Marketing Event Management Is Now More About Marketing Than Events.

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Planning a marketing event calendar for the next year is probably going to be one of the more strategic programmes for many B2B CMOs and marketing directors over the next months. Many in marketing used to see events as nice-to-have vanity driven exercises of corporate PR. Now, for most, it is an integral part of an overall customer engagement strategy.

In the era of digital marketing, marketing plans include both physical and digital events as standard in customer engagement programs; to collect market/customer insights at scale and to maintain a buyer/customer relationship over a longer period than just a buying cycle. A B2B CMO I've met recently talked about plans as more of a 'media strategy' than a marketing strategy. Furthermore, I know of several large tech vendors that already have concrete plans into 2024 for large scale, multi-media, highly branded events accommodating thousands of delegates and providing an outstanding conference, networking and banqueting experience for business partners and customers alike.

Virtual marketing events will become part of a new marketing channel, scheduled, and atomised across the whole calendar and much more numerous, impactful, and measurable than before. Savvy marketing organizations will augment that with an on-demand microsite using something like the Netflix or BBC iPlayer metaphor for their own content.

Marketing Event Management (MEM) refers to a wide range of processes involved in the management of all customer events such as lead generation events, trade shows and conferences. MEM software solutions help enhance the quality of virtual and physical events and meetings, as well as providing enhanced management visibility for the event organizers. The applications can streamline the planning, scheduling, and overall event organization.

The global market for MEM software has moved from its previous boom economy, with businesses buying multiple MEM platforms to experiment with; to a consolidation state as companies now reduce their inventory of MEM vendor licenses to just a few strategic suppliers. Over half of the companies surveyed this year have more than 6 vendors they work with, counting all tools supporting virtual meetings, video conferencing, conferences and events, and trade shows. There has already been a significant consolidation of vendors in the past two years, with the proportion of firms with over 10 vendors reduced by two-thirds and the cohort with 6-10 vendors down 40%.

Which means that my new Vendor Selection Matrix[tm] research on MEM, to be published next week, is going to be more useful than ever for potential buyers of software for that process. As usual, as the report reflects the view of the market, 1500 business decision-makers reported their opinions and ratings for the MEM vendors they know. That is quite different than the standard research reports from my old colleagues

(remember, I am ex- Gartner and ex-Forrester) that focus on an analyst's rating of the product, based on briefing presentations by the vendors invited to speak with them.

Here is a list of the Top 15 vendors as selected by the 1,500 users we surveyed, based upon their rating of product, company, and service quality (listed alphabetically): ***BIZZABO*, CADMIUMCD*, CERTAIN*,*** *CIRCA**, **CVENT*,*** *HUBB,* ***KALTURA*, MEETYOO*,*** *NOTIFIED,* ***ON24*, RAINFOCUS*, 6CONNEX*, SPLASH*, SPOTME*,*** *and ZOOM.* These **vendors*** are the Market Leaders as they scored over 4 out of 5 in both the Strategy and Execution categories.

Always keeping you informed!

Peter O'Neill