



The Importance of
How to Pull Off a Kick-Arse



Face-to-Face Marketing, and
Event Workshop

What to Expect from this Workshop

This workshop will take you through the three stages of putting on a business-related event:

1. Planning
2. Event
3. Follow Up

Then, from my 4 years of Event Management experience, I will share my **Tips to Pull Off a Successful Event** to ensure that you make your event as worthwhile for you and your business as possible!

Why Host an Event?

As an entrepreneur, being taken seriously can be a challenge, therefore it's important to build up your credibility.

Holding a KICK ARSE business event is an increasingly viable way of doing this!

When you plan and sponsor an event, you're suddenly transformed into a business leader. You're responsible for bringing like-minded entrepreneurs together to talk business, and only a leader does that!

Add to that, pulling off a really *great* event, and you'll be seen as a leader and an authority in your community and field, regardless of your experience or age.

Plus, you can't beat the exposure – People often talk about great events they've attended, and that means the benefits extend well beyond the event itself!

Exercise 1: What is your main reason from wanting to host an event? What other reasons do you have?

Planning

Where to Start?

Many might think that securing a venue is the first action you need to take when planning an event, however in my experience this is not the case. Firstly, you need to work out WHY you are hosting the event, WHEN is the best time to have it, WHO will attend, WHAT you want to achieve, and HOW you are going to achieve it – before you even think of the WHERE!

By putting together a plan, this will help define all of the finer details of your event.

Exercise 2: Use your main reason from exercise 1 to create an event scenario, then define the points above related to this scenario:

WHY (YOUR SCENARIO/MAIN REASON):

WHEN:

WHO:

WHAT:

HOW:

You can then use the point you have made above to choose a suitable venue that will fit in with your event theme, have the capacity to accommodate your attendees, and suit the time of year you would like to host your event. When researching into an event venue you must also consider the budget you have for your venue, and whether this depends on the number of attendees or not (i.e. are you fully funding your event to thank your clients, etc, or will your event incur an attendance charge for your attendees?)

When you have chosen your venue (WHERE)...

What Else Will You Need?

- Decorations (flowers, balloons, table runners, etc)
- Food and drink
- DJ/music/audio equipment
- Screen/projector/laptop
- Photographer/videographer
- Speakers/Workshops/Stands/Etc
- Tables and chairs
- Banners, pens, promotional items, etc
- Event staff

It is helpful to write down people that you know that can offer the above products and services, to create your 'little black book' of contacts that you can call upon – you can also be a little cheeky and ask for little favors (relating to costs and extras) if you know someone personally, rather than just finding them on the internet!

It's ok if you don't know people who can help you pull together your event, as if you ask your current contacts directly, or on social media, most people are happy to provide recommendations.

Always remember when selecting providers that you are looking for 'value' and NOT 'cheap' – it is important to maintain a high level of quality, or your event could have a negative impact on your business reputation.

Exercise 3: Make a short list of some contacts you could call upon!

Budget and Costs

As well as maintaining quality, it is also a good idea to keep a close eye on costs while planning your event. You can use a simple spreadsheet with the following headings to keep track of your costs and ensure that you are sticking to your budget. **NOTE: ALWAYS SET A BUDGET!**

PLANNING SHEET AND BUDGET

Delegate numbers:

Expenditure

Fixed costs

Venue

Main meeting room

Syndicate rooms

Balloons

Equipment hire

AV equipment

Technical support

Exhibition board/stands

Speaker expenses

Speaker fees

Speaker travel

Speaker accommodation

Marketing

Website

Social media campaign

Printed publicity

Conference brochure

Post cards flyers etc

Advertising

Print media

Online

PR/press release

Management and admin cost

Conference organiser fees

Delegate registration admin fees

On the day staff costs

Event insurances

TOTAL FIXED COSTS

Variable costs

Online payment cost (i.e. PayPal, Eventbrite etc)

Refreshments

Delegate packs/badges

Chair Covers

Table Decorations

Variable cost per delegate

Plus fixed costs

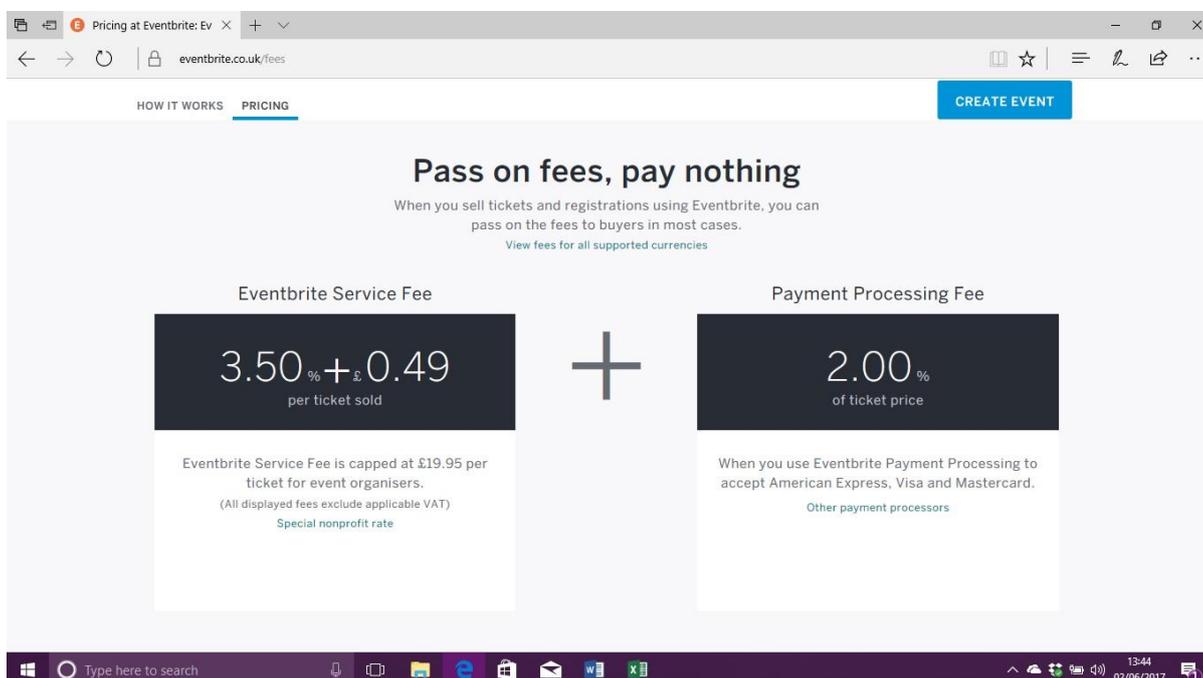
TOTAL COST PER DELEGATE

GRAND TOTAL

Tickets and Booking System

Once you have an idea of your event costs in advance, this will help you set your ticket price (if applicable). The price of your tickets must be reasonable based on similar events in your area, as if they are too high then they will not sell. If you find that your costs outweigh your reasonable ticket price, then you are best to either find ways of cutting costs, or consider absorbing some of the event costs yourself (if this would benefit your business in the long-term).

Using event booking systems, such as Eventbrite, is the easiest way to sell tickets, however remember that this type of system carries a charge (to either you or your attendee), but if offering a free event there is no charge. On these types of booking systems, you can download your guest list, send out event invites, and track your sales; therefore in my opinion the cost is small compared to the benefits the system brings.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL eventbrite.co.uk/fees. The page is titled "Pass on fees, pay nothing" and explains that users can pass on fees to buyers. It details two main fees:

- Eventbrite Service Fee:** 3.50% + £0.49 per ticket sold. A note states this fee is capped at £19.95 per ticket for event organisers and that all displayed fees exclude applicable VAT. A "Special nonprofit rate" is also mentioned.
- Payment Processing Fee:** 2.00% of ticket price. This applies when using Eventbrite Payment Processing to accept American Express, Visa, and Mastercard. Other payment processors are also noted.

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 13:44 on 02/06/2017.

Promotion and Event Invitations

There are lots of ways you can promote your event. For larger events (more than 100 people) at least 6 months of lead time is required to promote, however smaller events can be promoted in just a few months.

To promote your event effectively you should use a mixture of the following channels:

- Social media
- Mailouts to your database (including existing clients)
- Leaflets/stands at other events/banners
- Media – newspaper, magazines, radio
- Booking system invitations
- Face-to-face – asking and networking - Old fashioned paper invitation!

Note: Whatever methods of promotion you use to promote your event, the message should NEVER BE SALESY AND PUSHY – an event is a way to create awareness of you, your business, and your brand and not to be a direct sales tool to force people to purchase!

Exercise 4: Make a note of what channels you would use to promote your event from previous exercises (your scenario).

Event

Today's the Day!

After all of those months of planning, the day of your event is finally here! Remember, now is not the time to flap, stress out, or constantly beat yourself up about what hasn't gone right, and what might go wrong!!!

Always maintain contact with your venue and supplier, etc, every step of the way and so they know the exact layout and format of the event on the day. It is a good idea to get to your venue early to set up, giving you wriggle room for anything that could go wrong, allowing you time to relax and resolve!

Suggested Event Format

Create an itinerary for your event, and ensure everyone involved knows the plan. This will depend on the type of event, however suggested format follows:

1. Pre-drinks/canapes/sign in/networking
2. Introduction – to you, your business, and why you are hosting the event
3. Speaker(s)/workshops
4. Round up – thank attendees, mention the future!
5. Food, drinks and networking

For a larger event, you would break in the middle for lunch/refreshments.

Exercise 5: Write your event itinerary based on your previous scenario.

Other Things to Consider

Other things to consider at your event are:

1. **Photos and videos** – take plenty so you can use for promotional purposes afterwards. It might be a good idea to employ someone to do this on your behalf so you are free to be the **HOSTESS WITH THE MOSTESS** on the day, that's if you have the budget!
2. **Network** – speak to as many people as possible, not just the people you are pursuing as potential customers! You should never be salesy in your conversation, focus on getting to know the person and what they are all about!
3. **Share your knowledge** – use your speaking slots to show your knowledge of your industry and give free advice and tips, which helps to build your credibility in your field.
4. **Show your personality** – use the event to allow people to get to know the person behind your business – **YOU!** Always remember that **PEOPLE BUY FROM PEOPLE!**
5. **Most importantly** – Don't sweat the small stuff, and just **HAVE FUN!**



Follow Up

What's Next?

You have just hosted your KICK ARSE event, so what's next?

Well, you need to shout about your event from the rooftops!

Here is a simple list of the sorts of post-event promotion you could do from your event – which should not only tell people how amazing you are at putting on events, but should encourage more engagement with you and your business, attract more interest (and hopefully more clients/customers!) and allow you to move into different networking circles.

- **Social media** – Regular posts about your event, with images and video clips, to showcase its success. Encourage shares and engagement by asking questions and offering solutions to problems in your posts. Creative a promo video from your event, tailored to sell one of your products or services can also work well on social media (especially as a paid ad).
- **Press Release** – Writing a press release and sending it to local and national media will help you move into different areas and networking circles outside of your usual market. The press loves a fresh story, especially if it has been written for them, so it is a good idea to build a list of good PR contacts that will support you by publishing your features.
- **Mailshot or Newsletter** – Share the news about your event and what happened in a mailout to your database. This should spark conversations about the event, that can then lead to sales.
- **Thank you** – Send a thank you email (or card) to attendees (if you contain an offer or an incentive this works well to encourage custom).
- **Sales follow ups** – From conversations at your event, make calls and send emails to follow up anyone that showed interest in your business and its products/services.
- **Network** – Share the success of your event, and tell people about your next one!

Follow up is paramount to the success of your event, as most events do not generate sales there and then on their own, the post-event promotion is key to turning any leads into sales.

Due to this, only use GENTLE SALES PROMPTS AND CALLS TO ACTION in your follow up and post-event promotion, and NEVER be salesy or pushy!

Exercise 6: Imagine that you have just hosted your event (from the scenario previously created) and write your opening paragraph to your Press Release.



Exercise 7: Use all of your information from the previous 6 exercises as HOMEWORK – go away from here and plan your KICK ARSE event!!!

Tips to Pull Off a Successful Event

1. Be clear about your WHY!

Try to be clear on your objectives for the event. To build a community? For people to network? To generate leads and sales? To have fun? Generate PR? Build-up your reputation? Start with putting your thinking cap on and brainstorm on the above questions.

Don't have all the answers yet? Don't let that hold you back. Start experimenting. You will have a much clearer idea about your WHY after the first event – just in case you struggle with this.

2. Publicise

There's not much point putting in the effort to organise your event if it's not well publicised. Get the word out there using all available means; your current business network, social media, perhaps even targeted marketing. If you can, **build a community** of attendees that already know each other; this should ensure more interaction and discussion between the sessions.

3. Make it easy

Make it simple for attendees to register for the event. Depending upon the size of the event, consider using a pre-made registration application. Having people register in advance helps you estimate the attendance ahead of time, and it gets a commitment from attendees.

4. Attract awesome speakers

Your attendees are there for the speakers (and the networking!), so it's important to attract speakers who offer relevant experience and passion. The choice of speakers will vary greatly depending upon your event type and scale, but it's worth investing time in getting this right!

5. Make it inspirational rather than educational

Ask the speakers to focus on inspiring attendees rather than teaching them something. Instead of coming away with a technique or two to implement when they get back to the office, attendees came away fired up and inspired to go home, kick ass and build better products.

6. Choose the venue wisely

A good choice of venue is very important. Make sure the venue is up-scale, is appropriate to your event's needs (for example, audio / visual set up, space for break-out sessions, access to food / drink), is easy to find and has plenty of parking. Nowadays, many hotels will allow you to hold a networking event in their lobby or patio area, and often you can get the space for free if the hotel bar is connected to the space.

And don't forget, if your attendees are coming from far and wide, it's better that the venue is geographically centrally located.

7. Spend money on branding the event

If you have the budget, branding the event can build an ambience and get everyone psyched up and engaged on the day.

8. Make event check-in super smooth

It's a great idea to have attendees check in, even if you aren't charging for an event, that way you can track attendance, and if you ask for their email address, you can follow up and announce future events. But don't draw out the registration process.

9. Meet *everyone*

Make sure you introduce yourself to every person who attends. Welcome them, and focus on talking about what they do, not what you do. Be a great listener, and take a genuine interest in them and their business. They'll remember you for it.

10. Be a connector

As you meet and greet, constantly look for opportunities to connect people who would benefit from meeting each other. Keep track of these connections, and follow up next time you see them. Find out if they benefited from the introduction.

11. Recruit anchors

There are always a few people at any event who are off in a corner, not talking to anyone. Get volunteers to be anchors for your event. Their job is to make sure everyone is talking with someone.

12. Provide space and fuel for networking

Attendees will probably derive just as much value from the networking and discussions between sessions. So, you have to make room and time for that.

13. Follow up, and do it again

Follow up with your attendees. Ask how they liked the event, and get ideas from them about how it could be better. Then plan the next one. If you follow this formula, you'll see your events grow and grow.

14. REMEMBER that things will go wrong!

Don't stress out, above all else, STAY COOL and breathe. THINGS WILL GO WRONG. Don't worry about it. For now: just get started! Be creative! Embrace the unknown!

And most importantly of all – **HAVE FUN putting on KICK ARSE events!**

No time to organise an event, or still not sure where to start?

Glow Virtual Assistants can lend a hand! www.glowva.co.uk



Supporting your business to shine