



MESA Monthly Member Meeting (4M)

Thursday 31st October

Engagement at Events with Generational Differences

Thank you to [Chris Nelson](#), Customer Relations Manager, [CrowdComms](#), MESA Patron Member, for the MESA Pledge reading.

Thank you for the E-Book Express Showcase (provided by [Richard John](#), COO of [Realise](#), MESA Member). View in the Community Platform – [Trends, Reports, Videos & E-Books](#) (Files / E-Books / 4M's / October 2024) or click on the direct links below:

1. **14 Tactics to Combat Late Registrations** – [Link in Community Platform](#)
2. **Attendee Exhibitor Engagement on Exhibition Floor** – [Link in Community Platform](#)
3. **GDPR in Event Marketing** – [Link in Community Platform](#)
4. **EOS World Class Meetings** – [Link in Community Platform](#)
5. **Event Management Education** – [Link in Community Platform](#)

Overview – [Link in Community Platform](#)

Thank you for the 5 snippets in 5 minutes "5 Tips to Rethink Event Sustainability Beyond Standards" from [Franco Bondi](#), CEO & Co-Founder, [Eventboost](#), MESA Member. You can [view the slides on Gamma AI here](#)

- **Set Clear Positive Impact Goals** – Specific Goals and Objectives for a Clear Purpose
- **Engage Local Communities and Support Local Businesses** – Local Sourcing, Community Engagement
- **Incorporate Green Event Practices** – Sustainable Energy, Waste Reduction, Small Choices, Big Impact
- **Create Opportunities for Social Good** – Partnerships, Donations, Volunteer Activities, Resource Sharing
- **Educate and Empower Attendees** – Workshops, Panels, Displays

View in the MESA Community – [MESA Events – Summaries & Slides](#) (Files / 4M's 2024 / October) – [Direct Link to snippets slides](#)

"Engagement and Communication at Events (and in our own teams) Across Generations". How do different generations communicate, and why is it important for us? We need to keep all generations engaged for cross-generational collaboration and different engagement styles. Each generation (Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, Gen Z) has unique communication preferences and expectations - acknowledging these helps create better interactions.

KEY OUTCOMES FROM DISCUSSION:

- **Evolving Event Formats / Festivalisation:** Trend towards shorter, more interactive sessions (higher energy 'edutainment' style) with elements like gamification, live music / stand-up comedians and unique/interesting and street foods, frequent breaks – creating "festival-like" environments resonate well with younger generations. Millennials, who are now the event and speaker decision makers, have a different approach to attending conferences, valuing the experience, and receiving something in return and need to help make this change)
- **Gen Z do not make rigid distinctions** between their **work life and personal life** - they often look for conference content that brings them personal development as well as professional development (e.g., topics such as mindfulness and well-being)
- **Do not alienate other generations:** There is a need to design events that attract new audiences while keeping other audiences' content and engaged
- **Gen Z Preferences:** Over 70% of Gen Z prefer face-to-face communication in the workplace, despite growing up in a digital age. Leaders who can foster personal, in-person connections while navigating digital tools will be better positioned to engage Gen Z
- **Social Anxiety and Flexibility:** Many Gen Z employees struggle with social anxiety, so creating a welcoming, flexible environment is essential. Meetings and events may benefit from open formats, allowing attendees to come and go freely, which reduces pressure and increases participation
- **Direct Feedback with Empathy:** Gen Z is known for providing clear, direct feedback but also expects empathy and constructive support when receiving feedback. Managers should aim for a feedback approach that balances directness with understanding, encouraging a supportive environment
- **Involving Gen Z in Solutions:** Gen Z appreciates being actively involved in problem-solving rather than just receiving orders. Managers who frame challenges as collaborative opportunities can help Gen Z employees feel more engaged and motivated
- **Side Hustles and Flexibility:** Gen Z is highly entrepreneurial, with 71% having a side hustle. While this may raise concerns for employers, it's essential to focus on output and performance rather than strict adherence to traditional work hours
- **Constant Feedback:** Gen Z employees crave regular feedback, with 63% wanting it daily and 11% even more frequently. Managers should expect to be in constant dialogue with Gen Z employees to keep them engaged and supported

- **Importance of Onboarding:** The onboarding process is critical for understanding how each generation works best. Establishing clear communication preferences and expectations early on is vital for long-term success
- **Digital Distractions at Events:** Attendees, especially younger ones, may feel compelled to document events via social media. Event organisers should balance encouraging engagement with discouraging distractions
- genuinely present. **Leverage Technology Effectively** - Incorporate technology to engage younger generations at events (social media, apps, live polls), but balance this with more traditional forms for older attendees or team members
- **Bridging Generational Gaps:** There is an importance of intentional networking and mentorship across generations to break down silos and divisions. Events should aim to inspire cross-generational collaboration rather than segregate by age

Overview of Generational Communication Preferences:

- **Gen Z (1997-2012) | Ages 12-27** The first fully digital generation, entering the workforce and leaving their mark. They grew up with tech, hold others accountable, and are highly competitive. Known for **FOMO** (Fear of Missing Out).
Preferred communication: visual, digital formats—short videos, emojis, and quick, engaging content
- **Millennials | Gen Y (1981-1996) | Ages 28-43** Often in management roles, this generation excels in teamwork and collaboration. They act as a bridge between Gen X and Z, adapting to both.
Preferred communication: social media, instant messaging, and collaborative digital tools
- **Gen X (1965-1980) | Ages 44-59** Independent and direct, they focus on getting tasks done efficiently. Though initially analogue, they've adapted well to digital technology.
Preferred communication: a blend of face-to-face interaction and digital methods, with email being a top choice
- **Baby Boomers (1946-1964) | Ages 60-78** As they near the end of their professional careers, they offer wisdom and experience. Traditional in their approach but not averse to modern tools.
Preferred communication: phone calls and email, valuing personal, direct communication

Additional Information and Links

- Alastair Greener – speaker slides in MESA Community Platform – [The Six Generations in 2024](#)
- Rob Davidson - speaker slides in MESA Community Platform – [Event Architecture and programme design for different generations](#)
- Alisa Grafton - speaker slides in MESA Community Platform – [Generation Z in the workplace](#)
- Events Made Simple – [Expert Strategies for Multigenerational Events](#)
- Newsletter by Alison Grafton – [Connecting with Generation Z](#)
- Podcast: Bregje Frens, Co-founder Conferli - [Interviews Rob Davidson – Is Bleisure the Future?](#) (September 2023)
- MESA April 2023 4M – [Generational Gaps Summary](#)
- MESA October 2023 Planer Forum - [CPL International Research \(Generational differences at events\)](#)

Please provide your feedback on this session – we would love to hear what you say!

Thank you to our speakers:

[Franco Bondi](#), CEO & Co-Founder, [Eventboost](#), MESA Member

[Alastair Greener](#), Generational Communications Speaker & Consultant at [PresentYourself.co.uk](#), Event MC and TV Presenter

[Dr Rob Davidson](#), International Speaker and Trends Expert, MD of [MICE Knowledge](#)

[Alisa Grafton](#), Speaker & Expert of [Great Networking](#)

The session was moderated by [Richard John](#), COO of [Realise](#), MESA Member



NEXT MEETING:

MESA MONTHLY MEMBER MEETINGS (4M's)

1400 GMT / 1500 CET:

Wednesday 13th November: How to Turn a Simple Idea into a Successful Event Tech Company

With guest speaker [Juraj Holub](#)

Moderated by [Sébastien Braun](#)

We look forward to seeing you there!

[MESA Events page](#)

[MESA MONTHLY MEMBER MEETINGS \(4M's\)](#)

[Join us at ibtm - MESA Stand P52](#)

[Please connect to our LinkedIn page](#)

Thank you, MESA MEMBERS!

Remember: You are in the MESA Community Platform (Intranet wall) - For general access and content / To be connected and hear about events / To get to know MESA and the community. **Please post content and connect with each other**