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## The Stand that Learns: Building Feedback Loops into Brand Activations

**Ewa Gallon**

Senior Global Marketing Manager at GWI

**Gina Kay**

Marketing Manger at International Confex

**Oliver Colegrave**

Senior Creative Strategist at Identity

**Moderator: Jack Newey**

Chief Commercial Officer at Mash Media

**VOXO**

## Summary

The session delved into the complexities of integrating feedback loops into brand activations, emphasising the importance of strategic planning, effective use of technology, and the human element in creating successful brand experiences. The speakers highlighted the necessity of understanding the objectives of an event to design meaningful feedback mechanisms that enhance the overall experience and drive business goals. They discussed the risks of over-engineering data capture processes, which can detract from the human experience and lead to unused data if not properly managed and followed up on. Training staff to engage effectively and ensuring they understand the activation's components were also deemed crucial to avoid common pitfalls like disengaged personnel and ineffective data collection.

The importance of having a clear plan and multiple backup plans was underscored, particularly when launching new products or features. Real-time adaptation based on daily feedback during events was recommended to ensure continuous improvement and optimal attendee experience. The speakers stressed the role of collaboration among sales, marketing, product teams, and leadership in defining event objectives and ensuring alignment across the board. This cross-functional approach was seen as essential for creating cohesive strategies and maximising the impact of brand activations.

Oliver Colegrave discussed the balance between creative ideas and the practical application of technology, warning against using tech for tech's sake without adding value to the audience. He shared examples of successful activations where technology was seamlessly integrated to enhance the experience, such as the Omega Pavilion at the Paris Olympics, which used multiple layers of tech to create an engaging environment.





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Similarly, Gina Kay shared how International Confex supports exhibitors in maximising their presence through creative and budget-appropriate feedback loops, highlighting the importance of fun and engagement.

Ewa Gallon provided insights into the use of feedback loops at GWI, stressing the importance of identifying clear objectives and designing activations that capture relevant data without overwhelming attendees. She shared a case study from Cannes Lions Festival, where daily debriefs and real-time adjustments helped refine the activation and improve the attendee experience. Ewa emphasised the need for pre-event enablement sessions to prepare teams for effective follow-up and data utilisation.

Post-event strategies were discussed, with a focus on the importance of pre-planned follow-up processes to ensure collected data is used effectively. The speakers recommended mapping out customer journeys and enabling teams before the event to streamline post-event actions. They also highlighted the value of social listening and incentivising survey participation to gather richer feedback.

Overall, the session underscored the need for intentionality in data collection, the value of human interaction, and the importance of continuous learning and adaptation. The speakers provided practical tips and shared their experiences to help attendees optimise their brand activations and achieve their business objectives.

# Takeaways

## **Understand event objectives before designing feedback loops**

To create effective brand activations, it is crucial to identify the key objectives of the event. This ensures that feedback mechanisms are intentional and aligned with business goals, enhancing the overall experience and driving meaningful outcomes. Clear objectives help in designing activations that capture relevant data without overwhelming attendees.

## **Train staff and adapt in real-time for optimal results**

Well-trained staff are essential for engaging attendees and collecting useful feedback. Regular debriefs and real-time adjustments based on daily feedback can significantly improve the activation's effectiveness. This approach allows teams to address issues promptly and continuously enhance the attendee experience, ensuring successful outcomes.

## **Pre-plan follow-up processes and leverage social listening**

Effective post-event strategies involve pre-planned follow-up processes to ensure collected data is utilised properly. Mapping out customer journeys and enabling teams before the event streamlines post-event actions. Additionally, leveraging social listening provides richer insights, capturing feedback that attendees may share voluntarily on social media.



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