



New Research In Action Vendor Selection Matrix™ Report – Marketing Event Management: The Top Global Vendors 2021.

Germany – December 9th 2021: COVID-19 induced travel and meeting restrictions have led to large Virtual Events becoming a standard operating practice in most organizations, as the overall experience has been surprisingly positive for event organizers, speakers, and attendees alike. Many businesses will now plan these as routine into their future marketing calendars. Webinars are now also an accepted marketing tool across most sectors and geographies. This means that investments in Marketing Event Management (MEM) platforms will become a new major category for CMOs and they must make a strategic choice of which MEM partner(s) to work with.

Through 2021, many MEM platform providers released new, dedicated software to better support virtual events of all sizes, accelerated, of course, by massive injections of venture capital into several of these vendors. The classical webinar vendors expanded to also support larger events, while existing virtual event providers added functionality for webinars and meetings to their portfolio.

A new Research In Action GmbH global survey of 1,500 business decision-makers examined their MEM experiences in 2021 and plans for 2022, as well as asking about which software vendors are the most known and what do the businesspeople think about those vendor’s products and services. Over half of the 1,500 companies used between six and ten different MEM vendors this year and most did not have a centralized procurement strategy for this topic. We expect this to change for 2022 and going forward.

OUR MARKET IMPACT OVER 12 MONTHS





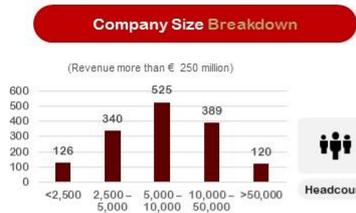
The Vendor Selection Matrix™ is a primarily survey-based methodology for vendor evaluation where 63% of the evaluation is based on a survey of enterprise, marketing or business decision makers and 37% on the analyst’s opinion. The analyst’s input is fed by a combination of intensive interviews with software or services vendors and their clients, plus their informed, independent point-of-view as an analyst. All of this combines to make Research in Action Vendor Selection Matrix™ reports so unique. This approach is one of the key differentiators of Research In Action in market research. For this report we interviewed 1,500 marketing and business managers with budget responsibility in enterprises globally. We selected those vendors who achieved the best evaluations scores from the buyers but disregarded those with fewer than 15 evaluations.

Report details can be viewed here: <https://researchinaction.de/wp-content/uploads/VSM-MEM-2021-WWW.pdf>.

OUR SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS: MARKETING AUTOMATION



Energy	97
Financial Services	256
Government & Non-Profit	92
Life Sciences	200
Manufacturing	350
Technology, Media & Telecoms	200
Consumer Packaged Goods & Retail	105
Professional Services	100
Travel & Transportation	100
Total	1,500



Business Unit Marketing Executive	179
Corporate Marketing Executive	167
VP /Director Marketing Operations	146
VP/Director Demand Generation	135
Business Executive	129
VP/Director Sales	121
VP/Director Marketing Analytics	112
CIO	85
VP/Director Marketing Technology	66
CTO	64
Chief Digital Office	62
Sourcing/Vendor Management	57
COO	52
VP IT	39
Chief Sales Officer	31
CFO	25
Chief Sales Officer	15
Total	1,500

- 100,000+ Data Points
- 1,500 Marketing and Business Managers
- 37% Analyst's Opinion
- 63% Survey Results

The Vendor Selection Matrix™ Evaluation Methodology:

The basis of our competitive vendor evaluation reports is always an extensive buyer survey. We then select those vendors which achieved the best evaluations scores from the buyers but disregard those with fewer than 15 evaluations. The final matrix scores are a combination of the survey results, vendor input and analyst's opinion.

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Peter O’Neill, Research Director for Marketing Automation at Research In Action GmbH, comments:

- **Partner COVID accelerated an already-inevitable move to virtual.** Virtual is part of a new marketing paradigm where events will be more numerous, impactful, and measurable than before. Expect all digital marketing plans to include events as standard in customer engagement programs; to collect market/customer insights at scale and to maintain a buyer/customer relationship over a longer period than just a buying cycle.



- **Hybrid event strategies will prevail, but the definition changes.** Marketers see “hybrid” as more than just mobile apps for on-site attendees. It is a mix of on-site with virtual attendance, with all attendees treated equally; a program of on-site and virtual events within a hub and spoke engagement strategy; plus, importantly, the ability to switch to virtual at short notice if necessary.
- **Events elevate to integral component of engagement strategy.** Marketers used to see events as nice-to-have vanity-driven exercises of corporate PR. In future, as part of an overall customer engagement strategy, they’ll need metrics of personal/account engagement over a series of events. New KPIs will need to be created for event engagement, value capture and customer insights.
- **To immerse or not to immerse, that is the question.** Many virtual event vendors create 3D, CGI-like, avatar-driven, conference environments. A debate will prevail through 2022 among marketers and attendees/speakers/exhibitors whether this is necessary. A good share of marketers will opt for a more pragmatic experience – something like a Netflix, with a content hub or corporate streaming platform over time where recordings can be leveraged in campaigns or even just be discovered.
- **Virtual events encourage further globalization.** Most virtual events attract and discover new attendance from international audiences. This raises new challenges for event organizers (and the platform they select) around localization, supporting synchronous and asynchronous presentations and meetings, as well as compliance issues such as using attendee and engagement data.
- **The MEM vendor landscape bewilders, vendors must tell better stories.** The over-100 MEM vendors out there have a variety of roots. Some have just repackaged traditional offerings through new product positioning. Others are meeting platforms good for meetings, but not necessarily larger events, or vice-versa. Most are challenged, however, to communicate the benefits of their technologies to business-oriented marketers.
- **Who came out on top?** Here are the Market Leaders (having both a Strategy and an Execution score of over 4 out of 5) in the Vendor Selection Matrix™ – Marketing Event Management 2021 as scored by the survey and myself (listed alphabetically):
 - 6CONNEX, ACCELEVENTS, AIRMEET, BIZZABO, CERTAIN, CVENT, KALTURA, MEETYOO, NOTIFIED, ON24, RAINFOCUS, SPOTME, VFAIRS, and ZOOM

The full list of vendors in the Top 19 vendors scored in the survey is completed by:

- CADMIUMCD, CIRCA, HOPIN, SPLASH, and MICROSOFT.

Vendor Selection Matrix™ Disclaimer:

The Vendor Selection Matrix™ is a primarily survey-based methodology for comparative vendor evaluation. Research In Action GmbH does not endorse any vendor, product or service depicted in our research publications, and does not advise technology users to select only those vendors with the highest ratings.



The information contained in this research has been obtained from both enterprise as well as vendor sources believed to be reliable. Research In Action GmbH's research publications consist of the analysts' opinions and should not be considered as statements of fact. The opinions expressed are subject to change without further notice. Research In Action GmbH disclaims all warranties, expressed or implied, with respect to this research, including any warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. All

About Research In Action:

Research In Action GmbH is a leading independent information and communications technology research and consulting company. The company provides both forward-looking as well as practical advice to enterprise as well as vendor clients.

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