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## Constant Contact Survey Reveals Social Media is a Critical Marketing Tool for Event Planners; Usage Expected to Increase

*Findings indicate social media marketing complements other event marketing tools*

WALTHAM, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- A new survey from [Constant Contact®](#), Inc. (NASDAQ: CTCT) finds that [social media marketing](#) has become a critical marketing tool for small businesses and nonprofits planning events, with 77% of event planners currently using social media to market their events, and another 14% planning to do so in the next year.

The survey also reports that event planners still rely heavily on email marketing, online [event marketing](#) tools, websites, and print advertising to promote their events, indicating that traditional forms of event marketing still play an essential role in promoting an event.

### Social Media Marketing Increasingly Important for Events

A full 78% of survey respondents believe that social media is an important marketing tool for their events. Roughly the same percent (77%) currently use social media to market and/or promote their events (advertise or engage on Facebook® or Twitter®, responding to posts in online social forums, etc.) and another 14% plan to do so in the next year. In addition, the vast majority of respondents using social media said their social media efforts to market events will increase in the next year (81%), with the remainder reporting that their level of usage will remain the same.

Forty-six percent of respondents have at least an initial plan for their social media marketing efforts, and another 10% report having a thorough and refined social media strategy. Those that do not yet have a plan see the value in creating one: 34% stated that they were beginning to think about creating one, and while another 9% believe they should start.

"Event marketing has evolved. It's no longer just direct mail invitations, phone calls and simply hoping that people will come," said Chris Litster, vice president and general manager of event marketing for Constant Contact. "Now, it's social media conversations, real-time communication and online video—true engagement across platforms to create a holistic event experience from start to finish."

### Forms and Uses of Social Media for Events

Facebook is the most popular form of social media; of those using social media to market their events, 89% report using Facebook, followed by Twitter (66%) and LinkedIn® (54%). Reliance on Twitter and LinkedIn appears to be growing, however. Eight percent plan to start using Facebook to promote events within the next year, while 13% plan to use Twitter and 20% plan to use LinkedIn. Eighty-five percent of respondents using social media have a Facebook fan page for their organization, and another 11% plan to create one soon.

The top reason (56%) event planners are currently using social media is to educate/inform about upcoming events. Their goals for future use are greater: 66% of respondents would like to use social media to reach more people, 65% of respondents would like to gather feedback from past event attendees, 63% would like to obtain new/more event attendees, and 62% would like to remain engaged with past event attendees. Those not yet using social media to promote their events cite the number one reason as they don't know how (54%), followed by it being too time consuming (39%).

"An event — be it a networking gathering, open house, fundraiser, or class — is by nature a social affair, so it makes perfect sense that social media would be a fantastic tool to help plan, promote, and build excitement. If the goal is to get as many people as possible interested in your event, social media is a perfect complement for spreading the word to your core base of customers, members, and beyond," said Litster.

### Social Media Marketing Complements Other Event Marketing Tools

With social media efforts growing, the effectiveness of other marketing tools to promote events remains strong. Email marketing is ranked the most effective of these tools (91%), followed closely by online event marketing/management tools (85%), websites (77%), and print advertising (69%).

These findings suggest that social media marketing is complementary and additive, rather than a replacement to more

"traditional" event promotion tactics.

"We've seen our small business and nonprofit customers improve their results by taking an integrated approach to their event promotions," said Litster. "The combination of social media with other event marketing platforms can be powerful, and today's tools make it easier than ever to integrate them together. The end result: increased event attendance, deeper relationships with customers and members forged, and maximum impact obtained from your events."

### **About the Survey**

This Constant Contact-sponsored survey was administered in October 2011 to small businesses and nonprofits using Constant Contact's event marketing product. Results include responses from 474 respondents across a range of business-to-business, business-to-consumer, and nonprofits industries.

### **Additional Resources:**

**Ebook:** [The State of Event Marketing: Getting Social with Small Business Get-togethers](#)

**Best Practices Guide:** [Add Social Media to Your Event Strategy](#)

**How-to Guide:** [Using Social Media to Plan and Promote Your Events](#)

### **About Constant Contact, Inc.**

[Constant Contact](#) is revolutionizing the success formula for small organizations through affordable, easy-to-use Engagement Marketing™ tools that help create and grow customer relationships. More than half a million small businesses, nonprofits, and associations worldwide rely on Constant Contact to drive ongoing customer dialogs through email marketing, social media marketing, event marketing, and online surveys. All Constant Contact products come with unrivaled KnowHow, education, and free coaching with a personal touch, including award-winning customer support.

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