

# Trends | Events & Brand Activation

# Events & Brand Activation

Industry Observations

## **Creative concepts are no longer an option - they're a requirement**

Brands want to see fresh ideas. It's no longer about paying the project fee for event delivery - they expect the creative element to be a given.

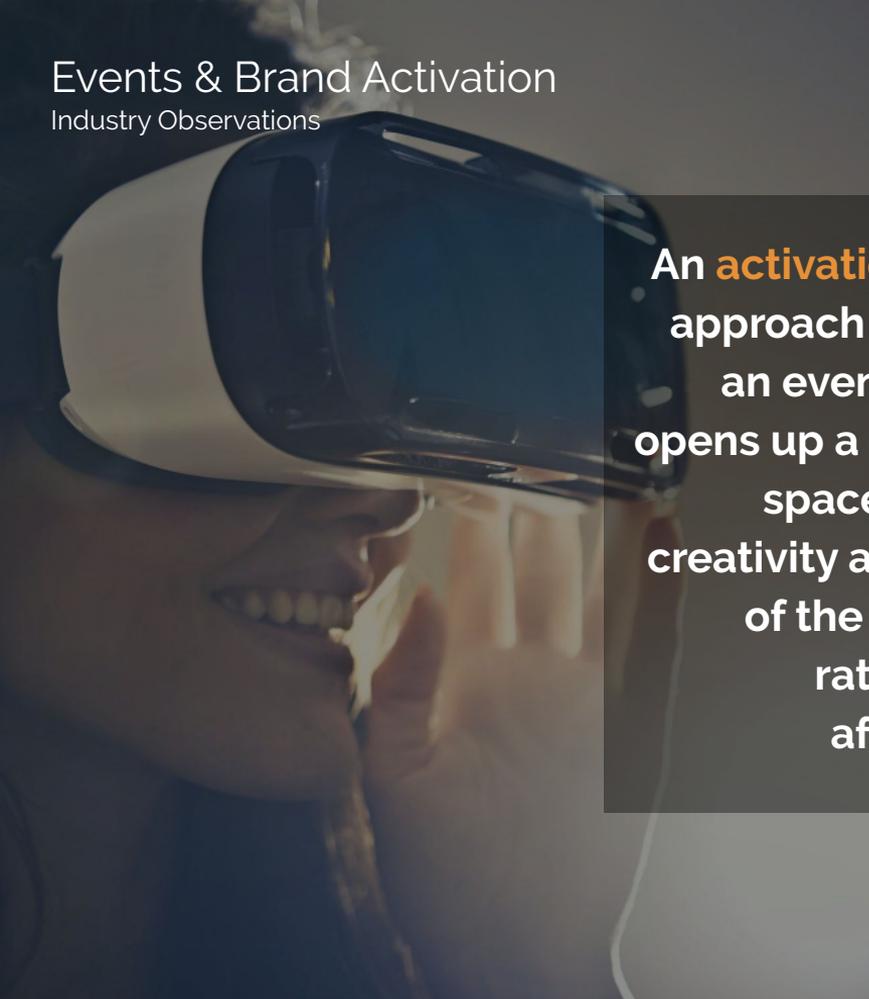
In the past, when a brand wanted to educate their audience at an event, they'd put up a backdrop. But today, they're playing with audio guides, games, and the experiential journey.

AR and VR are being incorporated to add dimension to the event experience. Lucky draws are tried and tired; clients want interactivity that emphasises brand experience and brand impression.



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**An activation-focused approach rather than an event approach opens up a conceptual space to think of creativity as the driver of the experience rather than an afterthought.**

## Opportunity

Brands that seamlessly integrate AR/VR into events with an understanding of how it can enhance the experience of their product or service will have a clear advantage over others.

Aside from AR and VR, brands willing to explore with creative activations are on the right path, although care should be taken to always have the right intent - piling on the activations for the sake of interactivity, with no direction of how they lead up to business goals, does little justice to event branding.

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### Project Miller

Traditional activations revolve around supply POSM, trade and merchant engagements - but things are catching up.

Marketers are beginning to see that brand experience extends beyond the event and that merchant POS are fair play.

Project Miller was a special operation involving marketing of a heavily regulated product in unconventional ways. The ROOTS Brand Activation team crafted a conceptual drink based on the product's theme, bamboo charcoal, serving it exclusively at partner bars and inviting KOLs to sample. The project blurred the lines between various marketing disciplines, demonstrating what activation could be, independent of an event-centric focus.



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## Digitalisation in 4 main areas

- Cloud-based management solutions
- Augmented reality & virtual reality
- Live streaming
- **Event management apps**

In particular, aside from AR and VR spatial experience, we've noticed a trending demand for event management apps. User-friendly apps that help event organisers manage, gamify, or personalise events are becoming more in use. 76% of event professionals who do not use an event app intend on adopting one in the next year.\*

Event management apps are not new to conferences, which use them to automate certain processes such as self check-in. The source of the demand stems from a desire to digitalise events, which may not be practical for smaller events.

\*Event MB

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### Event apps - a matter of feature and scale

Features are the most important consideration for event organisers. The top 3 features in an event app that organisers want are onsite registration (19%), in-app registration (16%), and content capture (13%).\*

But for event apps, the demand is for highly personalised features that allow for specific kinds of games and interactivity, in addition to the basic registration features. Not a single app has features robust enough to meet *all* the varied demands of large and small scale events - yet.

The apps on the market cater to larger conferences, which lack personalised features that more intimate events require such as participant voting (e.g. for Best Dressed contests) and seat selection options.

That aside, the feasibility of using apps for smaller events is a matter of scale - the per head cost, divided among fewer people, is naturally higher than the per head cost for a conference.

\*Event MB



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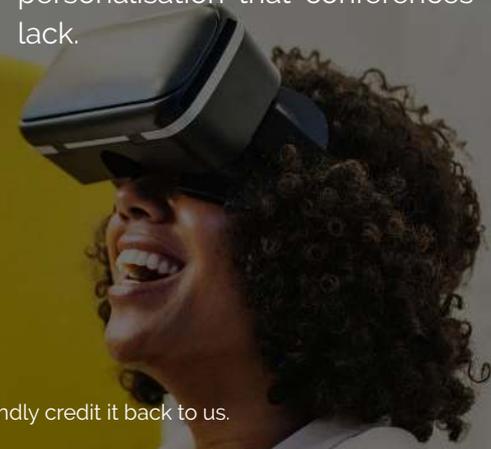
### Opportunity

91% of event planners say that adopting a mobile event app has provided a positive ROI.\* Despite the extremely encouraging outlook, cost is a major factor for the easy adoption of dinner apps. Since only 1.2% of the event budget for each attendee is allocated for event apps, the pay-off from using these apps only once may not be enough to offset the higher 'rental' price.\*

\*Global Experience Specialists

Some event companies that specialise in dinner events have developed their own proprietary event management software to meet this demand. The upfront cost of building their own app will eventually be offset by the rental accumulated over some time. In the long-run when the development cost has been covered, the owner can leverage on the app as a part of the service offering instead of charging per use, thus bolstering their value-added services.

Meanwhile, the amount of event apps has grown 20% year on year.\* At this rate, it's only a matter of time that the gap will be filled for rentable apps at an affordable price that strike the right balance between the efficiency of conferences and the personalisation that conferences lack.





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