

How to Promote a Festival

Promoting a festival is an important part of having a successful event. Whatever type of festival you want to promote, whether it be a music, dance, art, or food festival, the steps are similar. You need to get the word out about the...

Method 1 of 4:

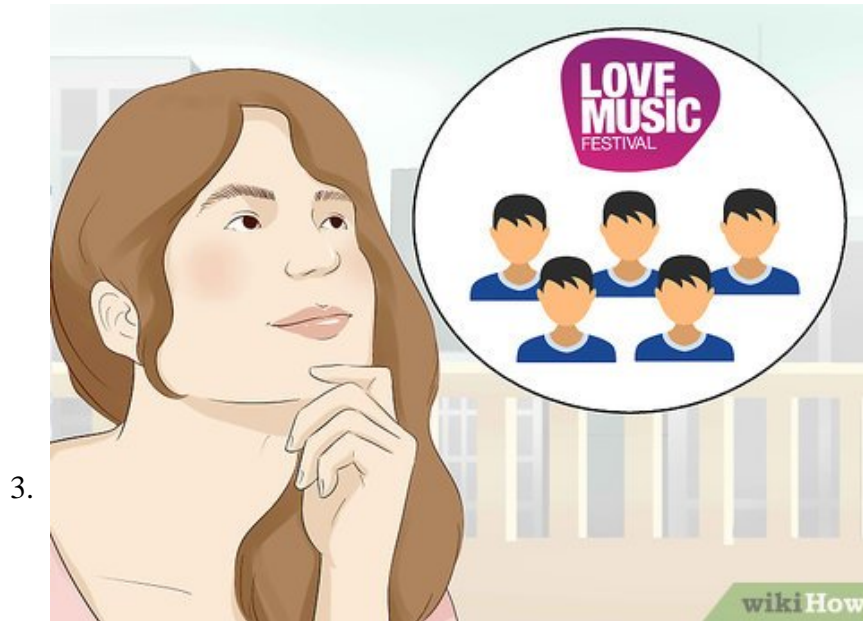
Creating a Promotion Plan



Set festival details. Before you start promoting your festival, you should have a definite date and time set for it. Ideally, the date and time would be set between a half and a full year before the actual event, depending on the scale of your festival. Knowing when the festival will occur will allow you to do more effective promotion.^[1]

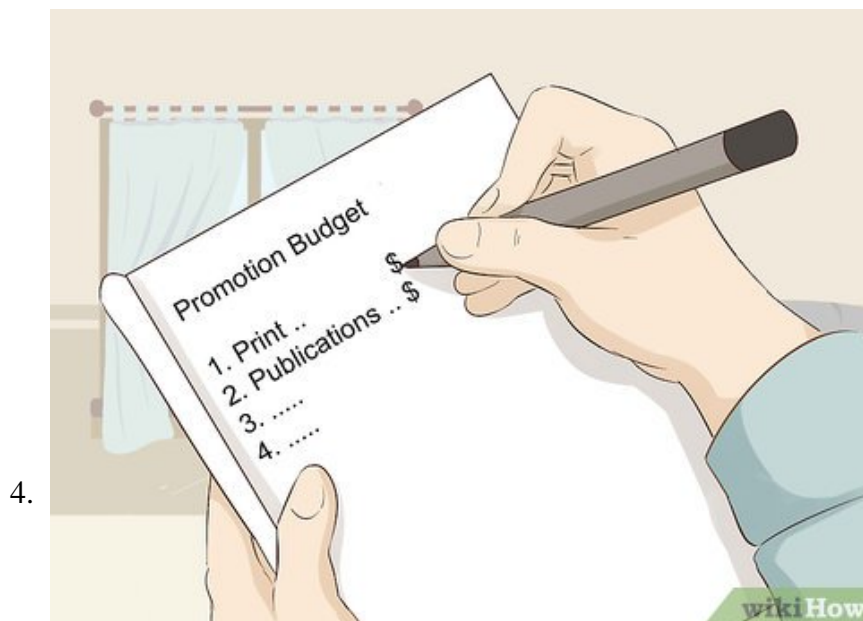
1. You do not need to have all the festival details set in stone before you start promotion. You simply need to have enough ironed out so that people will understand what type of festival it is and when they can go to it.
 2. For example, if you are planning a local drama festival, you should know when and where the festival will be, as well as what plays will be performed. However, you don't need to have the exact times of the plays when you start promotion. This can be ironed out later.
2. **Decide what kinds of promotion you will do.** Promotion for any festival should include a variety of methods of getting the word out. It can include free types of promotion, such as word of mouth and a social media campaign, as well as those that may cost money, including a website and a print campaign. These are all complementary and potentially effective ways of getting the word out about your event.

1. If you have a group of people in charge of promotion, you can divide up the types of promotion between them to break up the work.



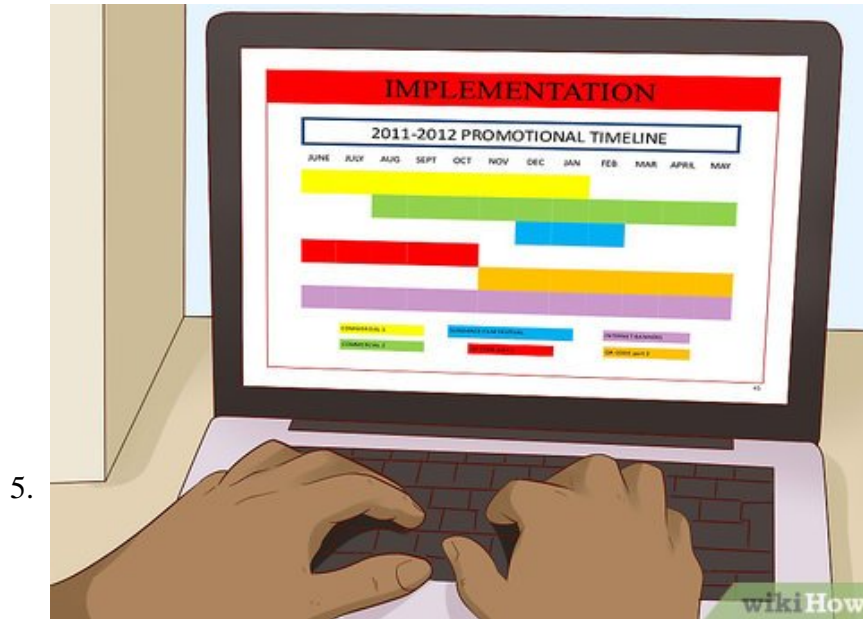
Pick your target demographic. When promoting a festival, you want to advertise it to people who will potentially go. Being very clear about your demographic will allow you to do more focused promotion and it will make your promotion more effective than generalized promotion without a specific target.

1. For example, if you are promoting a local bands music festival, it is likely that your demographic is young people. If you are promoting a classical music festival, your demographic will be older. With this difference in mind, you can use your time and resources for promotion more effectively.



Make a promotion budget. Promoting a festival takes time and resources. In order to effectively promote a festival, you need to create a budget that takes into account a variety of types of promotion. This will allow you to both use your money effectively and not spend excessive amounts of money that you don't have.^[2]

1. First you need to identify how much money you have to spend on promotions. Then you should divide that money into the various types of promotion you want to do.
2. In order to make an effective budget, you will need to do some research into how much certain types of promotion will cost. For instance, how much will online, print, and media ads cost you? Call or email local TV stations, radio stations, and publications you want to advertise in and ask them about their costs or if they promote local festivals for free in their content about local goings on.
3. Promotions is just one part of your overall festival budget.



Create a promotional timeline. In order to promote a festival effectively, you need to start promotion early, but not so early that people forget about it when the time comes. Start promoting a small festival a few months before it is set to happen. Do a few promotions to get the word out that the festival will occur at first. Then, when the festival is only a few weeks away, increase the amount of promotion you are doing.

1. Some promotional activities, such as creating a website, can be done several months before the event. Having the site online will not cost you much and will allow people to find information when they want it.
2. Paid advertisements, such as those run in local papers, should be done a few weeks in advance and up to the week of the event, so that people are sure to set the day and time aside to attend the event.
3. Starting promotion too early can also cause you to spend most of your budget early on, leaving few resources for the final push leading up to the festival.

Method 2 of 4:

Promoting the Festival Personally

1. **Use your community to promote the festival.** A lot of small festivals are put on by community groups that can get the word out through personal connections. Word of mouth promotion is an effective and free way of bolstering the attendance to your festival.
 1. For example, if you are putting on a church festival, make sure that congregants of your church spread the word about the festival to their family and friends.

2.



Make partnerships with businesses. In order to promote a festival effectively, it's a good idea to create mutually-beneficial relationships with businesses that are related to your festival's topic. These partnerships typically include trading access to your festival for promotion and goods and services from your partners. The best types of festival partners are those that share a demographic or interest in your type of festival, because you will both benefit from your partnership.^[3]

1. Your business partners will usually promote your festival in their businesses. This can be done either with print ads being showcased in the business or the festival being mentioned to the businesses' patrons.
2. For example, if you are creating a jazz music festival, try to partner with the local jazz radio station that can mention your festival on their station.
3. You could also talk to jazz music teachers and ask them to tell their students about the festival in exchange for free passes or a showcase of their students.
4. Local jazz clubs and other jazz-related businesses would also be good business in this example. In exchange for promoting your festival in their businesses, you can offer them advertising space at the festival.
5. Partnering with businesses will allow you to reach more of your demographic without spending money and it will give your festival an air of authority if every business that is involved with your festival's subject is promoting the festival itself.

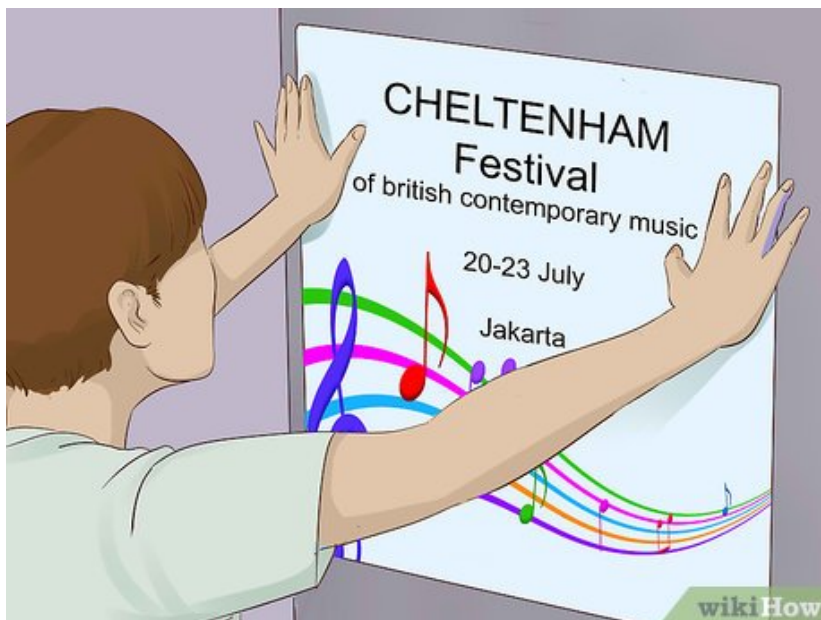
3.



Make community partnerships. Community groups, organizations, and individuals can be great assets when promoting a festival. Identify and contact people and groups that may have an interest in your festival and ask if they are interested in promoting and being involved with the festival.^[4]

1. To identify possible community partners, do an online search and ask those involved in your festival planning if they can think of anyone that might be interested.
2. For instance, if you are promoting a holiday festival, such as a Christmas festival, local singing groups and religious groups may be interested in promoting your festival free of charge if they are allowed to play a part in the actual festival.
3. Community partners can promote your festival in a variety of ways. For example, organizations and community groups can email their members about the festival and they ask members to spread the word as well. They can also be valuable assets when it comes to finding people to distributing fliers.

4.



Create fliers and distribute them. To get the word out, it is a good idea to make advertising posters and fliers that can be placed in areas where your demographic may congregate. Try to make the flier impactful by putting an image or caption on it that will grab people's attention. However, also include basic information, such as the date, time, and location of the festival.^[5]

1. For example, if you are promoting a kids music festival, put up fliers in places where kids congregate, such as libraries, toys stores, parks, and near schools. If you are promoting a film festival, put the fliers up around theaters in your town.

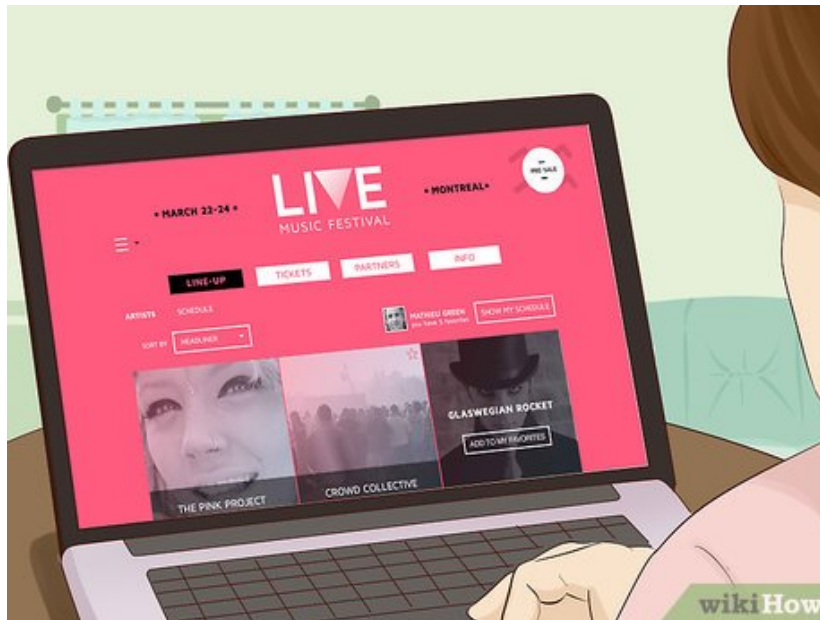


Make and distribute a variety of promotional products. In addition to more traditional fliers, products can be made that have the name of the festival on them. These products, such as hats and bags, can then be distributed in giveaways or at other events. If people then use these products in public, then become advertising for your upcoming festival. Some items that are good for advertising, cheap to have produced, and are desirable to the public include:^[6]

1. Bumper stickers
2. Hats
3. Bags
4. Buttons
5. Mugs

Method 3 of 4:

Marketing Your Festival Online



1.

Create a website for your festival. Every festival should have a website where people can find details that won't be available in advertisements and social media. This is a central point of information that you will link to in every other type of promotion. Your festival website should be both attractive and easy to use. You want people to be attracted to it visually but you also want them to easily find the information that they need.

1. Consult with a web designer to have your website built. If you have enough money in your budget to hire a professional, do that. If not, see if anyone involved with your festival has experience building websites or knows someone who would do it for free or in exchange for advertising at the festival.
 2. You can also use a website creator, such as WordPress, Wix, and Squarespace, to make your own website.
2. **Make an event page on Facebook.** Social media is a great tool for promoting a festival. However, if you simply share a post on your social media feed, many people won't get your message. Instead, you should create and share an event so more people will see it.^[7]
1. An event page can also be helpful for keeping potential festival goers updated about festival details and will remind them about the event as it draws near.



- Buy online ads.** You can buy ads on Facebook, Google, and other popular websites. These ads are relatively cheap to buy and will be targeted towards likely festival-goers in your area.^[8]
1. Facebook ads are highly customizable. For instance, you can design your ad, pick your target audience, and limit the cost so it fits your budget.
4. **Continue to post to social media as the festival approaches.** You can do update posts about the festival on Facebook and other social media platforms, such as Instagram and Twitter, up through the day of the festival. This will get last minute attendees and remind people about the event.
1. For example, the week or 2 before the festival, do an update post on social media every day. Write "Arts and Crafts Festival in One Week" as the title of the post and then give details about the festival in the body of the post.
 2. Also, remember to include a link to the festival's website so that people can easily get all of the details they need.
 3. Have everyone involved with the festival post about it on social media. The more people posting about it and sharing the event page, the bigger your social media audience will be.



5.

Develop a specific hashtag for the festival. In order to get a large audience for your updates on social media, you need to create some buzz around the festival. As more people are talking about it, it's important to create a way for others to see all the talk. One way to do this is to create a hashtag that people will use when sharing about the festival. When other people see the posts and want to find out about the festival, they can search for the hashtag and find out more information.

1. For example, if you are promoting a scary film festival you can create a hashtag like "#scaryfilmfest" or "#scaryfilmfestAustin."
2. When initially posting on social media about your event, make sure that your hashtags are on every post. This will encourage others to follow suit and include them as well.

Method 4 of 4:

Promoting the Festival in the Media

1.



Create a press release and distribute it. When you have solidified the date, time, and general schedule of the festival, create a press release with those details to local media outlets. These outlets typically include both radio stations and TV stations.

1. It is a good idea to list the who, what, when, where, why and how of your festival in your press release. These details give the media outlets enough information about the festival to make a sound bite to use.^[9]
2. Most media outlets have the email address you should send your press release to listed on their websites.
3. By sending out a press release, media outlets may choose to include your festival in their programs. For instance, a radio station may include your festival when they list activities that are occurring in your town.

2.



Do interviews on TV and the radio. Contact local TV and radio stations and tell them that you would like to talk about your festival on their programs. Many local programs search out this kind of content, as it is free for them to produce and is of interest to their listeners and viewers.

1. When doing an interview about your festival prepare beforehand by memorizing the date, time, and overview of the festival. Also have a few stories worked out before the interview, such as how the festival got its start and why you are personally involved in promoting it.



Buy advertising time and ad space. In order to get people to come to your festival, you should create ads that tell them where, when, and what your festival is about. For example, these ads can be print ads that are put in local papers and on social media.^[10]

1. At minimum, your ads should include the name of the festival, the location, the date, the time, and a web address where people can find additional details.

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