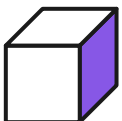


THE NEW ERA OF EVENT MARKETING

Becoming VIP: The Event Marketing Superstar's Guide to Data at Scale

And How Your Technology Connections
Can Drive Business Results



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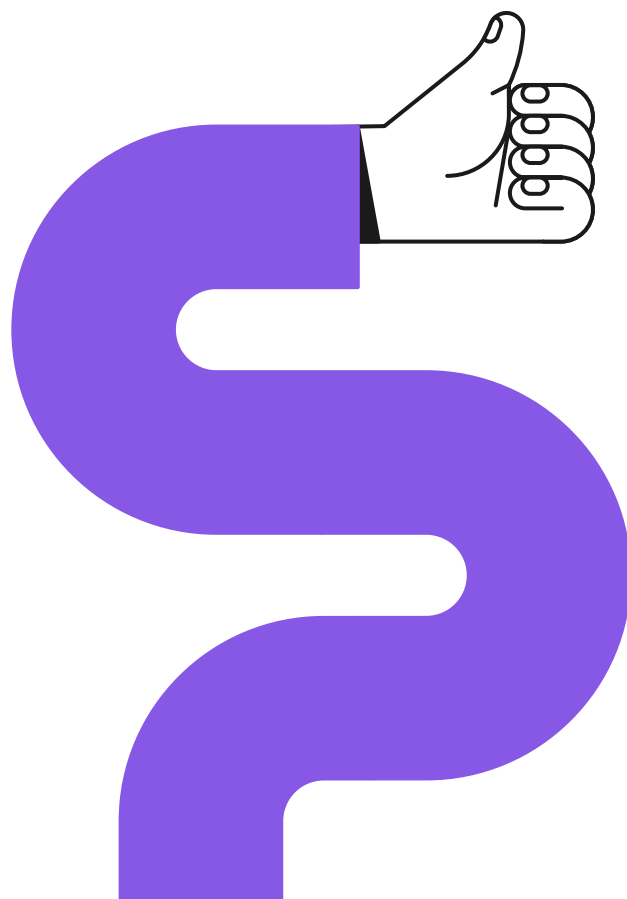
The New Opportunity for Event Marketing Data

The power of human connection can unlock incredible opportunities.

With every store opening, VIP dinner, and launch event (and everything in between), business leaders and marketers are experiencing why events aren't just a favorite engagement and conversion channel for sales teams.

They are also a chance to brand yourself as a thought leader, bring awareness to your company, generate new demand for your offerings, and strengthen customer retention and loyalty.

This is why event marketing is exploding.



In a [2018 Harvard Business Review](#) survey of more than 700 executives, 52 percent said events drive more business value than any other marketing channel.

As we enter the new era of event marketing, companies are discovering that the value of events extends far beyond massive tentpole conferences, and there is huge untapped business value in repeatable, scaled event programs. These represent key points across the entire customer journey; they're field marketing programs, roadshows, recruiting events, user groups, sales dinners, in-store activations, trainings, and even internal events.

According to SiriusDecisions, companies are already reporting [significant investments](#) into these kinds of events — scaled event programs make up 32 percent of event budget for companies with at least \$100 million in revenue, and a staggering 55 percent for those with at least \$1 billion in revenue.

And companies are spending on these for good reason: When event programs successfully scale, it means they can grow without adding more resources, ultimately leading to higher ROI and a greater business impact.

Whether you're already hosting kickass events or just starting to think about your events program, we need to talk about one important thing that may be missing from your [event marketing strategy](#).



One Thing that'll Elevate Your Event Marketing

Many event marketers focus on the more visible elements, like [event promotion](#) and production, but the single biggest differentiator between average and spectacular event marketing programs is something you already have: your data.

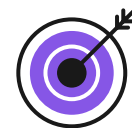
However, an event data strategy is all too often an afterthought for event marketers, even though it is more important than ever before — and will only continue to be a competitive differentiator.

The good news is that you're probably already capturing more data through events than you realize. If you're collecting any of the following, it'll be much easier to take your event data to the next level.

- Registrants versus attendees
- Topics and event types attendees are most interested in
- Content preferences
- Where attendees engage the most, both on-site and on digital touchpoints
- What information attendees took home
- What conversations attendees had with your team

Information about attendance, participation, and preferences holds clues that can unlock deep engagement with your prospects and customers. But you often have far more event data than what's listed here — you simply may not realize it.

Tapping into this additional data means you can give your attendees more customization and value in their follow-up communications and event experiences, in turn helping accelerate business results.

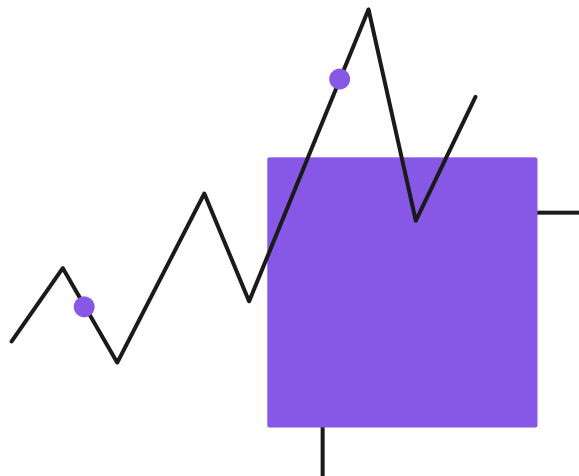
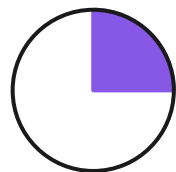
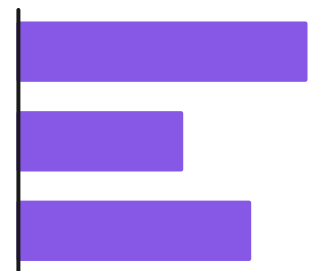


What's more, today's most successful event marketers integrate and share data with other technologies used across their organization. Event data integration has many wonderful benefits, like keeping contact information up-to-date, qualifying leads better, and understanding your [event ROI](#).

These integrations also empower other teams that use those systems — like sales teams using Salesforce and marketing teams using Marketo, Eloqua, or HubSpot — to use event data in their prospect and customer interactions. This helps continue the momentum from their events and frees up event marketers to do what they do best: event strategy.

This is data at scale.

In this guide, we'll explore the ins and outs of [event data integration](#) and get to the core of adopting a “data at scale” mindset. You'll no longer view your events as a single point in time, but rather a spark for accelerating a buying journey, a customer lifecycle, and a long-term relationship.



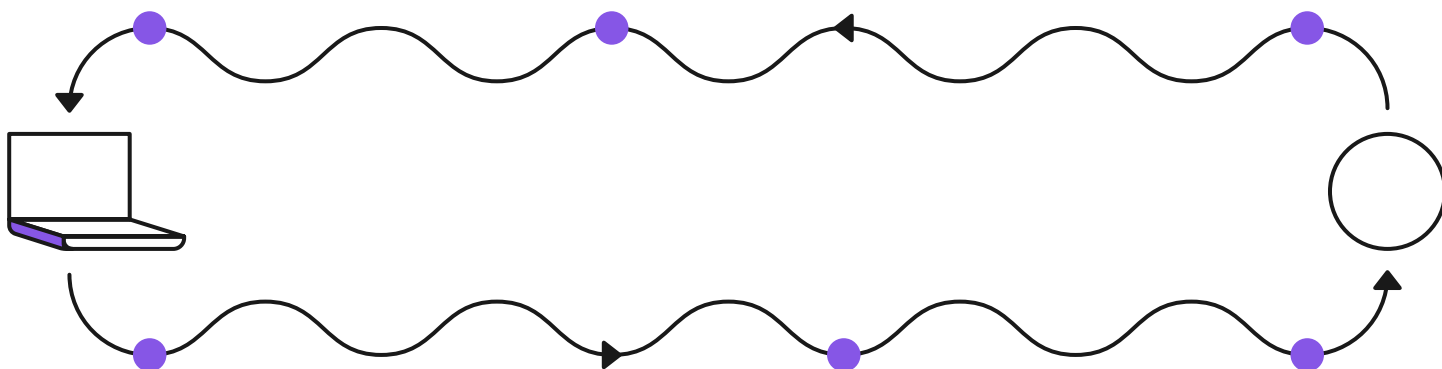
Defining Integrations (in Plain English)

Before we get to the good stuff, like the benefits of integrations and how they can drive business results for your organization, let's start with the basics.

In this section, we'll answer the questions: What are integrations, and how do they connect your event data with other [sales and marketing systems](#)?

The Magic Behind Integrations

Simply put, an integration is when one software technology shares information with another. If information flows both ways between the systems, it's called a bidirectional integration.



How does this crazy magic even work? The under-the-hood technology is possible thanks to something called an Application Programming Interface (API).

An API defines the questions that one system's code can ask another system, along with the right way for the code to ask those questions. For instance, a sales platform's API might explain to a software developer: "You can ask me what a contact's last name is. I'll need your code to include that contact's email address in order to do that. Here's how your code should be formatted when it asks me."

Sound complicated? It kind of is — but the good news is that you can do all these things easily without writing a single line of code.

The minds behind some of the best software platforms know that day-to-day technology users don't want to get wrapped up in technical API functionality. That's why innovative platforms (like Splash!) have built-in integrations with easy-to-use interfaces that don't require you to know any code.

These kinds of integrations make connecting your data faster and easier than you ever thought possible.

Types of Integrations

By far, built-in [integrations](#) are the best solution for fast-growing companies and marketing teams that want to save time and scale their events. But if your software platform doesn't yet offer the integration you need, or if you want something a little more custom, here are three options to get your event data to play nicely with your other data systems.



Manual “Integrations”

We place “integrations” in quotes here because going the manual route isn’t really an integration. But at the end of the day, allowing your event data to work with the rest of your marketing data is key — so if this means manual uploads for you, do it.

This can mean simply adopting a checklist-based process for moving data from one system to another. For example, your checklist may include noting post-event survey results in a contact’s Salesforce record so your sales team can have more intelligent follow-up conversations.

Or a big change for you could be as simple as uploading all event contact and attendance data into Salesforce within 24 hours of an event. (Because, let’s be honest, a lot of us aren’t even doing that much. There’s no shame in it, but you’re missing out on a huge opportunity for your events to have a bigger impact on the business.)

This is not an ideal long-term solution, as going the manual route means you lose the automation that actually allows you to scale your event marketing programs.

Before going manual, be certain built-in integrations don’t exist with your current marketing and sales systems.



SPLASH PRO TIP

If you are manually uploading data into your systems, keep your data as clean and consistent as possible by using templates, naming and formatting conventions, and specific fields dedicated to each piece of information.

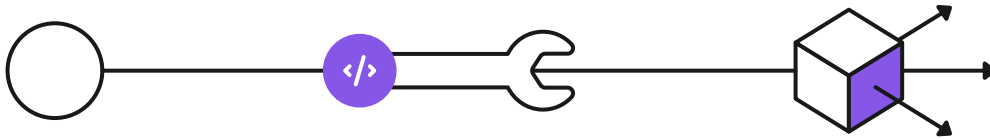


Custom Integrations

If built-in integrations don't exist — or if you want to do something beyond what's available in that integration — then a custom integration is the way to go. Just be sure your event marketing platform makes its API available, so developing an integration is technically possible.

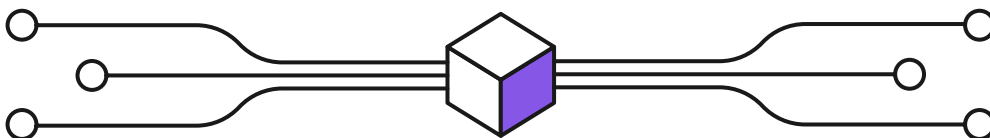
Many development shops can write custom code and build integrations for you. You may even have internal teams at your company who can help with this.

Keep in mind that custom integrations are typically created from scratch, so not only can they take a lot of time to develop, they will also be the priciest option. That said, the benefit of having your data in one place may be priceless.



Third-Party Connectors

You can also work with numerous third-party “connectors,” like Zapier and IFTTT (otherwise known as “If This Then That”). Both have pre-built many inter-application connectors for thousands of technologies.



Six Reasons to Love Integrations

You know that capturing powerful data and insights at your events is important to give your attendees the best possible experience both now and at future events. And even better, it informs you on who's engaging with your brand.

But have you thought about the potential of integrations to prove event ROI and enable your coworkers to do their jobs even better? Here are six benefits of integrating your data that we know you'll die for.



Integration Benefit #1:

Show Event Value with Strong ROI Reporting

Connecting your event data with other systems means you and your team can create a stronger and more complete picture of event performance and the overall impact of your marketing. Knowing ROI also means you have information that's key in optimizing your event marketing programs and making them better year after year.

Bonus: Strong ROI reporting also means you can prove that your efforts and event programs are influencing the business, which could lead to more budget, more resources, and more headcount — so much to love about that!

Integration Benefit #2: Enable & Empower Sales

Imagine your sales team combining real-time insight into event actions (like registrations, check-ins, and booth visits) with their existing information to have deeper conversations with customers and prospects. Your event data is bursting with insights and opportunities to improve conversations and velocity toward greater sales.

Trust us — you'll be your sales team's hero!

Integration Benefit #3: Guarantee Data Accuracy

When your data is collected and integrated with your other key systems, you eliminate the need for manual data management (for example, the dreaded clipboard, pen and paper, or business cards). You also prevent data management and analysis errors that, at best, disrupt future event performance and, at worst, erode confidence from your management team that events are worthwhile in the first place (yikes!).

Creating a system for accurately capturing and communicating event data saves you time and makes your future events better.

Integration Benefit #4: Save Time & Resources

By collecting event data and automatically syncing it between systems, you and your team are free to spend your time on what really matters: more strategic planning and creating the most amazing event your guests will ever experience.

And after you've spent 20 hours on your feet on-site, the very last thing you want to do is manually format and input data. Integrations not only save you from having to complete this awfully dreadful task — they also save you the incredible amount of time it takes.

Integration Benefit #5: Ensure Compliance & Security

Security and privacy concerns across the globe have never been greater, so ensuring data privacy for your prospects and customers is more important than ever before. Your event marketing platform should let you capture opt-ins, share legal information based on attendee residence, and keep unsubscribe data current.

By integrating your event marketing platform with your other technologies, you can respect your attendees' data privacy and avoid compliance nightmares.

From laws like [GDPR](#) and the pending [privacy laws in California](#) (scheduled to go into effect in early 2020), to future data regulations that will impact the events industry, getting in front of your event data management processes now will save you many headaches in the months and years to come.

Integration Benefit #6: Scale Your Event Marketing Data

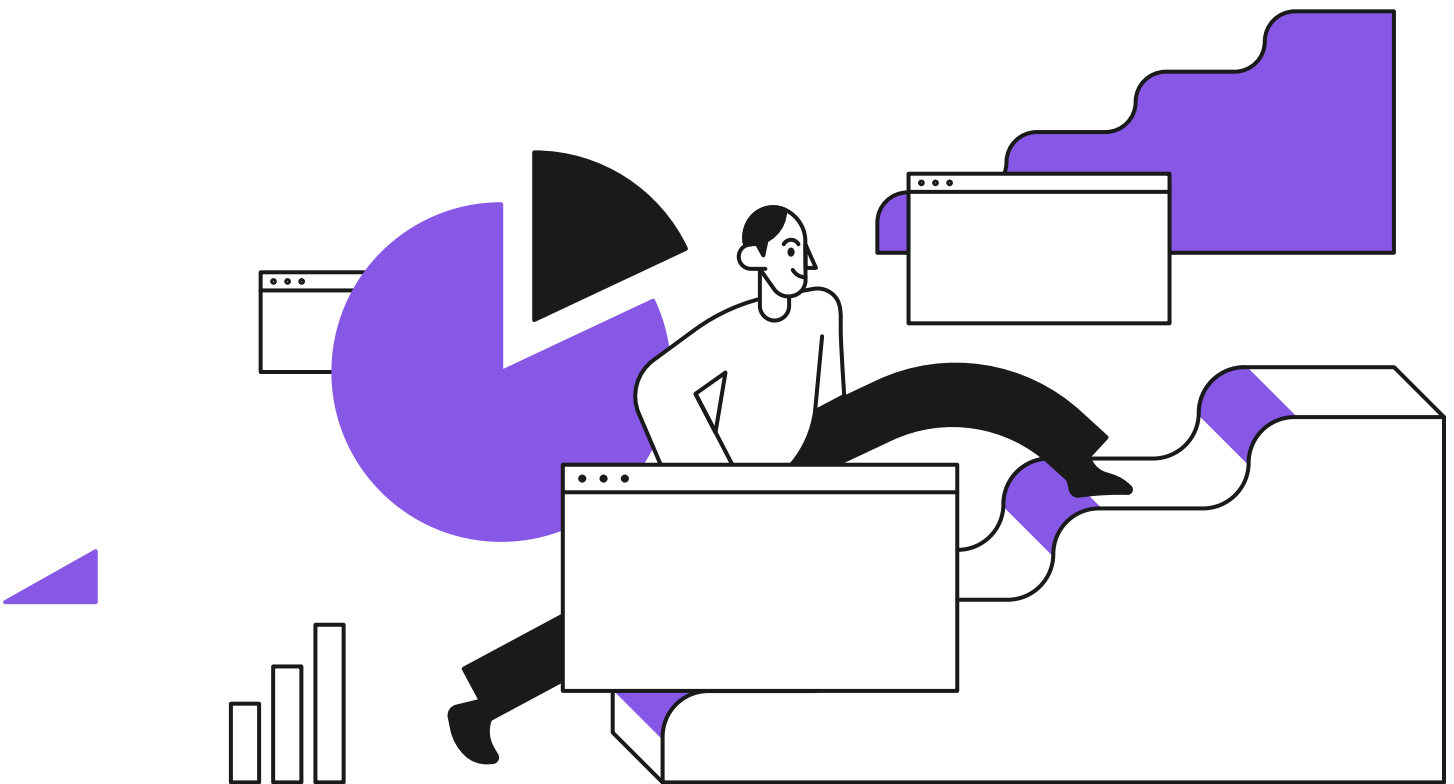
We've mentioned scaling your event marketing data several times, and we're not the only ones talking about it. Event marketing at scale is quickly becoming an industry-wide conversation, and it's important to get ahead of it.

SIX REASONS TO LOVE INTEGRATIONS

Scaling your event marketing means using integrations that empower your sales and customer service teams to maximize the event data at their fingertips (without worrying about inaccurate data). It means allowing yourself to focus on the important stuff (like event strategy). It means having visibility into data across all event programs without manual effort.

Ultimately, it's growing your event marketing programs without adding more resources.

Scaling successful event marketing programs (or any program, for that matter) is impossible without automating processes and workflows, predictably reporting on performance, showing value through event ROI, and confidently accelerating future event programs based on evidence of past program successes.



Customer Story

How Salesforce Gained Full-Funnel Event Data

Salesforce connected their own [CRM products with Splash](#), enabling them to report on more than just top-of-funnel metrics (the ones event marketers know so well!).

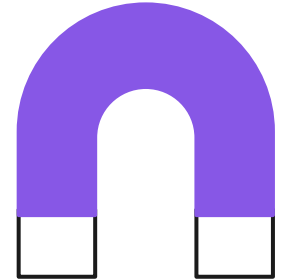
Beyond tracking who attends their events, they also calculate how much open sales pipeline is represented in their attendee list, based on their past interactions with the company.

After the event, Salesforce measures how many new opportunities were created within the first 90 days following an event, segmented by existing customers and potential customers who attended.

Finally, they associate the event with that new pipeline of sales opportunities in Salesforce, so they can follow those opportunities every step of the way until those deals close.

Apart from sales data, Salesforce also conducts extensive post-event surveys to find out what attendees thought of the event's content (everything from the speakers, demos, videos, and sessions), as well as focus groups after keynote speakers have addressed their events.

All the Event Data to Collect — and Connect

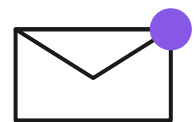
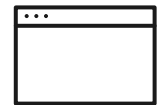


We said it before, and we'll say it again: Event data is most beneficial when you collect and integrate it. And we encourage you to collect all of it. When it comes to answering questions about the impact of your event marketing, it's better to have too much data than not enough.

Here's your ultimate list of event data to collect and connect:

Data to Collect before Your Event

- **Registration information:** Personalized information about attendees, like job title, company name, industry, contact information, social media handles, special requests (including dietary restrictions and accessibility needs), location, and more
- **Invite-to-registration ratio:** The percentage of attendees you email with an invitation who registered
- **Registrant residency:** To maintain compliance with [GDPR](#), [CCPA](#), and other residency-based privacy restrictions
- **Engagement:** [Email opens and clicks](#)
- **Event page analytics:** Page views, conversion, source, bounce rate, and more



- **Premium requests:** VIP access, add-ons, and more
- **Past event participation and preferences:** Number and type of events your guests have attended, content they've engaged with, and more
- **Data to provide a more customized experience:** Why they're attending, who they want to meet, projects they're working on, challenges they're facing, and more



Data to Collect during Your Event

- **Attendance:** Whether they [checked in](#) (and how long they stayed) or were a no-show
- **Registration-to-check-in ratio (attrition):** The percentage of registrants who showed up
- **Walk-in data:** Registration information for walk-in attendees
- **Online sentiment:** Social or press mentions
- **Meetings:** Sales, retention, or engagement details
- **On-site surveys:** Event and product feedback, hand-written evaluation forms, and more
- **Badge scanners:** Booths each participant visited, breakout sessions they attended, and more
- **On-site engagement:** Ancillary events attended, evening events attended, product interactions, and sessions
- **Tickets:** How many tickets were sold, to whom, at what price

Data to Collect after Your Event

- **Post-event feedback:** [Satisfaction surveys](#), social mentions, and more
- **Internal feedback:** Anecdotal evidence of success from debrief with events team
- **Email analytics:** View open and click rates in follow-up emails to gauge post-event engagement
- **Sales leads:** Which leads turned into business, how quickly those leads closed compared to leads who didn't attend events, lead comparison based on type of marketing activity (event versus non-event), and lead comparison based on type of event attended
- **Ticket payouts:** Gross sales and net profit to prove event ROI
- **Landing page:** Post-event landing page views, clicks, time on page, scroll depth



Data to Collect between Your Events

Between your events, you want to nurture your prospects and customers. Identify their level of engagement with your company by looking at how event participants behave in the days, weeks, and months after attending your event.

Buying signals and/or triggers, such as email interactions, form fills, demo requests, and more, could change how you communicate and/or sell to a specific prospect or customer.

SPLASH PRO TIP

Use data collected at all stages of your event to influence how and when you'll follow up, and what content you'll send them. Ensure you have post-event content that spans several topics and personas to meet everyone's needs.

Game-Changing Integrations for Event Marketers

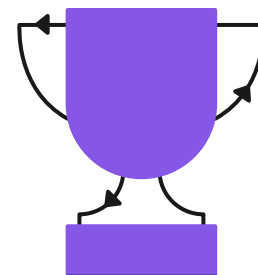
Close your eyes and imagine this: You're gearing up for your biggest event of the year.

You've sent all invitations and follow-ups, the registrations have started flooding in, and you are now sitting down to update your associated Salesforce campaign's invitee statuses... one by one. You sigh (and possibly cry) thinking about having to update all of these statuses again to "Attended" or "No-Show" after the event.

You realize the sales team is starting to log on and quickly make your third cup of coffee, prepping for what will inevitably be a long day of fielding requests for the full registration list.

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? It doesn't have to be like this.

We highly recommend you consider an event marketing platform with the following [integrations](#), as they will give you your time and sanity back, and help you scale your event strategy.





Salesforce Sales Cloud Track Your Attendee Lifecycle

Close the loop between sales and your events. An integration between Salesforce and your event marketing platform should empower you with the insights and processes needed to close more deals, connect your events to revenue, and give sales a quick and easy way to answer the question: “Is my prospect coming to the event?”

More ideal functionality includes the ability to:

Initiate event campaigns in either platform and sync event data bidirectionally.

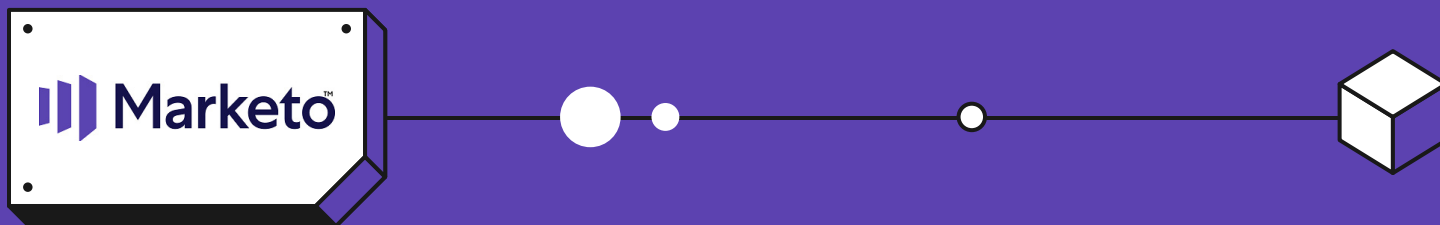
Update campaign member statuses in real time.

See event engagement by lead, contact, or account.

Track and attribute every invitee, registration, and attendee in Salesforce.

Collaborate easily on guest lists.

Customize your integration to pass specific data.



Marketo Make an Impact

Ditch the messy spreadsheets and late-night uploads. An integration between Marketo and your **event marketing platform** should automatically sync event registration and check-in data so your team can take faster follow-up action on leads.

More ideal functionality includes the ability to:

Use information from Marketo directly in your event marketing platform, like title, start date, end date, and description.

Keep unsubscribe preferences in sync automatically.

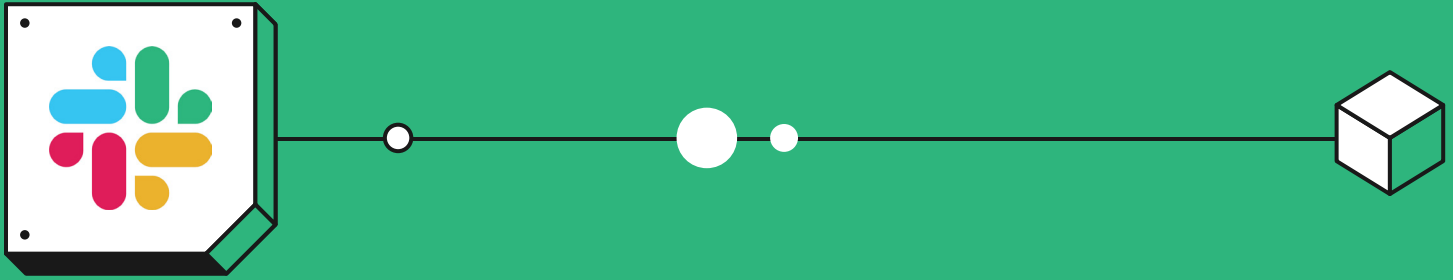
Get visibility into your data.

Save time connecting to Marketo just once for all your events.

Eliminate human error in the spreadsheet.

Increase your speed to lead.

Ensure real-time lead quality.



Slack Notify Your World

Stop, collaborate, and listen. An integration between Slack and your event marketing technology should let you push real-time event data to Slack and automatically notify your team as registrations and check-ins happen. This empowers your entire organization to take immediate action on event milestones, and you spend less time communicating event progress internally.

SPLASH PRO TIP

Loop all the right sales people into your Slack channel to inspire a bit of healthy competition.

More ideal functionality includes the ability to:

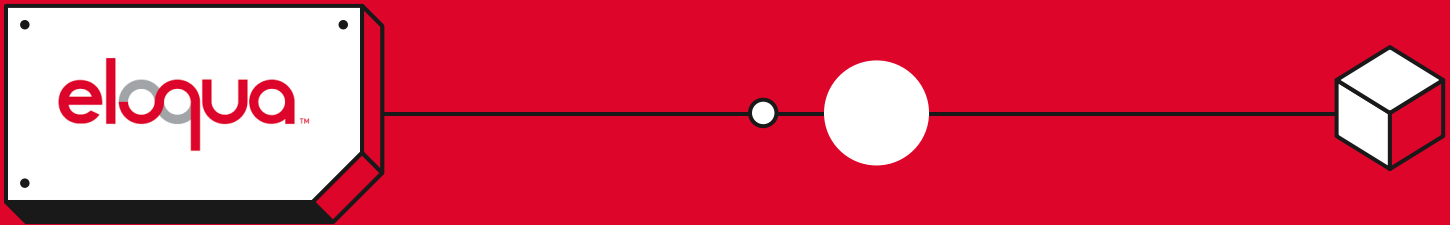
Spread event awareness and increase visibility with real-time notifications in Slack channels.

Share newly created events, registrations, ticket sales, check-ins, and survey responses as they happen.

Avoid logging in to get event updates that you have to manually share with your team.

Streamline on-site processes.

Motivate the teams promoting the event and keep it top-of-mind.



Eloqua

Explore Powerful Insights

Keep calm and measure on. An integration between Eloqua and your event marketing platform should let you uncover powerful insights about your prospects and customers at each stage of the event lifecycle, empowering your team to execute events that bring in more leads, shorten the sales cycle, drive new business, and strengthen relationships with your customers.

More ideal functionality includes the ability to:

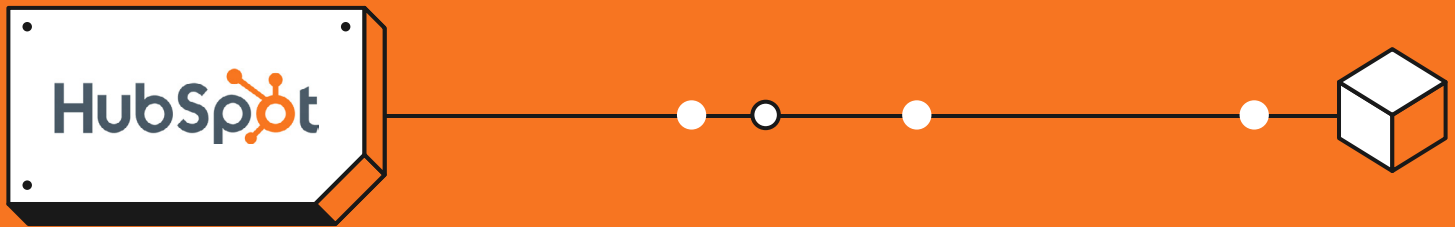
Capture event data and automatically sync event registrants and attendees to Eloqua in real time.

Update campaign statuses, score leads, initiate lead handoffs, send follow-up alerts, and more.

See all your leads' activities in one place.

Map custom fields to Eloqua to understand event performance and learn what drives revenue.

Send real-time notifications to your sales team.



HubSpot

Take Fast Action on Event Leads

Move fast and furious. An integration between HubSpot and your event marketing platform should automatically sync new event registrations so they can become new contacts in HubSpot. Your event marketing platform should also be able to update a contact's timeline when they're invited to an event, register, buy a ticket, or check in.

More ideal functionality includes the ability to:

Create HubSpot Lists to develop workflows like follow-up programs or automatically update a lead score.

Sync attendee, registrant, and engagement data to the HubSpot Contact Timeline in real time.

Update HubSpot contact and timeline data automatically as people register and check in.

Check attendees in and manage them quickly from an event marketing app, and sync that check-in data to HubSpot in real time.



Zapier

Connect All Your Technologies

Go with the workflow. An integration between Zapier and your event marketing platform should let you seamlessly connect to the technologies you're already using, then automate your tasks, streamline your workflows, and sync your event data in real time with more than 750 platforms. This integration should enable you and your team to automate everything from the smallest of tasks to the most complex of workflows.

Our favorite uses:

Generate new event attendees from Google Spreadsheet entries.

Add GoToWebinar registrants from event landing pages.

Send event updates via Twilio SMS texts to your team.

Add songs to a Spotify playlist from event forms.

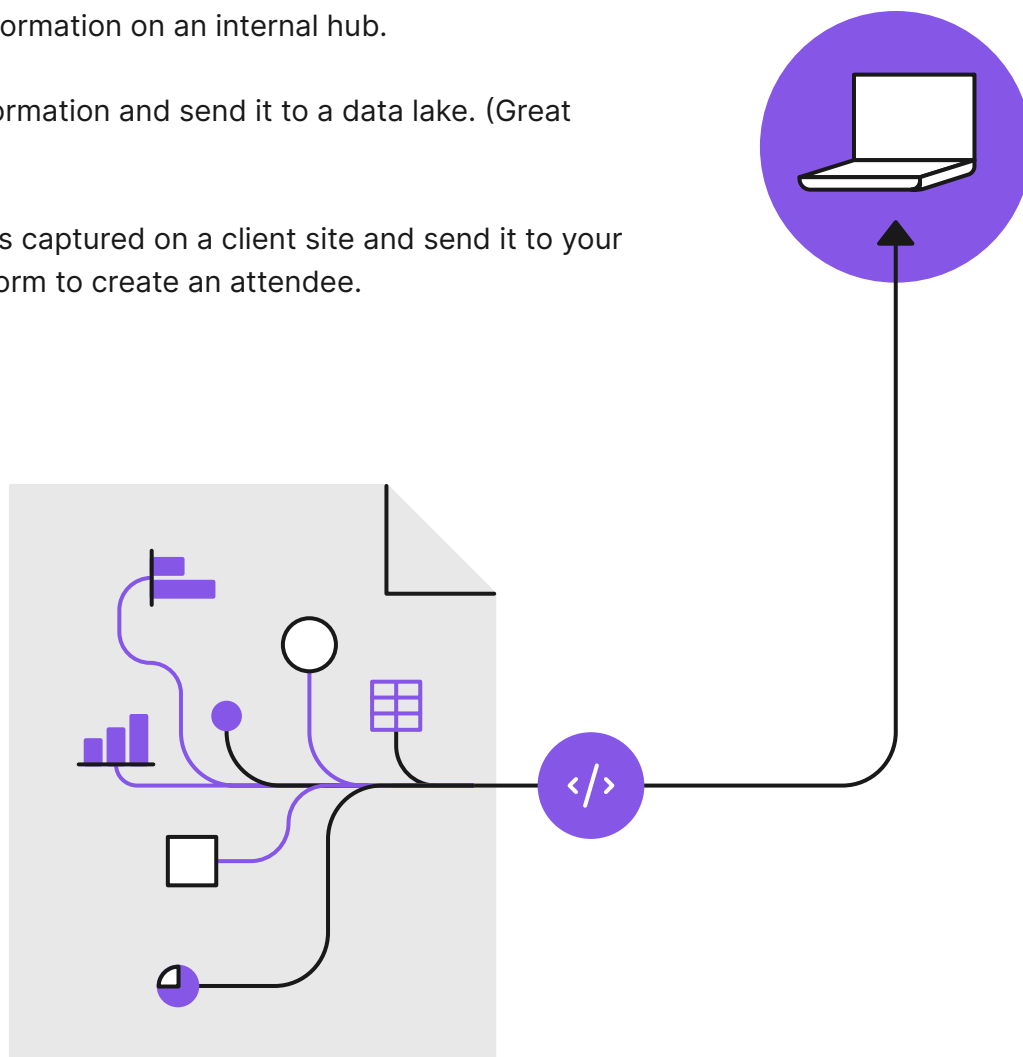
Create new Pardot leads from event registrants.

API & Webhooks: Get Custom

If you want to write your own integration or build something custom, ensure your event marketing platform supports an API and easy-to-use webhooks. This should let you retrieve data from your event marketing platform for use in other applications, such as custom event hubs or data visualization tools.

Ways people use an API or webhooks:

- Post event data as information on an internal hub.
- Retrieve attendee information and send it to a data lake. (Great for reporting!)
- Take information that's captured on a client site and send it to your event marketing platform to create an attendee.



Choosing an Event Marketing Technology

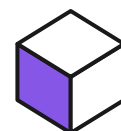
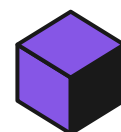
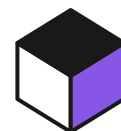
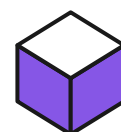
By now, you know what an integration is and how they work, why integrated event data matters in your marketing (and what data you should be collecting), and the game-changing integrations that'll help you truly scale your event marketing programs. There's only one thing missing from this equation:

How do you choose an event marketing platform? Let's talk about a few things you should think about when evaluating event marketing solutions — specifically, from an event data perspective.

Do your research and ask the right questions.

Any event solution you invest in and integrate with your marketing technology stack should have strong event data management functionality. Ask prospective vendors all the questions you have, but make sure these are also on your list:

- What are your event data capabilities?
- What business systems does your tool integrate with?
- How much do the integrations cost?
- What data points do you collect and connect with other systems?



CHOOSING AN EVENT MARKETING TECHNOLOGY

- How can you help me use collected data to improve future event experiences?
- How can your event data functionality help me scale my event marketing programs?
- Do you have an API my team can use if we want to do more custom work? Does it cost extra?

Ask questions internally, too. Your own team's insights may help identify technology needs. For example:

- What data do you currently collect and leverage?
- Which data points could you most benefit from if collected and integrated from future events?
- How long does it currently take us to take action on event data?
- Could that happen faster if the data were input faster?

Get your internal teams involved early.

Technology implementations are rarely completed by just one team, and event marketing solutions are no exception. Reach out to your IT team first to understand their requirements for new applications, including security and privacy requirements.

It's also smart to involve your marketing operations and technology teams. They may already have an integration solution in place, which could get the job done faster and easier, or they may have skills they're willing to use on the integration work.

SPLASH PRO TIP

Identify exactly which department owns the marketing tech stack. Knowing this, and therefore, who will be key to making integration decisions and execution happen, will help you get consensus and resources to integrate data sooner rather than later.

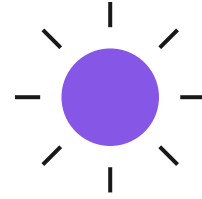
By involving these teams early, you give them plenty of time to become well-informed and communicate their needs and existing solutions. This way, other teams don't become a bottleneck when you are trying to make a purchase, and you'll know you have IT buy-in.

Sell the benefits internally.

Why should your CFO sign off on this investment? As an event marketer, you know the incredible things an event marketing technology can do for your events. But your stakeholders may not be as clear about these benefits.

Ask yourself the following questions, then use those answers to present your proposal:

- What benefit will a platform have for the business immediately?
- How do its benefits translate into more sales and better retention rates?
- What are the risks and potential costs of not using an event marketing platform?
- How will smarter event data collection benefit not just future events but the entire organization?
- What impact will a platform have on the broader team's productivity? On their job satisfaction?



Scaling Your Data for Today — and Tomorrow

Events — particularly live, in-person events — have the power to connect people through meaningful, immersive experiences. But even though they're one of the highest revenue-generating activities in B2B marketing, events can also be a black hole of data.

That's when events stop being productive and start being a hassle.

As an event marketer, you know it's nearly impossible to have a 100 percent complete picture of every single interaction at your events. But your ability to collect, integrate, and use your event data can be much easier than you may have thought — with the right event marketing platform that helps you scale your data.

Integrating your event data is so important for your event marketing programs because it helps you easily gather the information you need from prospects and customers, without doing extra work.

It helps you focus on the big picture, because you're empowering sales and customer service teams to use the data. It helps those teams build positive results for the business, because they're using personalized, accurate information. So at the end of the day, data at scale helps you grow your event marketing without adding new resources.

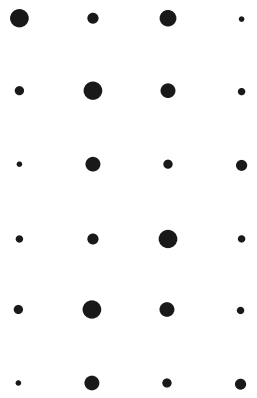
If you couldn't tell, we're head over heels for data at scale, and you should be too!



Whether you are just starting to think about an event marketing strategy or have had a sophisticated one for years, it's always a good idea to revisit your event data strategy. After all, it's not only about scaling your programs and driving business outcomes. It's also about what event attendees are coming to expect in their event experiences — and that's customization every step of the way.

Inspired by the thought of data at scale and what it could mean for scaling your event marketing strategy?





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Let us know we can help! Grab a Splash demo to learn how our event marketing platform helps organizations like yours scale event marketing and maximize ROI.



Learn more at splashthat.com

