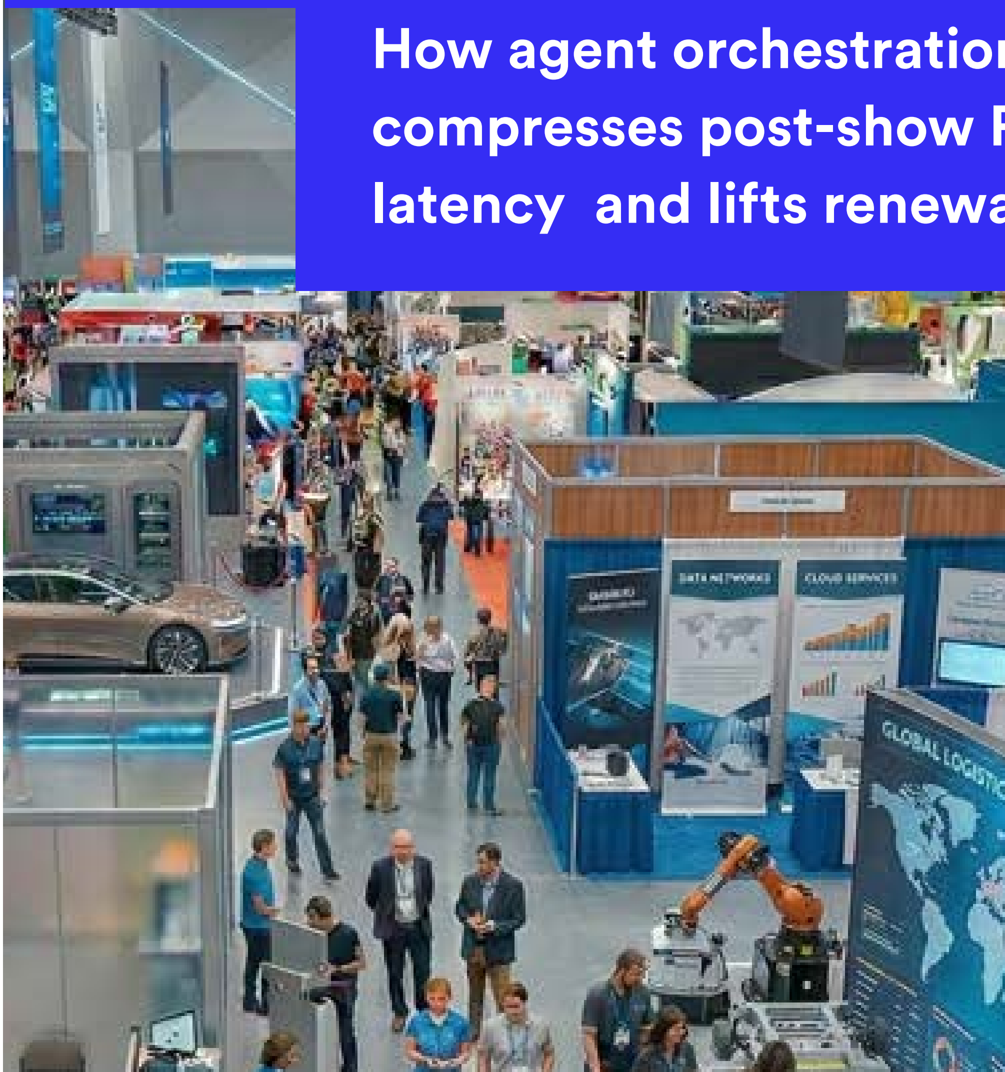
NowVertical

Premium renewals at speed:

How agent orchestration compresses post-show ROI latency and lifts renewal yield



2026

We Transform Data into Business Value with AI, Fast

About Us

NowVertical Group is a leader in data analytics and governance, trusted by global enterprises for expertise in managing complex data challenges, including PII protection.

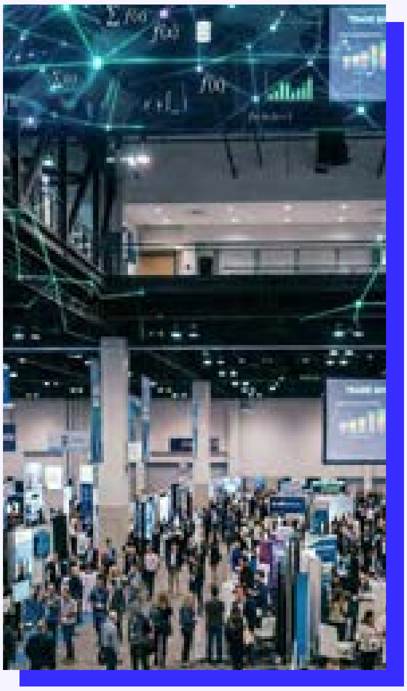
Executive Summary

Senior commercial and portfolio leaders across major organisers (RX, Informa, Clarion, Hyve, Messe Frankfurt, Future, Delinian, Springer Nature, Wiley and peers) are already fluent in the "renewal-rate" playbook: on-site rebooking desks, early-bird incentives, floor plan strategy and relationship-led account management. What is changing in the market is the second lever of the revenue equation: renewal yield (exhibitor revenue per renewal), driven by premium stand moves, sponsorship tiers, digital packages, and year-round marketplace exposure. The evidence emerging from industry benchmarking and large-scale platform datasets since 2025 is clear: the events with the strongest commercial outcomes are those that measure and activate value—not merely deliver activity. [1]

The central constraint is not a lack of data. It is latency—the time between show close (and the emotional "high" of participation) and the point at which an exhibitor can credibly say, internally: "This investment generated value; approve the premium renewal." Vendor research based on hundreds of events and millions of participants shows that the majority of lead-generation and engagement now occurs in the digital layer—before, during and after the physical show—yet many exhibitors do not operationalise the value, with fewer than 10% downloading their final lead report within ninety days in one large dataset. [2] When the exhibitor cannot turn participation into an evidence-backed ROI narrative quickly, renewals default to the lowest-friction outcome: "same stand, same spend" or "wait and see".

Agent orchestration changes the operating model. By treating post-show ROI as a multi-step workflow — ingestion → identity → intent → attribution → narrative → activation → governance—an orchestrated set of agents can compress time-to-ROI from "days to weeks" to "hours", while improving accuracy and auditability. That speed, in turn, enables premium renewals because it changes the nature of the rebooking conversation from "space and price" to "outcomes and growth levers" (sponsorship and digital packages that demonstrably lift lead volume and quality). The newest event engagement research points to the mechanisms behind this: sponsors at large events can generate materially more leads than non-sponsors, and exhibitors that use digital touchpoints alongside lead capture can generate substantially more leads than those relying on traditional touchpoints alone—exactly the kind of value proposition that supports premium packaging when you can prove it quickly. [2]

A critical nuance for portfolio leaders: compressing latency improves not only renewal rate but also renewal yield because it unlock (a) segmentation (who is most likely to renew at premium?), (b) personalised bundling (what is the "next best package" for this exhibitor?), and (c) internal exhibitor decision velocity (budget approvals happen while memory is vivid and stakeholders are aligned). Industry benchmarking reinforces that leaders who track the right metrics outperform: IAEE/CEIR commentary highlights correlations between tracking participant sentiment and retention metrics and stronger financial outcomes, and notes that missed revenue opportunities persist where sponsorship strategy and tiered pricing are not optimised. [3]



The remainder of this whitepaper details the commercial mechanisms, the agent-orchestrated blueprint, the data inputs and KPIs, and the measurable business outcomes leaders can target—grounded in 2025+ industry research, vendor datasets and anonymised delivery experience from NowVertical engagements.

The commercial physics of post-show latency

Post-show is not "after the event"; it is the **closing phase of the sale.** The rebooking window is defined by a simple behavioural reality: when time passes, enthusiasm and clarity decay, and the organiser loses the "easy sale" that follows a successful edition. Map Your Show's 2025 guidance is blunt: if an exhibitor does not rebook on-site, the organiser must keep momentum through rapid follow-up, including early access to next year's marketing packages and premium sponsorship opportunities; otherwise, letting too much time pass risks losing the easier sale. [4]

What is different in 2025+ is that "value" is increasingly created outside badge scanning and stand footfall alone. Multiple datasets now quantify the shift:

In Swapcard's 2025 research release, 85% of leads came from digital touchpoints, and 40% of leads were generated before the event even started—evidence that value is being created across a longer, hybrid journey, not just in-hall. [5]

In the same report family, the "currency" of ROI is moving to digital-first engagement, with 67–85% of lead generation coming from digital interactions in the dataset cited, while exhibitor execution gaps (e.g., low completion of listings and low report download rates) mean organisers are leaving value unrealised. [6]

This matters for premium renewals because the premium sell is inherently an ROI sell. A larger stand, an upgraded location, a hosted-buyer programme, sponsored content distribution, or a digital marketplace package all require the exhibitor to believe that incremental spend will generate incremental value. When the organiser cannot prove that value quickly and credibly, the exhibitor's internal procurement logic pushes spend downwards or delays the decision.

Freeman's 2025 commercial trends research provides an important lens on why "fast, credible ROI" is now commercially decisive: decision-makers increasingly use events to reduce uncertainty and accelerate purchase decisions, and attendees value experiences that make it easier to advocate for purchases and address purchase concerns. [7] If the organiser can translate exhibitor performance into an ROI narrative (qualified conversations, buyers reached, pipeline indicators) while the exhibitor team is still debriefing, the renewal discussion becomes less about negotiating price and more about scaling the outcomes the exhibitor just experienced.

At portfolio level, the problem compounds. Large organisers run dozens (sometimes hundreds) of editions, each with its own event tech stack, regional data processes, and KPI definitions. IAEE's 2025 commentary on CEIR benchmarking reinforces that tracking sentiment and exhibitor activity correlates with stronger performance; conversely, inconsistent measurement makes it harder to predict and influence floor space sales and stabilise year-on-year outcomes. [3]

In short: post-show latency is now a revenue problem in two dimensions—renewal rate and renewal yield. Leaders who treat it as an operational reporting inconvenience will be outperformed by those who treat it as a commercial system.

Why fast, accurate exhibitor ROI unlocks premium renewals

Premium renewals are "locked" behind three gates: confidence, comparability, and commitment. Compressing post-show ROI latency addresses all three.

Confidence means enabling the exhibitor to answer: "Did we hit our objectives, and what created the result?"

Swapcard's 2025 findings quantify how premium outcomes are increasingly measurable and therefore sellable: digital booths accounted for 44% of all leads in one dataset, and exhibitors who used digital touchpoints alongside lead capture tools generated 83% more leads; these are precisely the kinds of uplift claims that justify upsell—if they can be made credible at account level. [5]

Comparability means enabling the exhibitor to see relative performance: "How did we do versus peers, versus the last edition, versus our target segment?"

IAEE's late-2025 synthesis of CEIR benchmarking is explicit that measurement correlates with outcomes, associating NPS tracking with profitability and larger exhibitor bases, and highlighting that retention tracking enables prediction and influence over floor space sales. [8] In practice, comparability underpins premium pricing: if value is measurable and benchmarked, tiered pricing becomes defensible.

Commitment means reducing the internal friction of re-approval.

Freeman's 2025 data indicates attendees use events to build purchase certainty and stakeholder consensus. [7] That same behavioural pattern applies to exhibitor renewal: the sales team's job is easier when the organiser can provide an evidence-backed "board pack" within the exhibitor organisation's normal approval cadence (often immediate in the post-event week).

Fast ROI is therefore not just "nice reporting". It is a commercial catalyst that changes the renewal conversation:

From "space" to "outcomes"	Premium packages become a rational extension of a proven outcome, not a speculative add-on. [6]
From "post-show follow-up" to "post-show activation"	Upsell becomes personalised, grounded in observed intent and engagement patterns, rather than catalogue- driven. [9]
From "one-size-fits-all" to "next best package"	The organiser does not merely send a report; they trigger actions—targeted offers, meeting follow-ups, and proactive adoption nudges—while momentum exists. [10]

A particularly powerful premium-renewal mechanism is **sponsorship proof.** In the October 2025 "currency of event revenue" release, sponsors at large events were reported to generate over 250% more leads than non-sponsor peers, and digital/content-based sponsorships were described as measurable yet underpriced and undervalued. [6] If organisers can show, within days (or hours), what sponsorship delivered and what it could deliver next year (with clear benchmarks and projections), premium renewals stop being a negotiation and become a growth plan.

The agent-orchestrated operating model for compressed ROI

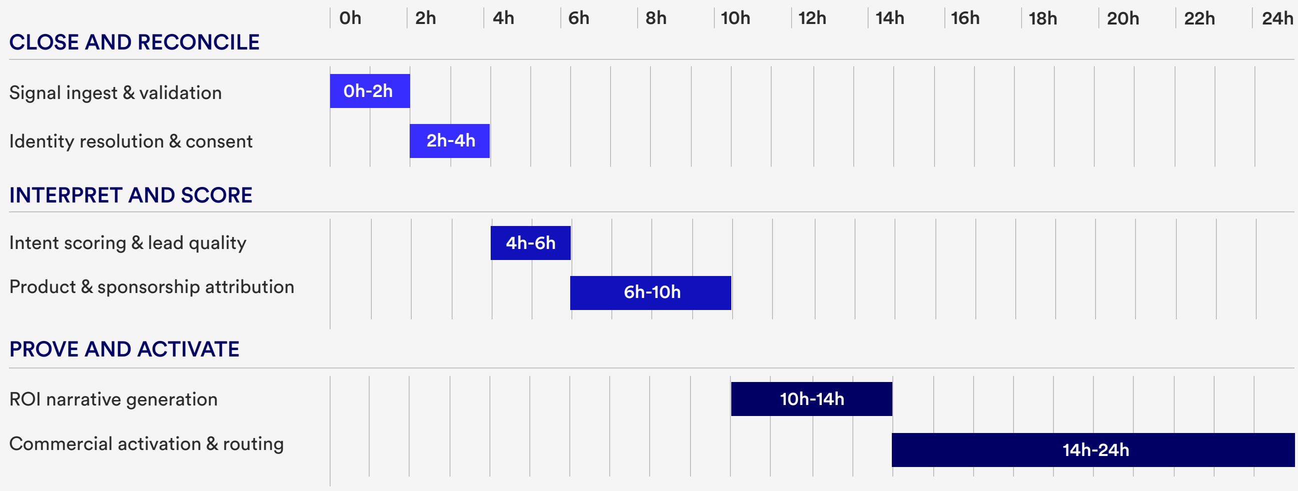
Agent orchestration is not “a chatbot for exhibitors”. It is an operating model that turns post-show analysis into a governed, repeatable workflow across a portfolio—one that can run at scale, edition after edition, market after market.

Flow stage	What the agents do in practice	Core outputs for commercial teams	Typical failure mode in legacy approaches
Ingest	Pull structured and semi- structured signals from registration, lead capture, meetings, app/web engagement, session attendance, exhibitor portal activity, content downloads, outbound comms, and (where consented) onsite sensors; validate schema and timeliness. [11]	A reconciled “event signal ledger” that is complete enough for ROI scoring and comparable reporting.	A reconciled “event signal ledger” that is complete enough for ROI scoring and comparable reporting.
Identity	Resolve people company account relationships across touchpoints (e.g., one attendee uses multiple emails; multiple delegates map to one buying group); apply consent rules and suppress restricted data.	A buyer-group view (“who mattered”) rather than a raw lead list (“who scanned”).	Duplicates, missing firmographics, and inability to link digital and onsite behaviour. [2]
Intent	Score engagement and buying signals (e.g., repeated returns to exhibitor pages, meeting requests, session engagement in relevant tracks, long dwell time in listings); distinguish “curious” from “ready”. AI-based lead prioritisation and behavioural scoring are now mainstream in leading event tech. [9]	“Qualified interaction volume” and ranked buyer lists that can be credibly tied to exhibitor value.	Over-reliance on contact volume (badge scans) and lack of quality measures. [13]
Attribution	Attribute outcomes to products and levers (stand, sponsorship tier, digital placements, hosted buyer programmes, content syndication); quantify incremental value of each add-on using benchmarks and counterfactuals. Sponsorship and digital packages are increasingly measurable in platform datasets. [2]	A product-level ROI bridge: “what you bought” → “what you got” → “what to do next year”.	Teams can’t defend premium pricing because they cannot attribute value to add-ons. [8]
Narrative	Automatically generate CFO-ready storylines and visuals: summary of objectives, performance, benchmarks, missed opportunities, and recommended next-best package. “Outcomes over activity” is the emerging standard. [14]	A renewal deck and dashboard that can be used in a renewal meeting without analyst rework.	Reporting is static, slow, and not personalised to exhibitor objectives.
Activation	Trigger actions: tailored renewal offer; premium location/upgrade recommendations; sponsorship upsell; exhibitor enablement prompts (complete listing, respond to meetings); internal sales tasks and routing. Post-show momentum depends on rapid, purposeful follow-up. [15]	Time-boxed “revenue plays” per exhibitor segment, pushed into CRM and account plans.	Reports are sent, but adoption is low and the renewal motion stalls. [14]
Governance	Maintain audit trails (what data was used, model versions, decisions); enforce consent, security, retention limits, and escalation; prevent “agentwashing” by clearly defining what is automated vs. assistant-led. [16]	Defensible automation that stands up to internal risk review and client scrutiny.	AI is deployed as isolated tools without clear accountability, leading to poor outcomes. [17]

Mermaid timeline of the compressed workflow

This is not a claim that every organiser is at this maturity today; it is a target-state operating cadence that has become technically feasible because modern agents can execute multistep workflows, use tools, and act autonomously within defined guardrails (with auditability). [18]

Compressed post-show ROI workflow enabled by agent orchestration



Data inputs, KPIs, and measurable business outcomes

Data inputs that matter for renewal yield

The essential principle for premium renewals is that exhibitor ROI must be measured in the same “units” the exhibitor sells in: pipeline quality, buying-group penetration, and conversion velocity—supported by interaction data. Freeman’s 2025 research underscores why this matters: attendees value expertise and experiences that reduce purchase uncertainty; exhibitors need evidence of those moments. [7]

In practice, the minimum viable input set for an orchestrated ROI engine includes:

Identity and account: exhibitor account hierarchy, contract history, products purchased (stand, sponsorship, digital), and sales ownership.

- **Audience:** registration and attendance, firmographics, seniority, and buying influence.
- **Engagement and intent:** meeting requests and acceptances, exhibitor page views, content downloads, session interactions, and messaging. Platform research shows major portions of lead generation happen pre-event and via online booth visits. [14]
- **Operational delivery:** service tickets, exhibitor portal completion (listings), onsite support interactions—because delivery quality affects renewal decisions. [19]
- **Commercial levers:** sponsorship placements, digital ads, content sponsorships, hosted buyer participation—because premium renewals are “sold” on incremental outcomes. [2]

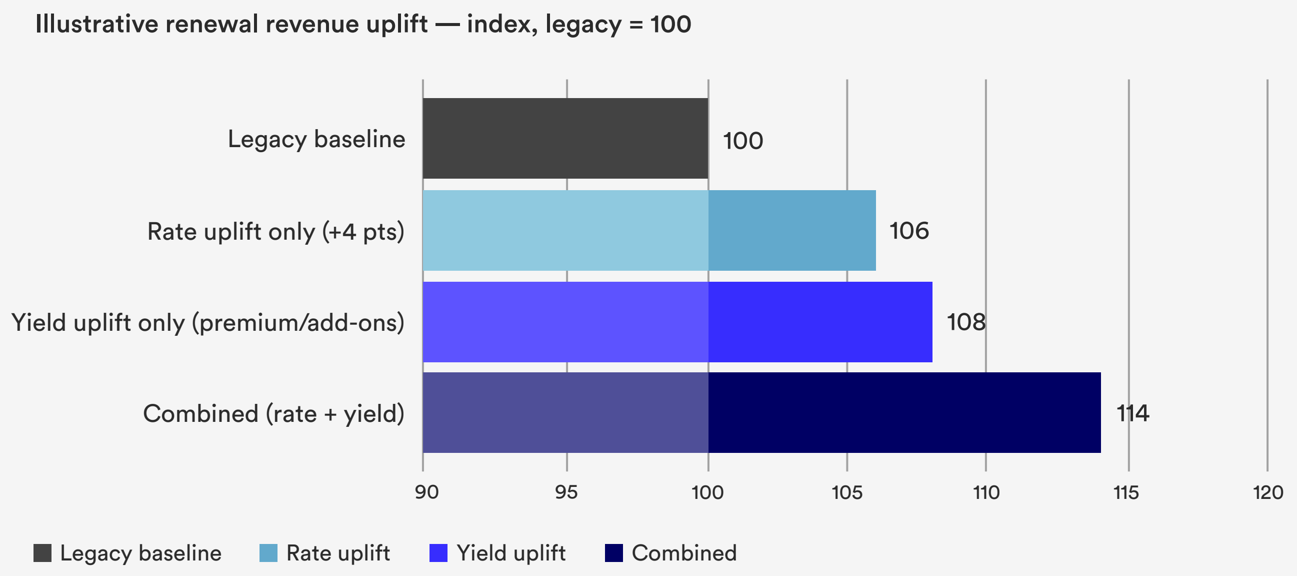
KPIs for leaders who want yield uplift, not just renewal-rate uplift.

IAEE's 2025 synthesis of CEIR benchmarks emphasises that tracking sentiment and retention metrics correlates with stronger outcomes and enables organisers to predict and influence key commercial results. [3] Building on that, an agent-orchestrated model should be measured with a tight KPI spine:

Latency KPIs	**Time-to-ROI:** show close → exhibitor ROI pack delivered (dashboard + narrative). **Time-to-rebook:** show close → signed renewal, segmented by exhibitor tier.
Commercial KPIs	**Renewal rate:** baseline retention measure. **Renewal yield (exhibitor revenue per renewal):** includes stand, sponsorship, and digital products. **Rebook value uplift:** change in contract value vs. previous edition. **Upsell/cross-sell conversion:** conversion rate of targeted add-ons (sponsorship tiers, digital marketplace packages, content syndication). **Exhibitor LTV per segment:** measured at portfolio level, reflecting multi-year renewal value.
Value proof KPIs	**Qualified interaction volume:** meetings with target accounts, high-intent digital actions. **Buyer-group coverage:** number of distinct stakeholders engaged per target account (critical for enterprise B2B). **Attribution confidence:** proportion of ROI narrative supported by measurable touchpoints (digital and onsite). [2]

Infographic-style chart: why yield uplift often dominates rate uplift

The following is an illustrative decomposition showing why compressing ROI latency should be funded as a yield programme, not just a retention programme. It models an edition with 800 eligible exhibitors, where orchestration increases renewal rate modestly while increasing average revenue per renewal through premium packages and targeted add-ons. (Figures are scenario assumptions for modelling; they are not direct claims about any single organiser.)



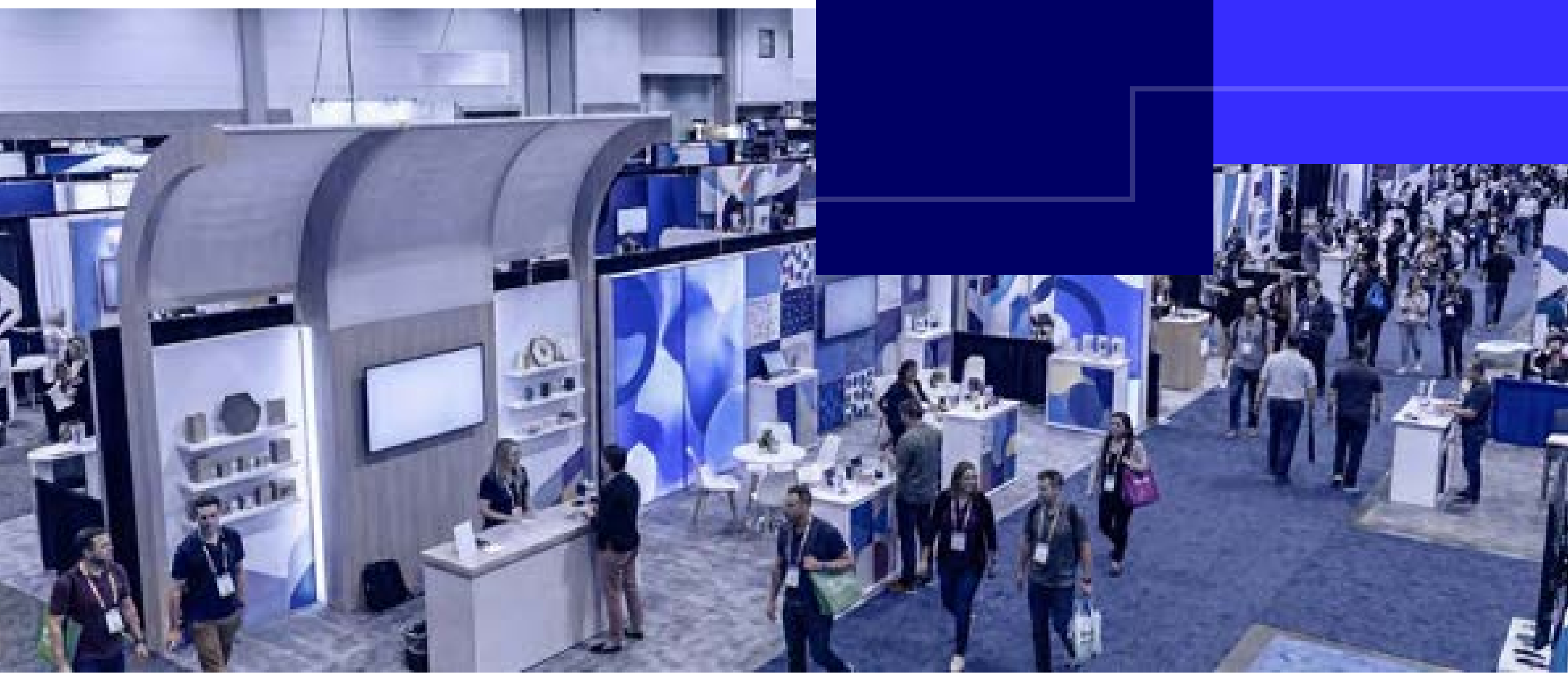
What makes yield uplift plausible in 2025+ is that premium levers are increasingly measurable and therefore sellable. For example, one 2025 dataset reported that sponsors at large events generated over 250% more leads than non-sponsors, and that 15–25% of digital leads came from session content engagement—evidence that well-designed sponsorship and content packages can create outsized outcomes that support premium renewals when their impact is provable. [6]

Dimension	Legacy post-show motion	Agent-orchestrated motion	Material commercial impact
Proof of value	Metrics arrive late, fragmented, hard to benchmark; reports may be available yet under-used by exhibitors. [2]	"Exhibitor ROI ledger" (digital + onsite), benchmarked and narrative-ready; adoption nudges and enablement built-in. [20]	Premium renewals become easier to justify internally at the exhibitor (less uncertainty, faster decisions). [7]
Upsell logic	Catalogue-led ("here are packages"), low personalisation, weak attribution. [8]	Behaviour- and intent-led ("next best package"), backed by attribution and response data. [21]	Higher attach rates on sponsorship/digital, and better pricing power for tiered offers. [22]
Account prioritisation	Human judgement, reactive ("save the squeaky wheels").	Risk and opportunity scoring (who is at churn risk? who is primed for upgrade?). AI lead/intent tooling is increasingly standard in event platforms. [21]	Better use of sales capacity; premium inventory protected for the right accounts. [8]
Portfolio learnings	Limited cross-event comparability; inconsistent KPIs. [23]	Standardised measurements and repeatable ROI playbooks, enabling portfolio steering. [24]	Higher predictability in floor space sales and tighter revenue planning. [8]

Anonymised delivery outcomes and what they imply for organisers

NowVertical's events-industry work (as described in the supplied materials) includes repeatable patterns that align with the external research: standardisation of KPI frameworks, personalisation that dramatically increases engagement, and recommendation systems that create measurable revenue uplift. In anonymised portfolio engagements, the provided materials report examples such as increased show turnout, multi-fold increases in email engagement from personalisation, reductions in visitor churn, and matchmaking/recommendation outcomes that improved engagement and NPS. These are not "nice-to-have" marketing stats; they are precursors to premium renewal capability because they increase (a) audience quality, (b) exhibitor confidence in lead generation, and (c) the organiser's ability to package digital products as value, not as add-ons.

The internal case materials also highlight a crucial operating principle that is directly relevant to agents: value should be unlocked progressively across the lifecycle (not as a big-bang system overhaul). This aligns with what external research implies about adoption gaps: even when digital lead generation is strong, exhibitors may not download lead reports or fully activate listings, and organisers must bake enablement and activation into the workflow, not treat reporting as an endpoint. [14]



Why this is newly feasible and how to govern it

Why it wasn't possible before

Three constraints historically blocked the "hours not weeks" operating model.

1 The event tech stack was fragmented. A 2025 industry partnership announcement described how planners face fragmented tools that create poor experiences and are difficult to manage, and positioned integrated solutions as a way to deliver personalised experiences and measurable ROI more consistently. [12] Fragmentation is not merely inconvenient—it makes it hard to produce an auditable, account-level ROI narrative because identity and engagement signals sit in different systems.

2

Measurement was not commercially connected. IAEE/CEIR commentary in 2025 stresses that measurement correlates with stronger outcomes and that organisers miss opportunities if they have not optimised sponsorship strategies or implemented tiered pricing models. [3] In practice, many teams could produce a post-show report but could not connect it to a repeatable "next best package" model across the portfolio.

3

The tooling to execute complex, multistep workflows autonomously did not exist at practical cost. Since 2025, major research institutions have been explicit that AI is moving from assistants to agents capable of end-to-end task execution and orchestration; Gartner's 2025 forecasts describe enterprise software shifting toward task-specific AI agents and warn against "agentwashing" (calling assistants agents), underscoring the need for clear definitions of autonomy and governance. [18]

Governance that protects value and prevents failure

Agentic programmes fail when they are deployed as technology projects rather than outcome systems. A 2025 news report citing Gartner warned that a significant share of agentic AI projects may be cancelled due to costs and unclear business outcomes—an important caution for event portfolio leaders: the business case must be tied to renewal economics, with measurable KPIs and staged rollout. [25]

A governance pattern that fits exhibition portfolios should include:

- **Consent and purpose limitation:** use first-party, consented data; define permitted uses (ROI proof, matchmaking, product recommendations) and disallowed uses (e.g., ungoverned enrichment or re-identification).
- **Model risk controls:** versioning, bias checks, and "human in the loop" thresholds for premium offer recommendations and churn-risk labelling. [16]
- **Commercial auditability:** every ROI claim should be explainable ("which signals drove this score?"), because premium renewals often require procurement justification. [22]
- **Operational guardrails:** escalation paths for disputed metrics, data quality issues, and exhibitor complaints—because credibility is the product. [26]

The strategic point is that governance is not a brake on innovation; it enables scale. In portfolios where brand trust and long-term exhibitor LTV matter, a premium-renewal engine must be defensible.

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