

## AbaF

# Marketing your exhibition internationally

Marketing your exhibition internationally builds upon the foundations established in the *Marketing your Exhibition in Australia* Fact Sheet. The basic principles of marketing to Australian audiences apply for marketing your exhibition internationally, but an extra level of information needs to be taken on board.

Dr Sharron Dickman's definition of 'What is marketing?' is a useful one:

*Marketing is: the analysis, planning, implementation, and control of programs designed to increase visitor awareness and use of the collections, facilities, and services in a way that will mutually benefit both the organisation and the visitor...<sup>1</sup>*

Remember that marketing is a 'customer focused' activity. Given that the focus of marketing is on the consumer, the development of sound research strategies to obtain information about the international market – the consumer's needs and wants - is imperative and cannot be overstated. This enables you to identify international market segments which are most likely to respond to your products and services.

**TIP:** *Aside from the fundamentals of marketing, never assume that just because something works in Australia, it will work overseas.*

### **Research, research, research - desk and field**

Finding out what drives the market and how to get the best of it is essential. This can be done only by good research.

*"Market research involves finding out about things you need to know such as import duties, regulations, distribution channels, market size and growth, competition, demographics and local production – so you can assess market opportunities and the costs of capturing them.*

*Gathering this information is usually straightforward and helps you understand how a market operates. The most valuable element of market research is information about 'market feel'. How will your product or service compete in the environment where you will be doing business?"<sup>2</sup>*

Your research should reveal:

- The types of buyers/customers you are targeting
- What they want and how they want it
- What sort of promotion works for them
- How business and marketing activities vary with different cultures
- What the market environment is like
- Who your competitors are

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<sup>1</sup> Sharron Dickman, *Arts Marketing: the Pocket Guide*, 1997, page 3.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.austrade.gov.au/Market-research-MR/default.aspx>

Your market research activities might include some/all of the following:

- Developing a short list of markets and creating a structured search outline by for example, looking for curators or galleries.
- Gaining a feel for the environment by speaking with people operating in the market of interest to you
- Seeking out practical advice at country specific seminars about the nature of the marketplace, for example, Austrade
- Gathering basic information from the internet
- Developing direct contacts with curators or gallerists
- Checking out online reports that are available free of charge or sold in chapters
- Planning well: a consistent approach produces results<sup>3</sup>

### **Getting local knowledge: What is the local market?**

The first step in marketing your arts activity internationally is to understand the local context. It's very helpful where possible to visit your destination well before your show opens and get the local knowledge about the market, establish key relationships and how to best promote your work.

**TIP:** *Read up on background information before your visit – your reading will assist you to ask informed questions and negotiate more knowledgably, which will achieve a better result. First impressions are critical.*

Austrade has a useful checklist to make the most out of your preliminary visit including:

- Never finalise an agreement before visiting the market
- Try to visit 2-3 prospective clients, to give you a basis for comparison
- Make sure you allow enough time to lock in a well-balanced appointment program with the right people
- Review the checklist – and ensure you have your pricing and delivery times right to be able to meet commitments
- Prepare yourself so you know something of the country and how business is done - to present as being well informed
- Be ready to send a follow up fax or email within 48 hours, acknowledging the main points of the meeting and seeking the prospective customer/business associate's response<sup>4</sup>

### **Building relationships - make contact beforehand**

When working in an international market, it's vital to build and maintain relationships and have a close liaison with your presenting gallery overseas. Their local knowledge is invaluable.

**TIP:** *Know your international market: research and understanding your customers' wants, needs and demands – and how they differ from Australian practices. This provides important input for designing market strategies:*

- The key to effective partnerships is understanding your own and your partner's aims and objectives
- When working in partnerships, set measurable targets you can achieve early on as success breeds success
- Be flexible and open to new ideas<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.austrade.gov.au/Market-research-MR/default.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.austrade.gov.au/Visiting-the-market-VTM/default.aspx>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publications/publication\\_detail.php?browse=recent&id=409](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publications/publication_detail.php?browse=recent&id=409)

### Devising your marketing materials: in English and in translation?

You must supply top quality materials to your representatives:

- Similar to Australian requirements, excellent quality images that reflect the nature of the work are essential
- All flier/brochure copy and images should be forwarded to the presenting organisation well in advance
- Media releases should be forwarded well in advance and if appropriate, translated in the language of the destination country.

What should you expect from your international partner?

- Advice about audiences
- Effective distribution systems for marketing material
- Access to their mailing lists, where possible
- Supply of samples of their marketing material - media releases, direct mail outs etc so you can evaluate their design style and ensure that your materials hit the mark.

### Understanding cultural differences

It's vital to consider the cultural differences in your target markets. Make sure you consider the differences in the markets in each region.

- Are they predominantly commercial?
- Government supported?
- What are the different segments in these markets?

Further considerations:

- Research differences of cultural values and expectations to avoid potential disagreements and conflict
- Don't assume that everyone can, or wants to, communicate in English
- Establish shared goals and objectives at the start with your local contacts
- Consider the use of language in the work – if you have very text-based work, will it be appropriately received in your destination country?
- Realise that in Asian cultures the need to 'save face' and not ascribe blame is very important. Apologise immediately if something has gone wrong
- Some cultures are 'gift giving', make sure you have plenty of gifts and thank you cards with you!<sup>6</sup>

### Publicity campaign: Getting international media coverage

A publicity campaign can be one of the most successful ways of promoting yourself internationally and reach a wide audience.

**TIP:** *Working successfully with the media is a combination of creative stories, brilliant strategy, context and timing – you need to get this mix right!*

Research, story angles, timing and context:

- Do your research – read and listen to the media in the destination country, identify where you would like to be featured...create a target list
- Have great ideas for stories that communicate the right message and your long-term vision. Look for the logical matches and points of reference between the other country and Australia

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<sup>6</sup> Andrew Ross, *Hirano Productions – Touring Asia*,  
[www.fuel4arts.com/files/attach/F4A\\_HindeFinal12.pdf](http://www.fuel4arts.com/files/attach/F4A_HindeFinal12.pdf)

- Make sure that the context of your media story pitch is appropriate for your destination country, especially if your work is political in nature or controversial
- Consider issuing media releases in the language of your destination country
- After you have the timing and context right, match your story angles to the most appropriate media outlets and execute your campaign
- Make sure you follow-up accordingly and send through information and excellent quality images promptly.

### Using Australian media to link internationally

There are a number of journalists in Australia writing for both foreign news outlets as well as reporting for in-language media outlets in Australia. They are an excellent point of contact because they could potentially do an interview with you prior to your visit and get their article published overseas. You might get featured here in Australia as well!

A useful starting place to find internationally journalists:

- The Foreign Correspondent's Association – [www.foreigncorrespondents.org](http://www.foreigncorrespondents.org)
- SBS - [www.sbs.com.au](http://www.sbs.com.au)

### Opening nights

The opening night of your exhibition is a critical time to liaise with potential buyers, media, reviewers and other supporters. Despite the costs associated with putting on a function, it is one of the key ways to build relationships – which will be beneficial to you in the long term.

**TIP:** *Make sure you promptly follow-up any interested leads for your work – purchasers of artwork, media interest and others. Remember that they have expressed interest in your work in coming along in the first place!*

### Get 'in-country assistance'

There are many associations and Government Departments who can offer 'on the ground local knowledge', assistance and all-important contacts. Make sure you make contact with Australian Embassies, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade DFAT and others prior to your visit.

## Resources

### Web based resources

#### *Australia International Cultural Council*

The Council is a consultative group. The Council, chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, draws together leaders from government, the arts and business with a common interest in promoting Australia overseas through art and culture.

W: [www.dfat.gov.au/aicc](http://www.dfat.gov.au/aicc)

#### *Austrade*

Austrade's website provides country and industry data as well as links to other sources.

W: <http://www.austrade.gov.au/How-to-export/default.aspx>

#### *Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)*

W: [www.dfat.gov.au/geo/](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/)

#### *Smart Traveller*

W: [www.smarttraveller.gov.au/](http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au/)

The Australian Government's travel advisory and consular assistance service

W: [www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/](http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/)

### **International export websites**

*The Asian Development Bank (ADB)*

The ADB offers good background data on its member countries at. Click on the 'Regions and Countries' tab at the top of the home page.

W: [www.adb.org](http://www.adb.org)

*Federation of International Trade Associations (FITA)*

FITA provides links to information on a wide range of international trade and import/export topics. It also has a trade leads service.

W: [www.fita.org/webindex.html](http://www.fita.org/webindex.html).

*Global Edge*

Global Edge is an international business portal providing country guides, links to global information resources and a discussion forum.

W: [www.globaledge.msu.edu/ibrd.ibrd.asp](http://www.globaledge.msu.edu/ibrd.ibrd.asp)

### **Further Reading**

- Arts Marketing Association, *Message in a Bottle: The art and science of communication*, AMA Conference Report, 16-18 July 2003. UK: Lighthouse, Poole's Centre for the Arts – available on line at [www.a-m-a.org.uk/message\\_home.asp](http://www.a-m-a.org.uk/message_home.asp)
- Helen Close and Robert Donovan, *Who's My Market? A Guide to Researching Audiences and Visitors in the Arts*, Australia Council, Sydney, 1998
- Sharron Dickman, *Arts Marketing: the Pocket Guide*, Centre for Professional Development, Melbourne, 1997
- Sharron Dickman, *What's My Plan? A Guide to Developing Arts Marketing Plans*, Australia Council, Sydney, 2000
- Morris Hargraves McIntyre, *Taste Buds: How to cultivate the art market*, Arts Council of England, United Kingdom, October 2004, [www.newaudiences.org.uk/resource.php?id=486](http://www.newaudiences.org.uk/resource.php?id=486)
- Sue Hodge and Janet Millar, *Getting Art There: An Artist's Marketing Manual*, National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA), NSW, 2002
- Peter Hughes and Peter Steidl, *Marketing Strategies for Arts Organisation, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*, Australia Council, Sydney, 1999
- Philip Kotler, *Principles of Marketing*, Prentice Hall, NSW, 2003
- Woolcott Research Pty Ltd, Positive Solutions and Judith James Consultancy,
- *The Great Indoors: Developing audiences for contemporary art and craft in Australia*, 2003

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*This Fact Sheet has been developed by Trudy Johnston, tjc, for AbaF's Artist Business program*

