

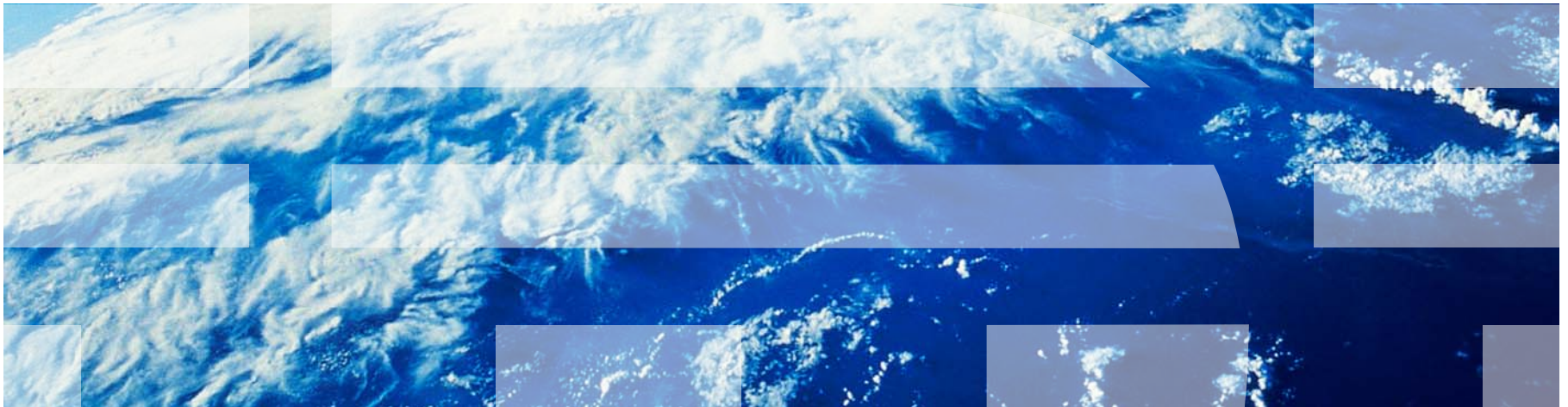


Exclusively for midsize businesses

# IBM Midmarket Training:

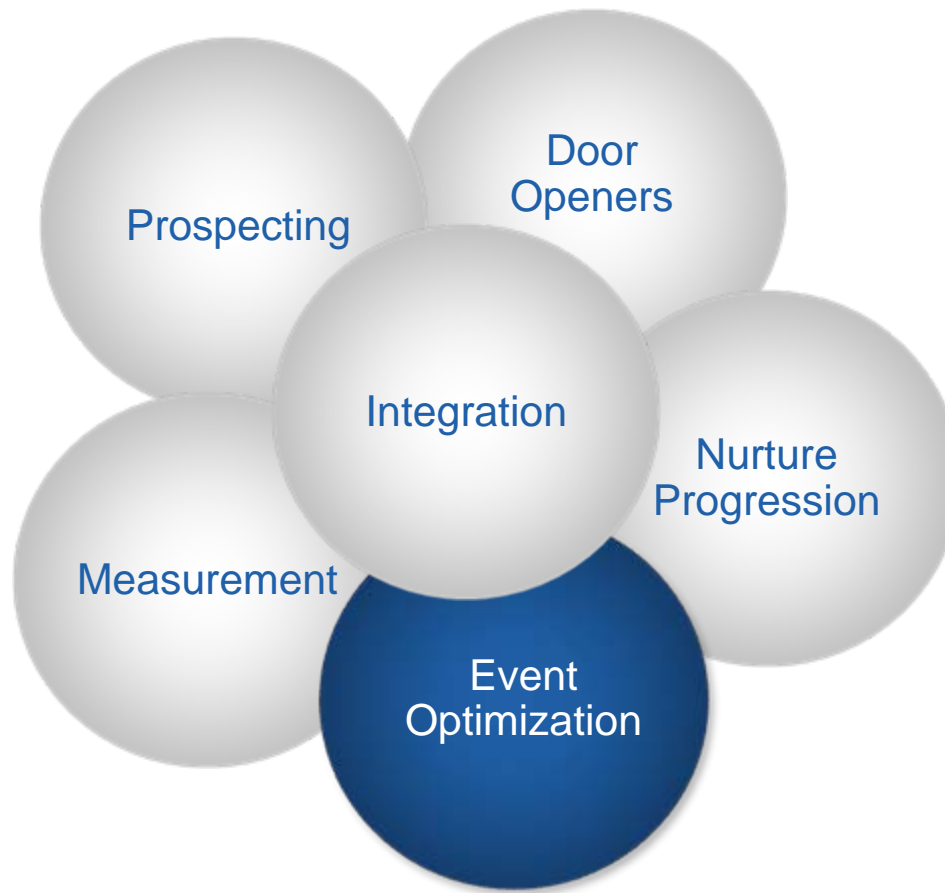
## Event Portfolio Optimization

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# IBM Midmarket How-to Guides: Evolving Our Approach to Effective DG



# Contents

- Purpose
- Definitions
- Optimization Explained
- Benefits of Event Portfolio Optimization
- Optimization Applied: Overview
- Optimization Approaches
- Contacts
- Examples

# Purpose

Optimizing Events or Event Portfolio Optimization is not a new concept at IBM. Many of you are currently conducting regular analysis of your events, making adjustments to your plans quarter-to-quarter and year-on-year in order to maximize the return on your event investments.

This training guide, part of a DG Training Guidance Series for MM DP Teams, will address the general principles of Event Portfolio Optimization as well as provide ideas to consider adopting for your own event optimization work.

## Who Can Benefit From this Guide

- **MM IMTs/GMTs who are already conducting event optimization work may find new ideas to support and improve ongoing efforts.**
- **MM IMTs/GMTs who are not currently doing event optimization may find the principles explained here helpful to developing an event portfolio optimization strategy today.**

For questions or assistance with developing your event portfolio optimization strategy, please refer to the IBM and GPJ contacts listed on the “Contacts” slide.

# Definitions

## op-ti-mize or op-ti-mise

[op-tuh-mahyz]

1. to make as effective, perfect, or useful as possible.
2. to make the best of.

## op-ti-mi-za-tion

[op-tuh-muh-zey-shuh n]

1. the fact of optimizing; making the best of anything.
2. the condition of being optimized.

## In Other Words...

Yield  
Evaluate Quality  
Efficiencies  
Strategize  
Value  
Budget  
Maximize  
Improve  
Refine  
Adjust  
Prioritize  
Increase  
Right Events  
Plan

# Optimization Explained

## Optimization & Events

Typically, optimization is associated with mathematics. However, in the context of event marketing, think of **optimization** as:

**The process you will use to make your events portfolio as effective, perfect, or useful as possible.**

**\* As you think about event portfolio optimization, consider these questions to get started:**

- Which events in your current portfolio are returning value and to what extent?
- Are you making the most of each individual event in the portfolio?
- Which events do you keep, discard, or add as net new?
- How do we improve event performance?
- What impact will better events have on your clients and Business Partners?



**\* These are a few examples of questions your team can use to begin your discussion or thought process.**

# Benefits of Applying Event Portfolio Optimization

- Improve event **ROI**
- Enhance event experiences for clients and IBM Business Partners
- Increase yield
- Improve quality
- Increase efficiencies
- Improve overall portfolio effectiveness
- Do fewer events **better**
- Free up resources - people and budget - to reinvest in:
  - net new events - IBM-led or third-party
  - Innovative technologies to:
    - enhance the attendees' experience with IBM and other attendees
    - engage attendees in a more compelling manner



The Right Event at the  
Right Time for the  
Right Audience



# Optimization Applied: Overview

In event portfolio optimization work, you try to determine the best investment strategy for your event marketing budget.

**To do so**, you need to determine if you are making the best investment of all resources – **people, time, money and tools**.



## Explore and Ask Questions

- Will the same or less budget, when applied differently yield different results - more profitable results?
- Will changing our approach to planning the event yield different results - more attendees?
- Will engaging with the sales and BP channels differently yield a different response?



The questions to explore will differ for every team who conducts this type of review. Define what 'improvement' means for your events portfolio and then start asking the questions.

# Getting Started

## Review your Event Portfolio

- Historical Perspective: Look at all events and their results
- Use captured results and metrics from readily available IBM tools to inform your decision-making process:
  - Is there one result or metric that matters more than others?
  - Some metrics, not all, are useful for analysis and diagnosis
  - Use both quantitative and qualitative results, if available

***Note: Different teams may use different metrics in their analysis work***

## Determine...

- Which **events** should be **repeated** - **kept in the portfolio**
  - Are you making the most of these events? Or, are changes needed to yield better results from these events?
    - Review the Optimization approaches outlined on Slides 10, 15, 19-22)
- Which **events** should be **discontinued** - **discarded from the portfolio**
  - Ensure all interested parties are involved in the discussion and debate
- What **new events** - IBM-led or third-party - **should be added to the portfolio**

# Optimization Approaches

## Change your approach to **Planning**



### 1. Apply 'Critical Event Execution Success Factors'

- Derived from the analysis of hundreds of IBM proprietary and third-party events
- A total of 12 factors make up the list (Slides 11-14)
- Learnings from teams who are applying a ***minimum of 6*** of the identified critical success factors to their event planning execution today:
  - Improved overall results
  - Stronger and better collaboration with sales and sales channel partners
  - Quality events for attendees
  - Qualified attendees



Different teams will apply different Success Factors to their event planning and execution efforts depending on what improvements they are trying to achieve.

# Critical Success Factors \*

Critical Success Factors	Rationale
<b>1. Sufficient Planning Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that the event is memorable and valuable to your midmarket audience, and to IBM and IBM Business Partners, sufficient lead time is critical to effectively plan and execute the many details involved in an event</li> <li>• Without sufficient planning time, the quality of your event elements or tactics will suffer and the results they generate will be compromised</li> <li>• Recommended minimum lead times for when to schedule your kick-off or initial planning meeting are provided for these specific event types:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Large IBM Conference - 24 weeks</li> <li>▪ IBM Proprietary Conference - 16 weeks</li> <li>▪ Road Show / Multi-city - 15 weeks</li> <li>▪ Virtual Events – 14-16 weeks</li> <li>▪ Third-party Business/ Trade Show - 13 weeks</li> <li>▪ Seminar/Single City - 10 weeks</li> <li>▪ Closing Events - 10 weeks</li> <li>▪ Luncheons/Dinners/Receptions - 6 weeks</li> <li>▪ Event in a Box - 6 weeks</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>2. Correctly Categorized Objective</b>	<p>Establish a primary objective at the beginning of the planning process and align your execution plans to that objective.</p>

\* Adapted for Midmarket event application

# Critical Success Factors (continued)

Critical Success Factors	Rationale
<b>3. Sales Integration throughout the Planning Process</b>	<p>Create events that IBM sales and IBM Business Partners will support. They can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• suggest topics for event content based on customer insights</li> <li>• raise awareness for the event</li> <li>• drive attendance – existing customers and open opportunities</li> <li>• recommend locations and venues</li> <li>• identify whitespace / best opportunities</li> <li>• enlist and secure customers for event speaking opportunities</li> <li>• reinforce local IBM presence</li> <li>• use the event for 1-to-1 meetings with key clients or prospects</li> </ul>
<b>4. Sales and Channel-driven Customer Invitations and Pre-scheduled Meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide these key stakeholders with enablement tools to invite their customers to the event</li> <li>• Share the pre-registration list with them in advance to enable the scheduling of onsite meetings</li> </ul>
<b>5. Clearly Defined Client Journey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with local GPJ representatives to create a Strategic Experience Map for your event</li> <li>• This planning tool clearly identifies effective pre, onsite and post-event touches that will help to create valuable and quality client experiences</li> </ul>
<b>6. Content Aligned to Specific Client Needs</b>	<p>Ensure the event content is aligned to directly speak to clients' pain points and current industry or market issues of top concern to your midmarket audience.</p>
<b>7. Comprehensive Surround Plan</b>	<p>The event must be surrounded by other marketing and event tactics to ensure its success. Tactics can vary depending on event type (i.e., proprietary or non-proprietary), size and format, geography, air coverage provided by IBM global, tie-in to other marketing campaigns, etc.</p>

# Critical Success Factors (continued)

Critical Success Factors	Rationale
<b>8. Business Partner Engagement</b>	<p>IBM Business Partners play a critical role in IBM's midmarket marketing strategy. They help to demonstrate local presence, understanding and knowledge of the issues and challenges facing midsize businesses, and keen insights into the unique needs of midsize businesses.</p> <p>Ensure that IBM Business Partners are involved in your event plans – before, during and after the event. Their involvement can take many forms:</p> <p><b>Proprietary Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• as speakers or sponsors</li> <li>• drive audience</li> <li>• recruit customers as event speakers</li> <li>• as demonstrators</li> </ul> <p><b>Non-Proprietary Events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participants in the IBM booth</li> <li>• drive audience</li> </ul>
<b>9. Strong Audience Generation Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No matter the size of the event, develop an audience generation plan that includes targets/goals</li> <li>• These plans can be IBM-driven or third-party driven or a combination of the two</li> </ul>
<b>10. Business Value Giveaway/Memento/ Gift</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If providing a giveaway or gift, ensure it provides added business value to event attendees/delegates.</li> </ul>

# Critical Success Factors (continued)

Critical Success Factors	Rationale
<b>11. Lead Management Plan in Place</b>	<p>This plan ensures that clients and prospects receive appropriate and timely follow-up after the event.</p> <p>Develop your lead management plan early - before the event - is highly recommended. And, ensure it's ready to be implemented immediately after the event. It should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Identified owners</b></li><li>• <b>Clear and concise guidelines on follow-up times for all stakeholders</b></li><li>• <b>Guidelines on the use of enablement tools, if providing tools</b></li></ul>
<b>12. Social Media Plan</b>	<p>Apply social media to the event experience to enable midmarket constituents to interact and share information throughout the entire event lifecycle: before, during and after the event. Use what you know about your audience's behavior and go where they are online to facilitate a dialogue with them.</p> <p>For more information and guidance on "Social Media" specific to Midmarket, visit the Smarter Planet Midmarket Event Resource Portal and click on the <b>Social Media</b> link.</p>

Click to link to [Midmarket Smarter Planet Event Resource Portal](#)

# Optimization Approaches



GOAL:  
Improve Event  
ROI

## Change your approach to **Planning**

### 2. Review 'Essential Characteristics of Midmarket Events' (Slides 16-18)

- Derived from the successful midmarket 'large' event executions held in Malaysia, UKI, France, Mexico and China last year
- Nine characteristics or attributes and an explanation of the impact they made on the events are listed on the following slides
- Consider including some or all of these attributes into your midmarket event plans



- Consider how these attributes map to the 'Critical Success Factors' presented earlier in this deck
- How can they can be combined and applied to continually improve event performance



# Essential Characteristics

Key Attribute	Why This Matters
Leverage third-party business influencers with knowledge, experience and name recognition with midsize businesses in the local geography.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Overcome IBM perception issues</li> <li>▪ Point of entry among target audience that IBM can leverage</li> <li>▪ Third-party database of contacts</li> </ul>
Include outside speakers (i.e., government leaders, well-known midmarket thought leaders – local or national) on the agenda program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrate IBM's understanding of relevant issues of importance to local midsize businesses IBM perception issues</li> <li>▪ Good draw for local audiences -- names they may recognize, people they want to see/hear (brought to them by IBM) Third-party database of contacts</li> </ul>
Gain support from and interlock with internal IBM teams – sales, marketing, BPO, brand teams, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drives registration and attendance</li> <li>▪ Ensures the sharing of a more comprehensive solution message with event attendees when relevant IBM brands are represented at the event</li> </ul>
Align strongly to smarter planet framework.	Brings to life the smarter planet for midmarket platform and invites clients to engage with and begin to see the role they and their businesses can/are playing in the smarter planet story.

# Essential Characteristics (continued)

Key Attribute	Why This Matters
Integrate IBM and Business Partner solutions via Solution Showcase and conference sessions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Demonstrate that IBM and its Business Partners have relevant solutions to address specific business challenges and pain points of midsize businesses</li><li>▪ Business Partner participation reinforces IBM's commitment to providing "local" or "community" experts and it demonstrates the easy accessibility of IBM and IBM solutions</li></ul>
Think beyond the event with a comprehensive 360-degree integrated marketing approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Surrounds the event with comprehensive messaging that raises awareness and generates audience for the event</li><li>▪ Gives a boost to other midmarket tactics pre- and post-event</li></ul>
Deliver consistent branding, and look and feel – pre-event, onsite and post-event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Surrounds attendees with consistent messaging and campaign images while reinforcing overall branding</li></ul>

# Essential Characteristics (continued)

Key Attribute	Why This Matters
<p>Use social media tactics to connect and communicate with midmarket audiences – pre-event, onsite and post-event.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduces new channels for community building and communication with event attendees and the midmarket community overall</li> <li>Engage with the audience where they are – ask them to join the discussion with IBM, listen and learn</li> <li>Introduce midmarket audiences to <b>infoboom</b>, the IBM sponsored social networking community for midmarket business leaders</li> </ul>
<p>Raise awareness through face-to-face events to enable IBM and IBM Business Partners to establish/confirm a “local” presence among midsize businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face-to-face events give IBM and Business Partners a way to demonstrate a true presence in local/regional communities</li> <li>Face-to-face events provide a platform from which IBM and Business Partners can engage directly with midsize business owners to speak about what matters to them – their unique needs and challenges</li> <li>Face-to-face events set the stage for further engagement via virtual events or virtual briefings</li> </ul>

# Optimization Approaches



GOAL:  
Improve Event  
ROI

## Change your approach to **Planning**

### 3. Talk with and Share Ideas with Other MM DP Teams

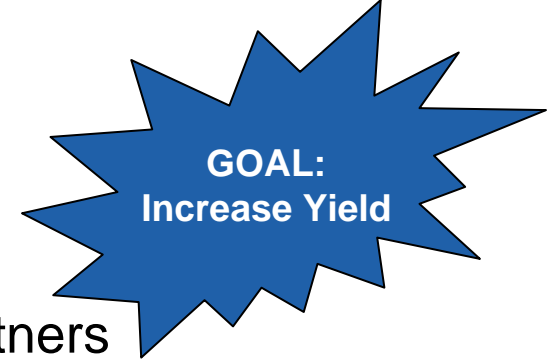
- Consider talking with MM teams who are executing successful midmarket events
  - Identify the specific challenge or area you need to improve and speak with the MM DP teams who are successful in that area
  - Share learnings and practices you use with other MM DP teams
- Visit the [Midmarket Smarter Planet Event Resource](#) portal for guidance docs and reference tools to address specific areas of event planning and execution that are challenging to your team
  - If you cannot find the information in the portal, contact the WW IBM or GPJ leads listed on Slide 24



Work with the Worldwide IBM or GPJ leads noted on Slide 24 to help you find other MM DP teams to talk with about the specific challenges you are facing with your events.

# Optimization Approaches

## Shift the **Portfolio**



### 4. Shift Specific Types of Events to Business Partners

- Consider shifting the execution of **product-centric, road show or product launch events** to IBM Business Partners in markets where:
  - co-marketing is feasible and relevant
  - An IBM MSV (Marketing Service Vendor) is supporting and overseeing IBM Business Partner marketing activity
- Focus IBM's efforts on events where you need to deliver a larger cross-company message that maps to the Smarter Planet story and demonstrates how **midsize businesses are the engines of a Smarter Planet**



Careful consideration should be given to how much of a shift to make your events portfolio. Engage with local BPO teams or MSVs to better understand the capabilities of local Business Partners to execute effective events that will drive high midmarket revenue.

# Optimization Approaches



## Do Fewer Events **BETTER**

### 5. Ensure Events are NOT Executed Outside the Program Framework Plans

- Eliminate BU funding spent in the country outside of the MMPF to support additional events:
  - Can result in ad hoc brand-centric events driven by market management that create conflicts of dates, locations and audiences with planned MMPF event activities
- Combine event executions where audience overlap (SME and LE) is likely and event messages can be complementary
  - Leverage GB LE event planning, where appropriate to optimize and maximize certain resources

# Optimization Approaches

## Shift the Portfolio



### 6. Look for New Event Opportunities

- Conduct a search of third-party events targeting midmarket audiences, in total or part
  - The landscape of industry and association events has changed dramatically in the past two years, it may be time to take another look at what's available
  - IBM's participation can take many forms -- sponsorship, exhibitor, speaker, etc.
- Research the event activity of key IBM midmarket competitors
  - You may discover events that you've never heard of - add them to your list to research further to determine if it's a good fit for IBM
- Contact local business or government authorities aligned to the development of midsize businesses in your region
  - These types of organizations may conduct events or be open to discussing the creation of new events with IBM



Your local GPJ Event Strategist may be able to assist you in these efforts. They can conduct the research, develop POVs and provide recommendations based on facts. See Slide 24 for a list of GPJ IOT contacts.

# Summary

## Portfolio Optimization

- **Create program specific event portfolios based on Midmarket program objectives**
  - Country-driven strategy based on objectives and requirements of local program profiles
  - Balanced event portfolios with a mix of IBM-led, third-party, face-to-face, virtual, and hybrid events that drive customers and prospects through the conversion cycle

## Event Optimization

- **Integrate proven ‘Critical Success Factors’ and ‘Midmarket Essential Characteristics’ to improve attendee experience and event results**

## Tools & Data Optimization

- **Continually improve EST data quality to provide reliable data for measurement, reporting, analysis and decision-making**
- **Improve projections to enable target achievement**

**The Right Event at the Right Time  
Right Audience.**



# Key Contacts

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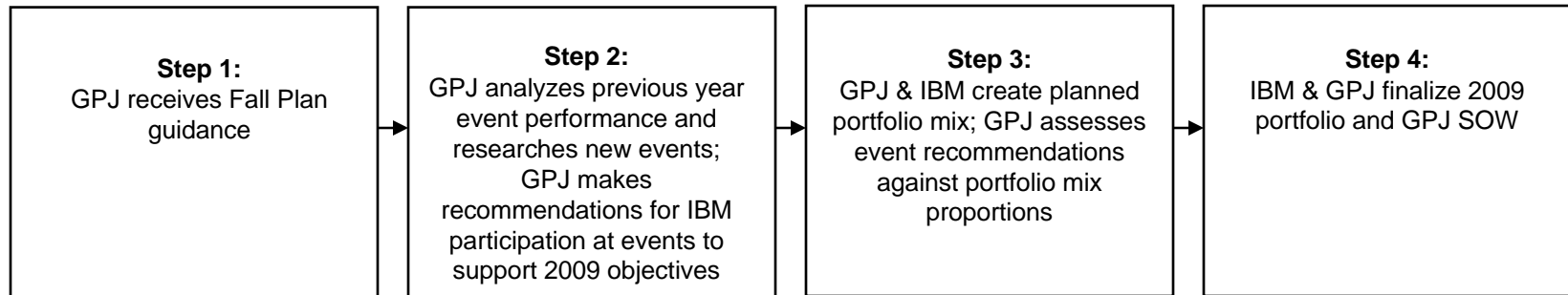
# Back-up

- Example: Americas Strategy
  - Portfolio Planning & Optimization Process
  - Top 6 Critical Success Factors
    - Findings

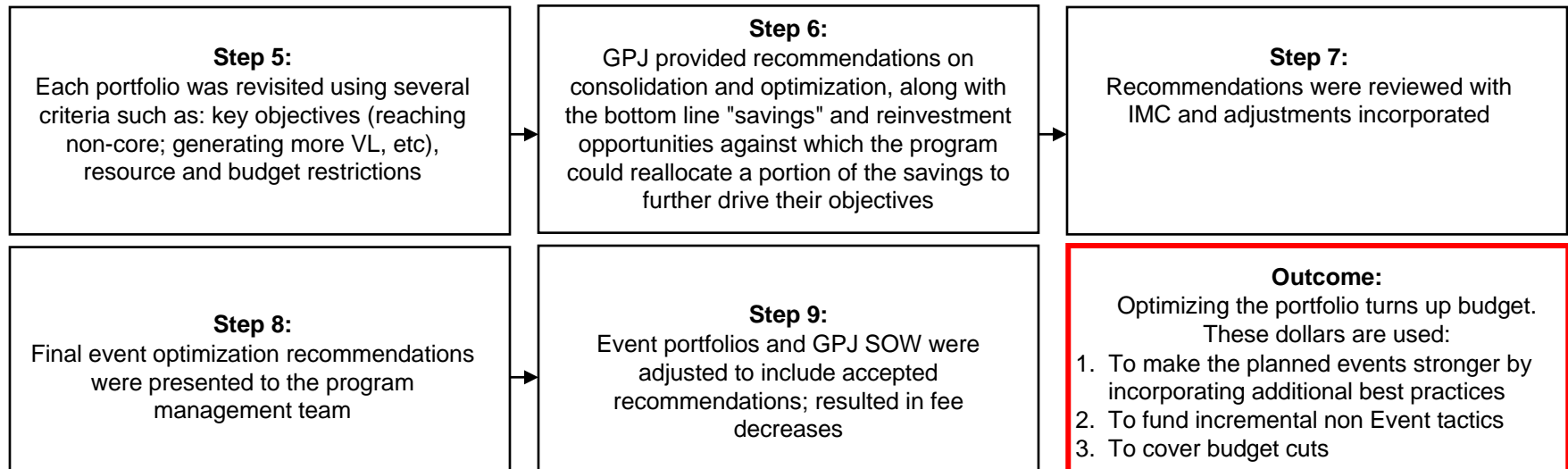
# Portfolio Planning and Optimization Process

## Example of work done by AG Team







### Standard Fall Plan Portfolio Development Process



### Additional Steps Taken for 2009 Portfolio Optimization to support Economic Changes



# Critical Event Practices: Top 6

Critical Event Practice		Why?
Correctly categorized objective		Clear and common purpose; Execution developed to deliver against that objective
Content aligned to specific customer needs		Allows customers to clearly understand how engaging with IBM will benefit them
Sales integration throughout the planning process		Connects event to existing contacts/prospects
Lead management plan in place		Ensures that customers receive appropriate and timely follow up
Sales-driven customer invitations and pre-scheduled meetings		Automatically builds in qualified drive-to; enables progression
Sufficient planning time (specific to each event type)		Domino effect for all other elements; drive-to; sponsorship options; messaging; content

# Summary of Findings

## 6-month Snapshot

- **Sufficient lead time** and **Sales integration** continue to be the practices that are used the least
- **YET** they have the **greatest impact** on whether or not an event will create opportunities
  - Those programs that consistently allowed for sufficient planning time and integrated with Sales are also the programs that created opportunities (lowest % of events with no VLR)
- Programs that **used all 6 critical practices consistently** also had the **highest percentage** of events **with VLR** (CIO & EBF)
- Programs that used an **average of 5.0+ critical practices** (overall average) were more likely to **have events with attributed opportunities**

# Critical Practice Usage by Program

## Rank Ordered by CP Usage

Program	Kick Off Lead Time*	Sufficient planning time**	Correctly categorized objective	Sales integration	Sales-driven invitations	Content aligned to customer needs	Lead management plan in place	CP Usage	Events with No VLR
CIO	81%	88%	100%	92%	96%	92%	100%	5.7	0%
LMI	29%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	5.5	8%
ISVs	50%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	5.5	25%
EP	59%	91%	100%	82%	82%	82%	100%	5.4	27%
EBF	100%	50%	100%	100%	93%	100%	93%	5.3	7%
MM	60%	60%	100%	90%	50%	100%	100%	5.0	80%
DCO	60%	68%	96%	68%	80%	96%	88%	5.0	16%
MBI	79%	50%	93%	71%	86%	93%	100%	4.9	14%
LOB	69%	81%	96%	77%	69%	83%	85%	4.9	38%
M2I	69%	77%	100%	62%	62%	100%	69%	4.7	62%
LI	30%	76%	95%	54%	57%	84%	95%	4.6	30%
ESD	82%	82%	91%	73%	64%	64%	73%	4.5	64%

All US	58%	72%	97%	77%	76%	89%	92%	5.0	25%
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### Critical Practice Usage Scoring

- More than 80%
- 60% - 80%
- Less than 60%

All data, except Kick Off lead time, taken from EST on 8.24.09  
Includes GPJ SOW and any event briefs that completed Best Practices tab  
Awareness and Thought Leadership events have been removed  
Events are categorized by Master Program Profile (acquisitions included)

### No VLR Scoring

- Less than 10%
- 10% - 20%
- More than 20%