



THE BLACK UNICORN

CONTENT CREATION CASE STUDY DOCUMENT

Client: RollOut IT

Industry: IT (Staffing, Product Design)

Title: Guacamole at sunrise and new leads by sunset — how to get the most out of business events

Published: July 2022

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Guacamole at sunrise and new leads by sunset — how to get the most out of business events

Published:

July 4, 2022

So it all started with [Balint](#), our Sales Manager and Biz Dev, longing for some company.

With Covid restrictions being lifted all over the world, and cities opening up, he had one wish for 2022: getting to 100% real, in-person events.

You know, the ones when you walk into brick-and-mortar buildings. Meeting real people. Eating in the food court. Having random chats with people he meets for the first time. Doing sales the traditional way.

Hitting the road

He jumped into a long trip in Mexico first, to air out his head, to [embrace digital nomadism again](#), and to move forward with his life, personally and professionally, but that's a story for another time. ([Here is 85 seconds of pure Mexico](#), if you want to set yourself up mentally for the rest of this article quickly. And here is Balint, the [gastronomy enthusiast](#), [making guacamole at sunrise](#), on the beach, if you are open to a more meditative kind of content. Salud!)



But since he's been enjoying the hospitality of the Southern neighbour to the US, it made perfect sense for him to end his trip in San Francisco, combining his powers with Tamas, a new addition to the Rollout team.

[Tamas](#) is an HR Business Partner, who learned the ropes at Grafton, one of the earliest and best known IT recruitment companies in Hungary. He's been hiring people to remote projects globally in the last 10 years or so, living in San Francisco for more than 20 years now. He is an old coworker and buddy of [Balázs](#), our founder and CEO.

Recruiting for Team Spirit

Tamas's forte is **assembling perfect project teams**, based on the behavioural characteristics of the people. This is called the Predictive Index Method, and one reason for its greatness is that the questionnaire you need to ask people to fill can be done in like 3 minutes. Developers are not known for loving to fill out forms about their habits and psychological profiles for hours on end, so this tool is really useful.

Your natural personality is something you want to work *with*, not *against*.

Especially in remote work. In this way of life, voluntary physical (but not digital) isolation makes you even more *You*. While it's important to keep yourself sane and work on your people skills, it's also important to go with the flow whenever possible.

And making people work together can be hard.

‘Sure, you *could* force it..’ — says Tamas. You can always find workarounds, get through the debates, making sure everyone is on the same page with painstaking precision and effort — but this will take a lot of project management time. Like a boat with a hole, where you spend most of your energy drawing water instead of paddling ahead.

However, and you yourself know this and have felt this before too, there are some people who you can work with seemingly effortlessly. What’s the secret? It’s pure, psychological, behavioural pattern matching. Tamas has 10+ years of experience in mixing and matching talent for the San Francisco startup scene.

After finally meeting in real life for the first time, and having climbed some boulders, rode and hiked some trails together, Bálint and Tamas set their sights on [Techcrunch Mobility](#).

Trips, tips, and tricks

It’s been an exciting possibility for a number of reasons. Unlike Hungary, where restrictions have been lifted for a while now, bigger events in San Francisco are just opening up after the lockdowns, so it was going to be a kind of a new first for the whole scene, even though usually there are 5–10 high profile business events like this in town, every year. International interest has been higher than usual as well.

When you are a businessman on a trip, it's probably hard not to focus too heavily on direct sales. **The first rule of Tamas about going to conferences:** aim for maximum openness and leave your expectations out the door, because they tie you up and you will almost certainly fail to get the most you can out of the event.

Sure, finding new clients would be nice, but there are many other positives from a conference: you get new ideas, you get to know the current trends, and meet new people. Leave room for randomness, use it to your advantage!

One example would be **Balint, and his French fries.**

On Day 2, he headed straight to the food tables with a plate of french fries serving as bait, or rather, camouflage. He just did this because on the day before, he enjoyed the random conversations that occur when people sit at his table to eat.

The mindset is key: try to focus on **how you can help** the one you are networking with because that way you can make a lasting impression. A nice trick is to ask the other one: what kind of introductions are you looking for? Because that way, if you meet someone who would be a good match for them, you can connect them to one another, and they both will be grateful to you. You generated value for both of them!

This is another reason why you should leave some 'mental space' for the conference. If you arrive there overworked and exhausted, you will not be sharp enough to get the value you are going for. It's really worth it if you combine the event with some casual activities and arrive with a refreshed, open mind.

You can literally never know who you bounced into. Tamas has been an accomplished MTB athlete and Balint is no slouch when it comes to biking either, so the conversation suddenly shifted when the two young startup owners they have been talking with mentioned that one of them literally biked across the United States. These kinds of things create **new perspectives** — these guys will certainly remember Tamas and Balint, with their enthusiasm, and sharing their own biking anecdotes. So, while you are staying in the flow zone and keeping it natural, you might be able to grab some valuable business opportunities. Without desperately trying to look professional and push whatever you are there to sell.

Techcrunch Mobility is about self-driving taxis and whatnot. We are coders, not here to report about the future of automated commutes. So without going into details, it seems that the industry is in a more settled state, the companies are focusing on taking you from A to B, without gimmicks.

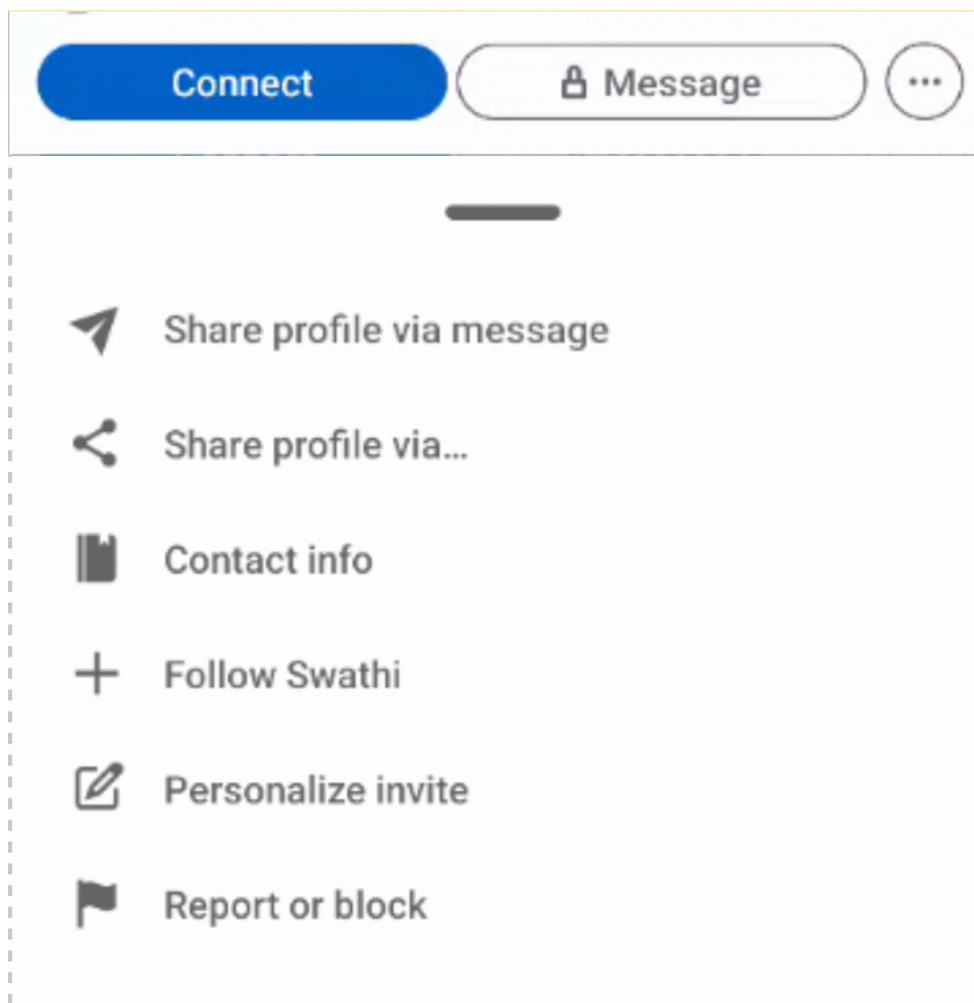
All we can say is that we've been able to enjoy the event greatly, although it really feels that putting the pandemic behind us will take some time, if and ever it truly happens. Social euphoria and distancing awkwardness was still equally lingering in the air.

Balint is back in Budapest now (refreshed and recharged), and by the time you read this, he visited a [major local event](#) as well. Tamas will come over to Europe to the famous [Bits & Pretzels](#) in München, which is conveniently held during Oktoberfest. He can practice these tips above, and find out about new ones.

The final trick we share is this: **look up the people who visit the event you are planning to go to, and use this synergy to add them on LinkedIn!**

When you mention in the connection request message that you will go to the same event, and ask for a few minutes of their time there, the positive response rate is over 90%, in our experience!

To do that, don't forget to use the 'Personalize Invite' option. On mobile, you can find it hidden under the 3 dots. That will open this menu for you:



Tapping 'Personalize Invite' will give you the option to explain why you are adding the contact, which you should do every time you connect with someone you don't personally know.

So this is Balint's story about embracing the real world again.

Here's a quick recap about the main things we learned:

- 1. Have an open mind and no expectations when you go to a business event!*
- 2. Try to help the people you meet there first, instead of trying to get something — it will be worth it later*
- 3. When you travel to the event, make sure you combine it with some fun activity and try to arrive refreshed and in a chill mood — so your focus will be laser sharp*
- 4. Enjoy the randomness of who you meet there, feel free to talk about not strictly business stuff*
- 5. You can look up people who go even before the event and ask for a chat! Great way to add people on LinkedIn*

Make sure you stay subbed to our Medium for more Rollout adventures, business tips (and business trips) and interesting IT case studies!



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