

STOVA

INNOVATIVE REGISTRATION

20 E-Commerce Techniques
For Event Organizers

WHITE PAPER

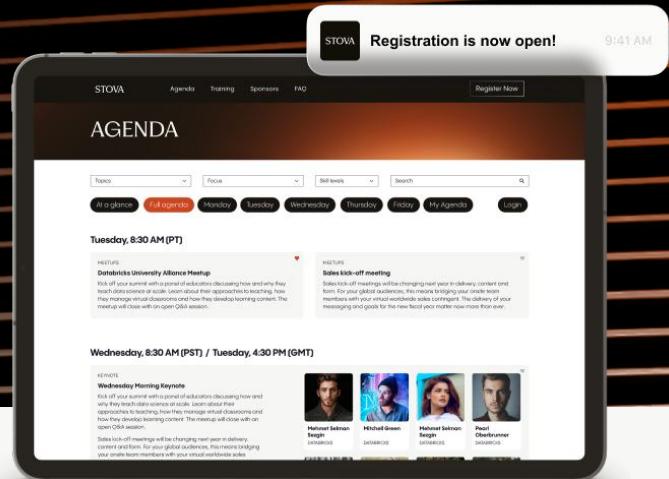
Innovative Registration: 20 E-Commerce Techniques for Event Organizers

Lede: Registration technology is effectively an event's e-commerce platform. Solutions in this vertical take a number of features from the world of eCommerce. What lessons can eCommerce teach event organizers about good registration site design?

Growing and maintaining an audience for an event can be a challenge; the last thing an event organizer needs is for all of the hard work marketing an event to be undermined by a poor registration experience. Bad registration sites can result in confusion, abandoned carts, and in the worst case scenario, data breaches.

The world of e-commerce may help to solve this problem. While event registration sites and e-commerce platforms serve distinct purposes, their underlying similarities are instructive. By balancing an intuitive UX design with a personalized user experience and secure payment processing, both categories prioritize getting the user efficiently to the checkout. Recognizing these commonalities can inspire best practices for registration sites and guide event organizers when sourcing registration solutions.

How the Function Shapes the User Journey



While the end goals – registering for an event or completing a purchase – may differ, both platforms are fundamentally about moving a user toward a transaction with as little friction as possible. Understanding this functionality is important, but it's equally important to understand the intentions of the **user as they go through the functionality.**

For example, attendees might be looking for specific information such as event schedules, speaker details, or venue directions. While you may be tempted to provide as much information as possible, e-commerce websites have impacted the online habits of potential registrants. They are used to an expedited search process.

Especially for events with one to three ticket categories, a helpful design element to take from the world of e-commerce is **clear information architecture**. That might mean making design decisions that prioritize easy access to event information, prominent calls to action for registration, and a visually simple focus on decision-making factors like the start date and end date, price, and core unique selling propositions (USPs). Consider leaving more detailed information like session or track descriptions, full speaker bios, etc. for elsewhere in the process.

Your registration provider should be flexible enough to handle both scenarios in a way that's intuitive to the end-users. For example, Stova's registration is tailored to events of any type, size, and complexity, and includes access to a support team with thousands of events under its belt and a wealth of experience and best practices to share with you.

Moving People Toward the Checkout and Maximizing Registration Completion

Event planners can draw valuable lessons from the e-commerce world to enhance their registration forms and websites, ultimately increasing the likelihood of registrants completing their sign-ups.



① Efficient Product Discovery

Search functionality and product filters should help users find and add things to their cart quickly. This may even include personalized product recommendations based on their history and past events/sessions attended.

② Intuitive Navigation

Intuitive navigation ensures users can easily find and complete desired actions, whether that be filling out form fields or finding the form in the first place. For example, it should be easy for office admin to register multiple attendees, and for anyone registering to be able to pick up where they left off. As such, a well designed form collects essential information, like a user's first name, last name, and email at the start.

③ Streamlined Forms

Only request essential information as too many mandatory fields can overwhelm users and lead to abandonment. Implement progress bars to show users how many steps are left, which can reduce anxiety and encourage completion. Use auto-fill capabilities to pre-populate fields with data already provided by the user in previous interactions or from their customer relationship management (CRM) profiles.

④ Responsive Design

Ensure the registration site is mobile-friendly as many users will access it via smartphones and tablets.

⑤ Visual Accessibility

Use clear, easy-to-read fonts and strategically placed calls to action (CTAs) to guide users through the process. Maintain consistent branding to build trust and make the process feel cohesive and professional.

⑥ Incentives and Urgency

E-commerce sites often use incentives and a sense of urgency to drive purchases. Event planners can adopt similar tactics by applying limited-time 'early bird' discounts or countdown timers for special offers or registration deadlines to create a sense of urgency. A countdown of spaces in the event may also be helpful if space is limited.

⌚ Real-Time Assistance

Timely support can significantly impact the registration form's conversion rate. Offer easily accessible customer support options such as live chat, FAQs, or a helpdesk to assist users with any issues during registration. Real-time assistance specifically is critical for helping customers to complete the registration form, as any departure from the form to seek more information or deal with an issue will likely result in an abandoned cart.

Facilitating Fast and Secure Transactions

E-commerce businesses thrive on their ability to provide fast, secure, and seamless transactions. Adhering to industry standards ensures customer trust, reduces cart abandonment, and enhances the overall shopping experience.



🛒 Streamlined Checkout Process

A streamlined checkout process is crucial. Aim to reduce the number of steps required to complete registration, much like e-commerce sites strive to minimize cart abandonment rates by simplifying the purchase process. This involves clear calls to action, minimal form fields, and multiple payment options to cater to a wide range of users. For simple events with straightforward ticketing, consider offering guest checkout options to cater to users who prefer not to create an account. A payment gateway that supports multiple currencies will also help to streamline the checkout process.

⌚ Multiple Secure Payment Options

Ensure that the payment gateway is secure and trusted to protect user data, ensure safe transactions, and avoid any last-minute drop-offs due to security concerns.

Offer multiple payment options, including credit cards, digital wallets, corporate billing, and a range of reputable and secure gateways (e.g., PayPal, Stripe, Square) that adhere to high security standards and handle payment processing on your behalf. Many of these gateways offer built-in fraud detection, PCI compliance, and secure data handling.

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Upselling and Generating Loyalty

Event planners can significantly enhance their revenue and attendee experience by incorporating upselling strategies commonly used in e-commerce. Upselling not only increases the value of each registration but also enhances the overall event engagement for attendees.



Packages and Tiered Pricing Models

Tiered pricing models for different levels of access and experiences are a good way to highlight premium value offerings. For example, VIP packages could include additional benefits like exclusive sessions, meet-and-greets with speakers, or special seating arrangements.

Exclusive or FOMO-Inducing Add-Ons

Another option is to provide specific opportunities that can be added to every member's general attendance. For example, offer limited access workshops or masterclasses geared towards a segment of your audience that is particularly keen. Consider a retreat limited to elite members such as CEOs or other decision-making classes.

Bundles

E-commerce platforms often bundle products together at a discount, encouraging customers to spend more. Event planners can use a similar approach. Offer packages that include access to a series of related sessions or tracks at a reduced rate compared to purchasing them individually. Combine event tickets with other offerings such as hotel stays, transportation, or meals to create a convenient and attractive package.

Personalized Recommendations

E-commerce platforms excel at using data to make personalized recommendations. Event planners can leverage attendee data to suggest relevant upsell opportunities, especially for repeat attendees. For example, recommend additional sessions, workshops, or networking events that complement a registrant's preferences based on previous attendance.

Dynamic Pricing

In a similar vein, consider offering special discounts or deals on upsell items based on an attendee's past behavior or profile. This less overt type of loyalty program can make registrants feel a sense of exclusivity that generates loyalty by establishing a precedent in which you reward repeat attendance.

An Emphasis on Experience Enhancement

Highlight how additional purchases can enhance the customer's experience. This is especially helpful for convenience add-ons such as fast-track entry, concierge services, or reserved parking.

❑ Testimonials and Social Proof

The opinions of an attendee's peers are critical for building trust and credibility. Reviews and testimonials are a straightforward way to highlight the positive ones. Share testimonials from past attendees who benefited from premium packages or additional services, and use the same hashtag year over year so it's easy to capture publicly available reviews. Highlighting the number of attendees who have opted into certain premium offerings, such as exclusive networking opportunities, can also lend social proof to your upselling efforts.

Collecting Data and Personalizing the Experience

Analytics play a pivotal role in both event registration and e-commerce platforms. These sites leverage data analytics to understand user behavior, track conversion rates, and identify trends. Insights gained from this data help in optimizing the user experience, refining the registration flow and improving overall performance.



⌚ Collecting the Right Data at the Right Time

Collect information required to identify and communicate with attendees early in the registration process. This will ensure that if the process is abandoned, you have an avenue for following up and getting them back on track. Once you have that, you can move on to essential event information required to complete the registration.

Inessential demographic information like age, gender, location, job title, or dietary preferences can be collected after the fact if you want information just to be able to understand your audience better. If you do decide to ask for this, explain why you need it. A good reason to give prospective attendees is that it helps to personalize something they will receive during the event, like a t-shirt or a meal.

↗ Behavioral Data

Optimize your registration site by tracking how attendees interact with it so that you can identify and eliminate pain points in the registration process. Which pages or sessions get the most visits? Which have the best CTA click-through rates? How long does it take to complete the registration form and where do drop-offs occur? Regularly audit your registration site and refine the flow to direct people towards the pages they find most valuable and which have the most persuasive copy.

✉ Past Event Data and Responses

If attendees have registered for previous events, leverage that historical data. Previously entered data can be used to autofill fields, which reduces form friction, and the events and sessions they attended can be used to make personalized recommendations.

Conditional logic can also be applied to limit the fields a user sees based on previous answers. This helps to reduce the number of unnecessary or repetitive questions registrants have to answer.

✉ Personalized Communications

Go beyond email invitations that address the attendee by name by using both demographic and behavioral data to send personalized event invitations that include, for example, relevant suggestions for sessions or tracks. In Stova, segmented lists can be established within the registration platform itself or imported directly from your CRM. These can also be useful for personalizing the follow-ups after registration has been completed, for example including specific details about the sessions they have registered for.

🔒 Privacy Assurance

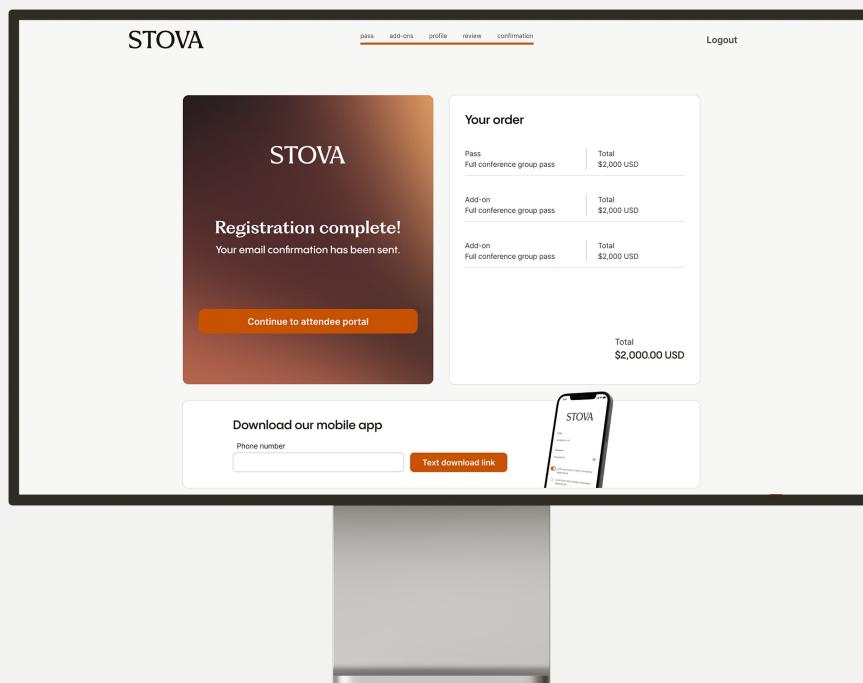
Apart from the payment transaction, provide clear information on how user data will be used and protected before users begin entering it so ensure they feel comfortable throughout the process. Be explicit about your adherence to regulations like the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) for handling and protecting customer data.

Especially if registering for your event requires the creation of an account and potentially the storage of payment information, consider implementing two-factor authentication (2FA). This adds an extra layer of security by requiring two forms of verification (e.g., password and a code sent to a mobile device) to help protect user accounts from unauthorized access.

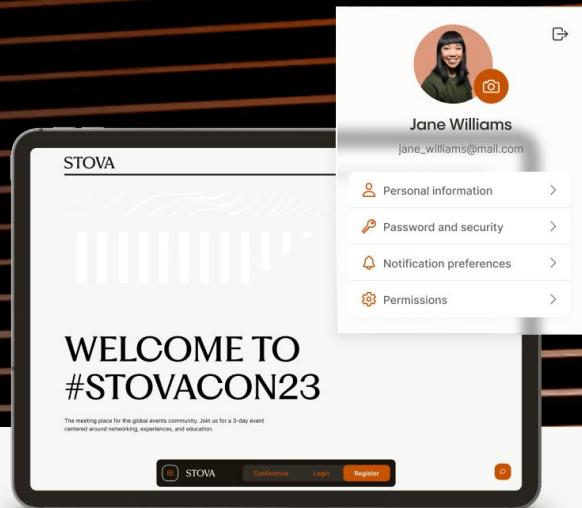
While it's mandatory to obtain explicit consent for data collection, users are commonly not provided options for managing their data. Allowing them to easily delete their own data is a show of good will that customers will appreciate.

⚡ Behavior-Triggered Interactions

Consider sending push notifications or emails based on specific actions (e.g., abandoned cart reminders, dwindling availability if there is limited attendance, or prompts to share the event upon completion of the registration).



Conclusion



Incorporating e-commerce strategies into event registration design is a powerful approach to optimizing the registration experience. By leveraging insights from e-commerce, event organizers can create user-friendly, efficient, and secure registration sites that enhance attendee satisfaction and boost registration rates.

✉ Enhanced User Experience

Just like in e-commerce, a seamless user experience is paramount. Simplifying navigation, streamlining forms, and providing intuitive design elements ensure attendees can register without frustration. Responsive design and visual accessibility are critical, as many users will access registration sites via mobile devices.

⌚ Efficient Transactions

Fast, secure, and diverse payment options reduce barriers to completing registrations. Ensuring the security of transactions and displaying trust signals can significantly enhance user confidence. Adopting e-commerce best practices like SSL/TLS encryption, multiple payment gateways, and compliance with security standards protects user data and reduces cart abandonment.

🚩 Personalized Engagement

Data collection and analytics are crucial for understanding attendee behavior and personalizing the registration process. By leveraging behavioral data and past event participation, organizers can make tailored recommendations and enhance the overall attendee experience. Personalized communications and behavior-triggered interactions further foster engagement and loyalty.

💰 Upselling and Loyalty

Implementing e-commerce techniques like tiered pricing, exclusive add-ons, and dynamic pricing can significantly increase revenue. Highlighting the benefits of additional purchases and using social proof through testimonials and reviews builds trust and encourages attendees to opt for premium offerings.

In summary

The fusion of e-commerce principles with event registration design creates a streamlined, secure, and engaging registration experience. By focusing on user-centric design, efficient transactions, personalized engagement, and strategic upselling, event organizers can maximize registration completions, enhance attendee satisfaction, and ultimately drive the success of their events. Embracing these 20 registration design tips from the world of e-commerce empowers event planners to navigate the complexities of event registration with confidence and innovation.

STOVA

Stova is the industry's end-to-end event management software, combining visionary technology and best-in-class service. Plan, grow, and measure your events of all types and sizes with one partner dedicated to your success.



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