

Event



Event Marketing is Brand Presence

Event Marketing Sets You Apart, Engages Your Prospects and Creates Revenue.

Technology has made it easier for sales and marketing professionals to personalize their communication with customers and potential customers. Customers now have access to enormous amounts of information to help them make buying decisions.

Yet despite the immense amount of information now available – and the ability to interact with customers electronically – there is still no better approach to networking and brand-building than face-to-face interaction at industry events.

Event Marketing – such as trade shows, conferences, exhibitions, exclusive meetings, local seminars and virtual events – are an expanding component of the revenue growth effort. Trade shows and events command more budget than any other activity for B2B companies.¹Fifty-six percent of marketers planned to increase their event marketing and speaking engagements in 2012.²

In fact, event and experiential marketing spending by companies is growing much faster than the overall economy: Companies were expecting their budgets to grow by nearly 8% in 2012.³In our evolving digital marketing world, this may come as a surprise, but there are solid business reasons why event marketing continues to grow.

Getting the most out of your events requires goal setting and a truly integrated marketing approach – strong branding, personalization of the attendee experience through mobile, SocialPR and evidence-based content marketing.



Why Participate in Events?

You Need a Presence.If there were ever an effort that made your company conspicuous by its absence, it's event marketing. To have brand presence, you're going to have to be there. Prospective customers expect market leaders to participate in notable industry events.

Prospects Are Going.Decision-makers see it as a priority to attend regional or company-specific events.

When prospects come to an event, they are out of their office environments, open-minded and aware that their participation is an investment of time and money. They want to see the best the industry has to offer.

¹Forrester, Lisa Wizdo, Principal Analyst, Oct 4, 2012 ²Social Media Examiner 2012 ³The Event Marketing Institute 2012

You're Sending a Message. Event marketing indicates to audiences that you are reaching out to them, that you are investing in building relationships and are an active educator.

If you're not there – or if your effort doesn't match the quality of the venue – you become easy to forget.

You're Amplifying Your Brand. Event Marketing is a proven contributor to your brand presence and lead-generation efforts, and a key platform to amplify your brand. Events provide a focal point to leverage your Branding, Mobile Marketing, SocialPR and Content Marketing. This isn't Event Marketing from the 20th century: Presenting your message in multiple formats and mediums allows you to reach not only your customers, but industry influencers as well.



Events Are Improving in Quality. In 2012, the number of exhibitions and tradeshow that were consolidated rose by 56%⁴. This event consolidation allows vendors and attendees to emphasize quality rather than quantity of events. Hand in hand with event consolidation is the consolidation of event participation. With fewer large events in which to participate, it becomes imperative for exhibitors and attendees to make the best use of time and money at those events.

Face-to-Face is Better. Obviously you want to meet people who want your offering, are ready to make decisions, have the budget and are receptive to your brand. Having human contact delivers results difficult to replicate with other forms of business development. Even when it comes to marketing communications agencies, event marketing feeds the top four avenues to new business.⁵

Improve Effectiveness with Trust. Business is a contact sport and almost all companies sell a service offering, which means you are already in the relationship business. Trust is required for relationships to blossom. By meeting in person, your body language delivers messages of trust and sincerity that cannot be accomplished without in-person contact. In addition, you can be granted permission to engage within the attendee's personal space, which is usually reserved for trusted relationships.

⁴ Jordan Edmiston Group Inc. 2012 ⁵ RSW/US 2012

Why Event Marketing Can Underperform

Event marketing can underperform for a myriad of execution reasons such as:

- 1) Weak preparation and planning. This is far too common and highly preventable. Companies should not be surprised with poor event results if they failed to plan ahead and develop a complete pre-event, event and post-event strategy
- 2) Success is poorly defined. If you don't define your desired outcome, how do you know if the outcome was accomplished? There are several contributors to a successful event, and some of them are going to be out of your control. Executing an event without a clear understanding of what is to be accomplished is asking for a reduced budget and greater expectations next time – a double-edged sword.
- 3) You lack the ability to measure your success. Sometimes we know what success is, but we haven't deployed the resources to capture the metrics that would show and present the results.
- 4) Follow-up was never done, or if done, was done slowly. Let's say the number of qualified leads was one way to measure performance, but after the event, no one made an attempt to reach the leads or the response was slow. Either way, the moment is gone and probably so is the opportunity.
- 5) No multimodal inclusion. If all of your money is poured into a standalone event, you will find it difficult to deliver great results since it carries the entire marketing weight on its shoulders. Customers expect a multimodal marketing experience that includes touch points such as social media, mobile, PR, email and content before, during and after the event.



Perhaps the most troubling reason for underperformance is the inability to align to today's buyer. Ignoring the changing expectations of event attendees can make us look out of touch. Symptoms of a poor approach may include:

- 1) The effort you made was about the company, not the attendees. This was the common approach in the past and suffers the same lack of relevance that mass advertising does.
- 2) Mobile devices are not integrated in your effort. If the attendees are using these (and they are) and you haven't integrated the use of mobile devices into the event experience, the perception will be that you are not helping them make the most of their time and investment. This translates into the perception that you just don't get it.

3) You didn't make it easy to share. Attendees are using social media; if you don't, you're not allowing for the sophisticated integration of digital sharing. This puts limits on what could have been achieved. While the average person has influence with over 250 people in an analog world,⁶ he or she can instantly share an event experience with thousands in the digital world.

How to Ensure Event Marketing Success

Personalize the Event Experience with Mobile

Today's event attendees have higher expectations, are more informed than ever before, and interact with the world through their smart phones and tablets.

Event attendees expect exhibitors to use these new technologies to customize the experience, while at the same time giving the attendee control. Where it was once enough that the vendor was simply present, the value is now found in how the exhibitor facilitates a better, more personalized experience for the attendee.

Every interaction needs to live up to your brand. Your branding agency can help you build a well-coordinated plan that ties everything under a unified brand experience. For instance, the ability to update your content through the mobile device shows how responsive you are to the attendee's needs.

Compare event marketing to going to a shopping mall. An attendee's currency is his or her time and attention. Today, 70% of iPhone owners will use apps to help them shop in a store.⁷ Similarly, about 80% of tradeshow attendees use smartphones,⁸ and they want to use their devices to get the most out of their event participation.

Companies such as Crowdtorch help an exhibitor create apps just for an event, to help attendees navigate, and get the most out of, their experience. Companies that lag in the integration of the smart phone in their event execution will look lost to attendees.

Don't Just Do PR, do SocialPR

Everyone knows it's better to have a news announcement that coincides with your participation in a key event. What can you do, beyond issue a press release, to make sure you're leveraging all the best news and thought leadership your company has to offer?

The reality is, traditional public relations alone won't do the job. Today's industry news and brand messages have the potential to travel at lightning speed, through mainstream news organizations as well as through networks of influencers active on social media.

⁶ Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler, *Connected: The Surprising Power of our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives* (New York: Little, Brown, 2009) ⁷ Online Marketing Trends. "Retail Shopping via Mobile: Apps vs Mobile Platforms," 2011. ⁸ Professional Convention Management Association



We call the convergence of PR and social media - SocialPR. That means building powerful messaging, sharing compelling content, and engaging the influencers who will tell your story the way you want it to be told – across the spectrum of print, broadcast, digital and social media.

When you're participating at an event, you need to be just as active and engaged on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube and other appropriate social networking sites as you are with journalists to whom you issue your press release.

Share Evidence-Based Content

Every event attendee is motivated by goals. Those goals can be a balanced mix of company objectives and the event attendee's personal aspirations. It's a moving target to be sure, but one of the reasons you are at the event is to move closer to your customer's motivations. The personalized experience you deliver at the event creates differentiation against your competition. The strategies and tactics you will employ will change from event to event, but the requirement to deliver a tailored experience for the event attendee will not.



How to Measure Success

This is critical for any event marketing effort. Without a few KPIs (key performance indicators) defined, how can we manage and improve our efforts? It's marketing malpractice not to define what success is before the event, but yet, it happens. The world is changing into one that insists on being measured and analyzed as a path to improved insight.

The top ways marketers measure events, according to The Event Marketing Institute are:

How Will We Measure?

70 percent cited the amount of traffic

67 percent looked at qualified leads

59 percent tracked sales increases ⁹

⁹The Event Marketing Institute 2012

Fastlane Takes a Holistic Approach to Event Marketing to Ensure Success.

As outlined above, event marketing is a platform for integrating many of your marketing components from brand identity to mobile marketing, SocialPR and content marketing. Whether a component will play a direct role at the event or a supportive role, it deserves execution excellence. Fastlane's team creates integrated and engaging marketing communications that rely on detailed planning. It's an ideal combination that gives you confidence.



Fastlane is particularly sensitive about the process leading up to an event in regard to audiences, the number of touches, reminders, etc. We are particularly keen on contacting leads that come out of every event. Post-event follow-up is too often mishandled, putting you in the position of justifying your investment in the rearview mirror with softer metrics.

Nearly all of our clients involve us in their event marketing. We have executed with every level of budget, and have experience working a broad array of organizations, from start-ups to F100 companies. All marketing events begin with a clear definition of success, and we collaborate with you on an achievable plan to meet and exceed expectations.



Build a Well-Rounded Brand That Excites All the Senses

Smart brands deliver lasting impact and value. The right brand strategy provides endless energy to power your marketing, sales and communications efforts. We build “brands that move” – your customers, partners, prospects, media and other influencers.

- Map your brand story, core competencies and messaging to your brand identity
- Be unique and take a stand for something BIG
- Strike a chord that is relevant, stirs emotions and is timeless



Purposefire Lights a Path to Better Financial Results

Purposefire is a unique and transformational strategic program that combines internal communication, external marketing and a disciplined approach to social media.

Give your audiences the elements they need to share your purpose and all supporting messages with their trusted networks.

- Higher revenues – 4X revenue growth
- More jobs – 7X job creation
- A higher stock price – 12X stock price



Media & Beyond

At Fastlane, we define the convergence of Public Relations and Social Media as SocialPR. Today’s news and brand messages have the potential to travel at lightning speed, through traditional news organizations as well as through networks of influencers active on social media.

A SocialPR program involves building powerful messaging, sharing compelling content, and engaging the influencers who will tell your story the way you want it to be told – across the spectrum of print, broadcast, digital and social media.

- Tell your story by leveraging our unique Storyforce capabilities
- Build trusted relationships with key media influencers and market analysts
- Get quoted as a thought leader in your targeted markets



Content Marketing Fuels Your Outreach Efforts

Companies now have more ways than ever to tell their brand stories, share thought leadership and differentiate their products. At the same time, competition for mindshare is intense.

If you’re going to stand out, your content needs to be fresh, engaging and impactful. Fastlane specializes in content strategy development, execution and outreach that will:

- Fire up your SocialPR with real ideas that will get influencers talking
- Generate leads by sharing success metrics, using our unique Storyforce capabilities
- Raise your brand profile by positioning yourself as a leader in the marketplace



Creating That “Wow” Factor

Event marketing is all about the experience and the memories. It’s what separates good events from truly exceptional ones.

We develop well-rounded, experiential event strategies that are designed to break through and excite all the senses. Our Marketplace Makers practice even develops virtual events to complement a physical tradeshow or as a stand-alone online event. Working with Fastlane helps you:

- Develop integrated and full, social-enabled event plans
- Engage customers and generate leads
- Gain brand momentum and raise your brand’s profile
- Make the most of your trade show and event budget



Your Customers Have Moved to Mobile. Have You?

Mobile is fast becoming the primary place where prospects learn about your brand and make buying decisions. Shipments of mobile devices are already far outpacing computers at historic levels – yet many companies still don’t have an effective marketing solution for mobile.

Fastlane’s Mobile Marketing practice works with companies to develop a comprehensive mobile strategy to fully engage customers when, and how, they want to be engaged.

- Align with the 68% of consumers who bought from their smartphone in 2012
- Help 85% of B2B buyers who researched services on their smartphone in 2012
- Prepare for the projection that 78% of Internet traffic comes from mobile in 2017

For more information contact:

Christopher Faust • 855 677 5263 e 104 • chris@fastlane.co • 855 677 5263 • fastlane.co • copyright ©Fastlane



Over the past few years, Fastlane has helped Collabera (Formerly known as Global Consultants, Inc.) grow considerably on a global scale. We initially started with public relations, but have since worked with Fastlane on brand development, marketing communications and event marketing.
Cynthia Moricz de Tecso – Marketing and Supplier Diversity Manager Collabera

Fastlane gets it – their ideas are innovative, writing is full of impact, PR is business building, and the team members are consummate professionals.
David Glassman – Vice President of Marketing Onstream Media

Fastlane has been responsive to our needs and helped elevate our company's brand profile through well-designed, attention-getting advertisements, compelling tradeshow graphics, and sophisticated marketing campaigns.
Bill Gilbert – Vice President of Marketing Advantedge Healthcare Solutions

The Fastlane team brings its significant experience and forward-looking communications expertise to our venerable brand. As a result, Fastlane will enhance the already-strong relationships we have with the CEO community.
Marshall Cooper – CEO Chief Executive Group

We've worked with Fastlane for several years now and they continue to treat us as if we are their only client. Their passion, creativity and professional pride is contagious too. The entire team is a real joy to work with.
Jeff Neale – Director of Marketing Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America

Fastlane captured the essence of my business and developed our ShinyPaw branding and image from scratch, everything from the logo and product packaging to our eCommerce-enabled web presence and business stationary. I couldn't be happier and would recommend them highly to anyone.
Roger Koman – Founder Therapeutic Pet Solutions