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Cars for a Cause


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Cars for a cause

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Introduction

In the United States, Alzheimer's affects roughly 5.3 million citizens which makes it the sixth leading cause of death. This disease is the only cause of death in the top 10 in America that cannot be prevented, cured or slowed. The organization, The Alzheimer's Association, is a not-for-profit charitable corporation that spends 78% of its total expenses on care, support, research, awareness and advocacy which exceeds the BBB Wise Giving Alliance's guidelines and expectations. In order to help fight this horrific disease, charitable donations and contributions in any amount are greatly appreciated. This is how Cars for a Cause was born. In order to provide a family friendly event that centers around a charitable cause and to put into practice four years of business disciplines in a real world setting, I used different marketing techniques, presentation skills, communication skills, leadership skills and research skills to put together this event.

Planning Stage

In order to hold a successful event, first I had to analyze the internal and external factors surrounding Cars for a Cause. Then I had to segment the market, target my audience, and position my event to attract the correct audience.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Cars for a Cause is a charitable event
- Thompson Speedway is a well known location which may result in high traffic
- Experience in event planning

Opportunities:

- Thompson Speedway has their own liability waiver in case of an emergency
- Cars for a Cause may improve local businesses
- There is a growing interest around track activities

Weaknesses:

- Volunteers are very limited
- Organization between different groups is complicated
- Event area is away from the paddock

Threats:

- Different automotive events occurring on the same day
- Weather conditions
- Potential of sponsors being unable to participate

STP Analysis

Segmentation

- Geodemographic Segmentation used
- Geographic – MA [Boston area, Metro-west, Western], RI and North Eastern CT
- Demographic – Age, Gender, Income and lifestyle characteristics

Market Segment must be identifiable, substantial, reachable, responsive and profitable

Differentiated Targeting Strategy used – target several market segments with different offerings for each

This helps obtain a bigger share of the market by appealing to each different segment

Targeting

Positioning

- Defines the event so target customers have a clear, distinctive, desirable understanding
- Value Proposition – communicates the customer benefits to be received from the event
- Salient Attributes – relays product attributes that are important to the target market

Event Details



Location: Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park
205 E Thompson Rd, Thompson, CT 06277

Date: May 9, 2015

Time: 10:00am-2:00pm

Cost: \$15 per car and \$10 per additional passenger in car (under 5 years old free). Out of this cost, Thompson charges \$10 per individual admitted onto the grounds.

Liability Waiver: All individuals that enter the Motorsports Park premises must sign Thompson's "RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT" in order to obtain a specific colored wristband that allows access to the grounds

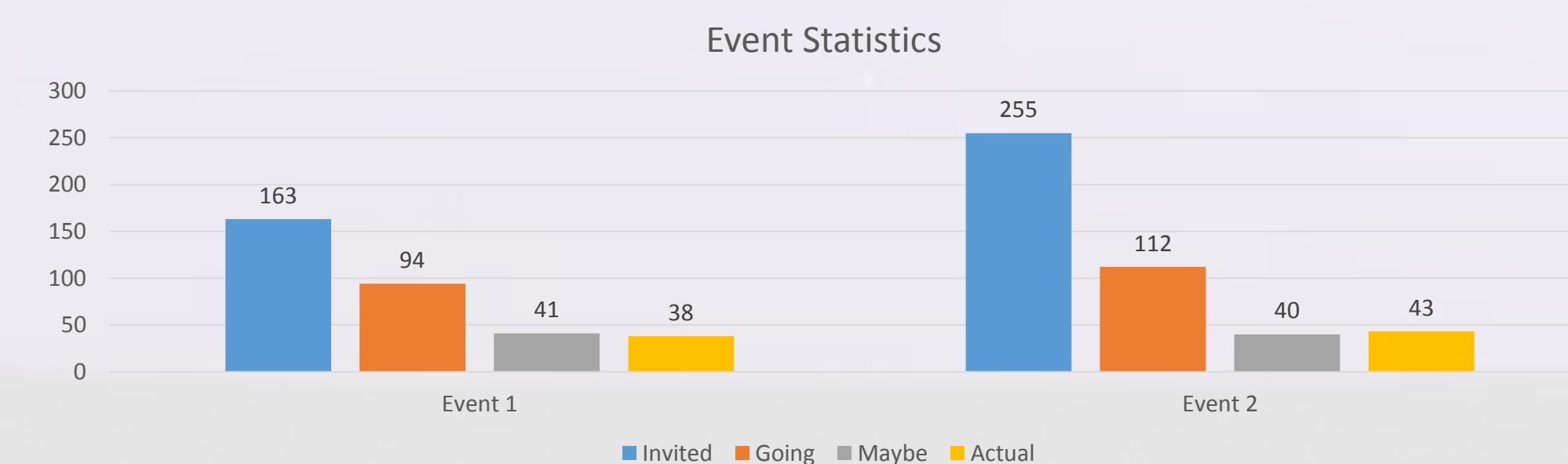


Practice Events

Due to the record breaking snow fall this winter in New England, Cars for a Cause was unable to take place during the semester. With enormous snow mounds taking above average times to melt due to the frigid temperatures, many outdoor places of business, such as Thompson Speedway, were unable to open at their normally scheduled time for safety reasons. This has forced Cars for a Cause to be pushed back until May 9th. The extended time period has allowed me to help organize and run two events at a local business to gain more experience.

The first event, called Protective Solutions Cars and Coffee was organized at Protective Solutions in Holliston, MA on February 21st from 9:00am-12:00pm. This event was marketed using only social media and inviting a limited number of people since the event space was not able to accommodate hundreds of people and cars. In order to attract attention about the event, a free giveaway was donated by Protective Solutions which included Sonax car care products.

The second event, called Protective Solutions Cars and Coffee – The Spring Startup Meet, was organized again at Protective Solutions in Holliston, MA on March 28th from 9:00am-12:00pm. Once again, it was marketed only using only social media and included another giveaway.



The chart above shows how many people were invited on social media, how many confirmed they were going, how many said they might go, and how many actually came to the event. The first event had a 23% turnout rate from the original invite and the second had a 17% turnout rate. Both events experienced a small percentage of actual event goers because each time it was snowing.



Marketing

Cars for a Cause is being marketed various ways to accommodate the different target audiences. For a majority of the marketing, social media, such as Facebook and Instagram, are being used to spread the word about the event. This marketing strategy will reach a majority of my target audiences such as families, car enthusiasts and those individuals affected by Alzheimer's somehow. By using Facebook, I am able find pre-formed groups with specific interests that would enjoy this event.

For the audience that social media will not reach, I am using print advertising. This will consist of visiting local events and passing out flyers and leaving flyers at local businesses. The goal of the print advertising is to reach those with similar interest by advertising at relevant events and businesses to reach those that are not on social media.

The last marketing effort will be to employ individuals that are well known in certain aspects of the car community to spread the word by word of mouth. Since these individuals have a larger reach than I do, this will hopefully get the word out to as many people as possible. By also employing well-known individuals, this might help convince people to attend.

Discussion

The purpose of Cars for a Cause is to raise money and awareness about Alzheimer's while providing a family friendly event and supporting local businesses. Even though the event has not happened due to weather related restrictions, Cars for a Cause is extensively planned and expected to take place on May 9th. From the beginning of planning towards the end, this event has exceeded expectations by being able to work with some well known businesses to hosting the event at a well known and desirable location.

Helping to organize and host the two events at Protective Solutions has helped me to have a realistic view about the number of people that will attend Cars for a Cause. By using social media to spread the word about the event, the amount of people that say they are "going" is an unrealistic number. By using a percentage of this number, I can predict the amount of people going. Taking into account the number of people that see the event details through social media, the exposure from print advertising and people who hear about the event through word of mouth, I am estimating about 33% of the social media "going" population will be in attendance.

The largest challenge about Cars for a Cause was predicting the unpredictable. Having to work around the snowiest winter New England has seen was proven to be the most difficult in finding and booking a location. Also working with various groups and personalities led to difficulties when organizing and planning.

Overall, the planning and practice that has gone into establishing Cars for a Cause will ensure that May 9th will be a success and hopefully have a chance of repeating in the future.

Works Cited

- 1). "Help End Alzheimer's." *Alzheimer's Association*. Web. 9 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.alz.org/>>.
- 2). "Welcome to Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park." *Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park*. Web. 20 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.thompsonspeedway.com/>>.

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