



CREATE AN EFFECTIVE, FOCUSED DISCUSSION WITH 100 PEOPLE

THE CHALLENGE

Find ways to facilitate and encourage discussion

The third annual Attractions Africa conference, presented by African Agenda, brought together more than 100 Attractions industry leaders, from the Table Mountain Aerial Cableway to Gold Reef City and UShaka Marine World. The conference featured international and local speakers who shared trends, benchmarks and best practices.

Attractions Africa is a platform for information sharing and collaboration and the conference architecture needed to facilitate and encourage discussion within the formal agenda.

THE SOLUTION

The conference secretariat, African Agenda, implemented a number of tools for engagement which included a “Standing Discussion” session aimed at exploring all corners of a hot industry topic: couponing.

Couponing is a debatable option for Attraction Managers who want to boost attendance at their Attractions while maintaining a positive bottom line.

“We wanted to give attendees the opportunity to voice their opinion and share their experiences with couponing. We felt that this important topic would be best covered through a discussion rather than a presentation” said Karen Hilliard of African Agenda

[!\[\]\(4b7a79268f6ba26c1471d4232fffa85a_img.jpg\) Read our *How-to Guide on how to conduct a standing discussion*](#)

The Implementation

The African Agenda team placed three signs up on the walls in the following positions:

- > LEFT: YES / AGREE / FOR
- > RIGHT: NO / DISAGREE / AGAINST
- > CENTRE: UNSURE

A facilitator introduced the session and each participant wrote their name on a Post-it note found in their attendee pack. The facilitator posed the first question:

“Are you for or against using discount coupons or vouchers to boost business at your Attraction?”

Participants moved to the side of the room that reflected their opinion and stuck their named Post-it note onto a flip chart. The facilitator then prompted participants to share why they chose a particular response and encouraged everyone to ask questions, leaving out the “unsure” camp.

After each side had contributed, the facilitator asked the participants in the middle “unsure” camp if they'd like to join one of the other camps (they did not have to move) and allowed them to move their name (and bodies) to whichever side.

To conclude, the facilitator summed up the discussion and gave participants one last opportunity to move. The “movers” were asked to share why their viewpoint on the opening question had changed.

THE RESULTS

The Standing Discussion session on couponing was a tremendous success. The session took participants out of their comfort zones and brought them together to share ideas in a lively, structured discussion. Experiences and knowledge were shared and new ideas were sparked.

“This was such a great way to get delegates interacting with each other. Not only did the activity generate a vibrant discussion, it got people out of their seats and got the blood flowing. Thanks to African Agenda for the initiative.”

Sabine Lehmann, Zeitz MOCAA