

# How social media has helped transform event management media essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Social media has changed the way information is communicated completely. The fact that people have adapted social media and prefer to use social media to communicate and get in touch with the world is proof of the fact that social media is here to stay. Social media has become very important for communication, marketing and a sales discipline as well.

Event managers know from their experience that the most effective way of communicating, selling or marketing is face to face, but the reach of this is very limited as you can't meet and approach every potential customer. Other forms of marketing that are less personal had a wider reach but social media has made it possible for event managers to get in touch with as many people as they want. Face to face conversations allow a consumer to get engaged with the brand. Social media also allows people to share experiences about a brand and become advocates of it.

There are at least 41.3 million people online in the UK alone and twitter users all over the world are estimated to be around 35mn. Social media is like amplified word of mouth. The word spreads fast and to a number of people at a time. It is something that event managers had been waiting for. Event managers can now build their event strategy after taking advice from their customers directly on what to include in the content, promote the event, share the experience with others and also evaluate how the event went.

Now the event's life has increased as the event is kept alive in the mind of the consumer through videos and pictures that are shared with many other people. This also increases the reach of the event. Event managers now have to embrace the reality and make the event available online.

Event management often involves 5 phases, I will discuss each phase and how social media has helped transform it.

## **Step 1. Planning**

Every event requires planning. Planning an event is an extremely lengthy and tedious job, many softwares and guidelines are available to do this work. It involves getting people together to make an event a success. Deciding on the venue, the food, emergency plans, promotion, attendees etc. An event will only work out if these things have been planned in detail and the right people to perform the task are there. Some ways in which social media makes this phase easier are:

Skype: Skype can be used to communicate with people who are miles away, it allows people to brainstorm and contribute unique ideas to make the event better.

PBworks: this platform also makes it easier for people to contribute ideas add notes and organize the entire event. It is used by organizers all over because of its document sharing features which makes information exchange much faster and easier.

## **Step 2. Organizing and inviting**

**Once the planning part is done, the event manager has to make sure that everything is going as planned and that the people who have been delegated responsibility are also working. Time management is crucial at this stage, because of delay by one person to do his duty can have disastrous results.**

**Also the planner needs to start inviting people, these include guests and attendees, you have to make sure that all the people who make the event a success are invited and are able to come to the event. For this purpose social media is available to keep information on the event organized and also to publish guest lists and speaker lists. Starting a blog is another great idea that event managers can make use up, these blogs are updated on a regular basis and keeps the attendants informed about how the preparation of an event is progressing. Facebook can also create an invite to an event, it allows people to respond to the invite as well.**

## **Step 3. Promotion and distribution**

Promotion is important whether its for a brand or an event, without it consumers or interested people can not be brought in. a number of promotional techniques are available but can be divided into below the line(ATL) and above the line (BTL) ATL deals with indirect ways of promotion where there is no individual contact between the buyer and the seller, these include print ads, TV ads, billboards etc. BTL is about direct interaction with the customer, may include activities and organizing of certain events to invite people to the product, consumer reach is limited compared to ATL but

is much more effective. Social media can also be called an ATL approach but it has a much wider reach so is more effective.

The event management needs to make sure that it is promoted through every channel possible. Potential attendees should be able to access information about the event and ask questions easily. Social media like twitter, youtube, facebook, orkut should be used.

Social media should be considered a primary mode of advertising. Twitter and facebook should be used because they are meant to transfer messages. A facebook page is more effective than a facebook group because everytime the page is updated it appears in the newsfeed, allowing more people to view it. Facebook event is also an important way of letting people know about the event and also knowing how many people are likely to attend the event.

#### **Step 4. Meet expectations**

The manager should optimize the event to meet people requirements, because if the event does not make the attendees satisfied they are also capable of creating bad publicity for the company. High speed wireless should be made available so people can communicate with each other and converse easily with the guests and other attendees. Often even before the event starts the attendees start having dialogues with the speakers on the event and after the event that communication is continued. The attendees should be able to tweet in their questions in real time and also get answers, other attendees should also be able to answer those questions for the speakers. This makes the whole event much more interesting.

There should be live conference available for people who are unable to attend the event. This allows people miles away to attend the conference and interact with every one around, the event manger should try and make it a holistic experience for such people also. Live streaming can also allow the event managers to reach out people who could not attend the event, later on some videos should be uploaded of the event, so that the lifecycle of the event is lengthened.

The event manager also needs to listen to what the audience has to say. If they complain about any aspect of the event like the food or a particular speaker then the event manager should take action to improve the situation. Twitter conversation should be tracked properly and if not than surveys should be used to see what consumers have to say about the event. This makes consumers feel important as their opinion is being listened to and it helps managers align the event to the needs of the consumers ensuring that the event is a success.

### **Step 5: communication after the event**

Post event communication is also important to make sure that the impression of the event is positive and lasts long especially if more events have to be held later on; If this impression is not a good one than consumers are less likely to attend the one in the future.

After the event make sure your attendees know how to remain in touch through social media, emails should be exchanged to facilitate communication. Thank you notes should be sent along with updates and

other information. Event management is as much about relation building as it is about organizing the event.