

Step 6: Do your Marketing

Marketing is about communication. The marketing behind an event can make a huge difference to the numbers that attend and the impact it has. The starting point will be to develop a marketing plan.

A **marketing plan template** is available to download at www.BridgendBites.com/Events.

Begin marketing your event as early as possible. Think back to the work you did in step 3 identifying your target audience and as soon as the event has a set topic, title, description, date and venue you are in a position to start devising a marketing campaign - a planned promotional activity over a period of time

It can be split into four components often referred to as marketing's four P's: Product, Place, Price and Promotion.

Product - Make sure that what you are offering is what your target audience is looking for.

Price - Ensure that the price is set at the appropriate level to meet with your target audience's expectations.

Place - Make sure that you are placing your marketing activity in the right places, where your target audience is likely to come across it.

Promotion - Be sure to use the right tools to promote the event including a mixture of online, broadcast, face to face and print.

This is about more than getting people to come to an event or performance; it's also about building customer loyalty, so once you've got your customers on-board, you can monitor and evaluate what they do, and communicate with them on a regular basis.

There are a number of different ways to get your event message across to your target audience and you'll need to ensure that you meet any funders' requirements on your promotional materials.

Events Calendar: Register your event with BridgendBites.com,

Flyers: Small, one or two-sided leaflets are a cheap way of distributing information and may be photocopied or printed, depending on your budget. Ask to leave your flyers at libraries, cafes, shops, supermarkets, gyms, early childhood centres, schools, doctors' and dentists' surgeries, churches, and at businesses (including your sponsors). Distribute the flyers at other events, particularly those with related themes.

Advertising leaflets: Speak to local businesses about including event information in their regular newsletters or leaflets, perhaps as part of a sponsorship package.

Posters: Design these so as to attract attention, yet contain the main information (time, date, venue, description of the event) and credit any sponsors. A4 or A3 size posters are the best size for display purposes. Smaller sized posters are easily missed. Any larger and many shops and outlets lack window or wall space to display them.

Speak directly: To groups such as church groups, Rotary, Lions, schools and business networks.

Create a website: With links to your event, competitions, performers, location, sponsors and links to social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Social Media: Social media is becoming an increasingly popular tool to market and promote events. By using social media on websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, you can promote your event by creating discussion forums and comment to create a 'buzz' surrounding the topics and speakers at your event. Activity such as blogging and additional discussion forums are valuable for post event comments, and will prolong the exposure of the event online.

Print advertising: As well as daily newspapers, consider advertising in community newspapers which will have cheaper rates. Think also about magazine advertising, particularly magazines that align with the interests of your target audience. Sponsors will sometimes help with advertising costs in return for naming recognition.

Radio: Local radio is a lively means of communicating with a local or regional market. It has the advantage of immediacy and can be used to distribute new information. Single spot and series announcements need not be expensive and can be used to generate immediate responses. In addition, 'on air' interviews can enliven radio schedules and help spread your message at no cost.

Television: Television advertising may be too expensive for the majority of events, although local television has competitive rates but with smaller audiences. If a promotional video of high technical quality has been produced it will be possible to create a 15 or 30 second advertisement from the footage using a recorded voice over to promote the event. As with radio, local television news desks are always looking for local community activity – and it's free!

Working with the media

The media can be a very effective way to get your information out to the public. The main types are:

- Print media
- Radio

- Television
- Internet

To work effectively with the media, you need to have a named contact who is able to write or speak clearly about the purpose and importance of your event and why it is of interest to your audience. Identify what points of difference your event has that the media will recognise as newsworthy and exciting. Write a number of key media releases, focusing on these points to entice the interest of reporters and try to 'drip feed' information to maintain interest.

Your media release should concisely outline the details of your event. The release can include a quote from an appropriate person to help to present the message of your event. Remember to provide that person's name and position and, if necessary, explain the relevance of the person making the statement.