

Hiring the right ambassadors for your event

 By Jane Stevenson

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Formula One's decision to dispense its 'grid girls' reflects the need for marketers and event professionals to develop new approaches and strategies when it comes to using ambassadors to represent brands.



Image credit: danciaba via [123RF.com](https://www.123RF.com).

Gone is the swimsuit competition for future Miss America pageants, the old boys Presidents Club is no more, and Formula One has laid the hot pants to rest. Using attractive women (or me) to sell products and promote brands is an antiquated strategy, and we're seeing brands carefully considering who they use as ambassadors.



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Ambassadors aren't 'eye candy'. They're a group of men and/ or women who are hired to interact on behalf of a brand. Through the use of the right people that represents your diverse customer base, you have an opportunity to improve customers' perceptions of your brand.

Below is our advice for finding the right event ambassadors that can relate to your audience:

Always hire people who reflect your brand image

The ambassadors you engage for your next event has to do more than just smile and answer questions. They represent the face of your brand and, assuming they are successful, they will help you build new relationships with potential clients. So during the hiring process share your vision and desires and ask candidates how they will represent your brand, or what approach they would take to ensure alignment.

You should also correctly, and thoroughly brief your ambassadors, as they need extensive knowledge of your brand, business and its products to be able to answer any questions and be of value. And to be authentic, they need to fully support and believe in the brand to persuade customers to trust the brand and form an affinity.

Qualities to look for

Brand ambassadors must represent the qualities your target audience admires, and possess the same value as your business. The individuals you hire should have a strong presence, demeanour and confidence to speak with people visiting your event. So, excellent communication skills and a friendly attitude to are vital so they can communicate the brand's messages effectively.

Ensure team-fit

Like any job, you should interview the ambassadors to determine if they are a good fit for your company, particularly taking heed of organisational culture fit. Integrate them into the team so that, if you have employees who will be working alongside the ambassadors, they form one team with one message and, complement one another.

Find people that have worked in the industry before

If you can hire people with experience in your industry, they will understand the expectations and values of your target audience. By having an understanding of your market, your ambassadors can represent your brand appropriately and can handle queries with confidence. But just because they have industry knowledge, don't assume they are familiar with the culture and values of your company.

Hire attitude – period

Hire on attitude – it's that simple.

ABOUT JANE STEVENSON

Named by CEO publication as SA's most influential government businesswoman in the SME sector in 2012, she's big on vision, strategy and effective communication. Start with a successful business strategy and executive coaching consultancy to leading national brands... add the experience of being a Board and EXCO member of the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber; and stir in some fearless Scottish roots and a dedication to building organisational vision. The result? A motivating, passionate team player.

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