More Bang For Your Buck...

Why you don't need a massive budget to have amazing guest speakers

Who am I?

A brief overview:

- Over a decade of large-scale events experience
- Event marketer by trade but dabble in onsite customer journey and content
- Passionate about attendee experience

TL:DR

What we'll cover:

- Reverse engineer your strategy
- Debunk common guest speaker myths
- Pro tips to build your own strategy — even on a budget

One Size Doesn't Fit All

A Brief History...

Pre-pandemic: big budgets, “hype” and “vibes” were high

>2020

Post-pandemic: new constraints, new mindset

2022<

MYTHS

Let’s bust some myths about guest speakers…

01

Attendance

Having a guest speaker will drive event registrations

02

Lots of $$

Guest speakers will cost too much money

03

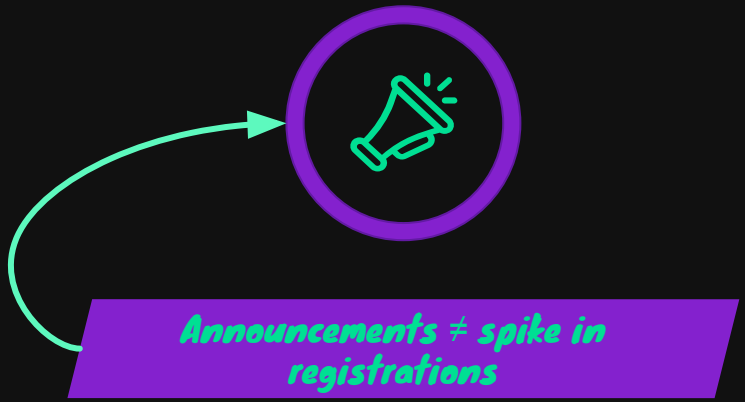
“Celebrities”

Attendees want to hear from “famous people”

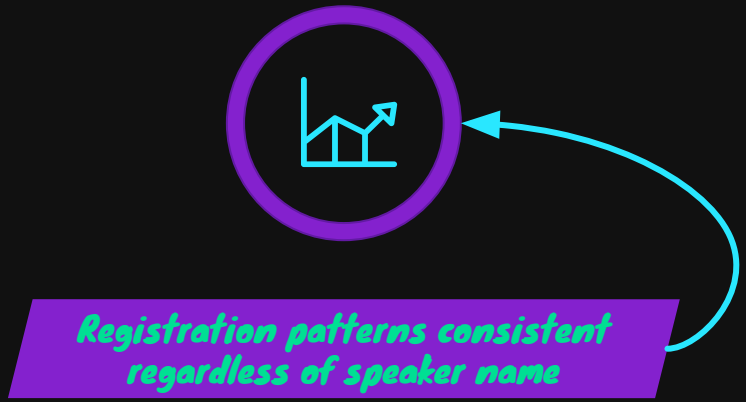
01 Attendance

Having a guest speaker will drive event registrations

Do guest speakers drive registrations?



Announcements ≠ spike in registrations



Registration patterns consistent regardless of speaker name

02

Lots of $$

Guest speakers will cost too much money

I just don't have the budget

Budget Smarter

Can you get more "bang for your buck"?

Tap Resources

Employees, communities, customers

Value>Cost

Shift the mindset, expensive doesn't necessarily mean good

Negotiate

Speaker rate is a starting point, tailor the ask to meet your needs

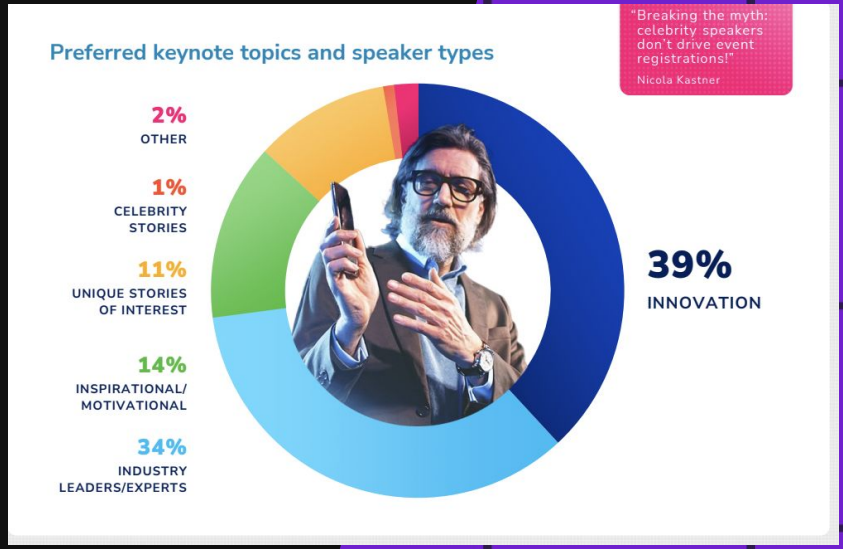
03

"Celebrities"

Attendees want to hear from
"famous people"

The data to back it up!

"We repeat: celebrity speakers will not boost registrations. Unless they're experts in a relevant vertical, celebrities don't drive behavior or outweigh what really matters."



Source: Winter 2024 Freeman Syndicated Survey of Event Attendees. Copyright Freeman 2024.

PRO TIPS

How the heck do I get started?

Attendee-first approach

Dig into your audience

Demographics, needs, preferences, patterns

Marketing-led thinking

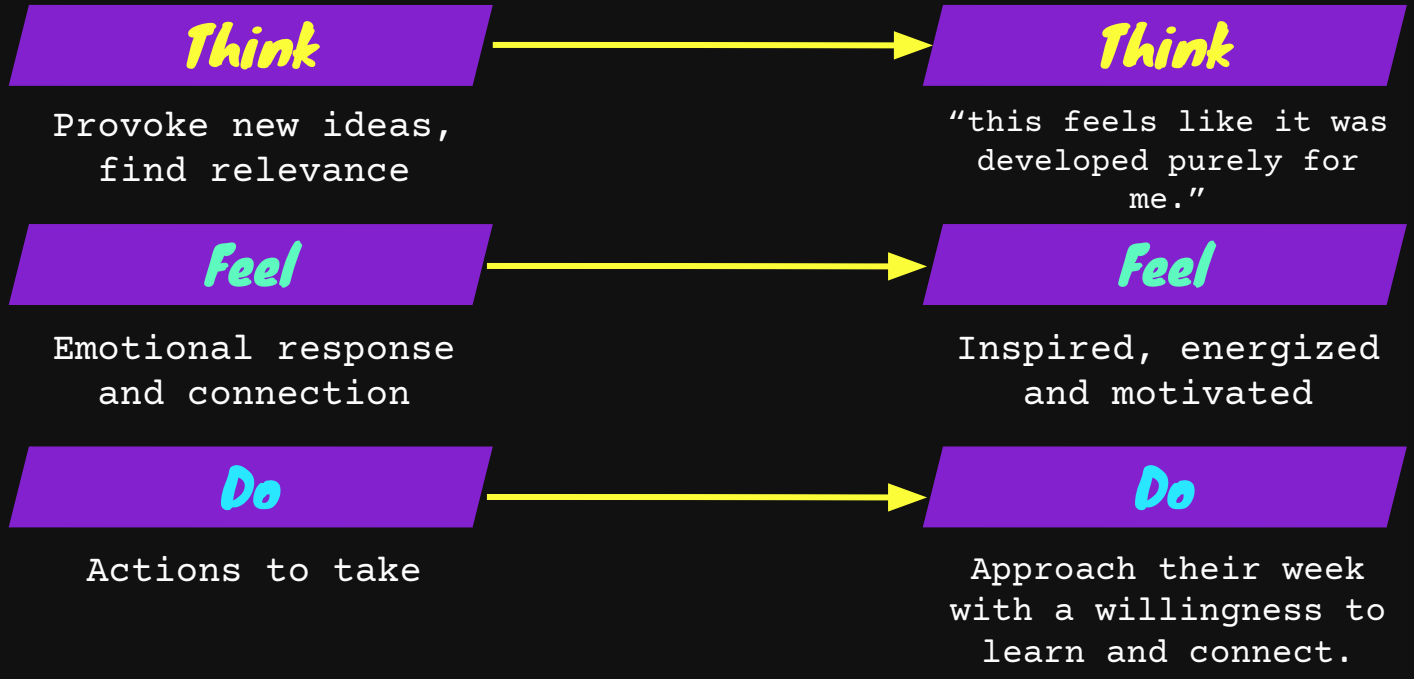
Align with overall attendee value

Redefine KPIs

What does success look like?

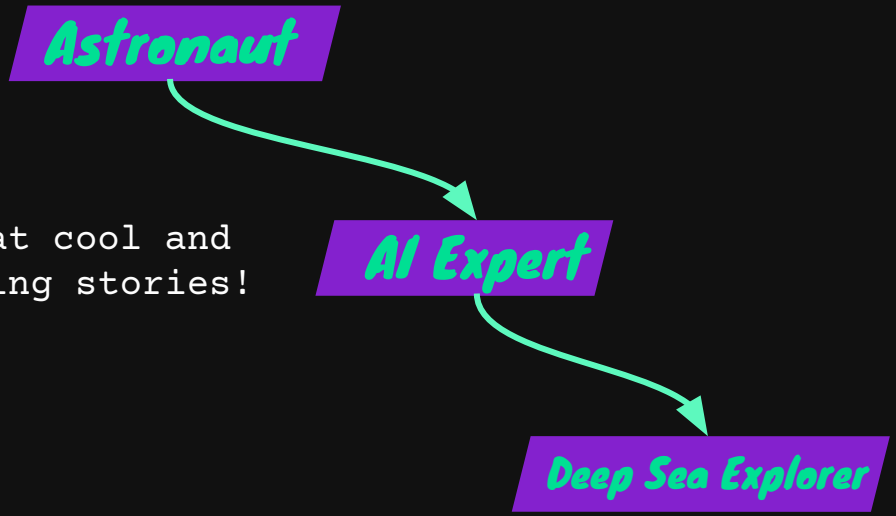
With an attendee-first approach, you need attendee-first feedback to drive your success metrics.

THINK. FEEL. DO.



Storytelling
WINS

Storytelling always wins



Wow! What cool and interesting stories!

It’s my job to create the narrative to weave the stories together

So...How did it perform?

Attendance Rate

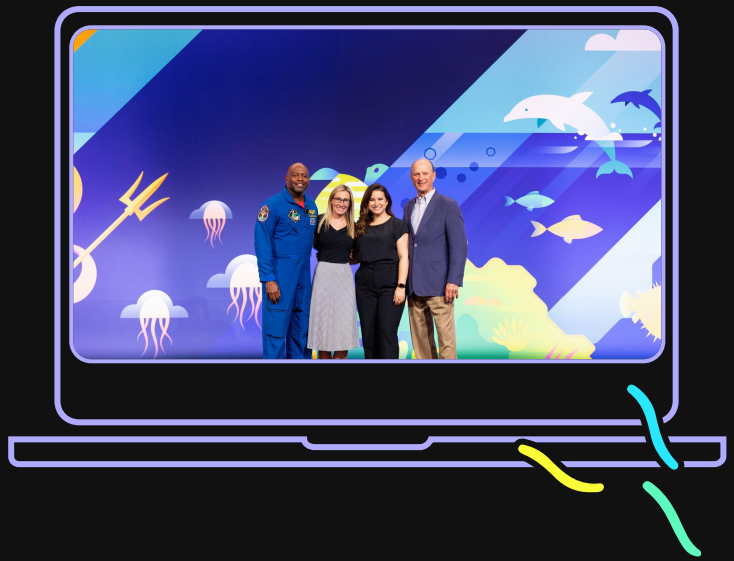
Overall average attendance rate for all session at 70%

Session Score

Overall average session score at 4.16

"This was the very best session I attended through the entire Explore, I was feeling overwhelmed and anxious about the place I fit in the ecosystem of VMware, until I had my perspectives re-adjusted by the extremely engaging and just awe-inspiring presentations. I worry that because of its divergence from the typical software development mindset it will not get a good review, but I cannot stress enough how meaningful this experience was to me. thank you."

-Session Attendee



keep on exploring...

Let's connect!

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Thanks!

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