

Preparing for an Athletic Competition and Developing a Marketing Campaign – The Same Steps Must be Taken

MICHELE WOODWARD GILLMAN • Controlled Chaos

Professional athletes and meeting professionals share several common traits. They are responsible for preparing and performing. They require tools and training. And, they have the ability to create memorable events.

Athletes customarily have a team of supporters that provide them with the tools and the coaching required to achieve optimal success. Often times they utilize the support of several individual specialists. Lance Armstrong used a doctor, an oncologist, a nutritionist, a fitness trainer, a chef, masseuse, several bike mechanics, and numerous sponsors. Together they provided the tangible and intangible items he needed to compete as a world-class cyclist.

Meeting professionals as a rule do not produce as much perspiration as athletes; however, they do generate an extreme amount of energy. Developing a Marketing Campaign requires the successful implementation of several tools and tactics to produce positive results.

TEN TOOLS & TACTICS TO DEVELOP A MARKETING CAMPAIGN INCLUDE:



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- 1. CONDUCT MARKET RESEARCH.** Has this type of a gathering been planned before and if so, what were the results?
- 2. DEFINE GOALS RELATED TO YOUR MEETING OR EVENT, CONSIDERING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE.** What is the purpose of the gathering?
- 3. DEVISE A BUDGET AND CREATE A TIMELINE.** What funds do you have to create a memorable gathering? When is the gathering to occur and what must be done leading up to it?
- 4. BRAINSTORM IDENTITY AND THEME CONCEPTS.** Will your existing company logo be tied into the potential new identity for your gathering?
- 5. CONSIDER MARKETING MESSAGES.** How will potential attendees understand the purpose of your gathering and be encouraged to confirm their participation?
- 6. SOURCE VENDORS FOR SUPPORT.** Which location and venue? What additional services or products may be utilized (creative or décor)?
- 7. BUILD YOUR MEETING OR EVENT THEME TO BRAND YOUR EVENT.** Which company images support your marketing theme?
- 8. DECIDE ON MARKETING COMMUNICATION VEHICLES.** Will print, electronic or a combination of both raise awareness and confirm attendance?
- 9. BUILD A DATABASE AND ASSIGN MANAGEMENT.** Will you be using an internal file accounting system with contact names or will you need to confirm an outsourced solution?
- 10. EXECUTE YOUR CAMPAIGN AND EVALUATE RESULTS.** Have you secured all of your supporting partners and created an engaging message? What is the final outcome compared to your initial goals?

Following steps one through ten will allow you to build a tailored marketing campaign which will attract your target audience and generate your desired response. If you are planning a sales meeting or incentive program, quarterly gathering or annual event, the same steps must be taken to reach your ultimate destination which is launching a successful campaign.

Market research for the professional athlete and the meeting professional involves reviewing historical data, including past results. We can learn a great deal from what has worked well as what has not worked well in the past. Defining goals may involve other key players from your team or the executive team at your office. The campaign budget and timeline are critical components as they set both monetary and time parameters. Brainstorming identity and theme concepts involves some creative ingenuity. Utilize magazines, books, websites, billboards and everyday advertising media to elicit captivating concepts for your campaign. From your concept development marketing messages will form.

Vendor support plays a role in developing your marketing campaign as it may positively impact your budget. Using current company images along with ideas generated from various print materials, will also aid you in the formation of your marketing message. Your budget, timeline and database will dictate the most appropriate marketing communication vehicles to promote your message. Lastly, executing your campaign and evaluating your results will complete the journey of employing a successful marketing campaign.

And, as is true in athletic competitions, “the more you practice the better your results.” Assemble your tools and implement your tactics so that you can reach your destination and achieve event marketing success! ☺



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