Marketing

There are many ways to market an event.

Posters & Flyers - Most events print out posters and flyers. Make them eye catching and easy to read. Also consider a smaller size poster then the typical 24" x 18". Offer businesses the option of displaying a poster or flyer and bring your own tape! Most businesses will let you (rather than having them) tape the poster/flyer in their window. At least you know it will go up in a prominent place and not buried in the back.

Postcards - Drop off cards at businesses, mail them out to friends, go to other events and hand them out and, if you are planning an event with vendors, encourage them to hand them out at other events they are participating in. Some vendors will write notes telling people their booth number and "bring this card for 10% off".

Radio - Work with the local radio stations but don't be afraid to look outside of the County, for in-kind sponsorship (free ads in exchange for logo/booth at event). Check with your committee members as they may know someone in the media that they can personally talk to and ask for support. Be sure that the media you are choosing fits the audience you are targeting. You aren't going to advertise a Hip Hop benefit concert on a Country music station or vice versa. Ask for on air interviews. The best times for these are during the morning radio shows. Request actual promotion spots/commercials rather than Public Service Announcements (these are always free). Some radio stations may require you to purchase commercials in exchange for their support, so be prepared to have a radio-advertising budget.

Television - Another good source for promoting your event television needs not be costly. In Ventura, CAPS (Community Access Public Television) can assist with taping a segment about the event to run on the local channel. Local cable franchises often have a community calendar for which you can submit information. Some cable franchises also offer interview segments to run during news shows. Contact your local cable company. The major networks have community calendars that events can be submitted to at no charge. In some cases an event may be one of the highlights on Friday segments of "things to do on the weekend". Submit these request 3 weeks prior to the event.

Newspaper - Display ad(s) can be negotiated for in-kind just like radio & TV. Have your poster/flyer saved and ready to be submitted for a print ad. Don't limit your event to the daily local papers; venture out to the weekly and monthly periodicals. Go outside of the county! Submit your Press Release to every media outlet possible. In Ventura County don't leave out the Navy Base newspapers.

Websites - Have a website developed for the event. Post links for donations and sign ups. Attach your sponsors logo and link to the site. Be sure to keep the website up to date, offer weather outlooks, directions to event, route map, etc.

Social Networking - Just about everyone has an account! Not only create an account for your event but also encourage your committee, participants, vendors and friends to pass the website link on to their list of friends.

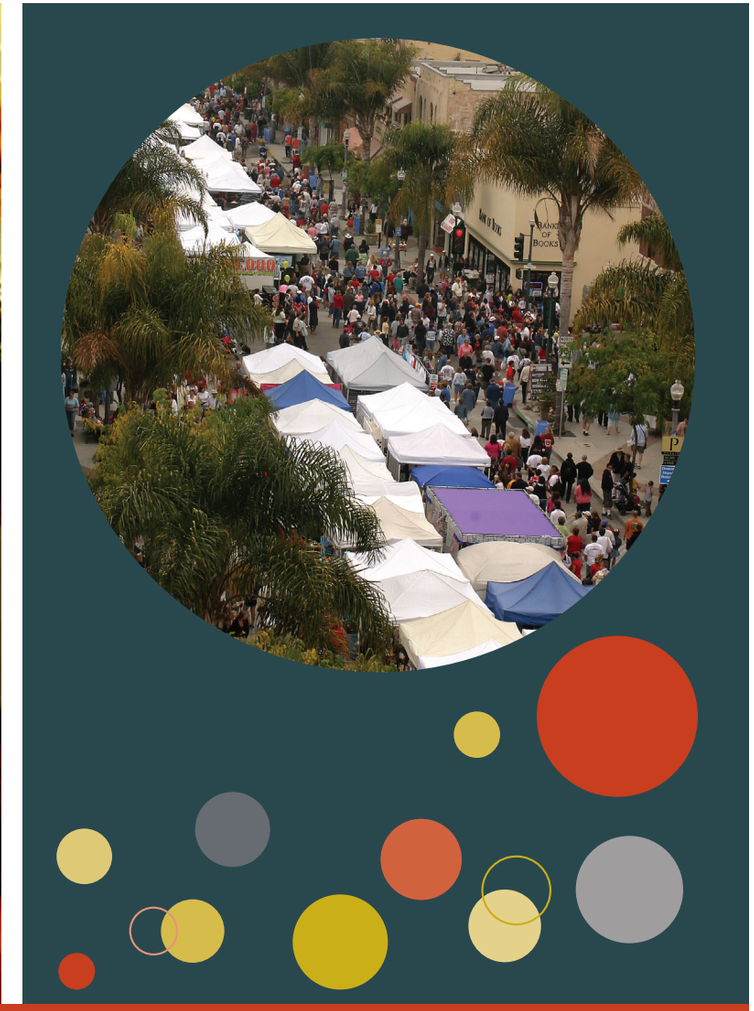
Email Blast - Send a blind copy to all your friends and, if appropriate, co-workers. Keep the message brief and simple, add a phone number or have the people email you back if they have questions.

Special Events/Filming/Facility Rental: Michelle Godoy-Morales, 501 Poli Street, #226, 805.654.7749 or email mgodoy@ci.ventura.ca.us. For parks contact Diana Roemer, 805.652.4551.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this document is available in alternate formats by calling the City of Ventura Department of Community Services at (805) 658-4726 or through the California Relay Service.

CITY OF VENTURA
PARKS, RECREATION & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Let's Plan An EVENT



Visit www.cityofventura.net/permits for more information on the event permitting process or call 805-654-7749.

Special Event Planning

1 **Pick your date:** Always have alternate dates in case your first date is taken. Also do not begin to advertise until your date, location, time are approved. Check with the Ventura Chamber of Commerce, Ventura Visitors & Convention Bureau and Ventura County Fairgrounds to make sure there are no conflicts.

2 **Your location:** Do you want a beach setting? A park? Are you going to be using city streets, state and/or county property? Consider your logistical needs when picking a location. Using non-city of Ventura property will require a permit from the agencies that own or control the event site.

3 **Event time:** Mornings are popular for benefit walks/runs. Take the weather and daylight into consideration when planning your event.

4 **Timeline:** Make a timeline and stick to it. This will help in the planning process and assist you in marketing the event.

5 **Budget:** Make your budget; including contingency funds (usually 10% of the total budget) for those emergency fees and purchases that may pop up. Your budget might include advertising (print cost, print ads, recorded ads, signage), operation supplies (rentals, catering, non-advertising printing), permit fees, and staffing.

6 **Permit:** Download permit applications and if you have any questions be sure to ask. Staff is available to assist at every step in the process. The permit is fairly self-explanatory and must be completed in full. A site map is required when the completed permit is submitted. If you are serving alcohol you will need to apply for an alcohol permit and talk to the Ventura Alcohol Officer from Ventura Police Department regarding other related requirements.

7 **Turn in permit:** It is best to submit your permit as soon as you have set the date and location and verified there are no other conflicting events. A phone call does not guarantee your date and location. Fifteen business days is the minimum. A permit can take from two weeks to a month to be finalized.

8 **Insurance and business license:** Prior to the event you must submit proof of liability insurance listing the city of Ventura as an additional insured (Letter of Endorsement). You can also purchase insurance through the city if you do not have a broker. Prices will vary on the type of event; check with city staff for pricing. Most special events and filming and photography permits require a current City of Ventura Business License, whether you are a non-profit or commercial applicant. Info: 805/658-4715 or www.cityofventura.net/businesslicense.

9 **Permit issuance:** When the permit is done, you will receive a phone call from our staff and can pick it up at City Hall during business hours. When you receive your permit you must submit full payment, sign the application and submit proper insurance documentation (if not being purchased from city).

10 **Pre-event contacts:** On your completed permit will be sections from each city department involved in the permit process. In some cases city services are required (police, parks, fire inspection) and these departments and the individuals will be expecting a phone call from you to review the event and their role.

Helpful suggestions to make your event flow, be fun and have minimal stress:

Volunteers

Once you have secured the date/location and time, start recruiting volunteers. Have written out assignments and list of time slots available. The type of volunteers you require depends largely on your event needs. Remember, high school students can make great volunteers and many of them need community service hours for graduation. The (active) senior community is also a great resource for volunteers.

Hold a pre-event volunteer meeting at least 2 weeks prior to the event to review volunteer tasks on the day of event. Offer community hour credit for attending. This is the perfect time to distribute staff shirts/instructions and also for everyone to meet. The pre-meeting will save you time on event day explaining to the staff/volunteers their roles.

If you cannot hold a pre-event volunteer meeting, gather email addresses and send out instructions and schedules via email (send out as "Blind Copy" to prevent people being placed on chain lists). This method is also the best way to communicate any changes about your event. Plus it saves staff time instead of making the individual phone calls! You may just want to send out an email as a friendly reminder to everyone with the schedule and task description 3 days before the event.

Volunteer Tasks

Here are some event tasks volunteers can help you with:

Information Booth - This is a very important location as it is the main check-in site for the public, vendors and for any type of inspections needed. Be sure to have a good supply of pens, notepads, event information, first aid kit, snacks, volunteer instructions, schedules, emergency phone numbers and procedures. It's a good idea to have one person as the Information Booth Chairperson.

Decorating - If your event requires decorations, have volunteers do the decorating and let them be creative.

Signage - If signage is required, have a map showing where the signage is to be placed. Have two volunteers take care of the placement and removal of all signage. Supply them with zip ties, duct tape, scissors or box cutters and, if needed, the barricades on which to place the signage.

Refreshment Table - Two people should be enough to run the refreshment table if you are supplying water or snacks for participants.

Other Assignments - Depending on the type of event you may find that there are other tasks for volunteers. What you don't want to do is have people just standing around with nothing to do and getting bored.

Set up - Have people assigned to the set up of the event. Give them exact details and a timeline. Use your site map for the set up. Assign one person to be the contact for set up. If you are having rentals delivered be sure to supply a site map to the company two weeks prior to the event. The company staff can then come to the event site and set up, have them check with you before leaving to make sure everything is correct. You can save money by doing the set up yourself and picking up the rentals, only if this is feasible.

Tear Down - Just like the set up, assign a group for the tear down. Your rental company may offer to do the rental tear down for a charge. The location should look the same way it did in the morning with no trash, signage or decorative items left behind.