

Interview - Ecsite 2024 Conference sponsor EXPO Booking

Could you please introduce yourself, sharing where you're from and what your background is within EXPO Booking?

I am Andreas Brandell, CEO of EXPO Booking. We are based in Gothenburg, Sweden with collaborations and customers throughout Europe.



[Picture: Andreas Brandell - CEO at EXPO Booking.jpeg]

Can you provide an overview of EXPO Booking and what led your company to specialise in developing booking & ticketing solutions for events and exhibitions?

EXPO Booking is a cloud-based booking, resource and visitor management system developed for science centres and museums. Our journey started over a decade ago, when a science centre reached out to us with a complex problem. They were struggling with a large number of school programmes, shared equipment, labs, spaces and guides with varying expertise. When speaking to teachers over the phone, there was not enough time for the guest service team to explain all possibilities, and to make matters worse, they had to deal with occasional double bookings. Their situation was really like trying to untangle a bowl of spaghetti with a pair of chopsticks.

Working together, we designed a solution that transformed their way of working, and since their situation was not unique, we were also introduced to more science centres and eventually Ecsite.

The past ten years have been a pleasant ride, and looking at where we are today - the work we're doing and the people we have the privilege to work with - I have never once regretted our first project with a science centre.

How does EXPO Booking ensure that its solutions meet the specific needs and expectations of clients, maintaining high quality in your service?

I would say keeping a close connection to our customers is most important. Especially since what we're developing quickly becomes such a big part of how the whole organisation operates. We simply have to be right there in order to fully understand the needs and challenges of our customers.

In developing your booking & ticketing systems, how do you balance incorporating the latest technological advancements with ensuring that the technology serves the ultimate goal of facilitating seamless experiences?

This may come across as a bit cliché, but our team really loves diving into new tech and ideas in order to make our customers' lives better now and in the long run. At the same time we keep up with the latest trends in security and software testing to maintain the high level of stability we have achieved.

Equally important to us is keeping our software as flexible as possible. You can only imagine our pride when we discover our clever customers benefiting from EXPO Booking in ways we didn't plan for. This calls for celebration!

Could you share some notable projects or instances where EXPO Booking has tackled particularly interesting or challenging requirements from clients?

To give you a good example, one of our customers, the Heureka science centre in Finland, wanted the planetarium reservations to be made on site at the entrance, just as the visitors arrived. Together we developed a feature we later named **EXPO Booking Displays**, something Heureka now uses in customised screens presenting all planetarium shows for the day with available seats. Visitors scan a unique QR-code to make a reservation in their mobile phone with just a few clicks, and a QR-ticket is issued and later scanned by the planetarium host as the visitor enters the planetarium.

As usual, this development has led to even more uses and now our customers can incorporate this feature to sell events or tickets through as many customised screens as they like, wherever they need them.



[Picture: EXPO Booking Display at Heureka.jpeg]

Sustainability is a growing concern for many industries. How does EXPO Booking address sustainability in its solutions, both in terms of the technology itself and the broader environmental impact?

I don't think I need to further emphasise the climate benefits of digitalisation. We practise what we preach by performing online workshops and training in our cloud-based system to keep our travelling footprint and hardware to a minimum. I would say a more important part we are playing is helping so many science centres and museums reach their audience with important programs addressing sustainability.

Are there any upcoming projects or partnerships that EXPO Booking is particularly excited about and can share with us?

I'm sorry, but as much as I would like to share with you who we are making new plans with right now, I can't.

But what I'm excited about on a daily basis is the growing number of well-run organisations we have the benefit of working with. It goes to show, we're all about that long-term partnership, not just short-term gains.

What motivated you to participate in the 2024 Ecsite Conference in Ljubljana?

The Ecsite conference has everything we look for. We get to meet existing and future partners, friends and colleagues, it challenges and inspires us to do more and we get to show that there is a system really tailored for this community.

Can you offer us a glimpse into what EXPO Booking will be showcasing or discussing at the Ecsite Conference in Ljubljana?

Oh, only the biggest update in the history of EXPO Booking. We will be showcasing what we have been planning and working with for over a year now. This translates to even more flexibility and possibilities and we can't wait to show everything in Ljubljana!