

How to Market Your Brand Through Live Events



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Few marketing vehicles offer the advantages live events do. They provide unmatched opportunities for customers and prospects to touch, demo and otherwise interact with a product. Events facilitate relationship- and community-building with like-minded individuals, and enable brands to create a “brain-washing chamber” where they have complete control over the environment and messaging.

Related: [Online Marketing Gets All the Buzz But Check Out the ROI for Live Events](#)

Plus, live events are custom made for photo-sharing on social networks.

It is probably no coincidence, then, that event planning is one of the fastest growing career categories in the United States, projected to grow at three times the average job growth over the next ten years, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Here are some time-tested professional tips for successfully marketing your brand through live events.

1. Set clear, measurable goals.

It’s shocking how often this doesn’t happen, but without articulating event objectives, how will you know if your event was successful? If you’re having trouble with this, consider this perspective: What action(s) do you want people to take post-event? What circumstances or outcomes would lead you to absolutely not want to host the event again? What outcomes would prompt you to *guarantee* you’ll host it again? Or, what do you want attendees to think about your brand after this event, and how does that differ from their current perception, if at all?

2. Build an easy narrative for guests to share.

Think about what you want attendees to say about your brand when they leave your event. The text should be like an elevator speech: short, easy to understand and compelling. (There’s a reason why so many startups explain their companies with references like, “We’re like Uber -- but for baby sitters”: It’s easy for people to grasp.) Every element of the event should be designed to support this message. The goal is not just for on-site attendees to understand your story, but also to enable them to easily share that story with others. Likewise, avoid anything that might detract from it, or confuse people, such as a branded giveaway that doesn’t clearly reinforce your narrative.

Related: [10 Must-Have Tech Tools for Producing Better Live Events](#)

3. Design the event for on-site and secondary audiences.

If your product-launch event will have 500 people in the room, there could be another 50,000 people participating in some way through social sharing on Snapchat, Periscope, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, etc. While most event organizers focus their efforts on the 500 people on-site, smart planners spend just as much energy making the event share-friendly, and thinking about how that secondary audience will interact with the event.

4. Negotiate ancillary venue costs up-front.

The venue, which often includes in-house food and beverages, is usually the biggest expense for most events, so it’s important to choose and negotiate wisely. Many venues require you to use certain in-house vendors, like audio visual companies, which in turn pay commissions back to the venues, of 30 to 50 percent. That, combined with a lack of competitive bidding, can really jack up your budget unnecessarily. The solution is to look at the entire cost of having your event at venue A versus venue B; that should include all related support costs. Some venues, like nightclubs, have lighting, sound and projection equipment already built-in, which should be taken into consideration. And always ask up-front if there are any required in-house vendors. If so, negotiate those costs up-front before committing to the venue.

5. If your company is the host, you need to work the room.

The last thing you want at your event is your company’s staff all hanging out together. These are your brand ambassadors, and they should fan out and connect with attendees, facilitate introductions, solicit feedback and build relationships with event participants. This is your chance to take someone who’s merely interested in your company, and turn him or her into an evangelist.

6. Prepare for post-event communication.

Too often, organizers high-five when their event is over, thinking their work is done. What they should be doing is leveraging the connection guests have already built to the brand. If this is done right, it cultivates an emotional connection in attendees; and that relationship is ripe for nurturing. Use the post-event warm glow to start an ongoing dialogue with these people, and weave them into the fabric of your brand even further.

There’s a reason why the most-watched shows on television are usually live events (Think: Academy Awards and the Super Bowl.) Events have a FOMO effect, where people are drawn to participate while they are happening live. Smart marketers already know the the power of live events to grow their brands.

Related: [How to Leverage Live Marketing With Social Media Before, During and After Events](#)

They know that if they do this right, they will have an unparalleled opportunity to acquire new customers and solidify relationships with existing ones.



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