



Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation

Festival Handbook

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Introduction

1.1 Overview of Approach

1.2 Organization of the Report

1. Introduction

HLT Advisory Inc. ("HLT") has provided this Handbook resource as a component of a broad based study conducted on behalf of Southwest Ontario Tourism (RTO #1) during January- March 2014. The consultants were engaged to review the festival and event trends from a programming, resourcing, and marketing perspective as well as to establish a working document (Handbook) that can be utilized by festivals, municipalities, and other organizations as a tool to support efforts in promoting tourism growth within the region.

The intended use of this document is to provide festivals throughout the region with a combination of trends, best practices, and marketing tactics that will hopefully assist in driving increased local attendance and potentially enhance the visitation draw from attendees outside a 3-4 hour drive radius. The overall purpose of this Handbook and the study conducted on behalf of SWOTC is to explore methods in which a greater degree of economic impact; measured by visitor growth fostering increased spending . To summarize, Southwest Ontario Tourism recognizes that tourism growth from its key source markets of Ontario and border US states can be accomplished by virtue of building the awareness and value of its festival industry.

Events and festivals tourism is one of the fastest growing forms of tourism in North America. They are becoming increasingly popular in rural areas as a means to revitalize local economies. Festivals and special events play important roles in destination development, image - makers, animators of static attractions, and catalysts for other developments.¹

The trend toward festivals becoming the new concert hall for the music industry is developing at a rapid pace, exerting a significant impact on the economics of major acts and bands which have depended on the fixed concert venue as a mainstay for delivering live music. It is clear that the expansion of the music festival option replacing the traditional arena or concert hall is creating a boost to the festival business and providing a lifeline to the music industry which has lost much of its historic single and album revenue streams.

1.1 Overview of Approach

The Handbook has been developed to provide trends and potential new practices with respect to the following areas within the festival process:

- Developing a plan to grow festival attendance
- Utilizing research to understand the key demographic(s) of the current and potential attendee
- Clearly defining the festival's value proposition (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities)

¹ Impacts of Community events and festivals on rural places, June 2011 Gov't Alberta

- Driving revenues of the festival through sponsorship, attendee daily spend
- Understand access to government grants
- Entertainment and programming trends
- Marketing of the festival's key attributes

This document does not deal with issues surrounding municipal policies, festival execution, staffing, security or any of the operational elements required to stage the event.

1.2 Organization of the Report

Following the introduction, the report is organized into four sections.

- Planning for festival attendance growth
- Funding the festival
- Programming opportunities
- Marketing to the local & out-of-town attendee

Festival Plan & Positioning

2.1 Strategic Plan

2.2 Identify the Festival Attendee

2.3 Research the On-Site Visitor

2. Festival Plan & Positioning

2.1 Strategic Plan

A Festival that is operated with the notion of establishing a foundation, and becoming sustainable within the community, requires long-term planning and commitment with values, goals and organizational structure attached to it.

Festivals are volunteer-driven with roots in the community. They are considered to be branded experiences, where patrons may not have any knowledge of the programming, performers or activities found on site. By and large, many community festivals are attended by locals or visitors with the purpose of simply enjoying the environment that has been created.

The Plan can be looked on as a document with a series of steps that helps a team/committee to move the festival/event from your current point to a desired point of development 2/3 years down the road. It compares to a series of signposts to help you get to your destination.

Recognizing that a festival/event may be a small annual summer experience for your community, and that such a plan seems an arduous task for a volunteer committee or Board; a failure to adopt a structured plan may well miss out on a growth opportunity which has the potential to be an enhanced experience for the local community and visitors alike.

In addition, any government grant application administrator will include the requirement to review a festival plan; the more impressive of which is surely to have a greater success at generating a much needed revenue source.

Festival Strategic Plan Process

- Acquire background information to build plan
- Situational analysis
- SWOT
- Profile research of existing attendees
- Past 3-5 year financials, attendance figures

- Develop a short concise strategic plan by:
 - Create a visioning statement
 - Establish a mission for the organizing committee/Board
 - Establish 5 requirements/objectives for success over a 3-5 year period
 - Identify key weaknesses from the SWOT which require specific actions
 - Person's profile requires at a festival
 - Build a sub-plan for the most important (revenue) day of your event. ie : Sat night
 - List 3-5 main benefits that your community will achieve through greater success or growth of your festival

Develop a value proposition based on the characteristics of your festival audience, allowing a potential sponsor to easily understand how they would position their product or service against the festival goers buying habits.

Strategic Planning Template

ITEM	STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	OPPORTUNITIES
Strategic Planning	Committee members have good experience	Disagreement among members on festival objectives	Good understanding of need to adjust certain festival objectives
Programming	Vision & Mission of the event was evident and borne out in research	Too many events to manage: research showed festival audience overwhelmed with choices	Committee agreement on fine-tuning of festival programming, particular shoulder day activities
Outcomes	Business community feedback showed they were pleased with event	Festival site cluttered with sponsor signs.. businesses complained	Revisit the volume of sponsorship deals to be executed next year
Outputs	Acquired # of volunteer staff needed to operate	Potential that many volunteers will not return next year	New volunteer committee to be organized to target colleges in area
Committee Member	Full participation by all committee members	Certain members did not pull their weight during event	Create a specific job description for all members to sign at 1 st meeting

2.2 Identify the Festival Attendee

Current trends & research reflect a few key tendencies when assessing festival attendees who will travel (3 + hours by car) a distance significant enough to be considered a potential overnight visitor.

Research within the tourism industry in North America has reflected, over many years, that the female in the household plays a larger factor in determining holiday destinations than the male. This factor has achieved a greater balance over the past five years as technology and social media has turned the vacation decision into an on-line research exercise, which is equally conducted by either gender.

However, decisions with respect to travel to a festival destination continues to be heavily skewed to female head of household due to the nature of the festival business and entertainment or cultural programming.

A significant body of research conducted by the Canadian Tourism Commission, identifies the terms 'Authentic Experienter' and 'Gentle Explorer'² within the framework of the Explorer Quotient study. For the purposes of this document we'll use the term 'Passive Explorer' as a person typically traveling with a partner who has

children at an age which does not require supervision, and therefore has a tendency to make use of weekends between May & October to explore their region within a 3-4 hour radius. Most festivals, with the exception of those targeting young families and music goers under the age of 30, should be considering festival messaging, and developing vendor strategies that cater to this demographic.

Lastly, Southern Ontario has experienced unprecedented growth in the immigration of new families located mostly in the swath of land from Oshawa thru Niagara. Many of these new residents come from backgrounds which are very much attuned to community, cultural, and music festivals. Any

CURRENT TRENDS AND RESEARCH

WHO?

FEMALE DECISION MAKER: 65%-35% COMPARED TO MEN

ADULT AUTHENTIC EXPERIENTER/GENTLE EXPLORER

MUSIC ADVOCATE 18-30 YRS WILL TRAVEL ON/BY CAR

FOODIES WILL DRIVE 4-5 HOURS - MUST BE AUTHENTIC VENDOR MATCH TO THE AUDIENCE

TARGET THE NEW IMMIGRANT (GTA) WHO HAVE A CULTURAL AFFINITY TO FESTIVALS

² Explorer Quotient, CTC <http://en-corporate.canada.travel>

festival, be it programmed around family, music, culture or arts should be recognizing the potential for this demographic to increase its exploration of the province within a 3-4 hour drive. Typically, festivals in Ontario's Southwest attract a minimum 50% of their attendees from within their region. Depending on the location of the community within the region from Oxford to Essex counties: the approximate 6 million population in the Metro Toronto – Niagara region will represent the next largest source of visitation. Although the US bordering states are within an hour of many of the region's festival locations, the issue of border crossing continues to limit the potential for travel.

- Assumed split of origin of Ontario's Southwest festival attendee:
 - Local region 50%
 - Greater Toronto Metropolitan area 35%
 - Michigan /New York/Ohio 10%
 - Other 5%



2.3 Research the On-site Visitor

The first step to gaining insight into future marketing opportunities is to frame your existing customer, understand what led to their attending your event, and to query their motivation for returning to your festival.

1. Identify the target demographic that your festival requires to succeed, listing all of the characteristics from entertainment, shopping, eating and family activities.
2. Successful future marketing flows from the insight to the current year's mix of visitors.
3. The following is some of the data required about your visitors:

Research attendee to establish identity:

- Age category
- Gender
- Families
- 15-25 without parents
- Adult without children
- Seniors

Research local & visitor to establish preference:

- Prime interest in festival (ie: music, rides, food, shopping, education)
- Quality of 1-4 scale: vendors, entertainment, site, overall activities

Separate those Visitors from 3 + hours away:

- Where they reside
- How often have visited this festival
- How many in their group

- How did they hear of the festival or event
- Do they eat in restaurants/ overnight in hotel
- Average spend per day at festival

Research process

- On site fill out short survey for chance to win
- Student volunteers to do intercept short 2-3 min/ 4 questions
- Festival website with free hotel stay for visitors / local restaurant offer for locals
- On site email acquisition for post-event follow up

Research probes for Festival guest satisfaction:

- Food and beverage vendor quality... healthy options
 - Rank entertainment venues/performers individually
 - Volunteers and assist area friendliness
 - Overall value for money
 - Car park convenience
 - Intent to return to next year's event
-
- Utilize for programming, operational improvements
 - Sponsor acquisition
 - Marketing high value inclusions

Motivation

Festival motivation for adult passive explorer:

- Date/ Location/ Theme
- Music tourism
- Arts & Culture
- Antique auto
- Wine & Spirits
- Homecoming extended to schools, corporate etc... easiest way to get an o/n visitor is to provide networking opportunity

Much research conducted on the empty nest regional traveler (**Passive Explorer**) suggests that the first motivating factor for visitation to a festival lies with the date or weekend that this couple determines the time to go for a drive/ explore without a particular destination or activity in mind. Certainly the location of a festival and its theme and reputation (on-line research) become a factor once the *Passive Explorer* decides to leave home.

Recently in Ontario there has been much discussion and reporting on the significant rise in music tourism; a phenomenon which has arisen from the gradual restructuring of the music industry business model. The Ontario, Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport's live music strategy, launched in 2013 by Minister Chan, brings an important component to music tourism within the province, previously noted in the Government Grant section. 'Our government is committed to evolving our tourism strategy to align with our cultural assets – for example, harnessing live music from within our borders and beyond to explore and experience our exciting province. Experiences that will drive our economy and firmly place Ontario as a primary destination to experience the growing live music experience.³

Music tourists, by definition, are people who travel, often with their families, to an event beyond their home region for the sole purpose of attending a large music event, often an international music festival or a 3+ hour festival which features a performer of interest.

While larger Canadian centres are, inevitably, better positioned to create year-round tourism driven by commercial music, even small centres stand to benefit if they skillfully exploit their live music assets. The live music industry has extensive experience marketing to a diverse and far reaching fan base using an array of social media tools.

³ Music Canada: Accelerating Toronto's Music Industry Growth

Festivals throughout Ontario's Southwest offer an array of homegrown music performers on their programming lists. Most significantly the live music element serves as a catalyst for the main Friday or Saturday night spike in attendance which is key to the financial success of the festival.

As musicians and bands rely much less on the typical single/album sale to finance their profession, the impact of the summer festival tour across Canada and North America is paramount. The good news for festivals in Ontario lies with the fact that this province is one of the major targets for touring bands due to the obvious huge population within an accessible range of northeastern North America. The impact of the developing strategy to transform Toronto into a North American hub for live music tourism will surely have a residual impact on regions throughout Ontario that can offer audiences on dates around the main events in Toronto. London and Windsor are well positioned as touring locations connecting Toronto to US locations that are typically part of a summer tour itinerary.

Somewhat related to the potential to grow visitation through music programming is the growth of *homecoming* events as a determinant in regional tourism. 'Homecoming' is one of many 'Facebook factors' whereby the population over the age of 40 is attaining access, which never really existed before, to past school, sports, or business acquaintances. A festival's focus on developing a particular night for targeting homecoming events should range from schools in the region to large corporations (particularly long term manufacturing plants) to an array of sporting associations; all of which provide a flashpoint for people to connect in a common space... typically in their original hometown from which they relocated over the years.

The beauty of executing a 'Homecoming' theme is that the concept is not restricted to major centers; it is a notion of pulling adults from major centers, such as the GTA, back home to a smaller center from which they may have migrated 20 years ago. Additionally, the Homecoming element of a festival is one that can become part of the festival value proposition each year without any significant cost to programming or marketing. Clearly, the promotion of a Homecoming component to a festival is activated virtually 100% through social channels.



Financing the Festival

3.1 Sponsorship

3.2 Government Grant Process

3.3 Vendor Strategies

3. Financing the Festival

3.1 Sponsorship

The search for the holy grail of sponsors in a festival environment – the \$10-\$25,000 corporation or retailer who will step up to support a small - midsize community festival has become extremely challenging due to:

Much tighter control of marketing \$\$ in most business sectors

Lack of recognizing value for their dollar spent

Considerably more competition from festivals, charity events, and single day sporting events than in the past

The first step in any festival sponsorship process is the creation of a number of value propositions which can be targeted to various businesses both large and small. The purpose of a well thought out plan, identifying the value that a potential sponsor may accrue is based on 3 principles:

Value equals the sum of both the make-up & size of audience multiplied by the time spent in proximity to the marketing message

Sponsor's value is also derived by associating their brand & message with a cause that is relevant / emotionally tied to their targeted audience

A sponsor typically wishes to avoid the clutter & noise of other brands & services, and therefore looks to attain 'sole ownership' of that which they sponsor.

The good news is that festivals & events are receiving a greater percentage of sponsorship dollars than in the past, due to the fact that they offer marketers the opportunity to interact directly with the

CURRENT TRENDS & RESEARCH

SPONSORSHIP VALUE PROPOSITION
TIME & VOLUME = VALUE

BUNDLING SPONSORSHIP... 3-5 FESTIVALS

3YR PLAN FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES... PRICED APPROPRIATELY

PROVIDE A CLUSTER OF SMALL BUSINESSES / OWN A DAY

OWN A LOCAL CAUSE TO TRANSFER SUPPORT TO SPONSOR

customer. Festivals are excellent venues for 'experiential marketing' in that a large number of people can actually 'touch and see' their product in a live setting as opposed to interacting through another medium such as print or radio.

Developing Sponsorship Requirements

- Plan certain programming or venue set-up with a range of sponsors in mind
- Identify each potential asset for visibility/ volume of attendees/ time spent in location
- Calculate rough impressions based on past year's figures
- Define 3 demographics of past festival attendees, providing value proposition for different types of businesses
- Package assets into 3 financial categories
- Research local and regional prospects
- Target, meet and gain understanding of a potential sponsor's needs
- Customize proposal based on 'discovery' meeting with target business

In the past, sponsorship negotiation was predicated on the simple factor of visibility of the message; position the sponsor's signage within the festival grounds under the precept that the more eyeballs viewing the message equated to value for the sponsor.

In current times, many marketers see little value in 'passing eyeballs' and wish to spend their marketing dollars on a more certain outcome. The advent of Google search provided the marketer with a level of certainty that tied spend to message views; a principle that has changed the notion of advertising one's product in a significant way. A festival needs to explore the grounds through which the attendees pass, and identify areas where large numbers of people remain stationary for an extended period of time. This is how an advertiser or sponsor can achieve comfort that their message is being considered:

- Music & entertainment venues
- Beer tents
- Children's ride locations
- Bingo or gaming areas

Many marketers will agree that it is quite often true that attaining a \$25-\$40,000 sponsorship is easier than attracting five individual corporate entities willing to pay \$10-\$15,000 apiece. Therefore, a key opportunity for a large corporate entity is to arrange a sponsorship deal which allows them to own the local market or region, by spending in one financial block to own 'the region's festival branding'

The practice which is becoming more common in the festival environment and behooves a group of smaller community festivals to land a major sponsor:

Bundle a group of festivals together with a sponsorship arrangement that allows XYZ Corporation to own the month of August through brand visibility at 4-5 festivals and events.

This 'bigger' strategy for the sponsor provides for brand messaging over a longer duration and also positions the sponsor strongly within a target group that represents significant spending power within the entire community. The projected share of revenue for each participating festival will most likely equal that of a mid-size or large supporter of their event.

Every festival should own a revenue-generating plan, which targets local community businesses: restaurants, retailers, home services. It is obvious that most of these businesses are not capable of spending a lot of resources against promotion of this type, and, typically support festivals and local events through the easier method of 'Value in Kind'.

Considering that festivals require cash to fulfill their programming needs, a potential strategy exists to pair a small business with a targeted festival attraction over a 2-3 year period.

For example, a family-oriented local business supplying goods or services to a young family demographic can be positioned over a 3 year period with the face-painting vendor; a location that involves parents standing for 5-10 minutes while the artistic deed is accomplished on behalf of their excited children.

Another option for small businesses in the community is to cluster a geographical group – BIA or shopping mall, and sell them the rights to promote in a fixed, high profile location for an entire day of the festival weekend... clearly, the cost of this multi-group sponsorship is determined by historical daily attendance.

The most value derived by a local business stems from the ability for the festival to provide access to a community cause or emotional issue with which the sponsor may be associated. Any festival should be providing a community fund-raising element to their event; particularly one which is close to the hearts of the festival attendees:

- Family that has been affected by a publicized calamity
- Funding a local sports team to travel overseas
- Supporting a new feature in a hospital/ school etc.

A tastefully arranged positioning of a corporate sponsor to head up the fund-raising efforts within the confines of the festival grounds (including a token contribution from festival admissions) serves method to bring on a sponsor who might have resisted the option of a typical 'billboarding' within the grounds.

3.2 Government Grant Process

This section is intended to provide a sample of the options that are available to festivals within Ontario who wish to apply for additional funding from the government. It is recognized that other opportunities for grants may exist at a regional level, or from within the private sector.

- I. Celebrate Ontario
- II. TEMPP (Ontario Tourism Event Marketing Program)
- III. Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund (OCAF)
- IV. Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)
- V. Tourism Development Fund
- VI. Ontario Music Fund

I. Celebrate Ontario

Description:

Celebrate Ontario is the most well known program helping new or existing Ontario festivals and events enhance programs, activities and services that will lead to long-term improvements. Funding from this program is completely focus on growing tourism in the province (40+km) by making it easier for festival and event organizers to offer new and improved experiences that will attract more tourists and increase visitor spending.

Eligibility:

Applicants accessing funds from Celebrate Ontario must, first and foremost, operate a festival/event which demonstrates a capacity and intention to develop itself as a tourism driver over a set (long term) period of time.

Shows evidence that it attracts and promotes tourists through it's programming and marketing materials.

Funding Levels: Maximum of \$350,000

Festivals or events with cash operating budgets less than (<) \$250,000 will be eligible for up to 75 per cent of their enhancement cash operating budget, or 50 per cent of their total event cash operating budget, whichever amount is less.

Festivals or events with cash operating budgets of \$250,000 or more (\geq \$250,000) will be eligible for up to 50 per cent of their enhancement cash operating budget, or 25 per cent of their total cash operating budget, whichever amount is less, and to a maximum of \$350,000.

Process: celebrateontario@ontario.ca pg 9

II. TEMPP (Ontario Tourism Event Marketing Program)

Description:

This program also focuses on a festival's ability to attract overnight tourists with funding that requires proof of visitation from a greater reach (+ 100km); in this case attached to an organizations marketing efforts.

Eligibility:

Although festivals or events may be eligible through advertising placed in the province, funding priority is given to requests which focus on out-of - province media plans and those which encourage visitors to stay longer in the province. Additionally, the applicant must:

Have significant public/private sector participation;

Is packaged with other tourism industry operators in the community;

Has local municipal support (letter of support must be provided);

Offer a marketing plan occurring in the shoulder and off-peak tourist seasons

Funding Levels:

Funding will equal up to 75% of the applicant's tourism media placed within Ontario up to a ceiling of \$20,000. 50% of the media buy may be acquired by a festival spending outside of Ontario to a maximum of \$150,000 for a single applicant.

Process: tourismpartners.com/partnerops/tourismevent

III. Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund (OCAF)**Description:**

This Ontario government grant exists primarily to support arts, heritage or other cultural programming for a project that an organization or a municipality has on offer. Funding is based on a festival which is deemed to focus on cultural programming and is offering a new program that is distinct from ongoing programming. This fund also requires a marketing initiative targeting new visitors to the region.

Eligibility:

Ontario based, not-for-profit cultural or heritage organization

- Project must represent the single largest new programming initiative in the applicant's business plan for that year
- Project must run for a fixed or limited period of time
- Must have a marketing plan targeting new tourists to the community
- Must anticipate that at least 10% of the project total revenues are secured from the private sector AND at least 40% of total revenues are achieved through the project's earned revenue
- Project must demonstrate clearly the capability of repayment to OCAF and with an aim to generate a surplus for the applicant

Funding Levels:

- events with expenses of over \$1 million may receive 33% project expenses
- expenses between \$100,000 - \$1 million can apply for 50% of the project expenses
- events with expenses less \$100,000 eligible 66% of expenses.

Process : OCAF.on.ca

IV. Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)

Description:

OTF, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, distributes funds to charities and not-for-profit organizations through four sectors: Arts/Culture; Environment; Sports; Social Services. It's intent to promote and celebrate diverse cultures and heritages throughout the Ontario arts & culture community to

- Broaden participation and engagement in arts and culture
- Leverage the power of the arts for positive social change, community building or economic impact
- Develop more arts and cultural activities that transform communities and lives in positive ways

Eligibility:

- Festivals and events with attendance under 10,000, which attract 90% of their visitors from the local community and the remaining 10% from other Ontario communities.
- Festivals and events with attendance between 10,000 and 20,000 which attract 75% of their visitors from the local community, 20% from other Ontario communities, and 5% from outside of Ontario.
- Festivals and events with attendance over 20,000, which attract 50% of their visitors from the local community, 40% from other Ontario communities, and 10% from outside of Ontario.

Funding levels:

- Community Grant Program is primarily for activities driving local impact
- Grant investments of up to \$375,000 over five years including up to \$75,000 per year for operating or project expenses and up to \$150,000 over one or more years for capital initiatives such as building renovations and/or equipment purchases.
- The decision to fund all or part of a request depends on how well an application fits with the Foundation's priorities

Process: otf.ca

V. Tourism Development Fund

i. Ignite Ontario

Description:

A relatively new partnership program for festivals and events, inspired by the province's desire to motivate and engage communities in participating in the 2015 Pan Am Games. The purpose of this fund is to enable organizations and communities to create their own special Games-themed initiative. Priority will be given to theming related to the Americas, particularly South , Central America and the Caribbean. The benefits are non financial from a direct standpoint, but does connect the participating organization to the broad based marketing of the Pan Am Games throughout Ontario.

Eligibility:

Those existing festivals or new initiatives which:

- Provides a solid project plan with strong community engagement potential taking place in Ontario
- Have an applicant organization in existence for one year or longer as of Sept 2014.
- Connect strongly to Pan Am/ Parapan Am themes and events such as the culture and heritage of the Americas and the Caribbean (e.g., food, music, sport, dance, performing and visual arts, etc.).
- Engage the community in Pan Am/Parapan Am sports and healthy active living (e.g., sporting activities, demonstrations, etc.).

Funding Levels: non-financial, potential marketing benefit

Process: grantsontariocs@ontario.ca

ii. Cultural Development Fund**Description:**

A fund which is designed to strengthen a cultural organization including its Board, Advisory Committee, improve financial and digital capabilities, social media and generally support the structure of the organization.

Eligibility:

- Cultural service organizations
- Non-profit culture industry umbrella organizations
- Ontario-based not-for-profit arts & heritage organizations with a regional or provincial impact
- National arts, heritage or cultural media industry organizations with a project that provides significant benefit to Ontario
- Municipalities

Funding Levels:

The Culture Development Fund is a cost sharing program that can be used in conjunction with other contributions and funding sources, including other grants. Single applicant organizations can apply for up to 50% of total eligible project costs to a maximum of \$25,000 per year for up to two year

Umbrella organizations and consortia can apply for up to 50% of total eligible project costs to a maximum of \$75,000 per year for up to two years.

Process: grants.gov.on.ca

VI. Ontario Music Fund

Description:

The Ontario Music Fund administered by the Ontario Music Office (OMO) is aimed at strengthening and stimulating growth in Ontario's music companies and supporting this growing sector. The Fund is designed to drive activity and investment and to support Ontario's music companies and organizations in expanding their economic and cultural footprints within Canada and around the world.

The 'Live Music' component of the fund includes increasing the presence of Canadian artists at festivals and in venues across Ontario and helping to increase the number of opportunities for emerging local artists – boosting tourism and growing local economies.

Eligibility:

Eligible applicants include music promoters, music presenters and booking agents. Establishments primarily engaged in the development and delivery of live music events, concerts and tours in more than one venue in Ontario.

Core business activities include:

- developing and delivering live music events, including concerts and tours;
- Minimum Annual Eligible Revenues (net to the applicant company) of over \$100,000 from core business activities (average over the last two years).

Eligible Revenue:

- Annual Eligible Revenue is defined as the total of the following:
- Net earned revenues from the staging of live music events (in any location); and
- Any other earned revenues from music-related business activities, including sponsorships, commissions and fees.
- Annual Eligible Revenue is defined as the total of the following:
- Net earned revenues from the staging of live music events (in any location); and
- Any other earned revenues from music-related business activities, including

Funding Levels:

Successful applicants are eligible to receive up to \$500,000 (\$250,000 maximum per category) on an annual basis.

Process: omdc.on.ca

3.3 Vendor Strategy

Food

Festival should develop a comprehensive marketing e-Brochure to attract unique food vendors and allow for a selection process instead of accepting each applicant:

Use festival attendee research to:

- promote attendees demographics and potential for vendors who may not be typical summer roadshow variety
- for last year vendors... show delivery deficiencies, or appetite for different themes

Arts & Crafts

Shopping and perusing goods at festivals can, with certain demographics, become the overriding draw to attend.

- Create food competition from local chefs: promote their restaurants, program competitive fun
- Create a theme each year with a unique (local) food type.... mushrooms, pumpkins
- Communicate to craft vendors the theme of repurposing.. stay environmentally current
- Shopping... reputation for vendor quality can sometimes surpass draw of entertainment programming.

CURRENT TRENDS AND RESEARCH

IS FOOD THE NEW MUSIC?

GASTRONOMIC 'YOUTH QUAKE' IS OCCURRING

PEOPLE DEFINE THEMSELVES BY THE UNIQUE FOOD THEY CONSUME

FESTIVALS ARE BECOMING THE EXPERIMENTATION GROUND AND INTRODUCTION TO INTERESTING FOOD

FOOD TRUCKS ADD AUTHENTICITY TO FESTIVAL OFFERING 'LOWBROW FOODS TURNED Highbrow'

CHEEZ WHIZ/VELVEETA GOURMET BURGERS

CAROLINA BURGER, POTATO CHIPS, CRUNCHIFIED BURGER MEATBALL SANDWICHES

SURF/TURF BURGERS

ARTISANAL PRODUCT SOURCING, LOCAL FOODS

VENDORS SERVE AS BOTH A PROGRAMMING ELEMENT AND A FUNDING SOURCE

Pop-up phenomenon

It is well known that the retail industry has been flooded by the **pop-up store**; one that accesses empty storefronts created by lease – breaking retailers who have failed to achieve projected sales. The pop-up retailer assumes very little risk...sells typically a trending product at highly discounted prices... and creates most of its clientele through the typical social channels such as FB, Twitter, Four Square.

The pop-up store is not particularly relevant to the festival operator, however what has become the latest trend in Ontario and one that has taken the USA by storm in all major cities over the past couple of years, is the mobile retailing truck. The Food truck began the craze by delivering gourmet food created by burgeoning chefs to street corners in cities at lunch time. This concept has now bred a retail trend to sell willing urbanites a host of products which can be easily distributed, priced below traditional storefronts, and communicated with 'just in time' precision through social channels.

- food
- fashion
- flowers
- personal care

Fashion Truck Canada: defined by the tag line - 'Great style just doesn't fall off the back of a truck every day' delivers trendy clothing to women on the street throughout Toronto.

Pursuit: located in Atlantic Canada is a roving fashion store on wheels which drops into communities with willing customers awaiting its arrival.

Food trucks currently roam cities delivering gourmet offerings from:

- Asian fusion
- Unique breakfast
- Sumptuous desserts
- Ostrich hamburgers

The relevance to festivals is that the mobile food, fashion, or jewelry trend is one that will be a key element of vendor programming for any festival which wishes to offer unique products that may not exist within their community. Recognizing that the world of food or fashion trucks is one that revolves around the social media communication and GPS technology; festivals should be communicating their interest in attracting this group of rapidly growing entrepreneurs to their weekend festivals.

There is an obvious fit for mobile retailers to utilize the festival network to provide a customer base throughout the summer period.

Vendor Evaluation

To monitor and assess the success of the vendor program, maintain a database of all vendors who have participated, and conduct a simple 5-6 question on-line survey (post-festival) to acquire opinions on the issues and successes of the vendor section.

- Was the servicing adequate?
- Was the space provided sufficient and meet their needs?
- Was their participation profitable?
- If not, was it a factor of too much competition for same product, or attendance levels?
- Are vendor fees higher/ about the same as comparable festivals in the region ?
- Suggestions for next year?



Programming

4. Programming the Festival

Any festival is certain to succeed or fail based on the consistency of its programming and the authenticity of its theme including its delivery from entertainment through to vendor quality. However, festivals, which rely primarily on local community support as a base of attendance, should consider a cause in the form of a local charity to bind the festival to the community.

A local cause in the form of support for needy families, or fund-raising for a particular charity that resonates with the community will add an element of emotion to the decision to attend and spend at a festival. Clearly, people are typically well aware of the charities within their communities; a festival that can personalize the cause, particularly with a person/family who requires an element of fund-raising to get back on their feet, will have offered another element drawing people to their event.

Most important, the festival provides a way to leverage its community attendance to give back to the community in which it operates.

CURRENT TRENDS AND RESEARCH

**ESTABLISH A CAUSE: CHARITY = EMOTION
= REASON TO TRAVEL**

**AUTHENTIC PROGRAMMING...
COWS/ART/WINE/CANOES**

MUSIC DRAWS VISITORS

PROGRAM FOR 2 DISTINCT AUDIENCES

**COMEDY IS FASTEST GROWING GENRE
WITH UNDER 30**

**SHOULD DAY STRENGTH ... DEVELOP O/N
MARKET**

Authenticity

Authenticity attracts and, more importantly, keeps local and visiting attendees coming back over a period of time. Ontario's Southwest has an abundance of agricultural heritage which may be offered as unique to an extremely large urban population that rarely experiences such opportunities to connect with the land or livestock.

Music

Music consumed in a festival setting is an exploding phenomenon due to the complete transformation of the music industry over the past ten years. The May-October festival season affords the performing bands to market themselves in a way, which was once done in the more lucrative large venue concert halls. The economics have driven most bands to the burgeoning festival venue for recouping revenues lost to on-line access to their music, which supported them in the past. Arguably, the fastest growing element of 3+ hour visitation comes from the music festivals, particularly with respect to the under 30 generation without children.

Consider Multiple Demographics

One of the more obvious factors with programming festivals lies in the need to target two distinct demographic categories, recognizing that a typical 3 day festival model allows for completely different audiences from one night to the other. For instance, a festival that targets a younger demographic with a brand name performer on Saturday night, can utilize a completely different entertainment experience on the Friday night or Sunday pm program.

Comedy

An entertainment genre that has moved from marginal to mainstream over the past decade, particularly fuelled by television exposure is that of the stand-up comedian. Festivals typically have not utilized this form of programming due to the acoustic issues surrounding an outdoor venue, however improvements in audio technology have fostered significant growth in comedy performances, particularly on a secondary night.

Any festival targeting the tourist should be structuring its programming around a method to guide the festivalgoer to an overnight stay,. Considering that the typical festival focuses its biggest name entertainment on a Saturday night, it is logical that it must also provide that same demographic with a marketable Sunday program that will entice overnight stays.

Although many visitors to a festival who have driven a significant distance to attend a Saturday night performance will stay over due to the drinking/driving factor... it still behooves a festival planner to providing intriguing Sun morning activity that makes the decision to overnight easier.

Marketing

- 5.1 Positioning
- 5.2 Website
- 5.3 Community
- 5.4 Social Media
- 5.5 Tactics

5. Marketing the Festival

5.1 Positioning the Festival

A festival is a brand similar to any other product, including hotels, fixed attractions, and restaurants which require appropriate positioning and brand identity to communicate the value and strength of its offering; albeit for an event that may last only 3-4 days of a year.

Developing the right positioning for a festival is usually an outgrowth of a strategic planning or visioning process by festival organizers who are in a position to best understand the DNA of their event, and who can make the necessary adjustments to programming that supports the overall look, touch, and feel of the festival.

Positioning differentiates festivals from each other in terms of attributes which are meaningful to customers, and which give the festival a competitive market advantage.

Crafting festival positioning may be described as the way an attendee would define the most important attributes experienced at your event relative to competing festivals around the region.

Who is attending, and who is not? In other words: *What niche are we trying to fill?* What makes us **different** and how can we seize upon our unique qualities to market our programming and vendors.

The intrinsic motives for attending festivals include dimensions such as:

- Escape from personal pressures
- Self-esteem
- Family togetherness
- Event/entertainment novelty
- Bonding within a large crowd
- Community pride

Two elements are required to develop the positioning of a festival whether it's in its first or twentieth year of operation:

A simple vision of what the festival can be from the perspective of:

- a. Timing and duration
- b. Revenue size
- c. Quality of programming
- d. Reach beyond the local community
- e. Level of vendor products and food offered
- f. Target attendee be it family, adult singles under/over 35

A value proposition which defines specifically what a festival attendee will experience, spend money against, and, most important, enjoy at their age level. This may be a one line statement which conveys to a person why they would spend a day at your festival; one that allows the marketing and communications people to develop their story to the festival visitor.

This one-liner should compare the festival's key programming and environment features while emphasizing its differentiation to other experiences that can be enjoyed in the same community or region. One of the most famous festivals in North America offers a very simple, understated value proposition. The strategy behind this festival has always been tied to promoting a relatively small Pasadena metropolis amidst a huge state recognized as a global tourist draw.

Tournament of Roses Festival

'Showcasing the abundance of fresh flowers, even in the midst of winter, offers a mirror to Pasadena's charm'

Support for the positioning of a festival

Develop a persona, an attitude for the festival

1. An arts or music festival should utilize its messaging and website visuals to draw in a customer who is looking to invest nothing more than a day of their leisure time... avoid being bland and conservative in presenting the features of your event.

2. A community festival should consider supporting a local cause; one that will support people's desire to share a small part of their wallet knowing that the festival stands for something... the more local & personal the cause... family in severe distress..the more draw of the event.
 - An emotional charity- family in community
 - Civic greening – item that all can own
 - Kid's sports/music – contribute to a overseas trip for group
3. A festival that has been in existence for a long time may require its outward image to be interrupted
 - Change the visuals
 - Look at promoting with a revitalized tag line
 - Establish a spokesperson who can represent a new start

It's key to realize that affecting interest in a festival through a strategic change in messaging is much easier to do than changing the programming of a 'stale' event which has offered a consistent programme for years

4. Let the past attendees position your festival for you... highlight the tweeters/ bloggers on site... the most important messages describing the value of your festival come from the 'buyers' not the 'sellers. Acquiring quick snippets from current festival customers each year, and posting on web throughout the year, is the surest way to achieve the image that you require to position your event for success.

5.2 Website

The window to marketing your festival or event is clearly the website: a festival's positioning, value proposition, programming, participant reviews, photo library, and vendor/entertainment applications all reside and are communicated through this very central location.

CURRENT TRENDS AND RESEARCH

STORY TELLING

RETHINK MAKE-AND-SELL MARKETING TO SENSE-AND-RESPOND MARKETING

VISUAL IMPACT OF THE EXPERIENCE

PHOTOS OF AUDIENCE ENJOYING KEY ACTIVITIES

BRANDING TAKES PREDOMINANCE - CREATE AN ATTITUDE

ADJUST MARKETING MONOLOGUE TO CUSTOMER DIALOGUE

AUTHENTICITY OF THEME: DON'T SELL WHAT YOU DON'T OWN

ESTABLISH A VALUE PROPOSITION WHICH PERMEATES ALL COMMUNICATIONS

Common elements missing in Festival websites reviewed in Ontario's Southwest:

General

Visuals of audience during different programming elements through duration of festival

Stated upfront vision statement, value proposition & brand persona of festival

Attendee or visitor research formatted to tell a story about the festival's success.. demographics / key positive elements coming from research

Communicate authenticity of the theme, food, artisans, in order to set festival apart from surrounding 'ordinary' events or attractions

with which the festival will compete during a certain calendar period.

Social photo-sharing section where attendees control messaging on festival behalf, **not** the festival staff

Off-season

- Information such as potential programming changes, prior season attendee reviews
- Community benefit story... economic impact or other attributes, charities supported
- Communicate coming year's dates ... Revealing other events planned within 25 miles of festival community location - within same 3-4 day range
- Promote the community tourism attractions, restaurants and hotel offerings during this down time when not as much to offer on website due to lack of confirmed programming.

Storytelling

Selling the features of a festival on the website requires an approach that breaks through the clutter that typically exists for a browser who has shown enough interest in the event to visit the site.

First step clearly involves visuals: particularly of the festival grounds, main programming theme, and of the audience engaged with all elements of the festival activity.

Secondly, a story of the event can be constructed to engage someone to connect with the message that you wish to convey. A sell message replete with a number of information pieces is no longer sufficient to sustain interest in a person quickly browsing a site. Customer emotional involvement in the festival through social media and web content storytelling is the current method employed to gain attention from a prospective attendee of your festival.

Blogging and social media channels in addition to the website are the modern day tools for building a storytelling marketing strategy. The goal is to include a mix of branding fundamentals with the basics of fiction writing. A story about the festival should have a beginning, middle and an end, but also be rooted in honesty and transparency with respect to your festival experience.

Festival brand storytelling requires that you create characters your audience will like and cheer for, which doesn't mean fictional characters. A festival storytelling strategy can select interesting tidbits from the following areas to illuminate the festival experience and better market the product to a person browsing a web site. Stories about:

- people who visit your festival and have had a unique experience
- a few vendors who've created an interesting product, or have unique backgrounds
- the trials/tribulations of the entertainer's road to success
- backgrounder on a face-painter and how she turned a fun hobby into a summer business that

involves travel around the province.

- Story on a volunteer who works for the festival and has an interesting day job or upbringing in another culture.

A couple of methods to tell a story, which has a continuous run, and keeps a viewer returning to your site:

Dear Diary: This type of content is great if you're keeping a running storyline throughout the year or, at least, during the 3 months prior to the festival date. It is simple to set up a blog in a diary-friendly format.

Story in Pictures: another approach is to focus on visuals to tell a story and market the festival... slideshows with captions are an easy way to convey the message and engage the browser.

The interview: Create a Q&A with an individual that provides a fresh voice on your site and highlights personalities associated with the festival.



5.3 Community Focus

The primary step taken by organizers to promote their festival begins in the local community; simply because the greatest value of your event is bestowed upon the residents and businesses who can best benefit from its activities. It is key to understand the value that your festival brings to the community, and to use these selling points in all messaging delivered locally throughout the year:

- Strengthening community identity and spirit
- Providing a venue for local artists and artisans to showcase and sell their products
- bring an awareness and appreciation of the culture and heritage of the community
- help to stimulate & improve the local economy
- acquaint the local and outside community to the unique opportunities within your community



All economic impact studies conducted on behalf of festivals have/ will reflect that the more involved local people and suppliers are in terms of provision of services, food, beverages, and

attractions, the greater the economic benefits to the region. The revenues received by local vendors, artisans, craftspeople, restaurateurs, hoteliers and innkeepers may make the difference between an average and a great financial month on their statements.

Festivals and events create impacts that go well beyond what can be measured in economic terms. They contribute to the quality of life across a community, providing unique activities and events, building awareness of diverse cultures and identities, and acting as a source of community pride.

All of the above should be effectively communicated through a town, city, or region via releases to all media outlets, including the local seat of government.

Key Opportunities to promote festivals locally:

- establish a locally respected political or business spokesperson for the festival to be the voice of the festival, possibly on a long-term basis... or change each year
- as previously identified, establish a local fund-raising cause which benefits a : family or group of people in distress, an environmental opportunity, a kid's program that requires additional funding. Out-of-town visitors will, as well, view this type of cause in a positive manner which supports the reputation of the event.
- Find a method by which local businesses can promote themselves in a cost-effective manner...
 - Restaurant bake-offs
 - Corporate bed race competition by local bank branches
 - Home Improvement Day.... All services involved in renovation, landscape, retail hardware etc are provided space to exhibit at a 'friendly' rate

... Though these examples fall into the programming category, the existence of such provides buzz within the community leading up to the festival, and serves as a useful marketing tool driving local involvement.

5.4 Social Outreach

It is no secret in 2014 that social media offers the most obvious way to promote a festival, due to the simple fact that festival attendance is all about sharing music or culture with friends and bringing people together.

Social media has become a critical component for promoting the event and inviting festival - goers to participate before, during, and after the festival. The trick is to activate the user content to bring 'connected' people together at your event.

CURRENT TRENDS AND RESEARCH

SEARCH STRATEGY IS FIRST PRIORITY

YOU TUBE IS THE FACE OF FESTIVAL SELL

SOCIAL = SHARING FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE

SHARING: PHOTO/OPINIONS BETTER THAN ADVERTISING

DEVELOPING THE FESTIVAL ADVOCATES (SOCIAL BLOGGERS, TWITTER)

FACILITATE USER CONTENT: FB/TWITTER LIKES, FOLLOWERS, INSTAGRAM, PINTEREST

WEBSITE SERVES AS THE RESPOSITORY IN WHICH ALL OF THIS RESIDES

In past years, the marketing mind-set has been a **command-and-control** approach that relies on selling to passive customers whose demands and perceptions can be influenced and manipulated. Anyone marketing today, needs to evolve to a **connect- and-collaborate** mind-set that ascertains the organization collaborates with customers to create, deliver, and share.

Why Social media:

- a. Increases awareness of festival
- b. Broadens reach when coupled with traditional/digital advertising
- c. Supports Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- d. Increase web views
- e. Empowers supporters/fans of the event to become ambassadors

How to Start:

- Incorporate into existing marketing and PR activity
- Listen to what's being said
- Find the right executer from within festival environment
- Before creating a Facebook page, launching a Twitter stream, designing a social contest, or any other social media tactic is to figure out what your event's biggest draw is. Is it a big-name band? A well known chef or winemaker? A celebrity appearance? A landmark piece of art?
- Keep the conversation going pre – during - post event. A mix of Facebook, Twitter, social contests, viral video, mobile check-in services

A few key areas to attract attention to your festival:

- Use QR codes on posters advertising your event, allowing mobile users to quickly scan the codes to get more information on tickets, venue, headliners, and more. These codes can also lead people to your social sites, so they can join in on the conversation. Once at the event, QR codes posted around the venue can offer attendees a chance to keep the conversation going through promotions, offers, and social links.
- Before creating a Facebook page, launching a Twitter stream, designing a social contest, or any other social media tactic is to figure out what your event's biggest draw is. Is it a big-name band? A well known chef or winemaker? A celebrity appearance? A landmark piece of art?
- During the festival, host a virtual info booth on the festival's Facebook and Twitter pages – giving festival-goers with smartphones access to all the info they needed while they were at the show. Need to know which entry gates have the shortest lines?

- Ensure the content you create is highly shareable – music, videos, contests, games, giveaways, fun information about the headline stars....make it easy to share via “share this” buttons. Incent people to share content ..ie if a fan shares the festival page with 30 friends, give them a discount on their tickets
- One way to create shareable experiences at a festival is to host a social tent at the event. Inside the tent, festival - goers could take photos with friends and instantly upload them to Facebook. Encourage everyone to tag each other in photos.
- Add a mobile component to any social media promotion for a festival . Mobile check-in apps like Foursquare can be used before and during the event to drive buzz and encourage sharing.



How to execute social:

- Picking a platform, is a strategy unto itself. Platforms are communication tools.
 - **Spotify** to share playlists prior music festival
 - **Twitter** during festival

- **Pinterest** to capture audience and street style of the experience
- **Vine** is a mobile service that lets you capture and share short looping videos. Similar to Tweets, the quick 6 sec video requires creativity in a short framework. A festival can inexpensively share 6 sec clips of a range of activities throughout the event, particularly focusing on engaged festival participants
- Picking a **hashtag** is about finding a balance between length and originality
 - Start with something memorable
 - Keep it brief, must fit within 140 characters with a message
 - No need to put a calendar year as it typically loses traction after the event... people see it as temporary
- Event guests will feel compelled to post on behalf of your festival when they see:
 - Eye-catching décor
 - unique products
 - unusual entertainment
 - great shots of kids having fun
- The festival planner's goal is to make it easy for people to use social tools and then make them feel really good about it. Getting 're-Tweeted' at an event can become a real big deal for some people.

Identifying social manager/conversation builders:

- Run student competition for digital support role, targeting local community colleges or technology programs.
- Advertise on festival blog for a couple of on-site young people to carry conversations on-site during the festival.
- Volunteer (no budget) possibility for students who require high profile activity for resume building.

5.5 Tactics

The impact that festivals & events have on overnight visitation is becoming more and more evident as the huge pockets of urban population in Ontario and Michigan look for 'no fuss', less expensive 2 day drives which can be accomplished with little planning. In an area such as Ontario's Southwest, where fewer blockbuster attractions or festivals are available in comparison to those within Ontario's 'Golden Triangle'; the notion of promoting clustered events or activities within a 2-3 day period is key.

The advantages of festivals and special events are demonstrated more explicitly in rural or smaller city settings, where the entertainment or artisan offering stands out as a unique opportunity to experience value with less hassle, congestion, or cost than that of major urban centres.

Festivals also provide free marketing and advertising for local businesses as visitors talk about their enjoyable experiences when they go back home. If visitors post comments and photos about their experiences on Facebook or other social media, so much the better. The economic benefits of successful festivals ripple throughout a local economy—affecting tourism and non-tourism- related businesses alike.

1. It starts with the Search

- Connect your festival to regional activities to attract a browser who may not have begun their research looking for a festival
- Tag your festival to other attractions, restaurants, hotels that may be part of a visitor's search without knowledge of the presence of a local festival
- **Geotargeting** shows your marketing messages to potential customers in a selected geographic location
- During the pre- festival period you can use Google Adwords to target festival-goers where they live.. ie GTA, Niagara region with location targeting allowing the message to appear for people in these locations

2. Targeting the 401 'Passive Explorer'

- Festivals located throughout Ontario's Southwest have a potential customer driving through their region each weekend from May –October identified in this document as a 'passive explorer'. Such a person or family is prepared to exit the highway for the purpose of exploring shops, attractions or festivals without a specific destination in mind.
- Utilizing a **geofence** in festival marketing (virtual perimeter around a location) enables marketers to send text or push notifications on an opt-in basis to mobile devices that enter or leave the defined area. *Rogers Alerts* is a mobile phone app that allows people to receive SMS messages from retailers when in a particular location.
- An obvious location for geo-fencing in this region is the OnRoute travel centres which are filled with quick stop travelers of many intentions, including the passive explorer. Eight locations exist between Toronto and Windsor which include Ontario travel kiosks to feed and, in certain locations, to support the itinerant traveler with tourism information.

3. Promote the 'Festival Trail'

- Best opportunity to attract the attention of day trippers or travelers through your region is to connect the festivals and other local attractions that have common timing over a 3 day period.
- Bundling of other festivals or sporting, culture events is the first step to expand the potential *for* attracting the interest of an overnight traveler to Southwest Ontario
- Although festivals within a broad region operating over a similar week may see themselves as competitors, the opportunity to serve up a viable 'road trip' with 2-3 options will create greater recognition to a potential visitor who is browsing the web.
- Options that exist today within Ontario's Southwest such as:
 - Caledonia – Port Dover – Aylmer where one can leisurely visit Music in the Park, Art in the Park, and a Corn fest all in a 2 days period Aug 15-17 weekend

Alternatively, selecting and partnering with a fixed attraction within a one hour drive from your festival location is an easier method, in that the attraction is not a temporary event, and typically has a larger marketing reach

4. Programming

- Any festival can help itself enhance its overnight visitor activity by pairing strong shoulder day programming with the main Saturday draw. The shoulder days of Friday and Sunday need to be viewed from a programming standpoint as providing the festival attendee with strong options for Friday night/Saturday morning and more typically Saturday night blockbuster attraction with Sunday morning offerings that provide a strong reason for someone to stick around for another day.

5. Homecoming

- The previously mentioned notion of 'Homecoming' themes are well-suited to attracting overnight visitation due to the obvious option for people to reconnect the next morning over brunch with old acquaintances. Gaining access to university and college newspapers and bulletins targets an obvious group at low cost. Additionally, focus should be spent on local and regional long-standing corporations and manufacturing plants which are equally inexpensive methods to convey news of a 'homecoming' theme at your festival.

6. Traditional Media

'Has not yet retired'

Start with a **Press Release** including:

- a. NEWS RELEASE typed at the top of the page so that the editor or writer knows what you're promoting
- b. Indicate if the information is for immediate release or for release at a later time
- c. Date your releases and type the name of your festival, followed by all contact info and the name of a contact person on the top right side of the release

- d. The body of your release should begin with a catchy or provocative headline that describes the festival in a way that will make a newspaper journalist want to read further. ... " *TV personality Jane..... will lead the mile-long parade through our streets to kick off our celebration of the Children's Art Festival on June 12"*
- e. Followed by Where, When, Who, How all double-spaced and as concise as possible

Local print media is the first place a festival media buyer visits to attain a VIK (Value in Kind) sponsorship to ensure that the event will receive good coverage within the community... in return festivals can offer a host of on-site profile for the local newspaper, including exclusive interviews of performing talent . There should be no obvious reason to spend hard media \$\$ within the community in either newspaper or radio if located in a community where a sufficient number of outlets exist to communicate coming events.

Community newspapers in large suburban target markets (Metro Detroit, Toronto) may make sense from a media buy standpoint, particularly if one wishes to promote a major music event beyond digital channels. These publications are less expensive, have fairly loyal readership, and offer the ability for a (2 week) buy prior to event to be noticed at a decent ROI.

HLT Advisory Inc.

HLT is widely recognized as one of Canada's leading hospitality, leisure and tourism industry advisory firms. HLT was formed in 2005 by Lyle Hall and Rob Scarpelli. Prior to the creation of HLT, Lyle was Managing Director/Partner of KPMG's National Hospitality and Leisure practice area and Rob was Managing Director/Partner of PricewaterhouseCoopers' National Hospitality and Leisure practice area. Both Lyle and Rob left their respective partnerships and formed HLT Advisory Inc., which now includes a total of eight professional staff. HLT's core competencies are in the following sectors:

- Tourism and Attractions – HLT provides strategic planning, operations, market analysis and marketing support to major attractions and events as well as assisting the public sector in the development of tourism marketing and investment plans and Request for Proposal processes.
- Convention Centres – HLT has unsurpassed qualifications in the meeting and exhibition industry including preparation of market substantiation assignments for almost every major Canadian convention centre/tradeshow facility (and corresponding economic impact assessments) opened over the past two decades (as well as several in the planning stages).
- Lodging – HLT has worked across Canada, and internationally, for a cross section of hotel companies focusing on development, marketing and operations planning for major mixed-use projects.
- Gaming – HLT has played a significant role in the growth and development of the Canadian gaming industry through involvement, in one fashion or another, with almost every major land-based gaming project in every region of Canada, over the past two decades.
- Sports and Entertainment Facilities - HLT has worked on numerous spectator and community sports/entertainment venues, preparing market assessments and business plans as well as providing acquisition and related transaction services.

For more information please visit www.hlta.ca

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