

Maximizing the Value of Customer Meetings at B2B Events



Introduction

It's well known that event marketing is a powerful channel for advancing pipelines, driving growth and achieving long-term business objectives. In fact, B2B organizations rank trade shows, conferences and other in-person events as the marketing tactic that produces the best results.¹

Events are an opportunity to engage prospects and customers through 1-to-1 and 1-to-Many meetings, where vendors can educate, nurture and pitch attendees while advancing core business priorities. However, the traditional meeting scheduling workflow is wrought with complexities, and with these come lingering consequences.

In this white paper, we'll examine the challenges of appointment scheduling at trade shows and conferences, and the downstream implications of their resulting inefficiencies. Then, we'll explore four meeting types essential to advancing business opportunities:

- Executive Meetings.
- High-Value Prospect Meetings.
- SME Meetings.
- R&D-Client Meetings.

With the power of a robust meeting scheduling automation tool, organizations can mitigate the adverse effects of inefficient appointment booking and maximize the value of their B2B event strategy.

¹ <https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/b2b-2023-research-final.pdf>

The Cost of Inefficiency in B2B Meeting Scheduling

Simply put, events allow businesses to meet directly with new prospects and existing customers at a high volume and velocity. These meetings are key to nurturing potential partnerships, furthering the sales cycle and, ultimately, driving long-term growth.

However, although the value of event marketing hasn't changed, its complexities certainly have. For B2B sales, no longer is appointment scheduling a simple, intuitive workflow; today's teams have more on their plate — and at stake — than ever before.

Of the many logistical factors involved in meeting scheduling, the most challenging obstacles include:

- Meeting context and preparation.
- Calendar availability and scheduling conflicts of meeting participants and locations.
- Multiple stakeholders from various organizations.
- Time zone coordination.
- Last-minute scheduling and location changes.
- Approvals, confirmations and reminders.
- Communication and post-meeting follow-up.



These obstacles are amplified when an organization's goal is to achieve more high-quality customer meetings while relying on manual processes, basic appointment setting tools or spreadsheets to manage the process. This can waste important resources, such as:

- **An executive's time and attention:** The opportunity cost of their focus is immeasurable, as their presence could make a bigger impact elsewhere, such as another high-value meeting.
- **Human capital:** Subject matter experts, salespeople and other team members also have limited availability. It's important to ensure their time and energy are allocated effectively to the high-stakes clients most likely to convert to revenue.
- **Event budget:** As event costs rise and executives look to cut expenses, 53% of event professionals are facing reduced budgets.² Marketers simply don't have as many resources to go around, which means it's critical they're spent on actions that maximize return on investment (ROI).

Downstream repercussions

Scheduling inefficiencies ultimately lead to a frenzy of short- and long-term consequences, including:

- Missed opportunities, canceled meetings, double-bookings and time-zone errors.
- Lower customer satisfaction.
- Decreased productivity and fewer meetings per event.
- Slower sales cycles.
- Reduced ROI from your events.

They also make justifying high event costs much more difficult. There are gaps in information, miscommunications and human errors that cloud the impact of B2B meetings.

² <https://www.bizzabo.com/blog/event-marketing-statistics>

4 Types of Meetings That Drive Business Activity

Generally speaking, there are dozens of meeting types you might schedule at any given event. All have a unique role in advancing your business goals, but four stand out amongst the rest as having a particularly tangible ability to generate business value.

1. Executive Meetings

Also known as VIP meetings, this type of engagement is where the C-suite executives meet with their largest and highest-priority customers. Thus, they're among the most valuable in terms of building strong relationships. To put them into perspective, consider the value comparison between VIP meetings and scanned badges.

Event marketers rely on badge scanners to collect leads. However, just 15% of an event's scanned badges receive a follow-up, which means hundreds of opportunities are going to waste.³ In fact, even fewer have a real business impact, with less than 3% of scanned badges actually converting to revenue.

In contrast, executive meetings are where deals get made or important business relationships are strengthened. These interactions are necessary for the long-term success of the business. If even a small percentage of them convert to additional revenue (or other outcomes), that generates an exponentially greater success rate with a much more tangible impact.

But, as mentioned, executives' time is limited. The opportunity cost of their presence is immense, which is why sales teams, marketers and executive assistants need an effective process for maximizing their time spent in high-priority meetings.



³ <https://blog.jifflenow.com/heres-why-you-need-a-badge-scanner-integration-at-b2b-events/>



2. High-Value Prospect Meetings

When organizations meet with high-potential prospects, these appointments can be worth millions of dollars. Winning such a client is often a months-long commitment, and this meeting is considered a significant turning point in the sales cycle.

High-potential meetings often involve many team members from both organizations — including, but not limited to, senior executives. Moreover, they may include multiple meetings over the course of an event. These span several topics, such as technical considerations, partnership details, product education and negotiations.

Given the stakes, it's important nothing goes wrong at any point in the process. Sales and marketing are responsible for ensuring these meetings work seamlessly. This involves managing dozens of calendars, preparing participants, navigating room changes and so on.



3. SME Meetings

Also known as ‘meet-the-expert,’ sales teams want subject matter experts in the room to meet with prospects and existing clients to answer questions, demonstrate credibility and establish trust in their products and services.

The B2B sales cycle can be long and involves multiple meetings with experts to research, evaluate and validate the relationship before a deal can be closed or a physician can be convinced to try a new treatment. Therefore, SMEs play an essential role in B2B sales meetings.

Of course, scheduling SMEs isn’t easy. Organizations need quick and real-time visibility into their available time slots to avoid double-bookings and other errors. If a prospect books an appointment but discovers they’re not meeting with the right person, it’s a waste of their time and yours.

4. R&D-Client Meetings

Research shows that 92% of trade show attendees come to see and learn about new products or services.³ This is especially true in industries where access to cutting-edge technologies is key to success, no matter the definition. For instance, healthcare service providers depend on new innovations to improve medical care and patient outcomes.

R&D-Client meetings and product demonstrations are a chance for such clients to understand your latest offerings. This allows them to feel more comfortable and confident about investing in your technology as opposed to a competitor. In this case, product experts share details on the innovation’s design, its architecture, how it works and how customers stand to benefit from its capabilities.

³ <https://blog.jiffle.com/heres-why-you-need-a-badge-scanner-integration-at-b2b-events/>

Scheduling Automation for Effective and Profitable Meetings

The four meeting types described above each uniquely impact business performance. However, they also come with their array of challenges, all of which can greatly hinder event marketing ROI.

Fortunately, many marketers have found a proven technology solution that maximizes success — namely, meeting scheduling automation. Rather than booking appointments by hand using basic tools and spreadsheets, a robust platform like JiffleNow's eEvent software streamlines the process.

eEvent is designed for event marketers and sales to simplify the scheduling workflow in one comprehensive solution. It maps requests to topics, SMEs, meeting types, locations and more, allowing users to easily book the engagement they're looking for and at the best available time. The platform also eliminates back-and-forth communication by automating reminders, appointment changes and more — thus reducing scheduling effort by 85%.⁴

Take LucidLink, for example. According to VP of Marketing Adam Kranitz, trade shows are the company's effective customer acquisition tool — yet also its most expensive. Recognizing that his current scheduling process was needlessly complex, Kranitz turned to JiffleNow for help.

At the National Association of Broadcaster's 2022 trade show, LucidLink used eEvent to book prospects into meetings. By the end of the event, Kranitz and his team booked 160 meetings with a 91% success rate. In his own words, JiffleNow's solution is more than just an event product. "At the end of the day, it helps us book revenue," he says. "It's a revenue tool."

⁴ <https://www.thetradeshownetwork.com/trade-show-blog/20-powerful-stats-on-the-value-of-trade-shows-and-expos>

Make The Most of Your Resources With JiffleNow

No matter the trade show, industry or organization, meetings are a key success factor when it comes to B2B event marketing. With a robust meeting scheduling automation platform that is designed to simplify the complex enterprise workflows like JiffleNow's eEvent software, you can take the pain out of the process and book more high-value meetings with customers and prospects alike.

Don't leave money on the table. [Request a demo](#) today to see eEvent in action.

