



Social Media Events Promotion

Factors that Attract and Reasons for Attendance

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ABSTRACT

Digital marketing is a significant channel for communicating events to the public. Yet, for event planners, the fundamental issue becomes how to maximize social media as a critical marketing asset to secure higher participation rates for events. Although social media has demonstrated benefits such as cost efficiency, creating immediate access, and expanding consumer reach, strategy to achieve higher attendance is not clear. Accordingly, the purpose of this research was to address gaps in the literature to understand what factors motivate people notified about an event on social media to attend the event by examining the connection between their reasons for attending the event and the factors that attracted them to the event. Findings will provide event planners insights on marketing strategy, what social media channels are most appropriate, and factors that influence event attendance.

INTRODUCTION

- Social media networks have become more and more complex (Moise & Cruceru, 2014).
- Social media platforms play a significant role in today's communication, whether it is related to communicating at a mass level, to existing friends, or creating new paths for communication with old and new friends.
- Digital marketing has become a significant channel for communicating events to the public (Marine-Roig, Martin-Fuentes, & Daries-Ramon, 2017).
- What is unknown to event planners and event organizers are the factors that motivate individuals, who are notified about an event on social media, to attend the event.
- This research examines the connection between individual's reasons for attending events and the attributes of how the event was promoted on social media contributed to his/her interest in attending.
- Event planners must uncover the process through which special event consumers come to accept social media as a channel in which they use to make decisions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research is guided by the following research questions:

- How does social media affect an individual's motivation to attend an event?
- What social media strategies increase intent to participate?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Evolution of Social Media

- Social media's continued evolution includes other functionality that allows convenience and entertainment for its members – whether it is app specific games, funds transfers, and market place capabilities created by the social media platform organizations.
- Users have identified additional uses for social media for both personal and professional purposes, including branding, blogging, and now event planning and marketing.
- Social media networking sites, such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, are great resources for creating pages for events with descriptive details, then opening it up for the public to see (Odhiambo, 2012).
- The power of social media to promote and organize collective action and enhance political empowerment has been acknowledged and widely researched because technology-enabled personal networks did not simply function as communication systems but also empowered flexible organizations that allowed rapid action and coordinated adjustments (Marine-Roig, Martin-Fuentes, & Daries-Ramon, 2017).

Capabilities of Social Media

- Social media sites offer new tools that contribute to a larger complexity of sociotechnical systems (Hvass & Munar, 2012).
- Takes advantage of existing traffic and sites that potential attendees are already looking at and interacting with (Friedman, 2012).
- Utilizing social media increases credibility and amplifies brand messaging to all who view the content (Glosby, 2015).
- There are capabilities to target a group of individuals from specific demographics or specific interest groups.
- Social media is considered a timely and cost-effective marketing tool which provides companies with extended opportunities to influence customer choices and behavioral intentions (Lee, Xiong, & Hu, 2012).
- Added functionality that enables Facebook to predict whether or not the user will attend the event (Bogaert, et. al., 2016).

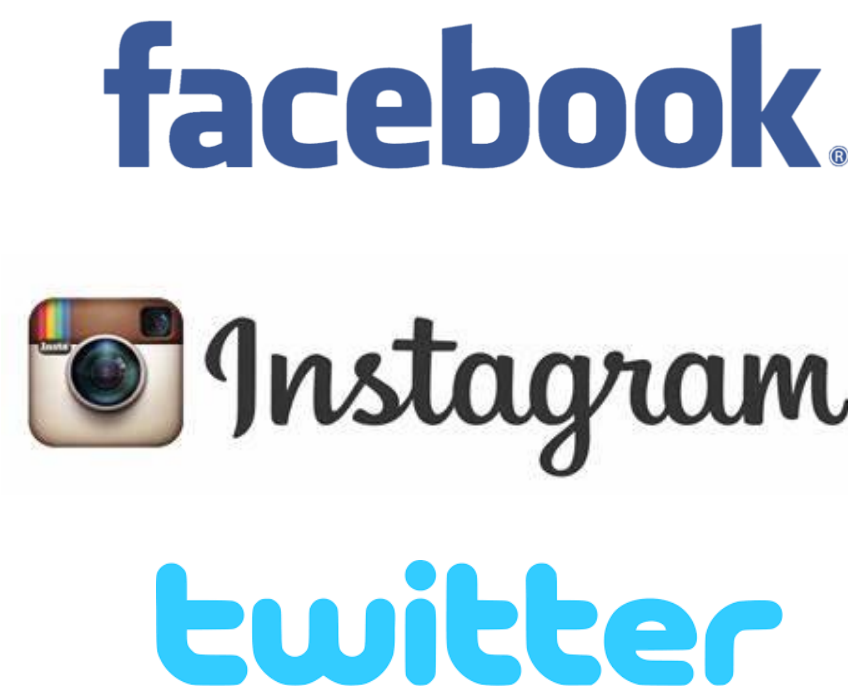
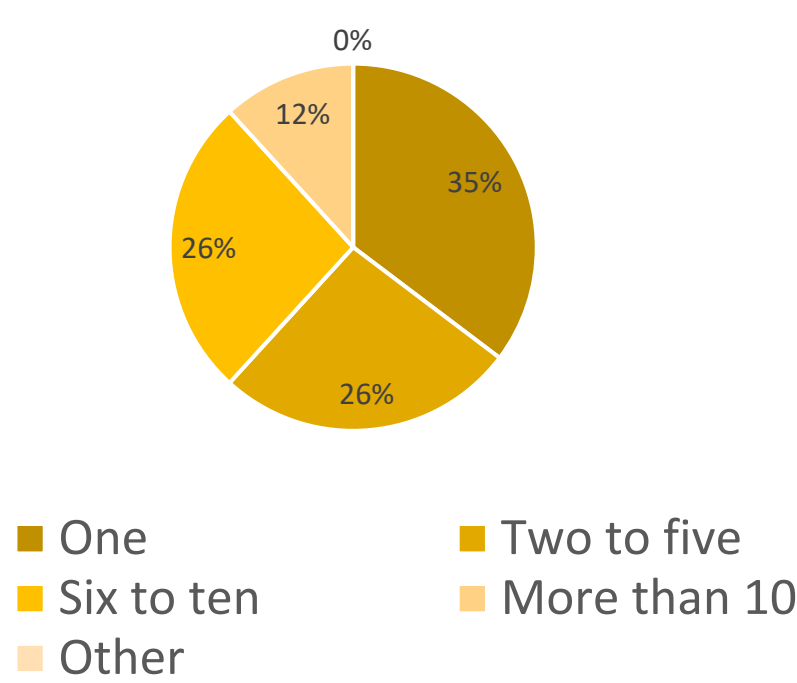
Social Media and Events

- Social media platforms have the ability to bring forth an event to the public through user interest.
- Social media platforms have introduced meeting types of events, such as Facebook Events, that can help event planners to “manage event participants and notify participants' friends” (Bogaert, Ballings & Van den Poel, 2016).
- Events spontaneously generated by users through social media followed and became increasingly massive, exemplifying the convening power of social media and its potential to go viral.
- Preparation, planning and engagement throughout the event cycle gives substantial advantages (Glosby, 2015).
- The social media contents, which may include photos, videos, and/or texts about the event, can be useful in helping potential attendees to identify and make decisions (Lee, et. al., 2012).
- Posts shared before the event may express the interest of the users in the upcoming event and their intention to attend (Monteiro de Lira, et. al., 2017).
- Events wholly generated by users and promoted through social media have not only been growing, but have become more formal, organized and specialized in certain subjects, fostered by the generalized use of mobile devices (Marine-Roig, et. al., 2017).

FINDINGS

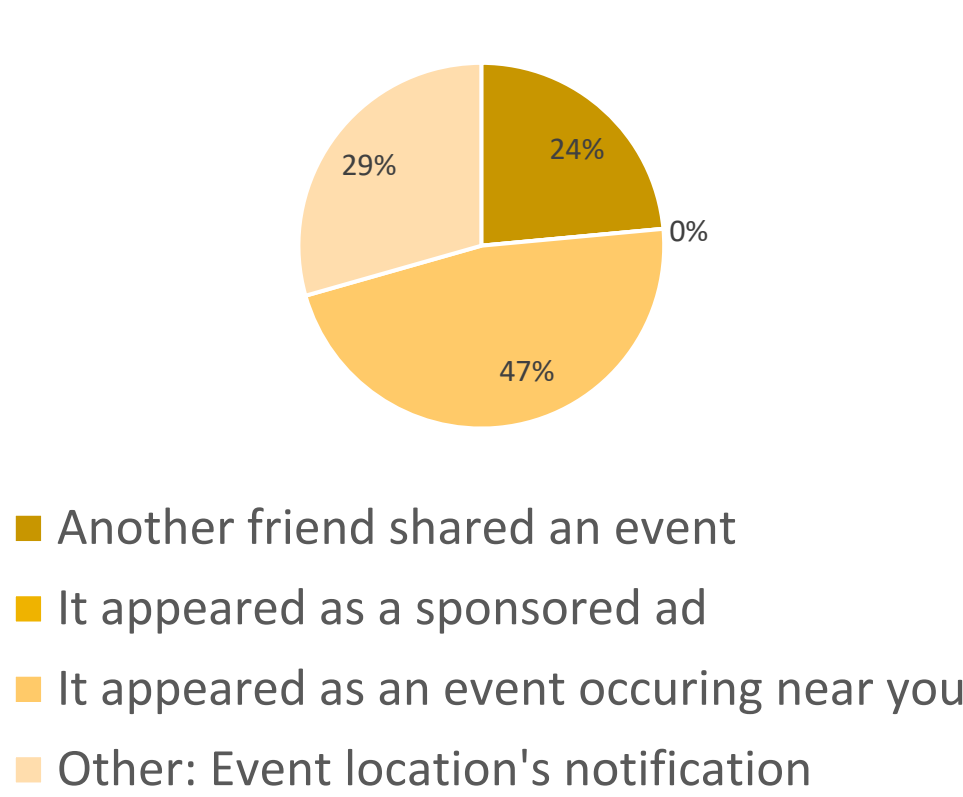
- 71% women; 32% men (respondents).
- 100% of respondents answered “yes” to having attended an event where social media was involved in their decision making.

Attending Social Media Events

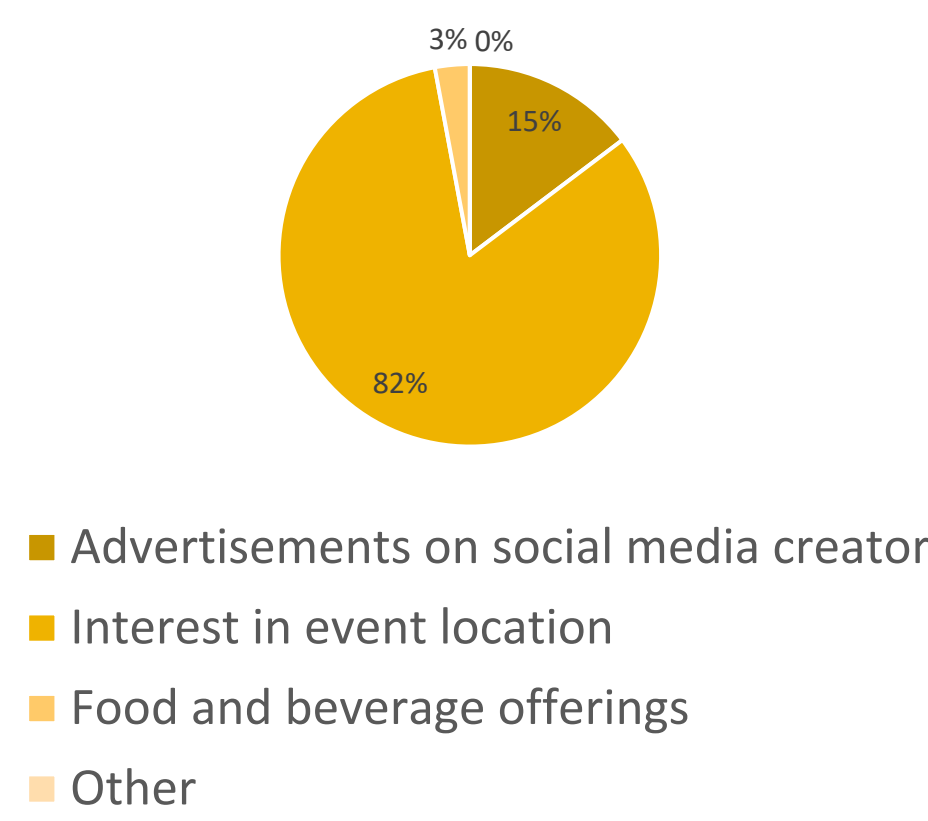


- No respondent identified event notification via Twitter and Instagram.
- 70% of respondents identified Facebook as the primary social media platform that notified respondents of events.
- 30% were informed of an event via the event's notification system (website, newsletters, etc.).
- Those informed via Facebook clarified the primary way they come across event listings was they appeared as an event occurring near their current location, while others were notified through friends sharing an event.

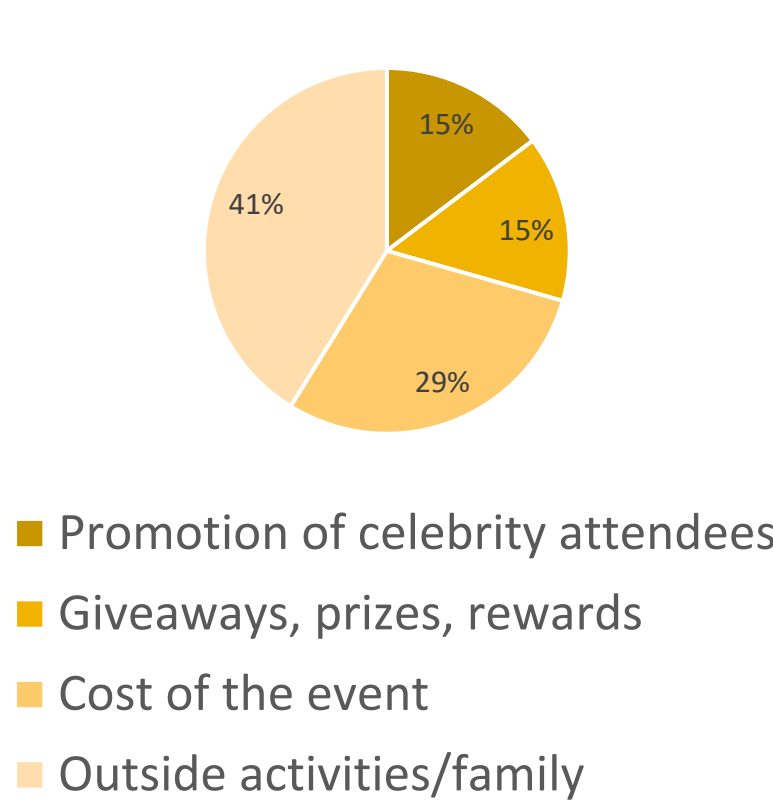
Source of Notification



Social Media Promotion



Event Attactions



CONCLUSION

- The connection between the surveyed respondents' reasons for attending the event and the factors that attracted them to the event are directly linked to their interest in the event, the location of the event, and support for the event theme.
- Facebook is the primary social media platform used to notify and remind participants of events.
- Most respondents decided to attend events within a limited window which creates significant challenges for event planners.