

MARKETING & PR GUIDELINES

These Marketing and PR guidelines are intended as a guide for organisers to get the most out of their Bealtaine event in terms of audience attendance and media coverage.

Marketing and PR

Marketing and PR (Public Relations) are similar but have different aims. Marketing is the distributing of information about your project with the specific aim of generating ticket sales, generating audience numbers. PR is the distribution of information with the aim to make as many people as possible (including key figures in the arts and culture sector) positively aware of your project. Marketing and PR activities often overlap so don't worry about getting too technical! The main aims are to improve media coverage, increase general awareness of your event and get 'bums on seats'!

TOP TIP - Before you carry out any Marketing or PR activities, set some time aside to think about the following: who you want to reach (your target groups); what you want them to do (your aim); why you want to reach them (reason); how you are going to do this (the action).

Some examples are listed below:

Target Group	Aim	Reason	Channel
General Public	To buy ticket for event	Develop audiences (for the artform and older people). Generate income (for venue and to cover costs).	Advertisements Listings Social media Flyer distribution E-zine
Journalists/Bloggers	To write a preview, create a listing or write a review	Get more people to attend/buy a ticket for the event. Generate publicity. Have quotes for additional publicity.	Press release Social media Personal letter
Promoters	To find out about you as a producer/artist	Develop links for future collaborations. Expose your work for other opportunities.	E-zine Social media Personal letter
Performing Groups	To find out about you as a producer/artist	Perform your work Work with you in the future	E-zine Social media Personal letter

An awareness of who you want to reach, why you want to reach them and what you want them to do will help you plan activities more effectively.

Activities can include

- **Press release** - This is the most traditional format and still carries a lot of weight despite the growth in social media. Press releases should be sent to media platforms including newspapers, especially local papers, magazines, radio stations and bloggers.
- **Social media** - Increasingly important and growing in importance all the time. There are many different social media channels to choose from and as each one has its own approach and requires time to develop it is worthwhile choosing which platform you want to be on wisely.
- **E-zine** - many artists have built up a list of e-mail addresses of friends, colleagues and interested members of the public, which can be used to send circulars to. Venues also have mailing lists for their regular attenders and may be happy to mention your event in their e-zine. So check with your artists and venues!
- **Personal letter** - Sending individual, personal letters can be a very powerful tool, as it conveys your passion for the project and demonstrates that you have made an extra effort to reach the person you are writing to. This is useful if you know of an influential figure who can spread the word about your event.
- **Advertisements** - Buying advertising space is expensive, so it's vital to check how many readers (or hits if it's online) the publication has and that it reaches people to whom your event is potentially aimed at. In addition to ads in papers and magazines, you can buy space or a promoted status on websites, social media platforms and on other organisation's newsletters
- **Word of mouth** - This involves telling people directly about your event and hoping that they in turn tell other people!
- **Blogs** - You could write a blog about the project and publish it on one of your partner's sites or on a microsite specifically created for your project or on your own web site if you have one.
- **Flyers** - Printed flyers can be useful for mail-outs, to be handed out in person or to be laid out at strategic points (with permission from the venue). However they can be costly to produce and distribute so think carefully about if they are needed.

TOP TIP - Having a designer do up an online version of a flyer for social media and online use can be equally as effective and incurs no printing or distribution costs!

Please see Social Media Guidelines for more detail on paid advertising across social media and on platforms and usage.

Planning

You need to research how much each activity costs, how long it will take and when the most effective time is to carry it out. Based on the information, you can draw up your marketing plan, listing each action and its timing (e.g. send out press release, 6 weeks before event) as well as points in the timeline when you measure the success of your activities so far and review your activities.

It is essential to collaborate with venues, as you want to pool resources and activities rather than double up. It's a good idea to have a conversation about your event with the marketing department at each venue right at the beginning, to ensure they know what the project is about and that they have all material they would like/need for their purposes. For example, some venues, especially libraries are keen on posters, while others no longer use printed material at all, focussing on-line instead. If you stay in touch with the marketing departments throughout, you will be able to find out how well each event is selling and which venue, if any, might need some support.

Your marketing activities will depend on how much money you have available, how much time you are able to invest, and what standard you are happy with.

If you have a more generous amount for marketing within your budget you could look to create a microsite for your project. This is a great way to feature all information about your project in one easily accessible place. You could also consider a podcast or a video about the project, featuring soundbites from people involved in the project, images, etc.

Please see Social Media Guidelines for more advice on using online platforms.

Preparation

For any marketing and PR activities you will need to have the following ready:

- Text about the event of varying lengths (e.g. 50, 100, 250 words), as different publications/platforms will have different requirements.
- Strong Images that tell the story of what your event is about; you will already have some images, which you used in the information document you sent out to promoters at the beginning of the project, but as the project has evolved you might like to reassess and add new or different pictures.

TOP TIP - Taking new images of the work-in-progress is very important and these images can be very compelling and can also serve as important documentation.

- Logos of your partnering organisations; you are usually required to include logos from any funding organisations on publicity material and you should include logos even if their use is optional, as they demonstrate that another organisation has bought into your project.

It is useful to have all of the above readily available as a part of a marketing pack.

TOP TIP - You can store the material in an online, for example using Google Docs so that all involved in the project, or journalists asking for further information, can have easy access to it.