

## Marketing Workshops and Seminars

### The 3 Biggest Challenges Everybody Has To Fill Their Events

#### Challenge #1 - Budgets are tight, and training is an easily cut expense.

When money gets tight, training and educational expenses are among the first to be cut unless it is viewed as “mission critical”.

And if attendees are paying their registration fees out of their own pockets, the sell becomes even more difficult. If your prospects are worried about putting food on the table or paying for little Jimmy’s braces, they won’t be inclined to fork over their hard-earned cash for a seat at your event.

#### Challenge #2: Prospects don’t want to – or can’t afford – to travel.

After September 11 some Americans are still plain hesitant to leave home. Others would like to, but can’t afford the expense ... and can’t get their employers to pick up the tab. Many view it as too much hassle.

#### Challenge #3: Everyone has become more protective of their time.

We’ve gotten busier than ever. Laptops, cell phones have literally eradicated the 8-5 workday and are keeping us hostage to our employers. And the pursuit of multiple streams of income has greatly diminished available time that used to be filled with leisure and education. It has become more and more difficult to convince prospective attendees that it’s worth giving up their time to attend a training event.

### The Key to Overcoming The Attendance Challenge Is “Value” – The “What’s In It For Me”

Your event must offer high **Value** in content and your seminar marketing materials must convince prospects beyond a shadow of a doubt that they cannot “afford to miss your event”.

You must demonstrate reasons why they would want to trade their time and money to attend. Your prospects must believe at a gut level that your seminar will be “worth” it.

Worth the money they’ll have to cough up to travel to your event.

Worth the cash they’ll have to scrape together to pay the registration fee.

Worth the hassle and frustration of airport security.

Worth the effort of rearranging their schedules.

Worth the guilt of being away from their families for days.

Worth the extra hours they'll have to put in at the office to make up for the time they'll miss.

## The 10 Biggest Mistakes People Make Marketing Their Seminars

### 1) Not allowing enough time for marketing

One of the biggest boo-boos you can make is waiting until the last minute to market your event. Ideally, you want to get your promotional materials into your prospect's hands at least 6-8 weeks prior (exception: free events and tele-seminars, both of which can be successfully marketed with a 2 weeks notice)

Production requirements need to be considered on top of the 6-8 weeks. For example: Let's say you are using direct mail of some form – brochure, sales letter or postcard – to promote the event. You must consider their production time as well. Here are some typical guidelines:

2-4 weeks for your strategy development

2-4 weeks for copywriting

1-3 week for graphic design

1-2 weeks for printing

1-2 weeks for mailing

**That is 7-15 weeks of production time on top of the 6 to 8 weeks lead time!**

### 2) Not offering a satisfaction guarantee

Many marketers don't include a satisfaction guarantee in their promotional materials because they fear being taken advantage of.

1) You have nothing to fear if you actually deliver what you promise and offer a top-notch event, and

2) If you're not willing to guarantee your attendees' satisfaction, it will be an uphill battle to convince your prospect to sign up in the first place. People are looking for reassurance that they are not making a colossal mistake parting with their precious time and money.

Putting a guarantee in writing removes the risk from the buying decision and places it squarely on your shoulders...where it belongs.

### 3) Not a giving enough information about the content of your event

When describing the content of the event, many marketers make the mistake of being too brief. Short copy will lead to one or two undesirable outcomes:

- 1) Prospects aren't convinced that you'll teach them what they want to learn...so they don't register
- 2) Prospects don't think that what you'll teach will be worth the money they'll be paying, so they don't register.

If you want to get prospects to read your promotional materials and register for your event, write more - not less - describing what they will learn. Rule of thumb for a paid event, about 25% of your promotional material should describe "the what" they will learn.

For maximum effectiveness your marketing materials must containing the A +E+A formula: (ie Get Attention + Educate + Action)

**Headline** must speak to the prospects' fears, desires and needs.

**Copy** must convince prospects of the value and reassure prospects that they are making the right decision. Copy **MUST** include "satisfaction guarantee" statement

**Action** must have an "ACT-Now" incentive (if you sign up by \_\_\_\_\_ you save \$\_\_\_)

Depending on the cost of entry, consider creating a Seminar Pre-View Pack.

For lead generation, consider doing a tele-seminar prior to the seminar giving a synopsis of what to expect and generate excitement

### 4) Not explaining the true money value of your event

Many seminar promoters list the event registration fee for their events almost as an afterthought...just one more thing to put on the registration form. Obviously you need to show the cost of the event.

If you want to get prospects to whip out their wallets to register, you need to help them see the expense as an investment by quantifying the results they can expect. For example: How much money will they make or save, how much more productive will they be, etc.

Also help them see the value of their seat. For example, just for attending, they will also get...Talk about all the little extras they get as part of their registration cost. Or reveal how much you would normally charge if they hired you to consult in a one-on-one situation.

## **5) Contacting prospects only once**

Research has consistently shown that contacting a prospect more than once will increase attendance. With repetition you increase your chance of breaking through the clutter and grabbing your prospect's attention. Try a mix of different follow-up techniques: Phone, email, different style of DM. Assign promotional codes so you can track how many touches it takes and which one got prospect to respond.

## **6) Having unreasonable expectations regarding response rates**

Your response rate will be directly related to the quality of mailing list, the subject matter, the name recognition of the speaker and frequency of touches. Rule of thumb, expect less than 1% if you are working with a rented list, your topic is viewed as a commodity and speaker is relatively unknown.

## **7) Not developing your own qualified leads**

Your mailing list is one of the most important factors in filling your seats. For maximum success, you want to mail to people who would want to buy what you're offering, are ready to buy, have the ability to buy, have the ability to pay, and who know you.

Renting a mailing list whose demographic matches most closely your ideal customer is a great start for marketing your event.

However, what will win hands down over any rented list is the list you have developed on your own. People that have purchased from you before, or attended another one of your events, knows your reputation, etc. That is why lead generation is almost as important as marketing your seminar. At the same time you're trying to fill seats, you should be building a house list of customers and qualified prospects.

## **8) Not tracking results**

If you're not identifying the source of every registration you get, you are wasting your time and money!

Unless you are tracking results, you won't know which mailing list worked, or which promotional piece generated the most interest, or which version of your ad pulled the most responses, or even at which point your seminar will become profitable.

That is why each piece you send out must have a unique identifier, and you must ask for that code every time you get a registration request or receive a call for more information.

## **9) Skipping the basics**

Although it does seem obvious – be sure you don't forget to list the basic information of your seminar...like date, time, location and how to register, contact person and phone number, etc. on your marketing materials. Do yourself a favor and double check your marketing materials before they go to the printer.

## **10) Not continuing to sell after the sale**

Many seminar promoters think that their job is done once they receive a registration. Not so...at least not if you want to head off cancellations and keep registrants excited about their buying decision.

Instead – keep selling after the sale.

Start with the obvious. Promptly confirm the receipt of every registration you receive. And don't forget thank your new customers.

Depending on schedule and resource, you might even go further and continue to communicate right up to the date of the seminar. Email is the most efficient and inexpensive way to do so. Send reminders about what they'll learn, give 10 reasons why people change their minds and build a case why your prospect cannot afford to change his mind, send one reason a day, etc. You might even call and introduce yourself