

# The Event Planners' Guide To Effective Online Event Registration

*How to choose a registration system that's right for you, 48 questions to ask suppliers when you are researching systems, plus six pages of insider tips on how to use online registration to help your events succeed and make you look good.*

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## Why Use Online Event Registration?

Online event registration has quickly become the most popular, standard event registration option, as it frees you to focus on the many other event planning details and demands on your time. Plus, it's easy and efficient if you use a reputable, reliable online event registration system.

Here are five key benefits to using online event registration for your upcoming events.

**1. Online event registration gives you, the event planner, direct event registration control without constant monitoring:**

- a. Easily and quickly set registration opening and closing times
- b. Easily and quickly set or change registration limits
- c. Automate price changes, for example, early bird to regular
- d. Easily and quickly update registrants' information as you go
- e. Access "real time" registration data to make informed and timely decisions

For more information: [www.eply.com/event\\_resources/online\\_registration\\_articles/gain\\_more\\_control.html](http://www.eply.com/event_resources/online_registration_articles/gain_more_control.html)

**2. Online event registration reduces your event planning workload:**

- a. Eliminates data entry
- b. Processes payments automatically
- c. Eliminates manually sending confirmations, invoices and receipts
- d. Eliminates preparing, updating and distributing reports

**3. Online event registration saves money:**

- a. Reduces staff-intensive, costly data entry, payment processing, and follow-up when payments are declined
- b. A "green" option that saves you money by reducing material costs, such as mailing, printing and faxing
- c. Eliminates people mailing in registrations at the lower early bird price after the early bird deadline has passed.

**4. Online event registration adds a professional touch to your event planning:**

- a. Professional-looking forms and registration systems impress clients and give a great first impression
- b. The online event registration system organizes your forms, reports, and other data for you electronically, so it is easy for you to access all of your information at a glance, with the click of a mouse
- c. Reduces errors in data entry and reporting

**5. Online event registration helps you secure more registrations for your event:**

- a. People increasingly expect online event registration and payment options from professionally managed events, and may be more likely to sign-up if you provide an easy process.
- b. A user-friendly online event registration system guides the potential registrant through the entire process ensuring an error free registration.
- c. Prospects can conveniently review information and register for an event anytime, 24/7, from any computer with Internet access.

Find more reasons to use online registration at [www.eply.com/resources](http://www.eply.com/resources)

## Questions To Ask Potential Online Event Registration Providers—And What Answers To Look For

Use this handy Q&A to find out what you should look for in a professional online event registration company, and compare how ePly responds to your business needs and concerns.

### ***Business Due Diligence and Policy***

#### ***Ask - How long have you been in the online registration business?***

Make sure you are comfortable that the company has enough experience to provide a good service and give you good advice.

**ePly - ePly has been a leader in the online event registration business since 2002.**

#### ***Ask - Do you have insurance coverage?***

Providers should carry some type of errors and omissions or professional liability insurance, just in case something goes wrong.

**ePly - Yes. However, we have never been in a situation where we have had to use our insurance coverage.**

#### ***Ask - What happens if I'm not satisfied with the system?***

Look for a commitment to making it right. Getting your money back is fine, but you may still be out time and lost registrations which could cost money and repeat business.

**ePly - Our goal is to make you a repeat customer, so we will go out of our way to ensure we provide the services that we promise.**

**You are welcome to open an account, build your form, and put in as many test registrations as you like before agreeing to our terms of service, or making any kind of payment.**

#### ***Ask - Do you have references that I can speak with?***

Make sure you ask references questions such as:

1. Are you currently using this service, or will you use it for your next event? Why or why not?
2. Why did you choose the service?
3. What could be improved about the service?
4. How would you rate the support/customer service?

**ePly - Yes. Just ask, and we will provide you with references.**

#### ***Ask - Do I have to sign a contract or agree to any specific terms?***

Any reputable provider will have terms of service. Read the fine print to see if you are agreeing to a set term, set

number of events, or any minimums or billing that you might not expect.

**ePly - Yes. We have terms of service that our clients must agree to.**

**ePly does not, however, lock you into any kind of long-term commitment or specify a minimum number of events or registrations.**

**Ask - What information do you have to help me sell this to my boss, client or committee?**

A well-organized company should be able to email all the information that you need, right away.

**ePly - ePly provides the following information to help you make an informed choice about our services:**

1. This guide.
2. Upon request, a quote specifically for your event that gives all of the details of the service and cost.
3. Our online selling tools: [www.eply.com/event\\_resources/selling\\_tools.html](http://www.eply.com/event_resources/selling_tools.html).
4. Our online movie: [www.eply.com/online-registration-movie](http://www.eply.com/online-registration-movie).

**Ask - What happens if I want to stop using your service after my event is live?**

Make sure that you have a way to stop registration without penalty, in case your event is cancelled or postponed.

**ePly - ePly only charges for the registrations entered into the system. If you stop entering registrations, there is no further billing or penalty.**

## ***The Registration System***

**Ask - What makes you better than the competition?**

A good provider will know their competition and be able to state their competitive advantages.

**ePly - The ePly difference:** [www.eply.com/features\\_benefits/why\\_eply.html](http://www.eply.com/features_benefits/why_eply.html)

**Ask - How will you help my event succeed and bring in more registrations?**

Look for a provider with an interest in helping your event succeed.

**ePly - ePly will review your registration form and make suggestions to make it easier to use, and help encourage more registrations. Just ask and we'll give you feedback on headers and layout, wording, cancellation policies, use of mandatory fields, choice of fields and much more.**

**Ask - Can I open a free trial account so I can test out the system?**

You should be able to try the system before you make a commitment.

**ePly - Yes. Create a free account at [www.eply.com/event\\_registration/signup.html](http://www.eply.com/event_registration/signup.html). You will have access to all of the system's features, and can enter as many test registrations as you like before making a decision about payment or terms.**

**Ask - What features does the system offer?**

Look for a list of features from the provider, and check it against your requirements.

**ePly - All the features you would expect from a professional supplier, and more. Please view:**  
[www.eply.com/features\\_benefits/default.html](http://www.eply.com/features_benefits/default.html).

**Ask - Will there be any advertising on my form?**

Advertising on your form is not recommended, especially without your permission.

**ePly - No. We provide a professional service and do not include advertising for third parties on our forms.**

**Ask - How long does it take to learn the system? How easy is it to use?**

This depends on your individual software and PC knowledge, familiarity and ability, as well as the complexity of the system you are trying to set up. Look for realistic time estimates.

**ePly - The ePly system will guide you through the entire set up process. Most people find it comfortable and easy to navigate our online event registration system after about an hour of use.**

**Ask - What system customizations are available?**

Make sure that you will be able to make all of the customizations you need.

**ePly - Almost every aspect of the ePly system is customizable such as colours, images, fonts, all fields, warning messages, "thank you" pages, confirmation emails, and reports. ePly also provides suggested settings so you only need to adjust the ones that don't fit with your event.**

**Ask - What will my form look like?**

You should be able to see some sample forms.

**ePly - All forms are created to match a specific event's registration needs, and the event's look and feel.**  
Sample forms: [www.eply.com/event\\_registration/sample\\_registration\\_forms.html](http://www.eply.com/event_registration/sample_registration_forms.html).

**Ask - What happens if your servers are down?**

Look for a contingency plan for handling server downtime.

**ePly - ePly servers rarely go down, and all routine maintenance is performed late at night. If a server is unexpectedly down, ePly staff are immediately notified. During the brief downtime, anyone attempting to register for your event will see a message asking them to try again shortly. In the unlikely event of a longer downtime period, ePly will post a toll free phone number, manually record registration details, and update your event data once the server is up again.**

**Ask - Will your logo be on the form, and can the logo be removed?**

If you ask for a logo to be removed, the provider should be willing to comply.

**ePly - As an established and reputable service provider, ePly provides its logo at the bottom of your registration form to help assure potential registrants of your event's credibility and to help give the form a professional appearance. It will not be a clickable link. If you prefer not to display the ePly logo on your form, just ask, and we will remove it.**

**Ask - Can you help me open a merchant account?**

Providers should be able to make a recommendation to help you set up a merchant account.

**ePly - Yes. We partner with companies that offer great service and rates—just as ePly does. Just ask, and we will refer you to one of our partners.**

**Ask - Do potential registrants have to create an account with you before they can register for my event?**

Requiring an account to be created before registering is a major deterrent to signing up for an event, and should not be required.

**ePly - No. ePly does not require potential registrants to create an account before they can register for an event.**

## **Pricing/Billing**

**Ask - What are all of the potential costs of using this system?**

Look for a simple, clear pricing model, and be sure to explore your options beyond the “low advertised price” designed to capture your interest. You get what you pay for!

**ePly - \$4.00 per registration plus credit card processing fees if applicable. No contracts, no sign up fees, no minimums.**

For all of the details see - [www.eply.com/event\\_registration/pricing.html](http://www.eply.com/event_registration/pricing.html).

**Ask - How much does it cost for you to set up my form for me?**

It's good to get a fixed quote. You could be in for a surprise if you agree to an hourly rate without a price cap or limit.

**ePly - ePly will quote you an exact, fixed price based on the complexity of your form.**

**Ask - When am I billed?**

Make sure you are comfortable with the billing and payment terms.

**ePly - ePly will bill you at the end of each month.**

**Ask - How do I pay?**

Looks for options in case your organization isn't set up with a credit card.

**ePly - ePly will automatically charge your credit card, or if requested, can email you an invoice.**

**Ask - What extras are included?**

Look for some value added items that will help you stage a better event.

**ePly - At no extra charge, ePly provides:**

- One free follow-up survey per event
- One free save-the-date form per event
- A free review of your registration form by an expert

## **Support**

**Ask - Who will I talk to when I need support, and what are their qualifications?**

Ensure the person on the other end knows about your specific event registration form, and how to deal with your specific support issues.

**ePly - Each of our Event Registration Software Specialists are highly trained on our software and systems, can quickly pull up your account details, and can troubleshoot any situation efficiently.**

**Ask - What is the turnaround time for email and voice mail queries?**

Look for a written commitment to response time.

**ePly - ePly will respond to all voice mail and email within two business hours.**

**Ask - Is support free?**

Support should be free.

**ePly - ePly provides full support for free.**

**Ask - Are there any limits on support?**

If you see a limit on the amount of free support, be sure to ask more questions about why, what the limits are, and how much you will have to pay for extra support.

**ePly - No. The ePly system is built to be easy to use and we have a vested, genuine interest in seeing your event succeed.**

**Ask - What hours is support provided?**

Look for reasonable support hours

**ePly - 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM Pacific**

**Ask - What if I need emergency support?**

Be sure there is a provision for this.

**ePly - Support staff are alerted of emergency calls outside regular service and support hours.**

**Ask - What will support do for me? What won't they do?**

Make sure you know what is included in the level of support offered.

**ePly - ePly support is there to help you learn how to navigate the system, and show you how to use specific functions and offer advice. If you need ePly to set up your form for you, we will quote you a price based on your requirements.**

**Ask - Do I have to pay for one-on-one training?**

Make sure you are clear about whether training is considered part of the included support, or if there is a separate fee.

**ePly - No. ePly doesn't charge for "as-you-go" training, and is happy to guide you with the information you need. If you are looking for a custom training session for you or your staff, please contact us to discuss your requirements.**

**Ask - What if I want you to set up my form for me?**

Even if you are planning to set up your system yourself, it's good to find out what your options are in case the process takes longer than anticipated, or you receive other more pressing demands on your time.

**ePly - No problem! ePly staff are experts at setting up online event registration forms and provide a fast turnaround for your event's needs. Just send us a few details, and we will give you an exact cost for us to set up your system.**

## **What If I'm Paying To Have My Form Set Up For Me?**

**Ask - How long does it take to get set up?**

Look for a written commitment about set up time.

**ePly - ePly's set up commitment: [www.eply.com/features\\_benefits/setup-times.html](http://www.eply.com/features_benefits/setup-times.html).**

**First drafts are ready within two business days and all changes are made within one business day.**

**Ask - Will you quote me a fixed cost for set up?**

You should ask for a set cost for set up to avoid unexpected expenses.

**ePly - Yes. Based on your requirements, we'll give you an exact cost.**

**Ask - How many form/set up revisions do I get?**

There will always be changes after you and your team or committee review the first draft of the form. Make sure you budget for extra set up charges if revisions aren't included in the quote you receive.

**ePly - ePly includes three rounds of revisions in its original quote.**

**Ask - What if I need to make changes after going live?**

As this can mean making significant changes to the existing system, do expect an attached cost unless it's a very minor change that won't affect already collected data or other system settings.

**ePly - It's possible to make changes anytime. Charges may apply, depending on the amount of work involved with addressing your request. We will always give you an exact quote for your approval before implementing any revisions, and you always have the option to make the changes yourself, at no additional charge from ePly.**

**Ask - Who does the testing?**

You should always test your form, but if you are paying to have it set up for you, the supplier should also be doing rigorous testing.

**ePly - ePly thoroughly tests all of the forms that we create using a 150-point checklist. If you would like to do your own testing, just ask, and we will send you our checklist.**

**Ask - Do you guarantee your set up?**

You should expect that your form and system set up is guaranteed to work as required.

**ePly - Yes. We guarantee that the form will work exactly as intended, and collect your data in a way that makes the reports useable.**

## **Privacy/Security**

**Ask - What is your privacy policy?**

Make sure the supplier's privacy policy meets the requirements established by your organization.

**ePly - ePly's privacy policy: [www.eply.com/privacy\\_policy.html](http://www.eply.com/privacy_policy.html).**

**Ask - How do you protect the security of my registration data?**

Make sure the servers are professionally managed and secured, and the provider takes protecting your data seriously.

**ePly - Data is stored on a server in a professionally managed data center, back-ups are stored in a secured location and only trained ePly staff with a need to access data to provide service and support, have access to it.**

**Ask - Do you store credit card numbers on your server?**

There are very strict rules that must be followed when dealing with credit card information. In most cases you should not allow an online registration provider to store credit card data on their servers.

**ePly - ePly does not store credit card numbers.**

**Ask - Do you have PCI (Payment Card Industry) certification?**

Companies dealing with credit card processing need to be PCI compliant.

**ePly - Yes ePly is PCI compliant. If you need a copy of our certificate, just ask and we will email it to you.**

Ask - ***Who owns and uses the collected data?***

Ensure you own all of your data and that any use of it is only authorized by you.

**ePly - You own all of the registration data and have full access to it. ePly never discloses the registration data to another party or uses it for any other purpose.**

Ask - ***How often is data backed up?***

Make sure your data can be recovered in case of server failure.

**ePly - Data is constantly backed up in several different ways including internally using a RAID array and once a day to a secure offsite location.**

**In addition to the questions above, do make a list of your own business-specific questions to ask, and remember to include questions about any special features and requirements for your event.**

## Questions You Should Ask Yourself About An Online Event Registration Provider

1. How professional is this company?
  - a. Do they answer the phone in a professional way?
  - b. Is the tone and language they use in emails professional?
  - c. Do they seem knowledgeable in terms of answering questions, giving advice, and their business processes?
2. Do I feel comfortable trusting this company with this critical part of my event?
3. Do I feel that this company has a genuine interest in the success of my event?
4. What is the total cost going to be?
5. Am I happy with what their references said?
6. Am I confident that the registration form, reporting and other tools will meet my expectations?



## Considerations for Canadian Companies/Events

If you are based in Canada, there are a few items that you may need to consider that many US-based providers don't provide.

1. GST/HST/PST Calculations – Do you need the form to calculate and track taxes?
2. Tax Exemption – If you are required to collect tax, do you need an option for some registrants to enter a tax exemption number?
3. Spelling – Do you need to have the Canadian version of certain words used on the form, such as “cheque” instead of “check”?
4. Are you paying for the registration service in USD or CAD?
5. Will registrants be able to pay in CAD?
6. Will the address fields on the form be customized for Canadian provinces and postal codes, rather than states and zip codes?
7. Patriot Act – Many Canadian organizations have a policy that all data be stored within Canada because of the US Patriot Act. Before choosing a provider, be sure to ask where the servers are physically located.
8. French version of form – Do you need to provide a French version of the registration form? If yes, make sure the system can handle French characters and formatting and that all system messages can be updated to display in French.

## What About Building My Own Online Event Registration System?

Building your own online event registration system sounds like a great investment, but programming and maintaining your own system can be much more expensive and time consuming than you might expect.

Why spend money, time and resources building a costly online event registration system, when you can focus on your core business?

Here are a few things to consider about building your own online event registration system.

1. **Even a basic online event registration system can take months to build.** Assessing exactly how an online event registration form should look and function can be time consuming. For instance, you will need to document your business requirements for each possible situation, and have programmers painstakingly design, build and test every part of the system.
2. **There are many actual and potential costs** involved with building your own online event registration system:
  - a. Programming time – Programmers generally start at \$75,000 per year
  - b. Management time to administer programmers, designers and other staff \$60,000 per year +
  - c. Testing and “bug fixing” time
  - d. Reworking time for programming revisions
  - e. Server hosting – \$1000+ per month as \$9.99 per month shared hosting isn't what you need to deliver professional results
  - f. Software licensing – Licensing fees for your server operating systems and database software, \$4000. Plus, the software will need to be continually updated as your business requirements and technologies change
  - g. Server and system maintenance – 20+ hours a month
  - h. System support (tech support and troubleshooting for your clients and their customers)
  - i. Updates/adding features
  - j. Getting a PCI certificate and audit each year – \$3000+
  - k. System backups
  - l. Staff overtime to deal with emergencies
  - m. Lost business or additional staff costs (for manual or assisted event registration) if the system is down

When you consider all of the work, time and cost involved with programming and maintaining your own online event registration system, it makes sense to have an expert online event registration company do it for you.

High-quality, efficient online event registrations systems, such as ePLY's, are guaranteed to work right from the start—and at a fraction of the time and cost for you to build your own.

Save time and money, and get it done right.

## Secrets To A Successful Online Event Registration Form

### Online Event Registration Form Design Tips

Your online event registration form may be a “first touch” point of contact for many potential event registrants. Here are a few handy tips to help ensure your form reflects your event’s marketing strategy and that it looks and functions as professionally as you do!

1. **Brand the form** with your business identity (a similar look and feel to your website design) or to match the look of the event’s marketing material—it looks more professional, and feels less “generic” or “cut and paste.”
2. **Keep the style of the form neat and simple**, so “at a glance” it looks quick and easy to fill out:
  - a. List basic registration details only
  - b. Keep form fields lined up (justified), and the spacing between fields consistent
  - c. Use fonts that are easy to read on screen
  - d. Use contrasting colours for form headers and fields
3. **Ask only for information that you really need.** Potential event registrants may abandon the form if you are asking for personal information they may not wish to give out, or that doesn’t seem relevant.
4. **Keep “required” fields to a minimum.** Seeing too many “required” fields (usually marked with an asterisk or alternate font colour) can cause potential event registrants to abandon the form.
5. **Have a clearly visible, customer-focused cancellation and refund policy.** For example, a “no refunds” policy may discourage potential registrants from registering early, or cause them to abandon the form.

For more information: [www.eply.com/event\\_resources/online\\_registration\\_articles/cancellation\\_policies.html](http://www.eply.com/event_resources/online_registration_articles/cancellation_policies.html)

6. **List a customer service contact person** for registration-related questions. Not many people will actually contact you, but seeing the information helps them to feel more comfortable.
7. **Display a privacy policy.** Many people are concerned about access to their information and how it will be used, and need the assurance that you are protecting their information.
8. **Keep the page free of external links** that may distract potential event registrants from completing the form, such as clickable sponsor logos or text links to your business website. List these links on the registration confirmation page, or include them in your confirmation email.

## Email Invites That Work

Email is a great way to reach the most people, in the least amount of time, at a minimal cost. Emails can be set up to display enticing graphics and images; are easy to customize once your system is set up; and make it convenient for potential registrants to access your form with just a few mouse-clicks.

Guarantee the success of your next email campaign! Before you hit the "Send" button, use this checklist to see if your email covers the basics.

1. **Use a descriptive subject line.** This can make or break your campaign. An effective subject line quickly catches readers' attention - for example, which of these subject lines would prompt you to continue reading: "2009 Computer Conference" or "Registration for the 2009 Computer Conference is Now Open"? To ensure your email is not red-flagged as spam, it is advised that you also try avoiding words like "Free," "\$\$\$," "Save" and "Discount."
2. **Send content based emails.** Image heavy emails can be a red flag for spam filters, and potential event registrants may not have "allow images" turned on. Get your message out with text and support it with images (not the other way around). If you create a good balance between these elements more potential registrants will receive your message.
3. **Use well-written, clear copy.** Before sending your email, consider this, if you were to send this email to anyone, right now, would they know what it's about without explanation? If you don't have a good in-house copy writer that's okay, contract it out with all that money you saved ditching that ineffective paper campaign.
4. **Use an effective call to action.** Ask yourself, "Why am I sending this email?" and "What do I want people to do after reading this email?" If your call to action is for someone to register, make sure that's what stands out in the email.
5. **Test your email.** If you have an email list of more than 500 names, try taking 10% of that list and sending one version of your email to one half, and another version to the other half. Whichever receives the highest response rate will be the version you send to the other 90%.
6. **Avoid sending from a personal email application.** This can set off spam filters and could result in your email being blacklisted by the recipients' firewall, or worse, the recipients Internet Service Provider (ISP). If you rely heavily on your email, the last thing you want is your email being lost in cyberspace.
7. **Provide an "Unsubscribe" option.** Respect your email list by providing the option to unsubscribe. It is also required under CAN-SPAM compliance.
8. **Provide a "Forward to a Friend" option.** Including this can help increase your distribution list and ultimately your registrations!
9. **Pick a good time.** This is ultimately up to you and who your target recipients are, but as a general guideline, Tuesdays to Thursdays, between 8:00am and 11:00am, is the best time to send out your email event invitation campaign.

10. **Include the name and phone number of a real person to call** if questions come up about the event and the registration process. This reassures potential registrants and makes you look professional and customer-focused.

## Attract More Event Registrations—Without Lowering Your Price

Getting people to register comes down to your sales pitch. You, the event planner, must convince the event participants that attending your event is the best use of their time and money—even if your event is free and intended to be fun, such as a team building event.

Here are five tips to keep in mind for your promotional material and your registration forms to help you get the sale.

1. **Clearly state the benefits of attending.** Make your benefit statements descriptive and put them in terms that prospective event participants can relate to. Here are two examples:

“When you leave this event, you will have ten new strategies for motivating your staff that will result in less turnover.”

“In this workshop, you will learn the real differences between software A and B, so you can make the right decision for your business and avoid a buying mistake that will cost you time and money.”

2. **Use a descriptive title.** Most event titles are similar to this one: “2010 Annual Convention.” This tells you what it is, but doesn’t catch your attention or tell you why you should attend. Add a benefit or other interest-grabbing words to the title, such as this one: “2006 Annual Convention—See the new industry technology that will keep you competitive.”
3. **Clearly state what the price includes.** Itemizing what your event includes will help to show people the value of what they will receive. Outline items of potential interest such as speaking events and the number of instructional hours, or included meals and conference materials.
4. **Talk about the food.** Everyone likes a good meal, and most conventions have several meal functions and usually a final banquet. Rather than listing the meals as “Monday Lunch” or “Dinner and Awards Banquet,” create some anticipation around the event by giving more details such as the various meal options, or how many awards the caterer/chef has won.
5. **Use testimonials.** For the most effective, persuasive testimonials, ensure the ones you use are descriptive and demonstrate how the person benefited by attending the event.

## Online Event Registration Set Up: Potential Issues

So you've decided to set up your online registration system and an online registration form. Now what? What do you need to know before starting the process?

Here is a checklist of a few common issues event planners may need to consider about online event registration:

1. **Don't assume the online registration form is easy to find.** The link to the registration form from your website or promotional material needs to be very obvious. Use large fonts, different colours or some other effect to make it stand out. You may even want to put the link on several pages just so it can't be missed.
2. **Don't assume set up is easy.** If you are new to online registration, allow lots of extra time to get set up as it may take longer than you think. Set up times vary considerably depending on the complexity of your form. Allow plenty of time to get approvals from your clients, managers and/or committees and for the time it takes to make any necessary changes and get final approvals.
3. **Don't assume the system is ready to go.** Whether you use an online registration supplier or build something in-house, be sure to personally test the entire system to make sure it has the right look and feel. Programmers can verify that it functions correctly, but only a professional event planner will notice the finer points to make it perfect.
4. **Don't assume the registration process is easy.** Some systems are very complicated, even for advanced users. Choose as simple a system as will meet your needs, to ensure potential registrants aren't spending precious time trying to figure out how to use your online registration system.
5. **Don't try to collect too much information.** Your participants may get annoyed with filling out a form that seems too long, has too many "required" fields, or seems to be asking for irrelevant personal information. Find a balance between collecting enough details and keeping the registration form easy to complete.
6. **Don't make your participants feel uncomfortable.** People are concerned about what happens to the information they submit online. Post a privacy policy, make the form's design match your website or other event marketing material, don't ask for information that you don't need, and don't ask online registrants to create an account with an online registration company before registering for your event.
7. **Don't use shopping cart software.** Most online shopping cart software is designed for merchandise, with shopping carts, fields for shipping addresses and items that are referred to as products. Using shopping cart software for event registration is not a professional solution, and can be confusing to potential event registrants.
8. **Don't forget to include the event planner's contact information.** If a potential registrant needs help and can't find a number to call for immediate assistance, they may become frustrated and abandon the form.
9. **Don't make event participants do the math.** Your online event registration form should be set up to automatically make any necessary calculations for the potential event registrant, as well as automatically adjust for early bird rates, provide member discounts, and prevent users from making conflicting or invalid selections.

## What Makes ePly Different Than Other Registration Suppliers?

When it comes to online event registration, ePly offers a host of benefits and advantages that give your business or event the competitive edge:

- 1. Customizable forms** - With the ePly system you aren't tied to a specific template and have unlimited flexibility in how you build your form. You can add any combination of fields and change all of the colours fonts and styles to make the form match your website or event.
- 2. Easy-to-use, one-page forms** - ePly offers a unique registration form style that makes online registration easy. Our registration forms are a single, easy-to-use page. We've found that it makes a huge difference to completion rates, and eliminates the confusion people often experience with multiple screen registrations. The end result? More registrations for you.
- 3. No long-term commitment** - That's right: we want our service and technology to keep you coming back, not a contractual obligation. We know that the best way to win your future business is to provide you with a great registration system and exceptional service, every time. That's why we have tons of repeat business and client/customer referrals.
- 4. Full access to all system features** - Spend your time planning the event, not on coming up with a work-around because a service or feature isn't included in your package. We don't have basic and pro levels, charge for extra users, or limit your use of the system based on the size of your event.
- 5. Documented response times** - Our clients are serious about their business, and we are too. That's why we have documented our response times for everything, from setting up your form if we are doing it for you, to responding to a support email.  
For more information: [www.eply.com/features\\_benefits/setup-times.html](http://www.eply.com/features_benefits/setup-times.html)
- 6. Three FREE bonuses** - When you use ePly you get the follow free bonuses to help your events succeed:
  - Free "save-the-date" form
  - Free follow up survey
  - Free review of your form by a registration expert
- 7. Simple pricing** - Simple per-registration billing means that you only pay when someone registers.  
For more information - [www.eply.com/event\\_registration/pricing.html](http://www.eply.com/event_registration/pricing.html)
- 8. We've completed the E-myth Mastery Program** - This program helps businesses to become world class, systems-based businesses so that they consistently deliver efficient, reliable and valuable service.

*"The reporting functions are fantastic; I've been able to summarize them exactly how I want ... This will save us a TON of rekeying time! Ever so helpful!"*

*Nancy Harper  
Project Coordinator,  
Corporate Resources,  
GWL Realty Advisors Inc.*

9. **Free resources** - If your events are successful it helps ePly succeed too. Since 2002 we have been writing articles, producing checklists and developing tools that our clients can use to put on great events and impress their clients. See - [www.eply.com/event\\_resources/helpful\\_tips.html](http://www.eply.com/event_resources/helpful_tips.html)

## Online Event Registration: Additional Resources

Access all of the links and resources mentioned in this guide plus checklists, cost calculators, how-to articles and more at [www.eply.com/resources](http://www.eply.com/resources).

### Triple Bonus

## The ePly Online Event Registration 'Triple Bonus'

When you use the ePly system to manage your event registration, we will include the following items at no additional charge:

### Save-The-Date Form

If people are expressing interest in your event, but your registration form isn't open yet, you could be missing out on potential attendees. The best way to capture this interest is to create a simple form to collect name, and phone number or email address of these people so that you can follow up to remind them about the event when you open registration. ePly will not charge for any registrations made on a "Save-the-Date" form.

### Follow-Up Survey

Collecting feedback after an event is key to continuous improvement of your event. For each event registration form that you have on the ePly system, you can create an online follow-up survey. ePly will not charge you for any of the survey responses.

### Form Review by a Registration Expert

How you set up an online event registration form can have a big impact on how many people actually complete the form. Before your form goes live, just ask an ePly expert to review your form and point out any issues that we think could affect the registration rate, how the collected data will work in the reporting, or items that will help you to put on a better event.

*"This system is fantastic; this will be so much easier than how we did it last year - by hand! Thanks again for the great service."*

*Heather Reid and Sharon Lapointe  
Innovative Conferences & Communications*

## Use ePly To Make Your Next Event A Success!

- ➔ **Try ePly Now!** Open a free no-obligation account with access to all features and start building your form: [www.eply.com/event\\_registration/signup.html](http://www.eply.com/event_registration/signup.html)
- ➔ **See ePly's competitive pricing:** [www.eply.com/event\\_registration/pricing.html](http://www.eply.com/event_registration/pricing.html)
- ➔ **Sign up for the ePly monthly "Tips and Tricks" newsletter,** providing event planners with useful ideas: [www.eply.com/event\\_resources/eply\\_newsletter/default.html](http://www.eply.com/event_resources/eply_newsletter/default.html)

Visit our website at - [www.eply.com](http://www.eply.com)

Contact us for more information at [sales@eply.com](mailto:sales@eply.com) or 1-800-507-3759.

*"The online registration system continues to be a valuable tool for me and my business. I appreciate the thought that goes into the design of the ePly tool. I have used other tools and they pale in comparison. The entire process from start to finish is smooth, seamless and incredibly reliable.*

*Secondly, the service I have received from ePly is absolutely stellar. ePly is very responsive to any inquiries I or my staff have made and continue to impress me with their dedication to ensuring we are being provided the best service possible."*

Sally Celford  
President,  
Face 2 Face Events Management