

The Use Of Social Media & Virality For Event Marketing

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Event organizers have taken to social media in a big way to promote their events and enhance their viral element. But does it always work? This is the focus of a new study conducted by FreemanXP in association with Event Marketing Institute. The report was prepared after a survey of brand marketers and event marketing executives from over 100 large corporations from a diverse bunch of industries, including IT, healthcare, financial services and automobile. Here are a few key takeaways from the survey report:

Social Reach: An overwhelming majority of the respondents agreed that attendees to events regularly share event content over social media. The subsequent impact, as measured by the estimated viral touches – including communications, shares, connections and impressions per event is immense. While the average respondent saw close to 1.39 million viral touches per event, companies with revenues of over \$500 million reported viral touches of over 1.8 million.

Effectiveness Of Viral Touch: Is the immense virality from events effective in translating into business? While close to 70% of the respondents think viral efforts are an important aspect of their event marketing, only 37% of the surveyed population believe they are actually effective in their efforts.

Effective Social Channels: Not all social media channels are made alike. Consequently, the most effective social channel was found to be dependent on what stage of the event marketing cycle the respondents were in. For pre-event and post-event viral touches, respondents found Facebook to be the most effective while for on-site viral impact, close to 73% of the respondents found Twitter to be the most effective.

Most Popular Social Channels: Besides Facebook and Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and YouTube were found to be the most popular social channels. Apart from these social networking websites, the other major viral channels were event apps and text messaging applications that provided further avenue to build visibility.

Budgeting For Virality: Do event marketers have a budget allocated for building viral impact from events? The survey found that only 50% of the respondents actually had a budget for building virality. However, among businesses that reported over \$500 million in revenues, over 60% of the respondents had an allocated budget for viral efforts.

Future Course For Viral Efforts: Despite the fact that only 37% of the respondents found their viral efforts to be effective, the overall optimism around such efforts continue. 53% of the surveyed respondents expected their budgeting for viral efforts to increase in the next billing cycle while another 44% expected it to remain the same. Just 3% of the respondents expected the budgets to reduce.

Event Social Media Management: Close to half the businesses (47%) interviewed for the study reported to have a dedicated social media team within their marketing group for managing events related social marketing activities. This figure rose to 59% among businesses with over \$500 million revenue. The other popular means to manage social media for events were through an internal events team, followed by a corporate marketing group. Only 20% of the respondents used their agencies to manage the social media activities related to events.