

ENHANCING EVENTS WITH DIGITAL

- **About me and the Calgary Chamber**
- **Our event experience story**
- **Visual Seating**
- **Digital check in**
- **SMS/Text messaging**
- **Livestreaming**
- **Webinars**
- **Questions**

Have a question? Text it to **204 500 1628**



Do me a favour?

Yes, that's how we spell it in Canada.

Text *ACCE* to 204 500 1628



Let's connect!

Text Contact to 204 500 1628

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Follow along from your phone

Text *Presentation* to 204 500 1628



Got questions?

Text *them* to 204 500 1628

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Our journey

- Throughout 2015
 - Seating by spreadsheet, manual badge printing
- Throughout 2016
 - Visual seating for events, manual badge printing
- Prime Minister – December 2016
 - Eventbrite registration, digital check-in/visual seating: 1200 people, 30 minutes
 - Badge printing: Impossible
- Former Premier – March 2017
 - CRM registration, digital check-in/visual seating/badge printing - 600 people, 30 minutes
- ONWARD 2017
 - Eventbrite registration, digital check-in/visual seating, badge printing: 1200 people, 30 minutes



Ideal operational event integration

- Chamber event team builds events on *The Event System*
- *The Event System* delivers great users experience from presentation to registration*
 - [Event dependent] *The System* allows staff to easily seat attendees*
- *The Event System* connects to your CRM*
- *The Event System* offers a best-in-class app solution for digital check-in*
- The app solution supports on-demand badge printing*
- The app solution supports SMS/text messaging to participants*

*Or *The System* easily connects to another system that does this



Reaching the goal

**Impossible? No.
Hard? Hell yes!!!**

Chambers have a pesky, unique set of requirements that lacks a silver bullet solution.*

We want:

- To use the registration system that ties into our CRM for member/non-member pricing, engagement tracking etc.
- To have seating functionality like a wedding but name badges like a conference

*The Calgary Chamber has some ideas...

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What we learned

- It will take ~~some~~ a lot of ugly work to make a beautiful experience
- Make sure you always keep unique identifiers with your data
- Great process takes time, and some failure
- Unstated assumptions will hurt you
- Digital can help you save time and money, and deliver a better user experience



Visual seating: Value proposition

Benefits:

- Events team can build the room making it easy for rest of team to do seat assignment
- Multi-user access enables easy collaboration from any device/any time
- Ability to move people as groups (companies/tables)
- See empty seats and who hasn't been seated
- Chamberinos empowered on site to see who has arrived/where they are sitting
- Check-in functionality out of the box

Drawbacks

- Additional cost
- Poor badge printing/trade show management/text messaging functions



From spreadsheets...

Table/Row Name	Table/Row Number	Total Seats
Bill	1	8
Scotia 1	2	8
Stampede	3	8
Enbridge	4	8
Suncor	5	8
ATCO	6	8
Encana	7	8
CNRL	8	8
CPA	9	8
RGO	10	8

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Visual seating: Process

1. Room layout built by events team
2. Registration cut over point decided on between events/sponsorship (eg. Sell out, 48 hours before...)
3. At cut over point all attendees exported from registration system, data massaged as needed and imported into visual seating tool
4. Events/sponsorship manage registration additions on an ad-hoc basis (adding them to visual seating tool as they come in)
5. Designated people given access to start moving people around on their own
6. As needed, team meeting to resolve seating challenges



Visual seating: Hardware and tools

Spreadsheets

- Still needed to for export/import, easiest way to make big changes

Social Tables

- Best we can find, but we are on the old version because the “new” version lost some functionality we preferred
- Annual subscription required

Alternative: All Seated

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Digital check in: Value proposition

Benefits:

- Saves staff time in the long run
- Saves on badge costs
- Makes name/company changes a breeze
- Scalable for virtually all use cases
- Exceptional user experience
- Check-in data

Drawbacks:

- Additional setup, cost, complexity

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Digital check-in: Hardware and tools

Smart hub

- Affordable internet, plug and play setup, fast, unlimited users

Printers

- Thermal printers necessary for high throughput (we use Zebra GK-420d - wired version)

Software

- Without name badges: Visual seating tool
- For name badges: Boomset – on-demand printing/session management/lead retrieval

Badges

- Thermal badge paper rolls - much easier to get in the US!

Tablets

- Likely iPads, don't need to be top of line, screen protectors, stands

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Digital check in: Process

A week before event

- Ensure appropriate staff/volunteers are available to man the tablets and printer stations
- Ensure back up thermal print paper is on hand or order
- Order tablets/printers if renting

Night before

- Confirm check-in setup with events team (based on layout and number of attendees)
- Ensure all tablets fully charged
- Set up Boomset
 - Create event
 - Design badges to match label size and kiosk mode screen (if using)
 - Export from Social Tables/ Import attendees into Boomset
 - Or utilize event sync with Eventbrite



Digital check in: Process (cont'd)

On-site technology setup

1. Smart Hub plugged in
 - Printers and tablets must be connected to the same network
2. Thermal printers plugged into power and connected to Smart Hub (ethernet or wireless)
3. Tablets
 - Powered on, airplane mode with WiFi enabled to conserve battery
 - On-brand wallpaper
 - Check-in/badge printing app logged in with appropriate credentials (Boomset)
 - Pair with appropriate printer and check-in station
 - Test print a check-in on each (ensure to check “out” the guest again)
4. Review guest flow with all staff/volunteers



Digital check in: Protips

- Guest flow will vary greatly, so will different staff's ability to check-in or stuff badges, have floaters to step up when backlogs happen
- Always have a help desk setup for people changing names or not found so it doesn't ruin the process for others
- If utilizing wired printers make sure your router/Smart hub has enough ethernet ports to connect all devices
- Label printers with IP address/MAC addresses for easy pairing



Text messaging: Hardware and tools

Twilio

- Made it exceptionally simple get a phone number and build services over top of it, especially text messaging
- Very little functionality provided by Twilio, mostly just API

Telerivet

- One of many interfaces that can work over top of Twilio infrastructure
- Robust and affordable

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Text messaging: Value proposition

Benefits

- Easiest way to reach your attendees
- Best way to quickly disseminate information to attendees
- Much more cost effective than an app
- Multiple use cases (user support, event updates, questions for speakers, surveys)

Drawbacks

- Requires getting cell phone numbers on registration
- Need a clear communication strategy, takes time for attendees to become comfortable

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Text messaging: Process

1. Get your corporate number via Twillio
2. Connect Telerivet w/ Twillio number
3. Define logic in Telerivet
 - Groups
 - Keywords
 - Autoreplies
 - Broadcasts
4. Develop communication strategy for the event
5. Get designated staff to download Telerivet app to easily utilize Telerivet on site



Text messaging: Protips

- A single text message is 160 characters, anything greater will be broken into several messages
- Users get annoyed quickly if you aren't delivering value
- Always shorten links with something like Google link shortener:
 - <https://goo.gl/>
 - No ability to format messages with **bold**, *italic*, underline etc. so use whitespace, 'apostrophes', "quotes" and Capitalization to your advantage



Livestream: Hardware and tools

- **Audio feed**
 - Easy to tap into venue's A/V soundboard that they will be running anyway
- **Video feed**
 - Is there IMAG? (What is IMAG?)
 - Are you providing the video feed? Video camera with HDMI output
- **A/V Bridge**
 - Blackmagic Web presenter – hardware box that takes multiple inputs and convert into single USB feed to run to computer
 - OBS Studio – computer software that takes feed, allows you to manipulate and easily connects/streams to Facebook (or other platforms)
- **Internet**
 - Can they provide wired internet (more reliable) at a reasonable price? Likely not, so, Smart Hub.

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Livestream: Value proposition

Benefits

- Capture speakers to use for annual reports or other promotional clips
- Expand the reach and engagement of your events
- Sponsorship opportunity

Drawbacks

- Very important to have your events start on time or may lose audience
- Lots of people come not just for the content but for the people in the room
- Easy to do a basic job, hard to do a great job
- Need to pay attention to comments

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Livestream: Process

One week out:

1. Make the decision to livestream
2. Create Facebook event placeholder for the event
3. Schedule rental of hardware or hire of contractor to do it

Day of:

1. Arrive early to connect with event space A/V
2. Setup connection between on-site audio/video and Facebook stream
3. Have placeholder language ready if event is delayed
4. Moderate comments

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Livestream: Protips

- Create the Facebook live event ahead of time to advertise and generate interest
- Often a delay on audio through the soundboard - test out the audio delay on site to make sure your audio and video sync
 - Bad <https://www.facebook.com/CalgaryChamber/videos/10155201359661657/>
- Ensure you have good lighting on the subject
 - Bad <https://www.facebook.com/CalgaryChamber/videos/10155232090326657/>)
 - Good <https://www.facebook.com/CalgaryChamber/videos/10155248644271657/>



Trade-off: Costs

- **What's you think it's costing you:**
 - Avery badges
- **What's it costing you in time?**
 - Painful seat assignment meetings?
 - Printing badges, keeping them organized, transporting, laying them out, fixing problems
- **What's it costing you in data?**
 - Do you know who actually attended?
 - Are you keeping track of name changes?
- **What's it costing you in experience?**



Trade-off: Convenience vs Everything

What is most important?

- Scaling
- Easy interoperability of systems
- Collaboration across your team
- Set up and tear down
- Technological complexity
- Cost



Trade-off: Rent vs Own

Rent

- Courier costs / Setup time
- Longer lead time, less control over what you get
- Better for ad-hoc, rare

Own

- Up front costs, but capitalized
- Always ready to go
- Better when it becomes standard operating procedure



Too much?

Sorry.

But, you don't have to do it yourself!

There are absolutely companies/contractors that can help you perform these services. For the most part they require some challenging setup but much easier operation.



Let's meetup!

I also love chatting about change management, knowledge management, data-driven organizations, CRMs, digital strategy, new product creation, disaster preparedness, digital marketing, digitization, digital transformation, etc..

Text *Meetup* to 204 500 1628

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