

## MODULE 3

# PEOPLE

---

- *human beings in general or considered collectively*

# VENUES 2 EVENTS PEOPLE FRAMEWORK

The holy grail of event management is getting people to:

1. Register to attend your event then
2. Actually attend your event

Just because you have invited people and they have registered to attend, does not necessarily mean they are actually going to turn up.

## STEP 1 – GETTING PEOPLE TO ATTEND

In **PURPOSE** you decided who you needed to invite to your event, the types of people and companies. There are two scenarios when it comes to your event guest list:

1. You already have contact details for your potential guests
2. You need to go and find the right type of people to invite to your event

Scenario one is fairly straight forward as you already have the contacts. Your next step is to look at the database of contacts and fill in any missing data.

If you find yourself in scenario two there is a lot more time and effort required (sorry there is no easy way around this one). You can approach this from a few different angles:

- 1. Engage a PR company to do the work for you**
- 2. Use your own contacts and connections**

You will have a certain amount of your own contacts that you can ask to help promote or send a few invitations for your event.

The world of social media can also be a great ally to help market and promote your event.

- Facebook
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Twitter
- Email blast to your database

If you think you will need a little more help, then move on to the next step...

### **3. Get clever by using partnerships and affiliates**

Let me ask you a couple of questions:

***“Who do you want at your event?”***

---

---

\* You will already have the answer to this from Module 1, Prepare.

***“Who else has these people on their database?”***

---

---



## **FRAMEWORK TO WRITING A DISTRIBUTION PARTNERSHIP PROPOSAL:**

If you can tailor each proposal it gives a personal touch and lets the company you are approaching know that you have hand selected them to work with. This will help increase your chances of gaining a partnership.

Below you will find our simple framework to writing a distribution partnership proposal. You will find it is pretty much identical to the contra partnership proposal we covered in module one, purpose.

### **Event Background**

Write about your event. Has it been held before, why are you holding the event? Write about the purpose of your event and give the reader an overview of the bigger picture.

### **Event Details**

This is where you get specific on the timing and overall event format. Include items like:

- Event Date:
- Event Timing:
- Event Set-up:
- Catering:
- Audio Visual:

### **The Audience**

Who will be in the room? Get specific, including the type of industry and position within their company.

\* Remember, this is why people will support your event as they want exposure to the people in your room.

## **Previous Events / Testimonials**

Do you have any data on previous events held and the type of response you gained from them? Build the credibility of your event, show it was successful.

## **Proposed Event Partnership**

This is where you 'go for gold' ask for what you want.

“We are looking for form a partnership with you to help promote our event. Ideally we would be looking for you to send out event invitation to your database”

## **In return we would be happy to provide the following:**

In this section you talk about the things that you can provide in exchange for them sending your event invitation to their database.

## **Appendix / Examples**

Can you create a visual drawing of what you are offering if a company supports your event? These can be designed or simply take screen shot of an example PowerPoint slide or page from a brochure.

## **Booking form, how do they secure a place?**

Include a call to action; make it easy for companies to become a contra partner by including a booking form. We use [Google Forms](#)

## **Who do they contact for more information?**

Include contact details of the person best equipped to handle enquiries.

## Things to keep in mind:

- In our experience, you should try and offer your potential distribution partners something they can't get on their own without you. For example, offering money doesn't always work as companies can always find ways to make more money but if you offer them a five-minute presentation to their exact target market (the people in the room at your event) this would be highly valuable to them.
- Start contacting your potential distribution partners at least three months prior to your event. This time will allow for review of your proposal, acceptance and time for their marketing team to schedule your information to feature within an upcoming email.
- Keep track of your distribution partners (online acceptance form) then compile the data into a master spreadsheet.
- Make it easy for them. Create the invitation, send them an email template they can forward to their database, let them know what they get in exchange for sending your invitation.
- Make sure you have professional event collateral including website, invitation, brochure or partnership document. If you are asking them to partner with you and help promote your event, everything must be professional and something they would want to align their brand with.
- Set dates by which they have to send the information out to their database.
- Ensure you deliver what you promised in your partnership agreement.

## STEP 2 – INVITATION TYPE

There are various formats in which we can send an invitation to potential guests:

- Hard copy (mail)
- Email version

Both of the above invitation options come in an unlimited amount of styles and varieties. Try and create an invitation that reflects your overall theme.

The invitation is the first thing a guest will see relating to your event, so it needs to make a positive first impression. As an event manager, you are providing an end to end experience for your guests. This starts with their invitation.

***As soon as they receive their invitation your event has started!***

When deciding between a hard copy or email invitation think about the guests you are going to invite. What would be the more favourable format to receive an invitation in?

**Some things to consider when selecting your invitation type:**

- Consider sending a physical invitation and follow up those you haven't rsvp'd with an email invitation
- Physical invitations will have a greater impact
- Physical invitations take longer to get to guests (also allow time for change of address, return to sender etc.)
- Hand writing envelopes increases the open rate on physical invitations (you could also try coloured envelopes)
- Email invitations make it easier for guests to register via an on-line link (reducing your amount of administration time)
- Online invitations are preferable to printed invitations when you need to gain responses quickly or need to gain more information from your guests than a simple yes/no and dietary requirements.

You should also consider if your event requires any supporting material, for example:

- Event Website (or page on an existing website)
- Event Brochure
- Promotional Videos
- Posters
- Flyers
- Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn pages
- E-newsletters
- Mail-outs

## STEP 3 – INVITATION CONTENT

What information do you need to communicate to your guests?

When it comes to creating content for your event invitations there are some guidelines we would like you to consider:

- Make the content easy to read and understand
- You want to entice guests to attend
- You want to provide all of the information they will need to make a decision on whether to attend or not (or at least enough to get them interested to click and find out more)
- Don't make them think too much

Get clever with your invitation. With regards to location, you want people to picture in their heads where your event is going to be held. If your venue is located at 333 Collins Street, go the next step and add (between Queen and Elizabeth Streets). Already they are imagining where the venue is.

Their next question will be how easy is it to get to? Where will I park? Your potential guests are going through a mental checklist in their head as to whether they are going to attend or not. Make it easy for them to place ticks on their lists.

- Venue location  I know where it is
- Parking  they have explained where I can park, it has the pricing and it seems easy
- Time  I know when I have to arrive to register, when the session starts and when it will finish
- Catering  I know that I will be provided with a coffee and or food
- Cost  I know how much it is
- RSVP  I know how and when to RSVP by

If people are going to attend your event for the purpose of gaining information, networking or learning a new skill it is also imperative your invitation also tells them:

- Why they should attend and/or
- What they are going to learn as a result of attending

Make sure this section appears first on your invitation. Dot points work really well and use the rule of 5 plus or minus 2. *Millers Law* - There is a general rule cited in psychology papers that the number of objects an average human can hold in working memory is 7 plus or minus 2. In relation to event invitations, any less than 3 items is not enough detail and any more than 7 is too much.

The details section of an invitation is best placed at the end. There are a few MUST have items on every invitation, they are:

- Name of your event
- Date (including the day of the week)
- Time (arrival time, start time and finish time)
- Venue name and room name
- Venue address
- Parking information
- Catering (are you providing any food and or beverages at your event?)
- RSVP (how do I RSVP and when do I need to RSVP by?)

## Invitation worksheet:

Items I must have on my invitation	Detail
Name of event	Make it stand out! What is going to appeal to your guests?
Date	Include the day of the week, date, month and year
Time	Arrival time, event starting time, event finishing time
Room within your venue	What is the name of the room your event has been booked into?
Venue name	What is the name of your venue?
Venue address	What is the address of your venue?
Parking	Does your venue have on-site parking, what is the price? Is there alternate parking nearby?
Cost	How much is the event and what is included in this price?
Catering	What food and refreshments will you be providing at your event?
RSVP	How do guests RSVP and by what date?

**Invitation template:**

**Who should attend your event?**

*Are you?*

---

---

---

---

---

**What they are going to learn as a result of attending your event?**

*Why attend our event?*

*Do you want to know how to...*

---

---

---

---

---

Items I must have on my invitation	Detail
Name of event	
Date	
Time	
Room within your venue	
Venue name	
Venue address	
Parking	
Cost	
Catering	
RSVP	

## STEP 4 – REGISTRATION

This is the next step in your end to end guest experience. They have received your invitation and will now either register to attend or decline your invitation. You need to make sure their experience is a positive and easy one.

You can have your guests register for your event in a few ways:

- Phone number

Make sure the phone number supplied is answered and answered quickly. You want to avoid a telephone number with a call menu eg. Dial 1 for sales, 2 for marketing.

The person taking RSVP's must be friendly and professional (ensure you supply them with a list of information they need to gain from your guests)

Make sure there is an answering machine/voicemail on the phone number supplied

- Email address or on-line link that opens up a blank email

Make sure the email address you supplied is checked daily

Ensure the data from each and every email is placed into a master guest list.

- On-line link to a registration form

Make sure the link works

Allow multiple responses from the same computer (for colleagues who may RSVP for each other)



Below are items you MUST consider when collecting guest information. Do any of them apply to your event?

- First name
- Surname
- Company name
- Company position
- Phone number (landline)
- Phone number (mobile)
- Email address
- Dietary requirements
- Address, State, Suburb, Postcode

When asking people to register for an event, the quicker it is for them the better. Consider carefully how much information you really need from them and keep it to the minimum amount.

Do you also need to know:

- If they are bringing a guest? What are the details for their guest?
- Which session/s they will be attending?
- If they require parking?
- Emergency Contact Number
- If they require accommodation?
- If they are staying for dinner?
- Their social media links? (Facebook, twitter, Pinterest, YouTube)

Each event will have its own set of data that you will need to collect from your guests.

*Event Tip:*

Spend the time to workshop every possible piece of information you will need to collect from your guests. This will save you hours of time later down the track, as the last thing you want to do is have to contact each of your guests to gain a piece of information you forgot to ask them initially. This doesn't make you look very professional either.

**Which of the below data will you need to collect from your guests:**

- First name
- Surname
- Company name
- Company position
- Phone number (landline)
- Phone number (mobile)
- Email address
- Dietary requirements
- Address, State, Suburb, Postcode

**Is there any additional data that you need to collect?**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## **On-line registration software:**

Online invitations are preferable to printed invitations when you need to gain responses quickly or need to gain more information from your guests than a simple yes/no and dietary requirements.

There are many online registration platforms that you can use, both paid and free. The beautiful thing about online is that it happens instantly and you start to receive rsvp's immediately after sending. Once the invitation is sent you simply download a spreadsheet and you have a readymade guest list.

We love on-line registration software because:

- You can create a page or event website with your event branding
- Tailor fields to capture data from your guests
- Import your guest list and send your invitation from the software
- Email one link to all guests
- Automatic confirmation emails sent to your guests
- Easy download of guest list at any time
- All of your data is in the one place
- Email all guests from the system
- Facebook sharing capability, use your attendees to help market and promote your event
- You can download an app to your phone or ipad to register guests
- Print name badges
- The list goes on as they continually update their software

Check out the below on-line registration platforms:

For free events:

- If you are running a free event can your CRM handle registrations?
- Google Forms, Green Envelope

For ticketed events:

- Eventbrite
- Humanitix
- iVvy (for tickets that are \$800 or more)

\* If you decide to use a third-party registration system look at using Zapier to 'zap' your guest details into your CRM System.

## STEP 5 – CONFIRM

Upon registering for your event guests should receive confirmation of their attendance.

### **On-line Registration:**

If guests are registering via an on-line system arrange for a confirmation email to be sent automatically to each guest upon registration, or at the very least a pop up confirmation that appears on screen.

### **Manual Registration:**

Create a confirmation document and personally send to each of your registered guests upon registering.

Confirmation documents can include items like:

- Date
- Time
- Location
- Catering
- Dress Code
- Map
- Parking details
- Public transport
- Accommodation
- Or anything else you deem relevant to tell your attendees

## STEP 6 – SEND INVITATIONS

When is the best time to send your invitations?

This all comes back to the type of event you are holding and understanding your guests. Do they need lots of notice or do they respond better when the invitation is sent closer to the event. A lot of the time it is about trial and error.

In most cases the type of event you are holding can give you guidelines as to the best time to send your invitations. You may also like to consider sending a 'save the date'. Below is a general guideline as to when to send an invitation, keep in mind times will vary for each individual event:

<b>Event Type</b>	<b>When to send invitations</b>
National Conference	Save the date would apply as they are usually planned a year in advance and take place over multiple days
Awards Evening	Save the date would apply, or at least publish the dates on an event website and all pre-event correspondence
Seminar	3-4 weeks notice for a short seminar. If it is one day or more in length, consider at least 5-6 weeks notice.
Book Launch	4-5 weeks notice as it is a short event
Cocktail Event	4-5 weeks notice as it is a short event
Product Launch	Depending on the length of the event, 8-10 weeks notice to build hype and interest

In a typical event scenario we use the following invitation timeline (for physical invitations add another week to allow for your invitations to be delivered):

### **Anywhere from 6 months to 8 Weeks before event**

This can be a 'save the date' notice with a teaser announcement in the subject line and a request to save the date and time.

For ticketed events you could offer an early-bird rate now.

### **6 to 8 Weeks before event**

This should be your full invitation. Remember to list the benefit of attending to your potential guests.

### **2 to 3 Weeks before event**

For events with a guest list - Contact each guest who has not yet RSVP'd to attend your event

For events without a guest list - You may want to increase the sense of urgency to RSVP by including a push to action, such as 'Limited seats remaining' or 'Only two weeks left to register'

### **One Week before event**

For events without a guest list – You could send a 'Last chance to register' email. Remember to highlight 'what's in it for me?'

### **Week or a few days prior to your event**

A simple reminder to those who have already registered to attend your event, not to the rest of the database.

## When is the best time of day to send an email invitation?

Like most of the above points this once again depends upon the type of people you are inviting to your event. Your optimal send time depends on a lot of factors, such as industry, audience demographics, and the nature of your message.

There is no universal 'best time' of day that works for every profession, industry or group of people. The best way to determine your optimal time to send is to survey, research, ask questions.

However, there are some general guidelines:

- First thing in the morning, people are quick with the delete button, ready to get rid of all the junk in their inbox.
- Mondays, especially in the morning, are often busy with meetings and catching up with the previous week's issues.
- Friday afternoon people are on countdown or spending time figuring out the weekend's fun activities; avoid Friday afternoon.
- Lunch time or early afternoon may be the best time as people tend to be more relaxed.
- Weekends may be an option for your demographics — test to see if it works.

You can measure the effectiveness of e-mails sent on different days and times by comparing the number of actual registrations and also click-through rates (click through rate - the number of people who have clicked on your registration link).

## STEP 7 – FOLLOW-UP

One week prior to your event we suggest following up with each guest who has registered. The reason this step is so important is that the email reminder you sent them when they registered is now buried underneath a few hundred of their emails.

*Remember make it easy for them; the easier you make it, the more likely they are to turn up.*

Ensure your follow up includes at least the below details:

- Date
- Time
- Location
- Map
- Parking details
- Public transport
- Anything else you deem relevant to tell your attendees

*Event Tip to help maximise attendance:*

Within your follow-up email you could insert a line saying, “this event is at full capacity, if you unable to make it along for any reason please let me know asap so I can offer your place to someone else”

The addition of this one line makes them feel like they are attending a great event that is sold out. They are now more likely to turn up as they would feel guilty about giving up a seat that someone else could have had.

This can also help you determine your true final guest numbers as you will always have a few people who are unable to attend. You can now tell the venue your exact guest numbers and you don't end up paying for additional catering.