

cvent | *Hospitality Cloud*

Cvent's Ultimate Guide to
Digital Marketing
for Group Business





Today's meeting planners are interacting with you and your property across multiple devices and channels.

Expectations are high. Modern planners demand personalized and relevant conversations with you that seamlessly flow from their smartphone to their desktop and social media channels.

Fortunately, digital marketing and easy-to-implement online tools create powerful opportunities to share the right message, at the right time, to the right planner.

As you consider the meeting planner's journey when sourcing venues, you'll discover how important it is to include a variety of digital marketing tactics and touchpoints in your overall group business strategy.

Use this guide to help accelerate group bookings at your property and inspire planners using seamless online conversations.

Website Experience

Hotels often use their meeting and events pages merely as a destination for venue information and details. They list square footage, attach maps of meeting space, share capacities based on seating arrangements, and encourage the planner to submit an RFP.

However, today's planners are searching for a memorable attendee experience, not just a venue. Here's how to convey that your team can help build the event planners are looking for:

Feature Your Sales Team with Full Contact Details

Avoid listing a general telephone number to reach your group sales coordinator. Instead, share the names, headshots, markets, and full contact details for each sales professional on your team. Planners want to know who they will be collaborating with and how to reach him or her when it is convenient.

Showcase Your Brand Personality

Differentiate your website experience by getting creative. When your website's content features an authentic voice, it shows planners that you are flexible, can provide innovative solutions, and best of all, will be easy to work with and a trustworthy event planning partner.

Show, Don't Tell

Visuals are vital to conveying your hotel's event space and experience. Planners want venues in which attendees can network, dream up ideas, collaborate, and learn. Include images from previous events held at your hotel, interactive tours, videos of destination activities, and 360-degree videos or views of meeting areas. Don't let your online presence stand between you and group business prospects. Show them everything they can look forward to before setting foot on the property.

Market Your Destination

The technique used for marketing your destination to planners will impact your ability to attract buyers to the venue. Showcase the activities attendees have access to pre- and post-meeting, the offsite dining options available within walking distance, and local destination tips and secrets for optimizing their visit.





Tina Sampson

Vice President of Sales
Vail Resorts

Expert Insight

Vail Resorts recently unveiled a new online experience to showcase meeting and event possibilities at its nine resorts throughout Utah, California, Wyoming, and Colorado. Here are five tips from Vail Resorts you can use to revamp your own online group business experience.

1. Set a Specific Goal

We wanted to provide a seamless experience for planners during their venue search. Plus, we wanted to showcase the beauty and distinctive nature of our mountain locations.

2. Determine How Your Website Can Help Planners Succeed

Instead of just focusing on rates, dates and space, we worked to customize the entire event, including activities, transportation, dining, and equipment rentals. We worked to deliver this with a single, easy-to-navigate resource.

3. Determine Your Must-Haves

We wanted to draw in visitors with rich imagery and videos that showcased truly iconic locales and experiences. Then when the planners are ready to get down to business, we made it easy for them to find meeting rooms, accommodations, and all the details they need early in the planning process.

4. Do Your Research

First we sat with our entire team to align goals, strategies, and our target audience. We conducted competitive research and even reviewed non-hospitality sites for a fresh perspective on the user experience. We also elicited feedback from planners on design and content.

5. Continue to Refine and Evolve

While the Vail Resorts meetings website initially took six months to build out, it continues to evolve. Websites should always be kept up to date, whether to refresh the content or refine the functionality.

Social Media Marketing



Elizabeth Glau, CMP

Attendee Experience Manager,
International Society for Technology in Education
Consultant, Building Blocks Social Media



Expert Insight

Which social media channels do meeting planners tend to spend the most time on?

There are not any one or two platforms that are universally loved by meeting planners. Everyone has personal preferences. Early adopters tend to use more than one social media channel, while those new to social media start with just one or two.

LinkedIn is the preferred platform for planners who are not interested in social media for the socializing.

Where should group sales professionals go to interact with planners?

Just like meeting planners, you can't be everywhere. If you enjoy a particular social media platform over another, that is where you should spend your time. You'll get the most value out of it and genuinely enjoy maximizing that tool.

Venues should also capitalize on event hashtags that hundreds of planners are following and paying attention to within a short time frame, such as #IMEX16. Instead of using it as a chance to sell, only share useful and relevant information that would enhance the experience of other attendees.

How do meeting planners want to interact with venues on social media?

No one wants to be given a sales pitch on social media. Use social media to focus on building relationships with planners. It doesn't take much to connect on social media. You can be passive by liking photos, or active by leaving comments and posting regularly to keep your name at the top of planners' newsfeeds.

If you see a planner seeking advice, even if it's outside what you're selling, chime in with assistance. Also, get active in online communities like LinkedIn or Facebook groups. Find out what planners are talking about and offer value that benefits them, not you.

What social content is most appealing to planners?

Regardless of the platform, the most appealing content is visual. Move your content strategy to highlight photos and videos. You'll get even more traction from that content.

Don't just focus on content regarding your hotel or event space. Planners want to get to know you as a person. People want to do business with people they like, so show that you are more than someone who sells meeting space by being authentic. If you're too shy about sharing personal updates, like sharing photos of your kids on your channels, find other ways to connect. Share a joke every day, or find content that resonates with you and share it.

It's also smart to focus on a listening strategy. This allows you to focus more on context, instead of content. Listen in on conversations that planners are having, and pay attention to what their pain points are or where they are seeking solutions.

There is already so much content on social media. The chances of your perfect clients seeing it are so slim, so focus on giving them answers exactly when they need it.

What mistakes do you see hotels making on their social channels when interacting with planners?

Some venues tend to send more spam, like constantly promoting open houses, events, and specials. It's just not going to work since social media is not the appropriate channel for spam.

How important is it for each hotel sales professional to have his or her own social media presence? Or is it enough for a hotel brand to interact with planners through the corporate account?

Hotel sales people should have their own channels, but they have to find enjoyment in it or else it is a waste of time. Pick a platform you genuinely enjoy, find groups, and explore active conversations. Planners who are truly committed to this industry are already out there interacting with vendors on social media channels.

If you're at an event, don't be afraid to ask the planner about connecting on LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, or another platform you're using. Work your social media channels casually into your conversations when you network at events to increase traffic and maintain lasting connections. Try this: Take a group photo and ask, "Can I tag you on Facebook?"

For detailed insight, tips and tactics on leveraging social media to drive more group business, download:

The Hotelier's Guide to Boosting Group Business with Social Media.



92% of buyers engage if the sales professional is a known industry thought leader.

Content Marketing

Content marketing is the new essential in today's relationship-based meeting marketplace.

Creating valuable content informs, attracts, and engages meeting planners, and it establishes your sales team as thought leaders while promoting your hotel brand. A steady stream of relevant and interesting content also builds the trust and credibility necessary to establish stronger planner relationships that drive lifetime value.

Studies show that prospects crave guidance from sales professionals. Here are content possibilities that can position your group sales team as a trustworthy resource.

Downloadable Guide to a Remarkable Attendee Experience in Your Destination

Create a guide that shows how attendees can experience the people, food, and local culture that define your destination. Include unique ideas for offsite activities, dining venues, and locally inspired attractions within close proximity to your venue.

Case Studies

Show planners how your event staff creatively solved a problem or helped to achieve a client's goal. Planners want documentation and support for their decisions. Promote short case studies to prove your accomplishments and relationships with happy customers. A few short paragraphs outlining the problem, the solution, and the outcome are all you need to paint a picture that resonates. Format case studies to be digestible by using Slideshare or an infographic.

Meetings Blog

Position your hotel as the authority for meetings and events in your destination with a meetings blog. While thousands of hotels have leisure travel blogs, only a small fraction host blogs for the meetings and events market. A blog is not a place to solicit RFPs. Like on other online platforms, you should offer ideas and tips to planners on how to better plan events and maximize the attendee experience in your city. Research other blogs to make sure you're providing content and insight that can't be found anywhere else.

Email Newsletters

Email newsletters are most effective when sent consistently. Many venues use newsletters to promote exclusive blog content that readers might have missed. Newsletters are one of the best ways to stay in touch with past clients and share new ideas that entice planners to return to your hotel.

Publish Articles on LinkedIn

Create short posts (300-500 words) offering suggestions and tips to help meeting planners with different aspects of their event. One article can be reposted by different members of your sales team, but be sure to have each sales person write his or her own introduction paragraph.





Misty Goff

Director of Convention Marketing,
Visit Orlando



Jennifer Juergens

Manager of Convention Communications,
Visit Orlando

Expert Insight

In 2012, Visit Orlando launched the Orlando Meeting blog, one of the first DMO-run meeting blogs in the industry.

Why did you create the Orlando Meeting blog?

The main purpose was to entice planners to engage with our website as a resource. We also wanted it to be a place to share unique meeting ideas with planners. We didn't want to simply regurgitate facts from our sales kit, but instead showcase unique experiences, hotels, venues, and offsite activity ideas.

What types of posts resonate most with your readers?

Our meeting planner testimonials, in which planners share why they like to come to Orlando, are the most popular content. Posts about dining are always big. Also, content that focuses on anything outside of the theme parks, including arts and entertainment, Broadway shows, and outdoor adventures, is very popular.

How do you promote your blog to planners?

We leverage the content in our email newsletters and social media. We also meet with clients all the time who have already booked an event with us, and who are looking for good content to share with their attendees. Our sales team can also personalize the blog content and share with clients.

What tips can you offer to hotels wanting to start their own meeting blog?

Most hotels have B2C blogs. Leverage the content you already have there and put a meeting twist on it to make the content relevant to planners. Don't just repeat facts that clients can find on your website and in your sales collateral. Instead, tell a story around your space, F&B, amenities, and destination.

How can group business professionals use their hotel's blog posts to build and maintain relationships with planners?

Push the best content to your sales team and encourage them to send to a client who can benefit from the information.

What other content marketing assets should hotels create for their group sales team?

Create something that shows how your hotel can benefit each group type, including religious, government, association, corporate, and medical meetings.

Email Marketing

Despite the attention given to social media, video, and other rapidly evolving online channels, email still remains the true workhorse of group business marketing. Emails offer a longer life span than social media posts and add tremendous value across the sales cycle.

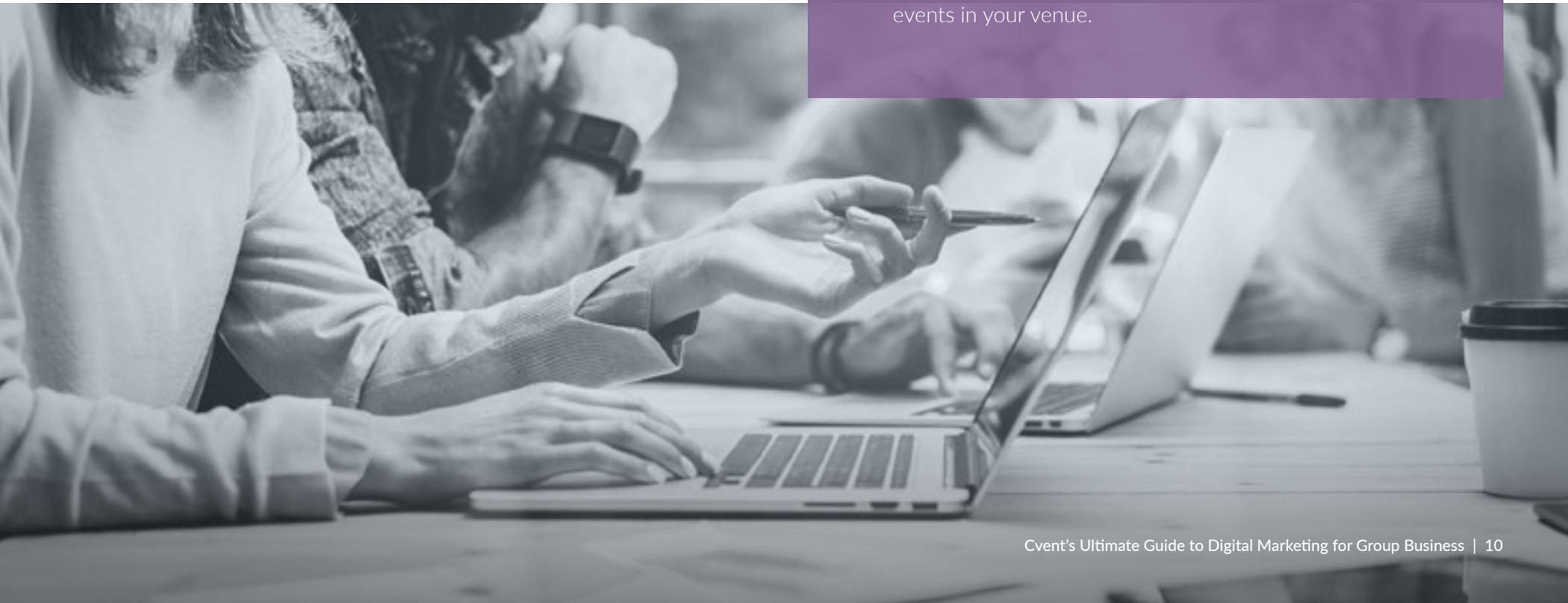
Focus on a Steady Schedule

Securing venue space is not an impulse decision. Most often, venue sourcing requires a long buying cycle, and buyers won't be making instant decisions based on a single email blast. This means that multiple emails released over a scheduled time period is the best option for maintaining the buyer's attention.

Sell the Content, Not the Venue

Planners are not interested in emails promoting your specials, need dates, or announcements about your hotel's awards. Each email sent to planners should be relevant to their events or attendees. Planners crave engaging content that will help them shine. For example, send a bi-weekly or monthly email that includes:

- Ideas for extraordinary offsite activities.
- Tips for attendees who want to experience the local culture.
- Suggestions from previous clients on how to best maximize the destination during an event.
- Photos showcasing how other planners created engaging events in your venue.





Sue Hershkowitz-Coore

Hospitality Sales Trainer

Expert Insight

Relationships are vital in the meetings and events industry. Personal emails to your planner contacts are more impactful than mass email communication.

Hershkowitz-Coore, who has worked with group sales teams from Ritz Carlton, Mandarin Oriental, Langham Hotels, Loews, Starwood, and DMOs in Palm Springs, Anaheim, and San Antonio, offers these tips for building successful client relationships with every email:

Power Sales Tips Using Email

- Every sentence should focus on the planner's success, not yours. Create emails aligned with his or her needs.
- Take baby steps to pique interest and build trust.
- Create an "emotionally sticky" message. Get the buyer excited to take the next step with you by using authentic and appealing messaging. Show the planner the success he or she will have working with your hotel.
- Create distinction by being genuine. Use conversational language to showcase your personality and the character of your hotel brand. Don't use formalities like Mr. or Mrs. unless you are addressing global planners or if the person's name requires a title, such as Dr. or Reverend.
- Don't go for the kill. Your emails should not be about selling and buying. You should focus on making planners feel safe and smart about trusting their business with you.
- Own the next step. Don't put the responsibility on the planner to reach out to you. Instead, end the email by telling the planner how you'll follow up. For example, "I'll call you tomorrow afternoon. If another time is better, I'll follow up as you suggest."
- Use the content that your hotel marketing team is already producing for your hotel blog or group business newsletter. Forward your contacts one or two articles with personal messages that you think are relevant to their event needs.

Mobile Marketing

Although you may already employ a mobile marketing strategy to boost leisure bookings at your hotel, there may still be room for improvement when accommodating today's mobile-centric meeting planner in the booking process.

Don't automatically assume your mobile-friendly website fulfills your entire mobile marketing strategy. The journey a meeting planner takes on mobile devices can be drastically different from the one on an office desktop. There are several more steps needed to optimize your group business marketing campaigns for a mobile audience.



Do's and Don'ts for Your Group Business Mobile Marketing Strategy

DON'T craft your group business marketing campaigns on your desktop and expect meeting planners on mobile devices to experience it just as you created it.

DO watch the speed at which your mobile meeting site loads. Most mobile users browse using data networks, which aren't as fast as Wi-Fi. Strip down all unnecessary features that could slow down your mobile site. Planners are time-crunched more than ever and will not wait for your pages to load on their device before moving onto the next venue option.

DON'T postpone creating videos because of budget limitations. Video should be essential for your mobile marketing strategy, as users are already producing massive amounts of video on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat. There are many cost-effective mobile video editing apps that will allow your group sales team to shoot and edit video using nothing more than a smartphone.

DO consider investing in a mobile meeting planning app if your budget allows. The app should help meeting planners execute events of different types and sizes at your property.

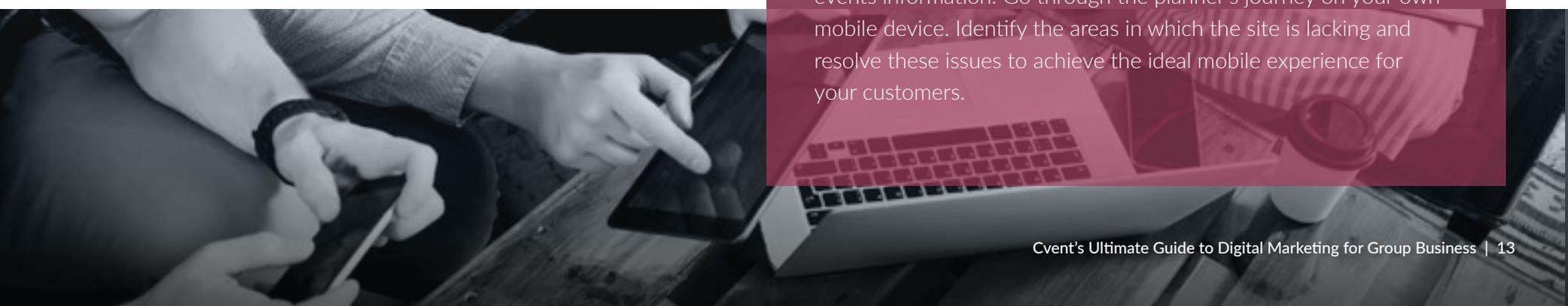
DON'T ignore downloadable content, like downloadable property maps and group sales kits. Keep text short and confined to one column, use more visuals, and make sure meeting planners don't have to move around the page or zoom in to get the information they're looking for.

DO format your online content with bullet points, shorter sentences, and subheadings. Meeting planners on their mobile devices are scanning (rather than reading) content, which means content should be easily digestible. Content that appears short on your desktop can seem much longer on a smartphone screen.

DO reconsider which property images you use and size them properly. Images don't display the same way on your desktop screen as they do on a mobile device. Smartphone images appear much smaller, which forces planners to zoom in to properly view them.

DO optimize for search engines and social media. Most modern meeting planners pull up apps rather than search browsers; and the most popular apps are social media channels. Optimize your social media pages to capture meeting planner's mobile activity. Your social media accounts should be natural extensions of your hotel website, delivering a consistent and seamless experience to planners no matter their device.

DO conduct a self-audit of your website and its meeting and events information. Go through the planner's journey on your own mobile device. Identify the areas in which the site is lacking and resolve these issues to achieve the ideal mobile experience for your customers.



Digital Advertising

Digital advertising lets you tell the story of meetings and events held at your hotel, while communicating directly with planners online. Relevant, real-time digital ads placed on the sites your audience visits most can help nurture planners until they become customers, even in a cluttered space.

The more interesting, relevant, creative, and non-intrusive your ads are, the more your buyers will engage with them. Effective digital advertising allows you to listen to your audience's behavior and respond with relevant content.

Here's how to get started.

Develop a Viable Advertising Strategy

- Determine the state of the market
 - Which planners are most likely to book your venue? How much of that market is interested in your property? What do your comp set's advertising strategies look like?
- Identify your current efforts and where you want to go
 - What is your hotel sales department currently doing for digital advertising? Who is running your group sales digital ad strategy? How are your current group sales digital ads performing? What isn't working and needs improvement?

Define Your Advertising Goals

Digital advertising goals usually fall into four categories. Once you have your success metrics, you can determine what's working and what's not.

Goal 1: Planner Acquisition

An ad is deemed successful if it helps your group sales team acquire new leads or increases your property or brand's awareness among planners.

Goal 2: Planner Nurturing

Using marketing automation and retargeting technology helps hotels use ads to build relationships with potential planners before they're ready to book.

Goal 3: Branding

More and more hotels are investing in digital advertising to expand brand awareness with planners and increase demand for their services.

Goal 4: Customer Loyalty, Upsell and Cross-Sell

Digital advertising plays a significant role in the entire lifecycle of a planner – from acquisition to purchase and advocacy.

Identify Your Audience and Build Buyer Personas

Which particular event planners are you creating ads for? A well-defined audience profile or robust buyer personas will determine every aspect of your ads.

By using surveys and customer interviews, you can define the qualities and characteristics of your ideal client, such as demographic, internal motivations, how they're incentivized in their job role, resources they use for venue sourcing, online preferences, pain points, and preferred content format and platforms.

Types of Ads

Pay-Per-Click Ads

For most hotels, Pay-Per-Click (PPC) ads make up the majority of their advertising spend. PPC search ads place listings for your hotel in the sponsored results on the side or top of search engine results. When a visitor clicks the ad, you pay for each click.

Display Advertising

Display ads come in a wide array of channels and formats including video, images, text, and more. You can choose individual websites for your banner ads to be displayed, or you can create banner ads as part of a larger retargeting campaign.

Social Advertising

Social advertising helps hotels target the right planners on the channels they frequent most, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and more.





Expert Insight

Cvent CSN Product Marketing – Hospitality Cloud

What is the most important thing for hotels to know about digital advertising?

Hotels should aim to have a presence across all the channels their target audience visits. In Cvent's case, that would include the Destination Guide, sourcing platforms, blogs, and newsletters.

What is a common mistake hotels make in their digital advertising campaigns?

The biggest mistake would be to invest in a single ad campaign and stop there. You need to work on cross-channel campaigns that reinforce your messaging. Planners expect a consistent online experience from hotels that moves seamlessly from your website to your social media and ads. Another common mistake is not optimizing the landing page that your advertisement links to.

What's the first step when launching a digital ad campaign?

Before jumping in, you must first research where your target audience is going and which sites they visit online.

How can hotels better engage planners using online advertising?

Ensure that your content and images are compelling enough to capture planners' attention and drive them to take action. A single image of a beach is not enough to stand out, especially if your comp set is doing the same thing. Have a distinctive identity and personality that separates you from the competition. Showcase your property's unique and quirky features, rather than trying to be everything to everyone.

What can we expect from digital advertising for group business in the future?

Digital advertising is always becoming more targeted. Planners expect personalized communication with venues and destinations at the right place at the right time with the right messaging.

Video Marketing

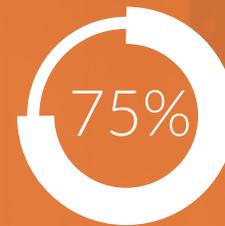
Video marketing is today's star of digital marketing, which makes it essential for your hotel's group business marketing strategy. Thanks to simple tech tools and social integration, it's easier and more cost-effective than ever to create videos that connect with meeting planners, promote trust in your brand, drive traffic and engagement, and convert leads into booked business.

Here are some ways to create compelling videos to showcase your meeting experience, share your story with meeting planners, and boost group business demand:

Social Video

Videos stand out on social media and give meeting planners a quick and entertaining way to engage with your brand. Because of its overwhelming value, more social platforms are rolling out native video all the time. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat all offer their own video features, in which video is created and dispersed directly from the application. YouTube, the internet's main video sharing site, has more than one billion users who watch millions of hours of online video daily.

Because each social media channel has a unique audience, social videos must be optimized to meet the needs and interests of different networks. While Instagram videos might showcase the visual appeal of your property, a clip shared on LinkedIn may directly market to a specific type of planner.



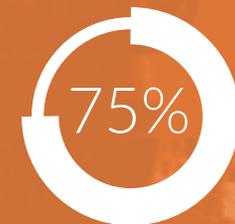
75% of all online traffic in 2017 will be video.



Websites with video receive two more minutes of dwell time than sites that don't.



During prime time, 18-49 year olds in the U.S. consume more YouTube videos than the top 10 TV shows combined.



75% of executives watch work-related videos on business websites at least once a week.

Email Video

Plug at least one video into every newsletter that is sent to your planner clients. Studies show that adding the word “video” in your email subject line increases open rates by 19 percent, reduce opt-outs by 26 percent, and increase click-through rates by 65 percent.

Streaming Video & Live Engagement

Live video is an exciting new channel to reach meeting planners, build brand authenticity, and create real-time engagement. Live videos serve as an interactive conversation between you and the planner viewing the video. They creatively introduce planners to the event staff that will execute and support their meetings. Using applications like Periscope, Facebook Live, YouTube Connect, Meerkat, and Snapchat Live Stories, you can live stream hotel events, hold a live Q&A with planners and your event team, showcase new attendee experiences, or even stream your chef launching new F&B offerings.

Immersive Video

While virtual reality has received the bulk of media attention, the number of users who own or have access to VR sets is still relatively low. These numbers may change as headsets become more accessible and less expensive. In the meantime, 360-degree and 3D immersion videos don't require any special equipment for meeting planners to view. Using any mobile or desktop device, meeting planners can move the video in any direction, up-and-down, and side-to-side to explore and self-direct the entire video frame.

These 3D and 360-degree videos are produced using the same cameras that create VR videos, with multiple lenses facing various directions to capture thousands of photos at the same time, which are then stitched together.

Meeting and conference venues have already started to implement this type of video to showcase their spaces to meeting planners. Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority launched VR and 360-degree videos in March 2016. Visit Houston produced 360-degree panoramas of the George R. Brown Convention Center and the Hilton Americas Houston.



Digital Marketing Trends

The biggest challenge in group business marketing is a constantly evolving digital landscape. No hotel can afford to be complacent about the trends and technology that are shaping how meeting planners do business today and in the near future.

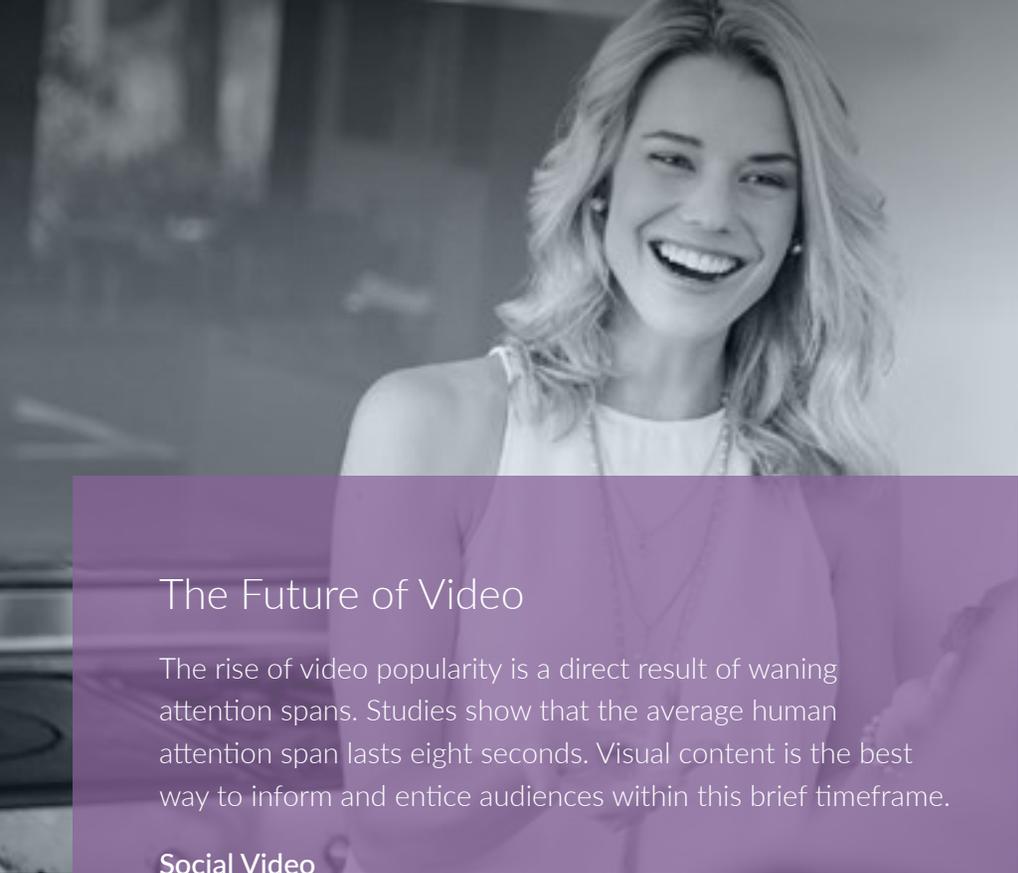
Here are emerging trends that should shape your 2017 group business marketing budget.

While many of these trends have already become popular in the leisure market, they have only begun their impact on boosting group sales and planner engagement.

Better Data for Better Decisions

Today's powerful analytic tools offer more precise information about your online audience, including where they come from, who they are, where they will go next, and where to find other users like them. Use this new data to determine your group business marketing strategies instead of relying on assumptions alone. Better data produces better conversations, content, and conversions.





The Future of Video

The rise of video popularity is a direct result of waning attention spans. Studies show that the average human attention span lasts eight seconds. Visual content is the best way to inform and entice audiences within this brief timeframe.

Social Video

Video already has taken over the social media landscape with four times as many users preferring easy-to-digest video content over text. Videos are easily supported and created using with social platforms.

Facebook and Instagram also offer the option to deliver highly targeted video ads = and the analytics to measure your ROI.

Streaming Video & Real-Time Engagement

In-the-moment content has surged online, with users eager to share and see what is happening in real time. The abundance of written content and today's rapid internet connections have made people crave visually appealing content that allows them to engage in real time.

Interactive Video

More and more meeting planners will begin to expect virtual reality and augmented-reality experiences to help them source venues. Oculus Rift headsets can be used at tradeshow to send your booth visitors on a virtual site tour of your property. Meanwhile, the Amsterdam RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre has harnessed augmented reality to develop an iPad app they use while conducting onsite tours. Using the app, the planner can select specific areas of the venue and navigate with just a turn of the body to view the areas as they appeared from previous events. The extremely realistic renderings allow planners to feel as if they are attending the actual event, instead of standing in an empty ballroom.

Individual Sales Professional Brands

Meeting planners base a big majority of purchasing decisions on the personal relationships they have with vendors. That is why it is increasingly important for group sales professionals to establish their own online brands, while also promoting their hotel's brand. Sales professionals can project a friendlier and warmer persona through their own online content that planners need to feel more in touch with the hotel brand.

Behavioral Retargeting

Planners do not enjoy being blasted with irrelevant sales messages that are not applicable to them. Retargeting overcomes this dilemma. Retargeting involves delivering specific ads and messages to planners who have visited or distributed certain behaviors while on your hotel's website and meeting pages. Whether the planner downloaded your sales kit, viewed your venue gallery, or completed an RFP halfway, retargeting allows you to push custom messages and advertisements specifically for them. This cuts down on advertising costs dramatically and delivers laser-focused messages to a qualified meeting planner audience.

Long-Form Social Content

Features like LinkedIn Pulse and Facebook's Instant Articles give hotel group sales professionals more long-form options to get their message in front of planners. Planners are already accustomed to videos that play automatically in their social media newsfeeds, and now these features allow planners to engage with your content within the social app itself. This will put more demand on your hotel to provide content through social media channels first and your hotel website second, adding implications to your traditional group sales SEO strategy overall.

While none of these digital marketing trends demand that you completely overhaul your current group sales marketing strategy, this list should give you ideas about how to adjust your digital marketing campaigns for the future. You may need to redistribute your group sales marketing budget to invest in more effective strategies and experiment with new marketing channels.





Digital Marketing Glossary

A/B Testing

Comparing two variations of a marketing piece to determine which performs better. This is most often used to compare calls-to-action, email marketing, and landing pages.

Ad Impression

A single display of a specific ad on a web page. Some advertising fees are based upon impressions, while others are based on the number of clicks.

Average Time On Site

A metric to gauge interest on your website. Low time on site can indicate unengaging content or potential issues with your website loading correctly.

Banner Ads

Also known as “display ads.” These ads are images that hotels place on a known publishers’ website (such as Cvent.com, Meetingsnet.com, and Smartmeetings.com) to attract a target audience of meeting and event planners.

Bid

The amount your hotel is willing to pay per action generated from digital advertising. You can bid manually, which allows you to select a target maximum bid. Some platforms offer automatic bidding, which optimizes your bid to help you reach objectives.

Bounce Rate

A vital metric that shows the percentage of people landing on your hotel website or meeting and events pages and leaving right away (bouncing). A high bounce rate, usually more than 60 percent, means improvements must be made to hold onto a planner’s interest and engage them immediately when they are on your site.

Call-to-Action (CTA)

A statement that encourages a meeting planner to take the next step that moves them closer to becoming a lead. Common CTAs include “Submit Your RFP Here” or “Come and See Our Renovated Event Space Today.”

Click Through Rate (CTR)

The percentage of your target market of meeting planners who are exposed to your digital ads and click on the link you provided.

Context

The idea of delivering content that is relevant to the right customer at the right time.

Conversion

A desired action completed by a meeting planner, such as submitting an RFP, scheduling a site visit, or booking an event.

Conversion Rate

The percentage of unique visitors to your website that were converted leads or bookings.

Cost Per Action

The average amount paid for each action a meeting planner takes on your online ads. The amount you pay depends on your target market and the amount of other hotels competing to show their group sales ads to the same audience.

Dynamic Content

The practice of displaying different messages on your website or digital ads based on the information you know about the visitor. For example, a planner who is sourcing a venue for a winter event will see a different message than a planner working on a summer meeting.

Earned Content

Content that is created and shared by hotel guests or social media followers, rather than your hotel itself. This is opposite of owned content.

Engagement Rate

Shows the percentage of your social media audience who are viewing your post and engaging with it via comments, likes, etc. Engagement is a common way to measure the success of a post.

Evergreen Content

Content that is relevant and valuable to readers long after it was published.

Friction

An element of your hotel website that is distracting, confusing, or stressful for planners, causing them to leave your page. This can include too much text, dissonant colors, and hard-to-find venue information.

Google AdWords

Google's program that allows your hotel to hyper-target advertisements within Google search engine results. The ads are placed at the right side and top of the search results.

Google Keyword Planning Tool

A free Google tool with Google AdWords that helps your property discover which keywords to target for your group business ad campaigns.

Hashtag

A simple keyword phrase with a pound sign in front of it such as #eventprofs or #greenmeetings. Hashtags tie conversations on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter in one place and allows your hotel to comment and participate in a particular topic.

Keyword Discovery

The research to determine your hotel's most valuable keywords for your group business strategy.

Landing Page

A page on your hotel's website that is designed specifically for a meeting planner to land on from a digital ad, social media post, or email offer. A common mistake hotels make is linking their marketing assets back to their generic homepage or meetings page.

Marketing Persona (Buyer Persona)

A semi-fictional, detailed representation of your ideal client. This can include age, gender, lifestyle, interests, and habits and is based on market research and actual data from existing planners.

Mobile Marketing

Any promotional message or advertising that appears on mobile devices like tablets or smartphones.

Native Advertising

A form of digital advertising that uses the function and form of the platform it appears on. The idea is to make advertising look less like ads and more like regular content.

Owned Content

Marketing content that is created or curated by your property. This is opposite of earned content, which is created by your followers or property guests.

Paid Content

Content your hotel pays to have placed in front of your target meeting planners. This includes banner ads, Facebook ads, and Google AdWords.

Pay-Per-Click (PPC)

An advertising model where you pay a specific publisher, including a social media site, search engine, or website, a certain amount each time your digital ad is clicked.

Retargeting

The technology that allows your hotel to continually put your group business message in front of meeting planners who have visited your hotel's website.

Responsive Design

A website that adapts to the device on which a meeting planner views it. A responsive site will recognize if a planner is accessing your site from a tablet versus a desktop.

SEO

The goal of search engine optimization is to optimize your hotel's website and content to match your intended user experience and achieve high-ranking placement in search results.

SEM

Search engine marketing is the foundation of digital advertising and includes marketing activities like using Google AdWords, display ads, and retargeting.

Social Impressions

Total number of times a post has been seen on a particular social platform. If you notice a post is seeing higher-than-average impressions, it may have been shared many times, or an influencer shared it with their own followers.

Social Influencer

A social media super user who has a loyal following on one or more social media channels. Their content is usually concentrated on a specific subject or field, and is trusted by their followers.

Social Listening

Social listening is monitoring what planners are posting about online to see what's important to them. This includes using platforms such as Hootsuite to track trending topics so you can better deliver relevant content.

Social Media Engagement

This term refers to how your social audiences interact with your posts, whether through shares, comments, or likes. Measuring engagement will help you to understand their interests and show you which posts attract your audience the most.

Trending Topics

A topic that is currently popular on social media. You can view and search trending topics and hashtags on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Trends can be tailored by who you follow, interests and your location.



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