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The Neuro-Triggered Event: Designing Tech-Driven Touchpoints That Stick

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Summary

The session presented by Lisa Schulteis delves into the intricacies of designing tech-driven touchpoints that align with the neurological processes of attendees to create impactful and memorable events. Lisa explores different ways event planners can use technology to enhance the attendee experience by working with, rather than against, the brain's natural functions. She introduces the concept of neuro-triggered events, emphasizing the importance of understanding how attendees' brains process information through three distinct modes: scanning, encoding, and consolidating. By aligning technology with these brain states, event planners can create experiences that not only capture attention but also encode and retain memories effectively.

Lisa begins by discussing the scanning state, where attendees are in a mode of pattern detection and predictive processing. This state is dominant when attendees first arrive and are trying to orient themselves. Event technology plays a crucial role here by providing clear, predictable patterns that reduce cognitive load and avoid information overload, which can trigger avoidance rather than attention. Strategic priming, such as personalized agendas and visual previews, can help attendees navigate the event smoothly and engage more effectively.

The encoding state is characterized by emotional salience, where attendees are actively engaged and forming memories. Lisa highlights that only experiences tagged with emotion are encoded into memory. Event technology should amplify emotions rather than distract from them.





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Techniques such as real-time polling, sentiment analysis, AR projections, and shared screens can enhance emotional engagement, surprise attendees, and foster social bonding. Multi-sensory experiences that integrate sight, sound, and touch are particularly effective in creating durable memories.

Lisa also emphasizes the importance of the consolidating state, which occurs after the event when attendees reflect on their experiences. This stage is crucial for memory retention and often overlooked in event planning. Event technology should support spaced retrieval by prompting attendees to recall memories at strategic intervals post-event. This can be achieved through personalized recaps, follow-up emails, and retrieval triggers that encourage attendees to apply what they've learned. By doing so, event memories are strengthened, and the impact of the event is prolonged.

A practical framework is presented for evaluating whether event technology serves the brain's needs effectively. This involves assessing the tech stack against five key questions: which brain state it serves, whether it reduces or increases cognitive load, if it triggers emotion, whether it works with attention or competes for it, and if it enables retrieval after the event. The framework helps event planners identify strengths and weaknesses in their technology choices and make informed decisions to enhance attendee experiences.

In conclusion, Lisa urges event planners to design their tech tools with the brain in mind, ensuring they serve scanning, encoding, and consolidating states effectively. She provides actionable steps for planners to evaluate and optimize their technology, ultimately creating events that are memorable, engaging, and impactful. By understanding and leveraging the neurological processes of attendees, event planners can significantly enhance the effectiveness and success of their events.

Takeaways

Understanding brain states enhances event design

Lisa Schulteis emphasises the importance of recognising attendees' brain states—scanning, encoding, and consolidating—to design tech-driven touchpoints that stick. By aligning technology with these states, event planners can ensure that attendees are engaged, retain information, and reflect on their experiences effectively.

Strategic priming reduces cognitive load

Event planners can use strategic priming to help attendees navigate events smoothly by providing just enough information that aids predictive processing without overwhelming them. Personalized agendas and visual previews are effective strategies to achieve this, enhancing attendee engagement and reducing cognitive stress.

Multi-sensory experiences create durable memories

Integrating multiple senses such as sight, sound, and touch in event technology can create stronger, more durable memories. Techniques like real-time polling, AR projections, and shared screens amplify emotional engagement and foster social bonding, making the event experience more memorable and impactful.



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