



# Experiential Marketing Impact Report (EMIR)

In today's market, brand strength isn't just a nice-to-have—it directly **shapes consumer decisions, protects against competitive disruption,** and ultimately **drives revenue.**

But building brand affinity—what we call

# brand gravity

—has never been more complex. Traditional and digital channels like TV, PR, and social media are designed to capture attention. Yet they often struggle to sustain it, let alone translate it into deeper emotional engagement.



# experiential marketing fills this gap

From major conferences and industry trade shows to consumer pop-ups and branded festivals, live experiences create moments that move people. These aren't just activations—they're **immersive interactions that build trust, stir emotion, and foster advocacy in ways other channels can't replicate.**

And it works across both sides of the aisle:



**B2B**

In **B2B**, experiential events trigger confidence in high-consideration purchases, aligning brand and buyer around shared values and real-world solutions.

**B2C**

In **B2C**, these engagements create lasting impressions through hands-on interaction, helping consumers reframe how they see and feel about a brand.

**But here's the challenge:** Experiential marketing has long been undervalued in boardrooms—not for lack of belief, but for lack of proof. Without a clear line to revenue, it's been viewed as a cost center instead of the strategic growth driver we know it to be.

# the Experiential Marketing Impact Report (EMIR) changes that.

This proprietary study interviewed **MORE THAN 2,000 CONSUMERS**, 1,000+ each attending CPG and Tech events, linking live event experiences to measurable lifts in purchase intent.\*

That correlation—long elusive—is now undeniable. The result is a **data-backed framework** that brand and event marketers can finally use to **justify investment, optimize event strategy, and elevate experiential within the marketing mix.**

Each key finding is paired with practical recommendations you can apply immediately, whether you're shaping a multi-million-dollar conference or rethinking your in-store demo approach.

\*The methodology includes cross-tab analysis, correlation mapping, and behavior clustering.



# what **EMIR** is—and what we want you to do with it



EMIR is **more than a benchmark**; it's a strategic tool. We've built it to:

- **Equip CMOs and brand leaders** with the data they need to elevate experiential to the C-suite.
- **Empower event marketers** with proof points that validate their work and guide smarter, more impactful programs.
- **Help cross-functional teams** understand where and how live events influence behavior—and how to design for outcomes, not just impressions.



EMIR was built based on **identifying and quantifying:**

- Which **types of experience attributes** actually correlate with purchase.
- How **trust and perceived value** shape recommendation behavior.
- **Amplification behaviors** like social sharing and their relationship to downstream action.

For use as your **go-to reference** when you're:

- **Planning** annual brand budgets.
- **Making the case** for experiential in omnichannel strategies.
- **Designing experiences** with clear ROI expectations.

Aligning creative, sales, and marketing teams around the true power of live events.

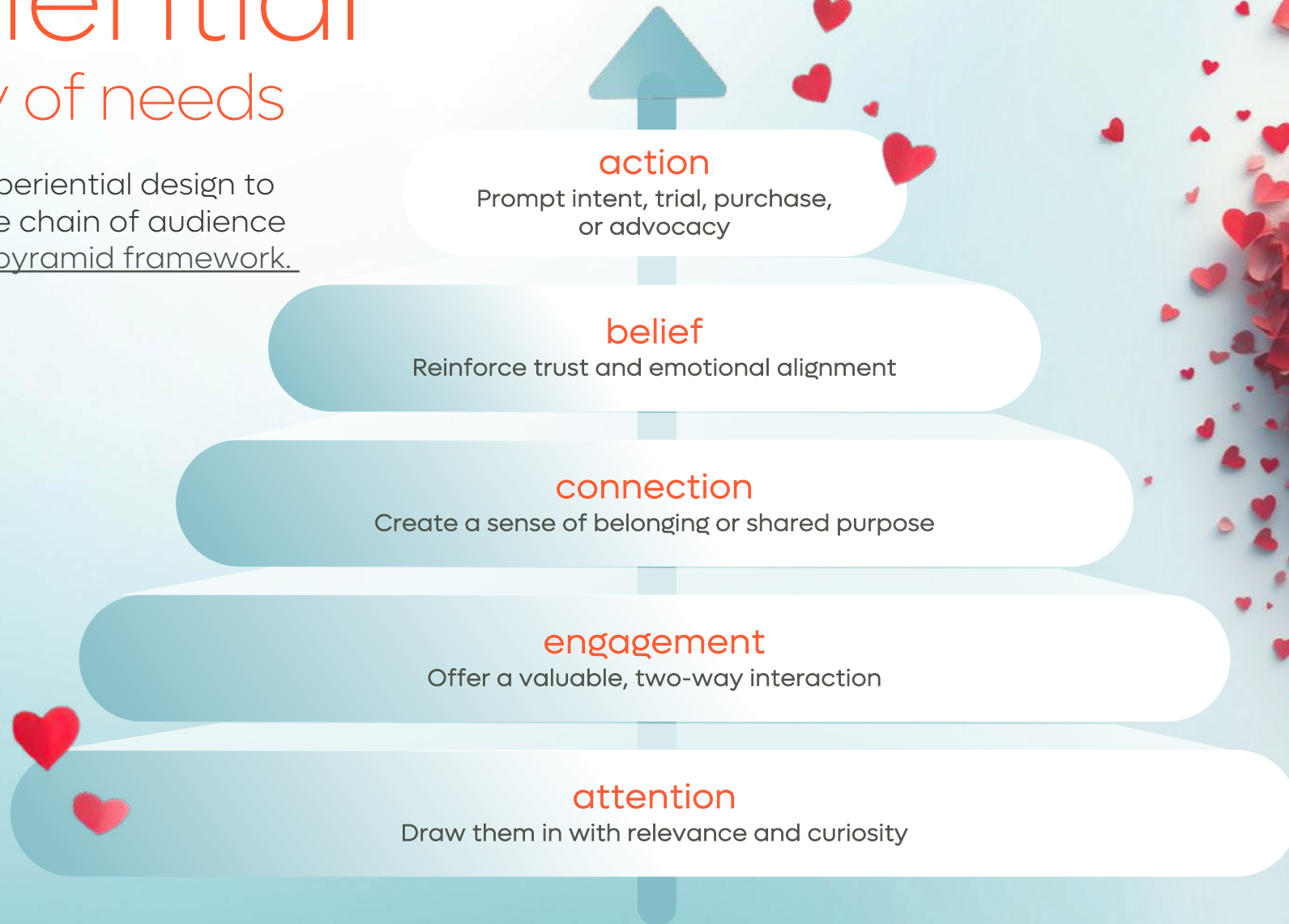
## the role of events in **BRAND STRATEGY**

Events are more than singular impact points. They're **brand-defining opportunities**. Whether in a convention center, at an outdoor pop-up, or embedded into a digital ecosystem, live experiences provide the one thing today's audiences value most: **authentic connection**.

In that sense, "event" doesn't mean big or expensive. It means intentional: a curated experience designed to meet your audience where they are, move them emotionally, and drive them to act.

# experiential hierarchy of needs

Empower your experiential design to ladder up the value chain of audience needs through [this pyramid framework](#).



# what you'll find in this report

Let EMIR be your catalyst to move experiential marketing from anecdotal success to proven strategy. The data is here. The impact is real. **NOW IT'S TIME TO ACTIVATE.**

This report unfolds in  
**FOUR CHAPTERS:**

1

**Demonstrates** the business impact of experiential marketing, grounded in data.

2

**Translates** those insights into actionable strategies and experience design principles.

3

**Helps** organizations assess their operational readiness using the Experiential Maturity Model.

4

**Summarizes** how to reposition experiential from engagement to engine.

You'll also find practical frameworks, sample metrics, and design recommendations embedded throughout.

# when brands show up live, revenue follows

- EMIR demonstrates that well-executed live experiential does **more than delight and surprise** audiences: It plays a key role in driving bottom-line revenue.



**FACE-TO-FACE ENGAGEMENT** can translate into higher purchase rates, stronger trust, more vocal amplification, and measurable movement along the sales funnel.

Across both verticals:

- **80% (Tech)** and **93% (CPG)** of attendees reported purchasing from the brand post-event.
- **96% (Tech)** and **94% (CPG)** were more likely to recommend the brand after attending.
- Attendees who described their experience **as memorable, valuable, and trustworthy** were significantly more likely to buy, **often nearly three times more likely** than those who had a neutral impression.

While digital marketing captures attention, it is live brand interaction that sustains it.

**In Tech**, where products can be complex and competition is fierce, experiential activations, when executed correctly, can help **humanize innovation and reinforce authenticity**.

**In CPG**, where purchase decisions are impulse-driven and frequent, events serve as trigger moments, **connecting product with emotion in real time**.

These results **draw a direct line between well-crafted experiential marketing and revenue impact**, when designed with behavioral intent and optimized for meaningful audience interaction.

The following sections synthesize these findings across five domains of impact:

- I. Revenue Attribution**
- II. Trust**
- III. Engagement**
- IV. Amplification**
- V. Sales Funnel Movement**

Let's unpack each of these:

# I. Revenue Attribution: From Presence to Purchase

While experiential events have long been recognized as tools for engagement, the data here demonstrates they are also powerful accelerators of conversion. **The correlation between live experience and actual purchase behavior is clear—and quantifiable.**

Cross-Vertical Purchase Outcomes:

**CPG:**

**93%**

confirmed post-event purchases.

**Tech:**

**80%**

of attendees reported making a purchase after the event.

These outcomes aren't random; they're tied directly to how attendees perceived the quality of their experience. When events were described as **memorable, transparent, or personally valuable**, purchase likelihood increased significantly.

# experience quality drives **ACTION**:

## Let's break that down:

**93%**

Among attendees who called the experience "**memorable**," **93% said they were likely to purchase**. Emotional and mental "stickiness" appears to be a powerful bridge from interest to action.

**91%**

For those who felt the event was "**transparent and real**," **91% expressed purchase intent**—pointing to authenticity and relatability as core drivers, especially important in Tech, where trust can be a barrier.

**90%**

When described as "**of value**," **over 90% of attendees planned to purchase**. Whether educational, practical, or product-driven, perceived utility moved the needle.

In stark contrast, **neutral experiences**—those lacking emotional or perceived value—saw purchase likelihoods in the **30–35%** range. That's a **2.5–3x lift** simply by crafting more resonant, meaningful experiences.

**In Tech**, this is particularly important. Long buying cycles, complex products, and multiple decision-makers can stall momentum. But when attendees engage with high-value elements—like product demos, founder Q&As, or deep-dive panels—those **friction points start to fade**. Experiential becomes a **shortcut to clarity and confidence**.

**For CPG**, the pathway is shorter, but no less important. When sampling is embedded in a **branded, immersive environment**, the product becomes more than functional. It becomes part of a memory. That's what **drives preference beyond trial**.

# time-on-site matters

Duration of engagement also plays a critical role in driving outcomes. Among Tech attendees who spent a **full day or more** with the brand:

**81%** were extremely likely to purchase.

Compared to just

**63%** among those who spent under an hour.

**It's not just about exposure; it's about depth.**

Longer dwell times often include:

- Richer one-on-one conversations.
- Attendance at sessions or demos.
- Stronger emotional involvement in the experience.

From a design standpoint, this reinforces the need to **INCENTIVIZE LONGER STAYS**, not just attract traffic. Think: lounge areas, recharge stations, staggered content blocks, or immersive environments that reward exploration.

## II. Trust: The Currency of Conversion

In a crowded media landscape, trust is no longer a soft metric. It's a conversion trigger. The data makes that clear: **Trust drives both recommendation and purchase behavior across verticals.**

- **96% of Tech attendees** and **94% of CPG attendees** were more likely to recommend the brand after attending a trust-building event.
- Of those who reported increased trust, **over 90% went on to purchase.**
- In contrast, where trust didn't increase, **purchase intent dropped to just 34%.**

That's a stark gap, demonstrating that **trust isn't nice to have; it's necessary.**

### **In Tech, trust helps establish credibility.**

Attendees are often engaging with unfamiliar products or brands. Trust is built through transparent communication, visible leadership, and straightforward storytelling. For enterprise buyers, this reduces perceived risk.

### **In CPG, trust shows up differently.**

Consumers seek confidence in what the brand stands for—safety, values, sustainability, cultural relevance. These aren't assumptions; they must be designed into the experience.

### **Drivers of Trust:**

The events that built trust most effectively shared these traits:

- **Clear, honest messaging.**
- **Access to real people**, not just screens.
- **Consistency across touchpoints**—from signage to session content to follow-up.
- **A visible brand purpose**, particularly around social or environmental impact.

When these elements are present, **trust becomes a multiplier, elevating every other experience metric.**

trust =  
**ACTION**

### III. Engagement: The Ripple Effect

Driving purchase is the end goal, but engagement is the vehicle that gets you there and sustains momentum beyond the event.

Engagement as a loyalty builder:

- **83% (Tech)** and **88% (CPG)** said they made new professional or personal connections.
- **Nearly 70%** across both sectors reported growth in professional development.
- **“Interactive”** or **“immersive”** formats delivered **2.2x higher** brand recall than passive setups.

Attendees who engaged in **workshops, demos, or networking** consistently rated the brand higher for **credibility, innovation, and cultural relevance**.

**Engagement also pays off long after the event ends.** Many respondents cited follow-up conversations, shared resources, or continued social interaction as part of the lasting impact.

**This is the compounding effect of Brand Gravity:** The stronger the engagement, the more it amplifies over time.





## IV. Amplification: Experience at the Speed of Share

Attendee-driven content is an often-overlooked force multiplier. When people feel moved, surprised, or delighted, they share—and that behavior extends the event's impact exponentially.

### Experience drives expression:

72%

of CPG attendees posted or shared brand content after the event.

61%

of Tech attendees did the same.

Attendees who shared were nearly

2x

as likely to purchase (89%) as those who didn't (48%).

**Social sharing is more than a vanity metric; it's a signal of emotional resonance and intent.**

Attendees were most likely to post when experiences were:

- **Visually bold or emotionally moving.**
- **Personalized** (e.g., co-created content, VIP access, name tags).
- **Status-driven** (behind-the-scenes access, exclusive previews, etc.).

When shared, the experience is reinforced for the original attendee and introduced to their community. **That's free amplification with real business value.**

# V. Sales Funnel Impact: Accelerating the Journey

Ultimately, great experiential doesn't just create awareness. **It moves people through the funnel.**

## Full Funnel Movement:

### TOP OF FUNNEL:

91%

of Tech attendees with no prior engagement said they'd now consider the brand.

CPG

attendees reported higher brand recognition at retail and online post-event.

### MID-FUNNEL:

68%

said the event clarified what made the brand different from competitors.

### BOTTOM FUNNEL:

82%

said the event helped confirm or speed up an existing purchase decision.

**In Tech**, the impact was strongest at the awareness and consideration stages, helping audiences understand complex offerings. **In CPG**, the lift was clearest in immediate purchase behavior and ongoing recall.

In both cases, **experiential acted as an emotional and behavioral accelerator**, giving audiences what they needed, intellectually or emotionally, to take the next step.

# translating insights to **ACTION**



Experiential marketing shouldn't just create moments for your audience—it should create **MOVEMENT FOR YOUR BRAND**.

Chapter 1 demonstrated experiential marketing's ability to influence behavior, build trust, and drive measurable business outcomes. But **data alone doesn't generate momentum**. The real opportunity lies in applying those insights: translating them into frameworks that inform how we design experiences, train teams, measure success, and maintain connection post-event.

In this chapter, we break down how to operationalize the findings from Chapter 1, **turning emotional signals into strategic design inputs** and **aligning experiential programs to measurable business outcomes**.

# I. Revenue Attribution: From Presence to Purchase

When an experience feels memorable, transparent, or personally valuable, it does more than resonate. It converts. When people feel something, they do something.

## Insight

**Emotional resonance** and **perceived value** drive higher purchase intent.

The journey from presence to purchase isn't linear. It's shaped by three key experience variables:

- **Time-on-site**
- **Depth of interaction**
- **Post-event reinforcement**

## ACTION item

**Design for Behavioral Outcomes, Not Just Attendance**

**1. Map purchase outcomes** across experience elements:

- **Time-on-site** (short, medium, extended)
- **Touchpoint depth** (passive vs. active)
- **Post-event reinforcement** (follow-up offers, rep outreach)

**2. Apply experience design principles**—surprise, storytelling, interactivity—to engineer emotionally resonant moments.

**3. Prioritize depth over breadth:** optimize for dwell time and meaningful interaction, not just foot traffic.

**4. Design for dwell time:** lounges, recharging zones, staggered sessions, and surprise elements can increase time spent and emotional connection.

When brands shift focus from just attracting attendees to **ENGAGING THEM MEANINGFULLY**, revenue attribution becomes rooted in behavior, not just attendance metrics.

## II. Trust: Currency of Conversion

Trust isn't a luxury; it's a requirement. And based on the data, it's arguably the most critical metric in turning events into sales.

### Insight

Trust is the **single strongest predictor of post-event purchase** and recommendation.

Trust is **built or broken through experience**. It's not a line in a keynote or a slide in a deck. It needs to be felt across every part of the event.

### ACTION item

#### Operationalize Trust with Authentic Touchpoints

- 1. Build a trust framework** into your planning: include checkpoints for transparency, human interaction, and brand purpose visibility.
- 2. Train staff to engage** in values-based storytelling, not just product messaging.
- 3. Show, don't tell:** give attendees access to demos, founders, or transparent narratives that showcase credibility and culture.
- 4. Make purpose visible:** sustainability, social impact, and cultural relevance should be embedded, not bolted on.

Trust isn't a passive outcome; it's a **DESIGN PRINCIPLE**. Build it with intention, and it becomes a force multiplier across every stage of the funnel.

### III. Engagement: The Ripple Effect

Engagement is often treated as a single moment—but as we saw in Chapter 1, it's the engine that powers recall, loyalty, and post-event momentum.

#### Insight

**Engagement is the engine that powers everything else.**

But **not all engagement looks the same**. Some attendees crave content. Others want connection. The most effective events build multiple modalities so each individual can engage in their own way.

#### **ACTION** item

##### **Begin Architecture on Engagement Multipliers**

- 1. Design for range:** offer programming that spans content, connection, and co-creation—panels, demos, workshops, lounges.
- 2. Implement engagement scoring:** track not just who attends, but what they do and how long they stay, to identify high-value participants.
- 3. Build bridges:** follow-up campaigns and post-event engagement extend impact across channels and touchpoints.

When engagement is layered and intentional, it compounds. It's not just a ripple—it becomes a **WAVE THAT SUSTAINS BRAND GRAVITY** long after the event ends.



## IV. Amplification: Experience at the Speed of Share

When attendees feel something worth remembering, they share it. And that sharing isn't just reach. It's reinforcement.

### Insight

**Social sharing** isn't just a byproduct; **it's an indicator.**

People post what matters to them. That makes amplification a reliable signal of emotional investment, and **a business driver that doesn't add cost.**

### **ACTION** item

#### Engineer for Lifecycle Amplification

- 1. Design shareable moments with purpose:** go beyond the photo wall—think about emotional peaks, aesthetic uniqueness, and surprising elements.
- 2. Incentivize sharing, subtly:** gamified elements, creative prompts, or “you-had-to-be-there” moments make posting feel authentic, not forced.
- 3. Extend the life of amplification:** curate UGC, repost community content, and feed these moments into CRM and nurture campaigns.

When sharing is built into the design, it becomes a **FLYWHEEL**. Each post reinforces the attendee's connection and multiplies your reach through trusted networks.

# V. Sales Funnel Impact: Accelerating the Journey

Experiential marketing doesn't just make impressions. It moves people forward: From curiosity to consideration. From trial to decision. From intent to action.

## Insight

**Experiential marketing impacts every stage of the sales funnel** differently across verticals.

**In Tech**, experiential lifts top-and mid-funnel performance by clarifying complex offerings and establishing trust. **In CPG**, it shines at the bottom of the funnel, turning trial into preference and preference into purchase.

And importantly, day-of impact is only the beginning. True ROI shows up over time.

## ACTION item

**Align Your Experience to Funnel Stage and Build a Closed-Loop Measurement System**

### 1. Align design to funnel stage:

- **Top:** storytelling, vibe, emotional resonance
- **Mid:** education, differentiation, demos, expert access
- **Bottom:** conversion offers, next steps, sales integration

**2. Track beyond the event:** implement 30/60/90-day follow-ups to measure conversion and nurture momentum.

**3. Close the loop:** align CRM, social, and sales teams to identify and act on high-intent signals.

**4. Leverage predictive analytics** to understand which experience elements are most closely tied to revenue outcomes.

When experiential is mapped intentionally to the buyer's journey, it does more than support the funnel: It **ACCELERATES IT**.

# but first ... is your organization ready?



- From Cost Center to **REVENUE DRIVER**

Every brand generates **Brand Gravity**, whether by design or by default. The difference lies in how intentionally that gravity is shaped and harnessed **to drive measurable outcomes**.

As EMIR findings confirm, organizations that deliver the **right experience** at the **right time and place** can directly influence purchase behavior.

But capitalizing on this potential requires more than running great events. **It calls for a mindset shift:** from viewing experiential marketing as a cost, to recognizing it as a strategic growth engine.

That transformation doesn't begin at the event. It starts with your **organizational readiness**.

Historically, events have been considered necessary but expensive—a line item often justified by anecdotal success rather than direct revenue attribution.

That perception is changing. Leading organizations are now reframing experiential as a **lever for growth**, one that **connects brand, audience, and sales outcomes** in powerful ways.

But to truly unlock that potential, companies must reassess not just their event strategy, but their **entire operating model:** governance, culture, logistics, creativity, and marketing integration. Readiness is about moving from **reactive execution** to **proactive orchestration**, where every event is designed to serve a business outcome.

To support that shift, we introduce the **EXPERIENTIAL MATURITY MODEL**.

It's a framework that helps organizations **self-reflect and assess capabilities** today. It helps you to chart a path toward **expanding and targeting your experiential approach**, as defined by your organizational KPIs and business growth trajectory.

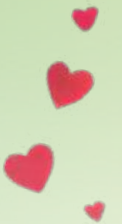
It spans six areas, with check boxes to capture where your organization stands across **Operational, Integrated, and Transformational** maturity levels:



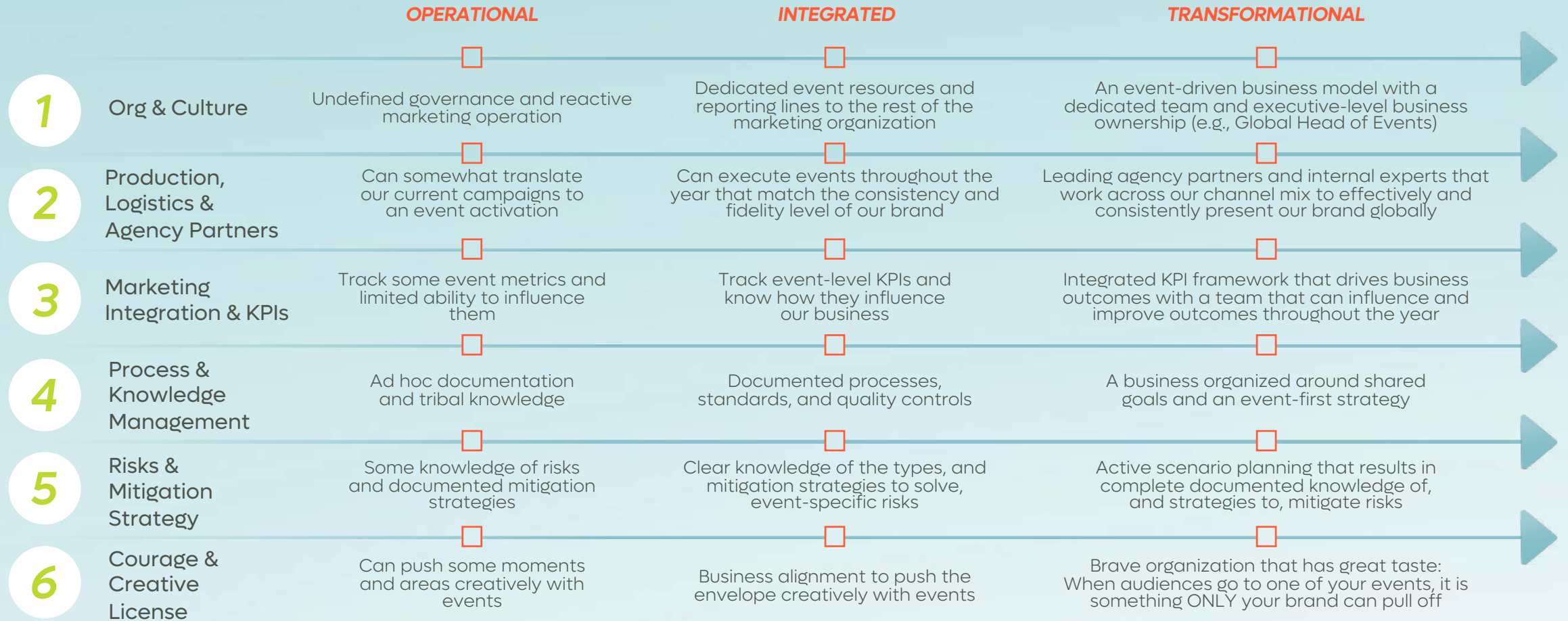
**For full direction** and a guide in situ, see our **Maturity Assessment** EMIR Companion Piece.

This model isn't about labeling teams as "behind" or "advanced." It's about knowing where you stand in context to what is important to your organization—**GAINING CLARITY**.

Knowing what's important to your organization and where your events play within that empowers **better strategic prioritization, clear perspective of risks, and smarter investments** to move your organization from left to right.



# the experiential maturity model



## Operationalizing Readiness

Once your current state is clear, the next step is embedding experiential thinking into the DNA of your business. This means asking the right questions—not just about the event itself, but across every operational layer that touches it.

# ask yourself:

- Do we have **executive sponsorship** for experiential initiatives?
- Are our **event teams empowered** with the right tools, data, and authority?
- Is our **pricing strategy aligned** with perceived customer value?
- Are we **measuring what matters**, or just what's easy to track?
- Do we **truly understand our audience personas** and how they engage with our brand in real life?
- Are our **business KPIs and event KPIs aligned**—with direct, trackable links to business outcomes?
- Do we **understand and have mitigation strategies** for the risks of bringing our brand to life experientially?
- Are we a brave brand that can **push the envelope creatively**?

These are **cross-functional questions**. They require input and alignment from marketing, sales, operations, finance, and executive leadership. And they don't get answered in a single meeting—they **form the backbone of an ongoing cultural shift**.

Ultimately, organizational readiness isn't only about being prepared for the next event. It's about building a business capable of **consistently delivering experiences that drive loyalty, advocacy, and revenue**.

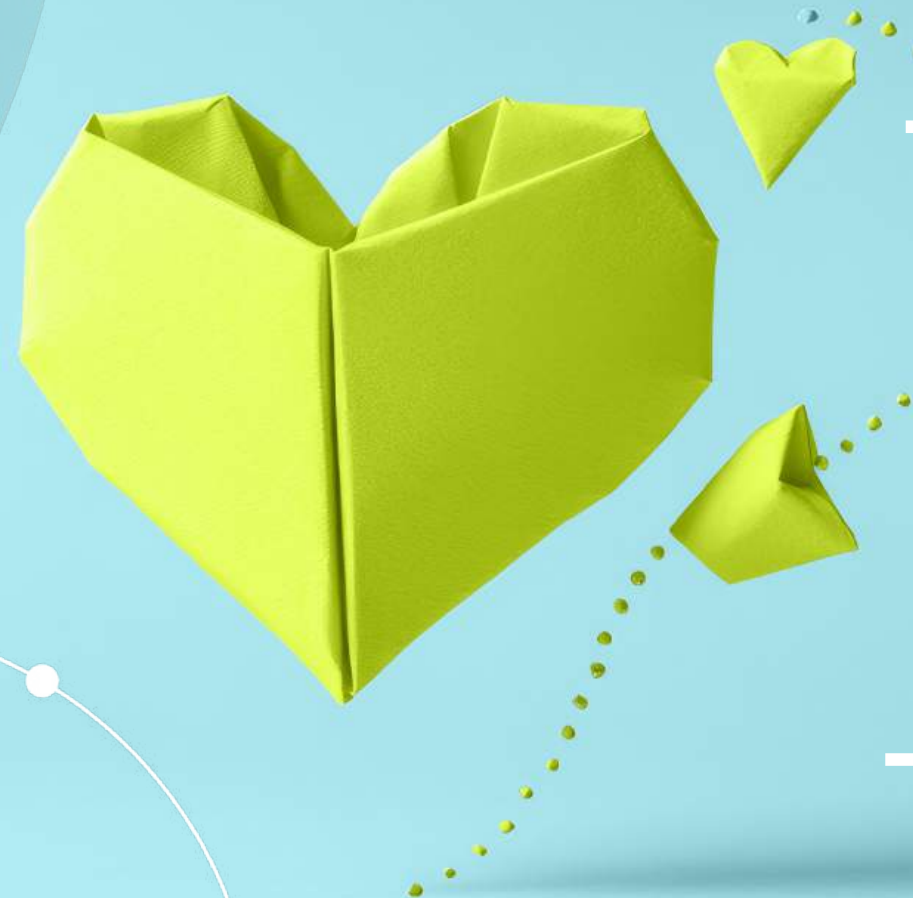
EMIR gives us the why. The Maturity Model gives us the how. **Now the challenge, and opportunity, is to act on it.**

# reframing experiential: from engagement to engine

**Experiential marketing** has long been celebrated for its ability to captivate, inspire, and connect. But for too long, it's been siloed from the core growth narrative, regarded as a moment of engagement, rather than a **strategic engine of business value**.

EMIR **REFRAMES** that narrative.

Through proprietary research and real-world behavioral data, we've shown that live experiences—when designed with purpose and measured with precision—don't just delight audiences. They influence **purchase intent**, accelerate **sales velocity**, strengthen **brand trust**, and create **authentic amplification** that extends long beyond the event floor.





## What this means for **BRAND & EVENT LEADERS**

Whether you're a CMO shaping marketing strategy or an event marketer on the ground designing activations, EMIR provides the validation, and the playbook, you need to confidently position experiential as:

- A **revenue driver**, not a cost center.
- A **full-funnel accelerator**, not just a top-of-funnel tactic.
- A **trust builder**, in both consumer and enterprise decision-making.
- A **force multiplier**, amplifying brand story and community connection.

This is not a theoretical shift.  
**It's a measurable one.**

## What comes **NEXT**

Now that you've seen the data, the next step is **internal activation**:

- **Evaluate your organization's experiential readiness** using the [Maturity Assessment](#).
- **Apply EMIR's insights** based on your immediate needs with the [Implementation Checklist](#).
- **Re-architect event strategies** around behavioral and emotional drivers, with the [Experiential Hierarchy of Needs](#) as your guide.
- **Align stakeholders**, from executive leadership to field teams, on experiential's role in the growth engine.
- **Close the loop with measurement systems** that connect live engagement to pipeline and revenue.

The brands that win tomorrow will be the ones that **use live experiences to drive demand, trust, and loyalty in every interaction.**

Let EMIR be  
your foundation.  
The rest is  
yours to build. 