

STOVA

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO EVENT SPONSORSHIPS

A Special Report for Event Professionals

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Introduction

With event costs rising, securing sponsors is more critical than ever.

However, convincing companies to come on board can be a challenge. Many organizations have cut their sponsorship budgets due to economic uncertainty. Others wait till the last minute. Before committing, they want proof of a positive return on investment (ROI). Organizations are clamoring for data around sponsorship value -- they want to know who your event attracts and whether attendees are decision-makers.

The good news: Your chances of securing incredible sponsors expand exponentially if you offer the right incentives.

This ebook will help you navigate today's event sponsorship landscape. By reading it, you'll discover:

- ✓ Strategies to land stellar sponsors, even in a challenging economy
- ✓ New rules for ratcheting up sponsorship ROI
- ✓ The key to designing irresistible packages
- ✓ 9 ways to win in sponsorship negotiations
- ✓ How to help sponsors capture better leads faster

Let's get started.



6 Trends You Need to Know

Events are a fast-changing landscape. Something new is always bursting onto the scene. To attract the right sponsors, you need innovative packages that keep up with evolving attendee preferences.

These trends below are driving our industry forward and changing how companies think about sponsoring events.

TREND 1



Sustainability

The past few years have seen sustainability jump to the top of the events agenda. In the 2024 [AMEX Global Event Forecast](#), more than two-thirds of respondents globally reported that sustainability is “very” or “extremely” important when planning events.

We see evidence of this paradigm shift in green practices across our industry. Organizers are turning to plant-based menus, locally sourced products, sustainable venues, digital tools, and other practices that reduce our environmental impact.

TREND 2



Proven ROI

Businesses today demand reliable data to support their sponsorship decisions. As mentioned, they want to know what ROI they can expect in terms of brand visibility, attendee engagement, and lead generation.

In today’s competitive environment, robust analytics and reporting tools are crucial for providing metrics, such as sales leads qualified and opportunities created. Leverage these solutions to satisfy sponsors’ need for measurable results.

TREND 3

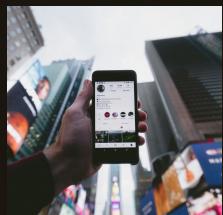


Year-Round Engagement

Why wait for the annual conference to nurture relationships? Companies today want engagement that extends beyond a single event. They're leaning into smaller, more diverse event experiences both online and in person.

For example, you might work closely with top-tier sponsors to develop custom, year-long packages. These partnerships could include a combination of VIP networking events, hosted roundtables, webinars, advertising, and product promotions.

TREND 4



Immersive Experiences

Placing logos in all the usual places isn't enough in today's era of audience engagement. Savvy sponsors are connecting with in-person and digital audiences through innovative, immersive experiences.

Why not pump up engagement with next-level gamification? Leverage influencer partnerships to amplify the sponsor's presence through live social content from your event. Consider immersive brand activations using augmented reality as well.

TREND 5



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

According to the AMEX 2024 Global Event Forecast, 87% of event professionals report their organizations strive to incorporate DEI into their trade shows and conferences. Events cater to wider audiences by choosing diverse speakers, truly accessible venues, closed captioning in stage presentations, and other DEI practices.

TREND 6



Custom Packages

Personalized marketing is trending. So, it's no surprise that custom sponsorship packages are gaining traction. Sponsors are embracing tailored packages to reach target audiences and support marketing goals.

For example, a tech company might sponsor a coding challenge. Participants could collaborate on innovative solutions using the sponsor's tools. Sponsors might engage potential customers in a fun, immersive experience showcasing the company's cutting-edge solutions. Prizes like job opportunities or product licenses could increase participation and build buzz within the developer community.

For creative event professionals, the possibilities are endless. Make the most of these trends and understand sponsors' budgets and objectives. You'll find a wealth of opportunities to attract the right sponsors with innovative packages that achieve their event goals.

Create Enticing Packages

“You can have everything in life you want if you will just help other people get what they want.”

This quote by author, salesman, and motivational speaker Zig Ziglar captures the essence of great partnerships.

Consider these steps below to help your prospective sponsors get what they want.

1

Identify your event's unique value

First, determine what organizations will gain by sponsoring your event. Write a description showcasing your ability to attract the right audience. Highlight attendee demographics like gender, industry, title, and geographic reach. Provide past attendee profiles, emphasizing the percentage of decision-makers in attendance.

Testimonials and success stories about past sponsors lend powerful social proof. When potential sponsors see that similar brands have reaped tangible benefits, they're more apt to invest in your event.

Also share vital details that make your event shine. Is it the captivating destination? Prestigious speakers and well-known sponsors? Not-to-be-missed activities and networking opportunities?



2

Understand sponsors' goals

One reason sponsors don't accomplish their objectives is that host organizations don't know their goals, according to a survey by [The Partnership Professionals Network](#) and Dynamic Benchmarking. Only 21% of sponsors achieve their objectives "most of the time."

Astonishing, right?

Make sure you know what your sponsors want. Conduct discussions and surveys to learn what they hope to gain through your event. Typical marketing goals include building brand awareness, generating leads, establishing a leadership position, and driving business development.

3

Create benefits to support sponsor goals

Develop unique benefits that help sponsors accomplish what they want. The opportunities are endless.

You might suggest exclusive networking opportunities and access to attendee engagement data to generate leads. You could also recommend speaking slots to companies that want to strengthen their position as industry thought leaders.

To raise brand awareness, you might offer to:

- Feature sponsor logos onstage during your event's opening ceremonies. Level up benefits by inviting a company exec to speak during this session.
- Present sponsors with an opportunity to host a reception and showcase their brand with immersive, hands-on presentations.
- Display sponsor logos online and off. For example, place logos on event badges, mobile app, banner ads, social media posts, gift bags, signage, or QR codes leading to the event website. You'll host a larger and more inclusive event, catering to online and in-person attendees.



4

Build compelling packages

Now that you have sponsor benefits, categorize them into different levels. You want sponsors to choose the best option for their budget and goals.

Events typically feature two types of packages: tiered and a la carte. Many offer both options to create a well-rounded program that attracts a wide range of sponsors.

Price package in a way that works well for your organization and sponsors. Consider how much your event costs, what competitors offer, and how much your sponsors can afford. You want to satisfy larger sponsors' desire for significant visibility with smaller sponsors' need for cost-effective options.

Cast a Wide Net

Build packages to appeal to a gamut of sponsors

Tiered packaging provides different levels and price points, such as Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze. High-value offerings encourage sponsors to purchase premium packages. These often include prominent logo placement, speaking opportunities, a prime location for exhibitor space, and VIP networking opportunities.

A la carte sponsorships improve ROI by allowing organizations to sponsor a specific element of an event that supports their goals. For example, they might choose exclusive workshops and activations to lift attendee engagement. Or they could sponsor branded swag bags, the mobile event app, or custom marketing campaigns to boost visibility.

5

Offer immersive experiences

Think beyond logo placement and suggest immersive experiences that engage and delight.

The lines between in-person and digital experiences have blurred. Virtual engagement tools, like live streaming and interactive platforms, are now instrumental in creating memorable onsite experiences.

Sponsorship today is all about enabling sponsors to engage with your audience and showcase their brands in innovative ways.

Look into interactive **booths**, hands-on **demos**, and immersive tech-enhanced **engagement**.

6

Add FOMO

Scarcity and urgency are mighty motivators. That's why advertisers always urge us to buy now before the offer expires.

Encourage early commitments by adding urgency to your sponsorship packages. For example, explain that an enticing benefit or special pricing ends on a certain date. Or offer a limited number of packages on a first-come, first-served basis.

Ditch the last-minute scramble. Let scarcity and urgency speed up decision-making.

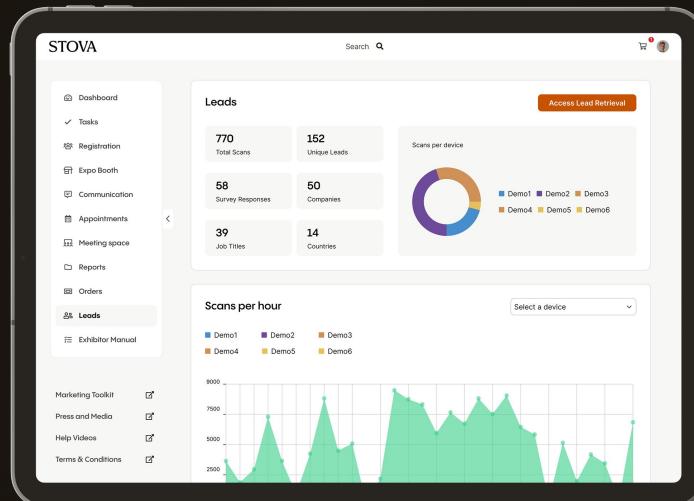
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Demonstrate ROI

Businesses today want to see quantifiable ROI.

Fortunately, the means of measuring event value have expanded. They now include real-time data analytics, lead generation metrics, digital engagement tracking, and more.

To this end, set specific key performance indicators (KPIs) for every sponsorship package. Then, give sponsors the tools to measure ROI for each goal. Help them wow leadership with proof that their sponsorship achieved or surpassed its goals.



How to Find Event Sponsors in 2024

Now that you have compelling packages, you need to find the right prospects. Let's look at the best ways to create a targeted prospect list for your events.

🏡 Start in your backyard

The first rule is to keep it simple. You'll be amazed by how many opportunities you can find in your network.

- Make a list of people you think would be good fits who are looking for a mutually beneficial collaboration.
- Reach out to coworkers for ideas on companies with objectives that align with your event.
- Contact businesses that funded your organization before, even if it's been a few years.
- Create an advisory board of past sponsors to provide feedback, ideas, and referrals.

🌐 Branch out

Research similar or competing events to find out their sponsors.

Social media, specifically LinkedIn, is an excellent way to find prospects. Search groups to see what their interests are, and where they've done business in the past.

⌚ Time it right

Many companies set their budgets for event sponsorships well in advance, often at the start of their fiscal year.

They also have long review processes. Meaning, getting an early start in your outreach is essential.

Talk to potential sponsors about their budget allocation timelines. Understanding their funding cycles can help you stay ahead of the process.

9 Ways to Win in Sponsorship Negotiations

Negotiating outstanding deals can be tricky, with event costs soaring and sponsorship budgets shrinking.

The tips below will help create a win-win situation for your event and sponsors.

1. Know your value

Understand the value you bring to the table regarding brand exposure, lead generation, and networking opportunities. Determine what sets your event apart. Is it your niche audience? Or maybe it's the eminent speakers and decision-makers you attract.

Share your data on attendee demographics, past attendance, and social media and website analytics. Case studies and testimonials from past sponsors add tangible proof of results.



2. Do your homework

Knowing your market and competition will help you position your event as a valuable, unique opportunity.

Review sponsorship prospectuses and media kits online for events that resemble yours in size, location, industry, and target audience. Gather information on their sponsorship tiers and pricing for booth space, ad placements, speaking opportunities, and activations.

3. Zero in on sponsor priorities

What good are creative benefits if you don't know what prospective sponsors want?

Listen closely to learn their objectives, budget, pain points, target market, and preferences. The more you understand their priorities, the better you can tailor your proposal and create mutually beneficial deals.

4. Be flexible

Stay open about different ways to meet sponsor requirements.

In this competitive market, be ready to negotiate on some aspects of an agreement, such as price, duration, scope, and terms like activation costs or payment schedules. Modify sponsorship levels if needed to accommodate sponsors' budget and goals.

5. Add value

Look for win-win compromises where you can offer concessions in exchange for bigger commitments.

Consider custom opportunities like co-branding, content creation, and experiential marketing. You'll increase visibility for your sponsor and enhance the attendee journey.

Exclusive experiences are another way to add value. Create one-of-a-kind experiences for sponsors and their guests, such as VIP access, backstage tours, or meet-and-greets with industry leaders. Think outside the venue. Consider activities to support a local charity.

You'll bring **sponsors** and **attendees** together in a genuine and personal way, while reinforcing the sponsor's corporate social responsibility programs.



6. Propose multi-year or bundled packages

Why not give sponsors turnkey, high-value solutions?

For example, create a package featuring your annual conference, quarterly meetups, and a webinar series. You'll add value by increasing your sponsor's exposure and engagement opportunities for a set price.

Multi-year and bundled packages incentivize sponsors to make more significant, longer-term commitments. By leveraging these packages, you'll:

- ✓ Strengthen partnerships
- ✓ Reduce operational expenses
- ✓ Improve your event's financial stability
- ✓ Enhance the attendee experience through enriched sponsor programming

7. Get everything in writing

Once you reach an agreement, document both parties' terms, benefits, deliverables, and deadlines in a formal contract. Get legal advice as needed. Include branding requirements, promotional activities, and any other commitments. It's also a good idea to clearly define metrics to quantify success.



8. Measure sponsorship ROI

Your event may be over, but your work continues. Post-event, revisit the goals and KPIs your sponsor shared at the outset.

Leverage your event management system (EMS) to map metrics to each sponsor's goals. Then, create data-rich ROI reports that show your sponsors met or surpassed their goals.

9. Build relationships and trust

Negotiations are easier when they rest on a solid foundation.

Treat sponsor negotiations as an opportunity to create long-term relationships. Understand partners' needs. In return, be transparent about your event priorities and constraints. Regular updates demonstrate your commitment to delivering on your promises

A collaborative approach based on mutual benefits builds long-lasting partnerships that benefit your sponsor and your event.

New Sponsorship Strategies for Epic Events

Event sponsorship remains a powerful means of building brand visibility and business relationships.

But the way brands achieve these goals has grown. Sponsorship is no longer just about banners and logo placement. It encompasses that PLUS social media connection, virtual networking, tech-powered engagements, and more.

Consider the following ideas to drive sponsorship value with immersive and socially conscious event experiences.

Interactive Workshops

The Package:

Sponsors host hands-on workshops that showcase their expertise and solve a top industry challenge.

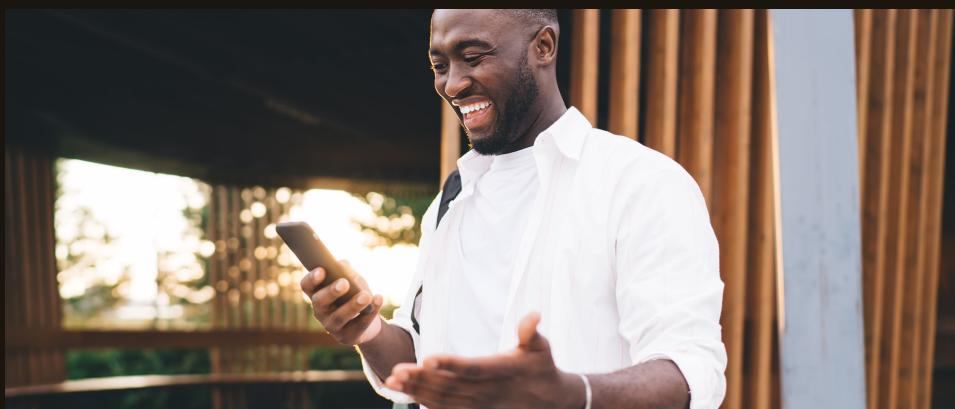
⊕ Value-Adds to Choose from:

- Use AI matchmaking to promote the workshop to a targeted group of attendee based on their interests.
- Offer interactive product demos or "labs" where attendees test devices and get hands-on experience with the latest products. Sponsor experts offer guidance tailored to attendee needs.
- Leverage augmented reality (AR) to overlay product descriptions, diagrams, and specs on real-life devices for participants who want to learn more.
- To boost engagement even more, add gamification elements like quizzes and challenges related to the workshop. Attendees earn points for participating and receive leaderboard shout-outs and branded prizes.
- Feature a "tweetwall" with a dedicated hashtag displaying attendee comments and questions with real-time responses from sponsor experts.
- Conduct surveys via the mobile app to capture attendee feedback right after the experience while it's still fresh in their minds.

☆ The Win:

Attendees enjoy valuable content through a fun and memorable experience. They also get branded prizes to use long after the event ends.

Sponsors create social media buzz and extend the workshop's reach beyond participants. They also generate quality leads, position themselves as experts, and walk away with attendee feedback and engagement data they can use for future marketing.



Relaxation Stations



⊕ The Package:

A health and wellness brand sponsors a lounge, offering attendees a comfortable place to relax and recharge. Attendees choose their relaxation experiences by completing a survey.

⊕ Value-Adds to Choose from:

- Offer sponsored health services like meditation sessions and foot massages in the lounge.
- Host expert-led workshops on topics like stress management and relaxation. Make workshops available to virtual and in-person attendees. Offer the option for closed captioning, too. Integrate live polling and Q&A's for attendees to interact with each other and health and wellness sponsor experts.
- Leverage virtual reality headsets or AR glasses to immerse attendees in serene virtual environments of their choice, such as beaches or forests. Add soothing audio like ocean waves or bird calls. Incorporate guided meditation in virtual spaces.
- As takeaways, provide trials of the sponsor's health and wellness products – meditation apps, fitness subscriptions, nutritional supplements. Streamline sign-up and access to trials through QR codes.
- Share branded relaxation and meditation content for attendees to access post-event via the mobile event app.

☆ The Win:

Attendees enjoy rejuvenating experiences tailored to their needs. They sample wellness products in a risk-free, low-pressure environment and leave with gifts to practice healthy habits post-event.

 **Sponsors:**

- ✓ Deliver a unique "wow" experience for attendees to remember
 - ✓ Position themselves as innovative leaders in health and wellness
 - ✓ Generate quality leads from attendees who opt in for product trials
 - ✓ Drive conversions to paid subscriptions or product purchases post-event
 - ✓ Gain valuable data on consumer preferences via product sampling and surveys
 - ✓ Leverage this business intelligence to personalize future marketing and inform product development
-

Earth-Friendly Events

 **The Package:**

Sponsors support the environment, choosing from sustainable swag to turnkey booths and menus that are good for the planet and the palate.

 **Value-Adds to Choose from:**

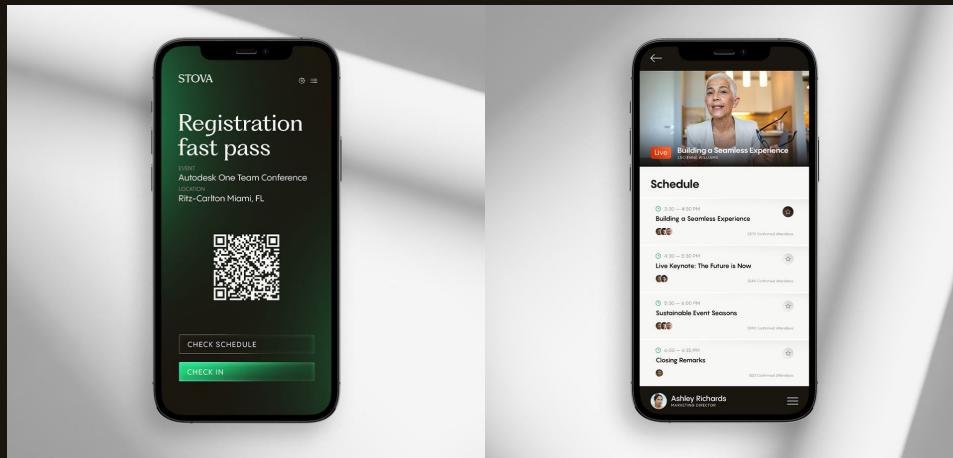
- Forget shipping heavy materials and structures. Offer turnkey exhibitor booths instead. These booths are typically rental solutions from exhibit houses near the event venue. They eliminate the need to manufacture and ship booths long distances for each event. Many providers offer modular systems to repurpose for different events. They use earth-conscious components, too, like bamboo, recycled plastics, and LED lighting.
- Explore alternatives to exhibitor booths as well. For example, boost visibility by sponsoring high-traffic areas like coffee bars, networking lounges, or social media walls. Consider hosting activations in unexpected places, too, like venue entrances and hallways.
- Reduce environmental impact by sponsoring delicious plant-based meals with ingredients from local farms.
- Toss paper badges, business cards, signs, agendas, maps, and brochures. Technology cuts down paper waste. Offer sponsorships for branded smart badges, digital signage, and mobile apps with agendas, wayfinding tools, sponsored content, and more.
- Choose branded gifts that champion sustainability, such as stone paper notebooks with cover designs by local artists. Other options include stainless steel water bottles, bamboo desk accessories, and power banks that run on solar power.

★ The Win:

Attendees, sponsors, and host organizations help reduce the industry's environmental footprint.

By sponsoring your event app, sponsors delight attendees with swift check-in, easy contact info swaps, and no more bags brimming with marketing collateral to tote.

Plus, sponsors increase visibility in a way that aligns with consumer priorities. In the process, they build trust and brand loyalty among consumers with strong environmental values.



Boost Sponsorship ROI with Technology

Technology enhances event sponsorship in so many ways. Consider the tools below from Stova and see how sponsorship value soars.

Make it easy

Sponsoring large-scale events takes a lot of preparation. There are so many items to create and deadlines to juggle.

The good news: Modern technology does the heavy lifting for you and your sponsors.

Take Stova's ExpoPRO, for example. This sponsor/exhibitor task-management platform automates the labor-intensive tasks involved in preparing for trade shows and conferences.

Like Asana for events, ExpoPRO streamlines communications, asset collection, approvals, and other tasks on one platform. The tool also tracks progress and sends reminders about upcoming due dates to keep everyone on track.

ExpoPRO slashes the back and forth. Sponsors save time and stay organized with everything housed in one place.

Capture better leads faster

Sifting through attendee profiles to find the right prospects eats up a lot of sponsors' time.

Wouldn't it be great if technology could do the work for them?

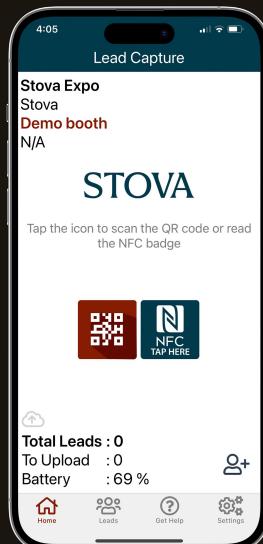
Imagine: Sponsors would pull up their ideal prospects with one click and dash off friendly meeting invitations. Within seconds, they'd crank up the value of their sponsorship.

Enter Stova's Lead Retrieval App to act as a matchmaker at events.

Lead Retrieval with ExactMatch features AI-powered "Hot Lead" recommendations. It also provides tools to capture and qualify leads, make notes, conduct surveys, schedule meetings, and deliver content – with one easy app.

Lead Retrieval adds value post-event, too. Sponsors can upload leads into their marketing automation systems.

With everything in one place, **Lead Retrieval** makes targeted event follow-up a breeze.



Give attendees and sponsors what they want

Why wait till after your event to discover what worked (or not). Thanks to your mobile app, digital badges, and iBeacon technology, your sponsors can find out on the spot.

When attendees opt-in, these [real-time tracking tools](#) capture engagement data. Analytics crunch the data and provide instant insights into what attendees want to know. For example:

- What sessions are people attending?
- How long are they staying?
- What questions do they ask?
- Which exhibitor booths are they visiting?

Sponsors can track session attendance, booth traffic, and other key metrics throughout the event. Real-time dashboards deliver a bird's-eye view of performance. With these insights, sponsors can make immediate changes to improve event outcomes.

Post-event, sponsors can integrate event data with their CRM system for targeted follow-up. They'll deliver the info their audience is searching for and build relationships that last long after your last session ends.



Prove sponsorship ROI

Businesses are relentless in their pursuit of quantifiable ROI. Fortunately, the avenues for measurement have expanded. Data analytics now provide a better toolbox for demonstrating event value and enhancing marketing.

Here's how to make the most of these tools to prove sponsorship ROI.

Start by collaborating with your event partners to identify their main event goals. Then, as shown in the examples below, capture key metrics to support those outcomes.

Event Goal	Sample ROI Metrics
Generate leads	Number of prospects added to your database, leads qualified, meeting request acceptance rate, year-over-year gains in leads generation
Increase brand visibility	Exhibit booth traffic, content downloads, logo impressions, social media metrics
Boost attendee engagement	Number of sponsored sessions check-ins, questions asked, surveys and polls completed, meetings scheduled, chat messages
Increase sales	Dollar value of pipeline created, number of opportunities added, and deals closed

Keep in mind the metrics are broader than they used to be. When evaluating the ROI of a sponsored session, for example, look beyond the number of check-ins. Also measure how many people watched the session live offsite (say, back in their hotel room) or downloaded it later on-demand.

Event technology makes reporting simple. You can customize reports and quantify event value in mere minutes.

Data-rich reports will show partners at a glance how their sponsorship achieved its goals and help them refine their strategy for future events.



Conclusion

Immersive, ongoing engagement is the key to compelling sponsorship packages.

To deliver on this promise:

- ✓ Give sponsors and attendees what they want.
- ✓ Think outside the booth.
- ✓ Wow attendees with personalized, tech-enhanced engagement
- ✓ Nurture long-lasting relationships.
- ✓ Prove sponsorship ROI.

That's how you build successful partnerships and keep happy sponsors coming back.

Ready to learn more about
technology to
level up sponsorship ROI?

Contact an expert at Stova.
Book a Demo Today!

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