

Meetings Mean Business + Skift Present:

What Millennials Want in Meetings



Millennial meeting attendees value face-to-face networking at meetings and events just as much as previous generations. Recognizing this, forward thinking industry stakeholders are implementing next generation meeting design and event technologies that are more aligned with Millennials' generational preferences.

Skift Team + Meetings Mean Business



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About Us

Meetings Mean Business is an industry-wide coalition that was created in 2009 to showcase the incredible value that business meetings, travel and events bring to the U.S. economy. Its members span all facets of the face-to-face meetings and events industry, which have come together behind a common goal: providing the resources, tools and information to show the real impact the industry has on businesses, economies and communities. Meetings Mean Business is organized around three central pillars:

Creating Personal Connections – Personal relationships are at the core of every business decision and face-to-face meetings provide professionals with that personal interaction, which leads to deeper relationships. The ability to look a new business opportunity in the eye and close the deal with a handshake simply cannot be replicated. Face-to-face meetings more effectively capture the attention of participants, inspire positive emotional climates and drive collaboration by building meaningful business relationships. Meetings create a shared sense of missions and purpose, foster empathy across organizational lines and create camaraderie that positions an organization for success.

Driving Positive Business Outcomes – Meetings and events deliver profits, help win new accounts, serve as education platforms and allow colleagues and partners to come together to innovate and achieve results. Organizations depend on face-to-face meetings to win new customers, close new deals and develop high-performing talent. The business outcome of a face-to-face meeting far exceeds any other. The ability to sit down one-on-one with colleagues and leaders across industries provides for instant collaboration and real-time productivity. Conventions and conferences serve as critical education platforms for professionals and are key components for developing advanced skills and workforce training.

Building Strong Communities – Outside of the results driven by business meetings, the industry creates hundreds of thousands of jobs, generates billions of dollars of revenue and supports communities across the country. The services provided by the meetings and travel industry often go unnoticed, but the economic impact is unmistakable. It is an economic engine, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs, generating billions of dollars in revenue and supporting communities across the country. Hosting an event, convention or trade show stimulates a region's economy by bringing in new visitors, who stay in area hotels, eat in local restaurants, shop in neighborhood stores and bring new revenue to the destination.

Bringing the industry together with one voice, Meetings Mean Business shows the real power of what business meetings, conferences, conventions, incentive travel, trade shows and exhibitions collectively do for people, businesses and communities.

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Executive Summary

Born roughly between 1980-2000, Millennials are often portrayed as preferring texting to talking and online to real life. The truth is that they prize face-to-face meetings as much as previous generations. This is because face-to-face meetings drive business, help maintain professional relationships, and promote personal and professional development better than any other medium. This has been the case for every generation throughout history.

Of course, technology is a powerful complement to that live engagement before, during and after a meeting. Technology has the ability to build attendance at face-to-face events and deliver exponentially more attention to stakeholders' messaging and products on a global scale. A primary theme of this report focuses on how virtual content and digital communication have the ability to enhance face-to-face meetings.

Millennials, or Generation Y, make up the largest segment of the U.S. workforce¹ and they're communicating loud and clear what they want in meetings and events. As a demographic that has heavily relied on technology since their childhood years, Millennials are seeking more interactive face-to-face meetings with more digital connectivity.

However, there is growing discussion among their ranks that, while the meetings industry has shown significant interest in conducting research around modern meeting design and event technology, there's room for improvement in terms of real world implementation. Part of this report shares some present examples of new event technologies that help meeting attendees engage in new ways.

Most of the conversation in the past revolving around Millennials has focused on technology as the primary generational trait. The argument has long held that the digital/analog divide defines the psychographic chasm between Gen Y and Boomer networking behavior. Although, there are significant socio-economic factors that are also impacting how and why Millennials want to engage with face-to-face meetings, which haven't been significantly explored by the meetings and events industry.

Over the last 15 years, Millennials have entered the workforce during an extremely tumultuous time in American history when society's traditional views about the national economy, global politics, formal education and urban living were disrupted at their foundational levels. That has caused a primary shift in Millennials' priorities and worldviews. Because of those disruptions, Millennials are more inclined to believe that a wide network of professional contacts and continuing industry sector education are more important than advanced degrees or longevity with any one company for professional growth opportunities. For them, there is no such thing as a corporate ladder, and a college education provides fewer guarantees and more debt than it did for previous generations.

Therefore, meetings and events offer the best possible platform to help Millennials expand their networks, customize their self-education, and personalize their career paths. That is why Millennials are advocating for more effective meeting design and better ways to connect, both physically and virtually, in a shifting and highly competitive global marketplace. Major meeting industry organizations are supplying the research about why companies and associations should implement new meeting strategies. There's also a wave of new event tech suppliers who have the tools to facilitate it, which also provide metrics data that help prove their ROI. Now, Millennials are saying, it's time for meeting owners to take more advantage of all that intelligence and deliver on the promise of the future.

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About Skift

Skift is a travel intelligence company that offers news, data, and services to professionals in travel and professional travelers, to help them make smart decisions about travel.

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Introduction

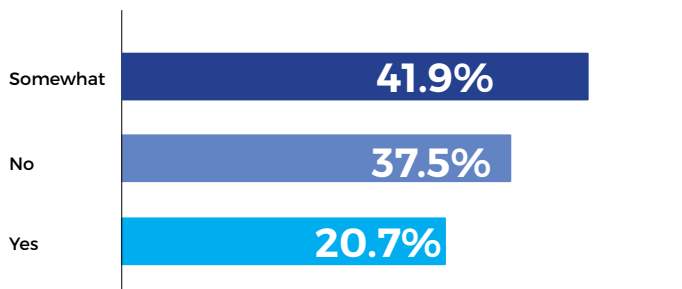


According to both the Pew Research Center¹ and Goldman Sachs Macroeconomic Insights², the population of Millennials in the American workforce surpassed Baby Boomers for the first time in Q1 2015.

This is creating a dramatic shift in the meetings and events industry because Millennial meeting planners and attendees prefer to learn and network differently than previous generations. Their propensity to reach for the nearest electronic device to engage with clients and colleagues, and their affinity for social media, have traditionally been cited as primary differentiators. Because of that, there's still sometimes the misperception that Millennials, or Generation Y, don't value face-to-face meetings as much as previous generations.

According to a Skift poll conducted in May 2015, over 62% of the participants believe virtual meetings are encroaching, or somewhat encroaching, on face-to-face meetings. Therefore, both Millennials and meetings industry stakeholders need to continue emphasizing why young corporate executives and association members value face-to-face events.

Do you believe virtual meetings encroach on face-to-face meetings?



Source: Skift/MMB Survey (2015)

According to a Cornerstone OnDemand study, “The State of Workplace Productivity,” polling over 1,000 working Americans aged 18 and over, 72% of respondents prefer face-to-face meetings over virtual communication. More telling, 41% of Millennials feel overwhelmed with information overload compared to 31% of older generations. Some 38% of Millennials say they are challenged with technology overload, versus 20% of older generations. And yet the misperceptions regarding how much Millennials value face-to-face events linger.

There is a significant body of research supporting the importance that Millennials place on face-to-face meetings. In February 2015, the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), International Association of Exhibitions & Events (IAEE), and The Experience Institute delivered phase one of “The Decision to Attend” research delving into the motivational factors that drive people to attend events. The study pulled survey data from 7,171 respondents who were asked to identify how and why they decide to attend destination meetings and conventions.

The report asserts that the top motivating factors to attend meetings and conventions revolve around considerations regarding destination, people, content and the over-

all meeting experience. One primary takeaway shows that Millennials desire to attend live meetings and events even more than older generations. According to the survey results, “If circumstances allowed, nearly 65% of respondents reported they would attend [meetings and events] more often. Responses varied by generation, from Gen Y/Millennials at 79% and Gen Xers at 71%, to Boomers at 63% and Pre Boomers at 46%.” In this instance, the numbers show that Millennials are more interested in face-to-face engagement than previous generations.

In addition, the report states that Millennials are more likely to explore the destination than other generations to create a more holistic destination experience, suggesting a further factor motivating Gen Y interest in destination meetings. The report states: “Three quarters (75.6%) of all respondents are likely or highly likely to get ‘out & about’ during the convention/exhibition. Although there is no significant variance by frequency of attendance, there is by generation, with Gen Y/Millennials the most likely to venture out at a combined 85.2%.”

In 2012, PCMA published the first truly comprehensive report on the Millennial psychographic profile within the context of meetings: “What the Millennial Generation Prefers in Their Meetings, Conventions & Events.” A survey of over 2,000 Gen Y respondents were asked to rank between 1-5 the importance of 78 questions relating to meeting design and networking.

Millennial Communication Channel Preferences

#	Question	1 = Prefer least	2	3	4	5= Prefer most	Mean
1	Official traditional letters	17.28%	21.36%	26.09%	23.23%	12.04%	2.91
2	Brochures	19.35%	26.09%	30.04%	17.20%	7.31%	2.67
3	Telephone	9.75%	15.34%	23.37%	28.17%	23.37%	3.40
4	Facebook	9.39%	11.40%	21.22%	29.82%	28.17%	3.56
5	Twitter	38.35%	15.05%	17.92%	15.41%	13.26%	2.50
6	LinkedIn	43.37%	19.71%	19.86%	12.33%	4.73%	2.15
7	E-mail	0.79%	3.30%	14.12%	34.48%	47.31%	4.25
8	Text message	6.16%	9.03%	20.79%	29.68%	34.34%	3.77
9	Blog	36.20%	26.09%	21.94%	11.04%	4.73%	2.22
10	Face-to-face	1.79%	3.73%	12.54%	28.24%	53.69%	4.28
11	Website	4.16%	9.03%	24.73%	34.48%	27.60%	3.72

Source: PCMA. “What the Millennial Generation Prefers in Their Meetings, Conventions and Events”
https://www.pcma.org/docs/be-in-the-know-docs/millennial_generation_findings.pdf?sfvrsn=0

Millennial Motivation to Attend a Meeting, Event or Convention

#	Question	1 = Prefer least	2	3	4	5 = Prefer most	Mean
1	Secure and safe environment	1.43%	2.78%	14.90%	33.43%	46.61%	4.24
2	Environment for generating and sharing my ideas	1.21%	7.27%	22.45%	36.78%	31.29%	3.93
3	Provide career coaching opportunities	1.07%	4.42%	17.11%	36.49%	39.49%	4.13
4	Strong Internet/ social media presence	3.78%	8.98%	27.51%	33.14%	25.59%	3.71
5	Provide career networking and job opportunities	0.36%	2.00%	10.12%	29.15%	57.16%	4.44
6	In a location with many activities	0.86%	3.71%	16.39%	35.78%	42.27%	4.18
7	In a location close to home	2.99%	8.13%	22.17%	30.86%	33.78%	3.91
8	Condensed program to limit time away form home	4.06%	8.98%	30.65%	31.72%	22.17%	3.66
9	In a location with a prestigious image	3.06%	8.70%	22.95%	34.64%	28.51%	3.83
10	Meeting, event or convention held during the weekend	16.18%	15.68%	26.87%	23.24%	15.89%	3.13
11	Meeting, event or convention held during the week	4.78%	10.76%	28.44%	32.15%	21.38%	3.62
12	Condensed program to allow for extracurricular activities	1.28%	5.13%	23.52%	38.20%	29.51%	3.97
13	Compact education or training	1.14%	5.20%	26.66%	37.06%	25.59%	3.94
14	Scholarships/Fellowships/ Financial inducements	1.00%	3.85%	13.04%	32.00%	48.90%	4.28
15	Personal recognition	3.14%	7.34%	24.95%	32.57%	30.65%	3.84
16	Menu of options in educational programming	2.07%	5.35%	25.02%	37.35%	25.59%	3.93
17	Provides professional development	0.50%	2.42%	14.90%	34.78%	45.97%	4.28

Source: PCMA. "What the Millennial Generation Prefers in Their Meetings, Conventions and Events"
https://www.pcma.org/docs/be-in-the-know-docs/millennial_generation_findings.pdf?sfvrsn=0

Among of the highest ranked responses at an average of 4.44, Millennials are significantly motivated to participate in meetings and events for the purposes of career networking and job opportunities. In response to the question about how Millennials prefer to communicate, the most preferred method was face-to-face, ranked at 4.28. The highest-rated response (4.56) pertained to how much Millennials want to see more web-based interactivity integrated into meetings and events.

In 2013, the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) produced another seminal report: “Associations, Generation Y & the Millennials.” This should be required reading for anyone in meetings and events. The report is based on an ASAE-sponsored retreat that convened 26 young association professionals to better understand the challenges Gen Y are facing in the industry.

The report states: “The idea that Generation Y and younger cannot or will not engage in face-to-face interaction is part of the popular mythology that has grown up around this demographic. Yes, they are heavily immersed in technology, but they are still humans with just as many needs for sharing and connection as any other generation.”

During the ASAE event, the group of Millennials were asked what they believe are the biggest myths about their generation. The three primary misperceptions, which they said are destructive to their careers, are preconceived notions suggesting: Millennials are entitled; members of Gen Y want immediate advancement and commensurate salaries; and they’re job hoppers with no loyalty to their companies.

In 2015, the American Program Bureau speaker association published: “How Millennials See Meetings Differently.” According to Dan Schawbel, a speaker and New York Times bestselling author, “Millennials find value in conferences and meetings... because they are seeking networking and career opportunities more than ever before. Millennials are searching for rewarding jobs, so they view conferences as a way to connect with great organizations face-to-face.”

Professional development is the most common theme among Millennial professionals today regarding why they value live interaction at events.

“I think it’s quite silly and misguided that people think we don’t value face-to-face meetings,” says Linsey Odre (24), manager of client services at Five O’Clock Club, a human resources company. “We can be perceived as antisocial because we’re always connected, but if you’re going to be successful working with people, you have to be comfortable working with people face-to-face. My main value for attending meetings is meeting other HR people to make new professional relationships and learn how to be better at my job. I think it’s pretty straightforward why we attend conferences.”

Millennial Attendees Want Face-to-Face



Skift Take:

Humans are social creatures. Just because Millennials use technology more than past generations, they still prefer face-to-face engagement to gauge people's reactions and intentions, communicate more holistically by using more senses, and generate business development better.

We spoke with a number of Gen Y executives about why they value face-to-face events, and how those experiences lead to new business opportunities. Odre says the business case for live meetings, like the Human Resources Association of New York event she attended in 2015, is based on the fact that, "Meeting face-to-face gives you a chance to be more memorable. Your rate of success to convert new business with face-to-face is much higher than virtual."

Likewise, New York-based Mariona Lloreta is a 30-year-old CEO and founder of the Azzimato fashion label, who attends live events on a regular basis. She argues that face-to-face interaction is a much better way to gauge someone's visceral engagement with a particular topic.

"While we live in the digital era and it certainly makes things very easy in many occasions, I feel like establishing both personal and professional relationships

face-to-face is crucial," she says. "When you get to know someone in person, you learn the most essential ingredients of who they are as a human being and as a professional. Looking into someone else's eyes, smiling and shaking hands are some of the things that help create a kind of connection that is not replaceable digitally."

Lloreta adds that face-to-face also helps to avoid potential misunderstandings that happen online, because it is much easier to assess someone's reaction to a question, comment or situation by standing in front of them. She says, "The stimulus you receive and amount of information is so much bigger, and I think that as long as there are human beings, there will always be value in face-to-face business networking."

Alex Grymes (27) is an account executive with the tech company Cirrus Works in Washington, D.C., which builds network appliances in commercial buildings. In March 2015, Grymes attended the Association of Collegiate Computing Services (ACCS) conference in Charlottesville, Virginia.

"One of the reasons why I like to go to conferences like ACCS is because people's guards are usually down," he says. "People are always hesitant to take a cold call or carve time out of their busy day for a call or a video conference session, so I always enjoy the face-to-face. The value is being able to talk to people in person and kind of read their emotions, see how the conversation's going, and picking up on the cues rather than just being able to see someone nodding their head during a web conference."

During the ACCS conference, Grymes says a lot of other vendors were trying to approach one particular person who he didn't know. So he introduced himself and it turned out that the person happened to be the CEO of a school close to the Cirrus Works office. Grymes explained the unique selling points of his software and services to the CEO, who then prompted him for more information on the company.

"So in terms of if I were to approach a business like that and try to go through a cold call or email to get to the right person to move along the sales cycle, it would have

taken so much longer rather than just meeting in person and getting that face-to-face meeting first," says Grymes. "It established trust and it gave him an opportunity to evaluate what we were offering in person rather than through a computer screen."

Also based in Washington, D.C., Andy Walker (24) is a sales manager at FierceMarkets, a B2B online media company that provides news updates for the healthcare, finance, retail and life sciences industries.

"I go to conferences all the time because face-to-face is very important for maintaining accounts that I already have pre-existing relationships with," he says. "And I think what might even be more valuable is with new accounts, where you can get in front of them after they may have ignored you for months and months over email."

Walker explains he's not going to close a deal in his line of business very often just by talking to potential clients at events, but it goes a long way to establishing a business relationship that will eventually convert. For example, Walker attended the American Telemedicine Association Show in May 2015 where he spoke with reps at a company that wasn't even on his radar.

"I met with two guys that were not my direct line contacts but I had probably a 40-minute conversation with them at the show," he says. "They put me in touch with the person who I did need to talk to, and then I had a phone conversation with that lady and it led to one of the bigger sales in my career that actually closed this morning."

MILLENNIALS WANT FACE-TO-FACE

A CT Business Travel research project in the UK launched in 2014 shows that Millennials prefer face-to-face meetings more than older generations. The study reports that 80% of Millennials want to attend face-to-face events over virtual, while 78% of Gen X feel the same way. Furthermore, 87% of all professionals believe that face-to-face meetings are essential for clinching business deals, because virtual conferencing creates lapses in emotional cues and inhibits casual networking. And, 47% feel they lost out on a business deal because there wasn't enough face-to-face interaction.

Why Millennials Value Live Networking & Education



Skift Take:

Society has played a greater role in determining Millennial's professional behavior than technology. Gen Y's preference for face-to-face networking is based on their professional development needs to expand their networks in a highly competitive job market.

The emphasis on technology as a generational differentiator for Millennials has oversimplified and overshadowed other factors defining Millennial motivations in the professional workplace, and therefore, the meetings and events industry. The social, economic and political upheavals during the last two decades have impacted the Millennial generation in ways older generations don't fully appreciate.

The oldest Millennials, who are now occupying decision-making roles in the meetings industry, began entering the workforce

during the time period including 9/11, the Iraq War and the global economic crisis.

They entered the workforce with the highest ever average amount of student loans³ and a job market where a college degree no longer guarantees quality employment.

According to Pew Research data about Millennials nationwide in America, discussed in the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta's Q1 2014 EconSouth magazine⁴, "In 2012, 63% of people ages 18–31 had jobs, down from 70% of their same-aged counterparts who had jobs in 2007."

Published in September 2014, the book “Knowing Y: Engage the Next Generation Now” is one of the best recent resources available for understanding how associations can attract more Millennial attendee membership. Author Sarah Sladek writes that, “Generation Y has come of age during a time of economic recession, digital innovation and political revolution. All too often we refer to this change as being purely driven by technology, but that’s not the case at all.”

Instead, Sladek writes there are multiple major “currents of change” that are so powerful that they’re actually referred to as economies, such as the Sharing, Freelance, Knowledge and Experience Economies. “Not surprising, these economies have shaped the opinions, values and behaviors of Generation Y in radical ways.”

The 2015 Goldman Sachs Macroeconomics Insights report suggests a somewhat optimistic view that because of the challenges Millennials encountered during early adulthood, they are much more strategic in their professional goals than previous generations. The report reads: “[Millennials] have struggled with the Great Recession as a much more visible part of their formative years. But we don’t see that tipping into negativity. Instead, we are seeing them laser-focus on where they want to be, what they want to do, and being strategic about how they’re going to do it.”

Meaning, many Millennials are moving through their careers in a competitive and unpredictable job market, with fewer guarantees in terms of traditional career advancement than previous generations. For Gen X and Boomers, a formal education and lengthy work experience provided more job security and opportunities to climb the corporate ladder than today. For many Millennials, there’s no such thing as a corporate ladder⁵. In response to that, Millennials are placing much greater value in the 21st century on developing external professional networks and a greater emphasis on real world education within their specific industries.

Corporate and association meetings are exactly where Millennials can accomplish both. If meeting owners and senior planners understand and fully appreciate that, they will understand why Millennials should not just be defined by their reliance on technology. They will better appreciate the fundamental drivers for Millennials in their professional careers today, based on their need to constantly learn and meet more experienced people in their industry.

“We have to keep learning and developing new skills all the time, because we are living in an age where change is so fast, so forget CVs, we need to build our networks,” says Rosa Garriga Mora (29), a Barcelona-based meeting design consultant. “More than anything, Millennials want to get to know

MILLENNIAL NETWORKING 101 WITH MICHAEL DOMINGUEZ, SENIOR VP & CHIEF SALES OFFICER AT MGM RESORTS

“I think it’s incumbent upon a younger generation to understand one of their challenges with networking, which is they need to be broad-based in their knowledge. When they’re taking the time to read and educate themselves, it’s important to know a little bit about politics, what’s happening in the world, world news. That is important because you can then have a conversation with anybody. That’s a challenge with networking.

One of the biggest things I’ve seen introduced into the market for networking, that’s really helpful and it kind of bridges the gap between technology and the face-to-face, or the digital and the face-to-face world, is MeetingMatch. It is a system that literally ties in, it ties into your LinkedIn network. It gives you a full meetings program into one app. When you’re networking, you already know who you’re looking for. It allows you to reach out to the people you want to meet and for those people to actually reach out to you. It makes it easier in a room to be able to find them. I think those types of advancements and creativity is where we need to head.”

“All too often we refer to the change as being purely driven by technology, but that’s not the case at all.”

— Sarah Sladek,
Author of “Knowing Y: Engage the Next
Generation Now”

people and network at events because that's one of the best ways we can develop our market value for clients and employers. But at the same time, we're not necessarily very good at networking at live events. We're so used to Googling everything, so we need to get better at building more connections at conferences."

To accomplish that, Garriga Mora would like to see more interactive networking opportunities during live meetings that can't be duplicated online. For her, interactive workshops and panels with a lot of give-and-take between the audience and speakers provide more ROI than other types of educational sessions. She says Millennials also want to meet other people at events with shared interests to help them make higher quality connections.

ery other generation coming through our industry has wanted—they want to network, they want to grow professionally, and they want to develop their careers," says Michael Dominguez, senior VP & chief sales officer at MGM Resorts International. "But I do think it's incumbent on us to stop throwing people into a room and say: 'Go.' What I see with certain organizations, they're now designing it where there is a buddy program. So for your first time at one of these large programs, you're actually teamed with one of the more veteran people in an organization or company who are raising their hands to say, 'Look, I want to help introduce you to the right people so you can start to develop your own network in the industry.'"

Supporting that, ASAE's "Associations, Gen Y & Millennials" report reads: "Throw-

“We have to keep learning and developing new skills all the time because we are living in an age where change is so fast, so forget CVs, we need to build our networks,”

"I think for event organizers to succeed, they will have to make it easier for people to find other like-minded people," asserts Garriga Mora. "And I think that sounds like common sense, but in reality, I go to so many events where that doesn't happen. You just meet people by chance."

One way that companies and associations are assisting their younger professionals to network more effectively at events is by pairing them with mentors who have already established their networks over the years.

"Millennials want the same things ev-

ing younger members into a reception and expecting those connections to automatically manifest is an outdated strategy."

Jenni Kuchenbecker, CMP (27), director of education services at Iowa Hospital Association, agrees. She says, "It can be really intimidating when you go into events and you feel like you're the outsider who is entering a sorority or frat house where everyone knows everyone, and then to top it off you are about 15 years younger than everyone in the room."

The Disconnect Between Meeting Ideation & Implementation

Skift Take:

There has been a lot of discussion and research around the future of designing meetings for Millennials, but there is still a long way to go until these strategies are mainstream for all sectors of the meetings and events industry.

While there's been a huge shift in conversation among the industry over the last few years about new meeting design and event technology strategy, there has been challenges in terms of widespread implementation.

Dr. George Fenich at East Carolina University authored the aforementioned PCMA report: "What the Millennial Generation Prefers in Their Meetings, Conventions & Events." He feels the industry at large has both an opportunity and responsibility to better engage Millennial meeting attendees, because the research and technology revolving around how to do so already exists.

"All of the research I have done has shown that Millennials want a lot of opportunities when they're coming to an event to net-

work, and one of their biggest issues is, what are those opportunities exactly when you're throwing 5,000 people in a room," says Fenich. "I'm not seeing a lot of change in terms of implementation. There's a lot of buzz, but from buzz to implementation takes activity and effort and maybe some money. I just don't see a lot happening, and there's a bunch of technology that could enable it."

According to Jessie States, manager of professional development at Meeting Professionals International (MPI), the primary reason for the gap between the ideation and implementation of next generation meeting design is most often a matter of time constraint.

"The biggest challenge is time, I don't think we as meeting professionals spend enough time in the design process, because we're

always being forced into where we're going to choose our venue, or figuring out what kind of space we're going to need, and we need to decide all of that quickly," says States. "We're not spending enough time in the design process so that we're able to incorporate these new ideas into our events. So it's really about taking a step back and looking at the challenges your audience is facing. And then really asking yourself, how can I create unique experiences for each and every one of my attendees?"

She suggests that the best way forward to create enough time to implement and experiment with new meeting design is by collecting enough data around potential deliverables to show meeting owners the ROI.

"I would say we need to look at meetings in a more strategic way," States explains. "Start collecting the data that you need. Start collecting the anecdotal evidence you need that shows people are unsatisfied with elements of your event. And show how you can correct that if you're given the time that is necessary to design appropriately. I think that all data is good data, even negative data, because it really is going to help you focus in on what challenges you're facing as an individual in your organization, and how you can take steps to improve over time."

How PCMA is Developing the Future of Meeting Design

Skift Take:

The move toward open-learning meeting space, where attendees can roam among casual “campfire” sessions, is helping Millennials personalize their educational journey in a more spontaneous and organic process.

Kelly Peacy is the senior VP of education and events for PCMA. She is at the forefront of intelligence behind next generation meeting design that creates more personalized and experiential networking and education opportunities. Peacy heads up the design of PCMA's two major annual events, Convening Leaders and EduCon, and she oversees the organization's annual “Twenty In Their 20s” collection of Millennial age meeting professionals, now in its second year. Following is an interview with her about the future of meeting design, specifically with regard to Gen Y meeting planners and attendees.

Skift: How much internal conversation at PCMA is there about Millennial psychographics?

We haven't done any research to the extent that we probably should and probably will. What we do have is our “Twenty in Their 20s” leadership area. They're from all segments of the industry and they applied and have been interviewed and reviewed. We tap into their knowledge and expertise as much as we can, but I would really like to do a little bit more research into what Millennials are expecting from a meeting experience.

Skift: What are some of your primary takeaways after engaging with these people over the last two years?

My takeaways are that their expectations are not the norm that we have seen over the last 20 years in this industry. This whole movement towards the personalization of meeting experiences really is significant for this group.

They don't like to be treated as a number, they want to be seen as a unique person, and their expectation is that their experience should be just as unique. From what I've learned, Millennials don't necessarily think in a linear fashion the way that other generations do. So that's part of the reason for our shift toward more open-space learning. We, as planners in this industry,

like to put things in a very linear schedule, but that doesn't necessarily mean that Millennials want to or will follow what we put together.

Skift: Is true that PCMA tries to show planners how to create those types of personalized experiences is the new open-space format at Convening Leaders, where everyone can move easily from session to session, versus sitting in a breakout room?

That's absolutely true. When we're designing that, we're definitely thinking of a younger attendee who wants to be an active participant in this industry. They may not have as many years of experience as the majority of our attendees, but their expectations are valid and we want to acknowledge those. So absolutely, that design of creating your own education experience and making it work and valuable for you is absolutely part of our plan. With the open format, people can take a few minutes of content in, they'll take what they need, and if they don't like it, they'll walk away from that space and go someplace else. That's the beauty of open-space learning, you can come and go as you please without offending a speaker or other people. That's what we've heard attendees say that they really like about that concept.

SELL THE IDEA, NOT THE TECH

The IBM InterConnect 2015 event at Mandalay Resort in Las Vegas is a great example of how a company can use technology in a fun way to both promote a product and engage attendees to share content with other attendees. The purpose of the event is to introduce new innovations in cloud and mobile computing to clients, so at the center of the show floor, IBM created an "Urban Art Cloud." Attendees were invited to create artistic collages using photos and hand-created graphics on large plasma touch screens. The completed imagery was then pushed to large video installations around the convention center, while at the same time, many attendees were compelled to share their artwork on their personal social networks.

"The Urban Art Cloud was developed in a way that explained the value of something in real-time moments through the ability to connect people socially," says Kurt Miller, SVP of strategy & planning at George P. Johnson. "It's about having the creativity to link your ideas with the tool, and when you focus on unique ideas that appeal to universal interests, that's how technology will change the future. To many brand marketers sell the tool, or the product or services, and not the creative idea, and that just doesn't resonate with Millennials."

The Rise of Hybrid Meetings & Event Tech



Skift Take:

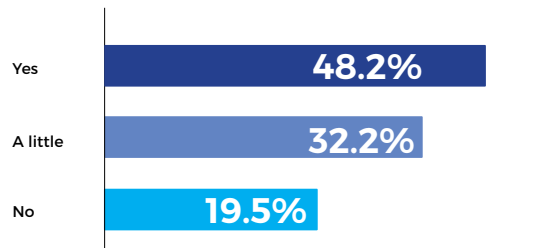
Companies and organizations are creating more hybrid meetings because many are seeing how the virtual engagement is driving event attendance.

Event technology is no longer regarded as some kind of add-on component attached to a meeting, because technology now underpins every part of the meeting experience from pre to post. As Garriga Mora says, "For many Millennials, there is no such thing as 'Before the Internet.' Millennials expect technology, including fast Wi-Fi, hybrid content, social media conversation, web-based audience participation platforms, comprehensive event apps and other tech to be seamlessly integrated into modern meeting design.

According to the May 2015 Skift poll, over 80%

of respondents say they are familiar, or a little familiar, with event technology.

Do you consider yourself familiar with event tech (app, event websites, virtual content, etc.)?



Source: Skift/MMB Survey (2015)

"A lot of companies used to have a technology committee but they've stopped because they

were like, wait a second, everything should have technology in it,” says Dan Berger, CEO and founder of the Washington, D.C.-based event tech firm, Social Tables. “So, the real question everytime you’re doing anything for a meeting or event is, “Okay, which technology should we use to develop a meeting experience?” Not, “Should we use technology?”

Going back to the misperceptions about the rise of virtual technology encroaching on attendance at meetings and events, the opposite is proving to be true in many cases. For example, at PCMA’s Convening Leaders conference in 2014, the virtual attendance made up 17% of the total audience of 4,949 people – 877 virtual and 4,072 face-to-face. Both were record totals. In addition, 76 face-to-face attendees attended both the live and hybrid events.

“Our numbers for both mediums prove our strategy is real and relevant [and] we continue to expand our audience globally as well as within our target audiences,” says Deborah Sexton, president and CEO of PCMA. “By releasing these numbers, we hope that the industry understands having a hybrid event will drive new traffic to your brand, and in the upcoming years, to your face-to-face events.”

About 65% of the hybrid attendees were non-PCMA members with 63% of those being meeting planners. Mary Reynolds Kane, senior director of experience marketing for PCMA, says, “It’s exciting, we are converting more and more people to members, to face-to-face attendees, and to engage deeper with PCMA.”

Likewise, as profiled in “Knowing Y: Engage the Next Generation Now,” the Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) has spent considerable time polling Millennials over the last few years to learn how the association can remain relevant for them. One of the biggest takeaways from that, the younger members wanted a convenient online platform for Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits. However, the association management was concerned that a move to more online engagement would lessen demand for members to meet face-to-face.

But according to Yolanda Jackson, deputy executive director of BASF, the association took the leap of faith, and the revenue from CLEs has more than doubled with members of all generations signing up online. At the same time, attendance at the face-to-face CLE events has continued to grow year over year since the online education was introduced.

Steph Pfeilsticker, founder of Hybrid Events Authority, says there’s much more awareness about the ROI of hybrid meeting technology recently, because by integrating both live and virtual education, many meeting owners have shown they’re able to expand the reach of their message, build audience engagement and drive new business development.

“Video is becoming more and more a part of our daily lives,” sums up Pfeilsticker. “It also allows planners to be a producer of their own content and be their own media company.”

“Although I don’t think as an industry we’ve really adapted to make many changes that accommodate the needs of Millennials better,” says Pfeilsticker. “I think there’s still very much the mindset of, ‘Oh, this is what we did last year.’ When you do that year over year, you’re really not making any strides to make events better, given that there’s a new generation that we need to consider.”

Working with hybrid tech providers such as Digitell, Pfeilsticker specializes in large association conferences where there’s an emphasis on advanced education and event marketing to drive new attendance. She says the way that planners can help secure the necessary budgets to increase the virtual component for face-to-face meetings is by learning about the revenue generation models, exhibitor services, and audience data capture specific to virtual streaming.

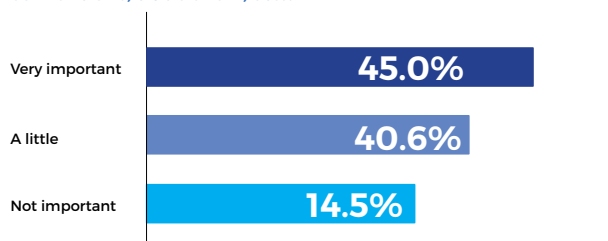
“There’s all kinds of various components of a hybrid meeting that can be sponsored, such as a virtual studio with a dedicated moderator engaging the virtual audience who’s sharing what’s going on onsite,” says Pfeilsticker. “That

could be branded with a backdrop, and you can brand segments within your broadcast.”

Hybrid meetings don’t just apply to online audiences, either. Often attendees at the physical event who can’t attend a session in person are eager to watch a video broadcast on a second screen somewhere else in the venue while they socialize or multitask. This also encourages planners to create “third spaces,” much like today’s popular co-work spaces, where attendees can network in a comfortable setting with food and beverage and a relaxed vibe.

“Video is becoming more and more a part of our daily lives,” sums up Pfeilsticker. “It also allows planners to be a producer of their own content and be their own media company. Millennials are much more likely to engage in this, so I think our ability to connect with video will become more of a significant impact on events.”

How important is social media for meetings, conventions, trade show, etc.?



Source: Skift/MMB Survey (2015)

The Future of Meetings is Mobile

Skift Take:

Every year, event technology is becoming more sophisticated and more intuitive to integrate the mobile experience more seamlessly into the event experience.

Georama is an example of how event technology can connect people in new ways, and how mobile technology is evolving as a primary marketplace. The “interactive travel discovery platform” uses a live video feed to connect an audience in one space, such as a ballroom, with people anywhere else in the world physically moving through a destination. For the people in the field, the group has one primary speaker and one person managing a camera and a backpack with Georama’s equipment. The proprietary technology stitches together all of the available Wi-Fi and cellular signals in any given place to create the most powerful broadband possible.

For attendees in the ballroom, they can connect with the remote group through Twitter and Facebook messaging that appears in a list running down the right side of the screen. Therefore, the entire ballroom audience can join in and/or read the live social media conversation, which is integrated into the live event. There’s also a remote Georama facilitator who can follow the social media chatter and pull out the most relevant audience questions to communicate to the speaker’s earpiece, so the speaker can focus on leading the group, navigating the destination and speaking to the camera.

In the fall of 2015, Georama is going to be launching a smaller personal Pro version of its equipment. Although not as powerful at creating optimal broadband as the backpack-housed Enterprise version, the Pro equipment fits in a person’s pocket. It syncs with a smartphone so anyone can become a roving video source for anyone else anywhere. Basically, an individual can now become their own live broadcast studio.

“We’re working with Hyatt Regency in Chicago where meeting planners do site visits now while sharing the experience with their teams back home in real time,” says Nihal Advani, founder and CEO of Georama. “So now, that group of people can actually have their own personalized tour.”

Meg Proskey is the VP of experience design for Maritz Travel, one of the major third-party meeting and incentive travel planning companies. Proskey says that like any industry, the meetings community has to look at the business from the customer perspective. But with the rise of Millennials in attendance at events, she says only a percentage of companies and associations are taking their Gen Y members’ needs into consideration.

“Some companies are on the cutting edge when it comes to using event technology, but most are

in the middle waiting to see what other companies are doing,” she explains. Proskey sees meeting design over the last year moving more quickly toward mobile. The big auto shows, for example, use beacon technology to push car specs to attendees’ phone when they get within a certain range of a specific vehicle. Also, planners and vendors are developing more creative meeting breaks around more sophisticated charging stations so people can network with other attendees using their mobile devices without having to go hunting for an outlet alone somewhere.

Most importantly, Proskey says meeting owners need to budget for a staff exclusively focused on mobile content and social media.

“Because mobile tech is such a different thing for planners who typically plan rooms and registration, it’s important to have someone dedicated to mobile to expand the experience, because everything is on the app these days,” she says. “And you can capture so much more audience information and develop more engagement after the event if you direct the appropriate resources to it.”

At Maritz’ sister company, Experient, which works more with association groups, they’re developing “proximity messaging” functionality into their

in-house event app “Engage,” based on beacon technology. As an example of that in action, when attendees arrive near the registration area, the app will push messages directing users to where they can print their badge or find sponsor giveaways.

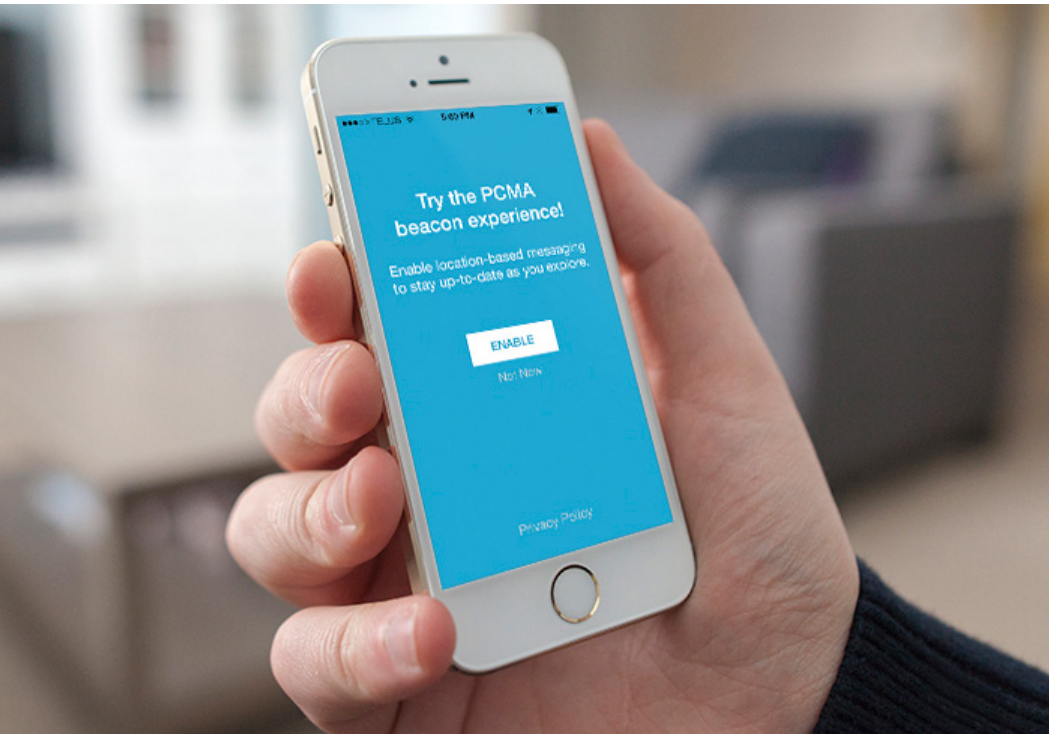
Experient is also presently developing a “Near Me” component that uses geolocation technology, which lets attendees know who else is around them within a self-defined area. Once that launches, users will be able to find other opt-in users and read their profiles to meet new people and maintain existing relationships.

“For me as a Millennial, it’s all about personalizing the user experience and building better connections more quickly.” says Beth DeFrates (29), product manager of Engage. “The goal is for the app to eventually know the behavior of the user, just like Amazon does, so it can give recommendations about things such as certain sessions you might like, based on past sessions you’ve attended. Or make suggestions about people nearby who you might want to meet based on your professional preferences.”

“For me as a Millennial, it’s all about personalizing the user experience and building better connections more quickly,”

— Beth DeFrates,
Product Manager of Engage

Behind the Rise of Event Apps



Skift Take:

The ultimate goal for event apps is to introduce like-minded attendees to each other based on both personal and professional profile information.

In April 2015, the Event Marketing Institute and Cvent cloud-based event management platform unveiled the results of its new research collaboration project: "Momentum of Mobile Event Apps." The report states that by 2016, 88% of planners expect their attendees to consider mobile event apps as critical to their event experience.

"Mobile apps for events keep getting better and better," says Kuchenbecker. "The ability to have your work and personal schedule integrate with the event schedule all on your phone has made it easier to attend

everything offsite while keeping up with calls back in the office."

The new research shows that meeting planners organizing events that have a mobile event app will increase or maintain their app spending level in 2015. In addition, according to another new report from Oracle Software, "Millennials & Mobility: How Businesses Can Tap Into the App Generation" it shows the importance that Gen Y places on app design and user experience.

The paper reads: "Mobile is a way of life

among Millennials. For organizations to truly engage with this generation, they will need to make mobility a core part of their business, and the primary channel by which they engage with customers.... Indeed, 54% of Millennials globally say that after a poor mobile experience with a company, they would be less likely to use any of its other products or services. Just as crucially, 39% said it would make them less likely to recommend the company's products or services to others, while 27% admit it would even give them a negative view of that organization's products or services altogether."

In Asia it's even more pronounced, with 43% of Millennials saying they would have a negative view of an organization based on the quality of the app experience.

Annie Tsai, chief customer officer at event app developer DoubleDutch, which has produced enterprise event apps for corporations like SAP and Rite-Aid, as well as large industry conferences such as Content Marketing World in Ohio. She says, "Mobile apps started out as a way to move the agenda from the offline world to an online platform, and over time we've kind of leaned into our hypothesis that we would be able to create a level of engagement that was truly transformative for event attendees and exhibitors."

At the Content Marketing event, DoubleDutch was tasked with helping attendees

connect with other people who had similar interests outside of the industry. So instead of tagging profiles merely with "marketing" or "developer," attendees could select more personal tags in the app's networking feature, such as "foodie" and "runner." That way attendees could meet people with something in common, making it easier to establish connections.

"Especially at large conferences, it's very hard for somebody to really be able to single out who are the right people I should be engaging with, and creating connections with," says Tsai. "It can also be difficult for people who are exhibiting at the event to find the right people that they should be getting their brand in front of.... So when attendees self-select various types of interests, they're essentially creating filtering mechanisms to develop additional insight, and then we can make better suggestions about who people can connect with."

Another app platform developer, QuickMobile launched a new networking functionality in April 2015. Attendees fill out a survey and then the app aggregates all of that data to show other attendees with whom they have the most commonalities. The client can decide what those categories are, such as "red wine enthusiast" or "innovation specialist," with input crowdsourced from the group before the event.

"Then you can start to find other people that you wouldn't have met at the meeting otherwise, because now you have a reason to go and find them," says Tahira Endean, manager of events. "You can use those at public events or you can do roundtables and make it so it's a more intimate experience. I can just look in the app and see that you and I both happen to want to work in Africa, and then I can reach out to you in the app and send you an in-app message so we can connect."

However, there's still room for improvement in the holistic event experience by integrating event apps and hybrid meeting content throughout the entire life-cycle of any given program. For example, while event apps are growing in popularity worldwide, they're often ignored a day after the event. This can throw up a log jam in the seamless engagement between the onsite event experience and the workplace back home when attendees want to re-engage with the content and other participants on web-based platforms outside the app.

After using an event app continuously for two or three days during a conference, attendees are often less inclined back home to access the app to cull through all of conversation. There needs to be a shift where more meeting owners develop more robust websites to continue spreading the message and extending

the conversation. Too many of us arrive home and forget about the bulk of session content and who we met because we're simply burnt out on the app. There's a huge missed opportunity here for both buyers and suppliers.

"I do not always like apps, and I have used so many with a wide range of features," says Magdalina Atanassova (29), a communications manager for AIM Group International. "Some are better than others, some are prettier than others, but at the end of the day, I will delete it right after the event. At one event I hated the fact that all of the conversation happened on the app, because even though there was a Twitter feature, it was very hard to use it for each post. Once the event was over, everything died with the app."

Therefore, more and more event organizers are starting to see the value of integrating app and website content.

"Our event app for one our largest events is programmed right alongside our event website, and as the event nears we'll add in some special app-only features," says Danielle Foster (26), a meeting planner with Certified Angus Beef in Ohio. "As our team is beginning to understand the app better, I'm receiving some really fun content ideas and it has been very neat to develop it."

The ROI of Pre/Post Web Content

Skift Take:

Developing better web content to increase engagement pre/post is the biggest opportunity today to build brand recognition.

Jazmyn Strickland is the 27-year-old founder of Gold Wave Events in northern California who operates two of her own events and collaborates on others. She regularly attends The Special Event Show, which rotates around the country, because she needs to stay abreast of new trends and network with peers. Strickland likes the fact that the event organizers are constantly trying to add value with pre/post web content, because as a small business owner she says she can't afford to waste time or money at meetings industry events.

Skift: What do you appreciate most about The Special Event Show as an attendee?

I appreciated as an attendee the information I got beforehand about the speakers and the ability to start a conversation with them. I know what we're going to discuss, and I can add comments or questions or email them ahead of time, and they'll incorporate that into a seminar. Or I can go on the blog and add comments there. So you're bringing together people with specific similar events before you get to the conference. And then when you get to the conference, you're already aware of the conversation, and then you can continue it afterwards.

Skift: How does that help justify the expense of attending for you?

As someone who works for myself and has a small business budget, I have to look at my budget and think about what am I really going to get out of this. Content marketing pre/post really adds value because people don't want the transaction just to start and stop at the event. People are investing a lot of money in the event and they want the product to continue delivering them something, and I think in the meetings and events industry, that's really important because the product that we're creating isn't always tangible. We want that meeting or event to stick with people for a while so they do feel

VALUE OF VIRTUAL LIBRARIES

Andrew Dergousoff, director of virtual conferences with International Conference Services in Vancouver, won the inaugural Innovation Award given by the International Association of Professional Congress Organisers (IAPCO) in May 2015. ICS provides various technologies such as virtual libraries of digital content to augment the benefits that members can gain from association membership.

"A virtual library is an excellent means to leverage the content you already have into a digital format," says Dergousoff. "This not only provides longevity for your education, it also would provide you with novel revenue streams and increased member benefits. Used in combination with traditional meetings, virtual libraries provide fresh incentives to grow and maintain a loyal association membership."

it was worth their time and their energy. A lot of times before the event for some of the sessions, they had a place where you could ask questions. Of course not every question gets answered, so they added round tables to the trade show floor for those questions that weren't. That way, we knew that on the trade show floor at 2 o'clock on Tuesday that we're going to continue this discussion at round tables. That brings the group down to a smaller size of people who are really, really interested in that topic, and who want to share more information than they were able to in that session. So I thought that was a really great value add, especially as someone who loves to soak up creative ideas.

Skift: What do you say to people in the meetings industry who might believe Millennials think technology and virtual engagement can replace face-to-face meetings?

I'm probably not at the top of the curve of using technology, but I want to go to an event because it gives me a competitive advantage. First of all, we all know knowledge doesn't always happen in the ballroom. It also happens in the bar where you can meet people and network naturally with your colleagues and clients. So I need the entire live experience so I can see what others are doing. We can sometimes lose the reason why we attend meetings. We're doing this to connect on a level that can't be duplicated any other way.

Skift: How can event organizers better develop content on social media?

I think the days of the generic, open-ended "Comment on this video" or "Post what you like most about this session" or "Show us a great picture" are over. You have to find a chord within your main content and get people engaged that way. Ask people to share stories about themselves because then they're likely to offer more than a few words and it helps increase comments from other people. That personal story makes it much more likely for people to engage.

**MILLENNIAL PLANNERS TALK
EVENT TECH**

"I certainly value face-to-face meetings as much as older generations, and I think it's just an expectation that technology will complement that face-to-face experience," says Danielle Foster (26), a meeting planner with Certified Angus Beef in Ohio. "We are a naturally social generation and that is reflected in our expectations. We also are a generation that can focus on about 10 things at once, so having a technology element allows us to multitask with the face-to-face experience."

Kacie Hackett (25), a planner with the Consumer Electronics Association in Virginia, sees the future of meeting design and event tech morphing along the trend lines of other industries, such as retail and media brands delivering personalized engagement with end users.

"I think this is something that's not just happening in this industry but in industries overall, like retail, because there's all these digital means for getting more information about your customers," she says. "And I think skilled business people use that information to their advantage and create a personalized experience for each person. So when you translate that to events, you can really see what your people are interested in, while giving them the technological tools to create their own curated experience inside your larger one."

5 Key Strategies to Engage Millennial Attendees

- 1 Customize event education —**

Modern meeting design today integrates education at every turn with more options for pop-up sessions and open space learning. Prefunction space is the new meeting space because attendees can come and go depending on their satisfaction with the specific content, and it tends to spur more casual and spontaneous conversations. People in all age groups are questioning the traditional one-way speaker lecture format but none more so than Millennials. The speaker/captive audience dynamic still has a lot of value of course, but planners should add audience participation apps like Slido.com and Conferences.io to develop live polls and inspire audiences to ask questions.
- 2 Create hybrid meetings with exclusive virtual content —**

If Millennials like sharing content digitally while participating in face-to-face events, then make sure they have something to share. Hybrid meetings are still in their infancy. Meeting planners can start slowly to build their online virtual content to test what engages attendees with stakeholder messaging most. As this part of meeting planning matures, so will sponsorship opportunities that can be packaged for individual sessions or larger portions of the event.
- 3 Include Millennials in social media and website development —**

Even though many Millennials are still developing their skill sets, they want to feel like their opinion is respected and they're helping co-create meeting content and experiences. Create a Millennial task force for special projects so they can work together on shared goals like new social media campaigns, pre/post online content, app content conversion to web-based platforms, etc.
- 4 Kill the cocktail reception —**

Well, maybe not kill it but definitely add some interactive knowledge sharing that helps Millennials develop either personally or professionally. Many Millennials in this report said the traditional cocktail reception is intimidating because it feels so unnatural to them to just walk up to someone to try to start a conversation without some kind of shared interest beyond the event theme. Apps like MeetingMatch are becoming popular where attendees can find people with similar interests, and app developers like DoubleDutch and QuickMobile are integrating similar functionality into their products.
- 5 Create young professional SIGs —**

Everyone loves special interest groups (SIGs) because they're smaller gatherings with people who really identify with a niche subject. Planners should think about creating one solely for young professionals, especially at association conventions, where Millennials can let their guard down and network in a more relaxed ambiance.

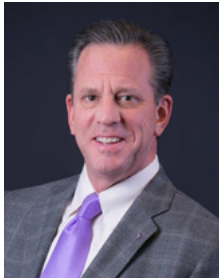
Endnotes

1. [Pew Research: Millennials Surpass Gen Xers As The Largest Generation In U.S. Labor Force](#)
2. [Goldman Sachs: Millennials Coming of Age](#)
3. [Student-Loan Surge Undercuts Millennials' Place in U.S. Economy](#)
4. [The Economic Plight of Millennials](#)
5. [The Corporate Ladder: A Millennial's Perspective](#)

Further Reading

[Pew Research: This Year Millennials Will Overtake Baby Boomers](#)
[Pew Research: Millennials Surpass Gen Xers As The Largest Generation In U.S. Labor Force](#)
[Goldman Sachs: The Millennial Effect](#)
[Goldman Sachs: Millennials Coming of Age](#)
[ASAE: Association, Generation Y & the Millennials](#)
[Knowing Y: Engage the Next Generation Now](#)
[Like It or Not, Millennials Are Officially the Future of Work](#)
[Why Face-to-Face Communication Won't Disappear](#)
[The State of Workplace Productivity Report](#)
[Five Myths About Young People & Social Media](#)
[Momentum of Mobile Event Apps](#)
[Why Face-to-Face Will Always Matter](#)
[The Millennial Generation of Planners](#)
[Millennials & Mobility: How Businesses Can Tap Into the App Generation](#)
[How Millennials See Meetings Differently](#)
[Mind the Gaps: The 2015 Deloitte Millennial Survey](#)

Understanding the Next-Generation of Meetings Professionals and Attendees



By David Peckinpaugh,
President at Maritz Travel, +
Co-Chair of MMB



Michael Dominguez,
SVP and Chief Sales Officer
at MGM Resorts International,
Co-Chair of MMB

Leaders from across the meetings and events industry are working together to showcase the substantial value derived from meetings, conferences, conventions, incentive travel, trade shows and exhibitions. The Meetings Mean Business coalition is an information and advocacy platform that highlights the industry's role in not only driving business success but also creating jobs and generating economic value.

The MMB coalition is organized around three central pillars:

- **Creating Personal Connections**
- **Driving Positive Business Outcomes**
- **Building Strong Communities**

As champions of the meetings industry, we were eager to understand the next generation of industry professionals and event attendees. By partnering with Skift, we learned that Millennials value meetings as much as, if not more than, previous generations. Technology is simply a way to complement live engagement and network virtually before and after a live event occurs.

Recognizing these nuances and understanding the expectations that Millennials bring to a meeting or event are important not only for professionals in our industry, but the business community more broadly. Meetings provide opportunities for education, skill-building and workforce development, arming Millennials with the personal connections and positive business outcomes to shape our future.

Thank you for reading this report.



About Skift

Skift is a business information company focused on travel intelligence and offers news, data, and services to professionals in travel and professional travelers, to help them make smart decisions about travel.

Founded in 2012 by media entrepreneur Rafat Ali, Skift is based in New York City and backed by Lerer Ventures, Advancit Capital and other marquee media-tech investors.

Visit skift.com for more.

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Skift's new content studio SkiftX helps brands such as Amadeus, American Express, Egencia, Hilton, Peak Adventure Travel and others create thought leadership in the global travel industry, through trends reports, research, branded content, social media audits and other content marketing initiatives, and helps distribute through its industry marketing platform.

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