

6 Easy Steps to Promote Your Next Event Offline

The below guide is 6 easy steps for you to focus on promoting and preparing your event through other means than digital - a strength often overlooked.

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Promoting Your Event



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There is a lot of hype around digital promotion right -which we agree is great. In the digital age of today, of course there is benefit to online marketing. But in the events industry, we understand the power of offline promotion too, if not even more so. But where do you even begin when considering this avenue of promotion?

6 Easy Steps to Promote Your Next Event Offline

We've all been there in this industry right - accidentally left something down to the wire because we didn't realise all the hidden parts that come together to make it work. The events industry is fast paced, and as an organiser your hands are in lots of different projects dealing with different ends of the event; be it the customer, the attendee, the supplier. So we've all had the stress of that one priority slip our mind, or misjudging something as a priority in the first place.

That's why having a plan, prioritising well, and knowing when and who is doing what is a good idea before organising your next activity. This is especially true when it comes to promoting the actual event. That seems to be the last thing we consider, all of the hard work goes into the appearance - but how are people hearing about it? And what steps have you taken for them to remember it?

All of these things feed into the promotion of the event. It's not just a case of marketing and then forgetting about now the event is coming up or happening - promotion of your event continues long after, especially if you plan on making continued business from it.

So here are 6 easy steps for you to follow, regardless of the type of event you are organising. Not only help the event be successful in its own promotion, but to promote your services, the services of your client's or colleagues, and promotion of your services for other potential customers.



STEP 1: SEGMENTING YOUR PLANS

Promotional literature, brochures and flyers, offering business cards at other networking events, take away pens, umbrella's with marketing details on them - the subliminal marketing, in real life, is what does all the heavy lifting in this hyped up digital world.

STEP 1: PLANNING IN ADVANCE

This seems like a no brainer right - but what does planning actually mean? Yes, a to-do list is essential - but everything on your to-do list needs its own to-do list right? I guarantee one of your first thoughts was 'promote event', amongst which is booking the venue, creating the timetable, launching ticket sales, organising catering - the list goes on.

Ensuring not only you know all of these overarching themes is great, but the work doesn't stop there. Plan out your calendar for when you will actually action each step, and make sure you have sub-tasks under your main ones. For promotion, do you want online as well as offline? Everyone in the events industry knows although the digital world is amazing, it is not the be all or end all.

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***Having an
overall plan is
great, but until
you structure
your steps,
you're not
organised***



Don't get me wrong, I love digital marketing as much as the next guy, I'm just saying to not fall into a trap of thinking it is the only way to promote events - especially in an industry that promotes face to face.



STEP 2: HOW AM I PROMOTING MYSELF?

So, in order to build out this timetabled plan, you need to first consider how you are promoting yourself. There are thousands of options when it comes to promoting, and that's before you hop online. Considering the event itself, what is suitable? First, what promotional material is there?

If you're relatively new to this, you may not even be considering half of the tools you can be utilising.

If you are running a stall at a big event say - how am I standing out? Am I using banners, posters, screens with the same imagery in digital form?

STEP 2:

MERCHANDISE

Have I got branded merchandise I am giving out? Is it stickers, pens? Have I got anything in place that makes it easy for this person to reach back out to me if they don't sign up there and then?

Do I want my staff to be promoting the brand? And if they are, how are they doing this? Are they handing out printed materials, wearing a uniform, carrying a branded bag with them whilst off the stand?

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How am I standing out from the crowd?

Is it the sort of event where people are looking for demonstrations? Do I sell or does my client sell a product that requires a demonstration? Printed handouts as 'How to' guides, or take away electronics with 'how to' videos could be a big winner.

Do I require PPE for the event (in this post-pandemic world) and can I be springboarding off this opportunity for further marketing effort?

Narrowing down what is suitable for your event helps you focus your ideas, which brings you more in line when it comes to looking at supplying and budgeting for the portion of your event activities.





STEP 3:

TARGET AVATARS

And your thinking has to extend to adaptability and physical suitability - if you are at an exhibition show, rushed business owners aren't looking to haul home bags full of goodies - as much as we all love a freebie. So make sure your complimentary promotional material is small, helpful, and something they could perhaps even use on the day. Of course, the draw here is pens, notepads and USB's - but be creative, what about water bottles on a hot summer event day? Or umbrella's if it's mid November and you're near an exit.

STEP 3: IS MY PROMOTION APPLICABLE TO MY CUSTOMER?

Once you have established which types of promotions suit the event itself, you must also consider those attending the event too - especially as that is who we are selling to.

So figuring out what is applicable to you, to your customers, or to your event goes, is a must. If you are running an event for schools, wine stoppers probably isn't the best way to go. Branded whiteboard markers, activity sets and stickers however, you'll get a thousand of those picked up before the day is out.

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Thinking about what your customer wants is key to the success of your promotion



People won't be taking away material that they don't see benefit in. Sometimes, it isn't always about the sales pitch on the day, but rather 'oh look a free umbrella, and it's pouring outside'. But that umbrella, with your branding, could turn a walk-by into a sale.



STEP 4:



PROMOTIONAL BUDGETS

So for promotion, research promotion budgets. Now you have a clearer idea of how much money is going where for your event - lets say £10k for promotion - how are you dividing the £10k? How much does the promotional material you are wanting cost? And if it is bespoke work, are there any hidden costs? Do I have to pay the supplier as well as the creator for materials - will it require set-up on the day, or do I need to organise delivery prior to the event? Will delivering cost more if I need express shipping?

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**What
percentage of
my budget is on
promoting?**

Don't launch into a plan without considering the costs of every step first - finding an appropriate supplier to walk you through the production from start to finish is always a good bet here - even more so if you are running an event on behalf of several businesses. I'm thinking for example franchisor exhibitions - and you are organising promotional materials for 50+ brands - knowing a supplier who carries out the service for you is key.

STEP 4: BUDGET

The fun part - how am I paying for it all. Having budgets overall is great, but a huge down fall is not driving down on the specifics. For the real rookies, they see £50k for an event and then just spend aimlessly - organise your budget with a specific structure - £10k for venue, £6k for promotion, £3k for catering ... and so forth. Research what is the norm for the location you are in, have an idea of event size, need for each sector - find your priority list and make sure it is covered. Discussions of budgets, and preparing one, can be lengthy, so once your overall budget is organised, then carefully plan out your budget for each sect of your event too.





STEP 5: WHERE AM I SUPPLYING FROM?

Before we even get on to preference - are the materials eco-friendly? Are they sourced locally to the country? Are they a small independent business and can they provide a specialist service? - you need to consider who your supplier is and if there will be any issues in working with them. As many of us know, the pandemic has impacted suppliers in a hard hitting way - from sourcing materials, reduced stock, increased delivery times with the build, to delivering the final product to the customer.



STEP 5:



SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS

For a lot of us, we don't consider half as many products coming from overseas - so be sure to check not only the production timescale of the product itself, but where the production is actually taking place. Especially as the pandemic's impact is ever looming and creating an ever changing playing field, depending on which country you find yourself in at the time - keep up to date, keep in contact and keep informed.

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Having a strong relationship with a supplier, and the right supplier at that, is essential to smoothly promoting your event

Work these factors into your timescales (you know that timetable we mentioned at the beginning) to ensure there are no hold ups closer to the event day.



STEP 6:

PROMOTING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Ensuring the organisation of this then is a huge must, as there are plenty of other areas that require your attention. Which is why, being able to find a supplier to fit all of your needs is a gold mine - someone that not only can supply all of the materials you want, but can bespoke to all industry types. This is a huge no go for a supplier who only creates bags, or pens, or has a niche product, when you are providing supplies on behalf of your network too.

STEP 6: AM I PROMOTING ON BEHALF OF OTHER BUSINESSES?

Ok, so this may not be relevant to every event you are organising - but being in the industry, you are going to be organising a networking event sooner or later. And what does that entail? Package deals. Packages where exhibitors can get you, your team, or your organisation to 'sort out all the faff' on their behalf. If this is you, promotional material becomes a huge priority - as now not only are you producing promotional content for yourself and your business, you're doing it on behalf of someone else too.

Not only will a company with this capability be able to source and provide the goods all under one roof, they will most likely be able to create bespoke products to your wish - which makes you look even better as the one presenting it to your exhibitioner. Plus, any snags means you don't have the stress of routing through suppliers or numbers- it's a one contact for all job.

And then you have the relationship with this supplier for the next event, no matter what event, for a one on one job. Your next solo client wants to organise an event which she needs her team uniformed for? Call up this supplier again now the relationship has been established, and trust earned.

Finding a supplier who can perform as a 'one stop shop' for you is a huge help to any event organisation, not only for the event at hand, but going forward in the growth of your business too.



The Perfect Source

Do you want your business to stand out from the crowd? The Perfect Source help in getting your brand noticed.

You will find our approach a little bit different. With over 25-years' experience supplying branded merchandise, corporate giveaways, clothing and print to all sizes of business, you will find us enthusiastic, professional, and full of creative ideas!

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