



5 Reasons To Insource Event Marketing Management

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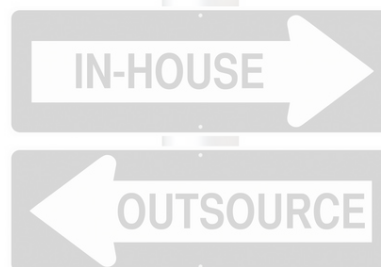


Should Events be Insourced or Outsourced?

Before we delve into the reasons why you should consider insourcing your event marketing management activities, let's take a moment to define clearly where this logic could apply and where it wouldn't work.

In our experience, companies tend to outsource events because they have been working with a provider for a long time and think that's the easiest way. But as a company using both our own marketing automation software and external agency services, our experience tells us that outsourcing may not always be the best option. While the prospect of managing an event may initially be daunting, the actuality is less so. Depending on the scale and frequency, many B2B events can be insourced quite effectively as long as you follow a few simple processes.

“If you have a good relationship with an event firm who knows your business as well as you do, or you are strapped for resources, it may be worthwhile to consider outsourcing – but we have seen many instances where companies, with a little bit of planning, can do most of these in-house”



Of course, there are other events – like major trade shows or global sales or partner conferences – that need to be outsourced, until and unless you have a full-blown event management team. In these cases, it makes far better sense to outsource some or all of the related activity to a major event marketing management firm. However, if your events do not fall into the mega production category, there are some good reasons why you should consider insourcing them.

1. Begin With the End in Mind

The purpose of most B2B events is demand generation or rewards and recognition. There are a very few – even the charity golf tournaments – that do not have a purpose. No one else but you and your marketing team has a clear idea of what you hope to achieve from each event. You need to know what success looks like before you start, and without this you won't do any better by outsourcing to an event marketing management firm. If you want to run the event internally and are looking for ideas, there's a lot of great advice on the B2B event organizers' websites.

2. Skip the Noise

People don't come to a B2B event for bells and whistles, but for substance. They do expect seamless organization, a professional and well set up venue, interesting speakers and reasonable food. So, just make sure that the purpose and agenda of the event is reflected by the way you set it up. If it is a training event, for example, a venue in a 4 or 5 star hotel ball room with good meals and a projector would do the trick and the hotel staff will help with all the practicalities like basic audio visual equipment. The skill of the trainer or the speaker will determine the success of the event. An event marketing management company can't add a lot of value to these smaller and less intricate gatherings, unless you don't have any in house resources or are running a lengthy series in multiple locations.

3. Rely on Automation

Five years ago it was hard to run an event all by yourself because you needed to pull so many pieces together, starting with the headache of invitation and registration. However, these days if you have an access to a great event marketing automation platform that can send outbound emails and manage responses automatically, as well as promote your event on various social networks, then you actually require far less support than you might think. Yes, you may have to hire a telemarketing firm to do some dialling-out for you, but if your event marketing automation platform has in-built rapid dialing capabilities then your inside sales team might even be able to drive traffic to the event without extra cost. And there is the added advantage that, since they understand your organization, they will do a much better job promoting your events than a scripted telemarketer.

4. Manage Execution

There are three core pieces that require your close involvement and management, whether or not you have hired an event marketing management firm. These are, a) creating compelling content tied to the objective of your event, including the agenda; b) working with internal or external design teams to create the graphical themes and assets that you will use to promote the event; and c) if you are going to hold an awards ceremony at the conclusion, or that is the primary purpose of the event, then you'll need trophies, certificates or other prizes. You have to be intimately involved with all of these aspects and you can't outsource any of this decision making to an event marketing management company or not. Yes, an event marketing management firm may know more about where to source what you need, but as long as the event is not excessively complex you can take care of these actions with a little bit of online research. And, if you are worrying about the venue set up and catering – well, don't. If you work with a reputable hotel or a great restaurant they will have an onsite event manager who will provide you the service and advice for free.

5. Tracking Results

This goes back to my first point – begin with the end in mind. You have organized an event or a set of events for a purpose. No one else is more passionate about meeting these results than you. So, it is essential that your event marketing automation platform can dynamically track who attended, and who didn't, and what leads or prospects or sales were triggered by the event. All of these results should be directly fed into your sales (CRM) system. This speeds up follow-up and helps build ensure attendee satisfaction, for those who have requested additional information and follow up.

To sum it up, if you are running an event for up to 100 potential attendees, the chances are you can do a good job yourself. This not only saves budget, as you will have to pay steep management fees to a professional outsourced event marketing management agency like ZINFI (yes there are cheaper options, but buyers beware). But can avoid these costs, provided you have some creative and management capabilities in place, and have an access to a great event marketing automation platform. Of course, if you have a good relationship with an event firm who knows your business as well as you do, or you are strapped for resources, it may be worthwhile to consider outsourcing – but we have seen many instances where companies, with a little bit of planning, can do most of these in-house.



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