

EVENT MARKETING IDEAS FOR SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIES

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Abstract

Event marketing is a type of marketing that implies promoting a brand, product, or service by holding, participating in, or attending events. Event marketing helps build more profound relationships with customers and educate them about your product. Event marketing describes the process of developing a themed exhibit, display, or presentation to promote a product, service, cause, or organization leveraging in-person engagement. Events can occur online or offline, and can be participated in, hosted, or sponsored. Sport and sport events have considerable social impact. Key reasons for a business to participate in an event are: (1) Branding and Awareness, (2) Lead Generation, (3) Customer Engagement and Up sell and 4. Education. 52% of Business owners claim that event marketing as the marketing channel that drives the most ROI. 47% of marketers say that events are a highly efficient way to engage with customers and prospects. 41% of business representatives think event marketing is a more effective channel than content and email marketing combined. Companies that experience 30% over growth have been increasing their event activity the most. Social impacts are consequences to human populations of any public action that alters the ways in which people live, work, play, relate to one another, organize to meet their needs, and generally cope as members of society. Sport events play a significant role in a community's marketing and branding strategy as event organizers can attract spectators and participants through the staging of sport events.

Key words: event marketing, sport, advertising, promotion, branding awareness

Introduction

Event marketing is one of the fastest growing forms of marketing communication. During the last few years, the term event marketing has been used extensively to describe different phenomena, like events as products, sales promotions, or sponsorships (Wohlfeil and VVhelan, 2005). Event marketing is understood exclusively in the sense of a communication tool whose purpose is to disseminate a company's marketing messages by involving the target groups in experiential activities. Event marketing describes the process of developing a themed exhibit, display, or presentation to promote a product, service, cause, or organization leveraging in-person engagement. Events can occur online or offline, and can be participated in, hosted, or sponsored. Event marketing seems an alluring opportunity for your business, right? Just in case you are still on the fence, we've found some more reasons to take advantage of this marketing channel (Sendpulse.com, 2023):

- 52% of business owners claim that event marketing as the marketing channel that drives the most ROI.
- 47% of marketers say that events are a highly efficient way to engage with customers and prospects.
- 41% of business representatives think event marketing is a more effective channel than content and email marketing combined.
- Companies that experience over 30% growth have been increasing their event activity the most.

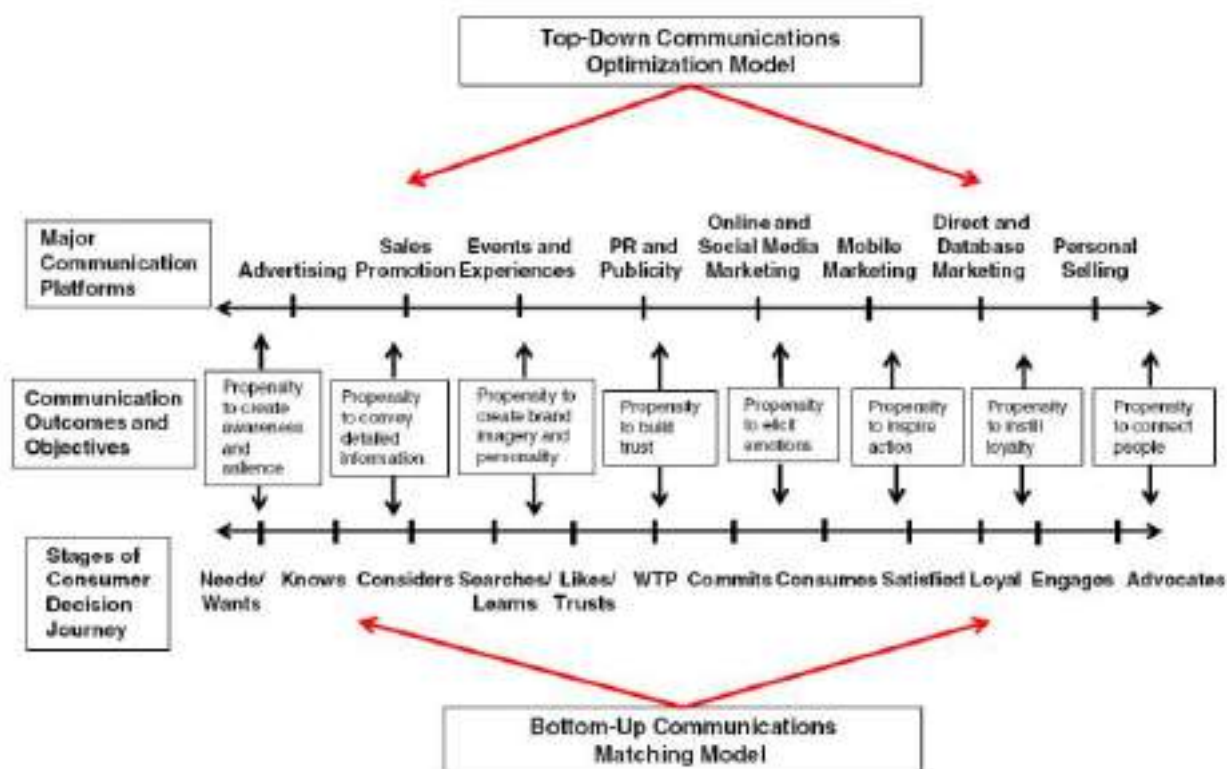
There are a ton of event formats that can be held both off and online. The most popular event types according to the Harvard Business Review (Sendpulse.com, 2023): (1) Conferences, (2) Seminars, (3) VIP events, (4) Thought-leadership events and (5) Product launches.

1. Conferences - Conferences are large-scale events, which focus on educational speeches from industry leaders and experts. They often include workshops and networking sessions to double the attendees' benefits. 40% of businesses believe conferences are the most impactful event type for their business objectives.

2. Seminars - The main goal of this type of event is to educate visitors. Hence seminars often take place in smaller venues and imply a limited number of participants. 8% of companies consider seminars crucial for achieving their business goals, but this format contributes the most to increasing attendees' expertise.

3. VIP events - These events aim at sales acceleration and key customer loyalty enlargement. VIP events can achieve these goals by gathering a room full of influential shareholders, key customers, and other honored guests. 7% of business representatives said VIP events have the highest impact on their company's KPIs.

Table No. 1 IMC Conceptual Framework



Source: Rajeev Batra and Kevin Lane Keller et al. "Integrating Marketing Communications: New Findings", *New Lessons, and New Ideas*, Volume 80, Issue 6

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4. Thought-leadership events - The supreme goal of these events is networking. A bunch of professionals with the same interests get together for in-person communication. Thought-leadership events allow organizers to boost their authority in a certain field and drive amazing business results – 14% of business leaders believe this type of event is the most beneficial for their companies' outcomes.

5. Product launches - Companies use this type of event to showcase their upcoming products to potential or existing customers. The goal is to make prospects and buyers excited about a new product's features and benefits.

The key to pulling off an effective event marketing campaign is to identify the target audience correctly and create an experience that remains in participants' memories. By finding an opportunity to interact with the right demographic of people - both current customers and prospective buyers - a brand can build favorable impressions and long-lasting relationships. The best, most creative events create interactions that not only reflect positively on the brand at the time but generate a buzz long after the event is over. (Marketing-schools.org, 2017) Events must be memorable to make an impact. Of course, the desired impact depends on your goals, but most companies want events to be more than just a staged advertisement for their brand. When done events have the power to create a lasting and powerful impression of all that your company can deliver. Participation in sport, whether this behavioral action is active, passive, indirect, individual, or event context related, has become an attractive strategy for local, regional, and national governments to provide social benefits for community residents (Johnson&Whitehead, 2000). Sport events play a significant role in a community's marketing and branding strategy as event organizers can attract

spectators and participants through the staging of sport events. The type of sport events can vary in terms of focus (e.g., participant or spectator, competitive, single purpose, multiple sport or festival, single day, weekly, monthly, or annual). (Higham&Hinch, 2003). Key reasons for a business to participate in an event are: (Marketo.com, 2017) (1) Branding and Awareness, (2) Lead Generation, (3) Customer Engagement and Upsell and (4) Education.

1. Branding and Awareness - A key reason for a business to participate in an event is to establish and build its brand. Event marketing allows your company to cultivate and express its identity firsthand. Through events, you gain the perfect venue to share your ideas, thoughts, and name in the exact manner you want to present them. “Don't forget that members of the media usually attend industry events. The event organizer can often give you a list of journalists and editors who will be at the event. Reach out to them in advance and schedule a meeting [...] which often can result in a feature article that highlights your company and gets the sales reps' phones ringing.” (WalkerSands, 2017)

2. Lead Generation - Another important reason businesses choose to participate in an event is to generate leads. And what better way to do so than to be part of an event where your target demographic is present? The right event allows your company to interact with a group of prospects that already have an interest in who you are and what you do. “In these days of social media, face-to-face content can really enhance your online connection with your potential customers. Make sure you are using the Twitter hashtags regularly and watch the social media marketing that happens for the event on Facebook so you can comment on the posts and gain visibility with other attendees before the event.” (Andreavahl.com, 2017)

3. Customer Engagement and Upsell - Events offer an unparalleled level of customer engagement, with an opportunity for positive personal interaction that builds loyalty. Plus, every marketer knows that companies can realize the biggest ROI on their marketing dollars by retaining and growing existing customers. The challenge is to gain the attention of your customers amid the distractions of daily work. At events, you enjoy the chance to upsell customers by introducing them to products and services that they may not know about - or may not realize could address their needs. “It's easy to fall back on the same type of event over and over again. Stepping out of your box will help you inspire and connect with your existing audience in a new and refreshing way. It will likely also increase the chance of attracting new attendees, participants and evangelists.”- (PamMktgNut, 2017)

4. Education - Most people attend events to network and be educated. Both are powerful draws in their own ways. No matter what type of event you are at, it is critical to impart knowledge that the audience will value - and that sets your company apart.

Now that you know who you want to reach, it's time to think of the best ways to promote your event to these people. So how do you make your event marketing persuasive and not pushy? Well, you can try some of these event marketing ideas and strategies to start with (Constantcontact.com, 2023): 1. Share your event with the media, 2. Socialize, 3. Go live to promote your event, 4. Dedicate pop-ups, 5. Market your event to your audience using email, 6. Spark FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) and 7. Promise a good time (and deliver!).

1. Share your event 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. With a formal press release, you invite local media to be a part of your event. You can also spark the attention of influencers, new supporters, and brand ambassadors. This is especially great when the goal of your event is to spread awareness and invite influential people.

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. Look for influencers who work within your industry and have a great following on various social networks. Never underestimate the power of word-of-mouth marketing! A survey conducted by Collective Bias shows that a whopping 70% of today's generation depends on influencer or peer recommendations to make buying decisions. For example, if you are hosting an event to recruit more volunteers, the influencers could talk about how this event is going to be amazing, why one should volunteer, or just why they would personally attend the event.

3. Go live to promote your event - Yes, it's going social again! Facebook 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 direct interaction with your target audience and invite them in. Use this opportunity to give your audience a peek into what lies ahead and make a compelling pitch about why attending the actual event is something they don't want to miss. Bizzabo studied that almost 30% of marketing professionals believe that broadcasting live events impact an event the most.

4. Dedicate pop-ups - Create a pop-up form on your event website or landing page for visitors to sign up to get more information. Pop-ups may be annoying, but one cannot overlook their effectiveness. And the content you use will be a key factor that will determine if people get pulled in.

5. Market your event to your audience using email - Email Marketing campaigns continue to be the most effective means to reach out to your consumers and invite them to an event. At 70%, event email marketing is known to be the most popular event marketing strategy among people who regularly host events.

6. Spark FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) - Create the “Fear Of Missing Out” among your audience. Use content like video or imagery to show them how they will be at a loss if they don’t attend. Contrary to popular belief, people are more interested in an event when they feel they will lose out on something valuable if they don’t attend. “You don’t want to miss this event” is a simple but effective email marketing subject line, social media campaign or blog post to generate curiosity about your event.

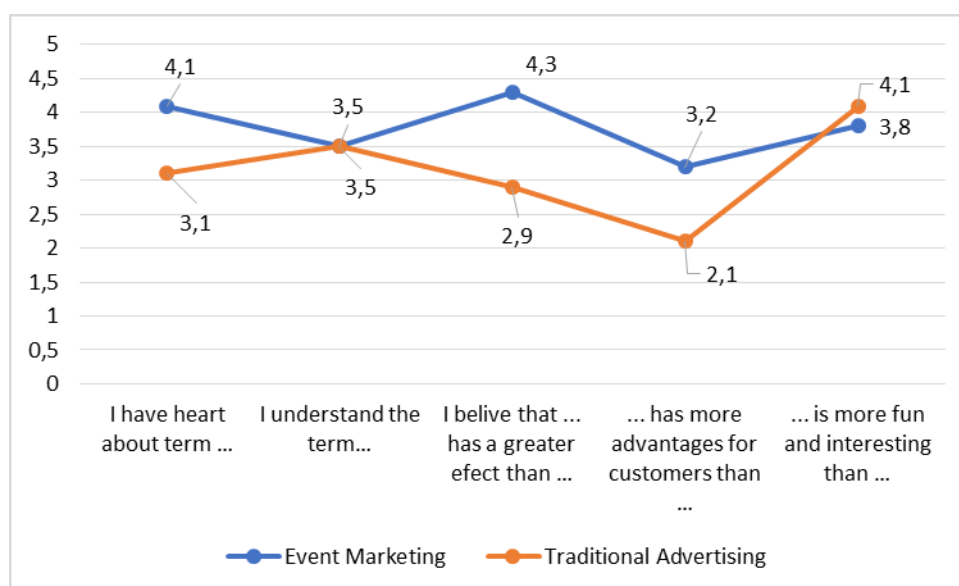
7. Promise a good time (and deliver!) - Use multiple mediums and channels to show people what a great time they’ll have at your event. A promotional video, images, user-generated content, and other details that will immediately spark interest are all great resources to excite your audience. It’s like any movie; when the trailer comes out, people start talking about it and can’t wait to go see the full movie. A sneak peek—visual or text—will show them that you have taken every effort to make this a memorable, fun and rewarding event for all your attendees- it’s an incentive you offer in exchange for their attendance.

The aim of the research in this paper is to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement with each of these statements about Event marketing (physical and online) - EM and traditional advertising (TA). The survey was conducted on a random sample of respondents. With a sample size of 180 respondents, 57% female and 43% male, the survey was conducted in the beginning of 2023. The respondents answered the asked questions with the following scale (5) Totally agree, (4) Agree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (2) Disagree, (1) Strongly disagree.

The results of both scales were summarized in a table to make a comparison between event marketing (physical and online) and traditional advertising. It is necessary to note that respondents who never heard of the terms and do not understand them, did not continue to respond to the questionnaire.

For the first statement that the respondents are familiar with the terms, the degree of consensus on the event marketing is 4.1, while the degree of agreement with this statement of traditional advertising is 3.1, which means that consumers are more familiar with the term event marketing than traditional advertising.

For the second statement that respondents understand these two terms, event marketing and traditional advertising has the same degree of agreement of 3.5.



In the third statement about which form has greater effects, the degree of agreement is 4.3 for event marketing, as opposed to 2.9 for traditional advertising, which means that the respondents think that event marketing is more effective than traditional advertising.

For the fourth statement that event marketing or traditional ad has more advantages for consumers, the level of agreement is 3.2 for event marketing and 2.1 for traditional advertising. The statement of event marketing shows that respondents believe that event marketing is a better communication activity than traditional advertising.

For the sixth statement that event marketing or traditional ads is fun and interesting, the degree of agreement is 3.8 for event and 4.1 for traditional advertising, which means that they think traditional advertising is really the more interesting way of promotion.

Event marketing is a promotional strategy that involves face-to-face contact between companies and their customers at special events like concerts, fairs, and sporting events. Brands use event marketing entertainment (like shows, contests, or parties) to reach consumers through direct hand-to-hand sampling or interactive displays. The practice works because it engages consumers while they're in a willing, participatory position.

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