



Gather

Proactive Ways to Grow Your Events Business

A guide to going after sales, staying
on top of trends and more



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Whether you've been hosting events for months or decades, you probably know that competition can be fierce. Because of this, traditional sales approaches may not work as well as they used to. Want to increase the amount of qualified leads you're bringing into your space? Being proactive — or seeking out event sales instead of just waiting for people to find your business — can help grow your private events program and keep you in the loop with this ever-evolving industry.

We wanted an inside look into a few ways event managers and owners can be more proactive about growing their event programs. So, we chatted with Grier Donald, events coordinator of [Spirited Event Group](#), an events consulting agency in Atlanta, Georgia that specializes in connecting venues with clients.

By the Numbers

58% of event planners use online industry magazines to keep up with trends.

— [Bizzabo](#)

Subscribe to publications

Struggling to keep up with the trends in the events industry? Subscribe to a few online publications or newsletters from companies that are doing it right, like your local Business Chronicle, Eater or Restaurant Hospitality Magazine. This way, you can open your inbox in the morning and take a few minutes to skim through the latest news that's relevant to your business. You'll

feel more in-the-know and be able to project that to customers interested in booking your venue. "Event professional organizations, networking events, trade articles, and following other event professionals on social media are all great ways to stay in the know," explains Grier.



Check out newly opened businesses

A great way to get to know your competition and help yourself stand out from the pack is to stay up-to-date with similar businesses opening in your area. "I often will google event spaces, breweries, concert venues and more in other cities to get ideas of what they're doing," says Grier. If you're a restaurant, see if there are other eateries in your neighborhood or city that have recently opened and stop by to see what they're doing, from interior design to their seating options to their menu (especially if they have lines of customers out the door).

Consider partnering with a PR firm

If you don't already have a [public relations firm](#) you're working with, it may be time to consider this marketing channel if you have the budget, particularly if you notice other event venues or restaurants getting traction this way. While not guaranteed, editorial features can do wonders for raising awareness for your event space and

provide credibility to your business that you wouldn't be able to get with typical paid ads. Grier also mentions that working with an event marketing firm can help you increase your event sales. "An event marketing firm can be a good partner opportunity, as they are actually creating marketing events and experiences, and they need places to host these events."

By the Numbers

84% of people prefer face-to-face meetings when it comes to establishing business relationships.

- *Forbes*

Attend networking events

[Networking](#) is probably top of mind when you're thinking about ways to grow your professional relationships – but it can help you expand your current client base too. "Attending networking events keeps you fresh on people's minds," says Grier. "It shows you care about the industry and that you want to be part of the larger community. Plus, it keeps you informed about things that are happening both locally and nationally."



Join local industry groups

Who doesn't want to grow their career and learn new skills? If you're looking to become a leader in the events industry and want to learn from the best, joining local industry groups (like the National Association of Catering and Events or Hotel Alliance Group) is a good idea. It can also give your business a little name recognition. "Building relationships with other event professionals is key to growing your business," agrees Grier.



Register for trade shows and conferences

While trade shows can be pricey, they can be worth the investment. You can pay for a booth and spread the word about your company. Or, if you don't want to pay for a setup, you can simply walk around and mingle with other event pros. You'll also be exposed to new ways to grow your business from industry experts. "When you're proactive, hopefully you've done your research and are contacting more qualified leads that have a potential to book your event. You're also getting your name out to people who may not otherwise know you exist," adds Grier.

By the Numbers

54% of event planners attend conferences to keep up with trends.

- *Bizzabo*

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