WHY NOT POP-UP CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

You've secured a killer venue, partnered with big-name sponsors, and promised a can't miss experience. But despite ticking all the right boxes, your ticket sales are flat. So what did you miss?

The short answer: data. Without it, you simply cannot know the real reason why your ticket sales are stagnating — or determine the best way to invest your time and money to correct course and sell out your event.

Read on to discover the data you should be using to understand why people are (or aren't) clicking "buy tickets" — and how you can convince them to.

Reason #1: Attendees are deleting your emails

In a *survey of 1,000 event creators*, email marketing was named the most effective out-reach tool in 2017. But how can you be sure that your email is moving the needle?
To make your event email marketing the most effective, you need to pay attention to three key metrics: your open rate, click-through rate, and unsubscribe rate.

Open rate — Your open rate is the percentage of recipients who open your email. The average event email has a 21-30% open rate. If your email open rates fall below this range, it's time to rethink your *subject lines* and the name of the sender of your emails.
Click-through rate — Your click-through rate (CTR) is the percentage of people who clicked on a link in your email. The average CTR for an event email is 4.95%. The best way to improve your CTR is to *get more targeted* with your email list.

- **Unsubscribe rate** — The average event email has an unsubscribe rate of 0.8% If your rate is above 1%, send more targeted emails. The more relevant your emails are to a

•recipient, the more likely they are to open and read them.

Get them to buy: Use the metrics above to find out why attendees are deleting your emails. Get them to click instead by emailing your attendees highlights to keep them

engaged from the time they first hear of your event to the moment they walk into your event. Send videos or photos featuring vendors or entertainment that will be at the event.

Reason #2: Your website is confusing

Imagine you could look over a potential attendee's shoulders as they scrolled through your site. You could see which pages they visited in the order they visited them, including what they were looking at right before they bought tickets — or left the site.

Google Analytics lets you see this behavior. Google Analytics is essentially a dashboard that lets you track whether and how your website is meeting its goals. For event organizers, that goal is to turn page visitors into registered attendees or ticket buyers (or to "convert" website visitors).

Get them to buy: Use data from Google Analytics to see where website visitors are dropping off of or converting on your site. Is a confusingly worded testimonial turning visitors off? Drop it. Is a photo gallery of last year's event spurring conversions? Make sure more visitors see it.

Reason #3: Your tickets are too expensive

Is your ticket price too high or too low? Many event creators use a "costs-plus" strategy to price their events — they price their event above their costs. But this commonly used strategy overlooks a crucial element: your attendees. If they don't think your event is worth the money you're charging, they won't pay.

Get them to buy: Value-based pricing is a strategy that puts attendees in the center of the equation. It can help you find your pricing sweet spot by taking into consideration the perceived value of your event, the actual price of your ticket, and the per-ticket cost of putting on your event. Ultimately, it allows you to design the best long-run economic model for your event.

How to Increasing Your Event Ticket Sales

1. Partner up

Look for partners who can help you uniquely position your event — and create a better event experience for your attendees. Is your event off the beaten path? You could partner with local hotels and sell the experience as a pre-"weekend getaway." You can also try partnering with a nearby bar or club for a pre-show happy hour or a post show after party. (*discount to at door show tickets with receipt for happy hour, discount for after party at the door with ticket stub*.)

Partners can also help you sell more by expanding your reach, & by giving attendees an extra incentive to buy. The Essence Festival, The BET Awards & Coachella for example, tag their partners on social media and gives special discounts for tickets purchased through their partners. This strategy helped them more than double their online ticket sales in 2015, 2016, 2017 & 2018.

2. Offer discounts

Keep an eye on your sales so you know when you're falling into a lull, and use discounts to climb back out. Here are some proven strategies:

- *Offer discounts for those buying a large group of tickets*

- *Give personal-referral codes to attendees to encourage them to invite friends via social media*

- *Give special deals to members of groups related to your event and sweeten the deal with early access to ticket sales and/or early event entry*

- *Send out a "last call" email with slightly discounted prices right before your event*

- *Offer time-limited discounts for the times of day when you could use a boost in attendance. For example, you could give 10% off to anyone who arrives before noon*

Discounts can give you just the sales boost you need — just make sure to track your aggregate discount "spend" as you go so you don't eat into your profits.

3. Retarget interested event-goers

Just because someone visited your page and left without buying a ticket doesn't mean you lost the sale. Your ticketing platform should be able to show you your site visits relative to ticket sales — in other words, your conversion rate. If your conversion rate is low (i.e. your page is getting a ton of views but you're seeing surprisingly few actual purchases) try retargeting your page visitors.

You can "retarget" these potential buyers by emailing them discount codes during slow sales periods or launching online ads that remind them about your event. These types of ads are most effective when they create a sense of urgency to buy, so retargeting shortly before your event is especially powerful. Just how powerful? I've seen an average of six times return on investment on retargeting ads.

4. Use tracking links

Tracking links will tell you which of your marketing channels are generating the highest sales, so you can spend your marketing dollars where they're most effective. For instance, when you realized that your banner ads aren't driving sales, you can cut them and reallocated the funds. Tracking links also allows your team to optimize the location of the "Buy Tickets" button on your website in order to convert more site visitors into ticketed fans.

5. Manufacture scarcity

Scarcity can help you overcome that lull in your sales cycle in a couple of ways. Limited-time discounts can create a sense of urgency and inspire people to purchase tickets right away. Or you can sell tickets in limited-number tiers at increasing prices, keeping your sales strong all the way up to the event. Whenever possible, play up the exclusivity of your event, let buyers know that remaining tickets are limited, and urge them to take action before it's too late. (*via Facebook, Instagram and Groupon promotions and ads*)

6. Sell at the door

It may seem obvious, but with so much attention paid to selling tickets online, it's easy to forget the potential for on-site sales. Selling at the door can be a great way to get to take your attendance from solid crowd to packed house. And it's not as old fashioned as it sounds — if your ticketing partner (Cain's ballroom or Eventbrite) has **a mobile box office app**, you can sell tickets quickly from any device.

NEVER STOP selling tickets onsite until it is sold out! Also with Eventbrite you can pull up the Eventbrite Organizer app, see how many people you've checked in, and keep selling tickets longer this will help also double ticket sales.

7. How do you optimize for conversions?

Now that you've got the proper tracking in place, it's time to revisit your online ad campaigns. You need to make sure they're set up to optimize for conversions — specifically, for event registrations or ticket sales.

For example, for your Facebook ads, you should select your marketing objective as "Increase conversions on your website." Facebook will then adjust how and when it shows your ads to get you the best results at the lowest cost.

If you prefer a more manual approach, you can increase your spend where you're seeing the best results. For example, in Google AdWords, you can see al the   conversions generated by each keyword and campaign in your dashboard. It's easy to change your advertising spend or simply pause campaigns that aren't resulting in registrations.

8.Be smart about where you spend

There's an old saying in advertising: "Half the money I spend on advertising is pretty much wasted; the trouble is, I we don't know which half." Thankfully, this doesn't have to be the case with online ads, which allow you to carefully track your spending. But if you're focused on reach or clicks and not on driving event ticket sales and registrations, then you're not seeing the full picture. And you're missing a big opportunity to get the most out of every dollar you spend.

9. If you're struggling with lackluster last-minute event numbers… *there are a few things you can do besides freak out, you can:*

1. Do a targeted social media buy (*Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Linkedin etc.*)

2. Strengthen your email marketing

3. Offer a referral incentive

4. Re-examine the registration process

5. Get on the phone

10. Perform a retargeting campaign

Why Are Your Event Numbers Down?

While this is primarily a time for action, it does benefit you to give some quick thought to why your numbers are down before implementing any of the above solutions. If this is an annual event or one that has taken place before ask yourself:

• What did we change from last year to this one?

• What did we forget to do?

• What is on the larger landscape (perhaps a competing show or event)?

Since this is a new event you'll want to think about the type of marketing you have done and whether your projections are realistic for a new event.

Once you've reviewed these things in your mind and with your team, it's time to take action with some last minute event marketing.

1. Do a Targeted Social Media Marketing Buy

2. t's time to take out ads on social media, but the first group you want to hit are those people who are in your venue's area. There's no point in contacting someone who needs to travel several hundred miles to attend your event with only a week's notice. You need people who can jump in a car, Lyft, Uber, Taxi and get there fast.

You can do a broad social media ad campaign but you'll likely be wasting a lot of money on people who simply can't navigate the logistics at the last minute. Instead, drill down to those who show an interest in the shows topics or comedy industry and can get to your location easily.

Another form of targeting you'll want to do is cull your database for locals. These people have a connection to you or your event and can get there quickly. They will be more likely to act than someone who has to coordinate a travel schedule. Plus, you'll need your local data for several of the next steps.

While you're doing a targeted social media campaign, do not forget to use your free social media to continue to promote your event. Sometimes potential attendees are still on the fence and seeing your fun posts could be what swings them at the last moment. Just make sure in those posts that you give links to register for the event and to buy tickets. You don't want a lack of ease to keep anyone from following an emotional urge to buy.

11. Strengthen Your Email Marketing

Ideally, you have been using email marketing all along to market your event but if not, there's one thing you need to do at this last-minute point in time. That's personalization. Go back to your data-base and segment it by the following filters:

• Pull out people who live near your venue but who haven't signed up yet. These people could easily come to your event with very little planning.

• Those who attended in the past but who are not signed up to attend.

• Those who are signed up already.

Next, launch several email marketing campaigns. Draft an email that will be part of a drip market-ing campaign to get those nearby to come to your event. If you have the time, send 2-3 emails re-minding them of the event and directing them to the sign-up page.

Continue to market aggressively to those who click but do not buy a ticket. Their click shows inter-est. If time allows, send them content on justifying the cost of the event, more details about the benefits attending, and other pieces directed at people that show interest. Learn more about drip marketing and email marketingas well as the types of emails you should be sending.
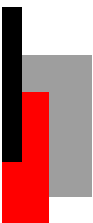
12. Offer a Referral Incentive or Special Offer

For those in your email list/database who are signed up, provide them with a referral incentive of some kind. Offer them something for bringing a friend. They're already attending, it's easy enough to bring someone with them. You could also offer a buy two, get one free incentive. Go back to your list and contact everyone who already bought two tickets and offer them a free one. This will make people feel appreciated and will help you fill seats. But do not offer both incentives or you run the risk of having the opposite effect.

If you're hosting a multi-day conference, you could also create a "spouse" ticket that would give them partial access to some of your sessions and parties for a fraction of the cost.

Contests are also effective ways to fill seats. You can create a social media contest with a free ticket prize - just make sure that your contest is visible on social. Give it a hashtag and ask people to vote for the winners or something that's engaging. Not only will you fill seats but you'll get people talking and create a buzz as well.

Don't forget your sponsors. You can always give free tickets to your sponsors so they can give them to their top customers and prospects, which could open up a new avenue of future attendees for you too.

4. Re-examine the Registration Process

5.

Have someone you can trust go through the registration process for you and point out any sources of friction. Are there any parts that are unclear or confusing? Is your technology working the way it should? Does it work correctly on mobile? Visitors can be a lot less patient than you might imagine. If something is hard to do, they may just give up on it. Plus, many purchases are emotional reactions, something that is acted on in a spur of the moment. If there's any sort of challenge you are giving the potential attendee a reason to spend their money and time elsewhere.

After you're sure your registration process is as fluid and easy as possible, you can look at additional ways to lubricate the process. For instance, you can use language about being nearly sold out or just a few seats left. However, don't use this terminology if your "few seats left" is really more like several hundred. You want to inspire action but not at the risk of honesty. If you have a lot of seats left use phrases like "Don't miss out" and "last few days to buy." Those phrases aren't deceptive.
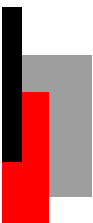
13. Get on the Phone

Even with all our technology, one of the best ways to encourage ticket purchases at the last-minute is calling people on your list. If time is at a premium, concentrate on calling your locals and people who have attended in the past. Locals can easily make the trip and people who have attended in the past should know the value of your event.

If this is a brand new event, concentrate on calling people who engage with you or your client frequently. You don't have time to "sell" people who don't know much about you at this point.

14. Perform a Retargeting Campaign

Have you ever visited a website where you're about to make a purchase and then changed your mind? Later on, as you go about your business on the Internet you see ads for that item or service everywhere. Is it serendipity and the universe trying to tell you to reconsider? No, it's retargeting.

Retargeting, or remarketing as it's sometimes called (mainly by Google), is a smart use of your time because it works on people who have already shown interest in your event by doing something like visiting your website, Facebook or LinkedIn page.

The tech is not all that complicated. When someone visits your page, they're "cookied" (the language is different from Facebook to LinkedIn) but essentially they carry with them a virtual souvenir of your site (unbeknownst to them) and it allows you to influence the ads that show around the Interwebs for them. Suddenly, you and your event are everywhere. The thought behind remarketing is that if you're top of mind, the conversion or ticket purchase won't be too far behind.

Do:

• Talk about your event on social media groups and pages. Whenever possible encourage people outside of your organization to do the same.

• Invite people on social media so that when they accept, others will see that they are going.

• Circulate past attendee comments. Reviews are a great way to persuade someone who's considering buying a ticket.

- Talk to industry organizations that may be a good fit for your event or have a similar audience. You can even give them a discount for their members, which makes them look like rock stars for arranging that. If your event is cause-based, you might consider reaching out to similar non-profits and giving them a few seats.

Host an employee contest to sell tickets. Encourage them to promote your event and offer prizes for the person who sells the most. This can easily be tracked through a discount code.

Don't:

- Offer a discount for no reason on a recurring event just to sell tickets. By doing so publicly, you are teaching your audience to wait until the very last minute each year to purchase tickets at a deep discount. This is not a pattern you want to create. Instead, use a reason such as "past attendee" or "loyal attendee" when giving discounts.

- Let your stress level over empty seats kill your creativity in filling them. Just imagine they will get filled, if you do the work.

- Forget to plug the other fun aspects of your event like the location or the speakers. Often these types of extras are what make the difference. Purchases are an emotional choice. Find that button or that item/thing that sways them and they'll buy instantly. Sometimes that's as easy as referencing the poolside cabana that guests mill about between sessions.

- Think that every seat must be sold. Sometimes giving away a seat or selling a ticket at a deep discount is better than an empty one. Plus, look at every new attendee as a chance to shine and sell next year's event to them. If this isn't a recurring event, you can still make a good impression and add them to your marketing list for other events in the future.

- Forget your communications and social media posts should all have clear calls to action. Use buttons where possible for higher conversion rates. Don't leave any question about what it is that you want visitors or readers to do - buy a ticket.

Go into hard sell mode across your social media channels. Pumping out sales messages with no interaction and value in between is unlikely to have the desired effect.

In Conclusion

When you don't have enough tickets sold and the event is fast approaching, it can seem like a nightmare of stress and panic. Maintaining a level of cool will help you get people on the fence to make the commitment. You just have to go where they are and make sure they hear your message. They won't decide to join you if they aren't thinking about your event. Obtaining top of mind positioning is essential to selling more tickets.

Target ads on Facebook:

to people in cities

Facebook allows you to choose whether you want to target your ads to people in cities of high population density or outside cities if you are looking to deliver ads to smaller population areas.

Targeting people in cities is a great option for businesses who operate brick and mortar stores that are only present in these cities.

You can also choose to target people in areas outside major cities. This is useful for businesses that that want to test expansion in markets they may not necessary know much about, for example, and for   businesses that only offer their goods or services outside major cities.

Here are the steps for how you can target your ads to people in cities and how you can deliver ads to people outside major cities.

To create an ad targeting people in cities:

1   Go to Ads Manager
1. Create an ad using any objective.

In targeting, within **Audience**, use the **Locations** box to type in a target country (for example, 'Germany') or region (for example, Asia).
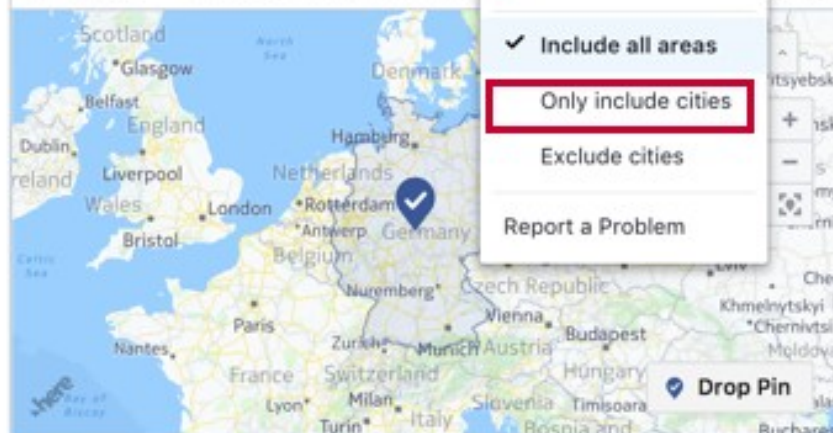
1. Hover over the country name and click ⌄ to open the drop down menu.

2. Select **Only include cities** for a list of options.
To create an ad targeting people outside cities:

Repeat steps 1 to 4. Select **Exclude cities**.

The number of cities will appear and you can choose which cities you want to exclude from your ad delivery. You can also select ⌄ next to the number of cities to exclude from your ad delivery cities that have a certain population range.

Places where your system can't target city dwellers

Although we try to offer truly international targeting, there are a few places where this feature isn't available.

They are:

Aland Islands, American Samoa, Andorra, Anguilla, Antarctica, Antigua, Aruba, Belize, Bermuda, Bouvet Island, British Virgin Islands, Caribbean Netherlands, Cayman Islands, China, Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Collectivity of Saint Martin, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Falkland Islands, Faroe Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, French Guiana, French Polynesia, Gibraltar, Greenland, Grenada, Guam, Guernsey, Heard and McDonald Islands, Iran, Isle of Man, Jersey Channel Islands, Kiribati, Liechtenstein, Malta, Marshall Islands, Martinique, Mayotte, Monaco, Montserrat, Nauru, Netherlands Antilles, Niue, Norfolk Island, North Korea, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Pitcairn Island, Saint Barthelemy, Saint Helena, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sint Maarten, Solomon Islands, St. Lucia, Sudan, Svalbard and Jan Mayen, Syria, Tokelau, Tonga, Turks and Caicos Islands, Tuvalu, United Stated Minor Outlying Islands, US Virgin Islands, Vanuatu, Vatican City, Wallis and Futuna and Western Sahara.

If you select a country group containing some of these places - ex: 'Asia' or 'Worldwide' - cities in these places won't be included.