



Starting to sell your work as a performer

Selling and getting an audience for your work can be much harder than making it in the first place. Marketing often does not come naturally, so here are some pointers on things to think about:

1) Selling your work to the promoter/venue

When creating your work think about who you will be selling it to. This could be venues, promoters, festivals, schools, community settings. When approaching a venue:

- Research a list of venues and promoters to approach who put on similar product to your own.
- Provide some easy access to the live experience: DVD, CD, website with downloads/showreels.
- Provide hard facts about the performers, the show, selling points and target markets, funders, other places you have performed and feedback on your work from press and audiences.
- If your work is new/unknown ensure you make parallels to other work the audience or promoter will know (eg 'if you liked ?? you'll love this'). Make sure you are clear who your work is for, including appropriate age groups.
- Think about what makes your work unique and why a venue or promoter might choose it over something. Eg how your work fits in with the school curriculum; why it is appropriate to village halls and community settings; other events/festivals/current issues it might link to.
- Ensure you are consistent with how you brand your company/group – make sure the logo and visual style is consistent on all information (print, emails, websites).
- Make sure you can be easily contacted. Keep in contact with past and potential venues, promoters and funders and let them know what you are up to.

2) Selling your work to audiences

If you are promoting your work to venues and promoters, they will need to sell it on to audiences. Give them as much help in doing this as possible by producing a package of marketing material. This should include:

- high quality posters & leaflets & other display material (inc e-flyers). Check what size or format is used by each venue/promoter.
- sample press release & quality press images
- written info & images for the venues own print/seasons brochure
- information about the production/show
- specific information on target markets (eg pre-school children & parents)

4) Pricing and financial deals

Agree a target for Box Office income with the venue/promoter. There are a number of different deals:

- Hire/rental (when you pay a fixed fee to hire the venue)
- Guarantee/fee (one-off fixed price for your show)
- Box Office split (agreed percentage of box office goes to the venue and to you)
- Minimum guarantee (eg you receive £1000 or 50% of the Box Office, whichever is the greater)
- First call (you receive a fixed fee and the remaining box office income is divided on a percentage ratio)
- First call and second call (you receive a fixed fee, venue/promoter receives a fixed fee after that and then any remaining income is divided on a percentage ratio)

5) Contracts

Make sure you have a written contract for each venue/promoter even if it's very simple. It should include:

- information on fees/financial deal
- marketing info required, who will pay for this and when it will be ready
- box office data and how you can access it
- who is going to invite press and other VIPs

6) Assessing/evaluating

Make sure you assess everything you do to help you make decisions about what is worth doing again. Work with the venue/promoter to agree how you will be able to access Box Office information on who came and what they thought. Make sure you do use this information when deciding how to develop your work!

Other sources of advice & support:

Creative Leicestershire www.creativeleicestershire.org.uk

Independent Theatre Council www.itc-arts.org

National Rural Touring Forum www.nrtf.org.uk

Emergency Showcase <http://www.leicesterymca.co.uk/ymca-news.php?article=39>

Dance 4 www.dance4.co.uk

Foundation for Community Dance www.communitydance.org.uk

Dance UK www.danceuk.org

Musicians Union www.musiciansunion.org.uk

Leicester Music Scene www.leicestermusicscene.co.uk

Music Industry Careers Guide <http://musicians.about.com/>

Arts Council England www.artscouncil.org.uk

Useful list of set designers, prop maker, scenic artists: www.ukscreen.com

And don't forget to sign up for our mailing list at www.creativeleicestershire.org.uk