

Exhibitor Guide to Engaging Attendees 2022 HCBS Conference



We are so glad your organization decided to join us at the 2022 HCBS Conference. You may be a trade show expert OR first-time exhibitor OR something in the middle. Regardless, we have a few practical tips and tricks to support your exhibit hall networking and information sharing successes, whether in-person, virtual, or both!

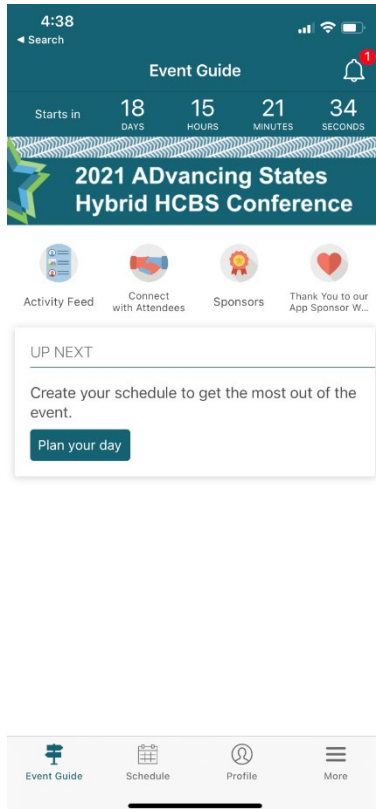
Feel free to reach out to **Gabe Passos** at gpassos@advancingstates.org with any questions, comments, or ideas to bolster the value your organization will receive from being an exhibitor.

We cannot wait to see you at the conference!

Engagement on the vFairs Website (Virtual Exhibitors)

- **Virtual Profiles** – Your virtual profile is a one-stop-shop for attendees to learn about your organization; access downloads, videos, and web links; and send you a message to connect!
 - **Setting Up a Virtual Meeting** --
 - **Engagement Tip!** - Have your virtual booth representative add contact information in your booth's description if you prefer attendees reach out to someone specific! Example:
 - Please contact [Name] at [Email, Phone Number] to learn more/to connect directly/ for more information.
 - **View Leads & Track Your Engagement**-- Attendees can send messages to your virtual booth representative upon viewing your booth by clicking on the "Send Message" button. Your booth representative will receive an email with the message, and can then either respond or forward the message to a colleague.

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Engagement on the vFairs App (In-person and Virtual Exhibitors*)

All attendees and exhibitors* can chat on the vFairs smartphone app with other attendees. On both the app and website interfaces, there is an icon titled “Chat,” that will open a list of all visible conference attendees. You can select an attendee to view their profile and send them a direct message.

***Note** – Exhibit booth packages include one full-access registration and one virtual booth representative. The virtual booth representative does NOT include full access to conference sessions, activities or to the App. Access is only available in the VFairs platform (exhibit hall).

Best Practices for Engaging Attendees

Pre-Conference:

- Set up your virtual booth before the conference by uploading your logo, external resources, weblinks, and contact information to grab attendees’ attention.
 - Include current information – what do you want attendees to know about your organization?
- Post on social media your planned presence and request for attendees to stop by the in-person and/or virtual booths. Tag your teammates and #HCBS2022, then link the conference webpage, www.hcbsconference.org.

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- Check out our [HCBS Conference Toolkit](#) here for specific examples.
- Reach out to your current and potential clients, stakeholders, bloggers, and other influencers to let them know you will be at the conference. Highlight your level of participation and associated activities.
- Connect with your end-users if you think they may be at the conference to let them know the location of your booth and request they stop by to say hello.
- Order promotional items for your in-person booth. HCBS attendees LOVE swag. Plan for over 700 in-person attendees.
- Get creative at your booth – bring a game like Plinko or Spin the Wheel or..., or photo props, your booth – it is your design.
- Review the [top 3 areas](#) of interest for attendees who shared this information as part of their registration details, identified as part of attendee registration. Be prepared to engage attendees interested in your area of expertise!

During the Conference:

- Participate in sessions, ask questions, and connect with others based on session discussion.
- Post on social media about a session that ties to your mission, with an invitation to connect after the session or to stop by your booth.
- Increase engagement through social media. Use our sample messages found in our [HCBS Conference Toolkit](#) or create your own!
- Join all available social activities. Remember to bring your dancin’ shoes for the Party Wednesday night!

For additional tips and tricks:

In-Person	Virtual
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mingle...mingle...mingle. Don’t stand, sit, or eat with your co-workers. Find someone you do not know yet or really want to meet. ● Take selfies – stop by the touchless photo booth and post your pics on social media. ● Connect with the ADvancing States team – I bet we can introduce you to someone new. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage (actively) on the virtual platform to follow-up on meeting requests, questions, and comments. Most important – reach out to attendees! ● Snap away at our virtual photo booth – do not miss the fun!

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At your In-Person Booth:

- Be present during all exhibit hours. If possible, have more than one representative to reduce waiting times for a conversation.
- Provide business cards for the LTSS Subject Matter Expert (if not present) or your business card to pass along to connect at a further time.
- Share information about your organization that will appeal to all attendees.
- Place promotional, educational, or other types of items on your exhibit table to draw in attendees.
- Stand out from your competitors. What can you do that is different?
- Play a game and offer prizes. Participate in all HCBS Conference games!
- Stand outside of the booth instead of behind the table. Engage!
- Move your chairs to the outside of the booth for an attendee to sit down or put their bag down if desired.
- Smile. Say hello first. Be approachable.
- Schedule time for coffee for longer conversations, so all attendees have time to connect.
- Bring a notebook/pen to write down questions/comments from attendees for follow up. Then follow up.
- Bring a fishbowl to collect business cards (a gift tends to help with collecting cards).
- Rent a lead retrieval scanner to scan the QR codes on attendee badges.
- Save electronics for the hotel room or when not at the exhibit booth, be fully present during exhibit hours.
- Visit other exhibitors and network...network...network...network.

Post-Conference:

- Follow up on questions from booth visitors with the correct person, it is nice to do an e-introduction to transition the conversation if appropriate.
- Send handwritten notes to people you met during the conference. Hand-written notes add an individualized touch and emails can get buried or end up in junk.