

Top Ten Tips for working with a venue's marketer



When you bring your show to a venue, on a split or a hire basis, someone at the venue will be in charge of marketing it. Here are Marketing Manager Alex Coke's top tips to help that relationship go smoothly.

1. **Remember that they care.**

They care about selling tickets to your show as much as you do. You're on the same side.

2. **Manage expectations.**

Learn what each of you expects the other to do, to market the show. Ask if they have an activity plan for your show, or look at your contract and see if activity plan is listed there. Work out as early as possible what both parties need to do. If one of you expects the other to do something, there will be bad feeling if that doesn't happen.

3. **It's a partnership.**

Unless specified in your contract, one party should not be doing all the work: it should be shared between you. The shows which do the best are shows which have marketing action on both sides, venue and company.

4. **Trust them.**

They know their turf. They will have relationships with the local press. If they give you advice on your local activity, take it. If they ask you to consider a change to your copy or your poster, give it some thought.

5. **Meet deadlines.**

The sooner they have your information, the sooner your show can go on sale, or out to the press. If you don't send posters until two weeks before the show, don't expect your audience to be as big as it could be.

6. **Remember that you are not the only one.**

A good venue marketer gives the same amount of love and attention to each show they are publicising. This means that their time is split between lots of different events – you won't be the only show that month, or even that week. They are doing everything they can.

7. **The more information they have, the more effective they can be.**

Rehearsal images, quotes from the show, a trailer, a list of target audiences – all of these are hugely useful for marketing, and can be used to interest press, target groups and spread the word on social media. Without them, getting interest is hard.

8. **Remember that press is down to luck.**

Sending out a press release does not guarantee newspaper coverage. Regional newspapers have ever-diminishing arts sections, and getting an event into a paper without a local connection (did you go to the nearby University? Were you at school here?) is becoming increasingly difficult. The marketer has done everything they can by

sending out your release, and chasing it – whether or not it gets picked up is out of their hands.

9. There are other factors to consider.

If your show isn't selling, marketing is just one of the reasons that may be the case. If your show is on the same night that England are playing in the World Cup, you may have a problem. Ditto major festivals, news stories, and political events. Different places have different audiences - some shows sell well in Bedford, but poorly in Banbury, or vice-versa. Sometimes it can just be the wrong show at the wrong time, in the wrong place.

10. Ask for help.

Are you stuck? Don't know where to start? Talk to the marketer. They work with a lot of companies – chances are, they will be able to offer some advice or support. We are generally very nice people, so please don't be afraid to ask for help.