

Planning for Audience Response





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What is an Electronic Audience Response System?

An audience response system is a number hand held keypads, which allow audience members to anonymously communicate their responses to questions asked of them by a moderator / speaker. The system is used to turn passive audience members into active participants and to receive immediate feedback on issues for the purpose of promoting discussion within the meeting.

How does it work?

Attendees use the keypads to answer questions by pushing a button on the keypad that represents their choice to a question being asked / displayed. Choices can be Yes/No, True/False, Multiple Choice (1-10), Range/Scale, Vote (Yes/No/Abstain), depending on how the questions are formulated.

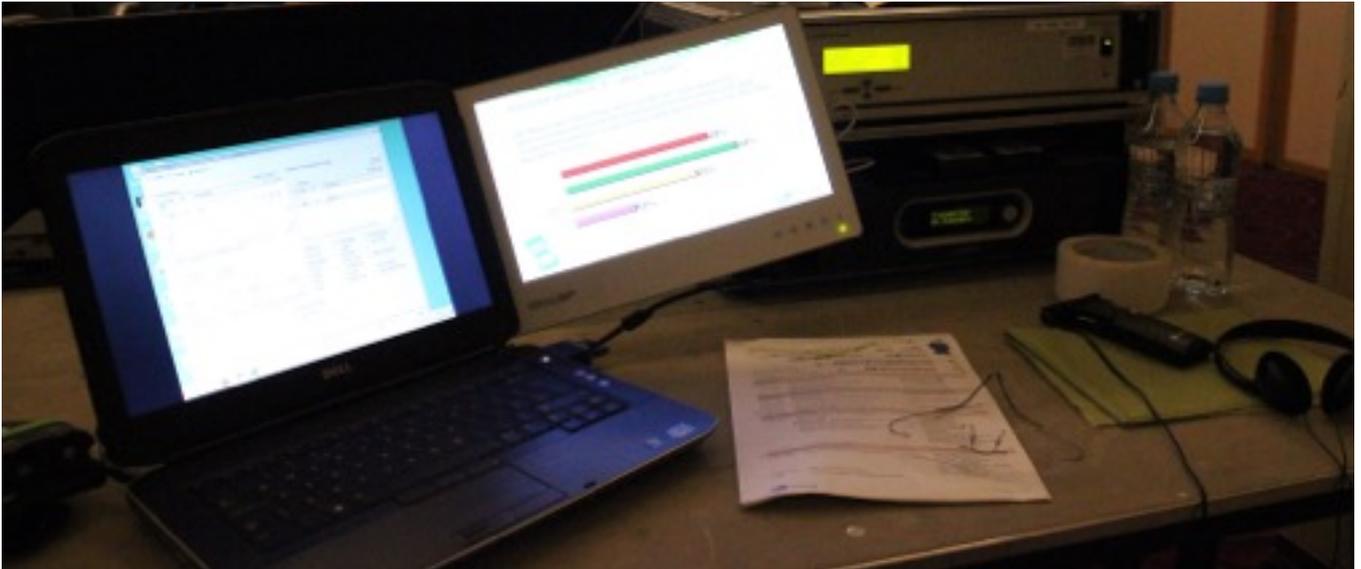
Instantaneously, a computer tabulates and displays the responses in a graphic format on a monitor or projection screen. This display is the communication between the speaker and audience. Ideally the speaker / moderator should comment to the responses and also elicit audience member reactions to the results.

How do I utilise an Audience response system in my meeting?

To maximise use of the system, the meeting objectives must first be determined.

- Who are the attendees?
- Why are they attending?
- How many will participate?
- How long is the meeting?
- What are the major points you want the audience to remember?

Once these questions are answered then a keypad session can be developed which will meet all of the objectives in a creative and informative way.



Do I need to plan questions before the meeting begins?

There are two types of questions... pre-planned and impromptu.

Pre-planned questions are developed prior to the meeting. In most instances the moderator / speaker has primary input in question development. Pre-planned questions have two advantages. They assure the user that all issues which need to be addressed are covered and well thought out, and that nothing gets asked or answered which the moderator does not want discussed at the meeting. Questions should be reviewed and edited carefully. Have someone else check them for clarity, relevance and freedom from ambiguity.

Impromptu questions are developed by the Chair person / speaker or an audience member, on demand. The major advantage to these questions is that they often open up areas of discussion which were not addressed in pre-planning the meeting, but are important to the issue. It rewards everyone in the room with the sharing of ideas and new information.

This format must be carefully considered before it is used. It should only be used with a moderator who is comfortable with the idea.

Impromptu questions may be asked of the group verbally, in any case, the technician needs to know the number of choices (Scale of 1-5, Yes/No, You'll choose one of three choices, etc.) before activating the system, or beginning to input a question to be displayed for discussion and saved for later analysis.

Generic impromptu screens may also be pre-built in order for the technician to quickly display a set of responses in answer to a verbal question. (For example: Yes/No, Set of Procedures, or Issues, to choose from.)

How are the questions displayed?

The questions are generally displayed on the main screen used during the congress. They appear to be part of the main presentation but are in reality running on a separate PC. The voting computer is switched to the main screen via a smooth fade switcher which can be provided by us or by your main av contractor. Using a separate computer for voting allows edits to be made while the main presentation is being displayed and it also gives better system security.

How are the responses displayed?

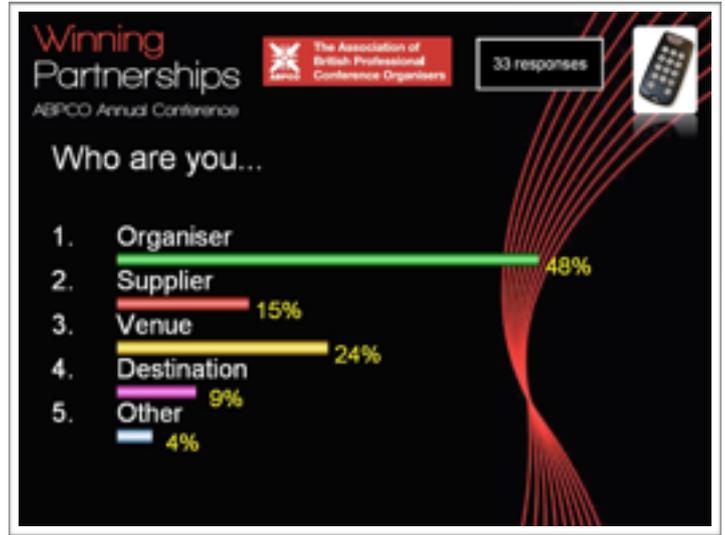
The most frequently used display is the bar graph. There are however several graphical options available for display, including:

- **BAR CHART** - Full or partial screen, horizontal or vertical bars in 2D or 3D
- **PIE CHART** - Full or partial screen, thickness and angle can be adjusted
- **DUAL BAR GRAPH** - Full screen dual or comparative bar graph in 3D format, allows you to compare, side by side results of the currently polled question with results of a previously polled question. Pre-Survey data can also be used for comparison display

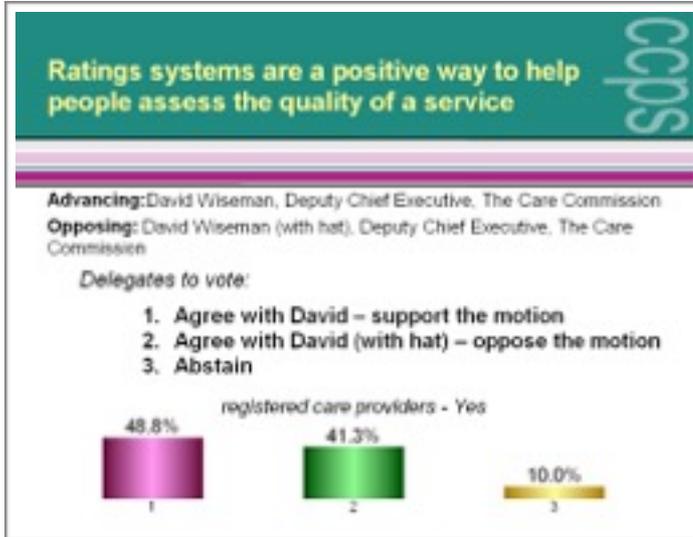
Additionally, line graphs, plane graphs, step graphs, are available.



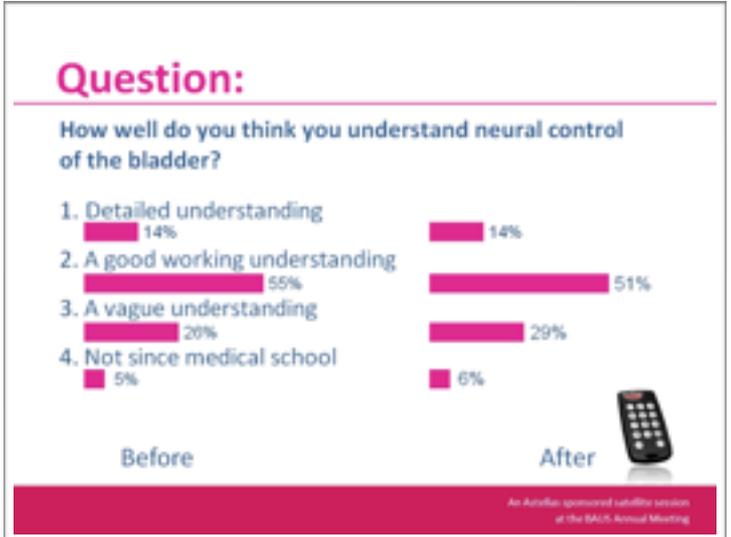
Multiple choice opinion polling question



5 option question designed as a 'filter' to break down further responses in to specific sectors



An example of a filter applied to a later question, here the graphic displays only those 'registered care providers' who voted 'Yes' and their response to the asked question.



Example of a 'before and after' question where responses from the same question, taken at different times, and are shown side by side to show any shift in perception or understanding during the intervening period. (Not much shift shown here though...)



An example of a quiz question where the correct answer is high lighted. Counter shows number of tables / keypads polled.



An example of a quiz score board shows table number, team name and score.

When should I ask the questions?

All meetings are different but if possible introduce the system early on in the day. The response system could be incorporated throughout the meeting or just in one session. Some presenters like to intersperse questions every few minutes to help the audience absorb new information others group all at the end to test information retention. Both help keep the attendees involved.

Some suggestions for designing questions to enhance presentations:

Ask questions to find out about your audience:

- **Who are they?** A couple of demographic questions will help you define your audience.
- **What do they already know about your subject?**
- **How interested are they in your subject?**
- **Do they use this information frequently?**
- **What kind of problems are they capable of solving?**
- **What difficulties have they had understanding the material you intend to present?**

Questions may be asked before a presentation to get the feel for the overall knowledge of the group on a subject matter. A review question may be asked in the middle of the presentation to find out if the group is comprehending the material, or if a review is in order.

Asking questions during the presentation is a good way to stimulate discussion and get the audience more involved rather than just pressing buttons. After the question results are displayed, invite discussion of responses that indicate disagreements or misunderstandings. Ask participants to defend their choice by sharing their reasoning for the selection.

Monitor the Audiences Progress: This can give you valuable guidance on where to take your presentation; however, you have to be ready and willing to make adjustments as you go.

Provide Diversion and Humour: You can do a lot to keep an audience engaged and sympathetic by interspersing some occasional questions that bring a light touch or a bit of humour.

Summarising the Audience's Progress: At the end of the presentation you may want to determine the audience's level of understanding of their opinions, either as an absolute measure or as a contrast to the initial information you gathered about them. When you've had to dispense a lot of information, a few knowledge assessment questions at the end of a meeting will let you know if the methods of relaying that information have been successful.

Do you have some suggestions for wording the questions?

To get the audience involved, questions should be provocative, thought provoking, actually challenging. Your objective is to get a graph which shows strong support to some choices and weaker support for other choices, thereby giving you material for providing feedback to the audience.

- **Never ask anything you don't want publicly answered.**
- **Never ask anything that might appear to compromise the speaker or audience.**

Keep it :-

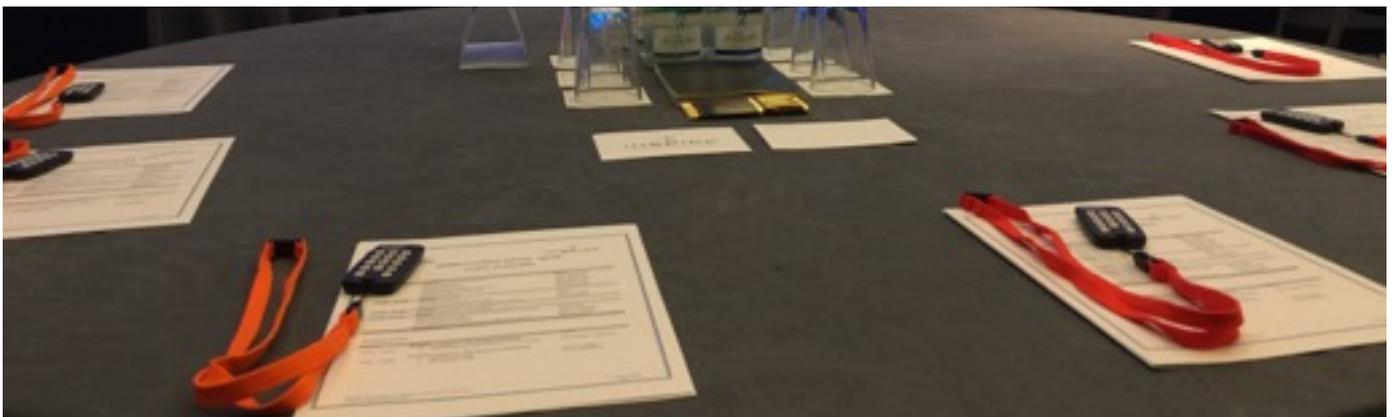
- **Brief** - Should be grasped quickly - many audiences become impatient. Provide only as many response choices as needed for your purpose.
- **Worthy** - The audience will become restless if they dismiss the questions as too obvious, superficial, or unimportant.
- **Clear & Unambiguous** - Edit to assure maximum clarity. It will help to read the question out loud and to have other experts in your field review your questions in advance for clarity, & relevance.
- **Engaging & Intriguing** - Audiences like to be engaged when they want to know the correct answer, or the opinions of their colleagues.
- **Personal** - Questions should be directed at individuals and not to the group as a whole.

Is the system Anonymous?

Individual responses MAY be tracked, but aren't usually unless attendance is taken through the system or a test is given. Responses are assigned to individual keypads but usually the keypads are randomly distributed so anonymising the results polled.

How do I submit Audience Response Questions ?

1. Questions should be in a multiple-choice format. Choices must be numbered from 1 to 10. Correct choices, if any, should be clearly indicated.
2. Questions and choices should be stated clearly, remember, the more words displayed on screen the smaller they become and harder for the audience to read.
3. Question text can highlight specific words on screen using bold, italic, underline, and/or a unique highlight colour.
4. Use of normal upper and lower case conventions is best for readability on screen. To assure the correctness and appropriateness of all text displayed, we will maintain upper and lower case as submitted.
5. Questions should have a clear numbering sequence. Inclusion of an event agenda with the questions is very helpful. Questions can be re ordered at any time and asked in a random order too so long as this is agreed between the presenter and system technician.
6. Questions should be submitted to us five working days prior to your event date to allow for proofing and possible redrafting.
7. Non-polling (purely information) displays are available; however, the system is not intended to be a replacement for PowerPoint.
8. To serve you more effectively and efficiently, we ask that questions be submitted in an electronic form. We prefer to accept questions via PowerPoint (.ppt / .pptx), Word documents (.doc / .docx) or ASCII text (.txt) for importing into the software. We can also accept questions formatted in Apple Keynote and Pages This will help eliminate some typographical errors. Questions should forwarded via e-mail.
9. To allow us to replicate your graphical format and keep on brand please submit your PowerPoint Slide Master or a preferred question background. We can use bitmap (.bmp) or jpeg (.jpg) images in any screen resolution and screen ratio. Graphic images can be e-mailed directly.
10. We are happy to send screen shots of how the system will look on screen. We also encourage you to schedule a rehearsal for presenters.



Can I make changes to questions once submitted?

Yes questions can be edited on the day and new questions added. It is recommended though that no major reformatting of the question graphics be undertaken as this can lead to unexpected graphing. This is where a graph overlays the question text, the data is saved but its presentation on screen may be difficult to interpret.

How should I ask the questions on the day?

The presenter should read through the question and the possible responses to the audience, as they are displayed on the screen. This is to confirm clarity but also to allow those who may not have full sight of the screen to comprehend the options available.

The presenter should verbally cue the technician to start the polling period. Note that as soon as the question is displayed it is possible to cast a vote, the timer countdown represents the remaining time before the vote closes.

The presenter should interpret and speak to the results, when displayed, and create a dialogue that carries the participant's thoughts and encourages audience discussion.



The speaker facilitates the voting and interprets the graphs to stimulate audience participation

To help presenters feel comfortable with the system, these notes have been prepared so the presenter can understand the system more fully. Also, please allow time for rehearsal. We encourage all presenters who are using the system to take a few minutes to cover their portion of the event with the system technician. We will be there to help you. Please don't hesitate to ask questions.

How should we introduce the system?

The audience needs a quick introduction to the keypads in order to get them acquainted and comfortable with it. Take the time to explain why you are using the system.

To help you introduce the system, we have written a script, see the next page, which you might find useful as well as having an introductory presentation slide (See above). We recommend that the speaker hold up a keypad to illustrate followed by a warm-up question or two, to demonstrate system use.

Introduction Script

At your seat you will have found, or you will have been given, an Audience Response Keypad.

These keypads will be used throughout the meeting today to gather your opinion on issues being discussed.

Your answers will be anonymous, so please give us your true feelings... not your neighbour's, or how you think someone else might like you to respond... we're looking for your input.

Each question will be displayed on the screen. I will read it aloud, together with the available voting options. You'll then see a countdown clock appear on the screen. To enter your response, all you need to do is press the button representing your choice while the clock is counting down. If you change your mind, simply press another button, the system will only accept the last response pressed.

Immediately following, a graph will appear on screen displaying the results.

At the end of the session ,or day, please return your keypad as they are expensive and we will be charged for any that have not been returned. They do not change the channel on you TV, operate garage doors etc...

Let's try a sample question to see how this works. Could we have the first question please.

(Question is displayed speaker reads through question and available choices)

Please vote now, you have 10 seconds to make your choice.

(Countdown clock activated at the end of the 10 seconds the clock disappears)

OK all voted? Can we see the results please.

(Graph is displayed, speaker comments to graph and opens debate)

Distribution and collection of the keypads: PLEASE NOTE!!!

The keypads will need to be distributed to your audience to allow them to enter their responses. At the end of the voting session they will need to be collected again. This process is the responsibility of the hirer.

The keypads have a value and should be looked after with care taken in their distribution and collection as **the liability for losses remains with the hirer**. Losses are usually small and are normally returned within a week as each keypad has an address label on the back of the unit. Losses are normally sustained not by purposeful theft but by accidental placement in bags etc.. High visibility lanyards are provided, on the smaller keypads, to help aid recovery.

The liability to the hirer extends, and is limited to, the replacement cost of the units lost. This is invoiced separately (but at the same time) to the job invoice. As keypads are returned we will issue refunds. Refunds will be issued for up to one year from the date of loss.

The keypads can't be used for any other purpose or function.

Distribution and collection is normally carried out by the clients 'on the day' staff. Depending on the size of audience and the seating arrangements of the event there are differing methods to best proceed with the distribution.

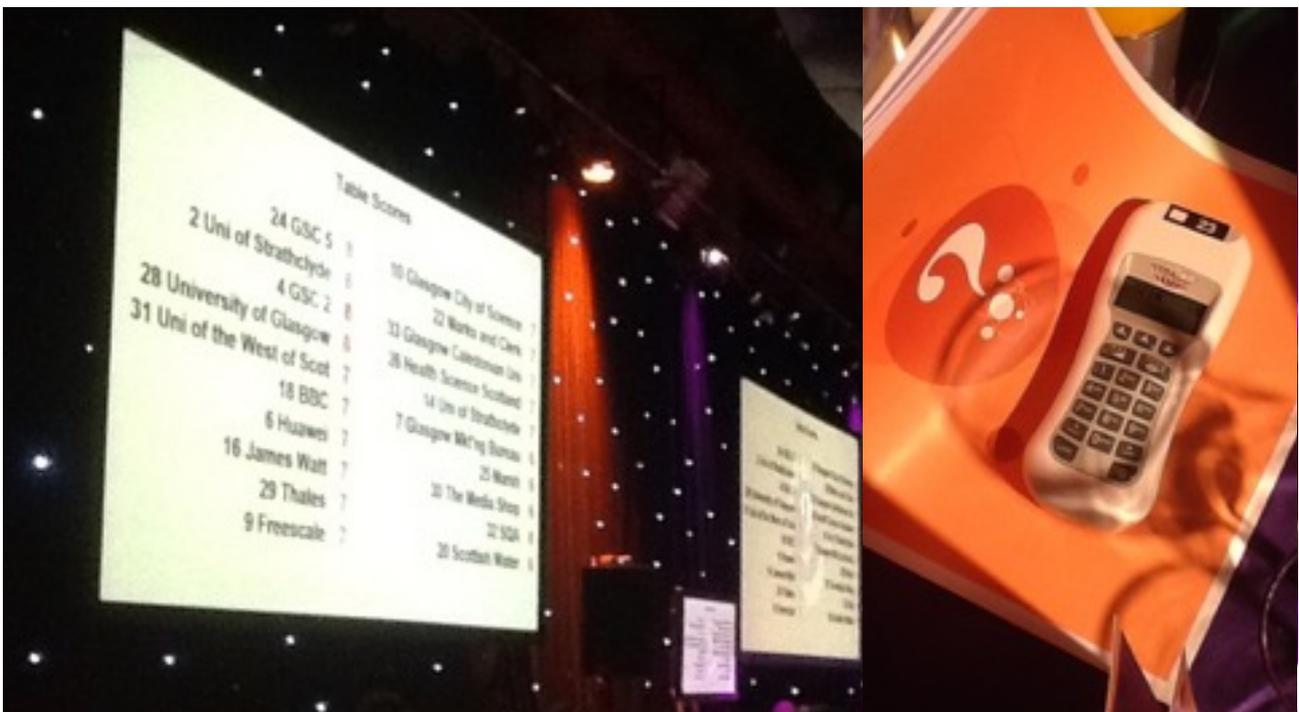
Theatre style.

Distribute at the points of entry to the hall, giving each delegate a keypad as they enter the hall. This prevents keypad placement in areas where no one is seated and ensures only the correct number of keypads are distributed. Many theatres have flip up seats which also makes placement difficult without losing the keypad down the back of a seat. We would recommend 1 on the day staff member per 100 keypads to cope with peak flow at the start and end of the sessions. Actively ask delegates to return their keypads to a collection point when exiting and ensure staff are available to receive them. Ensure the chair person is briefed to remind delegates to return the keypads

Cabaret, Class and Board room styles.

Place keypads on the tables at each place setting. We would recommend 1 staff member per 200 delegates. At the end of the session ask delegates to leave the keypad on the table for collection.

In all instances keypads are cased and presented in number sequence. To ensure accurate counting and notification all keypads must be returned to the correct cases and returned to the original number sequence. Our technician will always play an active role in the distribution, collection and sorting of the keypads.



Keypads vs Event Apps

With advances in technology you may have thought proprietary keypad audience response systems have been rendered obsolete as there are now a range of smartphone apps that offer a similar service. There are however key points that may be considered when weighing up the use of keypads or using an event app.

An app requires the delegate to have their own device and it is dependent on them understanding the process of downloading or connecting to an app / web based service. This can mean that a significant proportion of your audience may not actively participate in the poll. By giving all delegates a keypad you guarantee as far as possible the maximum level of participation of your audience.

We supply app based services too and note that there is a significant drop off of audience participation as the day goes on when delegates use their own devices. Keypads characteristically maintain a high degree of audience participation through out the working day.

The results obtained from a keypad allow a greater depth of analysis and question cross tabulation to produce filtered results. App based voting tends to provide a general result that does not allow greater investigation.

Keypads can allow for individually tracked votes when required. Apps generally do not allow individual participant tracking.

App based services require the delegate to have their device on, this may prove a distraction if the device receives a call or if the delegate would rather check their emails than participate in your event.

App based services tend not to offer a range of graphical options to best display your results. The keypad software that we use allows us to individually tailor the question and result screens to your presentation graphics making sure they fit seamlessly with the rest of the screen content and only your brand is visible on the day.

Keypad based systems can allow for last minute changes on site, just talk to the tech on site operating the system on your behalf.

Keypad based systems are self contained. They are not reliant on any venue supplied Wi-Fi, internet connection, mobile phone reception or any other third party supplied service.

Keypads ensure your audience does not personally incur any additional costs of participation.

The distribution of keypads ensures a level of equality is given to all delegates.

A delegate device may require recharging during the day if there is a high degree of audience participation. Are there 200 free charging sockets for your audience.

Keypads ensure there are no issues with delegate devices having enough space to download your app.

Keypads ensure there are no issues with delegate devices having the required version or type of operating system compatible with your app.

Delegates may not have the necessary permissions to download and install apps on company supplied devices.

Apps are good for larger public events were the cost of hire and distribution and collection of keypads is prohibitive. In these cases though you may only be looking for broader view of consensus in any polls.

Apps can allow the easy use of text based responses, access to microphone and camera data if required.

Available keypad types:

The Reply Plus keypad is a fully featured handset with a clear backlit monochrome lcd display. The display has icons that convey battery condition, communications channel, transponder communication and vote status. The display's main area shows voting instructions, messages and vote selections before transmission. This gives the user knowledge and confidence in the system's correct operation. Simple to use and easy to hold, the keypad has the ability to submit text messages to the system so making a 2 way engagement tool.



The Reply Mini+ keypad is a wearable keypad designed to be affixed to the delegate lanyard. The device is simple to use and its relative size makes it easy to transport and deploy. Vote confirmation is given by a coloured led.



Available keypad types:

The Reply IQ keypad is an older keypad but remains fully featured handset with a clear monochrome lcd display.

The display has icons that convey battery condition, communications channel, transponder communication and vote status. The display's main area shows voting instructions, messages and vote selections before transmission. This gives the user knowledge and confidence in the systems correct operation. Simple to use and easy to hold, the keypad has a sealed key area which is resistant to the ingress of dust and moisture.

The Reply IQ is now generally used for events abroad were the keypads can be transported for longer periods over land with out incurring additional hire costs.



Do you do supply just the equipment or 'Dry Hires'?

The Reply mini + keypads are available for 'dry hires' (without technician support on site). We supply the keypads, with a laptop with software. The software supplied is a cut down voting software suitable for training and smaller events. We use 'SNAP' from Audience Response Systems Inc. You can down load and view the software at www.snap-ars.com It is a free down load in demo mode to allow preparation of your event. We do not recommend dry hires to audiences above 100 persons.

Why not try our 'Engage' service on iPads. Full text entry, exercises, agendas, delegate lists etc.. a bespoke service to meet your requirement to fully engage your audience.



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