



# 9 SIMPLE WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR REGISTRATION PROCESS



Did you know that a smooth registration process can dramatically impact your attendees?

A smooth, comfortable registration process can change the way they look at your organization. It can decrease complications and complaints at your events. It can even lead to higher attendance and lower no-show rates. Over the past several years, we've invested hundreds of hours into studying how attendees flow through the registration process. We've identified what they like and what confuses them and come up with some simple, yet little-known techniques that will revolutionize your registration process and impress your attendees.

“ We have been using Lanyon's SMB product, RegOnline®, since November 2008 and have been extremely pleased with the product and services to manage our company's event registration needs. We hold many courses each month and through RegOnline, the registration processes have been smooth, user friendly and easy to use.

Deana Dinel, Training and Customer Service at CrossFit.com ”

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## 1. Get Rid of Paper-Based Processes

Event organizers often worry that high-tech registration options will alienate a portion of their target audience. Yet you'll be surprised how quickly even your most traditional users will adapt to online registration. In fact, many event organizers have found that removing paper registration altogether has led to higher attendance, happier attendees and much fewer complications at events.



**CASE IN POINT:** Handling registration for its larger conventions and events used to be a major data entry project for the Dairy Queen events team. They had to process mail-in registration forms for franchise owners, family members, and vendors. That meant entering all of the registrants, including any attending family members, and keeping track of all of their activities. Now that Dairy Queen is using RegOnline® by Lanyon, nearly 80% of its attendees are registering online and the number continues to climb each year.

## 2. Put Your Attendees in Control

Miscommunications and a lack of real time updates are pretty much guaranteed to negatively impact your attendees. Yet many event organizers still rely on manual processes to manage things like meal preferences, room blocks and nearly every other attendee preference.

Use RegOnline to enable attendees to choose their own preferences and make self-service changes to those preferences before the event. RegOnline makes this process easy for attendees, and even provides reports that can be shared with hotels, caterers and event organizers in real time. These shared reports ensure that all preferences are updated and accurate at all times.



**CASE IN POINT:** Fenway Sports Management's Fan Experience Programs provide 25 unique travel experiences that are once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for 2,200 fans. Thanks to RegOnline, the staff is now free from back-and-forth telephone calls to collect attendee details. The conditional logic of its forms allows the team to present various pricing tiers and options for events -- and even collect players' uniform sizes and baseball positions. This has reduced a tremendous burden on the staff.

### 3. Encourage Groups

Often many attendees from one organization want to attend your event together. With RegOnline, you can provide an easy-to-follow group registration process while still allowing each individual to manage their registration and attendance separately if needed. You'll impress the group leaders and provide value to the organization they are representing. There are two important ways you can increase the number of group registrations for your event:

- a. Include group registration in your standard registration process.** Simply enable group registration and a group leader can register any number of people. They can fill in a few personal details for each person, automatically copy duplicate information, and pay for the entire group in one transaction. Individuals within the group still receive individual notifications about registration status and event updates and can still cancel or substitute if needed.
- b. Provide group discounts.** RegOnline lets you advertise group discounts (e.g., buy 3 get the 4th for free) and set percentage-off or dollar-off discounts of any amount. You can set a date and time that the discount automatically expires to add urgency. You can even apply the discount to all fees or only specific ones (e.g., only registration, not merchandise).

“It's so important for me to know how people paid and when. Having those records and proof at my fingertips has been great. Also, our attendee organizations love that they can register and pay for multiple people in one easy process, instead of having to do multiple registrations with multiple payments.”

Marqita Jones, UCCS Matrix Center, Program Manager

### 4. Make Every Question Count

Usability studies show that attendees struggle with long registration forms, particularly when those forms contain information that isn't relevant to the attendee. RegOnline provides conditional logic in its registration process to avoid that pitfall.

Conditional logic tailors questions in the registration form to dynamically display based on information previously entered. So, for example, if I have a golf networking event set up in RegOnline, I may ask an attendee if they would like to attend. If that attendee answers “no,” they will not be required to fill out information on tee times, t-shirt sizes or transportation. On the other hand, if that attendee chooses “yes” they will automatically see the appropriate questions.

Very complicated events are using conditional logic to dramatically streamline the registration process, but even small events can use this technology to greatly reduce registration headaches for attendees while reducing workload for event organizers.

## 5. Make Networking Easier with Directories

For many event attendees, the networking side of events is the most important, and event organizers are increasingly dependent on good networking opportunities to make their events stand out. Those opportunities start during the registration process, so consider providing a quick link to a directory of event attendees both during your registration process and in your confirmation email. The kind of information you provide on that directory will vary, but many organizers include names of attendees, email addresses and even a list of sessions people are attending. This technique immediately engages your attendee with your event, allowing them to reach out to friends or set up face-to-face meetings.



**CASE IN POINT:** Prior to implementing RegOnline, Unitron provided a form for all meeting registrants to complete. Once the form was emailed or faxed back, the event planner manually entered all information into a spreadsheet and responded with a confirmation email. Another reminder email was sent to each attendee approximately one month prior to the event with any updates – again, manually.

With RegOnline, all information is entered directly into the database by the registrant, allowing easy access and reporting by the event planner. Confirmation and follow up emails are automated, by audience segment as needed, and sent together at designated times. Automating the process has led to 90% time savings for the event planner.

## 6. Re-Confirm to Eliminate No-Shows

If you're like most event organizers, seeing a stack of unused name badges at the end of an event is frustrating. The good news is that there is a way to identify no-shows before your events—yet it's one of the least-used features in event registration. It's called "click-to-confirm" reminders, and it allows event organizers to send a series of triggered email reminders leading up to an event, asking attendees to confirm that they will be attending the event. This practice allows you to weed out people who have changed their minds and open up spaces for sold out events. In addition, the extra action taken by your attendees reminds them about the event and reaffirms their commitment to attend.



Sample Registration Badge

## 7. Build Better Badges

A badge is a badge, right? Nope. Not anymore. In fact, top event organizers are realizing that badges can play a crucial role in tying registration information to the event. RegOnline allows you to enhance your badges with group information, color coding, an agenda and an individual QR code for each participant with scan-able contact information for easy exchange.

Make sure you're branding your badges, agendas and signage to match your registration form. In addition, provide your attendees with a complete list of their session selections and preferences when they receive their badge. This practice will immediately address any issues before confusion sets in, and it will remind your attendees of the selections they made during the registration process.

## 8. Streamline Registration for Returning Attendees

Event registrants can become frustrated by the length of time it takes to fill out a registration form. Yet many registrants are previous customers of the organization holding the event, meaning that most of their personal information will have been captured by the organization before. In this case the auto-recall option in RegOnline is a great way to speed up registration.

You can set up registration to pre-populate personal and business information for your registrants wherever possible. Not only does this practice dramatically reduce time spent in the registration process, but it also decreases the number of people who abandon the process and reduces errors in your reporting. This simple feature can improve the attendee experience while making sure you always have accurate contact information for follow-ups and promotions.

## 9. Make Passwords Optional for Registrations

For people new to your event, you want to ensure the smoothest registration experience possible to increase your event registrations and revenues. With RegOnline, you can elect to have people register for your event without a password. Plus, your registered guests will receive a secure URL in their email confirmations to review and edit their registration information, reducing the amount of time spent on forgotten passwords.

When you create a new event in RegOnline, there is a check box for "Require Password":

- Uncheck the box to allow your guests to register without a password
- Check the box if you want guests to register with a password