



THE CRITICAL EVENT PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

STEELHEAD
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This self-assessment is designed to help you **deeply reflect on your event program performance** and help identify areas in your event program that could use more energy or more support from your team.

Please set some time to go through all 12 sections of this assessment.

Now – let’s start by taking a few deep, grounding breaths...and dig in!



1 – ENGAGEMENT

How you engage with your audience is everything. If your audience doesn’t feel seen, heard, and understood, they will quickly move on to your competitor. Think about the strategies you employ pre-show, during the event, and post-show.

Ask yourself: Do I have the tools in place to measure the success of audience engagement? Am I utilizing the latest trends and event technologies to keep our audience engaged during all stages of the event? Does my supplier understand our engagement goals and provide unique engagement points for my brand activation?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your engagement tools, techniques, and goals and why you rated yourself what you did.

2 – VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

While in-person events are the most favorable for exhibitors and attendees alike, event marketers can't ignore the rise of virtual and hybrid events. **Events in the metaverse are not a futuristic concept — they are here, now.**

Ask yourself: Am I using a virtual environment to support telling our brand story? Is our virtual environment supporting my sales team in expanding their reach to new customers? Am I maximizing my reach to those who are unable to attend my event by utilizing a virtual environment?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your virtual environment strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

3 – SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability initiatives for trade shows and corporate events are no longer a “nice to have,” they are a must for socially conscious brands. Think about whether your company has a sustainability philosophy or initiatives, if so, what do those look like?

Ask yourself: How am I contributing to my organization's sustainability efforts? Do I strongly consider sustainability when working with a partner or vendor? Are my current vendors communicating their sustainability efforts and solutions with me?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your sustainability strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

4 – CREATIVITY

Think about how often your marketing or client outreach strategies adapt and evolve. Does your event space do the same? A culture of creativity should be portrayed in your approach to events to keep them customer-focused.

Ask yourself: Am I more brand or customer-focused when creating our event strategy? Am I providing my audience with a fresh booth experience year after year? How does my organization showcase its creative efforts in comparison to our competitors? Are my current partners providing new ideas and communicating the latest trends with me?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your creative strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

5 – MARKET & INDUSTRY

Having a pulse on your industry market helps you offer something deeply valuable at your trade shows and live events. Your event strategy should always consider industry trends, who your competitors are, and what differentiates you from them.

Ask yourself: What is our brand perception in the marketplace, and does it need to change? How do I incorporate new products or service offerings into our events in an exciting way? Do my suppliers understand my competitive landscape?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your market and industry strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

6 – COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE



Keeping an eye on your competitors helps you determine what exactly sets your brand apart from them. Sure, many companies may do what your brand does, but what makes you unique within the industry should be represented loud and clear at your events.

Ask yourself: Do I have a solid grasp on who my competitors are? How does my target audience vary from theirs? What new products or services are they bringing to market? Have I shared my competitive landscape with my suppliers?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your competitor strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

7 – AUDIENCE



Knowing and understanding your audience at every show helps you tailor memorable experiences that are unique to them. Dig deeper on the demographic profiles of those attending these events. Think about the brand awareness of your audience (have they heard of you before?) and the techniques you've used to draw attendees to your booth. As event marketers we must create spaces for people, specifically the type of people attending each show, which may change from show to show you exhibit at.

Ask yourself: Am I clear on the demographics of who attends each event we exhibit at? Do I know exactly what our audience is looking for when they step into our booth? Do I have a handle on how our audience likes to receive information? Do my suppliers provide solutions that help tailor my brand expression to suit the audience segments from show to show?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your audience strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

8 – PROJECT & SHOW OBJECTIVES



Each trade show needs a clearly defined main goal. Events should have a place in overall marketing and sales plans. It's helpful to keep track of learnings from past events — what worked and what didn't work, and where are the obvious opportunities for improvements.

Ask yourself: Do I know what my company stakeholders define as a meaningful and successful show? Do I execute all the details with our top objective in mind? Are my team and suppliers in tune with our goals?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your show objectives strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

9 – MESSAGING



Every brand has a messaging hierarchy, from corporate messages down to product-specific messages. Think about how these messages overarch into your trade show booth, and how these messages are conveyed not only during the event but also pre-show and post-show.

Ask yourself: Is my message ever evolving to keep my audience engaged? Am I doing my part to enforce consistent messaging from pre-show to post-show? Are my suppliers providing me with impactful solutions to communicate my various levels of messaging?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your messaging strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

10 – EXHIBIT AESTHETIC

The design of your trade show booth should reflect your corporate image, tone, and culture. Think of three words you'd use to describe your desired exhibit, and whether they match your current exhibit design.

Ask yourself: Is my environment eye catching among the sea of other exhibitors? Are we nailing the first impression we want our audience to have upon seeing/entering the space? Do my suppliers understand the importance of an ever-evolving brand presence to continuously capture attention year over year?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your exhibit aesthetic strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

11 – EXHIBIT FUNCTION

How your exhibit functions, and how the space is utilized for each trade show can make or break the experience for your audience. Having the appropriate space for engagement between booth staff and attendees makes your booth much more inviting.

Ask yourself: Does our booth design allow for the desired sequence of events for our attendees? Do I have a clear understanding of how our functional elements are performing or not (for example, demo stations or product displays)? Does my supplier understand how design ergonomics enhance the attendee experience, and then provides inviting and effective solutions?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

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Describe your exhibit function strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

12 – TECHNOLOGY

Technology is a major driver of engagement. An exhibit without tangible and interactive technology is not in the game. From lead management systems to video content and interactive stations, technology is a huge asset for exhibiting brands.

Ask yourself: Is our lead management system collecting relevant data? Do we have a library of digital content that can be easily adapted for a specific audience? Do my suppliers understand the importance of tech and provide options to integrate into our event environment?

Rate yourself from 1 – 10. (10 being the best)

									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Describe your technology strategy and why you rated yourself what you did.

Total Score – add up the total number of points that you rated yourself. *(Ex: if you scored all 10s, your total score would be 120.)*

Average Score – With your total score calculated, divide that number by 12 to get your overall average rating.

Would you like to discuss your event and tradeshow strategy with a Steelhead expert?

Let's chat!

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