

Meetings Africa Gets the Support it Needs from Lumi

Lumi technology used throughout prestigious expo

Over the past few years Africa has become an increasingly desirable place to hold a corporate meeting or conference. Meetings Africa, a large pan-African expo held annually in Johannesburg, South Africa, is designed to help drive this market and to open up opportunities for the entire continent.

Now owned by the South African Tourist Board and managed by the South Africa National Convention Bureau, the event attracts around 250 international and regional buyers and 280 exhibitors from 15 African countries.

Challenge – The Need for Local Support

Meetings Africa had previously used technology from one of Lumi's competitors. However, this company could provide no local support at the time and so the organisers had had to figure everything out for themselves. This was an added burden at a busy and crucial time when they really needed to be concentrating on the exhibitors and visitors.

Aside from this overall challenge, there was a more specific one too. Each year the Unique Speakers Bureau (USB) showcases its top speakers upstairs from the main exhibition – an event that attracts up to 400 corporate buyers. However, as Bjorn Hufkie, marketing manager, South African Tourism explains: "There's often a disconnect between this event and the main Meetings Africa exhibition happening downstairs. Our aim this year was to somehow get these corporate buyers to go downstairs and network with the Meeting Africa exhibitors."

Solution – Lumi is official technology partner

The organisers decided to make Lumi the official technology partner for Meetings Africa 2016, in the knowledge that it would be able to manage all on-site support. They worked with Lumi to build a customised app based on Lumi Show, a complete mobile event app that encourages interaction and engagement. It does this by providing on-going communication throughout the event with features such as searchable attendee lists, instant polling, surveys and attendee-to-attendee messaging. Two massive live Twitter walls were created throughout the entire event, to help capture and extend the conversation.

Finally, the organisers also put Lumi Say to work, to help entice the USB's corporate buyers down to the main exhibition hall. USB had arranged 'café-style' sessions where suppliers could book a table with potential clients for five minutes to pitch their products and services. First, Lumi Say provided a short profile of each supplier and a rating system to mark each speaker.

But then Lumi loaded the app with an activity to encourage the buyers to venture to the main event. They had to go downstairs to the expo and have at least three meetings with exhibitors, taking a selfie at each one as proof. This entitled them to be entered into a draw for an all-expenses paid trip to Mauritius.

Results – Optimising use of the technology

"The best thing about Meetings Africa's partnership with Lumi was their personal touch," says Hufkie. "They were there the whole time making sure we got the best from the technology," which was far more than we were used to on previous occasions.

"After the event we always have a discussion with the exhibitors to discuss improvements. This year there were some pressing issues elsewhere, but nobody mentioned the technology, which is how it should be. There was obviously nothing to complain about," he adds. Overall the exhibitor and attendee features on the app were opened over 2,300 times with some attendees making up to 56 page views each. Over 1,200 people participated tweeted and featured on the Twitter wall.

The corporate buyers' use of Lumi Say was equally successful. There was a 64% activation rate with 161 people rating the meetings they attended and 134 "please contact me" requests. Proof that many more of these buyers went downstairs was provided by the 246 entries for the selfie competition.

"But above all it was great to have the support of Lumi on the floor. Although these apps are easy to use, people need support getting onto Wifi and loading the app. We were pleased to have Lumi there to help out throughout the event," concludes Hufkie.