

Event Coverage

Effective multimedia event communication –
getting the message across



Tailor-made communication plays **a key role.**

Events ARE BOOMING. Never before have budgets for conferences or trade fairs been higher. A successful event brings people together and it creates added value as well - both analogue and digital.

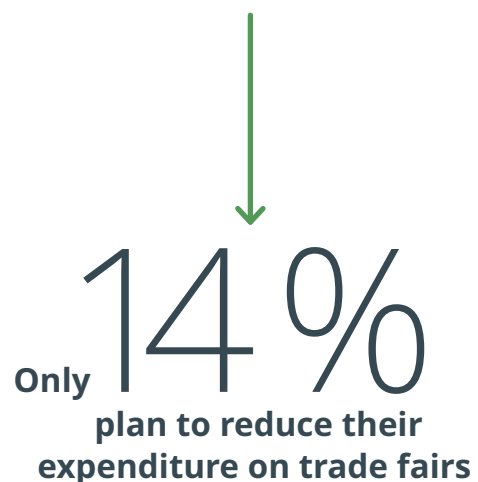
Digitalization is devouring the analogue but is social media replacing real contacts? Far from it! The exact opposite is the case. Both worlds complement each other - especially when it comes to events. This is true even in industries that have already achieved a high degree of digitalization.

IT companies put 35 percent of their branding budget into trade fairs and events, industry association, the organization Bitkom 2018 found in a study. By comparison, online activities account for 29 percent. **More than a third of the companies asked said they planned to even increase spending on face-to-face events in 2019.** Conferences and customer were allocated the number one slot by 94 percent.

ATTENDEE NUMBERS ARE GROWING

Data from AUMA, the Association of the German Trade Fair Industry, confirm this trend. According to a survey published in 2018, 85 percent of German exhibitor companies said their trade fair budgets would increase (28 percent) or remain the same (57 percent) in the next two years. Only 14 percent intended to reduce their corresponding expenses. This is the continuation of a long-lasting trend. Between 2001/2002 and 2016/2017 the share of spending on trade fairs rose from 37 to 48 percent as a share of total communication spending.

While the number of trade fair visitors in Germany has remained almost constant for years at around 10 million per year, data from the events and meetings industry show a clear increase. **The number of attendees rose from 292 million to 405 million between 2006 and 2017.** In addition, the proportion of participants from abroad at events in Germany has more than doubled over



**A typical trade fair scene:
getting to sit down at last,
recharging batteries,
checking messages and
pressing on with more
networking -
digital and analogue.**



the past ten years. This is clear evidence that direct, face-to-face contact and interaction between internal and external stakeholders is becoming increasingly important.

NETWORKING VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

Naturally, the number of visitors on site is not the only measure of an event's success. Media coverage plays a major part, beyond the remit of classic journalistic news. Regular social media users, bloggers and top influencers - they are all part of today's fast-paced and highly interactive media environment. Networking via platforms also influences the event landscape. After all, the smartphone as a mobile communication tool is a constant companion. Eight out of ten people in Germany use a smartphone, according to a current Bitkom study. Of that number **55 percent believe the smartphone brings them closer to other people** but in order to foster the networking idea, organizers must proactively use the right channels of communication - ideally during all phases of an event, namely before, during and afterwards.

Event communication can do much more than just record the course of an event in multimedia form. Successful coverage transports emotions and corporate values. It reflects discussions, generates traffic and enables shares - often in real time. By targeting the information around an event properly it is possible to not only boost reach and awareness, but create the basis for experience-oriented interplay using live digital communication.

Summary

This applies to internal or external events - well-prepared and professionally implemented event communication has many advantages:

- ➔ It builds a bridge between the analogue and digital world - just like the Second Screen.
- ➔ It attracts attention far beyond the event location and the event duration - keyword: viral propagation.
- ➔ Tracking tools enable exact target group analysis.
- ➔ Event Coverage also delivers content that can be useful way after the event has ended - for both internal and external communication.

Events have **more impact these days**



**Philipp
Westermeyer**

... is founder and CEO of OMR (Online Marketing Rockstars), a 360-degrees-perspective media company based in Hamburg with focus on digital marketing and tech. Before OMR, Philipp Westermeyer established two Adtech companies with partners and sold them to Bertelsmann and Zalando. Now and then he ventures onto the speaker's floor himself.

The annual OMR Festival is one of the largest digital conferences in Europe, with more than 50,000 visitors, international stars and high-ranking executives. Alongside the festival, OMR publishes daily articles about the digital industry on its platform omr.com. The team also produces a podcast with 40,000 listeners per week, in-depth analyses and guides in the form of reports, as well as other topic-specific events.

In an interview OMR CEO Philipp Westermeyer talks about the **yearning for „real“ life in the digital age** and why the event world does not need to be completely re-invented.

OMR is growing. Why are analogue events so successful in a digital age?

Philipp Westermeyer: I think various factors come together here. Overall, I believe events in the digital world are more or less being reinvented and this is not going to stop. They are scheduled to take place at a particular point in time, but are announced on social media and this creates a degree of anticipation. This is much more intense than was once achieved using posters or any kind of advertising. The events also stay online as videos or as clips. The impact they have is much greater than was ever possible in the past. Back then you could only attend and there was a little press coverage of the event. These days even smaller events and unusual formats live longer. You could say, our festival is ongoing publicity for media brand that

carries on throughout the all year round, with podcasts and articles.

The second explanation is that even in a digital world there is a yearning to meet up again in the „real“ world. Classic event formats are something to look forward to. My favourite example of this the Karl May Festival which is staged in the town of Bad Segeberg near Hamburg. I go there every year because a friend of mine appears as an Apache. Every year the mayor attends the final performance and announces “We have a new attendance record.” This „meta-trend“ shows that.

But in the end isn't turning an event like yours into a brand completely detached from the actual event?

We are still at the beginning but we are trying to transform the event into a media brand or a year-round product as fast as we can. Of course, you can view the festival separately but our vision sees it as part of the total artwork.

„It lets people look forward to classic event formats“

The two-day OMR Festival is an eye-catcher for national and international online marketers.



So you see the overall brand as being more important these days?

From my point of view the brand is more important than anything else. Things can always crop up like the speaker cancelling attendance at a festival or air traffic controllers suddenly going on strike. That's when I'm glad that we at least have the overall brand and can continue communicating. And not only that: Our customers and exhibitors can get in touch. The key thing is to stay connected with this scene but of course, the year's biggest single turnover is generated on festival days.

How do you pick your own path and where is it taking you?

We have to make sure too that people are fired up by the partners we find. But I believe that the overall experience we create is something very special. We try to inspire people by getting the right mix of exhibitors, visitor information and app navigation. During the day we host a business event and celebrate with a party in the evening. However, we are not trying "to re-invent the world" – that is not my aim.

You are constantly juggling channels before and after the festival. What role does content play during the event?

We benefit very much from having a

„During the day we host a business event and celebrate with a party in the evening.“

target group of people that comes to us and can reach 10, 15 or even more than 100,000 people using mobile phones. These are at the micro-influencers. And then there are also 10 or 20 attendees who reach more than a million followers. If the pleasure of spending time with us animates them into posting about it, this is something that we planned and is exactly what we wanted to happen. We certainly have the edge on other fairs whose target group is perhaps older or a little less tuned into social media.

As organizers do you use many other agencies?

For our Liveticker we have been engaging the guys at the website 11Freunde for years now. We also have our own editors who cover and are involved with us all year round. In the meantime, we also do press work, just like every other professional event organizer.

It seems the before and after are the more important aspects.

Absolutely. The job the editors do all year round is important. We do not hire our editors just to work the festival days.

What tips would you give organizers and maybe companies planning events?

It is not for me to give advice to others but from our point of view this media format makes a lot of sense. It is also clear that there will be more OMR-like events in the future - just looking at what is happening in the USA.



Not on site but still there

In an interview, Communications Director Oliver Santen explains how the Association of German Banks is increasing the reach of its event content in the digital world.



**Oliver
Santen**

... has been Head of Communications and Member of the Management Board at BdB since 2017. The association represents private banks and was established in Berlin, Germany. Prior to this, the former head of the economics department of the „Bild“ newspaper was head of PR and technology media at the Siemens newsroom in Munich and at the Allianz insurance company.

His department at the Association of German Banks manages media relations, controls content in the digital channels and looks after the organization and communication of events. This includes the Banking Day (Bankentag), the most important meeting of association members with representatives from national and international politics, businesses and the public. The next Banking Day will take place in April 2020.

How does the Association of German Banks benefit in its press and public relations work from comprehensive communications support for an event like Banking Day?

Oliver Santen: Digital media offers us a huge opportunity today to increase the audience for our events - and thus the reach. Via the digital channels, we also reach people who were not present but who nevertheless took part in the event. For example, there may be 100 visitors on site, but hundreds or thousands watching the live stream.

When I was at Siemens, we hosted a reception for 150 high-ranking guests

in 2016 to celebrate the 200th birthday of the company's founder, including Chancellor Merkel and numerous big names from the top league of German business.

We streamed the arrival, the red-carpet situation so to speak, live via Periscope and moderated the event. That was a big new thing back then. About 30,000 people watched the event live with us - an impressive figure considering the 150 visitors on site.

The social networks are particularly important for this: I can follow every trade fair, every industry day all over the world via the corresponding hashtag and get a wealth of detail from on site - and the more the organizer controls and accompanies this, the better. Anyone who doesn't do this is missing communication opportunities.

„Social networks are important to increase the audience“

A specialist conference with in-depth content and economic policy debates: Banking Day. The industry meeting takes place every three years in Berlin.



And what does it take?

In my opinion, Twitter and LinkedIn deliver very good results in our field - the banks - for the contact with an interested industry public. On Banking Day we focus on our website as the central hub for content and on Twitter. We also attract attention with sponsored tweets, short videos and topical quotes. Privately I am a big fan of Instagram. But the focus is on visuality which is much better for the classic consumer brands. For us at the Banking Association, this is not the focus.

How do you plan for a huge task like Banking Day? ?

The Banking Day takes place every three years and is the largest meeting of the private banking world in Germany. Planning starts more than a year before the event. After all, these days, it is no longer just a question of staging a smooth event, but also of turning it into a success. Naturally, Banking Day is not on the same high level as Germany's Bambi TV awards award ceremony, but we give it a lot of thought.

The heart of the show – and a major share of the work – are the two days of the event, when we communicate live on our channels. Post processing in the form of documenting the event must also take place swiftly. Our experience is

**„Instagram's
visuality is not
the focus for us
at the Banking
Association“**

that many people are interested in the content of the event even after it has taken place. We rely on a classic reports, a short summarizing video and a summary of the most important statements of those who took part.

We cannot rely on in-house resources alone to achieve this, even though we have some 20 people in the team. We call on outside support for catering, technology, security or editorial services.

What is your checklist for event communication?

The relevance of an event is essential – you need a top-class guest list and an excellent program with inspired speakers and discussion partners. A clear sequence of events and a strong theme ensure that the days go down positively in people's memories. And last but not least, the checklist includes communication planning, i.e.: What content do I play when? When it comes to the digital channels I have to prepare this carefully and meticulously.

Storytelling instruments

Reporting means harnessing a huge range of media possibilities. Only professional directorship can make an event a communications success.



1 TEXT Whether a press release, an article for the intranet, the newsletter, the corporate website or a magazine - well-written texts are not procedural protocols. They summarize the event in an informative, comprehensible and entertaining way, provide added value and giving readers the opportunity to immerse themselves (once again) in the event. This is where content structure, an eye for the essentials and stylistic craftsmanship are of the utmost importance.

2 FOTO An event without photos is a virtual “no-go” in terms of communication. Our viewing and reading habits require visual accompaniment, an „eye-catcher“. A professional picture, a creative perspective or a particularly high-lighted detail can make a big difference. And don't forget: People want to see other

people. Who was there? Can you see as many participants as possible?

3 AUDIO The more speech assistants become a natural part of our lives, the more important it is to offer audio formats in communication as well. This can boost reach.

4 VIDEO Moving images convey vivid impressions and authentically reflect the atmosphere at an event. It means watchers can participate in the event afterwards.

5 INFOGRAPHICS Getting across numbers, quotations or correlations: the most important information of an event presented at a glance – this sums up the added value of an infographic.

6 SOCIAL MEDIA All the above-mentioned tools also work in the Social Web. Remember: Users here are mainly on the move using their smartphones or tablets. Therefore, the content must be technically optimized for this purpose. A greater reach for the messages of an event is guaranteed. Deciding which channel is the right one depends on the organizer and the target group.

Conclusion: For a convincing storytelling, all instruments need to be coordinated.

Make the event participants your ambassadors.

Provide a suitable selfie backdrop.

Ensure good lighting and a catchy logo to match the event or location - and you automatically have a hot spot for the obligatory selfie.

Tip: If the name of the event, possible sponsors or your logo are then visible, each selfie taken by a participant ensures even greater coverage.

Use a catchy hashtag.

In combination with the abbreviation of your event or a suitable term, a hashtag will increase your reach in social networks. However, this only works if the event participants know and use the term behind the hashtag.

Tip: The simpler the spelling the better.

Make sure you have a stable Wi-Fi.

Nothing frustrates more than a slow Internet connection. Even strong networks (Wi-Fi) will perform badly if the number of users at an event increases significantly.

Tip: An extra Wi-Fi for the communications department is helpful and saves some coverage.

There's no escaping this either.

So you want to ensure that every participant gets the message? That means using the rooms that are guaranteed to be visited by every guest. These include the entrance and exit, the cloakroom and the washrooms. **Tip:** It's better to avoid puns with the last-mentioned location.

Get your **Event Coverage Box** packed and take these things with you:



Pump it up

If you want to cover events, you have to be fit and mentally strong in order to produce concentrated and consistently high quality results - even after several hours in action.



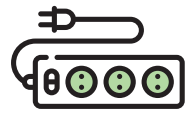
Compass

The goal of event coverage must be defined in advance. Then it's important to stay on course, keep a firm eye on things and react quickly in the event of possible deviations.



Tailor-made

There is nothing off the peg here, just individually tailored content. Sometimes even small solutions are enough.



Power

Remember that event coverage means top performance - and that means technical equipment too. Emergency hardware must be available.



Sneakers

Events also demand a lot of physical effort so think practically. An average 10,000 steps a day? No problem!



Multifunctional tool

Everything has perfectly planned but you forget about Murphy's Law? With good craftsmanship and by keeping a cool head, the right solution can be found for every situation.



Fruits/Vitamins

Make sure guests are well looked after. And what about the catering arrangements for your own team?

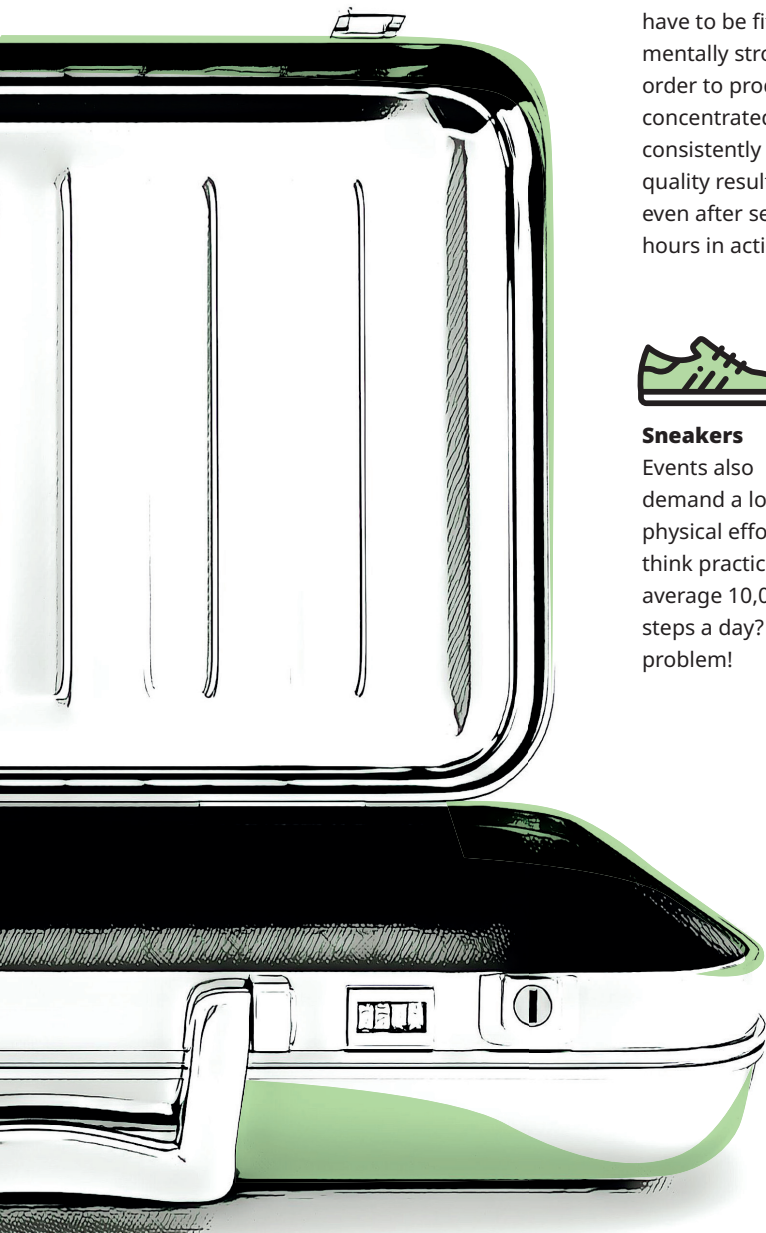


Stopwatch

Good timing is everything. Especially when a lot of information has to be processed in a short space of time. Create a communication schedule in advance.



Don't lose your thread It is better to focus on one main topic than on a bit of everything. Professional storytelling ensures that messages are understood.



„It's Showtime!“

Reporters on site just for you

Every event is unique and communications support is just as individual. Here are three examples of events covered by dpa-Custom Content:

#HamburgSummit18

Event: the „Hamburg Summit: China meets Europe“ is considered the most important Sino-European business conference and it takes place every two years at the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce. Participants are leading company representatives, politicians and scientists from China, Europe and other parts of the world. Around 520 guests attended in 2018 - including China's Deputy Prime Minister Liu He, German Minister of Transport Andreas Scheuer, former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder and EU Competition Commissioner Margrethe Vestager.

Mission: live coverage in English of the „Hamburg Summit“ on 26 and 27 November 2018 via Twitter; compact summaries of the 15 program items for the summit website in English at news agency speed and with corresponding quality.

Result: more than 2,500 media reports were put out on the Hamburg Summit, mainly in China, Europe and Germany; 125 tweets and 15 texts within 20 hours by the dpa-Custom Content team alone. The total reach for tweets with #HamburgSummit18 was 15 million users.

Highlight

#HamburgSummit18 on the Twitter Germany trend



PAUL HARTMANN AG Future Forum

Event: nursing care crisis, digitalization, lack of rural doctors - the PAUL HARTMANN AG Future Forum in 2018 dealt with the most pressing challenges facing the healthcare sector. More than 400 guests and experts from pharmacies, hospitals, nursing, the medical profession and politics discussed current issues in June. The occasion marked the anniversary (200 years) of the medical and care products manufacturer from Baden-Württemberg.

Mission: advance PR for the Future Forum; multimedia live coverage (text, video, infographics); editorial implementation of the 32-page magazine „Gedanken für morgen“ (Thoughts for Tomorrow) following the event.

Result: sustainable content that was used far beyond the event, especially in the anniversary year.

Highlight

Event videos that generated very good click rates in the HARTMANN YouTube channel



Mission: to document Manuela Carmena's political work since May 2018, especially during her trips abroad, in Spanish using multimedia (text, photo, video); to make the material available to the Spanish media for daily reporting.

Result: top quality, up-to-date material tailored to the needs of journalists and distribution by dpa's partner agency Europa Press; high reach within Spain; regular broad use of the material in leading Spanish media.

On the trail of Madrid's Lord Mayor

Events: as Lord Mayor of Madrid Manuela Carmenaviele has appointments, some of which take her far beyond the borders of Spain. In New York, for example, she attended a conference of Latin American mayors and met with UN representatives and NGOs. In Berlin, she was scheduled to meet with the Mayor of Berlin, Michael Müller, at City Hall, and to hold a debate with her London counterpart Sadiq Khan.

Highlight

#Continuous, multimedia coverage from all over the world in Spanish

„Newsroom to go“ Our on-site commitment



The essence of good event coverage is this: well-rehearsed teamwork. Because there is no second chance.

Our coverage teams at dpa-Custom Content accompany all phases before, during and after an event.

We are flexible, work accurately and match the right style even under extreme conditions. Short communication paths, reliable cross-checking and our expertise guarantee consistent quality.



dpa • custom content

Together we cover your event on all channels.

Your event is taking place in a few days' time and you still do not have a photographer? You want to use social media, but don't know exactly how to go about it? You need to give a routine event a new twist?

dpa-Custom Content, the on-demand editorial department of Germany's leading news agency, is your partner for communication. The corporate publishing and content marketing unit stands for care and accuracy backed up by comprehensive resources whether text, photography, graphics, audio or video. We also have access to a worldwide network.

Get in touch with us. We are happy to advise you personally.



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