

CONVENTIONS/MEETINGS MARKETING CAMPAIGN



2015 Winner: DECA Inc.

Entry Title: #DECAICDC—DECA International Career Development Conference Social Media Campaign

Project Overview/Elevator Pitch:

The annual conference is certainly the pinnacle of the DECA membership year. More than 16,000 DECA members attend this event, which is now widely referred to as #DECAICDC. Since their attendees are primarily millennials, DECA knew this event had huge potential to maximize exposure and generate positive brand conversation.

The organization used social media, a dedicated team of member correspondents, a conference app, daily feature e-mails, a 70-foot screen streaming social media and streaming video of general sessions. To engage members, the focal point of the social media campaign used the #DECAICDC hashtag that captured the organization's name and event name. This campaign also engaged members who could not attend as well as parents, teachers, friends and administrators of those attending.

Project Goals/Objectives:

DECA's goal was to create as much positive exposure for DECA and #DECAICDC on social media as possible. It is the organization's biggest event of the year, and their goal was to capitalize on it by creating experiences and opportunities for conference attendees to share with their social networks. DECA wanted them to share user-generated content that showed their authentic experiences at the conference. The objective was to garner more than 5 million impressions and 10,000 tweets and Instagram posts, while also attaining a 15% open rate on daily special e-mails.

Strategy:

The strategy first included creating a simple, yet effective hashtag that represented the DECA brand and event—#DECAICDC. After that, they knew they had to use a variety of techniques to engage members, and #DECAICDC became the official 'unofficial' name of the conference. The group created a social media correspondent team for its members to use their social media to engage in the conversation as influencers as well as generate articles for the organization's news site (decadirect.org) and daily e-mails. The daily e-mails included articles and Instagram photos from the day and were sent to the entire distribution and through social media, not just attendees. DECA also created a conference app to communicate with attendees.

DECA wanted to leverage the opening session's immense impact in setting the conference tone. As members walked in the Georgia Dome, they were greeted by a 70-foot screen with a continuous feed of their Instagram and Twitter posts, curated by posts using #DECAICDC and then approved. Calls to use social media throughout the session were authentically integrated into the script and #DECAICDC was overlaid on the screen during most live shots. The sessions were streamed so those not attending could be part of the experience to maximize exposure.

Before the conference, DECA sent a social media advisory to its exhibitors and corporate partners explaining how they could engage. The organization also had a social media booth in the exhibit hall using t-shirt giveaways, Instagram frame photo opportunities and Google Glass demonstrations to generate interest.

Success Metrics:

The impact of #DECAICDC was incredible.

- Using analytic tools, DECA estimates this campaign generated 8.7 million impressions with 14,000 tweets and Instagram posts in just four days.
- From Twitter, it generated 19,058 link clicks mostly to the website and news site, 2,448 mentions, 2,300 retweets and 776 new followers during the conference week. On Facebook, it generated 537,800 impressions by 212,600 users.
- The conference app downloads netted nearly 7,000. Videos of the opening and closing sessions tallied 2,823 and 5,976 views respectively. The daily e-mail open rate averaged 21%, representing viewership by more than 4,828 people.
- DECA was featured as a case study on tintup.com, in ASAE's Associations Now for the Google Glass use, and in a Successful Meetings article for their social media wall.
- DECA also attributes the exposure to playing a role in their increased membership, which is nearing a 10,000 increase over last year.

Learn More:

www.deca.org