

**CORPORATE EVENT
MARKETING IN THE
UNITED KINGDOM
2016**

A large, stylized graphic of the Union Jack flag, rendered in shades of teal and white, occupies the right and bottom portions of the cover. The flag is tilted and partially obscured by a dark teal diagonal shape at the bottom right.

Symphony

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About The Survey

We wanted to know how corporations value event marketing and what challenges key decision makers face around using events in their marketing strategies. In this original study from Symphony, we look at how events are valued within corporate marketing and where the challenges are for decision makers. We surveyed directors, event managers and marketing managers from large and mid-size corporations across the UK to find out how they use events to promote their brands.

Here's what we found:

- There is more buy-in for event marketing
- Measuring ROI of events is one of the biggest challenges
- Email is one of the best channels for promoting events

1. Event marketing has become increasingly competitive

- A quarter (25%) of businesses are planning to create more events in 2016 than 2015.
 - Just 4.5% of the survey respondents don't see the opportunity from event marketing.
 - 22.7% of respondents are planning to increase their team size.

2. Email and social media are seen as the most cost effective for event marketing success

The following marketing tactics were rated most highly by marketers for cost effectiveness:

- Email (77.3%)
- Social (54.5%)
- Direct mail (27.3%)

3. ROI remains difficult to prove

- 4.5% find it difficult to measure ROI
- 68.5% believe they are limited in measuring ROI
- 27.3% feel they can deliver and measure ROI

About Symphony

We develop some of the most comprehensive internet based solutions for the events management industry. From the Symphony registration and management platform to our attendee apps and major website development projects. Powerful but much easier to use than other systems. We take the hassle of time-consuming battles with paper forms, lost e-mails and endless telephone calls about double bookings and forgotten workshops.

From conferences to corporate events; we help event managers across the industry including teams from Jaguar Land Rover, Oxford University Press and Lacoste.

Symphony solves the largest challenges that event manager's face, along with the smaller aspects that we both know are integral to each event. Our powerful solution aims to improve processes, solve challenges, increase productivity and ultimately enhance the event experience for everyone involved.

Small enough to care, big enough to support. Our team goes the extra mile when it comes to helping you make your event a success.

Learn more at: www.symphonyem.co.uk

CHAPTER ONE

Event Marketing in 2016

Buy-in and Adoption

Event marketing is now a well-established core marketing technique. Max Lenderman, stated back in 2009

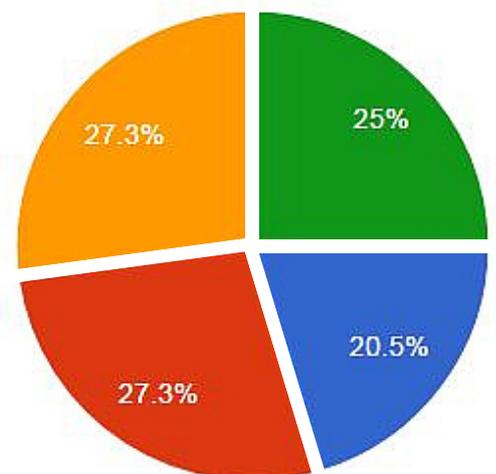
"Experiential marketing is based on engaging people".

Many corporates will tell you that they have always practiced this, and rightly so.

But how has event marketing evolved since then? With the evolution of technology. It's now easier for marketers to create more immersive and engaging events; and with that comes its own issues.

The success stories have convinced more organisations to buy into event marketing, so it's no surprise that it's becoming more competitive. When asked to what extent content marketing had been embraced in their organisation, only a quarter (25%) said they're inconsistent with their efforts.

- Little investment of event marketing
- Moderate investments in event marketing
- A lot of investment in event marketing
- Inconsistent investment in event marketing

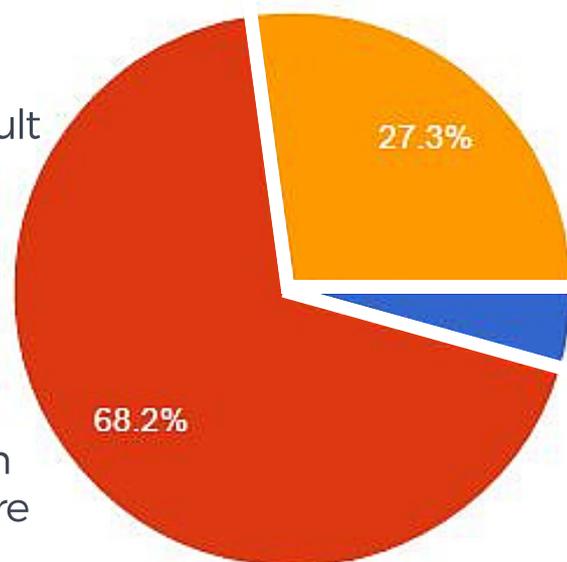


Value of Event Marketing?

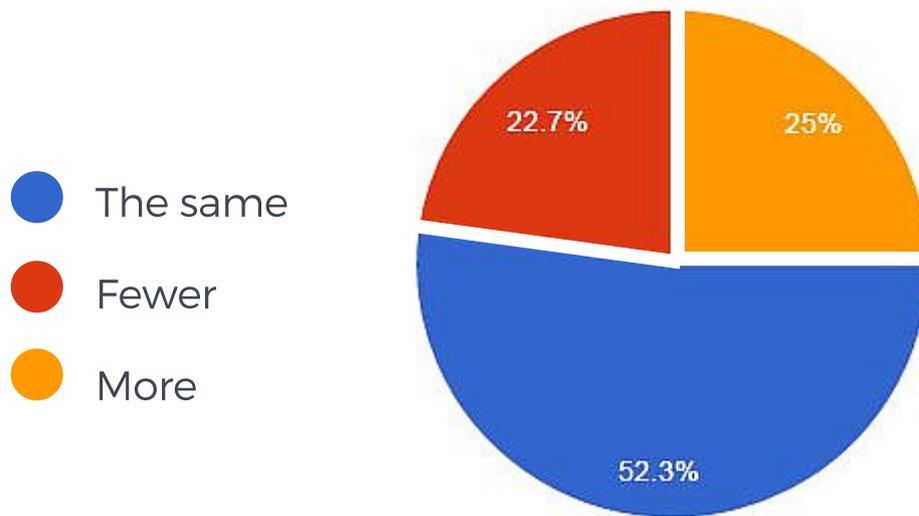
Businesses are not just adopting event marketing into their strategy for the sake of it. The majority of marketers can see the huge opportunity it presents.

In the next chart, we can see that just 4.5% of people surveyed are not convinced of the value of event marketing. 27.3% are convinced of its value and are happy with their ability to measure ROI. But a large proportion (68.2%) of “believers” see opportunity, but still feel limited when it comes to measuring ROI.

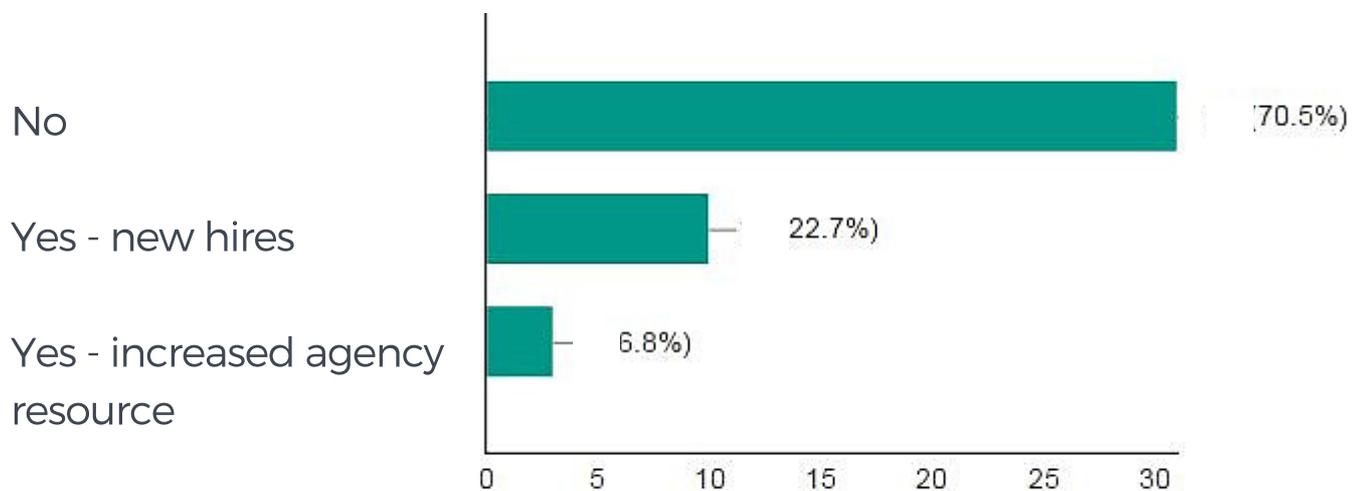
- I'm not convinced of the potential of event marketing to deliver value and see it as difficult to measure ROI
- I see opportunities from some event marketing channels but measurement of ROI is limited
- I'm convinced of the value that investment in event marketing can deliver and can measure ROI



As you would expect, with the higher rate of event marketing adoption across the UK, the amount of events are increasing, we can see that a quarter of businesses are creating more events than they did last year.



Just under a third (29.5%) of companies we surveyed indicated that they are increasing their resources to assist with event marketing this year. With the majority (22.7%) of those being new hires.



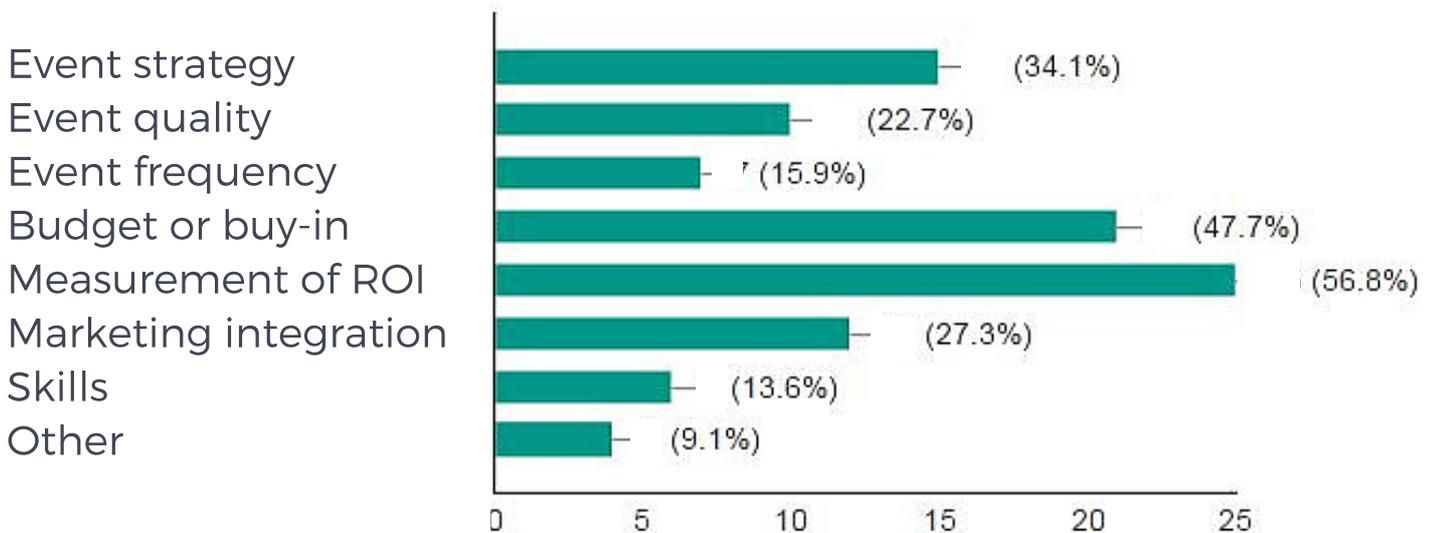
CHAPTER TWO

The Challenges of Event Marketing

The Challenges of Event Marketing

The top challenges that marketers face include:

1. Measurement - measuring ROI and effectiveness (56.8%)
2. Budget and making the case - insufficient budget or buy-in (47.7%)
3. Event strategy - Defining the best event strategy to build reach and support conversion (34.1%)



With measuring ROI and effectiveness proving to be the biggest challenge for marketers. It makes sense for the budget to come just behind. Suggesting, if there is no proof of ROI, then senior managers are less likely to invest the budget into event marketing.

CHAPTER THREE

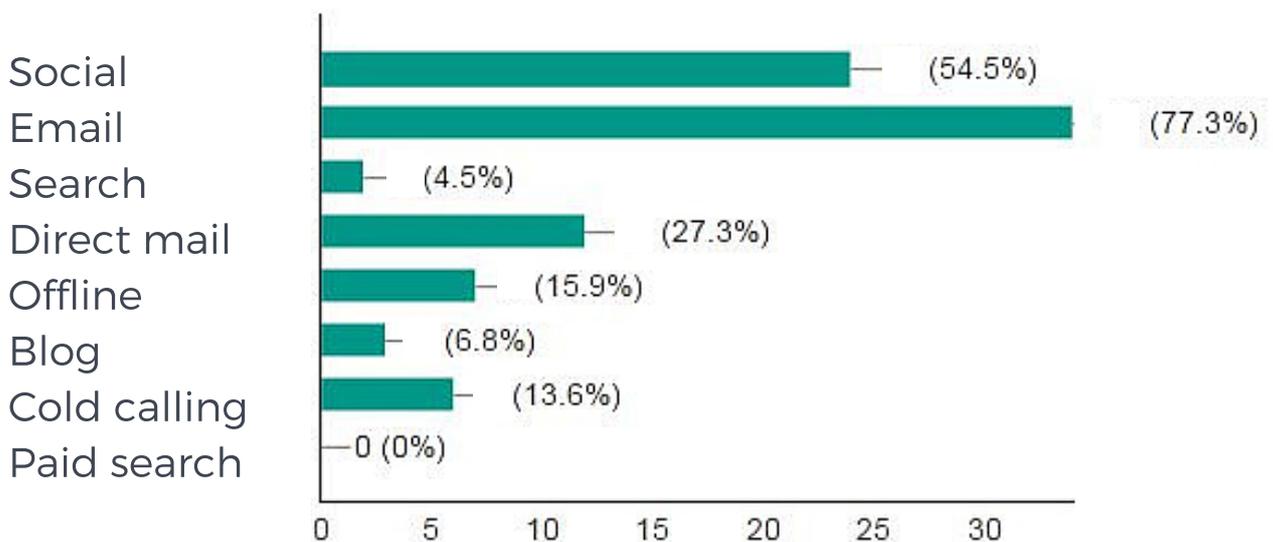
Event Marketing Promotion

Event Marketing Promotion

With so many different promotional techniques available to marketers now, we asked our survey respondents which ones they found most cost effective within their event marketing strategy.

Sending out emails is the clear winner, with 77.3% of marketers having success with them. Social media (54.5%) came in second, followed by direct mail (27.3%).

Paid search seems to be the least effective at 0%. This could be related to the upfront costs that are needed for a successful campaign, resulting in event marketers deterring from experimenting with them.

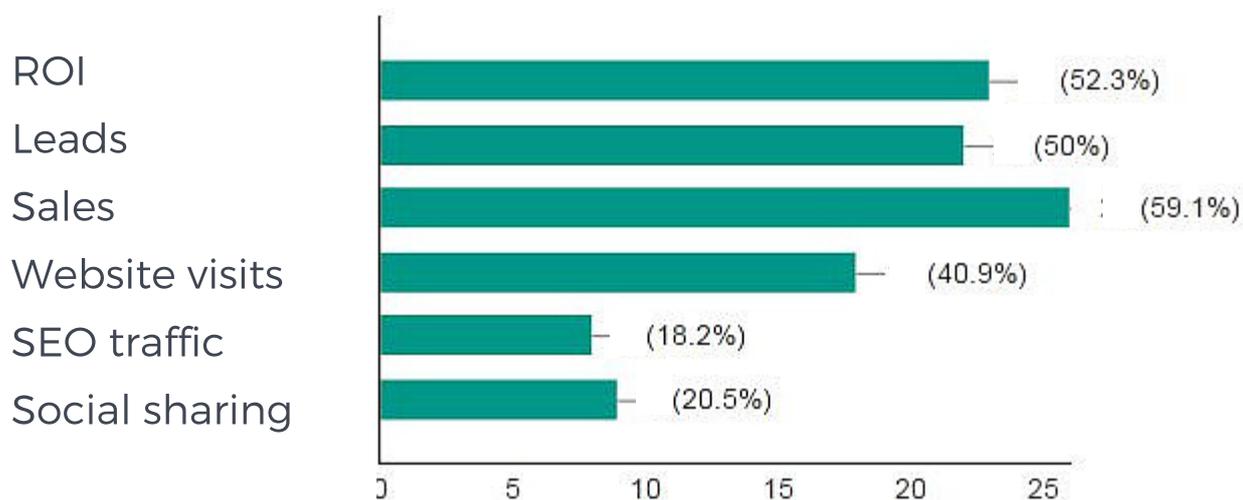


CHAPTER FOUR

Evaluating Event Marketing

Evaluating Event Marketing

We saw earlier in the report that many marketers struggled to calculate the return on investment from their event marketing. We asked our respondents which metrics they use to assess their event marketing effectiveness, the results may give an insight.



The most commonly used metric to measure event marketing effectiveness was sales (59.1%), followed by return on investment of event marketing (52.3%) and leads (50%). The least popular metric was SEO traffic (18.2%), which coincides with our data from earlier implying that 4.5% of respondents used SEO effectively.

Conclusion

In summary, we learned that event marketing is growing in popularity and competitiveness in the UK. However, senior management still needs to believe in its value so budget is no longer a challenge for marketers.

There is still a lot of room for improvement, however, measurement is still a huge obstacle. This comes into play as more and more event opportunities become available and marketers are having to spend far too long in excel trying to prove the ROI of their efforts.

As event marketing becomes more widely adopted and integrated within organisations, measuring ROI will remain top of mind. But forward-thinking marketers will now be more concerned with what we actually mean by ROI, in order to effectively measure it.

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and bookings?

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