

ATTENDEE ACQUISITION ROUNDTABLE

# **Next-Gen Proofing Your Events**

**Tactics to Reduce Friction and Drive Participation**

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THE DISRUPTION

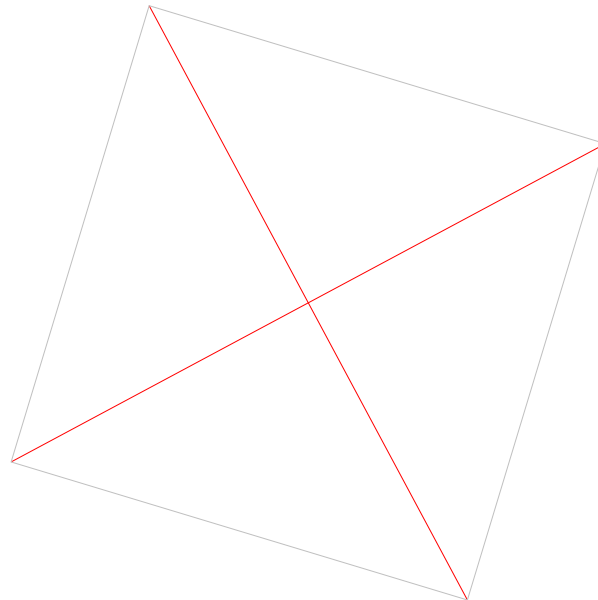
**Business events are  
at a crossroads.**

**Why?**

**By 2030, 75% of the  
workforce will be  
comprised of the two  
youngest adult  
generations – Gen Z  
and Millennials**

# About The Report

- Aggregated research across academia, events industry, global consulting firms
- Finds common ground across generations
- Society is changing, expectations shifting
- Begin with empathy and understanding



# Gen Z Barriers



Events feel scary



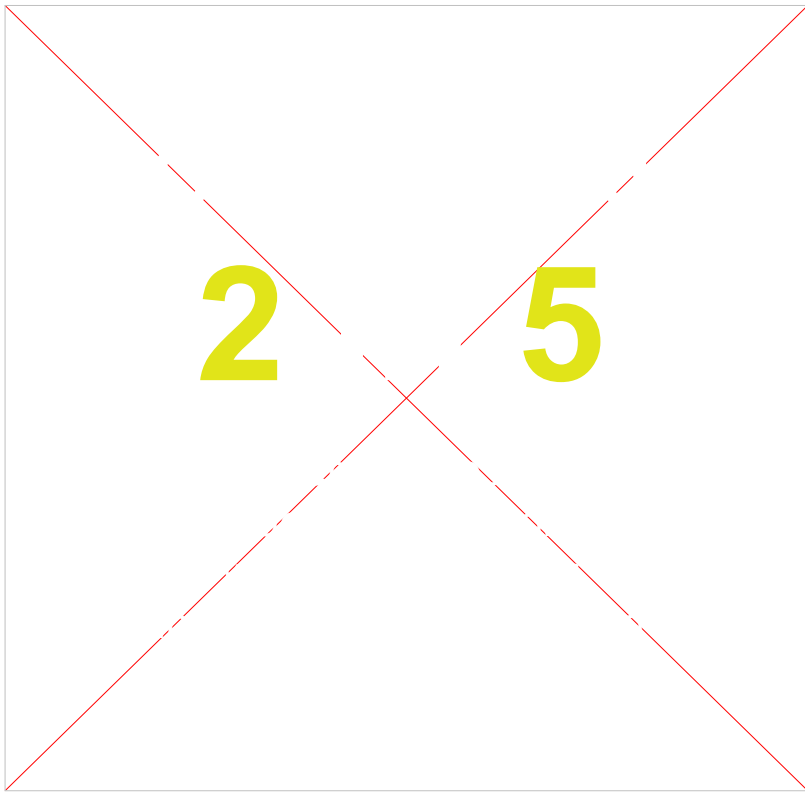
Hidden costs:  
Free events aren't free



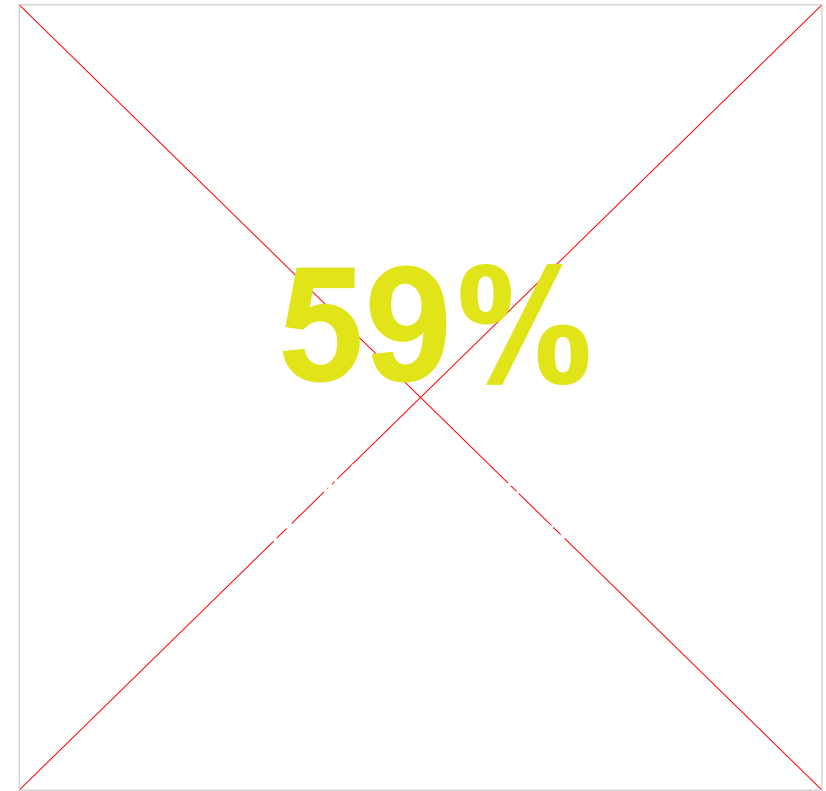
Events aren't  
designed for them

# Events are scary

Gen Z wants in-person connection...but it's also intimidating



Source: 2025 Gen Z Report: The value of live events in the digital world  
– Freeman and The Harris Poll

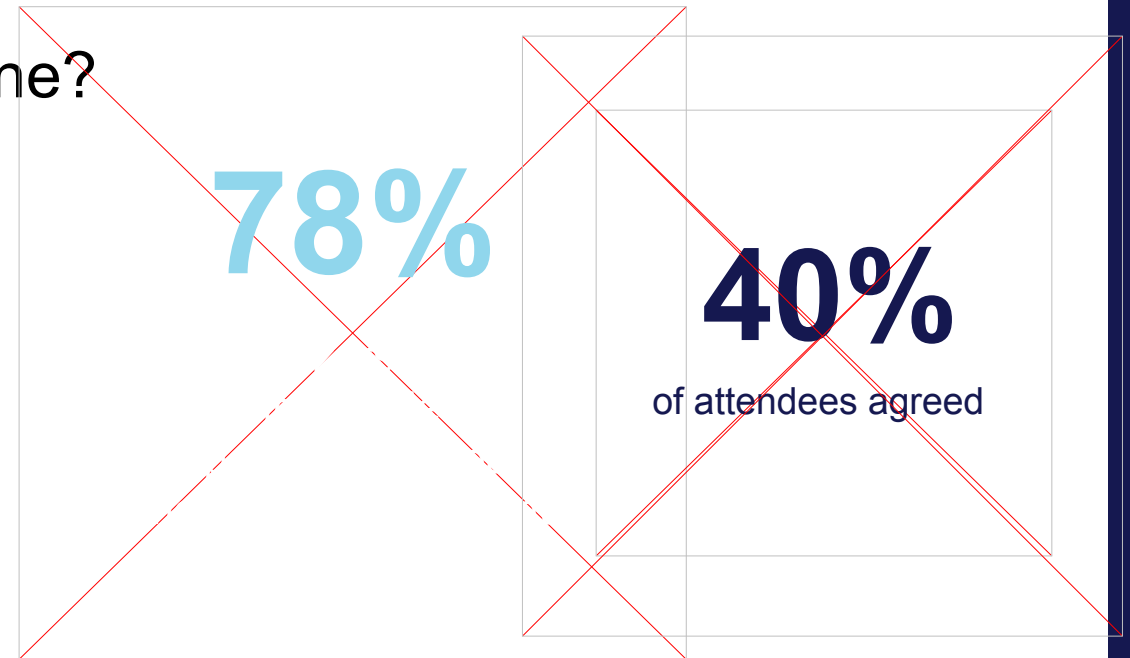


Source: Dr. Corey Seemiller

# There's Not Enough in it For Them

## What's not working

- Lack of personalization
- Overloaded agendas with no downtime
- Passive learning formats: same as online?
- Pressure to “network”
- Disconnect with values and interests



Source: 2025 Freeman Trends Report – Unpacking XLNC: Bringing the X factor to attendee experiences

**So How Can  
We Lower  
Barriers?**

## TACTIC 1

# Make the path to attend personal

### Make it easy to invite others

- Invite a colleague programs
- Leverage trusted networks
- Incentives to spark action

### Turn registration into discovery

- Expectations are shifting
- Recommend & curate
- What should I attend?
- Expo areas matched to interest
- Fun quizzes & guided paths
- Give back opportunities



## TACTIC 2

# Use authentic voices to drive engagement

- Real > Polished
- Top buying decision channel: YouTube\*
- Partner with relatable creators and credible industry voices
- Use unscripted, human content
- Bring them into the conversation
- Extend creator moments on site

this does:

familiarity & trust

es experience  
el authentic

into already  
ommunities

\*Source: *The Intent Advantage: What viewers watch, who they trust, and how they buy on YouTube*. Kantar and Brand & Beyond from [YouTube](#)

## TACTIC 3

# Structure connections & let them choose

Guide the opportunities to engage:

- Organize pre-event meetups
- First-timer & student programs
- Use Braindates and facilitated roundtables
- Experiential education sessions
- Offer immersive, hands-on and interest-based activities

What this does:

Reduces anxiety of  
"What do I say?"

They can curate &  
what to expect

Anticipation and  
built-in  
connection points

# Wrap Up

Personalize the  
path to attend



Use influencers and  
authentic voices



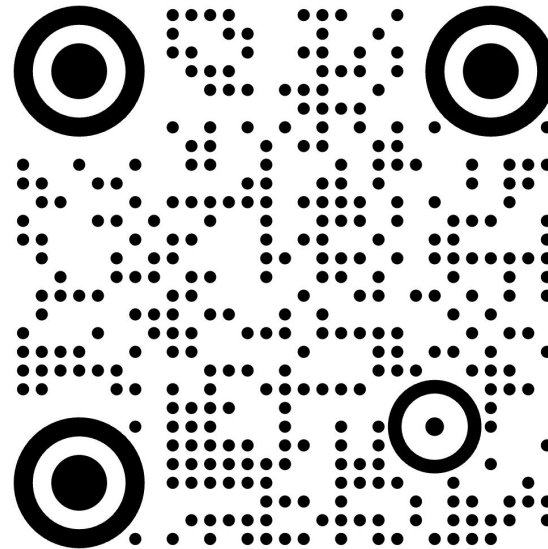
Structure connections  
& let them choose





# Find the Report Here!

## NextGen-Proofing Your Events | Maritz



Download  
the Report

THINKING OF YOUR EVENT:

**Where does friction show up before someone arrives?**

**What's one thing you could change to make the experience feel more relevant, authentic or connected?**

# Thank You

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