STRATEGIC EVENTS FOR LEGAL FIRMS

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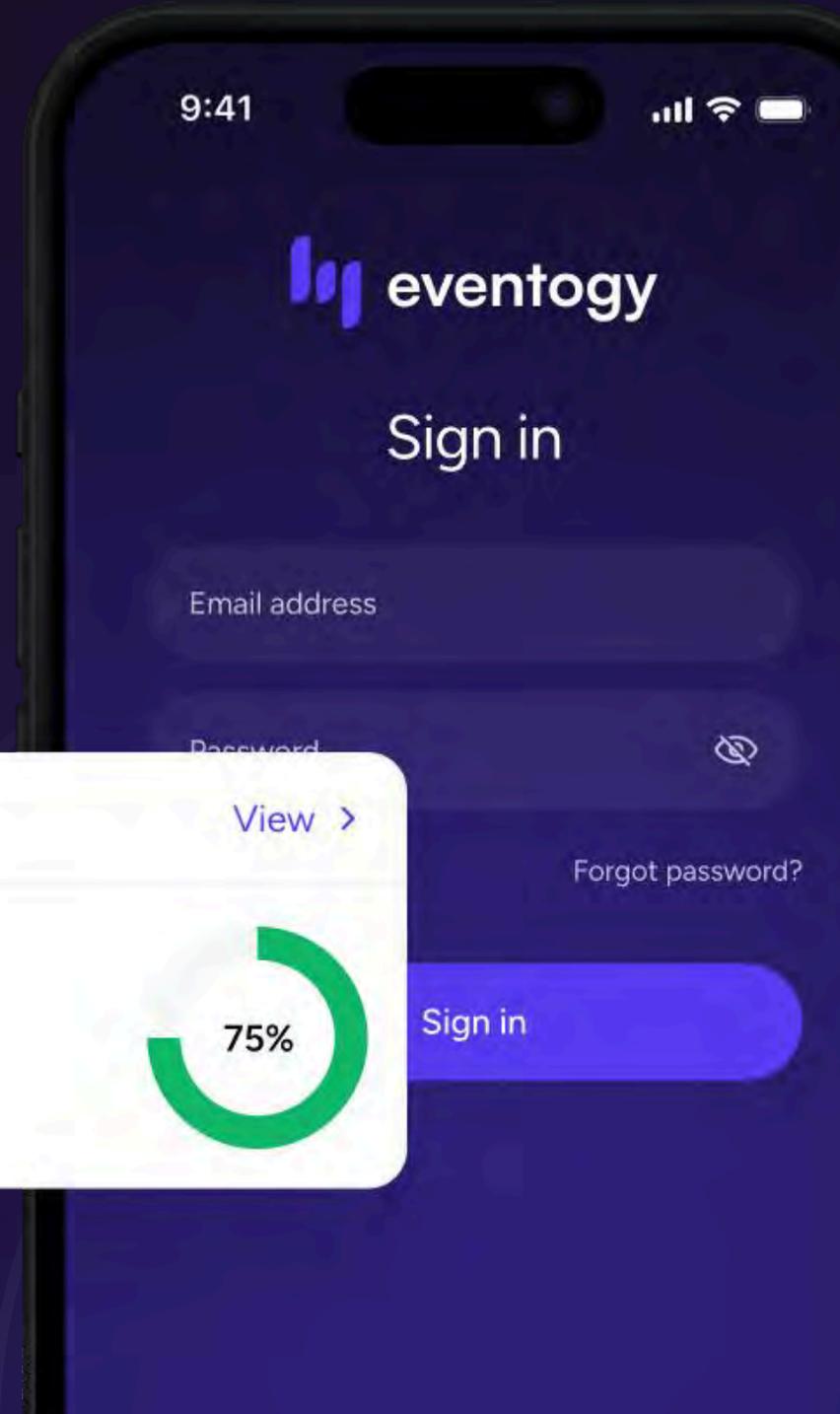
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How Leading Law Firms Are Turning Events into Their Most Powerful Growth Engine

A Whitepaper by Eventogy

For Heads of Events, Event Directors, Marketing Directors and Senior Event Managers at UK and US Law Firms

Executive Summary

Legal services operate in an environment defined by high trust, deep complexity and intense competition for client attention. In this context, events have quietly become one of the most powerful tools available to law firms, not as one-off hospitality exercises, but as strategic platforms for building relationships, reinforcing expertise and generating long-term growth.

The evidence is compelling. Research from the Freeman Trust Report shows that 77% of people trust brands more after face-to-face interaction, with 72% reporting more positive perceptions following a live event. The American Bar Association's latest marketing survey confirms that events are the most popular traditional marketing channel among law firms, used by 44% of firms. Meanwhile, Embroker's 2025 Legal Risk Index reveals that 47% of legal professionals now cite reputational risk as their top concern, making the quality and professionalism of every client-facing interaction critically important.

Yet most law firms still treat events as isolated projects rather than integrated programmes. Data from events is rarely connected to CRM systems, compliance processes are ad hoc, and the insights generated at events vanish within days.

This whitepaper makes the case for a fundamentally different approach. Drawing on legal-industry surveys, event-industry benchmarks and trust research, it provides a practical framework for transforming events from a cost centre into a strategic growth engine. It is written for Heads of Events, Event Directors, Marketing Directors and Senior Event Managers at UK and US law firms who want to elevate what events deliver for their organisations.

77%

Of people trust brands more after face-to-face interaction.

72%

Reporting more positive perceptions following a live event.

The Trust Advantage: Why Events Matter More Than Ever in Legal Marketing

1.1 Events Build What Digital Marketing Cannot

Trust is the currency of legal services. Clients entrust law firms with their most sensitive commercial disputes, transactions and regulatory challenges. That trust is built through personal interaction, and events are the most scalable way to create it.

The Freeman Trust Report demonstrates the power of face-to-face engagement: **77%** of respondents said they trusted brands more after in-person interaction, and **64%** reported that this trust persisted for at least a month. For law firms, where a single client relationship can span decades and generate millions in fees, this sustained trust dividend is extraordinarily valuable.

The Legal Marketing Association's 2025 CMO survey reinforces this. In-person speaking engagements and webinars rank among the top five most effective marketing activities across all firm sizes. Among large firms (251–500 attorneys), **69%** consider webinars very effective and **62%** rate in-person engagements highly. Mid-sized firms show similar patterns.

Key insight

77%
Of people trust brands more after face-to-face interaction

72%
Feel more positive about a company after attending its event.

In legal services, where trust determines buying decisions, events offer a uniquely powerful marketing channel.

1.2 The Digital Saturation Problem

Digital channels are increasingly crowded and commoditised. The ABA survey notes that **78%** of law firms use paid search marketing, yet **82%** describe the return on investment as underwhelming. Events cut through this noise by providing a captive audience and the opportunity for substantive, two-way interaction. Research compiled by Cvent confirms that nearly 8 in 10 attendees prefer in-person events, and **87%** say discovering new products and ideas is essential to their attendance.

Put simply: your clients are drowning in emails, LinkedIn posts and webinar invitations. A well-executed event — whether an intimate client roundtable or a flagship industry conference, creates a space for the kind of conversation that digital channels cannot replicate.

78% Of law firms use paid search marketing.

64% Describe the return on investment as underwhelming.

87% Say discovering new products and ideas is essential to their attendance.

The Hidden Complexity: Why Legal Events Are Operationally Harder Than They Appear

2.1 Compliance and Data Sensitivity

Every legal event involves the collection and processing of personal data from registration details to dietary requirements to post-event communications. For law firms, this data handling sits within a uniquely demanding regulatory environment.

Non-compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) can result in fines of up to **€20 million** or **4%** of global turnover. The California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) grants attendees the right to access, delete and opt out of data processing. The Eventtia compliance guide notes that GDPR applies to any event collecting data from EU citizens, regardless of where the event is held. For global law firms operating across jurisdictions, the compliance burden is substantial.

The human factor makes this harder still. Stanford University research found that **88%** of data breaches are caused by employee errors - not sophisticated cyber attacks. This means that even firms with robust technical security can be exposed by a single staff member mishandling a guest list or forwarding attendee data insecurely.

88%

Of data breaches are caused by human error, not technology failures.

For law firms handling sensitive client data at events, staff training is as important as encryption.

2.2 Complex Stakeholder and Invitation Logic

Law-firm events involve multiple practice groups, partners, clients and prospects across jurisdictions. Invitation logic must account for client confidentiality (ensuring conflicted parties are not placed at the same table), regulatory restrictions and the political sensitivities inherent in any partnership structure. A misstep, like inviting a client's competitor to an intimate dinner, or failing to include a key contact, can damage relationships that took years to build.

2.3 Reputational Risk Is Rising

Embroker's 2025 Legal Risk Index found that **47%** of legal professionals identify reputational risk as their top concern, surpassing financial risks. Events are uniquely exposed to this risk: they are public-facing, involve client data and create lasting impressions. A poorly executed event - a registration system that fails, a speaker who cancels at the last minute, a data breach affecting attendees - can erode the trust that the firm has spent years cultivating.

Industry data confirms the stakes: 26% of event planners say they would not return to a venue after a poor attendee experience, and **54%** of event professionals anticipate rising costs, meaning that sub-par delivery wastes increasingly scarce resources.

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54%

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From One-Off Events to Strategic Programmes

3.1 **The Industry Is Moving to Portfolios**

The most significant shift in corporate events over the past five years has been the move from isolated, one-off events to continuous, portfolio-level programmes. Forrester's State of B2B Events survey captures this transition clearly:

Metric	Finding	Implication
Post-event follow-up	**92%** plan to improve	Events are the start, not the end
Year-round engagement	**77%** plan to increase	Continuous relationship building
Small in-person events	**58%** plan more	Intimacy drives deeper trust
Small in-person events	**95%** plan more focus	Shift to evidence-based ROI
Tech integration	Only **20%** integrated	Major opportunity gap

For law firms, this shift is particularly relevant. Client relationships are long-term, multi-practice and multi-geography. A single annual conference cannot serve the depth and breadth of engagement that modern client development requires. Leading firms are building portfolios that include intimate partner-hosted roundtables, sector-specific seminars, webinar series, alumni events and flagship conferences, each designed to serve a specific relationship objective.

3.2 The Cost and Capacity Challenge

The global corporate events market was valued at **$325 billion** in 2023 and is projected to nearly double to **$600 billion** by 2029. An American Express Global Business Travel forecast found that **70%** of meeting professionals expect their spend to increase in 2026, with **52%** planning to organise more meetings.

More events mean more operational complexity. Without standardised processes, each additional event increases the risk of inconsistency, compliance gaps and budget overruns. Cvent reports that food and beverage **(73%)**, audiovisual **(66%)** and venue costs **(29%)** dominate event budgets, and **that event professionals are highly price-sensitive: 97%** would switch venues for a **20%** cost saving.

3.3 Repeatability Is the Foundation

Running an effective portfolio requires repeatable processes: standardised invitation workflows, consistent branding, built-in compliance checks and templated data capture. Mature programmes can deploy new events rapidly.

A case study of a **Top-30** UK law firm found that adopting a modern event platform reduced setup time from **30–40 minutes** to **10–15 minutes** per event, a productivity gain that compounds significantly across a programme of **50** or **100** events per year.

70%
Of meeting professionals expect their spend to increase in 2026

52%
Planning to organise more meetings.

Governance frameworks that define approval steps, escalation paths, budget thresholds and success metrics ensure that each event fits within the firm's strategic objectives and that quality is maintained as volumes increase.

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The Data Opportunity: Connecting Events to Business Development

4.1 The Intelligence Sitting in Your Events

Every event generates valuable intelligence: who attended, what they engaged with, which sessions they prioritised, what questions they asked, and how they responded to follow-up. Yet most law firms leave this data on the table. Forrester's research highlights that only **20%** of large enterprises have integrated their event technology with their broader marketing stack.

This is a significant missed opportunity. Event data can reveal which clients are actively exploring new areas of law, which prospects are moving from awareness to consideration, and which relationships are cooling. When connected to a CRM system, this intelligence becomes actionable, informing partner conversations, cross-selling strategies and pitch preparation.

20%

Of large enterprises have integrated their event technology with their broader marketing stack.

4.2 Integration in Practice

The most advanced legal event programmes feed attendance history, engagement signals and client feedback directly into the firm's CRM and business-development pipeline. Freshfields, the global law firm, **provides a compelling example:** using the Eventogy platform, the firm consolidates all event data, invitations, RSVPs, attendee demographics and engagement metrics and automatically transfers it to Salesforce.
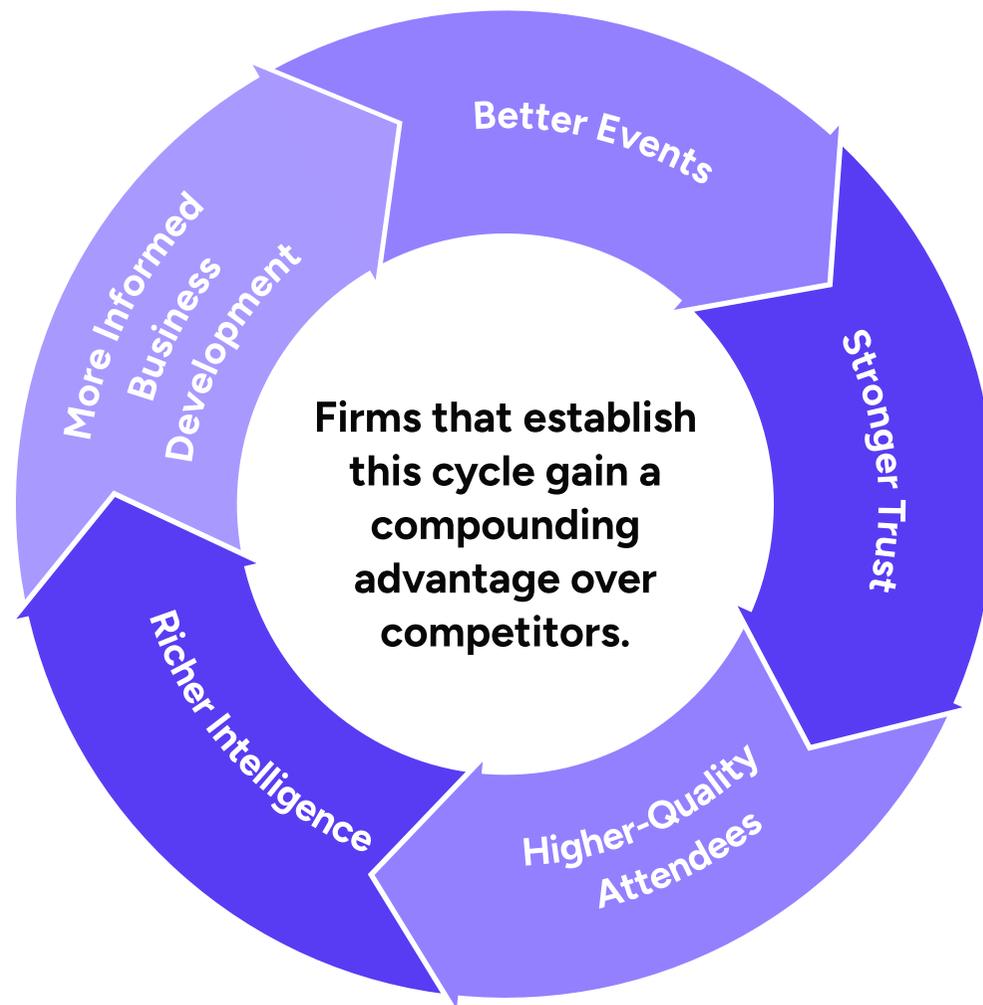
This gives Freshfields a unified view of each client's event interactions alongside their broader relationship history, enabling more informed and timely business development.

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Welcome back, Daniel

Events Archive

Future Summit

Global Inve

Live

Live
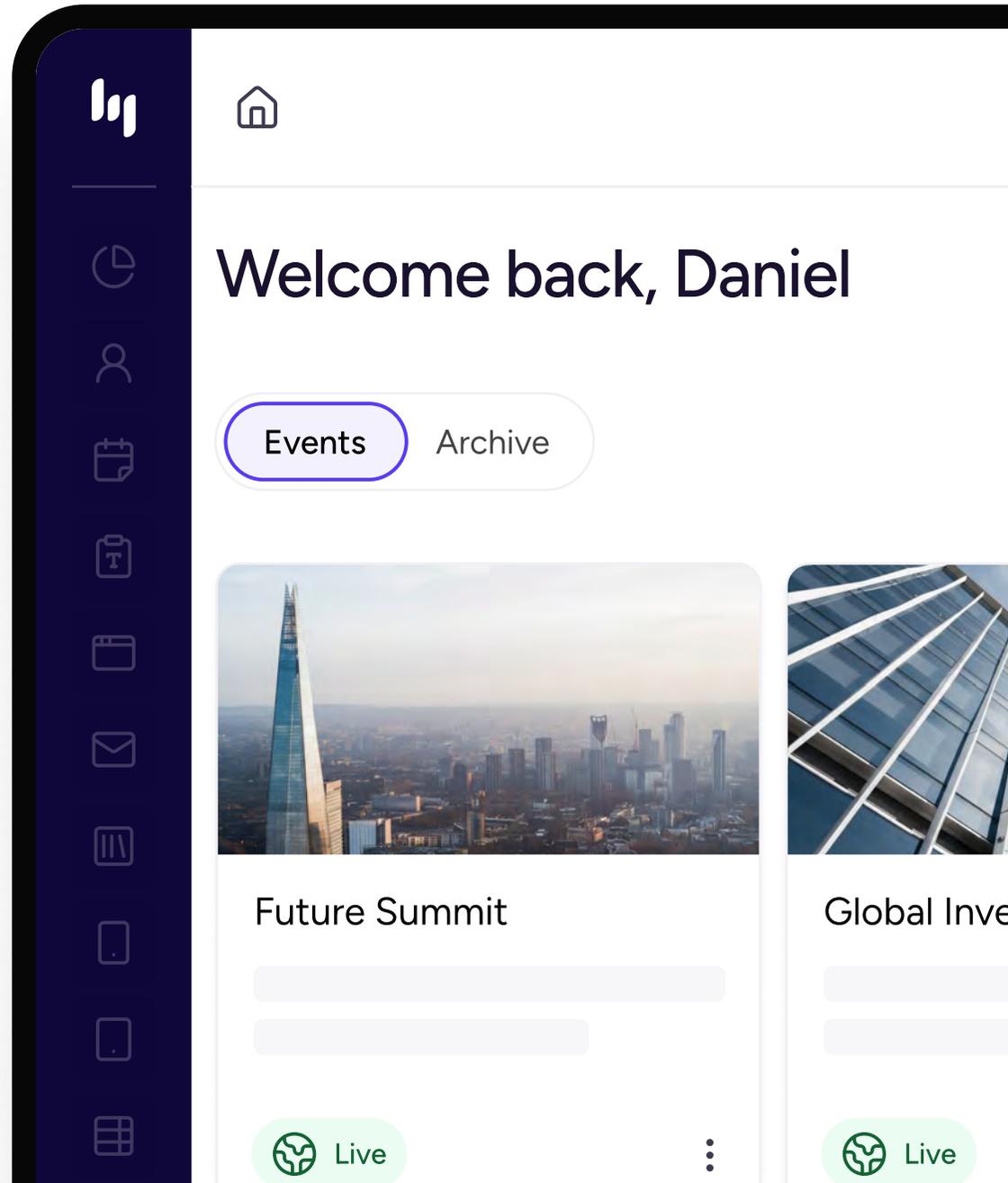
4.3 ## The Reputation Feedback Loop

Events do not exist in isolation. They feed directly into your firm's reputation. Edelman's 2024 Trust Barometer shows that business is the only global institution still considered broadly trusted, with a trust score of 63 compared to NGOs (59), government (51) and media (50). Every well-executed event reinforces your firm's position within that trust. Every poorly executed one erodes it.

This creates a feedback loop: high-quality events build reputation, which attracts higher-quality attendees, which creates richer engagement, which generates better intelligence, which informs better events. The firms that enter this virtuous cycle first gain a compounding advantage.

Better Events

Stronger Trust

Higher-Quality Attendees

Richer Intelligence

More Informed Business Development

Firms that establish this cycle gain a compounding advantage over competitors.

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Technology: Choosing the Right Platform, Not the Most Features

5.1 What Mature Legal Event Teams Actually Need

The event technology market is crowded, and it is easy to be seduced by feature-rich platforms. Mature legal event teams, those who have learned from experience, consistently prioritise four qualities over feature count:

- ✓ **End-to-end capability.** A single platform that handles pre-event registration and communications, onsite management and post-event analytics, without requiring multiple vendor relationships.

- ✓ **Seamless CRM integration.** Data must flow effortlessly between the event platform and the firm's CRM and marketing automation systems, so that event intelligence is immediately available to partners and business-development teams.

- ✓ **Security and compliance.** Encryption, single sign-on, multi-factor authentication and compliance certifications (such as SOC 2) are non-negotiable for firms handling sensitive client data.

- ✓ **Human support and training.** Technology is only valuable if people adopt it. Given that 88% of data breaches stem from human error, training and ongoing support are as important as the technology itself.

5.2 The Hidden Costs of Complexity

Forrester's research notes that a quarter of large enterprises use six or more event-technology solutions, yet only a fifth have integrated them with their marketing stack. This tool proliferation creates hidden costs: overlapping functionality, inconsistent data, complex user training and unpredictable pricing.

With **54%** of event professionals anticipating the highest cost increases for special events, firms cannot afford to pay for unused features or manage fragmented technology stacks. The most effective approach is a modular, scalable platform that provides the right balance of capability and simplicity, one that can grow with your programme without introducing unnecessary complexity.

Website visits

54%

54%

Of event professionals anticipating the highest cost increases for special events.

The Legal Events Maturity Model: Where Does Your Firm Stand?

Based on the research and best practices outlined in this whitepaper, we propose a four-stage maturity model for legal event programmes. This framework helps firms assess their current capabilities and identify the most impactful next steps.

Stage	Characteristics	Data Practice	Typical Outcome
1. Ad Hoc	Events are reactive, one-off projects managed by individual partners or PAs	Spreadsheets, no CRM link, data lost after event	Inconsistent quality, no measurable ROI
2. Organised	Centralised event team with templates and basic processes	Registration data captured but siloed from CRM	Consistent branding, improved efficiency
3. Integrated	Event data flows into CRM; compliance built into workflows; portfolio planned annually	Attendance and engagement tracked and linked to BD pipeline	Measurable pipeline impact, reduced risk
4. Strategic	Events are a core growth channel with dedicated leadership, governance and continuous measurement	Predictive analytics; real-time dashboards; closed-loop reporting	Compounding trust advantage; events drive demonstrable revenue

Most law firms sit at Stage 1 or 2. The research presented in this whitepaper — particularly the finding that only 20% of organisations have integrated their event technology with their marketing stack — suggests that firms moving to Stage 3 or 4 will gain a significant competitive advantage.

What Market-Leading Legal Event Teams Do Differently

Across our research and client work, six practices consistently distinguish the highest-performing legal event teams:

1. **They treat events as a strategic programme, not a series of projects.** High-performing teams plan an annual portfolio aligned with firm priorities, client development, thought leadership, recruitment and alumni engagement. Each event has defined objectives, a target audience and success metrics before a single invitation is sent.

2. **They invest in professional leadership and governance.** Leading firms appoint Heads of Events or Event Directors with the authority to set policies, templates and standards. The LMA's CMO survey found that more than half of marketing decision-makers now have a seat at the firm's strategic-planning table. These leaders coordinate across practice groups, IT and compliance to minimise risk and maximise impact.

3. **They connect event data to business development.** They select event platforms that integrate with CRM and marketing-automation systems, ensuring that attendance, engagement and feedback flow into the business-development pipeline. Freshfields' integration of Eventogy with Salesforce is a prime example of this approach in practice.

4. **They obsess over client experience.** Ease of registration, personalised communications, thoughtful logistics and timely follow-up, these details signal to clients that their time is valued. Templates and mobile apps ensure consistency, while the human touches (a handwritten note from a partner, a curated seating plan) create lasting impressions.

5. **They build compliance into the workflow, not onto it.** Privacy by design is embedded in event processes: consent clauses in registration forms, automated data-retention policies, single sign-on and multi-factor authentication, and regular staff training. Compliance is a feature of the system, not an afterthought.

6. **They measure, learn and iterate.** They define metrics across the event lifecycle: registration rates, attendance, engagement scores, client satisfaction and pipeline impact. And use post-event analysis to refine future programmes. Forrester's finding that 95% of event professionals plan to enhance data measurement confirms the direction of travel.

Five Actions for Legal Event Leaders

For event leaders ready to move their programmes forward, we recommend five immediate priorities:

Adopt a portfolio mindset

Map your firm's event activity for the year ahead, categorise events by objective (client development, thought leadership, recruitment, alumni) and ensure each format, from intimate roundtables to flagship conferences, serves a defined strategic purpose.

Build internal advocacy around trust and reputation

Use the data in this whitepaper to make the case for events as a strategic investment. The finding that 77% of people trust brands more after face-to-face interaction is a powerful argument for partners who question whether events justify their cost.

Invest in integrated, secure technology

Choose a platform that provides end-to-end event management, integrates with your CRM, meets your security requirements and comes with human support. Avoid the trap of accumulating multiple point solutions that create data silos and operational complexity.

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Make compliance a system, not a checklist

Audit your data flows, update consent mechanisms, implement multi-factor authentication and, critically, invest in training. The 88% human-error statistic should focus minds: security is a people challenge, not just a technology one.

Measure what matters and close the loop

Define metrics across registration, attendance, engagement, satisfaction and pipeline impact. Integrate this data into your business-development dashboards. With only 20% of organisations currently connecting event technology to their marketing stack, closing this gap represents a significant competitive opportunity.

20%

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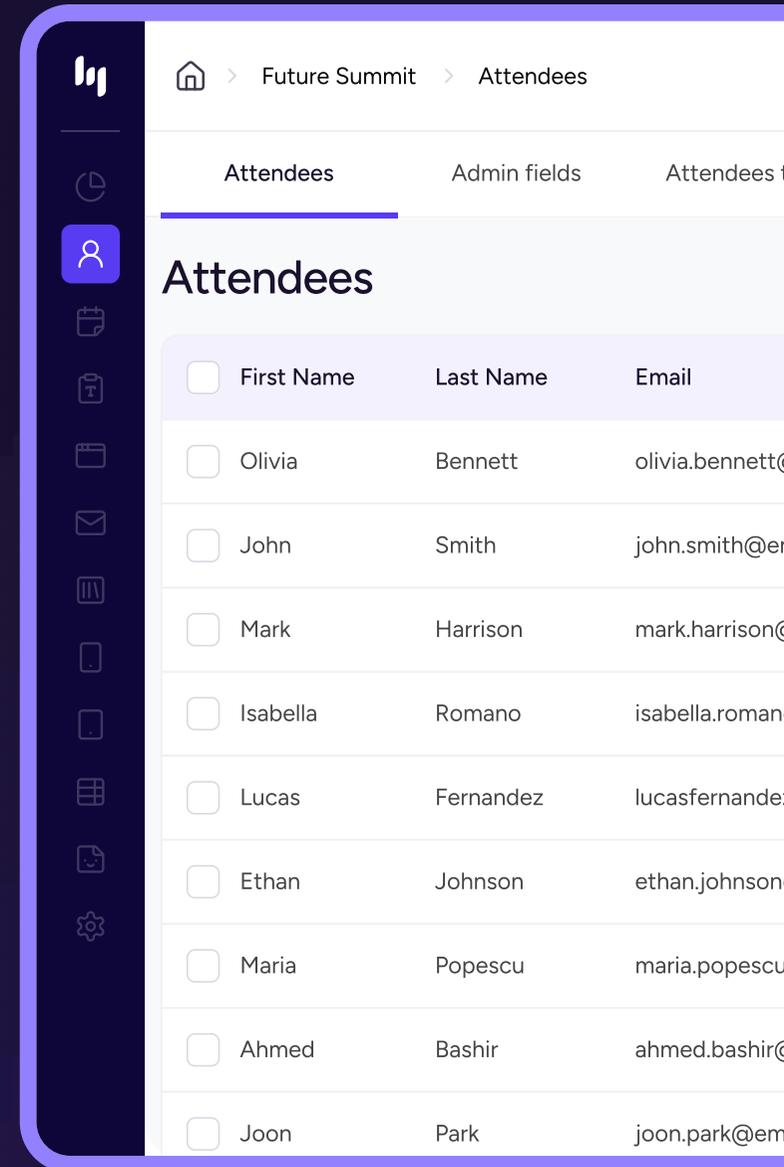
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Conclusion

In a profession where reputational risk is the number one concern and marketing budgets must demonstrate return on investment, events have emerged as strategic assets — not logistical exercises. They offer a unique and proven ability to build trust, demonstrate expertise, gather intelligence and deepen client relationships in ways that digital channels cannot match.

But realising this potential requires a fundamental shift in how firms approach events. It means moving from ad-hoc projects to data-driven programmes, from fragmented tools to integrated platforms, and from anecdotal justification to measurable impact.

The firms that make this shift will enter the virtuous cycle described in this whitepaper: better events driving stronger trust, richer intelligence and more effective business development. Those who do not will find themselves spending more for less in an increasingly competitive market for client attention.

Eventogy was purpose-built for this challenge. Designed for complex, repeatable, high-stakes events in legal and professional services, it provides the operational foundation — from invitation management and compliance to CRM integration and post-event analytics — to deliver strategic event programmes efficiently and consistently.

> The question is not whether your firm should invest in events. It is whether you are getting everything your events could deliver.

Future Summit > **Attendees**

Attendees   Admin fields   Attendees

Attendees

	First Name	Last Name	Email
☐	Olivia	Bennett	olivia.bennett@e
☐	John	Smith	john.smith@e
☐	Mark	Harrison	mark.harrison@
☐	Isabella	Romano	isabella.roman
☐	Lucas	Fernandez	lucasfernande
☐	Ethan	Johnson	ethan.johnson
☐	Maria	Popescu	maria.popescu
☐	Ahmed	Bashir	ahmed.bashir@
☐	Joon	Park	joon.park@em

Sources

Corporate Event News – 2023 Freeman Trust Report summary: **77%** of respondents trusted brands more after face-to-face interaction; **72%** felt more positive about a company after attending an event; **64%** said trust endured for at least a month.

ExpoPlatform – Forrester's State of B2B Events survey: 92% improving post-event follow-up; **77%** increasing year-round engagement; **95%** focusing on data measurement; only **20%** integrated with marketing stack.

MyCase blog – "Top 40+ Law Firm Marketing Statistics for 2026": American Bar Association data showing **44%** of law firms sponsor or attend events; **78%** use paid search with **82%** finding ROI underwhelming.

Embroker – 2025 Legal Risk Index: 47% of legal professionals cite reputational risk as their top concern.

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