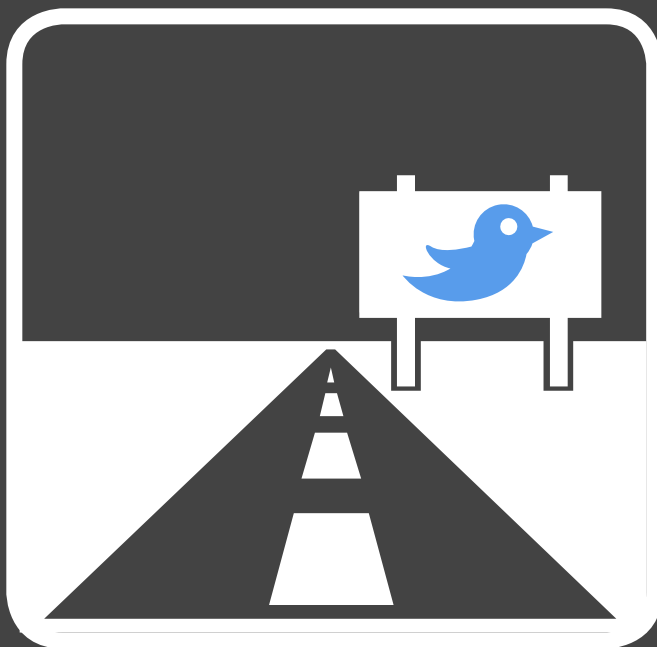


HOW TO

NAVIGATE EVENTS SUCCESSFULLY WITH TWITTER



Learn How To
Plan Your Time,
Network With
Attendees, &
Generate Leads
At Events.

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HOW TO NAVIGATE EVENTS SUCCESSFULLY WITH TWITTER

By Liz Rosenthal

Liz Rosenthal is a member of HubSpot's Global Marketing Relations team. She helps create and manage content creation for co-marketing efforts. Liz also helps to manage lead generation for paid ads and contributes to the HubSpot blog.



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FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER
[@AMANDASIBLEY](https://twitter.com/AMANDASIBLEY)

By Amanda Sibley

Amanda Sibley is a member of the Global Marketing Relations at HubSpot. She helps create and manage paid advertisements and external vendors to help generate leads across various platforms. Amanda is also a regular contributor to the HubSpot Inbound Marketing Blog, where she writes about various topics across inbound marketing.

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CONTENTS

.....

TIPS FOR SETTING GOALS & PREPARING FOR AN EVENT /7

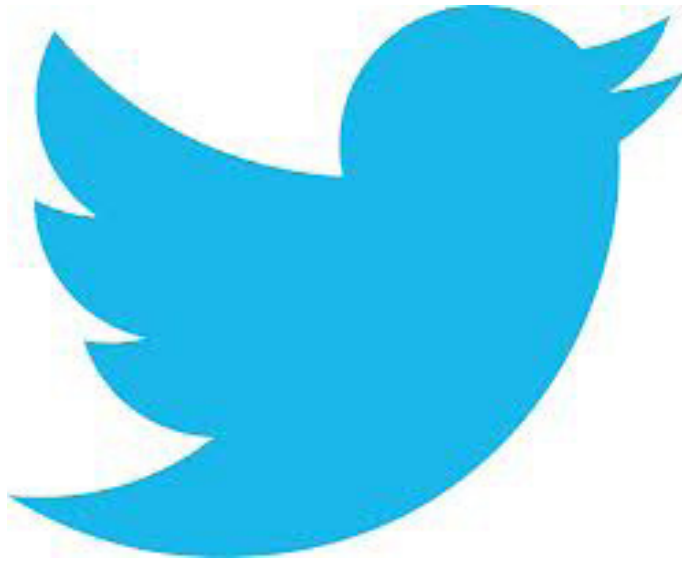
USING TWITTER THROUGHOUT EVENTS /16

TACTICS FOR SUCCESSFUL POST-EVENT FOLLOW-UP /22

CONCLUSION & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES /29

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Attending business events and conferences can be an overwhelming experience. With so many speakers, networking opportunities, and smaller events going on, how do you get the most out of attending an event? This ebook will share advice for staying organized while navigating events through Twitter. This social media platform offers many ways to help you get the most for your business from the pre-event planning all the way through post-event follow-up. You will be able to take advantage of all the opportunities available during each event you attend, and prove that it was time and resources well spent.



Navigating Business Events

When it comes to marketing, Twitter is an integral part of event culture. It's a platform that makes it easy to stay up on ever changing event information, organize your schedule, and interact with people involved. For example South by Southwest is an incredibly large and involved conference that covers a range of topics from technology to media to music and film. The 10-day event has something for everyone and is jammed pack with all sorts of opportunities. But how do you know who you want to hear speak? What events should you be going to? When are you going to have time to network? Using Twitter can help guide you through your event experience and keep you on target with how you can make the most out of attending.



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CHAPTER 1

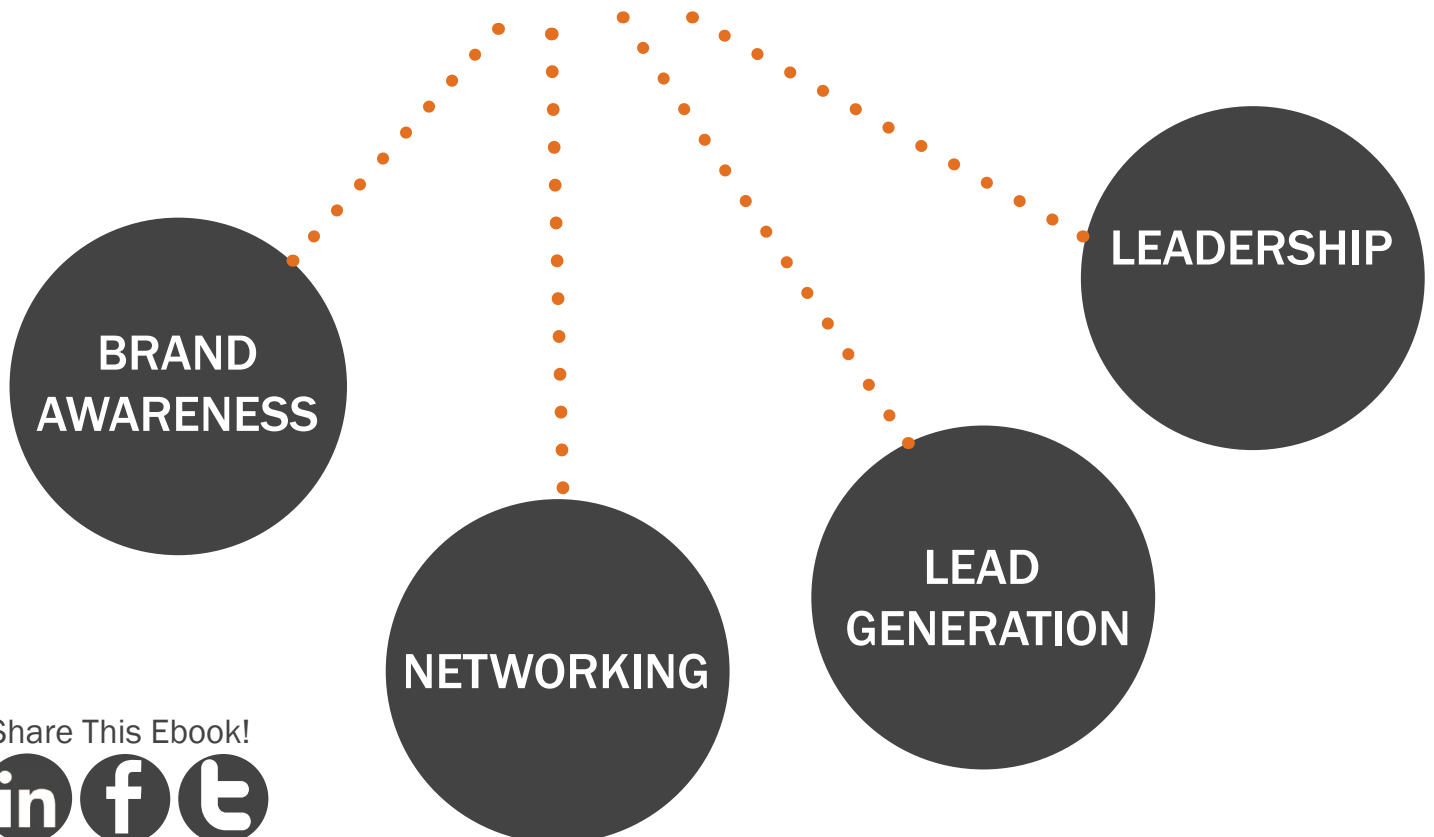
TIPS FOR SETTING GOALS & PREPARING FOR AN EVENT



Set Specific Goals For Events

Just like any other marketing campaign you're working on, you want to have a list of quantifiable goals you can refer to before you start planning what you're going to do at the event. This way you'll know exactly what you want to get out of it and you'll have a way to go back and measure your results at the end. Different goals will result in different event experiences, so it's important you know what you want in order to navigate the event effectively. Once your goals are set, you'll be able to easily prioritize your activities and create a schedule so you know when you're going to fit everything in. Let's review four core goals: brand awareness, networking, leadership, and lead generation.

What's Your Goal?



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GOAL 1: GENERATE LEADS

Business events are a great way to find people who are in your target market and may convert into leads. Engage in conversations to see what people in your field have to say. You don't want to be over promotional, but where appropriate, discuss topics relevant to your business. In order for a person to convert into a lead further down the line, you want to provide an easy way to draw people from the event to your website. That's where Twitter comes into play.

A simple way to do this is by asking people what their Twitter handle is -- or look at their name card since many conferences have started including those. Then use your Twitter account to tweet at them. For example:

Hey @AmandaSibley, we met at #SXSW. Just wanted to share my business with you >> www.HubSpot.com

If you spoke about a specific topic, you could even refer them to a specific resource. For example:

Hey @AmandaSibley, we discussed Vine as a business tool at #Inbound13... Just wanted to share my ebook with you >> bitly.com/Twitter-Vine-Ebook

Now you have an actual link for people you meet to click, which could influence them to become an actual lead for your business.

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As you can see in the tweets above, using event hashtags to springboard conversations can help your lead generation strategies.

You could also try a paid promotion with hashtags about events, speakers and the topics of the event as an opportunity to promote tweets that will likely generate leads for your company. This gives you a direct opportunity to include links to landing pages on your site where visitors can convert into leads.

That way, you could potentially start generating leads before the event even begins! As you get closer to the event, be aware that the cost-per-click will sky rocket for major event hashtags. Consider promoting more specific tags in order to reach the right people without paying so much.

Knowledge Check: What Are Promoted Tweets?

A promoted tweet is a way to show one of your tweets to a specific audience on Twitter. This can be very beneficial around certain event hashtags and audiences.



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GOAL 2: INCREASE BRAND AWARENESS

From sponsoring parties to hosting a talk, events are incredibly branded. You need to do something unique to break through the noise and differentiate your brand from all that competition.

Tweeting prior to the event is a great way to get people thinking about your brand and company before you even arrive at the event. This will save you time and effort once you're there, since people will already have you in mind. Brainstorm different ways to get attendees of an event engaged with you and your brand. One way to accomplish this would be by jumping on an event hashtag and tying the event to your brand in a lovable way. Here's an example:

Attending [#SXSW](#)? So are we! Meet us outside Ballroom D at 5PM for a free t-shirt.

While this concept calls for a hand full of free goodies, there are other ways you can attract people to your brand and get them to know you better, such as a happy hour meet up or a meet up to discuss a certain topic. At the end of the day, you just have to find a way that aligns with your brand image.

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GOAL 3: MAKE MORE CONNECTIONS

With such a high volume of people attending events, it's important to schedule times to meet up during and/or prior to the event. That way, you'll know you're getting to see everyone that you need to while you're attending. Use Twitter to connect with people you may not know well to begin to establish a relationship.

Ways to Connect through Twitter

- 1 Retweet and Send a Reply:** Begin to interact with people you're trying to connect with. Let them know you're interested in what they have to say.

- 2 Mention People in Tweets:** Reference the person you're trying to connect with through a tweet. You could mention something cool they're working on, share a piece of content they have written, or simply share something you think they'd find valuable.

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How to Prepare for Your Event

Once you've determined your overarching goal for the event you're attending, you need to determine a strategy to accomplish that. By doing research prior to the event and planning your activities for the duration of it, you will be able to more efficiently reach the goals you laid out.

Your first step should be to research all the event-sponsored activities, such as speaker sessions, so you have a solid idea of everything that is happening. Thoroughly look this over so you don't end up missing a great opportunity for your business.



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Create Your Personalized Event Spreadsheet



Organize the talks you want to attend by creating a spreadsheet with all conference speakers. Include a short description of the topics each one will cover. Since there's no way you can go to them all, determine which ones will be most beneficial for achieving your event goals. Once you've determined the most important sessions to go to, prioritize the rest of your schedule and networking opportunities around those events.

Keep in mind that some topics will sound more impressive due to a fancy title or big name speaker. Don't let this affect the topics you choose -- you want to select the topics most relevant to meeting your goals. Your time is precious, so having a strategy and sticking to it will help optimize your event experience and return.

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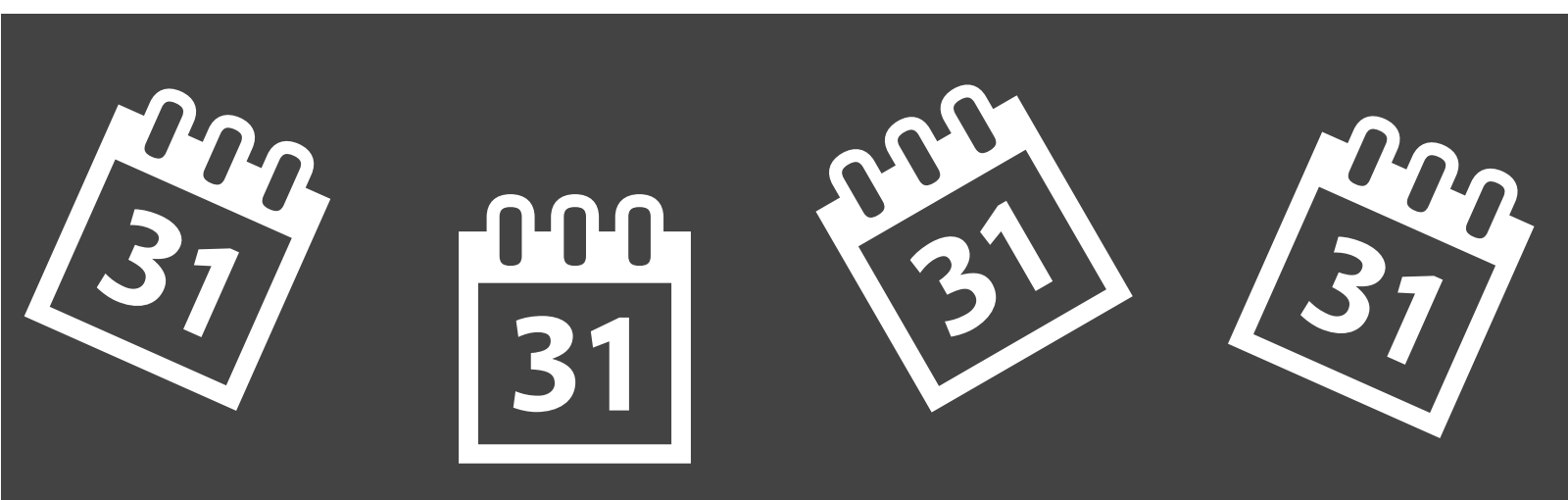


Create a Calendar of Events

After determining the times you'll be busy attending different speaker sessions, we suggest creating the rest of your event calendar to include the other goals you want to accomplish during the event.

Determine when and where you're going to be throughout the event so you can schedule times to meet and network with other people. Monitor Twitter hashtags and use the lists feature to determine if other people you want to see are attending the same sessions as you. You can even use Twitter to reach out to and connect with people you want to network with.

Since things will likely be chaotic once the event starts, so you may want to consider scheduling meetings before the event even starts with people you want to network with. Don't rely completely on being able to find a time once you're there - you're both going to be insanely busy!



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CHAPTER 2

USING TWITTER THROUGHOUT EVENTS



How to Get the Most From an Event

You've successfully mapped out your goals for the event and prepared as best you can, but now it's time to put all your work into action.

The days of an event can be crazy. With thousands of people you want to meet, how do you find the right people and navigate to the best speakers and companies to help you reach your goals?



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Stay a Part of the Conversation

Throughout events, keep up with the conversations. While you should be interacting with attendees during the event, you can also schedule tweets beforehand using a [social publishing software](#) so that you do not fall under the radar.

Share a mix of tweet content around the speakers and events you are attending, as well as normal tweets related to your brand and products. After each event, speaker, or interesting discussion, tweet your comments using relevant hashtags to keep your voice heard in as many places as possible.

After attending a speaking event, try to snag a picture with the speaker, or a picture of the person speaking. Tweet out pictures and comments about the presentation. This will help you remain in the conversation with both the speaker as well as the people who are actively involved in a certain topic. Spend more time focusing on speakers and events that are most relevant to your business and will help you achieve your goals more efficiently. These are the people that will be most beneficial to your business or career, so make the most of it!




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Start Valuable Conversations

Visit booths sponsored by companies that are relevant to the goals you are trying to accomplish by attending the event. Understand what you want to talk about and what you want to get out of each conversation before starting the conversation. Prepare questions and talking points to discuss, so you can steer the conversation in a direction that is efficient and effective. Here are some tips for having valuable conversations:

-  Exchange contact information
-  Get any valuable content or collateral
-  Prepare to follow up with them afterwards

While planning valuable conversations is helpful, just be sure you're open to the casual, unplanned, conversation that could unveil unforeseen opportunities. You never know who is standing behind you at lunch or who is sitting next to you at a session. Which brings us to our next page on lunch meetings.

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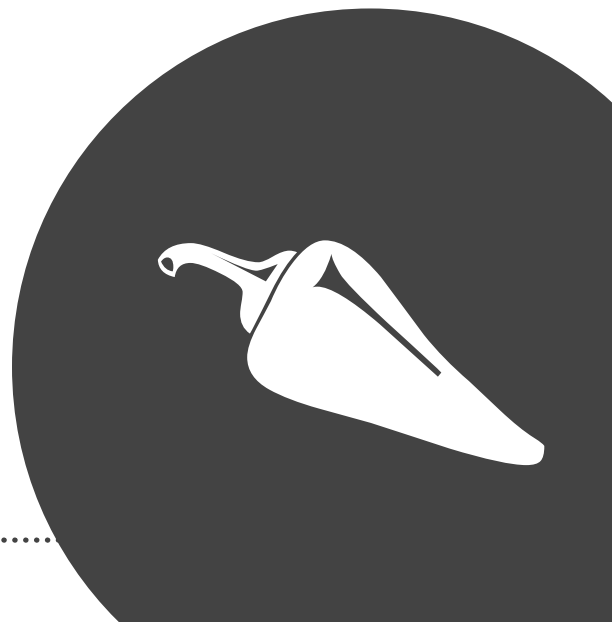
Network With Lunch Meetings

Meet and connect with as many people as you can. If you are going to lunch, don't just stick to the companions you came to the event with. Eat with people you want to get to know more about in order to expand your network while you have the chance. Whether it be thought leaders you can learn from, a potential customer you want to delight, or simply an attendee you bumped into at a session, meals are a great chance to network and get one-on-one time with people during a chaotic event. Remember to exchange business cards or other contact information so you can easily follow-up with them after your meeting.

Quick Tip:

Don't wait for people you've met to contact you after an event. Be pro-active about following up with them and showing your interest.

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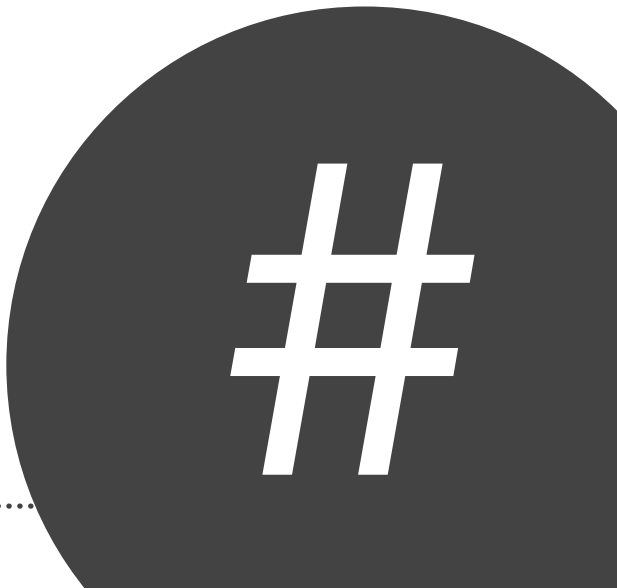
Discover the Right Conversations

Promote yourself and your products around the right conversations on Twitter. Even after the event, you want your tweets to be seen in searches and conversations, so make sure you keep up on your Twitter advertising strategy. During the first few days of an event, the cost-per-click of ads can increase significantly around event hashtags and conversations as the popularity of these increases, so be aware of this and try to find hashtags that may be less popular but more targeted to your audience.

For example, promoting a tweet on the hashtag [#SXSW](#) will cost a lot more than promoting a tweet on the hashtag [#sxswweekend](#) or [#sxswsocial](#).

Promoting your tweets shouldn't be forgotten during events, and needs to be closely monitored, as CPC and popularity change often during large events.

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CHAPTER 3



TACTICS FOR SUCCESSFUL POST-EVENT FOLLOWUP



Stay in Touch After the Event

Make sure your hard work and money spent at an event does not go to waste. The effort put in after an event is just as important as all the planning and execution that has gone into it. Here are a few ways to successfully continue communication between you and your new connections.

TIP 1: KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Just because someone has your business card, or because you tweeted your picture to a speaker, doesn't mean they will take the initiative to follow up with you. You need to be on top of maintaining the relationships you began at an event. Include specific and relevant links you want them to see when you tweet at them. Don't be afraid of contacting them through other methods of communication you were able to get at the event. If you have their email address, send a quick note about how great it was to meet them.



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TIP 2: KEEP NETWORKING

You went to fifteen speaking events, and had lunch with five different thought leaders in your industry, but now it's time to differentiate yourself from all the other people who did the same thing. To continue developing these relationships, you need to keep reaching out and networking with your new contacts. Follow up with them, both in thanking them for their time, and starting a conversation around something you find interesting.

If you are trying to get a great speaker to talk at an event of your own, or work for your company, tailor the conversation towards that. Even if they're not necessarily the right fit, maybe they know someone within their network that you can be introduced you to. For example:

Looking for an SEO expert to speak at #Inbound13! @AmandaSibley -- know anyone that fits this description? www.inbound.com

Continue expanding your reach by introducing your new contacts to other people within your network and vice versa. Consider setting up meet-ups in your area to get to better know your new connections and meet more people within their network.

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How to Reconnect With People

Use social media to check in with people. The speakers at events like SXSW are always on Twitter, so direct messaging them or tweeting at them and using hashtags will help your visibility and continue the conversation.

Great talk about [#digitalmarketing](#) by [@AmandaSibley](#). Learned so much at [#SXSW!](#)

This way, your tweet will not only reach all your followers, but will also show up in timelines about digital marketing and SXSW, increasing your overall reach. Reconnect initially on Twitter, as it is a public forum. If the conversation is going well, ask for further contact information to chat with them in another format where you can express your ideas more thoroughly.

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Tracking Your Potential Customers

You are going to meet a lot of potential customers at events like SXSW. Keep track of people you connect with throughout events. Writing down notes about each one will make follow up easier. Talk about the event and discuss your products with them. If you don't have an email address, reach out to them via Twitter and remind them about your products or services. Just be careful not to be spammy. They'll need a reminder about your product after having been bombarded by so many businesses at the event.

Keep up with the questions your potential customers are asking on social media. People are likely to tweet questions at you about your product or something they saw at an event. Don't ignore these people, they are already engaged with your brand and are more likely to become customers than people you haven't interacted with yet.

In short, follow up with everyone you meet at an event. Everyone from speakers and vendors, to potential and current customers have value. Build a broad network, as you never know who could be an asset to your business in the future.

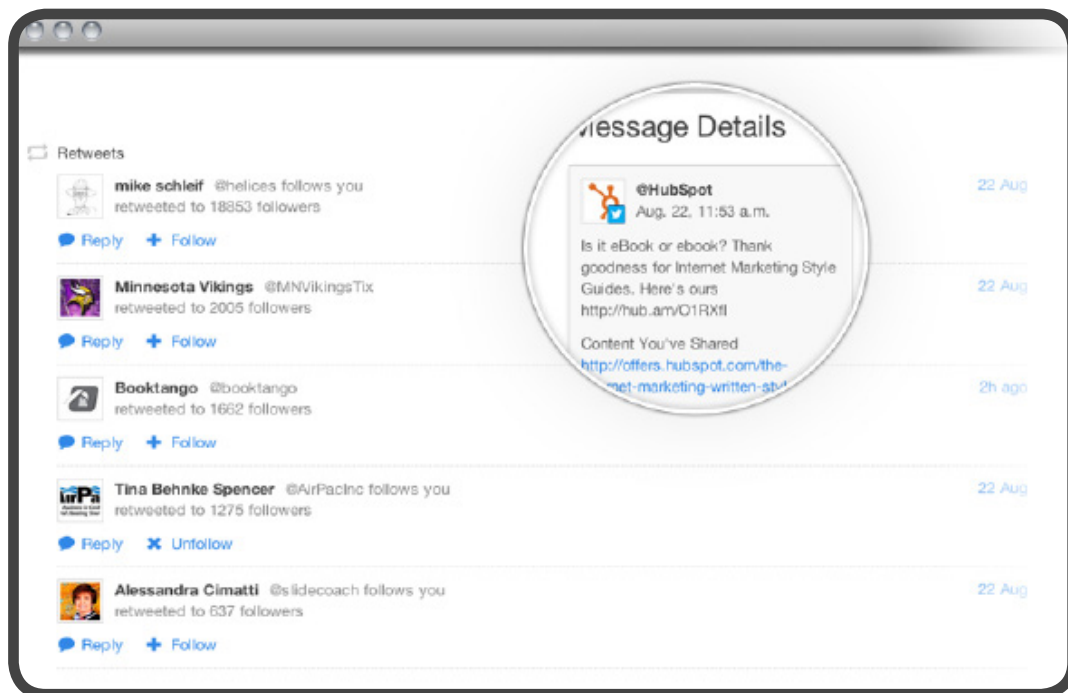
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Track Interactions Post-Event

It's not easy to figure out who out of all the people you met are actually a good fit for your business. That's where HubSpot's social media tools can help.

For every social media message you share via Twitter, HubSpot will show you who interacted with it and how many followers they have. You can then opt to reply or follow them, and see who out of the people you met you are influencing.



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Measure Event Success with CTAs

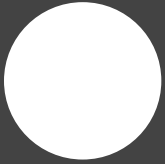
Measuring the success of an event can be tricky. There is no concrete way to see how many “impressions” there were for each speech or event you attended. In order to prove the ROI of an event, interact with people in inbound ways afterwards and begin tracking every action. However, calls-to-action (CTA) can help solve this problem.

After an event, add in a CTA in every conversation you have with leads from the event. Link back to your content, such as an offer, or a page on your website. Track the interaction on these links with a software such as [HubSpot](#) or Google Analytics. When your website traffic becomes a prospect or lead by downloading your content, nurture these people separately from your other leads. Send them emails and content related to the event where you first interacted with them. If you were tweeting about a certain speaker, send content to leads from this source that is related to the topic of the speech. Check out our example from chapter one:

Hey [@AmandaSibley](#), we discussed Vine as a business tool at [#Inbound13...](#)
Just wanted to share my ebook with you >> [bitly.com/Twitter-Vine-Ebook](#)

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CONCLUSION & ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Conclusion



Now that you have a guide on making the most out of attending an event -- from the planning stages to the post-event follow up -- you have everything you're ready for your next event! Keep your strategic goals in mind each step of the way. Organize all activities of an event around these goals, and you will be sure to see success. Now go out there and start attending events. Good luck!



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