



International Festivals & Events Association

Media Story Ideas

Festivals and events are an ideal topic for coverage by the media at the local, regional, national and global level. The available images and angles for coverage are colorful, unique and memorable. Most events today have their own web sites with specific schedules, photos and contact information. Below are some suggestions, certainly not all-inclusive, of story ideas that you may want to consider when covering a festival or event in your coverage area.

- **History of the Event**
How has the event changed and developed over the years. Capture the memories of those who remember it from the past. What is the vision for the future?
- **Focus on Volunteers**
Who are the key players who have donated endless amounts of time (often vacation time), free of charge, to make the event a success? What is their motivation? What are their functions? How many volunteers does the event use and depend on? Are there whole families who volunteer?
- **New Additions to the Event Schedule**
What new events, activities, vendors, stages, float units, etc. are there this year?
- **Food**
Festivals and events are renowned for their food. Take a taste tour through the event sampling all of the many offerings, get attendee reviews and recommendations of their favorites.
- **Focus on Entertainers**
Who are the headliners, local acts, and wandering entertainment at the event? What's new? What favorites are returning?
- **Awards Won**
Has the event won any industry awards such as the IFEA/Haas & Wilkerson Insurance Pinnacle Awards or been recognized as part of the American Bus Association's 'Top 100' events list?
- **Role in the Industry**
How is the event staff involved in the larger festivals and events industry professionally? Where do they turn for advice and creative new ideas? Event Impact - What is the broader impact of the event on the community economically, as a tourism draw and on the quality of life for those who live there? How do local tourism, real estate professionals and corporations use the event to market, recruit and sell the community?
- **Municipal Partnerships**
What positive partnerships does the event enjoy with local law enforcement agencies, fire departments, parks departments, waste disposal agencies, etc., to make the event a reality?
- **Green Events**
Does the event have any special recycling programs, clean-up programs, or other programs geared to educating attendees about environmental care?
- **What Do You Do the Rest of the Year?**
The Business Behind the Event - It is a common misnomer that festival and event staffs only work on their events for a few short weeks each year, when reality is far different from that. What does it really take to pull off the event?
- **Sponsors**
Who supports the event from a sponsorship position? Why? Are their employees involved? What does their involvement mean to them? Help the event underline the importance of this key group of supporters to the public.

- **Event Merchandise**
What special event souvenirs can you buy? What is the new design for this year? Where can you buy them? How does merchandise sales help to support the event?
- **Focus on Participants**
Does the event have sporting event competitions? Storytelling winners? Crafters or food vendors? Entertainers? What is their story and perspective?
- **Contest Winners**
Are there any special promotions, drawings, lotteries, fun runs, tournaments, or other contest winners?
- **Special Guests**
Is there a parade Grand Marshall, a Queen and Court, or other featured event personalities?
- **Attendee Information**
Event schedules, maps, traffic and road closures, first-aid and safety suggestions, bus and transportation schedules, parade routes and line-ups, ticket information, etc., are always appreciated and useful.
- **Cultural Coverage**
Does the event feature a different country each year? Is it based upon a specific cultural heritage? Are there visitors/entertainers/vendors from other parts of the world? Can you take a trip to the country/region being featured and act as an education tool for general public?
- **Construction/Preparation of the Event Site**
Events often magically transform an everyday park or city street into an entirely new place. Who is behind the transformation? What planning is involved? How long does it take to set-up and tear-down? Where does power, water, and communications come from?
- **Industry Perspective**
How does the industry and other similar events view your local event? What other communities and events share similarities with your own? Are there any visiting guests from other events or event industry related organizations attending the event? What are their impressions?
- **Creativity**
Keeping up with event audiences is a constant challenge for event and festival producers. How does your local event maintain its creative energy? Where can creativity be found behind-the-scenes at the event?
- **Event & Market Match**
Festivals and events are often portrayed as 'calling cards' for their communities. What kind of match between the event and your market is there? How do the two work together to further each other.
- **Industry Insights**
Your event is part of a larger industry whose appeal transcends cultural and geographical boundaries. What are the challenges and opportunities of that industry? How are current industry trends and issues impacting the local event? What new trends has/is the your local event setting for the rest of the industry?
- **Focus on the Event Staff**
Pick a festival or event staff member and spend a day shadowing them. You'll be surprised at what their day includes!
- **Technology**
How has technology impacted the event? Web sites? Carnival rides? Security? Volunteer scheduling? Marketing? Ticket Sales? Sponsorship follow-thru? On-site attendee services?

For additional story ideas, contact the IFEA at +1-208-433-0950.