



A Guide to Planning

Events and Festivals



South Australian Tourism Commission



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Introduction

What is the purpose of this guide?

This guide has been prepared for organisations and individuals that are, or may be faced with, the challenge of conceiving, planning, developing and producing a festival or special event. It is by no means designed to be the definitive guide to planning special events and festivals, but hopes to provide direction, hints and hopefully shed some light on where and how to start planning an event in South Australia.

While this guide is mainly directed at small scale events, usually held in regional South Australia, it should be remembered that smaller events need the same amount of preparation, responsibility and professionalism to organise and run successfully as their larger scale counterparts.

What is a festival? What is a special event?

You could describe festivals as recurring events and special events as “one-offs”. In general, *Festivals* are a celebration where the public are **participants** of the experience and *Special Events* are activities where the public are **spectators** to the experience.

The South Australian Tourism Commission sees its role as:

“...encouraging each region to develop or better market a flagship festival or event that reinforces its positioning and branding and complements that of the State.”

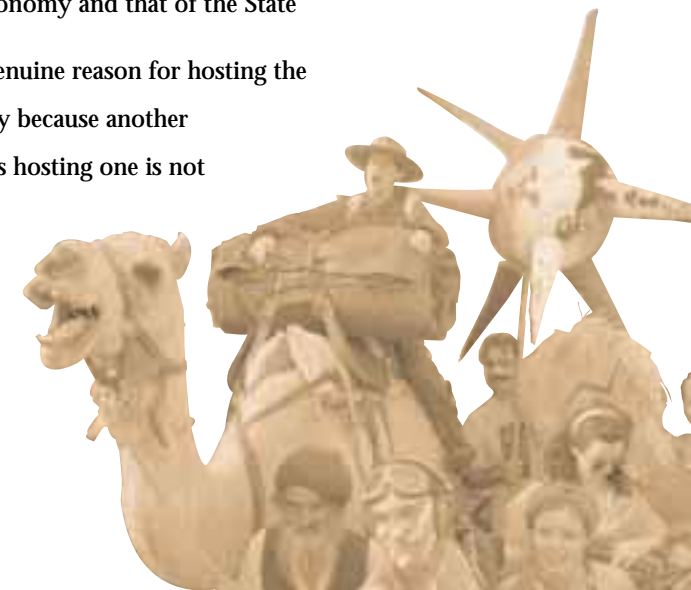
Events and tourism

South Australia has embraced the concept of using events as a means to increase economic activity through the generation of tourist visitation. At a time when visitors are looking for more authentic and hands-on tourism experiences, events can act as a hook that complement the already existing tourism infrastructure and product of an area.

Events can:

- act as a reason to visit
- extend the nature and length of a visitor's stay
- increase spend/yield
- provide valuable media exposure, bolstering image, branding and positioning
- foster regional pride
- create jobs
- stimulate the immediate economy and that of the State

Organisers must have a genuine reason for hosting the event. To host an event purely because another community, town or region is hosting one is not a good reason and will not necessarily offer a legitimate tourism experience. Tourism (and events) is not the answer for everyone.





Community event or tourism event?

A community event is primarily created for the immediate locale, but you cannot have a tourism event (an event with an economic motivation) without the support of that community. This does not mean an event staged for the local community cannot also appeal to tourists.

Organisers must have a clear idea of the event's target audience – is it designed purely for locals or designed to appeal to potential visitors? For an event to attract and motivate visitors, it must provide some or all of the following:

Change: Experiencing something different to usual day-to-day life

Escape: Getting away from day-to-day life

Indulgence: Being pampered or waited on

Understanding: Learning about different cultures, places or lifestyles

Adventure: Doing exciting things, daring and challenging things

Companionship: Making new friends and contacts

It is important to note, however, that organisers should not aim to be all things to all market segments. If this occurs the original reason for hosting the event may become unclear, therefore alienating the community and not providing a genuine experience for visitors.

The event – getting started



Some things to consider

You must know why you want to hold the event first. Do you want to celebrate something, launch a product, or just make money?

The title

The title is the first point of contact with the event and is possibly the most important marketing tool. The title should have impact and entice immediate interest.

Is the title pertinent? Does the event title seem appropriate and does it clearly identify what it is about?

Is the title inviting? Think about how appealing an invitation to this event would be. Undertake some pre-release market research of the proposed event title.

Is the title unique? How will the name of the event make it stand out from others?

Is the title memorable and easy to remember? Try not to pick a name that is unpronounceable or confusing.

The event program

When developing the program content for the event always consider:

- nature of the chosen location/venue

- inclement weather options
- facilities for the disabled, the aged and young families
- impact on the local environment
- available infrastructure

The program must provide:

- quality experiential activities
- a visually attractive event
- balance within the choice of activities
- unique attractions
- elements complementary to the main theme

The venue

Venue selection is vital to the success of the event. The venue can assist in marketing the activity and attracting interest if it:

- is an attraction in its own right
- is easily accessible
- offers something different

Obviously the cost of creating a venue specifically for an event can be prohibitive, so in most cases events are limited to current infrastructure, however, imagination can still create dramatically different environments. Some unique venues include quarries, mines, wineries, fields, racecourses and even old churches. While these are not always practical, appropriate and available, they do offer a change from the usual sports oval or town hall. If using more than one venue, ensure it is easy to get from one to another.

When selecting a venue you should also consider:

- public amenities (carparking, toilets, food & beverage service...)
- signage
- comfort
- staging, lighting, public address systems
- air conditioning
- security
- sufficient space

Event management

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEES

It is vital that a management or coordinating committee be appointed to take responsibility for the total organisation of the event. The management committee can then delegate various responsibilities and tasks to sub-committees.

If the event has only modest aims and objectives, requiring little financial outlay then the management committee can be an informal group of local citizens. However, when more ambitious programs are planned with heavier financial implications, then it may be necessary to create a permanent organisation with legal status, or alternatively find a local incorporated body (eg council or service club) to be the host body.

INCORPORATION

A legal concept which was developed to protect members of voluntary organisations from being personally liable for the financial affairs of the organisation. If the organisation is incorporated, the total membership assumes a single identity and, as far the law is concerned, the only person liable to legal action for contractual debts is the organisation, not all or any single member. In the case of negligence, the organisation and party whose personal actions caused the injury may be liable. Incorporation is a very useful concept and all voluntary organisations of any size and appropriate activity should consider protecting its members by becoming incorporated.

It should be noted that where an incorporated body is not responsible for the organisation of the event, and the event experiences financial failure, every individual taking part in the organisation is personally liable for any losses incurred.

In order to gain incorporation from the Corporate Affairs Commission it will be necessary for the management committee to prepare a constitution and set of rules under which the organisation will operate. The management committee should also consider other forms of insurance such as public liability insurance, director's indemnity, association liability, workcover, volunteers insurance and special risk cover.

The management committee should also consider undertaking a Risk Assessment and it must complete an emergency response plan. Emergency Management Australia produce a manual on 'Safe and Healthy Mass Management' (Pt 3, Vol 2 Manual 2) that you should refer to.

ADMINISTRATION SECRETARIAT

An efficient administration centre is extremely important for the effective management and organisation of the event. Time is a major factor, and given that most event management committees are voluntary, the person who volunteers to be event secretary needs to be dedicated and aware of just how much time is involved.

The secretary should also be responsible for creating the event's record history. This involves accurate record keeping for future committees to refer back to, such as accounting, day-to-day operations, databases, timelines, correspondence, templates and hints.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A separate sub-committee should be set up to control the financial aspect of running an event. This sub-committee should ensure:

- each activity is costed and budgets are prepared based on forecast attendance, proposed income and expenditure, administration expenses and capital expenses
- a cash-flow statement is prepared and monitored
- appropriate records are kept
- appropriate banking methods are secured
- GST/taxation rules are taken into account
- auditing of finances is done after each event/ financial year

SOME OTHER USEFUL SUB-COMMITTEES...

- Marketing and Public Relations
- Catering
- Sponsorship and Sponsor servicing
- Operations (venue hire, cleanup, equipment hire, signage, road closures, emergency procedures, parking, electricity supply etc)
- Protocol (especially when dealing with judges, competition rules etc)

EVENTS AND GST

There is no doubt about it, the GST has made starting up a business quite confusing. The first thing you should do is visit the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) tax reform site at www.taxreform.ato.gov.au.

Are you a non-profit organisation? This will affect whether you need to be registered for GST purposes or not. Do you require an Australian Business Number (ABN)? Check with the ATO before starting operations as this will affect your financial management methods and can impact on incoming sponsorships; for example, if you do not have an ABN the ATO requires that the SATC deducts 48.5% from any sponsorship amounts as with-holding tax.

For more information contact the ATO on 13 2478.



Sponsorship

Who to target for sponsorship

It is important to think about what kind of product you are offering to potential sponsors - is your event relevant to the organisation/s you are approaching and will they gain something from being a sponsor?

In being affiliated with your event, sponsors will look for exposure so they can promote their product to the right audience. It is up to you to show exactly how the potential sponsor's product or service will benefit from being linked with your event.

What to ask for

While it may seem easier to ask for a large injection of cash from one or two sponsors, this large investment may not appeal because of the cost. It involves more work, but try to break the sponsorship proposal up into components, tailor-making it to suit individual needs.

Do not discount the value of in-kind sponsorship such as:

- Provision of the venue
- Free advertising in print, radio or television
- Signwriting and design
- Printing
- Provision of catering services or food and beverage
- Administration support
- Travel and accommodation



What to include in the proposal

The sponsorship proposal must clearly demonstrate that the company will receive tangible benefits from being associated with your event. All companies will be looking for a return on investment.

The sponsorship proposal should include:

- Your aims and objectives – the reason for hosting the event
- Your defined target audience – how does this match the company you are approaching?
- Proposed program
- Proposed budget, including anticipated attendance numbers
- Sponsorship components
- Benefits to the company

You should also highlight the tangible benefits to the company such as:

- Naming rights of program components
- Inclusion of logos on promotional material and other printed collateral
- Display of company banners and promotional material
- Sponsor acknowledgement in advertising

Other benefits can include:

- Provision of free tickets
- Invitations to official functions and media launches
- Free advertising in event brochure
- The opportunity to present awards/make speeches
- Access to appropriate audience databases/survey results

All of these benefits must be directly proportional to the level of support shown by the sponsor and the associated costs to the event budget should be accounted for by organisers.

Once the event is over, do not neglect your sponsors! These sponsors are potential supporters of next year's event. Provide regular information newsletters or updates in the lead up to the event, and provide a debrief after the event including a copy of all promotional material and media exposure received.

Government sponsorship

In addition to corporate sponsorship, various departments within Federal, State and Local Governments offer a range of funding schemes. These schemes are not designed to provide primary sponsorship of an event, but aim to reinforce the corporate and local sponsorships an event receives. Event organisers should not rely on government funding, as it is not provided indefinitely.

Careful and advance planning is required when applying for all government funding. Most schemes have one intake annually, often requiring an application 12 months in advance of the event. Read the guidelines and criteria carefully, as many schemes require that only one source of government funding be applied for.

Federal Government

For information on Federal funding visit www.grantslink.gov.au



Government of South Australia

A good place to start looking is www.sacentral.sa.gov.au.

Other funding avenues include:

- South Australian Tourism Commission, *Regional Events & Festivals Program*:

Managed by the SATC's Marketing Unit, any sponsorship supplied is tailored toward event promotion, media and marketing activities. Sponsorship is specifically available for events that generate an increase in tourist activity and which lift the profile of the State's tourist regions. There is a strong focus on an event's future sustainability. Contact the Regional Events & Festivals Coordinator on (08) 8463 4500.

- Office for Recreation & Sport, visit www.recsport.sa.gov.au or phone (08) 8416 6677
- Arts South Australia, visit www.arts.sa.gov.au or phone (08) 8463 5444
- Department of Premier & Cabinet, *Premier's Community Fund* or *Premier's Multicultural Grants Scheme*, visit www.premcab.sa.gov.au

Local Government

Again, visit www.sacentral.sa.gov.au or phone your local council.

Also consider:

- Country Arts South Australia, visit www.countryarts.org.au or contact your local Country Arts SA Arts Officer. To find out who your local Arts Officer is, please call (08) 8444 0400.



Marketing and Public Relations

What are your target markets?

Identify the audience you want to come to your event. Do you want vintage car enthusiasts, food and wine buffs, music lovers, horticulturalists or any other specialised market? From there you can identify the nature of each market – is this market typically family oriented? Are you targeting a market primarily made up from the higher income bracket or another?

Once your target markets have been identified, you can then start to plan your promotional activities based on trying to reach those markets.

Where to advertise

Advertising mediums include newspapers, magazines, radio, internet and television. The trick is to identify which medium reaches the maximum target audience for the investment. While television reaches a wide audience it can be the least targeted and can be the most expensive to use.

Consider the reach and audience of each medium. If you are unsure, ring potential TV stations, newspapers, radio stations and magazines and ask for a kit detailing all advertising information and statistics.

Public Relations

Write and distribute a media release as soon as the venue, program and dates are confirmed. Follow through with another release leading up to your event or whenever something newsworthy is confirmed. Only send your release to television outlets if you know good vision is also available.

A good way to involve your sponsors is to host a media launch. This gives media the opportunity to conduct interviews, meet the stakeholders and to get a feel for the theme of an event. Remember, hosting a media launch involves a lot of planning and will incur some costs, especially if you are providing catering and specially made media kits.

You could also consider hosting a journalist or two on a familiarisation of your event. This can be expensive as it may involve travel and accommodation expenses.

When you have decided on certain media activities and when to advertise, create a timeline that schedules all of your proposed media and promotional activities.

Promotional collateral

This includes flyers, posters, brochures and even postcards.

Your budget should dictate the standard of promotional material that is created. In some circumstances black and white photocopied flyers are all you will need, but in others, a full colour brochure will need to be printed.



The promotional material should support your advertising activities and must reinforce the image portrayed in any advertising.

Promotional material can be creative, but must provide the basic information your audience requires – what, where and when.

Give careful consideration to the distribution methods of your promotional material too – where do you want it displayed and how will you get it there? If, for example, an event attracts a specialised audience of club members, a good way of reaching that audience is to mail your collateral to them directly via a database. However, if you are targeting a public audience for a food and wine event, dropping off posters and flyers at cafés and restaurants could be a good idea.

Visitor Information Centres, tourist offices, accommodation houses and transport suppliers are also valuable distribution points to be considered.

The marketing plan

Once all of the above has been considered, it must be consolidated into a marketing plan. This plan can then be included in sponsorship proposals and will provide a base for future events. The marketing plan should be a practical plan that clearly communicates objectives, strategies, specific activities and budgets. Formulate a marketing plan that has measurable outcomes so you can gauge the success of each activity.



How the SATC can help market your event

Public Relations Unit

The PR Unit can help to publicise your event through three main publications, all of which are distributed direct to media, tourism groups and visitor information centres.

The Word Around is a monthly tourism update featuring new products, events and SATC news, and is distributed to more than 1,000 international, national and local media.

Fast Track is a weekly newsletter detailing upcoming events for the SA media, and is regularly used by *The Advertiser's* "What's On" section, *Postcards* on Channel 9, *Discover* on Channel 7 and various radio programs.

The Calendar of Events is an annual publication listing hundreds of events throughout South Australia. For inclusion in this publication you must make your event known to the PR Unit about four months before the new financial year, either directly or via your local tourism association or regional marketing committee.

The PR Unit also liaises direct with many local and national magazines, television programs and publications, and would greatly appreciate input about new, quirky events, or interesting snippets of information on your regular event.

To be included in the above publications you must provide the PR Unit with information about your event, including media releases and, where appropriate, promotional material. Also remember that many magazines and television programs work up to three months in advance.

SA Visitor & Travel Centre:

The SATC's public information and retail outlet can assist in the following ways:

- Display your brochures/flyers (provided they meet certain criteria)
- Travel consultants can refer visitors
- Sell event packages (provided they meet certain criteria and are commissionable)
- Allow you to host special promotions/theming at the centre

It is also possible to utilise the SATC's brochure distribution system to target all or some of the Visitor Information Centres around the State, however, this will incur costs. Brochure distribution is managed by the National Trade Marketing Unit.

www.southaustralia.com

The SATC's website is linked to www.australia.com and will be part of the *Australian Tourism Data Warehouse*, a national database linked to all states that forms a central facility for bookings via the internet throughout Australia.

To be listed on www.southaustralia.com your event must first be registered with the SATC's central database. This database is managed by On-line Services.

Research Unit

The SATC's Research Unit can also offer assistance, including:

- Interpretation and dissemination of information from major tourism data sources
- Advice on research available from other sources relevant to your target markets
- Advice/evaluation of research in relation to special events

Regional Marketing Committees

The SATC provides funding to one organisation in each tourism region to effectively market that region intrastate and interstate.

It is highly recommended that, even in the early concept stages, you speak to the marketing manager of this organisation in your region

Regional Marketing contact numbers		
Adelaide	Adelaide Convention and Tourism Authority	8463 4611
Adelaide Hills	Adelaide Hills Tourism	8339 7788
Barossa	Barossa Wine and Tourism	8563 0600
Clare Valley	Clare Valley Tourism Marketing	8842 1750
Eyre Peninsula	Tourism Eyre Peninsula	8682 4688
Fleurieu Peninsula	Fleurieu Peninsula Tourism	8556 8766
Flinders Ranges & Outback	Flinders Ranges and Outback SA Tourism	8648 5187
Murraylands	Murraylands Tourism Marketing	8539 1141
Riverland	Riverland Tourist Association	8582 3415
Kangaroo Island	Tourism Kangaroo Island	8553 1185
Limestone Coast	Limestone Coast Tourism	8723 1644
Yorke Peninsula	Yorke Peninsula Tourism Marketing	8821 2663

about your event. The marketing manager may be able to assist you with your marketing plan, provide advice and even offer to work cooperatively with your event on certain marketing activities.

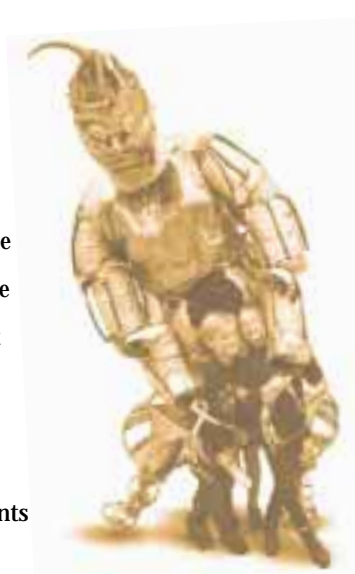
Australian Major Events

Australian Major Events (AME) is the SATC's events division. AME heads the events sector of the tourism industry in the State. The aim of AME is to attract, develop and support special events in South Australia that generate substantial economic and social benefits for the State and promote the image and profile of Adelaide and South Australia to the rest of Australia and the world.

AME's charter requires it to concentrate its support on the largest events available to South Australia and to those with the greatest potential, while some flexibility is afforded to events with significant potential to develop. AME only considers supporting events that generate a minimum of \$5 million in economic benefit to the State economy. Contact AME on (08) 8463 4630.

Marketing SA – An Operator's Guide

This is an annual publication produced by the SATC and provides an overview of the main roles and responsibilities of the various departments within the Commission. This is a valuable tool if you wish to contact anyone in the SATC or are not quite sure who is the best person to speak to, and a great way of maximising cooperative opportunities. Copies are available from the PR Unit.



Event evaluation

At the conclusion of every event, some means of determining its success must be undertaken. Measuring the success of an event includes the financial, artistic and attendance aspects, but the most important aspect to measure is the success of the event in light of the original objectives.

Assess the tourism value of the event to the area. Identify where the visitors came from, perhaps using a survey at the gate. Attendance figures are required with information pertaining to where the audience came from, how they heard about the event and, what they did and didn't enjoy. Figures on local commercial activity during the event, including traffic counts, petrol sales, occupancy levels in accommodation houses, restaurant attendance and general merchant sales are all useful in giving the event economic credibility within the community.

Copies of all forms, form letters, registration forms, insurance papers, mailing lists and administration documentation should be filed for future reference.

Copies of all publicity material, including tickets, brochures, posters, flyers and advertisements should be kept and assessed as to their value in attracting visitors and participants. Keep a copy of all newspaper articles on your event, or radio broadcasts and TV segments.

Audited financial statements should be prepared. The management committee should undertake an overall evaluation in terms of financial success, acceptability of individual activities and the success of individual promotional campaigns.

