

Raising the Bar for a User Conference

A new team and new partners deliver an unforgettable conference



About the Client

Our client is a leading content delivery network services provider for media and software delivery and cloud security solutions.

The Challenge

We were tasked with developing a user conference for 1,500 plus attendees after a program cancellation in 2018 and with the internal meeting department having been eliminated. This left no one at the client who had any prior conference experience or information other than the Vice President of Marketing. In addition, the conference was trying to move from a free to a paid model.

The Solution

We created a highly branded user conference that consisted of 6 general sessions, 70 Breakouts, 30 Expo Theater sessions, 48 Expert Bar customer meetings, an interactive showcase, 8 Customer Advisory Board meetings and 118 meetings in the Executive Briefing Center. In addition, 7 evening activities were created consisting of everything from Welcome Receptions to VIP Dinners, to Analyst/Press Dinners and a Closing Party complete with Nitro popcorn.

In attendance were partners, prospects, and customers representing 117 unique accounts and 12 countries, prospects, press, analysts, investors, board members and key employees.

Not only did we manage the entire conference with limited internal resources, but we also managed air ticketing and housing for various ancillary groups. A total of 20 individual customer video testimonial interviews were conducted for future marketing and sales use. In addition, a Customer Advocacy Booth created Gartner Peer Insight Reviews, and numerous media quotes.

Additionally, to facilitate such a large conference with many moving parts, we introduced new partners to the client to assist with the general session and breakout production as well as the Showcase. Creative Group managed the partners on behalf of the client, providing a seamless approach.

A key highlight of the conference was the attention paid to Corporate Responsibility with guest speaker and Girls Who Code founder, Resha Saujani, who recognized our client not only at the conference but also in social media. In support of this initiative 25 high school girls were hosted, participating in engagements on the expo floor and in panel discussions in addition to creating inspiration kits for girls attending summer coding camps and interacting with attendees at the Corporate Responsibility Booth.

The conference was supported by an app which was used by 97% of attendees and received 7,500 engagement sessions such as taking surveys, sharing notes, downloading PDFs, social activity feeds, viewing sessions or checking in. In addition, attendees were able to click on pin drop and locate the exact location of any session on the event map.

The Showcase space created an unconventional experience and attendees couldn't get enough - taking pictures and videos to share. Some of the activations included an Escape Room with 39 teams competing (2nd place winner was "Tech Girls Rock" a group of Girl Scout teens participating in the Corporate Responsibility program), a Golf Simulator, DevOps Area and Video Games. Participants just wanted more time to engage with all the activities, demos and booths.

And let's not forget the marketing support behind the event which included email, organic and paid social media campaigns.

The Outcome

The conference was rated by 96% of attendees as good or excellent, with 88% likely to attend again. It received a Net Promoter Score of 57%, meaning they would recommend the conference to a friend or colleague. The pre-event formation was also well received with 83% feeling that it helped them better understand the event. And 94% of attendees agreed with the direction that our client shared, and the new offerings proposed. The number of paid attendees also nearly met client objectives.

Press coverage was greater than expected with 21+ attendee generated articles, 40+ news articles and 3 TV interviews.

We think our client summed it up well, saying "WOW! We broke the mold and tried something very different this year and it was a success! Thank you so very much for your hard work in creating this unforgettable experience for our guests. From the keynotes & content, demos, creative, videos, logistics, #social, special events, The Edge Expo and so much more you truly hit it out of the park. We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from our customers, partners, employees and executive team."

Ultimately, the conference reinforced the brand, put them back on the map as a conference to attend in their space and helped all those that attended familiarize themselves with many ways the company can help them in their daily business.