

Sample Special Events Timeline

Concerts and Performances

Week 12 (or earlier):

- **Select and confirm artists.** Use personal contacts if at all possible. Send a letter describing the event and its purpose, the organization's work and its goals, and others who are involved or who have been involved in the past.
- **Confirm details** with artist's manager and/or publicist
- **Review contract(s)** with appropriate (pro bono if you're lucky) attorney
- **Identify and confirm volunteer co-chairs**
- **Select a date.** The artist's availability will be a major factor. Other major considerations include the venue's availability, competing events, day of the week, and appropriateness of the season.
- **Select and confirm the venue.** Factors to consider include: Location suited to the artist's following, union or non-union (Affects costs), parking and public transportation, public safety, and accessibility to persons with disabilities.
- **Hire technical crew and security**
- **Arrange insurance**
- **Make travel arrangements** for artist(s)
- **Hire/recruit publicity and promotion staff**
- **Apply for any needed city permits** (for such things as closing off a street corner, re-directing traffic, renting portable toilets, portable booths, food concessions, liquor sales, and unusual visual and sound effects—such as fireworks!)

Weeks 10-11

- **Publicity and promotion begins:** Organize/develop press list, check on listing deadlines, select poster design
- **Choose method of ticket sales:** Contract with ticket service or handle within your organization; contract with web sales service (unless your organization already sells things on line)
- **Co-chairs help with lists of contacts:** invitees, donors of services, press and volunteers
- **Hire technical staff,** including stage and house managers, sound and light designers, dee jays, etc.
- **Obtain hall/theater specifications** from venue and stage/technical needs from artist
- **Work with technical crew** to select needed technical equipment. If not available within venue, contract sound and lighting (and fireworks) companies.
- **Recruit and organize volunteers** by skills and availability.
- **Design and prepare promotional materials** such as buttons, tee shirts, and hats.
- **Recruit and brief a knowledgeable speaker** (maybe your board chair?) to speak at the event.

Weeks 8-9

- **Print and distribute poster and flyers**
- **Begin ticket sales**

- **Distribute press releases**
- **Write and distribute public service announcements** to radio and TV stations
- **Plan a press conference** (if you have a compelling idea that would attract attention) or smaller-scale promotion like ticket give-aways on the radio
- **Estimate needed security staff and hire security**
- **Compare artists' stage plots to hall specifications** and double-check about any additional needed equipment
- **Plan event volunteer needs**

Weeks 5-7

- **Assess volunteers' skills** and assign them to committees/tasks
- **Plan and secure needed materials** for information tables, booths, and concessions
- **Make follow-up calls to the press**
- **Schedule production crew meeting**

Weeks 3-4

- **Produce press conference** or other press promotion
- **Develop time schedule for the event**
- **Meet with technical crews, house managers, master of ceremonies, and other key staff to review and refine time schedule**
- **If you expect a large crowd, contract with and confirm medical staff** (generally one doctor and assistant)
- **Arrange food for event staff day-of-show**
- **Arrange food and beverages for artists' dressing rooms**
- **Arrange comp tickets and artists' passes for guests and press**

Weeks 1-2

- **Make follow-up calls to previously mailed press releases**
- **Coordinate radio and TV interviews**
- **Prepare press packets**
- **Hold final "walk through" with technical staff and security chief**
- **Prepare for sales of tee shirts, buttons, and other merchandise**
- **Organize backstage passes**
- **Confirm all volunteers and their roles**
- **Confirm artists' travel and accommodations**

Day before show

- **Compile event necessities, including:**
 - **Cash boxes with change in appropriate denominations**
 - **Receipts**
 - **Credit card equipment and receipts**
 - **Literature about your organization**
 - **Merchandise you will sell**
 - **Sign-up lists and guest lists**

- Backstage pass lists
- Ice chests and bottled water
- Name tags for committee members and volunteers
- Emergency numbers for police, fire, security, and medical staff
- All contact phone numbers (performers' hotel, hosts, speakers, suppliers)
- Emergency cash
- Posterboard
- Pens and markers for signs
- First aid kit
- Microphones and sound system (if facility does not have them)

Day of show

- Pick up artists' at the airport
- Send artists flowers/candy/other complimentary items
- Greet press and distribute press packets
- Coordinate complimentary tickets and guest passes
- Distribute backstage passes
- Check with stage manager and house manager to keep event on schedule
- Check with event security staff
- Set up and monitor sales of concessions
- Arrange meals for staff and artists
- Clean up
- Count your proceeds!

Post-show

- Thank and recognize artists, volunteers, and crew
- Hold a follow-up meeting with organizers to discuss what worked and what didn't work
- Prepare notes for your files and/or the next event coordinators