

Digestive Disease Week®

Finds a Cure for Inefficient Sponsorship Sales

a2z Case Study



60%

sponsorships sold 6 months before the event



Higher than ever

first-day sales on launch



Digestive Disease Week® (DDW) is the world's largest gathering of professionals in the field of gastroenterology, hepatology, endoscopy, and gastrointestinal surgery. Its annual conference and exhibition attracts 15,000 attendees and approximately 250 exhibitors every May. **a2z helped the**

organizers of DDW streamline and accelerate sales of the event's growing number of sponsorship opportunities with the a2z Show Online Sponsorship Sales Management solution, and a little bit of healthy competition.

Transforming the Operation

Like many organizations, the DDW team became aware of the inefficiencies of a paper-based operation, especially with its fast growing inventory of sponsorships. "We were processing booth applications and sponsorships utilizing paper forms and over the last two to three years, DDW has really expanded their sponsorship offerings resulting in increased staff time needed to process paperwork which started to become very cumbersome hindering our ability to actually sell," says Diedra Crawford, Industry and Sales Operations Director.

Migrating to a Better Solution

In an effort to begin the paper-reduction process and increase efficiency, DDW began using Floorplan Genie several years ago, a2z's freemium floor plan management tool. For the 2016 event, the group implemented a2zShow, a full-featured online exhibit sales platform and the Online Sponsorship Sales (OSS) solution enabling companies to purchase enhanced listings and sponsorship options directly from the event website. OSS allowed DDW to upload art, display all sponsorships available by category and link to the general service contractor's virtual tour of banner placements in the convention center.

"a2zShow has made the sponsorship sales process so much easier for the staff, sponsors and exhibitors. The huge time savings is hard to put a dollar figure on."



Diedra Crawford
Digestive Disease
Week®

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More Efficiency, Higher Sales

Despite the drastic change from paper forms to a state-of-the-art, PCI-compliant ecommerce platform, exhibitors welcomed the a2z solution. "Being able to view all the available inventory, easily click and submit purchases in one step rather than fill out paperwork saved exhibitors time and energy" explains Kaitlin Bolum, Industry Sales Coordinator.

Rather than spread out sponsorship sales by introducing new products throughout the sales cycle, DDW released the entire 2016 inventory on one day. That change in procedure boosted first-day sales to a level much higher than organizers had experienced in past years. It drove excitement and competition among the buyers who, for the first time, were able to see the entire inventory at once. By December 2015, more than 60% of the sponsorships for the May 2016 show were sold.

The a2z sponsorship solution also helped DDW approach their sponsorship program more strategically. "It forced us to take a look at the sponsorships as a whole instead of dividing them up into categories. We were able to budget more efficiently and think about what we wanted to offer based on the facility. Typically, we haven't launched sponsorship sales until January, so we are significantly ahead of the curve. a2z has put us on a good path," explains Crawford.

Next Steps

A key objective for DDW going forward is to make a2zShow a cornerstone of the online exhibitor experience. The group has plans to integrate the registration platform and the general contractor's ordering system with a2zShow to create a one-stop exhibitor resource center. Crawford, Bolum and team are also planning an exhibitor meeting at the site of the 2017 conference in Chicago where they will provide exhibitors with more in-depth training on the a2z features.

About a2z's Customer Service

a2z provides all client event organizers with a dedicated a2z Project Manager (PM), a member of our widely experienced Professional Services team. The a2z PM assists with the system configuration, mapping of business processes and provides guidance on event-specific scenarios. S/he is also available on an ongoing basis to answer technical questions, as well as to facilitate onsite and offsite training. In addition, a2z solution users have access to comprehensive product documentation and additional resources through a self-service Help Center, powered by Zendesk.

Contact us today to discuss how a2z can help you improve your events: ☎ 443-393-2443 ✉ sales@a2zinc.net 🌐 www.a2zinc.net

The logo for a2zInc, featuring the text "a2zInc" in a bold, sans-serif font. The "a2z" is in a dark red color, and "Inc" is in a lighter red color. The text is set against a white background with a dark red border.

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Three Powerful Platforms. One Integrated Solution.

a2z provides powerful cloud-based event management and marketing tools that grow your brand by accelerating booth sales, helping boost revenue, and enhancing engagement and value for event participants. a2z's solutions are used by 500+ clients to power 1000+ events annually, including over 45% of the Top 250 U.S. shows.