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## What 25 Years of Bootstrapped Growth Taught us About Scaling Events

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**VOXO**

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Wednesday, 12 November 2025

# Summary

This session explores how Zoho, a three-decade-old enterprise technology company, has utilised events as a strategic tool for customer engagement, product promotion, and revenue growth. Vimal, the lead product marketer for Zoho Backstage, presents Zoho's approach to leveraging events within their marketing strategy, focusing on both brand and revenue objectives. Events serve as a critical intersection for building trust and relationships while driving product adoption and customer growth, with Zoho allocating more than 50% of their marketing budget towards events.

Zoho's journey with events began in 2008 with their first user conference, Zoholics, which played a pivotal role in understanding customer needs and improving product development. Over the years, Zoho has expanded its event portfolio to include various formats and regional focuses, running approximately 1,500 events annually with a dedicated 45-member team. The company prides itself on managing events in-house, ensuring a deep understanding of their audience and greater control over execution. Zoho's events range from large conferences to smaller, community-focused gatherings, each tailored to different stages of the customer journey.

In the marketing funnel, Zoho uses events to attract new users, convert prospects, and retain customers. At the top of the funnel, events like Brunch with Zoho and CX Summit raise brand awareness by leveraging influencer marketing and digital campaigns. Middle and bottom funnel events, such as Recon and HRZone, target prospects who have already interacted with Zoho products, aiming to drive conversions through industry insights and product introductions. Below the purchase line, loyalty and advocacy-focused events like Zoholics and Inspire foster deeper customer relationships, product adoption, and cross-sell opportunities.





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Zoho's event strategy has led to significant revenue growth, particularly through increased product adoption, up-sell, and cross-sell. For instance, Zoho One users increased their usage from an average of four products to 18 following event participation, demonstrating a 350% rise in product adoption. Regional growth has also been substantial, with the Middle East and Africa experiencing an 18-fold increase in conversions due to intensive event marketing efforts. Zoho's integration of events within their marketing playbook has proven to be a powerful engine for both brand building and revenue growth.

Key to Zoho's success with events is their meticulous planning and execution, guided by five breakthrough learnings. These include engineering value at every touchpoint, leveraging tailored agendas, one-on-one meetings, peer-to-peer learning, and gamification. Zoho's commitment to thinking globally while acting hyper-locally ensures that events resonate with diverse audiences across different regions, integrating cultural elements into the experience. Post-event debriefs and continuous follow-ups maintain momentum and foster ongoing customer engagement.

Zoho's technology platform, Zoho Backstage, has been instrumental in managing their extensive event portfolio. Designed by event organisers for event organisers, Zoho Backstage streamlines website creation, attendee communication, registration processes, and analytics integration. This platform supports multiple languages and provides seamless integration with Zoho's broader ecosystem, enabling efficient event management and deeper customer insights. Zoho Backstage's features have empowered Zoho to scale their event strategy effectively, contributing to their overall growth and success.

# Takeaways

## Events as a strategic tool for growth

Zoho has effectively utilised events to drive customer engagement, product adoption, and revenue growth. By investing over 50% of their marketing budget in events, they have created a powerful intersection for building trust and relationships while promoting their products. This strategy has led to significant increases in product usage and regional growth.

## Tailored and personalised event experiences

Zoho's success with events is largely attributed to their meticulous planning and personalised approach. By tailoring agendas, enabling one-on-one meetings, and fostering peer-to-peer learning, Zoho ensures that each event provides maximum value to attendees. This personalised experience helps deepen customer relationships and drive conversions.

## Zoho Backstage platform

The Zoho Backstage platform has been instrumental in managing Zoho's extensive event portfolio. Designed by event organisers for event organisers, it streamlines website creation, attendee communication, registration processes, and analytics integration. This technology enables efficient event management and deeper customer insights, contributing to Zoho's overall growth and success.



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