

# LOWELL COMMUNITY FESTIVAL AND EVENT PLANNERS RESOURCE GROUP



Mosaic Lowell

February 7, 2024 Meeting, 6:00 pm, LTC

Panelists Diandra Silk, Laura Tavares, and Sylvia Cunha discussed proper marketing techniques and processes to prepare festival and event organizers for the beginning of Lowell's festival season.

## Festivals/Events/Nonprofits Represented

- DIY Lowell
- Pollard Library
- GLSO
- Lowell Festival Foundation / LSMS TK
- Black Joy
- Lowell Summer Music Series
- City of Lowell
- MAPS

## Marketing Tasks

The panelists provided quick tips for successful marketing. Some of these answers were provided in response to questions of how to market to the Black and Brown communities, how to deal with negativity, how frequently to post, where to drive people leading up to the last month, and how to pick a date for a fundraiser.

- **Quick Marketing Tips:**
  - o Timeline. Start planning and marketing as early as possible. Ideally, you should start thinking and planning one year ahead. Look for ideas everywhere! Avoid hosting the event on bad historical dates. Pay attention to the connotations associated with the date and location.
  - o Endorsement. On your materials, have a partner logo that "endorses" your event.
  - o Your Story. Tell your story in a unique and different way. For example: Food for Charity.
  - o Goal. Define what success looks like for your event, and create metrics to measure this. Question what the barrier is.
  - o Audience/Collaborators. Define what types of people you want more of at your event.
  - o Negative Response. When faced with negativity, respond to the question, correct the misconception, and point to a resource. Let the situation resolve in the comments. You can also ask "Do you want to talk?" or hide the comment - the person will not know that their comment is hidden on Facebook. Try to help each other out with these situations.
- **Pre-Event Marketing Tasks:**
  - o Marketing Budget. While creating a marketing budget, start with the goal, then backtrack. Your goal should be 6-16% of your total budget, meaning about \$0.10 per \$1 spent overall. Don't spend money on printed ads, such as newspapers. Leave space for promoting the event through Facebook.

- Sponsorship. Think ahead to include sponsors in your marketing. Where could their logos go on event advertisement and event signage? Create a sponsor packet and sponsor deck. In the sponsor packet, explain why someone should sponsor your event, provide full details on the event, include the festival's reach, and include the reach with partners. What is one sentence that summarizes the event? Put this sentence up front, and be authentic while telling your story.
  - Photography. Get a volunteer photographer, and ask people to share photos - make sure to ask for permission to use the photos for future marketing.
  - Translations. Create translations of your flyers. Mosaic Lowell's website has a translation services guide at [www.mosaiclowell.org/resources](http://www.mosaiclowell.org/resources). For Khmer and other Southeast Asian languages, CMAA is a great contact. Make sure to have confirmations that the translations are completed, and have someone copy edit and proofread prior to posting the translations anywhere.
  - Advertisement Materials. Create flyers and social media graphics to publicly showcase your event's details. Include photos of the audience you're targeting, including people of color. Include a diversity of performers.
  - Build an Audience. In the advertisement materials, lead people to a website and include an email sign-up. Answer the questions of where you can be the most active in your marketing and what platforms your target audience uses.
- **Marketing Methods:**
- Emailing. Create an email list to ask others to cross-promote your event. Some local organizations would be willing to share out your event details in their network! Make sure to be willing to do the same in return.
  - Flyers. Post flyers at least 1 month prior to the event around Lowell. Make sure to post the flyers in numerous places/neighborhoods. Posting translated flyers is also useful in providing the information to a broader audience.
  - Website. Create a unique URL to direct people to a specific website or webpage. On this webpage, include details, such as where to park, maps, and the schedule. You can also buy a URL to redirect to a Facebook page.
  - Social Media. Consistency is more important than how often the event is advertised on social media. You can post the event on Facebook, and Instagram. Make sure to create an actual event on Facebook in addition to the normal posts, and to boost the event. Meta Business is useful for scheduling the posts and stories on Facebook and Instagram ahead of time. On Instagram, you can add multiple photos to a post. Use insights/analytics to understand your outreach and audience.
  - Online Calendars. Add your event to public event calendars, such as [likelowell.com](http://likelowell.com), [business.greaterlowellcc.org/events](http://business.greaterlowellcc.org/events), [mosaiclowell.org/events](http://mosaiclowell.org/events), [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com), and Vanna Howard's calendar. When applicable, add categories to your event so that it appears with certain calendar filters.
  - Mailing Lists. COOL, GMVCVB, and Like Lowell (run by City of Lowell's Office of Cultural Affairs and Special Events) have mailing lists for events. There is also the Tailorville email program.
  - Survey. Post a survey for email sign-ups, and include zip codes.
- **Useful People in Your Network:**
- Mosaic Lowell ([Info@mosaiclowell.org](mailto:Info@mosaiclowell.org)) shares events on their social media and events calendar on their website
  - Teddy Panos ([teddypanos@insidelowell.com](mailto:teddypanos@insidelowell.com)) shares news and events frequently on Inside Lowell

- City of Lowell's Office of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (CASE) provides assistance with event permitting and the advertisement of certain events. Email CASE at [case@lowellma.gov](mailto:case@lowellma.gov).
- Reporters. Build a personal friendship with reporters. Still, be mindful of what the reporters post.
- Organizations. Find organizations that are friendly and aligned to share your event's details with their network.
- The Community. Make yourself uncomfortable and meet the community! Members of the community assist with spreading word of the event.
- **During-Event Marketing Tasks:**
  - Photos. Take photos of the festival that can be used to market future occurrences of the event.
  - Social Media. Showcase your social media handles during the event to grow your followers and reach.
- **Post-Event Marketing Tasks:**
  - Debrief. What could you have done differently? What worked?

### Questions and Ideas

The meeting closed with a brainstorm of questions and ideas for future contemplation.

- **Questions**
  - Collaborate with UMass Lowell?
  - Create a fundraiser calendar?
- **Ideas**
  - Create a resource list of free applications.