

# Ten Things That Cost Nothing (or not much!)

SOUTH WEST ARTS MARKETING

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# Ten Things That Cost Nothing

## Introduction

Ten Things That Cost Nothing is one of a series of publications produced by South West Arts Marketing for South West Arts and Bristol City Council.

The guides are intended as an introduction to arts marketing and as a practical guide for artists and organisations working with very limited resources.

Further information and advice on any of the topics covered in this guide or any other issue related to arts marketing, training, audience profiling, research or regional support networks are available from South West Arts Marketing on 0117-927 6936.

**South West Arts Marketing** is an independent agency established to add value to arts marketing activity in the South West by providing strategic services and support to artists and arts organisations wishing to increase and broaden their arts audiences.

For further information about the range of support and services available contact:

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# Ten Things That Cost Nothing

Arts organisations are well aware of the need to maximise their limited resources and to ensure value for money when undertaking marketing activities.

To make sure your budget stretches as far as possible, endeavour to undertake all the relevant activities that can be done for free—or at relatively little cost—allowing your budget to be spent on other urgent items.

## 1. Listings

Most local and regional newspapers and radio stations broadcast an events diary to enable them to keep their audience informed of local events.

Ensure your organisation sends a copy of its diary of events at regular time intervals to capitalise on these broadcasts.

Try to determine the best time interval for each paper or radio station (e.g. once a week, once a month or the start of each season).

Also send a copy of the season's events to commercial listing services

e.g. Listings Ltd	PA News
17 Berner Street	66 Queens Road
London	Bristol
W1P 3DP	BS8 1RE

## 2. Press Coverage

Develop and maintain good working relationships with the local press as the value of free editorial cannot be over-estimated.

Keep a press list and make sure your contacts' names and details are kept up to date.

Make initial contact by telephone, introduce yourself and ask each newspaper and radio station how and when they would like information sent.

As well as issuing press releases on your events, look for newsy angles and good news stories in your events.

Always issue a press release after an event detailing its success and creating a sense of anticipation for the next one.

## 3. Print

Print 'blindness'; is a growing problem in the arts as there is so much of it to look at. Make sure your design is effective and encourages people to pick it up.

It also needs to be effectively distributed: think carefully about where your target audience is most likely to visit (e.g. doctors, hairdressers, shops, offices, pubs and churches).

Recruit volunteers from your organisation to distribute the print and—most importantly—to develop relationships with the outlets. Ask the volunteers to record where and how much print is distributed and suggest they go armed with their own scissors, blue-tack and Sellotape for ease and speed of putting up posters. If you leave this job to the shop-keeper, receptionist, etc it may never happen, despite the goodwill.

#### 4. Radio

Local commercial radio stations are springing up everywhere and are keen to forge links with organisations to establish their local credentials

Telephone the station to introduce yourself and your company and send an information pack as a follow-up.

Listen to the station's programme to discover where your organisations overlap in interest (e.g. competitions, reviews, magazine programmes, music type, news items) and make sure you exploit any resulting opportunities.

e.g. You may be able to offer tickets to an event as a competition prize in return for airtime.

A member of your organisation could be an interesting interviewee or reviewer.

#### 5. Co-promotions and cross-selling

Ask yourself what other activities your audience may be interested in and then make links with relevant organisations.

For example:

##### Crossover

Theatre-goers may also regularly visit restaurants, dance attenders may also take dance classes and purchase dance shoes.

##### Links

Exchange brochures and display posters. Share mailings to spread the costs. Add inserts into mailings and direct mail shots.

#### 6. Signage

If your organisation has a building is the way to it well-signed and can people easily identify where you are?

Is it clear to everyone passing what events are being staged and when?

#### 7. Brochures

If you are putting together a season brochure, make sure you have a proper design input.

Remember, it doesn't have to be produced in full colour to look good, many effective and eye-catching brochures are produced in one and two colours.

Good copy is important, as is simple effective layout and good illustrations.

Don't clutter the layout with boring or irrelevant details. Keep it simple.

#### 8. Telesales

Why not use the telephone to contact your most loyal audience with news and special offers?

This is also an effective way of keeping in touch with group bookers:

"As you are a valued customer, we want to make sure you get the seats you want so we're calling to let you know first that pantomime bookings are opening."

#### 9. Teletext

Make sure you send details of all your events to Oracle and Teletext who will include them in their listings for free.

### And Finally...

#### 10. Get yourself noticed!

Why not appear in public in costume?

Do an impromptu street performance?

Ride an elephant down the High Street?

(Remembering to check local by-laws and ask permission first, of course.)

Go on...create a stir! And have fun at the same time.