



# Case Study

## Social Media Marketing for Event Recruitment

Most successful marketing strategies today employ social media to cast a wide net around prospective customers. Used for cross-channel and multi-channel communications, the social Web helps businesses large and small to grow and retain their customer base.

Social media puts a company's brand in front of its target audience—around the clock and wherever they may be. In the case of the Arts and Business Council of Greater Philadelphia, social media was the perfect avenue for building buzz and drawing attendance for a local event.

### The Challenge: Fill the Seats

The Arts and Business Council of Greater Philadelphia, an affiliate of the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce (GPCC), was hosting a special event featuring actor, director and entrepreneur, Robert Redford. The event, "Cultivating a Creative Workforce," was a discussion on how creativity in both arts and business can strengthen communities and improve economic development.

The Council and the GPCC had begun to integrate social media into their communications channels but had never used social media so predominantly to promote such a major event. Capacity at the venue was approximately 350, and with only 3 weeks until the event more than 300 seats remained empty. The goals of this engagement were clear—sell out tickets for the event and increase visibility for both the Council and the GPCC.

### The Solution: Integrated Social Media Marketing

To help generate awareness about the event and build attendance, the Council turned to Sagefrog Marketing Group for its social media expertise. With a late start in the planning process, a limited budget and a short time frame to execute, Sagefrog immediately conducted a risk analysis and designed an integrated social media strategy to help manage its client's expectations.

Sagefrog began putting its strategy into action by developing target audience criteria. The target audience included fans of Robert Redford, the 40+ age demographic, members of the Council and the GPCC, those interested in creativity in business, those interested in cinema, and those located in and around the greater Philadelphia area. Next, Sagefrog recommended the social media channels that would best reach the Council's target audience within the limited time frame available. Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and the Council's and GPCC's current social media channels were among the



Sagefrog Marketing Group is a full service marketing, interactive and public relations firm. We specialize in health, technology, and business marketing for companies in greater Philadelphia and New Jersey.

chosen outlets. Specific promotional tactics included the following:

- Sagefrog created a **RedfordinPhilly** Twitter account and, as the account began gaining followers comprised of the target audience, Sagefrog began populating it with relevant news as well as promotional content. The hash tag #RedfordinPhilly was used to track the buzz regarding Redford's upcoming visit.
- Sagefrog created a Facebook fan page specifically for the event, with a custom contest tab developed using Facebook's FBML language. The contest form captured the names and email addresses of those interested in winning two tickets to the event, creating additional leads for the Council. Status updates on Facebook and LinkedIn helped to spread the word.
- Sagefrog utilized bookmarking sites such as Digg, Del.icio.us, Stumble Upon and Reddit, along with local event sites such as Gowalla, Upcoming and Eventful.
- Sagefrog commented on blogs and YouTube videos of Mr. Redford and his business, Sundance, to further create awareness and excitement about the event.
- Sagefrog ensured that the landing page used to drive traffic to the event registration was consistent in messaging and look with the email promotions sent to all Council members. Bit.ly links were created to track landing page visits driven by social media.

## The Results: Beyond Expectations

With more than 250 Twitter followers, 1500+ Facebook Fan page views, 350+ clicks on the Bit.ly link and 800 views of the YouTube event video, social media had a tremendous impact for this client. Sagefrog's social media marketing plan helped lead to a 500% increase in ticket sales, filling over 300 seats.

As with any strategic social media marketing plan, promotional activities did not end after the event. The effort continued to achieve its secondary goal of creating visibility for both the GPCC and the Arts and Business Council. Sagefrog posted several event-related assets to social media channels to continue to raise awareness for its clients and their future events. A story about the event, including photos and a video hosted on YouTube, was posted on the GPCC website. This link as well as the YouTube video were shared through Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Digg, Del.icio.us, Stumble Upon and Reddit. Photos of the event were shared through Flickr, Shutterfly, Photobucket, Facebook and Twitter.

## Conclusion

The partnership between Sagefrog Marketing Group and the Arts and Business Council of Greater Philadelphia proves that a thorough social media marketing campaign can be extremely successful and cost-effective for event recruitment. Incorporating social media enables event marketers to remain connected to attendees, extends the impact of the event and its host, and enables organizations to market other products, including future events. 🐸



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