

Top tips to help you promote your speaking event

Congratulations, you have secured your speaking gig! Whether you are speaking at your own event, or as a guest speaker at a large conference or small local networking group, there are a number of activities you can do to promote yourself and fill seats whilst capitalising on the opportunity to build your reputation as an expert in your field.

Promoting your event will help you to

- Get more attendees, so more people will hear your message
- Capture more leads and grow your database
- Attract new employees or potential partners
- Build your reputation as a popular speaker
- Attract further invitations to speak

1. Design and print event-specific business cards promoting the event. These can be particularly useful if you are promoting a large one-off or annual event, or have several workshops running throughout the year.

- Include your contact details, details of the event(s) and a one-sentence outline of the talk, including a reason why delegates should attend
- On the reverse, include appropriate promotional text or a testimonial
- Use them as mini invitations and hand them out at networking events, which can be particularly useful if there is a decent length of time before the event. This helps build an emotional connection to your potential audience prior to the event.
- You may like to run a promotion using these cards, for example, using a code which delegates enter on purchase

2. Website. Not only are you promoting the event, you are ensuring that it is as easy as possible for potential attendees to book tickets.

- Promote the event in your email signature with a hyper-link to booking details
- Post in the relevant section of your website (events/news/home/speaker page), including a link to booking details
- For your own event, create a landing page with an RSVP form or booking details and use social media to signpost potential attendees directly to this landing page
- Write a blog promoting the event, outlining what you will be talking about, who the event will be most appropriate for, what to expect and logistical information if relevant. You may want to offer the opportunity, in the comments section, for attendees to request certain information which they would like to see you cover.
- Explore the opportunity to submit a guest blog to the conference blog if they have one, or the group's Facebook page

- 3. Social media.** Leverage this to its best effect by convincing attendees of the value of your talk, the benefit they will receive by attending and providing opportunities and information on how to purchase tickets.
- Discuss with the event organiser and sponsors to see if there are opportunities to partner on any promotional activities
 - Track the hashtag for the event, if there is one, and interact with other people using the hashtag discussing the event – participate in the conversation
 - Consider providing tips in the form of images, starting a few weeks before, then daily, the three to four days leading up to the event, using the event hashtag (#). Consider posting 2 pictures of you wearing 2 different outfits and ask your followers which one you should wear when you are presenting at XXX conference on XX date. (I recently saw an example of this which gained 300+ comments and 35K views on social media!)
 - Don't forget the event sponsors, tag and mention them in your tweets/posts
 - Introduce yourself to the other speakers, especially those speaking before you. Promote them and their talk and hope that they reciprocate
 - Schedule some social media updates for the day of the event – particularly for the bigger conferences where your workshop is one of many and delegates have to choose. A well-crafted tweet may attract some last-minute undecideds
 - Ask people to tweet during the event, particularly if the event organiser has a live feed
 - Post in local LinkedIn groups. Look for local networking and business groups, trade associations and the local Chamber of Commerce as well as industry and subject-specific groups
 - Publish a post in your own LinkedIn status update.
 - Ask to share posts on other speakers/sponsors updates

Press/journalists:

- If you are the organiser: send a press release to local events listings/business calendars, both print and online
- Contact anyone you know in the media and relevant bloggers and invite them. Speak to the organiser about obtaining some complimentary tickets. It will be of mutual benefit.
- Invite journalists and bloggers who are on the press list to sit in on your session and offer an interview immediately afterwards

Personally, invite friends/colleagues/potential partners whom you feel would be relevant.

- Take the trouble to write a personalised email or make a phone call explaining why you would like them specifically to come.

Make a poster: Old fashioned, but simple, particularly if you work in a corporation and you are running a training session for colleagues internally and/or speaking and representing your company at an external gig.

- Showcase the fact that you are speaking, put it on your company notice board.

At the event, particularly if it is a small one, greet people at the door. It's a wonderful personal touch

- Arrive early, get set up and have your equipment tested and ready to go in advance of the start, so you can relax and meet and talk to people in the room. You can find out nuggets of information about their businesses; their challenges, successes, experiences etc, which you can use, as appropriate, in your talk, perhaps giving specific examples and/or advice relevant to those in the room.

At the end of the session, provide a reminder of who you are and what you offer

- This could be a special offer such as a free download/ free 1:1 session and request that they leave their email addresses
- If appropriate, mention the next event at which you are speaking
- Request speaker endorsements

After the event

- Ask for a testimonial from the event organiser for use on your speaker page, but also ask for one on your LinkedIn profile
- Revisit the Twitter event# or look for anyone who has tagged you in conversation and respond. Perhaps ask them what they liked best and what they would like to see next time. Thank them for attending and being such a great audience, tagging them if appropriate
- Ask a colleague to take pictures of you speaking and then publish a recap post of the event with the photos, including a pdf download of the key points from your talk – perhaps this will only be available for a certain period of time
- If the event is being videoed, obtain the footage and, once edited, include on your speaker page

Thank you for reading this guide, if you have anything to add, please let me know

islay@islayohara.co.uk