

Best Practices #5: Event Management in Comidor

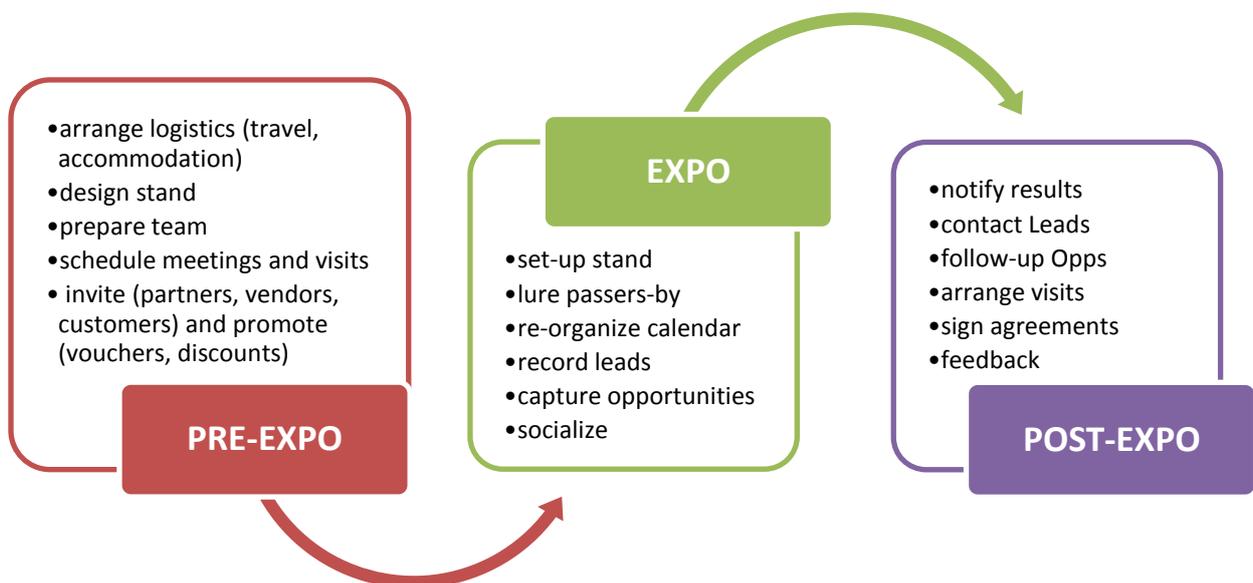
Event Management is *“the application of project management to the creation and development of large scale events such as festivals, conferences, ceremonies, formal parties, concerts, or conventions. It involves studying the brand, identifying the target audience, devising the event concept, planning the logistics and coordinating the technical aspects before actually launching the event. Event management is considered one of the strategic marketing and communication tools by companies of all sizes. From product launches to press conferences, companies create promotional events to help them communicate with clients and potential clients”* (Wikipedia).

Basically, the Event is characterized by a fundamental community action: people exchanging ideas. As such, the challenge is not only to organize it (handle all these individuals), but also to provide an appropriate positive environment that will facilitate the exchange of ideas. Both challenges are tough and this is where the word “management” comes in place and where Comidor’s tools can be a valuable assistant.

Let’s go through a typical Event Management scenario: EXPOs. We will not approach it from the generic point-of-view of the venue organizers, but from a more business-centric point-of-view, that of a company that participates in an EXPO.

The success of an EXPO participation depends heavily on the appropriate preparation (pre-EXPO), on the smooth organization of your meetings and visits (during the EXPO) and, of course, on the close follow-up with your new leads and opportunities (post-EXPO). It is more than true that an EXPO-Project starts long before its official starting date and finishes long after its official closing date...

of the basic actions that you need to consider during all phases can be seen in the following diagram.



Now, let’s see how **Comidor functionalities** can help you complete these steps!

PRE-EXPO

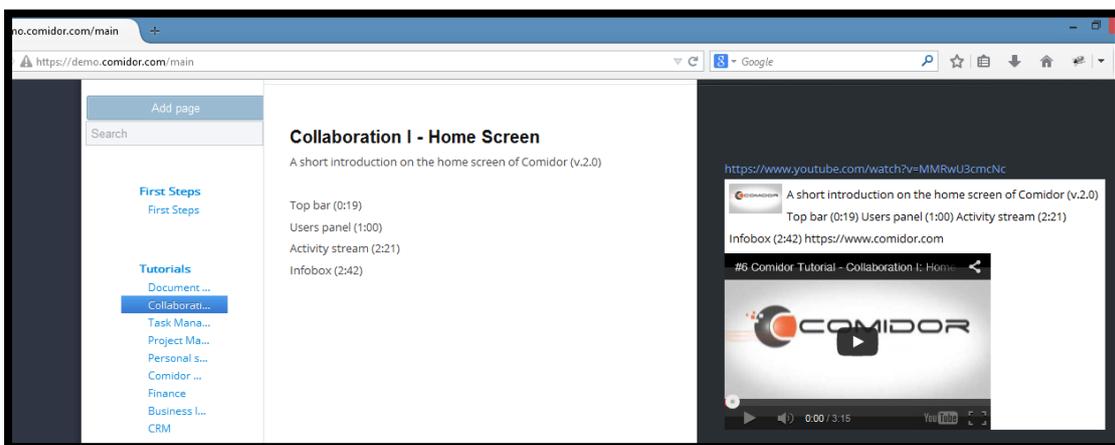
- 1. Arrange Logistics:** Assign a task to the PMO team: “Complete the Participation Process” and, right away, send an internal message to the PMO leader: *“Mate, please book me at the XYZ super luxurious spa hotel... it is so near the EXPO!”*
- 2. Design Stand:** Typically, most EXPOs provide you with online stand design-tools and EXPO maps. Pick a spot (hint: entrances, restaurants and toilets are the areas with the higher traffic) design 2-3 stand models and

take screenshots of your creations. Then, **upload these images** on Comidor's DMS and **notify the decision makers** (don't forget to include the FI director in this step!): "Dear Colleagues, which model you prefer?" It will not be long until your notification will be filled with various comments!

- 3. Prepare Team:** No matter how big is your EXPO budget, it all comes down to selecting the correct participants. Your visitors come primarily for one thing: information. Try to form a team of strong key users to promote your business. Use people from different departments (to back-up each other and handle a wide variety of inquiries) and have them aligned as per what and how to communicate. **Create a virtual group** in Comidor's Organogram and add the participants that you think will form your EXPO's Dream Team. To keep them aligned, **post a topic** mentioning your primary expectations from the EXPO, analyzing the target groups and proposing a common communication approach technique.
- 4. Schedule Meetings & Visits:** In the EXPO's website you will find interesting exhibitors and promising events. **Send e-mails** to the exhibitors and ask them for a meeting either in your stand or theirs. **Fill-in your Calendar** with meetings and **reassign** some of your calendar meeting **tasks** to your Dream Team. The EXPO is an extremely unique opportunity for your colleagues to become extrovert and increase their brand loyalty, so give them the chance to communicate your business on their own. An EXPO brings growth in many dimensions...
- 5. Invite and Promote:** What is the point of participating in a social event and not communicating it with your circle? **Tweet in Twitter and post in LinkedIn** to promote your participation and **run an Comidor email campaign** inviting employees, partners, vendors, customers, associations and friends to visit your stand. Why not distribute some free-entrance vouchers? Perhaps offer a 20% special EXPO discount for every ad hoc sale. Or simply take advantage of your EXPO promo activities to introduce the release of a new product in the market. It is your company's showtime!

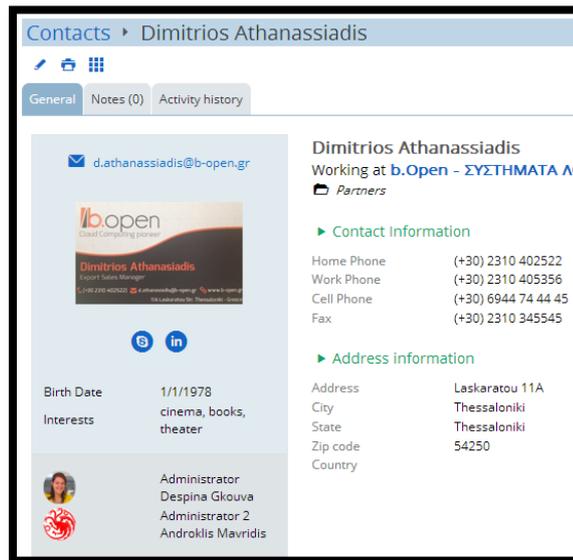
EXPO

- 6. Set-Up Stand:** You will hire a contractor to build your stand. So, **add the contractor as a guest user** in Comidor and assign him to a virtual Org Chart group named: "Project EXPO". Now, create a project "Stand EXPO" and **assign the schedule** phase "Arrange banners" to him. Use the project to follow-up the whole stand progress from blueprint to installation. All is under control; just don't forget to bring the coffee machine!
- 7. Lure passers-by:** Nobody likes dull stands. Connect a projector to your laptop, login to Comidor and **open the Wiki app**. Impress passers-by by projecting Marketing videos on your stand's more visible wall!



- 8. Re-organize Calendar:** Meetings will be postponed and cancelled, new ones will be scheduled! Re-schedule your Calendar events (simply **drag-n-drop tasks to the appropriate dates**), delegate tasks according to your heavy workload and **create events** requesting attendees' participation.

9. **Record Leads:** Upload your lead's business card in his **contact profile** and store even the smallest bit from your discussion by **keeping a note!**



10. **Capture Opportunities:** New leads, new markets, new projects, new opportunities...**Open an opportunity** in Comidor, connect it with the respective account (perhaps a new customer or a new partner) and estimate deal target and completion date.

11. **Socialize:** Walk around the expo, visit other stands and try to socialize. **Check the latest #hashtag trends** in your Twitter account and **import your new LinkedIn connections** directly into Comidor Contacts. Carpe Diem.

POST-EXPO

12. **Notify Results:** Inform your colleagues of the EXPO's huge success with a **post on the company's activity wall**. It is extremely important to share your experience with them. Never underestimate the word-of-mouth that sources from inside your premises.
13. **Contact Leads:** **Create a Contacts filter** "EXPO contacts" and run an after-EXPO campaign targeted only to these recipients. Call your leads and write down the updates in the notes of each contact. In the long-term, the **activity history of each contact** will be a treasure of information.
14. **Follow-up Opps:** Monitor your opportunities' status and progress by **checking your Sales Funnel diagram**.
15. **Arrange visits:** Plan carefully your visits to your EXPO contacts in order to save time and money! **Use the embedded Google maps** to organize efficiently your travel arrangements per territory.
16. **Sign agreements:** Congratulations! You just signed a profitable agreement! Now, scan that document, upload it on Comidor's DMS **and link it with the respective contract**. You can **even set the document as a deliverable** in the "Project EXPO".

And one final thing, a small detail that makes the difference: feedback.

17. **Feedback:** Report any problem you noticed during all 3 EXPO stages by **submitting an issue** to the appropriate department. You got less than a year to fix it!