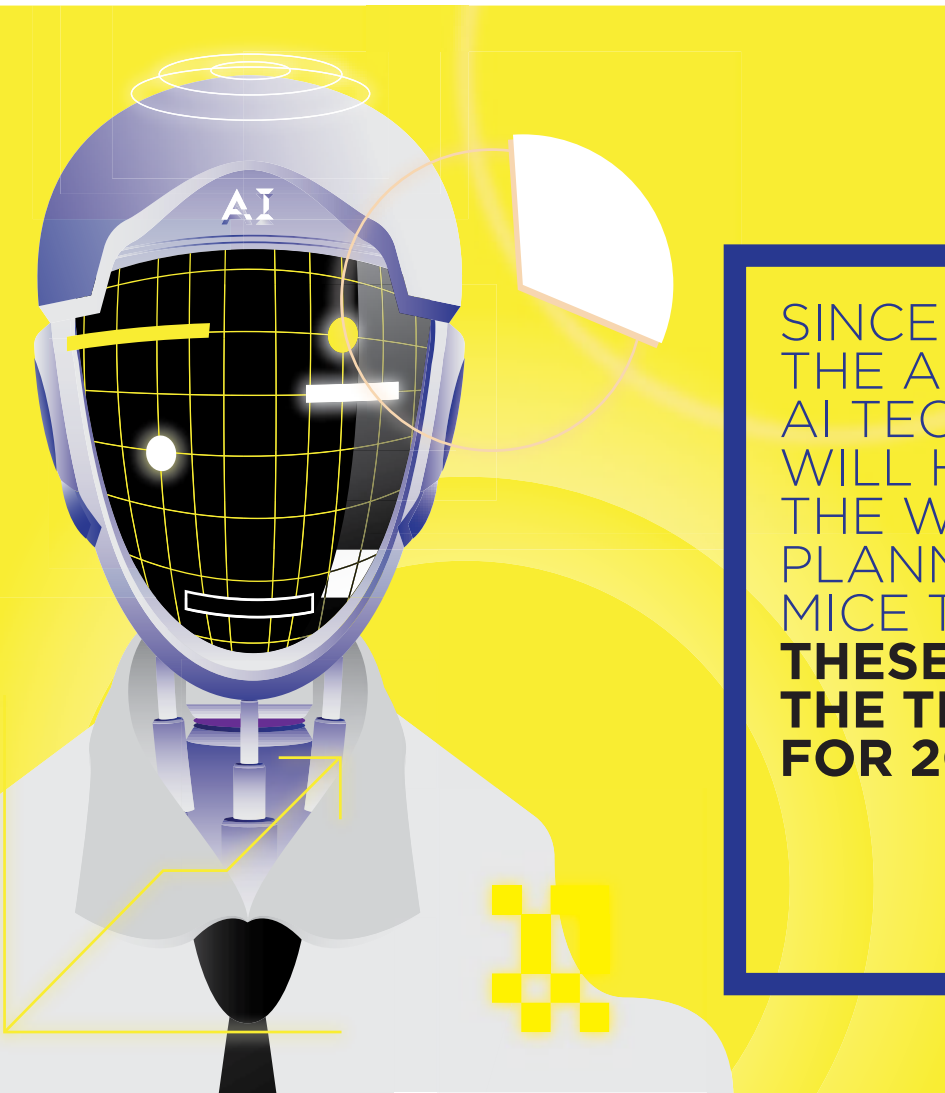


# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE KEY TO THE FUTURE FOR MICE INDUSTRY

TECHNOLOGICAL TREND



SINCE THE ADOPTION OF AI TECHNOLOGY WILL HELP PAVE THE WAY FOR PLANNER AND MICE TRAVELER, **THESE ARE THE TRENDS FOR 2019!**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Artificial Intelligence (AI) seems to be the next big thing which is going to impact the MICE industry in many ways. AI could double the annual economic growth rate according to the market research firm IDC. Technological trends are changing the face of the MICE industry such as AI-powered chatbot, event management software, and facial recognition. AI will be a challenge to keep up the pace of change, but doing so will ensure you can deliver the finest meeting and event of 2019.

## KEY FACT AND FIGURES:

- In 2022, global spending on AI systems will reach \$77.6 billion, more than three times the \$24.0 billion forecast for 2018. (IDC Forecast)
- 67% of enterprises globally have already adopted or plan to adopt AI in the next few years.
- Chatbot helps answer more than 90% of queries received and have improved guest calls time spending by back-room staff up to 31%.
- Facial recognition makes event check-in five times faster than traditional check-in method.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been engaging with our lives since we have entered the age of digital economies such as a virtual assistant like Siri or Alexa, booking flight ticket and hotel online, and event suggestions on Facebook. AI replicates decisions and actions like a human as well as creating new experiences to meet the rapidly changing needs of users. The International Data Corporation (IDC) found that 67% of global organizations were starting to implement the AI system to gain competitive advantages over the next few years. Furthermore, the IDC market research forecast of AI's impact on the global economy is that it will generate \$77.6 billion in economic spending across the globe by 2022 more than three times the forecast of 2018 which is \$24.0 billion. AI is not just a buzzword anymore because its adoption is forcing travel businesses to rethink the tools and solutions they offer to their clients. The challenges for the MICE's value chain organizations, corporate travel, travel suppliers, MICE travel or visitor as well as government and association are about how to satisfy the changing needs of travelers and what are the best ways to meet those needs.

The following case studies are just a few examples that AI could benefit the MICE industry in the future:

## **AI-POWERED CHATBOT CREATES PERSONALIZED ATTENDEE EXPERIENCES**

The growth of internet users in 2018 has been dominated by more affordable smartphones. Today, the number of people who uses messaging apps like WhatsApp, WeChat, and Skype are rising—only Facebook messenger alone has more than 1.2 billion monthly users according to the database company Statista. AI Chatbot that imitates human conversation for solving various tasks is becoming increasingly in demand. A chatbot is a computer system that uses artificial intelligence to enable fast and thorough interact with users. It will be available for 24/7 in order to respond to customers instantly.

The Monterey Car Week & Concours D'Elegance, a drive event held in the United States, partnered with Sciensio to create 'DriveBot'—a chatbot system designed to enhance overall attendee experience through AI technology. First of all, it is very important to define chatbot's voice and tone. DriveBot uses a natural language processing to deliver fun and casual answers and create a personalized and informal experience that mimics how you might speak to a real human staff during the event. By making an efficient solution, clients provide basic information and details in advance to identify conversational topics that attendee might ask. They also choose SMS channel to communicate with chatbot because it is very simple and easy. During the event, DriveBot helps and supports 40-70 years old clients by answering simple questions such as event location, lost and found service, and attendee appointment. It is programmed with the entire event database including information more than 400,000 questions around 30 key topics, as well as input from help desk staff relating to the most common questions they received.

The result of using DriveBot in drive event is magnificent. It is 53% successfully engaged with event attendees, and 95% success rate in responding to participant texts, meaning participants are able to immediately get a response to their questions without the need to talk to an actual human. Only 5% of the missed-out texts that DriveBot is not able to answer properly.

Most existing communication channels have lost their spark because of the advanced technology. It is not just the typical way that attendees interact anymore. A chatbot helps bridge the communication gap between event hosts and attendees.

## **HOW FACIAL RECOGNITION BECOMES A TICKET FOR AN EVENT**

Facial recognition is useful across many applications and industries, especially in the travel industry. You can see that your face can use as a travel ID at the airport. As a passenger, you will be able to check-in for your flight and security checkpoint using your face instead of travel documents. In a meeting or event, facial recognition will help planners speed up and make a seamless check-in process. According to the survey of event management company Etouches, 42% of worldwide meeting planners said that managing the on-site registration and check-in process are the biggest pain points during an event. Thus, a faster event check-in brings a better overall event experience for attendee and relieves the pressure of the planners.

In the 2017 International Corporate Events awards in London, an event registration platform Ya Ya Regie used Zenus facial recognition software to create a truly personalized experience. Before the event, attendees needed to upload a picture of their faces to create their face signature. During the check-in process, staffs used a tablet and mobile devices to read facial features, checked-in attendees, and printed out a name badge, or put the tablet facing the line and automatically checked-in as attendees walked by. The key process of facial recognition is comparing your face signature to a database of known faces. Traditional check-in process using a printed ticket or QR code takes more than a minute per person while facial recognition takes an average of 15 – 20 seconds to check someone in which is five times faster than typical scanning methods. Moreover, the Zenus facial recognition program is accurate 99% of the time with 1,000 faces in the database.

Facial Recognition is representing the new wave of identity and high technology solution. Yet, the technology still has its flaws. There are private matters such as security, ownership, safety, or mistaken identity. However, technology is developing and becoming more reliable. The success rate of this technology is quite high, so it is hard to trick the system. This could potentially optimize the processes of your business.

## AI MATCHMAKING CHANGES THE WAY TO COMMUNICATE

Networking is one of the processes for doing business and makes lots of opportunities. The key reasons to attend a meeting or an event are communicating, learning, and making valuable business contracts. The number of professional attendees always have a high expectation of networking but often do not make the connections as they hope for. AI matchmaking might be a solution. Its feature is an advanced algorithm-based which is called deep learning. It helps organizers and event planners collect important information about networking preferences of attendees, classify them into different business groups, and allow them to create their own agenda – requesting a meeting with people that serve their needs. Furthermore, AI matchmaking enables attendees to be recognized as well as connected with others before, during, and after the event.

The event matchmaking app Swapcard supports the OECD Forum with AI technology to connect and exchange open discussions and solutions among 3,000 participants. They can schedule the meeting through the app. All they need to do are complete their profiles, customize selections of suggested attendees, and answer questions about their interests. AI will learn from the attendee's previous behavior and recommend people to meet at the event as well as present them on an easy-swiping interface. Swapcard also provides program and speaker recommendations. 84% of participants say that meeting new people at the event is very important to them and they are so satisfied with Swapcard.

AI matchmaking is not a new face. It is the same way as using social media like Facebook or LinkedIn. AI can be used to match attendees or exhibitors based on their interests and recommend meeting, conference, event, or exhibition to attend based on their behavioral data. As event planners or attendees, it is time to transform the event and create more networking opportunities.

## FINAL THOUGHT

AI helps improve customer experience and makes operational efficiency in all areas. The impact of AI technology in the MICE industry has begun with features like chatbot, facial recognition, and an event matchmaking. Unfortunately, there are three biggest challenges to overcome AI. Firstly, most organizations are lacking AI specialists and staffs with AI skill sets. Therefore, they must train internal staffs to be equipped with tools and techniques which will become more prevailing in the future. The next two largest challenges are hardly stakeholder buy-in and a high cost of AI solutions. To relieve these barriers, organizations can start to invest in AI technology rapidly and communicate early and often with key stakeholders, then they will see the future for the event industry. Say hello to a better way of MICE industry!