

Standards for Conducting Business-to-Business Exhibition & Event Audits

**A Document of the Exhibition and Event Industry
Audit Commission**



STANDARDS:

1.0 GENERAL

At minimum the audit shall include a validation of verified attendance, attendees' contact information, and basic demographics used to qualify the target audience within the market segment the event represents as collected as part of the registration process.

2.0 AUDIT ORGANIZATION

The firm or organization conducting the audit of an event shall be an independent third party firm or organization not that is in no way affiliated with the event organizer except as the auditor of the event. The audit organization must be approved by the Exhibition and Event Audit Commission. Approval shall be granted to those companies provided that they meet the following criteria:

- a) Provide a completed Application to the EEIAC. The application will be mailed upon request or available at the designated EEIAC website
- b) Submit a fully executed DECLARATION OF CONFORMITY WITH THE AUDIT STANDARDS OF THE EXHIBITION AND EVENT INDUSTRY AUDIT COMMISSION. A copy of the Declaration will be provided to any company upon written request to: ADDRESS TO BE DETERMINED. A copy of the declaration may also be found at the EEIAC website.
- c) Submission of a Statement of Methodology detailing the proposed audit methodology. The EEIAC will provide Non-Disclosure Agreements to an audit organization as requested by the auditing organization.

3.0 AUDIT PROCESS

The firm or organization shall adhere to the following standards for the audit process:

3.1

Prior to the exhibition or event, review the advance and on-site registration system to ensure the validity of the process for collecting registration data. This will include, but is not limited to, reviewing the registration form and fields, registration categories, and all processes for registering and verifying visitors.

3.2

After the event, the event organizer shall provide the auditors with a clean ("de-duped") electronic database of all claimed registrants with full name, address and contact information, and all registration data collected and/or assigned to each registrant including, but not limited to: demographics, registration category codes as defined herein (see **Section 7.0 Definitions**), and onsite and advance registration codes and attendance verification code.

3.3

No registrant can be audited if not included in the database provided by the event organizer.

3.4

The event organizer shall submit summation reports of all registration statistics and/or exhibit space data to be audited.

3.5

The testing and validation of the claimed registrant database (see section 3.2) shall at minimum include:

3.5.1

A review of the entire database to check for duplicate records, missing data, etc.

3.5.2

A tabulation of all records in the electronic database of claimed registrants for:

- attendance verification/non-verification code
- on-site and advance registration code
- registration category codes as defined herein (see Sections 5.4 and 7.0)
- codes for responses provided by the registrant to demographic questions

3.5.3

A comparison of the auditor's tabulations (above) to the summation of the same data as provided by the event organizer with an analysis provided of the resulting variances.

3.5.4

Testing of the database of claimed verified attendees to validate actual attendance:

- The testing shall be based on a representative sample of all attendees within each major registration category being audited (i.e., exhibit-only attendees, conference attendees, etc.).
- Samples shall be of a size to ensure the accuracy of each attendee registration category being audited, and if necessary, to make statistically reliable adjustments to attendance figures in each registration category.
- The primary test of the database will include contacting the sample(s) by phone, email, mail, fax or a combination of these methods to verify that they attended and that all encoded demographic information that is to be reported in the audit statement is correct.

3.5.5

Testing of the database of those claimed as not verified as having attended the event to determine if they actually attended, **if requested by the event organizer**.

- A questionnaire shall be distributed by mail; fax, telephone or email to all non-verified registrants asking if they attended the event and if the data held in the database that is to be reported in the audit statement is accurate.
- Only those responding as having attended may be included in the count of verified attendees. There can be no projection of the respondents to the total count of non-verified registrants.

3.5.6

Summation of audited data of verified attendees and confirmed attendees (previously non-verified) to yield total attendee counts of:

- registration category codes as defined herein (see Sections 5.4 and 7.0), and
- codes for responses provided by the registrant to demographic questions.

4.0 ADJUSTMENTS

Adjustments to attendance figures or demographics will be made (if required) based on the results of the above tests. Adjustments shall be reviewed with the event organizer, but the final decision to make adjustments rests with the auditing organization.

5.0 AUDIT REPORT CONTENTS

The audit report shall include the following as a requirement unless otherwise noted:

- Cross tabulations of data are **optional**.
- If graphs are included, the text table from which the graph is based shall be shown.

5.1 Basic exhibition or event information:

- **OFFICIAL NAME OF EVENT**
- **DATES OF EVENT**
 - exhibit

- conference
- **LOCATION**
- **EVENT ORGANIZER NAME**
- **FREQUENCY OF EVENT**
- **ADDRESS OF THE EVENT ORGANIZER** to include:
 - mailing address
 - phone
 - fax
 - url
- **NAME AND DATE EVENT WAS ORIGINALLY ESTABLISHED**
- **NAME AND DATE AS IT IS CURRENTLY NAMED/BRANDED** (if changed)
- **LOCATION OF NEXT EVENT** (*optional*)
- **DATE OF NEXT EVENT** (*optional*)
 - exhibit (*optional*)
 - conference (*optional*)

5.2 STATEMENT OF MARKET SERVED

- Brief auditable fact-based description of attendees, which may include attendees' qualifying characteristics.

5.3 REGISTRATION POLICY AND FEES IF ANY

- Brief description of admission requirements
- Schedule of fees listed

5.4 AUDITED ATTENDANCE ANALYSIS

5.4.1 Table of audited attendance figures by the following registration categories:

- EXHIBIT ONLY ATTENDEES
- CONFERENCE ATTENDEES
- SUBTOTAL: EXHIBIT ONLY AND CONFERENCE ATTENDEES
- SPEAKERS
- MEDIA & ANALYSTS
- REGISTERED EXHIBITORS, NON-EXHIBITING SPONSORS & THEIR SUPPORT STAFF
- GUESTS (if applicable)
- TOTAL

5.4.2 Attendees may only be counted in one registration category. In cases of multiple categories applying to one attendee, those who meet the Conference Attendee definition shall override all other registration categories. Those who meet the Exhibit Only definition shall override all registration categories except Conference Attendee.

5.5 FIVE-YEAR HISTORY OF AUDITED ATTENDANCE

This shall be in compliance with industry-accepted definitions (see Section 7.0) and shall report all categories as provided in Section 5.4. All certified audits, beginning with the current audit, shall be included in the five-year history regardless of the audit organization performing the work. However, audits conducted prior to the issuing of these standards may be included, appropriately footnoted, at event organizers' option.

5.6 AUDITED CLASSIFICATION OF ATTENDEES

Required in all audits:

- Geographical distribution of attendees
- Results of demographic questions audited if required to qualify the target audience in Section 5.2

Optional information:

- Results of demographic questions audited but not required to qualify the target audience as defined in Section 5.2

Each table of results shall be based on total audited attendance, i.e., including attendees who did not provide an answer to each demographic question. Percentages reported shall be based on total attendees. Percentages may also be reported based on those who have answered the specific question.

5.7 EXHIBITORS AND NET EXHIBIT SPACE (OPTIONAL)

Optionally, event organizers can elect to audit and report their net exhibit space (see Sections 6.0 and 7.0). If the data is audited, the reporting shall include the total number of exhibitors and total net and net paid exhibit space.

5.8 ADDITIONAL DATA (OPTIONAL)

Optionally, other information can be audited and included within the audit report but the information shall be census based and included within the attendee database and/or exhibitor database (i.e., not survey questions added to the audit testing procedure). Examples of this **optional** information are actual number of attendees from specific entities (e.g., Fortune 500) or specific exhibitors represented on the exhibit floor.

5.9 EXPLANATORY NOTES

Shall include any notes approved by the auditor to provide further clarification to the audit or history of audits, (i.e. events canceled due to force majeure) and the following:

5.9.1 REGISTRATION FORM

The registration form(s) used to gather attendee demographic information shall be included.

5.9.2 STATEMENT OF VERIFICATION METHODOLOGY

Description of the methods used to verify the number of unique individuals who actually attended the show shall be included.

5.10 AUDITOR'S OPINION

A statement of opinion by auditor as to accuracy of data shall be included.

6.0 VERIFIED EXHIBIT SPACE (OPTIONAL)

If the event organizer **opts** to have exhibit space and number of exhibitors audited, the event organizer shall provide all exhibit space contracts for examination and testing at the event, final floor plan with dimensions of exhibits that is to exact scale, and the total number of exhibitors and net square feet and net paid square feet of exhibit space used.

The audit organization shall:

- a. Sample exhibit space contracts and validate against actual space used on exhibit floor by those exhibitors.
- b. Calculate total space from floor plan and test against actual space on exhibit floor.

The audit would also include verification of payment for the space, if being claimed.

7.0 DEFINITIONS

7.1 ADVANCE REGISTRATION SYSTEM

The process by which individuals register with the event organizers to be permitted to attend an event, before the event opens, through phone, fax, mail, or online. These individuals need to be verified as having actually attended the event before they are called attendees.

7.2 AUDIT

A published independent third-party certified census of verified attendees conducted in accordance with industry-standard guidelines established by the Event and Exhibition Industry Audit Commission. The Audit **MUST** be published within 30 days of completion and available on the Auditor's website and the EEIAC website. In the event that the EEIAC website is unavailable for any reason, the Audit must be published on the Auditor's website for a minimum period of 2 years from the date of publication unless superseded by a more current audit,

7.2.1 CONDITIONAL AUDIT

An Event Organizer may elect to designate an Audit as "Conditional" in the first year an event is audited using EEIAC Standards.

In order for Event Organizers to be able to test their systems and ensure that their registration systems can hold up under audit, Event Organizers shall have the option, only for the first audit of a particular event, to not make that audit public. If they choose to do so, the Event Organizer should so notify the Auditor, and should not publicize the fact that they have hired an Auditor. Once the audit is completed, the Event Organizer may elect to keep the audit private or at this point to release the audit publicly.

If the audit produces unsatisfactory results due to problems in the registration system, verification system, or database, and substantive changes are made to systems to indicate that the next event audit will be successful, the Auditor may allow a second non-public "Conditional" audit one year later. This trial period may not last more than two audits. If the initial audit is held back only due to the Organizer's dissatisfaction with the total attendance or demographic data, no second non-public audit will be permitted.

For any subsequent audits that are performed in a 3 year period following the Conditional Audit, results must be published according to Paragraph 7.2.

7.3 CENSUS BASED

A complete enumeration of a population (e.g. registrants) often including the collection of related demographic information through questions asked of every registrant. A census is differentiated from survey data that is based on collecting data from a sample of the population and extrapolating the information for that population.

7.4 CERTIFIED AUDIT

An audit performed by an organization sanctioned by The Event Industry Audit Commission and conducted in accordance with these guidelines.

7.5 CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

Those who registered for an event and are verified as being on-site at the show with controlled access to the educational program as well as the exhibits and other public areas of the show. This may include registered exhibitors and their support staff who have controlled access to the educational program. Those who are only Speakers, Media, Analysts, Registered Exhibitors and Support Staff who are not registrants for the conference section of the event are not to be included.

7.6 CROSS TABULATIONS

Data tables, *optionally* included in an audit report, that show the results of one question in rows against the results of another question reported in columns.

7.7 DUPLICATE RECORD

The same individual appearing on the registration database more than once, whether in the same registration category or in multiple registration categories.

7.8 EXHIBIT ONLY ATTENDEES

Those who registered for an event and are verified as being on-site at the show with access only to the exhibit and public areas of the show.

Possible *optional* sub-categorization by qualification type, for example, if some exhibit only attendees are required to pay.

7.9 EXHIBIT ONLY AND CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

Subtotal of Attendees, including only the categories of “Exhibit Only Attendees” and “Conference Attendees”, which is included in the required table of attendee categories and used as the base for presentation of *optional* demographic data.

Those who are only Speakers, Media, Analysts, Registered Exhibitors and Support Staff who are not registrants for the conference section of the event are not to be included.

7.10 EXHIBITOR

A company that has purchased or otherwise negotiated to receive space provided by the event organizer to promote its product or service, and exhibited in the event.

7, 11 GUESTS

Spouses and others who attend an event invited and accompanied by a conference or exhibition attendee, but are not themselves members of the community served by the event. If an event that has a registration category for this type of attendee elects to include them in the audit report, they must be shown as their own category and not included in the Exhibition Only or Conference categories.

7.12 MEASUREMENT OF EXHIBIT SPACE (OPTIONAL)

Reporting exhibit space is *optional*; however, when reported, it is measured in two formats; net and net paid. Net is the aggregate footprint of all square footage in the event including paid for, trade/barter and complimentary space, including meeting rooms. Net paid represents only space that is paid for.

7.13 MEDIA & ANALYSTS

Those who registered for an event and are verified as being on-site at the show that are qualified as working for a media organization or for a company that specializes in analyzing the industry that the show represents.

These categories may be broken out separately at the option of the event organizer.

7.14 NON-EXHIBITING SPONSORS

Those organizations who have paid or bartered to receive promotion at an event but do not have exhibit space.

7.15 ON-SITE REGISTRATION SYSTEM

The process by which individuals register with the event organizers to be permitted to attend an event and does not include advance or pre-registration.

7.16 QUALIFIED ATTENDEES

Optional wording for “Exhibit Only” and “Conference Attendees” providing that a clear definition of qualification is provided in the “Statement of Event Objectives and Markets Served” (see Section 5.2) and verified by the auditor.

**7.17 REGISTERED EXHIBITORS & THEIR SUPPORT STAFF, or,
REGISTERED SPONSORS & THEIR SUPPORT STAFF, or,
REGISTERED EXHIBITORS, NON-EXHIBITING SPONSORS & THEIR SUPPORT STAFF**

(Alternate versions, depending on types of exhibitors/sponsors applicable to specific event.)

Employees of exhibiting or sponsoring companies and their support staff who are registered for exhibitor badges in order to staff the exhibit/event.

These registrants may or may not be verified by the event organizer as to whether or not they actually attended the event. The audit report shall be specific on whether or not these registrants are verified participants, and whether or not this number is audited. **(See sections 7.5, 7.8 and 7.9)**

7.18 REGISTRATION CATEGORIES

Segmentation of all registrants for the event based on their role at the event. Includes: Exhibit Only Attendees, Conference Attendees, Speakers, Media & Analysts, Exhibitors, and Non-Exhibiting Sponsors & Their Support Staff.

7.19 REGISTRATION DATA

The only information that may be subject to audit is that collected in the registration process, asked of every attendee. Demographic information, if shown on an audit report, will be that demographic information collected by questions asked in the registration process.

7.20 REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE

A sample of attendees, selected for testing, that is statistically representative of each registration category of attendee to be audited.

7.21 SUPPORT STAFF

People who attend an event to provide services to exhibitors or non-exhibiting sponsors, whether employees of the exhibitor or sponsor or are hired specifically to provide services at the event. These attendees are included in the Registered Exhibitors, Non-exhibiting Sponsors & Their Support Staff registration category.

7.22 QUALIFYING CHARACTERISTICS

Mandatory information collected from the registration form.

7.23 SPEAKERS

Those who registered for an event and are verified as being on-site at the show as a speaker or presenter in the controlled access educational program, a keynote or other information session.

7.24 SPONSOR

A company or association that is promoted as a sponsor of the event.

7.25 STAFF

Employees of the event organizer, attending for the purpose of supporting the event, should not be included in any category of the audit report.

7.26 TOTAL

Includes all audience groups that were at the event: exhibit only attendees, conference attendees, registered exhibitors and support staff, media & analysts, and speakers. It does not include employees of the event organizer's company or contractor companies who provide services to the show.

7.27 VALIDATION

Attestation by the auditor that a claim is true.

7.28 VENDOR

Individuals hired by the event organizer to support operations of the event, badged as such, shall not be included in any category of the audit report

7.29 VERIFICATION

Confirmation that an issued badge was claimed or used at the event.

7.30 VERIFIED ATTENDEES

Event registrants whose attendance at the event was confirmed in accordance with industry standards established by Event Industry Audit Commission.

The event audit report shall disclose the methodology used to verify attendance including badge swipe data recorded at booths for otherwise undetected attendees.