7 Online Techniques to Increase Basketball Game Attendance at your School

1. Develop Email Marketing Campaign

Developing a great email marketing campaign will drive people to your basketball games by keeping them continually informed and interested in the program. Here are a few tips for a successful basketball newsletter campaign.

> ➢ *Provide Relevant Links*: Incorporate relevant links into the newsletter. Provide some links within the basketball page of your school site. Newly posted blogs, articles, interesting forum discussions, schedules, podcasts, are some examples. Also, incorporate some interesting 3rd party resources. For example parents may be interested in injury prevention, injury care, summer training, or hydration.

> ➢ *Catchy Titles:* Make sure the titles of your newsletters are memorable and exiting. Game headlines work great. A distinct look and personality should be portrayed in each title. Doing this will help recipients easily identify your email.

> ➢ *Establish a Schedule for Writing and Distributing*: Establish a set frequency based on resources and the ability to produce relevant information.   This makes budgeting and planning easier, and is required to hold people's attention and keep them looking forward to receiving your emails. For more info on email distribution frequency read my article, "Email Marketing for Schools: Why and How."

2. Host Blogs/Forums

Hosting a blog is a very effective way to promote your program by keeping people continually informed and interested. It is important to reach a distinct audience with a blog, so create a separate blog on the basketball page rather than posting basketball blogs on the school's main blog page. Remember to include pictures in your blogs for visual reference. Also, for a good resource for creating great blog content, visit http://www.buildabetterblog.com.

3. Integrate Wiki Pages

A **Wiki** page is a webpage given the capability to be edited by website visitors. Not many schools have wiki pages, which presents you with a great opportunity. Create a wiki page that is linked from the basketball homepage. Coaches, parents, students, or anyone involved can post pictures, stories, and comments. This creates a sense of involvement that sparks interest and participation. The insightful content will also spark the interest of visitors not contributing to the wiki pages.   Wiki pages communicate real, personal experiences and interaction, and invoke excitement. JotSpot provides a fully integrated wiki application that makes creating wiki pages a breeze.   While most wiki pages are mostly text based, JotSpot allows you to create rich web-based spreadsheets, calendars,

documents and photo galleries with ease. For more information on general wiki page creation, visit www.intersci.ss.uci.edu.

4. Post Regular Video and Podcasts

The excitement of your basketball games can be captured and communicated through rich media content. Collect audio and video files during exiting game moments and post them on the main page. Anyone can download the files and share them via ipod, email, or MySpace post. Rich media goes a long way toward creating buzz. Be sure to provide links to good media content in your email newsletters. Also, remember to post new content regularly, otherwise the appeal is lost. In order to preserve talk and excitement, people must have something new to talk about.

5. Incorporate a Web Calendar

It's essential to integrate a web calendar into your basketball homepage.   A web calendar allows visitors to quickly view upcoming games or other events. The real advantage of a web calendar is the ability to integrate an RSS feed (described below.) There are many web calendar applications out there. Trumba event calendars (www.trumba.com) are easy to use and boast a number of features. Google and Yahoo also offer free event calendars.

6. Establish RSS Feeds

An RSS feed is crucial for maximizing the effectiveness of the above components. RSS stands for "really simple syndication." By subscribing to your school's RSS feed, visitors can receive automatic updates on new website content. Upcoming games, new podcasts or video content, newsletter releases, blog posts, or relevant news should be put on your RSS feed homepage. An RSS feed can also be integrated with your web calendar or published on other web sites. In a time constrained world, people cannot regularly check your website for news and upcoming events. An RSS feed will keep your school at top of mind for potential event attendees. For more info on creating RSS feeds visit http://www.wilsonweb.com.

7. Consider Social Networking

You might not want to get too entrenched with social networking sites, but you don't want to get left behind either. Place someone in charge of keeping track of changes in technology so you can react strategically

Posting some of your better videos on YouTube and MySpace will allow for easy sharing. Post any good pictures on Flickr, a picture sharing social networking site. Doing these things might not directly affect event attendance, but will go toward creating a better web presence. By making this content easily accessible, there is a better chance it will become widely distributed.

By Lance Trebesch
lance@ticketprinting.com
www.TicketPrinting.com