

What is 'partnering'?

This page explains the purpose and process of 'partnering' at business conferences.

'Partnering' refers to the organization of one-to-one meetings between two companies for mutual benefit. The meetings take place at a gathering, usually a conference or trade show. Partnering, facilitated by EBD Group's effective online partnering system partneringONE®, is the most efficient way to find and meet the right people for your company's collaboration aims. New collaborations can include a variety of opportunities and different types of organizations: business partners, customers, suppliers, government and academic organizations, and investors. Smart businesses also use partnering opportunities to foster existing partnerships and strengthen important relationships.

Online partnering is a process, starting two months before an event, but new companies can join in at any time. After registering, the first step is to enter a detailed company profile. EBD Group's acclaimed online system makes this easy, allowing you to enter as much or as little information as you want about your products, technologies, research projects, partnering aims, and licensing opportunities.

These profiles fuel the second stage of partnering, as companies identify potential partnering candidates. Using partneringONE's flexible search engine, profiles can be searched for keywords, specific companies or delegates, as well as licensing opportunities. Bookmarking companies of interest allows you to return to your shortlisted results at a later date.

After identifying possible collaborators, the third stage of effective partnering is requesting meetings. However, before you can do this, it is essential to confirm your availability on the Agenda page of your partneringONE account. Mark yourself as 'unavailable' for all timeslots when you are unavailable for one-to-one meetings due to travel, a speaking or presenting slot, or for any other reason, and 'available' for all timeslots when you can take a one-to-one meeting. One-to-one meetings can be requested either from your Bookmark page, directly from a Search results page or from the Message page. Just as you will request meetings with companies you have identified, other companies will be requesting meetings with you. It is key at this point to monitor the Messages/Requests page on your account almost daily, accepting those requests which are of interest and declining those you would like to pass up. Accepting meetings is easily done, by clicking on the green [Accept] button on the message. You can select who from your company will participate in the meeting. You may add a message to your Accept and Decline responses, if you wish.

A week before the event, accepted meeting requests will be automatically scheduled by the partnering system. Daily rounds of scheduling will add further meetings, and the results will be visible on your Agenda/Schedule pages. The location of the meetings will be released the evening before the event. The system is very flexible, and if your availability changes at any time, meetings can be rescheduled. Also, new meetings can be arranged once the event has started. The entire process is closely monitored by dedicated EBD Group support staff, who ensure that as many of your agreed meetings take place as possible.

Whoever you decide to meet with, the most productive one-to-one meetings are those which you prepare for. Do some research on the company you will be meeting, or brush up on recent highlights of a long-standing partner. The time spent face-to-face will be more productive and your efforts more effective if you have the background information ready to hand. You can print out the profiles of the companies you are meeting, if you want. Partnering meetings are scheduled in 30-minute slots and last for 25 minutes, so keep presentations less than 10 minutes to leave time for discussion and questions. Bring lots of business cards, and after the event, make sure to follow up with each new contact.