



B2B MARKETING GUIDE

B2B Event Marketing Guide: Executing a Successful Launch





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Introduction – Getting the Most from Event Marketing

When launching a new product or company, most would agree that creating buzz and anticipation around your new offering is a prerequisite for successfully accessing your market and setting your solution up for long-term success. As a result, many B2B marketers rely on event marketing to create the necessary attention and traction needed for an impactful launch. Carefully targeted B2B events allow your organization to interact with prospects, generate brand awareness, showcase your new solution and motivate your audience to ultimately take the next steps with your company.

Despite the variety of events to choose from, many organizations shy away from event marketing for its notoriously high costs and time investments. Particularly for events such as national tradeshows, expos and conferences, developing a great presence, training your staff and traveling to the event isn't cheap. However, with the right strategy, event marketing can be a very viable and profitable mechanism for propelling your new offering into the marketplace and sustaining its momentum beyond launch day.

This white paper explores best practices for defining, outlining and integrating all event marketing activities from start to finish so you can execute a successful, revenue-driven launch for your organization.

B2B marketers participate in a variety of events such as:

- Tradeshows
- User Conferences
- Executive Events
- Regional Meetings
- Workshops
- Webinars



Defining Your Target Audience

To ensure your event is as targeted as possible and reaching the ideal audience for your launch, you should get as granular as possible with how you define and establish your target audience. The more you hone in on the audience for your launch, the greater your ability to create messaging and content that speaks to your audience's interests and engages them. Listed below are the primary factors you'll want to consider when crafting the ideal audience you want to target and reach during your launch event. Factors to consider include:

Company

This will allow your team to understand who your audience is prior to the event, as you dive into their website and LinkedIn to learn more about their history and evolution as an organization.

Role

Are they a decision maker in their company? Or maybe they're a potential user of your product/service? Understanding their objectives and pain points will help you craft relevant messaging that immediately gets to the heart of what they want.

Revenue

Gaining insight into the budget they are working with will help inform the offer types that will appeal to different audiences and drive response.

Industry vertical

Similar to understanding your target buyer's role within the company, it's important to have context around the needs and problems they're looking to solve.

Company size

Pinpointing ideal company size for your product or service will assist you in planning the scale of your event and what kind of resources your team will need to cater to the potential customer's entire team.

Geographical location

The location of your target audience gives your team the ability to strategize where to host events or what key events to attend in select areas.

Current products or solutions

When you have a firm grasp on your audience's preexisting solutions, you can better frame your messaging around the ways your solution supplements or outperforms their current stack.

RESOURCES

Download the eBook [“A B2B Marketer's Guide to Event Marketing”](#) for a look at how to create buzz around any upcoming B2B event, whether it's for a launch or another great marketing opportunity.



The Five “P’s” of Event Marketing

Incorporating the 5 “P’s” of event marketing can help streamline your launch events and remove some of the stress your team may feel trying to reinvent the wheel for future appearances. The 5 “P’s” include: Purpose, Planning, Promotion, Presence and Post-Event. We’ll dive into each one to understand how this structure can support your launch event strategy.



RESOURCES

Want even more insight on how to successfully execute your next product launch? Check out our blog [“10 Important Questions To Ask Before Launching a Product.”](#)

Purpose

In order to successfully plan your launch, you need to first establish goals and an event strategy. There are many goals you can choose, so don’t feel pressured to choose just one. Goals can be qualitative or quantitative in nature and include anything from educating the media on your product/service to getting a certain number of leads.

Some questions to consider when forming your goals:

- What is the purpose of the event?
- What do you want this event to feature?
- How will you attract and engage attendees/visitors?
- What are the key messages you would like to communicate?
- What does success look like?
- What impact would you like to leave on prospective buyers?





Once you've set your goals, make sure your entire team agrees on the goals and is clear on what their role is in ensuring their success. With your goals in place, you can move on to formulating the individual activities that will help you achieve them.

Planning

The next step is to take on the tactical aspects of planning your event. The dynamics of planning are going to hinge on whether the event is hosted or if it's an event you will attend, such as a tradeshow. Here are some key questions to consider when planning for these two very different types of events:

HOSTED EVENT

- Budget?
- Small or large-scaled event?
- In-person or virtual?
- Formal presentation, demo, and/or networking?
- Sales slicks and/or handouts?
- Keynote or expert speaker?
- Entertainment?

ATTENDED EVENT

- Budget?
- Sponsorship level?
- Booth design and location?
- Speaking or other sponsor opportunities?
- Handouts or branded tchotchkes?
- Ways to drive booth attendance?
- Giveaways?

Developing the full detailed timeline of your launch event, including the marketing of the event, is essential. Marketing for most events can start anywhere from one year out or more, up to just a couple of months prior to the event. Establishing the timeline should be thorough, taking into consideration the early tasks and carrying through to promotions and post-event follow-up.

Ultimately, your timeline will only be as successful as the team that's executing it. Developing the timeline should be a group effort to ensure your plan is realistic in scope and inclusive of perspectives from key stakeholders (even if they're outside the marketing department). Make sure all event stakeholders are fully bought-in to the timeline and have the resources, tools and decision-making power necessary to execute their individual deliverables.



When hosting an event, the shorter the event's duration, the shorter the announcement lead time should be. For instance, a two-hour regional seminar requires only three to four weeks for your contacts to plan, whereas several months should be given to attendees of a 3-day conference.



Promotion

Thoughtful and well-executed promotion of an event is essential for successful engagement. To achieve maximum impact, implement an integrated marketing approach utilizing multiple tactics. Creativity is encouraged! Out-of-the-box promotional thinking includes modifying email signatures to include event links or brief teasers to information about your launch event, such as a “PS” in all of your emails. You can also post content blocks on your website homepage highlighting the event. These little promotional moments will help create a valuable pre-launch buzz in your audience’s head.

So, what are the key mediums that you should be utilizing to promote your launch event? According to 156 leading event coordinators in a survey published by EXPO Magazine, email, Facebook and direct mail postcards are the most used mediums for attendance marketing. Consider leveraging eye-catching postcards or dimensional mailers to high-value prospects – especially if they are local. If you have a preexisting database, email marketing can be a valuable channel to spread the word across industry contacts and build excitement for your launch among current and prospective customers.

Presence

On average, 67% of all attendees represent a new prospect and potential customer for exhibiting companies. If you want to turn event attendees into leads, you must be prepared with “wow factors” that make your launch stand out. Garnering this level of interest means coming equipped with eye-catching, engaging, professional, branded and vibrant materials. Presentations, sales slicks and any other relevant handouts are all great opportunities to help your offering and company stand apart and set the tone for your event.

B2B companies report that events help generate more leads than any other strategy.

(Marketing Charts)



When posting or sharing about registration on different mediums, use a unique code for each marketing vehicle to track which performed best, this will help with the marketing strategy for your next event.



Forming the right presence also relies on how prepared your event staff is. Be sure to designate roles appropriately and have a pre-determined dress code. Ensure everyone has pre-planned talking points prior to the event so that key messages can be consistently reinforced. The team should also have all the marketing content at their disposal to engage with attendees, such as promotional giveaways and prepared demos. This is also a great opportunity to boost your brand awareness beyond launch day - utilize branded giveaway items that will create ongoing brand affinity, such as t-shirts, fanny packs, sunglasses, water bottles and other trendy, useful items.

Lastly, don't forget about your digital audience. Broaden the reach of your launch beyond just the prospects that attend or stop by your booth. By using tactics such as live tweets and video highlights, you can create an immersive experience with which online followers can engage. If your company is not hosting the event, keep an eye out for relevant LinkedIn Groups tied to the event that you can join. This is the perfect way to spark initial conversations with top-of-funnel leads and simultaneously establish yourself as a knowledgeable thought leader in the industry.

Post-Event

While the pre-show marketing may seem like the bulk of your efforts, it should only comprise about 50% of your event marketing strategy. The other 50% should be focused on the most critical piece of your event marketing — the post-event follow-up.

Event Follow Up Best Practices:



Follow Up Immediately

As soon as an event has concluded, make sure that all leads and booth attendees receive a genuine thank you email for their time. It should be short, casual, to the point and on behalf of the company. Qualified leads should receive a personalized follow-up in 3-5 (max) business days later. One of the best ways to keep newly found leads interested and engaged is to provide them with relevant, targeted content.

25%
of B2B marketers reported
the greatest ROI on event
marketing from email.



Personalize Follow-Up Communications

Personalization is one of the most essential tools a marketer can utilize and has become a necessity for your B2B leads, so aim to make your follow up with event leads as personal as possible. Personalization can be achieved simply by incorporating their name and company name into any communication but more deeply personalized by tailoring the message to any known interests of the recipient.



Provide Value

Stay away from any communication that will feel like a sales pitch to your event leads. Instead, keep the follow up casual and authentic. Show how you're ultimately interested in their growth and providing them with value by offering them content appropriate to where they're at in the buying cycle, such as an eBook, video or whitepaper.



Look Beyond Initial Event Follow Up

While you want to engage right away following the launch event, maintaining consistent contact with these new qualified leads is key to keeping your company and products/services top of mind. Continue to spread your marketing message using integrated marketing plans that consist of lead nurturing programs and campaigns, ensuring you're providing contacts with continuous value.

Rock Your Next Launch Event

Following the five P's will help serve as the basis for your upcoming or future launch event and help your marketing efforts be as effective as possible when engaging your targeted audience. Be sure to tailor these fundamental ideas to your unique brand and new offering so that your marketing efforts are authentic and memorable. Don't forget that each event is an opportunity to test in real-time what does and doesn't work for your organization's specific marketing needs. Always look for opportunities to capitalize at every stage of the event process so you can ensure complementary or future launch events are developed and attuned to your team's goals.

Stay in front of your target through regular seminars, webinars, newsletters and/or social media.



Need help taking your upcoming B2B event or launch to the next level? Let Launch Marketing help drive attendance, engage your audience and create the optimal experience for your attendees.

[Schedule a complimentary 1:1 consultation](#) with one of our B2B marketing experts today.

Additional Resources

About Launch Marketing

Launch Marketing is a boutique business-to-business (B2B) marketing firm in Austin, Texas that provides turn-key services focused on generating leads and driving revenue. The team brings a breadth of senior-level expertise with a full-service approach to help clients maximize the impact of marketing for their business. Since 2001, they have helped countless clients successfully launch their company, dive into new markets, introduce new products, and generate more qualified leads. For more information, visit www.launch-marketing.com.

