

## How to Promote a Successful Event

### Notes from a seminar by Rebecca Haas and Becca Webb of Making it as a Maker

#### **It's okay to promote yourself!**

- Great self-promotion includes you being authentic, positive, and consistent.
- Write as though you're talking to your favorite customer(s).
- Focus on the customer's experience.

#### **The marketing Rule of 7**

People need to hear about something seven times before they act on it. They forget! Think about promoting your event as a service. Talk to people as if they want to be reminded.

#### **Don't count on an organizer to promote for you.**

You need to be promoting as well.

Develop talking points for your event – what's new, different, and newsworthy?

Let people know what they can expect during a visit – **share both written details and photos**. Address any barriers by putting a positive spin on them. Use **authentic storytelling**.

**When dealing with the issue of COVID**, show people that you care about keeping them safe. Tell them that you'll be spacing out appointments, wiping down surfaces between visitors, opening windows to let in fresh air, or scheduling private visits.

Share what you're doing during the event that's value added. Is there anything besides shopping? Some ideas:

- Are you offering gift wrap?
- Is shipping available?
- Will you be having a seconds or samples sale?
- Will you be showing work that isn't available online?

Curate an event within an event (answers to these questions can be used in your social media posts):

- What else is fun to do at your location?
- What's going on in your area?
- How about nearby restaurants?
- How nearby are other towns?
- Can you create an itinerary for people to use?
- Is there someplace nearby where people can walk their dogs?

If possible, cross-promote your event with others in the area.

### Content Planning:

1. 3 – 4 weeks pre-event: create a Facebook event.
2. Write a blog post with all the details, including studio photos.
3. Send a series of 5 emails (your email list is your most powerful tool; it includes your most engaged and dedicated fans):
  - a. 1 – 2 weeks pre-event: Save-the-date/teaser email. Include the key details up front.
  - b. 24 – 36 hours pre-event: About to start/head's up. Talk about what you're doing to get ready.
  - c. Day before: Event launch - "Starts tomorrow."
    - i. Make the event the only thing discussed.
    - ii. Include a call to action.
    - iii. Make sure all photos are clickable.
    - iv. Let your photos do the talking.
    - v. Use seasonal photos if you have them.
  - d. 24 hours before ending: Last chance/last call. Creates urgency.
  - e. 3 days after event: Thank you email. Can share a testimonial.

**Social media** acts as a runway for the event launch. Write your first post 1 – 2 weeks before the event. Don't start all your posts with the direct attack (ex. I'm hosting an open studio...). Use photos, talk about your process, etc. Focus on providing value. Educate people about what they'll see. Give people information to which they can relate. Make sure to address what's in it for them.

Something that can help you plan your digital marketing is to **use a content calendar**, also known as an editorial calendar. Start from the date of your event and work backwards as you plan. Check out this article for content planning tools and resources (including calendars): <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/social-media-calendar-tools>

### **Instagram & Facebook**

You can update your Instagram profile to include the link to your event website. You can also change the bio text to mention the event. Just remember to change everything after the event (set a reminder). You can ask people to join your email list on your Facebook event. On Instagram use slideshow posts to share content. Connect Instagram to Facebook so that you can post to both platforms at the same time. You can also pay to promote your event or boost a post on Facebook, using audience targeting.

Use **Front Porch Forums** for marketing, but the focus should be less on sales and more on community outreach.

**Market the event in your email signature** by including a link to your website or FB event. Here are directions for how you create one in Gmail:

<https://support.google.com/mail/answer/8395?hl=en&co=GENIE.Platform%3DDesktop#zippy=%2Cedit-signatures%2Cremove-signatures>

### **Don't forget about the old school methods**

Postcards are great. You can use them to not only inform, but also share your website or invite people to join your email list.

### **How can you put people at ease when they arrive?**

Post pictures of where they'll be going so, they'll know they're in the right place when they arrive.

Have clear signage and pricing on all your work.

Make your studio feel more like a shopping environment.

Have people sign up for your newsletter in a guest book.

Have a raffle for email addresses. Make sure to add them to your email list before sending out your thank you email post-event.

Take pictures while the event is happening and especially take pictures of the studio with other people.

Think about how you make this a successful event for the customer.

### **Building your future transaction**

Create a way to capture their email addresses.

Give a credit to be used on a future purchase.

Have a list of other shows, events, open studios that you will have.

Send that post event thank you.