

Networking in 2025: What's Changed and What's Stayed the Same?



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As we enter into conference season and approach the Spring EGSA conference, this is a good opportunity to revisit networking and why it is important. Networking remains the backbone of business growth, but how professionals connect has evolved dramatically over the past five years. With advancements in technology, shifts in workplace dynamics, and new expectations from buyers, networking in 2025 combines traditional and modern approaches.

What Has Changed?

1. The Rise of Hybrid Networking

Pre-2020, in-person events dominated networking. Now, hybrid models combine live events with virtual components, allowing broader participation and AI-driven matchmaking to facilitate meaningful connections.

2. AI-Powered Tools and Smart Outreach

AI now plays a critical role in networking. Tools like LinkedIn Sales

Navigator, AI-driven CRM insights, and automated scheduling assistants help professionals build connections more strategically and efficiently.

3. The Expansion of Personal Branding

Social media has become a requirement for visibility. Executives and sales professionals leverage LinkedIn, Twitter (X), and even short-form video content to establish credibility and stay top-of-mind within their industries.

4. Shift from Cold Outreach to Community Engagement

Traditional cold calls and emails are less effective. Instead, professionals join invite-only LinkedIn groups, Slack communities, and WhatsApp circles where relationships are built before business discussions occur.

5. Emerging Role of Virtual Reality (VR) and the Metaverse

While still in its early stages, VR networking events and metaverse trade shows offer immersive experiences, allowing professionals to connect in digital environments beyond traditional meetings.

What Has Stayed the Same?

1. The Power of In-Person Connections

Despite digital advancements, face-to-face interactions at trade shows, conferences, and industry events remain vital for trust-building and long-term relationships.

2. The Value of Warm Introductions

Referrals and personal introductions are the fastest and most effective way to establish credibility and initiate business conversations.

3. Relationships Over Transactions

Networking remains about genuine connections, not just quick deals. Professionals who provide value and insights before making an ask continue to build the strongest networks.

4. Follow-Ups Matter More Than Ever

Making an initial connection is only the beginning. Thoughtful email, social media, or direct outreach follow-ups are still essential in turning introductions into business opportunities.

5. Industry Associations Continue to Drive Business

Organizations and trade groups remain central to networking success. Being active in associations, speaking at industry events, and participating in advisory groups are powerful ways to form lasting business relationships.

Key Takeaways for Networking in 2025

To stay ahead, professionals must embrace AI-driven tools, engage in community-based networking, maintain a strong online presence, and attend industry events. Relationship-building fundamentals remain unchanged, but the strategies to achieve success have evolved. By balancing digital engagement with personal connections, executives and sales professionals can maximize their networking efforts in an ever-changing business landscape.

I am looking forward to continuing my networking with everyone at #EGSASpring2025 ●