

Events Aren't Demand Gen.

Measuring ROI in Relationship-Driven Sales

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Two corners of the same industry.

[BOTH]

Mackenzie Hill

Sr. Marketing Coordinator

Port authority serving 140 ports in 70 countries. Plans and executes JAXPORT's trade shows, conferences, and customer events.



Ash Thoms

Sr. Trade Show & Events Manager

Asset-light 3PL. Leads strategy and execution of ITS Logistics' presence across major industry events.



Different cycles. Different customers. Same broken scoreboard.

**Events in transportation
are not demand gen.**

The roadmap.

01

Define success

before the show

02

Track what matters

on-site

03

Debunk

"you can't track that"

04

Sell the story

to leadership

05

Be memorable

without overspending

01

SECTION 01

Why event ROI is different in transportation

On average, how many touches did it take to
close a sale in our industry in 2025?

27

AVERAGE TOUCHES TO CLOSE A SALE IN LOGISTICS

2025 industry benchmark

Events are relationship infrastructure.

[MACKENZIE]

PIPELINE

RELATIONSHIP INFRASTRUCTURE

Trust acceleration · Repeat conversations · Brand familiarity · Stakeholder depth

The layer underneath the pipeline.

02

SECTION 02

Defining success before the event

Real success looks like:

10

qualified meetings with BCO shippers in automotive

3

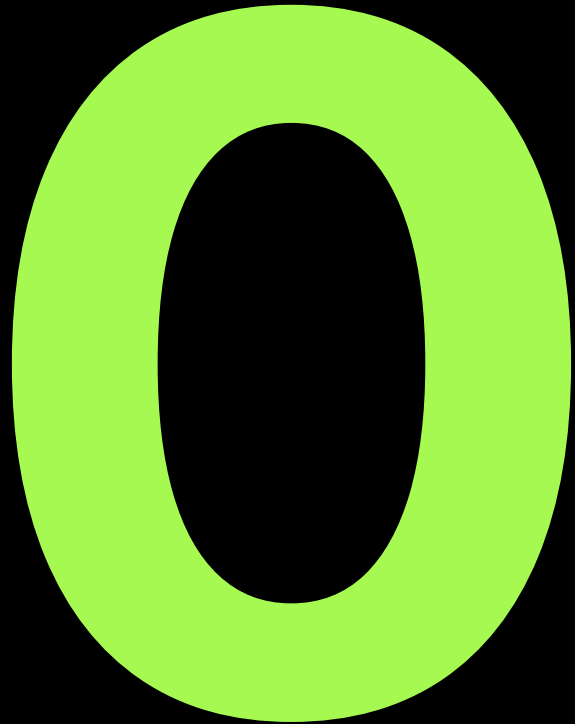
reconnects with customers we haven't seen in 18 months

1

on-stage moment we can clip for 6 months of content

1

specific competitor's customer at our booth



SECTION 03

What's worth tracking on-site

What we track. What we ignore.

[ASH]

TRACK

- ✓ Meeting quality
- ✓ Cost per meeting vs. cost per trip
- ✓ Conversation rubric (1-4)
- ✓ Target account presence
- ✓ Brand sentiment & overheard quotes
- ✓ Referrals from booth conversations

DON'T TRACK

- × Badge scans
- × Swag pickup
- × Floor traffic
- × Session attendance (unless sponsored)
- × Social impressions as a headline

What do you track?
What do you absolutely avoid tracking?

What'd we miss?

You don't need an AI tool.

1

A Google Doc.

Shared. Open all show.

2

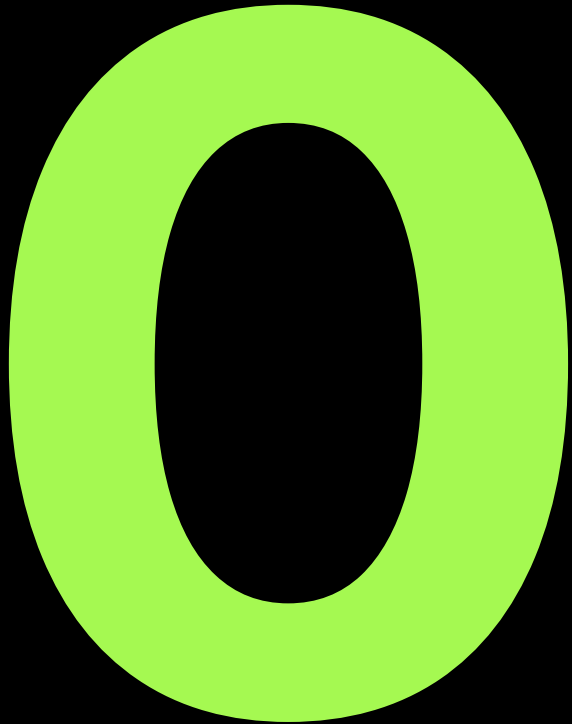
A team that's listening.

On the floor. Eyes up.

3

Quotes logged in real time.

Before you forget who said it.



SECTION 04

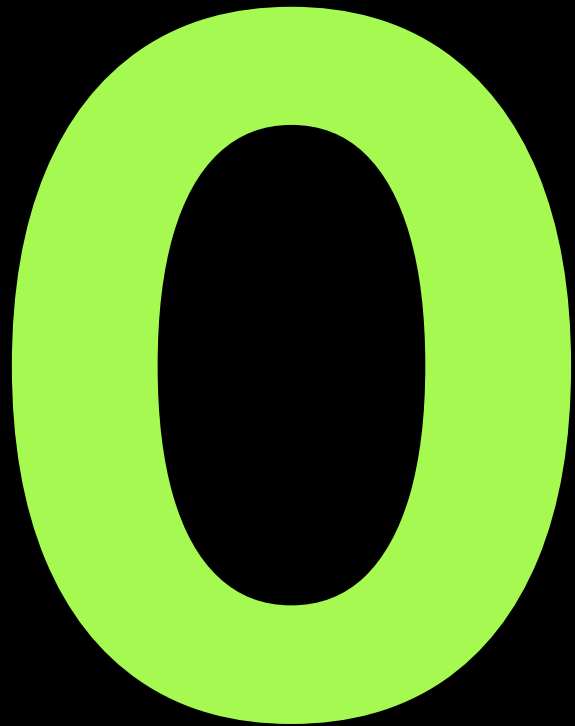
Debunking "you can't track that"

Within 7 days. Every show. Always.

[ASH]

-
- Which accounts did you meet with?
 - What stage did they move to?
 - What's the next action?
 - What did you hear about competitors?
 - What did you hear about us?

**If it happened
and it's not written down,
it didn't happen.**



SECTION 05

Telling the story leadership buys

Two scoreboards. Pick the right one.

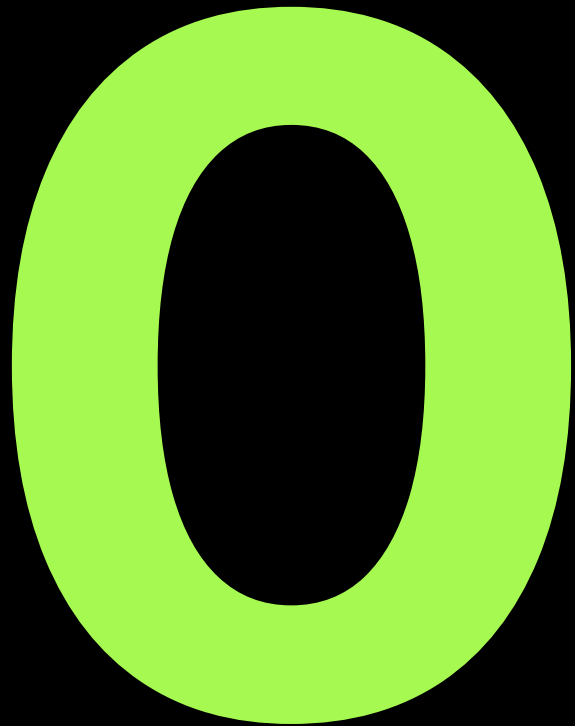
[MACKENZIE]

DEMAND GEN METRICS

- × MQLs
- × 30-day attribution
- × Cost per lead
- × Closed-won (90 days)
- × Form fills

RELATIONSHIP ACCELERATION METRICS

- ✓ Target accounts engaged
- ✓ Touches advanced
- ✓ Cost per meeting vs. trip
- ✓ Influenced pipeline (3x)
- ✓ Familiarity-scale movement



SECTION 06

**Memorable without
overspending**

What's the typical cost of a rental chair at a trade show?

[ASH]

\$900

FOR A CHAIR.

for a day and a half.

Cut the chair. Keep the experience.

[BOTH]

✂ CUT

- Printed collateral
- Elaborate disconnected swag
- Oversized empty booths
- Shipping overages
- Rental furniture rip-offs

★ KEEP

- + Hosted dinners with top accounts
- + On-stage / panel moments
- + Memorable activations
- + The right 12 in a quiet room
- + Specificity over scale

**Where in this budget
am I creating a memorable moment
— and where am I just paying for a chair?**

Six things to steal.

- 01** Events are relationship infrastructure, not demand gen.
- 02** Define success before you sign the booth contract.
- 03** Track meeting quality, target accounts, sentiment. Not scans.
- 04** "You can't track that" is a willingness problem.
- 05** One slide. Three sentences. A number. A recommendation.
- 06** Don't rent the chair.

A

M

A

M

A

M

Your turn.

Push back.

Ask the hard one.

Tell us we're wrong about the chair.

Thank you.



ELEVATE
TMSA CONFERENCE

[BOTH]

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Sr. Marketing Coordinator



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