

The Ascend Sponsor Playbook

A framework for building category-defining brand presence at industry conferences.

Foreword

This playbook distills three years of sponsor activations across Ascend events into a repeatable framework. It is written for marketing leaders, partnership directors, and founders who treat conferences as compounding brand investments — not transactional booths.

01 • The Four Pillars

Every high-performing sponsorship balances **Presence, Proof, Proximity, and Persistence**. Underweighting any pillar collapses ROI within two cycles.

02 • Pre-Event: 90-Day Runway

Begin narrative seeding 12 weeks out. Publish one signature insight, recruit three customer voices, and lock a single hero moment. Generic logo placement is never the moment.

03 • On-Site Activation

Trade square footage for choreography. A 200 sq ft stage with a 20-minute hourly ritual outperforms a 1,000 sq ft static booth on every measured KPI — leads, recall, social mentions, and post-event meetings.

04 • Capture & Amplify

Treat the event as a content factory. Budget 15% of total spend toward in-event capture (video, stills, transcripts) and 10% toward 60-day post-event distribution.

05 • Post-Event: The Compounding Window

The 30 days after the closing keynote are worth more than the event itself. Ship a recap microsite, a long-form essay, and a private dinner series for top-of-funnel accounts within that window.

The Ascend Scorecard

Score each activation 1–5 across the dimensions below. Anything under 18/30 will not return positive ROI within two quarters.

Dimension	Weight	Score (1–5)
Narrative clarity	High	
Hero moment	High	
Customer proof on stage	High	
Capture quality	Medium	
Post-event distribution	High	
Executive proximity	Medium	

© Ascend 2026 · Distributed to delegates of Ascend Summit 2026. Not for external redistribution.