



NEIGHBORHOOD EVENT TOOLKIT

Indy's Guide to Planning Events & Festivals

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INTRODUCTION

What is the Neighborhood Event Toolkit?

Indianapolis is known for having some of the most creative minds out there, so it's no surprise that we also have a lot of local neighborhood community events to offer. This Neighborhood Event Toolkit provides a structured approach to planning and executing successful events in our own Indianapolis community. It begins with fundamental steps like choosing a venue, theme, and date, then emphasizes community involvement and legal considerations. Health, safety, and budgeting are also highlighted, along with entertainment and logistics planning. The Toolkit covers pre-event preparation, including marketing and sanitation, as well as event-day operations like volunteer management and attendee feedback. Post-event tasks such as clean-up, gratitude expressions, and succession planning are also addressed. Additionally, insights from past events are shared to provide valuable advice for future events (find them as comments throughout the document). Overall, this Toolkit serves as a comprehensive guide for organizing authentic and memorable events while ensuring compliance with regulations and fostering community engagement.

Who it is for?

This Toolkit is for anyone, and especially those who have never planned an event before. Every great event started as a simple idea and every great host had to plan their first event. This Toolkit is a guide meant to identify obstacles and opportunities so that everyone feels like they can execute a successful event in their neighborhood.

How to use it?

Use this Toolkit in whatever way it is useful to you. You can read the whole thing and note the parts that are the most relevant for your event, you can skip to a certain section, or you can simply use the templates in the Appendix. This is a Toolkit made for you.

Who is behind it and how they can help?

Every year, the people of Indy welcome upwards of 30 million visitors into their homes, neighborhoods, and public spaces. As the authority on storytelling in our city, Visit Indy wants to help share more about what makes Indy's people and places so unique, diverse, and vibrant with these visitors while also enhancing the quality-of-life for those of us who live here every day. Neighborhood-scale events are a way to build community, bring people together across differences, and make sure the story of every neighborhood is being told. Events aren't always easy to pull off, but with our track record hosting the world's biggest events and a deep bench of successful, long-standing local events to pull from, this Toolkit is designed to help set you up for success. The Visit Indy team, as well as many other Indianapolis organizations, are ready and eager to help. Find contact information in Chapter 10.





1. COMING UP WITH AN AUTHENTIC EVENT

Define your story

The story of every neighborhood and community is as unique as the people in it. That is why it's important to research what makes your neighborhood or area different.

Start by delving into the unique identity and character of your neighborhood – its quirks, charms, and passions. Consult local businesses, community leaders, and residents to unearth the diverse interests that define the area. Look into its history as well as its current culture to determine what story needs to be told. A well-defined story serves as a guiding framework for event planning, influencing decisions on everything from the choice of activities to the marketing approach. It creates a cohesive and memorable experience, fostering a sense of community identity and pride among participants.

- » **Reach out to your local history center, city planning office, and library to see if there is any historical information about your neighborhood.**
- » **Consider contacting the neighborhood associations serving the area and having conversations with long-time residents.**
- » **Indy Encyclopedia is a website with lots of information about neighborhoods.**

Identify your target audience

In order to plan an event, it is important to define just who the target audience is. The target audience will inform your event's location, marketing tactics, programming, pricing structure, and more.



Consider demographics, such as age groups, cultural inclinations, and lifestyle preferences, and tailor your event to the tastes of those you want to attend.

Set your goals and objectives

When crafting an event, take some time to define the purpose. Why put on this event? Who will be there? What should people take away from it? Clear communication of the goals to the team and participants ensures that the event is not only successful but also authentic and impactful to the community it serves.

“Be really clear on your goals, because if your goal is to raise money, that’s a very different thing than just trying to do something to engage your community.”

- KACY RAY, COTTAGE HOME BLOCK PARTY

Pick a place

Picking a location is one of the first steps in planning an event. Consider aspects like where neighbors already gather, and whether the event should activate underutilized spaces, and what space best serves the needs of your target audience. Your event site might be an event center, a park or greenspace, a church, a parking lot or even a neighborhood street.

Choose a date and time

When picking a date and time for your event, ask yourself a few things. What other events are going on in the city and in the neighborhood? Should your event build on the momentum and energy of an existing event or should it stand alone? Is your event one-day-only or does it take place over a weekend? What timing works best for your target audience? What season aligns best for your event theme and location?



“ Start small and have some clear goals and a focus. [Our event has] grown so much over the years to something much much larger but we couldn’t have done that the first year. ”

- THE ARTS GARDEN

- » You may consider reaching out to desired venues, partners, and vendors prior to confirming your date just to be sure they are available to participate.
- » The Visit Indy event calendar lists both large and small events and is a great resource if you want to see what is currently scheduled for the area.
- » While finding a date without competing events could be ideal, there may be instances where planning your event on the same date and time as another event could be beneficial. For example, the Indianapolis Art and Music Festival takes place on the same weekend as the Talbot Street Art Fair. The events benefited from each other due to their proximity and similar target audiences. By coordinating with each other, they created a much bigger draw to the area. If a similar opportunity exists in your neighborhood, be sure to coordinate with the other event to maximize shared benefits.
- » Consider hosting your event in the off season. You’ll have less competition and an opportunity to stand out among other events in the city.
- » Although weather is unpredictable, researching average weather conditions can help you identify months that may be more conducive for your event than others.

Determine the program

Programming should be closely tied to the story you want to tell and your target audience. If your community’s story is that it is home to many artists and musicians, you will want the arts to be a focal point of your event programming.

Depending on your target audience, you may consider adding activities specifically designed for certain groups, like a children’s activity area if your target audience is families.

Events, no matter where they take place, have common programs. For example, many events will have some sort of food and beverage component, entertainment, and vendors. You can make those elements unique for your event by spotlighting breweries, food trucks, and performers from your neighborhood.



- » Decor can add a special flair and set your event apart from others. Rocky Ripple has children-decorated pennant banners, Cottage Home Block Party has lighted ghost stringers, and Feast of Lanterns has lanterns. Consider adding visual elements to your event that enhance the theme and bring the story to life event that enhance the theme and bring the story to life.



2. GETTING A BUY IN FROM COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Be a good host

Being a good host before, during, and after the event involves a combination of organizational and interpersonal skills. First and foremost, understand the needs and preferences of the community impacted. Be a proactive problem solver, anticipating potential issues and addressing them promptly. Commit to developing plans for managing noise, traffic, and any potential inconveniences, demonstrating your commitment to minimizing disruptions in the neighborhood. Ultimately, a good host is one who not only executes an event that leaves attendees with a lasting impression but also makes people feel welcome, informed, and comfortable throughout the whole process.

Communicate early and often

Securing buy-in from local businesses and residents is essential to holding a successful event. Explain the details of the event and a plan to make sure local businesses and neighbors will be impacted in a positive way. If needed, schedule meetings to discuss the proposal in person, allowing for open communication to address any concerns.

**“ See what your neighbors want to do...
Make connections, network with like
minded people, become a team, love it
and follow your passion. ”**

- ROCKY RIPPLE FESTIVAL

3. ESTABLISHING A TEAM OR ORGANIZATION

Event planning and implementation can be complex and time consuming. It is highly encouraged to build a team and develop a basic strategy and framework for how a group of people will work together to get things done.

Informal structure - Event Committees

One common approach, that is relatively informal, is forming an event committee. Each member of the committee will have a designated role with specific tasks they are responsible for. Committee members are recruited and assigned roles based on their skills, experience, and relationships. If the committee needs additional help, they may assign more than one member to a particular task and/or consider developing subcommittees to delegate tasks to. Event committee members should meet regularly, once or twice per month, to report on the status of their tasks and to collaborate with other members on idea generation and problem solving. Committee members hold each other accountable for completing their assigned tasks.

Event committees are a good structure for one-off, new, or small events, or events that are exploring their feasibility. It is recommended that the event committee partner with a larger, more formal organization that shares similar values, which can serve as an umbrella organization and provide necessary legal and financial administration. This partner organization, often referred to as a fiscal agent, could be a neighborhood association, local foundation or nonprofit.

Formal structure - Incorporation

If you intend on organizing a regular event and are entering into formal agreements with venues, vendors, and entertainers, then you should establish a formal organization through a process called incorporation. This requires filing paperwork with the state and federal government to establish a new legal/business entity. While this option is more costly and complex, a separate legal entity provides protection for team members against



financial liability. A common type of business entity for neighborhood-based events is a nonprofit corporation. Nonprofit corporations are led by a Board of Directors. In addition to its governance duties, the Board of Directors can also take on the tasks of event planning and implementation, essentially serving in a similar capacity as an event committee.

- » **If you want to incorporate, the Central Indiana SBDC office can provide guidance.**
- » **You may also consider engaging a lawyer, CPA, and insurance agent to ensure you are developing the proper governance and financial policies and procedures and have adequate insurance coverage for the type of organization you are and the type of event you organize.**

Key roles and responsibilities

While events can differ vastly from a size and programmatic standpoint, behind the scenes, the work that goes into an event and the range of tasks that need to be completed, are very similar.

- **Logistics and operations** - Responsible for filing for permits, getting insurance coverage, coordinating with vendors that provide items like stages, sound and lights, fencing, port-o-potties, electricity, security, etc.
- **Programming** - Responsible for coordinating programmatic elements of the event such as food and beverage, entertainment, performances, children's activities, games, market booths, etc.
- **Financial management** - Responsible for maintaining the budget and accurate accounting and bookkeeping, processes invoices and deposits funds into bank account, prepares financial reports for the board of directors and/or event committee.

- **Marketing & community outreach/relations** - Responsible for developing and maintaining positive relationships with community members, developing and managing the brand identity, placing advertising, conducting social media marketing, working with media outlets for coverage, and ensuring photo and video documentation of the event.
- **Fundraising** - Responsible for raising funds through sponsorships, donations, and grants.
- **Volunteer coordinator** - Responsible for recruiting, scheduling, training, and acknowledging the contributions of volunteers.

It is possible that all the roles could be fulfilled by volunteers, but depending on the skills needed and the skill sets on your team, you may need to hire out certain tasks. Stage production is an example where you would likely hire a professional staging, light and sound company. Find more information on contractors and suppliers in Chapter 7. Budgeting and fundraising.



“Communicate with the people in the area. If you’ve communicated and everyone’s on board, it’s going to be so much easier [to get a special events permit].”

- ANNA WILMONT



4. WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an integral part of any event. They are a workforce above and beyond the event committee that plugs in to the event during the final stages of planning and executes the on-the-ground event implementation. A well-organized and executed volunteer program can strengthen community bonds and make a tangible difference for your event.

“ This event would literally not happen without people volunteering their time for setup and tear down. So being able to give a better volunteer experience, has probably been like one of our bigger focuses over the last years. ”

- MARTHA, FEAST OF LANTERNS

Recruitment

Volunteers play an integral role in community events, so it's important to make a plan early on to secure help. Start by clearly communicating the purpose and benefits of the event, emphasizing how a volunteer's contributions and time ultimately make the event run. Utilize various channels such as local community boards, social media platforms, and neighborhood gatherings to spread the word. Create an easy sign-up process and offer flexible time commitments to accommodate diverse schedules.

Scheduling

Scheduling volunteers and staff can be difficult, as everyone has different availability. One of the easiest ways to set clear times and expectations is to use a website where people can sign up for times. This way you can set times and places where people will be needed, and they can sign up for the times that work best for them. One such scheduling website, Signup.com, will even remind people of their commitments and time slots.

Training

Training volunteers for a community event is a crucial step in ensuring the success and smooth execution of the occasion. This training can cover various aspects, including event objectives, roles and responsibilities, communication strategies, and emergency procedures. Make sure to provide a way for volunteers to be able to communicate with event organizers before, during, and after the event.

Effective training will not only make volunteers feel confident and excited, but it will also foster a sense of unity and commitment. Training can be conducted online or in-person and can take place in advance of the event or when the volunteers arrive at the event for their shift.

- » **Be sure to schedule enough time for volunteers to receive a short orientation on their role or tasks at the beginning of their shift.**
- » **Super Service is a free training provided by Visit Indy offered to community members to help prepare them to welcome visitors to our city. It teaches people how to exceed expectations, how to provide a memorable experience, and all about Indianapolis and its history.**

Acknowledgement

It is important for event organizers to show their appreciation to the volunteers who give their time and energy to put on the event. Throughout the process, recognize volunteers' contributions and achievements. Consider volunteer reward items like free T-shirts or a volunteer appreciation party. At the very least, be sure to send thank you letters to volunteers following the event.





5. LOGISTICS AND OPERATIONS

Risk assessment

A risk assessment identifies potential hazards and outlines measures to mitigate them. It encompasses considerations such as potential injuries to attendees and damage to property.

◇ Find a Risk Assessment template in the Appendix.

Liability

Insurance - There are multiple different types of insurance coverage that may be recommended or required based on the activities taking place at your event. Short-term event insurance, General Liability, or Vendor Liability insurance are all offerings you may need to consider, or may be required to provide, during the planning process of your event, based on the activities, vendors, and number of people attending the event.

Volunteer waivers - Volunteer waivers are vital legal tools that outline the responsibilities and potential risks associated with volunteering. By signing a waiver, volunteers acknowledge their understanding of the inherent risks and agree not to hold the event organizers or the neighborhood liable for any injuries or incidents that may occur during their participation.

Incident reports - Incident reports are documents that detail any unexpected or undesirable occurrences that take place during the event. These reports are crucial for recording and addressing issues such as accidents, injuries, property damage, disputes, or any other incidents that may arise. The purpose of incident reports is to provide an accurate and comprehensive account of what transpired, including the date, time, location, and details of the incident. They may also include information about individuals involved, witnesses, and any actions taken to address the situation. Incident reports are valuable tools for event organizers, as they help in

assessing and improving safety measures for future events, as well as serving as a reference in case of any legal or insurance-related matters.

“**Don't be scared of having conversations with community. You know Marian County Health department or department of code enforcement about your permit, or DPW about a lane closure.**”

- CHRIS DURNIL, SAUSAGE FEST

Permits

Special Event - The City of Indianapolis requires that certain private and public events obtain a Special Events Permit from the Department of Business and Neighborhood Services (BNS). You should file for a permit a minimum of 30 days prior to your event if your event will host more than 250 participants and involves:

- Closing of a street
- Blocking or restriction of streets, sidewalks, alleys or other public places
- Set up of tents, stages, bleachers, and other temporary structures
- Set up of temporary signs, banners or other displays

If your event is taking place outside the City of Indianapolis, make sure to look into the specifics of that municipality's permitting process.

Indy Parks - Indy Parks will require a permit for certain private or public events. You should apply for an Indy Parks Permit a minimum 45 days before your event if it “will have an impact upon, park property, park facilities, sidewalks, Greenway trails or city streets surrounding said areas.” This is in addition to the City of Indianapolis BNS Special Events Permit.



Health Department - The Marion County Public Health Department of Food and Consumer Safety has a registration process, permitting, and guidelines for any event that will be offering food and beverages at a public event. Event organizers of a temporary event should register their event 30 days prior to the event. In addition to that, you should submit your site map and vendor list 10 days prior to the event. The vendors will need to obtain a temporary food license at least 48 hours prior to the event, unless they are a licensed Marion County mobile unit – they do not need additional licensure. The registration application and food vendor application can be found on their website as well as a FAQ document.

Alcohol - If you'd like to serve alcohol at your event, you must apply for a permit with the Indiana Alcohol and Tobacco Commission. To serve beer and wine, you'll need to complete the Temporary Beer & Wine Permit Application. The deadline to submit a fully and properly completed application to the ATC is five full business days prior to the event, but the application must be reviewed and approved prior to being able to serve beer or wine and will require local law enforcement approval before you can apply with the ATC, so start the application process much earlier.



» **Indy Parks and Recreation may have an additional layer of approval necessary for hard alcohol to be allowed to be served in the parks.**

If you'd like to serve spirits, you will need to hire an entity that holds the appropriate 3-way on-premise license and supplemental catering permit for off site events. The laws around serving alcohol are enforced by the Indiana State Excise Police. Event staff or volunteers serving alcohol should complete the state's certified server training program and possess a valid employee

alcohol permit. If you have questions about any type of temporary alcohol service or alcohol law & rule enforcement related subjects, contact Indiana State Excise Police, District 6.

Amusement and Entertainment - An Amusement and Entertainment permit from the Indiana Department of Homeland Security is required for events that have tents, indoor or outdoor stages, concerts, amusement rides, fireworks, and other features listed on the application. The permit approval process generally includes safety inspections.

» **If your event is not within the boundaries of the City Indianapolis, be sure to consult with applicable departments of the local municipality your event is in.**

Gaming - Indiana's charity gaming laws apply to certain nonprofit organizations who want to conduct charity gaming events. Which include bingo, raffles (50/50's, door prize drawings, game ball drawings, etc.), dice, card and wheel games, pull tab, punch board and tip board sales, guessing games, and water races. To legally conduct these games, your organization must meet certain qualifications and apply for a permit. Permit processing can take approximately 60 days and approval hinges on a number of factors, including fair market value of the prizes awarded. It is best to coordinate directly with the Indiana Gaming Commission to ensure you are completing the correct paperwork.

Contracts and agreements

Venue rental - Rental agreements are essential documents that outline the terms and conditions for the use of a venue or space for an event. These agreements typically detail the duration of the rental, permissible activities, and any restrictions imposed by the venue owner. Fees associated with



venue rentals vary based on factors such as the size of the venue, amenities provided, and the type of event. Common fees may include a base rental fee, security deposit, and additional charges for equipment, catering facilities, or cleaning services. Event organizers should carefully review and negotiate terms to ensure a clear understanding of costs and responsibilities. Venue rental agreements are binding contracts.

Vendors, contractors and suppliers - Vendor, contractor, and supplier agreements are essential documents that outline the terms and conditions for the exchange of goods and services in return for compensation. The agreements establish the conditions of the business relationship and detail each party's obligations. Event organizers should carefully review and negotiate terms to ensure a clear understanding of costs and responsibilities. Vendor, contractor, and supplier agreements are binding contracts.

- » **Commonly included in contracts is a Force Majeure provision that frees both parties from obligation if an extraordinary event directly prevents one or both parties from performing. Examples of extraordinary events include natural disasters (fire, storms, floods), governmental or societal actions (war, invasion, civil unrest, labor strikes) and infrastructure failures (transportation, energy).**
- » **Be sure to clearly communicate and include details about the event's cancellation policy in all your agreements.**

Safety and security

Emergency Action Plan - An emergency action plan (EAP) is a formally written document that identifies potential emergency conditions at events and creates procedures to minimize or

prevent loss. Having a comprehensive, easy to understand and act upon EAP is critical to ensuring the safety of event attendees, vendors, and volunteers. The City of Indianapolis' Department of Business and Neighborhood Services (BNS) requires an EAP as part of its special event permitting process, as does Indy Parks and Recreation for their permitting process. Your event's EAP will be reviewed by Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD), Indianapolis Fire Department (IFD), Department of Public Works (DPW), among other offices.

◇ *Find an example of an Emergency Action Plan provided by BNS in the Appendix.*

- » **If you intend to close streets for your event, you must plan for an emergency lane. An emergency lane is a clear area on the street that is wide enough for emergency vehicles to drive in and out of the event site.**

Capacity and overcrowding - When you secure your venue, be sure to ask how many people the venue holds, otherwise known as the venue's capacity. If you are doing an event outdoors, in a park or on the street, where there isn't a known capacity, contact the local special event office or fire marshal's office for guidance. They can typically provide you a capacity for a particular land area. It is important to track the number of attendees who enter your event site, so that you can adhere to the site's capacity. Otherwise you risk overcrowding, which can be dangerous and illegal. Capacity and overcrowding is monitored and enforced by the fire marshal and police department.

Fire safety - Ensuring fire safety at an event is paramount to creating a secure and enjoyable atmosphere. Prioritize the availability of fire extinguishers at easily accessible





locations throughout the event venue, and designate a dedicated area for open flames, such as grills or bonfires, with appropriate safety measures in place. Clearly communicate emergency exits and assembly points to attendees, and have a well-defined evacuation plan in case of any fire-related incidents. It is also important to have a mass exit plan and make it clear to the volunteers and officers. Finally, it's essential to have a trained and vigilant team responsible for monitoring fire hazards and responding promptly to any potential risks.

First aid - Having a designated first aid station equipped with essential supplies like bandages, antiseptic wipes, and basic medical tools is imperative to the success of an event. Clear signage pointing to the first aid station and ensuring its accessibility is essential for quick response. Additionally, promoting awareness among event attendees about the location of the first aid station and the importance of reporting any incidents promptly contributes to a safer environment.

» **Indianapolis Emergency Medical Services can provide information on private service medical and ambulance providers. Find their contact information in Chapter 10. Helpful Contacts.**



Inclement weather - Inclement weather includes conditions like lightning, high winds, thunderstorms, snow and ice storms. A comprehensive weather emergency plan is essential to safeguarding the well-being of attendees at an event. Begin by monitoring weather forecasts leading up to, and throughout the event, and staying informed about any potential hazards. In hot weather, organizers should provide shaded areas, hydration stations, and encourage attendees to wear sunscreen and lightweight clothing. For cold temperatures, consider offering warming stations and advising

participants to dress in layers. Establish a communication system to relay weather updates to event participants, utilizing public announcements or digital platforms. Designate a shelter or evacuation area in case of severe weather, and clearly communicate its location to attendees. Assign trained personnel to oversee the implementation of the weather emergency plan, ensuring a swift and organized response. If the weather becomes dangerous, the event should be postponed or canceled and necessary steps taken to communicate evacuation to event attendees, vendors, and volunteers.



Security - Creating a safe environment for attendees, volunteers, and event partners is one of the most important responsibilities an event organizer has. Security considerations should encompass the event site as well as where event attendees will park and where they will walk to and from the event. Onsite security personnel are typically tasked with identifying potential threats, responding swiftly to emergencies, and providing assistance. They are typically positioned at the gates and near areas serving alcohol, but can also be assigned to roam the entire event site. Security tasks can be performed by volunteers or hired through a security company. It is possible that BNS, IMPD, IFD, or DPW will require your event to have certain licensed security. This is particularly relevant for events that have traffic control needs and that serve alcohol.



Gun Free Zone - Creating a gun-safe zone for events in Indianapolis can be a proactive step toward ensuring the safety and comfort of attendees. Event organizers should clearly communicate a strict no-firearms policy and work closely with local law enforcement in planning ways to enforce and monitor compliance. Incorporating local law enforcement into your



event committees, especially security management is a great start. This will allow you to work closely with professionals who can help you find a way to enforce your policies through private security or other methods. This measure aims to promote a secure environment, reduce the risk of accidents or altercations involving firearms, and foster a sense of community trust. Signage reinforces the gun-free policy, and organizers may consider implementing security measures, such as bag checks, to prevent unauthorized entry with firearms. If your event wants to make it a gun free zone, make sure to communicate with attendees prior to the event.

Lighting - Adequate lighting is essential for ensuring the safety of attendees. Event organizers need to strategically plan for lighting to enhance visibility in key areas.

- » **It might be helpful to consult safety personnel, like the local police department, to understand your event's lighting needs.**
- » **Ask your lighting provider about energy efficient options.**

Lost and found - An area of high visibility, like an information booth, should be designated as a location for lost and found. Volunteers or staff members should be stationed at the lost and found area to assist in locating and reuniting lost individuals with their families or friends. Implementing a systematic approach to managing lost people, such as logging descriptions and contact information, helps streamline the process and increases the likelihood of successful reunions. The area can also be used as a location for found items to be stored and for attendees to report lost belongings. Signage will help increase visibility.

Health and sanitation

Cleanup Plan - Event organizers should develop a cleanup plan encompassing cleanup activities prior, during, and following the event. If you are renting a venue, confirm what condition the space will be in when you arrive to set up your event. The space may require some cleaning, litter pickup, or mowing. During the event, you should have a plan to keep the venue tidy, including tasking volunteers with litter pickup and trash emptying. Following the event, the cleanup plan should map out activities to return the venue to pre-event condition.

- » **Common supplies for a cleanup plan include trash and recycle receptacles, receptacle liners, a central dumpster for trash receptacles to be emptied into, gloves, buckets and grabbers, rakes and brooms.**
- » **Contact Keep Indianapolis Beautiful for low-cost supplies for cleanups.**

Toilets and handwashing stations - A major consideration for health and sanitation is providing adequate toilet and handwashing facilities. If you are renting a venue, confirm the number of toilets and handwashing stations already onsite. You may need to supplement with additional facilities by renting portable toilets and washing stations.

- » **The Portable Sanitation Association International has a guide for renting portable toilets [download]. You can also contact your local portable toilet vendor and the Marion County Health Department for guidance**

Drinking water - Commit to the welfare of your event attendees by ensuring there is adequate and affordable drinking water available at your event. This is particularly important during the hot summer months when dehydration is a potential



risk. Consider providing a free water station and encouraging event attendees to bring their own refillable water bottles.

Site access, traffic control, and parking

Perimeters and gates - Depending on the type of event you are organizing, you may want to, or be required to create a perimeter. A perimeter is a boundary or enclosure. You can create a perimeter using fencing, ropes, or bike rack. Having a perimeter allows you to establish gates, or entrances and exits, to your event. Gates create a sense of arrival, provide an opportunity to capture attendance and attendee data, collect tickets, conduct security checks, and inform attendees of policies (either verbally or through strategically placed signage).

» **There are a number of low-cost or free online ticketing platforms, Eventbrite being one.**

Wayfinding signage - Wayfinding signs guide attendees to and through your event site. It typically points attendees to important amenities like parking and restrooms, and exciting activities, like to the stage, market, or beer garden. Wayfinding is helpful at large events and may not be necessary for small events.

Traffic - Organizing traffic for an event involves planning and coordination. Have a plan to make sure residents and local businesses are not negatively affected by blocked or congested streets. BNS, DPW, and IMPD are resources for developing traffic flow plans and can inform you if you need barricades and licensed officers to direct traffic. Establish clear communication channels between officers and event organizers, incorporating contingency plans for unforeseen circumstances.



◇ Find an example of a Traffic Flow Plan in the Appendix.

Parking - Having a parking plan is crucial for any event. Work with the event venue as well as neighbors and city departments on creating a comprehensive and well-designed plan. Be sure attendees know where they are expected to park and if there will be a charge. This can be communicated early and often via the website and social media pages. Wayfinding signage can also be helpful.

» **Contact Pedal and Park for bike racks. Contact information is available in Chapter 10. Helpful Contacts.**

Site Map

Creating a site map for events is essential for ensuring efficient organization and a smooth flow of activities, and is also needed to apply for various permits. Event organizers should begin by surveying the event location to identify key features such as entrances, exits, restrooms, stages, vendor areas, and parking facilities. Using this information, they can design a visual representation of the site layout, including designated areas for various activities and amenities. It's crucial to consider factors such as crowd flow, accessibility, and emergency evacuation routes when designing the site map. Clear signage and labeling should be incorporated to guide attendees and vendors throughout the event space. Regular updates and communication with stakeholders can help refine the site map and address any logistical challenges. By creating a well-planned site map, organizers can enhance the overall experience for participants and ensure the success of the event.

“**[For site maps], we recommend doing a Google Maps kind of thing. We're not looking for top notch artists, we just need to get some sort of general picture that's not just a sketch on a napkin.**”

- ANNETTE HARDEN





- » **The best way to understand your site is to walk it.**
- » **Place portable toilets, generators, dumpsters, or anything else that may be noisy or smelly away from food and beverage tents, stages, and seating areas.**

Power

Considering a plan for power infrastructure is important for event organizers, playing a pivotal role in creating a safe, inviting, and functional environment. A power plan is crucial to support various event components, including sound systems, displays, and vendors' equipment. Ensuring sufficient power sources and distribution and making a plan for various weather conditions can help prevent disruptions, technical issues, and potential hazards like tripping hazards or volume control concerns.

- » **It might be helpful to consult an electrician or the equipment rental companies to understand your event's power needs.**

Communications

Internal - An internal communication plan involves clear channels for information flow among the event committees, volunteers, and event implementation partners. This may include regular team meetings, shared online platforms, and project management tools to update everyone on progress, responsibilities, and changes. A well-designed internal communication plan fosters collaboration and efficiency within the organizing team.

External - An external communication plan focuses on engaging with attendees, sponsors, vendors, and the media. This includes promoting the event through various channels, providing information on schedules, ticketing, and logistics, and addressing inquiries or concerns. An effective external communication plan helps build anticipation and ensures attendees are well-informed, contributing to the overall success of the event.

Day of Event Tips:

- » **Be sure to communicate the Emergency Action Plan (which should include inclement weather protocols) to event partners and volunteers so everyone is on the same page.**
- » **Radios can provide instant and streamlined communication during an event.**
- » **Equipping volunteers with lanyards is a great internal communication tool, featuring important contact numbers and cell phones is a practical and efficient way to enhance communication and response during an event. These lanyards can display emergency contacts, key organizers' numbers, and relevant hotlines, ensuring that volunteers have immediate access to crucial information.**

Policies

Cancellation - Event organizers should clearly communicate cancellation criteria and timelines to attendees and partners, outlining circumstances under which an event might be canceled, such as inclement weather, unforeseen emergencies, or other factors. Clearly define refund policies, if applicable, and provide information on rescheduling or alternative plans. Transparent communication channels, such as event websites or community newsletters, should be established to promptly inform attendees of any cancellations.



Photo Consent - A Photo Consent policy typically involves event organizers communicating its intent to take photos, the purpose of their use, and providing attendees with the choice to opt-in or opt-out. By notifying attendees of this policy, organizers foster trust within the community and contribute to a sense of collaboration and respect among neighbors. The photo consent policy can be communicated at various stages, including on the event website, when purchasing a ticket, at the entrance to the event, or through signage at the event.

◇ *Find an example of a Photo Consent Policy in the Appendix.*

What is allowed vs. not allowed - Event organizers should establish a policy regarding what is and isn't allowed on-site during the event and communicate the policy in advance of the event on the event's website and on signage at the event. The policy can cover a range of factors from prohibited items like weapons and illegal substances to restrictions

on bringing dogs or pets. The policy may also specify age restrictions, addressing whether the event is suitable for children or if there are specific areas restricted to minors.

» **Organizers of events large and small are increasingly conscious about decreasing their overall carbon footprint, and Indianapolis offers a robust ecosystem of local resources to support these efforts. The Indianapolis Event Waste Guide is designed to empower both out-of-town and local event organizers with the information they need to minimize waste. You'll find key suggestions and solutions to reducing, reusing, and recycling the waste produced during your event.**



6. CREATING A TIMELINE AND WORK PLAN

To develop an effective event planning timeline, identify key milestones and break down tasks into a detailed list, estimating how long each task will take. Allocate buffer time for unforeseen challenges and assign responsibilities to team members. You might even develop a visual timeline, to illustrate the sequence of tasks. Regularly update and communicate progress, including post-event tasks, and be prepared to review and adjust the timeline as needed.

Before the event

Run of show meeting - A run of show meeting for event organizers is a session where the sequence of activities and logistics for an event is

outlined and coordinated to ensure smooth execution. These meetings serve as a vital opportunity to review the event schedule, assign roles and responsibilities, and address any logistical concerns. Organizers discuss key elements such as setup and breakdown procedures, safety protocols, and communication channels. It also gives an opportunity to finalize details regarding entertainment, vendors, and any special activities planned for the event. Finally, run-of-show meetings offer a chance to troubleshoot potential challenges and establish contingency plans to handle unexpected situations.



During the event

Volunteer check-in and orientation/training - A volunteer check-in and orientation/training session are essential components to ensure smooth operations and maximize the impact of volunteers. The check-in process allows organizers to greet volunteers, distribute necessary materials such as badges or T-shirts, and confirm their assigned roles and responsibilities. An orientation/training session can have different information including an overview of the event, its goals, schedule, and safety guidelines. Volunteers receive specific instructions related to their tasks, along with any relevant training or demonstrations. This session also offers an opportunity for volunteers to ask questions, clarify expectations, and feel confident in their roles.



Capturing attendance - Event organizers can effectively capture attendance through various methods to ensure accurate data and gauge community engagement. Digital platforms such as event registration websites or apps allow attendees to RSVP in advance, providing organizers with real-time attendance numbers to help with planning. On-site check-in procedures, such as scanning pre-issued tickets or using mobile check-in apps, offer a seamless way to track attendance. Additionally, manual methods like paper sign-in sheets or clicker counters can supplement digital systems for backup and verification purposes. Obtaining accurate data can play a pivotal role in post-event analysis and future planning efforts.

Surveying attendees - Event organizers can gather valuable insights and feedback from attendees by conducting surveys that encompass the entire attendee experience, from the website to leaving the event. Utilizing online survey platforms, such as Qualtrics, or paper-based forms, organizers

can inquire about various aspects such as website usability, event information clarity, on-site amenities, entertainment quality, and overall satisfaction. Questions can also be tailored to assess specific touchpoints, including registration processes, wayfinding signage effectiveness, and interactions with volunteers or staff. Additionally, attendees can provide suggestions for improvement or highlight aspects they particularly enjoyed, helping organizers refine future events to better meet community expectations. By actively seeking input from attendees, community events demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement and ensuring a positive experience for all participants. Surveying can happen throughout the entire experience, from planning the event, to during the event, to after it is over.

Storytelling in real time - Event organizers can captivate audiences and foster community engagement by harnessing the power of real-time storytelling, and can be a great marketing tool. By utilizing social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, or X (Twitter), organizers can provide live updates, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and highlights of the event as it unfolds, and encourage more people to come as well. By sharing photos, videos, and live streams, attendees can feel immersed in the experience, even if they're unable to attend in person. Incorporating user-generated content, such as attendee posts and comments, further enhances the sense of community participation and connectivity. Additionally, organizers can use storytelling techniques to showcase the event's impact on the community, spotlighting local businesses, volunteers, and community initiatives. Through real-time storytelling, neighborhood events can create a dynamic and inclusive narrative that resonates with attendees and strengthens community bonds.



After the event

Clean up - Events can promote community stewardship and environmental responsibility by facilitating clean-up efforts during and following the event. Organizers can designate specific clean-up times and areas, providing volunteers with necessary supplies such as gloves, trash bags, and recycling bins. Additionally, consider starting to clean or put away aspects of the event as they end, allowing for an easier clean-up process afterward. Collaborating with local waste management services or community organizations can also streamline disposal and recycling efforts. By prioritizing post-event clean-up, events demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and leave a positive impact on the community and environment.

◇ *Find an example of a Clean Up Plan in the Appendix.*

» **Connect with Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB), a local environmental stewardship nonprofit, for low-cost cleanup supplies and tools. Contact information can be found in Chapter 10. Helpful Contacts.**

Marketing Recap - Following the event, post an event recap on your website and social media channels. The recap can include photos, videos, testimonials, statistics (like attendance, money raised, hot dogs sold, etc.), and expressions of gratitude for volunteers, sponsors, and community partners. A recap concludes the storytelling arch for the event.

Send Thank you's - Events can express gratitude and strengthen community bonds by sending personalized thank-you messages following the event. Whether through email, social media, or handwritten notes, organizers can extend appreciation to attendees, volunteers, sponsors, and collaborators for their



contributions and support. By acknowledging their involvement and highlighting the event's successes, organizers reinforce a sense of camaraderie and appreciation within the community. Additionally, thanking attendees for their participation fosters goodwill and encourages continued engagement in future events. Including specific details or highlights from the event in the thank-you message adds a personal touch and reinforces the impact of their involvement.



Evaluate - After an event, conduct a thorough evaluation to assess its success and identify areas for improvement. Organizers can gather feedback from attendees, volunteers, and stakeholders through surveys, focus groups, or one-on-one interviews to gauge satisfaction levels and gather insights on the event experience. Analyzing attendance numbers, revenue, and expenses provides information that measures the event's impact and financial viability. Additionally, reflecting on logistical challenges, communication effectiveness, and community engagement helps organizers refine their planning processes for future events. Consider taking notes in a formal document throughout this process, and keeping them in a space where they can be accessed by people planning the event in the future. This process should be conducted 2-4 weeks after the event can involve multiple people, a board, or just one person, depending on budget and the time allocated.

Financial follow-up - Following an event, conducting a financial follow-up is essential for organizers to assess the event's financial health and plan for future endeavors. Organizers should review income and expenses, comparing them against the initial budget to determine if the event was financially successful. It also allows



organizers to make sure all parties received the compensation promised. This involves accounting for all revenue sources, including ticket sales, sponsorships, and donations, as well as tallying up expenditures such as venue rental fees, equipment rentals, and promotional costs. By analyzing these financial details, organizers can identify areas of overspending or potential cost-saving opportunities for future events. Additionally, creating a comprehensive financial report helps maintain transparency with stakeholders and provides valuable insights for future budgeting and financial planning efforts.

Debrief meeting - After an event, organizing a debriefing meeting is essential to reflect on the event's successes, challenges, and areas for improvement. Organizers should gather key stakeholders, volunteers, and team members to discuss what went right, acknowledging accomplishments and positive outcomes. Similarly, they should candidly address any issues or setbacks encountered during the event, identifying lessons learned and opportunities for growth. By facilitating an open and constructive dialogue, organizers can collaboratively brainstorm ideas for changes or enhancements to implement in future events, ensuring continuous improvement

and delivering even better experiences for the community in the years to come.

After a while

Future events - After the event has occurred for a while, it is important to think about a long-term plan. Determining whether an event should continue involves careful evaluation of various factors. Organizers should assess the event's ongoing relevance and impact within the community, considering factors such as attendance trends, feedback from attendees, and evolving community needs. They should also reflect on the sustainability of organizing the event over time, including the availability of resources, volunteer support, leadership capacity, and logistical challenges.

Succession planning - Succession planning is crucial to ensure the event's continuity, involving the identification and training of future leaders or organizers who can carry on the event in the future. Creating a succession binder with detailed documentation, including event plans, contacts, and operational procedures, helps streamline the transition process and ensures organizational knowledge is passed down effectively.

7. BUDGETING AND FUNDRAISING

Creating a budget

Developing an operating budget for event organizers is a crucial aspect of ensuring the success and sustainability of community gatherings. Event organizers need to consider various elements such as venue costs, permits, entertainment, marketing expenses, and any potential unforeseen expenditures. This can be done through a spreadsheet or shared document. Additionally, contingency plans should be incorporated to address unexpected costs or

incorporated to address unexpected costs or changes in circumstances.

- ◇ *Find an Operating Budget template in the Appendix.*



Raising funds

Event organizers employ a diverse range of fundraising strategies to finance their initiatives and create vibrant community gatherings. Sponsorships from local businesses and organizations provide a significant source of financial support, fostering community partnerships and promoting local businesses. Admission fees collected at the gate contribute directly to the event's budget, and participation fees, often associated with specific activities or attractions, offer an additional revenue stream. Grants are pursued to secure financial assistance from community foundations or governmental bodies interested in supporting local initiatives. Concessions, where organizers manage the sale of food and beverages, generate revenue while enhancing the overall event experience. Event-themed merchandise for purchase can also further contribute to the fundraising efforts. By diversifying their revenue streams, event

organizers can ensure financial sustainability and the continued success of community events.

Selecting contractors and suppliers

Selecting contractors and suppliers for an event is a crucial step in ensuring its success. Organizers need to consider various factors such as reliability, experience, and cost-effectiveness when choosing contractors for services like catering, stage setup, and security. Event organizers are encouraged to seek out a diverse pool of contractors and suppliers, prioritizing businesses owned by individuals from various backgrounds in the neighborhood. This not only promotes inclusivity but also reflects the rich diversity of the community. Moreover, organizers can actively engage with local minority-owned businesses, women-owned enterprises, and other underrepresented groups to foster a sense of community support. Don't be afraid to consider multiple options in the beginning, and then narrow down as you plan the event.

8. PROGRAMMING

Entertainment and activities

Programming entertainment for local events involves careful curation and attention to the community's interests and demographics. Organizers typically begin by conducting research to understand the preferences and cultural background of the local residents. This informs the selection of performers who can resonate with the audience, whether it be musicians representing diverse genres, dancers showcasing various styles, or comedians with universal appeal. Make sure to include a contract for these performers, so that both parties have realistic expectations. Collaborating with local artists and cultural organizations helps infuse authenticity and community spirit into the programming. Additionally, incorporating interactive elements

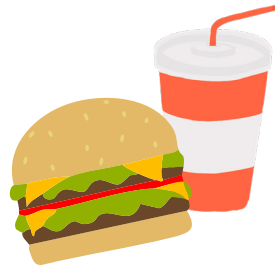
such as workshops or participatory activities can enhance engagement and create memorable experiences for attendees. It is also important to program with accessibility and inclusion in mind, so that everyone can participate in various activities. Regular communication with the community ensures that the entertainment lineup reflects the local evolving tastes and fosters a sense of inclusivity and belonging.

Partners

Event organizers for Indianapolis events should prioritize building partnerships with local businesses, community organizations, and cultural institutions. These partnerships can enhance the event experience by providing additional resources, promoting the event to a broader



audience, and offering opportunities for collaboration. Local businesses can sponsor activities or provide in-kind donations, while community organizations can offer expertise in event planning and help engage residents. Cultural institutions such as museums or theaters can contribute programming or performances that highlight the city's artistic heritage. By fostering these partnerships, organizers can create more dynamic and inclusive events that truly reflect the spirit of Indianapolis' diverse community. It is important to consider writing a contract so that both parties have clear expectations for responsibilities.



Vendors

Event organizers for Indianapolis events should carefully select vendors who can contribute to the vibrant atmosphere and diverse offerings of the occasion. Seeking out local businesses and artisans not only supports the community but also adds authenticity and variety to the event experience. From food vendors serving up delicious local cuisine to artisans selling unique handmade crafts, each vendor brings their own flavor and flair to the event. Organizers should prioritize diversity among vendors, ensuring representation from different cultural backgrounds and offering a range of products and services to cater to the varied interests of attendees. When contracting food vendors, it is important to consider accommodating allergies and diet restrictions as well.

- » **Make sure to include the food and drink vendors on your list of vendors for a Special Events permit and Health Department permit.**
- » **Don't forget about ice! Be sure to clarify who is responsible for providing ice when you enter into an agreement with your food and beverage vendors.**

Food trucks - Event organizers for Indianapolis events can consider forming partnerships with local food trucks to enhance the culinary experience for attendees. Local food trucks bring a dynamic array of flavors and cuisines, adding to the diversity and excitement of the event. By collaborating with these mobile vendors, organizers can offer a wide range of options to cater to different tastes and dietary preferences. Additionally, partnering with food trucks allows organizers to support small businesses within the community and showcase the city's vibrant culinary scene. Establishing these partnerships not only enriches the event but also fosters a sense of community and camaraderie among residents and attendees alike. Keep in mind that there may be fees associated with having food trucks at an event, or they may be willing to donate a portion of their proceeds.



- » **Visit Indy has some resources for finding a food truck that fits with the goals and theme of the event. Find more information on visitindy.com.**
- » **Events with two or more Marion County licensed mobile food units need to register with the Marion County Health Department as a Temporary Event. The registration deadline is 30 days prior to the event. Find more information about Health Department permits in Chapter 5. Logistics and Operations.**

Breweries, wineries, cideries, and distilleries - Partnering with local breweries, wineries, cideries, and distilleries allows organizers to showcase Indianapolis’ impressive craft beer, wine and spirit scene. These local breweries, wineries, and distilleries will need to have the appropriate permit from the ATC to serve alcoholic beverages. Working with catering partners adds convenience and variety, ensuring that the event offers a range of options to suit different preferences, all while ensuring alcohol and food is sold safely. These partnerships not only enhance the event experience but also support local businesses and help display the city’s diverse and creative options.



9. MARKETING

Marketing for event organizers involves the strategic promotion and communication of events to attract attendees, sponsors, and stakeholders. It encompasses various activities such as identifying target audiences, creating compelling messaging, selecting appropriate channels (such as social media, email marketing, or advertising), and engaging potential participants. Effective event marketing aims to generate buzz, build anticipation, and ultimately drive attendance while also enhancing the event’s brand and reputation.

- ◇ *Find an example of a Marketing Plan in the Appendix.*

Name

The first step when considering marketing is selecting a name for your event. Event organizers should prioritize clarity, distinctiveness, and memorability to ensure it stands out. The name

should succinctly convey the event’s purpose and essence while capturing the audience’s attention. Additionally, considering the availability of a matching domain name might be important for online visibility and branding consistency. Conducting research to ensure the chosen name isn’t already trademarked or heavily associated with other events or brands should also be a consideration.

Brand identity

Creating a strong brand identity for your Indianapolis event is a great tool for standing out and fostering community engagement. Start by developing a logo or visual symbol that encapsulates the spirit of your event and resonates with your audience. Incorporate consistent graphics across all promotional materials, such as

flyers, posters, and social media posts, to reinforce brand recognition. Choose colors that evoke the desired emotions and align with the theme of your event, ensuring they remain consistent throughout all communications. Additionally, establish a distinct voice and tone in your messaging that reflects the personality of your event and resonates with your community. By cultivating a cohesive brand identity through graphics, color, voice, and tone, your event will become more recognizable and leave a lasting impression on attendees. If your budget allows, consider hiring a local graphic designer, or looking among volunteers. There are also accessible websites like Canva that make graphic design accessible to anyone.

Website

Creating a website for your event can serve as a central hub for information, registration, and community engagement. Start by choosing a user-friendly platform and domain name that reflects the identity of your event, this can include sites like Weebly. Incorporate your event's graphics, colors, and imagery to capture the essence of your neighborhood and event theme. Ensure the website is easy to navigate, with clear sections for event details, schedule, FAQs, and registration. Regularly update the website with news, announcements, and countdowns to keep attendees engaged leading up to the event. By creating a dynamic and visually appealing website, you'll enhance the visibility and accessibility of your event.

» **Include a QR code to your website on flyers and posters.**

Social media

Events can leverage the power of social media to amplify their reach and engagement within the community. Start by creating dedicated social media profiles for the event on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and X. Share compelling graphics, photos, and videos that highlight the event. Encourage residents to follow and engage with the event's social media accounts by posting regular updates, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and interactive content such as polls or Q&A sessions. Utilize event hashtags to increase visibility and encourage user-generated content. Engage with followers by responding to comments, questions, and messages promptly. Additionally, consider collaborating with local influencers or community groups to further extend your event's reach. Advertising on social media can be a cost-effective way to get the word out. By harnessing the power of social media, events can foster a sense of community, generate buzz, and maximize attendance.

Paid advertising

If you have the money in event budget, you may consider placing ads in traditional media outlets, like local newspapers and magazines and on radio or TV. Sales reps at the outlet can help guide you on when and where to place your ads to reach your target audience while staying within your budget.

» **Ask local media outlets if they would be interested in sponsoring the event. In exchange for certain sponsor benefits that you provide, they would provide advertising on their station or in their paper/magazine for a discount or free of cost.**



Earned media

Events can harness the power of media relations to garner attention and support from local media outlets at no cost. Crafting compelling press releases that highlight the unique aspects and community impact of the event can help generate extra excitement. These press releases can be distributed to newspapers, online news platforms, and radio stations, inviting journalists to cover the event or interview organizers for feature stories. Additionally, proactive media pitching involves reaching out directly to journalists or media contacts to pitch story ideas related to the event. Building relationships with local reporters and influencers can enhance the likelihood of media coverage. By effectively utilizing PR strategies such as press releases and media pitching, events can secure valuable media coverage, increase awareness, and drive attendance.

◇ Find a Press Release template in the Appendix.

- » **Tagging media outlets in your social media posts (particularly announcement posts) can help you get the attention of local media outlets.**
- » **Research how similar events are covered in local news media and reach out directly to reporters who cover them.**

A press kit for event organizers is a comprehensive resource containing essential materials and information designed to facilitate media coverage and promotion of the event. It can be sent to journalists, sponsors, bloggers, influencers, or anyone looking to promote your event. It typically includes press releases, fact sheets, event logos, high-resolution images, key messages, bios of key speakers or organizers, and any

relevant background information. By making this information readily available, event organizers can streamline the media outreach process, ensure consistent messaging, and increase the likelihood of securing media coverage, thereby enhancing the event's visibility and reach. Additionally, a press kit can be instrumental in maintaining control over the event's narrative and ensuring accurate information is being shared.

◇ Find an example of a Press Kit in the Appendix.



Signage and direct mail

Banners and yard signs strategically placed in high-traffic areas within the neighborhood can serve as visual reminders of the event. Direct mail campaigns can target specific households with flyers or postcards, providing detailed information about the event and encouraging attendance.



Online

Events can leverage various internet tools to boost visibility and community engagement. Submitting your event to various online event calendars like Downtown Indy, Indyhub, and Visit Indy ensures they're easily discoverable by residents searching for local activities. Newsletters are another effective tool for keeping residents informed about upcoming events, providing regular updates, and fostering a sense of community. Additionally, platforms



like NextDoor provide hyper-local networking opportunities, allowing organizers to share event details directly with neighbors and solicit feedback or assistance. Finally, ask partners and sponsors to advertise the event in their newsletters and offices. By tapping into these internet tools, events can enhance their reach, connect with residents, and create memorable community experiences.

Grassroots

Events can harness the power of grassroots efforts to generate enthusiasm and participation within the community. Word of mouth remains one of the most potent marketing tools; encouraging attendees to spread the word to friends and neighbors can rapidly increase event awareness. Actively participating in local meetings, whether it's a neighborhood association gathering or a community council meeting, provides an opportunity to directly engage with residents and promote the event. Distributing flyers and posters throughout the neighborhood, particularly in high-traffic areas or local businesses, serves as a tangible reminder of the upcoming event. Additionally, utilizing bulletin boards in community centers, libraries, or coffee shops ensures event information reaches a broader audience.

Promotions

Events can elevate their promotional efforts by incorporating engaging strategies such as giveaways, contests, and co-branded partnerships. Giveaways, whether it's branded merchandise or event tickets, incentivize participation and create excitement in the community. Contests, such as photo contests or scavenger hunts related to the event theme, encourage community involvement and foster

a sense of fun and competition. Co-branded partnerships with sponsors or local businesses not only provide additional resources but also extend the event's reach by tapping into their existing networks. Collaborative promotions, such as offering exclusive discounts or special offers in partnership with local businesses, can further incentivize attendance and foster goodwill within the community.

Documentation

Events can effectively document their proceedings through photography, videography, and drones, capturing memorable moments and showcasing the vibrancy of the community. Professional photographers and videographers can be enlisted to capture high-quality images and footage of the event, highlighting key activities, performances, and interactions among attendees. Additionally, drones offer a unique perspective, capturing aerial shots that provide stunning visual narratives of the event's scale and ambiance. However, it's crucial to adhere to regulations and obtain necessary approvals when utilizing drones, ensuring compliance with local laws and safety guidelines. By documenting the event through photography, videography, and drones (responsibly), events can create compelling visual content that preserves memories, promotes future events, and strengthens community connections.



10. HELPFUL CONTACTS

Visit Indy

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IndyParks

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317-327-5588

Marion County Public Health Department

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kwhiting@marionhealth.org
317-221-2256

Indiana State Excise Police, District 6

dist6@atc.in.gov
317-541-4100
www.in.gov/atc/isepe/contact-us/

Indiana State Gaming Commission

317-232-4646

Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center (INRC)

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Indy Arts Council

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Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB)

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Bicycle Indiana's Pedal and Park

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11. APPENDIX



A. Clean Up Plan [[Download](#)]

B. Emergency Action Plan [[Download](#)]

C. Marketing Plan [[Download](#)]

D. Operating Budget [[Download](#)]

E. Photo Consent Policy [[Download](#)]

F. Press Kit [[Download](#)]

G. Press Release [[Download](#)]

H. Risk Assessment [[Download](#)]

I. Site Map [[Download](#)]

J. Timeline / Work Plan [[Download](#)]

K. Traffic Management Plan [[Download](#)]



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Downtown Indy

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Oktoberfest

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Rocky Ripple Festival

Summer Keown
Keep Indianapolis Beautiful

Amy Lapka
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Martha Latta
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Cottage Home Block Party

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Indiana Department of Homeland Security

Kelli Whiting
Marion County Public Health Department

Anna Wilmont
City of Indianapolis Department of Business
and Neighborhood Services

Megan Wright
Rocky Ripple Festival

There's more resources to help!

Online Examples & Templates
[VisitIndy.com/events/festival-toolkit](https://www.visitindy.com/events/festival-toolkit)



Online Training
[VisitIndyAcademy.com](https://www.visitindy.com/academy)

