How to Pitch a Mobile Association App to Your Board (and Kill it!)

eventmobi

Preparing Your Pitch

Pinpoint The Benefits

Benefits must be clear, specific, and quantifiable. If you're asking a senior board member to approve an investment in new technology, be sure to clearly articulate benefits and provide specific examples as back up.

When selling through an association app to board members, strong benefits might include:

- Generating non-dues revenue through digital sponsorship opportunities
- Catalyzing member engagement before, during, and after events
- Building a strategy to attract and retain millennials

EXPERT TIP

Present event technology benefits from the board members' perspective

While you'll be very aware of how using an association app will make your event workflows more efficient, to gain board buy-in, it's important to focus primarily on how this technology will offer bigger picture organizational benefits.

Improving the operational efficiency of how you run events may be foremost in your mind, but remember that your board will be more interested in understanding how this investment will have an impact on association goals, such as improving member engagement or generating new streams of non-dues revenue.

Research All Associated Costs

The benefits are important, but your board's primary question will be: How much is this going to cost our association? And a "no surprises" approach works best when introducing new technology. This is particularly important if there has been resistance and it has taken time to win support for new technological initiatives. It's important to be as objective and transparent as possible when pitching technology to your board, and that means being honest about the costs.

Keep in mind that when it comes to technology, there can often be hidden costs involved. Make sure you ask yourself these questions:

- *How much time and money will it cost to train staff on the new software?*
- *Is there an opportunity to gain cost efficiencies by using this technology across multiple events over the course of the year?*
- *What added value are we getting by going with this vendor?*
- *Are there any other associated costs?*

Let your board know exactly how much they'll be spending both now and in the future. They'll be more confident in making the purchase, and you'll both be relieved when there are no unexpected expenses lurking down the line.

Presentation Tips

Your presentation is prepared, you've done your research, and now it's game day (deep breaths!). Here are a few tips to make sure you drive home your key messages and get buy-in for this decision.

Know Your Board Members

Often board members can be from different demographic or psychographic groups. Their perceptions of technology may not be in sync and it's not necessarily a matter of age. It also has lots to do with their previous exposure to technology and comfort level in adapting to technological innovations.

To the right is a simple grid to help you determine the most effective communication strategies to sell technology to senior stakeholders.

The process involves two steps:

1. Find out how much senior stakeholders and event participants have with the technology you want to introduce.
2. During the discussion period, engage with board members based on your assessment of their technical aptitude, and their level of comfort with risk.

Don't Read From The Slides

Although you may not have enough time to invest in memorizing your presentation word-for-word, it's important to rehearse it a few times over in front of the mirror or perhaps a few colleagues.

The goal is to make sure you're comfortable with the structure, have a good idea of what slide will be coming next, and get past the point of sounding awkward or recited. Then you can deliver your pitch with authenticity and confidence.

See deck slides →

We've included speaking notes which you can tweak and summarize to suit your purposes, but we don't recommend reading it verbatim!

Common Objections to Association App Adoption

Let's talk about some of the key objections that may come up when a board is evaluating a technology purchase like an association app. We've also included suggestions on how to address these concerns, so you can be well prepared to respond.

Our demographic isn't tech-savvy enough

It's true that not every person who participates in and/or attends events is technologically literate, but that's changing fast. With the pace of technology in most offices and professions, members are already receiving on-the-job training in technology. That said, EventMobi's platform is actually one of the industry's most intuitive and easy-to-use event apps.

Another important thing to note: Seeing the value in new technology is one of the key factors that motivates people to learn how to use it. If you can show members how the app will provide benefits that align with the reasons why they initially joined your association, they'll be far more likely to download and engage with it.

We don't have the budget for event technology

This statement may indicate that you haven't done an effective enough job showing your board members how an association app could help solve many of your association challenges. Or perhaps the challenges cited aren't painful enough that they are ready to invest money towards solving them.

One approach to veer the conversation back in your favor is to revisit these challenges and quantify how much money you're losing/already spending.

For example, as a board, you could discuss how much money you're:

- Losing for each member than churns
- Spending printing event guides and paper signage
- Spending on direct mailers and newsletters throughout the year

Then, you can continue by emphasizing to your board that implementing an association app will help you save money and/or bring in more net revenue by opening up sponsorship opportunities that not only cover the cost of the technology, but will generate additional revenue.

EXPERT TIP
Refresh Your Sponsorship Packages

Ready to start generating new channels of non-dues revenue to cover the cost of your association app?

Check out this ebook: **How to Create a Sponsorship Strategy that Maximizes Event Revenue**

DOWNLOAD NOW