

THE



VIEW ON

ROI

Very few developments have had such an impact on experiential and promotional marketing over the last few years than an increased focus from clients on ROI. Of course, that is more than their right – managing budgets is critical, and in many ways the live events market stood immune from these pressures, on the whole, probably for longer than it should have. This was because, for a long time, there was no integral way of linking live events work to real world sales or action. In the past, many client briefs were often relatively loose, with broad objectives around boosting brand awareness or introducing new products to new audiences. Wide briefs such as these frequently varied in terms of setting tangible deliverables for clients, depending on how they measured success and who each brand was speaking to.

However, times have undoubtedly changed. The recent IPA Bellwether reports underline the essential role live events are playing for brands in their

marketing strategies: the most recent states that events are expected to see budgets rise in the quarter ahead, second as a channel only to internet spend. Experiential has risen in prominence in recent years as brands seek to gain that unique contact only face to face immersion and personal trial can deploy. And yet, it now has to be underpinned by solid and robust reporting, measurement and analysis of campaigns to continue to hold this cherished position – especially given the detailed and precision analysis which internet advertising can provide.

At BD Network we have applied a rigorous approach to ROI reporting to clients for many years now. We know that ultimately, the best event could be tremendous fun for all concerned, but it needs to show tangible results to clients and brands to be judged as a true success. We approach this from three angles, in what we call the 'Experiential AAA' model: looking at gauging success by activation, amplification, and actual.

ACTIVATION

looks at campaign reach, or 'spend per eyeball', and desired actions, looking at cost per contact or sample for the event.

AMPLIFICATION

looks at increases in Word of Mouth mentions or Net Promoter Score uplift – applying more to the brand awareness and perception shift for a product launch or experience. It also encompasses the ever-present social media element – how far attendees have seen, liked, opened and shared their views and experiences from the campaign, and what impact that may have had.

ACTUAL

looks at the hard figures – number of redemptions or claims of free gifts and product trials, and the critical incremental sales uplift, taking into account promotional cost and rate of purchase for products post-campaign.

Specific metrics will vary from one client to another, and this is a discussion which must be had between agency and client at the very beginning of planning a campaign. Woolly or unclear objectives, or too broad a brief ("we just want a successful launch for our new product", "we want to improve our brand perception") might seem like a dream at the start, but when it comes to proving return and value for your campaign it will be your undoing. BD Network believe there is nothing better in our experience than a fun campaign, which delivers phenomenal results for a client and their customers. This could be in the form of short term sales, it could also be a longer term assessment of repeat purchase or brand perception, propensity to buy or competitor benchmarking over a longer period of time. The key is to be specific.

Equally, using these metrics and the desired outcome as the framework around which an event or a promotion is built is a useful tactic for both brand and agency partner. It focuses creativity, and removes assumptions on campaign development as ideas are shared and evolved. The BD Network process for developing ideas is to work very closely to align client to staffing and creative solutions, and keeping a close eye on the desired results is a central pillar of concept development and execution. Of course, there may be additional and incremental benefits from campaigns which aren't planned (but welcome). The important thing is to set those goals, and measure against them. As we compete for budgets against other disciplines, it is especially important for clients to be able to compare results from promotions and events as closely as possible to other activations in their marketing mix.

At BD Network, we take pride in not only delivering on our clients expectations, but actively demonstrating how well they are connecting with their consumers through each and every piece of work we deliver. If you want to learn more, please contact us on 0207 749 5500 or email zoe.brown@thisisbd.com.