

# Case Study

## So Many Events. So Little Staff. Experient Helps Sage Find the Solution.

### About Experient

*Experient is the source for integrated meeting and event solutions including 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

*Formed in 1981, Sage Group plc is the world's leading supplier of business management software and services. In North American markets, Sage Group plc is represented by Sage and offers leading business management products and services for accounting, operations, customer relationship management, human resources, time tracking, merchant services and the specialized needs of the construction, distribution, healthcare, manufacturing, nonprofit and real estate industries.*

### Key Facts

- 13,400 employees
- 5.4 million customers
- Manages 35,000 customer calls a day
- Global network of 23,000 reseller partners and 40,000 accountants

### Challenge

As Sage acquires new US companies, the events department frequently inherits new events without adding staff to help manage those events. Today the department is responsible for more than 225 events and has 14 staff members.

In 2002 Danielle Cote, VP event marketing at Sage, began searching for a partner to help her team develop a strategy and a division of labor that would efficiently manage the tasks associated with such a large number of events while freeing up internal staff to concentrate on strategic planning. To win the business, Experient needed to:

- Exhibit advantages over other event suppliers in a highly competitive market, winning the full support of the Sage events team.
- Demonstrate to Sage executives that Experient could not only help with logistics and coordination but also show value in their expertise and strategic negotiating approach.
- Show the executive team a breadth and capacity to grow their support as Sage grows their business.
- Prove to Sage's financial team that outsourcing the business and adopting Experient's proposed solutions were financially sound decisions.



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## Solution

After winning the bid through multi-level meetings and presentations, Experient became an extension of the Sage team. Sage and Experient divided labor in a way that allowed each team member to focus on the areas in which they could best contribute. As a result, Experient handled the logistics and coordination of site selection, hotel research, speaker management, food/beverage management and any events that were in conjunction with the main conference. Experient automated registration, session and speaker management and housing, allowing Sage staff to concentrate on overall strategy -- the big picture. Cote says, "Experient takes a highly consultative relationship-centric approach. They're very professional. They're honest with a high level of integrity. With Experient you always know their intentions are to do the right thing for you, the client."

## Results

According to Cote, the transition of coordination, tactics, and logistics to Experient was seamless. She says, "I think one of the key reasons for that was their general understanding and intimacy of our practices. They understood our program; they understood the needs." The numbers prove the partnership's success. Sage's overall satisfaction ratings for their events program have raised 2 – 4 points each year from 82% in the first year to 92% by May, 2006. Exhibit revenue has grown 30 – 40% and is now at an all-time high. Venue negotiations on multi-year plans have saved Sage more than \$300,000 per year in concessions – that's more than \$1.2 million over the course of four years.

Cote adds, "One of the things we've heard back from exhibitors is that the hotel rate is negotiated so well that they can't find a lower rate in the city. Experient has done a terrific job in making sure those revenue dollars not only come to us but also to fulfill our contract obligations which is really important in the world of attrition. It's just been a success overall."



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