

EVENT MARKETING PLAN & IDEAS

Marketing plays a large role in the success of any event. This resource sheet highlights some important considerations and offers ideas to set your event up for success. It is intended provide valuable information to help you get started and is by no means exhaustive. You will find options to fit within any budget; we encourage you to explore other possibilities independently, depending on your target audience and budget.

Know your Audience

Who are you targeting with your event?

This is an important first step for any event marketing plan. The clearer you are about this, the more likely you will be to create an event and marketing strategy that is appealing to them.

Establish a Budget

How much money will you dedicate to marketing your event?

It is important to establish a budget to ensure that the marketing funds are sufficient to meet your event goals and that the marketing strategies you choose fall within the available budget.

Create a Marketing Plan

How will you reach your target audience?

Your marketing plan should be designed to reach and attract the audience that will be most interested in attending your event. The size, scope and budget will influence the components of your marketing plan and subsequent campaign.

- **Develop a marketing strategy.** Will your event have a theme? If so, how will it be incorporated into your marketing materials? If not, what is unique and/or appealing about the event that can be used for marketing purposes?
- **Create a visual image.** Scale this piece according to your event. Establish a logo (if appropriate), colours, text styles, images, etc. and stick with them. A consistent look & feel, messaging, and quality throughout your promotional material will help your event stand out and attract your target audience.
- **Create a marketing plan.** Decide which marketing avenues you will use to promote your event and make it a success. *See below for ideas.*

Free / Low Cost Marketing Ideas

Social Media

- **Facebook Page.** If your event will happen on an annual or ongoing basis, creating a Facebook Page for the event can be a quick and easy way to get the word out. The organizing committee should then invite friends to the event and ask them to invite their friends.
- **Facebook Event.** If yours is a one-time event, or you're not sure whether or not it will happen again, creating an Event from within a personal Facebook page is another way to get the word out to friends, and friends of friends.
- **Twitter.** Tweet about your event. Identify a hashtag for your event (i.e. #yourevent); include it in your tweets & facebook posts to increase exposure.
- **Instagram.** Take pictures of people, marketing materials, places etc. related to your event and post them on Instagram.

Email

- Email family and friends with event details & ask them to share it with others.
- Partnering with an organization(s) that is connected to your target audience to promote your event through their email list can be very effective. Be sure to adhere to the following anti-spam laws: <http://bit.ly/7-1-14anti-spam>

Word of Mouth

Sharing information and details about your event with people you know, or interact with, is another good way to get the word out. Ask them to tell others.

Other Marketing Ideas

Printed Material*

Creating printed material such as flyers, brochures, posters, etc. that adhere to the established visual image for your event can be an effective way to get the word out. They can be displayed or distributed (by hand or mail) in the area(s) that the event is happening and in an area(s) that you are hoping to attract attendees from. It is a good idea to have someone proofread material before it is printed & distributed. Refer to the 'Event Poster Locations in Hope' resource at <http://hopebc.ca/calendar/event-resources/> for popular display locations in Hope.

- **Flyers** are best for small scale marketing, if you have a small area to cover, or if you are on a limited budget. A flyer is usually a standard 8 ½" x 11" (A4) size. Flyers are a relatively inexpensive way to get information out to a large number of people.

- **Invitations** can be a cost effective and compelling marketing tool. Eye-catching invitations on thicker stock make a good impression and designing as 4 per 8.5" x 11" sheet helps keep costs down. Consider hand delivering where possible and personalized mailing if delivery by hand isn't feasible.
- **Postcards** are similar to invitations in that they are a great way to visually represent and spread the word about your event. Again, heavier stock and colour add to the impact, but also the cost. Deliver by hand or mail out.
- **Brochures** are a helpful option for events during which information will be referred to again and again (i.e. multi-day, multi-activity events). They are usually printed on standard paper & folded, and are more expensive to print.
- **Posters** are larger than flyers & brochures and generally hold a strong visual appeal. They can be a great way to grab attention and attract people to your event. Posters are printed in colour on heavier paper, which makes them more expensive than other printed materials.

** Be sure to include the name, location, date, time, cost (if any), an image, a write-up/agenda, and any other pertinent information on printed material (as appropriate and as space permits) to clearly communicate event details and highlight why your target audience would want to attend.*

Online Advertising

Identify locations that your target audience is likely to visit and create a message that will appeal to them. Costs vary depending on the option(s) you select.

Newspaper and/or Magazines

Ads in key publications can significantly broaden your reach. This tends to be a more costly option; the cost will vary, depending on ad size and publication.

Website

You may choose to create a website for your event, or create a page(s) within an existing website through which to promote the event. This can be a costly option, which should be explored before making any decisions.

For more information, contact:

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AdvantageHOPE

AdvantageHOPE, Hope's Economic Development Agency, is committed to building community & prosperity in the Hope area.