

Nonprofit Technology Network (NTEN)

NTEN Chooses Acteva Private Social Networks (APSN) for NTConnect

CHALLENGE

Engaging conference attendees using cutting-edge technology

SOLUTION

Acteva Private Social Networks customized for the NTEN conference

RESULTS

Increased networking opportunities.
30% attendance growth

Background

The Nonprofit Technology Network, commonly referred to as NTEN, is a professional organization whose members use technology to support a variety of nonprofit causes. Their members share a common mission: to help nonprofits use technology more efficiently.

Business Challenge

Offering an online forum to engage attendees before, during and after event

After the successful 2008 event in New Orleans, NTEN Executive Director Holly Ross was looking for new, intuitive ways to help get the word out about her 2009 event in San Francisco. She felt it was essential to find an easy way for returning alumni, potential attendees, students and others to get better connected – to share their thoughts and goals for the event – and to network with each other.

“Foremost in my mind for 2009 was adding a professional, innovative social networking tool to help enhance the overall conference experience,” says Ross.

Acteva Solution

Implementing Acteva’s trusted Private Social Network

In 2008, Acteva introduced Acteva Private Social Networks (APSN) — a single tool to calendar, publish and consolidate event data, organize multiple groups, manage membership registration and sales and provide members with a user-friendly but powerful social networking experience.

Impressed with the technology, Ross felt APSN would now serve as an integral new solution for attendees to increase their reach and effectiveness. As Ross explains, “Our mission is to help the non-profit sector use technology to meet their goals - connecting our members so they can share their knowledge with one another is central to everything we do.”

Soon after the debut of APSN, Acteva worked with Ross to develop a customized version to be used specifically for NTEN 2009. This groundbreaking new social networking solution, NTConnect, would utilize APSN to create a unique forum for sharing ideas, networking and connecting with others online.

“The goals of NTConnect were to leverage its networking capabilities and create a single ‘meeting place’ for show attendees,” says Ross. “The plan was for Acteva’s solution to help our event attendees ‘meet’ each other and talk about the challenges they face.”

In addition, NTConnect participants each have their own profile page with their own calendar, and a place where they can post their own blogs, photos and videos. They could also become members of groups associated with any sponsor, exhibitor, speaker or topic.

With this partnership, an exciting new venture and avenue for growth had been born that would benefit all involved—especially NTEN members and alumni. “Those are the people who keep us afloat and help make us who we are as an organization.”

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Holly Ross,
Executive Director,
Nonprofit Technology
Network (NTEN)

Every NTConnect participant had access to a dynamic calendar where they could view conference sessions, import events from their favorite vBooths (more on these below) and create personal events, which could be downloaded to Microsoft Outlook or Google Calendar. The technology was extremely user-friendly—whether the user was technically inclined or not.

Ross explains a success story that occurred just before the conference began. “One local attendee wanted to set up a pre-NTC meet up before the conference opened at a local brewpub,” she says. “He posted this event to NTConnect, requesting that participants RSVP if they were interested. With that information he was able to secure the location and communicate the plans to everyone.”

Finally, Acteva helped NTEN create “vBooths” or virtual trade show booths that attendees visit online. With vBooths, exhibitors could advertise their upcoming events at NTC 2009 and throughout the year through a shared calendar, push traffic to their website through special offers, post product literature and communicate directly with attendees through blogs and group discussions.

Ross highlights what is perhaps the greatest enhancement since the 2008 event: “With NTConnect, when attendees arrived they already had a network of contacts and our exhibitors and speakers were prepared with relevant topics and materials. This made for a far richer conference experience for everyone involved.”



Results

Increased networking opportunities, 30% growth in attendance

The end result: despite the tough economic climate, NTEN grew significantly in 2009. “We sold out with over 1,440 registrants, an increase of about thirty percent over last year. To grow this conference in such a challenging climate is impressive,” says Ross. “This was due in part to the tremendous anticipation that grew out of the online community prior to the physical event. People started to go crazy, and in a good way.”

Going forward, Ross anticipates even greater success in the future. Having worked with NTConnect from the beginning, she looks forward for more opportunities for growth leading up to their 2010 event in Atlanta.

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Experience that counts

Acteva is the trusted leader in online event registration, ticketing and payment management services. Since 1998, over 14,000 customers have used Acteva to manage more than 260,000 events and process more than 4.6 million registrations. Acteva’s customers include Bausch & Lomb, Pfizer, SAP, Girl Scouts of America, Whole Foods, BMW/MINI, NASA, VMware, Apple, DHL, PG&E and thousands of small to large-sized businesses and organizations.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Location: San Francisco, CA

Primary Event: NTEN

Industry: Nonprofit Associations

Products Used: APSN, Acteva Plus

Attendee Focus: Non-profit professionals, start-ups and event planners

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