



FEST FORUMS®

How FestForums Uses Its Mobile App to Power a Connected, Real-Time Event Experience



The Challenge: Connecting a Multi-Experience Event

For nearly a decade, FestForums has been the premier gathering for festival producers, organizers, and industry leaders across North America, convening senior leaders from organizations like Goldenvoice, Sundance Film Festival, Insomniac Events, and C3 Presents.

As a B2B conference designed to spark connection and collaboration, FestForums delivers a multi-day experience that blends panels, networking, sponsor activations, awards, concerts, and social events in Santa Barbara, California.

With so many moments happening across the event, attendees previously relied on paper schedules and in-person coordination to navigate the experience. As the event grew, FestForums faced a core challenge: there was no single place to bring the full conference experience together, from sessions and speakers to networking opportunities and sponsor activations.

Without a single source of truth, important moments were harder to discover, updates were more difficult to communicate, and the overall experience became more fragmented.

The opportunity became clear: create a platform that could bring everything into one place, improve discovery, keep the experience current, and drive deeper attendee participation across the entire event.

The Solution: A Central, Digital Hub for the Conference Experience

FestForums partnered with WMT to launch a mobile app designed to serve as the central hub for the entire event experience. Powered by WMT's Fan

Results:

- 52K+ screenviews (+44% YoY)
- 97K+ Sponsor Impressions
- 14 min Average Time on "Featured Events" Screen
- 20%+ Push Notification Engagement

“As FestForums has grown, we’ve had to rethink how the experience is delivered. It’s not just about programming, it’s about how attendees move through the event and who they connect with. With WMT, we’ve been able to create a more seamless and engaging experience for attendees while also strengthening relationships with our own partners.”

Phoebe Choi
Speaker and Marketing Director

Experience Platform, the mobile app brings together programming, attendee engagement, and sponsor activations into one environment.

What began as a way to replace paper itineraries and centralize the agenda quickly evolved into a platform the team uses to operate the event in real time and deliver a more dynamic, responsive experience.

Centralizing the Event Experience

The platform brings the full conference experience into one digital hub, including the agenda, speaker profiles, sessions, and sponsor activations. This creates a consistent foundation to manage and surface content throughout the event, while ensuring everything is accessible in a single, connected destination.

As the conference unfolds, the team can continuously adjust what is surfaced in the app to reflect what is most relevant in the moment, including the ability to:

- Remove completed sessions from the home screen
- Surface upcoming programming
- Highlight key moments like awards, benefit concerts, and major sessions

This ensures the experience stays aligned with what is happening in real time, making it easier for attendees to navigate what comes next.

Real-Time Event Management

Live events are constantly evolving, with last-minute changes to sessions, speakers, and timing happening throughout the day. Updates can be easily made directly within the app and reflected instantly, without interrupting the event or requiring manual communication.

This ensures the schedule stays current and reliable, reducing confusion and allowing attendees to move through the event with clarity and confidence.

Powering Attendee Discovery

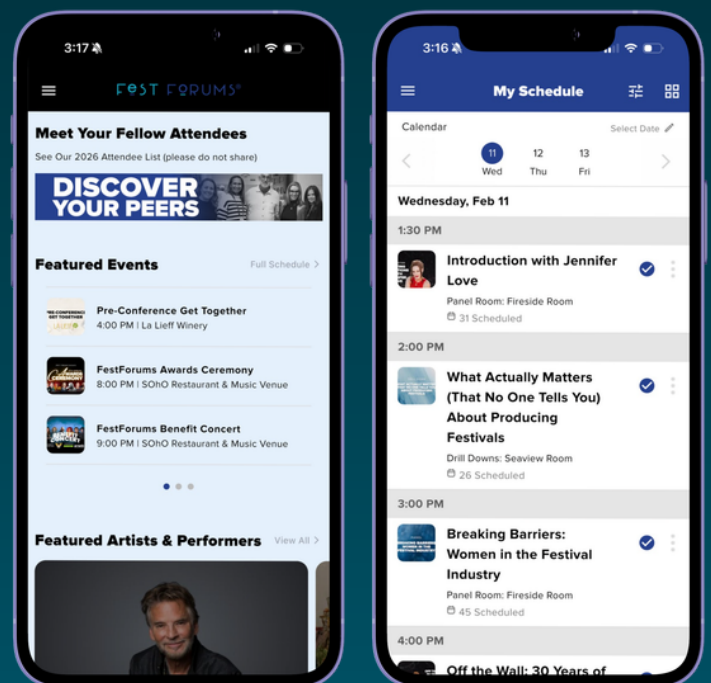
The platform helps attendees make more informed decisions about how they spend their time throughout the event. Speaker profiles and session details provide the context needed to quickly identify which conversations and moments are most relevant.

With the **“create your schedule”** feature, attendees can add sessions and events directly to their personal in-app calendar—giving them a clear, organized view of their day and guiding where to go next based on what matters most to them.

In a networking-driven environment like FestForums, this leads to more meaningful participation, as attendees engage with the right sessions, activations, and conversations throughout the event.

Delivering Targeted Communication

Push notifications provide a direct channel to communicate with attendees and drive participation throughout the event. Messages are delivered in real time to reinforce key programming, highlight upcoming sessions, and prompt engagement between sessions and during natural downtime.



This has a direct impact on participation. For example, during a late-night whiskey tasting, attendance was initially low. However, the team sent a timely push notification reminding attendees of the time and location, quickly redirecting traffic and increasing turnout significantly.

The same approach is used across key moments, including:

- Highlighting upcoming panels
- Driving traffic to sponsor activations like the LA Photo Party headshot station and Puppy Palooza
- Supporting major moments like sponsored cocktail receptions

Follow-up notifications also extend engagement beyond the moment itself, encouraging attendees to share photos after the event or continue interacting with experiences after they happen.

Rather than relying on passive discovery, attention is actively guided and participation is driven throughout the event.

Enabling Sponsor Visibility and Value

In addition to driving participation to sponsor events, sponsors are embedded throughout the app.

This includes a dedicated sponsor section organized by tier, as well as key moments where attendees encounter sponsor-led content. Higher-tier partners are featured more prominently, reinforcing sponsorship value and creating clear differentiation across partner levels.

Digital activations introduce a more measurable and trackable approach to sponsor engagement, connecting sponsor presence directly to attendee interaction within the app.

During FestForums, **this translated into 97K+ sponsor impressions delivered through in-app banner placements**, giving sponsors more tangible insight into performance while creating new digital inventory for FestForums to deliver value to partners.

The Impact: Results

During Fest Forums, the app drove:

52K+ screenviews
44% increase YoY

reflecting significant growth in engagement

97K+ sponsor impressions
delivered through in-app banner placement

creating new digital visibility for partners

14+ minute average time
spent on “Featured Events” screen

highlighting active session discovery and planning behavior across the event

20% engagement
from push notifications

driving real-time participation across the event

Takeway

FestForums' approach reflects a broader shift in how events are experienced. A mobile platform is no longer just a place to access information. It becomes the layer that connects programming, attendees, and sponsors in real time.

Over the past three years, FestForums has continued to evolve its approach with WMT, using the platform to create a more dynamic and responsive experience, one that adapts as the event unfolds, improves discovery, and drives deeper participation across every part of the conference.

The result is a more connected event where every moment is easier to discover, participate in, and build upon.