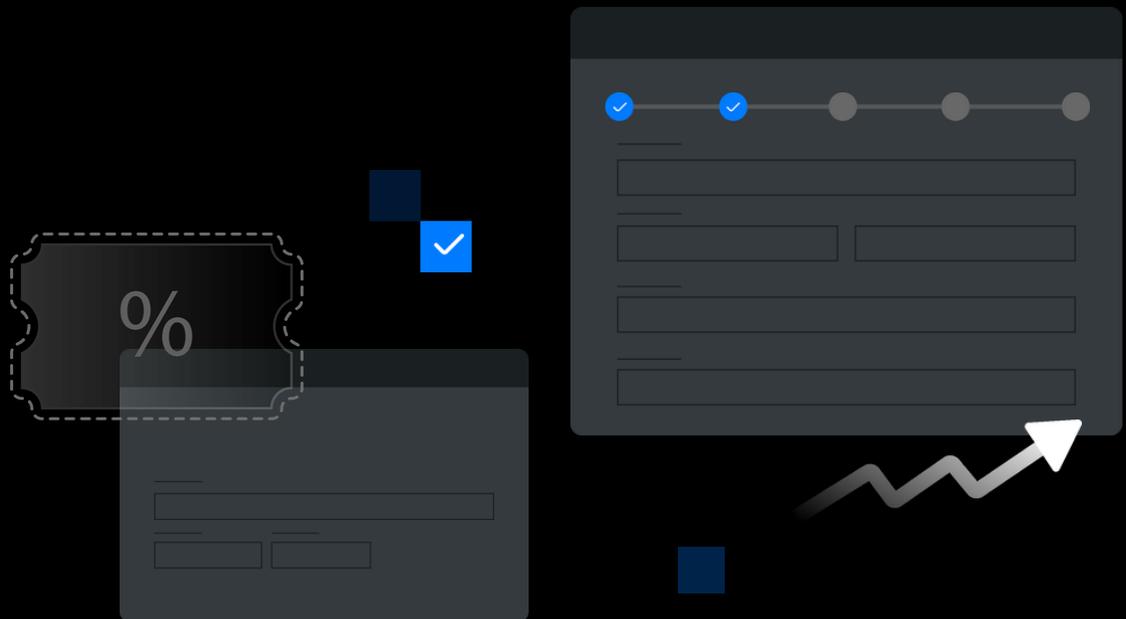


# Custom Forms Don't Reduce Registration Completion, but Promo Codes Correlate with Lower Rates

*Data-backed benchmarks from real-world events*



# Executive Summary



This report examines how two common registration features relate to registration completion rates: custom forms (additional questions added to the registration flow) and promo codes. The analysis is based on aggregated data from live events over a two-year observation window.

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## KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- Custom forms do not reduce registration completion. Events with custom forms achieve a median completion rate of ~91%, compared to ~89% for events without. This gap holds across the distribution and across question counts.
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- Question count is not predictive of lower completion. Events with 21+ custom form questions achieve 90%+ completion at a higher rate (64%) than events with 1-2 questions (49%). This likely reflects selection effects rather than a causal benefit of longer forms.
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- Events with promo codes configured show a median completion rate of ~85%, compared to ~94% for events without. However, promo-configured events are structurally different: they offer 6x more ticket types and attract 2.5x more registrants, indicating that the gap is driven by event complexity rather than the promo code field itself.
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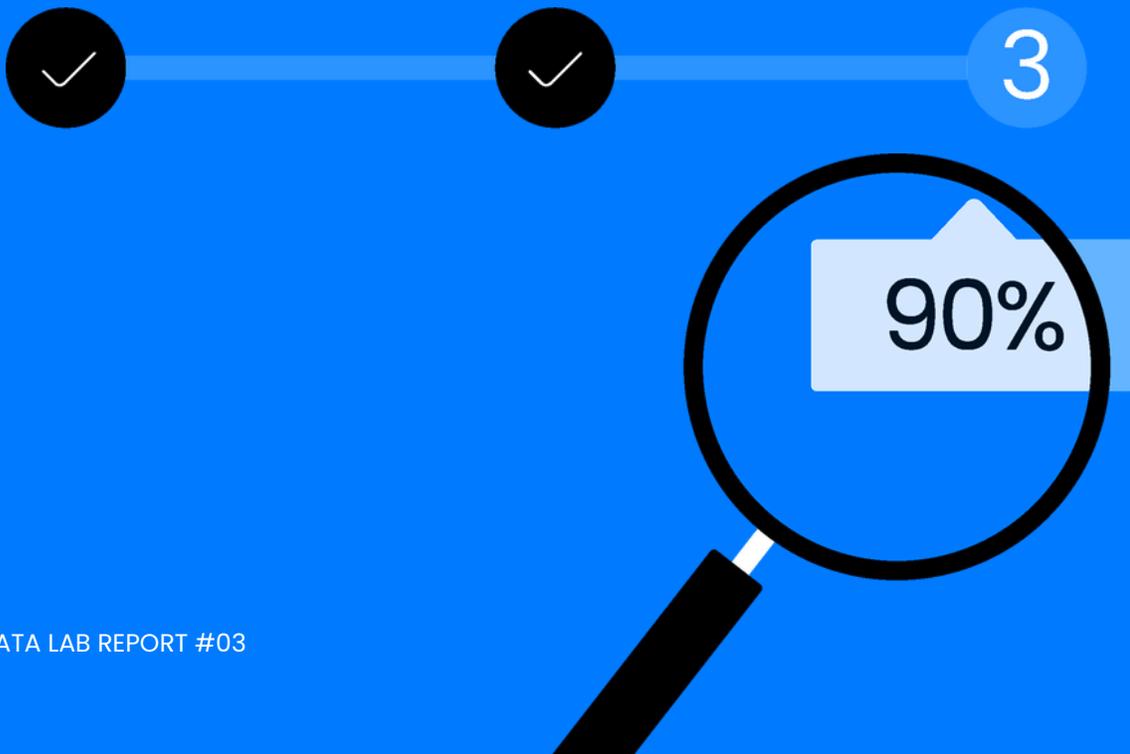
- Registration friction is more strongly associated with decision complexity than with data collection. Features that add choice (ticket types, payment flows) correlate with lower completion, while features that add information gathering (custom forms) do not.
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These benchmarks are intended to help event teams evaluate the effectiveness of their registration experience and identify when performance deviates meaningfully from typical patterns.



# About the Event Data Lab

The **Event Data Lab** is an ongoing research initiative focused on analyzing real-world event performance using aggregated and anonymized data. Reports published under the Event Data Lab aim to surface empirical benchmarks and operational insights across registration, onsite operations, engagement, and ROI.



# Dataset Overview



## Scope

- **3,600+ live events** analyzed over a two-year observation window
  - Custom form analysis: 1,655 events with custom forms (containing at least one question), 2,017 events without
  - Promo code analysis: 1,930 events with promo codes configured, 1,748 events without
  - Data aggregated and anonymized across live events
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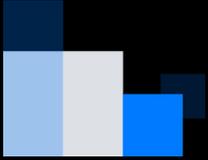
## Exclusions

To ensure statistical stability and reduce noise:

- Test, sandbox, and internal events were excluded
  - Events with very low registration volume were excluded
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## Anonymization

All data was aggregated and anonymized prior to analysis. No individual event, organization, or attendee can be identified from this report.



# Metric Definitions

**Registration completion rate** is defined as the percentage of users who completed registration out of all users who initiated the registration process.

$$\text{Registration Completion Rate} = \frac{\text{Completed Registrations}}{\text{Completed Registrations} + \text{Incomplete Registrations}}$$

This metric measures conversion **within the registration flow**. It does not account for website traffic, marketing impressions, or users who viewed event pages without beginning registration.



# Metric Definitions

A **custom form** is any additional set of questions added to the registration flow beyond standard registration fields (name, email, etc.). Custom forms may be applied to one or more registration categories. Total question count reflects all custom form questions across all categories for a given event.

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**Promo code** configuration refers to whether an event has created one or more promotional codes within the registration setup. Promo usage indicates whether at least one completed registrant applied a promo code during registration.

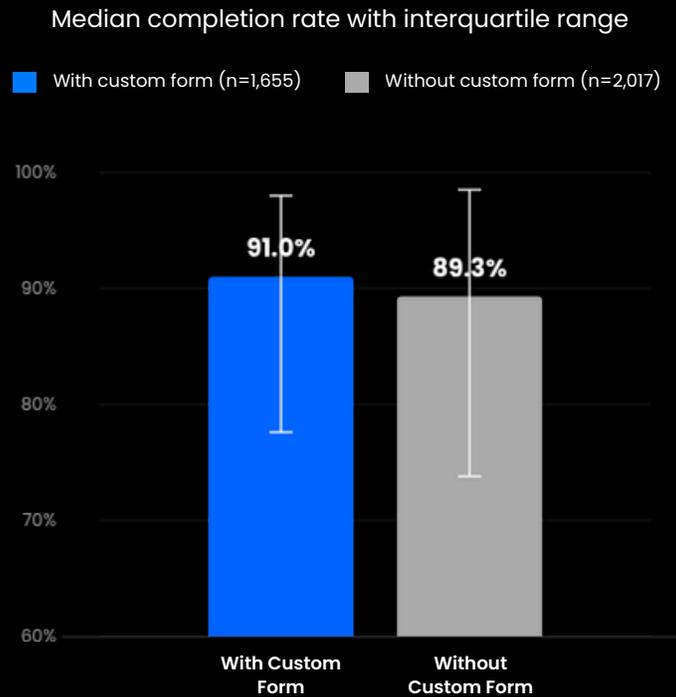
# Part 1: Custom Forms and Registration Completion



## Custom Forms vs. No Custom Forms

Events that include custom registration forms perform at or slightly above the level of events without them across all distributional measures.

### Registration Completion Rate: Event With vs. Without Custom Forms



Median registration completion rate. Whiskers show interquartile range (P25 to P75). Events with fewer than 10 registrations and test events excluded.

Events with custom forms show a 1.7 percentage point advantage at the median and a 3.8 point advantage at the 25th percentile. The interquartile range is also narrower for form-using events (20.4pp vs. 24.7pp), indicating less variability.



The share of events falling below 70% completion is lower among form-using events (16.0%) than non-form events (21.3%). At the 80% threshold, the pattern is similar: 27.7% of form events fall below compared to 32.5% of non-form events.

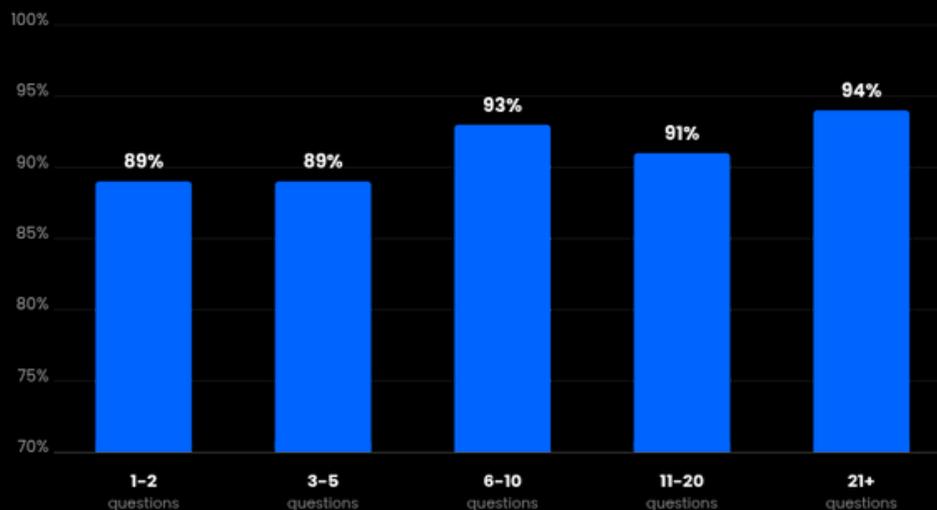
**Interpretation:** These results do not mean custom forms improve completion. Events that invest in custom forms likely differ in other ways: audience commitment, organizational maturity, and registration flow design quality. What the data shows is that the presence of custom forms is **not associated with lower completion**.

## Completion by Question Count

Among events with custom forms, median completion rates show no decline as question count increases.

### Registration Completion Rate: Event With vs. Without Custom Forms

Among 1,655 events with custom registration forms



Median registration completion rate by number of custom form questions. Events with fewer than 10 registrations and test events excluded.



Events with 21+ questions achieve 90%+ completion 64% of the time, compared to 49% for events with 1-2 questions. Only 9% of high-question-count events fall below 70%, compared to 19% of events with 1-2 questions.

This counterintuitive pattern is almost certainly driven by selection effects. Events with very long custom forms tend to be educational conferences, certification programs, and professional development events where attendees have high registration intent. The question count itself is not causing higher completion. But the data clearly shows it is not reducing it either.

**Key finding:** Adding custom form questions to registration does not measurably reduce completion rates. Question count is not a useful predictor of registration performance.

# Part 2: Promo Codes and Registration Completion

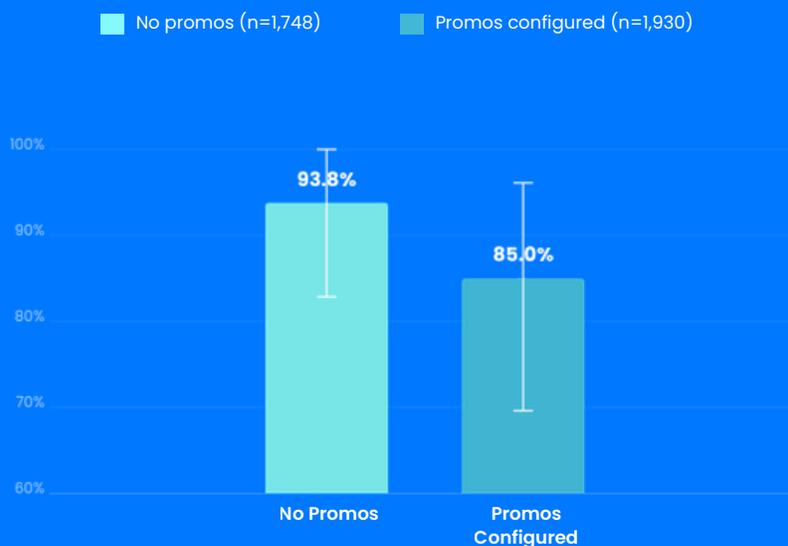


## Promo Codes Configured vs. Not Configured

Events with promo codes configured show materially lower median completion than events without.

### Registration Completion Rate: Promo Codes Configured vs. Not Configured

Median completion rate with interquartile range (P25-P75)



Median registration completion rate. Whiskers show interquartile range (P25 to P75). Events with fewer than 10 registrations and test events excluded.

The median gap is approximately 9 percentage points. The 25th percentile gap is even wider: ~70% for promo events vs. ~83% for non-promo events, a 13-point difference.

# Controlling for Registration Volume



The completion gap persists across registration volume bands, though it varies in magnitude.

## Registration Completion Rate: Promo vs. No Promo by Event Size

Median completion rate by registration volume based



**Note:** Events with promo codes configured have a median of 6 ticket types, compared to 1 for events without. The completion gap likely reflects event complexity, not the promo code field itself. See Report #02 for ticket count benchmarks.

Median registration completion rate by registration volume band. Events with fewer than 10 registrations and test events excluded.

At every volume band, promo-configured events underperform by 5 to 12 percentage points. However, controlling for volume alone is insufficient to isolate the effect of promo codes.

# Why the Gap Is Misleading



Promo-configured events differ systematically from non-promo events in ways that independently predict lower completion:

Characteristics	Promo Events	Non-Promo
Median ticket types	6	1
Median registrations	138	55
Events with any promo usage	54%	n/a

Promo-configured events offer 6x more ticket types at the median. Report #02 in this series demonstrated that ticket count is independently associated with lower completion. Promo events are also larger and more likely to involve payment, both of which introduce additional friction.

Nearly half of events that configure promo codes never have a single registrant use one. Among events where promos are used, the median usage rate is just 11% of completed registrants.

This suggests that the promo code input field is a minor element of the overall registration experience for most registrants, even on events that offer them.

# Completion by Number of Promo Codes Configured



Looking at the number of promo codes configured provides additional context.

Promos Configured	Events	Median	Mean
0 (none)	1,748	93.8%	88.0%
1	688	91.2%	84.7%
2-3	374	80.3%	75.0%
4-10	430	82.0%	78.6%
11+	438	80.4%	77.6%

Events with a single promo code show only a modest completion difference from non-promo events (91.2% vs. 93.8%). The larger gap emerges at 2+ promo codes, which correlates with more complex pricing structures and multi-tier ticket configurations.

**Key finding:** The correlation between promo codes and lower completion is driven by the complexity of events that use them, not by the promo code input field itself. Promo code configuration is a proxy for paid, multi-ticket, higher-complexity events.



# Combined Analysis: Decision Points vs. Data Collection

Taken together, the custom form and promo code findings point to a consistent pattern: registration features that ask registrants to provide information do not reduce completion, while features associated with decision complexity do.

Feature Type	Example	Completion Impact	Likely Mechanism
Data collection	Custom form questions	None observed	Low cognitive load; no decision required
Decision point	Ticket selection	Negative (Report #02)	Choice complexity; evaluation cost
Complexity proxy	Promo code config	Correlated negative	Confounded with ticket/payment complexity

This distinction has practical implications. Planners often treat all additional registration steps as equivalent sources of friction. The data suggests they are not. Answering a question (even many questions) is a fundamentally different cognitive task from choosing between options, and the registration data reflects that difference.

**Key insight:** Registration friction is more strongly associated with decision complexity than with form length. Teams should focus optimization efforts on simplifying choices, not on removing questions.

# Practical Implications for Event Teams



**Do not avoid custom forms out of concern for completion rates.** The data shows no evidence that collecting additional information through registration forms creates meaningful friction. Teams that need attendee data for operational, programming, or compliance purposes should feel confident adding custom form questions.



**Question count alone is not a useful diagnostic for low completion.** Teams with long forms that are experiencing low completion should examine other factors, including ticket complexity, pricing clarity, and flow design, before reducing form length.



**Promo code presence is a symptom, not a cause.** The correlation between promo codes and lower completion likely reflects the complexity of events that use them. Teams diagnosing low completion on promo-enabled events should look at ticket count, payment flow design, and overall registration architecture.



**Distinguish between decision points and data collection steps.** Features that add choices (ticket types, payment options) are associated with measurable completion declines. Features that add information gathering (form fields, custom questions) are not. Optimization efforts should prioritize the former.

In practice, the largest improvements in registration performance come from simplifying the decision architecture of the registration flow, not from shortening forms.

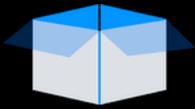


# How to Use These Benchmarks

These benchmarks are most useful as:

- Diagnostic reference points for evaluating whether a registration flow is performing within expected ranges
- 
- Context for prioritizing which registration flow elements to optimize first
- 
- Evidence for internal conversations about whether to add or remove registration features

They should not be interpreted as performance targets or guarantees. Individual event performance will vary based on audience, format, pricing structure, and registration configuration.



# Limitations

- This is an observational analysis. Causal claims about the relationship between registration features and completion are not supported. Events that use custom forms or promo codes may differ from those that do not in ways not captured by this data.
- Custom form question count reflects total questions across all registration categories. Some registrants may encounter a subset of configured questions based on their selected category.
- Promo code configuration does not distinguish between discount codes, access codes, or tracking codes, which may serve different functions in the registration flow.
- The promo code analysis cannot fully separate the effect of promo codes from the effect of event complexity, payment flows, or ticket structure. Cross-referencing with Report #02 provides additional context but does not resolve this limitation.
- Results may vary based on audience, industry, pricing structure, and registration flow design.

# Closing



Event Data Lab benchmarks are designed to help event teams move beyond anecdote and evaluate performance using empirical evidence. This report extends the findings of Reports #01 and #02 by examining two additional registration configuration variables and their observed relationship with completion.

Across the first three Event Data Lab reports, a consistent theme has emerged: registration completion is shaped more by decision architecture and flow execution than by the volume of information collected or the specific features enabled. The strongest predictor of underperformance is not what registrants are asked to provide, but how many choices they are asked to make.

Future reports will expand beyond registration to examine onsite operations, engagement, and attendee behavior.

# Appendix



## Definitions

- **Registration completion rate:** Completed registrations divided by total registration attempts (completed + incomplete).
- **Custom form:** Additional questions added to the registration flow beyond standard fields.
- **Total question count:** Sum of all custom form questions across all registration categories for a given event.
- **Promo code configuration:** Whether an event has created one or more promotional codes within the registration setup.
- **Promo usage:** Whether at least one completed registrant applied a promo code during registration.
- **Median:** The 50th percentile value. Used as the primary central tendency measure because completion rate distributions are left-skewed.
- **P25 / P75:** The 25th and 75th percentile values, defining the interquartile range.

## Data Exclusions

Events were excluded if they matched common test or internal naming patterns (e.g., containing keywords such as "test," "delete," "sandbox," or "demo") or if they had fewer than 10 registration attempts. These exclusions reduce noise from inactive, experimental, or statistically unreliable event records.

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*This report is part of the Event Data Lab, an ongoing research initiative analyzing real-world event performance across registration, onsite operations, engagement, and ROI.*

# Appendix



## **Note on Selection Effects**

Throughout this report, findings are described in terms of association, not causation. Events that use custom forms or configure promo codes are likely to differ from events that do not in systematic ways (audience type, event maturity, organizational sophistication, pricing model). These differences may explain observed patterns independently of the features themselves. Readers should interpret benchmarks as descriptive of the dataset, not as evidence that enabling or disabling specific features will produce specific completion outcomes.

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