

## Marketing Your Expertise Through Events<sup>®</sup>

By Kathy Ellis, The Business Lab Marketing Coach

Creating an event that ties in with your company's products, services, and expertise is an excellent marketing tool and one that can really separate you from your competitors and position you as a leader in your industry. Now, with that said, keep in mind that creating a successful event takes a commitment of time, money, and considerable involvement from you, your team, and perhaps other alliance partners. In this month's article we will share event ideas with you along with some steps to think about when creating your own event.

**Determine your goal and game plan:** The marketing goal for all events is to choose the events that will have the greatest impact for your company/product/service, to showcase your company/product/service in a manner that is consistent and congruent with who you are as a company, to share your expertise in solving participant's problems, and to follow-up with those interested participants so that you can earn more business.

It's a good idea to complete a marketing brief or outline a game plan for the event so you can stay focused and understand how the event will impact your business. You will want to understand:

1. Deliverables — What is to be delivered/what will be done? Identify a specific, concrete, and tangible action or item.
2. Steps Involved — what steps are necessary to bring about the deliverable?
3. Measurement — how will you know when you have done it?
4. Investment — what are all the costs involved?
5. Date — when will it be done? Consider setting dates along the way for the specific items you outlined under deliverables.
6. Person responsible — who will do it? Name the primary person responsible for overall project and then list the team members and the deliverable for which they will be responsible.

**Event examples:** A Public Relations firm invites a select group of clients and ideal prospects to a monthly networking event. It is basically a social gathering where people with like interests come to eat and learn about each other. Employees of the firm interact with the group — visiting with clients and/or learning more about prospective clients. As the creator of the event, the PR firm is performing, in real time, its own core service: the ongoing activity of promoting others through awareness and education. After each event, the PR firm sends thank you notes to those who participated, obtaining permission to continue to market to the participants and schedule in-person follow-up meetings where ideal prospect matches were found or client needs discovered.

A business franchising coach invites a select group of non-competing clients and ideal prospects to monthly TeleForums (meeting by phone) to discuss relevant issues facing franchise owners and managers. After each call, the coach sends out a checklist of action items on how real-life results can be obtained and continues to stay in touch with these clients and prospects. Information learned from these calls is also used in writing new

articles, which are distributed to all subscribers and pertinent publications.

An editing firm sponsors an education event at a national conference. As a sponsor of the event, the firm has a booth at the trade show, advertisements in the conference magazine, and identity presence throughout. Additionally, the owner of the firm presents a two-hour seminar on effective writing, how to edit, and common mistakes to avoid. Seminar participants are invited to give their business cards to receive the firm's booklet *Common Mistakes in Writing and How to Recognize and Correct Them*. The firm sends thank you letters along with the booklet to all seminar participants who requested the information, obtains permission to continue marketing to the participants, and schedules follow-up meetings where the editing firm found ideal prospect matches or discovered client needs. The firm also has access to the entire conference attendee list, which is cross-referenced with the list obtained during the seminar. Those not receiving the firm's booklet do receive a targeted direct mail piece inviting them to the firm's website and offering a FREE subscription to the firm's monthly newsletter. Firm continues to stay in touch with newsletter subscribers and seminar participants.

A business etiquette firm offers monthly lunch-and-learn seminars for clients and ideal prospects to gain a competitive advantage through image and etiquette. Luncheons are scheduled in a consistent manner (same location, day, time) and advertised through the firm's monthly newsletter. After each event, thank you notes are sent to those who participated, permission is obtained to continue to market to the participants, and in-person follow-up meetings are scheduled where ideal prospect matches were found or client needs discovered.

*Tip from The Business Lab: Keep information about all the specific events you've created or have been involved with in a Corporate Story/Scrap Book for future reference and historical purposes. This will help you learn from each event (taking the elements that were the most successful and expanding upon them) and by keeping a Corporate Story/Scrap Book, you help all new employees learn more and more about your business and how you help your clients.*

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**More Information?** If you would like to learn more about this important topic or would like to receive our FREE Service Ideas Booklet, please send an E-mail to [kathy@thebusinesslab.com](mailto:kathy@thebusinesslab.com), visit our website at [www.thebusinesslab.com](http://www.thebusinesslab.com), or fax a note on your letterhead to 281-374-0569.

**Author's Note:** Kathy Ellis is a Marketing Coach and the owner of The Business Lab, a full service marketing and graphic design company. We specialize in creativity and helping you think outside the box. We then help you implement those creative ideas through programs including database marketing, websites, interactive CD brochures, company brochures, client newsletters and promotional marketing materials. We share our FREE newsletter with you to showcase powerful marketing tips, techniques, and ideas to help you improve your business. The Business Lab is based in Houston, TX, at 281-374-0170 or by E-mail at [kathy@thebusinesslab.com](mailto:kathy@thebusinesslab.com)