

Case Study

Experient Improves Registration and Housing Processes at Solar Power Event

About Experient

Experient is the source for integrated meeting and event solutions. Experient is recognized as the industry leader in providing full-service, customized registration, housing, event management and lead retrieval services. With a vision to perfect the event experience and a mission to help bring people together to drive business, this year Experient will create memorable event experiences at more than 3,300 events attended by more than 2.8 million people who will occupy more than 5.5 million room nights.

Background

A premier conference on solar power was created in 2004 when two solar power associations joined together to create a business-to-business conference and expo. Attendees are made up of manufacturers, integrators and installers, large and small customers, architects and builders, and policymakers. The event had grown from 1,100 attendees to more than 12,500. Show management hired Experient after temporary on-site registration workers at their previous events recommended Experient.

Challenge

Typical onsite registration lines at the show were around three hours long, housing room blocks were not under control, and hundreds of room nights were going undiscovered, creating an attrition risk. The show management needed help with a rapidly growing show for registration, onsite registration flow, overall planning, and housing services for a three-day event at the San Diego Convention Center with more than 400 exhibitors and 12,500 attendees expected.

Solution

The Experient team began by analyzing past event attendance and saw that each year participation was more than expected and consistently growing. It was also clear that in previous years many room nights belonging to the show were not in the event block, therefore not credited to the event. The Experient registration team monitored room pick-up very closely and began with a base hotel block for the 2008 event, then added on additional event hotels as demand required it. In all, 18 area hotels were contracted, compared to just seven hotels in 2007. The rates Experient negotiated for the event attendees were often half the price of other area hotel rooms. Experient also installed new housing and registration procedures for the 2008 show, through the Experient EventXL-based systems and with streamlined onsite registration layout adjustments. A key recommendation implemented for the show was coupling registration with housing—before attendees could book a room and benefit from the group rate within the hotel block, they had to register for the event.

Results

With Experient's expert advice more than 17,000 attendees and an additional 5,000 people who came to the free public night were handled in record time. Instead of a wait time of 2-5 hours, Experient's registration technology and planning—which included pre-show registration mailings, on-site registration staff and layout consultation, pre-printed registration badges, 6 "scan and go" registration stations, bag/badge pickup areas and separate cash and credit payment lines—whittled the average wait time to 30 minutes. Experient housing services allowed show management to track room pick up at each of the 18 hotels and were credited with 1,000 attendees found outside the block. The organized and detailed room tracking was a first for the show and allowed better forecasting of room blocks, using the accurate accounts of the historical housing trends.



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