
Eight Ways to Rock Your Next Event with Social Media

Communication today is real time, all the time. Thanks to the continuing innovations in technology and the rapid rate of adaption, events that occur around the world – or across the street – are now capable of being seen by millions of individuals. And it's not just the "viewing" that is important – it's what effect those views have on the individual watching them.

The social media platforms that exist today, as well as those which are being developed and will be the next big thing, can have a far-reaching impact on the ministries of your church.

Are you taking advantage of them? Or, do you feel like they take advantage of you? Is social media creating communication traction? Or is it becoming a constant distraction?

THE QUICK SUMMARY - *[The Art of Social Media](#)*, by Guy Kawasaki and Peg Fitzpatrick

By now it's clear that whether you're promoting a business, a product, or yourself, social media is near the top of what determines your success or failure. And there are countless pundits, authors, and consultants eager to advise you.

But there's no one quite like Guy Kawasaki, the legendary former chief evangelist for Apple and one of the pioneers of business blogging, tweeting, Facebooking, Tumbling, and much, much more. Now Guy has teamed up with Peg Fitzpatrick, who he says is the best social-media person he's ever met, to offer *The Art of Social Media*—the one essential guide you need to get the most bang for your time, effort, and money.

With over one hundred practical tips, tricks, and insights, Guy and Peg present a bottom-up strategy to produce a focused, thorough, and compelling presence on the most popular social-media platforms. They guide you through steps to build your foundation, amass your digital assets, optimize your profile, attract more followers, and effectively integrate social media and blogging.

For beginners overwhelmed by too many choices as well as seasoned professionals eager to improve their game, *The Art of Social Media* is full of tactics that have been proven to work in the real world. Or as Guy puts it, "great stuff, no fluff."

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

In the not-too-distant past, promotion of an upcoming event focused primarily on print media – think newspaper ads, or poster, or the like. If you were lucky enough to have the resources, you might have even ventured into radio or television advertising.

Why those methods are still in use – and might be very beneficial for some of your activities – there is another, more powerful, and certainly more timely method – social media platforms.

You have something critically important to your ministry happening every weekend – your

worship experiences. Maybe you have an annual event that attracts thousands of people to your campus.

How are you taking advantage of social media platforms to not just promote the event prior to its actual happening, but connect real-time with participants in the room – or “participants” around the world?

Most organizations do not use social media to increase the visibility and value of events. Instead, they focus on pre-event promotions and do little, if anything, with social media at the event itself.

Here are several ways you can rock an event with social media.

Pick a short, evergreen hashtag – the goal is to choose a hashtag that's trending and constantly in people's faces.

Integrate the hashtag into everything – use the hashtag the moment you start promoting the event. That means it's on your website, in all your advertising, and in your e-mail signature. All print materials and video slides should include the hashtag. Every team member, speaker, vendor, and guest should know what the hashtag is.

Ask everyone to use it – it's not enough to tell people the hashtag; you also need to ask them to use it.

Reach beyond the event – the audience for an event is anyone in the world who's interested in your organization, not only the people at the event.

Dedicate a person – to truly socialize an event, at least one person should focus exclusively on social media activities. The person will have plenty to do:

- *Before:* share promotional posts to drive awareness and attendance.
- *During:* Tweet what's happening and take pictures of speakers and guests. Upload these pictures during breaks and reshare other people's posts.
- *After:* Share articles about the event, as well as more pictures and videos. Encourage attendees to share their pictures.

Stream live coverage – don't obsess about the possibility of reducing event attendance.

Provide real-time updates – If you can't do live streaming video, use Twitter and Instagram to provide in-the-moment updates.

Put your leaders to work – make sure your leaders are available for and encouraging to pose for photos with attendees. Encourage them to post photos with the hashtag.

Guy Kawasaki and Peg Fitzpatrick, [The Art of Social Media](#)

A NEXT STEP

Pick a future event that you want to raise the quality of experience around – before, during, and after – via social media platforms. With your leadership team, brainstorm what kinds of actions need to take place to make that happen.

Pull together an action team composed of individuals representing the event and individuals responsible for social media. Outline to the team what your leadership team has discussed, and ask them to review the initial brainstorm list, add to and/or revise, and then implement. Work with the team to create an evergreen hashtag, as the authors above describe.

Ask this team to also develop sharing measures for each of the three stages – before, during, and after – so that you will be able to gauge the effectiveness of sharing. Provide resources to this team so they will be able to carry through with their plans.

At the conclusion of the event, ask this team to report to your leadership team the results of the experiment. Decide what was effective, and plan to implement with future events. If something worked but needs revision, ask the team to develop plans for that. If something clearly didn't work, and can't be revised, scrap it.

After you have used the sharing plan for four events, make additional revisions as needed, and then implement for all events as needed.

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*This is part of a weekly series posting excerpts from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** book excerpts for church leaders.*

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