

# IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

# Event Networking Game



PRESENTED BY



# Event Networking Guide



Games use tried and tested engagement mechanics and this guide will show you how to leverage them in fun activities that reinforce your networking objectives. Gamification is a strategy, not simply a technology tool. Clear objectives, concept design, promotion and execution are critical to the success of your game. To ensure you are taking all the necessary steps, we've broken down the process to seven stages from identifying your objective to measuring your success. Each and every event will be different from the last. Outlining the objectives in full detail will serve as the framework that you build your event around and implement technology based on.

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STEP 1

# Identify Objectives

Motivating attendees to meet each other during breaks, between sessions and at networking receptions will increase the value of the event for attendees. Articulating and documenting your objective early on clearly aligns your team’s efforts and keeps everyone on track.

Here’s a template objective that can give you a starting point:

*“To increase the number of quality networking opportunities for attendees.”*

To take it a step further, define how success will be measured:

### USAGE

In order to achieve this objective, we will strive for \_\_\_\_ % usage among attendees. Because the objective is to encourage networking, adoption rate is a key indicator for success. How many attendees actually play the game?

### ENGAGEMENT

To measure how engaged participants are with the game, we will aim for \_\_\_\_% of challenges completed. The percentage of challenges completed will measure the success of the concept. Is the activity they are participating in valuable to them?

Onsite observation from staff and a post-event survey will also help inform the success of the networking game. In the post-event survey, ask *“Were there an adequate number of networking opportunities throughout the event?”* Articulating the objective and success metrics before you start building your game will ensure you and your team align your organization’s efforts.

When writing your objectives, ensure they are SMART:

- + Specific
- + Measurable
- + Actionable
- + Reasonable
- + Time sensitive

A SMART objective might look like this:

*“Increase the number of networking opportunities for attendees by 25% at the Sales Conference in January.”*



YOUR OBJECTIVE

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SUCCESS METRICS

*We will strive for \_\_\_\_ % usage among attendees.*

*We will aim for \_\_\_\_% of challenges completed.*

14%





## STEP 3

# Create Content



Filling your game with content, references and themes your players are familiar with will draw them intrinsically into your game. The passcode on each attendee's name badge can be up to 32 characters long; however, it is highly recommended these passcodes do not exceed 6 characters in order to avoid typing errors.

Passcodes can be random numbers, letters or special characters, but from past experience, systematizing the passcodes is most successful.

### RANDOM NUMBERS SYSTEM

+ 1564, 2982, 7739, 3049, 3817

### NUMBER-LETTER SYSTEM

+ FH02, R812, 48FK, F45J, MAS9, 91MF

### LAST NAME-NUMBER SYSTEM

+ smith45, bell11, johnston85

The Last Name-Number System is effective because it incorporates the names of participants; however, it's important to include some sort of number in the passcode to ensure attendees do not simply enter the last name of everyone on your attendee list.

As a pre-engagement tool, well before launching your game, you could have everyone submit their passcode as part of their registration. "Choose a short secret word for the networking game." That way, people can choose witty or interesting passcodes that can help break the ice.

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42%





STEP 4

# Build a Game



NOTES + IDEAS

Now that the game strategy and concept have been outlined, use EventMobi to build your game. Simply title your game (128 character limit) and enter a description (2,000 character limit). Despite the game's flexible design, it's best to keep it simple and easy for attendees to adopt, and the description should reflect that, it's best to keep your description short and concise.

Upon accessing the game, participants will want to know the following:

- + What is the game and what do I get out of it?
  - "Connect with other attendees at the conference to expand your network"
- + How do I win?
  - "Meet other attendees and enter in the passcode on the back of their name badge to collect points"
- + What do I win?
  - "Apple Watch", "Registration for Next Year's Conference", "Gift cards" etc.

Once you've outlined the game, it's time to build challenges that link back to the overall objective of your game. While other games will demand more creativity, the Networking Game is fairly straightforward.

In the EventMobi Content Manager, you can create challenges one-at-a-time or you with an Excel template easily accessible in the Gamification module.

Include the attendee's name (Column B) and, optionally, a description of the challenge. Upload the Excel sheet in the EventMobi Content Manager. If and when you want to make changes to individual challenges or add more, you can do so in the Challenges Listing tab in the Content Manager.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Order*	Name*	Description	Points*	Passcode/ID*	Enabled (yes/no)*
2	1	Alexander Carr	Meet Alexander and earn points!	50	carr11	yes
3	2	Caroline Brown	Meet Caroline and earn points!	50	brown87	yes
4	3	Joe Baker	Meet our CEO Joe Baker and earn points!	100	baker49	yes
5	4	Molly Ince	Meet Molly and earn points!	50	ince55	yes
6	5	Emily Coleman	Meet Emily and earn points!	50	coleman26	yes
7	6					



56\*

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STEP 5

# Promote Your Game

You have an amazing game, but no one knows about it yet. Effectively marketing your game is the most important step in successfully executing a gamification strategy; even more so than having the right technology.

A networking game is primarily executed onsite due to the face-to-face nature of meeting others and collecting passcodes. For this reason, promotion will revolve around excitement and prizes.

### MESSAGING

- + **2 Weeks Prior** Announce the game, prizes and how to win. Instruct attendees to create their attendee profiles, which they will need in order to participate.
- + **1 Week Prior** Ensure everyone has created their attendee profile ahead of time. Add the Gamification widget to your event app Home Screen to generate excitement and entice attendees to use your event app's other functionality too. Explain that the game will begin when the first attendees start receiving their name badges upon checking in at the event (so it's important they arrive early)!
- + **First Day** Launch the game using email and a pre-scheduled Push Notification through the app. Repeat the objective of the game, how to play, and the prizes awarded.

### MEDIA

Decide what channels are most appropriate for your event. Social media can drive mass adoption, email can offer a more targeted, private approach. Decide how you're going to get the message out using your overall event communications strategy. It's critical that you incorporate the game as a part of the overall event experience, not simply an additional task.

### STAKEHOLDERS

Perhaps the most overlooked aspect, communicating the game objectives and instructions to everyone at your event, not just the direct participants will increase understanding of the game, its usage and overall benefit. Explain to speakers, event and hotel staff about the game, not only to encourage participation but to help troubleshoot if attendees ask.



### MESSAGING

2 WEEKS

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1 WEEK

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FIRST DAY

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MEDIA CHANNELS TO USE

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WHO I NEED TO INFORM

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70%





## STEP 6

# Onsite Experience

As attendees check-in onsite, every staff member must be well-versed in the game. Attendees will be arriving with questions and faint memories of reading an email about it. Onsite signage must clearly define the objective of the game and how to access it. Do not worry about explaining how to play on onsite signage; attendees will learn about that once they successfully access the game. 20 minutes before the opening keynote or session, send out a Direct Notification directing attendees to the game. At this point in the event, attendees are using their smartphones to coordinate with friends, check agenda times and look busy rather than saying hi to a fellow conference-goer. This is the time to engage!

### LIVE LEADERBOARD

Your game's live leaderboard is your most powerful onsite asset. Ensure you are using every screen available to show the game's leaderboard, which will automatically update throughout the event. A key aspect of gamification is the competition, and showing who is at the top and close to it will drive participation. Keep in mind that attendees arrive at your event at different times and people may be late to arriving. Don't place your leaderboard at the registration desk on the first day as other attendees might be well on their way to the top of the leaderboard. Other prospective players may see the lead insurmountable and be deterred from engaging with the game.

### BE RESPONSIVE

Looking to help your exhibitors and sponsors make business connections too? Award 10 points to participants when they meet other attendees. Award 30 points to participants when they meet exhibitor staff and 50 points when they meet sponsor staff.

### IN-SESSION PROMOTION

Ensure speakers and emcees communicate the game to all attendees during keynotes and prior to coffee breaks. Providing speakers with instructions and asking them to give quick reminders can greatly increase the level of engagement. Tease your participants with images of the prizes, enticing them to get involved while they still can. Having only one prize may be intimidating to late adopters as they will feel the prize is out of reach. Multiple prizes and a random raffle system in awarding winners may help too. For example, the top 10 networkers get entered into a draw for the grand prize.



## DAY OF PREPARATION LEADERBOARD LOCATIONS

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## POSSIBLE ONSITE UPDATES

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## BLURB FOR SPEAKERS

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84%







NOTES + IDEAS

STEP 7  
 Measure Success

Now it's important to measure the impact your gamification strategy had on the event objective you outlined in the beginning.

**QUANTITATIVE MEASUREMENT**

The following measurements can be made after exporting Excel Sheet results from the EventMobi Content Manager.

$$\text{USAGE PERCENTAGE} = \frac{\text{GAME PARTICIPANTS}}{\text{NUMBER OF ATTENDEES}} \times 100$$

If your usage numbers are less than expected, reevaluate your promotion strategy. Was the game communicated early enough? Was messaging clear? 100% usage is possible but difficult. Give yourself a few events to fine tune your promotion strategy before really targeting total usage—some people just don't want to play.

$$\text{ENGAGEMENT METRIC} = \frac{\text{MEDIAN NO. OF CHALLENGES COMPLETED BY ALL ATTENDEES}}{\text{TOTAL NUMBER OF CHALLENGES IN THE GAME}} \times 100$$

If challenge engagement is less than expected, did the game seem like too great a challenge for attendees? Was it too difficult to earn points quickly? Were the rewards tiered well enough to hook people with small scale rewards and keep people motivated to strive to the next level? 100% engagement is near impossible for medium and large events. Use your first event to benchmark this metric, it might be anywhere from 20%- 80%. From there, set your goals for future events, aiming to improve every time!

**QUALITATIVE MEASUREMENT**

Start by referring to post-event survey results. Understand what attendees loved most and what wasn't working for them. Depending on how you setup your survey, you may also be able to get quantitative measurement of success too. Rather than simply asking "Did you like the game?" understand the greater objective of the event: "Did you feel as though you had an adequate amount of networking opportunities available?" This will take your analysis beyond the technology and into your fundamental event strategy moving forward. Conversations with a select group of attendees can also inform a deep dive in terms of what tools (including Gamification) did and did not work in enhancing the networking opportunities at the event.

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*If you have any questions or would like to learn what other marketing and event professionals have done in the past to succeed, connect with the game gurus at EventMobi.*