



June 2015

# EVENT MARKETING ROUNDUP

Events—offline and online—are a key part of lead generation for many firms, especially B2Bs, and research suggests they provide among the best leads of any marketing channel. eMarketer has curated a Roundup of articles, interviews and key trends exploring why marketers are increasing spending on events, who is using events successfully and how events are changing with increasing digital technology.

presented by  
**doubledutch**

## Overview

Events—offline and online—are a key part of lead generation for many firms, especially B2Bs. Research shows that many marketers use them as promotional channels, many firms create event-specific content and they generate some of the most and best leads of any channel. Marketers expect adoption to increase, and the vast majority plan to increase spending or hold it steady in the future.

When UBM Tech surveyed B2B tech marketers around the world in 2014, 61% rated trade shows and events effective marketing tactics—higher than any other channel.

UBM Tech also found that event marketing budgets are going up. More than one in three respondents said they would be increasing spending events in 2015. In a separate question, 27% said they would increase the amount of personnel devoted to trade shows and events. These respondents also found online events effective: 63% said webinars worked well for them.

According to the Content Marketing Institute (CMI) and MarketingProfs, 86% of B2B tech marketers in North America used in-person events in 2014, while 84% had webinars and webcasts. In addition, 28% ran virtual conferences.

Software Advice also found increased event spending plans when it surveyed US B2B marketers in September 2014. Nearly 35% of respondents said they would spend more on trade shows and events in 2015, while another 46.2% would hold spending on the channel steady. Increasing spending on sponsoring online events like third-party webinars was nearly as popular, and again, 46.1% would hold that spending steady.

Meanwhile, Econsultancy found that 46% of client-side marketers worldwide planned to increase their spending this year on webinars and virtual events, while another 48% would spend the same amount. Many also planned increased spending on live events and trade shows—for the second year running, more than for any other offline marketing tactic.

### Tactics that Have Been Most Successful for Their Company According to B2B Tech Marketers Worldwide, Oct 2014

% of respondents

#### Trade shows and events

61%

#### Content creation and management

45%

#### Email marketing

39%

#### Design, development and maintenance of corporate websites

29%

#### Digital or online marketing (banner ads, webinars, etc.)

29%

#### Search marketing (including paid search)

24%

#### Social media

22%

#### Analytics

16%

#### Video production

8%

#### Mobile marketing

4%

Note: respondents chose up to 3 tactics

Source: UBM Tech, "2015 Tech Marketing Priorities," Jan 26, 2015

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Effectiveness is one reason for increasing spending. Software Advice found that trade shows and events generated more leads than any other channel investigated—and on top of that, trade shows and events also generated the highest quality of leads. Nearly eight in 10 respondents said they got a high numbers of leads from events, and more than eight in 10 said those leads were excellent or good. Those leads were, however, relatively expensive.

Forrester Consulting found in January 2015 that 54% of digital marketers and 47% of customer insight professionals considered events effective for acquiring new customers.

B2Bs surveyed by Regalix in March 2015 reported that trade shows were their No. 1 traditional marketing channel, with 71% using them to generate leads or a pipeline. Another 51% reported using promotional events,

and on the digital side, 77% used webinars. Respondents considered events and trade shows suitable for lead generation during the introductory, growth and maturity phases of the product lifecycle—making these events more versatile for B2B product marketing than many other options, such as direct mail which was only considered effective in earlier stages. Online events were similarly suitable for the introductory, growth and maturity phases. In all three of these stages, B2B marketers ranked in-person events among the top 5 most effective content types.

Webinars and online events may be effective, but they're also difficult. Marketers worldwide surveyed by Ascend2 rated them more difficult to create than any other content type except videos and white papers.

Earlier research from Regalix found that 45% of North American B2B marketers expected increased adoption and usage of online events this year, including workshops and seminars. Another 17% said they thought usage of physical events would grow in 2015.

CRM data from clients of SaaS firm Implitis breaks down how good events are at turning leads into opportunities—and opportunities into deals. Trade shows, Implitis found in October 2014, converted 12.4% of leads into opportunities, according to that research. Online events were more effective in this respect: Webinars converted 17.8% of leads into opportunities, making it the No. 3 conversion channel for B2Bs.

On the journey from opportunity to deal, trade shows performed better, with a 4.4% conversion rate, vs. 2.5% for webinars. Taking the whole lead-to-deal journey into account, Implitis found that trade shows had a 0.55% conversion rate, and webinars 0.44%. For comparison, customer and employee referrals converted the most leads into deals, at 3.63%.

Trade shows and events were also among the most trusted and effective media for influencing small-business owners in September 2014 polling by Cargo—and they had grown in effectiveness and trust since an earlier survey. In September, 27.3% of respondents rated trade shows and events as trustworthy, vs. 10.0% earlier in the year. Online events were also increasing in effectiveness, with webinars rising from 2.0% to 9.3% over the same period.

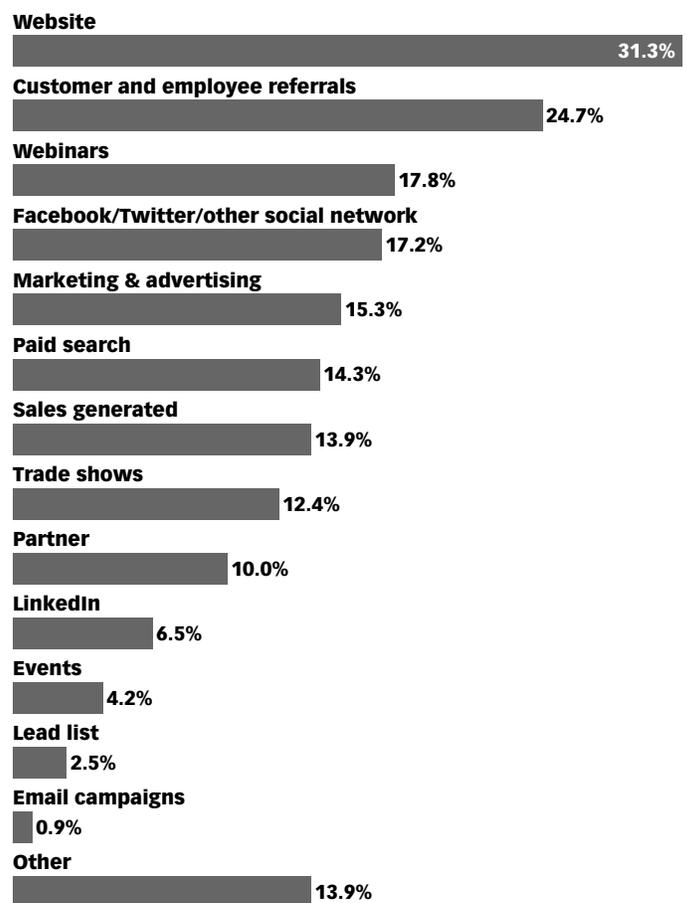
According to February 2015 polling by G/O Digital and Entrepreneur, nearly three in 10 small-business executives said they were likely to share vendor webinars with their

colleagues, and another 16% said they shared other webinars and events that weren't from vendors.

According to Percolate, 20% of US marketing executives say their firms create webinars—making them less common than many other types of content, including white papers. But other research suggests they are highly useful.

B2B marketers find online events to be effective content marketing tactics—66% agreed with this, making webinars second only to videos for effective content marketing, in a Webmarketing123 survey from November 2014. When Eccolo Media asked B2B technology decision-makers what they used to evaluate purchases, more than one-third used webinars in 2014—up from 29% the year before. One reason could be time: 35% of SMBs surveyed by G/O Digital and Entrepreneur in February said they had less time and budget for attending large industry events.

**US B2B Lead-to-Opportunity\* Conversion Rate, by Channel, Oct 2014**  
among clients of Implitis



*Note: based on CRM data from clients of Implitis, broader industry metrics may vary; read as 31.3% of leads generated from websites result in an opportunity; \*a prospect who is engaged in an active sales process*  
Source: Implitis, "B2B Sales Benchmarks," Nov 24, 2014

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# Social Promotions Boost Event Awareness

## More than half of event marketers use social media to spread the word

Events are, in themselves, promotional. Whether marketers are creating their own events or sponsoring pre-existing ones, ultimately events are about getting a brand in front of an audience.

But as with so many types of marketing, events must also be marketed. Just as an app created for marketing purposes must be marketed to get anyone to download it, and content created for marketing purposes must be marketed for anyone to consume it, if you want to get your brand in front of an audience at an event, first you need to get people to the event.

According to research from Maximillion Events, social media may be one of the best ways to do just that.

Maximillion surveyed event organizers about how they use social media for their jobs, and 75% said it was “very important” to use social for event promotion. Facebook was the most popular channel for doing so, at 78%, followed by Twitter (56%) and LinkedIn (49%).

Event marketers most commonly used social media to increase event awareness, with 58% of respondents choosing that answer. Nearly half used social to increase awareness of their brand more generally, and 20% used it to increase ticket sales for the event.

Social media appears to work well for event promotion: 44% of respondents said it was effective in increasing event awareness. It was less effective as a direct-response channel, with just 10% saying it helped increase ticket sales.

According to 2015 research from Econsultancy, events and conferences are the No. 1 offline marketing tactic client-side marketers are planning to increase budget for this year—for the second year running. It’s also the offline marketing tactic respondents were least likely to say they were decreasing budgets for—again for the second year running. This suggests most marketers are happy with their event efforts. If they’re promoting those events via social, they might be even happier.

### 2014 vs. 2015 Offline Marketing Budget Plans Among Client-Side Marketers Worldwide, by Channel

% of respondents

	2014			2015		
	Increase	Keep the same	Decrease	Increase	Keep the same	Decrease
Live events/conferences	39%	46%	15%	38%	46%	16%
Direct mail	35%	43%	22%	31%	46%	24%
Telemarketing	29%	52%	20%	23%	51%	26%
TV	22%	52%	27%	23%	54%	24%
Newspapers/magazines	20%	49%	31%	19%	44%	37%
Outdoor ads	16%	59%	25%	19%	46%	35%
Radio	16%	57%	27%	15%	49%	36%

Note: numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Source: Econsultancy, "Marketing Budgets 2015" in association with Oracle Marketing Cloud, Feb 26, 2015

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# For B2Bs, Webinars Are a Winning Tactic

## B2Bs place webinars among the most effective marketing tactics

Not all events are in-person. Webinars are a popular marketing tactic—especially for business-to-business (B2B) marketers—and research indicates many believe they can be highly effective.

Polling from Webmarketing123 in November 2014 found that two-thirds of US B2B marketers considered webinars effective content marketing tactics. They were considered more effective than any other content marketing format except videos, which won out by just 2 percentage points. In the business-to-consumer world, webinars were less effective, but one-third of respondents still favored them.

According to polling by Percolate, 20% of US marketing executives said their companies created webinars last year.

Another survey, from Demand Gen Report, found that 62% of US B2B marketers were using webinars as part of lead nurture campaigns in 2014. More than half of respondents also considered webinars effective for this purpose. Only white papers were more widely used, and they were slightly less likely to be rated effective. And Chief Marketer reported that 44% of US B2B marketers used webinars for lead gen last year, up from 29% in 2013.

Webinar prominence among customers has also gone up in recent years. Longitudinal research from Eccolo Media found that 34% of US B2B technology decision-makers used webinars to help them evaluate a potential purchase in 2014. That was up from 29% the previous year.

According to October 2014 data from Implisit based on its clients success with converting leads to opportunities, webinars had a success rate of 17.8% by this metric—better than any other channel except websites or customer/employee referrals.

Sponsoring a webinar in search of leads can be expensive, according to polling by Software Advice. September 2014 research found that third-party webinars had relatively high lead costs—20.0% of US B2B marketers said the costs per lead were “very high,” while another 45.5% said they were “somewhat high.”

### Effective Content Marketing Tactics According to US B2B vs. B2C Marketers, Nov 2014 % of respondents

	B2B	B2C
Videos	68%	73%
Webinars	66%	34%
Case studies	63%	32%
Blogs	55%	46%
Infographics	53%	40%
Ebooks	30%	15%
Mobile apps	29%	47%
Other	11%	16%

Source: Webmarketing123, "2015 State of Digital Marketing," Feb 10, 2015  
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But the high cost of leads wasn't deterring respondents from using third-party webinars for demand generation—suggesting they are effective for this purpose. More than one in four respondents said they would be spending more on third-party webinars in 2015, while around half planned to hold spending steady. It's also because lead quality is high. Nearly three in 10 webinar leads were considered “excellent,” and another 39.3% were rated “good.”

An Econsultancy survey of client-side marketers worldwide also found that 46% planned to increase spending on webinars and virtual events this year.

According to March 2015 polling from Regalix, webinars are most suitable for B2B marketing in the introductory and growth phases of the product lifecycle.

# Event Organizers Offer Incentives to Boost Sales

## Event exhibition space, sponsorship sales see growth

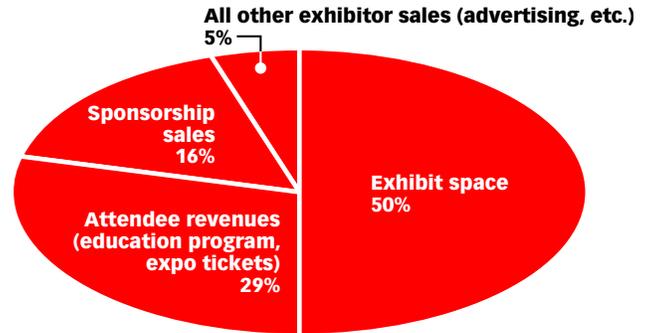
Event professionals have seen growth in both exhibit space and sponsorship sales, according to October 2014 research by Exhibit Surveys and Lippman Connects. Among US exhibition and event professionals polled, 63% said exhibit space sales were up for their most recent event, and nearly half said the same about sponsorship sales.

Exhibit space blew sponsorship sales out of the water when it came to revenue share, though, accounting for half of total event revenues. Meanwhile, dollars from sponsorships added up to represent 16% of total revenues, with attendee revenues landing in second.

Respondents reported using a variety of incentives in order to grow sales. Among the 83% of professionals who said they offered incentives, providing exhibitors and sponsors with a list of attendees' USPS mailing addresses ranked No. 1 in usage, cited by nearly half of respondents. Discounting sponsorships, advertising and exhibition space were also common incentives, offered by 44%, 42% and 39%, respectively.

However, incentive usage and effectiveness don't always match up. Exhibit Surveys and Lippman Connects found that providing sponsors and exhibitors with a list of attendees' email addresses—far more useful than physical mailing addresses in today's digital world—was considered the most effective incentive, cited by 56% but used by just one-quarter of respondents. And while just 8% of professionals said they credited some of their sponsors' and exhibitors' drayage costs, the majority of that tiny group found this to be effective. Discounting exhibit space also appeared to pay off, but the same didn't hold true for discounted advertising, considered effective by just 13%.

**Event Revenue Share According to US Exhibition/Event Professionals, by Segment, Oct 2014**  
% of total



Source: Exhibit Surveys and Lippman Connects, "Issues and Trends in Exhibit Space and Sponsorship Sales: A Research Study of Exhibition and Event Professionals," Oct 16, 2014

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**Incentives Offered\* vs. Considered Effective by US Exhibition/Event Professionals, Oct 2014**  
% of respondents

	Incentives offered*	Considered effective
Attendee lists with USPS addresses	47%	20%
Discounted sponsorship	44%	35%
Discounted advertising	42%	13%
Discounted exhibit space	39%	45%
Free advertising	25%	26%
Attendees lists with email addresses	25%	56%
Free exhibit space	10%	9%
Free sponsorship	8%	11%
Credit some of their drayage cost	8%	56%
Credit all their drayage cost	5%	0%

Note: among the 83% of respondents who said they offer incentives; \*to an exhibitor or sponsor in the past 12 months  
Source: Exhibit Surveys and Lippman Connects, "Issues and Trends in Exhibit Space and Sponsorship Sales: A Research Study of Exhibition and Event Professionals," Oct 16, 2014

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# How Marketers Use Social to Promote Events

## Social media usage varies throughout event process

Social media provides marketers with an opportunity to promote events before, during and after they take place. A September 2014 study by FreemanXP and Event Marketing Institute took a deeper look at how marketers were using social throughout the event process.

US marketers were most likely to use social pre-event to increase awareness, cited by nearly nine in 10. Driving attendance and providing event details such as schedules, information and news were also main use cases. Just under half of respondents were focused on building engagement among their social communities. Facebook was the most effective social media platform during this stage, while Twitter and LinkedIn ranked second and third.

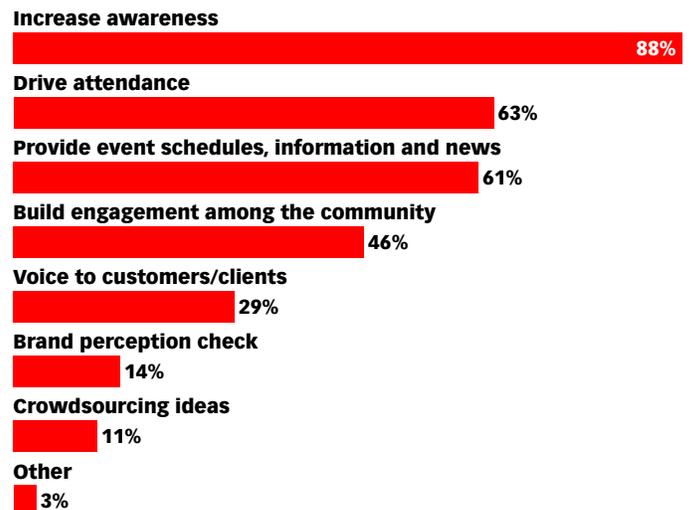
After event kickoff, marketers were most likely to promote specific event elements and features via social (73% of respondents). Posting and sharing photos (55%) and content (50%) were also popular, while around one-third of marketers leveraged social to promote education and content or contests and giveaways, amplify product announcements, or measure and assess the experience and feedback. During events, Twitter proved to be the most effective social platform, followed by Facebook and Instagram.

The event doesn't end once the final session is over. Social media marketers focused on reliving highlights of the experience and leveraged influencers. More than four in 10 provided a summary of event content, while 36% focused on the future, promoting their next events. Here, Facebook returned to the top spot for most effective social network, with YouTube and Twitter at No. 2 and No. 3.

November 2014 research by Regalix found that among business-to-business (B2B) marketing executives in North America, social media was used most during events, cited by 91% of respondents, while 79% used the channel for pre-event promotion and 52% for post-event efforts. Overall, 87% of B2Bs used social media to promote events—the third most popular channel—and it ranked as the second most effective channel for event promotion, tying with websites at 68% of respondents.

### Ways in Which Social Networks Are Used to Promote Events Before They Occur According to US Marketers, Sep 2014

% of respondents



Note: n=106

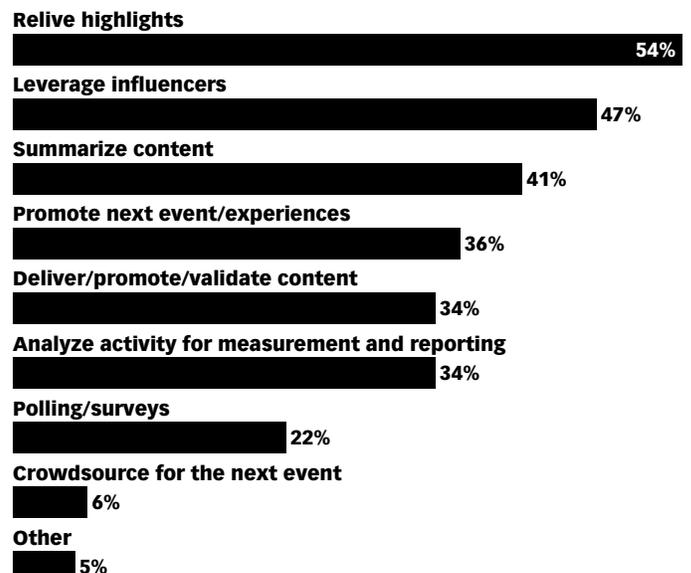
Source: FreemanXP and Event Marketing Institute, "The Viral Impact of Events: Extending & Amplifying Event Reach via Social Media," Feb 17, 2015

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### Ways in Which Social Networks Are Used to Promote Events After They Have Occurred According to US Marketers, Sep 2014

% of respondents



Note: n=106

Source: FreemanXP and Event Marketing Institute, "The Viral Impact of Events: Extending & Amplifying Event Reach via Social Media," Feb 17, 2015

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# How B2B Marketers Spread Their Event Promo Dollars

## B2B marketers use different promotion channels pre-, during and post-event

Using events to drive leads isn't a new concept for business-to-business (B2B) marketers. In a November 2014 study by Regalix, 91% of B2B marketing executives in North America reported investing in event marketing, and nearly all of this group—96%—said events were extremely or somewhat significant for accelerating lead gen or growing the sales pipeline. As such, lead generation tied with brand building as the top objective for companies investing in event marketing, each cited by 80% of respondents.

Much effort goes into promoting events—before, during and after—but spending isn't even throughout the process. Regalix broke down promotion channels used pre-, during and post-event and found that marketers checked off more costly channels before appearing at events, then cut back during and afterward.

Expensive outdoor ads, TV, radio and cold calling, along with paid search and online display ads, were the most-used promotional channels pre-event. Once the big day came, though, usage dropped drastically for these channels as social and mobile took center stage. Fully 91% of B2B marketers reported using social media during events, and around 80% promoted via mobile apps and text messages. When the doors closed, low-cost channels remained the most relevant. Email (72%), blogs (66%) and social media (52%) helped marketers stay top of mind among attendees post-event.

Post-event promotions aren't the end, though, as marketers must measure event return on investment (ROI). And here, it all comes back to lead generation. More than three-quarters of respondents said they looked at the increase in leads to measure an event's ROI—the top response. Sales, which can happen way after a lead originally comes into play, came in second, at 48%.

But recent research suggests price per lead is high, possibly because these aren't the most quality ones. In a September 2014 study conducted by Research Now for

### Channels Used to Promote Events According to B2B Marketing Executives in North America, by Event Phase, Nov 2014

% of respondents

	Pre-event	During event	Post-event
Cold calling	100%	8%	15%
Radio	100%	29%	14%
TV	100%	25%	13%
Outdoor ads	100%	0%	0%
Online display ads	100%	0%	0%
Paid search	100%	6%	6%
Email	97%	22%	72%
Website	97%	305	33%
Direct mail	96%	9%	14%
Affiliate marketing	95%	26%	16%
Print media	87%	27%	20%
Social communities	84%	68%	44%
Social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.)	79%	91%	52%
Blogs	69%	28%	66%
Mobile web	53%	68%	20%
Mobile apps	41%	82%	0%
Mobile messaging (text messaging)	40%	80%	7%

Note: among the 91% of respondents investing in event marketing  
Source: Regalix, "State of B2B Event Marketing," Dec 5, 2014

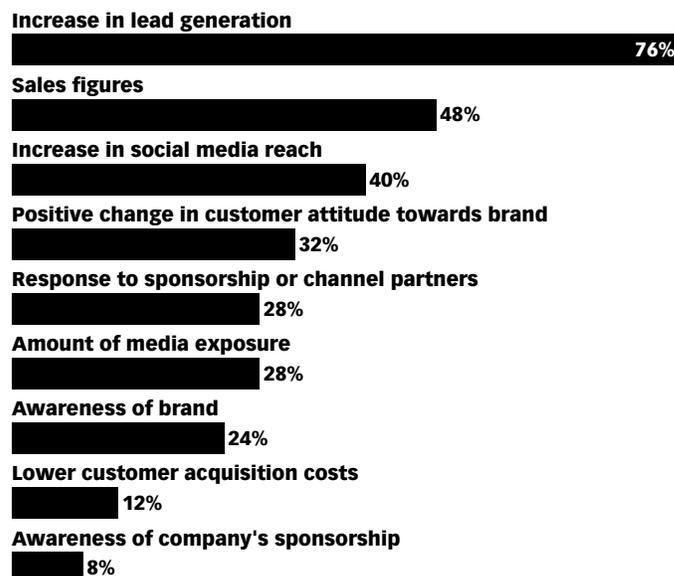
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Software Advice, 39.4% of US B2B marketing professionals said the cost per lead generated from trade shows and events was very high, and 43.3% said it was somewhat high. Meanwhile, just 2% and 14.4% said this was very or somewhat low, respectively.

### Metrics Used to Measure Event Marketing ROI According to B2B Marketing Executives in North America, Nov 2014

% of respondents



Note: among the 91% of respondents investing in event marketing  
Source: Regalix, "State of B2B Event Marketing," Dec 5, 2014

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## Concertgoers Leave with Brands Stuck in Their Heads

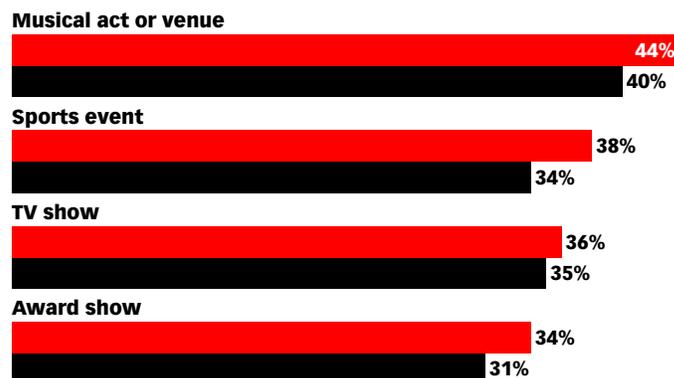
### One in three concertgoers remember the sponsor of the last show they attended

For many, there's nothing like listening to some good music while unwinding from a stressful day, getting amped up to head out for the night or cruising in the car. Indeed, in an October 2014 study from GroupM ESP conducted by GroupM Next, US internet users ranked listening to music as the most important activity in their lives, at 22% of respondents. Meanwhile, watching television and reading came in second and third, at 21% and 20%, respectively."

Based on the study, consumers want their music live, too, with one out of every two respondents saying they had attended a live concert or festival in the 12 months leading up to polling. And they didn't just head home humming tunes on repeat—they also had brand sponsors on their minds. One in three concertgoers said they remembered

### Attitudes Toward Event Sponsorship Among US Internet Users, by Event Type, Oct 2014

% of respondents



- More likely to have positive feelings toward sponsor brand
- More likely to consider purchasing sponsor brand in the future

Note: n=2,000 ages 18+  
Source: GroupM Next, "The New Music Model for Brands: How Live Events and Digital are Changing the Sound of Things," Feb 3, 2015

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the show partner of the last live event they attended, and fully 44% of respondents said music partnerships were the factor most likely to increase positive feelings toward a sponsor brand—higher than the percentage who said the same for sporting events, TV shows and award shows.

Concert sponsorships help influence purchases, too. Four in 10 said they were more likely to consider purchasing from a music event sponsor brand in the future, vs. 35% who said so for TV, 34% for sports events and 31% for awards shows.

GroupM noted that brands could extend their reach among concertgoers even more by leveraging the rise of digital technology. Fully 56% of respondents said they would pay extra for an LED bracelet that lit up in-sync with the music, and half would pay extra for an app that let them request a song during the show.

Brands are increasing their spending on live event sponsorships. Citing data from IEG, GroupM reported that brands spent \$1.43 billion on live music sponsorships last year, and investment had increased more than 33% since 2010. However, the source noted that this was a still a sliver of overall music industry revenues.

## US Open App Delivers Up-to-the-Minute Coverage Along with Ads



**John Kent**

*Technology Manager*

**IBM**

### **Nicole Jeter West (not pictured)**

*Senior Director, Ticketing and Digital Strategy*

**United States Tennis Association**

IBM and the United States Tennis Association (USTA) have been working together for 25 years. This year, both companies teamed up again to deliver an interactive mobile experience to 2014 US Open tennis fans. John Kent, technology manager at IBM, and Nicole Jeter West, senior director of ticketing and digital strategy at USTA, spoke with eMarketer's Rimma Kats about the new mobile experiences and use of beacon technology.

**eMarketer:** IBM unveiled a new interactive mobile experience to the 2014 US Open. What are the features of the app?

**John Kent:** Mobile is important to the US Open because it's a way to reach fans wherever they are and let them consume the content however they want. The iPad app is a refreshed experience where users can view scores, see what's current and use the TrendCast, which is a curated feed about the hot topics that are trending in social media.

Notifications have been also really enhanced, and we're taking advantage of location-based technology and geofencing to understand, "OK, you're on-site." We may message you differently than if you're not on-site.

**Nicole Jeter West:** We're really excited about the mobile app because fans are now getting minute-by-minute information. There's information coming from Twitter, from our news—articles, stories, videos, photography—and that allows fans to be in the center of what's taking place during the tournament.

**eMarketer:** Does mobile usage vary by device?

**Kent:** Last year, our mobile users surpassed our desktop users, so we clearly see growth there. With this type of an event, we're still a sizeable desktop audience. We interrupt the productivity of the world because a lot of people will view the tournament and get information from their desktops at work.

**“With this type of an event, we’re still a sizeable desktop audience. We interrupt the productivity of the world because a lot of people will view the tournament and get information from their desktops at work.”**

However, mobile is a growing platform, and the interactions on those platforms are increasing.

**West:** There’s no first screen or second screen, it’s really about the best screen. If a user is on the road or if they’re heading to a meeting, they may not be in front of a television. But what they do have is their phone, and we need to always think about that on-the-go opportunity and make sure that we’re serving up content in an appropriate way.

Tablet users have the ability to spend more time and engage a little bit more. They might be using that while they’re watching a match on television, or they might be streaming on their tablet.

The content needs to be tailored, and we need to make sure that we’re meeting that user’s needs and we’re giving them the best possible experience regardless of what device they’re on.

**eMarketer:** The USTA is also said to be testing rich media and beacons.

**West:** We started testing last year and rolled beacon out with push alerts and geotargeting around the grounds. It gives us the ability to deliver specific messages to our fans on-site that are relevant to them. We’re also able to share sponsor-related activations to our fans, let them know when there’s an autograph signing or a sweepstakes opportunity that’s taking place. At first we focused on text messaging, but rich media offers a bigger benefit to our sponsors.

Fans will be [at the Open] for hours, so they might go check an alert that they got in their app inbox and say, “Oh, that’s great. I want to check that out later.” We found that they do go back into that inbox and check those messages and opportunities from sponsors.

The big strategy behind it is not to serve up too much content to them, but to make sure that we’re appropriately sending the right messages at the right time depending on what the fan’s location is, and I think our fans appreciate that.

## B2B Perspective: UBM Tech Sustains Connection with Game Developers via Mobile



**Bibi Jackson**

*Director of Marketing*

**UBM Tech**

UBM Tech’s gaming division organizes the annual Game Developers Conference (GDC) and owns a number of products, including the online magazine “Gamasutra.” Braughnwynn “Bibi” Jackson, director of marketing for UBM Tech’s gaming properties, spoke with eMarketer’s Stephanie Wharton about how her team is using the mobile channel to enhance its offerings.

**eMarketer:** How do you use targeted email content to get gaming industry professionals to register for your conferences?

**Bibi Jackson:** For the first time this year, we decided to do an abandoned registration campaign. We looked at the point in the process that people were abandoning registration and noticed that a lot of people abandoned at the questions in the demographics section. It wasn’t a huge number of people dropping out there, but it was significant enough to run a campaign. We have about 15 or so demographic questions we require people to answer.

**“We decided last year to convert all of our email newsletter templates into mobile-responsive designs. It was quite a large undertaking but completely worth it.”**

We created a fast-track registration campaign for those that dropped out. We retargeted them and they basically only had to provide their name and email to purchase a pass. When they did that, we later sent them an email and said, “Hey, when you have time, be sure to fill these questions out or you’ll have to do it on-site. You probably want to avoid the lines.”

**eMarketer:** Do you use any mobile-specific targeting?

**Jackson:** We decided last year to convert all of our email newsletter templates into mobile-responsive designs. It was quite a large undertaking but completely worth it. We wanted to make sure we sent one thing that could be read across all devices. Our emails and our website are all mobile responsive now, and resize to phones and tablets. Our next phase will be to optimize, so we have been tracking how our website performs and how people interact with it.

We know people who dropped out at the demographics section obviously don’t have a lot of time. Maybe they were trying to register for the conference from their mobile device and didn’t want to sit through all those questions. Maybe the questions weren’t rendering well on a smaller device. We need to think about the audience and why we are retargeting and nurturing them. We try to make everything extremely friendly to the user.

**eMarketer:** How do you use the mobile channel to keep the gaming crowd engaged during conferences?

**Jackson:** We have a GDC mobile app, and a lot of people use it while on-site. We have a schedule builder within the app so attendees can create a schedule for each day of the conference. It’s a week-long event with 400 sessions. It’s a lot, so this way, people know at what time they need to be in which room.

We also give people the ability to post photos to the app. So if they’re on the expo floor or the GDC store, they can see what their friends are doing. It’s a community event, so lots of people take pictures and lots of people check in. We also have a leaderboard that attendees can earn points on by posting lots of things.

**“On the weekends, we retweet some of the top posts and that gains us even more traction.”**

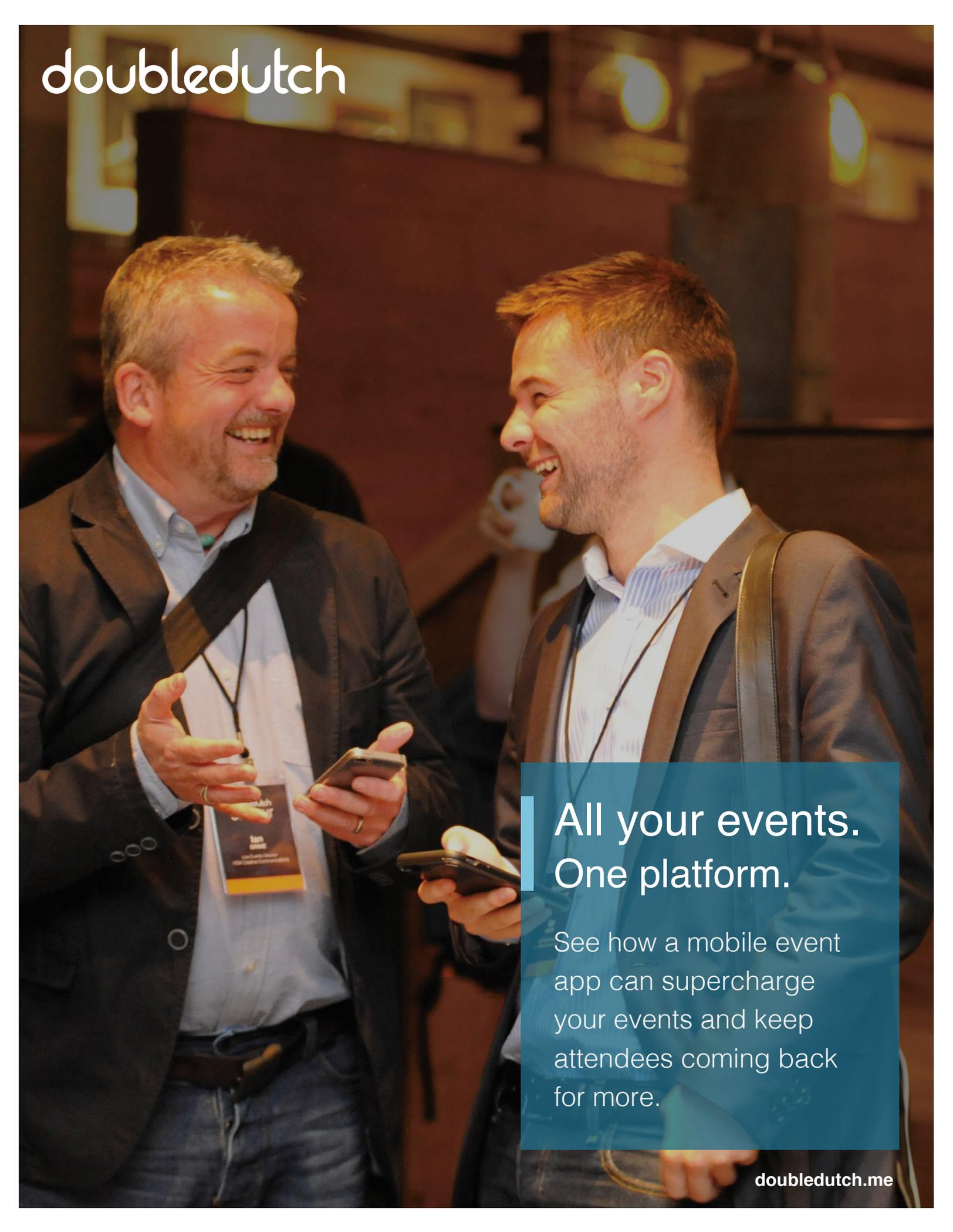
**eMarketer:** What are you doing on social media?

**Jackson:** This year, we decided to try tweeting daily. It’s been incredible for us. On the weekends, we retweet some of the top posts and that gains us even more traction. We just ran a #BestOfGDC campaign, and asked people to post and tweet their best memories of GDC.

Our news channel, Gamasutra, is like a water fountain that allows us to recycle marketing content. Every channel supports the next one. For example, we might create some tactical tweets that take snippets from a big story on Gamasutra that says, “This person just made the news over this type of game, and they’re also going to be speaking at GDC. Don’t miss it.”

**eMarketer:** How is marketing to the gaming industry different than marketing to other sectors?

**Jackson:** The game industry lives, eats and breathes what they do. It’s very different than other tech sectors. It doesn’t matter what side of the fence game developers are sitting on—whether they’re programming or storyboarding—it’s such a journey. It’s an intimate thing.

A photograph of two men in business attire at a conference. The man on the left is older, with grey hair and a beard, wearing a dark blazer over a light blue shirt and a lanyard with a badge. He is smiling and gesturing with his hands while holding a smartphone. The man on the right is younger, with brown hair and a beard, wearing a dark blazer over a striped shirt and a lanyard. He is also smiling and looking at a smartphone. The background is a blurred conference setting with warm lighting.

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