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## Helpful hints and tips : Organizing and Running an event: version 4/08

Events are fun, but **can** be hard work organizing one, as well as potential lasting problems long after the event has finished. On this page, there are 6 quick steps to think about when organizing an event. Although some may seem basic, from my over 19 years in the commercial entertainment industry and from my 11 years in the event management ministry, I have seen many bad events who haven't followed these basic steps. We will look into what goes into organizing a **successful** event, for the punters and every one involved. For argument sake, let's just say you are wanting to run a band event for youth. (we will use this example, because it's a very common event, but is easy to go wrong—if you don't think first). I always welcome to be what ever support I can to Christian based outreach events, so if you would like help to get your event 'off the ground' please contact me.

### Step 1

Firstly, you need to figure out what kind of event you are wanting to do, for whom and what are you trying to achieve. You need to make sure that the kind of event is suitable / will be well attended for the age / demo graph of your audience. Also how much you will charge at the door and if you are charging, how much will you pay and who will you pay.

### Step 2

Next, you need to get a support crew happening. (obviously it can be done without one, but a lot harder). You need to share your vision and get others on your side (even just to eventually promote). If the event is a fun 'break even event' regarding finances and with a good cause. Then it should be easy to get helpers.

### Step 3

In this step, you may have to go backwards and forwards a few times, between the performers and the venue etc. It is obviously important when asking a band to perform, that you have a date and venue already penciled in. when looking at venues, check out how many toilets, how close to public transport, parking, power, stage size, kitchen (if your selling food). How long you have to set up and pack down etc. Does it have adequate sound and lighting etc. (otherwise you need to organize more). Security, How close is the venue to local houses etc (noise) When booking in your venue and acts, you need to be fully aware of your responsibilities, as well as making sure they are aware of theirs. What happens if there is damage to the venue? The band doesn't do what they say they will etc?.

### Step 4

Leading up to the event, you will need to do as much advertising as your budget allows. The local papers and radio often do free community advertising. Letterbox drops and fliers on cars as well as billboards outside the venue are usually also a good investment. On fliers, it's a good idea to have a contact phone number for any questions. Before you design your fliers/ advertising, it's a great opportunity to try your luck at getting sponsorship. Start with the people you know. A good idea is to offer the opportunity of their name on the advertising. Check all the times/ venues/ dates carefully. Keep in touch with the performers and the venue, making sure that everything is sorted and no problems have arisen.

### Step 5

The time of the event has come, every thing should be organized, so on the day, you are pretty much free to run your teams. It is very important that your crew know what they are doing. There is nothing worse than having one person (you) who knows everything so that no one can make decisions... or find you!! Especially if you are using volunteers, Make sure you have plenty of drink and food available. Its good to run to time, as kids may need to be picked up etc.

### Step 6

At the end of the event, If your event is a long one, it is good to have a separate team to come in and help 'energize' the others. There is nothing worse than having too many 'helpers' who just get in the way. This often leads to people standing around and been a distraction to the others. Watching others horse around why they work, often leads them to stop working and join in with the fun.... Which obviously means pack up takes a lot longer. Having drinks and a snack available is also very important. When pack down comes around, Make sure you clean the venue better than when you found it. If the hall is hired or even worse lent for free. It is a very bad witness to leave it for someone else to do. Any gear which was borrowed, make sure it gets returned on time by reliable people. If appropriate, ring or send a thank you letter to your team and any one who has given you donations etc. let them know how much their support has meant to you and to the event.

I cant stress enough the importance of showing appreciation to those you deal with, weather it's performers, venue organizers, printers, volunteer crew and even your punters.—even if you don't want to do it again, just think what kind of response you might have got if the person before you didn't appreciate, or even worse was negative. Make sure your appreciation is sincere and they know what it means to you for having them on the team. Trust me, you can never thank somebody too much !!

Depending on your expected crowd, they may be more trouble than you are anticipating. So in this regard, its better to know what to do BEFORE it happens. Have a good people friendly crew, crew which are there for the right reasons. Not just to 'be the man'. Make sure your security crew are clearly visible.

Hopefully some of the above has been of help. Running an event doesn't have to be hard, you just need to be organized. Don't leave things to the last moment, the longer you have, the more people can hear about it and the more support you will get. Please feel free to contact me if you would like some help or indeed if you would like to help.

Blessings Mark