8 Alternatives to Extending Early Bird Deadlines by Jim Romanik

Article published on February 27th 2012 | Software

Last monthâ€™s article called â€œ5 Reasons Not To Extend Your Early Bird Pricing Periodâ€• advised ag
extending early bird deadlines to encourage people to register for your events and promised to
come up with a list of alternatives.

We have put together our list of ideas and also invite you to send us some of your own ideas.
Anyone who sends us an idea will be entered into a draw for a coffee card and with your permission
we will publish any unique ideas along with your name in our next newsletter. See below for the
details.

8 Alternatives To Extending Early Bird Deadlines When You Need More Registrations

1. Reinforce the benefits of attending your event. Highlight different benefits when you send out registration reminders. Be sure to write these benefits in a way that will appeal to the demographic you are marketing to. For example, promoting that the conference is next to a world class golf course wonâ€™t be a benefit unless most of your group are avid golfers.

2. Pick up the phone and make a sales call. It can be time consuming, but the payoff can be big. Start by calling the people who registered for your last event, but havenâ€™t registered for the current one. They probably have it on their to-do list, but remind them why they should register today. Maybe you can even enter their details into the online form while you have them on the phone to secure the registration right away.

3. Reveal new details about the event in each registration reminder. Rather than repeating the same information in your reminders to register, let people in on some of the new details such as surprise guests, newly added workshops, or door prize announcements.

4. Use testimonials from previous events. Make sure people know how great the last event was so they attend this year.

5. Find discounted deals for your participants. Rather than discounting your price, find deals on attractions, restaurants, accommodation, etc. that your participants can take advantage of if they attend your event. Some of these deals may already be offered and you just need to find them, or you may need to call businesses in your area to see what they are willing to offer.

6. Add a second tier price break. If you really feel that extending a price break is needed, then consider making it in between the early and regular rate. For example, if the Early Bird deadline is Dec 15th for $100, then go up to $125 before reaching the final price of $150 rather than extending the original early bird price. This ensures that people who registered early still get the greatest benefit.

7. Be honest about your situation and address concerns that people may have. Itâ€™s usually better to address the concerns that people may have than to let imaginations runs wild and allow rumours to start. For example, if you think people are not registering because they are unsure if the event will happen, let them know that registration is down due to the economy, but that you arenâ€™t cutting any programs. Fill them in on what you are doing to ensure the event happens. Always remember to highlight the positives without making it look like you are being unrealistic.

8. Offer an incentive to registering early besides saving money. Items such as an entry into a draw,

a free white paper or a book related to the event could be just enough to get people registering. Make sure that the real early birds get the same benefits too!

Remember, it doesnâ€™t take much to convince people who are sitting on the fence to take action and register. I hope that you will be able to use some of these ideas or that they get you thinking about some other ways to encourage registrations.

Article Source:
http://www.articleside.com/software-articles/8-alternatives-to-extending-early-bird-deadlines.htm - Article Side

Jim Romanik - About Author:
Jim is the president of ePly, an event registration software that makes a event registration software a breeze. For more information about a online registration software please visit a http://www.eply.com

Article Keywords:
event registration software,online registration software, online event registration software,event registration system, online event registration

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