

# **SOLUTIONS FOR** COMMON MARKETING CHALLENGES



#### **BRAND INCONSISTENCY**

Professional management of corporate brand guidelines. Equipment and skills to color match, every time. Understanding of core values to ensure your brand is reflected consistently.



#### SIGNAGE LIMITATIONS

Visual solutions from one time usage signs to dependable multi-use event kits. State of the art equipment and team will produce and install wall graphics, banners, table top & POS signage.



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Deliver products that your teams and customers want. Retail items, custom one of kind goods, apparel, booth giveaways and gifts. Creative promo gurus provide ideation, creation, quality and delivery.



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Professional project managers, masters of print, promo, packaging, direct mail, signage and distribution. Custom packaging and promotional product consultation.



#### SUPPLY CHAIN **CHALLENGES**

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#### **CUSTOMIZATION** AND INTEGRATION

Online solutions to enable ordering, inventory management, budgets, data collection, and gifting. Real time reporting and data services.



## ACTIVATE



t Almaden, your brand is our priority. We pride ourselves on delivering a premium experience through custom technology, in-house production, and project leadership from industry experts. Our mission is to manage and maintain your brand integrity through our comprehensive and integrated solutions: Commercial Printing, Gifting & Promo, Signs & Graphics, and Fulfillment & Distribution.

Brand activation is more than just a buzzword; it's about bringing your brand to life and ensuring it resonates with

"Brand activation

is more than just a

it resonates with

your audience at every touchpoint."

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bringing your brand to life and ensuring

your audience at every touchpoint. At Almaden Global, we place the brand owner at the center of our purpose. By surrounding you with remarkable Digital Solutions, Project Leadership, Brand Management, and Fulfillment Management programs, we ensure that

your brand not only stands out but also connects deeply with your customers. With our detailed custom technology as the bedrock, we activate your brand in ways that are both impactful and enduring.

In this issue of Integrate, we explore the critical importance of brand activation through two features. Our cover story, "The Bridge," delves into how field marketers are bridging the gap between brands and customers, playing a pivotal

role in brand activation. In our second feature, "Event 360°," we examine how leading organizations have integrated automation, AI, and storefront technology into their marketing supply chains, further enhancing the power of brand activation.

We hope you enjoy the latest issue of Integrate and find inspiration in the stories and strategies shared within. As always, we are here to help you activate your brand to its fullest potential.

Warmest regards,

#### Manny Cuevas

VICE PRESIDENT OF BRAND ACTIVATION

#### integrate This Issue

MANAGING EDITORS Manny Cuevas, VP of Brand Activation

Melanie LoBue, Chief Marketing Officer

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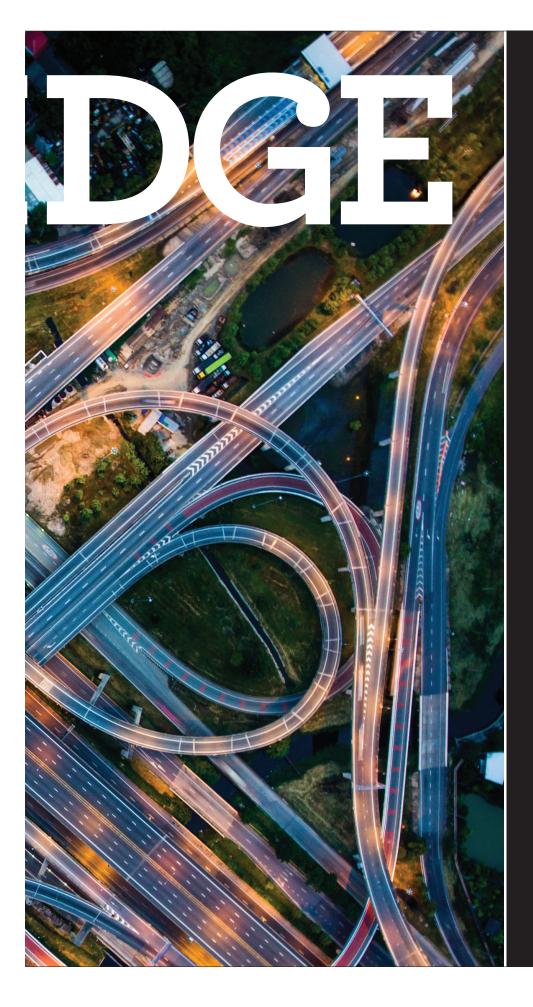
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#### Adapting to change and driving revenue through field marketing

n their widely acclaimed book, "The Effortless Experience: Conquering the New Battleground for Customer Loyalty," Matthew Dixon, Nick Toman and Rick DeLisi provide an in-depth look at why loyalty is driven by how well a company delivers on its basic promises and solves day-to-day problems, not how spectacular its service experience might be.

Most customers, the authors found, don't want to be "wowed"; they want an effortless experience. Digging deep into countless case studies, "The Effortless Experience" found that too many companies are so entrenched in the concept of exceeding service expectations, they are numb to everything else.

In the ever-changing world of field marketing one that has evolved significantly over the past few years, this notion is more than profound, especially as companies continue to adapt to rapid changes in technology and customer behavior.

Michelle Radlowski, Senior Director, AMS & EMEA Regional Marketing and ABM, DigiCert, says for the industry's marketing strategies to stay relevant and effective, it must stay in a customercentric mindset. "With every activity or campaign, we need to consistently ask: What does the customer need? What are they looking to hear from us? Are we doing this campaign because it makes us feel good or is it because it resonates with the customer how we can help meet their security needs?"

FIELD MARKETERS ARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PARTNERS TO SALES: THEY'RE GOAL-ORIENTED REVENUE MARKETERS, AND ALSO TARGETED AND CUSTOMER-CENTRIC MINDED."

— REBEKAH MCADAMS,

VP, GLOBAL FIELD & CHANNEL MARKETING, VARONIS



FIELD MARKETING IS A CRITICAL COMPONENT OF THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE REVOLUTION. THEY ARE THE END-TO-END CREATORS OF THE PROGRAMS THAT ENGAGE OUR TARGET ACCOUNTS IN MEANINGFUL WAYS."

- MICHELLE RADLOWSKI,

SENIOR DIRECTOR, AMS & EMEA REGIONAL MARKETING AND ABM, DIGICERT

DigiCert, a digital security company based in Lehi, Utah, provides public key infrastructure and validation required for issuing digital certificates or TLS/SSL certificates, acting as a certificate authority and trusted third party. For the past 16-plus years, Radlowski has seen a mindset shift in the field marketing landscape, focusing on building trust and partnerships with sales, distilling noise and the continuation of cultivating field marketing to grow even more with time.

"Latane' Conant, CMO of 6Sense, sums up what I believe field marketing is," Radlowski says. "They are the future CMOs of the world—you're the on-the-ground experts in your market, the quarterbacks of the go-to-market plan, the alignment builders between sales and marketing, and

the masters of the mind-blowing moment."

Radlowski believes field marketers are more than just event coordinators or party planners focusing on "menus and venues", but instead the masterminds behind killer events. "Field marketing is a critical component of the customer experience revolution. They are the end-to-end creators of the programs that engage our target accounts in meaningful ways—all with their eyes steadfastly trained on the organization's business objectives."

By operating outside the box of just event people, field marketers can act as strategic business partners to sales teams, serving as a critical part of full life-cycle marketing. "We have the unique opportunity to sit in marketing, but live on the 'pipeline battlefield' with our sales

team," Radlowski says.

When it comes to delivering seamless customer experiences, Radlowski likes to share the analogy that each of these components should be a spoke in the field marketing flywheel: digital, email, webinars, third-party content syndication, events, through-partner marketing, incentive to meet campaigns through LinkedIn conversations, etc.

"Today's full stack marketer should also be able to think in terms of all these areas, and incorporate those components into their regional field marketing strategy or engage those on the broader marketing team that can advise and help," Radlowski says. "When I hire a field marketer, I'm looking for someone who can look at a region, dig into all the nuances, identify gaps and opportunities, then work crossfunctionally within the marketing team to build a marketing strategy."

### DATA AND THE NEW LANDSCAPE

To talk about the evolution of the role of field marketing, Rebekah McAdams believes the conversation should start with what field marketing is not, i.e., not just event planners. The VP and Global Field & Channel Marketing of New York Citybased security software platform Varonis says today's field marketers are not just task takers you can throw something over the wall to and expect them to do.

"Field marketers are strategic business partners to sales; they're goal-oriented revenue marketers, and also targeted and customer-centric minded," McAdams says. "The role of field marketing really did start at the event coordinator stage, which means it was pretty tactical and logistics focused. Then, as a field marketer, we were still event heavy, but we are more of a business partner to sales and much more goal-oriented and ROI focused. That means we wanted to make sure that any investment we were doing generated revenue for the business."

Today, McAdams says field marketers have evolved into full stack, revenue, marketing managers. Breaking down their roles shows they have strategies focused on goals, objectives and data, including

a combination of online and offline programs. "We must be true business advisors to sales and aligned with sales leadership. Most importantly, there must be a customer experience focused truly at the heart of everything field marketers do-and that should be data."

When it comes to digital communications to field marketers' customers, it is important to know that today is a digital era, which means people consume information very differently than they did years ago. That means being able to create a balanced mix. McAdams says this is where today's field marketers must have a close collaboration within the corporate marketing organization. "The first place people may go is your website. How do you want customers to understand what your company does and how you can solve their problems in an easy consumable way? It means being mobile friendly. If you can invest more then definitely do chatbot."

McAdams says digital targeting also can be done through digital ads on websites where your customers may consume information. Depending on who you are targeting in your account and persona base will drive the strategy of your digital tactics. And while email is alive and well, she advises being brief, relevant and valuebased.

"When it comes to events, we definitely still mix virtual and in-person engagements," McAdams says. "Virtual definitely helps you expand your reach outside of a certain local metropolitan type area. But when it comes to in-person interactions, those are definitely the strongest when it comes to networking and relationship-building for sales with their customers. Again, relevancy of the content and who you are targeting, no matter the medium of how you are engaging with your customers, is extremely important."

More than anything else, data remains at the heart of what field marketers need to be successful. Having the ability to purchase an intent type tool-6sense, demandbase, Zoominfo, etc.—will help provide better data insights for your marketing needs. "When you can look at what type of content your targets are engaging with,

what keywords they're searching, locationbased information that helps you refine down your strategy," McAdams says, "utilize this information to personalize your communications to the accounts and personas you're speaking to."

#### INTO THE FUTURE

While there is no crystal ball to help field marketers predict the future, Radlowski and McAdams both say the best course of action is to stay on top of the latest technology trends and be creative. In a time where it is easy to get stuck in the status quo and do the same thing over and over, the key is to always test and try new things.

"AI can be used to make our jobs easier in certain ways, to be more productive, creative, so don't be afraid to try it," McAdams says. "There is a lot of noise, so you have to stand out and that is done through research and personalization."

As the landscape of marketing continues to evolve, today's field marketers are proving their adaptability and resilience by embracing new strategies and technologies that can drive revenue in unprecedented ways. By blending digital tools with traditional face-to-face interactions, they are forging stronger connections with customers and delivering personalized experiences that resonate.



# Surfing the maze

#### How the Cybersecurity Marketing Society can help you

When you're built by cybersecurity marketers for cybersecurity marketers, there is no slack in what you get as a member of the Cybersecurity Marketing Society. In a space that has its share of complicated, ever-changing protocols, the group helps equip cybersecurity marketers with the best information, resources and connections to grow their career and succeed.

First introduced as a Slack channel by co-founders Gianna Whitver (now CEO) and Maria Velasquez (Director of Demand Generation for NetSPI), the group has grown into a network of like-minded professionals complete with its CyberMarketingCon events, surveys, job boards and the widely acclaimed podcast, "Breaking Through in Cybersecurity Marketing."

The private community of 2,000-plus cybersecurity marketers—and growing facilitates networking, skills growth, mentorship, opportunities and knowledge among its members. Its evolution has been a vital asset for marketers seeking advice, direction and mentorship.

For more information, visit cybersecuritymarketingsociety.com.



BY AUTOMATING REPETITIVE TASKS, WE FREE UP OUR TEAM TO FOCUS ON STRATEGIC, HIGH-IMPACT WORK. THIS BOOSTS PRODUCTIVITY AND ENSURES WE'RE MAKING THE MOST OF OUR RESOURCES."

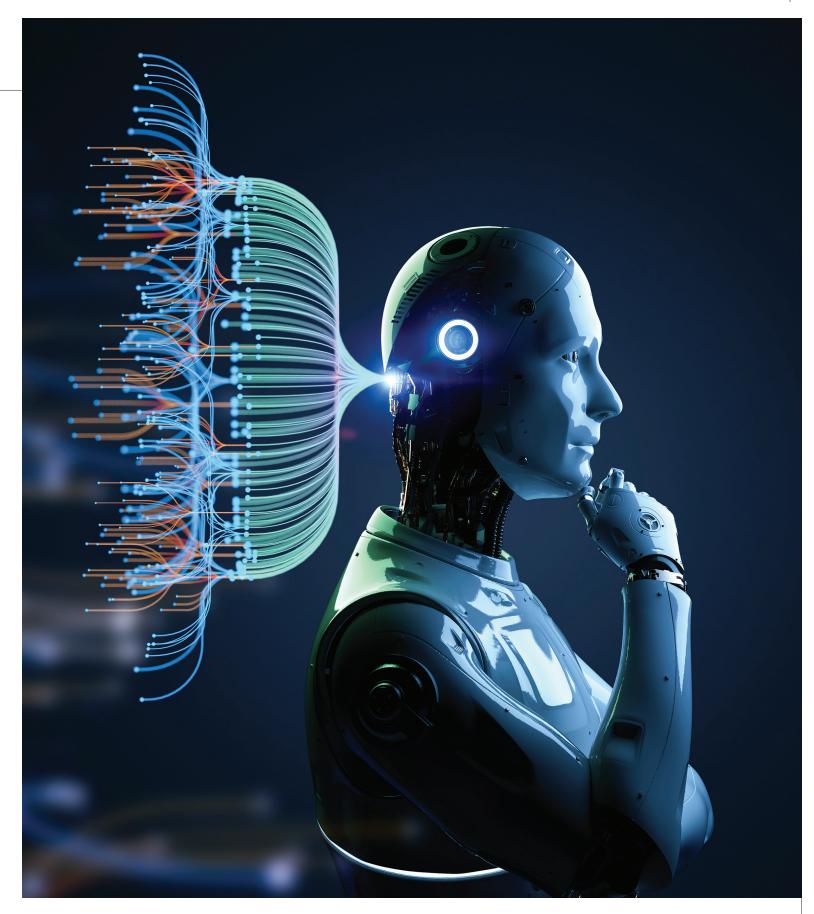
- TIM HILLISON,

Founder & CMO, Entry Point 1

few years ago, Yevhenii Tymoshenko helped organize a photo exhibition at the PhotoPlus Expo in New York City (which today is the Create NYC in Brooklyn). In Tymoshenko's recollection of the experience, the event involved a slew of details that had to be taken into account. To help lessen the load,

THE NEW AGE OF INTEGRATING AUTOMATION, AI AND STOREFRONT TECHNOLOGY

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she opted for an event management software with Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities. The tools helped Tymoshenko and her team track everything in real time, automating tasks like sending out followup emails, analyzing attendee behavior, etc.

"The technology was revolutionary for us," says Tymoshenko, who today is

CMO for Skylum, a software development company known for its photo editing software. "By tapping into technology, we were able to ensure smooth operations, as

well as help us engage with our audience more effectively."

Today, Tymoshenko continues to lean on automation to help keep her supply chain process running smoothly and efficiently, as well as to personalize its marketing strategies. "The key is to connect with the right audience at the right time with the right message. This helps make our campaigns more effective and has boosted customer engagement."

If you take a deep dive into the new age of automation in event supply chain marketing, you will find that cutting-edge technologies are reshaping the industry in profound ways. From streamlining processes to reducing waste and optimizing inventory management, these continual advancements are not only driving efficiency, but also helping take the customer experience to new heights.

When Josh Lamerton was looking for ways to further empower the real estate professionals his company, PropTexx, works with to streamline their perspectives on property listings, he incorporated the power of automation and AI into the process. The company continues to use technology to leverage advanced machine learning algorithms that offer personalized home customization options directly to its clients' websites.

"This level of automation means users can interact with listings more dynamically, leading to higher engagement without requiring manual input," says Lamerton, who co-founded the company in 2020. "For example, when a user specifies their preferences, it automatically generates tailored visualizations and suggestions, transforming the browsing experience and reducing the workload on our clients."

By embracing the power of automation and AI, PropTexx has significantly optimized its marketing supply chain by automating user engagement and lead capture processes. The automation has led to measurable improvements in several areas: increased lead conversion rates, reduced manual workloads and enhanced data utilization.

"By offering personalized experiences and immediate visual feedback, we've

BY OFFERING PERSONALIZED EXPERIENCES AND IMMEDIATE VISUAL FEEDBACK, WE'VE OBSERVED A 35% INCREASE IN LEAD CONVERSION RATES ACROSS CLIENT WEBSITES."

— JOSH LAMERTON, Co-founder, PropTexx

observed a 35% increase in lead conversion rates across client websites." Lamerton says. "[They] report a 50% reduction in time spent manually following up with potential leads, as the AI handles much of the initial engagement. And our AI analytics provide real-time insights into user preferences and behaviors, allowing for more strategic marketing decisions. This has led to a 25% improvement in campaign targeting accuracy."

#### WHAT'S IN STORE... AND MORE

When Lamerton looks into what the future holds in today's ever-evolving technological landscape, he sees a path into immersive technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR). Both, he believes, will play a crucial role in revolutionizing the marketing supply chain. "We're currently exploring the integration of AR/VR capabilities into our process—one that would allow users to take virtual tours directly from their devices. This advancement will further personalize the experience and provide even more value."

Additionally, the PropTexx team is investing in AI-driven content generation and conversational AI to provide real-time assistance and recommendations, ensuring that its clients stay ahead in a rapidly changing market. "Our commitment to innovation ensures that we remain at the forefront of these developments, continually enhancing the PropTexx platform to meet the future needs of the real estate industry," Lamerton says.

In his work on marketing initiatives for world-renowned brands like Visa, Microsoft and PayPal, Tim Hillison has had a front-row seat for how innovation can revolutionize the supply chain process. As founder and CMO of the growth

advisory consultancy Entry Point 1, he has successfully launched over \$1 billion in products and campaigns and has spearheaded global go-to-market strategies around the world.

While Entry Point 1 does not manage physical inventory, the technology it uses has been instrumental in helping reduce waste and improve efficiency, especially in managing its resources and delivering results for its clients. "While we don't deal with physical inventory, we treat our marketing assets, time and effort as valuable inventory that requires careful management," Hillison says. "AI and automation help us streamline processes, cutting down on wasted time and effort. By automating repetitive tasks, we free up our team to focus on strategic, high-impact work. This boosts productivity and ensures we're making the most of our resources."

The company also combines intent and signals-based data with predictive analytics to anticipate demand for specific strategies. By analyzing trends, customer behavior and real-time signals. Hillison and his team can forecast which approaches will be most effective, allowing them to allocate resources where they'll have the greatest impact.

"This approach shows how we combine technology with expertise to transform the customer experience at every stage of the marketing supply chain," Hillison says. "We focus on helping our clients understand their future customers and make smarter marketing investments. Marketing is a social science, so we start with a solid understanding of our clients' ideal customer profiles (ICP), shifting buying behaviors and the competitive landscape. This helps us create differentiation that truly connects with both their products and buyers."

#### **Talking with • HIVE Interactive's Mitch Mitchem**







n a time when many professionals are working double time to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) and human-centric experiences, Mitch Mitchem is one of those who has figured it out. The visionary CEO of HIVE Interactive's career began on the entertainment side, where he helped lay the foundation for his deep understanding of human engagement.

After learning to master the art of learning and development on stages and in leadership sessions around the world, Mitchem is now a global keynote speaker, author and disruptive thought leader committed to redefining human connectivity in the AI era through all that HIVE Interactive offers. That means rekindling the passion and drive that make us uniquely human while harnessing AI's incredible

potential to elevate our lives.

His view on navigating today's rapidly evolving landscape can be found in his acclaimed TED talk, which delves into the impact of overcustomized technology on human culture.

Here's his take on today's ever-changing event landscape.

#### What trends are you seeing in the in-person events landscape? How can event professionals stay ahead of the curve?

We are noticing a significant shift toward face-to-face, interactive and more authentic human experiences. For example, in our AI keynotes, we demonstrate how AI can play a supportive role in enhancing human interactions by automating background processes like event scheduling or audience polling, which frees up more time for genuine, face-to-face engagement.

Event professionals should focus less on flashy tech and more on fostering human-centric experiences, using AI as a tool to enhance these moments rather than detract from them.

#### With the increasing popularity of virtual components in events, how can in-person event organizers create compelling experiences that stand out?

We're actually seeing virtual components fade in popularity, with attendees craving more real, analog experiences. For example, at "The BUSTED Show," we encourage the audience to put away their phones and engage with the live performance and one another. This creates an interactive and immersive environment where people are truly part of the show, not just passive viewers.

Event organizers should focus on creating experiences like this, where people are fully present and participating in the moment, rather than relying on virtual elements that may dilute the in-person experience.

#### What are the key factors to consider when planning hybrid events to ensure both in-person and virtual attendees feel equally engaged?

We are seeing a strong shift away from virtual events, and as such, our focus is on in-person experiences. For example, in our "In-Person Presentation Skills and Sales Training" events, we emphasize the importance of direct human connection. These sessions train participants on how to engage their audience authentically, read the room and adjust in real timeskills that are difficult to replicate in a virtual environment. The trend is toward full, in-person engagement where people can truly connect on a human level.

#### How can technology be best integrated into live events to improve attendee experience and streamline event management processes?

In our "AI Unleashed" workshops, we demonstrate how AI can be seamlessly integrated into live events to enhance the attendee experience while keeping the focus on human engagement. AI can personalize experiences, offer realtime feedback, or help with event flow, but it's always in the background, enhancing rather than replacing human interaction.

For example, we use AI to streamline check-ins and tailor event content to individual attendees, which creates a smooth experience that feels personal, without detracting from the human connections happening in the room.

#### In a digital-first world, why do you believe in-person events remain an essential tool for building strong professional relationships?

Our work with AI and events shows that while digital tools are powerful, they are no substitute for in-person connections. For example, our research highlights that Gen Z and other demographics are moving away from tech-heavy interactions, preferring more face-to-face engagements.

Through our experience in running AI-driven events, we've seen firsthand how AI can help facilitate these interactions without overshadowing them. By automating routine tasks, AI frees up time for more meaningful in-person interactions, allowing attendees to build stronger, deeper professional relationships.



#### How Almaden is making a difference in today's fast-paced trade show world

Consistency. Quality. Timely delivery. In today's fast-paced landscape, finding the right marketing supply chain provider is crucial. We asked Michelle Radlowski, Senior Director, AMS & EMEA Regional Marketing and ABM, Digicert, and Rebekah McAdams, VP, Global Field & Channel Marketing at Varonis, to share how their relationship with Almaden works.

#### Describe your relationships with Almaden.

Michelle Radlowski: I have worked with Almaden for around seven years with two different companies. Thanks to their capabilities and service, I have a trusted vendor that can do everything from ordering basic giveaways to a full branded campaign and fulfillment. They have also leaned in on any ideas I have brought to

Rebekah McAdams: We conducted a lengthy RFP process for the right vendor to host our external brand store for customers and our internal marketing team. After some frustration with vendors we were evaluating, we were recommended to Almaden. The rest, as they say, is history.

#### What have been some of the specific challenges you've tackled since partnering with Almaden?

Radlowski: We were working with another vendor on handwritten notes with every order we placed, but the lead time and

cost became long and costly. When I brought this challenge to Almaden, they added a custom note card in our portal so that marketing and sales could add a personalized note in the shipment. There have been a number of last minute needs where they helped pull us through, whether it was printing more books at the last minute, getting giveaways to an event or handling special reporting needs on online store orders.

McAdams: Quality of service and items were the biggest challenge we faced with our previous vendor. There was a lack of consistency in branded items produced to a point that each month we had to request production credit. We couldn't always count on the items getting to events. With Almaden, we're able to have multiple departments' promotional items housed in distinct sections. As such, we're able to be more consistent with our brand across multiple departments and functions.

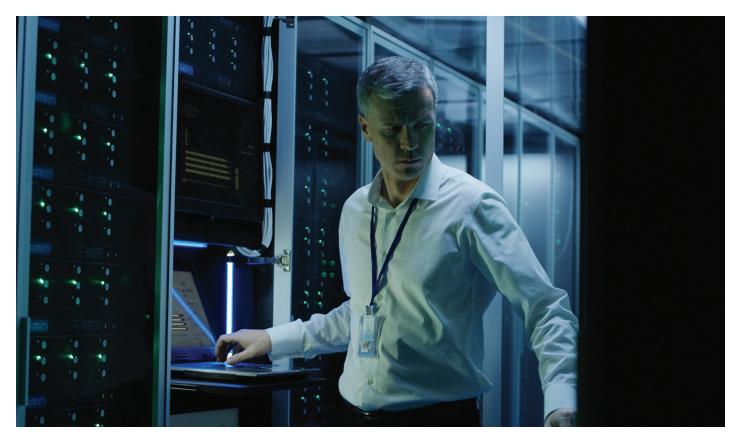
#### How have Almaden-assisted projects and campaigns been received from your end-users?

Radlowski: Almaden also has done some great price matching for us. There were hesitations from some internal team members because they were working with other vendors, so when we gave the opportunity to Almaden, they came in at or under most of the time. The only difference is printing, where if it's a small job, it's easier and more cost effective to just print locally. With any more complex jobs like booklets or multi-page binding projects, it's better to go through Almaden.

McAdams: We've definitely had more compliments by our sales team on promotional product quality and design since moving to Almaden. When there are shipping issues, Almaden is quick to address. When looking for new or seasonal items, we are provided with incredible look-books filled with options for every cost tier to fit our needs.

#### integrate

# Stats Events



## **Full Plate**

#### CYBERSECURITY MARKETERS FACE MYRIAD ISSUES

#### NISING CYBERCRIME COSTS

The global cost of cybercrime is projected to reach \$10.5 trillion annually by 2025, emphasizing the importance of robust cybersecurity measures. This sharp rise in cybercrime costs reflects the increasing frequency and complexity of cyberattacks.

#### **NANSOMWARE THREATS**

In 2023, 72.7% of organizations globally reported being targeted by ransomware, with the average ransom payout more than doubling from the previous year. This has made ransomware one of the top concerns for security professionals, underscoring the need for effective cybersecurity solutions.

#### AI'S ROLE IN CYBERSECURITY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a double-edged sword in cybersecurity. While it enhances threat detection and response capabilities, it also enables more sophisticated cyberattacks, such as AI-driven phishing and ransomware campaigns. Organizations

must balance the benefits of AI with the risks it introduces.

#### **TALENT SHORTAGE**

The cybersecurity industry faces a significant talent gap. There were over 660,000 cybersecurity-related job openings in the U.S. alone in 2023. This shortage exacerbates the challenges organizations face in securing their digital assets.

SOURCE: COBALT: OFFENSIVE SECURITY SERVICES

# **Going Live**

#### **EVENTS CONTINUE RAPID GROWTH**

- Industry Growth: The global event management industry is projected to reach a value of over \$1 trillion by 2028, with a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.5% from 2023 to 2028. This growth is driven by the increasing demand for corporate events, conferences, and advancements in event technology.
- **Hybrid Events:** Hybrid events, which combine in-person and virtual elements, are becoming increasingly popular. Approximately 67% of event organizers
- believe that hybrid events are the future of the industry, with 89% of organizers using attendee satisfaction as a key performance indicator (KPI) for these events.
- **Virtual Events:** Despite the resurgence of in-person events, 93% of event marketers plan to continue investing in virtual events, with 72% acknowledging the pivotal role of virtual event technology in shaping their event strategies.
- **Budget Allocation:** Nearly 48% of

- surveyed marketers allocate 21% of their marketing budget to in-person events, highlighting the ongoing importance of face-to-face interactions in driving business outcomes.
- **Sustainability Focus:** The event industry is increasingly prioritizing sustainability, with 67% of event professionals noting that hybrid events, which reduce travel and waste, are crucial for future event strategies.

SOURCE: EVENT BOOKING



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