



## Social Media and Sustainability/live!

IWEX, NEMEX, BEX, and more recently Sustainable Business, provides leads and the networking opportunities with industry peers that are second to none and go way beyond the three days of the show. In fact, we believe that Sustainability/live! can truly claim to represent a 10 month marketing opportunity for your business.

So how can you make the most of your time at the show, maximise your return on investment and attract potential customers to visit your stand (rather than someone else further down the aisle!)?

For many people the answer has been through finding ways to engage with visitors before, during and after the show through social media. Networks such as Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook are well placed to help drive traffic to your stands and stay in touch with people long after the event.

And of course, the content you generate will not only inform those who visit the show, but also those who couldn't attend, who are nevertheless interested in connecting with you.

So here are a few suggestions for those wanting to use social media to support their Sustainability/live! marketing campaign. As always, if you're not sure, take specialist advice.

### Step 1: Choosing Channels and Planning Your Campaign

It goes without saying that you should choose channels that you can offer reasonable focus to. They each have their own characteristics and will need close and regular attention. If you are not entirely familiar with any individual channel or how channels can work together then do get expert counsel.

Once you have decided which channels you are using, it can be helpful to create a calendar which identifies what will be posted, and on which day, to help direct the campaign – obviously upping the frequency of postings the closer you get to the show.

Don't forget activity during the show week itself e.g. uploading photographs/videos, blog posts, tweets, following #tags, running competitions for those who become either Followers or Fan, discussing seminars and just as importantly, post-show posts

Do remember this is a conversation, so seek to share and respond to people as much as possible.

### Step 2: Share, Integrate

Integrating your communications channels will make life easier by allowing you to share content across multiple channels. More particularly, the more places you (reasonably) put yourself, the more chances there are of your company being found by customers. An example would be creating videos and still imagery to upload onto YouTube, Vimeo, Flickr, Photobucket et al thus creating content to share through your social networks and upload onto your blog.

There are a range of platforms including Hootsuite and Tweetdeck which are useful to facilitate easy message sharing.

Social share buttons in areas such as your website and ezines allow readers to share your content with their fans and followers. Meanwhile links to your blogs and online articles can be created from your Twitter or Facebook accounts. Start LinkedIn discussions from blogs with embedded links.

Make sure your social media addresses (and possibly a QR Code) are on your business card and at the bottom of emails etc.

Capture data and start ongoing relationships by asking people looking for information about a new product or service to sign up exclusive content on your website such as white papers and to receive regular updates via ezines – highlight this in promotional material on your stand.

### **Step 3: QR codes**

A QR code, which can be scanned with smartphones to take visitors straight to a website, is worth considering for any promotional materials that you prepare for your stand.

You could link a video recording to a QR code. You could also run competitions that require people to sign up on your website.

### **Step 4: Show Page and Twitter Feeds**

You could consider creating a show page on your website, with a link from your Homepage to tell your customers exactly what you are planning to do at the show. Alternatively, or additionally, you could also add a Twitter feed to your website, so that your tweets about the show also appear there.

On Twitter, #tags mean your tweets can be found by others at the event and allow you to track other people's activity/comments. Having identified a common interest, consider following them to see if there are opportunities to start sharing best practice/knowledge.

The organiser's #tag for Sustainability/live! tweets is #suslive.

### **Step 5: Sharing through Sustainability/live!**

Finally, keep an eye on this LinkedIn Group (don't forget to post comments or discussions, and share or like content for the group), keep the exhibitor zone on the Sustainability/live! website updated regarding any announcements to be made at the show so that we can share the information through our social media activity. And follow us on Twitter (@SusLive) for up to date information about the show, fellow exhibitors and expert commentary from presenters.

We look forward to seeing you at the show!

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