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# Event feedback basics: Rethinking your post-event surveys

Are attendees answering the same old questions on your post-event surveys? If so, shake up the script to get a fresh perspective.




## Understand your audience's changing expectations

Event Marketer's 2025 industry recap highlighted that 72% of attendees say ample free time is vital to a successful event experience, signaling a growing preference for intentional networking, flexibility and self-directed experiences rather than agendas packed with back-to-back sessions.

Attendees no longer want a one-size-fits-all experience. They want events that help them solve specific challenges, make meaningful connections and maximize the value of their time.
Post-event surveys help uncover which experiences created value, what content resonated and where attendee expectations weren't met.

## Gain intel pre-event to better inform post-event surveys

Now is the time to look at foundational **event measurement** best practices and make sure you're gathering the necessary data to make informed decisions moving forward.

Surveys are a great place to start. The key is encouraging feedback before the event starts.

- **Get to know attendees,** how they feel about the event and what they're most excited about.
- **Ask 3–5 questions** about what attendees value, their content appetite or current understanding.
- **Use the responses, combined with demographic data,** to design personalized content and event experiences that's relevant to attendees.

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## Improve post-event analytics with stronger surveys

Satisfaction scores alone don't tell you whether your event achieved its objectives. Ask questions that measure whether attendees gained the knowledge, confidence or motivation needed to take action after the event.

When designed correctly, surveys offer a unique lens into what content and experiences work and with whom.

**Is there content** available to resurface with new hires?

**Do channel partners know the value** of your newest products versus the competition?

Answers to these questions can guide future content, audience segmentation and event investment decisions.

Breaking down data silos is also critical to ensure a complete understanding of audience wishes and event objectives. While your organization likely has analysts looking at some data, can you definitively say they're looking at all of it through your event lens?

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# 3 questions to evaluate your post-event surveys

## 1 How do you set clear event objectives and event measurement baselines?

First, think about your event objectives and success metrics, and decide the question(s) you want answered. What attendee behaviors, perceptions or actions should change because of the event?

Gather event decision-makers and content owners to make sure there is cross-functional agreement about what success looks like.

**Too often, executives and sales leaders define success differently. Gather data to support both perspectives.**

Next, align the attendee journey and content elements to the agreed-upon event objectives so you know what to measure. Note the touchpoints your audience uses to reach/interact with the event. Collecting this information provides insight into how accessible you are and whether there is scope for improvement. Providing attendees with the right information at the right time is a critical component of delivering an exceptional event experience.

Lastly, capture the defined objectives using a cohort analysis of audience behavior, attitude and perceptions. Asking those pre-event questions during registration helps you know what current knowledge and advocacy levels are, and where you want to see improvement if the event is successful.

## 2 How do you design an impactful post-event survey?

In recent years, survey response rates have declined, often dipping into the low single digits, as companies vie for people's feedback and attention.

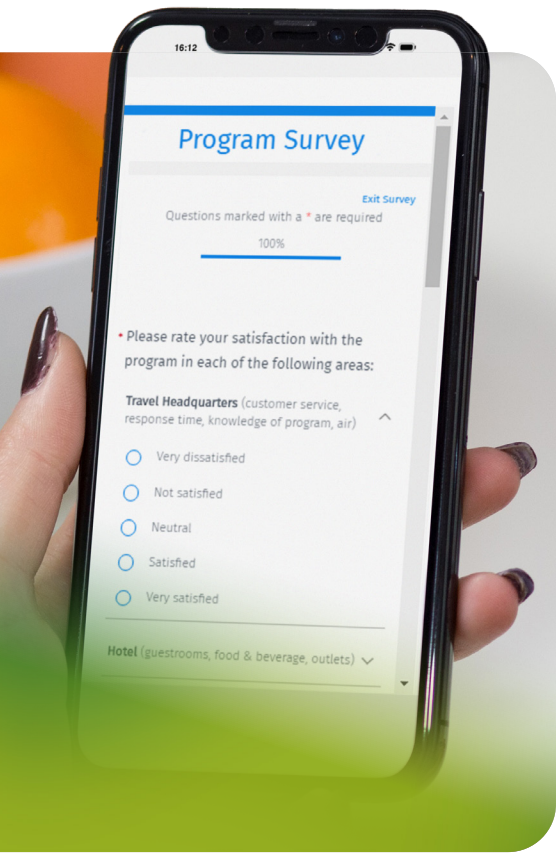
Make survey questions count by focusing questions on the core content or actions you're seeking to drive through attendance. Ask for feedback and tell your audience what they say matters (i.e., you're listening).

Surveys should be short to keep audience attention and get thoughtful responses. Consider three to five questions for the pre-event survey, under 10 for the post-event survey and three or less open-ended text fields.

### Questions can take various forms:

- **Yes/No**—Provide absolute answers and preface open-ended questions to help qualify the responses
- **Multiple choice**—Allow quick feedback on understanding or satisfaction with a five-point agreement rating scale and a clear neutral point
- **Open-ended**—Let the attendee express themselves in their own words and help you understand the nuances of their input
- **Net Promoter Score (NPS)**—Measure how attendee sentiment changes over time

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## 3 How can post-event surveys drive year-round engagement?

Survey insights can inform follow-up communications, ongoing engagement strategies and future event planning.

**Effective surveys reveal more than event performance. They uncover audience needs, content interests and knowledge gaps.**

Look at the event agenda for opportunities to ask “why” and gain deeper understanding. For example, align survey questions with General Session content to understand if your message landed with attendees the way you intended. If the content didn’t resonate, the post-event survey identifies exactly how to refine messages. If they answer “no,” always ask, “why not?”

## Examine data from past events to make surveys more targeted

Use historical event data to identify how audience interests have changed. Think about segmenting data by the elements of an event: roles, technology engagement, content tracks, session types, offsite activities, etc.

Understanding segments and profiles helps you identify which elements were the most effective at producing the desired meeting or event outcomes. Were the attendees at a specific session type more likely to become solid leads? If so, what did those attendees have in common?

Identifying what was effective for your audience means you can implement a smarter, more targeted engagement plan that connects to success metrics.

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CLIENT STORY

# Historical data identifies profitable event attendee segments

**A leading open-source tech client's complex event program included multiple session types and pre-event engagements to support their pipeline growth objectives. They wanted to know what was working and what wasn't.**




Historical data showed which attendees engaged in which experiences, sessions, etc., and how attendees proceeded down their buyers' journey—did they become a lead, get a meeting or make a sale?

Breaking down historical data helped categorize attendee profiles that showed leads from the most engaged profiles. The client then focused on the identified leads for future events and their entire marketing program.

The result? The organization redirected future budgets to event sessions and types that were proven to lead to pipeline growth.

## Better event decisions start with better data

Post-event surveys achieve two things:

1. **An understanding of what worked, what didn't and why**
2. **Smarter decisions about future events**

**If you're ready to make more confident event decisions, our event analytics advisors can connect attendee feedback, engagement and performance data to uncover actionable insights.**

**Let's talk—itagroup.com**

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