Delivering the delegate experience

Maximising the number of delegates attending a conference or convention is an objective both centres and their clients can heartily agree on.

To a centre, more delegates means more local spending, which drives the economic impact their government owners, typically, are looking for. To the client, more delegates mean more revenue, and as many meetings these days are a principle source of revenue for their respective organisations, good attendance is often not just a "nice to have" but a matter of economic survival.

However, good attendance is increasingly not just about good event promotion. Today's convention delegate is increasingly an experienced and sophisticated traveller with limited time and high expectations. Attracting them to a congress or similar event requires that the organiser and their suppliers deliver an experience that is both rewarding and enjoyable, and this, in turn, means a coordinated effort.

Which raises the questions of what makes for a good event experience, and how can all parties work together to deliver it?

One of the most obvious answers is programme content. In order to justify investing the time required to attend a convention, delegates have to feel that they will take away information and insights that they would not otherwise get, at least to the same degree.

This creates a real challenge for event organisers, as so much information is now available through sources like the Internet that there's little specific...