

SPREAD THE WORD

Connect with the right people to make your events a success



HOW TO USE DIGITAL PR AND SOCIAL MEDIA TO CREATE BUZZ AROUND EVENTS

Social media makes it easier than ever to spread the word about an event, workshop, product launch or your presence at a trade exhibition. With powerful new tools at your fingertips, you can find and connect with key influencers before, during and afterwards to maximize your ROI. As it's always a good idea to let people know about your event well in advance, building an online newsroom is a great place to start. Mynewsdesk, as well as platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, can help you promote attendance, organize face-to-face meetings, track proceedings and generate feedback.

BEFORE THE EVENT:

Build a social media newsroom

Start by gathering and publishing all the relevant info you have about the event you are holding or planning to attend. Remember to feature details about the organizer (which may be you), the venue, timetable and even the entrance price. It is useful to include graphic material, such as a poster, an invitation or the event logo, as these will help people identify the event.

Be sure to include a description of new products to be launched or the subject of the event as visitors or interested parties will want to know what to expect. This is relevant for your own event as well as when you are participating in a trade exhibition. Make sure everything is properly tagged and easy to find in one place. And of course, be sure the event is properly featured on your company homepage.

You can also create an event in Facebook and LinkedIn. This way, you will have the opportunity to post updates, links, images and other relevant content for your invitees.

Encourage people to register their attendance

Adding links to registration pages or sites to buy tickets/passes will encourage people to attend. You can also periodically post a direct link to the event on different social platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. You can even ask questions, which indirectly promote the event, such as "Have you got your ticket to the event yet?", "Who's is coming on Friday?" or "How about a meet up?"

Your own events: Once you have invited people, post as much information as you think your guests or industry contacts and even competitors will need. Add comments, notes, expectations and even references to things you think may happen during the event, such as new product launches - even something about the driving conditions, parking availability in the area where the events is held, the weather forecast, dress code and anything else guests may consider relevant.

USEFUL TIP:

Most people and companies only use a fraction of the 180px x 540px allowed for the image. Creating an event-specific banner image is an eye-catching way of letting people know what's happening.

Exhibitions, trade fairs, conferences: Add a link to the exhibition website, look at past events, republish the official poster or invitation or find the event logo and use it on your own website (just remember to seek permissions wherever necessary).

Establish which Twitter #hashtag to use

Hashtags are commonly used tools for grouping keywords in Twitter. By placing the hash symbol (#) in front of keywords, they become traceable. This means you can see who else is talking about the same subject on Twitter and similar social media platforms – be it a news story, a name or an event.

Large events like trade exhibitions, will most probably have their own hashtag already, so check on Twitter and see if there is one you can use. This way, you avoid people using the wrong one or creating their own, which will only go to dilute reaction to the event, rather than aggregating any comments. If you create your own hashtag, remember to include the name of your company and the name of the event.

Reach out to people involved with the event

Tap into and monitor any conversations already going on that are relevant to the event you plan to host or attend. Twitter is an ideal tool for this as it is essentially more public than Facebook. It is not a prerequisite that you are friends with someone for them to see your tweets (and vice versa). Using a personal profile to promote your event on Twitter is completely acceptable. Attendees often like to see the face behind the event and connect directly with you as the organizer.

Guest speakers and hosts will, if they have time and consider it worthwhile to them, most likely forward it to their contacts. Sharing valuable information is the best way for them to stay relevant and encourage participation at their event.

USEFUL TIP:

Monitor mentions of the event #hashtag

RSS feeds will automatically display new tweets with a specific #hashtag. You can also track tweets using Hashtags.org, TwitterGroups, TweetChat, TweetGrid or Twitterfall.

“INFLUENCERS, GUEST SPEAKERS AND ATTENDEES MENTIONED IN TWEETS WILL OFTEN GLADLY RETWEET WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY.”



Your own events: Write a blog post or news item about the invited speakers, special guests. Adding their bios and photos is useful as they will be recognised at the event. Request blog posts from guests or hosts, ask them about what they expect to happen during the event or what happened last year. Searching for people on social media platforms is simple to do and most influential people have public, rather than private, profiles. Let them know about your event and invite them to help spread the word.

Exhibitions, trade fairs, conferences: Appropriate influencers, guest speakers (external or internal) and attendees mentioned in tweets will more often than not gladly retweet what you have to say, possibly even adding a personal note of their own. Seek out opinion leaders, relevant journalists, celebrities or industry figures to help spread the word and engage with them via Twitter or LinkedIn or Like them on Facebook (you can do this by searching for their usernames and establish contact) or comment on one of their posts, etc.

4 TIPS FOR LISTENING AND ENGAGING IN REAL TIME

Listen

The most useful tool is undoubtedly Twitter. It is the only one that really enables people to share their thoughts effectively as events are live. You can see, quote and respond to people tweeting during an event.

Promote

Let people know you are reporting live by putting up signs or giving out stickers, mention it in printed material, and even from the stage if you are a host or a guest speaker. Make sure everyone knows you will be tweeting in realtime and repeatedly use the hashtag.

Monitor

Use great visualisation tools such as Tweetdeck, Visible Tweets, TwitterCamp, Twitter Fountain or Twitterfall. to see what people are saying.

Engage

Connect on their level – respond to their tweets, see what they are discussing, commenting on, read their blog posts, etc and interact with them as much as possible.

AFTER THE EVENT:

Generate feedback

It is always good idea to save some of the best comments, photos and tweets generated and display them on your company page, profile or blog post and invite people to leave comments. This will give people the opportunity to voice their opinions (good and bad) and let others see what they have missed. Ask those who attended what they thought and if they would like to comment. You can ask them to write and publish something on your Facebook page, tweet (using the appropriate hashtag) or ask if you can quote them in your own blog post.

Measure your success

Search for your #hashtag to find statistics on the event, including the number of tweets, contributors, tweets per day, retweets. This will enable you to improve future schedules or capitalise on any triumphs.

Thank those who attended

Send an email to the hosts saying how much you enjoyed their event (if relevant) or thank your attendees for coming. Encourage everyone to keep an eye for future news from you or your company and for future events. If it was a success, you may notice improved visitor numbers, feedback and even sales.

MYNEWSDESK IS THE SMARTER PLATFORM FOR PR & BRAND ENGAGEMENT

Pioneered in Sweden by journalists and web innovators, Mynewsdesk is the smarter platform for PR & brand engagement. Use it to find and listen to the people who matter most to your brand, then add them to your network of influencers. Mynewsdesk lets you collect and present all your content in one user-friendly, search-engine optimised newsroom, with real-time ROI feedback. Engage brand advocates on their own terms using Mynewsdesk's automatically updated content channels (social media, mailing lists, RSS, blogs, videos, photos). Mynewsdesk serves more than 25,000 companies with a 97% customer satisfaction rate.

For more tips and advice on how to use social media to promote and measure the success of your events, visit www.mynewsdesk.com