

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses Expedites Booth Sales

“We like the a2zFloorPlan web-based system because it is online, real-time. People understand that they can use it 24/7. It’s there whenever they need it. I can come in to our Orange County, Calif., headquarters at 8 a.m. and have messages from the East Coast, where people have already been online looking at space.”

— Randy Bauler, CEM, Corporate Relations and Exhibits Director, American Association of Critical-Care Nurses

CHALLENGE:

The American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) produces the National Teaching Institute & Critical Care Exposition (NTI) each May to help members stay up-to-date on technology and techniques for treating acutely and critically ill patients. More than 6,500 nurses visit the 125,000 net-square-foot exhibition, where about 550 companies display healthcare products and educational materials. In the past, AACN managed the exhibit hall floorplan using a paper-based system. Prospective exhibitors downloaded a PDF file of the floorplan from the conference website, but the document was only updated bi-weekly, and booth numbers and company names were often illegible. Updated versions sent by fax were no more readable.

SOLUTION:

AACN began evaluating electronic floorplan management solutions in early 2005 and quickly narrowed the search from 10 companies to four for in-depth evaluation. In November 2005, a2zFloorPlan was selected for its superior functionality, as well as being the best option for a web-based, licensed solution. The board approved budget for the licensing agreement in April 2006, and the agreement was executed at the start of the new fiscal year in July 2006. By September, a2zFloorPlan was live on the NTI 2007 website, providing an up-to-date, printable floorplan that would be accessible 24/7.

RESULTS:

With a2zFloorPlan, AACN no longer has to wait for the service contractor to provide an updated floorplan PDF file to post to the website. AACN uses a2zFloorPlan to display the booth number, size of space, company name and AACN company database ID number. Having a live, real-time floorplan accessible at all times has reduced the number of faxes being sent to prospective exhibitors. (About one third of AACN’s customers prefer a fax or hard copy printout, so faxing was not eliminated entirely.) AACN sales staff can talk to exhibitors by phone while both parties view the most up-to-date floorplan online. All available space as well as the names of companies who have already purchased space are displayed in real-time. Exhibitors can quickly select space, sometimes reserving more space than planned. AACN attributes record sales for NTI 2007 in part to the ease with which sales were closed using a2zFloorPlan. After just 12 months, the association has realized these results:

- **Real-time accessibility** — The most current floorplan can be accessed from any Internet connection at any time.
- **Printability** — The print command generates a printable PDF file of the most current floorplan, with booth numbers and company names clearly legible.
- **Readability** — Users can zoom in on the color-coded exhibit hall layout to see available, reserved and sold space.
- **More visible options** — Companies consider more options when they can see available space regardless of size.
- **Expedited sales** — Options can be quickly reviewed and the sale closed without faxing additional floorplans.
- **Exhibitor satisfaction** — Customers can clearly see the entire exhibit hall, locate available space and read the names of companies who have already purchased booths, making the purchase experience easier.
- **Low maintenance** — The web-based application requires little or no IT staff time to maintain.
- **Superior support** — a2z staff provides expert implementation support, enabling AACN to quickly launch the next year’s floorplan.
- **Licensing fee payback** — The annual licensing fee for a2zFloorPlan can be recouped with the sale of just one additional booth.

“With a2zFloorPlan, exhibitors can look at all the options, see every size booth available and the location of those booths. Therefore, they can say, ‘We were planning to take a 10-by-10 booth, but there is a better 10-by-20 booth available up front.’ That’s a sales plus for me.”

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