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Generate UK[™]
The Next Generation In Marketing

A GUIDE TO INCREASING ATTENDEES

This paper is a guide to helping you increase the number of attendees you can secure at your next business seminar/event

Seminar marketing is an exceptional way to deliver your message to multiple qualified prospects. By attending your event and taking time out of their day, your delegates are sending you a strong message that they are interested in what you have to say. The universal challenge with seminar marketing is in ensuring that the right numbers of delegates attend and getting enough bottoms on seats to justify the expense and effort of creating a seminar.

This guide runs through the steps we take when marketing a seminar for ourselves or on behalf of our clients. We may tweak the process slightly depending on the market sector we're targeting, in the main though our thought process will be much the same.

Whilst this white paper focuses on seminars, it can be extended to other events. In fact, as a general marketing guide it can be used for any new "go to market strategy".

Considerations

1. Consider the objectives of your seminar. It sounds simple but is very important. Write them down and agree what will make a successful seminar. How many delegates do you want? What profile of delegate do you want? Is it a business development seminar or an educational event?
2. Think about what you have to say or offer. In our opinion the more focused an event the better chance of it being successful. Think about the challenges that are happening right now in your customer base. Work out how to demonstrate your expertise in a way that will benefit your delegates.
3. Visit and evaluate a number of potential locations for your event. Consider whether it is large enough for your requirements Are the staff friendly and helpful? Is it easy to find and does it have enough car parking? It is important that your event has a separate registration area and a place for tea and coffee.
4. Once you have chosen a potential location, decide upon the format of your event. Consider whether you need to provide refreshments (advisable) or lunch if your event is longer. This can be a critical time for you to network with your delegates and for your delegates to network with each other.
5. There are many different styles of events you could consider. Speed networking is quite popular at the moment, which is a spin off from the better known speed dating format; this is proven to work in the right circumstances, although we use this method with caution. We prefer a more traditional approach because we know that it works, if it

helps you to differentiate your event from others it might be worth it to consider other styles.

6. Once you have decided to deliver an event and you've chosen your location, the next important step is the agenda. We are not always in the fortunate position that our brand or profile alone is enough to attract delegates, so the agenda becomes vitally important. This is your chance to say to your target market "We are the industry professional and you must come to our event or risk missing out and allowing your competitors to prosper".
7. The agenda is critical in the sense that it needs to be attractive and of value but also it needs to be presented in this way as well. It is no good having a great day planned full of fantastic presentations, only for your agenda to be stale and unimaginative. This is your opportunity to use the headlines to your advantage. Tell your audience what they'll get out from attending your event. If you're presenting a new product release that does something your prospects have been crying out for, shout about it and explain to them why they need to be there to hear about it!
8. It is easy to fall into the trap of creating an agenda that is basically a list of sales presentations; this will disappoint your delegates. To really attract delegates, you must provide them with some value. Help them to solve a challenge they're having, provide them with something useful that will make them look good. Whatever it is, you should have already identified these selling points at an early stage when identifying the objectives for your seminar.
9. Now that we have our seminar objectives, key success factors, a location, a target audience and an agenda; we need to start telling people about the event. This largely depends on your budget, however you will want to take elements of these suggestions and work them into your own seminar marketing.
10. Consider the impact of your speakers, are they industry experts? Are they credible and are they able to deliver the message in line with your objectives. Sometimes it is viable to work with other companies to increase the value of your agenda. It is also worth considering a guest speaker or someone that you know who is well known or has a really interesting story that can be used as a case study.

Marketing your Seminar

There are many ways to market your seminar, it largely depends on the type of event you're planning to run, who your audience is and how they usually absorb information. For example, if you're targeting people within the IT sector, it is a fair bet that they have access to the Internet and emails. If you're targeting building site foremen, then email might not be the best way to communicate with them.

1. Leave plenty of time to market your event, usually 6-8 weeks is about right. You might want to extend this to 12-16 weeks if you're targeting larger numbers of delegates.
2. Decide on what media you are going to use to tell people about your seminar. You should create a marketing schedule that will outline when your communication and advertising is planned for.
3. If you're buying data in especially for your seminar, we recommend that you warm your list up first. If your target delegates have never heard from you before, they might not connect your company with their market or as a company they might be interested in. Warm your list up by submitting to it and offering a white paper or something that begins to add to your credibility like a case study.
4. Find out where your target market is likely to be. Is it worth sponsoring a website that you know attracts the profile of delegate you want to market to. Are there joint venture opportunities to market to other lists in return for them speaking at your event or similar contra? Is there a governing body or a busy forum that you could use to filter information about your event? Whatever you choose, do not rely on just one method.
5. Make it easy for your delegates to book their place on the seminar. This is a crucial factor so spend some time on this. If you're sending them an email, make sure that they can respond to the email to register their interest, many companies use a noreply email alias when marketing to their email list, this is frustrating for your potential delegates if they respond to your marketing with a question.
6. Use best practice for your seminar landing page. Provide an overview of your seminar, details of the agenda, and details of who should attend and reasons why, plus there should be an option to register via the landing page. Don't forget to include details of the location, a map and full address (for those using sat-nav) details. If you're in London, details of the nearest tube station.

7. Consider placing an .ICS file on your event landing page. This is the standard way to install calendar information on your web page. This will allow your delegates to download a calendar entry that will populate their chosen calendar programme, such as Outlook. This is a nice way of pre booking your event in their diary and increase the chances that they do not double book.

8. Use an auto respond email to confirm their seminar place is booked, ensure that you include all of the information as it relates to the event and contact details in case they have questions or queries. Make sure the basics like a link to the address details are provided.

9. In our opinion this next stage is one of the most essential elements to making your seminar a success; staying in touch with the delegates who have registered. We would suggest that from cold list to seminar attendee you will need to touch your contact a minimum of 5 times, obviously this can change depending on the circumstances. Below is our communication touch process when using email marketing for seminars:
 - Warm up the list, initial offering of case study or similar.
 - Additional touch designed to show your expertise in a specific market.
 - Market the seminar
 - Auto respond email thanking those that register
 - A follow up email with a slight change to the agenda (optional)
 - Phone call to establish what the delegate is looking to gain from attending
 - Final call to check dietary requirements and attendance plans.

The above list is useful because it provides you with a number of different interactions with your delegate. At the same time you are constantly qualifying them, did they respond to your initial offer, did they register for the seminar, did they show an interest when you spoke to them, were you able to arrange some one-on-one time with them? All of this is great and will allow you to have a better picture of your delegate and plan your event well.

The worst case scenario here is that you have had a number of opportunities to find out the potential number of attendees. If through your calls or emails you realise that you have more people coming than the space you have available, you have an opportunity to do something about it.

Delivering your event

Now that you're confident that your event will be well attended and you've followed the steps with regards to organising and marketing your event. It is time to consider how you make your event the best event your delegates have been to this year. Happy delegates will always come and see you again, they will also tell others how good your event was, so it is worth following the list below:

1. Make sure that you have created your name tags in advance. There's nothing worse than making your delegates wait around while you fuss over a name badge machine.
2. If appropriate, double and treble check your caterers. Make sure they know where they are going and what time they are expected to be there. Hungry delegates are likely to wander off in search of sustenance.
3. If you have decided to provide give aways or promotional material, make sure that it is available and at the event location. It is often better to provide bags at the same time; remember if you're giving away bags that you're open to comment about your green credentials, so consider this beforehand.
4. Double check your audio and video equipment; we've all experienced the despair of the presenter who can't get their laptop to synchronise with the presentation screen. Make your audience remember your message and not your mistakes.
5. If you're responsible for the event, ask you speakers to provide you with details of their presentations. Sometimes, experienced speakers feel that they do not need to rehearse or check their content, we advise you to be very cautious about this. Look through their content and if necessary talk to them about any concerns. We would be concerned if we did not rehearse our seminar and suggest this is a key part of ensuring a successful event.
6. This White Paper is not about presentation skills, however it is important that you consider these when choosing your speakers. Remember the basics such as eye contact, addressing your audience and engaging with your delegates.
7. One of our most important facets of our events is the feedback form. We will be tigerish with regards to getting the feedback forms completed as this is the only way we can measure our delegates feedback and learn for the next event.
8. Manage your event staff and make sure that they know what is expected of them. These people are representative of your company and therefore should know why you're holding the event and be working with you in order to meet the event objectives.
9. Make sure that you have a way to capture any requests for information or hot leads from the events. Have a process in place so that none of the warm conversations and rapport that is created is lost.
10. Remember your event objectives. A seminar should be part of wider marketing goals, so do not waste the opportunity to take a step closer to your target. This means following

up with everyone who attended your event, asking for their feedback and seeing whether there is anything you can do for them.

Summary

Thank you for your interest in our guide about increasing the number of attendees to your next seminar. By following our steps, you have an excellent chance of ensuring your event is well attended and that you take full commercial advantage of your delegates. If you would like more information about Generate UK or our Event based services, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Who are Generate UK?

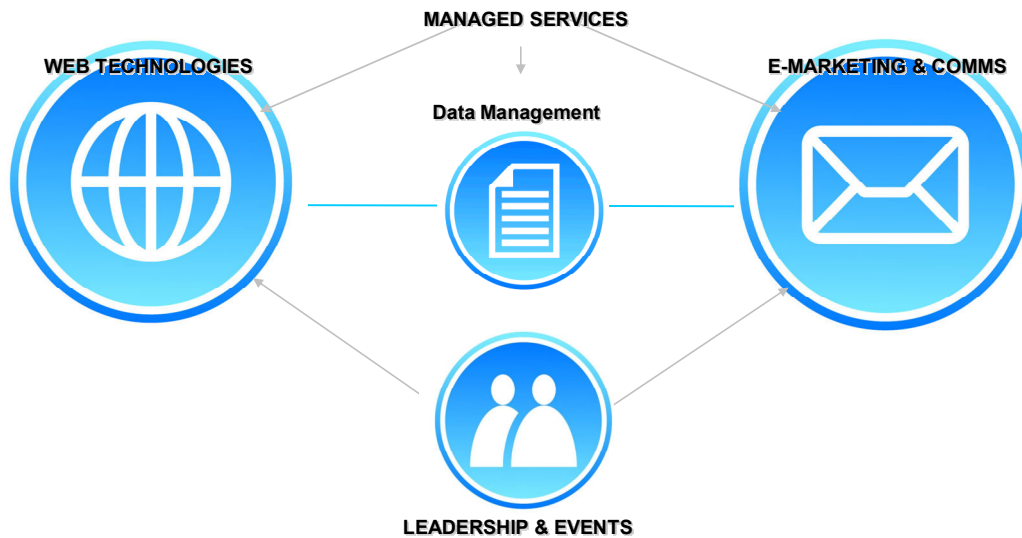
Generate UK help companies draw an online vision and fill in any online gaps. Generate UK are innovators and market leaders in online communications and business development solutions



- **Specialist Sales & Digital Marketing Agency – *The next generation***
- **Built on wealth of client side commercial experience**
- **Delivering genuine solutions to business problems**
- **Web development / design**
- **SEO and Online PR/Advertising**
- **Email Marketing**
- **Event Management and Leadership Solutions**
- **In house technologies and support**
- **Development partner of ‘best of breed’ software authors**

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