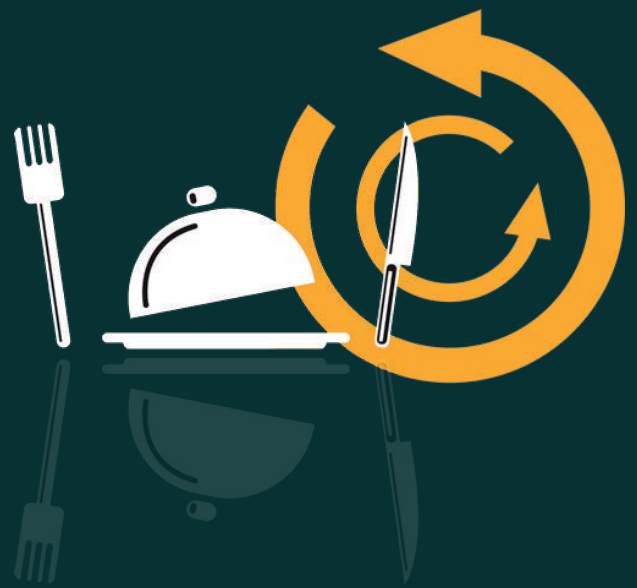


THE EVENT PLANNER'S COOKBOOK

PROVIDING EVENT
PLANNERS WITH
THE RECIPE FOR
SUCCESS



THE EVENT PLANNER'S COOKBOOK HAS BEEN CREATED TO HELP EVENT ORGANISERS BUILD STRONGER FOUNDATIONS FOR THEIR EVENTS. THE KEY TO EVENT PLANNING SUCCESS IS IN THE PREPARATION. THIS COOKBOOK WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH THE RECIPE AND THE INGREDIENTS THAT YOU NEED IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR YOUR EVENT.

Rock Ya Events
Group

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PLAN FOR SUCCESS – KNOW YOUR EVENT INSIDE-OUT

WHY, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHO?



WHY?

It's important to identify your objectives. The purpose of your event should be made clear early on in the event **planning process** as it will give you a clear direction to work towards and can be referred to when analysing your event's success.

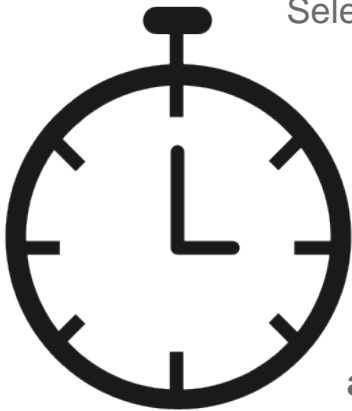
WHAT?

What is your event about and what will it include? Define your event's programme or running order by outlining the various types of entertainment or guest speakers that you will have at your event.

A **production schedule** is a great way of doing this as it will provide you with a framework of actions and timeframes in addition to providing you and your team with a clear list of who is responsible for every aspect of the event.

Your **event budget** will play an important role in answering the “what” question as it will give you an indication of how much you need to spend to produce and market your event; it will also give you an idea of potential entry fees that you can charge your attendees.

WHEN?



Selecting the right time to hold an event is paramount to its success. Remember to take things such as weather and holiday periods into consideration when selecting your date. Another essential factor when choosing your date will be dependent on your target audience and their availability; this will become clearer when conducting your **audience and market research**. Finally, check with local authorities and tourist boards to ensure that there are no conflicting events that could drive potential registrants away from your event.

WHERE?

Where is your event taking place? Is it an outdoor event? Remember to check with your local council to ensure that there are no planned works or disruptions that could interfere with your event. When selecting your venue, make sure that you have adequate access to transport and parking facilities

Check the capacity of your venue to ensure that it can **accommodate the number of expected attendees or participants**

If you're planning an indoor event, check to see if they've held similar events there before, this will give you an indication of how prepared the venue staff are and whether you need to allocate any extra resources.

When calculating the budget for your venue, include things such as security, bathroom facilities, and first aid officers if these are not included in the venue fee.

When you have selected your venue, ensure that you complete a **risk assessment** for your event.

You will require this for your insurance and for any permits or licences that you may need to obtain from your local authority for your event. Your **risk assessment** will also provide other team members and volunteers with clear actions and procedures in case of emergencies.

WHO?

Who is your target audience and why will they attend your event?

This is where your market research will play a vital role. Remember, your event sponsors or partners will require data to back the answers to these questions.



Find the appropriate ingredients

Production schedule template

Contact sheet template

AUDIENCE AND COMPETITOR RESEARCH

Market research is one of the areas that is often neglected or overlooked. Most people conduct their market research around the question: *Is there a need or market for my event?* Although this is a fundamental question that needs to be addressed, there are two major areas that need to be analysed in terms of

- Audience Research
- Competitor Research

YOUR AUDIENCE RESEARCH SHOULD GO BEYOND THE GENERAL INFORMATION SUCH AS GENDER, AGE, AND PROFESSION.

Delve deeper by **identifying how your target audience** spent their time; if they have an online presence, check to see if there are appropriate Facebook pages, LinkedIn groups, twitter feeds, or forums that they subscribe to.

Use **surveys** and **engage** with your potential audience prior to your event in order to achieve more information such as their likes, dislikes, customs, and spending habits. You can enhance the participant experience by using surveys and engaging with your audience prior to your event in order to ascertain what your audience expect and what they would like to obtain from your event.



You can utilise the information that you collect to **create a persona for your ideal attendee**. Your attendee persona is vital when creating content, product/service development, boosting ticket sales, or raising donations.

CONDUCTING YOUR AUDIENCE RESEARCH IN ADVANCE WILL SAVE YOU TIME AND RESOURCES BY HELPING YOU TO RUN A TARGETED MARKETING CAMPAIGN AND BOOSTING YOUR EVENT ATTENDANCE.

Find the appropriate ingredients

Audience/Personas template

When you have familiarised yourself with your target audience, it is vital that you check out your competition and what they offer. Knowing your competition can set your event apart and give you the upper hand by providing potential attendees with a point of difference, your unique selling point.

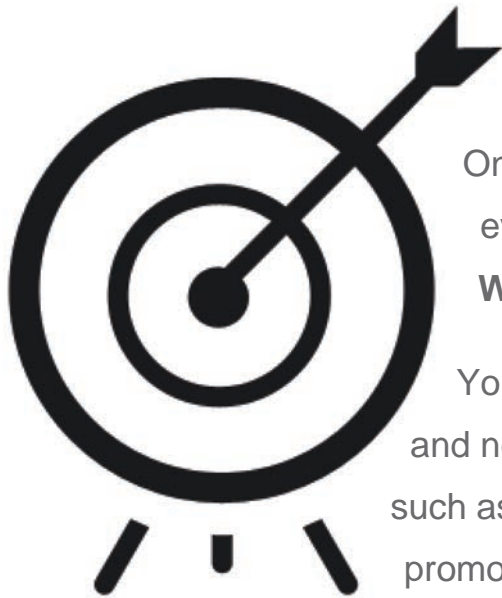
It is advisable that you attend one of your competitor's events when conducting your research so that you can analyse their programme, attendee profiles, and any other services that they provide at their event

Find out how your competitor promotes their event and obtain contact details of any partners or sponsors.

Remember to compile a detailed report of all your findings as this will be extremely useful when completing your marketing and promotion plan.

Find the appropriate ingredients

Competitor Research template



SWOT ANYLYSIS

One of the fundamental steps in planning a successful event is recognising your **STRENGTHS**, **WEAKNESSES**, **OPPORTUNITIES**, and **THREATS**

You should use your SWOT analysis to identify positive and negative factors affecting your event's objectives, such as: your level of expertise, your marketing and promotion techniques, your event budget etc...

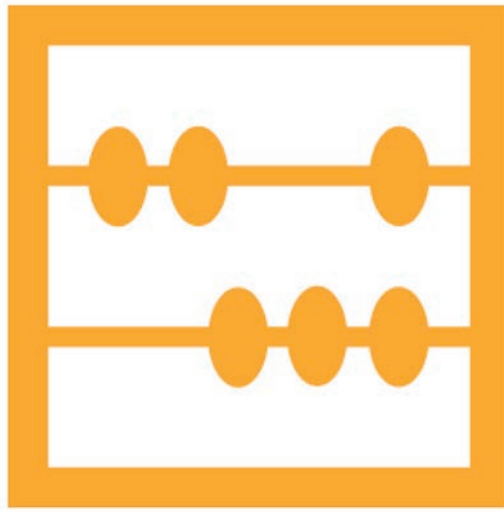
You should also include any external attributes that will have an impact on achieving your event's objectives, for example: local or government support, the use of an external event and participant management system, poor weather etc...

Although completing a SWOT analysis may seem like a tedious task, it works extremely well in identifying your strengths and key areas for improvement. The exercise will also help you to achieve your goals by exploiting opportunities and minimising the impact of your weaknesses and threats.

REMEMBER TO REFER TO YOUR COMPETITOR RESEARCH WHEN COMPLETING YOUR SWAT ANALYSIS

Find the appropriate ingredients

SWOT Analysis template



CREATE A MARKETING PLAN

GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT YOUR EVENT

Don't leave your event marketing to the last minute. Use the data collected during your market research and your SWOT analysis to create a comprehensive marketing plan. Your marketing plan should include:

- **MARKETING OBJECTIVES**

Provide an overview of your objectives. List your competitors and their positioning, the market size, and SWOT Analysis.

- **COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Your communication strategy should include details of your marketing mix such as: your event, pricing, merchandise, venue/location, and promotion. It should provide details of your chosen marketing channels and tools that you will use to promote and market each aspect of your event.

- **MARKETING BUDGET**

Plan your marketing budget in advance, remembering to allow 10-15% for contingencies. You should refer to this budget plan throughout the various stages of your event planning journey, making any amendments if necessary.

- **PROMOTIONAL OFFERS**

It seems like a simple tip, but it's one of the most effective when trying to attract new attendees/clients. Make it worthwhile for your prospects to attend your events by providing them with discounted rates and bespoke packages that will entice them to sign up for your events. Although this is an effective way of increasing attendees, it may not work for some small businesses due to budget restraints or lack of resources.

- **SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES**

Identify potential sponsors and create a concise sponsorship proposal that outlines the benefits to your potential sponsors. Decide what type of sponsorship would best suit your event. **Will you conduct your sponsorship deal on a barter basis, such as the provision of a service in exchange for product placement or promotion on your marketing materials, or will it be a straight forward financial arrangement?**

Don't forget to use the data that you collected during your market research to outline the benefits of the partnership to your potential sponsors. Don't just send out your sponsorship packs and leave it to chance! Follow up potential sponsors within a week of sending out packages.



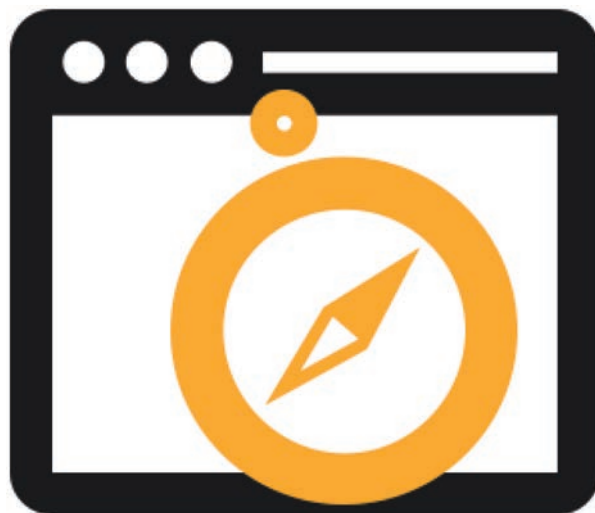
TRACK, MEASURE, REPORT & OPTIMISE

ONCE YOU HAVE CREATED YOUR MARKETING PLAN AND COMMENCED YOUR MARKETING ACTIVITIES, IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT YOU TRACK, MEASURE AND REPORT YOUR SUCCESS SO THAT YOU CAN MAKE AN EDUCATED DECISION ABOUT WHAT ACTIVITIES TO CONCENTRATE YOUR EFFORTS AND YOUR BUDGET MARKETING ON.

For this section, we'll use the free analytics tool from Google www.google.com/analytics

TRACK

Using web analytics not only helps you **TRACK** and measure traffic to your event site or landing page, but it can also help you measure the results of specific campaigns in order to monitor the traffic to your site after its launch, whether e-mail, social media, organic, or paid search.



By providing the user with statistics such as unique page views, it can help you identify trends that will be an asset for future activities

It's important to **track each of your campaigns separately**. This will help you identify the source of the lead or prospect visiting your event site or particular landing page, helping you identify which activity performs the best.

You can do this by assigning tracking or unique tags (*UTM tags**) to each of your marketing efforts, such as blog posts, tweets, LinkedIn posts, emails, etc...It is a good idea to give your campaigns names and assign unique tags (UTM tags) before you launch. You can then track the results of your campaigns in the Campaign Report section of Google Analytics. A UTM tag should contain the name of your campaign, the medium used, and the source.

For example:

* What is a UTM tag? "a UTM tag is a tracking marker appended to a URL, and is recognized by Google Analytics as a dimension, just like average time on site, for example. UTM stands for Urchin Tracking Module. [In 2005], Google purchased Urchin and rebranded it Google Analytics."

Common parameters include

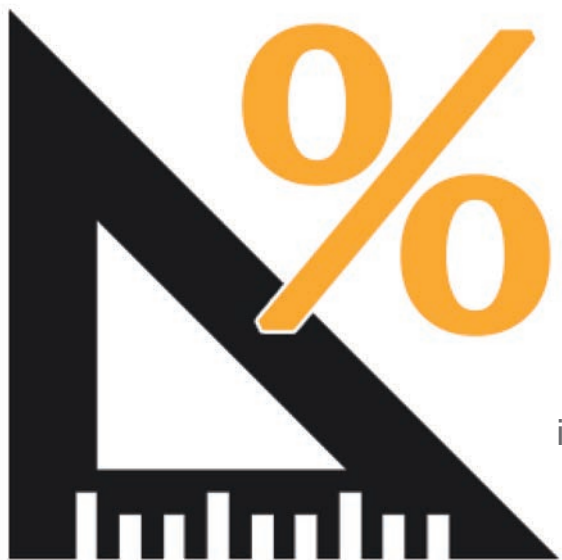
- Campaign Source: (utm_source; usually the site, such as Facebook or blog)
- Campaign Medium: (utm_medium; how the link was published, such as a banner ad or tweet)
- Campaign Term: (utm_term; to identify the paid keywords for search campaigns)
- Campaign Content: (utm_content; use to differentiate ads)
- Campaign Name: (utm_name; for ad campaign names, such as 'FacebookMay2012' or 'sedanbannerad')

Tip: If you do not feel comfortable creating UTM tags yourself, Google has a custom URL builder that can add customised campaign parameters to your URLs.

Social Media has been a predominant factor in increasing conversion rates and is rapidly growing. Measuring and analysing your social media efforts will help you achieve your goals and boost participant numbers by providing you with a general view of the content and messaging that drives the most results so that you can revise your marketing plan in order to improve your ROI. Make sure that you link your social media channels into your web analytics tools and assign values to each engagement point that is relevant to your event or business goals. In addition to linking your social media channels, ensure that you also link your AdWords accounts to your web analytics, so that you can monitor and enhance the performance of any PPC campaigns that you are running. Most organisers use more than one social channel to market their event, and with so many options, measuring the success of each channel against another can get somewhat complicated.

In order to help you gauge what content and platform most drives conversions with your audience, we have created a [Social Media tracking tool](#), to help you generate reports and insights that you can easily take actions from and share with your key stakeholders.

MEASURE



Knowing which channels perform better in terms of generating leads and engagement is extremely valuable, however, it is imperative to MEASURE the performance of your campaigns in relation to conversions.

Your web analytic tools can provide you with information such as click through rates, shares, sales, or contact requests, that can be used when compiling your report.

REPORT

Your REPORT should show your goals and the data that you have tracked and obtained from your web analytics tools and compare values across various channels. You can usually define rules and search for specific keywords or traffic sources through your web analytics.

The Dashboard on your analytics tool provides a quick overview of your activities performance. You can customise your Dashboard to include information that is of relevance to your goals, performance based on your chosen metrics, and monitor conversion. It can provide you with specific information such as bounce rates, page views, and click-through rates.

The In-Page Analytics tool is a great asset and can be found under the



Content section of the Reporting tab on Google Analytics. It provides you with a visual insight of how visitors interact with each specific page on your website. The tool is extremely useful as it provides you with details of what assets or sections are most clicked on or viewed, similar to a heat map, helping you improve the layout, content, messaging, and other functions of your site or pages.

Tip: In order to use the In-Page analytics tool, you need to enter the URL of the site or page that you want analysed in the Settings of the Admin section.

Another useful section of the web analytics is the Real-Time option. It allows you to view data about the traffic on each page and visitor activity in real-time. You are also able to gain further insight into your visitor's data, such as their geographical location, the particular page that they are viewing, and the particular traffic source that referred them to the landing page. This is extremely useful as you can monitor the effects of any marketing activity so that you can assess and make immediate changes if required. Although analysing data and traffic to specific pages is extremely useful, you should also use Event Tracking to monitor user interaction with your content (such as downloads, video elements or mobile apps) separately. Setting up event tracking is slightly more complicated and should be done by your web developer to ensure that it's done properly. Once this is set-up, you will be able to access the data collected in the Events Report section.

You can use the data collected from the In-Page analytics and other reports to optimise your landing page or website to improve your conversion.

OPTIMISE

OPTIMISATION IS A CONTINUOUS PROCESS THAT IS VITAL TO BOOSTING YOUR CONVERSION AND INCREASING YOUR ROI.



There are various ways in which you can do this. To experiment with optimisation you can perform split tests (A/B and multivariate testing).

This is where you use the data collected from your In-Page analytics in order to try to improve the ratio of click-through rates, by testing two different versions of a landing page (for example you can change the position of an image, messaging, or call-to-action).

Using the Experiment option in [Google Analytics](#), or other providers such as [ION Platform](#) you can divert a set percentage of visitors to the alternative page in real-time and optimise your pages according to the results achieved.

Find the appropriate ingredients

Social Media Tracking Tool

Reporting Template

LIST OF APPROPRIATE INGREDIANTS

EVENT PRODUCTION SCHEDULE TEMPLATE

PROJECT TEAM CONTACT SHEET

AUDIENCE / PERSONA TEMPLATE

SWOT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

COMPETITOR ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

RISK ASSESMENT & SAFETY CHECKLIST TEMPLATE

SOCIAL MEDIA TRACKING TOOL

REPORTING TEMPLATE



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