

EBOOK



Guide to

EVENT MARKETING

for lead generation

Introduction



In today's fast-paced digital landscape, B2B marketers are constantly seeking innovative strategies to generate high-quality leads. Amidst this pursuit, one timeless approach has consistently proven its worth: B2B events. These gatherings not only provide a platform for networking and knowledge sharing, but they also **serve as a powerful lead generation activity that can fuel your business growth.**

In this ebook, we delve deep into the transformative power of B2B events, unravelling the strategies, tactics, and best practices that will enable you to unlock their full potential. Whether you're a seasoned event marketer or new to the realm of B2B events, our expert insights and practical tips will empower you to orchestrate compelling experiences that captivate your target audience, foster meaningful connections, and drive tangible results. Get ready to witness your lead generation efforts soar to new heights as you harness the power of B2B events.



Producing a B2B event builds leads

Skilled marketers are always looking for new ways to generate leads and build brand awareness. Staging a targeted, branded and unique event, seminar or conference can be very good for business.



B2B EVENTS ARE HIGH YIELD

As a B2B lead generation agency, we have witnessed the growing popularity of executive events over the last few years. Research indicates that executive events are amongst the highest yield in terms of ROI for marketing activity (IDG Lead Generation Marketing Report). We have extended our service offerings on purpose to include all aspects of events and B2B event marketing. Because it works.

BUILD CONNECTION

Hosting an event of your own gives buyers, executives and interested parties the unique opportunity to engage with your brand face-to-face rather than from behind the screen.

It allows your organisation to promote causes that are central to your line of expertise, share insights, industry information and starts a dialogue with your audience. Events also provide attendees with the added bonus to build their professional network.

The majority (80%) of marketers believe live events are critical to their company's success.

Host your event + Build leads



Hosting a B2B event provides a unique opportunity to stretch out from business as usual and offer a point of difference.

The scale and size of your B2B event will vary depending on budget, available resources and your target market. Here are some of the trialled and tested variants.

TYPES OF B2B EVENTS

FULL DAY SEMINAR

full day with speakers, meals and plenty of networking opportunities.

PRODUCT LAUNCH

invite your customers (and the press) to your next launch.

WORKSHOPS

offer a workshop on a particular skill set such as managerial, leadership, or tech up-skill.

CONFERENCE 1 + DAYS

often these program offerings require a fee to attend given the cost, and provide a mixture of speakers, seminars and workshops.

PRESENTATION/ TALK

this can be a short session offered to targeted people and can take place in your own office, or a paid meeting venue.

NETWORK SOCIAL EVENING

topical presentation, followed by an hour or two of social drinks and nibbles.

BREAKFAST SEMINAR

quite popular, features a session followed by coffee and light refreshments for networking.

WEBINAR AND LIVE EVENTS

talks tend to run from 1-2 hours, often with a moderated Q&A session.

KEEP LEADS WARM & HOT

It's good sense plan for and maximise all the points of opportunity where you can generate leads. From initial sign-ups and registration landing pages to breaks and networking opportunities and post event questionnaires/feedback. Capturing this information in a sufficient manner is invaluable. Ensure your communication plan involves the recording of these leads and of course, **follow-up!**



Producing a B2B event - build leads



START WITH THE WHY

Well let's just start with the why shall we? That's what your prospective attendees will be thinking. Why should I attend? What's in it for me/my business?

In a study that surveyed 7,000 people (International Association of Exhibitions and Events), the top 3 reasons that people attended events included:

- ➔ **EDUCATION:** What content will attendees be exposed to? Does the event theme align with business, industry or personal interests? Investing in an engaging and 'on-trend' keynote speaker can play a huge role in the success of your event.
- ➔ **NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES:** Will there be an opportunity to connect with industry relevant people, or business opportunities at the right level?

➔ **LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION:** Is it accessible? Are there any special and unique features about the location?

From the outset it's fair to say you need to provide an educational opportunity with some great opportunities to network, and hold the event in a unique, accessible and desirable location.

YOUR INVITE LIST

There are a number of things to consider when thinking about who to invite. First of all – what is the desired outcome? Again, this will lead you back to your why. Is it an annual conference to update stakeholders? Is it geared at brand awareness or a chance to demonstrate thought leadership in your industry? Your budget will play into this also. Regardless of whether your event is big or smaller and intimate, success will depend of how much you can align the expectations of attendees with the content and program you deliver.



QUALIFY ATTENDEES

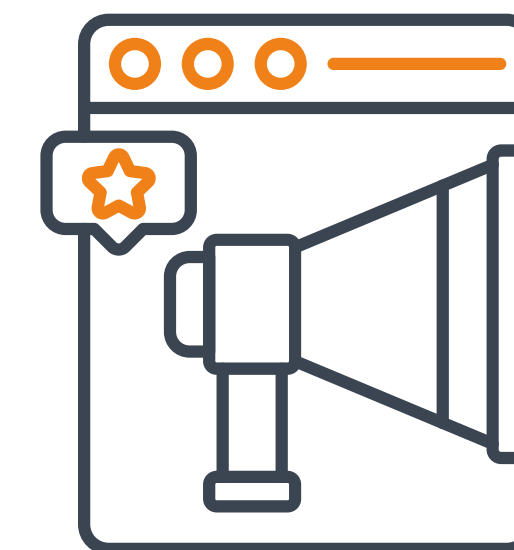
Qualify each attendee, especially if your event is on the smaller and more intimate side. We have seen huge ROI for this small style of intimate event of 7-15 attendees. Despite the high cost-per-person to attend, the right prospect is worth the investment.

DATA IS IMPORTANT

Building your invitation list on data that is robust, clean and up-to-date avoids wasting time and resources targeting the wrong contacts. It also enables you to focus your efforts on the people most likely to attend.



Rise of digital events post-covid



In the midst of the global pandemic, we witnessed a major shift in how events are done, with digital events taking the stage. As physical gatherings faced restrictions, B2B organisations quickly hopped on the digital bandwagon, embracing virtual conferences, webinars, and interactive online experiences. This opened up a whole new world of possibilities, allowing businesses to connect with a broader audience, no matter where they are.

But the perks don't stop there! Digital events bring cost savings, real-time analytics, and exciting interactive features that keep attendees engaged. With immersive presentations, interactive sessions, and virtual networking opportunities, digital events have become a game-changer for B2B organisations, helping them forge valuable connections, generate leads, and thrive in this new era of event marketing.



DIGITAL EVENTS PLATFORMS TECH/ PLATFORM ROUNDUP (CURRENTLY ONLY GOTO AND WEBINARS ONAIR)

With the move towards online events, there are more and more digital platforms available to suit a range of online events. Conferencing tools such as GoTo, Zoom and Webinars OnAir have been around a while, but some others to consider include:



BIG MARKER

This browser based platform suits small webinars up to massive virtual conferences for 1000 people. It comes with microsites, interactive video, social media streaming, audience handouts, embedded surveys, and email marketing.

VFAIRS

An all-in-one virtual events program that delivers a 3D immersive experience, 1:1 and group networking features, gamification, personalised landing page and email marketing, and in-depth analytics.

HOPIN

Perfect for streaming webinars and events for up to 100, 000 people, Hopin also offers chats and polls, interaction 'expo areas', customisable branding, and a flexible event schedule tool.

SPOTME

Breakout sessions, personalised agendas and two-way communications between staff and attendees make SpotMe an easy choice for both live and on-demand events.

Types of digital events

WEBINARS

Engage your audience with informative presentations, expert speakers, and interactive Q&A sessions, all delivered online.

VIRTUAL CONFERENCES

Bring the conference experience to attendees' screens with keynote speeches, breakout sessions, virtual booths, and networking opportunities.

LIVE STREAMING EVENTS

Stream your product launches, panel discussions, or thought leadership sessions in real-time to a global audience, creating a sense of excitement and engagement.

VIRTUAL TRADE SHOWS

Showcase your products or services through virtual booths, demos, and networking opportunities, allowing attendees to explore and interact from anywhere.

Types of digital events

FIRESIDE CHATS

Host informal conversations between industry leaders or influential figures, allowing attendees to gain unique perspectives and hear personal stories.

ONLINE WORKSHOPS

Provide hands-on learning experiences and skill-building sessions in a virtual environment, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Bring together industry experts to discuss relevant topics and share insights, creating thought-provoking conversations for attendees to participate in.

VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLES

Facilitate focused discussions among a small group of participants, encouraging collaboration, idea-sharing, and relationship-building in a virtual setting.

VIRTUAL SUMMITS

Gather industry leaders, experts, and professionals for a series of keynote presentations, panel discussions, and networking opportunities, providing a comprehensive and immersive experience for attendees.



Strategies to maximise the ROI on digital events

When you're going to the effort of creating any event, even a digital one, you want to take steps to maximise your return.

Here are 5 strategies to make sure you get bang for your buck on your digital event:

1

PROMOTE EARLY

Generate buzz through targeted marketing channels and offer incentives to encourage early registrations.

2

CREATE ENGAGING CONTENT

Develop compelling sessions and workshops that align with attendees' needs and leverage technology for personalised experiences.

3

FACILITATE NETWORKING

Provide virtual networking opportunities, such as chat rooms and one-on-one meetings, to foster connections.

4

CAPTURE LEADS

Implement lead capture mechanisms and promptly follow up with personalised communications.

5

EVALUATE AND IMPROVE

Measure KPIs, analyse attendee engagement and conversion rates, and use insights to refine future event strategies.

Drawing a crowd to your event



A THEME THAT WOWS

Your event theme and content will form the crux of appeal. While the ‘wow’ factor might not have the same pull as a social or leisure event – you still need to offer a strong ‘value add’ to busy executives to validate their time. Inviting a keynote speaker that is an expert in his/her field is a great way to spark interest. Additionally, exploring an issue that is facing your industry such as changing regulations, a skill shortage or tightening market conditions is also likely to generate interest.

YOUR POINT OF DIFFERENCE

In other words, give people a good reason to come along! For live events, this may involve a free meal/refreshments, or exciting networking opportunities. While for a virtual event such as a webinar, the incentive could be a special offer exclusively for attendees, or the chance to engage in a live Q&A with a notable speaker.

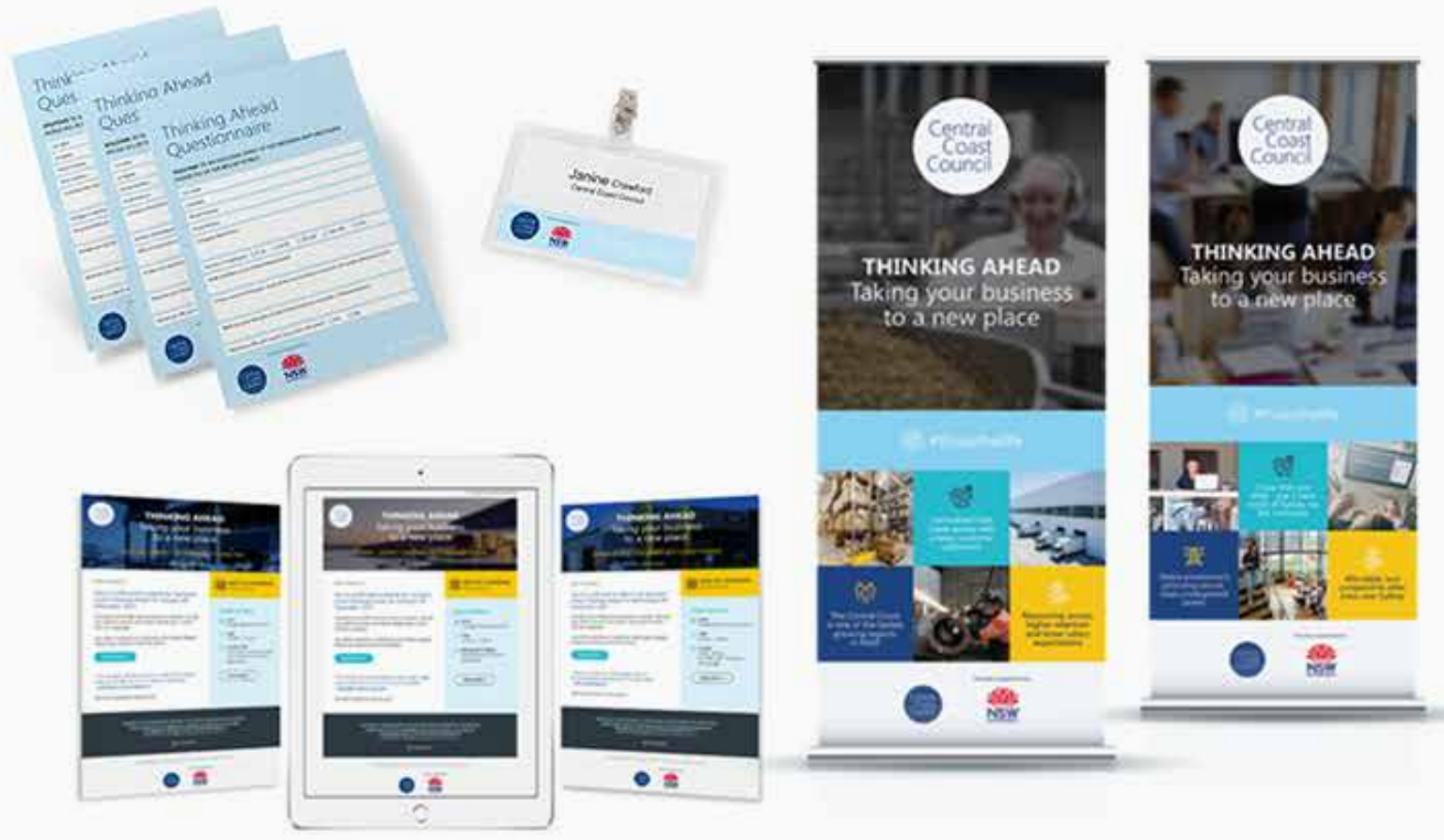
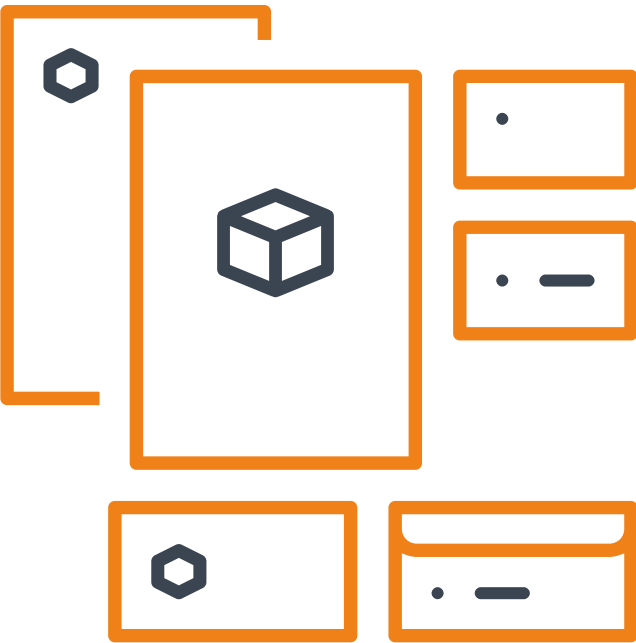
Make it clear what people stand to gain from attending your event, in order to persuade them to take time out of their day or night to show up.

EVENT BRANDING MATTERS

Whether your event is in-person, online, or both, building a brand identity is a very effective way for your event and event marketing to stand apart from the noise. Start off with a strong visual identity, including a logo, colours, graphics, and typography to use across any web pages and socials. You'll also need a memorable name and tagline. TED's 'Ideas worth spreading' is a great example of this.

Attendee experience is an often overlooked aspect of event branding, but if you're familiar with MIH at all you know we're all about customer experience! Is your event laid back and welcoming? Include a lighthearted ice breaker activity and relaxed networking. Is it more of a high powered and focused event? Try a structured speed-networking instead. Whatever your event is about, make sure your attendee experience matches the promise your branding makes.

There's no need to make branded merchandise for the sake of it, but thoughtfully branded gift bags with offers from select partners can have a powerful impact.



Pricing, bookings & event management tools



You want to create a seamless experience for all event prospects. From the first communication point, often the initial invite you should strive to make booking, ticketing and reservations simple and painless. Luckily there are many automation and booking tools that can facilitate this process.

TICKETING YOUR EVENT

It can be a challenge to determine which automation software suits your business. Using event management software comes in handy to:

- Help sell limited seating – sold as a first come and first served basis
- Assist with ticketing when your team is lean
- Design tickets for co-branding
- Register a large number of tickets
- Process payments and issue invoices

Eventbrite, Eventbee and Bizzaboo are the big three currently making waves. Eventbrite is probably most popular and doesn't charge if your event is free. It also like Bizzaboo allows you to set up your own event landing page. Those who sign up for your event provide details essential for lead generation. They also allow your team to customise the event further and add touches such as planned seating.

BOOKINGS VIA YOUR WEBSITE

There is always the option to install an event management system on your company website using a specified landing page. Depending on which CMS system you use, this process can be relatively simple. WordPress users for example have the option add event booking and registration to your website by installing available plug-ins. It's worth discussing options with your developer.

SHOULD YOU CHARGE?

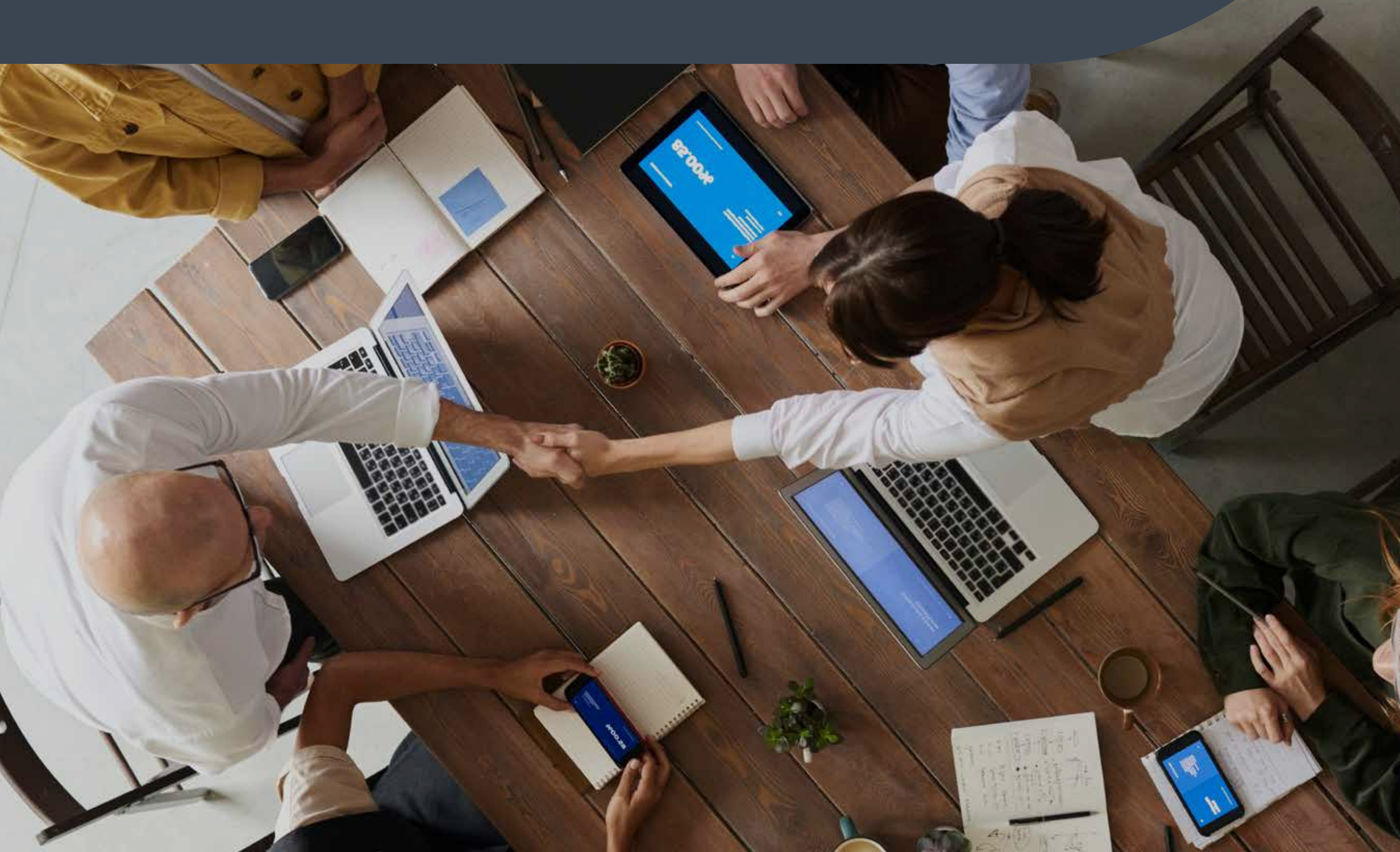
Deciding to charge for a ticketed event can help ease any potential gaps for ROI. Priced and ticketed events tend to work for larger scale events - particularly if your event is showcasing inspiring and interesting content and your guest speakers are very high quality.

EVENT PROSPECTS ARE LEADS

To maximise the prospects of your B2B lead generation you should also factor in a nurture component - additional touches for prospects that are stuck in the lead funnel. Using automation software and Analytics from email software you will be able to track where they might be stuck. People often respond to people. Consider following up by phone those prospects who might need an extra push, by providing information, answering questions or making a special offer.



You'll need a robust and smart content strategy



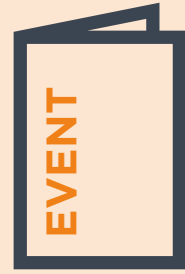
MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE

How you communicate the good news will make all the difference. You want to excite, and connect your audience with the speakers and the content of the event - a little publicity will always go a long way too!

→ PLAN EACH TOUCHPOINT

Consider your invite list and the channels best to target each group. Forming the heart of your content strategy, brainstorming together with your wider team is a great way to plan for each communication point.

Think about what 'value-add' each communication piece will include. Video, photographs, exclusive content are some of the useful ways you can build engagement and excitement.



Initial invite

Look & feel (print or digital),
calendar invite. When to send?
Follow-up? Telemarketing call?

Bookings/Tickets

How will you follow up
and confirm booking
and tickets?



Social Media

Appropriate channels for promotion.
Automation, content schedule. Event
hashtag. Paid/speaker endorsements?

PR/Publicity

Media release, radio,
industry publication,
editorial, advertisements



Confirmation

Follow-up confirmation to confirm
final numbers, wait lists, calendar
invite, telemarketing

Post event/Follow-up

Email, social posts, feedback
forms, event photographs,
event video, telemarketing



→ STAND OUT ACROSS GRAPHIC, PRINT AND DIGITAL

You've probably noticed that the best campaigns for big events seem to just flow - from the messaging, to visuals and graphics across each touch-point. Each of these elements is intricately connected. You might like to consider branding your event to include a logo, separate landing page or website, unique colours, stylised imagery. It's about differentiation and standing out - how can you entice attendees with a professional look and feel of your event.

→ CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

You want to create a seamless experience for prospects. From the initial invite you should strive to make booking, ticketing and reservations painless. Luckily there are many automation and booking tools that can facilitate this process. You might like to also consider sending a calendar invite. Ensuring wait lists and cancellations are effectively managed will ensure you maximise the lead potential of your event.

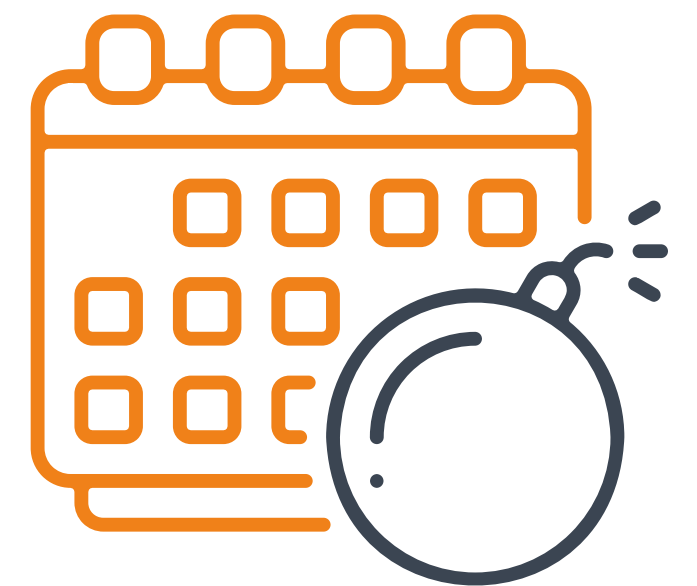


→ **CALL TO ACTION**

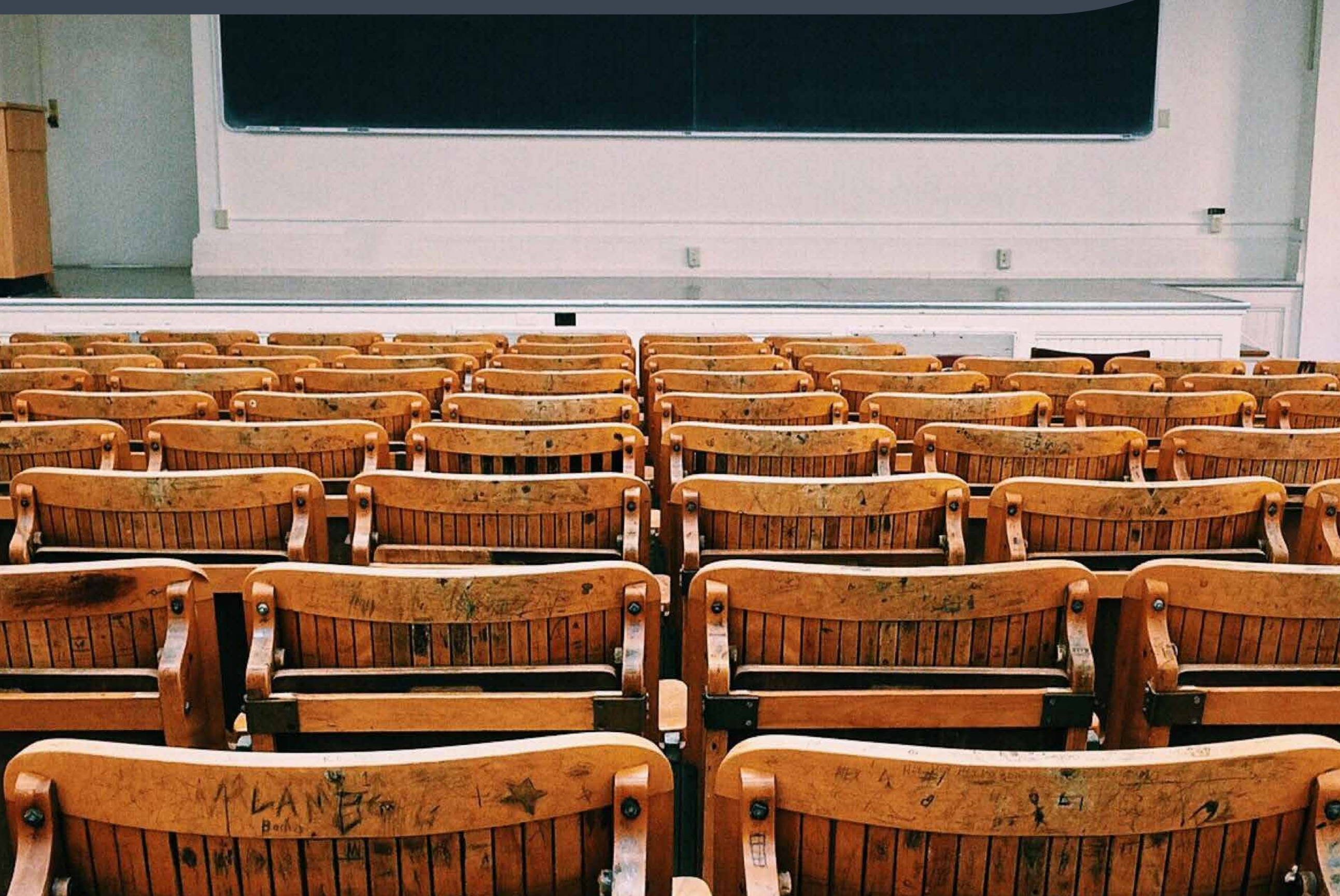
Think carefully about the tone and language you use across your promotional material. With each communication it's essential to communicate value. Draw on the expertise and topics of keynote speakers, emphasise the entertainment or educational value. Creativity, persuasion and a sense of urgency via a strong call to action will point readers in the right direction – to register for your event.

→ **FOLLOW UP**

It's good sense to consider throughout your event plan all the opportunities you can create to generate leads. From initial sign-ups and registration landing pages to breaks and networking opportunities and post event questionnaires/feedback. Capturing this information in a sufficient manner is really important. Be sure you have a communication plan that involves follow-up up and keep in regular contact.



Audiovisual presentations that impress



KEY DO'S AND DON'TS

Different event venues are more suited to different types of audiovisual (AV) presentations.

DO'S

- ✓ Select the right display type for the venue and tailor your presentation to the size and nature of the space in which it will be delivered.
- ✓ Less is often more when it comes to the AV experience, so be selective about what you want to convey. Choose the most important points and use creative and colourful slides that include elements such as video, photographs and infographics.

DONT'S

- ✗ Don't overload your audience with information. A presentation that's overcrowded with information can be seriously off-putting.
- ✗ Don't over complicate the animation. Some messages can be made more memorable through the slow build of content onto the slide whilst others can lose all relevance as the audience waits for the bullet points to build.



KEEPING VIRTUAL AUDIENCES ENGAGED

While going virtual allows you to be more accessible and may draw in a wider audience, the challenge lies in keeping virtual audiences engaged. People are busy, distracted, and the temptation to multitask can detract from the impact of your event.

So how do you keep a virtual audience engaged?

- **Make your presentations interactive.** Short quizzes, a lively chat feed and fun prizes will keep your audience paying attention.
- **Keep things short and simple.** Presentations that are short, focused on a single topic and that provide actionable tips will keep people engaged.
- **Include plenty of breaks.** Let people refill their coffee and grab some snacks!
- **Take advantage of the tech.** If people are already online for your event, how can you use technology to create a novel experience? Think outside the box.

AFTER THE EVENT: REPURPOSING YOUR CONTENT TO MAXIMISE REACH

Whether you're running an in-person or online event, there are many ways to repurpose your content afterwards to maximise your returns. Some ideas to think about:

- **Use summaries or slide decks as lead magnets**
- **Turn summaries into blog posts and downloadable ebooks**
- **Sell individual recordings as masterclasses**
- **Use the recordings to create an evergreen virtual summit**
- **Create video snippets to use across social media platforms**



THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR

When planning a B2B event, there are some common challenges to watch out for. Regardless of whether your event is in person or online, make sure your tech stack is up to scratch. While some technical issues may be unforeseeable, you want to provide as smooth an experience on the day as possible. You also need to ensure you manage your event data properly so that you can accurately assess the success and returns of your event, follow up with attendees, and improve for your next one. You need to give yourself ample time to market and promote your event, and take steps to ensure audience engagement.

All that being said, if you follow the tips outlined in this book, you should be well on your way to success!





Let's talk...

MIH.COM.AU

Love the idea of running an event for your B2B organisation but don't have the resources to pull it off? Our team of event managers can help you deliver successful events marketing to create positive engagement and boost rapport with your clients. Small or large, executive or casual, in person or online, **let's make your event happen!**



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