



Beacon Technology – What is it and will it work for your event?

Today's event attendee relies heavily on their mobile device to check email, stay in touch at work and maintain connection with family and the world at large through texts, alerts and social media. Because of this, conference mobile apps and mobile alerts have become increasingly popular at corporate and association conferences and events. While the on-site conference printed guide remains a staple, the mobile app is a great companion and offers another "on the go," real-time channel of communication. With beacon technology, event apps are even more personal and powerful. Beacons work in conjunction with your conference mobile app to deliver location-based specialized messaging and content.

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Beacons come in different shapes and sizes. They are usually small devices (think palm of your hand) that can be placed under tables, behind signs, in purses and pockets and on walls. They can be programmed to deliver pop-up content, specific messages and alerts to an attendee's mobile device when they are within a set distance of the beacon.

What can I do with it?

Meeting Expectations has used beacons in several ways with its clients. Below are a few sample methods on how beacons can improve your conference communications and processes:

1. **Welcome messages:** Set up a beacon at your registration area. A simple greeting of "Welcome to the conference! The next few days are going to be jam packed with events and we are so glad you here" can be an effective way to say hello, set the mood and greet your attendees. When they enter the conference venue doors, this message can pop up on their phones. It's a delightful surprise. (Likewise, a well-placed beacon en route to the airport can offer a grateful farewell and let them know how much their participation was appreciated.)
2. **Information messages:** Set up a beacon near the entrance of your tradeshow area. In some mobile apps you can link content to the beacon message. When the attendee approaches the entrance of the show area, you can have a map message pop up: "The tradeshow floor is a 40,000 square ft. area designed to show you the latest technologies and products. Use the mobile app map to discover it all! (Link to map in the mobile app.)"



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3. **Sponsor messages:** Beacons are a great way to highlight your top sponsors and can even be sold as part of a sponsor package. Place the beacon inside the tradeshow floor in specific locations to draw attendees to certain areas: “Visit Star Partner in booth 305. They are having a giveaway at 1 p.m.!”
4. **Logistic messages:** Sometimes attendees need a little reminder about events and where to go. If the layout of the convention center or venue is confusing to attendees (even with signage and maps), use a beacon to show them the way. Place the beacon near the elevators or stairs: “The keynote speaker is at the top of the stairs, take a left and enter the North Ballroom.” Or “Lunch is being served in Room 22B – walk straight ahead through the double doors.”
5. **Crowd control:** See the crowd is going in one direction and you want them to head to another on the exhibit floor? Put the beacon in your pocket or purse and walk through the crowd: “Special announcement in booth 1400. Light refreshments and snacks will be served.” We’ve used this roaming beacon method and the results were instant. The sponsor went from an empty booth to a busy booth packed with potential leads in minutes.
6. **“Uh-oh, need to smooth this over”** messages: Let’s face it, sometimes issues pop up that you didn’t anticipate: a change of speaker, a last minute high profile sponsor comes in or even a misspelled name or change of time in the program guide. Use beacon technology to get out a message out in minutes. Simply place the beacon in a high traffic area: “Join us for Kelly Smith’s can’t-miss session on Marketing and Social Media now located in Room 131 B at 10 a.m.”

Great ideas, but how do I know what type of messages I need and where the beacons should go?

Meeting Expectations is here to help. Our event technology team and marketing team work in tandem to figure out a plan that works best for you. We understand that each conference is different, each area of the conference has a specific purpose and each day of the conference can have a different focus. We work with you to understand your complete event and provide technology applications for your corporate, sponsorship or association needs. We also know that things happen on the fly and are skilled at creating “in the moment,” on-site solutions (see number 4, 5 and 6 above). Let our team help you decide how beacons could be part of your next event.

How can beacons work at your next event?

Please contact us at info@meetingexpectations.com.



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