

2022 Edition

Event Strategy

Insights & Benchmarks Survey

eventmarketer × opus

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Introduction

The Event Strategy Insights & Benchmarks Study

Quantitative Analysis of the Power of Event Marketing Strategy

Welcome to the 2022 edition of the Opus Agency and Event Marketer Event Strategy Insights & Benchmarks Study. The study uniquely analyzes how top companies and brands are approaching strategic planning for their event marketing programs and explores how event strategies are determined, how events fit within overall corporate marketing goals, and analysis of the data and information brands use to inform their strategic plans. This report offers insights across the full range of event marketing program initiatives and benchmarks including:

- How strategic event planning is changing at top companies with comparisons to past versions of this study conducted in 2018 and 2020
- Measurement strategies and key metrics informing strategic plans
- Challenges and opportunities facing brands' strategic event plans
- Industry outlook with focus on portfolio composition, budgets, content and technology
- And many other important areas

This analysis is based on surveys of a wide cross-section of more than 300 leading marketing executives in both business-to-business and consumer markets. Respondents represent many of the largest corporations in the world from a range of categories including technology, entertainment and media, medical and pharmaceuticals, professional and financial services, consumer electronics, and other important sectors. The survey was conducted between late 2021 and early 2022.

It is important to note that for many of the survey questions, the findings are based on all the respondents together with breakouts for the brands that have a company-wide event portfolio strategy, as defined as having a holistic plan for face-to-face marketing activities aligned to overall corporate goals. For comparison, the findings from brands without this type of company-wide event portfolio strategy are also provided.

Opus Agency and Event Marketer thank all of the respondents for their invaluable contributions to the study.

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Executive Summary

It's an understatement to say that the past two years have been an extremely challenging time for event marketing teams around the world. Yet there are many silver linings from this period. Brands accelerated their experimentation with virtual communication technologies and platforms, but more importantly, in 2021 and 2022, brands have been able to completely reevaluate their event program strategies and tactics.

The next few years present a rare opportunity for brands to continue to reimagine and reset their approach to face-to-face marketing. A key focus of this multiyear Event Strategy Insights & Benchmarks Study is on the differences between brands that have a company-wide event portfolio strategy that closely links with other marketing, sales and corporate business strategies across the entire organization, and with brands that have a more singular, stand-alone approach to event strategy development. The findings from the study show a strong correlation

between companies that have a corporate-wide event strategy and a number of success indicators. The overall main finding is that brands with a company-wide event strategy place a higher value on event marketing and achieve better results from their event programs.

This edition of the study is unique due to the multiyear aspect of this report as three surveys were conducted to develop the analysis—surveys of top brands in 2018 and early 2020, and this new survey conducted in late 2021 and early 2022. How the industry collectively responds to the range of challenges and opportunities as the live in-person event and experiential reactivation process moves ahead—and how live events are re-imagined and integrated with hybrid digital platforms and in-person programs—will set the course for the industry for a number of years.

[On the next pages are some of the key insights from the research.](#)



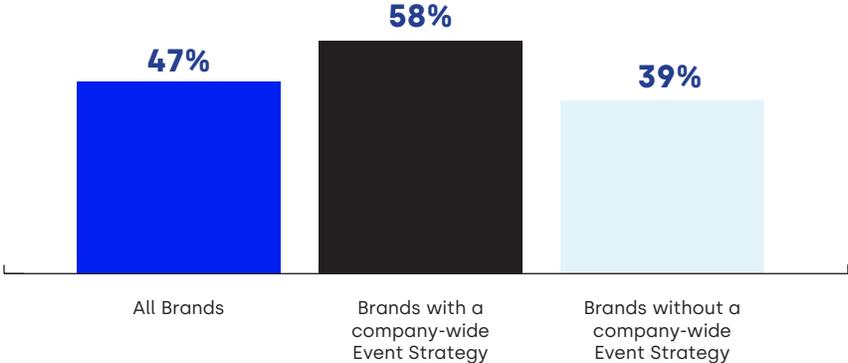
The Definition of Event Strategy Used to Guide This Study

A company-wide event portfolio strategy is a company's clear, detailed and shared plan for face-to-face and hybrid marketing goals and objectives, resource planning, and desired outcomes across the entire organization.

Key Insight #1: Brands' 2022 event budgets are rebounding well—especially for brands with company-wide event strategies closely integrated with other marketing and corporate strategic plans

While only 26% of all survey respondents said their total event budget had increased in 2021, 47% said they expect their total spend in 2022 to increase. A stark difference in the 2022 budget is seen when comparing brands that have a company-wide event strategy with companies that do not. Fifty-eight percent of brands with a company-wide event strategy say their budgets this year have increased compared to 39% that do not have this level of integrated strategy. This is a 19% differential. This data alone powerfully suggests the value of developing a company-wide event strategy.

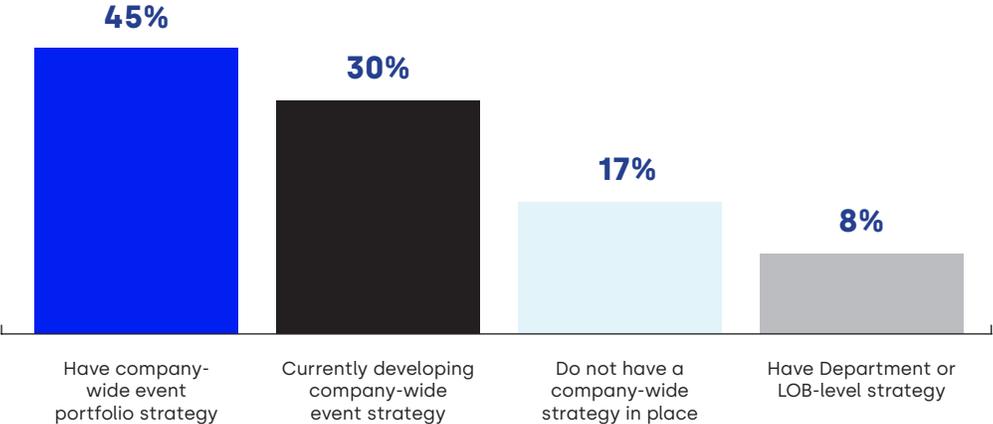
Percentage of Brands With an Increased 2022 Event Budget



Key Insight #2: The trend is towards instituting company-wide event portfolio strategies—45% of brands have a company-wide event strategy currently, and 30% are planning to develop this level of integrated event strategy

A sizable segment of the industry, but still less than half (45%), has a company-wide event portfolio strategy in-place. This 45% found in the 2022 survey is the exact same percentage that was seen in the survey conducted in 2020. The 2018 study found that only 34% of the industry had a company-wide event portfolio strategy in place. That this percentage has not changed over the past two years, after a big jump between 2018 and 2020 is due to the pandemic pause, but the new survey data suggests more movement to institute company-wide event strategies is underway. An important finding: 54% of brands that do not currently have a company-wide event strategy say they are in the process of developing this level of event portfolio strategy now.

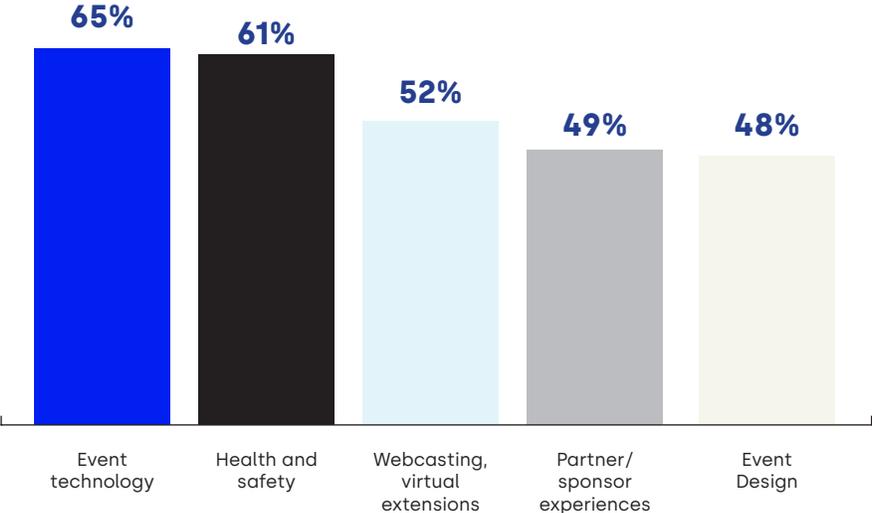
Percentage of Companies with a Company-wide Event Portfolio Strategy



Key Insight #3: Big changes to how event budgets are deployed are expected over the next few years driven by spend on event technology and health and safety measures

Nearly half or more brands say, over the next few years, their budgets will increase to invest in more event technology and to enhance their experiential design elements. Sixty-one percent of brands say they expect to spend increasing funds on health and safety-related areas and measures. The main spending spikes are projected to be concentrated around technology and audience health-related areas, yet closely followed by the need to upgrade on-site experiences and content. The survey question was: Looking ahead to the next two to three years, how do you predict your event budget will change in the following areas?

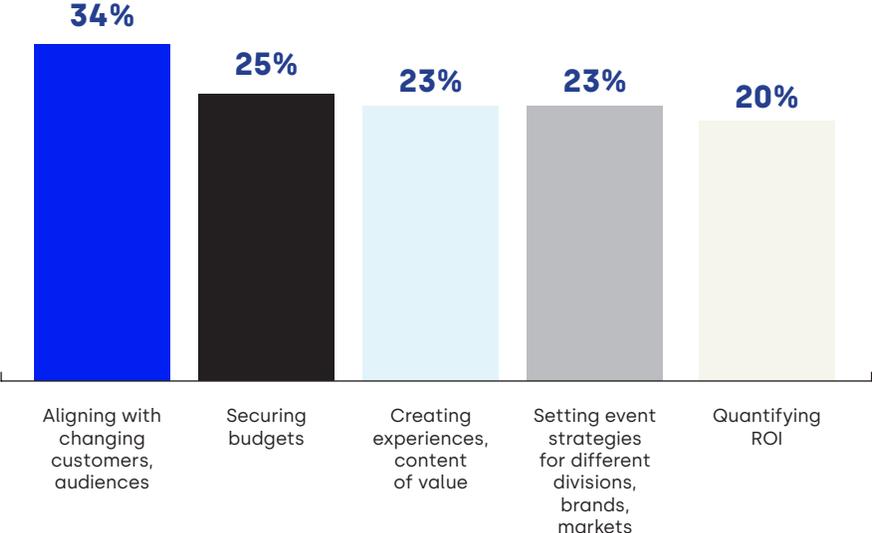
Where Brands Expect Event Marketing Budget Increases Over the Next Few Years



Key Insight #4: Understanding how audiences have changed is the key—and the main challenge—when developing event strategy

Along with budget issues, the top challenge in this post-pandemic period is aligning with changing customer, prospect and audience needs. This is a primary challenge for many brands that lack a company-wide event strategy (42%), which is likely due to lack of resources to better understand how their audiences have changed and/or their ability to address these changes with a more integrated program of events.

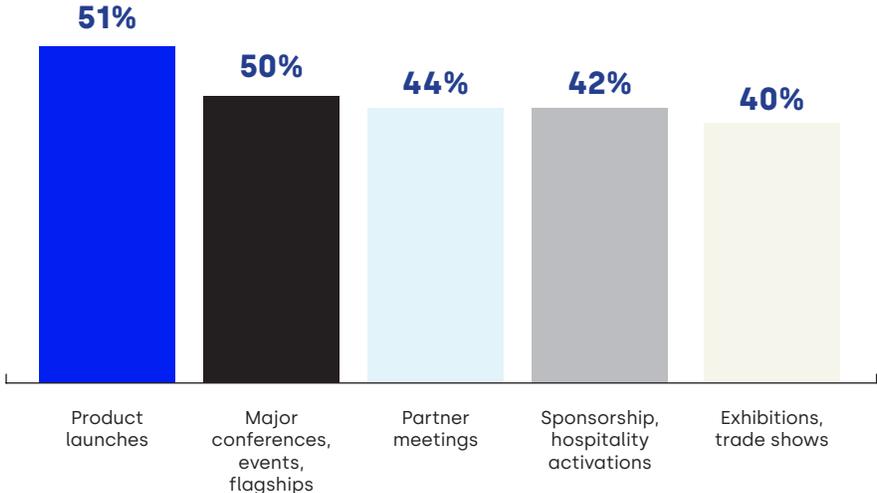
Biggest Challenges for Brands When Developing Event Strategy



Key Insight #5: Product launch events along with major conferences/events/flagships are expected to increase the most as part of brands' event portfolios

The survey asked brands: Looking ahead to the next two to three years, how do you predict the makeup of events in your portfolio will change? The top three types of events are expected to be product launches, major conferences/events/flagships and partner meetings. The findings suggest in today's dynamic, growing and technology-focused economy, brands expect to launch more new products and services, and use events and experiential marketing to better meet the needs of changing customers in various markets. It is an important finding that there is expected to be increased investment and a focus on brands' most important flagship conferences and events. 2022 and 2023 will be critical years of normalization for the event industry.

Where Brands Expect to Make Increased Investment Within Event Portfolios



About the Respondents: The survey respondents represent a cross-section of leading brand and event marketers that work for many of the largest corporations in the world. The marketers mainly work in major industries including technology, entertainment and media, medical and pharmaceuticals, professional and financial services, consumer electronics, and other important sectors. Fifty-nine percent of the events run by the respondents are in business-to-business sectors and 41% are consumer market focused. Sixty-six percent of the respondents are with companies that have over \$100 million in annual revenue.

The findings in this Executive Summary provide only a small portion of the insights from the study. The next sections are packed with insightful data, benchmarks and analysis.

I. The Value of Events and Forging Event Strategy

I. The Value of Events and Forging Event Strategy

This section of the report covers in-depth just how closely aligned events are with overall corporate goals and marketing strategies, as well as the challenges and opportunities related to setting event strategies. Brand executive comments are included that speak to many of the issues and opportunities companies with event marketing programs are likely to face as their event marketing strategies and programs are reignited over the coming months.

Overall, the findings show that events and experiential marketing continue to become more important to the brands that were surveyed. Still, many corporate marketing groups and departments are digital-focused and siloed by specialty or department. Better integration between events and other marketing channels and specialties, especially as most markets continue to change rapidly due to technology, will likely remain a long-term challenge and opportunity.

Findings show that events and experiential marketing continue to become more important.

The Top Reasons Corporations Invest in Events

Survey Question: What are the top reasons your company does events?
(Select the top three.)

Overall, the top goals for events are to raise brand awareness, educate customers and prospects, and drive sales. The top secondary goals are to capture leads and launch new products and services. Half or more of brands with a company-wide event strategy use events primarily to raise brand awareness and drive sales revenue. As the comparison in the table shows, companies without a strategy across their entire event portfolio are more focused on gathering leads as a top event goal.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Raise brand awareness	59%	51%	63%
Educate customers, prospects and attendees	47%	49%	50%
Drive sales revenue	46%	50%	42%
Gather leads	42%	37%	48%
Launch new products or services	37%	34%	42%
Enhance partner relationships	33%	36%	32%
Enhance customer satisfaction/loyalty	31%	33%	32%
Establish/enhance leadership position in the industry/market	22%	24%	17%
Other	3%	2%	4%

Brands with a company-wide event strategy are more likely to focus their event programs on driving sales (50%) compared to brands lacking a strategy (42%). Companies without a company-wide strategy are more likely to place an emphasis on using events to raise brand awareness.

Multiyear Trends: Brands' Top Reasons for Investing in Events in 2018, 2020 and 2022

The multiyear event goals ranking differs somewhat from the similar surveys conducted in 2020 and 2018.

	2022	2020	2018
#1 REASON	Raise brand awareness: 59%	Educate customers, prospects and attendees: 62%	Raise brand awareness: 64%
#2 REASON	Educate customers, prospects and attendees: 47%	Raise brand awareness: 61%	Drive sales revenue: 62%
#3 REASON	Drive sales revenue: 46%	Drive sales revenue: 48%	Educate customers, prospects and attendees: 60%

Industry Sector Comparisons: Top Reasons Corporations Invest in Events

The findings to this question are broken out by five key industry sectors in the table below: IT and telecommunications, entertainment and media, medical and pharmaceuticals, professional services/consulting, and financial services. Driving sales revenue with events is more important to brands in technology, entertainment and media, and medical and pharmaceutical industries.

	IT & Telecom	Entertainment & Media	Medical & Pharma	Professional Services	Financial Services
Raise brand awareness	59%	71%	45%	65%	59%
Educate customers, prospects and attendees	59%	38%	60%	35%	45%
Drive sales revenue	54%	54%	35%	43%	55%
Gather leads	43%	54%	45%	51%	41%
Launch new products or services	29%	38%	45%	43%	27%
Enhance partner relationships	43%	29%	30%	24%	27%
Enhance customer satisfaction/loyalty	43%	33%	30%	19%	32%
Establish/enhance leadership position in the industry/market	20%	33%	45%	8%	23%

Importance of Events to Various Company Strategies

Survey Question: On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being the highest rating) how important are events to your company's overall various strategy areas (e.g., marketing, corporate business, sales and employee engagement)?

Overall, brands say their event programs are most important to adding value to marketing strategy, followed by corporate business strategy and then sales strategy. Comparing brands with a company-wide event strategy with those without finds the biggest difference is around the relationship of events to company sales strategy. That is, brands with a company-wide event strategy are often more closely aligned with their sales group goals.

Average 10-Point Scale	All Respondents	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Marketing Strategy	7.1	7.4	6.9
Overall Corporate Business Strategy	7.0	7.1	7.0
Sales Strategy	6.9	7.5	6.5
Employee Engagement Strategy	6.3	6.5	6.1

Industry Sector Comparisons: Importance of Events to Various Company Strategies

The findings to the question above are broken-out by five key industry sectors in the table below: IT and telecommunications, entertainment and media, medical and pharmaceuticals, professional services/consulting, and financial services.

	IT & Telecom	Entertainment & Media	Medical & Pharma	Professional Services	Financial Services
Marketing Strategy	7.3	7.3	7.8	7.0	7.6
Overall Corporate Business Strategy	7.4	6.8	7.1	6.1	7.5
Sales Strategy	7.2	6.4	6.4	6.7	7.5
Employee Engagement Strategy	6.5	6.4	7.5	6.2	6.9

Percentage of Companies With a Company-wide Event Portfolio

Survey Question: Does your company have a company-wide event portfolio strategy?

A sizable segment of the industry, but still less than half (45%), has a company-wide event portfolio strategy in place. This 45% in the 2022 survey is the exact same percentage that was found in the survey conducted in 2020. The 2018 study found that only 34% of the industry had a company-wide event portfolio strategy in place. That this percentage has not changed over the past two years, after a fairly big jump between 2018 and 2020 is due to the pandemic pause. But the new survey data suggests more movement to institute company-wide event strategies as 54% of brands that currently lack this level of event strategy integration say they are in the process of developing a company-wide event portfolio strategy.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Yes, we currently have a company-wide event portfolio strategy in place	45%	100%	0%
No, but we are in the process of developing a company-wide event portfolio strategy	30%	0%	54%
No, we don't have a company-wide strategy in place, but have in the past	8%	0%	14%
No, we've never had a company-wide event portfolio strategy	9%	0%	16%
No, we have department-level or LOB-level strategies in place, but not a company-wide strategy	8%	0%	14%
Other	1%	0%	2%



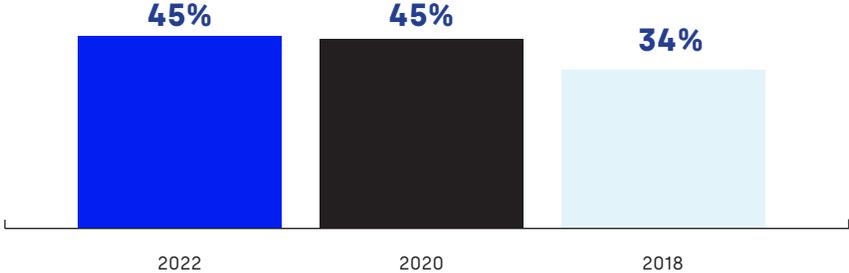
Important Finding:

Fifty-four percent of brands that do not currently have a company-wide event strategy say they are in fact in the process of developing this level of event portfolio strategy now.

Multiyear Trends: Percentage of Brands with a Company-Wide Event Portfolio in 2018, 2020 and 2022

Between 2018 and 2020 the percentage of brands with a company-wide event strategy increased by 9%. But the percentage has stayed the same over the past two challenging years.

% of Brands with a Company-Wide Event Portfolio Strategy



Industry Sector Comparisons: Percentage of Companies with a Company-wide Event Portfolio

The findings to this question are broken-out by five industry sectors in the table below: IT and telecommunications, entertainment and media, medical and pharmaceuticals, professional services/consulting, and financial services. Technology and medical related brands are the most likely to currently have a company-wide event portfolio strategy in place.

	IT & Telecom	Entertainment & Media	Medical & Pharma	Professional Services	Financial Services
Yes, we currently have a company-wide event portfolio strategy in place	51%	26%	47%	24%	36%
No, but we are in the process of developing a company-wide event portfolio strategy	36%	37%	37%	49%	23%
No, we don't have a company-wide strategy in place, but have in the past	4%	11%	5%	3%	23%
No, we've never had a company-wide event portfolio strategy	2%	11%	11%	11%	14%
No, we have department-level or LOB-level strategies in place, but not a company-wide strategy	8%	11%	0%	11%	5%
Other	0%	5%	0%	3%	0%

Brands with Company-wide Event Strategy Only: How Closely Aligned are Event Strategies with Overall Corporate Marketing and Sales Strategies?

Survey Question: How closely aligned is your event strategy with your company's overall marketing strategy, as well as with your company's overall sales strategy?

This question was posed only to brands that currently have a company-wide event marketing strategy. The findings show that events are more often "extremely closely" aligned with marketing goals and strategies compared to sales. There are different approaches, and levels of alignment, but a company-wide event strategy has benefits and improves results. The percentage of brands with events closely aligned with overall corporate marketing strategy is 63% vs. 60% closely aligned with sales.

<i>All Respondents</i>	Extremely Closely Aligned	Closely Aligned	Moderately Aligned	Somewhat Aligned	Not Aligned At All
Overall Corporate Marketing Strategy	31%	32%	16%	24%	1%
Sales Strategy	23%	37%	22%	17%	2%

Event Marketer Comments: Reasons Event Strategy May Not Be Aligned with Corporate Marketing or Sales Strategies

Survey Question: What are the reasons that your event strategy is not aligned with your corporate marketing or sales strategies?

Key themes in the various responses include:

- Divisions/departments/groups in silos
- Lack of communication among groups/stakeholders
- Changing and/or competing priorities
- Leadership changes
- Costs and resources
- Complexity of serving multiple industries and markets, especially at large companies
- Events may be seen as separate from marketing or more tactical

Select comments:

- "Changes in focus across organization and then each line of business."
- "Competing priorities."
- "Corporate marketing focuses more on sponsorship events and doesn't have a general head of events."
- "Events are done at a divisional level."
- "Ever changing growth goals coupled with historically segmented decision makers working in silos."
- "Historically we've been a very sales focused organization where marketing supports sales versus the marketing team driving the strategy."
- "Lack of communication and decision making within individual functions to the broader group."
- "Marketing vs. sales like oil and water."
- "No one to spearhead effort."
- "Recently re-organized the company structure and currently realigning events strategy to match."
- "Siloed activations."
- "Treated as silos but now incorporating into overall industry leadership and cross-sales/marketing."
- "We are currently working on aligning by industry and corporate for 2022."
- "We have decentralized marketing and sales functions that have autonomy to create strategies that satisfy their individual business objectives."
- "We've been in high growth mode during the pandemic, so our strategy was outpaced by customer acquisition. Now we are trying to create our strategy and consistency in our event experiences across LOBs and each of our global markets."

Event Marketer Comments: The Challenges to Improving Strategic Event Program Alignment with Marketing and Sales

Survey Question: When it comes to improving alignment with marketing and/or sales in 2022, what are the main hurdles or challenges your team faces?

Common themes in the write-in responses:

- Need executive leadership attention
- Better collaboration and communication among different groups
- Information silos need to be addressed
- Differences between sales and marketing departments
- Different goals, metrics and KPIs
- Budgets and resources
- Pandemic overhang still causing distractions
- Need to align incentives

Insightful comments include:

- "Ability to collaborate across teams and break down information silos."
- "Aligning executive staff leaders, changing the norm and tradition."
- "Alignment on focus for consumer events vs. sales engagement tactics."
- "Attribution to sales given long sales cycle."
- "Budget allocation, timeline to execution and internal confusion about what resources activations really take."
- "Collaborative consistency between teams."
- "Cross channel communication is sometimes lacking, and some channels can feel siloed."
- "Everyone wants ownership."
- "Getting all stakeholders to buy in and adhere to the strategy."
- "Getting others within the company to understand the complexity and skill set it involves to hold an events job and to not treat it like SaaS."
- "Getting sales team to use leads from events."

- "Processes to encourage/facilitate collaboration."
- "The constant shift of priorities and goals is one of the biggest factors in not having team alignment. Another challenge set are the processes that marketing implements to create alignment and sales sees as a hurdle."
- "Too many cooks."
- "Using the same approach in different geographic regions."
- "Working to eliminate individual silos and centralized procurement events included."

Most Important Elements of a Successful Event Strategy

Survey Question: Which of the following elements do you consider to be the most important for a successful event strategy? (Select the top five.)

The top two elements brands include in their event strategies are specific event objectives and alignment with sales group strategy and goals. More than 30% of brands also use events to align to overall corporate marketing objectives, develop post-event attendee engagement plans, and to gather intelligence about audiences and customers. In short, top event marketing organizations use a wide range of data sets and diverse information to build their event strategies and plans, and they integrate with other important company-wide strategies and plans.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
A set of specific objectives and goals for an event	47%	47%	48%
Alignment with overall sales group strategy and goals	43%	40%	45%
Alignment to overall corporate marketing objectives	35%	38%	32%
Post-event attendee engagement plan	34%	26%	41%
Intelligence about audiences, attendees, and/or customers	32%	31%	32%
Data collection, measurement, and analysis plan	28%	31%	26%
Attendee and/or partner feedback/input	27%	23%	30%
Assessment of related competitor and industry events	25%	20%	29%
KPIs and success metrics defined	23%	29%	18%
Experience/production design goals and plans	19%	23%	16%
Event technology plan	19%	18%	20%
Event messaging framework	17%	17%	17%
Creative concepts/event theme(s)	15%	19%	12%
Health & Safety plan	14%	20%	10%
Audience acquisition plan	13%	16%	11%
Pricing strategy (for fee-paid events)	12%	17%	8%
Contingency plan or timeline for pivot to digital	11%	10%	13%
Plan for external resources/role of agencies and service providers/vendors	9%	10%	9%
Other	1%	2%	1%

Biggest Challenges When Developing Event Strategy

Survey Question: What are the biggest challenges you currently face when developing your event strategy?

Setting or even simply updating an important event program strategy or plan is often a significant amount of work incorporating a number of data sources and internal (and external) constituencies. Now brands have been adding on the additional complexity of strategizing and developing plans in a post-pandemic period, and inside many organizations that are still in the in-person event re-start phase. This survey question focused on specific and somewhat granular issues and challenges related to developing event strategies. Along with budget issues, the top challenge in particular in this post-pandemic period is aligning with changing customer, prospect and audience needs. This is a particular challenge for many brands that lack a company-wide event strategy (42%), which is likely due to lack of resources to better understand how their audiences have changed and/or their ability to address these changes with a more integrated program of events.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Aligning with changing customer, prospect and audience needs	34%	24%	42%
Securing budgets	26%	29%	23%
Creating experiences and content that deliver value to attendees	23%	20%	26%
Setting event strategies that address needs of different internal divisions, brands, markets, etc.	23%	18%	28%
Quantifying ROI of event(s)	20%	18%	22%
Mask or vaccine mandates	20%	20%	19%
Setting strategies for different types of events (internal vs. third-party; B2B or consumer; etc.)	20%	16%	23%
Aligning with overall corporate marketing strategy and goals	18%	20%	16%
Aligning with overall sales group strategy and goals	18%	18%	17%
Overcoming travel hesitancy	17%	21%	13%
Generating new/innovative ideas and concepts that capture attention	15%	19%	11%
Overcoming internal resistance to new ideas, risk aversion	15%	13%	16%
Getting C-level attention and buy-in	13%	12%	13%
Local health and safety regulations onsite	12%	11%	12%
Creating experiences that align with the brand	10%	13%	8%
Corporate travel budgets	10%	7%	12%
Sustainability/environmental impact initiatives	8%	11%	5%
Event technology/digital platform selection	4%	5%	4%
Other	0%	1%	0%

Audience Data and Information Used to Inform Strategy

Survey Question: Which of the following audience, attendee and customer information sources do you currently use to inform your event strategy, and what would you like to use more of, or start to use, if resources allowed?

One of the primary major long-term trends in corporate marketing is the effort to better understand customers, prospects and audiences. Event marketing teams understand the critical importance of this and many want even more investment and resources from their companies to do this better. To inform their strategy and planning, over half of brands would like the resources to better analyze audience trends. Forty-seven percent of brands would like the resources to capture and analyze more digital engagement data. Currently, the core audience information focused sources are a combination of both event- and corporate audience-related research and event-specific data such as session ratings.

<i>All Respondents</i>	Extremely Closely Aligned	Closely Aligned
Feedback from previous events (surveys, evaluations, etc.)	82%	22%
Attendance data from prior events	71%	32%
In-session data and ratings	63%	38%
Corporate customer surveys	62%	40%
Pre-event surveys, interviews, feedback sessions	60%	43%
Social media conversation data	59%	45%
Digital engagement data	57%	47%
Trends from industry and customer behavior	52%	53%
Analysis of target audience trends	44%	60%

<i>Brands With Company-wide Event Strategy</i>	Use Currently	Want to Use More If Resources Allowed
Feedback from previous events (surveys, evaluations, etc.)	85%	17%
Attendance data from prior events	68%	33%
Corporate customer surveys	64%	39%
In-session data and ratings	62%	41%
Social media conversation data	60%	43%
Trends from industry and customer behavior	59%	46%
Digital engagement data	57%	46%
Analysis of target audience trends	57%	46%
Pre-event surveys, interviews, feedback sessions	57%	46%

<i>Brands Without Company-wide Event Strategy</i>	Use Currently	Want to Use More if Resources Allowed
Feedback from previous events (surveys, evaluations, etc.)	79%	28%
Attendance data from prior events	73%	31%
In-session data and ratings	64%	36%
Pre-event surveys, interviews, feedback sessions	63%	40%
Corporate customer surveys	60%	41%
Digital engagement data	58%	49%
Social media conversation data	58%	47%
Trends from industry and customer behavior	45%	61%
Analysis of target audience trends	34%	72%

Event Marketer Comments: How Brands are Driving Creativity, Innovation and New Ideas for Their Event Programs

Survey Question: What is your group's process to drive creativity, innovation and new ideas for your events?

Key themes from the respondents:

- Team brainstorming and idea meetings
- Audience research and feedback
- Industry trends analysis
- Competitive analysis
- Attending other events
- Working closely with agencies

Brand feedback:

- "Active brainstorming sessions."
- "Adequate time and research. OK to cast broad but reel in narrow."
- "Analysis of trends, feedback from customer panels, brainstorming."
- "Audit other industries programs/events."
- "Brainstorming sessions, contests, varied age range of creatives."
- "Brainstorming, looking at our IP, looking at what's being done in the marketplace."
- "Collaborating with agencies and incorporating technology in the experience vs. demo."

- "Collaboration from other departments (especially those driving product or customer engagement)."
- "Cross functional input."
- "Gathering data around the types of events needed, workshop with the team around options."
- "Group meetings - postmortem immediately while event is fresh, then early kickoff for next event with goal of two new items to launch."
- "Keep abreast of changes in the market, contact the market more, and communicate with people in the market to get the information you want."
- "Listen to what customers and prospects want and find creative ways to deliver."
- "Look at other industry events and what they're doing; look at events outside of our industry to see what they're doing."
- "New technologies brought to events."
- "Research and attend other similar style events."
- "Strategy."
- "Think tank sessions outside of the office."
- "We're a Silicon Valley tech start up, so we're creative and innovative on the whole. The part that we seem to miss is the structure and consistency to balance the ideation phase and moving into execution phases."

II. Budgets

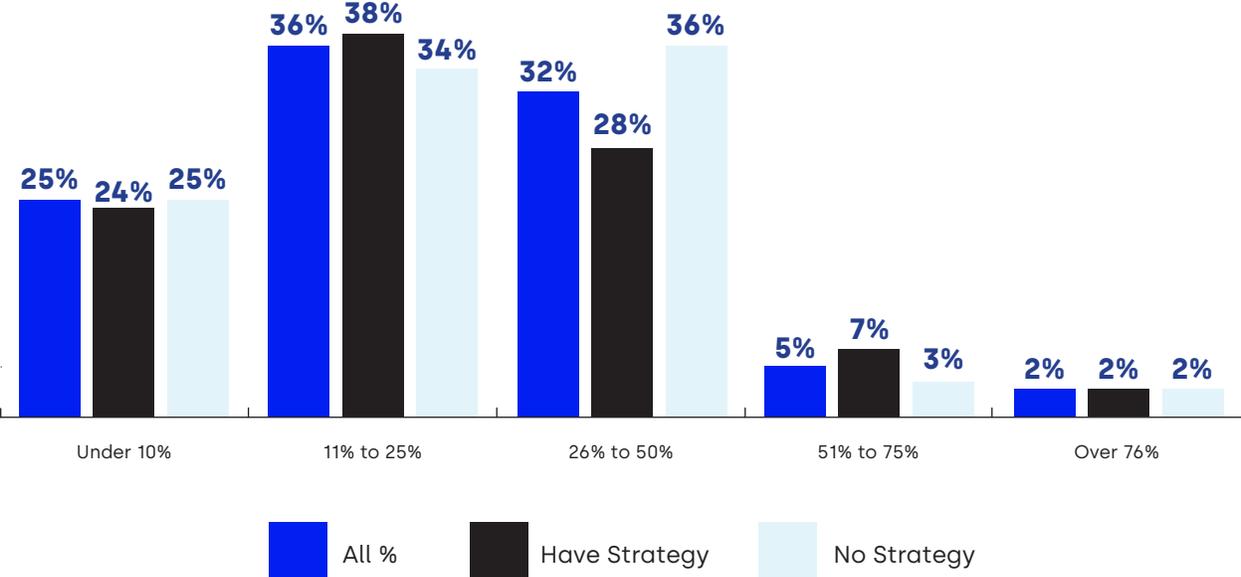
II. Budgets

The findings in this section of the study reflect growing confidence in the future of the industry and show the significant pent-up demand to reactivate face-to-face marketing. Clearly, as a result of the unprecedented challenges faced over the past two years, marketing budgets and event and experiential budgets in particular were significantly impacted with a depth and swiftness unlike any other period. This section covers this impact with a look back at event and experiential budgets over the past two years, and a look forward as live in-person events continue to be reactivated. It's worth noting that while event budgets are increasing a good portion of funds are required to deal with cost increases and inflation throughout the event industry and the global economy.

Percentage of Corporate Marketing Budget Allocated to Events

Survey Question: What percentage of the overall corporate marketing budget is allocated to events?

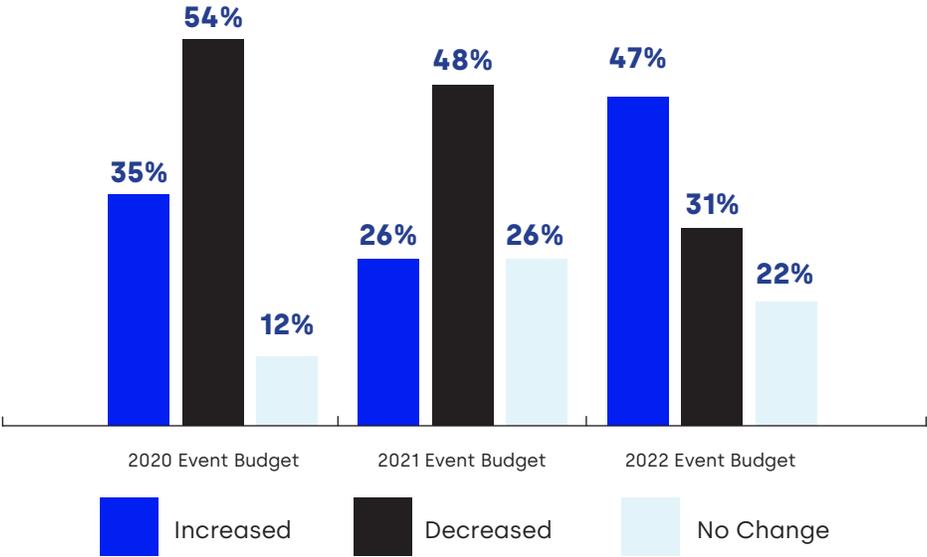
Exactly one-quarter of brands say their event budget is under 10% of their company's total marketing budget, but over one-third of brands (36%) have an event budget that represents between 11% and 25% of their company's total marketing budget. Brands with a company-wide event strategy more often have larger event budgets as a percentage of total corporate marketing spend when compared to companies that lack a company-wide event strategy. But the difference is not very significant. Sixty-two percent of companies without a strategy spend less than 25% of their marketing budgets on events, whereas 59% with a company-wide strategy have budgets that low.



Recent Event Budget Growth and Outlook

Survey Question: Looking at your total event budget across calendar years, how did your total event budget change in 2020 and 2021, and what is the outlook for 2022?

This 2022 event budget outlook data should be seen as good news as it confirms that, overall, corporations plan to increase their investment in events after a uniquely challenging two-year period that included nearly an entire year-long industry shut-down, a quick shift to virtual/digital events, and then a second pandemic year of partial event program restarts. For 2022, 47% of brands see their event budget increasing and only 31% expect an overall decrease in event spending this year. To compare, only 26% percent of all respondents said their total event budget had increased in 2021.



A stark difference around 2022 budgets throughout the industry is seen when comparing brands with a company-wide event strategy with companies that do not maintain this strategic depth. Fifty-eight percent of brands with a company-wide event strategy say their budgets this year have increased vs. 39% that do not have a strategy. This data comparison alone powerfully suggests the value of developing a company-wide event strategy.

<i>Brands With Company-wide Event Strategy</i>	Increased	Decreased	No Change
2020 event budget	24%	66%	9%
2021 event budget	36%	51%	14%
2022 event budget	58%	19%	23%

<i>Brands Without Company-wide Event Strategy</i>	Increased	Decreased	No Change
2020 event budget	42%	44%	14%
2021 event budget	19%	46%	35%
2022 event budget	39%	39%	22%

Reasons for Event Budget Increases

Survey Question: If your event budgets are increasing, what are the primary reasons?

Cost increases, often elevated even more by inflation, are impacting the event marketing industry just as it is a factor in most areas of the global economy. The main reasons for budget increases are related to basic cost increases and inflation followed by brands' plans to manage or participate in more events in 2022. These findings are not surprising when looking back at the past two years. Interestingly, higher costs look to be more of an issue for brands with a company-wide event strategy. This is likely due to these brands having larger event programs with more and often larger events.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Costs associated with doing the same events are increasing (i.e., venues, speakers, catering, technology and entertainment, etc.)	38%	44%	34%
We are doing more events	36%	33%	39%
Covid related event format changes	32%	30%	34%
Health & Safety expenses	24%	28%	20%
We are doing larger events	19%	23%	16%
Sustainability initiatives	15%	15%	14%
Inflation or other marketplace dynamics	15%	14%	15%
Other	2%	2%	2%
Not applicable; event budgets are not increasing	20%	18%	21%

How Event Budgets are Expected to Change: Two- to Three- Year Outlook

Survey Question: Looking ahead to the next two to three years, how do you predict your event budget will change in the following areas?

When the survey was conducted in late 2021 and early 2022, just under two-thirds of brands (65%) were expecting to have their budget allocated to event technology increase over the next two to three years. Sixty-one percent of brands expect to be spending more on health and safety related measures, and over half are planning to increase their budgets for webcasting and virtual extensions of live events. In short, the main spending spikes are projected to be concentrated around technology and audience health-related areas.

<i>All Respondents</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Event technology	65%	17%	19%
Health & Safety	61%	15%	24%
Webcasting and virtual extensions of live events	52%	28%	20%
Partner/sponsor/exhibit experiences	49%	15%	36%
Event design	48%	24%	28%
Event content	46%	24%	29%
Pre-event marketing/communication	45%	22%	33%
Production and operations	44%	23%	34%
Post-event communication	43%	24%	33%
Sustainability/environmental impact planning	40%	21%	40%
Measurement	37%	29%	34%

These budget-related findings can be read overall as promising news for the event marketing industry as large segments of brands are expecting to increase or at least hold their spending in a number of important areas of the industry. Consider that 40% or more of the survey respondents expect their spending to increase in 10 of the 11 categories tracked in this specific question, and 50% or more brands are expecting spending increases over the next few years in five of these key event management and marketing areas.

<i>Brands With Company-wide Event Strategy</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Event technology	65%	16%	19%
Health & Safety	55%	20%	25%
Production and operations	53%	21%	26%
Partner/sponsor/exhibit experiences	52%	13%	35%
Event design	50%	19%	32%
Webcasting and virtual extensions of live events	48%	32%	20%
Event content	47%	23%	30%
Sustainability/environmental impact planning	46%	19%	35%
Pre-event marketing/communication	42%	28%	29%
Post-event communication	40%	25%	35%
Measurement	38%	24%	38%

<i>Brands Without Company-wide Event Strategy</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Health & Safety	66%	11%	23%
Event technology	64%	17%	19%
Webcasting and virtual extensions of live events	56%	24%	20%
Event design	47%	29%	24%
Partner/sponsor/exhibit experiences	47%	16%	37%
Pre-event marketing/communication	47%	17%	36%
Event content	46%	26%	29%
Post-event communication	46%	23%	31%
Measurement	37%	33%	30%
Production and operations	36%	24%	40%
Sustainability/environmental impact planning	35%	22%	43%

III. Measurement and Data

III. Measurement and Data

Measurement has long been and very likely will always be a major challenge and opportunity for event marketers. For one, there is often an overwhelming scope and volume of metrics event marketers can and do collect. On top of this, there's the fact that the true impact of events may need to be tracked over months or longer especially when determining the impact of the event program on sales. Measurement is a key challenge area where brands want to see best practices in terms of what and how others are measuring. Many companies may still need a better and agreed definition of the key metrics within their organizations. A common challenge is that often measurement is not consistent, with marketing teams measuring differently than event teams, for example. Just one of the measurement challenges for brands is how to be accurate and consistent while working with other stakeholders in the company.

Most Important Event Performance Metrics Tracked by Brands

Survey Question: Which of the following metrics are most important for your organization to track? (Check all that apply.)

For all brands, the top metric is total attendance registration numbers. The next most-used metrics are sales attributed to the event and specific session/topic attendance. Brands that have a company-wide event strategy are more focused on tracking sales impact of their events, as well as leads, compared to brands that lack a company-wide event strategy. Broadly, the findings show that brands with a wider strategy are more nuanced in what and how they measure.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Number of registrants/attendees/visitors/participants	62%	57%	66%
Sales attributed to the event (over product/service life-cycle)	39%	41%	38%
Session/topic attendance	38%	27%	46%
Number of leads (MQLs)	29%	31%	28%
Attendance/engagement by pipeline/opportunity stage	29%	25%	33%
Social media activity	25%	24%	26%
Post-event engagement (nurture campaigns)	24%	21%	27%
Expo/Booth foot traffic	23%	25%	21%
Press coverage, public relations impact	22%	25%	19%
Increase in social followers	20%	20%	19%
Website hits	18%	21%	16%
Net Promoter Score	18%	19%	17%
Total view time	17%	20%	14%
Number of product demos	15%	19%	13%
Cost per lead	15%	16%	14%
Mobile app participation	15%	13%	16%
Environmental impact	10%	12%	8%
Dwell times	10%	9%	11%
Cost per touch	5%	5%	6%
Other	0%	1%	0%
Not applicable; we do not measure event ROI or track against metrics	13%	11%	13%

Multiyear Trends: Brands' Most Important Event Performance Metrics in 2018, 2020 and 2022

	2022	2020	2018
#1 METRIC	Number of registrants/ attendees: 62%	Number of registrants/ attendees: 54%	Number of registrants/ attendees: 83%
#2 METRIC	Sales attributed to the event (over product/service life-cycle): 39%	Number of leads (MQLs): 42%	Number of leads (MQLs): 64%
#3 METRIC	Session/topic attendance: 38%	Sales attributed to the event (over product/service life-cycle): 40%	Attendee evaluations and survey feedback: 59%

How Brands Measure Hard-to-Measure Event Aspects

Survey Question: How are you measuring hard-to-measure aspects of an event, such as share of voice, awareness, buzz, etc.?

Deeper analysis of social media monitoring, audience surveys and website traffic are the top ways brands are trying to better capture and understand hard-to-measure areas such as share of voice and buzz.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Social media conversation listening/monitoring	51%	47%	54%
Audience surveys	48%	44%	52%
Website traffic	42%	44%	41%
Partner, exhibitor, sponsor surveys	40%	38%	42%
Social media metrics	37%	36%	38%
Press coverage	32%	37%	28%
Qualitative or anecdotal feedback	31%	30%	33%
Other	2%	2%	3%

Event Marketer Comments: Additional Event Metrics Recently Measured or Plan to Measure

Survey Question: What is an additional event metric you have recently started to measure, or plan to measure, in 2022?

Key themes in the brand commentary:

- Content consumption and engagement
- Social media metrics and monitoring
- Overall digital engagement
- In-person and digital attendance differences
- Event impact on final sale
- Audience comfort level and sense of health/safety

Select verbatim responses

- "Automated target sessions."
- "Comfort levels due to Covid."
- "Content consumption by audience type."
- "Digital engagement at digital events."
- "Digital longevity."
- "Engagement."
- "How attendees felt about their health and safety at the event."
- "In-person vs. virtual."
- "Lead conversion timeline after event completion."
- "Length of time staying in session or view time."
- "LTV of event guests."
- "More detailed demos."
- "More surveys."
- "NPS score."
- "Qualitative language-based data such as chat in digital, open-ended survey data, social posts."
- "Sentiment."

- "Sessions bailed on in the first few min (virtual breakouts)."
- "Social chat."
- "True link from event to sale."
- "Virtual attendee duration, in-person attendee digital interaction, virtual vs. in-person data."
- "Virtual consumption by tagged session type (beginner, intermediate, expert level sessions)."
- "We're doing more media listening."

Staff Resources Available for Analyzing Event Data

Survey Question: What staff resources do you have access to for analyzing event data?

A total of two-third of brands either use dedicated analysts within their event organization or that work in their marketing group to analyze event data for key metrics and insights.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
We have a dedicated analyst(s) within the event organization	35%	32%	38%
We use an analyst(s) from the marketing organization	36%	39%	34%
We use an analyst(s) from the sales organization	19%	23%	16%
We use an analyst(s) from another organization	10%	15%	7%
We use 3rd party support for analysis of event data	10%	10%	10%
Other	2%	3%	1%
We don't have resources dedicated to analyzing event data	30%	27%	31%

How Event Data and Insights are Used

Survey Question: How does your organization utilize the data and insights you generate through events? (Check all that apply.)

Event data and insights are mostly used to design future events, inform future event portfolio strategy, and measure ROI. Using data to create/revise future event portfolio strategy is more of a focus for brands without a company-wide event strategy, while determining the ROI of event spend is more important to companies with a company-wide event strategy.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Design future events	51%	53%	49%
Create/revise future event portfolio strategy	40%	31%	47%
Measure/track overall ROI of event spend	38%	46%	31%
Build/reallocate event budgets	35%	34%	37%
Build/update/evolve target audience personas	30%	29%	31%
Inform planning for post-event attendee engagement programs	26%	26%	26%
Build/inform sales forecasts	26%	22%	28%
Inform other marketing tactics/campaigns	24%	27%	22%
Quantify impact/value of the event to internal stakeholders	24%	24%	23%
Personalize post-event follow-up based on attendee behavior at event	24%	19%	27%
Build/revise employee engagement programs	17%	11%	21%
Inform product development/R&D initiatives	10%	10%	9%
Other	1%	0%	2%

Which Groups in the Company Use Event Data and Insights

Survey Question: What groups/roles within your company review and/or take action on the data and insights generated by events? (Check all that apply.)

Marketing leadership and sales teams are the primary groups that use event-generated data and insights industry-wide. Not surprisingly, brands with a robust company-wide strategy are more likely to share event data and insights with senior executive leadership.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Marketing leadership	62%	60%	64%
Sales managers/relationship owners	46%	41%	50%
Sales leadership	46%	39%	52%
Senior executive leadership	44%	47%	41%
Marketing program/campaign managers	43%	46%	41%
Product development/management teams	17%	19%	15%
HR/employee engagement	10%	14%	6%
Finance/procurement	7%	8%	7%
Other	1%	2%	0%

IV. Reaching and Engaging Audiences

IV. Reaching and Engaging Audiences

This section of the report covers how brands are focusing on better reaching and engaging audiences. There is significant pent-up demand by many audiences in most industry sectors to re-engage with in-person events and experiences. Brands need to prepare for how to respond to the significant pent-up demand businesspeople and consumers have for events and experiences. The expected explosion of demand for events, experiences and gatherings, whether it happens in 2022 or 2023, is likely to be significant and sustained. Live, in-person experiences, by engaging the full range of senses and emotions, are almost always more memorable than other marketing channel engagements. This means brand marketers need to look at this still early period of in-person event restarts and new activations as a unique, once-in-a-career opportunity.

How Brands are Upgrading the Attendee Experience

Survey Question: Which of the following are you most focused on in 2022 for improving your on-site attendee experience? (Select your top three.)

In the post-pandemic period, brands are primarily upgrading the on-site experience by improving event design and audience flow, enhancing content and networking opportunities.

	All %	Have Strategy	No Strategy
Overall event design/flow	41%	32%	47%
Content	38%	40%	36%
Networking	34%	39%	31%
Event locations/venues	32%	29%	35%
Event agendas/schedules	30%	25%	33%
Health & Safety	27%	31%	24%
Technology integration	23%	19%	25%
Partners/sponsors experience	20%	21%	19%
Event registration pricing/packages	16%	12%	20%
Sustainability	12%	15%	10%
Check-in/arrival experience	8%	15%	3%

Industry Sector Comparisons: How Brands are Upgrading the Attendee Experience

The findings to this question are broken out by five key industry sectors in the table below: IT and telecommunications, entertainment and media, medical and pharmaceuticals, professional services/consulting, and financial services

	IT & Telecom	Entertainment & Media	Medical & Pharma	Professional Services	Financial Services
Overall event design/flow	42%	53%	25%	60%	43%
Content	44%	32%	44%	27%	29%
Networking	47%	16%	25%	23%	33%
Event locations/venues	47%	21%	6%	17%	19%
Event agendas/schedules	21%	5%	31%	50%	29%
Health & Safety	26%	42%	50%	13%	43%
Technology integration	23%	42%	38%	10%	33%
Partners/sponsors experience	21%	32%	13%	23%	29%
Event registration pricing/packages	2%	21%	19%	53%	5%
Sustainability	14%	11%	19%	7%	5%
Check-in/arrival experience	12%	5%	0%	3%	10%

Event Marketer Comments: What Brands are Doing to Effectively Reach Target Audiences and Increase Attendance

Survey Question: What are you doing that's new for your business to effectively reach target audiences in an effort to increase attendance at your most important events?

Top themes found in the written comments:

- Increasing social media presence
- Offering hybrid attendance and content options
- Adding video to audience development content
- Improved targeting and messaging
- Instituting more cross-promotional efforts
- Offering and upgrading gifts, promotions and incentives
- Expanding total audience scope and market coverage

Event marketers provide their outlook in select responses

- "Advertising and social media."
- "Automated target marketing sessions."
- "Broadening our audience/attendee scope."
- "Building new community."
- "Creating opportunities for virtual participation, keeping health and safety concerns top of mind."
- "Cross-promotional efforts will be increased."
- "Direct mail gifting campaigns."
- "Doing data integration with our product and sales teams to ensure we are targeting the right people with the right messages."
- "Expand market size."
- "Expanding social media footprint."
- "Funnel marketing."
- "Give them incentives like getting industry certifications for attending."
- "Giving out gifts to attendees."
- "Hybrid in person/digital to reach wider audience."
- "Influencers."
- "Marketing automation."
- "More contests and speaker/sponsor features to increase social tagging and traction for followers/conversions."
- "More demos, video-blogging."
- "More targeted communication."
- "Partnerships."
- "Provide additional content to entice registration."
- "Segmentation."
- "Social media."
- "Technology advancement application, social media approach."
- "We are going back to the basics and heavily relying on LinkedIn."
- "We are sending out short video messages to those who have requested information."

V. Brands' Outlook for Event Portfolios, Content and Technology

III. Brands' Outlook for Event Portfolios, Content and Technology

This section covers brand executives' outlook over the next two to three years for areas including how their event portfolios and content format may change, along with how they expect their specific event technology investments to change. Also included are event marketer comments on the most pressing strategic issues they see impacting their event programs over the next few years. Beyond the post-pandemic event industry recovery and rebound period ahead, and the continued technology acceleration, there are many other areas of change forecasted by industry executives.

How the Event Portfolio May Change: Two- to Three-Year Outlook

Survey Question: Looking ahead to the next two to three years, how do you predict the makeup of events in your portfolio will change?

The top three types of events and activations expected to receive the most increased attention and investment are product launches, major conferences/events/flagships and partner meetings.

All Respondents	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Product launches	51%	17%	32%
Major conferences/events/flagships	50%	29%	21%
Partner meetings	44%	20%	37%
Sponsorship or hospitality activations	42%	27%	31%
Exhibitions/trade shows	40%	30%	30%
Road shows	39%	29%	33%
Training meetings	36%	27%	37%
User conferences	35%	26%	38%
Internal sales meetings	27%	28%	45%

<i>Brands With Company-Wide Event Strategy</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Major conferences/events/flagships	55%	23%	21%
Exhibitions/trade shows	46%	32%	21%
Product launches	44%	19%	36%
Sponsorship or hospitality activations	44%	18%	38%
Road shows	39%	32%	30%
Training meetings	36%	22%	43%
Partner meetings	35%	22%	43%
Internal sales meetings	30%	28%	42%
User conferences	26%	28%	45%

<i>Brands Without Company-Wide Event Strategy</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Product launches	56%	15%	29%
Partner meetings	51%	18%	31%
Major conferences/events/flagships	45%	34%	21%
User conferences	42%	25%	33%
Sponsorship or hospitality activations	41%	34%	26%
Road shows	38%	26%	36%
Training meetings	36%	32%	32%
Exhibitions/tradeshows	35%	27%	38%
Internal sales meetings	25%	28%	47%

How the Event Content May Change: Two to Three Year Outlook

Survey Question: Looking ahead to the next two to three years, how do you predict your event content formats will change?

The top three content-related findings, in terms of what brands expect to do more of over the next few years, are offering more business case studies, increasing hybrid in-person/virtual sessions, and providing a wider number of interactive sessions.

<i>All Respondents</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Case studies, real life business experiences	51%	17%	32%
Hybrid in-person/virtual sessions	49%	19%	33%
Interactive sessions	46%	27%	26%
Panel discussions	42%	23%	35%
Digital sessions	42%	30%	28%
Single presenter sessions (outside of general session and keynote halls)	37%	19%	44%
One-on-one/peer-to-peer/mentoring sessions	37%	25%	38%
External Keynote speakers	35%	19%	46%
Moderated Q&A sessions	35%	23%	42%
Non-moderated open Q&A sessions, conversations	32%	23%	45%
Pre- and post-conference workshops	27%	26%	47%
Traditional classroom setting with workbooks/ educational materials	21%	36%	43%

Increasing hybrid in-person and virtual content is more of a focus of brands with company-wide event strategies.

<i>Brands With Company-Wide Event Strategy</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Hybrid in-person/virtual sessions	52%	25%	23%
Interactive sessions	49%	23%	28%
Digital sessions	48%	20%	31%
Panel discussions	37%	23%	41%
Case studies, real life business experiences	37%	25%	37%
One-on-one/peer-to-peer/mentoring sessions	35%	21%	44%
Moderated Q&A sessions	35%	22%	43%
External Keynote speakers	33%	19%	48%
Pre- and post-conference workshops	32%	26%	41%
Non-moderated open Q&A sessions, conversations	30%	26%	44%
Single presenter sessions (outside of general session and keynote halls)	27%	23%	50%
Traditional classroom setting with workbooks/ educational materials	21%	33%	46%

<i>Brands Without Company-Wide Event Strategy</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Case studies, real life business experiences	63%	9%	28%
Panel discussions	46%	23%	30%
Hybrid in-person/virtual sessions	46%	13%	41%
Single presenter sessions (outside of general session and keynote halls)	45%	16%	39%
Interactive sessions	44%	31%	24%
One-on-one/peer-to-peer/mentoring sessions	39%	28%	34%
Digital sessions	37%	38%	25%
External Keynote speakers	36%	19%	45%
Moderated Q&A sessions	36%	23%	41%
Non-moderated open Q&A sessions, conversations	34%	20%	46%
Pre- and post-conference workshops	23%	26%	52%
Traditional classroom setting with workbooks/ educational materials	21%	38%	41%

How the Event Technology May Change: Two- to Three- Year Outlook

Survey Question: Looking ahead to the next two to three years, how do you predict your spend on event technology will change?

Integrating technology with events will continue to be one of the key trends and innovation drivers for the events industry for many years. For all brands, the top three technology areas expected to receive the most increased spending over the next few years relate to live streaming, technology integration, and deploying audience response systems. These three areas fall in the categories of providing a wider reach to both on-site and off-site audiences, and weaving both event and corporate software platforms and technologies together with the goal of better serving and understanding audiences, customers and prospects. Brands with a company-wide event strategy are more likely to view event technology in various ways to ultimately also help drive sales.

All Respondents	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Live Streaming	58%	13%	30%
Technology Integration	51%	19%	29%
Audience Response Systems	45%	15%	40%
Data Analytics/Measurement	43%	15%	42%
Lead Capture and Management	43%	24%	34%
Content Capture/Sharing	42%	21%	37%
Experiential Activations	41%	22%	38%
Event Apps	40%	22%	38%
Digital Signage	40%	19%	41%
Registration	39%	19%	42%
Virtual and Augmented Reality	37%	22%	41%
Polling/Surveys	35%	26%	38%
Attendee Tracking Technologies (e.g., NFC/iBeacons/RFID)	34%	19%	47%
Mobile Device Charging Areas/Stations	30%	18%	52%
Event Mapping/Wayfinding	28%	28%	44%
Attendee Wearables	22%	32%	47%

It is interesting to note that the table above shows there are nine technology areas that 40% or more brands say they expect to spend more on over the next two to three years.

<i>Brands With Company-Wide Event Strategy</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Technology Integration	50%	14%	36%
Live Streaming	50%	19%	31%
Data Analytics/Measurement	48%	17%	35%
Lead Capture and Management	44%	14%	43%
Experiential Activations	41%	22%	37%
Registration	40%	16%	44%
Digital Signage	40%	24%	36%
Content Capture/Sharing	38%	19%	44%
Event Apps	38%	25%	37%
Virtual and Augmented Reality	37%	27%	36%
Attendee Tracking Technologies (e.g., NFC/iBeacons/RFID)	36%	18%	46%
Audience Response Systems	36%	23%	41%
Mobile Device Charging Areas/Stations	36%	20%	44%
Polling/Surveys	35%	20%	44%
Attendee Wearables	28%	23%	49%
Event Mapping/Wayfinding	26%	26%	48%

<i>Brands Without Company-Wide Event Strategy</i>	Increase	Decrease	No Change
Live Streaming	64%	8%	28%
Audience Response Systems	53%	8%	39%
Technology Integration	52%	24%	24%
Content Capture/Sharing	46%	23%	31%
Lead Capture and Management	42%	32%	26%
Event Apps	41%	20%	39%
Experiential Activations	41%	22%	38%
Data Analytics/Measurement	39%	14%	48%
Digital Signage	39%	15%	45%
Registration	38%	21%	40%
Virtual and Augmented Reality	37%	18%	45%
Polling/Surveys	36%	31%	33%
Attendee Tracking Technologies (e.g., NFC/iBeacons/RFID)	33%	20%	48%
Event Mapping/Wayfinding	30%	29%	41%
Mobile Device Charging Areas/Stations	25%	16%	59%
Attendee Wearables	17%	38%	45%

Event Marketer Comments: The Most Pressing Issues Expected Over the Next Few Years

Survey Question: Are there any other critical strategic areas or pressing issues you expect will impact your event programs over the next one to two years?

Common themes in the written responses include:

- Securing budgets as event industry rebounds/recovers
- Increasing costs and inflation
- Improving hybrid in-person and digital strategies/offerings
- Sustainability and environmental focus
- Continued impact of the pandemic

Select comments

- "Budget allocations; health and safety."
- "Budget is the number one driver."
- "Cost and then where the industry goes in terms of operating models as a whole."
- "Covid and attendee comfort with in-person events."
- "Greater focus on sustainability, health and safety impacts, and split of in-person vs. digital options."
- "Hybrid events. How to have the reach but also draw an in-person audience."
- "Making events more experiential based."
- "Saturation of market with digital events."
- "Sustainability and eco-friendliness."
- "We're returning to some in-person events, so we will watch attendee and sponsor willingness to attend and engage."

Conclusion

Conclusion

The findings from the Event Strategy Insights & Benchmarks Study show a strong correlation between companies that have a company-wide event portfolio strategy and a number of success indicators. The overall main finding is that brands with a company-wide event strategy place a higher value on event marketing and achieve better results. For example, companies with a company-wide event strategy have faster growing event marketing budgets, and these groups more often focus their events on driving revenue compared to gathering leads which is a primary goal of companies lacking a company-wide event strategy.

Prior to the pandemic, this message had made an impact. Between 2018 and 2020 the percentage of brands with a company-wide event strategy increased by 9%, from 36% to 45% of brands, and this 45% is the same exact percentage found in the 2022 survey. This is very likely due to the pandemic-induced industry pause, but the new survey data suggest there will be more movement to institute company-wide event strategies. It's important that 54% of brands that do not currently have a company-wide event strategy say they are in fact in the process of developing this level of event portfolio strategy now.

The findings from this unique study also help quantify the evolution of the event industry. Though the industry will be working through the impact of unprecedented challenges, brands have an opportunity to identify the benefits afforded by a more aligned and effective company-wide event strategy. Companies with better alignment between events, marketing and sales, and that have company-wide strategic plans for events that incorporate more data and intelligence, will help secure their advantage.

Characteristics of these best-in-class companies' approach to event marketing include:

- CMOs are highly engaged in the strategic planning process for events.
- Event strategy is developed with more collaborative effort at higher levels in the company.
- Events more often align with overall corporate marketing strategy and goals.
- Driving sales revenue is a top reason for doing events.
- More data collection and analysis is a key part of the event strategy planning process, with a focus on customer and audience trends.
- More event technology is used on-site and event technology investment is more often prioritized.

The findings help quantify the evolution of the event industry. As the corporate event marketing industry continues to restart and recover, having a detailed and well-informed strategic plan for events will be critically important. As this study shows, having a company-wide event marketing strategy that is well aligned with key groups within the organization has many benefits. Ideally, many of the best practices outlined throughout this report can be used as a blueprint for the event marketing industry during this important rebound period.

Conclusion

Methodology and About the Respondents

Methodology and About the Respondents

In late 2021 and early 2022, Opus and *Event Marketer* conducted a survey of a cross-section of leading brand marketers. The survey respondents represent many of the largest corporations and brands in the world with event marketing programs. The survey received 327 responses from leading brand marketers at large companies in both business-to-business and consumer markets in a range of categories including technology, entertainment and media, professional services, medical and pharmaceuticals, financial services, consumer electronics and other important industry sectors. Fifty-nine percent of the events run by the respondents are in business-to-business sectors and 41% are consumer market focused.

Respondents' Industry Sector

	%
Professional Services/Consulting	12%
Information Technology	11%
Entertainment and Media	8%
Consumer Electronics and Mobile Technology/Telecommunications	8%
Medical, Healthcare and Pharmaceutical	7%
Financial Services	7%
Food and Foodservice	6%
Retail	4%
Automotive	4%
Energy or Natural Resources	3%
Education	3%
Consumer Packaged Goods	3%
Restaurants and Hospitality	2%
Consumer Products	2%
Beverage	2%
Transportation	1%
Sports and Recreation	1%
Other	15%

Company Revenue

	%
Less than \$100 million	34%
\$100 million to \$500 million	26%
\$500 million to \$1 billion	22%
\$1 billion to \$10 billion	10%
Over \$10 billion	7%

Job Role/Level

	%
CMO and Above	12%
Chief Strategy Officer	7%
EVP or SVP Marketing	3%
VP Marketing	8%
EVP/SVP Events/Experiential	6%
VP Events/Experiential	4%
Senior Director Events/Experiential	16%
Director Events	17%
Events Manager	19%
Other	9%

Conclusion

About Event Marketer



Event Marketer magazine was founded in 2002 to serve the information needs of strategic brand-side event marketers and agency executives across the spectrum of face-to-face marketing—including mobile marketing, mall marketing, street events, trade shows, corporate events, proprietary events, virtual events, buzz marketing, PR campaigns, sponsorships, business-to-business events, and press events. It has become the world's most respected provider of content for the event and trade show category. Our portfolio includes our flagship magazine, twice-monthly EM Buzz e-newsletter, the annual Experiential Marketing Summit executive conference, the Ex Awards, the Experience Design & Technology Awards, and more.

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About Opus Agency



Opus Agency partners with world-shaping brands to catalyze movements through shared experiences. Across four decades, our end-to-end capabilities have scaled excellence at the intersection of events, content, and community. As the flagship of [The Opus Group](#), you will find our teams outperforming from hubs across the United States, in the heart of London, and around the world. For category creators and global brands, we are forming and fueling the future of brand movements.

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