

SOCIAL MEDIA

The graphic features the words 'SOCIAL' and 'MEDIA' in large, white, sans-serif capital letters. 'SOCIAL' is contained within an orange speech bubble pointing downwards, and 'MEDIA' is in a teal speech bubble pointing upwards. Small orange silhouettes of people are scattered around the text: one inside the 'SOCIAL' bubble, four to its right, and four to the left of the 'MEDIA' bubble.

How To Increase Online Registrations

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Eventbrite[™]

Why use social media marketing?

For conference directors, the advent of social media has levelled the playing field. Effective distribution and promotion are no longer just for those who can afford expensive media buys. Social networks allow conference attendees to become virtual promoters.

Even better, social platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are virtually free. Simply put, social media is great news for anyone holding a conference—no matter what the size.

Of course, optimising social distribution requires careful testing and study. And at Eventbrite, we want you to make the most of this opportunity.

It's helpful to remember that all conferences are inherently social. It's natural for people to tell their friends and colleagues about conferences they've found valuable and enjoyable. Social media hardly invented word-of-mouth. What it does offer is game-changing acceleration, plus a way to measure what's working.

So just how much are those event shares on Facebook and Twitter worth? In October 2012, Eventbrite released a Social Commerce report that put a value on shares for the first time. We discovered that on average, the value of an event on Facebook is £2.04. This means that a share on Facebook generates £2.04 in ticket sales and, in addition, 11 visits back to the event page.

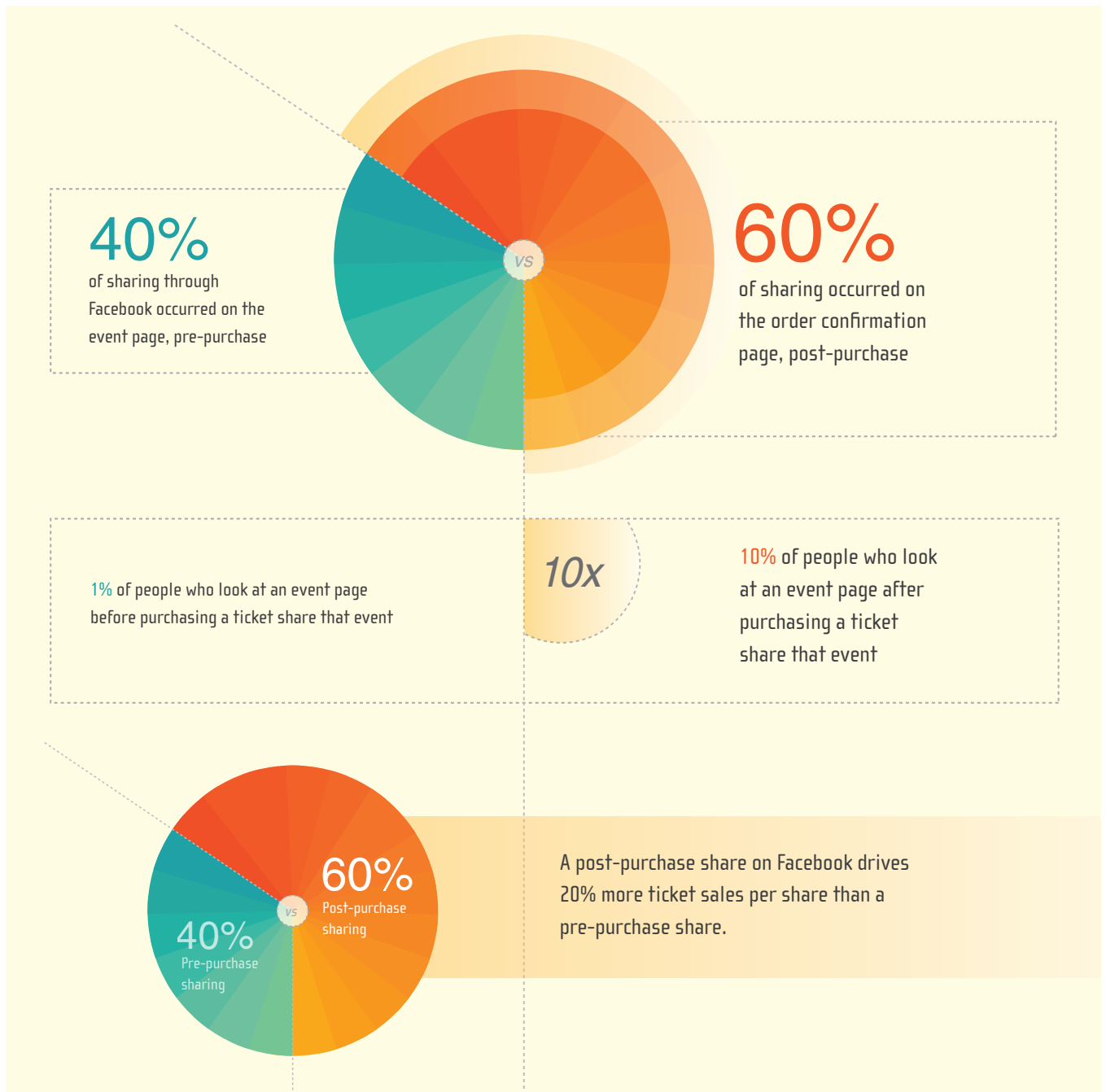


Looking at additional social networks, Eventbrite discovered that a share on Twitter equals £1.47, a share on LinkedIn equals £1.18. Every time someone in the UK shares an Eventbrite event on Facebook, 22 of their friends and contacts click on the link. Links shared through Twitter result in 33 page visits per share.

The numbers are there. Getting your community to talk about your conference and share it among their friends, followers and links means more sales and the eventual sellout you're striving for.

The level of commitment to attending an event increases the impact of a share about this event.



Source: Eventbrite Social Commerce Report, October 2012.








Recent feature launch: See Who's Going:

- Turn attendees into promoters.
- Increase ticket sales.
- By enabling people to see who – from their Facebook network -has already registered, or purchased a ticket, to attend an event.

Who's Going

 5 of your friends are going. Share it to get more people on board! 

 <p>Brittany Lauren Deal London, UK</p>	 <p>Brianna Haag London, UK</p>	 <p>Mitch Colleran London, UK</p>
 <p>Kiel Oleson London, UK</p>	 <p>Tamara Mendelsohn London, UK</p>	

Social Settings

Events are social. Select whether you want to allow your Facebook friends to see your upcoming events.

Social (Recommended)



Your Facebook friends will be able to see the events you register or purchase tickets for.

Private



No one will be able to see any of your upcoming events.

Save

Cancel

Getting started with social media

According to Alexa.com, 5 of the top 13 visited sites in the UK are social networking sites. These sites have caused a sea shift in the way people purchase. And when used correctly, they'll have a direct impact on the success of your conference.

However, these sites don't do all the work themselves. Just opening a Twitter account for your event isn't going to get it done. It's critical that you first understand them and decide how to deploy them.

So, what are your basic objectives? Before deciding how to use social media, you first must determine what your goals are. For example, you can leverage social media to achieve any or all of the following objectives:

- Sell out your conference.
- Increase awareness for your conference and brand.
- Gain sponsors and donors.
- Establish yourself as an expert in your field.

Who's coming to the event?

Check out websites like www.ukom.uk.net. Here you can search any website and discover demographic information about the traffic they receive, such as age, geographic location, income and interests. This information should be in mind before you make any marketing decision. It will help you understand where your future attendees spend time online and how to deliver correct messages to them.



A social media overview

You're familiar with Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and blogs. But each platform has its own unique attributes and can be used in different ways. How do you know which one to use?

Start by talking to previous conference attendees. Look to colleagues and peers you respect and check out their social media strategies. Research the different networks online and see what they do best. Just because it's there, doesn't mean you have to use it.

Here's a basic rundown of the major platforms:

Facebook – Ever heard of it? On Facebook, users, brands, businesses and events can interact with one another using multiple types of media (text, video, photo and links).

Twitter – The “microblogging” site allows users to write (or share) anything in 140 characters or less. That can include photos and video, direct event links, or even just a comment (ideally with a themed #hashtag) that they're excited about a particular conference speaker.

LinkedIn – This site was started with the goal of helping users manage job connections. Now it's a platform where users job-hunt, research companies, and engage in industry discussions, all still built on those professional connections. Because it's a social network framed around industries, LinkedIn can be especially valuable for conference organisers.

Blogs – A simple but often-overlooked social media tool. In a blog, you can generate and share any and all the quality content your heart desires. This is where you establish yourself as an expert in your field, gain the credibility that makes your conference a “must-attend,” and create a place to drive your audience.

Social media best practices

Here are the specific ways you can start using these sites to drive your conference sales, today:

Facebook

With over 1 billion registered users, Facebook is the largest social network and offers almost unlimited marketing potential. Facebook fan pages are the hubs where brands and events interact with users. Their diverse features include personal pages, tabs, and a chance for you to view metrics and better understand the demographics of your attendees.

We base our decisions on our friends and colleagues: which trips we take, which articles we read, and of course, which conferences we attend. Use Facebook to engage attendees and turn them into instant promoters by getting them excited about your conference.

Tip 1: Produce Quality Content

Are you sitting on thought-provoking research findings? Have you just published a great white paper? Can you share a preview of the conference programme?

Any quality content you can produce and send out to the masses will be great in generating buzz and excitement around your conference. Just remember to prioritise quality over quantity. The better it is, the more likely it is to engage attendees and get shared.

Tip 2: Get your Fans to Engage

In addition to high quality content, you need your fans to interact with your Facebook page. Here are a few ideas on how to talk with your fans:

- Show that you are genuinely interested in what your attendees care about. Ask questions and take surveys. Are you featuring a major speaker at your conference? Ask your Facebook community if they have a favourite book or previous talk by that speaker.

- Create a contest to encourage participation. Unless your fans interact with you on a regular basis, Facebook will start to hide posts from users' news feeds. So pose questions and offer advice to get fans engaging on Facebook. Getting fans involved leads to more visibility and will go a long way in making Facebook more effective. There are third-party Facebook apps that make it easy to manage contests and increase engagement. Check out AppBistro to see your options.

Brite Tip

Unless your fans interact with you on a regular basis, Facebook will start to hide posts from users' news feeds. So pose questions and offer advice to get fans engaging on Facebook. Getting fans involved leads to more visibility and will go a long way in making Facebook more effective. There are third-party Facebook apps that make it easy to manage contests and increase engagement. Check out AppBistro to see your options.

Tip 3: Be Creative

- Explore the site and take advantage of all that Facebook has to offer: poll questions, photo albums and the various apps and games that facilitate interaction and engagement.

Twitter

Twitter is often misunderstood and misused. That's too bad, because it can provide a lot of value if used well, and using it well is pretty simple.

From an event marketing perspective, here's what Twitter is:

- A platform to distribute content
- A channel that enables you to engage in meaningful online conversations
- An effective listening tool

And what Twitter isn't:

- A blatant sales pitch
- A one-way conversation
- A platform strictly for PR

Here's how to get started on Twitter and use it correctly:

Step 1: Set Up Your Account

Create a Twitter handle (i.e. name) for your conference.

Use your conference or organisation's name and make sure it's not too specific if your conference is recurring. For example, The UK's Annual London Web Summit uses Twitter handle "@WebSummitHQ." This allows the organisation to use this same Twitter handle for any conference it decides to hold, which ensures that the conversation keeps flowing.

Step 2: Aggregate Content

- Share your content, including stories about your event, links, videos, or insights. Try to keep tweets in your consistent brand "voice".
- Keep it short. Remember that you only have 140 characters. And you're more likely to get valuable retweets with comments if you keep them even shorter than that.

Step 3: Listen

- Use www.twitter.com/search to find Tweeters tweeting about your conference or space. Locate discussions happening around your field, not just your particular event – that's where future attendees can be found. When your next conference comes up you can search any related words or phrases. You can even limit your search to region.
- To organise your Twitter search feed, we recommend a Twitter client like TweetDeck or Datasift. They'll make it easier for you to monitor all the different conversations going on in your industry.

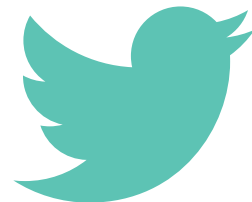
Step 4: Engage

Twitter also allows you to engage with potential and current attendees by responding to their tweets. Don't miss this opportunity!

When you find a person tweeting about a topic that relates to your conference or category, treat them as if they're a stranger. Be courteous and listen. Don't sell; engage. After you create a relationship, then talk about your conference. A sell from a friend doesn't feel like a sell.

Brite Tip

Use URL shorteners like bit.ly or is.gd so you have more room for quality content!



LinkedIn

The “professional” social network, LinkedIn is another way to target your audience and present relevant information. If your conference is industry or genre-specific (and it probably is), it can easily lend its way to interaction on LinkedIn.

Sharing with your existing contacts is also an easy way to spread your message. On average, people have fewer personal contacts on LinkedIn than Facebook; therefore, your conference promotion will be more visible to your LinkedIn contacts due to a less cluttered news feed.

Getting Started with LinkedIn:

1. Set up a LinkedIn event.
2. Share the event with your contacts.
3. Post the event in relevant groups.
4. Search LinkedIn’s database of professionals for those you would like at your event and send “InMail.”

And remember: The more people who mark “attending” for your conference, the more visible and attractive it will look to other potential attendees.

Blog

In a world of social media, content will make or break your strategy. Quality content can be found in all shapes and sizes. You don’t have to create long, drawn-out articles. In fact, the shorter, the better.

Great blogs consist of insightful and creative information. You can share a short article, a powerful picture, an interesting video or quote.

To create a buzz you can share information about the build-up to the conference: behind the scene updates, speaker confirmations etc.

There are many different sites that allow you to blog. Here is a list of the most popular. Take a tour of these sites and see how they differ. One may be a better option for your target audience.

Blogspot (or Blogger.com)

- Pros: Integrates easily with Google products including analytics and Picasa Web Albums.
- Cons: Not as customisable as other blog platforms.

WordPress

- Pros: Highly customisable in appearance and ability to use widgets. Allows for multiple authors.
- Cons: Requires more time to learn the technology and features and how to use the platform. Maintenance is more of a concern.

Tumblr

- Pros: Easy to use and set up. A more social way to blog allowing other members of Tumblr to follow your blog.
- Cons: Not as many professional/customisable features as WordPress. Tumblr works better for visuals than lengthy text.

How to Utilise the Blog

- Become a “go-to resource” in your conference category. Don’t just pay attention to your own blog or include only content about your conference. If you’re going to have, say, a popular TEDx speaker at your conference, talk about her on your blog and post videos of her past panels.
- Treat your blog as an extension of your experience planning a top-tier conference. What do you regularly talk about with attendees? What questions do you get asked the most? Take these topics and produce interesting content for your audience!
- Create a “home base” for your content. A lot of the content you promote with other social media tools will link back to your blog. Make sure your blog or site is in good shape. Websites and blogs are quickly judged by their appearance. A professional-looking blog will add to your credibility and ensure viewers stay and return.

YouTube

Visuals are an essential way to market your conference – you want potential attendees to see what they'll be missing if they don't register. It's now easy to take video clips from a past event and turn them into a brief YouTube video that engages and compels attendees. As the second-most trafficked search site on the Web, YouTube gives you huge event-discovery potential.

Step 1: Setup

After building a branded page on YouTube, share it with your other communities and networks (Facebook and/or Twitter) to gain subscribers. Make sure production quality is strong and content is interesting.

Step 2: Discover and Share

Find existing videos that your community will find interesting and valuable. Videos don't have to relate directly to your conference; they can connect more generally to the topics that will be featured. Use them as a means to generate excitement. Get creative. Even if you're hosting an industry event, it doesn't have to feel like all business all the time.

Step 3: Create Your Own

Record the buzz going on at your conference and make a recap video – a great way to show future attendees what to expect. And don't forget about the video once you've posted it. Make sure that you're responding to any comments and engaging on this platform as well. Capturing your event on film is essential to your audience and in attracting people to your next event. Leave it to the pros: Bradley.tv (<http://bradley.tv>) provide outstanding video production services and can really power your event promotion.

Social Media Takeaway

The Internet and its powerful social networking tools are just that: tools. These social media platforms do not work by themselves. They demand time and know-how to operate them successfully and effectively.

But with these tips, you'll be well on your way to bigger registration numbers and a more engaged, passionate crowd at your next conference. Clearly define your objectives, understand your audience, and devote some time to getting it right, and you'll soon be exceeding your event goals. **E**

About Eventbrite

At Eventbrite, we believe that conference registration is no longer just a monetary transaction. We see registration as an opportunity to leverage technology – to help conference directors like you get more out of every marketing pound, generate new cash flow, and better understand your attendees.

Eventbrite's social media tools turn your attendees into instant promoters through one-click integration with Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. We help all conference organisers grow their events, build their brand, and ultimately increase revenue by offering the best attendee experience.

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