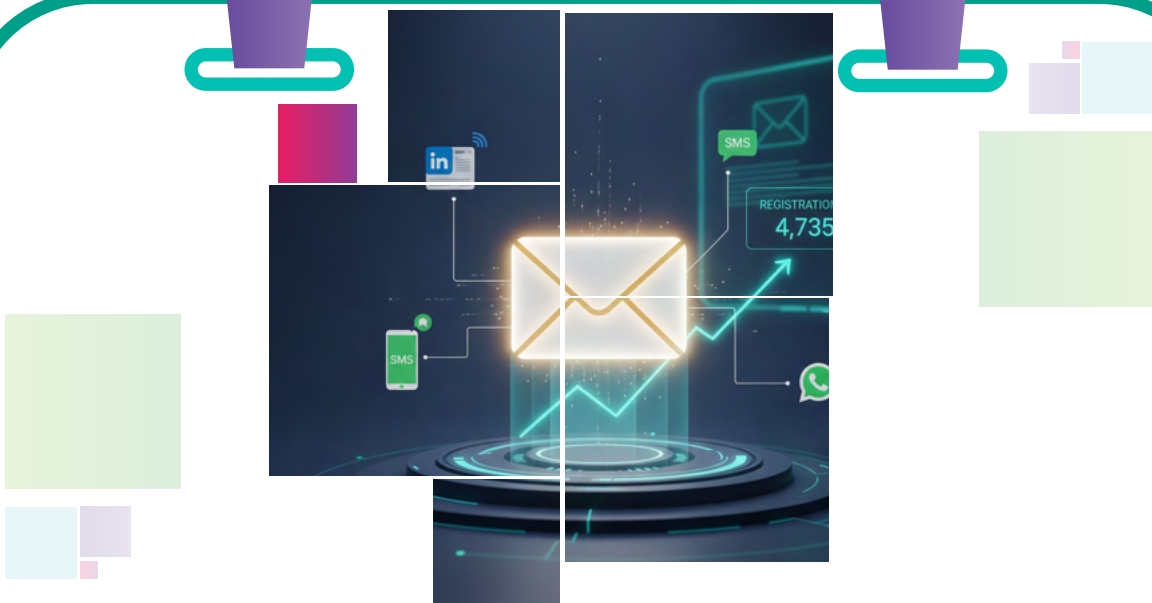




Don't Let Them Drop Off: Email Secrets for Packed Events



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Event marketing has more channels than ever before — LinkedIn ads, SMS reminders, WhatsApp nudges. All of them play a role. But when it comes to actually converting interest into registrations, email remains the strongest driver.

Why? Because an email:

- ➔ Reaches people directly in their inbox, where business decisions happen.
- ➔ Is cost-effective compared to paid ads.
- ➔ Allows precise segmentation and personalization
- ➔ Works in sequences, not just one-off touches, thus building momentum toward registration.
- ➔ Let's you customize offers; you control the design and decide when it reaches the inbox.

This guide shows how to structure your email program, track performance, and optimize step by step so emails keep filling seats.

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Step 1: Set Clear Success Metrics

Before you launch your email campaign, you must be clear about what you're measuring. Success isn't about vanity metrics like open rate alone. It's about registrations. Setting the right goals upfront ensures you focus on the outcomes that matter.

Primary goal:

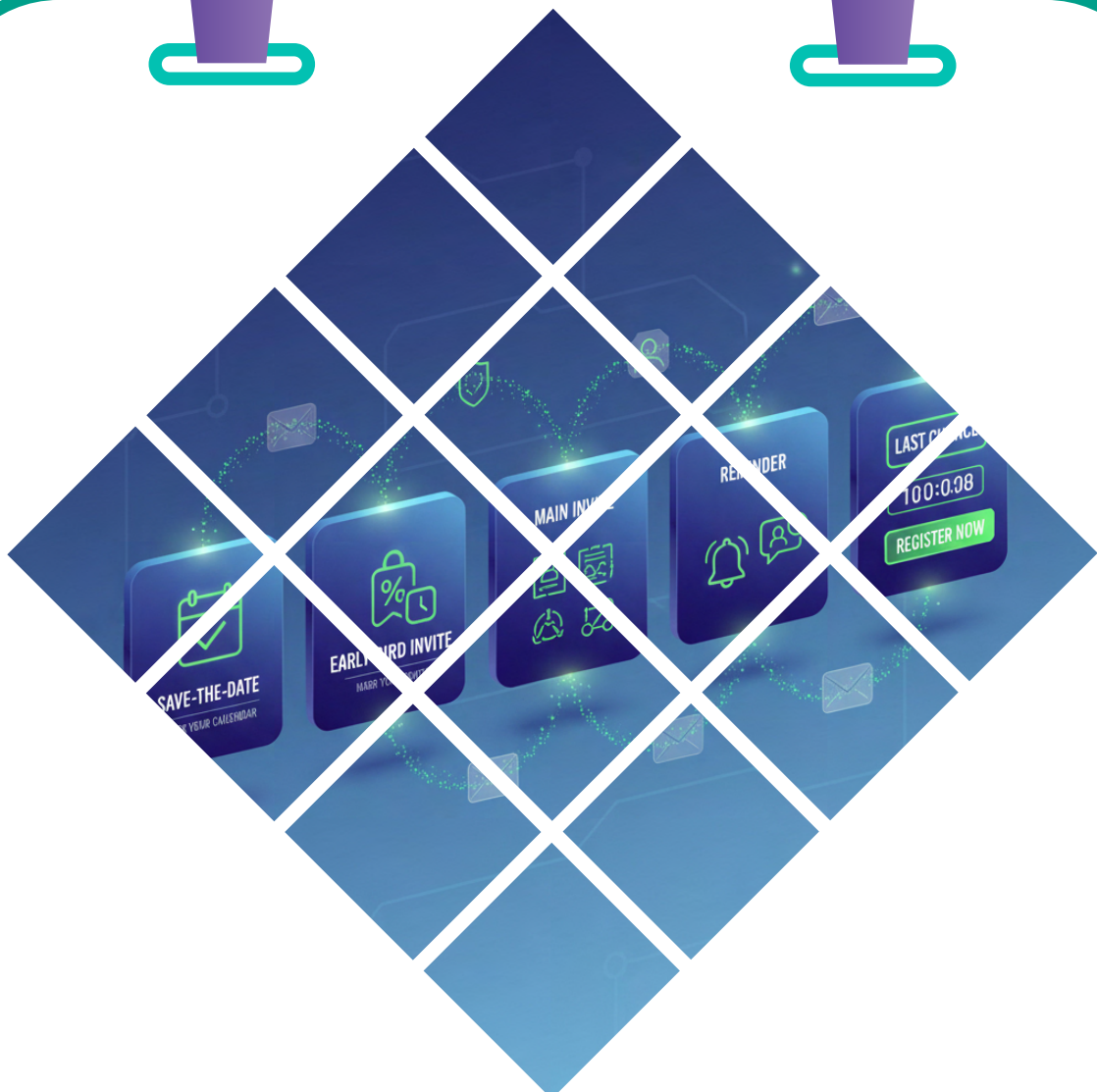
Event registrations (conversions).

Secondary goals:

- ➔ Opens → Subject line effectiveness.
- ➔ Clicks & CTA engagement → Content strength
- ➔ Time to convert → How long does it take someone to register after first touch?
- ➔ Multi-email attribution → Which sends contribute most to registrations?

Advanced:

Segment analysis (job title, industry, geography) → Which groups respond best?



Step 2: Design the Email Journey

Now that you've set your goals, it's time to set up the email journey. Mapping the flow helps you plan how to build awareness, nurture interest, and push for conversion at the right time

Below are the key email types in a standard registration cadence — each with a short introduction explaining its role and tips to reduce drop-offs and drive results.

Invitation Series

Save-the-date:

This is your first touchpoint. The goal is not registration yet, but awareness, getting people to mark their calendars and start thinking about your event. Done right, it builds early commitment and makes later invites more effective.

Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Keep the message extremely clear: event name, dates, venue, city.
- ➔ Use a subject line that sparks curiosity but stays direct.
- ➔ Always include a calendar link to lock in the date.
- ➔ Tease one highlight (theme, headline speaker, or benefit).
- ➔ Avoid multiple CTAs. One soft action is enough, such as Add to Calendar (link to the .ics file or event page). This is the single most effective way to reduce early-stage drop-offs, since the event now lives directly in their schedule.

Early bird invite

This is the first “ask” email. It rewards early decision-makers with a discount or bonus while creating urgency for everyone else. A strong early bird offer pulls registrations forward and reduces last-minute drop-offs.

Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Lead with the exact discount or offer. Don't bury it.
- ➔ Include a clear deadline with date and time.
- ➔ Reinforce what they lose if they wait (higher price, missed perks).
- ➔ Add urgency visuals like countdown timers.
- ➔ Keep the CTA bold and singular: *Register Now*.

Main invite

The main invite is the centerpiece of your journey. Its job is to showcase the event's core value: the agenda, the speakers, and the networking opportunities. If it doesn't feel compelling, many prospects will drop off here

Tips & Tricks:

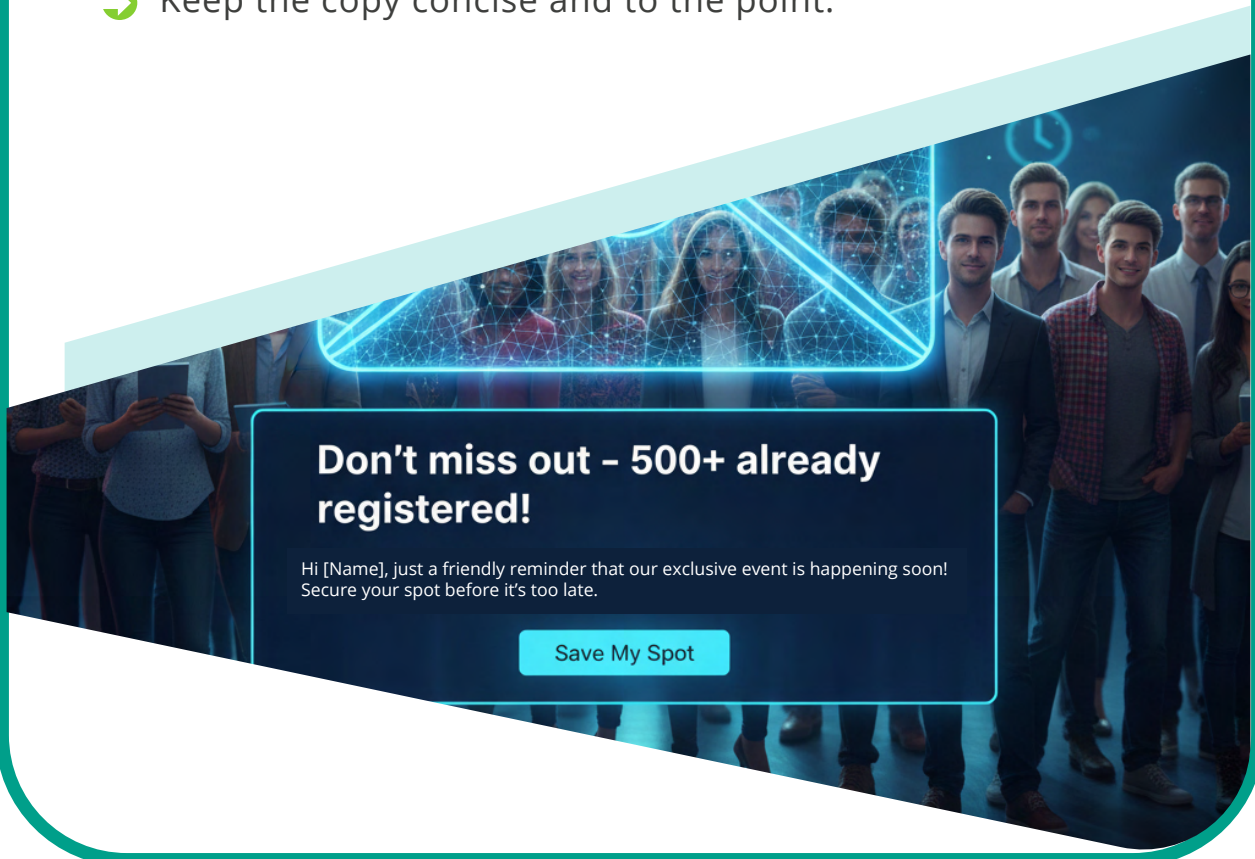
- ➔ Lead with a strong value proposition, not generic language.
- ➔ Highlight 3-4 key benefits in a scannable format.
- ➔ Balance visuals and text. Don't bury the CTA.
- ➔ Personalize content when possible by role, track, or interest.
- ➔ Repeat the CTA at both the top and bottom.

Reminder

Reminders are for the people who showed interest but didn't commit. They keep the event top of mind and counteract procrastination. This is often where social proof can tip the balance.

Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Use subject lines that acknowledge hesitation.
- ➔ Add proof points like "500+ attendees already registered."
- ➔ Frame the email as a friendly nudge, not pressure.
- ➔ Offer a fresh angle (e.g., a new speaker, session, or stat).
- ➔ Keep the copy concise and to the point.



Last chance

This is the closer. Its job is pure urgency: push fence-sitters to act before the door closes. It often ends up being the single highest-converting email in the series

Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Make the deadline obvious in subject, body, and CTA
- ➔ Keep copy short and sharp. Urgency works best with simplicity.
- ➔ Reinforce the top benefit so urgency doesn't feel hollow.
- ➔ Strip the design down to one bold CTA.
- ➔ Use urgency language sparingly but clearly ("final hours," "closes tonight").





Nurture & Engagement Series

Agenda reveal

This email fuels interest by showing what attendees will actually experience. Instead of overwhelming readers with every detail, it should highlight the most exciting sessions and themes.

Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Feature 2–3 standout sessions, not the entire agenda.
- ➔ Link to a clean agenda page for full details.
- ➔ Frame sessions around outcomes, not just titles
- ➔ Use personalization if possible (tracks relevant to their role).
- ➔ Encourage them to start “planning their day” at the event.

Speaker announcements

Speakers lend credibility and excitement. These emails should highlight the authority of the person and why their session is unmissable. When spread across multiple sends, they also build anticipation.

Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Announce one major speaker per email for focus.
- ➔ Include name, title, company, and topic
- ➔ Tie the session back to attendee goals (“what you’ll learn”).
- ➔ Place the CTA near the speaker highlight.
- ➔ Tease that more announcements are coming soon.

Networking/partner highlights

These emails shift the focus from content to connections. By showing who else will be there — peers, partners, sponsors — you increase perceived ROI and reduce hesitation.

Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Quantify the value (e.g., “1,000+ peers, 50+ exhibitors”).
- ➔ Showcase big-name sponsors or companies attending.
- ➔ Highlight tools like apps or matchmaking features.
- ➔ Position networking as a career or business opportunity
- ➔ Use FOMO by showing the scale of connections missed if they don’t register.

Logistics

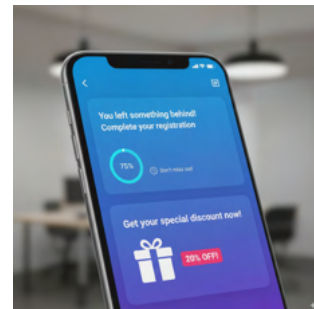
Logistics emails are practical. They reduce uncertainty and smooth the path to attendance. Clarity prevents last-minute drop-offs from confusion or friction.

Tips & Tricks:

- Present info in a scannable way: icons or bullets.
- Include direct links for hotels, travel, and app downloads.
- Highlight discounts or codes that make booking easier.
- Address common pain points (visa, directions, parking).
- Reassure attendees with support contacts or FAQs.



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Follow-Up Series

Abandoned registration

This is a recovery email for people who started the process but didn't finish. It is often the most valuable follow-up because it reduces lost revenue by removing friction and hesitation.

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Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Keep the tone helpful, not pushy (“Looks like you didn’t finish...”).
- ➔ Provide a direct link that resumes the form where they left off.
- ➔ Reassure them with payment security or refund policies.
- ➔ Add urgency lightly (“Secure your spot today”).
- ➔ Limit distractions — focus only on finishing registration.

Incentives

Incentive emails are a last push for fence-sitters. They offer something extra — discounts, promos, or guest passes — to nudge people over the line.

Tips & Tricks:

- ➔ Make the offer crystal clear and easy to redeem.
- ➔ Use a strict deadline to encourage immediate action
- ➔ Position it as a bonus, not desperation.
- ➔ Keep the copy tight: focus on the value of the incentive.
- ➔ Test different incentives (discount vs group pass vs referral) for impact.

Step 3: Track Every Email

Once you've planned your flow, the next step is knowing what's actually working. Tracking ensures you can measure the effectiveness of each email and identify where improvements are needed. Without it, you risk celebrating clicks without knowing whether registrations followed.

Here's how to effectively track the complete journey:

- ➔ Use UTM tags in your automation system (HubSpot, Marketo, Brevo, etc.).

Example:

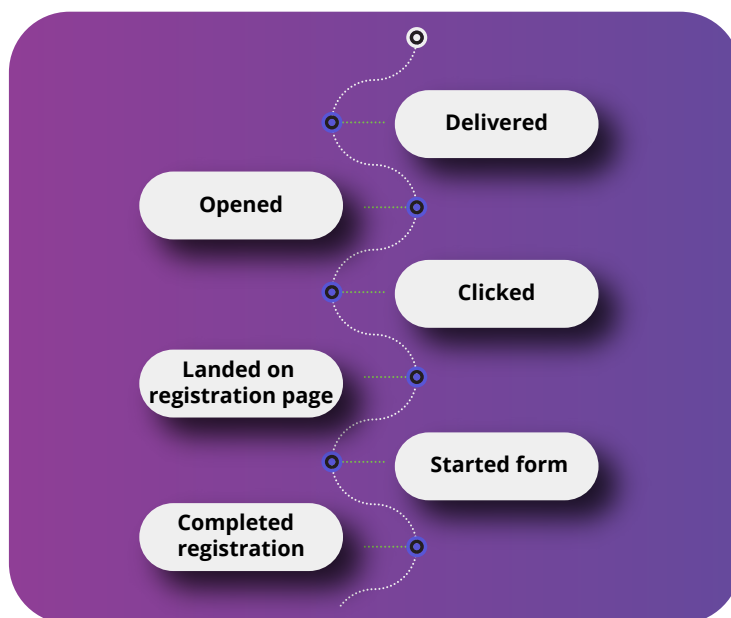
`utm_campaign=event_invite&utm_content=speaker_announcement`

- ➔ At each stage, watch these signals
 - **Open Rate** → Is the subject line compelling?
 - **Click-to-Open Rate (CTOR)** → Does the content lead people to action?
 - **Click-Through Rate (CTR)** → How effective is the CTA itself?
 - **Conversion Rate** → How many registrations are completed from that email?

Step 4: Build a Funnel View

Every email is part of a funnel, and each stage provides clues about where you're winning or losing prospects. By looking at the journey as a whole, you can spot weak points and fix them before they cost you attendees.

Here's what a typical event registration funnel should look like



What to look for:

- ➔ **Low opens:** subject line issue.
- ➔ **High clicks but low registrations:** landing page mismatch
- ➔ **Drop-offs at the form:** too many fields, poor mobile design.

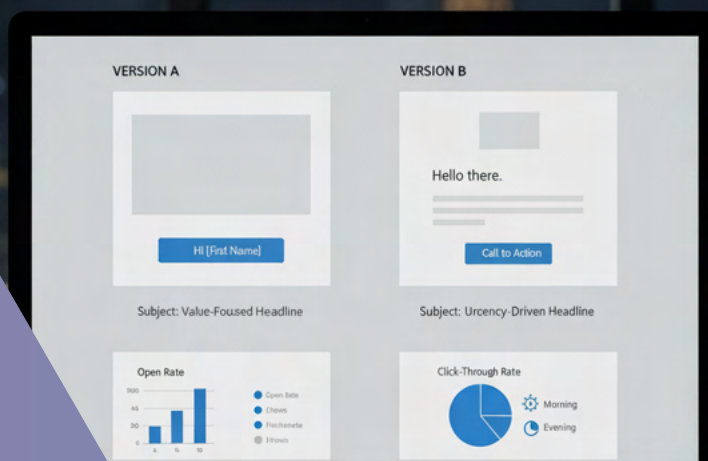
Each leak tells you what to fix next.

Step 5: Test and Learn with A/B

Improvement doesn't come from guesswork. It comes from testing. A/B testing lets you isolate what works best, from subject lines to send times, and apply those learnings across your campaigns.

What to look for:

- ➔ Subject lines (value-driven vs. urgency-driven).
- ➔ CTA placement (above the fold vs. end of email).
- ➔ Design (image-heavy vs. text-focused).
- ➔ Send time (morning vs. evening, weekday vs. weekend).
- ➔ Personalization (with name/company vs. generic).



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Step 6: Evaluate the Flow, Not Just the Email

It's tempting to judge each email on its own, but most registrations come after multiple touches. Looking at the flow helps you see how emails work together, and which ones are critical for conversion.

Once you have the testing data, analyze the flow and ask yourself the following questions:

- ➔ Did most people register after the main invite, or only after the reminder?
- ➔ What percentage only converted after the "last chance" email?
- ➔ How many touches does it typically take before someone registers?

Note: Often, urgency and repetition drive the bulk of registrations.

Step 7: Equip Yourself with the Right Tools

The right tools make it easier to track, analyze, and optimize your emails. You don't need a huge stack, but having the basics in place ensures you can connect activity in the inbox to registrations on your platform.

- ➔ **Marketing automation:** Tools like HubSpot, Brevo, and Marketo help you manage journeys and reporting
- ➔ **Google Analytics (GA4):** Track UTMs and conversions.
- ➔ **Event registration platform:** Connect registrations back to email campaigns.
- ➔ **Dashboards:** Solutions Looker, Power BI, and Tableau help visualize performance over time.

Tip: Start with automation + UTMs + registration data, then layer in dashboards as you grow.



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Step 8: Translate Data into Insights

When everything is tracked and connected, the value of email becomes clear. Instead of vanity metrics, you'll get actionable insights that shape future campaigns.

- ➔ Which types of emails (invite, agenda, speaker, reminder) drive the most registrations.
- ➔ Which subject lines and themes resonate best.
- ➔ How different segments behave (role, industry, geography).
- ➔ The average number of touches needed before conversion.
- ➔ Exactly where people drop off in the funnel.

These are the levers that turn email from “sending messages” into a registration engine.

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How to Avoid Drop-Offs (Stage by Stage)

Even great email journeys leak. Use this checklist by funnel stage to patch the biggest holes, balancing technical fixes for deliverability/measurement with creative tactics that keep people excited and moving forward.

1. Save-the-Date / Awareness

Technical:

- ➔ Authenticate your domain (SPF, DKIM, DMARC) to stay out of spam.
- ➔ Warm up new domains/IPs before sending out big email blasts
- ➔ Segment early (geo, industry, role) to protect sender reputation and reduce unsubscribes.

Creative

- ➔ Keep it short and visual—hero date/time/location with a clean banner.
- ➔ One soft CTA only: Add to Calendar (.ics link) to create early commitment.
- ➔ Light personalization by segment (e.g., “What’s new in event tech for [Region/Industry]”).

2.Invitation / Registration

Technical:

- ➔ A/B test subject lines (benefit vs. curiosity) and measure registrations, not just opens.
- ➔ Design mobile-first; 60–70% of opens are on phones (big tap targets, short paragraphs).
- ➔ Balance images and text (avoid image-only emails) to pass spam checks and improve load time.

Creative

- ➔ Lead with urgency: Early bird deadline or limited seats (with a real date/number).
- ➔ Spotlight 1–2 reasons to attend (keynote + top session or networking ROI).
- ➔ Use progressive storytelling across sends (announcement → keynote reveal → networking highlight).

3. Confirmation & Pre-Event Nurture

Technical:

- ➔ Send confirmations as **transactional** emails (separate stream) for higher deliverability.
- ➔ Attach an **.ics calendar** invite and include order/ticket details to reduce confusion.
- ➔ Track key actions (app download, profile completion) with tagged links for follow-up.

Creative

- ➔ Onboard, don't just confirm: "You're in—here's what to expect next."
- ➔ Seed micro-engagements (download the app, join the community, pick sessions)
- ➔ Humanize with a short video/GIF from the team or a speaker, "see you there."

4. Reminders (1-2 weeks & 1-2 days before)

Technical:

- ➔ Set frequency caps; avoid stacking multiple reminders in short windows.
- ➔ Re-send to non-openers with a fresh subject line and slightly tweaked preview text..
- ➔ Test send times by audience (morning vs. lunch vs. early evening).

Creative:

- ➔ Lean into immediacy: "Happening in 3 days—don't miss it."
- ➔ Add location-help content: venue map, transit/parking tips, nearby "top 3."
- ➔ Tease a speaker quote, teaser slide, or on-site perk to rekindle excitement.

5. Onsite / Live

Technical:

- ➔ Use SMS as a fallback for last-minute reminders or entry passes (with consent).
- ➔ Leverage app push for real-time schedules and room changes (bypasses inbox)
- ➔ Ensure QR/barcode check-in works offline to avoid connectivity drop-offs at doors.

Creative:

- ➔ Make check-in feel premium: fast lanes, clear signage, "scan & go."
- ➔ Share timely nudges: "Keynote in 10 minutes," "Expo happy hour at 5pm."
- ➔ Gamify participation (scan to win, passport stamps) to keep momentum high.

6) Post-Event Follow-Up

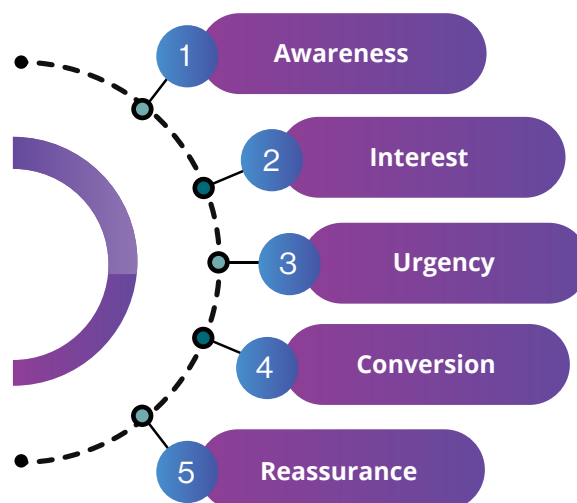
Technical:

- ➔ Segment attendees vs. no-shows; tailor links and offers accordingly
- ➔ Send within 48 hours while intent and memory are fresh.
- ➔ Tag links to recordings/slides with UTMs to inform next-season content and remarketing.

Creative:

- ➔ Personalize the thank-you (reference sessions attended or scans if available).
- ➔ Drip value (recordings, slides, whitepapers) instead of one heavy dump.
- ➔ Add a short survey with a meaningful incentive or early access to next event pricing.

Together, these emails form your event's email journey:





Spotlight: Nike Experiences

Nike's Experiences hub is a great example of how to run event emails the right way. Their cadence reflects many of the best practices outlined in this guide:

- ➔ **Save-the-Date & Awareness:** Clean visuals, bold headlines, and "Add to Calendar" CTAs lock in early commitment.
- ➔ **Invites:** Each email is focused, often spotlighting one activity (run club, training, launch event) with urgency and benefit-driven copy.

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- ➔ **Reminders:** They segment carefully — members get personalized nudges, while broader audiences see high-energy “don’t miss it” messa
- ➔ **Logistics:** Nike makes practical info (location, timing, registration) effortless with one-tap buttons and maps
- ➔ **Post-Event:** Follow-ups double as community-building, highlighting photos, content, or sign-ups for the next session.

Nike shows that when your email program mirrors the event funnel — awareness → invitation → reminder → logistics → follow-up — drop-offs shrink, and engagement keeps compounding.



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Email is still the strongest channel for driving event registrations — but only if it's managed as a structured journey, not a scatter of campaigns.

By setting clear success metrics, designing the right flows, tracking every step, building a funnel view, testing systematically, and translating data into insights, you'll know exactly what's working and where to improve.

At fielddrive, we've seen firsthand how important it is to fine-tune the email flow, to connect the full journey, from the first invite email to the moment an attendee checks in onsite. Email is where that journey begins. Done well, it ensures every onsite experience has the audience it deserves.

For more helpful guides and tips, check out [fielddrive Onsite Academy](#) — our in-depth resource repository for all things events!



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