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INCLUDES:
**SUCCESSFUL EVENT
CHECKLIST**

02 EVENTS



10

TIPS FOR AVOIDING EPIC EVENT FAILS!



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Ten Tips FOR AVOIDING EPIC EVENT FAILS!

Events can be an incredibly powerful platform when it comes to boosting your business' image, creating awareness of your brand and building, nurturing and maintaining relationships that are nutritious for your bottom line. There are, however, essential ingredients to getting the event recipe right. If these ingredients are not included in your event cook-up, you should prepare yourself for some brutal post-event lament!

Below are ten tips that you should keep in mind if you want to avoid the dreaded event fail.

1. **Event Objectives are VITAL!**

It is absolutely crucial to have clear objectives for your event before even thinking about organising one. Your objectives will affect your budget, your approach, your event outcomes and your bottom line.

Before developing event objectives, it is imperative to have a thorough understanding of your business and branding objectives so that your event objectives can cleanly align with these. If this is not done then precious dollars will unquestionably be wasted.

Although some objectives may be hard to measure (e.g. brand awareness), objectives should be clear as well as measurable wherever possible. Think about what you want to gain from the event:

- New leads or sales? If so, how many?
- Exposure? If so, through whom or what?
- Brand awareness?
- Maintaining loyalty of current customers?
- Promoting a new product or service?

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2. Choose the Right Event Type.

In order to determine the right event platform to apply to your objectives, you have to first establish exactly who your target market for the event is. This may be different to your usual target market (often applies to a new product launch). Once you have your target market in mind and know your event objectives, you can decide on what form of event is most appropriate to accommodate both of these.

There are several event forms to choose from:

- Trade Shows
- Exhibitions
- Lead-Generation Seminars
- Launch Events
- Social /Loyalty Events
- Online Events
- Sales Conferences
- Product Launches
- Award Dinners

NOTE: It is important to remind yourself that when it comes to trade-shows and exhibitions, you need to find out the number of expected attendees within your target market specifically, rather than just the overall number of expected attendees.

TRUTH:

If you are thinking of exhibiting at a trade show where there are expected to be 20,000 attendees, of which 100 are actually from your target market, you are likely to fail at meeting your event objectives.

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3. Embrace the Budget!

Without harnessing them securely into place, event costs can sky-rocket and completely obliterate any financial objectives you had for your event. Create a budget that incorporates all fixed and marginal costs that may relate to your event, and then add on a substantial buffer for any unexpected surprises!

Event budgets often include the following:

- Venue and Equipment Hire
- Signage and Branding Costs
- Exhibitor Registration Costs
- Logistical Costs
- Catering Costs
- Promotional Materials / Giveaways
- Printed Materials Costs
- Speaker Costs

4. Fantastic Signage is Your Most Visible Event Asset!

Even if you have promoted heavily, you have a great product, the best location and exciting giveaways, if your event signage isn't up to scratch, your results won't be either! Your signage is your most visible event asset so don't try to 'make-do' with less than the most effective signage and branding option to meet your objectives.

Think about the message you want to send your target audience. Even if your old signage looks good, it can actually sabotage your desired objectives if it doesn't send the correct message to your target audience at the event.

There are many event signage options:

- Pull-Up Banners
- Point of Sale
- Vinyl Banners
- Flags
- Outdoor Banners
- Teardrop Banners

Given the significance of your event signage, it is recommended to get expert signage and branding advice from a signage consultant.

To prepare for meeting with your signage consultant, consider the following:

- How often will you need to use the signage?
- Does the signage need to be highly transportable?

Your signage consultant should be able to help you sort out the rest.

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5. Position for Profit with an Expert Keynote Speaker.

If you are holding an event that includes a speaker (such as a seminar), the speaker is usually just as important, if not more so, than the subject matter. You can use this opportunity to position yourself as an industry leader and expert by engaging a trusted industry advisor or authority as your keynote speaker. Ensure that your speaker's personality and style also compliments your brand image and the objectives you have for the event. You'll like the results.

6. Promote for Influx!

If you have the opportunity to promote your event prior to the event date, use it!

There are many platforms available for promoting your event that can help to propel your target market in the right direction, towards you!

Here is a sample:

- Email
- Social Media
- Signage
- Your Website
- Exhibition Website
- Networking
- Trade Show Booklets

If you have access to a database of registered or previous attendees, you can use it to make several points of contact with your target market and position yourself for event success before the event even begins.

Contact your target market with:

- Deals, promotions or free gifts which are only redeemable at the event.
- Event Reminders.
- Helpful Information: Think about what your target market would appreciate.
 - Directions to the event or other helpful tips?
 - Industry related information?

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7. Logistics: Expect the Unexpected.

As many who have ever run events will know, logistical issues can throw a very large spanner in the works. There is nothing worse than waiting for someone or something to arrive at the last minute before an event and them (or it) not arriving! Don't make the mistake of assuming that all your deliveries and manpower will be on time and get to the right place. Things happen: road blocks, illness and miscommunication being a few examples.

What to do:

- Communicate: Even if you are one of the fortunate few who have managed to find reliable delivery, manpower and transport options, remind, check and remind again! Communication with all key contributors is one path to avoiding 'road blocks'.
- Take extra precautions where you can:
- If you are able to get event goods delivered early, do so.
- If you are able to have extra manpower on call if needed, do so.

8. Giveaways for Return!

Resist the temptation to waste money by aimlessly throwing all sorts of freebies and branded items at people. An expensive trap is thinking that people buy into the notion of 'if I give you something surely you'll give me your time and ear in exchange'. Pressure often repels people and rubbish bins are often full-to-overflowing with unwanted show-bags, brochures and other bits and pieces that cost money.

That being said, giveaways do have their place. A well-aimed giveaway at a member of your target market can be effective. You could create awareness amongst your target market through providing them with samples of your product or other branded items. You could position yourself by providing free 'inside advice' or industry tips. Always refer back to your objectives to ensure that the giveaway is well-targeted to hit the right notes with the right people.

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9. Get Engaged!

Today's conference and event audiences are hungry to be engaged and involved in the experience. At your event, find ways to engage your target market and create a valuable experience that draws them to you.

You can do this in many ways:

- Demonstrate your product's attributes where possible. A demonstration is non-invasive in that the audience just has to observe. This can be highly engaging.
- Don't be shy. Interact with your target market at every opportunity. Put your best foot forward and be confident (After all, you are the solution to their problem)!
- Ensure that your physical event surroundings are as attractive as possible. At trade shows and exhibitions this will also help you to stand out from the crowd.
- Hold Competitions: Competitions get people's attention as most people love the possibility of getting something for nothing. This also plays on the competitive nature of most people.

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10. Follow-Up, Follow-Up, Follow-Up!

Post-event, it is absolutely crucial to stay in contact with your target market attendees. It is therefore essential that during the event, you ensure that you have a method to collect contact information from your attendees (for example by collecting business cards). Maintain relationships with those that know your brand well and continue to nurture relationships with those that are still new to your brand through regular contact. This is a delicate process and careful planning should be given to your follow-up strategy. You want to engage your target market, not annoy them.

There are a number of ways to stay in contact with attendees post-event:

- Thank them for attending the event (via email, phone or mail)
- Invite them to your next event
- Send them your latest news or blog post, video or industry article (something of value to them!)
- Invite them to join you on your social media pages.
- Send them promotional emails with incentives or offers.

Now that you have the essential ingredients for avoiding epic event fails, cook-up something that satisfies!

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Do you need branding advice you can trust?

For over 20 years, Signarama consultants have been working closely with companies to create customised branding and signage strategies that expertly translate their company image into signage that makes a lasting impression, and we can do the same for you.

With 88 locations across Australia, there is a consultant near you that can give you personal, tailored service and advice that is specific to your business needs. Your very own signage consultant has access to the latest technologies, products and materials that others simply do not have. Add this to their exceptional branding and design expertise and there are no limits in creating the perfect signage strategy for your company.

Whether you have a big branding project or a small branding project, fully developed artwork or none at all, your Signarama consultant can provide you with a level of service and skill that will exceed your expectations. With decades of experience behind us, you can rest assured that the signage advice provided to you is trustworthy. Signarama will work with you to create signage that really drives your message home and gives your company the edge that it has been waiting for.

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Checklist

Check off the items from this list as you progress towards your epic event!

- Objectives
- Event Type
- Target Market
- Budget
- Venue
- Fantastic Signage and Branding
- Logistics Plan and Precautions
- Manpower
- Keynote Speakers
- Catering
- Printed Materials
- Audio-visual Facilities
- Other Technical Requirements
- Presentations
- Name Badges
- Evaluation
- Follow-up Strategy and Timeline

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