

Ready, Steady...SIGGRAPH

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Abstract

First time attendees at the annual SIGGRAPH conference account for more than 40% of attendees. We have begun to investigate ways to better accommodate first time attendees, and improve overall attendee experience. This panel represents an augmentation of a BOF (Birds of a Feather) session delivered at SIGGRAPH 2014 to assist (first time) attendees navigate the conference, and conference space. The special (BOF) session was entitled "Ready, Steady, SIGGRAPH", which was open to all attendees but of particular interest to first time attendees. This year we are extending the BOF to a panel to include program chairs from each venue and representatives from conference management.

1 Ready, Steady, SIGGRAPH

1.1 Purpose

A relaxed informal one-hour session during which participants were encouraged to answer questions as they heard information on each venue and comments from program chairs.

1.2 2013 Announcement

Not sure how to plan your time at SIGGRAPH 2014? Learn tips from seasoned attendees and program chairs on maximizing your conference experience, "don't miss" sessions, and convention center layout.

1.3 Room

In Anaheim we used 201C which seated 188, however audience members lined the walls and aisles. The room had no AV which did not greatly affect the presentation but in future years it would be beneficial to have AV to share visuals. For example, when showing the app I simply held up my iPad - it would have been more professional to have this projected.

2 Enhancements

We would like to introduce the following improvements to this session:

1. Holding the BOF early on Sunday morning (before the Fundamentals Course so first time attendees do not miss out)
2. Using a room with full AV and audio capabilities
3. A slightly bigger room would have been good, however it was better to completely fill a 188 capacity room than have one that felt sparse
4. Have all/more committee members present - it was very fun and informative to introduce committee members and have

them speak for a minute or 2 about their venues - Also, some AV with "teasers" of the best content at each venue will be showcased.

5. Bring more business cards or something to give attendees a point of contact.
6. Record attendees email addresses and ask them for feedback on the session.
7. Questions were mainly venue specific, how to get involved (volunteer) and how to submit to future conferences. So volunteer information should be available.

3 Summary

First time attendees at the annual SIGGRAPH conference account for more than 40% of attendees. It is crucial to find new ways to better accommodate first time attendees, and improve overall attendee experience. This session is an attempt to do just that. The BOF was really successful and fun in 2013- many additions and expansions could improve and enhance not only the experience but the successful transfer of knowledge to attendees. This session was well received at SIGGRAPH 2013 and with the proposed refinements will be more impactful for SIGGRAPH 2014 in Vancouver.

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