

HOW TO INCREASE ATTENDANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS FOR CE EVENTS



Recognize that Producers Appreciate Live CE Training



The most important step to overcoming fears about a lack of attendance at a CE event is to understand the reasons why producers may or may not take the time to attend the event. To gain a better understanding, it's important to look at some of the facts and opinions directly from producers regarding CE seminars.

When asked, 77% of producers surveyed indicated that they will make time to attend a CE event given by a wholesaler versus a wholesaler that is not providing CE. Sixty seven percent of producers generally view wholesalers that offer CE in their branches as being more knowledgeable as compared to wholesalers that do not offer CE.

Based upon these simple facts, there are a number of tips that wholesalers can utilize to further increase CE attendance and add value for the benefit of the producers who receive the training and the wholesalers that deliver CE training.

Be Sensitive to the Calendar and Clock



It is important to recognize that research has shown that producers have preferences as to when they want to attend CE training and when they do not. Consider the following when scheduling dates and times for your event:

- Producers prefer morning schedules for CE training.
- Tuesdays and Thursdays are preferred days for training.
- Avoid holding training on Fridays if possible.
- Avoid scheduling CE events on holidays and the eve of holidays.

Equally important: establish a reputation for starting on time and finishing on time.

The Importance of the RSVP: Invite, Invite, Invite



One of the keys to achieving higher attendance to your CE events is by inviting producers early, and often, reminding them about the event even if they have confirmed attendance. It's important to generate excitement around the event.

There are a number of ways that this can be accomplished and our recommendation is to use a combination of methods for best results. Nothing is more powerful than picking up the telephone and personally inviting producers to attend your CE event. This can be done by the External Wholesaler or an Internal Wholesaler or someone on the Sales Desk. Traditional printed invitations may be used, however today it is acceptable to rely on technology to convey your invitation to the event electronically.

Try this approach:

- 1 Send an electronic RSVP invitation to producers identifying the CE topic to be discussed, the time and date of the event. Utilize an electronic RSVP system that is easy to use and saves the date and time of the event in their Microsoft Outlook Calendar.
- 2 Have an Internal Wholesaler contact producers via the phone to invite them to attend the event, answering any questions and providing more detail.
- 3 Send an electronic email reminder 1 week prior to the event as a reminder to producers of the future training.

Establish a Reputation for Delivering Excellent CE Events



The key is to establish a reputation for delivering excellent CE events. Simple as it may seem, if someone enjoyed attending your last event, he or she is more likely to attend future events.

Send a Follow-up Communication and Thank Attendees



Because producers attend many meetings they will appreciate receiving additional handouts and other materials that may have been referenced by the Wholesaler. It is an excellent opportunity to share that information with a follow-up thank you message to those who attended the event.

The thank you note and follow up communications is something that many organizations often overlook, but noticed by attendees.