

To: ClexaCon Showrunners
From: ClexaCon Vendors

We are writing to express our sincerest disappointment with your mismanagement of ClexaCon 2019. The majority of vendors here are seasoned exhibitors who know the risks of conventions, but we also know that our success is largely dependent upon convention leadership.

Below, we've identified key failings, in terms of vendors and vendor support, and a list of changes we encourage you to consider and take action on.

First, we would like to address your communication - its inconsistency and, sometimes, complete lack thereof.

Throughout the application and acceptance process, different vendors were given different table sizes. However, all vendors (vendor meaning an in-line vendor, not a wall-based exhibitor) had uniform tables: 6' x 2' as opposed to a sometimes-offered 8' x 3'.

From: ClexaCon Vendors <vendors@clexacon.com>
Date: February 13, 2019 at 7:36:39 AM PST
To: undisclosed-recipients;

Hey there!

After reviewing your application, I am happy to approve your request to be a Vendor at ClexaCon 2019!!!

Please read this email in it's entirety!

This will be our third year and we are expecting an even larger turnout than we have had in the previous two years. In 2018 our vendor's gave us great feedback and we hope that in 2019 we can meet all of those needs and maybe improve on some of the things that worked well.

This is the link you will need to purchase your space:

[VENDOR SPACE PURCHASE HERE](#)

For clarity - Artist = Hand Made - 3x8 table
- Exhibitor = Mass produced 3x8 table
- Artist/Exhibitor Booth = Same price for both - 10x10 booth
- Vendor = Encompassing term for all artists and exhibitors.
- Non Profit = Charity and Non profit organizations

Simply click on the table/booth type you need and how many of that type and once you pay, you are registered for ClexaCon 2019.

Each table comes with 2 passes for general entry to ClexaCon 2019.
Each Booth has 3 passes.

Communication problems didn't stop here. On more than one occasion, volunteers attempted to clear vendors from the vendor hall before our allotted time. At approximately 7:06pm Friday

evening, a group of vendors was told by not one but three volunteers to leave the vendor hall because it was closed. According to ClexaCon emails, vendors have until 7:30pm to close up shop for the day.

VENDOR HOURS:

Thursday:

11am - 6pm Early Setup

Friday:

6am Early set up if needed

9am Doors open

7pm Convention doors close

7:30pm Vendor hall locked and sealed. All vendors must exit by this time.

Saturday:

8:30am Early entry for Vendors only

9am Doors open

7pm Convention doors close

7:30pm Vendor hall locked and sealed. All vendors must exit by this time.

Sunday:

8:30am Early entry for Vendors only

9am Doors open

5pm Convention doors closed

8pm Vendor break down to be completed. All vendors must exit by this time.

It should also be noted that for a queer event, there was *a lot* of gendered language being thrown around. One volunteer referred to this group of vendors as “ladies,” though it included two transmasculine afab creators - one wearing a prominent pronoun pin.



This photo was taken from the upstairs lobby. We wish to point out the complete lack of mention of the vendor hall. In fact, there were zero signs pointing to, directing toward, or even indicating the existence of a vendor hall.



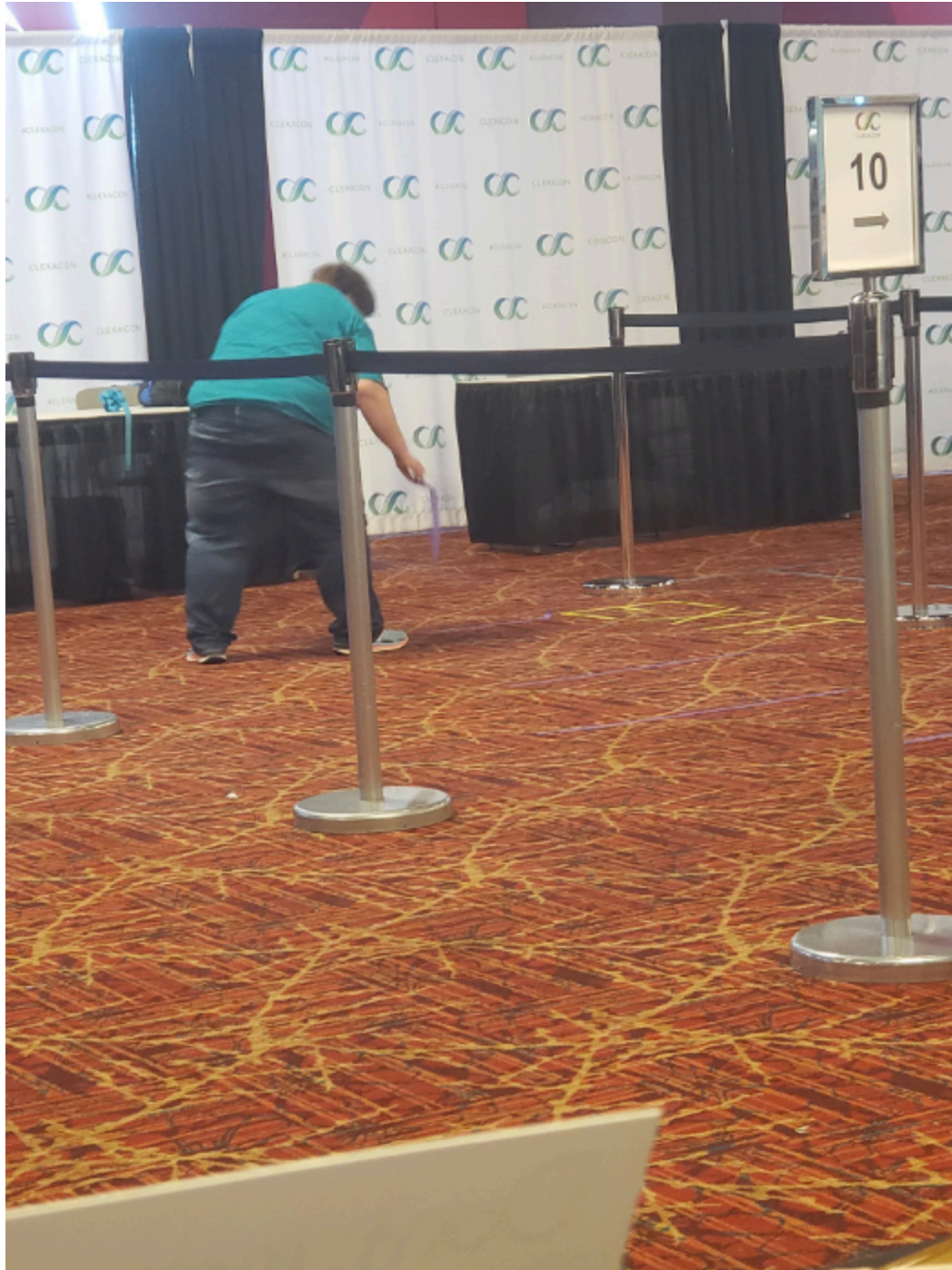
This photo looks into the vendor hall from the cafe and official merchandise table. There is, again, a complete lack of signage indicating that this is a vendor hall.



These are the doors to the vendor area from the main hall. These doors are a prominent feature, easily seen while walking to and from the restrooms. They remained closed the entire weekend. On Sunday, a video circulated showing that these doors were actually locked from the outside. So potential customers couldn't use these doors even if they wanted to. In fact, staff actively directed attendees away from these doors, although they were the most direct way to access the vendor hall.

Second, we would like to address organization and general management of the convention.

It was revealed near 5pm Sunday evening that the hotel had placed restrictions on hall times. It wasn't until Sunday - after two days of being harassed by ClexaCon volunteers - that vendors learned the hotel wanted everyone out of the rented spaces by 7:15pm (as opposed to the promised 7:30pm). No emails were sent out. No announcements were made. No attempt to communicate this information was had at all.



This picture was taken at 4pm Sunday afternoon. This is a ClexaCon volunteer removing tape from the floor which had been used to create autograph lines. This is within the vendor hall, which was supposed to be open until 5pm. This early breakdown and clean up of the convention sent the clear message that the hall was closing - while an hour of business and potential sales were yet to be had. There's no question in our minds that this hurt our business and took sales from us, as the convention then appeared to be over.



This photograph was captured at 4:04pm. According to our contracts, vendors were to begin breaking down at 5:01pm - after the close of the vendor hall. Yet, nearly an hour prior to this time, vendors were allowed to move out large boxes via trolley. This, again, sends the message that the hall is closed and business has come to a close - further hurting potential sales.

In addition to this obvious mismanagement, cleanliness and safety of vendors was hardly taken into consideration during the convention. Behind one table, a glass had shattered - falling into the space of the vendor behind them. This event was relayed to volunteers. The glass was never cleaned up. Vendors in the area did the best they could with the limited resources we had, but this area remained a danger for more than half the weekend.



Third, we need to comment on the complete lack of promotion for the vendor hall.

@jjidraws on Twitter covered this more than adequately, so I will defer here with her permission.

The AA has ZERO website visibility.
Events (where more money is required to participate) take the spotlight. There is no vendor's list. There is no map as to how to get to the vendors.

ClexaCon2019 is coming 11-15 April, 2019

clexa-con.com/

Media & Entertainment Convention for LGBTQ Women and Allies. At
page 2 times. Last visit: 4/7/19

Guests

seen circumstances,
will no longer be ...

Workshops

nd workshops scheduled
2019 ...

its

ission to ClexaCon for
lay & Sunday ...

from clexa-con.com »

Schedule

Convention floor doors
at 9am for VIP/Heda/Le

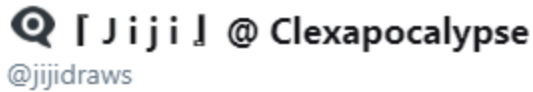
Ships & Giggles C

All Ascension and Ships
tickets purchased online

Our Vision

As the first and largest
event for LGBTQ ...





This was all information that could have very easily been added to the website. For both awareness and visibility.

9:00 am - VIP entry
9:30 am - General entry
7:00 pm - Vendor Hall closes

Thursday:
11am - 6pm Early Setup

Saturday:

8:30am	Early entry for Vendors only
9am	Doors open
7pm	Convention doors close
7:30pm	Vendor hall locked and sealed. All vendors must exit by this time.

Sunday:
8:30am Early entry for Vendors only
9am Doors open
5pm Convention doors closed

[illegible]

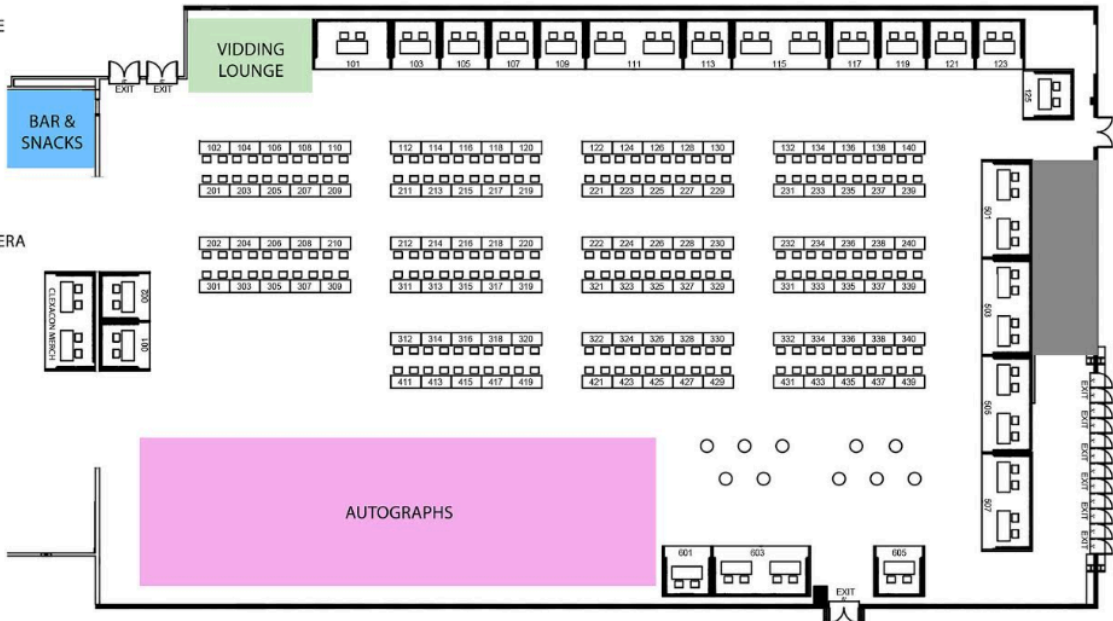
10:11 AM - 15 Apr 2019



VENDOR & AUTOGRAPH HALL

ESCALATOR TO
SECOND FLOOR

ENTRANCE



TABLES and SPACE:

When we all talked to one another we found out some people were promised an 8' x 3' table. They got here and were shocked to find a 6' x 2' - understandably. Here are screenshots from two different emails. The email also boasted 3 ft of space behind tables.

Hey there!

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This will be our third year and we are expecting an even larger turnout than we have had in the previous two years. In 2018 our vendor's gave us great feedback on things they loved and things they wanted improving and we hope that in 2019 we can meet all of those needs and maybe improve on some of the things that worked well.

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10x10 booth

provided with a table, two c
isplayed on the table. You a
e be aware that there will b
e and the back of the table l
er behind your table.

is is permitted, however, ple

10:15 AM - 15 Apr 2019

34 Likes



2



34



Tweet your reply



🔍 Jiji @Clexapocalypse @jijidraws · 22h



Spoiler alert: Some tables were lucky if they had ONE foot of space behind them. Vendors who could not obtain a wall space 10 x 10 had to set up their grid walls and other intense displays behind a standard table.

That also diminished visibility for a lot of artists.

Given the lack of promotional activities, and that this is a travel show for many attendees, the show hours were extremely long for people staffing their tables alone. The long hours also have

the effect of reducing any sense of urgency or excitement to go into the vendor creator hall, since there were close to 30 hours of access over the weekend. Finally, the long hours and constant programming created erratic periods of low foot traffic in the hall when attendees are in panels, and also preclude us from being able to fully participate in or even get a good taste of the con we thought we were meant to be part of.

Beyond the lack of baseline promotion, there was no attempt to drive activity to the hall. On Sunday we saw attendees who had not previously made their way down into the basement and into the hall, which seems to have been prompted by posts on Twitter made by the vendor coordinator on her personal account. I don't know what transpired behind the scenes, but that does suggest that the con was still choosing not to be supportive of its vendor creators, and that the frontline staff member felt that using her personal account was her only option for doing so.



Jodie 🏳️‍🌈 @Metriosity · Apr 14

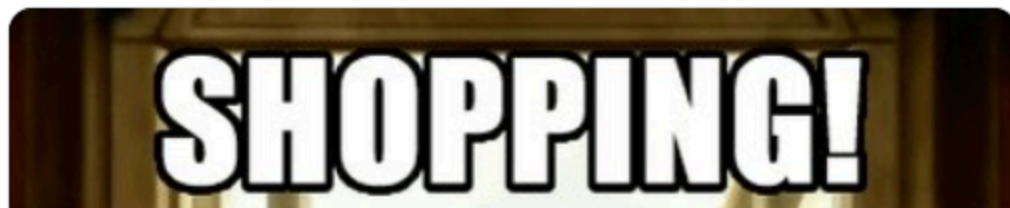
Vendor hall at #ClexaCon2019 closes at 5pm today!!! Don't sleep on grabbing your merch! Grab those shirts, prints, pins and crafts while you can!



Jodie 🏳️‍🌈 @Metriosity · Apr 14

Everyone survive last night?

Head down to the vendor hall for the last day of #ClexaCon2019 so you don't miss out on snagging more Queer merch!!



Advertising for the vendor hall was so nonexistent that it's worth noting that the atmosphere, and perception of the vendor hall being a disaster was tangible enough that both attendees and sponsors made comments to vendors.



Kristin ❤️🌈 **survived clex@con**
@foxflightstudio

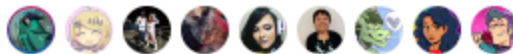
Following



The real hero of the clexapocalypse was the beautiful angel handing out the free vodka and we all know it

10:13 PM - 14 Apr 2019

32 Likes



3



32



Tweet your reply



Kristin ❤️🌈 **survived clex@con** @foxflightstudio · Apr 14



At one point she said 'I know I'm here for the vendors at this point'



1



20





cs smith @ Castle Point 48

@stupidlullabies

Following



I was at the airport waiting to check-in for my flight home, and an attendee was there also, and even they commented on the lack of support for vendors. They said last year there were signs everywhere and a map in the hall of where each vendor was located.

11:49 AM - 16 Apr 2019

Lastly, we'll be wrapping this up with some legitimate financial concerns.

As previously pointed out, the hall was breaking down early, and tables were becoming vacant. Some vendors asked to spread out to a second table, or take on a solo table if they were sharing, in order to make the hall appear less vacant. We were told we could. For a fee. Meanwhile, no one noticed those artists who didn't ask and instead simply sprawled to take over the additional neighboring spaces.



AshleighAlyn drank through Clexapocalypse @AshleighAlyn · 11h



We were all charged different prices for tables, some exceeding \$400 for a normal artist table, and when we tried to find fixes, such as spreading to empty tables to appear less vacant, the con tried to get vendors to pay an additional \$80.



1



6



The tables were already sold. ClexaCon had already made their money off the table. But in order for artists to try to make the best of a bad situation, you demanded even more money from us. Not to mention evidence of inconsistent table pricing with no discernable reason as to why.

Order Summary

July 10, 2018

Order #: 794937045

Name	Type	Quantity	Price
[REDACTED]	Exhibitor Table	1	\$342.24
TOTAL			\$342.24

Charged to: Visa - XXXX-XXXXXX [REDACTED]

This charge will appear on your card statement as EB
*ClexaCon Vendors 2

Refund Policy: No Refunds

This order is subject to Eventbrite [Terms of Service](#), [Privacy Policy](#), and [Cookie Policy](#)



Transaction Details



EB CLEXACON VENDORS 2 0014107300
US

Type Withdrawal

Amount **-\$342.24**

Posted Jan 28, 2019

Order Summary

August 9, 2018

Order #: 806711431

Name	Type	Quantity	Price
Leanna Cruz	Artist Alley Table	1	\$237.24
TOTAL			\$237.24

Charged to: Visa - XXXX-XXXXXX-3832

This charge will appear on your card statement as EB *ClexaCon Vendors 2

Artist Alley Table

SALES ENDED

\$225.00 + \$12.24 FEE

Artist Alley Package consists of one 6' draped table, two side chairs, one wastebasket. Artists will also receive: Two (2) exclusive Vendor Badges, which will also give access to the convention for the main three days of the convention. Entrance to extra events held at the convention will need to be purchased separately.

[Hide Info](#)

Exhibitor Table

SALES ENDED

\$325.00 + \$17.24 FEE

Exhibitor tables consist of one 6' draped table, two side chairs, one wastebasket. Vendors will also receive: Two (2) exclusive Vendor Badges, which will also give access to the convention for the main three days of the convention. Entrance to extra events held at the convention will need to be purchased separately.

[Hide Info](#)

You required vendors to report sales to you and pay sales tax before leaving the con. However, we were never informed to whom the money should go. We were told that we could only pay in cash or money order (as opposed to writing a check to the state of Nevada), and no receipt was offered or given when cash was turned in. Although there was a spot on the form where vendors could write down their Social Security Number and other personal information, some vendors did not fill out that information. When they brought it up to the staff/volunteer members who were accepting the money, the vendors were told that the information was not necessary, despite being asked for that information on the official tax form. When a vendor refused to pay without some form of receipt for their taxes, they were told the form serves as a receipt (it doesn't, it serves as a notice of what the taxes are) and were offered a handwritten receipt which didn't even include the date.

I am writing this as a vendor who exhibited with ClexaCon in 2018. I saw what this convention once was. It was well attended, well maintained, well organized, and profitable. It's become public knowledge that an original founder of the convention was removed from management, and remaining staff members were stripped of any power they might have had to right the situation. This is evidenced through to the layout, which seems random rather than planned to either disperse or collect similar creators in areas on the floor.

The impression I am left with is that it seems to have been something of an afterthought and additional revenue generator for the main convention, rather than an integral and integrated part of the programming. This sentiment can be seen in the complete absence of vendor badges.

VIP attendees, staff, and high paying attendees, all possessed badges labeling themselves as such. Vendors were given a 3-Day ClexaCon pass and a vendor ribbon which looks very similar to ribbons attendees collected throughout the convention - which voids any actual vendor visibility. Even the security and some staff had to look twice to determine if a vendor was actually labeled as such.

This letter was written and publicly shared as a good faith attempt to point out your missteps and provide feedback as to how the convention can be improved. Queer spaces, especially those for creators, are so, so, essential. Our community is starved and desperate for these spaces. Because of this desperation, it's very easy to appear hyper critical of under performing shows. This is why we've provided concrete examples of easily avoidable mistakes.

Here are some steps we hope you'll take to better the current situation and improve future ClexaCon events.

- Refund any and all vendors/creators/artists who paid more than others for their standard tables (a 6' x 2' table, two chairs, two badges, and nothing extra)
- Provide transparency in pricing and reasons behind pricing discrepancies.
- Discounted table prices for ClexaCon 2020 and for any 2019 vendors that might consider returning
- Advertisement for vendors. More promotion for your vendors. Retweets/Regrams from the main ClexaCon accounts and posts made regularly by the main ClexaCon accounts.
- Consider an artist alley consultant to aid in vendor hall layout.
- Volunteers who are informed to schedule changes and are trained to relay that information
- Volunteers dedicated to checking in on vendors and table sitting for vendor breaks
- Train your volunteers to be more inclusive and respect pronouns. Volunteers should not assume anyone's identity and should use gender neutral language.
- Shorter vendor hall hours
- Actual vendor badges
- Signage around the convention for the vendor hall
- Have prominent signage for elevators, escalators, stairs, etc.
- Pronoun buttons/stickers provided by the convention
- Free water for vendors or clearly marked water stations

We hope you take these notes into consideration.

Written by Jenn Arledge of Arledge Comics on behalf of, and cosigned by, the undersigned.

Leanna C.
Jiji K.
CS Smith
CometSams

Black-Haired Demon
Joni Miller
Jax Nguyen
Kelsi Jo Silva
Ashleigh Alyn
Reilly Leeds
Caitlynn Fairbarns (Fake Geek Girls Like Us)
Kristin Noell
Shelby Wolf
Jacqueline Yanez
Angelli Barrientos
Cleave
Cat Rhoads
Camila Abdanur (cahlac)
Sarah "What" Stovalosky
Diana Benitez
Theresa Nicole Tyree
Emmett Helen
Jordan Barber
Andrea Austin (Izzy & Marley)
Ely Ancheyta (SpycyShark)
@Vy_Ngu
James Lacroix
Matt Stevens
Alyssa Berkowitz
Paige Halsey Warren