“Getting budget buy-in: How to unlock the value of events to fuel business success and professional growth”

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Why am I here?

- **66%** of businesses are restricting travel budgets
- **80%** of leaders are actively encouraging the use of virtual and hybrid events as an alternative
- **75%** of respondents stated that attending events is becoming less common

Credit: Goldcast Attendee Sentiment Report
But only...

- **10%** of virtual event attendees rated their experience as ‘excellent’
- **11%** of hybrid attendees said the same

Credit: Goldcast Attendee Sentiment Report
Events are integral to business success and your personal growth

- Learn about the latest trends
- Network with amazing industry people
- Connect with your team in an increasingly remote world
- Socialise with peers
- Find tools and solutions for your everyday challenges
- Meet the ‘experts’ and ask your questions
- Travel to new places
- Get inspiration for your campaigns

And the list goes on!
Don’t just take it from me...

“I learned so many insights about expanding your global SEO strategies and really good technical insights. We’ve already seen a significant positive impact from our learnings.”

“Meeting inspirational people from all over the world in such a short space of time has been nothing short of incredible.”
“Nothing beats the efficiency of attending a conference like ISS where you can share your experiences and quickly gain a treasure trove of learnings and best practises from other international marketers.”

“I came to the International Search Summit with an international SEO problem. I left with a solution.”
How to maximise the events you attend

- Be choosy
- Do your homework
- Get involved in the event build-up on social media
- Plan your day in advance and write down potential questions
- Figure out your networking style
- Look for fringe events, other learning and networking opportunities
You know the value in attending events and you want to be there.

But what if your stakeholders don’t buy it?
Common challenges

- Restriction of travel budget
- Perceived lack of ROI
- Conflict with other priorities
- Time out of the ‘office’
- Too expensive
From their point of view

- Lack of information
- Budget cuts
- False assumptions
- Fear of change
- Short-term thinking
Digging a bit deeper

Lack of information
Do they understand the benefits of attending the event and how it could contribute to the organisation’s success?

Budget cuts
Juggling budgets is hard and saying no to events to easy!

False assumptions
They might make assumptions on costs, benefits, time out of the office etc. without actually researching it.

Fear of change
Some people/places are resistant to change and may object to budget requests simply because they are uncomfortable with the idea of doing things differently.

Short-term thinking
If they’re focused on short-term costs and fail to consider the long-term benefits of attending events.
So how do we change this?
Explain the benefits

- Clearly outline the benefits of attending the event for your team and the organisation as a whole.
- Networking opportunities. Who, when and how?
- Specific knowledge that can be gained. Name sessions!
- Share the trends you want to learn, and the potential impact they could have
- Identify speakers who specialise in the challenges you’re facing
Present a solid business case

Provide data-driven evidence to support your proposal.

- Data on event attendees
- Past success stories
- Potential return-on-investment for the organisation
- Mention the tools and solutions you want to visit and explore
- Pick the right moment
Be transparent with costs

Provide a detailed breakdown of the costs associated.

Ticket prices
Be transparent with costs

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- Ticket prices
- Travel to, from and during the event
Be transparent with costs

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- Ticket prices
- Travel to, from and during the event
- Accommodation costs
Be transparent with costs

Provide a detailed breakdown of the costs associated.

- Ticket prices
- Travel to, from and during the event
- Accommodation costs
- Food and drink
Be transparent with costs

Provide a detailed breakdown of the costs associated.

- Ticket prices
- Travel to, from and during the event
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- Food and drink

Always consider your booking timeline!
Look for cost-saving measures and include them

- Book early to take advantage of Early Bird rates
- Apply for ballot tickets
- Look for discounted group rates
- Suggest apartments instead of hotels
- Travel together
- Use public transport
- Are the slides/recordings available post-event?
Promise to provide a follow-up

Discuss setting clear goals, how you plan to measure ROI, and how you will communicate the results.

Post-event, share:

- Key learnings
- How is it going to benefit the organisation?
- Who did you meet?
- What solutions did you come away with?
- How you plan to implement the above...

Report, presentation, email, chat. You choose, but do it!
Events are vital to business success. And your growth

Choose events that are genuinely valuable to attend

Maximise every event you go to

Present a strong business case to get buy-in

Always follow-up post-event
Thank you!

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