

THE EVENT ORGANISERS' TOOLKIT FOR PROMOTING EVENTS

THIS EVENT PROMOTION PACK IS IDEAL FOR ANYONE KEEN TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THEIR EVENT FAR AND WIDE.

Part 4 of 4

By Dan Rose



In Part 1 of this article, included in the July 2017 issue of “ie” magazine, we learned about Pre-Event Promotion, including Website Promotion, Social Media, Email, Traditional Marketing Techniques, Partnerships and Public Relations.

In Part 2 of this article, included in the October 2017 issue of “ie” magazine, we learned about promoting events during and after the event, in addition to reviewing the Event Promotion To-Do List.

In Part 3 of this article, included in the January 2018 issue of “ie” magazine, we reviewed the many event promotion resources including Event Press Release Templates, Event Invitation Templates, Event Email Templates and a Social Media Strategy.

In Part 4 of this article, we will share Advice from the Experts including: Which Marketing Channels to Use; Examples of Successful Promotion Tactics; in addition to sharing some helpful online tools.



ADVICE FROM THE EXPERTS

We spoke to several event industry experts to discover what they feel is needed for effective event promotion. Here are a few of their top tips and industry secrets revealed to help you with your own event promotion.

WHICH MARKETING CHANNELS DO YOU USE TO PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS AND WHY?

“It is valuable to work with the media and generate interest in the event. A personality or industry professional commenting or offering a testimonial about your event is of great value. If you can engage with bloggers who are relevant to the event, this will increase your outreach to potential attendees. It might be an idea to create a strap line or hashtag that people can use when talking about the event, this will generate traction and reach previously unknown prospects. The data you generate will be invaluable for future events.

There is also huge value in the more traditional form of marketing - that is picking up the phone and speaking to prospects. This really gives you an understanding of what your potential visitors are looking for and allows you to build strong relationships.”

Georgina Coleman - Managing Director - Established Events

“If you want to get the word out about your event, the most effective channel is often social media. If you get it right on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, you can get your event in front of thousands of potential attendees for a fraction of the cost of traditional advertising.

A simple way to get your event noticed by the right people is to make it easy for those that sign up to drum up interest among their own friends and followers. You can do this by including social buttons on the order confirmation page that allow them to spread the word with a single click. You can add fuel to the fire by entering everyone who shares your event on social media into a raffle – this simple promotion can give a huge return on investment.”

Victoria Brunton – Managing Director – EventStop

DO YOU HAVE ANY EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL PROMOTION TACTICS WITH EVIDENCE?

“Pre-booked sales/attendees are the key to making sure your event is a success. If you can confirm your attendees before the event takes place, rather than waiting for them to walk through the door, you are guaranteed better success. I would never advise promoting an event and just see who walks in. From my experience, if you are sending out a message or invitation to prospects, you are likely to get a pick-up rate of 20-30%. So, bear that in mind when looking at the capacity of your event. You need to communicate by offering benefits or incentives. This may be in the form of reduced rates for early booking, or it may be an incentive for attending the event.

You need to be creative when thinking about what this may be. An experience that “money can't buy” is always a winner. This may be in a prize draw format, that allows any of your attendees the opportunity to win.”

Georgina Coleman - Managing Director - Established Events

“It's also important you send the traffic you generate from your social media activity to the right place. Creating a specific page for your event [on your website] featuring your branding and all the relevant information will give off a professional impression and help convince people to put their money down to attend. Before you start promoting your event, it's important you get this page set up so your efforts are effective as possible”.

Victoria Brunton - Managing Director - EventStop

WHICH MARKETING CHANNELS DO YOU USE TO PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS AND WHY?

"This very much depends on the event and its size. Do you have your database ready and know who you are reaching out to? If not, I would suggest creating a following, again via social media. You need to create a genuine interest in your event and why it is taking place. Engage with the community you are targeting. This may be in the form of attending other similar events, joining forums and networking groups.

From an operational perspective, you need to find your venue first. This is the most important element of your event. Does the venue have the right capability to deliver a success? Location and accessibility are both very important. Also, make sure that you have insurance in place should anything unexpected happen.

The next step is to get the invitation out if you are confident that you are entrenched in the community you are targeting.

Don't think you should only contact someone once about your event. Of course, you don't want to annoy someone who is not interested, so give them the option to unsubscribe or leave your database. There is no point having them there if they are uninterested. You want to focus on those who have a genuine interest.

I would always suggest that you put together a social media strategy and plan before you start contacting people. Know what you want to say and when you want to send the message, rather than just engaging as and when.

Monitor the result you get and utilise your analytics. This information is invaluable for the event you are working on and for future events.

The most important advice I can ever give is believe in what you are doing, if something isn't working, change it. Your passion and energy are the keys to your success".

Georgina Coleman - Managing Director - Established Events

ONLINE TOOLS WHICH CAN HELP



When it comes to promoting your event, you want to ensure you have every angle possible covered. There are various tools online which can be used for research, promotion and increasing the visibility of your event. All of these tools are free so it's worth taking a look to see how they can help you.



YOUGOV PROFILES

YouGov Profiles is a great place to do a bit of swotting up on your audience.

This tool allows you to search for a brand, product or particular interest (which is related to your brand) and

will then show you audience information based on 250,000 YouGov panel members. For example, if your event is a car show, you might want to try searching the Top Gear audience and you will be given information on demographics, interests, media habits and much more! While this data might be quite generic, it can certainly be inspiring!



LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

Most local newspapers will have an events section where you can upload your own event to the public. Wikipedia has a full list of newspapers in the UK, so try to add your event to as many relevant ones as possible. Remember to really sell your event and give all the details such as time, date, location, dress codes, cost etc. as well as your own contact details.



EVENT WEBSITES

There are plenty of websites online which will list your event, such as Eventbrite, The List, Yelp, Evvnt and Timeout. The key here is to find event websites which are relevant

to the area you operate in. A simple Google search for 'what's on in (your area here)' will most likely come up with an events website for your local area. Add your event details and then move on to the next website.



GOOGLE ANALYTICS

If you have a website, then Google Analytics will be great for measuring how your event affects your onsite engagement. If you have set up a competition page, a game, an information page or have a particular product or service you are promoting at your event, Google Analytics can tell you exactly how engaged your audience are.

Google Analytics allows you to analyse specific pages on your website and can show you how long people spent on the page, how many pages they viewed on site, whether they converted or not etc. All of this data is highly valuable and can be used to measure the success of specific goals relating to your event.

Dan Rose is Managing Director of Hampshire based Event Insurance Services, one of the leading providers of all types of event insurance in the United Kingdom. The company prides itself on a reputation built on outstanding personal service and is celebrating its 20th Anniversary this year. Dan has been with the company for nine years and has long been a festival goer himself. <https://www.events-insurance.co.uk>