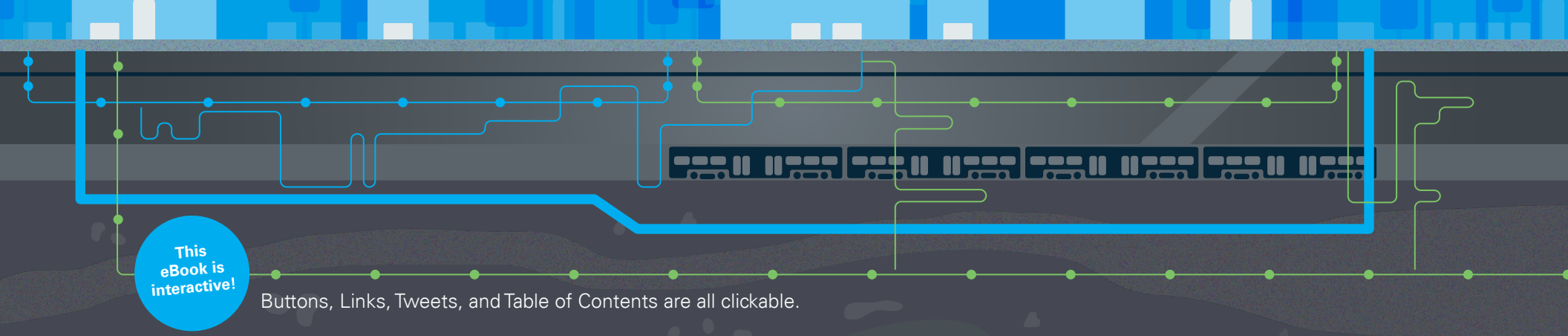
Social Media Power Plays for Events

an eBook by

cvent





This eBook is interactive!

Buttons, Links, Tweets, and Table of Contents are all clickable.

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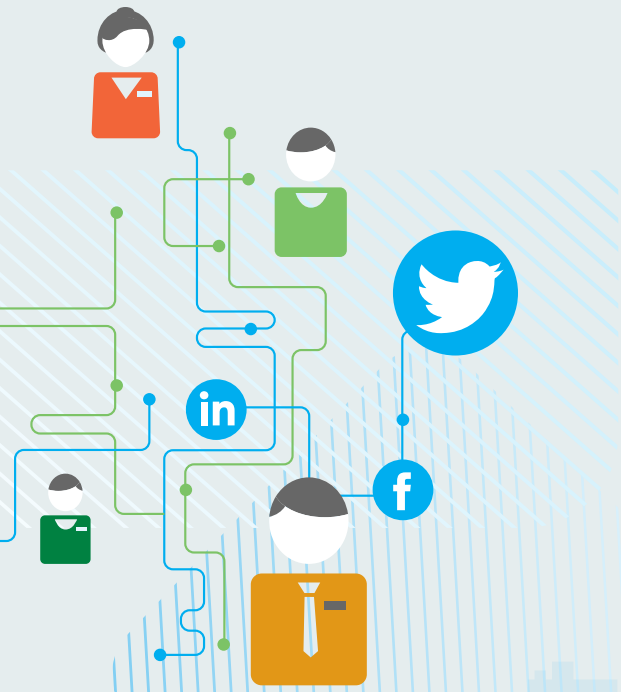
4 Social Media Checklist

Like the eBook? View our webinar.

Watch Cvent's SocialWall on-demand webinar and find out how you can harness the power of attendee generated content.

Watch Video Now!

It's Showtime!



There's No Better Time to Up the Stake on Your Social Strategy

In our fast moving, tech-enabled world, face time with colleagues, clients, prospects and thought leaders is even more precious. Business professionals have pushed technology as far as they can to connect from afar. When they attend an event, they want to make the most of every moment and every face-to-face encounter.

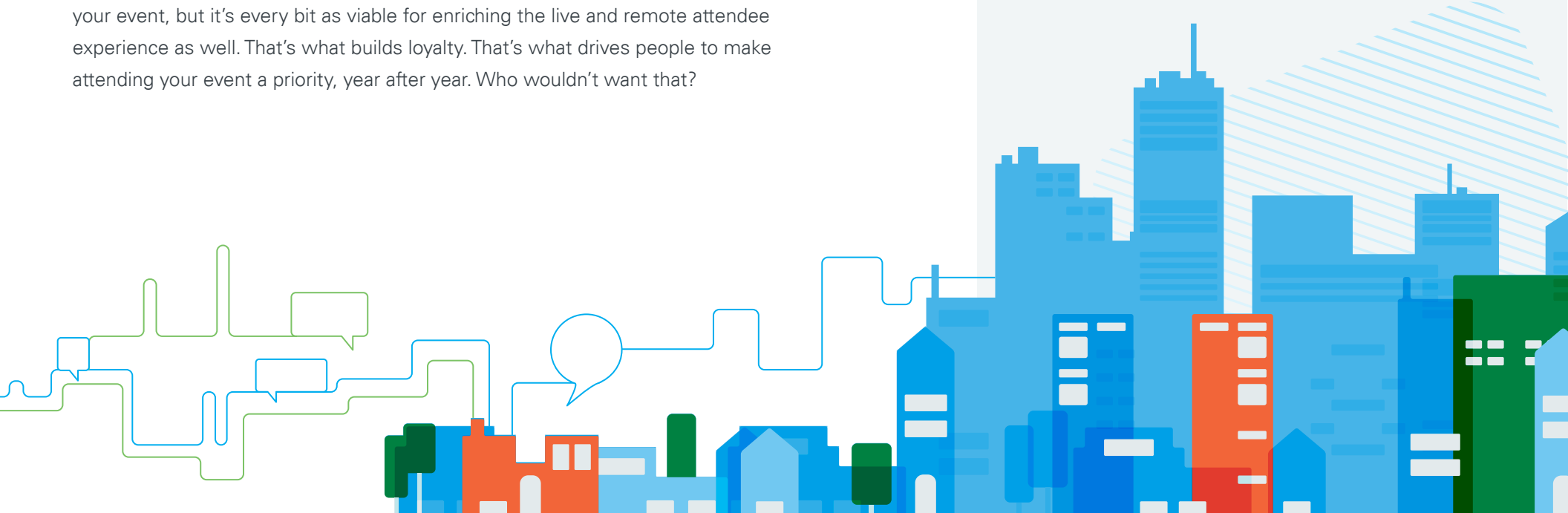
That's prompting event marketers and planners to step up their social media game even further. With the right social media strategy in place, marketers and planners not only get more people to register for the event, they see sharp spikes in social media engagement during the event. As they grow their online and offline audiences, they build their brand and enhance audience loyalty. In fact, 95% of marketers who use social media at least 6 hours per week indicated their social media efforts increased exposure for their businesses (http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/social-media-marketing-industry-report-2014).

Social media tactics that served you well during the pre-event cycle don't necessarily carry over once the event goes live. This eBook focuses on the next phase of social media marketing at events, where strategies shift as you strive to:

- Enhance the attendee experience (deliver on your promise)
- Grow event loyalty and get attendees to come back next time
- Make those who couldn't attend wish they did
- Build brand awareness for your event and your organisation

Social media has tremendous potential to increase visibility and conversion for your event, but it's every bit as viable for enriching the live and remote attendee experience as well. That's what builds loyalty. That's what drives people to make attending your event a priority, year after year. Who wouldn't want that?

> *You can buy attention (advertising). You can beg for attention from the media (PR). You can bug people one at a time to get attention (sales). Or you can earn attention by creating something interesting and valuable and then publishing it online for free.*
>
> — David Meerman Scott
>
> Marketing strategist and author of eight books, including three international bestsellers



Attendees are Managing a Disruptive Four-Screen World

Your attendees are on a wild ride, scrambling from one session or activity to the next, trying to network and capture as much value as they can. They're sitting in ballrooms, managing disruptions coming from as many as four screens: smartphone, tablet, laptop as well as audio visual at the event.

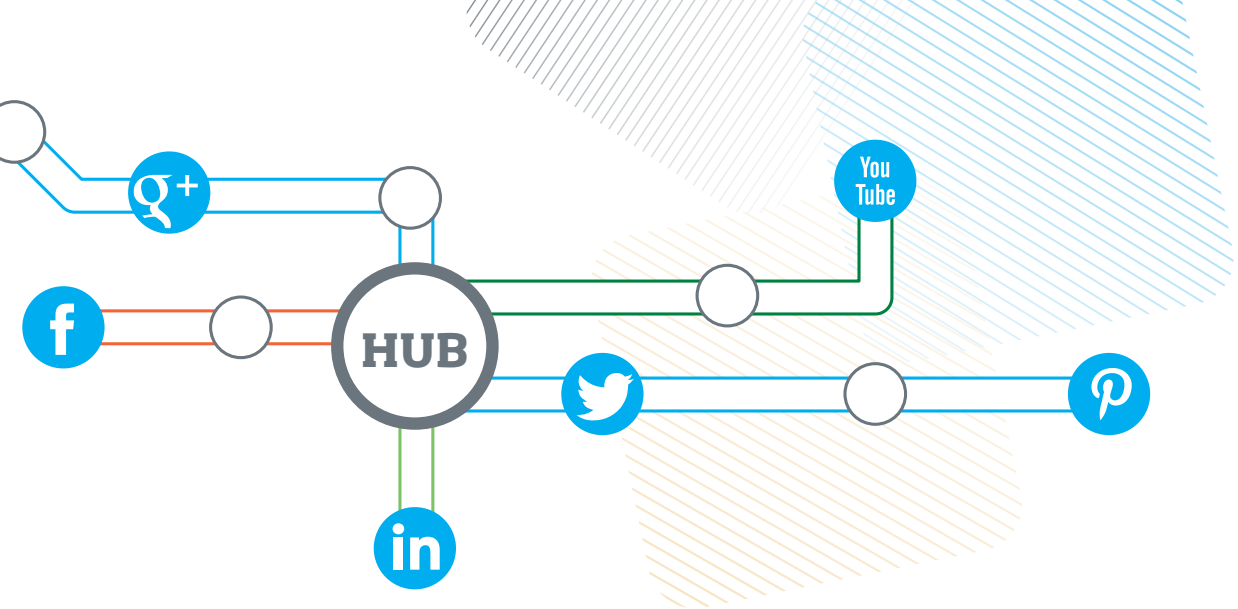
Attendees move about from one screen to the next at breakneck speed. They're checking email under the table. They're putting out fires at the office. For many, it's like a game of Whac-A-Mole where they're dealing with the information on whichever screen is most disruptive.

Don't ask your audience to turn off their devices. Instead, harness the scattered online attention and focus it on your best event moments. You can leverage all social channels to call their attention to valuable new insight and people who can help them succeed.

We live in a 4-screen world. Leverage social media & valuable content to reclaim attendees' attention.

click here to tweet!





Use an event content hub with many social media outposts to amplify valuable event content & happenings.

click here to tweet!

Your Social Infrastructure

Your event social media content hub must be built on one capable and nimble platform that's fully owned and controlled by you. This could be your event microsite, your blog or your organisation's website. Every bit of event-based content should be housed and accessible from your hub. Facebook, Twitter and others then serve as outposts to amplify your most valuable content and event experiences

We recommend studying your audience, finding out where they interact online and going there to promote your event. If Facebook is a favourite social network for your target audience, start sharing helpful information there to cultivate your community. When it's time for these new followers to take action (like registering for your event), you can easily direct them to your event hub.



Social Check-Ins: Proximity Accelerates Networking

Often, valuable new contacts are nearby and attendees don't even know it. Social tools like Foursquare help attendees capitalise on these valuable chance encounters.

Check-in at the hotel reception: *Who wants to share a cab to the airport?*

Check-in at networking reception: *Looking to chat with others who are upgrading their CRM.*

Check-in at the coffee shop: *Building my #xyz itinerary – any recommendations?*

Make sure your mobile app is optimised for speedy social check-ins and contact info swaps.

Get Clear on Your Social Media Mission and Strategy

In a recent Aberdeen Benchmark Report, more than 75 % of survey respondents revealed that they either have no social media strategy in place or a fuzzy one, at best. They might be tracking "likes" and "followers" but they struggle to connect those data points with any meaningful and measureable success outcomes. If they "like" us so much, why are our revenues flat?

Don't be like most people. Make sure you're crystal clear on the what, when, how and why behind your event social media strategy. Then ask yourself: How will we measure success?

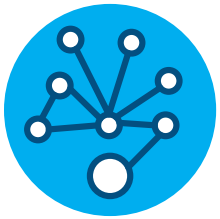
Avinash Kaushik, Digital Marketing Evangelist for Google, has identified four social media measures that matter most:



Conversation Rate

The number of comments and replies per post.

Social media is more about conversations, less about broadcasts. As conversation rates increase, you'll gain valuable insight about your audience, particularly what they value most in your event and brand. More importantly, you'll get cues on how to grow that value higher.



Amplification Rate

The number of shares or retweets per post.

Here's where the 2nd and 3rd degree connections kick in. Your followers have followers of their own. Every time they choose to share something from you, your amplification rate multiplies, which in turn expands your audience, influence and marketing reach.



Applause Rate

The number of likes, favourites or +1's per post

Look at these as endorsements — even mini–testimonials that what you're putting out there is highly valued. Added bonus: Even more insight about your market and audience.



Economic Value

The number of times people go to your hub or home base to do business with you.

This is the big one and often, it comes about as you successfully deliver on the previous three. If your event serves an internal audience, economic value comes through skills mastery, enhanced productivity, and more connected, committed and collaborative teams.

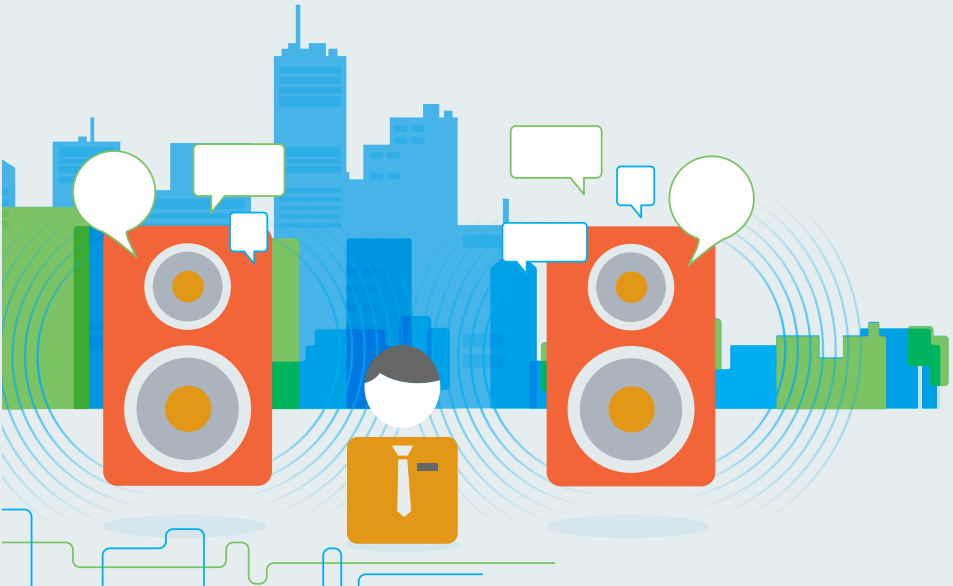


Chapter One

Key Takeaways

- Social media marketing strategies before and during your event are different.
- Audiences are dealing with a four-screen world. Tap social media to help them focus on the screen that's most important for that moment.
- You need a strong and flexible social media content hub that's controlled by you.
- Clarify your social media strategy, master the four key measures and success will follow.

Amplify the Best Parts of the Event Experience



This social media game is more about quality than quantity. More than broad amplification across many parts, it's about selective amplification of a precious few.

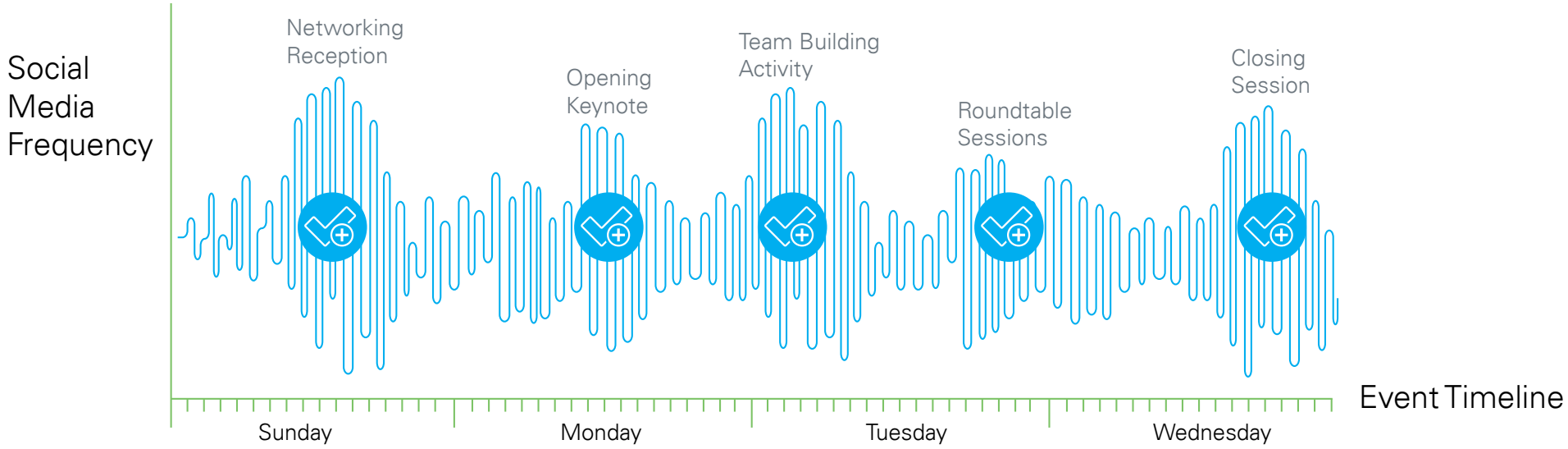
Zoom In on Your Three to Five Best Event Moments

All agenda items are not created equal. Some sessions and activities are more share worthy than others. That doesn't mean the other elements aren't appreciated, but you need to make sure you're investing your social media time on high impact experiences, as defined by your event audience.

Before you go on site, identify the three to five big moments where you anticipate the highest levels of excitement, engagement and audience interaction. That's where you want to concentrate your social media efforts most — on those best moments. But watch for unexpected engagement surges. Sometimes audiences can surprise us.

Use social media to amplify the 3-5 best parts of your event.

click here to tweet!



This timeline shows how a "five best experiences" strategy might play out during an event.

You'll notice, social sharing didn't stop between these five big moments, but it scales down considerably. When you highlight the best experiences, you earn more attention, more social shares and ultimately, more respect and trust. You're whispering in your attendees' ears as they jump between their four screens, "Hey, I know you're busy, but this is something you won't want to miss."

Remember, your best event experiences aren't defined by you. They're defined by your audience. You need to constantly look at your event through their lens, because when they're engaged and delighted, that satisfaction spreads like wildfire. Even to remote audiences who are only scanning the social streams — many will wish they were there at the live event.

> *An airplane travelling from New York to Chicago is off course 98 % of the time. Still it gets there. Why? The pilot is always adjusting his destination in mind. Do you listen to your best audience and tweak what you do to keep your content in their sweet spot?*

— Liz Strauss

Social web strategist, prolific blogger, and founder of SOBCon, the high-touch business summit

This Best Experience Strategy Works in Reverse: Handling Social Feedback

As your attendees move about your event, there are those inevitable poor experiences. Even the best laid plans are subject to a few unexpected snags. Some you can control or fix. Others you can't.

In social media circles, people tend to go to extremes, sharing more about the best and the worst. The vanilla experiences usually blend into the background. Be sure to give this worst experience category full attention.



Identify and address potential pain points in advance.

What did they complain about last time? What steps can you take to minimise the likelihood of these things happening again? As you scale up social media activity, make sure you're monitoring all social streams at every point of the event to quickly spot these comments.



Acknowledge and do everything you can to make it hurt less.

Detractors will pop up. If someone tweets about long registration lines, acknowledge this and suggest going straight to the opening general session and checking in later. Be consistent in how you respond, make your first response public and on the same channel where the issue was raised, and if further attention is needed, take the conversation offline.



In her book, *The Corporate Sponsorship Toolkit: Using Sponsorship to Help People Fall In Love with Your Brand* Kim Skildum-Reid explores this concept of amplifying best experiences and fixing worst experiences. If you're involved in any aspect of event sponsorship, it's a must read.

Use social media to rescue attendees from bad experiences (like waiting in line) or to make these hurt less.

click here to tweet!

Twitter Tips

- Choose a short and memorable event #hashtag
- Tweets at 120 characters or less are more retweet friendly
- Make sure someone is monitoring/responding to the Twitter feed
- Create a widget to display the Twitter feed in session rooms and high traffic areas
- Identify "retweetable" takeaways for sessions and get these on slides
- Ask for Twitter IDs when people register and create lists
  (All tweeters, speakers, exhibitors & sponsors, etc.)
- Use Twitter as a real-time question collection channel
- Award prizes for "Best Tweets of the Day" to drive more activity



Your Mobile App as a Social Media Amplifier

A mobile app gives your event added exposure on screens that rarely go dark. There's one special tool in the social media arsenal we haven't talked about yet — your mobile app.

Remember those four screens? Smartphones and tablets rarely (if ever) go dark. For attendees, a well-designed mobile app on their smartphone or tablet becomes their one-stop source for all things event related. It's also a social media super-aggregator, capturing, amplifying and archiving signals across all social channels.

The event experience starts earlier than you think and at different times for different people. For some, it's when they register and start building their itinerary. For others, it's when they board the plane or when they check into their hotel room. If your mobile app doesn't go live until days before your event, you're missing out on early opportunities to make a great first impression.

Get your mobile app out at least thirty days before your event and encourage your attendees to download it and use it through traditional and social marketing efforts. As they travel to your event, it will serve as their personal event concierge, providing expert recommendations every step of the way.

A mobile app gives your event added exposure on screens that rarely go dark.

click here to tweet!



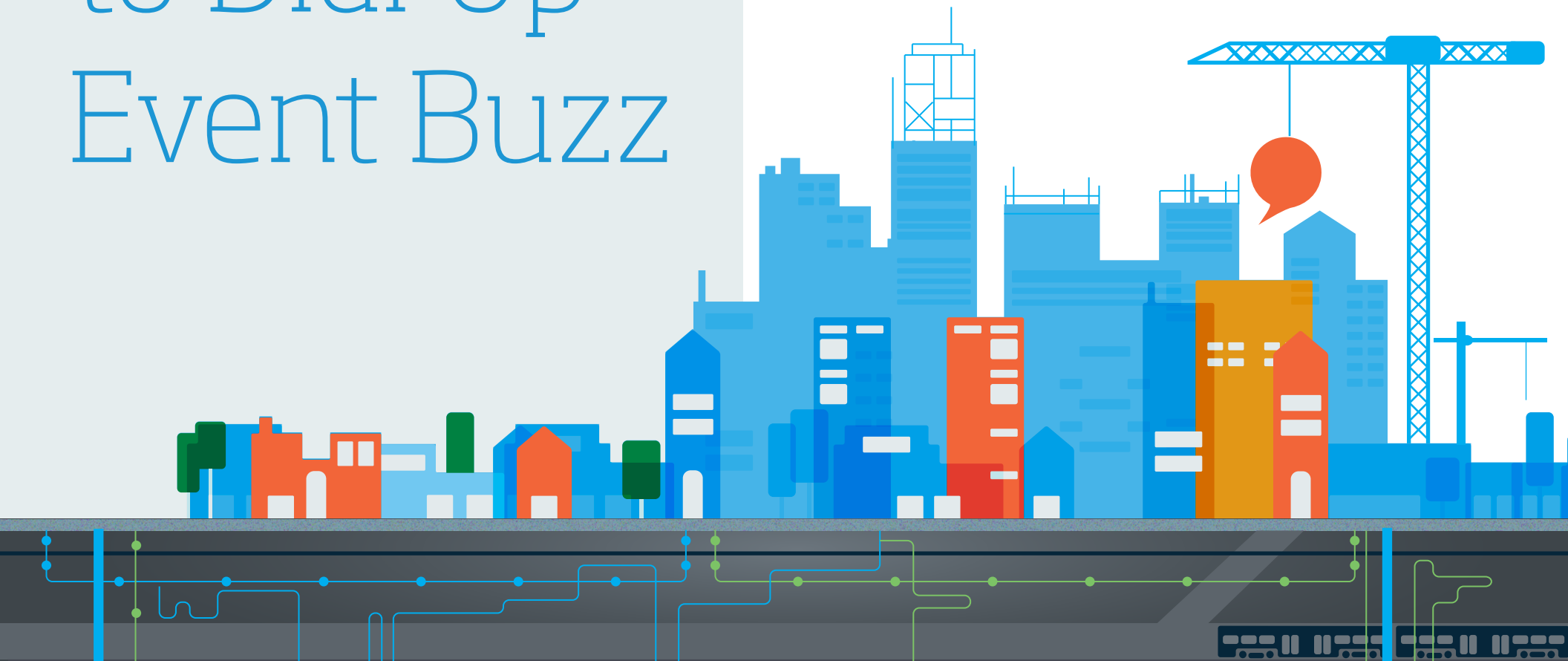
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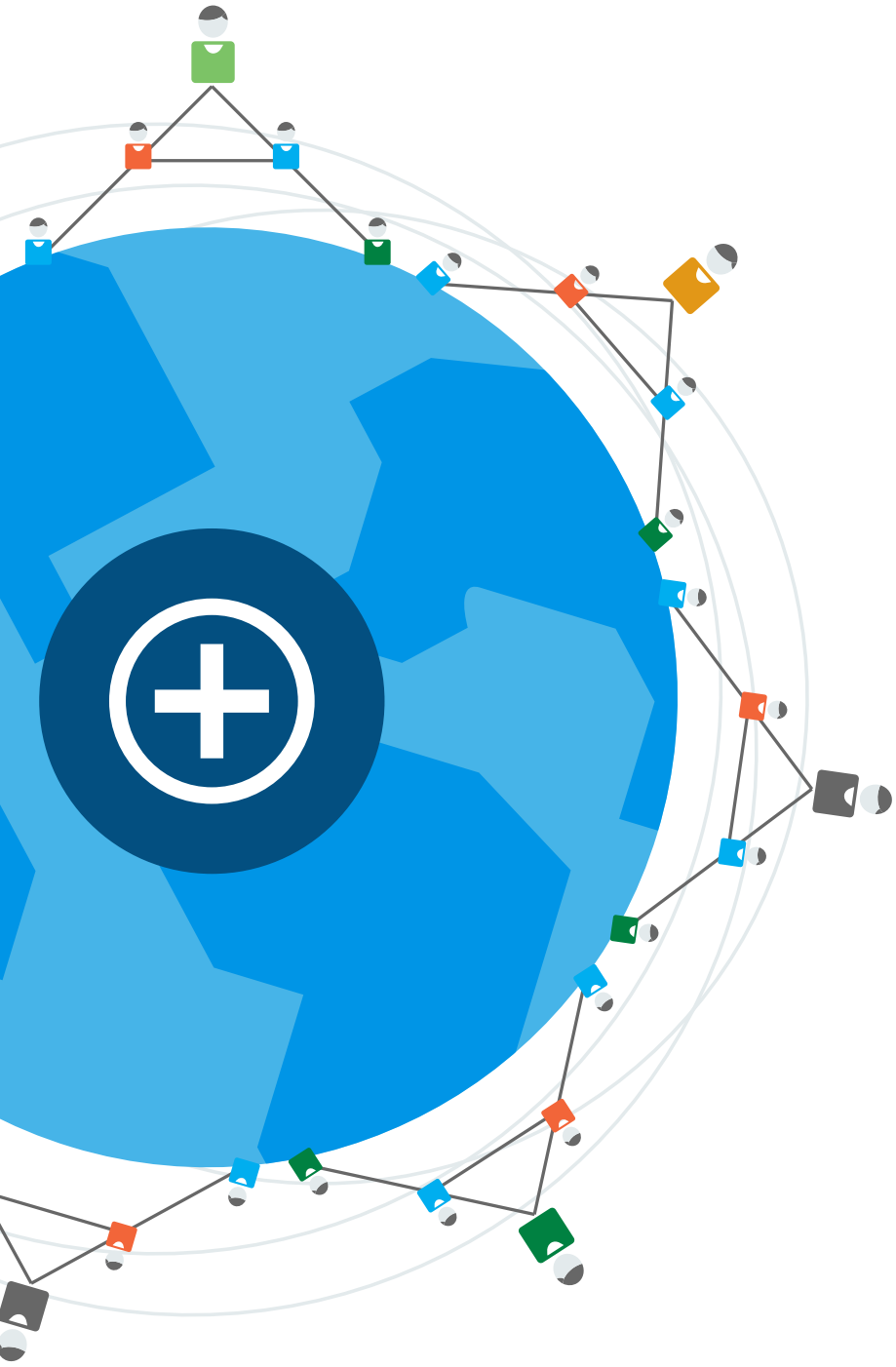
Key Takeaways

- Identify three to five best moments of the event and use social media to broadcast these.
- Leverage social media to rescue attendees from worst experiences, too.
- Capitalise on the power of your mobile app as a social media amplifier.Get the mobile app out early, as a start-to-finish event experience concierge.

Engage the Influencers to Dial Up Event Buzz

When we hit the social media sweet spot, where the online buzz and what's going on at the event work in tandem, momentum builds. More people tune in and participate. If the majority of social shares are coming from you, there's only so far you can go. Instead, you want to prime the pump with content that sparks more conversations, amplifications and applause. You'll earn credibility with influencers and once it's earned, the frequency and quality of these exchanges will skyrocket.





The Most Important Influencers: Your Word of Mouth Warriors

Many marketeers and planners set their sights on the big players, the celebrities… the cool kids. We'll talk about those influencers in a minute, but the most important influencers? They're in attendance.

They're the people who come back to your event year after year. They're the loyal attendees talking about what's happening at your event, as it happens and for months after. They're sharing discoveries with others in hallways, on Facebook, at the office water cooler and across organisations. Though unintended, these word of mouth warriors are also growing legions of new fans for your event, your organisation and your brand.

The Keller Fay Group analyses consumer conversations, both online and offline. Their studies show that the majority of word of mouth influence happens offline, with social media serving as a powerful catalyst. Up to 70 % of the chatter about your event is initiated by the hundreds, even thousands of loyal attendees who can't wait to share their experiences with their small networks.

Attendees are important influencers, generating up to 70% of the event buzz. Social media is a catalyst.

click here to tweet!

Four More Segments of Social Media Influence

Scan the social media landscape and identify high influence players that align with your event mission. Pay close attention to what they're sharing, be thoughtful, authentic and generous in your exchanges, and invest time to grow these relationships. Let's take a closer look at the four high influence segments:



Speakers and Industry Thought Leaders

Social media activity has been on the rise for this group. More executives and thought leaders are blogging, participating in LinkedIn discussions and even tweeting. They're being quoted in more articles and they're authoring more books. As their social influence continues to grow, make sure you're capitalising on this.



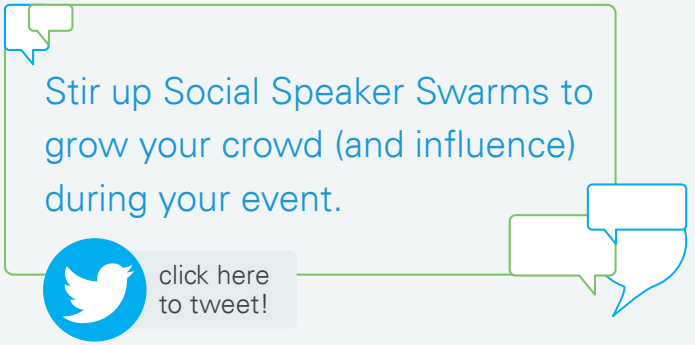
Bloggers and the Press

Bloggers are rising fast on the influence ladder. Pay close attention to this crowd, as influence rankings change quickly. On your registration form, ask attendees which bloggers they follow. One-size-fits-all requests for coverage won't cut it with most bloggers. Your outreach needs to be tailored to their specialty. How does your event align with their audience? Reference a particular post they wrote and they'll take notice.



Stir Up Social Speaker Swarms

- Schedule book signings and impromptu meet-ups with speakers.
- Record "behind the scenes" speaker interviews and post these to Facebook, YouTube, etc.
- Encourage speakers to mingle with attendees, especially at networking receptions.
- Create a photo booth where attendees can get pictures taken with speakers. Launch a photo caption contest and social shares will multiply.
- Add a clause to speaker contracts that outlines social media expectations.



Create a Blogger / Press Lounge

Equip your lounge with fast Wi-Fi access, charging stations, and all creature comforts (including a good spread of food). Encourage speakers to stop by the lounge for one-on-one interviews. Make it easy for these influencers to write posts and share observations about your event



Sponsors and Exhibitors

Some exhibitors flood the streams with low-value messages that irritate attendees. Others are more savvy because they recognise your event as an outstanding platform where they can BE the influencer on their own stage at their stand. They record (even live stream) interviews with thought leaders and post these to YouTube, Facebook and other channels where audiences might tune in. Coach exhibitors and sponsors to do more of this.

And the mobile app? With some quick tips and coaching, sponsors and exhibitors should become your power users, leveraging the mobile app to share information that's valued by attendees. Show them how easy it is to swap contact info and capture leads, anytime, anyplace.



Leadership and Staff

In some organisations, there are policies that limit staff social media use. It's interesting when you consider that these same employees are free to pick up the phone and talk to clients and prospects or send them emails. Social media enters the picture, and suddenly everything's on lock down. The best way to tackle this is with smart coaching and training. Identify your best social media messengers (smart people with solid communication skills). Show them how to use social media to better serve your audience. Provide examples of best posts and even a few "what not to do" examples.

> Event ROI will be measured less by foot traffic and more by clicks and connections enabled by the mobile app.
>
> click here to tweet!

Showcase Influencers

Take event photos and videos and use something like Animoto to create an above-average slide show. End it with a call to action for viewers. (Animoto will make anyone's still photos into something a world apart from your grandparents' vacation slide show!)

— From *Content Rules: How to Create Killer Blogs, Podcasts, Videos, Ebooks, Webinars (and More) that Engage Customers and Ignite Your Business* by Ann Handley and C.C. Chapman

> Coach your best internal messengers on social media tactics to spread the word about your event.
>
> click here to tweet!

Twitter Tip

A little separation between personal and professional tweets may be in order. Some companies create unique Twitter accounts just for business that blend the company name with the individual's name, like this: @XYZCo_Mary



Though TED is an event that has reached millions of viewers and touched many people, it is also the perfect example of platform because the organisers themselves do not generate the presentations at all but simply borrow and curate them.

— From *The Impact Equation: Are You Making Things Happen or Just Making Noise?* by Chris Brogan and Julien Smith

Five Fast Ways to Rally the Influencers

1

Clue them in on your event social media strategy.

Give influencers a sneak peek at your playbook, so they're ready for action, particularly during those "best part" social share moments.

2

Connect them with other influencers.

Influential people like to hang out with other influencers. Use your event as a springboard to make more of these introductions.

3

Provide exclusive "behind the scenes" access.

Tom Brown will soon be taking the stage for your Opening General Session. Imagine if you invited a small group of influencers backstage for a quick chat with Tom before gives his talk. That kind of exclusive "before the talk" access is sure to impress and get shared.

4

Acknowledge, thank and appreciate.

Make sure your social media dashboard is fired up at all times to catch (and respond to) social shares as they happen. Be on the alert for influencers in your audience, too. Monitoring tools like Hashtracking provide reports on your most active social media advocates.

5

Make it fun and include pictures.

Snap photos in the blogger lounge or as influencers move about your event. Don't forget to add captions, tags and links. Add games to the mix to ensure that the event experience is as fun as it is rewarding.



Chapter Three

Key Takeaways

- Earn social credibility with the influencers; because once you earn it, they'll share your messages with the community that trusts them.

- Your most important influencers are already in your audience. Use social networks to dial up the word of mouth buzz and social sharing.

- Understand the similarities and differences between other key influence segments and customise your approach to grow these relationships.



Social Media Checklist

Before the Event

- [ ] Clarify social media strategy, mission and goals
- [ ] Identify 3–5 best event moments where you anticipate highest levels of engagement
- [ ] Prepare your social media dashboard: hashtag, social networks, people, companies, keywords (strike a mix of pre-scheduled posts and live posts during the event)
- [ ] Mobile app: load content, links, profiles, etc.
  Schedule push notifications
  (best to have the mobile app live at least 30-days before your event)
- [ ] Social media profile and page audit: make sure info on all social networks is current and event focused
- [ ] Coaching, training and tip sheets out to all staff who will engage in social media
- [ ] Outreach to influence channels
- [ ] One final staff meeting to review social media playbook and plan
  (discuss dissatisfaction response plan – consistency is key)
- [ ] Each week, social media activity increases building up to your opening session
  (helpful attendee-focused information plus link to download the mobile app)

At the Event

- [ ] Twitter feeds loaded on digital displays
- [ ] QR Code signage (for fast mobile app downloads onsite)
- [ ] Wi-Fi tested and optimised
- [ ] Social Media Monitoring Dashboard
(Measure conversation, amplification and applause rates throughout your event)
- [ ] Blogger/PR Lounge ready
- [ ] If live streamlining, conduct quality checks well before your first broadcast

After the Event

- [ ] Thank you's
- [ ] Team debrief
- [ ] Review activity reports, surveys, etc.
- [ ] Engage post-event social media strategy immediately following event

Event Management	Strategic Meetings Management	Mobile Event Apps	Web Surveys	Supplier Network
Online event registration, payment processing, email marketing	Plan, market, manage & measure enterprise meetings	Mobile apps for consumer and business events	Create and launch feedback campaigns across the organisation	Find and book meeting space online

Cvent Solutions

I'm Interested to know more about Cvent solutions

Get in touch

SocialWall

Full-Screen, Interactive Displays

Great events are like stories—unfolding into some pretty memorable moments. In the age of Instagram, Twitter and smartphones, you now have the proper tool to capture the whole story. With Cvent's SocialWall, you can compile and display attendees' social content in real-time, onsite at your event.

Project their tweets, Instagram photos and your own custom posts to spark excitement and engagement. SocialWall is available now for all Event Management, CrowdCompass, and CrowdTorch customers. Contact your account rep for details.

Watch Cvent's SocialWall on-demand webinar and find out how you can harness the power of attendee generated content.

Watch Video Now!

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