



**BEFORE,
DURING
&
AFTER:**



**THE HOW-TO GUIDE
TO SUCCESSFUL
EVENT PROMOTIONS**

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BEFORE, DURING & AFTER: THE HOW-TO GUIDE TO SUCCESSFUL EVENT PROMOTIONS

When you spend a lot of time and money putting together in-person events for education, fundraising, networking, or membership building, the last thing you want is an empty room.

Get more out of your event promotions. Here are a few sure-fire things you can do before, during, and after your event to help maximize registrations and increase attendance.

PLANNING & GOAL SETTING



Pro Tip Use your association software event module and integrated payment features to handle all aspects of the registration and payment process.

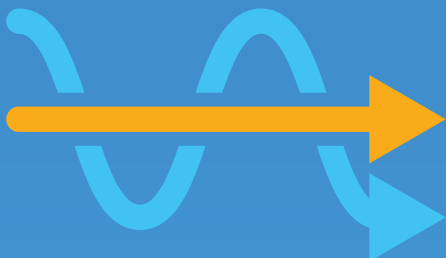
MESSAGING

Name the event - Whether formal or fun, the name of your event will set the tone. Either way, make it memorable.



Create a visual identity - Develop one image or look and use it consistently across all promotions. Think about creating a logo or using an interesting photo or illustration.

#Hashtag it - Create an official hashtag. Make it short, and ideally, unique to your event. It's a good idea to double check if/how the hashtag has been used by others. Then use the hashtag in every Facebook post, Instagram update, and Tweet leading up to the event. Include the hashtag in all your materials, and encourage others to use it before and during the event.



Keep it simple - Too much or inconsistent information will turn people off, and you'll lose their attention. Simplify and unify the messaging and the appearance of your event materials. The last thing you want to do is confuse people.

PROMOTIONAL TACTICS

(aka Promote Early and Promote Often)



People loooooove to procrastinate and register at the last minute. So when it comes to promoting your event, one interaction isn't enough.

Use this checklist to ensure you've hit the most important promotional touch points.

Your Website



An event landing page on your association's website is a great hub for people to get event information, register, and pay. The landing page should include:



- Event name
- Event logo or image
- A search engine-friendly description (including the purpose of the event, benefits of attending, and who should attend)
- Date and time
- Location with link to a map
- Price
- Link to register & pay
- The contact person's name, phone, and email address
- Social share buttons
- "Add to Calendar" button

If you have a blog, post an article about the event and include a link to the event landing page.

Remember to link to the event landing page from your website's calendar of events as well as from banner ads throughout your website.

Pro Tip:

Use your association software to easily set up all of these event details and display them on your public website and on the member-only portal.



Email

Sending an invitation by email is efficient, economical, and effective. Especially if you follow these tips.



Write a compelling subject line (“5 things you’ll miss if you aren’t at XYZ Event” is more compelling than “Sign Up for XYZ Event”).

Include critical event details:

- Event name
- Event logo or image
- A brief description (including the purpose of the event, benefits of attending, and who should attend)
- Date, time, and location



Provide a call to action (e.g. “Register Now,” “RSVP,” “Save Your Seat”) with a link to register and pay.



Pro Tip:

Make a final pitch. Within a few days of the event, send a follow-up email invitation to those on your original list who haven’t yet registered.



Facebook

Chances are, your association has a Facebook page with many engaged followers. Keep your page updated with event info, compelling reasons to attend, and links to the event's landing page on your website.

Keep your event posts share-worthy – encourage followers to share your event by making your posts interesting, eye-catching, and informative. Don't just promote the event. Promote the location (include amenities and nearby attractions). Showcase the speakers with bios, photos, and links to their websites. And highlight the benefits of attending.



LinkedIn

LinkedIn is a great resource for promoting events to other professionals who follow your association. Post stats from past events, news articles, and conference materials. Be sure to add the event to your organization's page and pin it to the top of the page.



Twitter

Tweeeeeet! Most tweets are missed as they flow through your audience's Twitter stream. So don't be shy about tweeting about the event often – both before and during the event.



Snapchat & Instagram

Connect with the next generation of potential attendees on the platforms they prefer. Post event prep photos, behind the scenes planning photos, and videos of the event.





Traditional Media

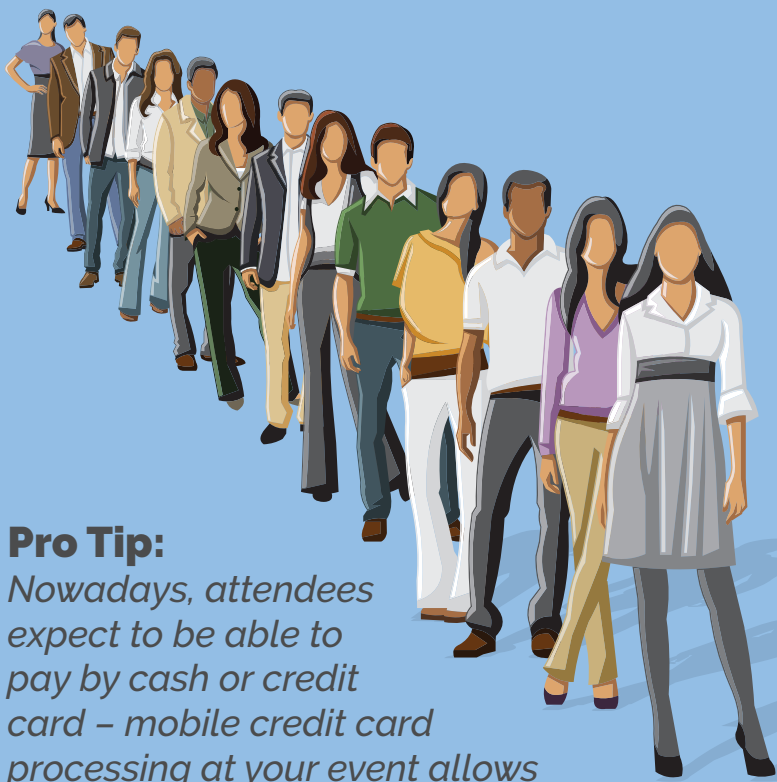
Don't overlook newspaper or TV and radio stations in your town as many of them have community calendars where you can include your event for free. You can also send a press release to local journalists who might be interested in covering your event.



Speakers & Sponsors

Leverage your speakers and sponsors, and encourage them to promote the event (it's in their best interest, after all!). Make it easy by giving them templated promotional materials and your hashtag.





DURING THE EVENT

A great attendee experience at the event can result in higher attendance for future events. Two often-overlooked event pitfalls are long lines – both to get into the event as well as use the restroom (seriously, it's a big deal).

Standing in line to get into an event is a drag for everyone. Speed up waiting lines by having a system in place for quickly checking in attendees and allowing them to pay on-site.

Keep Lines Moving

Implement advance registration, check in, and payment options when possible.

Pro Tip:

Nowadays, attendees expect to be able to pay by cash or credit card – mobile credit card processing at your event allows attendees to “swipe & go.” Payment options that instantly email a receipt to the payee and update your database with payment information add convenience for both attendees and event organizers.

POST-EVENT MARKETING

The event might be over, but your work isn't done yet. Be sure to take all your promotional efforts and close out your event in a way that can be used for future events.

You probably collected photos, videos, and testimonials. These are all valuable tools to use next time around to generate excitement. Consider sending them to attendees as a nice recap and reminder of the value they saw by attending.

Immediately after the event, jot down a recap of what went well and what needs improvement. This will come in handy for planning the next one.



TACKLE YOUR NEXT EVENT WITH CONFIDENCE

Putting on an event is no small task. But no matter what type of event you're organizing – a large expo, a small conference, a golf tournament, an educational seminar, or your association's annual dinner – these marketing tips are a great blueprint for success. Happy planning!