

Marketing a Hybrid Event

The way you promote a hybrid event is very similar to how you market a face-to-face event. Cannibalization of face-to-face attendance has been proven to be a myth, so don't let that stand in your way.

Registration Launch Date

Determine what timing works best for your event. To figure out the best time to launch your registration take into consideration the following:

1. When will the majority of my program be complete? When will my speakers be confirmed? – People who are motivated to attend an event are generally motivated by content. There is no reason to launch an event (usually) without this information
2. How long in advance does my audience like to be communicated with?
3. How much time before the live date do I need to gather the best audience?

Promotions

Web site

- If you have an event web page set up for the face-to-face event, use that to promote the hybrid.
- Set up a page from your “registration button” that will have both options listed – face-to-face or hybrid – then your attendee chooses the path that works best for them.
- Include details about the hybrid event, including the sessions and any hybrid-only programming.
- Build the case for “if you can’t attend face-to-face, you should attend remotely”
- Include as “house ads” if you have unsold space

Email

- Promote the hybrid event registration at the same time you promote the face-to-face. Focus the majority of the email content on the face-to-face and include a short blurb about the hybrid.
- When you get closer to the date of the event, when the majority of your audience has decided if they can travel to it, switch your tactic and start promoting the hybrid
- Think about all of the audiences you have been trying to attract to your brand/product/content and ensure you write customized messages to them
- If you have one day registration for your longer face-to-face meeting – convert them to attending the hybrid too
- Keep registration open through the event. Email invitations each the day of the event to increase attendance with something like “Today: Join us for...” Usually the closer to a hybrid event, the larger the registration buildup.

- In order to capitalize on retention, during the week before and on the day of the event, send out a reminder to those that have registered. Give them instructions on how to access the environment and tech support tips, with contact information of someone who will be available to help them with any difficulties.

Social Media

- Choose the SM where your target audience is most active and be sure to include hashtags that will increase views of your promotions.

Print

- If your target audience likes direct mail pieces, make sure to include this in your marketing mix
- In ads where you promote the F2f or in mailers, ensure that you include a small blurb about the hybrid event

Peer-to-peer outreach

If your registration company can do this, create a “share with a friend” option at the end of your registration. Often attendees can choose to share that they have registered for the event on social media or via an email. Peer-to-peer recommendations are very successful.

Codes

When you are creating your registration revenue model, make sure to include complimentary and discount codes that you can track for registration and attendance.

Collaborative outreach

Consider your target audience and reach out to groups that you feel would be beneficial to meeting your objective (i.e. affiliated organizations, partners, sponsors, etc.). Offer complimentary or discounted access. Most time the long term benefits of these arrangements can far outweigh the short term revenue loss.

Post-event

- Follow up on any requests received during the event
- Send out thank you emails with CEU information included, resources, or any sponsor follow up
- Distribute an evaluation to measure your event’s success
- Collect any positive tweets, emails, or information to share back with key stakeholders
- Send periodic follow-up emails to offer new opportunities to your attendees to further engage with your products, events and brand