

Chapter 15

The Role of Social Media in Event Marketing: Outcomes for Practitioners and Participants

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ABSTRACT

Activities, which include events that are not all intangible, include large-scale service components, and hence, their marketing includes service marketing. From this point of view, it is possible to state that it is very difficult to market activities that the participants cannot take home and consume physically. In this context, it is very important that the event marketing activities convey the feeling to the target audience that they will have fun and be entertained. Therefore, social media is one of the most important tools used in the effective transfer of the organization to the target audience within the scope of event marketing activities. As the most effective current communication and interaction tool, social media has become the most important tool for event marketers who are trying to appeal to large audiences and promote a certain destination, product, or service.

INTRODUCTION

Events, whether they are public or private or organized for whatever reason such as commercial or aid, for celebration or commemoration, are organizations that bring people together to share an experience and achieve measurable results (Silvers, 2004). Furthermore, events that are organized for the protection and development of the social identity in the region where they are organized are also activities that are a tourist attraction for the destination (Derret, 2004: 39) have increased rapidly in number, variety and popularity in recent years. Therefore, the rapidly developing event industry is one of the industries with the biggest employment potential and positive economic impact in the world today (Theocharis, 2008). There is a multi-dimensional organizational network in direct proportion to the size of the event, such as

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managing activities, managing financial affairs and staff, conducting public relations, ensuring security, advertising and promotion, decoration, organizing behind every event that is planned (Tassiopoulos, 2005). In this context, it is possible to provide this whole operation in a certain order with an organized event management and event marketing. Event management is the function of providing links between various sections of an event and organizing the flow of information between them (Bhe, Glasmacker, Meckwood, Pereira & Wallace, 2004). In other words, event management can be expressed as a way of dealing with the activities planned in an organization. Event marketing is the effort to coordinate the communication of an event. In other words, event marketing can be defined as an effort to coordinate communication around an event that occurs spontaneously or is organized by a professional sponsor (Behrer & Larsson, 1998). At this point, the purpose of organizing an event from the perspective of the sponsor is to announce the product to larger masses, to create an image and to increase participation (Lundmark, 1998).

Social media is one of the most important areas of communication, with its improved infrastructure facilities and its ever-increasing variety (Aktan & Çakmak, 2015). In today's internet age, social media has become a platform that allows people to turn themselves into "media" to collaborate and share information (Thevenot, 2007; Li & Wang, 2011). When evaluated from this point of view, it is possible to express social media as a communication tool that makes information sharing and communication very fast and easy (Koçyigit, 2015). However, the main strength of social media is its ability to enable two-way communication rather than information sharing (Chu & Kim, 2015). Furthermore, being mobile-based without time and space limitations, social media establishes a form of communication in which sharing, discussion and exchange of ideas is the main factor. Therefore, content sharing can take place instantly, quickly and easily, without the need for an intermediary, through social media (Vural & Bat, 2010) which consists of the dialogues and sharing that individuals have with each other on the internet (Kaynak & Koç, 2015). Hence, from this point of view, social media is seen as an important marketing tool to be used in event marketing.

Within the scope of the study, the concept of event marketing will be discussed in full detail, and the importance of social media will be emphasized in terms of the effective and efficient marketing of events. The role of social media in the promotion of events, enabling the participants to share their views with the target audience and receive feedback about events will be expressed in this context.

BACKGROUND

The Activity Concept

The concept of activity is a concept that can have different meanings depending on how it is defined. When the concept of activity is associated with the concept of "event", the meaning of the "event" concept also differs and is directly proportional to the purpose of each event (Eckerstein, 2002). In this context, in its most general form, an event can be expressed as bringing people together to influence them and create an experience for them (Silvers, 2004). From a wider perspective, an event is a series of activities that enable the revival of natural and physical resources in the cities or countries where it is organized, creating an image for that place and increasing the tourism attraction of the destination in question (Getz, 1997). The event concept, which expresses a unique time period (Berridge, 2007) apart from daily events, is also used to define activities designed for different purposes. These activities can

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