



BUILDING BRAND ADVOCATES

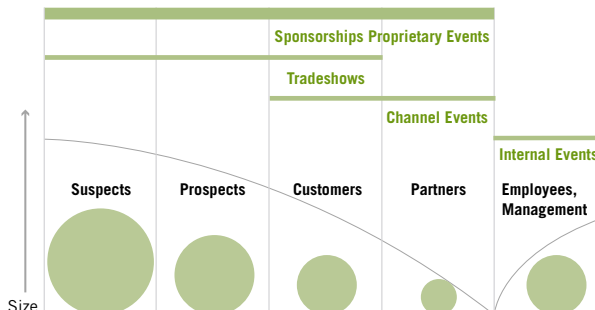
THROUGH INTEGRATED EVENT MARKETING

The planning and management of marketing events is often the responsibility of multiple stakeholders within the organization. As a result, each department may be forced to compete internally for senior management support, for capital and human resources—and ultimately, for the customer’s attention. A lack of precise coordination will not only increase the overall cost of marketing events, but also diminish their effectiveness as revenue-producing tactics. However, progressive companies now recognize the value of integrated event marketing—of converging enterprise-wide interests, of melding brand and event messages, and of realizing the benefits of shared economies.

Within larger organizations, the coordination of events eliminates the likelihood that some of them will be developed at cross-purposes. Moreover, at a time when customer acquisition costs have sky-rocketed and retention of highest-value customers is of paramount importance, the integration of all event-related marketing activities serves to deepen and prolong relationships. Companies doing business across broad national or international regions also find that close integration is a means to enforce the global consistency and delivery of key brand messages.

INTEGRATED EVENT MARKETING

Combining all face-to-face marketing to ensure seamless communication throughout the relationship



STEP 1: PROGRAM ANALYSIS & STRATEGY

The construction of a comprehensive Event Marketing Brief will provide support for whether the company is investing in the right events, and for what reasons. Is the company looking to explore new markets? Or continue to exploit opportunities that will increase current market share? Is it the intention of the event to entice outside channel partners? Or to leverage the relationship with captive sales resources? Requiring event stakeholders to first express their individual requirements and compiling their responses in the brief will ensure that the most important shared objectives are satisfied. The event marketing brief includes the following components:

- **Audience.** Who are we trying to reach and what are their prime motivators for attending the event?
- **Objectives.** What are the desired outcomes for each audience interaction? What do we want them to see, know, and do?
- **Messaging.** What are the primary and secondary messages we must convey to generate business? Which products and programs best match the audience for a given event?
- **Marketing Integration.** What other tactics are required for a successful event (i.e. direct mail, training)?
- **Experience Design.** What is the desired customer journey? What other physical considerations must be given to event design and the audience experience?

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WHITE PAPER

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MEASUREMENT

Accurate and projectable performance measurement is the foundation upon which all event planning must rest. Measuring event value combines hard data in terms of visitors, viewers and engagers (those who engaged staff) and leads with more subjective measures of audience behavior, perceptions and satisfaction. In assisting our own clients to achieve their event objectives, we have re-examined the measurement tools that have been available in the past and assembled a comprehensive list of methods and an approach that can be put to use right away.

- 1. Lead Quality & Quantity.** Evaluating quality and quantity is far from just a counting exercise. Lead quality must be evaluated as thoroughly as quantity, in terms of prospect budget, buying authority, need and the time-frame.
- 2. Audience Quality & Delivery.** How effective is your event or a tradeshow at reaching an audience that really counts? An evaluation of audited statistics and show performance will inform you of which events deserve the priority in your portfolio planning.
- 3. Message Effectiveness.** The critical importance and high cost of marketing communications demands that you understand which tactics help drive awareness, retention and move prospects most quickly to a sale.
- 4. Competitive Presence.** Are you getting the right 'share of voice' relative to your significant competitors? A competitive audit will examine strengths and weaknesses.
- 5. Audience Behavior & Event Performance.** An onsite audit and survey of attendees will document visitors, viewers and prospects engaged various activities. It will also reveal the nature of the audience (i.e. technical vs. business buyers), and can document their satisfaction and interests.
- 6. Sales Opportunities .** By documenting and qualifying leads more completely, sales and marketing staff can actually determine the size and likelihood of a potential purchase. Proper calculation of this data can provide a clear picture of the sales opportunities and ROI.
- 7. Press Impact.** Events are the place where your company and influential editors and publication writers converge. Your public relations efforts can be tracked and overall returns calculated using techniques that include paid-media equivalency, and requests for sales information.

PORTFOLIO PLANNING MATRIX

Selecting the right events based on business objectives



PORTFOLIO PLANNING

Beyond creating a detailed brief, scrutinizing show performance and analyzing event measurement results, deciding which events belong in a company's portfolio, and in what proportions, is essential to building an integrated event marketing program. The Portfolio Planning Matrix is a tool used to help companies create their event portfolio. It positions four basic event types as a function of 'share of voice' and the leadership that each event allows the event marketer to achieve.

The Portfolio Planning Matrix. All four event types should be considered when building an integrated event marketing portfolio.

Trade Shows, the most commonplace of events, are often a battleground for the attention of the customer, and are therefore low on the share of voice scale. Because exhibiting at either indus-

try or horizontal events confer no special status and are not assumptive of true leadership, trade shows are ranked low along this scale.

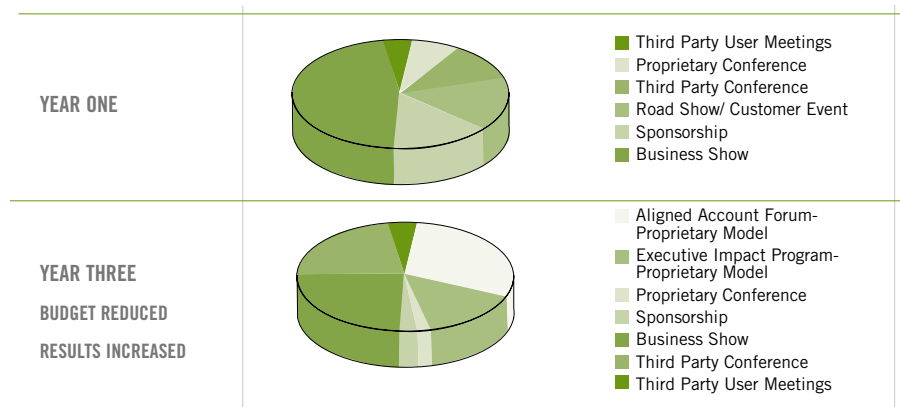
Channel Events, that is, the events put on by a company's own customers and/or channel partners, are also relatively low on the share of voice scale. However, because the company has been selected to participate, they allow the company to demonstrate its leadership within the overall context of the channel.

Sponsorship of sporting, cultural, and community events makes the company's invitees a captive audience, so share of voice is especially high. However, because the event itself is the center of attention, sponsorships are most often designed to express corporate gratitude and hospitality and are not as appropriate for expressing leadership.

PORTFOLIO PLANNING

SAMPLE PORTFOLIO

FPO(still to come)



Proprietary Events, or events that are completely controlled by the company, occupy the most desirable position on the matrix, since they allow the company to clearly express its leadership without the intrusion of other voices and messages. In marketplaces that have grown crowded and intensely competitive, the rapid proliferation of these types of events is especially notable.

Using measurement techniques to judiciously shift the mix of event types within your event portfolio can produce nearly immediate dividends. Over a three-year period, the company illustrated by these pie charts was able to reduce its event budget while simultaneously increasing its results in terms of revenue opportunity significantly.

In the first year, the majority of the company's budget is devoted to business shows, in which the company must fight for share of voice and an expression of leadership on the show floor. Moving the mix to more proprietary events, such as key account workshops and executive seminars, allows the company to educate prospects and close deals far more effectively.

STEP 2: PROGRAM DESIGN

Program design — the development of the actual event experience — guides the customer down a well-cultivated pathway and determines exactly what the event marketer wants that customer to see, to feel, to think, to know and ultimately to do. One approach to creating a uniquely memorable event experience, an experience that moves prospects inexorably towards beneficial, measurable outcomes, starts with message engineering.

MESSAGE ENGINEERING

Message engineering begins with an intimate understanding of the customers' needs and expectations as they relate to the event. Putting yourself in the customers' shoes and embarking upon the customer journey should provide valuable insights into engineering the right messages. During the journey, consider how your event will respond to these questions:

- What will motivate or provoke the customer into starting meaningful conversation?
- What is it about your brand message that customers will perceive as a relevant means to improve themselves, their business, or

their advantage over competitors? In short, what's in it for them?

- What assurances will you be providing that you indeed possess the right product ideas, skills or solutions to help?
- What specific offerings will you be making to satisfy customers and enable them to begin doing business with the company quickly?
- Given that more than 70 percent of what is learned and retained is visual, what will be the most appropriate use of graphics, visuals and multimedia within your displays?

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

The customer journey is a means of reviewing and creating a continuous cycle of customer experiences. Prospects and customers usually make decisions about large-scale purchases after a series of conversations and interactions with a brand, rather than after one isolated exchange. Salespeople know this and also stage their follow-up in a progressive fashion. Therefore, the design and engineering of customer experiences needs to match the natural flow of the relationship-building process. For



example, a prospect may first be invited to a networking event which lasts from two to three hours and provides a non-threatening setting for beginning a conversation. The next event experience would progress to a day-long event which further demonstrates the company's thought leadership. Finally, the prospect is invited to an immersive multi-day brand event, where he gains the perspective of his fellow peers and analysts—setting the stage for an eventual purchasing decision.

STEP 3: PROGRAM INTEGRATION & MANAGEMENT

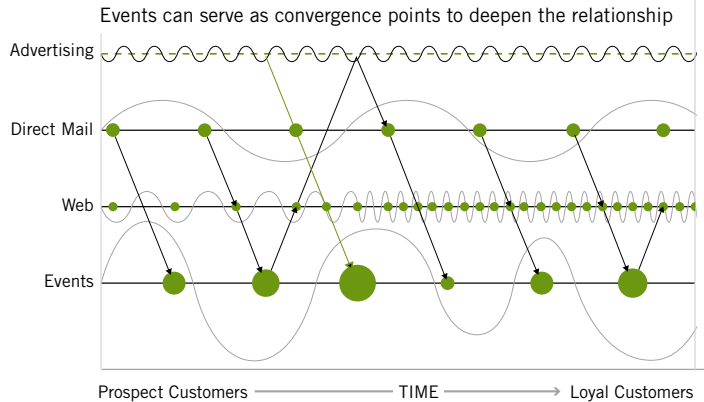
Just as corporations have extremely complex structures and management requirements, so do their event marketing programs. The international marketer must deal with a particularly elaborate organizational matrix to create and deliver programs across business units, product categories and global regions. By creating an agency structure that mirrors that of the corporation, strategies which emerge from the core may be interpreted regionally and implemented locally while maintaining necessary control of brand communications and overall program costs.

A shared understanding of all event marketing initiatives is an especially large challenge given the scale and geographic scope of the undertaking. However, a new generation of Web-enabled electronic tools can assist in the training of all program participants, and to ensure the consistent integration and utilization of event management practices. These various applications and technologies are built on a backbone of networks that link together all elements of creative, manufacturing, project and financial management. Secure Internet connections and extranets also allow these applications to establish links outside the boundaries of any single organization.

SIX WAYS YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN NEED OF GREATER EVENT INTEGRATION

1. When you can't recall if your advertising agency, direct mail/promotion house and Internet development group have ever had a meeting to discuss events.
2. When the best reason you can give for attending a trade show is: "We've always come to this show. We'd lose our usual space if we didn't."
3. When the most memorable take-away from your exhibit is a free tote bag.
4. When prospects happen upon your booth rather than making specific plans to see it.
5. When it is difficult to know exactly what you spent on trade shows and exhibits because it's difficult to roll-up various departmental budgets.
6. When the most consistent thing about your exhibit in New York and your exhibit in New Delhi is the logo.

CONTINUOUS CUSTOMER TOUCHPOINTS



Robert G. Vallee Jr. is Chief Executive Officer and Michael Westcott, Vice President of Marketing of The George P. Johnson Company. Founded in 1914, the Company produced the first auto shows in America, then expanded into other forms of displays and exhibitions, and is today the largest privately held global event marketing organization, producing 4,000 events through 14 offices worldwide.

The Company's clients include IBM, Siebel Systems, Daimler-Chrysler, Nissan, MGM and other highly valued brands in numerous industries.

For more information on the Company or any of the processes, planning documents and tools discussed within, contact Michael Westcott by phone at 508-513-3342 or by e-mail at mwestcot@gpjco.com.