

BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

Events Are Back! Here's How to Maximize Your Event Marketing and Sales ROI





Understandably, in-person events all but disappeared during the pandemic – replaced in large part by virtual events. Some were better than others as organizers experimented with different platforms and techniques to pull them off.

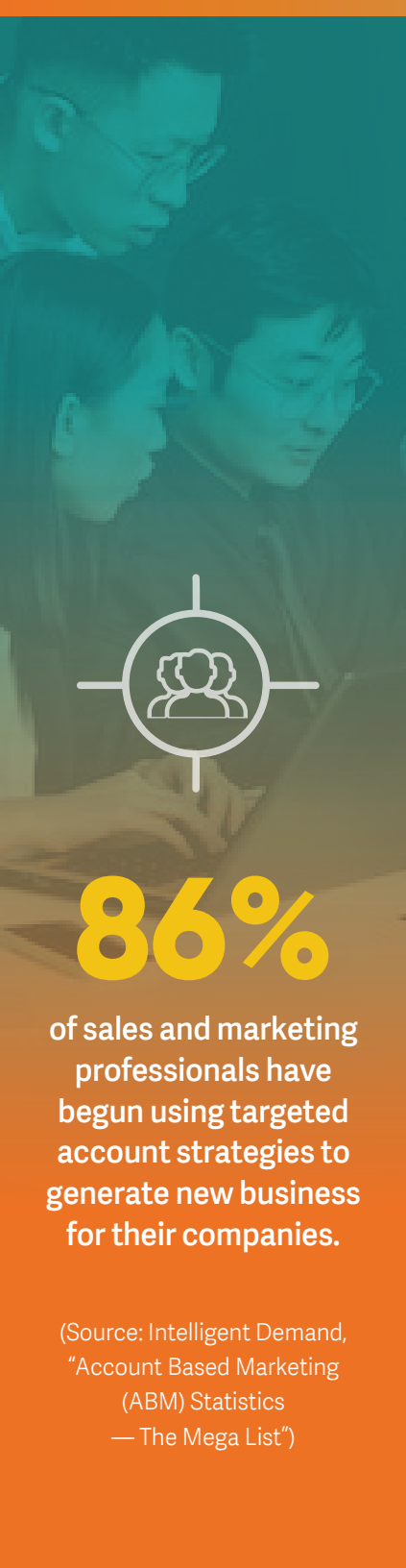
Early on, without many in-person events to attend, sponsor, and exhibit at, event marketers jumped on the virtual bandwagon too and experimented with different ways to get their messages in front of attendees and engage them.

For a while, the new approach seemed to be working. But then, virtual event fatigue set in. Attendance and engagement dropped, causing many marketers to put event marketing plans on hold, replacing them with stepped up means of going to market in other ways.

This wasn't necessarily a bad thing though because marketing must be agile and evolve.

It appears that the pandemic will continue to be an influence on how marketing is done. But in-person events are making a comeback and will most likely co-exist with virtual events. Attending events is still an ideal way to network, learn, share experiences, and get exposure to products and services – regardless of how global health and safety crises may impact our ability to do these things.

The new challenge now though is that as events re-start, budgets are tightening as companies feel the impact of inflation, supply



chain challenges, hiring issues, and economic pressures. However, there are several essential methods for marketers to get a bigger bang for their event marketing buck, including smart investments in:

1. Pre-event attendee recruitment and messaging
2. Maintaining top of mind presence and engagement with attendees during events
3. Standing out from the crowd through post-event attendee follow-up

There's an important place for events in the marketing mix. In this guide, we'll explore how smart marketers can optimize their event investment even in the face of budget restraints.

Takeaways:

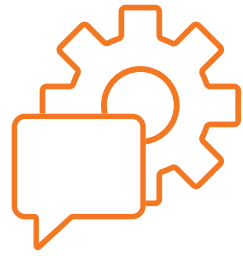
- 1 Event organizers are always searching for new ways to attract attendees, including leaning into their speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors to help broaden and amplify promotional efforts. A rising tide lifts all boats, and smart marketers should be part of lifting the tide to help lift their own boat, too.
- 2 While many event marketers are good at boosting attendee and booth visitor engagement while an event is taking place, there are other opportunities some marketers just don't have the internal bandwidth to execute on their own, or perhaps haven't thought about. Consider real-time digital and telephony-based marketing while an event is taking place targeted to attendees you just engaged with or are still trying to engage.
- 3 A marketer's work doesn't end just because an event is over. In fact, this is where the hard work begins for marketers as they attempt to compete for post-event attendee attention amongst the onslaught of follow-up from others targeted to the same attendees who are distracted by crowded in-boxes and a large body of work awaiting them after returning from an event. But it's possible to break through the noise and stand out with a few smart, well-timed approaches.



86%

of sales and marketing professionals have begun using targeted account strategies to generate new business for their companies.

(Source: Intelligent Demand, "Account Based Marketing (ABM) Statistics — The Mega List")



Pre-Event Marketing Optimization

Event organizers are as challenged now as when the pandemic was taking its toll on their ability to attract attendees. Much of this is related to stretching constrained budgets as their companies are tightening belts.

Innovative approaches to attract attendees are essential, so organizers are leaning on their speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors to spread the word. No event marketer wants to invest their precious limited funding on having a presence at events that don't attract enough of the right buyers and influencers to make the investment worthwhile.

Now more than ever, event organizers and their stakeholders should collaborate to build a strong attendee base. Here's how event marketers can participate:

- 1** If you haven't already been contacted by the event organizer about ways you can help attract more of the right people to the event, then contact them to offer your assistance.
- 2** Request complimentary or lower price registrations to extend to your best current or future customers.
- 3** Ask for a pre-registered attendee list, email templates, digital versions of event promotional material, and other resources to send on the organizer's behalf.



The average B2B purchase now involves 6.8 stakeholders. To win the account, you'll need to connect with each one.

(Source: Hubspot, "The Comprehensive Guide to Account-Based Sales for 2022")


- 4 Request custom landing pages, URL's, discounted registration promo codes, and other trackable incentives to use as calls to action.
- 5 Offer to help the organizer strengthen their program by including speakers, panelists, and other presenters from your company who are subject matter experts on topics that relate to the event's overall learning objectives.
- 6 **Request exhibit booth or sponsorship upgrades and/or an increase in the number of attendees allowed to attend from your company in exchange for the amount of cooperative marketing you'll coordinate and for the quantity of attendees you'll get to the event from other companies.**

In addition to providing your collaboration – whether or not the organizer is willing to provide the above-mentioned support – you should market your presence anyway leading up to the event.

Use your own digital marketing and telephony capabilities available through your sales team and/or in-house or external contact/customer service centers. Contact your best customers to let them know about your presence at the event, and also contact your best prospective customers with similar messaging.

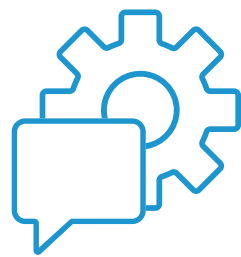
Being at an event is a terrific way to create net new customer opportunities and to move existing pipeline opportunities forward. Events are ideal settings to meet with current and future customers in an intimate, one-to-one way, so you should be capitalizing on this.

We recognize that engagements with your best current customers are ideally left in the hands of the sales reps or account/customer success managers responsible for these relationships. So, encourage them to use the opportunity of your presence at an upcoming event as a fresh, rationale way to reach out. If they say they're too busy, encourage them to work with internal or external inside sales rep team to help.



For customers you'd like to have in the future – especially those not already in your pipeline – if you're working with a third-party agency to generate leads for you, have them to make these calls on your behalf because it should be in alignment with your agency engagement and objectives, and they should have event recruitment capabilities within their wheelhouse. **A careful, yet simple set of adjustments to scripts, calling objectives, and CTAs should be all it takes to generate leads and opportunities via event-related calling.**

Pre-event marketing is critical to optimizing your event marketing investment at the front end, so leverage these opportunities.



In-Progress Event Marketing Optimization

We've worked with many companies to help them attract targeted buyers and influencers to events they're participating in, as well as to follow-up with people they've met at those events or who they didn't have a chance to engage with at the event.

However, we've seen many organizations not take full advantage of attendee engagement opportunities while they're actually AT the event. This is typically because they either don't have the bandwidth while on-site, or the know-how.

In terms of limited bandwidth at the event, we get it. Typically, it's an all-hands-on-deck scenario and on-site staff is busy either attending events or engaging current and future customers in-person before/during/after sessions and in their exhibit booth. But there are ways to address otherwise missed opportunities to creatively engage attendees while the on-site team is busy:



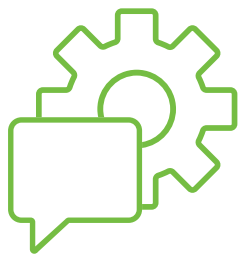
To gauge your overall ABS success, **track average contract value (ACV) or deal size and lifetime value (LTV)**. TOPO reports some organizations see a **75% increase** in ACV and **150%** in LTV.

(Source: Gartner, "The Account-Based Everything Framework")

- 1** For attendees your team has already spoken to, follow-up emails should be sent within a short time of talking with them. **Keep in mind that attendees are meeting with so many other product and service providers at the event, so conversations are easily forgotten. But when a conversation is quickly followed up on and a message is awaiting a customer or prospect in their email inbox when they're likely checking messages throughout the day or later that evening, you'll stand out.**
- 2** You'll also stand out with calls and voicemails left for those you just spoke with. While you may feel this may be perceived as annoying, we've found that instead it's seen as thorough follow-through, genuine interest on your part, and a convenient reminder about who they spoke with and what they spoke about.
- 3** We recommend similar event in-progress email and phone call approaches with attendees you want to meet with but haven't yet had the chance to. Use your attendee list provided by the organizer as your go-to source for emails and/or phone numbers. Assign calls and emails to your internal inside sales team, on-site reps, and third-party calling agency. Provide them with scripts and enticing CTAs to encourage attendees to meet with you at your booth or another location at specific times. This is your opportunity to remind them of your convenient presence at the event and desire to talk with them. Attendees tend to check emails and voicemails while at events, so you'll capture their attention while there's still time.

Like we said previously, **while your on-site event team may be very busy with their many responsibilities, chances are you still have staff at the office or working from home, as well as your third-party lead generation and inside sales agency partners who DO have the bandwidth to help optimize your presence.**

We strongly recommend capitalizing on this and embedding it into your event marketing plan ahead of time. An "all-hands-on-deck" approach should imply that EVERYONE be involved – including your on-site and off-site teams, as well as your strategic external partners.



Post-Event Marketing Optimization

Assuming you've done the right pre-event marketing work and executed the right set of marketing activities while an event is in-progress, you'll significantly increase your opportunity for a strong ROI by supplementing all your hard work AFTER the event.

While it may seem obvious to most sales execs and marketers, there are still too many organizations that fail to execute on the final, vital post-event marketing step. We understand that participating in events requires hours of prep work and attention to a never-ending set of details. It's tiresome, and that's generally the reason for not adequately closing the loop.



If your average deal size is greater than \$50,000, an account-based approach is recommended

(Source: The Sales Development Playbook by Trish Bertuzzi)

Here are a few critical things to keep on your event marketing optimization radar AFTER an event:

- 1 Most event organizers share a final attendee list. Follow-up in a timely manner with the organizer to request this if you haven't received it within a few days after the event.**
- 2 Comb the list thoroughly and carefully to select the attendees you talked with and those you didn't. Organize your follow-up based on both of these scenarios: "Met" and "Didn't Meet." Then, further segment this list for the most highly relevant follow-up you're able to execute on based on the nature of the conversations you were able to have with those you met with.**
- 3** Create and share email templates, talking points, and CTA's your internal sales and third-party lead generation/nurturing partners can easily use to guide their follow-up.
- 4** Upload the list to your CRM, assign the event as the lead source, then monitor follow-up progress and lead conversion.

Here too, be mindful of limited internal bandwidth. If you recognize this will be a challenge, work with your third-party partners to execute on the follow-through. Don't allow all your pre-event and at-event hard work to be short-changed by a lack of loop-closing activities due to event fatigue and limited internal resource availability.

This final push shouldn't just be limited to a one-and-done set of calls and emails. Instead, plan for and deploy ongoing lead nurturing to keep all leads and opportunities alive and engaged.

There you have it – your comprehensive and vital set of event marketing maneuvers that will optimize your time, effort, investment, and yield your strongest possible ROI.

About Televerde

Televerde is the first and only fully integrated sales and marketing technology organization with a proven execution model for generating demand and accelerating sales. The company combines end-to-end sales and marketing solutions to drive engagement, pipeline, and revenue for the world's leading B2B companies including SAP, Adobe-Marketo, and Pulse Secure. Since 1995, Televerde has generated more than \$10B in revenue for its clients. A purpose-built company, Televerde believes in second chance employment and strives to help disempowered people find their voice and reach their human potential. Seven of Televerde's 10 engagement centers are staffed by incarcerated women, representing 70 percent of the company's 600+ global workforce. The success of this model was documented in a recent study by the Arizona State University Seidman Research Institute. The results reveal that participants of Televerde's program go on to attain employment, earnings, and education at higher rates and reoffend at significantly lower rates than other formerly incarcerated females in the United States. [The full study can be accessed here.](#)

Based on the ideas and insight presented in this eBook, here are some of the services we provide companies like yours to optimize their sales pipeline:



Data Sourcing & Market Insights



Functional Role-Based Contact Acquisition & Validation
to Supplement Event Attendee Lists



Event Recruitment and Registration Services



Pre-Event, In-Progress Event, and Post-Event Lead
Follow-Up Plus Lead Generation, Qualification & Nurturing

For more information, visit televerde.com or call 888-925-7526.

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