

CASE STUDY

Collaborative Sales Strategy Delivers Record Results

THE SOCIETY FOR LABORATORY AUTOMATION AND SCREENING

(SLAS) is an international professional society of academic, industry, and government researchers as well as developers and providers of laboratory automation technology and tools. SLAS International Conference & Exhibition is a gathering of the world's leading laboratory science and technology companies. For SLAS, the annual exhibition is more than a revenue source. It's where the scientific community encounters the tools, technologies, and partners that advance their work. A healthy, growing exhibition floor signals a healthy, growing field.



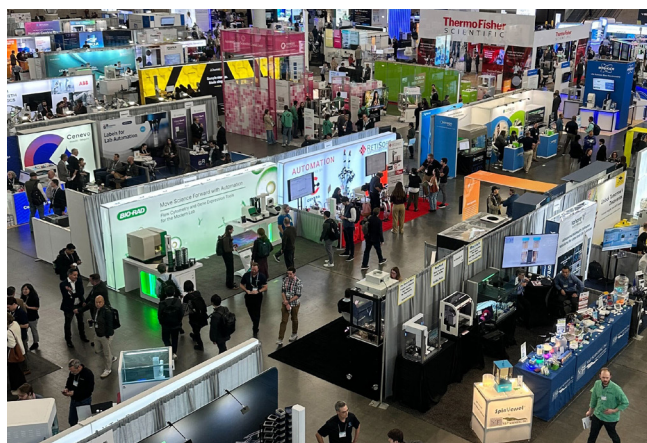
SB Expos & Events has managed expo sales and operations for SLAS since 2022. SLAS2026, held in Boston, represented the strongest exhibition in the organization's history.

THE CHALLENGE

The SLAS exhibition floor draws companies from across the laboratory automation, life sciences tools, and diagnostics industries. This is a specialized international market with its own dynamics, competing events, and buying cycles.

For SLAS2026, the challenge was threefold:

- First, grow the expo beyond the prior year's results while exhibitors face competing events and tightening budgets.
- Second, bring in a meaningful percentage of new companies to refresh and expand the exhibitor community.
- Third, build enough forward momentum during the conference to give SLAS2027 a running start before the meeting ended.



To accomplish all three required a relationship-driven sales approach.

THE STRATEGY

A prospectus built around SLAS's value proposition. SB developed an exhibitor and sponsor prospectus anchored in the specific value SLAS delivers. The prospectus introduced several high-impact new sponsorship opportunities and made a clear ROI case for every category.

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Retention first, growth second.

SB launched the “sponsorship first right of refusal” outreach in July 2025, giving returning sponsors the first opportunity to renew before the prospectus opened to the broader market. This protected relationships with long-term partners and generated strong early revenue.

Competitive intelligence to find new exhibitors. SB conducted market and competitive analysis to identify companies active at competing events and startups entering the laboratory science space. This research-driven prospecting helped produce new company numbers that distinguished SLAS2026 from prior years.

Persistent, high-volume outreach.

SB maintained a consistent, high-volume outreach cadence by phone and email across the sales cycle. Contacts included past exhibitors, new companies identified through research, companies in SB’s database, and leads provided by SLAS. Each contact category received outreach calibrated to their relationship stage and their fit with the SLAS audience.

Onsite sales to build SLAS2027 momentum.

Before SLAS2026 ended, SB was already selling SLAS2027. Appointment times were offered to all exhibiting companies, with proxy forms available for those who couldn’t make their appointments. By the time the Boston conference closed, a significant majority of companies had committed to SLAS2027, representing a meaningful increase over the prior year’s onsite performance, with a substantial portion of the exhibition hall already sold.

“Watching 240 companies commit to SLAS2027 before we’d even closed SLAS2026 tells a great story. SB teamed with us to create an experience that made exhibitors want to invest more. That’s not just good sales, that’s a partnership that fully understands what we’re building.”

– **Amy Wilkinson, CMP, CEM, DES**
Director, Global Events & Corporate Partnership, SLAS

Real-time Insights for SLAS.

SB provided SLAS with a daily snapshot of exhibitor behavior, showing exactly who was upsizing, downsizing, or holding steady for the next year. This gave SLAS an immediate read on exhibitor confidence and perceived value, serving as an early indicator of overall show performance. This reporting equips associations with actionable data to fine-tune pricing, adjust sales strategy, and proactively strengthen the expo for the year ahead.

THE RESULTS

SLAS2026 produced the largest exhibition floor in the organization’s history.

Total expo revenue exceeded budget and grew meaningfully over SLAS2025. Exhibits alone surpassed their budget target. The exhibition floor expanded in square footage, and the total number of exhibiting companies increased over the prior year.

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New exhibitors represented nearly 30% of the floor. More than one in four companies at SLAS2026 exhibited for the first time—a proportion that falls at the high end of what the industry considers a strong indicator of meaningful growth. These companies went on to invest further. One startup exhibiting for the first time was so satisfied with their traffic and lead quality that they doubled their footprint for SLAS2027. Another first-time exhibitor made a similar move, expanding their space and exploring a corporate partnership.

NexusXp: The Connected Lab delivered at or near budget. The NexusXp Pavilion, a curated innovation space within the exhibition, included more Flash Talks than originally planned, demonstrating demand for the thought leadership format that SB introduced and sold.

Forward momentum set a new standard. The SLAS2027 advance and onsite sales results were the clearest signal of exhibition health: a record number of companies committed before the current conference ended, with a significantly larger portion of the exhibition hall sold than at the comparable point for SLAS2026. Companies that exhibited in Boston weren't just satisfied. They were ready to invest more.

The feedback from the show floor confirmed it. Companies upsizing for 2027 cited consistent themes: strong audience quality, genuine lead volume, and a conference

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experience that delivered on what was promised during the sales process.

CONCLUSION

SB's sales approach for SLAS isn't conducted in isolation. It's built on a close working relationship with the SLAS team, shared intelligence about which companies are the right fit, and a sales conversation that reflects a genuine understanding of what SLAS's audience offers to exhibitors.

That partnership also shows up in what SB does between the calls. The exhibitor communications program maintained a strong average open rate among booth administrators throughout the planning cycle—a figure that reflects the consistency and relevance of every touchpoint from contract to show floor.

All exhibitor and sponsor payments were collected prior to onsite. The vast majority of exhibitors completed required tasks before published deadlines. The operational discipline that underpins the sales effort means that when companies arrived at SLAS2026, they were ready — and the experience they had reinforced their decision to come back.

SB delivers events that create non-dues revenue for our clients. You stay focused on your mission. We'll handle the rest.

We  Associations.