

THE NEW IMPACT IMPERATIVE

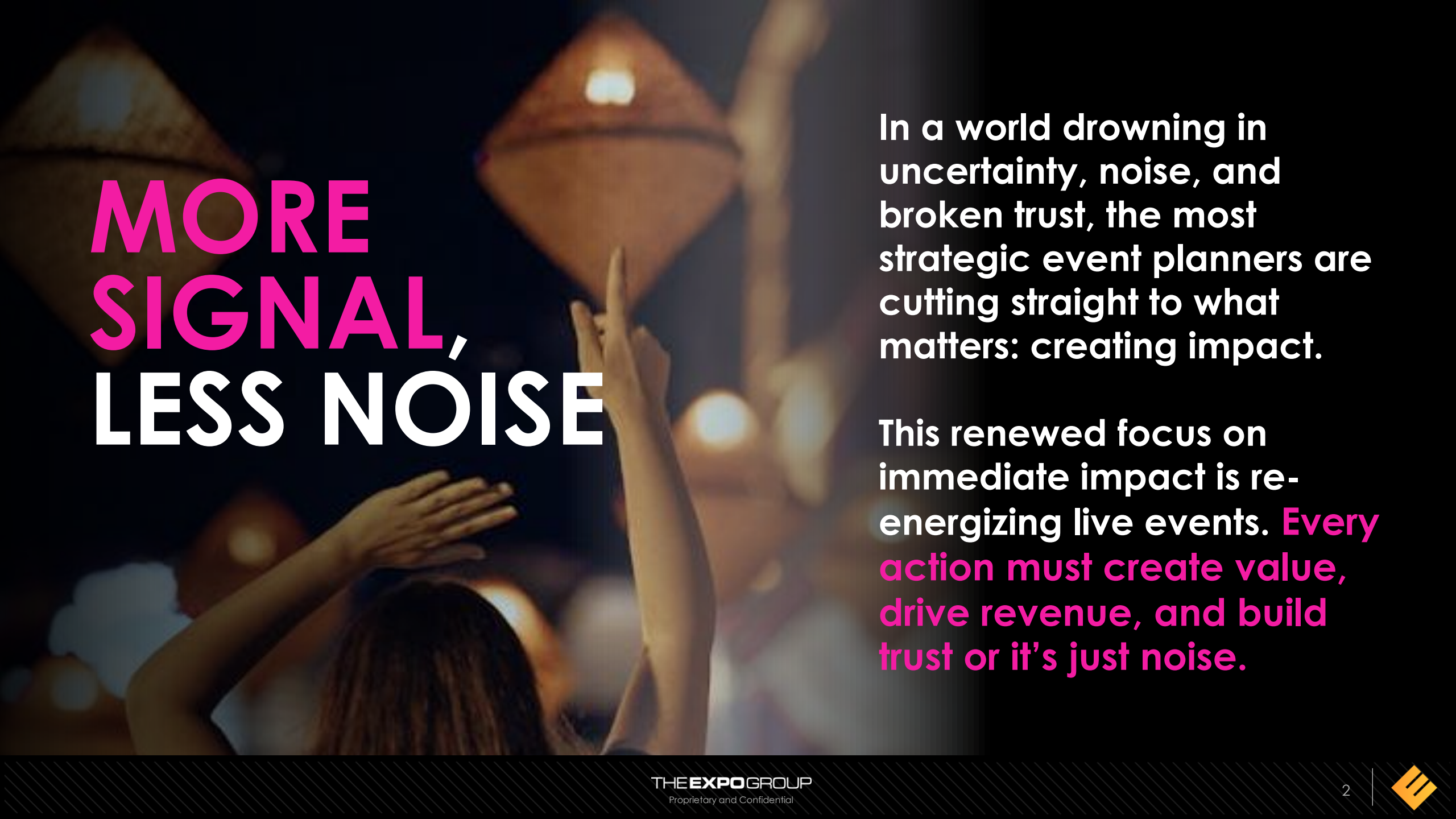
The renewed focus on IMPACT
that's re-energizing live events

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CROWDPulse
BY THE EXPO GROUP

THE EXPO GROUP
Architects for connecting communities.™

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MORE SIGNAL, LESS NOISE

In a world drowning in uncertainty, noise, and broken trust, the most strategic event planners are cutting straight to what matters: creating impact.

This renewed focus on immediate impact is re-energizing live events. **Every action must create value, drive revenue, and build trust or it's just noise.**



OUR APPROACH

OBSERVED BEHAVIOR AT SCALE

Revealing the key
forces reshaping
live events.

Start with
what people

DO

Validate vs.
what they

SAY

200K

Industry conversations

60M

Audience Reach

+50

Industry reports
cross-referenced
against our
CROWDPulse insights



WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

IS YOUR AUDIENCE INTELLIGENCE FIT FOR THE AI AGE?

Billions of real-time audience insights

CROWDPulse analyzes **billions** of real-time interactions to uncover what your audience is connecting with – **giving you the blueprint** of what truly moves them.

FROM ATTENDEES TO WHOLE HUMAN BEINGS

Revealing a comprehensive picture of who your audience is – *in work and in life* – through observed behaviors at a scale and depth that traditional surveys can never capture.

UNDERSTAND HOW TO CREATE VALUE

Embrace this renewed impact-led mindset by turning insights into actions that create value and drive growth.

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IN AN **IMPACT** STATE OF MIND

We've identified a back-to-basics shift, focusing on fundamentals **to create impact in three key areas**

Successful events embody this mindset. They cut through distraction by focusing on fundamental impact: powering local economies, leading with authenticity, and prioritizing attendee development through immersive learning.

The evidence is clear: events that embrace impact-driven fundamentals are achieving increased engagement and outsized business growth.

1 **Local Love, Real Returns:**
The Local Impact Imperative

2 **Why It Pays To Be Authentic:**
Closing The Trust Gap

3 **Skills In Action**
The Hands-On Learning Revolution



1 LOCAL LOVE, REAL RETURNS

Events that prioritize local impact create measurable value far beyond the show floor.

Nearly half of event conversations focus on local economy and community connection, with location-specific content driving consistently higher engagement.

The most successful organizers weave local voices, businesses, and communities directly into their events. Not as add-ons, but as central value creators.

For event planners to successfully evolve from experience creators to local economic catalysts, they must **understand attendees beyond job titles – using data to connect personal passions with local experiences.**

68%

Local community conversations related to growth opportunities

— CROWDPulse

60%

Positive sentiment linked to local communities; +10% vs. average

CROWDPulse, 2025

57%

North American consumers value local businesses; jumping +6pp from Q1-Q2

McKinsey, 2025

72%

Under 35s feel positively toward events that offer authentic, local cultural elements

Eventbrite, 2025





LOVE FOR LOCAL CONNECTS COHORTS

There's a **huge untapped opportunity to integrate local culture and communities into events**, beyond traditional food & beverage.

While F&B is still on the menu for attendees, **understanding their passions & preferences** opens up a new world of growth.

- Older audiences **favor local food & homeware**
- Younger cohorts love **clothing, gifts, and experiences**

BOTTOM LINE:

1. **Curate indie vendors** selling products and experiences matched to attendee personas
2. **Spotlight vendor uniqueness** rather than just local status
3. **Enable brand discovery moments** attendees can't find elsewhere





LOCAL LOVE IN ACTION

**McDonald's Canada
turned local employees
into celebrated artists**

McDonald's Canada invited employees nationwide to submit artwork, with winners having their creations featured on packaging and in-store displays across the country.

**Increased brand love fuelled a 5% jump
in revenue over the campaign period.**



SXSW LONDON

LOCAL RETAIL IN ACTION

SXSW London made the historic Old Spitalfields Market – operating since 1682 – an official festival venue, showcasing independent retailers and artisan traders.

Using their platform to amplify local retail, they transformed convention attendees into cultural explorers.



CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT



DRIVING COMMUNITY, FUELING IMPACT

HPX **made local impact the engine** of the high-performance racing expo by launching a new show in collaboration with the local Charlotte community.

Hands-on experiences with local teams, vendors, and garage tours **turned community connections into immersive, action-packed engagement**. Hendrick Motorsports, one of NASCAR's top teams located just a mile from Charlotte Speedway, served as a primary booth with their 'engine build' competition, highlighted local builders and connecting attendees directly with the region's racing talent.

Local voices and businesses were woven into every aspect of the event, proving that authentic, location-focused engagement fuels both excitement and measurable economic impact.



KEY TAKEAWAYS >>>

1

Use big data tools like CROWDPulse to better understand attendees beyond job titles. Tap into their interests and passions and use insights to create impact through enhanced experiences that drive local economies.

2

Amplify local creators, not just local spaces. Collaborate with independent artists, emerging designers, and community talent to co-create authentic experiences that give back – transforming attendees from passive consumers into active community champions.

3

Meet younger audiences where they are: seeking unique products for self-expression. Curate independent creators selling items that can't be found elsewhere – clothes, art, lifestyle products that let attendees explore their personal style.



2 WHY IT PAYS TO BE AUTHENTIC

Brand trust directly drives revenue and reduces price sensitivity – especially important as inflation and trade tensions pressure both prices and margins.

But trust is eroding fast: 71% of US consumers trust companies less than they did last year. This widening trust gap represents both a critical business risk and a competitive opportunity.

Savvy event planners are closing this gap by weaving transparency and authenticity throughout event experiences – particularly around leadership stories and innovation journeys, which our data shows dominate authenticity conversations.

65%

Leadership conversations connected to transparency & authenticity topics

— CROWDPulse

10x

Engagement with expert-led content vs average; the 'trusted authority advantage' in action

CROWDPulse, 2025

87%

Consumers will pay more for brands they trust

Salsify, 2025

200%

Total share price gain for trusted brands vs sector rivals over a decade

Edelman, 2025



CLOSING THE TRUST GAP

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP DRIVES THE BOTTOM LINE

Consumer demand for authenticity has never been higher. 63% will pay premium prices for genuine brands. But trust is eroding: 71% trust companies less than last year.

This trust crisis hands **competitive advantage to leaders who choose transparency over polish.**

86%

Employees say **authentic and transparent leadership is critical** to company culture.

Companies with transparent leadership see **40% lower turnover rates**

The Honest Truth

Trust isn't just good ethics, it's good business. Companies that prioritize authentic leadership and transparent communication consistently **outperform competitors on revenue, retention, and stock performance.**

Transparency isn't a nice to have, it's a business imperative





AUTHENTICITY IN ACTION

Patagonia launched the "Don't Buy This Jacket" campaign, urging customers to think twice before making a purchase, emphasizing the environmental cost of consumerism

As one of the world's most trusted brands, sales have risen 300% in the last decade





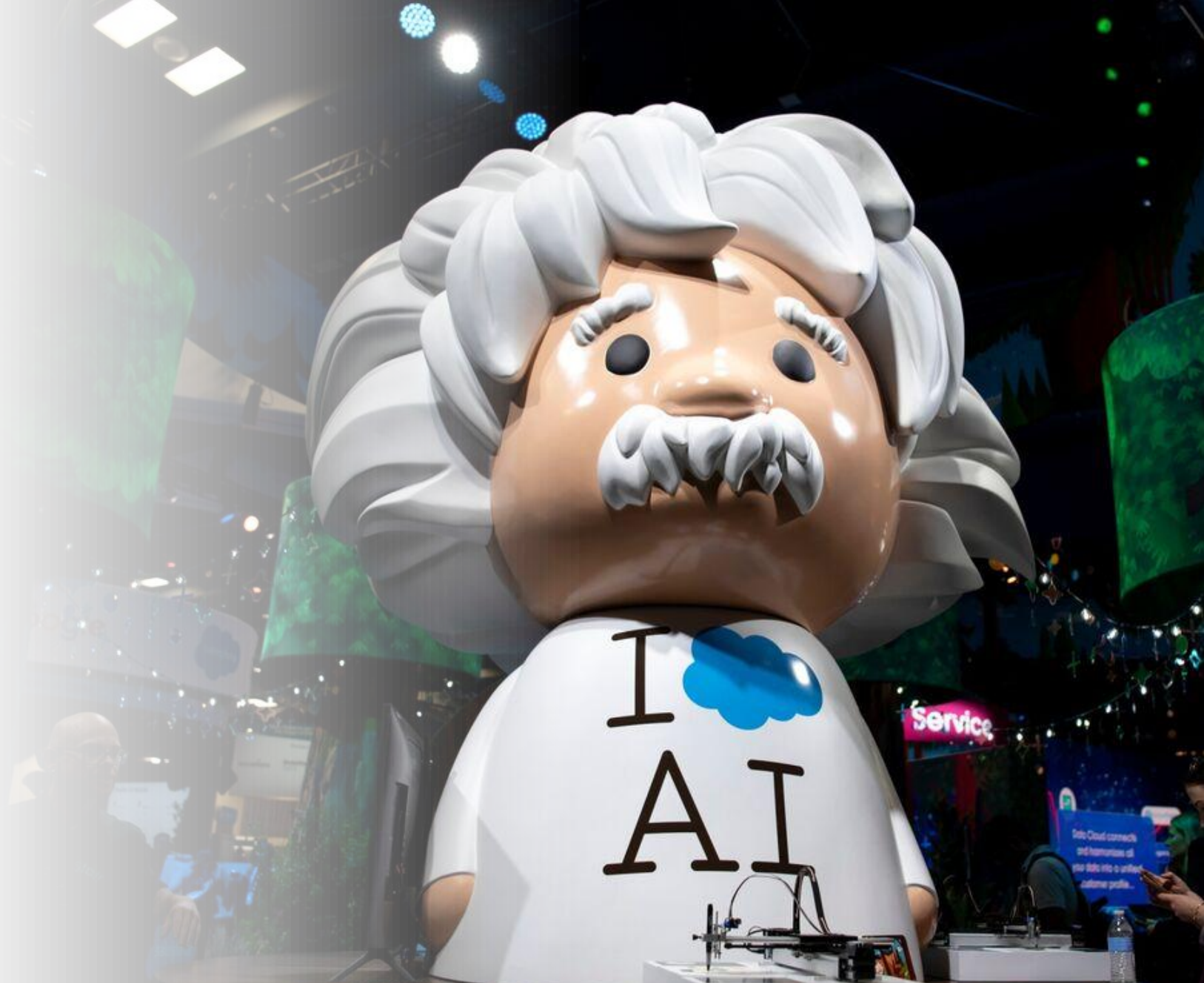
salesforce

TRUST-BUILDING IN ACTION

Salesforce tackled the AI trust crisis head-on with the Einstein Trust Layer initiative

An immersive educational experience demonstrating real-time data masking, toxicity detection, and complete auditability

Salesforce surpassed a record \$10 billion in quarterly revenue post-launch, demonstrating how trust-first AI messaging directly translated to tangible business growth.



CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT

SBC AUTHENTICITY AT SCALE

SBC Summit Americas placed **authentic leadership at its core**, connecting attendees to real challenges and insights across the Americas.

They brought executives together to **share real challenges and hard-won insights** through workshops, mentorship sessions, and regional market spotlights.

By weaving diverse voices from across North and Latin America into every conversation, SBC proved that transparent leadership – *where obstacles are openly discussed and lessons freely shared* – **builds trust, strengthens relationships, and drives meaningful impact**.

"We needed a partner that could not only keep up with the growth but also the creativity of our lively industry. The Expo Group did just that."

Santina Simons
Head of Events, Americas
SBC Events



KEY TAKEAWAYS >>>

1

Embrace transparency about setbacks and learnings. Share the real journey of creating impact – including **what didn't work, budget constraints, and unexpected challenges** – rather than polished success stories that feel manufactured.

2

Leverage credible voices; partner with recognized **experts from different sectors aligned with attendee personas and passions**. Demonstrate audience understanding.

3

Act **first, announce later**. Start supporting local causes 6+ months before your event without any promotional tie-in. **Let attendees discover your existing community work** organically during the experience.



3

SKILLS IN ACTION: THE HANDS-ON REVOLUTION

Events that prioritize immersive & experiential learning experiences create lasting skill retention.

Uncertain times drive demand for tangible career benefits; 4 in 5 event conversations now focus on future-proofing careers through technology upskilling, hands-on training access, and immersive learning experiences.

The most successful organizers design experiential learning journeys – replacing passive information sessions with active, immersive environments where attendees practice real-world scenarios and master new tools through guided application.

20x

Hands-on training conversations vs immersive tech (AR/VR)

CROWDPulse, 2025

81%

Event conversations connect to skills development

— CROWDPulse

74%

Employees looking to learn new skills to futureproof careers

LinkedIn, PWC,

65%

Attendees say immersive learning most important event element

Bizaboo, 2025



KEY TREND:

HANDS-ON BEATS HIGH-TECH

**Ditch high-tech showcases,
dial up hands-on training.**

While cutting-edge immersive technologies get attention, the actual conversation volume shows that traditional hands-on workshops, demonstrations, and experiential learning dominate the L&D landscape.

HELP ATTENDEES LEVEL-UP

74%

Employees looking to learn new skills to remain employable

— LinkedIn, PWC

“ Professional development and skills learning are not just desired—they are now a driving force behind event participation and design ”

Bizaboo, 2025

KEY TAKEOUT

Prioritize practical and immediately applicable skills development over flashy tech showcases





HANDS-ON TRAINING IN ACTION

Community-led fitness events across global cities bring training expertise to life.

By hosting local workout sessions and hands-on training events in cities worldwide, Gymshark empowers fitness communities to connect, learn proper techniques, and share expertise in real-world environments.

**An approach that's delivered
12 consecutive years of growth**



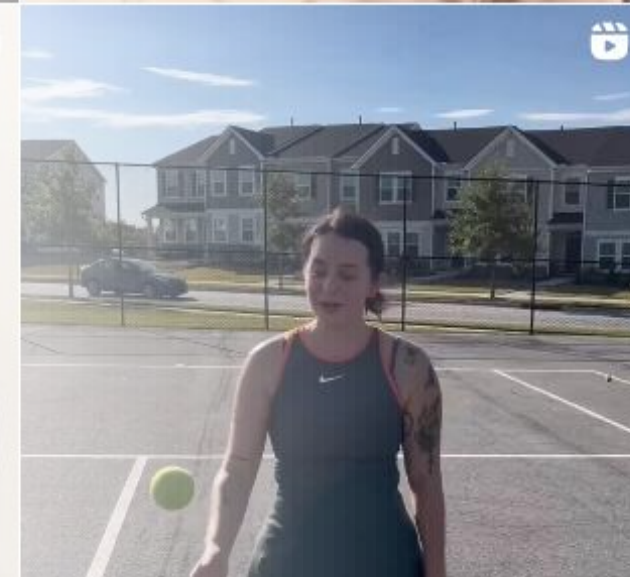


UPSKILLING IN ACTION

200+ free certifications through bite-sized videos, hands-on platform exercises and live workshops.

By eliminating cost barriers and rigid schedules, they created an always-on learning ecosystem that fits real professional lives.

The Results: 7M+ enrollments, 150K+ certified professionals, 81% more confident – **proving training-as-activation drives business impact.**





CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT



THE SCIENCE OF PLAY

The reimagined Knowledge Bowl made upskilling competitive, transforming expertise into a fast-paced, **team-based challenge**, proving that *hands-on* learning beats *high-tech* for a truly immersive experience.

Game show-style rounds **turned learning into lively face-offs**, blending entertainment with real clinical and scientific insight.

Diverse teams combined multiple disciplines to tackle real-world scenarios, proving that collaboration fuels both knowledge and confidence.



KEY TAKEAWAYS >>>

1

Practical Training Dominates High-Tech Solutions Hands-on training is 20x more prevalent than cutting-edge immersive tech in actual conversations, proving that practical workshops and demonstrations outperform flashy VR/AR showcases for real skill development.

2

Skills Development Is The Primary Trust-Building Mechanism 81% of event conversations connect to skills development and future-proofing, making practical career advancement the dominant way event planners build attendee trust and loyalty.

3

Immediate Application Beats Abstract Learning Organizations prioritizing immediately applicable skills development over theoretical training see better engagement and stronger attendee connections.



IT'S TIME TO GO BACK TO BASICS AND FOCUS ON **IMMEDIATE IMPACT**

1

Local Love, Real Returns: The Local Impact Imperative

Amplify **local creators** and
design **experiences** that
delight attendees and **drive**
local economies

2

Why It Pays To Be Authentic: Closing The Trust Gap

Prioritize **transparent &**
authentic leadership – share
setbacks and **learnings**,
particularly around
innovation

3

Skills In Action: The Hands-On Learning Revolution

Weave **hands-on training and**
development sessions across
event experiences; consider
when to showcase tech



LEARN HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOUR COMMUNITY BETTER.

The power is in the data. But it takes a specialized team of data analysts and strategists to distill it into insights that drive impact.

Are you ready?

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