged with at the event.

Our **2018 State of B2B Event Marketing report** found that the importance of events is increasing, as companies today leverage events to drive brand awareness, demand generation, pipeline acceleration, and customer engagement. Another **report by Certain** found that in 2017, 70 percent of marketers surveyed planned to increase their event budget in the coming year. With the importance placed on events increasing—as well as the spend—there’s more pressure on marketers to succeed than ever before. Marketers must ensure they have the right mix of tools—digital and in-person—to drive their business initiatives. Coupling face time with digital technology only enhances the experience for the attendee by introducing a wealth of insights that strengthen the follow-up process, lead to lasting relationships and build trust.




# Bridging the Gap:

## Utilizing Data for Effective Follow-up

Digital and in-person communications are often seen as opposites. You either text someone, or you go and speak to him or her face-to-face. But, think about when you meet someone in person and then *follow up* that conversation with a text. Typically, you find out more about the individual after the fact, and the relationship gets stronger as you continue the conversation digitally. The same is true when technology is leveraged for in-person events. In fact, networking pros often **suggest** that using digital tools is one of the best ways to follow up after you've attended an event, including sending an email to the person you just met and adding him or her on LinkedIn.

One of the most valuable results of digital tools that benefit a business in the long-run is the collection of customer data. People want to feel special and they want to be heard when they interact with a company. It's no secret that businesses that leverage data can learn more about their customers and prospects. However, using automation for events specifically gives marketers more power to not only conduct memorable in-person conversations with customers, but also to understand how to keep the conversation going after the fact.

Here are three ways marketers can use data to build customer loyalty:

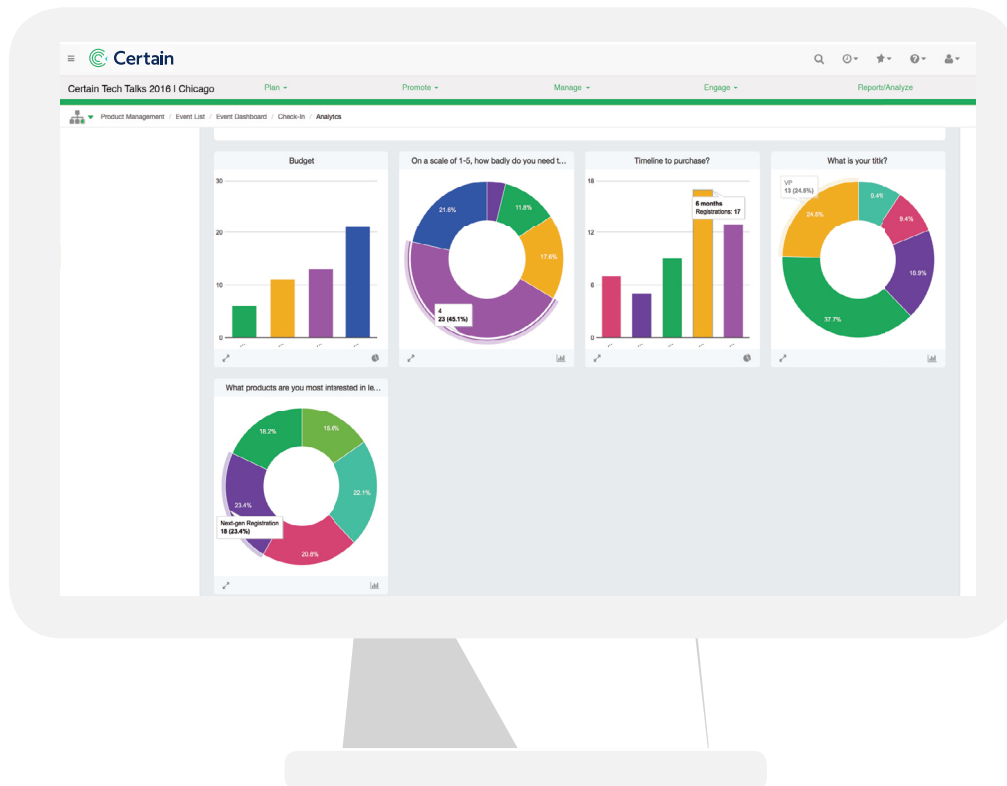
 <h3>Data capture</h3> <p>Event automation tech can track which sessions and booths an attendee visited. Survey data can also be leveraged to collect real-time feedback and provide more detail on the individual attendee's specific preferences.</p>	 <h3>Turning insight into strategic action</h3> <p>Attendee data gathered at events tells a business not only who to target, but how to target him or her. These insights can be used to keep in touch with potential new customers and retain existing ones after an event.</p>	 <h3>Knowing your customer</h3> <p>Companies can share personalized offers and creative content based on the attendee's engagement at the event. Instead of a generic email blast that goes out to all who attended and includes a non-personalized call to action, highly personalized content and next steps can be shared to maximize engagement with the company post-event.</p>
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# Sales and Marketing Working in Step

In-person communications is a crucial technique for sales and marketing professionals alike. Oftentimes, however, sales and marketing departments still operate in silos. Despite having quite similar goals, both teams may find themselves too focused on their own strategies and targeting tactics to cohesively align.

Our 2018 State of B2B Event Marketing survey found that although the importance of events might be increasing, over **half of all surveyed B2B professionals report that tying event spend to revenue generation is an elusive task**. The key to proving this return on investment (ROI) for events is having both marketing and sales teams agree on and work towards clear metrics.

There's an old saying: "numbers don't lie." In event ROI, however, there's room for misunderstanding, fudging and plain misrepresentation. Without standards in place to measure event success, such as amount of registrants, leads generated, or follow-up meetings with prospects booked, how can marketers understand the bigger picture of how to integrate their sales, marketing, and events platforms to maximize their event potential? Fortunately, event automation software takes the guesswork out of event success with data collection and insights. With event automation software, businesses can provide actionable insights to sales and marketing teams in order to speed up the sales process.





Digital communication tools have not replaced the value of meeting with someone face-to-face; however, if marketers use both in harmony, technology does have the power to enhance those in-person meetings by providing valuable customer insights before, during and after an event. Every customer is important to a business. Digital tools and in-person events together can enhance an attendee's experience by allowing marketers to customize and personalize every interaction, ensuring each customer and prospect feels valued.

Interested in learning more? Check out our latest webinar on [The Top 8 Tips for a Successful Event Strategy](#), and visit our [website](#) to [get started!](#)



Certain delivers the leading enterprise Event Automation platform to personalize event experiences and provide meaningful connections that accelerate business. Certain integrates with marketing automation and CRM systems to help move prospects through the buying cycle faster; and the Certain Event Success Hub includes industry partners that extend event automation capabilities. Our Lead Intelligence adds event-level interactions to not only track what attendees are doing, but also understand their actual interests in order to drive more personalized lead nurturing and effective sales follow-up. The Certain platform enables attendee management, utilizes a mobile app to simplify and speed-up event registration and management, provides event branding as well as social and mobile participation, and facilitates 1-to-1 meetings that engage audiences and maximize event value for all participants. Headquartered in San Francisco, with offices in North America, Europe, and the Pacific Rim, Certain is a strategic event partner to over 600 enterprise and Event Automation companies.