



Leveraging Cvent technology and powerful integrations
to grow business success

25%

top and bottom-line
growth YoY

2x

number of events
managed YoY

10x

increase in number of
attendees managed
YoY

Conference Catalysts is a conference and association management agency focused on providing full-service conference management, operations management, and digital solutions. “We’ve been in business for 16 years now,” notes Chris Dyer, Chief Executive Officer. Having partnered with Cvent for more than seven years, Conference Catalysts relies on several Cvent solutions to help power virtual, hybrid, and in-person events for their clients. “The core product that we have used with Cvent is the Event Management platform, specifically Registration,” explains Chris. They also utilize the Cvent Supplier Network and Onsite Solutions across various client events. In addition, the team uses an API integration between Cvent’s Registration solution and their internal virtual platform to ensure a successful onboarding experience for their conference attendees.



Innovating event tech solutions in the face of a crisis

Conference Catalysts has long sought to ensure the successful execution and growth of their clients' events. Chris explains, "One of the expectations of our clients is to continually grow the attendee base of the conferences we are managing, and having a seamless registration process from start to finish ensures that we do not lose any potential attendees along the way." During the pandemic, these goals remained consistent, though they needed to navigate several new challenges along the way. Conference Catalysts had more than 40 client conferences slated for 2020 and were projected to serve over 15,000 attendees. "Within the first couple of weeks, 25% of those canceled," Chris says.

Facing uncertainty, the team refocused their priorities to ensure their clients felt confident in the quick pivot to virtual. At that time, Conference Catalysts was actually in the midst of developing a digital platform. They sped up development to complete the tool as quickly as possible so it was ready to deploy for their clients' virtual events. "It ended up being one of the best things we ever did," notes Chris.

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— Shelby Lussier, Vice President of Conference Management Operations

Finding opportunities to increase efficiencies with Cvent solutions

With the virtual platform now supported by Cvent's Registration solution, they were ready to begin pivoting their clients' events to virtual. One specific example Chris offers is the International Ultrasonics Symposium. "We had already begun processing registrations for the in-person conference that was to be held in Xi'an, China and had to quickly change everything," Chris says. With an expected onsite attendance of over 2,000 people, efficient change management was paramount. "We were trying to make sure we were one step ahead of any issues that would arise for our clients," notes Shelby Lussier, Vice President of Conference Management Operations.

They first needed to adjust registration pricing and ensure all attendees received appropriate refunds. They initially began this process by manually adjusting each registration and providing the discount, requiring days of manual labor from their conference manager. "After working with our Cvent support team, we quickly identified solutions to assist us with this process," notes Shelby. Their Cvent team demonstrated how they could also easily update the fee tables in Cvent to prevent any the need for future refunds. "The process to update and publish the fee table was quick and seamless," Shelby says. "We were able to start marketing the new fees to our prospective attendees immediately."

They also needed to manage a complex registration process by providing unique discount codes for various attendee groups, as well as accounting for multiple types of fee grants for students, keynote speakers, tutorial speakers, and other committee personnel. Previously, this manual process had taken up a tremendous amount of the team's

valuable time, so automation became key. Shelby explains, “We were able to navigate these challenges easily by setting up various discount codes for the different groups and providing these to the relevant individuals. This took a matter of minutes to set up in Cvent and the entire registration process became seamless for these attendees.”

The importance of using integrations to automate workflows

Conference Catalysts then needed to create user accounts for registrants, relying again on what Shelby describes as a “painstaking manual process” that involved manual data entry and validation. This led to human error and potential mistakes that could mean users didn’t have accurate login access to the platform. Ultimately, these processes led the Conference Catalysts team to create a custom API integration that would sync user data with Cvent’s Registration solution, allowing the team to manage registrant details more easily. It also meant the registrant would be able to access relevant details within the platform based on their registration type and admission items. “This integration has saved countless hours and headaches as it has made the entire process extremely smooth for our attendees and stakeholders,” adds Shelby.

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— Chris Dyer, Chief Executive Officer

In fact, Chris notes that relying on Cvent technology has helped Conference Catalysts navigate their clients’ needs not just during the pandemic, but over several years. He says, “That has always, really since we started partnering with Cvent several years ago, been a consistent part of our backbone. It ensures reliability with that process and quality reporting that’s critical to our clients.” As an example, he cites IEEE, the largest professional association in the world. With more than 400,000 members in their membership database, IEEE requires Conference Catalysts to use the API integration to manage member rates for registration. “We have an API with that membership database and we are thus able to authenticate in an automated fashion,” Chris notes. Shelby agrees, noting how valuable those integrations are in saving the Conference Catalysts team untold hours of manual labor. “I think we’ve seen how valuable these APIs are with our virtual platform for taking out the manual side of things,” she explains. “Knowing we can have an attendee who registers in Cvent and they’re automatically synced to our platform, it’s the best-case scenario for our attendees.”



How event technology drives growth in the new events landscape

In fact, automation has been critical for Conference Catalysts as they've grown their business over the last few years. Using additional Cvent solutions like OnArrival allows them to create a flawless experience for their clients, particularly as they navigate hybrid events and the return to in-person. "It's great because as conference managers, we're always doing a million different things," Shelby says. By automating processes for their team, they can reduce manual tasks and ensure data accuracy for their clients. "Cvent allows us to know, for example, when there's an onsite registration the day of an event, and everything's automatically integrated," Shelby offers. She adds that utilizing the email feature in Cvent for communications like confirmation emails allows the team to automatically include the virtual login details for one-click access. "So as an attendee, you register in Cvent and you have all your information sent immediately, and then you're in our platform," she adds. "So we've been able to make that much more seamless through this process."

Ultimately, Conference Catalysts has found impressive success across the last two years. They have helped their clients scale their events with measurable increases in attendance and engagement. Moreover, their clients have a clear view of all event data thanks to on-demand reporting in Cvent. For example, the International Ultrasonics Symposium saw a 26% increase in paid attendance year over year and a 96% budget surplus, whereas Conference Catalysts typically sees a 20% budget surplus for most conferences. The client was so impressed that they contracted Conference Catalysts to manage three additional major conferences the next year. "This would only have been possible through the use of Cvent's registration software and reporting," adds Chris.

They also overcame the worrisome outlook at the start of the pandemic to instead significantly grow the business. In fact, Conference Catalysts grew both the top and bottom line by more than 25% in 2020 and by an additional 25% in 2021. "We're now consistently doing around 60 plus events each year," notes Chris. "Pre-pandemic, we did around 30 events and the total attendees across our events was 15,000; I think it's now over 150,000." This incredible growth is due to the team's ability to manage through the crisis by supporting their clients' quick pivot to virtual with the integrated event technology. "Our partnership with Cvent has been a vital component of this success," adds Chris.





A valued partnership between Cvent and Conference Catalysts

As they think about continuing to grow their business, the Conference Catalysts team is eager to expand their offerings to support both virtual and in-person experiences through hybrid events. “We’re seeing a lot of shifts towards hybrid events so that’s our main focus right now,” explains Shelby. As such, they have relied heavily on the Cvent Supplier Network for venue sourcing. “We’re back in the sourcing tool currently, sourcing lots of venues for immediate needs this year and next year,” adds Chris. Shelby notes that they rely on the integrated RFP feature within the Cvent Supplier Network to quickly and efficiently manage RFPs. “This feature ensures that all of our meeting space and the special needs that hybrid conferences require are being met so we can produce high quality experiences for both our onsite and virtual attendees,” she says.

Just as they supported their clients through the challenges of the pandemic, Chris and Shelby want to ensure their employees feel equally supported in their careers. They therefore ensure their staff remains up to date on the latest technologies and trends with industry-accredited training and certifications from Cvent. “We have six conference managers who are Cvent certified and one of our main focuses throughout the pandemic was to make sure we really got our members certified in these different areas,” says Shelby. “Across our small team of conference managers, we have collectively received 11 Cvent Academy certifications and we believe this has helped keep our team well-informed as we translate that knowledge into added value for our clients.”

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They continue to value the relationship between Conference Catalysts and Cvent as they look at the near future. “We’ve always had a good steady outreach from our team at Cvent, and we always provide open feedback,” says Chris. He adds that the relationship is clearly valued from the Cvent perspective. “Cvent obviously has a huge infrastructure, but every time I have a request, I feel like it is being taken seriously,” he says. “I’m grateful for that and I’m looking forward to continuing to grow that partnership and evolving it over the next few years.” In the meantime, the Conference Catalysts team is excited to see what opportunities will arise as they continue to grow their business. Chris summarizes, “When we are consistently increasing attendance with the conferences we manage, our clients are more successful and in turn, our company is more successful.”

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