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Event Management
Best Practices

WHITE PAPER

The Human Touch Can Increase Event Attendance by As Much As 20 Percent*

Background

Events hosted by companies are an excellent forum to promote brand awareness and capabilities to existing and prospective clients. Not only do events provide a venue for companies to showcase their competitive advantage, they also foster a consultative environment where companies can grow their customer base while providing relevant solutions. Well-executed events help the sales process, which most often stalls in the early stages, to evolve collaboratively and focus on finding the solution that completely meets the customer needs. The hosting company builds trust with clients by providing critical value which in turn cultivates the relationship and results in opportunities to develop sales-ready leads.

Challenge

Holding well-implemented events requires a holistic and disciplined approach to event management in order to successfully fill the venue with an interested and invested audience. The biggest obstacle is breaking through the clutter, developing dialogue and securing key influencers and decision makers to carve time out of their busy schedules to travel to and attend an event.

Successful companies deploy a series of event management best practices to ensure their events have the highest levels of attendance.

Event Management Best Practices

- **Determine fee or free** — An early and important strategic decision is whether or not to charge for an event. Free events entice registrants however this does not compel them to attend the event. In some cases companies have deployed incentives to attract attendees although there is no definitive evidence to suggest that drawings, door prizes and other incentives influence registrants to attend. Assuming the content is relevant and the value of the solution is perceived, even a nominal charge for an event is considered to be the better approach; early bird specials tend to complement paid events.

In lieu of charging a registration fee, companies should plan to “over register” for free events by at least double the number of attendees they would like to attract.

- **Present compelling content and speakers** — Content will almost always determine attendance. When an existing client or prospective customer perceives that they are receiving something of value an emotional commitment to the event is brokered. Ultimately, this emotional commitment positively influences the attendee who determines that their time is being well-spent.
- **Leverage the human touch** — the human element continues to be the vehicle that results in the highest response rates because it enables a more personalized approach. True one-to-one phone dialogue is by far the channel with the best and most consistent results. Becoming increasingly persuasive is the strategic use of social B2B networks that allow those connected with the event to inform their professional networks about them. Leveraging the existing business relationship and recommending an event is received more warmly than a perceived sales attempt.
- **Tailor a multitouch, multichannel approach** — While the phone channel should be leveraged as the cornerstone of your event management strategy, integrating a communication plan and leveraging the phone channel with other media, such as digital marketing, direct mail, social outreach and in some cases, guided voicemail technology, has the strongest results of all. Each touch builds brand recognition and creates a fluid communication that can move a prospect from non-awareness to awareness, followed by interest, registrant and attendee.

- **Send reminder emails and make reminder calls** — Busy registrants appreciate focused and warm reminders that their event is approaching. The premise upon which reminder emails and calls are most successful is to ensure they are succinct and focus on the key pieces of information the attendee needs. Sincere recognition of the attendees’ commitment to attend comes best in a coordinated message campaign that includes email, calling and a guided voice message.
- **Follow up after the event** — Considerable preparation tends to be invested in planning for and executing events. It is also vital to follow up with attendees and non-attendees shortly after the event has concluded. Gathering information about the event from attendees can help to make future events even more successful and additional sales follow up supports cultivating attendees to sales-ready lead status. In terms of sales pipeline progression, it is important to ask non-attendees why they were unable to attend and provide them with powerful materials that allow them to remain engaged. Increasingly, companies are sharing recordings of webinars and essential presentation materials from live events to nurture the relationship with the registrant who is unable to attend. This is critical and will truly determine the return on investment of hosting events. If there is no activity supporting post-event follow-up with attendees, the warmest of leads, valuable future clients, will quickly grow disinterested.

The Support You Need

The Harland Clarke Contact Center Solutions team has demonstrated its ability to balance being nimble and creative with being thoughtful and purposeful in their approach to event management. Experts in providing strategic guidance for event registration campaigns and staffed with experienced, sophisticated phone specialists, the Contact Center Solutions team is uniquely qualified to build a powerful and holistic campaign from start to finish. These best practices have consistently resulted in high attendance rates, high lead generation rates and higher lead-to-opportunity conversion rates.



*Estimates based on independent research conducted by Harland Clarke.

What Accounts for This Success?

- **Strategic guidance.** Harland Clarke’s Contact Center Solutions team is a group of trusted advisors who gather information intentionally to ensure that the solution completely meets the needs of the client. The combined knowledge of this team is harnessed and deployed strategically and tactically to deliver optimal results using multiple channels.
- **Sophisticated callers.** Harland Clarke’s Contact Center Specialists are professional, articulate and attentive B2B experts who are able to navigate productive conversations and describe benefits that are appealing and applicable.
- **Accountability.** Harland Clarke’s Contact Center Solutions team is held accountable for meeting campaign goals. The team has a track record for delivering significant return on investment when the best practices form the framework of the campaign.

What This Means to You

- **Higher rates of attendance.** Not only more but better qualified targets attend your events and start to build a relationship with you that will allow your company to comprehensively meet their needs.
- **Hollistic approach to event management.** A well-executed event is but one link in the chain of demand generation. Our Contact Center Solutions team will do the heavy lifting throughout the process as opposed to treating the event as a single, unconnected occurrence.

- **Trust, experienced professionals.** There are partners who can represent your brand in a world-class way. Our Contact Center Solutions team is a group of sophisticated, experienced, passionate professionals who are proud to be an extension of your company.
- **Take advantage of efficiencies.** Internal Sales and Marketing professionals cannot do it all. To allow them to focus on what they do best, consider working with a partner that can skillfully manage the nuts and bolts of event management. Relieving Sales and Marketing professionals of the crucial tasks that accompany event management instantly enables them to be more productive.

Working with Harland Clarke's Contact Center Solutions team can energize your Sales and Marketing teams by contributing toward a healthy pipeline. Let your teams focus on their strengths while our professionals take care of the logistics and establish a foundation for success.