

EVENT MARKETING – IDEAS AND STRATEGIES FOR CREATING A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

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Abstract: The article analyzes the marketing of the event, which kinds of events exist. Various ideas and strategies are proposed for a successful marketing event. Various promotional strategies used in the organization and marketing of an event are also considered.

Key words: event, marketing, strategy, event marketing, event types, email marketing, social networks, promotional strategies, etc.

What is event marketing?

Event marketing is all about letting people know that you are hosting an event and how much it would mean to you if they joined in.

Event marketing is the promotion of a product, brand, or service through people interactions. Companies can host their own event, building stronger relationships with their prospects and customers. Companies can attend an event as an exhibitor and introduce their product brand or services to potential clients. The event marketing is an effective strategy that builds long-term value upon relationships with clients and partners alike. Event marketing is a promotional strategy that involves face-to-face contact between companies and their customers at events. A successful event marketing campaign provides value to attendees beyond information about a product or service.

The key off effective event marketing is to identify the right types of event. Then to identify the target audience correctly and create an experience that remains in participants memories.

Event marketing is about making your event attractive to staff, volunteers, sponsors, participants, the media and attendees. It addresses all of the detail which makes up the event experience, both that which the attendee sees, and that which they are not necessarily aware of. It is therefore broad ranging. Events marketing is also a tool used by marketers for how they can reach audiences, promote products and enhance their brands.

Types of Events

The different types of events will help event marketers determine which ones align most closely their specific goals. Below is list of event types.

- Seminars – they usually last one day and often times only for a few hours.
- Conferences – they usually have a schedule filled with engaging speakers, educational workshops, and valuable networking sessions;
- Trade Shows – they usually held within a specific industry and give companies the opportunity to exhibit their products and services. By attending an

international or local trade show, companies can boost their revenues through the generation of promising business connections;

- Virtual Events – they are ideal for companies that may not have the resources to host a full-scale live event and for companies that cannot afford to travel to an international event. Virtual events allow people to participate from all over the world. This type is very applied in the marketing of events;

- Roundtables – they have a specific educational goal in mind. They are often times set in a more intimate setting, giving each attendee the opportunity to contribute to the conversation;

- Webinars, webcasts or web conferencing, these types of events revolve around presentations, discussions or workshops; can happen in real time. Real-time webinars can be interactive on many levels, and typically allow attendees to ask questions directly of to the presenters;

- Golf Events – the goal is to give people in the organization a venue where they will be able to build relationships in a relaxed environment. In corporate business this type of event call "deals are sealed on the green"

- Charity events – the goal is to collect donations in support of a cause;

- Appreciation events – depending on the target audience, appreciation events can aim to recognize employees' achievements or to build tight connections with loyal clients= The secret of success is to provide a relaxing atmosphere, friendly environment and capabilities for networking;

- Holiday parties events;

- Product launch event – are meant to generate media coverage and industry buzz prior to a product release. Product launch events are most common for business-to-consumer companies (B2C;

- Business dinners events;

➤ Team-building events – are meant to build upon the company’s strengths. These events also provide the unique opportunity for employees to spend time together in a nonwork environment;

➤ Board and Shareholder Meetings – there board members meet to review business performance and meet with company executives to make important decisions. Shareholder meetings provide companies the opportunity to share recent performance, targets, future goals, and business strategies with its shareholders.

➤ Hybrid events - they create a heightened experience for both in person and virtual attendees.

Marketing ideas and strategies to create a successful event

To create a successful event and to promote it the company may use the ideas listed below.

1. **Share with the media** – a press release is a great way to get the attention of the people who can help you further your event goals.

2. **Socialize** – with social media being one of the top places to connect with local influencers and people with a strong presence, this tactic can help you get the right attention.

3. **Go live with Facebook, Live Stream, Google + Facebook** and other social media is a huge space and a great platform to get the word out about your event. A Live Stream is a new trend in event marketing where you have a direct interaction with your target audience and invite them in.

4. **Create a pop-up** form on company website to direct potential event attendees to a dedicated event page.

5. **Using Email marketing** to reach out to your contacts and invite them to an event. Email marketing is the most popular event marketing strategy among people who regularly host events.

6. **Create the “Fear Of Missing Out”** among your audience. Use content like video or something else to show the audience how they will be at a loss if they don’t attend. People are more interested in an event when they feel they will lose out on something valuable if they don’t attend.

7. Show people with video, images, user-generated content, and other details what a **great time** they’ll have at your event.

In order to create a successful event, you must observe some important components of the event strategy. Here are some **practices for any event marketing campaign**:

1. **Determine the goals of the event** – The first step in an event marketing campaign is establishing your objectives and how you will measure success. Important objectives of the event are - presenting and advertising the company, products, services, activities, etc. looking for a link with sponsors, media, press invitees, and so on. Common goals for most large events are to increasing guest registrations of the event.

2. **Choose the right technology** – The second step in event marketing campaign is to choose and invest in marketing software, event management software, CRMs and other technology.

3. The next step is **to unify event branding** – This can be achieved by aligning the branding on the event web site, the emails and links to which the event is sent. Another important touch point to keep on brand is the URL. Having all event links reflect the brand provides a consistent and unified user experience.

4. **Event partnership** is the most important step in the event marketing campaign. These step include some benefits like – offsetting the cost of the event; bringing in additional event registrations; providing great speakers and other event content; educating the guests in how your organization of the event can work in conjunction with other organizations.

5. **Measure everything related to the event** – This step involves identifying methods for gathering information from the event and the possibilities for future analyzes. Some important indicators for analyzes can be:

- Registrations by ticket type;
- Event community engagement rate;
- Attendees in the event;
- Acquire customers from the event
- Clicks by different channel of the event.

6. **Follow-up after the event** – at the end of the day, the most successful marketing campaigns are those that are able to muster the resources and to focus on the participants' experiences and their emotions from the event. It is strategically important after the event to send an email to guests with short paragraph about company's products or services which will help your leads recall you.

Event promotion strategies

Successful event promotion will consist of a series of touches that may include emails, direct mail, press releases and call downs. It is important what sort of event you are hosting (online or offline event) when determining the promotional tactics that will draw in prospects or customers.

One of the important promotional strategies is the segmentation of the registered users of the event or potential users of the company. Segmentation can focus on industry, location, job title, company title etc to target top prospects. It is important to verify the correct indication of personal location, company location, IP address to make sure that you are sending your communications to the right person.

Direct mail is another promotional tactic which marketers use when planning an event. There are different ways to advertise an event via a direct email, for example:

- Unique Gifts – Sponsoring a show in Bulgaria you may send key prospects a gift unique to the area like an oil of Bulgarian rose;
- Reminder Postcards – Send a series of postcards, with fun and creative reasons why they should attend the event;
- Calendars – Send out a magnetic or sticker calendar that can be posted on a desk or cubicle;
- End other ideas.

Paid ads to promote the events are another method to promote the event. Here are some techniques of this method:

- Search engine marketing – you have to put ads in Google, Yahoo, Facebook etc.;
- TV & radio advertising;
- Sponsored newsletter and emails;
- Display and Banner – These types of ads appear on a website and can be effective at driving new names to register for and attend your event;
- Guerilla marketing – is an advertisement strategy to promote products or services on the streets or other public places (graffiti, flash mobs, and poster campaigning etc.).

Partner Promotions – No matter what event you organize a virtual event, webinar, or live event your partners can help you. They can send emails to their database and promote the event through their social media channels.

Visual Content to Promote Events – Infographics is a way to get someone excited about attending. Infographics, can help you increase engagement on social media, increase website traffic and increase the communication of data. Important places you can use infographics are:

- Website and blog;
- Social media – Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, LinkedIn, SlideShare;

- Press Release – infographic image to industry magazines and news organizations;
- Email marketing;
- White papers – a brochure or a case study.

Finally, it can be summed up that event marketing is important for the companies building brand affinity, sales, thought leadership and credibility; establishing and growing relationships; growing leads and your database and increasing brand awareness.

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