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AI analysis

The JOY Index, One Year Later

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VOXO

The JOY Index, One Year Later
Wednesday, 12 November 2025

Summary

The session focused on the development and application of the Joy Index, a tool designed to measure the emotional engagement and joy of event attendees using AI-driven technologies. Todd Moritz outlined how this index leverages both facial analytics and wearable devices to capture real-time emotional responses. The goal is to quantify joy, which is defined as trust multiplied by purpose, and use this data to enhance event design and prove emotional ROI to clients.

The Joy Index was born from the agency's mission to create joy and was inspired by Dr. Paul Zak's research on oxytocin and dopamine, which are chemicals that shape trust and empathy. By combining data from wearables and facial analytics, the Joy Index provides a numeric score that reflects attendees' emotional engagement during events. This approach moves beyond traditional surveys, which are often flawed due to memory biases and incomplete data.

The implementation of the Joy Index involves the use of Dr. Zak's Immersion platform paired with wearables to detect subtle blood flow changes and chemical releases. Additionally, Zenis AI's facial analytics platform reads micro-expressions to generate another numeric score. By integrating these data sets with session transcripts, the Joy Index can pinpoint moments of emotional connection and provide actionable insights for event planning.

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Moritz highlighted the practical applications of the Joy Index through pilot programs and real-world examples, such as the Meeting Professional International's World Education Congress. The data collected from these events demonstrated the effectiveness of the Joy Index in providing detailed reports on engagement peaks and drops, helping clients refine their event content and delivery.

The session also discussed the challenges and lessons learned in the first year of the Joy Index's application. Key points included the importance of clear communication between event teams, the need for visible clocks and timestamps, and strategies to boost participation in biometric data collection. Despite these challenges, the Joy Index has proven to be a valuable tool for understanding and enhancing attendee engagement.

Looking ahead, Moritz emphasised the potential for scaling and automating the Joy Index to improve data processing and reporting. The ultimate goal is to create a near real-time system that can provide timely insights and recommendations for event planning. The Joy Index aims to measure emotional engagement not just in events but in various contexts, proving that human connection is a valuable resource that can be scientifically quantified and leveraged for meaningful experiences.

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Takeaways

Quantifying joy through AI-driven technologies

The Joy Index leverages facial analytics and wearable devices to capture real-time emotional responses, providing a numeric score that reflects attendees' engagement. This approach moves beyond traditional surveys by offering more accurate and actionable insights.

Challenges in implementing the Joy Index

Key challenges include ensuring clear communication between event teams, the need for visible clocks and timestamps, and strategies to boost participation in biometric data collection. Despite these hurdles, the Joy Index has proven effective in enhancing event design and engagement.

Scaling and automating the Joy Index

The ultimate goal is to create a near real-time system that can process data and provide timely insights for event planning. This involves standardising prompts and templates, exploring reusable immersion bands, and integrating cloud processing to improve data collection and analysis.

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