

# Tips On How To Run A Successful Conference Or Seminar

*It is very important to make sure that any business event that you are planning on having is successful and is a return on investment. I will outline in short articles the factors to consider in having a successful conference or seminar, these will be written under the following headings:*

*Corporate reasons for having a conference*  
*How to plan for a conference*  
*Budgeting for a conference*  
*Marketing for a conference*  
*Finding the right venue*  
*Event management and logistics*  
*Conference on-site logistics*  
*Review of the conference and follow up*

## *Part 4*

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### **Marketing for a conference or seminar:**

*There can be many business reasons why a company should consider having a conference or seminar, and events are an important part of the marketing mix.*

*Having decided on your objectives and established a relevant theme, you need to consider the conference or seminar logo and the overall event branding and the invitation process for delegates.*

### **The Promotion of the event**

- *This is the most important aspect of all the planning, as you need to make sure that you have the relevant number of attendees.*
- *The marketing of your event is not just the promotion of the event but integral to promoting your business, services, and expertise.*
- *What ever marketing methods you adopt make sure you measure the results, so that you know what is the most effective method of getting people to attend.*
- *Make sure that all your promotion is highly targeted.*
- *Consider all possible methods of communication as different people like to receive different methods of communication. Use the full range of traditional offline promotion as well as online promotion as well as registration method for the delegates:-*

## **Offline promotion**

- *Advertising in newspapers, trade press, effectiveness of the advertisement will depend on the clarity of the advertisement,, perceived value and targeting the degree of benefits for a person to attend. You need to have a properly organized advertising plan and campaign.*
- *Direct mail – addressed to specific recipient, which allows one to be more targeted. You need to think who your target market is and adapt your message and language accordingly. Unaddressed mail can also be effective but again needs to be carefully targeted. Leaflets are a good medium for unaddressed mail.*
- *Leaflet drops*
- *Posters*
- *Postcards, can be used as teasers to announce the date*
- *Telephone, good for marketing to existing clients*
- *TV & radio advertising*
- *Audio and video, produce a CD that may show some of the speakers and their expertise.*
- *Business introducers, using face to face communication*
- *PR, promoting the event with a press release that needs to be newsworthy i.e. different, entertaining or significant to grab the editors attention.*
- *General correspondence, make sure your event is mentioned in some shape or form on all correspondence that leaves the office, such as fax header, note pads, compliment slips, leaflets to include in any correspondence sent out. You can also use giveaways to promote the event.*
- *SMS messaging, short texts are great way of reminding attendees of the event, and sending updates of what is happening.*

## **Online promotion**

- *Email, is an excellent way to market your event if you already have permission to contact the customer or prospect, often the collection of contact details through the website for newsletters can be excellent in sending electronic invitations. The event can be promoted on every email sent from the office with an additional line on the signature.*
- *Website this can be used to promote all your events on your corporate website under a specific tab heading of events. You can also now use external website specifically designed to promote your event, provide additional information on the event and register the attendees, automate*

*confirmation and joining instructions and send reminders if people have not responded, as well as statistics of registration and the attendees profile.*

- *Pop-Ups, on your website to convince people that your seminar is worth attending.*

### ***The invitation process needs to be efficient and professional***

- *For larger events use software products to manage the invitation process which sends out invitations, gather delegate data, and will show who needs to be followed up if they have not responded and produce statistical analysis.*
- *You need to build a suitable database from raw lists, customer lists, prospect lists, that are targeted to the audience you wish to attend the event. The database will need to be cleaned to make sure that all the contact details are correct. You need to invite far more people than you wish to attend the event as sometimes it can be only 25% of acceptance.*
- *Make sure all employees are promoting the event at every opportunity when talking to clients and potential customers, third parties.*
- *You want people to know about the event ASAP so a teaser or keep this date free can be useful before the main invitation is sent. The more notice people can have of the event the better, sometimes this can be 3 months before the event other circumstance 3-4 weeks. Remember reminders for those that have not accepted need to be built into the invitation process this can be by email, telemarketing phone follow up.*
- *Confirmation to invitees is very important for those who have accepted, you need to build up a communications channel to reduce inevitable drop out. Communications can include email messages, telephone, more detail on the programme and joining instructions.*

### ***How to get delegates to attend***

*Delegates will only attend after they find out' what is in it for me'*

- *Spell out the benefits*
- *Offer an incentive or discount*
- *Offer them a valuable bonuses*
- *Make your event irresistible stress the benefits, offer worth while bonus material and state their value or an incentive for attending your events, such as discount on early bookings*
- *Focus strongly on how specifically your event helps to improve the lives of attendees*

- *Get other people and organizations to promote your event, look into sponsoring the event with other organizations. Target other businesses, suppliers, distributors to invite attendees from their own database*
- *Work with local press to raise your company's profile, build relationships with local radio, look at free publicity in newspapers and magazines, send out a press release*
- *Measure effectiveness of everything you do, so that you know what works or does not for the next event*

*Further articles on how to run a successful business event that has ROI will follow. To receive these valuable ideas and make sure that you do not miss any of the articles we will deliver them to your in-box free. The articles will be full of tips and ideas, to help you and your business in event management.*

**Reference reading:**

John G Fisher - How to run a Successful Conference

Philip Calvert – Successful Seminar Selling