



MARKETING A VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

Case study: how a world-leading B2B conference series is going virtual

Webinar - 23rd April 2020

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Welcome!

Your webinar leaders...



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Recap of Part 1



Toby Daniels, Founder of Social Media Week joined us to discuss -

- The strategy behind going virtual
- SMW's vision for the delegate and sponsor experience
- The process behind picking an event tech provider
- The team that brought it all together

Recap of Part 1

Are you planning a 'pivot to virtual' for an event that has previously been a large scale conference?

Yes, first one to run between April & September 2020



Undecided



Yes, first one to run between October & December 2020



N/A



We are currently not planning a pivot to virtual



Yes, first one to run in 2021

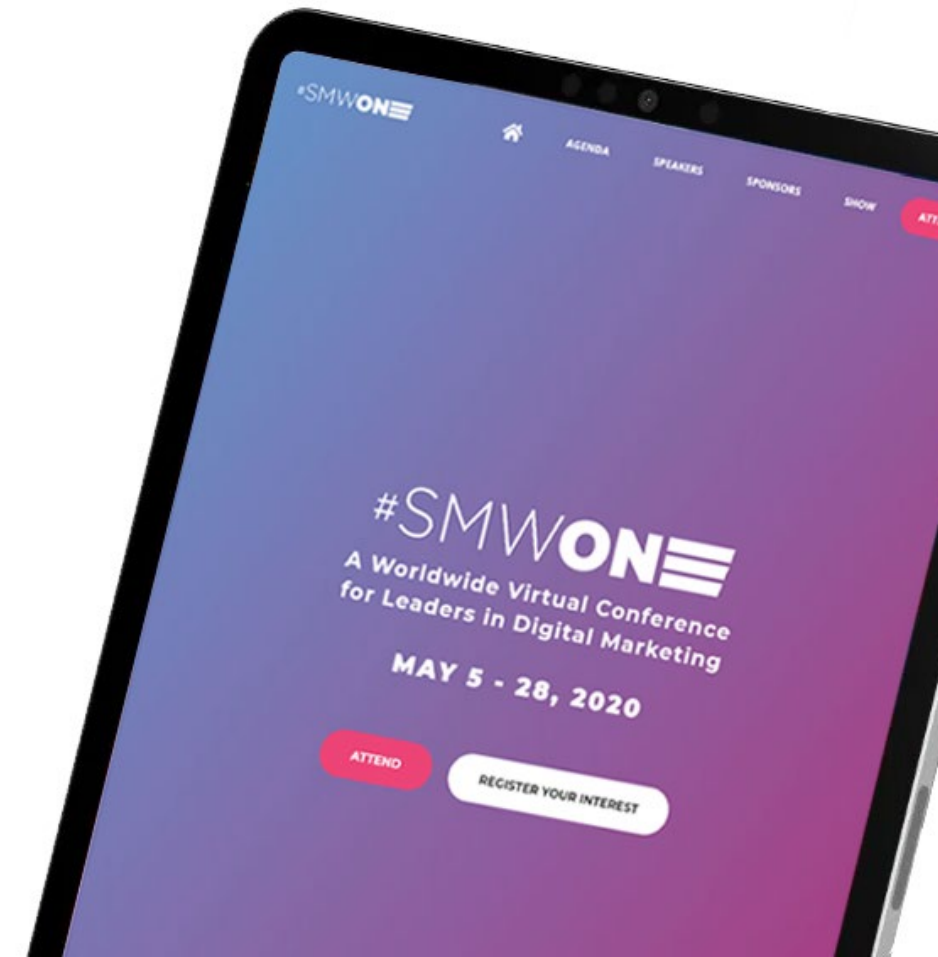


Focus of Part 2

- The factors behind the decision to make the pivot to virtual
- The 5 pillars in marketing a virtual event
- What's next for the #SMWONE campaign?
- What are the key learnings so far?

The opportunity

- Combining 2 events into 1 huge virtual event over 4 weeks
- Emailable audience grew by 56% overnight
- A larger accessible market -
 - Now on a global scale
 - Re-target price sensitive prospects
 - Availability on event dates - no longer an issue



The challenge

- 3 week lead time to -
 - Launch a new brand - that was better aligned with the digital offering
 - Launch a new website that would integrate with the event tech
 - Formulate a new messaging strategy
 - Generate a pricing model that was viable
 - Create a comms plan - acquisition and conversion
- 4 week lead time to market the event



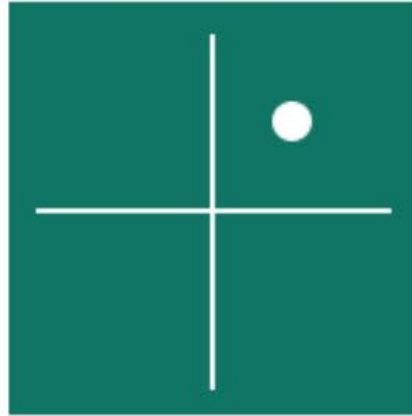
The 5 Pillars



Marketing
Funnel



Pricing
Model



Positioning &
Messaging



Rigorous
Execution



Measurement
& Reporting

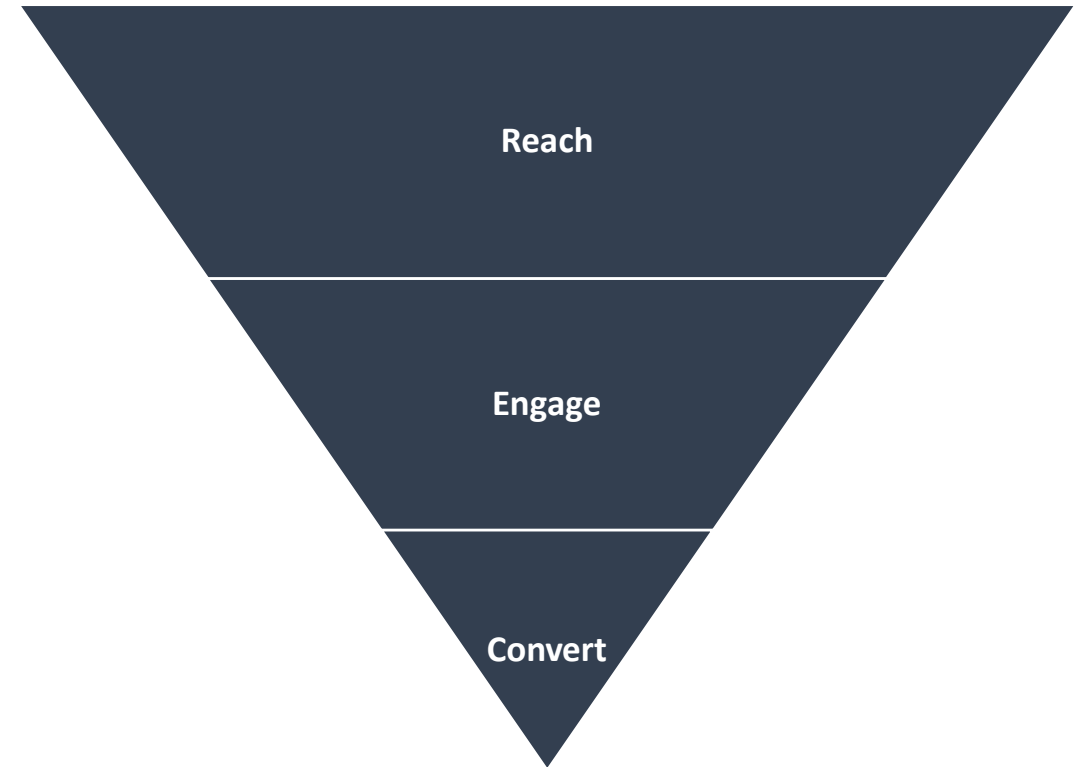


The Strategy

5 Marketing Pillars

1 - The Marketing Funnel

- Top of funnel - *reach/awareness*
- Middle of funnel - *engage*
- Bottom of funnel - *convert*





The Strategy

5 Marketing Pillars



2 - Pricing considerations

- What is the value to the delegate? Has this changed compared to the live event?
- Conduct research - what is the audience willing to pay for a virtual conference pass?
- What are your competitor events doing?
- What additional incentives can you provide to delegates?
- Think about how to retain delegate revenue from existing passholders
- Consider integrating the virtual event with subscriptions

If you are planning a virtual event - pivoting from a large-scale conference - are you planning to charge for delegate tickets?

Yes, we will be charging for delegate tickets



Yes, but we are offering free tickets to certain stakeholders



Undecided



No, we won't be charging for delegate tickets



N/A





The Strategy

5 Marketing Pillars

3 - Positioning & Messaging

- What is your live event's **USP**? Will this still be a USP if the event goes virtual?
- **Benefit-led messaging**
 - What will they learn?
 - Who will they connect with?
 - What challenges do they have and how will this event solve them?
- **Audience segmentation**
 - Get the right message to the right person at the right time
 - Segment by:
 - Behaviour
 - Seniority
 - Company type



The Strategy

5 Marketing Pillars



4 - Rigorous execution

- Our #SMWONE comms plan:
- Very similar to that of a live event
- Additional focus on the during and post-event marketing to generate additional delegate revenue
- More PPC campaigns to a global audience

Week Commencing	Lead Time	Programme Production/ Operations Milestones	Marketing Milestones	Reporting	Email Marketing	Email Automations	Direct Outreach Campaigns	Advocacy Marketing & Media Partners	Data	PPC	Website	Social Media:
16-Mar	7				EM1: SMW goes virtual announcement		SMW goes virtual announcement					SMW goes virtual - RYI
23-Mar	6								Prepare lists in Mailchimp & set up integrations	Remarketing Audiences Set Up PPC Strategy & Timeline Creation	Website updates - SEO and tracking E-commerce set up	
30-Mar	5					Crowdcentric create copy for lead automation email		Media partner follow up Marketing Pack creation		Campaign planning & design		
6-Apr	4		April 7th - launch	Report Build	EM2: SMWONE launch - introducing SMWONE EM3: SMWONE show	MPG set up lead automation	Registration now open	Marketing Pack follow up	Intro email to new data - outreach & Mailchimp	Paid search, paid social & remarketing campaigns go live: Introducing #SMWONE	Website goes live	Introducing SMWONE, register now
13-Apr	3		Event overview release	Weekly Report	EM4: #SMWONE show EM5: Event overview release	Add end of sale countdown to automation Add overview to automation	Event overview	Media partner follow up - sending updated copy and banners / social media posts		Campaigns running	Pre-end of sale changes Add demo Add event overview	Featured speakers / watch demo Event overview release
20-Apr	2		April 24: End of sale - \$100 off	Weekly Report	EM6: Reminder of what to expect EM7: End of sale final reminder	Remove end of sale countdown to automation	End of sale reminder	Marketing Pack follow up		Paid social & remarketing campaigns go live: End of sale	Post-end of sale changes	End of sale reminders
27-Apr	1		Attendee list release Full program announced	Weekly Report	EM8: Attendee list release - new networking opportunities EM9: Full program announcement, bookmark your sessions	Add event countdown to automation Add attendee list and Full program to automation	Full program			Paid social & remarketing campaigns go live: Full program/last chance to register	Add attendee list + event countdown	Attendee list release / Full program announced / see you next week
4-May	0			Weekly Report	EM10: Sessions happening this week EM11: Summary/highlights	Stop automations	Sessions happening this week/there's still time to register			Campaigns running (paid search only)		Event highlights, still time to register, countdown to event
11-May			Event takes place (May 5-28) 3 days per week (Tues-Thurs)	Weekly Report	EM12: Sessions happening this week EM13: Summary/highlights							
18-May				Weekly Report	EM14: Sessions happening this week EM15: Summary/highlights							
25-May				Weekly Report	EM16: Sessions happening this week EM17: Summary/highlights						Post-event website changes	
1-Jun					EM18: That's a wrap! Register your interest for 2021							Purchase on-demand pass
8-Jun					EM19: Purchase your on-demand pass							
15-Jun				Overview Report	EM20: Recap report							



The Strategy

5 Marketing Pillars



5 - Measurement & Reporting

- To give all stakeholders ongoing visibility of marketing and sales performance
- Provides valuable marketing intelligence and insights for data-led decision-making and responsive/agile marketing
- Enhanced opportunity to track engagement during the event - sessions and speakers that are most popular



Maintaining commitment & engagement

- A rigorous conversion campaign to ensure people who are registered attend the sessions:
 - Push notifications via the event app
 - Email automations
 - Calendar reminders
- Understanding the capabilities of the Bizzabo platform to better support, enhance and integrate with our marketing
- Content marketing - generating additional engagement through the #SMWONE Show
- Turning our engaged community into advocates

Key learnings so far...

1. Test and learn -

- Paid digital campaigns drawing in more European audiences
- Attracting a more senior audience in terms of paying delegates
- Media partners

2. Speed to execute - days represent weeks online

3. All hands on deck - range of skills and experience, made up of inhouse and external support

Work with a team of experienced B2B community and event marketers

The MPG team has been delivering high-performance B2B community and event marketing for more than 6 years.

With an outstanding track record in target-busting campaigns for some of the world's largest B2B community brands, we have the skills and expertise to deliver long-term growth for your business.

Get in touch to gain access to MPG's unique expertise in B2B community-focused, data-driven and digitally sophisticated marketing.



MARKETING EXCELLENCE

UPGRADE YOUR MARKETING