

Melbourne Fringe Marketing Pack

Anna Lumb, *Post Apocalyptic Body Slam*.
Melbourne Fringe 2017. Photo by Theresa Harrison.

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You asked. We delivered. Here is your Melbourne Fringe Marketing Pack - chock-full of all the tips and tricks you'll need to market your show like a boss.

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CHURCH, Melbourne Fringe 2016.
Photo by Theresa Harrison.

Why Does Marketing Matter?

Audiences have more choices than ever, so it's important to put together a marketing campaign that tells your story and helps audiences to discover your event.

Think of marketing as an extension of the creative process. Look past the jargon: marketing is just the story you tell that links your event to its audiences.

A solid marketing campaign can:

- Increase ticket sales
- Get your work noticed by the independent arts community
- Raise awareness among potential funders
- Gather evidence of your work and its reception

Marketing campaigns might seem daunting but we've put together this pack to guide you through each step of the process. If you're still feeling a little overwhelmed, we're always at the end of the phone.



Soul Mates, Melbourne Fringe 2016.
Photo by Theresa Harrison.

Your Image

A picture tells 1000 words (which is good cause our blurb word limit is much less than that)

We really recommend you some spend some time and dedicate some resources to creating an eye-catching, powerful image for your event. While it might be tempting to take a selfie and call it a day, our audiences often select the show they want to see, based on the image alone. You could have the best show in the Festival, but if your image doesn't reflect the unique vibe of your event, you might not get the right audience.

Here are some questions to consider when creating your image:

- What makes your work different?
- What is the tone of your work?
- What colours best represent your work?
- What is the best subject to represent your work?

TOP TIPS:

- Think about images that have captured your attention in the past - what is it about that image that made it so compelling?
- You might also like to bounce ideas around with a 'test audience' (friends, family, your local baristas) to make sure your image will really turn heads.
- **DO NOT** put text on your image. Under any circumstances. The media can't use it and it takes up precious space. Let your image speak for itself.

EXAMPLES from Melbourne Fringe Festival 2017



Too Ready Mirror

Credit: Sarah Walker
Photography

The image reflects the dramatic tone of the work, while the mirror jars our reading of it, sparking intrigue.



The Super Queer Murderess Show

Credit: Pier Carthew

The image draws on familiar cabaret motifs to create a sense of familiarity, while using bold colours to attract the eye.



How to Kill the Queen of Pop

Credit: Adam Ibrahim

The image reflects the kitsch and playful nature of the work - a satire based on the Sydney Olympic games.

Your Blurb

You only have a few words, so make them count

Imagine someone who knows nothing about art picks up our Festival guide. Even if your event is abstract and experimental, it doesn't mean the language you use to describe it should be.

TOP TIPS:

- Keep things succinct and relevant
- Use concise language - short, sharp sentences
- Mention any relevant reviews or awards to give your work authority
- Address your reader, use words like 'you' instead of 'audiences' or 'people'
- Ask yourself: what will they experience? What will they see? What will they think about when they leave?
- Avoid making the entire blurb a review of your event, i.e. "Everyone absolutely needs to see this saucy number. - Ballarat Bugle" will not, by itself, sell tickets.

EXAMPLES from Melbourne Fringe Festival 2017

Crimson Tide

They told us we shouldn't swim when Aunt Flow visits. Stuff that! The Clams don't just swim. The Clams WATER BALLET. Melbourne's most Clamtastic, least professional, water ballet squad have synced up to swim the story of the menstrual cycle, because it's bloody well time we celebrated it. Crimson Tide is a period piece. And a bloody good show. Period.

If there's not dancing at the revolution, I'm not coming

A rich contemporary performance collage of film scripts, pop songs, elaborate costumes and dance all stretched, teased, shattered and reassembled to challenge the treatment of women's bodies in popular culture. It uncovers the collective fantasies underneath these bodies, unapologetically intervenes, and explodes them into feminist confetti.

Biladurang

A queer, fair-skinned Indigenous man is trapped in a hotel room and the audience is stuck with him. He retells his people's story of the Biladurang - the platypus - and it echoes his own: a mutant creature who belongs neither in the Black nor the White world but inhabits his own world of drugs, sex and longing...



dis place, Melbourne Fringe 2017.
Photo by Theresa Harrison.

Your Ticket Prices

Like Larry Emdur, make sure the price is right

Ticket prices aren't just about breaking even - they can often mean the difference between someone selecting your event over another.

We recommend using an average of 30% capacity houses over your season to work out what you need to make at the box office to break even.

The average ticket price for a Fringe Festival show is \$22. Remember: you set your own ticket prices, so have a think about what your audiences will happily pay. Don't undersell yourself either.

Discounts, offers and promo codes

We recommend using a range of special offers, packages and promo codes to help you promote sales and awareness. Examples:

- **Promo Codes:** if you have a particular audience you want to target (football teams, university students, stamp collectors), set up an online promotional code that will allow them access to cheaper tickets.
- **Cheap Tuesday:** offer discounted tickets on a Tuesday to encourage mid-week sales.

Don't forget about Bank Australia Take 5. Every day from 1 September, a limited number of full-priced tickets to all shows across the Festival are \$5 cheaper when audiences use the promo code. The best bit? Bank Australia will reimburse you that \$5 so you don't lose out on ticket sales. The promo code will be announced each day, so share it with your audience - you win, they win, everyone wins! Promo codes are announced each day at melbournefringe.com.au or on our Twitter feed and in person at the Bank Australia Ticket Booth.

Remember, prices, packages and codes not only make your work more accessible, they also tell the story of *who* you want at your event.

Our Audiences and Opportunities

Get your head around *our* peeps

You'll have your own target audiences, but it's good to know about ours too. Here is the typical Melbourne Fringe attendee:

- Female (64%)
- Under 30 (29%) or 30-39 (30%)
- Live in the inner northern and western suburbs
- Work full-time in the arts, education or health
- Identify as LGBTI (26%)
- Attend cultural events at least once a month (37%)
- Spend \$24 on tickets
- Have attended the Festival before (72%)
- Attend between 1 and 3 events (50%)

This is how they select their events:

- Artist/presenter (70%)
- Location (60%)
- Recommendations (56%)
- Cost (54%)
- Artform (45%)
- Fringe guides on website (28%)

Festival opportunities

We offer a range of opportunities to showcase your work and promote your event.

- Spotlight Stage
- Festival publicist (keep reading for more info)
- Bank Australia Take 5
- Bank Australia People's Choice Award
- Early Bird ticketing
- Engage with Fringe on social media
- Posters and flyers at our Hub/Ticket Booth

Here are some handy resources that will also help you on your way:

- **Fringe Marketing info session**
- **Fringe Social media info session**
- **Fringe Facebook advertising info session**
- **Fringe Producer Packs**
- Discounts on advertising with **Triple R** and **Joy FM**
- Discounts on printing and distribution with **Plakkit** and **Finsbury Green**



Benjamin Hancock, *Post-Apocalyptic Body Slam*,
Melbourne Fringe 2017. Photo by Theresa Harrison.

Developing a Killer Campaign

You've done most of the hard stuff by now (you go, Glen Coco). Now it's time to develop that killer campaign.

Follow these easy steps and you'll be on your way:

1. Define your objectives (what do you want to achieve?)
2. Define your audience (who will see your show?)
3. Define your message (what do you want to say?)
4. Determine your budget (how much can you spend?)
5. Determine your tools and tactics (how will you reach your audience?)
6. Make a plan (who's doing what and when?)

1. Define Your Objectives

What do you want to achieve? Be specific so you know what you're aiming for. You can't do it all, so know what you want to do and do it well.

- Are you trying to sell tickets? If so, how many?
- Are you trying to get reviewers into the show?
- Are you trying to raise your profile in the arts scene?
- Are you trying to grow your following?

2. Define *Your* Audience(s)

Who is your event for?

Current audiences: people who already engage with your work

Prospective audiences: people you would like to expose to your work that aren't engaged yet

Here are some examples of audience groups:

- University students (undergrad, post-grad, international?)
- Artists (which type? Dancers, actors, directors?)
- Media and reviewers
- Touring delegates
- Interest groups (Is your show about a particular issue that might attract a particular group?)

Once you've narrowed it down, go even further and outline each group's demographics and behaviours. *Note: you might need to generalise and there may be some guesswork involved.*

Demographics:

- Age
- Occupation
- Education
- Location

Behaviour:

- How do they receive information (print, online, radio)
- What other work do they regularly see?
- How do they spend their leisure time?

So now you have it: your **target audience**. The more you know about who you are targeting, the better chance you have of reaching them and getting them to your event.

3. Define Your Message(s)

Think about the kind of language that best communicates your work. Start talking about your event with those close to you - how are you describing it? How are other people interpreting what you're trying to do?

Some questions to consider:

- What makes your event different?
- Is there a great story behind the work?
- Is there a relevant social aspect to your work?
- Why are you the best person to tell this story?
- How will you sum up what your event is about?
- What might convince an audience to come and see it?
- Is there any way of making the work more familiar (i.e. has it won an award? Does the artist have a profile? Is the content contemporary or reference current affairs)?

4. Determine Your Budget

You'll be creating an overall budget for your event, perhaps using our [budgeting template](#). Remember to include enough budget for marketing and include this in your total projected income. Don't spend everything you have on marketing but make sure you have allocated some budget to telling people about your work.

5. Define Your Tools and Channels

Now you know your objectives, your audiences and your message, it's time to figure out **HOW** you're going to reach them.

a. Collateral

'Collateral' is the collection of media used to achieve your objectives. Every show needs collateral - what you choose will depend on both your audience and your budget.

Types:

- **Posters**
 - > Keep it simple - include show information including dates, times, venue, prices and the Melbourne Fringe website and logo for booking
 - > Include relevant awards and reviews
 - > Include one sentence that represents your event (see your key messages)
- **Flyers**
 - > You can include a little more info here, such as the blurb and more reviews/awards
- **Videos**
- **Images and graphics**
- **Advertising (we'll talk about that later)**

Posters and flyers are great, if that's how your target audience receive their info. Chat to our partners at Plakkit and Finsbury Green for advice and artist discounts. We also take your posters and flyers to distribute at our Festival Hub and the Bank Australia Ticket Booth at Fed Square. Posters are great for catching people's attention while flyers are a good take-away reminder for people to book your event.

Videos and imagery are also great ways to drum up interest and tell the story of your event, so make sure they reflect the feel and vibe of your event. They don't have to be elaborate or professionally produced - think about what you already have at hand. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Quick Q&A with the artist
- Behind-the-scenes shots at rehearsals
- Sneak peek/teasers of the show (particularly if the event is highly visual)
- Snaps/videos of media interviews
- Snaps/videos of prop shopping/set design - the elements that make your event unique

b. Digital

Digital channels are highly effective and often deliver the best bang for your buck, but don't waste your time being on all of them if they're not right for your event and audience. They know rather than a show they know nothing about.

Social Media

The first step is picking your channel. We recommend Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, but if you're time-poor you might like to stick to just one.

The most important thing is to create a bit of a content plan so you're not just saying the same thing. Here's a handy template:

Date	Channel	Media	Copy
9 August 2018	Instagram	Story - artists at program launch, boomerang of artist open and closing Festival guide, photo of event in guide	#melbfringe @melbfringe
9 August 2018	Facebook	Link to event on website	After months of hard work, we're finally ready to share our @melbournefringe show with you. Thanks to everyone who has helped us to get here, we can't wait for the Festival to start. Grab your tickets for cheap with our earlybird offer

When selecting your channels and creating your content plan, it's good to know:

- **Facebook** is good for longer-form conversation, news and event updates.
- **Twitter** is where people get their news and have conversations. Follow the trends and see if you can work with them. Tweet at people who might be interested in your show.
- **Instagram** is where people go for short and sweet photos and videos, so make your messages visuals. It's not a place for long paragraphs, it's a place where you can generate interest and give people a real sense of your work.

Easy wins:

- Create a Facebook page for your event and/or production company. Invite everyone you know to like it.
- Create a hashtag for your event so that people can follow the journey and use it to share their own content
- Like grandma always says, remember to use the hashtag #melbfringe to be part of the online buzz that builds around the Festival.
- Create a short video explaining why people should vote for you in the Bank Australia People's Choice Award.
- Don't forget to tag @melbournefringe, we endeavour to re-share your content. If we've missed some of your excellent promotional content, DM us, it will help jog our memory.

Here are some people who do a great job:

- **Fringe Wives Club**
- **The Very Good Looking Initiative**
- **Deafferent Theatre**

E-marketing

Emails and mailing lists:

Your email address book is your mailing list - don't be afraid to use it. Basically, send an email to **everyone you've ever met** – this is one of the most effective ways to get people to come along to your show. The more you can personalise these emails the better. Send an electronic version of your flyer (or e-flyer) to your contacts a few weeks before your event opens, and again during the season. If you explicitly ask for them to forward it onto their networks, you'll be increasing your reach enormously.

Websites and blogs:

If you have the time and resources, you can try making yourself a free online home. There are loads of free and low-cost platforms to build simple, professional blogs and/or websites (we recommend Squarespace and Wordpress).

Websites are great for hosting reviews, event information (including cast and crew members), videos and photos from the company/event. If you don't have a lot of content, it might be something to consider in the future.

Cross-promotion

Know other people in the Festival? Speak to them about doing a bit of cross-promotion (you tell people about their event, they tell people about yours). Many of our Festival-goers attend more than one event each Festival, so it's a great opportunity to tap into each other's networks.

c. Advertising

You can't just rely on your image in the program to stand out and attract the audiences you're trying to reach. Advertising helps you to extend your reach and achieve those all-important objectives.

Keep your objectives and audiences in mind when you're selecting your advertising, e.g. if you think the Festival audience is the best audience for your work, then it's worth advertising with us. If you think you need to reach people outside of our Festival, then social media is probably your best bet. If you have the budget, we highly recommend doing both.

Here are some types of low-cost advertising:

- **Advertise with us:** you can buy outdoor, online and eNews advertising to help you stand out to our audiences. Consider your audience when selecting your package. If they're a little older, you might want to invest in our outdoor opportunity at Fed Square. If they're mostly millennials, consider your online options.
- **Advertise with our partners:** our media partners offer a range of discounts to artists - **see our website for more details**
- **Advertise on social media:** Do it. Whether it's Google Adwords or Facebook advertising, it's really cost-effective and extends your reach far beyond your own networks. Facebook has made it quite complicated to navigate their advertising platform so come our **Facebook Advertising Info Session** to find out more.

d. Publicity

Melbourne Fringe has a publicist dedicated to promoting the Festival as a whole. The more proactive you are with providing us with a media release and interesting stories/images, the more we can do to try assist in the promotion of your event.

It's also super important that you are proactive in securing your own media because:

- a. We have hundreds of events and our publicist can't get to all of them
- b. Sometimes media are more interested to hear directly from the artist/company
- c. It's good practice for the future and will help you to build your own contacts

Step 1:

Write your media release using our **guide**

Step 2:

Determine your pitch and angle. You can expand on your key messages to tell your story in a short, snappy and impactful way.

Step 3:

Create your distribution list. We'll send you a media contacts list in early August to help you with this.

Think about which media outlets would best tell your story, e.g. if you have yourself a music event, maybe radio is best (contact Triple R, JOY FM, SYN FM).

Think laterally. 'Media' isn't just tv, print, online and radio, it's anyone who has a network - that's bloggers, arts organisations, online communities - anyone who might be interested in hearing about your work, whose network matches your target audiences.

Step 4:

Pitch. Email your release with a concise explanation of your work (remember those key messages?). Make sure your pitch is personalised to the media outlet. Research the journalist and see what they like and how your story could resonate with them. Perhaps offer a free ticket to the show.

Step 5:

Follow up. Give the media a few days to respond. If you haven't heard back, don't be afraid to chase them up (respectfully, of course).

Step 6:

If you do secure media, make sure you have a list of points you want to cover - this will probably be your key messages, along with where people can buy tickets.

Step 7:

Once the show is up and running, start targeting the right media to see and review your work, then leverage these reviews to grow your audiences.

6. Make a Plan

In the lead up to the Festival, things can feel pretty hectic, particularly if you're also the person producing the event.

Now that you've answered the hard questions (above), we recommend using our **marketing plan template** to put everything into one handy document. Share this with the relevant people to make sure everyone is on the same page and knows what they're doing.