



What Works in Hedge Fund Marketing and Investor Relations

who, together with a team, raised \$2 billion in five years from professional investors worldwide

Part 1: How to Attract Prospects

1.5 How to Use Conferences to Attract Prospects

1.5.1 Speeches at Conferences

As your name becomes known in the hedge fund industry, conference managers will begin to invite you to participate on panels or to give a speech on a certain topic. Normally, you are not allowed to pitch your fund. But at these conferences, you have the chance to demonstrate your competence to a specific audience. As professional hedge fund investors are highly connected to each other, this kind of exposure will help create interest in your fund. The following is a sample of top conferences for emerging hedge fund managers.

Emerging Hedge Fund Conferences

- Alternative Investments GAIM (US & Europe Conferences) - www.gaimusa.com
- Opal Financial Group (Emerging Manager Summit) - www.opalgroup.net

Also consider attending conferences such as the following.

Hedge Fund Conferences

- Institutional Investor - www.institutionalinvestor.com
- Institute for International Research - www.iirusa.com

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1.5.2 Networking With Your Audience

When you speak at a conference, you will often be invited to stay for the entire event. If you can get permission, bring a marketing person with you. This is a great opportunity to meet as many prospects as possible and collect their business cards. A good way to start a conversation, for both the marketing and investment manager, is to ask a prospect whether he has heard you speak. Regardless of whether the answer is “yes” or “no,” this is an excellent opportunity to begin a conversation about your fund’s strategy and edge.

1.5.3 The Fund Manager’s Job

Often, fund managers do not have time to mingle with their audience. Remember, it’s the fund manager’s job to convey expertise on the strategy. It’s the marketing team’s job to follow-up with investors.

Restrict speaking engagements to events specific to your strategy, as opposed to speaking at general industry forums. This will enable you to target prospective investors who are interested solely in your strategy, enabling you to generate stronger leads!

Important: A fund manager’s job is to manage money, not to entertain speaking engagements on hedge fund topics.

1.5.4 Sponsoring a Conference

Sometimes, a conference manager will ask you to sponsor an event. You will be charged a fee to speak at many hedge fund conferences. You should have a budget for this type of marketing, but be very selective about which ones you participate in. Make sure that you are speaking in front of a large audience of prospects and that the conference has a very good reputation with hedge fund investors. If you are not sure, ask the conference manager for references from hedge fund managers who have spoken at previous events. Ask these managers whether they believe that sponsoring the conference was worthwhile for them. Ask for detailed information, concrete results on the heels of the conference, etc.

Also ask for a copy of last year’s list of participants to make sure that you will be in front of prospects that you are targeting.

1.5.5 Conference Invitation Flyer

One of the best things about conferences is the written invitation sent to prospective attendees in advance. These invitations are usually distributed to thousands of prospects. If your name, photo, and CV are front and center on the invitation, you know it will be a worthwhile event on which to spend time and money.

1.5.6 Speaking Time

Attempt to be one of the first to speak in the morning, since that is when everyone is ready to listen. Avoid the after lunchtime slot when people are full and tired. Being the last speaker of the day can be an advantage, but only if you can impress your

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audience with something they will remember long after they've headed home.

1.5.7 List of Participants

After the conference, obtain a list of attendees to follow-up with as potential prospects. This type of follow-up is also a good job for your best regional third-party marketer. Third-party marketing is explained later in this section.

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About the Author

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Mr. Angersbach, a consultant on hedge funds, was the head of marketing support and investor relations for a start up hedge fund management company. During his tenure of five years, assets under management (AUM) grew from a seed capital of approximately \$8 million to about \$2 billion. In 1979, Mr. Angersbach received a master degree in business administration from Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich, Germany (Diplom-Kaufmann). Thereafter, he was a lecturer in accounting and finance and worked for an auditor. In 1982, Mr. Angersbach became vice president of a real estate investment company. Two years later, he joined Germany's then largest independent wealth management company. After four years, he became vice president of their branch office in Atlanta, Georgia. Since 1992, Mr. Angersbach has worked for two banks (CL and DZ) in Frankfurt, Germany. From 1995 till 2001, Mr. Angersbach was the CEO of a family office in Zurich, Switzerland, investing in private and public equity. In 2002, he joined the aforementioned hedge fund management company.