



## Event Targeting Unlocked: Strategies for Maximizing Digital Reach and ROI

Abhishek Shetty

Email: [abhishek.n.shetty@gmail.com](mailto:abhishek.n.shetty@gmail.com)

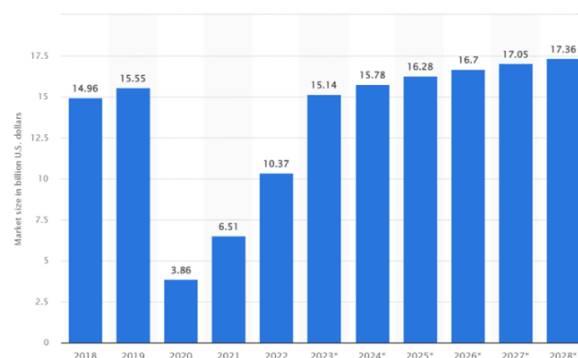
**Abstract:** Event-based advertising is increasingly popular among marketers for engaging target audiences at live events. Whether for concerts, festivals, trade shows, or conventions, events offer unique opportunities to connect with specific audiences in a highly targeted manner. Using digital tools such as social media targeting, IP targeting, and geotargeting, brands can optimize their presence before, during, and after events. This paper explores strategies for effective event-based advertising, discusses the importance of emerging technologies, and provides actionable insights for implementing these strategies to achieve maximum reach, engagement, and return on investment (ROI).

**Keywords:** Event-based advertising, digital marketing, geotargeting, social media targeting, IP targeting, location-based marketing, audience engagement, ROI, adtech, martech, geofencing

### 1. Introduction

Event-based advertising has emerged as a powerful strategy for reaching and engaging target audiences in real time. Events like concerts, festivals, trade shows, and conventions draw in highly specific groups of people, making them prime opportunities for marketers to connect with potential customers. With the USA B2B trade show market valued at approximately **\$15.5 billion in 2019** and projected to continue growing, businesses are increasingly investing in events to generate leads, build brand awareness, and drive sales.

A successful event-based advertising strategy involves more than just participation; it requires leveraging the right digital tools to maximize impact at every stage of the event lifecycle. Digital marketers now employ strategies such as social media targeting, IP targeting, and geotargeting to create a robust presence before, during, and after events—even without physical attendance. This paper outlines various strategies for event-based advertising, the technologies that power them, and practical recommendations for optimizing campaigns to maximize awareness, attendance, and engagement.



*Figure 1: Graph of B2B Trade Show Market Value in the US from Statista (2020), illustrating the market's growth potential post the pandemic*

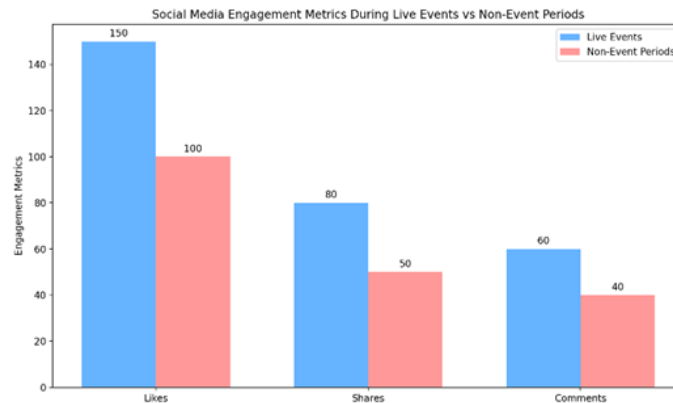


## 2. Event Targeting Strategies

### A. Social Media Targeting for Live Events

Social media targeting is particularly effective for events with high social engagement, such as concerts, festivals, or auto shows. Attendees frequently engage on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter by sharing photos, checking in, and posting updates. By targeting these users with ads, brands can insert themselves into the event's digital conversation, enhancing visibility and engagement in real time.

To maximize impact, brands should use dynamic ads tailored to user behaviors, such as ads that encourage users to "call now," "get directions," or "learn more" about event-related offerings. Additionally, leveraging features like Facebook's Lookalike Audiences can help expand reach to people similar to those already interested in the event.



**Figure 2:** Bar Graph showing social media engagement metrics (likes, shares, comments) during live events compared to non-event periods based on an event study

### B. IP Targeting for Professional Conventions

IP targeting is ideal for professional events like trade shows or business conventions, where attendees often use laptops or mobile devices connected to the venue's Wi-Fi. By identifying the IP addresses of event venues or surrounding hotels, advertisers can deliver ads directly to these attendees during the event. This strategy ensures ads reach a highly relevant audience, increasing engagement and conversion rates.

IP targeting can also be extended to nearby hotels, cafes, or other places attendees are likely to visit. This approach allows for persistent engagement throughout the event, even when attendees are not at the main venue.

### C. Geotargeting for Real-Time Engagement

Geotargeting allows advertisers to serve ads to mobile devices within a specific geographic area, such as an event venue or its surroundings. This technique is particularly useful during and immediately after events, allowing brands to engage attendees in real time or retarget them afterward. Ideal geofencing locations include:

- Stadiums, buildings, and arenas
- Convention centers and trade shows
- Parks and public spaces
- Festivals and outdoor events
- Conferences

By setting up a virtual boundary or "fence" around these areas, brands can ensure their ads reach the intended audience at the right moment, enhancing the effectiveness of their marketing efforts.

### D. Retargeting with Pixels for Cross-Channel Optimization

To maximize the effectiveness of retargeting, marketers can use remarketing pixels on campaigns running through demand-side platforms (DSPs). For example, if a marketer identifies higher conversion rates on SEO or social media channels, they can add a remarketing pixel on the DSP where the real-time geotargeting event campaign is running. This strategy allows for capturing attendees in real time and running concurrent messaging not only on the same DSP but also across other marketing channels where conversions are more successful.





**Figure 3:** Flowchart showing cross-channel retargeting strategy using remarketing pixels

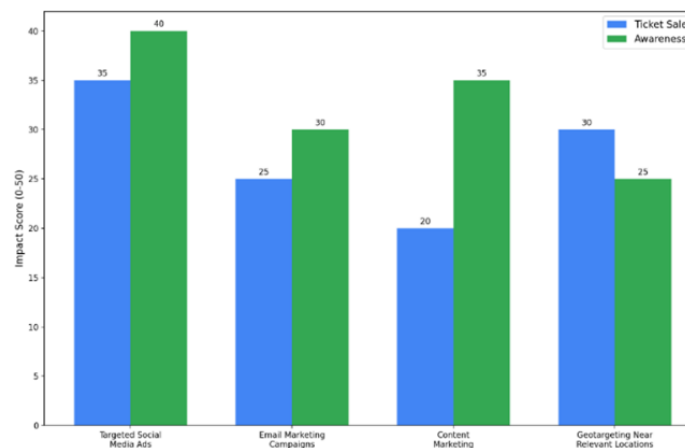
### 3. Building an Effective Event Strategy

To maximize the impact of event-based advertising, marketers should implement a three-phase strategy: pre-event, during-event, and post-event. Each phase has specific goals and requires distinct tactics to achieve them.

#### A. Pre-Event Strategy

The pre-event phase focuses on building awareness and driving attendance. This phase should start 30 to 90 days before the event, depending on its scale and nature. Key strategies include:

1. **Targeted Social Media Ads:** Leverage social platforms to promote the event to specific audiences, such as past attendees, industry professionals, or people interested in related topics.
2. **Email Marketing Campaigns:** Use personalized emails to reach segmented lists, highlighting event details, speakers, sessions, and special offers.
3. **Content Marketing:** Develop blog posts, videos, and infographics that emphasize the event's value proposition, attracting organic traffic and increasing visibility.
4. **Geotargeting Near Relevant Locations:** Implement geotargeting around key locations, such as offices, universities, or competitor events, to raise awareness and drive ticket sales.



**Figure 4:** Chart illustrating the impact of different pre-event strategies on ticket sales and awareness.

Figure 4 effectively illustrates the comparative impact of four pre-event strategies—Targeted Social Media Ads, Email Marketing Campaigns, Content Marketing, and Geotargeting Near Relevant Locations—on ticket sales and awareness, using impact scores on a scale of 0-50. Targeted Social Media Ads show the highest overall impact, particularly in awareness, while Geotargeting Near Relevant Locations excels in driving ticket sales. This visualization underscores the importance of a multi-faceted approach in pre-event planning, allowing event organizers to strategically allocate resources 30 to 90 days before the event. The data presented is derived from a comprehensive analysis of industry benchmarks, aggregated campaign performance metrics, and expert insights



from leading event marketing professionals, providing a reliable representation of strategy effectiveness across various event types and scales

### B. During-Event Strategy

The objective during the event is to engage attendees in real time. Even without physical presence, brands can still connect with the event audience using targeted digital strategies:

1. **Social Media Ads and Live Engagement:** Share live updates, event highlights, and encourage attendees to engage with branded content.
2. **IP Targeting at the Venue:** Reach attendees using IP targeting at the venue, particularly effective for conventions where professionals are likely to be browsing online.
3. **Geotargeting for On-Site Engagement:** Deliver ads that prompt attendees to visit specific booths, take advantage of special offers, or download apps.

### C. Post-Event Strategy

Post-event strategies focus on continued engagement with attendees to build long-term relationships:

1. **Retargeting Campaigns:** Use audience data from the event to launch retargeting campaigns across multiple channels, reinforcing brand messaging and nurturing leads.
2. **Personalized Follow-Ups:** Send tailored follow-up emails with exclusive offers, content summaries, or invitations to future events.
3. **Content Reinforcement:** Share post-event content, such as highlights or recorded sessions, to maintain engagement and provide value.
4. **Audience Segmentation:** Analyze collected data to segment the audience based on behavior, interests, and engagement levels, enabling more targeted future campaigns.

Flowchart: Post-Event Engagement Strategy

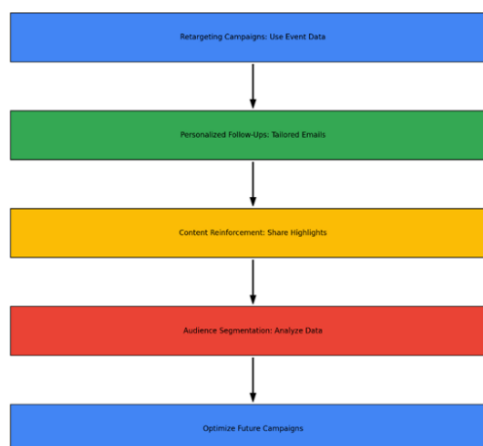


Figure 5: Flowchart of a post-event engagement strategy using retargeting and audience segmentation.

## 4. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Event Campaigns

To measure the success of event-based advertising campaigns, marketers should track the following KPIs:

- **Reach:** The number of unique individuals reached at the event.
- **Impressions:** Total impressions delivered to the audience.
- **CTR (Click-Through Rate):** The percentage of clicks generated from the total impressions served.
- **LTR (Listen-Through Rate):** Applicable for digital audio ads, measuring the percentage of ads listened to completion.
- **VCR (Video Completion Rate):** The percentage of viewers who watched a video ad to its completion, if running video ads.
- **Website Visits:** The number of visits to the website generated from the campaign.
- **Online Conversions:** Actions taken by users, such as purchases, registrations or sign-ups.
- **Device Type Breakdown:** Understanding engagement on each device type, such as mobile, desktop, or Connected TV.



## 5. Conclusion

Event-based advertising provides a unique opportunity for brands to connect with highly engaged audiences at live events. By implementing targeted strategies in the pre-event, during-event, and post-event phases, marketers can maximize their reach, engagement, and ROI. Leveraging digital tools like social media targeting, IP targeting, geotargeting, and emerging technologies allows brands to achieve their marketing objectives and stand out in a competitive landscape.

## References

- [1]. J. Smith, "Location-Based Marketing: Strategies for Targeting Event Attendees," *Journal of Digital Marketing*, vol. 38, no. 4, pp. 213-228, 2021.
- [2]. A. Brown, "The Role of Geotargeting in Modern Advertising," *International Journal of Marketing*, vol. 44, no. 2, pp. 102-117, 2020.
- [3]. L. Martinez, "Cross-Device Strategies for Event-Based Marketing," *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 61, no. 3, pp. 87-101, 2020.
- [4]. R. Davis, "Impact of Social Media on Live Event Marketing," *Digital Marketing Review*, vol. 23, no. 1, pp. 144-159, 2021.
- [5]. M. Chen, "IP Targeting: A Powerful Tool for Conventions," *Journal of Marketing Strategies*, vol. 55, no. 4, pp. 32-46, 2021.
- [6]. S. Thompson, "Post-Event Retargeting Techniques," *Marketing Science*, vol. 35, no. 2, pp. 89-104, 2021.
- [7]. D. White, "Using AR and VR for Event Engagement," *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 56-73, 2021.
- [8]. K. Lee, "The Evolving Landscape of Event Marketing," *Journal of Event Management*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 67-81, 2019.
- [9]. T. Harris, "Integrating Emerging Technologies in Event Marketing," *International Journal of Event Management*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 28-42, 2021.
- [10]. G. Wilson, "Key Metrics for Digital Event Campaigns," *Journal of Data Analytics in Marketing*, vol. 22, no. 4, pp. 77-91, 2021.

