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2021 TURNKEY RESEARCH TOPICS

VIRTUAL EVENT OPERATIONS UPDATE

» It may not be the sexiest aspect of the event business, but what goes on behind the screens for virtual events has proven to be more layered than we ever imagined. From sourcing, packing and mailing experiential kits, to production teams that prepare speakers and scripts, to platform people who “push the buttons” and deploy contingency plans, this research study peels back the digital curtain and breaks down the latest pain points, best practices and trends impacting virtual event planning, production and spending.

BROADCAST-QUALITY VIRTUAL EVENTS

» Attendee preferences are evolving, and they're expecting a higher quality production experience in the investments they make on virtual or digital registrations. This research study digs into attendee sentiment to get a sense of what audiences will expect in 2021, and what they aren't willing to settle for, while also shining a spotlight on how event marketers are amping up their spending on broadcast quality productions for their virtual events and streams.

EXPERIENTIAL AT HOME: REVERSE ACTIVATIONS

» The silver lining of COVID-19 is that it has forced the industry to completely reimagine how brand experiences are delivered. Make way for the “reverse” activation strategy wherein brands bring experiences to consumers' homes, rather than ask consumers to come to them. This report gives event marketers valuable data on this trend—who is doing it, how much they're spending, how it compares to live experiences—and forecasts where it will go into 2021... and beyond.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION: WHERE WE ARE, WHERE WE'RE GOING

» A stronger event industry ultimately is one that incorporates a variety of backgrounds, perspectives and ideas. And for an event to be successful, your team, your partners and your attendees need to see a piece of themselves in the production, content and audience. This study tackles one of the most important topics in the industry and features data points that can ultimately provide event organizations with a baseline for future measurement of progress and stronger DEI practices. Data points will include: insights on the state of BIPOC leadership across the industry; how companies are making progress; ways to measure change and growth; insights on making internal and institutional changes, and more.

360 MARKETING: INSIDE THE EVENT ORG OF THE FUTURE

» Events teams are working hard this year to meld with the larger marketing organization, working with digital, social, p.r. and even e-commerce to bolster hybrid experiential programming. This report gathers critical industry insights on the value of working as one collaborative team, and what the future of an integrated marketing and event organization will look like, and function like, post-pandemic. Data points will include: insights on ROI among integrated marketing organizations; where most departments fall on the integration spectrum; must-have skills for event marketers in 2021; integration best practices and more.

STEP BY STEP: PREPARING FOR YOUR BIG RETURN

» Before COVID-19 there was SARS. There were also terrorism concerns and severe weather threats. Indeed, it's a brave new world for event marketers, but activating in the pandemic era will require a brand new action plan with multi-layered and expert-led strategies. In this research report, survey data will reveal the new “checklist” for in-person event preparations that include new roles for the team, communications platforms, the latest health guidance (including attendees and vaccines), and the tools and technologies that will collectively give you a successful and safe liftoff.

TRENDS THAT WORK: LOCALIZED EVENTS

» Among the event types cities began to approve again following the onset of COVID-19 were localized activations that went unpublicized and purposefully avoided attracting crowds, but that made for viral-worthy, multi-channel content. This research study will give the industry the data it's looking for on the effectiveness of localized event programs and how they can compare (and in some cases—even *outperform*) their pre-COVID iterations. Data points will also include insights on how many marketers have made the switch to local, what they're spending and the role local will play long-term across industry portfolios.

CAUSE MARKETING & MOMENTS THAT MATTER

» You can thank millennials for catapulting cause-related marketing from an act of good to a business imperative. And some of the industry's best and brightest marketers will tell you that if the challenges of this past year have taught us anything, it's that brands who lead with empathy win. This research study will measure the industry's sentiment around cause marketing spending and how it will change in our post-pandemic world. Data will include: how budgets will be allocated for cause marketing; how marketers will integrate causes into their programs; which causes will be top of mind in 2021, and more.

NEXT-GEN BRAND AMBASSADORS

» They represent millions of dollars in marketing investments across the frontlines of live experiences in the U.S., but for some brands, hiring brand ambassadors is treated as an “add-on.” This timely study will qualify *and* quantify the industry's current best practices for recruiting, training and motivating event staffers while highlighting how the role brand ambassadors will play will fundamentally change in 2021. Data points will include: insights on COVID-era hygienic practices; how teams and budgets will be allocated to include this new breed of brand ambassador; and how event marketers will utilize brand ambassadors to ameliorate the fears and pain points attendees are likely to have in 2021.

MOBILE MARKETING: PAVING THE ROAD TO SUCCESS

» Mobile tours were among some of the first experiential programs to return in the post-COVID era. Their nimble nature, outdoor-based environments and clever builds were built for controlled programming. This research study will showcase the value and impact of mobile tours post-pandemic and will highlight some of the success metrics enjoyed by those who deployed them. Other data points will include: pre-planning best practices; pivot strategies for transforming static events into mobile ones; selecting target markets (who went where in 2020 and why—and where the hot markets will be in 2021); critical technologies; budgets spent and required; and forecasts on how mobile tours will be used in the future.