

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR YOUR FREZZA COMMITTEE

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Maximising event opportunities for your FReeZA committee is about planning for the year ahead. Effective planning ensures you're meeting the needs of your target audience, achieving your committee's goals and objectives, learning from past events, and being in a position to take advantage of further event opportunities when they arise. The following is a step-by-step guide of how to strategically plan the year ahead with your committee.

1. Do your research

Strategically planning the year ahead begins with doing research. There is likely to be a wide range of information available to you, so make use of it. Start by researching the population and demographics in your local and surrounding areas. Your local council will have a community profile and population distribution maps that can be filtered by age. Use these to find out where the kids are, what kind of backgrounds and cultures they have, how old they are, etc. Find out as much as you can about the audience you're trying to target. Where is the greatest concentration of young people in your area?

Now consider where your events are currently being held, where the venues are, and even where other potential venues are. Compare this to where the young people are in your area. Are you targeting the most effective areas, are you making it easy for young people to get to your shows? Or could you be doing something better, such as holding your events in a more centralised location to where young people are?

You need know this so you can GO TO WHERE THE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE. This isn't just the key to success in holding events, but it's vital to effective promotion as well.

Are you meeting your FReeZA group's goals, objectives and values?

Look at the values, goals and objectives of your FReeZA committee (or parent organisation). These might look something like this: To be inclusive of all young people, to be easily accessible, to be affordable, and to host a diverse range of events that cater for the varying interests of young people.

Are you currently achieving the values and objectives you set out? If not, you need to work out why that may be. Ask yourself:

- What is your committee doing that isn't really working, or what could be improved?
- Are the types of events being run meeting the needs and interests of the young people in your area?
- What events are the young people turning out for?

2. Planning event dates for the year ahead

There are always going to be the same events or dates that come up every year. Make a list of them all, whether you currently do something for them or not. These might include:

- National Youth Week
- Mental Health Week
- Volunteer Week
- Community festivals and events – what happens every year in your local community?
- FReeZA Push Start Battle of the Bands heat and/or Regional Finals
- Somethingsomething Awareness Week, International Somethingelse Day..

Once you've marked down which reoccurring events you want to hold, you can add in a few extra dates in your "quiet" times. Try to give yourself and the committee six months lead in time, plenty of time to start brainstorming and organising events so you don't leave everything to the last minute.

Keep on the lookout for other event opportunities that might spring up, like tours and visiting artists. TIP: Email booking agents, promoters and labels directly and offer some dates well in advance. Express your interest in doing all-age shows with them and they will follow YOU up for a gig!

3. Partnerships and collaboration

A great way to maximise the potential reach and impact of your FReeZA committee is to collaborate with other organisations in your community. Lookout for partnership and collaboration opportunities with:

- Pools
- Schools
- Parks
- Cafes
- Libraries
- Stores
- Skate parks or comps
- etc

A partnership should benefit both you and the organisation you're collaborating with. They will be much more willing to partner with you if you can offer them something of value, such as attracting a larger audience, logo exposure on your flyers... have a think about what you can offer in return to sweeten the deal. Also consider the peak times for you and your potential partners. When would be the best time try something?

4. Review, Evaluate, Implement

Every 6 months take a look back at your events, and measure your outcomes and attendances so you can compare them to the values, goals and objectives that you were aiming for. Determine the worth and value of each event. What things would it be wise to repeat or build upon? Are there things that didn't work that you could do different next time? Implement what you have learnt in the planning for the next 6 months.

5. Example of a yearly plan

The following is an example of a yearly event plan from Sean Daly, Yarra Ranges FReeZA.

Summer 2013

Lilydale Outdoor Pool – Jan 15
Yarra Junction Pool Party – Jan 22
Upwey Skate Park – Feb 1
Healesville Pool Party – Feb 8

Term 1

Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival – March 23
National Youth Week Gig – April 5
House Vs Hurricane (Mooroolbark) – April 26

Winter 2013

FReeZA Push Start Heat 1(Mooroolbark) – June 7
FReeZA Push Start Heat 2 (Mt Evelyn) – June 21
FReeZA Push Start Heat 3 (Warburton) – July 5
FReeZA Push Start Heat 4 (Upwey) – July 19
Finale w/ The Getaway Plan – Aug 30

Spring/Summer 2013

Mental Health Week Schools Tour – Oct 7-11
End Of The Line Festival – Nov 30

6. Key points to remember

Identify community needs/interests.
Make a note of reoccurring dates (Youth/Mental Health Week, etc)
Get onto community festivals and events
Look for partnership possibilities.
Leave room for opportunities!
Think ahead – what's coming up next year?

And then... if you have funds left over, use it to buy gear or equipment you may currently be hiring each time you need it. Aim to make your committee and events more sustainable, and more cost-effective in the long term.