



Kristofer Herlitz

He is the managing director of the New York Office of INCON's partner company: AIM Group International. Kristofer is HMCC certified and has more than 25 years experience in meetings and exhibitions management. He was President of the New York Chapter of PCMA (1995-99), board member of the International Rett Syndrome Association (2003-08) and member of the National Press Club.

Mastering the Algorithm of Meaningful Exhibitions

A successful exhibition starts with flawless design and seamless management. But the logistics themselves aren't enough. Empowering exhibitors, sponsors and attendees to engage in relevant interactions is paramount to driving value and quality results. Yet, considering the ongoing transformation of the events industry and growing expectations regarding tech-powered experiences, it's difficult to keep up the pace and deliver an innovative approach to exhibition management.

In this expert article, INCON brings you perspectives from Kristofer Herlitz who is a long-standing expert in exhibitions, meetings and events. Herlitz explains: "As an event professional, the overwhelming demands you might experience can lead you to lose sight over the core reasons why you're planning an exhibition in the first place. Now that we live in the era of data, technology and revenue impact, you have the tools at your fingertips to avoid unnecessary planning and expensive solutions". In the article, Herlitz provides his insights on the stakeholder approach that is needed to guide event planners and clients to create meaningful exhibitions.

The ROI that exhibitors must evaluate no longer involves the quantity of booth visits and leads. Nowadays, ROI is strongly rooted in the quality of leads who visit different stands. The numbers stopped being so pertinent, and instead, the qualification of the attendees and the value they get while engaging with the exhibitors has become essential when tracking the results. In other words, apart from keeping up with the need for innovation, you must also consider the

new ROI evaluation requirements that focus on measuring your exhibition's *real impact*.

A well-designed floor plan and attentive exhibit management, clear exhibit prospectus and dedicated program breaks aren't enough to make an impact or provide a meaningful experience.

You must never forget the ultimate goal, which is to gather the attendees and exhibitors in the same room for an open dialogue. After all, a truly successful exhibition involves the right context and strategies (for example, connecting the offer and demand) to encourage purposeful interactions and long-lasting business relationships.

It's all about your stakeholders

What should you do, then, to keep everyone happy? A good option is to start by increasing the value you are generating for both your exhibitors and your sponsors. First, **ensure the communication** between the **key industry leaders**. Make sure there is a mutual interest within your stakeholders (sponsors, executive board and exhibitors) for quick pre-event meetings. For example, you could schedule an exclusive encounter between these main contributors the morning of the exhibition before the attendees arrive. This will strengthen the overall relationships between your main stakeholders and even allow them to lay the foundation for further collaborations.

Second, **have executive leadership actively participate** in the exhibition planning by informing them about the top

supporters' or sponsors' requirements, needs and expectations. This will get everyone on the same page and avoid unnecessary misunderstandings or logistic-related challenges.

Third, take one step forward and **offer innovative sponsorship solutions**. Remember that brand experience is so much more than a simple logo displayed on conference bags and lanyards. What could you offer your top sponsors? Think about providing additional space to your attendees dedicated to wellness, group work and co-creation or simply rest, and link this space with your sponsors' logo. This will help your attendees associate pleasant experiences with the brands that are financing your exhibition, giving those brands extra value and positive marketing.

Finally, **identify the metrics** you want to keep an eye on and **gather data that truly matters**. If we were to talk in terms of digital marketing, most certainly, information such as the impressions versus the outreach, active engagement with the content or people's general reactions to sponsored news is important. However, this is not enough. You also might focus on which talks or speakers (if your exhibition is also incorporating a knowledge session) were most popular or which dates and time of the days your audiences were more active.

This article is No.37 in a series of expert articles brought to you by INCON. To consult other articles please go to: <http://www.incon-pco.com/expert-articles.html>.

INCON Partners



INCON Preferred Supplier



Compelling change for ongoing success

We identified four factors each exhibition needs to succeed and generate a positive impact over the involved stakeholders.

Element #1: "Something Old"

Whether it's about your sponsors, exhibitors or attendees, they can all become brand advocates and promote your events or exhibitions. Building and maintaining these key relationships is crucial for your upcoming marketing campaigns. Apart from that, setting ground for a strong community built around your brand will strengthen your strategy regarding attracting new stakeholders.

Element #2: "Something New"

To drive innovation and encourage the attendee engagement, it's important to add new elements. Consider designing brand experiences that involve your guests' senses, or experiment with different types of B2B networking dynamics. For example, think about connecting the offer and the demand at your exhibitions by offering short one-on-one meetings.

Element #3: "Something Borrowed"

It's your responsibility to thoroughly prepare exhibitors for constructive interactions during the event. Educate them about their prospects and how to build an attractive business pitch.

Element #4: "Something Blue"

Digital integration, personalisation and measurement are part of everyday event experiences. Adopting technologies such as beacons, attendee tracking or heating maps will empower your exhibitors with the necessary means to evaluate their activity and segment the leads, identifying the most valuable ones.

When it comes to brand experience and innovation, the amount of opportunities can be overwhelming. However, it's important to keep in mind the main purpose of planning an exhibition, which is to connect your stakeholders (exhibitors, sponsors and attendees) by providing them with a proactive context for valuable and long-lasting business relationships.

This article is No.37 in a series of expert articles brought to you by INCON. For other articles in the series, please go to: <http://www.incon-pco.com/expert-articles.html>.

More details about Kristopher Herlitz's perspectives on exhibition management are available in his recent white paper "[Promoting and Selling an Exhibition: Innovative ideas to do it with success](#)".

PROMOTING AND SELLING AN EXHIBITION: Innovative Ideas to do it with Success

INCREASE THE VALUE FOR EXHIBITORS AND SPONSORS



4 INGREDIENTS TO SUCCEED




YOUR INTERNATIONAL PARTNER
FOR CONGRESS EVENTS & COMMUNICATION
www.aimgroup-international.com

Contact Person:

Angela Guillemet, Executive Director of INCON
Tel: +353 86 311 40 67 // angela@incon-pco.com // www.incon-pco.com

About INCON

INCON is a partnership of the world's leading conference organisers and event management companies. The partnership covers 170 destinations and employs a total of 3,500 staff. INCON has substantial purchasing power and organises annually 10,000 projects and serves 3 million delegates.

This article is No.37 in a series of expert articles brought to you by INCON. To consult other articles please go to: <http://www.incon-pco.com/expert-articles.html>.

INCON Partners



INCON Preferred Supplier

