

Avoiding Social Media Pit-Falls for Events



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The art and science of asking questions is the source of all knowledge.

Thomas Berger

It is vital to understand that we in the events industry hold the golden key to human connections for which businesses, brands, associations and organizations strive. Live events present perfect opportunities to connect, to build stories together and why not – to be inspired to change the world. But just “organizing” events in today’s digital world does not cut it. Something extra is needed and now is readily available through the often talked about engagement with social media.

Social media tips and tricks can be easily found for each and every business and sector. But finding value in the massive amounts of published books, trend reports, etc. is hard without asking some tough questions that help you and your business keep out of the many pit-falls. Becoming a Master of the Question is easy and a must. Even if every marketer values the importance of social media, nearly everyone also agrees that it would be pointless if it is not aligned with business goals, values and beliefs.

So here are some key questions that every event professional or association professional staging live events should dare to ask and be able to answer for their business.



Stop targeting everyone. Do your services really apply to all people?

Talking about community, it is important how it is defined by you. Do you see it as everyone – from that old lady with the dog (a potential member?) through your current members, to the family and friends of your employees, etc.? Are you trying too hard to speak too many languages at once? Use your resources in order to define who you want to speak to, their demographics, and their interests. Only then can you become what you want to be, a valuable member of the community.

Are Millennials all that important?

Everyone associates social media with Millennials. Millennials seem like this special group of people speaking a special language. We will tell you one thing – Millennials, as in any generation, are different from the generation before. But Generation X was also different from the Baby Boomers before them and nobody seemed to be so obsessed about this change. So do not concentrate too much on the changes of the generations, change, as it is happening simultaneously in your audience and in your workforce. Remember that while it is still not easy to identify the right person to take care of your social media do not simply give it to the person with the most active personal Facebook. Be more critical – being a Millennial does not make a professional in social media.

What is the goal? Does the word “community” fit with our business goals?

One of the very first tasks anyone has to do in regards to social media is define a clear goal. Many employ social media because it is trendy – just as many people stick to fashion trends and, for many, it turns out to be a disastrous choice. So it is with social media. Do not do something only for the sake of it. Carry your research forward and see if you can build your own community by joining one or more social media channels. By doing this, would you improve the spirit of that community? Do they need such organized space to connect further? Do you have something to say and does that fit with the language of the chosen channel(s)? Ask yourself the hard questions, align your actions with SMART goals, and think of your community and how can you become one of its valuable members.

Are you trying to be everywhere? Is your audience there too?

After you have defined your audience and have not slipped on the slippery slope of buzz words, there is another pit-fall awaiting you – which channels to join? You might be thinking of joining all the big ones (buzz words again) – Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. but can you “speak” on all these languages? If you do not produce often videos (or ever) it does not make sense to join YouTube. If your community does not have the time to screen or post on Twitter (as busy doctors often don’t), do you see a point in joining?

After defining clearly the goals and the target audience, doing a research on the type of social media channels would yield the right answer as to what is worth joining and what not.

At the end of the day, are you satisfied with only “likes”? How about dislikes?

Do not take social media lightly. If your goal is to have a “like” or two it is a goal easily achieved. But you can aim so much higher. You must aim higher! If you have already done all the research and strategic thinking on it, why settle for low targets. Measure. Measure again and analyze the results against your goals. Quality is more important than quantity, certainly, but numbers will give you another view over the situation and will inspire further actions for you to take and keep abreast of what’s changing in your field and social media alike.

Give voice to your employees. Make them be the force behind your strategy.

It is hard to sound like a human when your association or organization employs so many people and has a strictly defined brand message. And it is already widely spread the opinion that not companies are the ones succeeding, but the people that they are made of. So instead of spending money on others talking about your brand, inspire your people and ask them to show that pride to everyone everywhere. They will be the biggest advocates for your brand, the biggest motivational speakers talking about each success made together. It is not a risk for any organization that is led by inspiring leaders working with motivated people.



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Magdalina Atanassova currently holds a full time position as Communication Manager at AIM Group International, handling all internal and external communication channels for all offices owned by the group.

Magdalina has established a strong position in the industry. In addition to being recognized as a Top Young Professional by PCMA, joining the PCMA 20 in their Twenties Class of 2015, she was also invited as a speaker at a number of international events (e.g. IMEX, IBTM World, MCE CEE, EURAS Forum, Eventex Conference, etc), and wrote and published various event management related articles. Magdalina is also known for her tremendous passion for sustainability - she was part of the International delegation for the development of ISO20121 and has been on the Advisory Board of the Sustainable Event Alliance (SEA) since its inception.

ABOUT AIM GROUP INTERNATIONAL

AIM Group International organizes over **three thousand events and meetings every year**. Despite our size, AIM Group still has a “small company” approach to **client partnership**.

AIM Group is committed to helping its clients reach their goals, to personalizing their event experiences, to providing an innovative environment, and to making a difference. Our strong sense of identification with client projects means that we are constantly striving to provide solutions, even for issues they aren't yet aware of. To this end, we adopt a progressive approach to technology and marketing techniques. This sense of identification also means we value and promote seamless interaction with clients' own teams, and ensure the best value is obtained from their event budget.

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