

# HOW TO HOST A CONCERT, PERFORMER, OR SHOW

ASMSU Campus Entertainment

## 1. Identify a potential act/show

Consider the answers to these questions:

- *Does this event promote our mission?*
- *Will the show be worth the cost?*
- *Does it make sense in our local area? Is it right for MSU?*
- *Is there audience demand? Will people come?*
- *What are the potential risks that this show includes?*
- *Does it make sense right now? (Are there any recent events, scandals, news, etc. that might make this not a good time?)*
- *Did this event or a similar event happen recently?*
- *Is it a good fit for our venue options?*
- *Do we have the facilities, infrastructure, supplies, etc. that this act will require?*

## 2. Run financial estimates

Consider the answers to these questions:

- *How did this or similar shows do in past tour dates?*
- *How many tickets did this act sell for recent shows?*
- *What kind of support, equipment, and venue costs will this include?*
- *How large of an audience do we intend to attract? Is this number reasonable?*
- *How much money do we need to make on ticket sales to get the ROI we want?*
- *What do trusted professionals (Duane, EJ, radio stations, etc.) think about the sales prospects and expenses?*

### 2a. Request a staffing and venue expense estimates

- **Get estimates for venue, grounds, and ticketing.** Communicate with the venue and professional facilities managers, evaluate what equipment and location costs are required. These costs might include (but are not limited to) equipment rental, portable toilets, fencing, stages, and/or power generators.
- **Get estimates for event support requirements.** Communicate with the venue and facilities professional managers, evaluate how much support is reasonably needed. These costs might include (but are not limited to) security personnel, medical personnel, janitors, set up and break down, transportation, etc. Inquire about staffing availability. Do these services have time and personnel enough to help? Do you know what kind of support staff is required to manage the amount of risk this event includes?
- **Review the invoice or estimate from the previous year,** when possible, to confirm the numbers and identify what may be different this year.

### 2b. Compare anticipated costs with anticipated revenue generation.

- Make data driven decisions. Is this show worth the expense, effort, risk, etc.?
- Request and follow advice from Bobcat ticketing, EJ Hook, venue manager, etc.

- 3. Contact the venue to check availability on desired dates.**
  - Call the venue or outdoor use and make sure that the venue is available. Have flexible date options prepared in advance.
  - Place the venue on hold, then email notice of event to stakeholders and professional managers including (but not limited to) venue manager, ASMSU director, police, facilities, etc. Some shows are more risky than others because of the types of activities, crowds they attract, or etc. Be certain that all of the event stakeholders and professional managers are aware of the risks and agree with your strategies for managing the risk.
  - Make a planning timeline. Can you complete all the required tasks in time?
  
- 4. Book the Performer/Act**
  - Review the questions from step 1. Is this right for campus now?
  - Review the performers' requirements for the show. Do they have a tech rider? Dressing room demands? etc.
  - **Sign a contract** with the performer.
  - **Determine a single contact person** who will head the project and be responsible for all communications.
  
- 5. Determine and announce sale dates.**
  - To determine the best date for your tickets to go on sale, think about vacation days, when students have money, major holidays, etc.
  - Contact the Bobcat ticket office to propose your sale date. Be certain that they are not selling other major tickets on that date.
  - Announce dates on websites, traditional and social media, and print as appropriate.
  
- 6. Confirm full date and full information with stakeholders and professional managers.**
  - When possible, reply to the group with the previous email chain so that the whole planning conversation is connected to the email.
  - Include information about the seating configuration (risks and accommodations for a seated or standing crowd are different, etc.)
  - Include website links to event announcements and full contact information.
  
- 7. Sell Tickets**
  
- 8. Host a preplanning meeting, or several preplanning meetings as needed.** Use the estimate (from step 2) to set up arrangements for venue management, ticketing, grounds, police, etc.
  - All the big logistic requirements must be completed a month in advance.
  - **Will there be food and/or beverages?** Follow university catering policies and strictly follow all rules for alcoholic beverages.
  
- 9. Complete a production sheet** (usually 3 weeks before an event.) **Host a production meeting** (one week before the event) to review the process step-by-step.
  - Use the template or create your own document
  - Confirm the staff/volunteers are scheduled for your event.
  
- 10. Host the event**
  - Take care to follow safety and risk management guidelines

**Remember that each show plan is unique!** The steps included here are a guideline to help you plan and execute a show that meets professional standards. This document will not solve for every issue but it is a guide for expectations and consistency. Use the following tips to ensure a successful show:

- Every event must have **one main contact person** who is responsible for everything.
- **Plan ahead.** Time is a critical factor. Making plans with only a few days' notice is a nightmare and requires too many people to rearrange their schedules. Shows planned last minute are most likely to be full of mistakes and risks.
- **Ask for advice early.** Get your stakeholders and professional event managers involved early. Let them know what you are thinking and ask what else you need to consider.
- Complete the appropriate **paperwork.** Make sure that you complete contracts, venue forms, insurance, etc.
- If you change a plan, you must **communicate the change** to your stakeholders, professional managers, and facilities personnel.

**Generally the schedule will look like this:**

- 4-5 weeks out Preplanning meeting - this is probably the first in-person meeting, before that it is just email exchanges. That gives you 4 weeks to get everything resolved.
- 3 weeks out Production sheet
- 1 week out Production meeting

Remember: Every year there is major fraud with concerts and colleges. Before we give anyone money must have a contract and diligently follow the appropriate process.