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Unmasking the event agency

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What does an event agency even do?

Local, international, big, small, specialist, full-service, independent, network

Event agencies come in many shapes and sizes, which can make navigating the landscape overwhelming, confusing, and sometimes, downright disheartening.

We've seen it too many times before: negative experiences lead to misconceptions, and the misconceptions lead to uncertainty about the true value event agencies bring.

And yet, if we look at figures from the likes of Bizzabo's [2025 State of Events Report](#), it's evident events bring immense benefit to companies. On the organiser side, 78% see in-person events as their company's most impactful marketing channel, meanwhile 71% of attendees find in-person B2B conferences provide the best platform to discover new products or services.

These experiences must be planned and executed effectively if they're going to live up to their potential, which is where agencies come in.

With all of this in mind, we've set out to address some of the myths surrounding the event agency's true purpose, so that you're armed with the knowledge and insights to make the most of your search.

... And, spoiler alert, your agency partner should consist of a team of individuals passionate about supporting you to succeed not just on a project-by-project basis, but in the long-term, while also ensuring you don't see them.

Because when they're onsite, they're unseen. They're hard at work ensuring every little detail is perfect behind the scenes, so your events are executed seamlessly, every time.

Myth 1: Full-service event agencies only do the “big stuff”

Are you missing an agile and creative partner that does it all?

While we recognise some agencies do operate in this way, the beauty of working with an independent versus network, is that they're not restricted by factors such as budget, service offering, event type, or sector.

They don't have to be tied exclusively to big shiny campaigns, or the smaller stuff, as they don't have the skillset in-house. Instead, they're a true partner that can adapt as you do, to projects of varying scope and complexity.

Think of this as the inner workings of a mighty force. One of our core agency values, it's not about staying stagnant and operating in a clunky way or, like boutique agencies, having a niche.

If you partner with a mighty force, they'll scale up and down depending on the nature of the task at hand, and ensure the right people, with the expertise that relates specifically to your brand, industry and brief, are around the table, contributing to the conversations, and onsite delivering on your objectives.



If you're tired of managing multiple agencies for different jobs, this could very well be your sign to embrace the purposeful partnership – a wholly collaborative way of working built on trust, mutual respect, and long-term, instead of churn and burn success.



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By pioneering purposeful partnerships with clients – our average tenure is 10 years – we not only develop a deep understanding of their businesses and teams, and in turn, get the bigger picture, it means we're exposed to various event types and sizes on the daily. Ultimately, our ability to adapt and creatively envision different scenarios based on the array of briefs we receive is what sets us apart.

Sarah Yeats
Managing Director, Sledge

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The mighty force in action

From large-scale US conferences for esteemed attendees, to more intimate affairs for VIPs in Europe, where team members are handpicked based on their local expertise, we evolve with our client, a leading finance brand, ongoing.

A partnership spanning 21 years might mean stagnancy, but we don't rest on our laurels, and recognise that innovation is the name of the game.

Elements such as Sledge's scope, the make up of client-side teams, audiences and locations vary by project, and it's what makes this relationship such a success.

Regardless of the task at hand, both client and agency consistently share the same project visions, strive for continuous improvement, push the boundaries of creativity, and celebrate milestones together.



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The focus can often be on the big event, yet there's nothing more powerful than content that cohesively complements it. Our client recognises this, and together we bring audiences AI-driven content that responds to their actions in real time, to docu-style films that transport viewers to exclusive destinations.

Ben Heaysman
Head of Film & Content, Sledge

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Myth 2: Event budgets are intentionally overcomplicated

From confusion, to clarity: reframing the agency way

Just like your organisation, event agencies are, of course businesses, and as such, they need to make money too.

At the same time, these agencies exist to help you. Their goal is intertwined with yours: to make you look good, by balancing creating something awe-inspiring with the budget you have to hand.

When we respond to a brief, we focus on finding the most cost-effective solutions, while not compromising on quality, and we always aim for clarity and transparency. We also get that budgets can leave you scratching your head, wondering how certain roles will add real value to your project, or what is meant by particular line items.

Project Manager deep dive

A role that exists across industries, the Project Manager is the most commonly queried position we have, in terms of its value and why some events might require several of them. So, what sets them apart, and what do they actually do?

They're sticklers for the fine print

From the initial concept to debrief, no detail is left unturned, ensuring a cohesive workflow and on the ground delivery.

Risk adverse rule players

Contingency planning and risk mitigation are second nature to them, ensuring that even in real-time moments out of their control, the event goes on, and it goes on with great success.

Deadlines drive their days

They know go-live dates can't be shifted, and on event day, agendas are set in stone. They're punctual, efficient and precise, ensuring there's minimal room for error.

Your ultimate puzzle masters

They manage every moving part, from curating runsheets that work for all and ensuring suppliers have what they need, to tracking budgets and keeping everyone on deadline. They are your north star, responsible for guiding the project and driving your vision.

They move fast

The beauty of "live" is you've only got one shot to make your mark. If a challenge arises: a speaker is a no show, or there's a tech glitch, they pivot, and they pivot quick smart.

A final word on...

EVENT BUDGETS



Our goal is not to confuse you, but empower you with the knowledge to understand exactly where your investment is going, and the value we're adding.

If you ever feel confused about anything budget related, your agency should be ready and willing to discuss it with you. Transparency is the name of the game, so if they aren't, it may be time to find a partner that is.

Becca Shanks
Creative Services Director, Sledge



Myth 3: It's better to keep events in-house

Three ways external agencies add value

We get it: the idea of keeping all aspects of event planning through to execution in-house can seem like a great idea in theory, as it could equate to cost savings, you maintain control, and your brand remains intact.

It might sound a bit controversial, but here at Sledge we think this is a little narrow-minded. Based on our experiences, clients that seek out the support of event agencies see greater return on investment.

A new take on "the big idea"

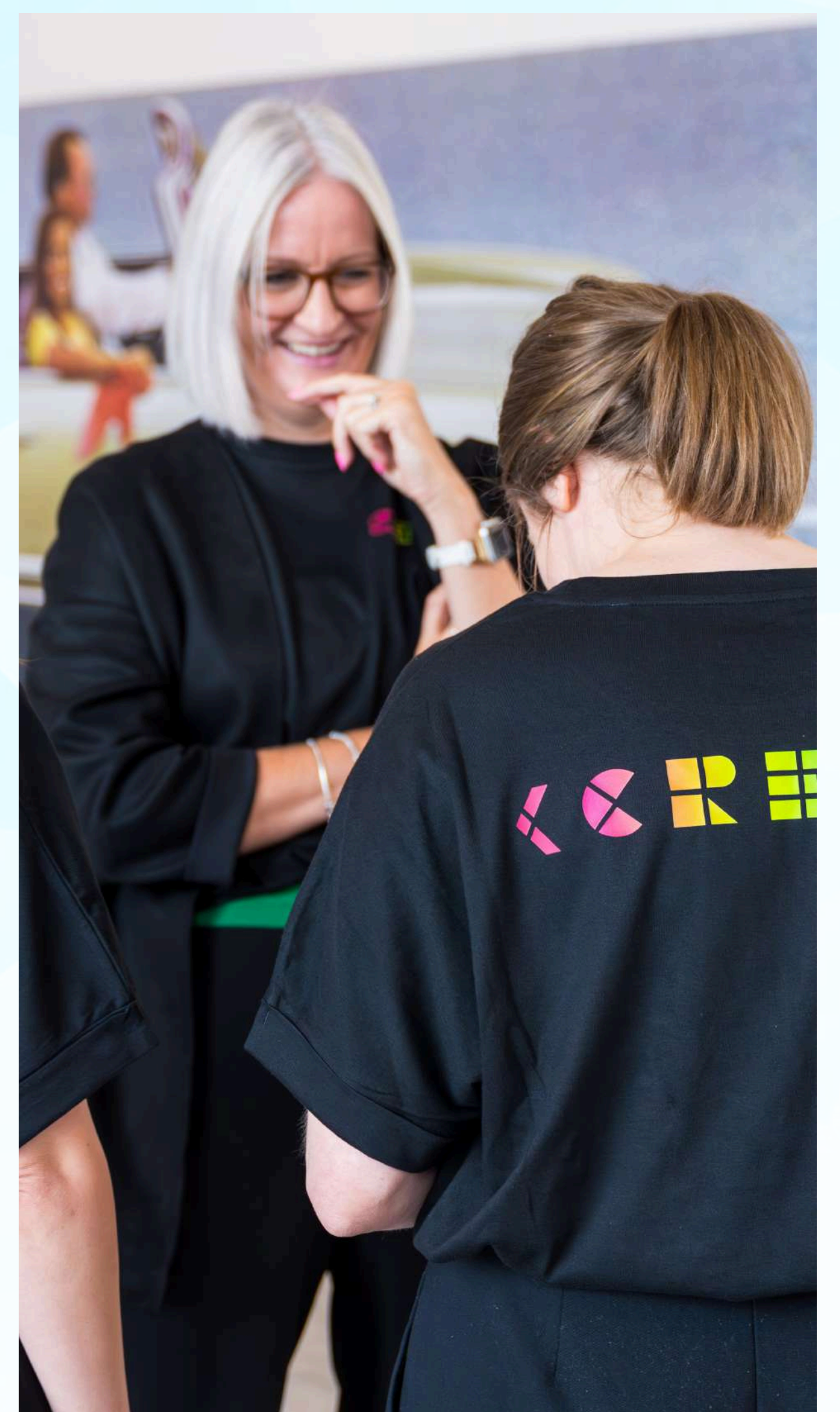
Event agencies don't try to be different, we are different. We provide fresh perspectives and unbiased viewpoints, and identify opportunities and challenges that might get missed when a team is too ingrained in a project. The result? More innovative, audience-centric creative.

Last minute stress, be gone

Budget cuts and leaner teams means more marketing employees are finding event related responsibilities creep into their roles, and given no one "owns" the project, it can fall by the wayside. Quick turnarounds, while doable, cost more, and so getting an agency in from the beginning can actually help businesses save in the long run.

Bye bye burnout

As a follow on from the point above, true agency partners don't need to take over all aspects of an event, they work in collaboration with you, fill in-house skills gaps, ramp their support up when team members go on holiday, and provide an extra pair of expert hands when employees' workloads are getting too much. In essence, they flex with you as and when you need them.



What's NEXT, THEN?



Event agencies can add immense value to your projects and organisation, and above all else, we recommend enlisting a partner that's passionate about truly getting to know you and your business, supporting you in the long term, and evolving as, when, and how you need them to.

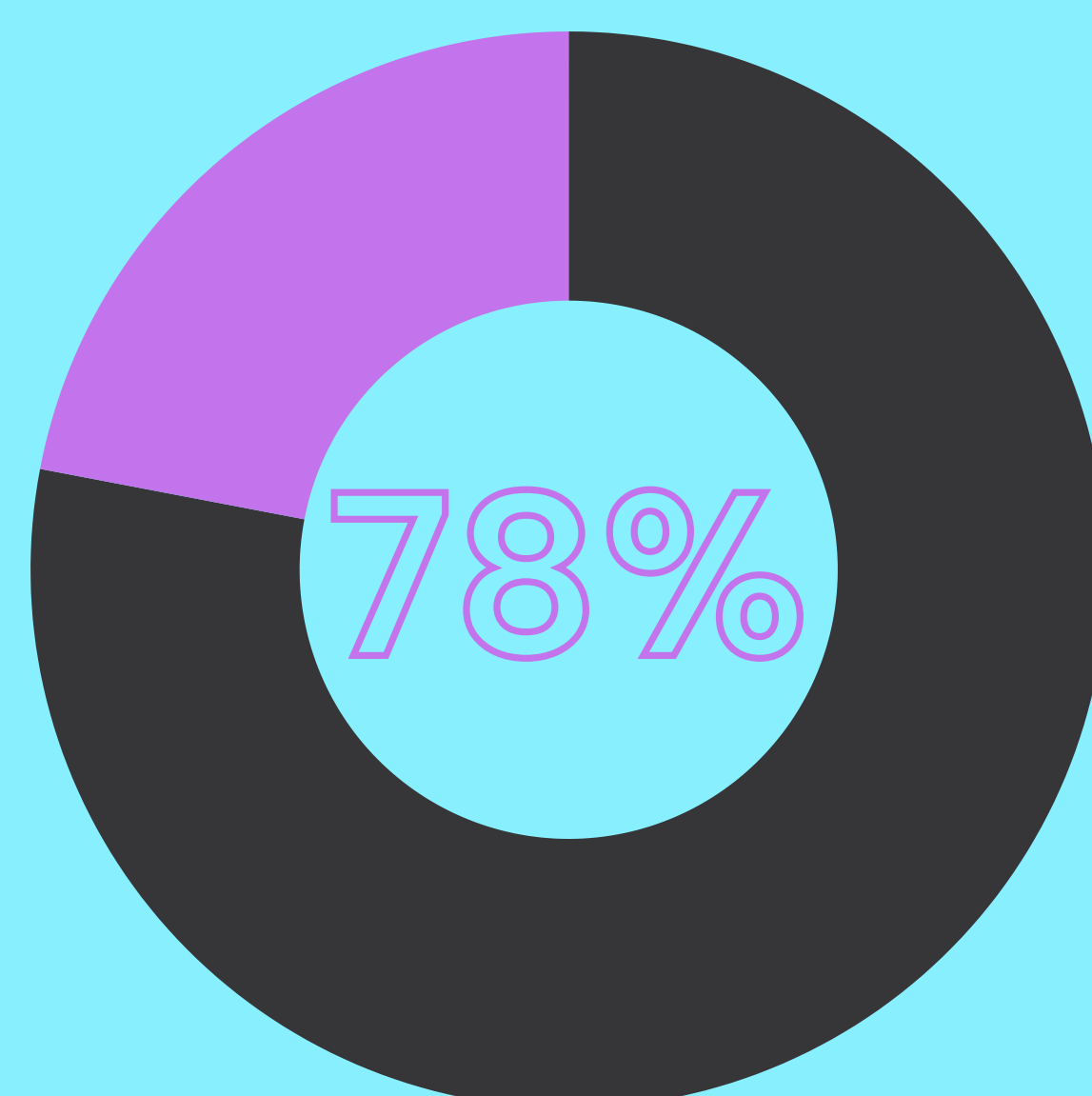
If you're seeking an agile, flexible, purpose-driven agency that operates in this way, why not get in touch, or view more of our work.

SLEDGE

hello@sledge.co.uk

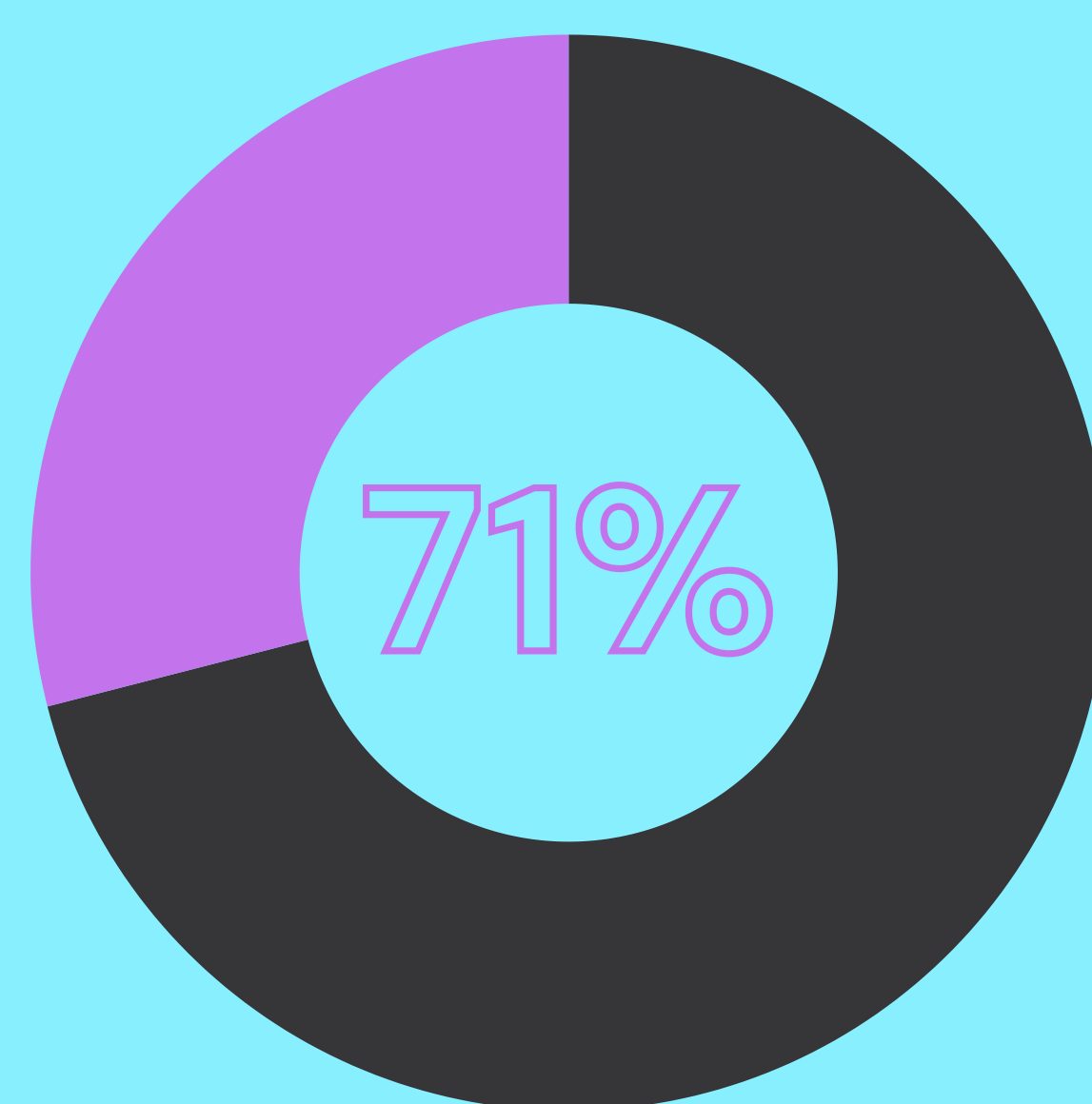
www.sledge.co.uk

+44 (0) 208 740 4550



of organisers see in-person events as their company's most impactful marketing channel

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of attendees believe B2B conferences are the best way to discover new products or services