



Generate More Business from Your Next Marketing or Networking Event

Michael Bitter

You've just finished a brilliant seminar or public talk. Accolades are flying. The crowd is awed by your genius. You've asked for business cards and much to your delight, the fish bowl you brought along in which to collect them is brimming with "opportunity."

And then, the inevitable question... How am I going to follow up with all of these "opportunities" before they grow cold? How am I going to pursue all of this new business while I continue working the old?

A successful, well-attended event is just the beginning. Whether you utilize seminars, public speaking engagements, trade shows, or other similar forms of lead generation, the key to success with this type of marketing is the follow up—aggressive, relevant, "personal", repetitive follow up—follow up designed to qualify and separate the "lookies" from those seriously interested in your product or service—before they forget about you.

Regardless of the type of product or service you market, the following steps provide an outline of the steps involved in maximizing the effectiveness of your event by creating a successful follow up mechanism.

Know the purpose of your follow up. Know exactly what you want to accomplish with your follow up. Is it to get an appointment? Is it to direct sell a product or service?

Develop a follow up strategy and objectives. Determine how your follow up process will reinforce your primary marketing message (value proposition, differentiation, compelling reason to buy) and accomplish your purpose. Determine what constitutes a successful follow up campaign (i.e., appointments set, sales made, etc.) and the time frame for completion given your available time and resources.

Develop a follow up campaign "road map." The follow up road map provides you and your team with a step by step "itinerary" of the follow up process you will use to achieve your follow up goals. In it you identify what resources you will use (phone scripts, web site "landing pages", sales letters, automated email, case studies, etc.), who is responsible for the various steps, and the timing of those resources. For example, your follow up campaign may consist of a handwritten thank you note sent the day following the event, followed 3 days later by a sales letter and brochure, directing recipients to a "special" web page developed specifically for the event, followed 3 days later by a scripted phone call, etc.

Develop and/or assemble all of the resources for your follow up campaign BEFORE the actual marketing event.

Utilize a CRM database and work flow/marketing process automation to store contacts, reduce time and expense of the follow up process, and ensure that follow up process is executed as designed. The key to a successful follow up campaign is making sure that it is implemented—that all steps are executed when they are supposed to.



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A CRM database and work flow automation software greatly reduces the time and effort required to perform the follow up steps and ensures that no contacts are lost or dropped.

In addition, the CRM database provides a place to store and categorize the contacts you collect for ongoing, focused marketing and nurturing.

Track and measure follow up effectiveness. Develop a mechanism to track and measure the effectiveness of your campaign. Measure to understand when in the process your campaign produces results. Learn what works and what doesn't. When looking to improve results, make changes to one variable at a time. Change timing. Change the order. Change the actual pieces.

So, before your next event, make sure you have a well thought out, purpose driven follow up plan in place. Have a map. Develop the resources. Execute, measure, and rework as needed for optimal results. Begin maximizing your return on your marketing events.

About the Author

Michael Bitter is a writer, public speaker, and small business coach, mentor, and consultant. A 25 year sales and marketing veteran, and small business owner for over 10 years, Bitter is a principal partner in the firm Business Results Unlimited (bizresults.net), a small business consulting firm that helps small business owners create new businesses or redesign existing businesses in order to dramatically increase sales, profits, and cash flow— while simultaneously increasing their personal freedom.

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