

Storesense Expo powers Microsoft's NT Conference

Overview

Events are big business. In the US alone, over \$24 billion is spent annually by 1.5 million exhibitors, reaching 80 million attendees at over 13,000 trade shows, conferences and expositions. Given the opportunities to build market presence, drive sales and gain market feedback, 99% of exhibitors still rely on their unique value (Center for Exhibition Industry Research).

Storesense Expo was deployed by NIL at the 20th Microsoft NT Conference in 2015. Slovenia's most prestigious IT show, the event hosted 1700 participants, 150+ speakers and 10+ one-day trainings. Exploring IT trends and future technologies, attendees included the country's prime minister as well as other leading industry figures. Hosted on two levels at the luxurious Grand Hotel Bernardin hotel in Portorož, the venue contained a complex setup of exhibition stands and lecture halls.



Photo courtesy of Microsoft

Challenge

Despite their retained importance, evaluation of events is still largely based on subjective reporting and touchpoint measures using badge scanners and clicker counters. With so many stakeholders dependent on their success, event owners, organisers and exhibitors desperately need a way to reliably evaluate their performance.

Given its reputation at the forefront of technical innovation, Microsoft challenged Storesense Expo to provide reliable data to remove the guesswork and reduce the complexity. Of particular importance was the need to understand the movements of attendees, optimise the event space, and validate each exhibitor's decision to attend. Microsoft required this information delivered in a concise and clear report to address the needs of range of internal stakeholders.

Solution

Storesense Expo provided a visual picture of every activity using location based Wi-Fi analytics. Without interfering with event arrangements, the existing Wi-Fi setup was optimised with the addition of a couple of network points. In less than 24 hours, universal coverage of the entire venue across 26 network points was achieved. Statistically reliable information from more than a third of attendees was then captured passively, whether or not attendees were connected to the available Wi-Fi. Without the need for any personally identifiable information, millions of data points and unparalleled amounts of data were interpreted instantly.

Following the event, Microsoft received a customised and personalised in-depth report to demonstrate the event's success, as well the success of each marketing decision to bring it together. Microsoft could then share this success with exhibitors, providing them with their own dedicated reports which enabled them to precisely evaluate their own marketing strategies. Microsoft could also deep-dive into the data in real-time and after the event via an online portal.

Results

26

data points

1704

visitors

2.27

lectures

279

lecture visitors

74-14%

conversion rates

Microsoft received actionable insights to demonstrate the event's overwhelming success in its milestone 20th year. This gave exhibitors the clear justification for their decision to attend, while rewarding the hard work of the numerous Microsoft employees involved in bringing it together. In delivering future events, Microsoft also had factual evidence to shorten the sales process and justify increased revenues.

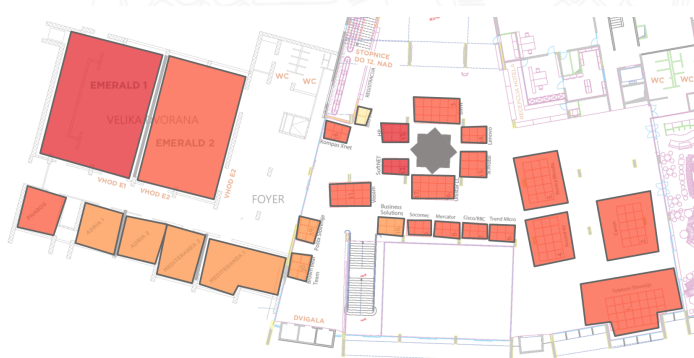
Understanding the movements of attendees



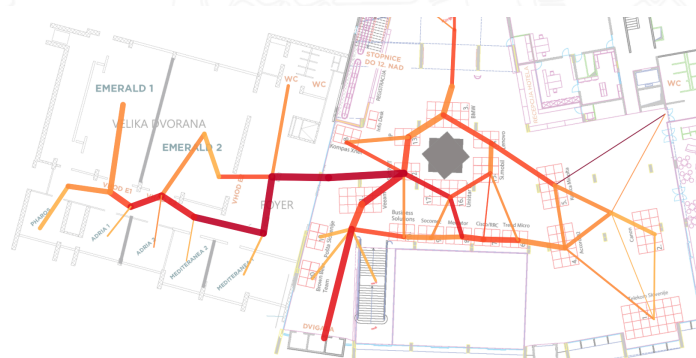
Adding to existing information about the popularity of the event, Microsoft now had full visibility of their movements across the show floor. The event attracted 1704 visitors - 967 on the first day and 737 on the second. Each lecture hall had on average 279, with a typical visitor visiting 2.27 lectures. Given the high quality nature and depth of the workshops, Microsoft also had all the information required to optimise scheduling and assess topic interests for the future.

Of particular interest was the flow of people between the smaller rooms designated for workshops, and the larger keynote lecture halls. Highlighting the quality throughout, the expected disparity between the lectures at the start and end of the event was relatively small. This retained interest throughout ensured that Microsoft could allay any concerns about selecting a speaker slot towards the end of the show.

Optimising the event space



Relative popularity



Visitor flows

As well as an understanding of the wider movements of visitors across the space, Microsoft received in-depth detail on the effectiveness of its chosen event layout. Although the central areas were the most popular, relatively few visitors stopped there, guaranteeing sufficient flow to the rest of the venue. Adding to this, visitor clustering identified the biggest concentrations of people, highlighting the popularity of the keynote speeches on the 12th floor.

This data now provided Microsoft with in-depth insights to help them optimise the signage to guide the flow of traffic, provide refreshments and manage the stand placements. This information was presented visually with each stand colour coded based on its placement and optimisation to take advantage of the visitor flows.

Validating the attendance for event exhibitors

206

Visitors

**4 min**

Avg. dwell time

**65 %**

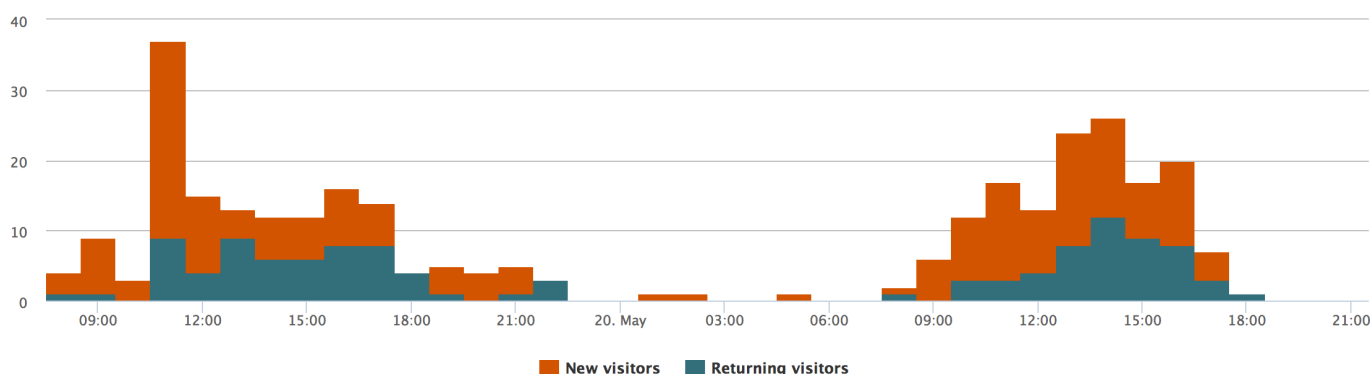
Conversion rate

**31 %**

Visitor return rate



Visits count



Microsoft could now provide exhibitors with evidence to demonstrate a clear return on their investments. This information could also be used to guide the evaluation of their on-stand engagement strategies through a number of key metrics including stand visits, dwell times and conversion rates.

To show the value in selecting each exhibitor package, Microsoft was able to clearly document the greater attendance to the premium stands. Conversion rates and dwell times could then provide each exhibitors with background into the success of their on-stand marketing strategies. Conversion rates ranging from less than 15% to above 70% clearly showed the value in using methods to engage passers by. Adding to this, dwell times remained consistent throughout the show at an average of 3.25 minutes, demonstrating the value of on-stand spokespeople, once engaged.

In addition, Microsoft could now assess the behavioural flows from one stand to the next without the need for cumbersome and expensive badge scanners. The reduced complexity and greater accuracy meant that exhibitors had an accurate picture of the attendee interests from one to the next.

"Storesense Expo supported our intuitive understanding of visitor behaviour with concrete data and analytics. We now have a better foundation to organise the next event, negotiate with event sponsors, and make it even more attractive for visitors."

Gregor Potočar, Sales Director, Microsoft Slovenia

Event details

The NT conference was held from May 18th to May 20th at the Bernardin Hotel in Portorož, Slovenia. Microsoft Slovenia collaborated with NIL, a regional network and security specialist, to provide Wi-Fi services at the event and deliver event insights with Storesense Expo.

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Interested in a free trial?

At 1% of the typical cost of a stand, Storesense Expo is incredibly cost effective. With minimal disruption, and regulated by EU privacy laws, it also takes less than a few hours to implement. To learn more, receive the comprehensive data set for the case study, or arrange a free trial*, please contact Storesense Expo sales at sales@storesense.info.



** free trials available for locations with compatible Wi-Fi networks*