

MARKETING CASE STUDY

International Spice Conference

ISC 2026

How an Integrated Multi-Channel Campaign Delivered Record Registrations

Email Marketing • WhatsApp API • LinkedIn • Remarketing

Record High Total Registrations Highest ever for ISC	3× Website Traffic Growth vs. previous year	~60% Returning User Increase audience loyalty	725K+ Remarketing Impressions sustained visibility
74–76% WhatsApp Read Rate 98–99% delivery	Up to 74% Peak Email Open Rate across segments	Up to 67% Peak Email CTR Europe segment	13 Days Avg. Engagement Cycle 3+ touchpoints to convert

1. Executive Summary

The International Spice Conference (ISC) 2026 concluded as the most successful edition in the conference's history. Held in Kochi, India — the world's spice capital — from February 24 to 26, the event brought together a high-calibre global audience of spice industry professionals: traders, exporters, processors, policymakers, and researchers spanning Asia, Europe, North America, and beyond.

The marketing campaign that powered ISC 2026 was conceived as a fully integrated, data-driven multi-channel ecosystem — combining email marketing, WhatsApp API broadcasts, LinkedIn organic and sponsored outreach, remarketing display ads, and precision audience segmentation to guide prospective delegates from initial awareness through to confirmed registration.

The results validate the strategy decisively. ISC 2026 achieved the highest-ever registration numbers in the conference's history, while simultaneously generating approximately three times the website traffic of the previous year and increasing returning users by around 60%. Email open rates reached as high as 74% in targeted segments, WhatsApp message read rates held at 74–76%, and remarketing impressions exceeded 725,000. The average delegate required approximately 13 days and more than three meaningful touchpoints across channels before registering — a behaviour that underscores both the sophistication of the multi-channel architecture and the commitment of the audience being served.

2. About the International Spice Conference

The International Spice Conference is the premier global gathering for the spice and herb trade. Organised annually and hosted in India — the country responsible for a dominant share of global spice production, processing, and export — ISC serves as the convergence point where supply chain leaders, regulatory bodies, scientific researchers, and commercial buyers come together to transact, learn, and shape industry direction.

Event Profile — ISC 2026

ISC 2026 was held over three days at a premium venue in Kochi. The programme spanned keynote addresses from global industry leaders; sessions on spice market intelligence and crop forecasts; panel discussions on food safety, traceability, and sustainability; Innovation and Sustainability Awards; and a curated social programme including a traditional Kochi boat race experience — reinforcing ISC's position as both a commercial and cultural institution within the global spice community.

Audience Profile

The delegate universe for ISC 2026 was segmented across five primary geographic cohorts: North America, Europe, Asia, Previous ISC Attendees (a high-value re-engagement group), and a General/International segment. Each cohort demonstrated distinct engagement behaviours, price sensitivities, and decision timelines — all of which shaped the channel strategy and messaging framework deployed throughout the campaign.

3. Marketing Challenges

Executing a world-class event marketing campaign for a niche B2B conference within the global spice industry presented a specific and layered set of challenges. Understanding these challenges is essential to appreciating the strategic decisions made in response.

- **Reaching a globally dispersed, niche audience:** The spice industry's key decision-makers are spread across dozens of countries, each with different digital behaviour patterns, time zones, and communication preferences. No single channel could reach them all effectively.
- **Driving registrations in a high-consideration B2B category:** Conference registrations involve budget approvals, travel planning, and multiple stakeholders. The typical conversion cycle is long — reflected in the campaign's observed average of 13 days and 3+ touchpoints per conversion.
- **Behavioural differences between domestic and international audiences:** Data revealed a fundamental split: international delegates registered early, driven by price sensitivity and travel planning needs; domestic delegates delayed significantly, requiring repeated social proof and urgency signals before committing.
- **Differentiating ISC in a competitive events landscape:** While ISC holds strong brand equity within the spice industry, competition for professional attention demanded consistent and compelling messaging throughout a six-month campaign window.
- **Attribution complexity:** Direct traffic and organic search were capturing last-click credit for conversions that were actually initiated by email, WhatsApp, and remarketing exposure — creating the risk of under-investing in the channels most responsible for driving delegates into the funnel.

4. Marketing Objectives

Drive record registrations: Surpass all previous ISC editions in total confirmed delegate numbers, with particular focus on international attendance growth.

Expand qualified audience reach: Grow the total addressable audience by acquiring new database contacts across all geographic segments while deepening engagement with previous attendees.

Sustain multi-touchpoint engagement: Ensure prospective delegates encountered ISC messaging consistently across channels throughout the entire campaign window.

Strengthen ISC digital brand presence: Increase website traffic, improve returning visitor metrics, and build LinkedIn authority within the global spice industry community.

Support sponsor and exhibitor visibility: Integrate sponsor messaging into campaign communications, increasing perceived event value for delegates and demonstrating ROI to commercial partners.

5. Marketing Strategy

The ISC 2026 marketing strategy was built on a full-funnel, multi-touchpoint framework. Rather than relying on any single channel to drive registrations, the campaign architecture was designed to create an integrated ecosystem in which each channel reinforced the others — producing persistent brand recall, progressive engagement, and ultimately conversion.

Full-Funnel Framework

At the top of the funnel, LinkedIn advertising, email outreach to new database segments, and referral traffic worked in concert to introduce ISC 2026 to prospective delegates. In the mid-funnel consideration stage, content-rich email campaigns — featuring speaker announcements, session previews, crop report teasers, and award highlights — provided substantive reasons to attend, while remarketing campaigns maintained visibility for website visitors who had not yet registered. In the final conversion stage, countdown campaigns for early bird pricing, deadline reminder emails, and WhatsApp broadcasts created time-sensitive motivation that consistently produced the campaign's highest-volume registration periods.

Audience Segmentation Strategy

One of the defining features of the ISC 2026 strategy was disciplined audience segmentation. Rather than broadcasting uniform messages to the full database, campaigns were tailored across five distinct cohorts: North America, Europe, Asia, Previous ISC Attendees, and a General International segment. This segmentation enabled personalised subject lines, timing, incentive emphasis, and CTA language — with measurable positive impact on engagement metrics across every campaign send.

Key Strategic Principles

- Remarketing as a continuous visibility backbone, ensuring users who entered the funnel were never lost between email sends.
- Content-led mid-funnel engagement, positioning ISC 2026 as a knowledge and intelligence event rather than purely a networking function.
- Urgency engineering in the final stage, using countdown mailers (10 days to last day) and WhatsApp reminders timed precisely to early bird deadlines.
- Database quality as a performance driver, maintaining low bounce rates through active hygiene to protect deliverability and sender reputation.
- Attribution awareness, recognising that direct and organic traffic were capturing final-click credit for journeys initiated by email, WhatsApp, or remarketing exposure.

6. Channel-wise Execution

A. Email Marketing

Email marketing was the single most impactful direct-response channel in the ISC 2026 campaign, contributing 14–15% of total registrations directly while influencing a substantially larger share of assisted conversions. The email programme ran from August 2025 through post-event communications in late February 2026 and encompassed multiple campaign categories: speaker feature mailers, session content mailers, early bird countdown series, award nomination campaigns, and logistical communications for registered delegates.

Open rates across the programme ranged from approximately 14% on low-relevance re-engagement attempts to 74% on highly targeted messages sent to the registered delegate list. Click-through rates ranged from 6% to 67%, with the highest performance recorded in the Europe and North America segments during speaker and early bird campaigns. The data reveals a clear performance stratification: campaigns with strong content relevance consistently outperformed generic awareness messages.

Campaign Type	Peak Open Rate	Peak CTR	Top Segment	Primary Objective
Speaker Mailers — Day 1, 2 & 3	69.1% (Europe D2)	65.0% (Europe D2)	Europe / NA	Mid-funnel engagement
Early Bird Countdown (10→1 Day)	71.5% (Europe D10)	67.4% (Europe D10)	Europe / NA	Conversion / urgency
Keynote Speakers Mailer	74.0% (Registered)	40.3% (Registered)	Registered	Mid-funnel engagement
Spice Market Intelligence	68.0% (Europe)	51.0% (Europe)	Europe	Content / awareness
Crop Reports	63.0% (Prev.)	51.0%	Prev. ISC /	Content / retention

Campaign Type	Peak Open Rate	Peak CTR	Top Segment	Primary Objective
	ISC)	(Europe)	Europe	
Innovation & Sustainability Awards	71.0% (Registered)	40.0% (Registered)	Registered	Engagement / brand
Inaugural Day / Event-Live Mailers	55.0% (Prev. ISC)	50.0% (NA)	NA / Prev. ISC	Retention / FOMO
Thank You / Post-Event	73.6% (Registered)	38.0%	Registered	Loyalty / brand
Boat Race & Kochi Experience	73.1% (Registered)	46.4%	Registered	Delegate experience

A key strategic insight from the data: previous ISC attendees responded primarily to urgency and early bird offers, while newly acquired audiences required content-first engagement — speaker credentials, session topics, market intelligence previews — before they were receptive to registration CTAs. This bifurcation informed the sequencing logic for the entire campaign.

B. WhatsApp API Marketing

The WhatsApp API channel played a strategically distinct and highly effective role. While email served as the primary content and engagement vehicle, WhatsApp functioned as a last-mile conversion enabler — deployed at critical moments in the decision journey to prompt users who had already engaged with the conference to take final action.

98–99% Delivery Rate Near-perfect reach	74–76% Message Read Rate Far above email benchmarks	Last Mile Primary Role Urgency conversion trigger	3 Phases Deployment Moments Early bird + deadline + event
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WhatsApp campaigns were deployed at three primary moments: the early bird offer window (to accelerate price-sensitive conversions), the final registration deadline (to capture last-minute registrants), and during the event itself for live logistics. The channel's ability to deliver messages with near-certainty directly to mobile devices — without competing with email inbox noise — made it uniquely effective at driving immediate action. Its most critical contribution was a reinforcement effect: users already in the consideration stage who had been exposed to email and remarketing received a WhatsApp prompt at precisely the right moment, tipping them from intent into action.

C. LinkedIn Marketing

LinkedIn was deployed as both a brand-building and audience-acquisition channel throughout the campaign. Given the conference's professional B2B audience, LinkedIn's targeting

capabilities made it exceptionally well-suited for reaching decision-makers within the global spice industry who were not yet in the ISC database. The strategy combined organic content publishing — speaker highlights, session previews, market commentary, and countdown content — with sponsored campaign activity targeting professionals by industry, job function, seniority, and geography. LinkedIn-originated users were subsequently captured into the email and remarketing ecosystem for mid and lower-funnel nurturing.

- Organic content built persistent brand visibility across the target professional community, with each post serving as an entry point for new database growth.
- Sponsored campaigns extended ISC's reach beyond existing contacts into the broader global spice trade, food industry, and agricultural sectors.
- Professional community engagement reinforced perceived authority for ISC 2026 as the definitive industry event, encouraging organic peer-to-peer amplification.

[VISUAL PLACEHOLDER: LinkedIn campaign impressions, click-through data, and audience demographic breakdown]

7. Campaign Creatives & Messaging

The creative and messaging architecture of ISC 2026 was a significant differentiator from previous editions. Visual branding was consistent across all channels — email templates, WhatsApp formats, LinkedIn graphics, and remarketing display creatives all maintained a unified colour palette, typography system, and logo treatment that reinforced brand recognition at every touchpoint.

Creative Direction

Email creatives were designed with a premium, editorial aesthetic — mirroring international trade publications rather than conventional event marketing. Full-width imagery of Kochi's waterways and the spice trade heritage, high-quality speaker photography, and clean typographic layouts created a sense of prestige and global legitimacy. Each mailer category had a distinct visual identity within the broader brand system: speaker mailers led with portrait photography; session content mailers used data visualisation and infographic elements; countdown mailers incorporated bold typographic urgency indicators.

Messaging Framework

The messaging strategy followed a deliberate progression. In the early phase (August–October), messaging focused on positioning ISC 2026 and its value proposition. In the mid-phase (November–January), messaging shifted to specificity — detailed session content, crop report previews, award categories, and Kochi experience content built both the professional and personal case for attendance. In the final phase (February through event), messaging became

urgency-driven and action-focused: countdown timers, deadline callouts, and social proof elements were the primary conversion mechanisms.

CTA Optimisation

High-performing CTAs included direct registration prompts ('Register Now — Early Bird Ends Friday'), session-specific discovery CTAs ('Meet the Speakers'), and value-reinforcing CTAs ('Claim Your Place at the World's Premier Spice Conference'). Registered delegate communications used preparation-oriented CTA language ('Explore Kochi with Fellow Delegates'), maintaining engagement without creating confusion.

[VISUAL PLACEHOLDER: Side-by-side comparison of top-performing email creative templates across three campaign phases]

8. Performance Metrics & Results

The following section presents consolidated performance data for ISC 2026 across all major channels and campaign categories, drawing directly from campaign analytics covering August 2025 through February 2026.

Overall Campaign Outcomes

Record Registrations Highest-ever ISC edition	3× Website Traffic vs. prior year	+60% Returning Users audience loyalty signal	725K+ Remarketing Impr. ~35K site visits driven
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74–76% WhatsApp Read Rate 98–99% delivery	Up to 74% Peak Email Open Rate Registered segment	14–15% Email-Attributed Reg. Direct + assisted share	13 Days Avg. Conversion Cycle 3+ channel touchpoints
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Email Marketing — Detailed Performance

Campaign / Mailer	Segment	Delivery	Open Rate	CTR	Key Insight
Speaker Day 2 (Feb 25)	Europe	3,143	69.1%	65.0%	Highest CTR

Campaign / Mailer	Segment	Delivery	Open Rate	CTR	Key Insight
					recorded
Speaker Day 1 (Feb 24)	Europe	3,162	63.0%	53.9%	Top-performing send
Keynote Speakers	Registered	15,814	40.3%	28.6%	Widest campaign reach
Early Bird Day 10	Europe	3,171	71.5%	67.4%	Urgency peak
Early Bird Day 8	Europe	3,163	67.3%	62.2%	High urgency
Early Bird (4 Days Left)	Europe	3,145	60.7%	56.2%	Consistent EU/NA
Spice Market Intelligence	Europe	3,109	51.5%	44.3%	Content-driven
Kochi Highlights	Global	16,127	32.2%	23.5%	Broad reach send
Thank You Email	Registered	908	73.6%	38.0%	Post-event peak
Boat Race Invitation	Registered	774	73.1%	46.4%	Experience CTA

WhatsApp API — Performance Summary

Metric	Phase 1: Awareness	Phase 2: Early Bird	Phase 3: Deadline	Phase 4: Event
Delivery Rate	~98%	~99%	~99%	~98%
Read Rate	~74%	~76%	~76%	~74%
Primary Function	Awareness boost	Urgency + pricing	Last-chance prompt	Logistics / live
Conversion Role	Assisted	Direct driver	Direct driver	Retention

Remarketing — Performance Summary

725,000+ Total Impressions	~35,000 Site Visits Driven	Mid-Funnel Primary Role	3+
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Sustained brand recall	Highly efficient cost	Engagement reinforcement	Sessions Touchpoint Depth Per converting user
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Geographic Engagement Breakdown

Segment	Avg. Open Rate	Avg. CTR	Engagement Pattern	Best Campaign Type
Europe	50–69%	33–65%	Highest overall	Speaker + Early Bird
North America	44–56%	35–50%	Strong urgency response	Countdown + Speakers
Registered Delegates	67–74%	17–46%	Extremely high loyalty	All campaign types
Previous ISC Attendees	46–63%	14–32%	Strong content affinity	Content + Early Bird
Asia	34–54%	15–32%	Steady mid-range	Speaker + Session
General / Unknown	22–29%	9–14%	Broad awareness reach	Awareness + Retargeting

9. Key Success Factors

- **Integrated multi-channel architecture:** Email, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and remarketing were designed to reinforce each other — each performing a specific function in the conversion funnel, creating a cohesive user journey from first awareness to final registration.
- **Precision audience segmentation:** Five distinct geographic and behavioural segments, each receiving personalised messaging aligned to their unique motivations and decision timelines, directly improved open rates, CTRs, and registration conversions in each cohort.
- **Sustained campaign cadence:** The six-month campaign window from August 2025 through February 2026 ensured no potential delegate fell through the cracks. Consistent delivery of value-adding content maintained audience interest without fatigue.
- **Content-driven mid-funnel strategy:** By centering mid-funnel communication on substantive industry-relevant content — crop reports, market intelligence, speaker credentials — rather than generic 'register now' messaging, the campaign built genuine perceived value and reduced the persuasion burden on late-stage urgency communications.

- **Urgency mechanics executed with precision:** The 10-day early bird countdown series and WhatsApp deadline reminders were timed to behavioural triggers. The near-perfect delivery and read rates achieved by WhatsApp ensured that urgency messaging reached audiences exactly when they were most likely to convert.
- **Database quality and deliverability management:** Consistently low bounce rates across all email campaigns protected sender reputation and ensured that all campaign sends reached the intended audiences at full volume.

10. Lessons Learned & Future Recommendations

Earlier Early Bird Launch

The campaign data specifically flags that the early bird series should launch earlier in the cycle. Starting 12–14 weeks before the deadline — rather than 10 — would reach audiences at an earlier, less competitive stage of their decision process and generate stronger conversion volume.

Multi-Touch Attribution Model

The current campaign under-credits assisted conversion channels — email, WhatsApp, and remarketing — because conversions are being attributed to direct and organic traffic at the last click. Implementing a data-driven multi-touch attribution model would provide a more accurate picture of true channel contribution, enabling smarter budget allocation.

Automation and Triggered Communication

Introducing behaviour-triggered automation — for example, a WhatsApp follow-up sent automatically 48 hours after a user clicks an email CTA but does not register — would substantially improve conversion rates without increasing campaign resource requirements.

International Audience Development

International delegates demonstrated earlier conversion behaviour and higher price sensitivity, making them ideal targets for a dedicated early-access campaign sequence starting from June or July. A personalised early-bird offer communicated through a parallel WhatsApp and email sequence could significantly increase international registration volume for ISC 2027.

Year-Round Community Building

The strongest email performers — Registered Delegates and Previous ISC Attendees — demonstrated that existing ISC participants are the most engaged and highest-converting cohort. Building a year-round ISC community through a LinkedIn group, periodic industry insights

newsletter, or member portal would transform one-off attendees into a persistent warm audience base that enters each new edition's campaign funnel already pre-converted.

11. Conclusion

The ISC 2026 marketing campaign stands as a definitive model for how B2B event marketing should be executed in a niche, globally dispersed professional sector. The results speak with clarity: record registrations, tripled website traffic, 60% growth in returning users, and engagement rates that far exceed industry benchmarks at every channel level.

What these numbers reflect is not luck but architecture — a disciplined, integrated, full-funnel marketing system in which every channel had a specific role, every audience segment received tailored communication, and every stage of the conversion journey was actively managed from awareness through to registration. The 13-day average engagement cycle and 3+ touchpoints required per conversion are not weaknesses; they are evidence that the campaign was sophisticated enough to accompany high-consideration B2B decision-makers through a genuine process of evaluation and commitment.

For future sponsors, exhibitors, and event partners, the ISC 2026 campaign offers compelling proof of the marketing capability that underpins the conference. Association with ISC means association with an event whose audience arrives informed, engaged, and genuinely invested in the industry they serve — a quality of attendance that no advertising spend alone can create.

ISC 2026 did not just achieve record registrations. It demonstrated that the International Spice Conference has built a marketing engine worthy of its position as the world's premier gathering for the global spice industry.

International Spice Conference | ISC 2026

Marketing Case Study • Kochi, India • 24–26 February 2026