

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. Social media, email, press releases, calendar posts, and post cards.

Develop talking points for your event that you can use to structure your promotion. 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**.

Covid Concerns - This is still a concern for some. Let them know how you will accommodate them on this issue. You may have masks available, open windows, or have displays outside the studio.

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?
- Do you have a lovely garden?
- Will there be live music?
- 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? (some visitors seek the studio-in-the-woods).
 - 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. Restaurants, Air bnbs, others in your "loop".

Content Planning - print and add to our base May calendar on Artist resources:

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):
 1. 1 – 2 weeks pre-event: Save-the-date/teaser email. Include the key details up front.
 2. 24 – 36 hours pre-event: About to start/head's up. Talk about what you're doing to get ready.
 3. 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.
 4. 24 hours before ending: Last chance/last call. Creates urgency.
 5. 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. See the sample calendar on the Artist Resources list.

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 Forum 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? (Please attend our free zoom presentations on this topic. Especially important for those new to Open Studio).

On social media post pictures of where they'll be going so, they'll know they're in the right place when they arrive.

If parking is not clear, create signs to show where to park and address it in your posts.

Have clear signage and pricing on all your work. Also make signs that save you from answering the same questions over and over.

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 these 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. Do not post pictures of the empty but clean studio, during the event.

Think about how you will move customers around your space.

Building your future relationships

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.

Be sure to send that post event thank you!

Please send feedback to us about Open Studio (we know you don't like surveys) because it helps us represent the total benefit of the event to funders and helps us plan for future events.