



edmonton **arts** council

TIXONTHESQUARE.CA

*Professional services for artists.
Edmonton's arts and culture concierge.*

WHERE LOCAL GOES LIVE!

Phone: 780.420.1757

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TIX ON THE SQUARE PROMOTIONS TOOL KIT

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1. Introduction

Welcome to the exciting world of arts and event promotion! This tool kit is a practical approach to getting ready to dive in and promote your event through a variety of tried-and-true techniques.

Welcome to TIX on the Square, and thank you for taking the time to learn more about us. I believe that Edmonton has one of the most vibrant arts communities anywhere. In my position with TIX I have had the pleasure of working with numerous artists and arts administrators and I am always amazed at what we can accomplish when we work together.

TIX was a part of the very first Theatre Six Pack close to 15 years ago and this collaborative group is still working together to get more people experiencing Edmonton's theatre companies. We work with all kinds of artists and organizations on their events, from small independent collectives, to a CD release for a local artist, to a 30 show line-up of events for the Edmonton Jazz Festival –we're here to help make your event a success.

We provide sales and promotional assistance at a low cost. We give a personal touch to ticket sales as well as offering online and phone sales. We can help you finalize your media release then send it out to our current media list of close to 100 contacts from radio, print and TV. And finally, we provide purchaser client data to you (with the purchaser's permission). If you need something from us, ask, and we will try our best to make it happen.

We exist to support the arts in Edmonton and we try every day to ensure that Edmontonians know about all the little gems that are available to them – songwriters, actors, poets, artisans and all artists who make this city just a little bit better than anywhere else to live!

Sincerely,

Amanda Skopik

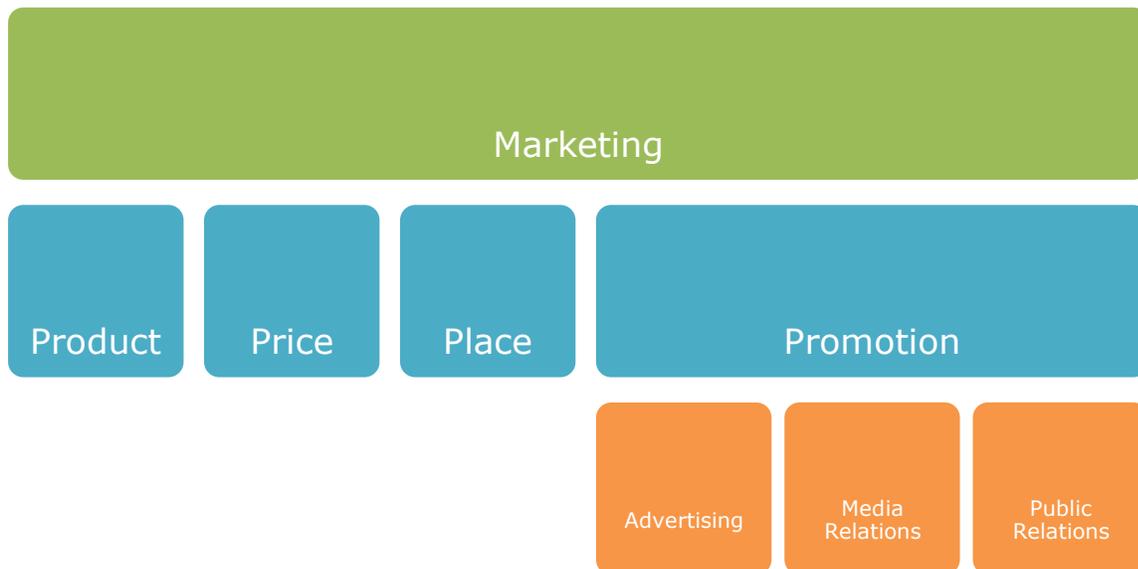
General Manager, TIX on the Square

2. Marketing Basics

Marketing is the broad term for everything you can control around your event that can influence a potential audience member to purchase a ticket. The Marketing Mix, or the 4 Ps, is the most important element to consider when evaluating who will be most likely to attend your event and the measures you can take to influence their decisions.

The Marketing Mix includes:

- Product: What do you have to offer?
- Price: What does it cost to attend your event? What is the value of your product?
- Place: Where is your product located? What amenities are available at that location or near the location?
- Promotion: What activities will we undertake to inspire an audience member to purchase a ticket?



Advertising, media relations and public relations are all functions that, in their own way, address the organization's relationships with external individuals and groups.

- **Advertising** is directed primarily toward the purchasing audience or customers. Its primary communication tools are purchased: advertising, brochures, posters, direct mail, etc.
- **Media Relations** is the process of "supplying information that is factual, interesting, and newsworthy to media not controlled by you, such as radio, television, magazines, newspapers, trade journals, newsletters, and online sources." (Yale, 2001, p. 2)
- **Public Relations** is the broadest and most comprehensive of the three functions of promotions. It is concerned with the organization's relationships with all groups that have an interest in the organization: board members, staff, donors, funders, government agencies, community groups, etc.

3. Advertising

Advertising is directed primarily toward the purchasing audience or customers. Its communication tools are purchased: advertising, brochures, posters, direct mail, etc.

Advertising works best when it is rolled out in conjunction with your efforts in media relations and public relations. If at all possible, it's ideal to have advertising plans in place in advance of the date your performance goes on-sale and/or concentrated in the 4-6 weeks leading up to your performance.

There are lots of different kinds of advertising available to arts and community organizations. The most common include:

- Brochures, postcards, and posters.
- Ads in newspapers and magazines.
- Radio advertising.
- Television advertising.
- Outdoor advertisements on billboards, bus seats and transit stations.
- Digital ads on websites or social media platforms.

Most of these options require significant cash investment and often include working with a few additional parties, such as a graphic designer and sales rep.

Brochures, postcards and posters are some of the most popular forms of advertising for local arts and culture organizations. One of the reasons they are effective is you can empower your artists, supporters, and volunteers with materials containing all the details around a specific event for them to share with their communities & networks.

The best uses of your advertising funds comes when you match your product to an anticipated audience; then match that audience with a specific type of advertising and the available budget.

If you have funds available for paid advertising, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is my product and in what medium is it best showcased?
- Who do I think would attend this performance?
- What radio stations would those people listen to? Which television station are they most likely to watch? Where would they shop?
- How much money is available for advertising? What kind of advertising can I afford?

Once you answer these questions, you'll have a good idea of where you would like to advertise and you can work with a variety of sales reps to find out if it is something you can afford.

Media Relations

Media Relations is the process of *“supplying information that is factual, interesting, and newsworthy to media not controlled by you, such as radio, television, magazines, newspapers, trade journals, newsletters, and online sources.”* (Yale, 2001, p. 2)

Media Relations includes:

- Presenting your message to the public via the media.
- The “free stuff”: it is not advertising, since you do not pay for time or space.
- News of interest to many people. It can create an image for a personality, an organization, or an event.
- A message prepared strictly within the parameters of print or broadcast news, distributed to the news departments (instead of to the advertising departments) without payment to the media.

Publicity helps organizations reach out in ways that other elements of the marketing mix can't. Some of the goals of publicity can include:

- To increase public awareness of an event, organization, product, service or individual, and in doing so, to increase sales activity. In the arts we often refer to this as getting “bums in seats.”
- To counteract misconceptions about your product, service, organization or cause.
- To get people to volunteer.
- To supplement an advertising campaign and to provide more in-depth information about your event or product.
- To garner long-term public support of your organization/product.
- To generate excitement and interest in your organization/product.

When it comes down to it, the practice of media relations boils down to common-sense principles and six commandments!

<p>Basic Principles (Carney, 2002):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communications cannot overcome bad judgment • Be a credible source • Practice media relations regularly • You cannot manage the media 	<p>“6 Commandments for Good Media Relations” (Smith, 1995)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Integrity 2) Immediacy 3) Accessibility 4) Deadlines 5) Familiarity 6) Honesty
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Practicing media relations means understanding its advantages and disadvantages.

<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick, efficient, versatile and relatively low-cost • Raises your profile quickly • Can shift public opinion, move people to action or change • Targeted and/or vast audiences • Legitimacy/credibility; media are perceived as objective 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You cannot control what media cover • Occasional lack of accuracy • Coverage can be brief • Coverage can lack in depth/detail • Media’s desire for conflict/drama • Bad press
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How to Write a Great Media Release

How would you explain how to make a sandwich to someone who has never seen or tasted a sandwich, let alone made one? Would you begin your sandwich lesson by discussing different types of deli meat or the merits of mustard and mayonnaise? You'd likely begin with a general explanation of what a sandwich is: two slices of bread with other food between them. After this, you'd probably provide some insight as to what we use sandwiches for (meals or snacks), before listing the things that go into sandwiches (any combination of meat, cheese, veggies and/or condiments), how to make them or where to buy them, different types of sandwiches (open faced, subs, paninis), and examples of specialty sandwiches (grilled cheese, peanut butter and jelly, Monte Cristo, Reuben, etc.).

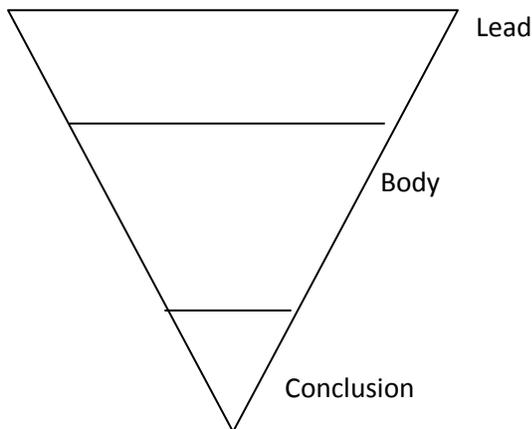
You can, and should, apply the same principle to your communication with media: introduce the topic at hand with broad, general information, and work your way towards specifics. Typically, publicists do this with a media release, making first contact with media about a newsworthy topic with general information.

We use media releases to help generate news coverage about an organization, event or product. Essentially, a media release is a news article in miniature, which adheres to the journalistic tradition of saying as much as possible using the least amount of lineage and the plainest language.

Media Release Components

The Inverted Pyramid

Take a look at an article in a newspaper or an online news source. You may notice that you can glean the Who, What, When, Where, Why and, often, How of the article within the first paragraph or two. As you continue through the story, it likely covers the finer details and less important points. This composition, starting with the broad, need-to-know information and narrowing into the less pertinent details, is called the Inverted Pyramid. This is the same shape a media release should take, opening with a **lead** paragraph, continuing with the **body** paragraphs and ending with the **conclusion**.



The Lead

Most people will tell you the most difficult part of any writing process is getting started, and sometimes this is true of the media release lead. This paragraph sets the tone for the entire release, contains the most important information and should be limited to three or four sentences. Although this all seems bit overwhelming, as long as you can answer the following question about your media release topic, you'll have the foundation of your lead:

WHO:

Who is performing the action you're drafting a media release about? Is it an organization? An individual artist? A band?

WHAT:

What is the Who doing? What are you asking potential audiences to engage in? Is it an event? A concert? A book launch? A play? Putting on a festival?

WHEN:

When is the Who doing the What? What is the date and time? Is the action happening over a range of dates or one day only?

WHERE:

Where is the What taking place? Try to include a location, as well as an address. For example: The Opera House (222 Song Street). If it's not clear that the action is happening in a particular city, do you need to identify it?

WHY:

Why is the Who doing the What? This question is a little trickier to answer. In the arts world, the Why is often a brief description of the What. Hint: this is often where you try to **hook** your reader by providing interesting insight about your release subject. For example: The season opening production; a chilling mystery; the musical adaptation; the critically-acclaimed novel; the follow-up to their debut album.

HOW:

How can potential audiences engage with the Who and What? Do they buy tickets? Attend a workshop? Visit a website? Call a phone number? And, if so, how/where do they buy, attend, visit or call?

Let's look at a sample lead paragraph together. This is a release about a fictitious one-day indie rock concert in Edmonton.

The YEG Rock Star Collective presents *YEG Rock City*, Edmonton's first annual one-day indie rock festival, July 22 from 11am to 11pm in Louise McKinney Riverfront Park. Festival tickets available now at The Independent Record Store (8765 Gateway Blvd.) or at TIX On The Ave, www.tixontheave.ca or (780) 555 4356. Partial proceeds from ticket sales benefit Art for Youth.

Now, let's identify the five W's and the H:

Who: The YEG Rock Star Collective

What: YEG Rock City

When: July 22, 11am to 11pm

Where: Edmonton's Louise McKinney Riverfront Park

Why: first annual one-day indie rock festival, benefits Art for Youth

How: buy tickets at The Independent Record Store or TIX On The Ave

Notice this paragraph provides a very general overview of this particular event, but not a lot of other details... Those details come in the subsequent body paragraphs.

The Body

Once you've written your lead paragraph, three or four body paragraphs should flow from it fairly easily. To determine the subject order of your next paragraphs, figure out what information might be the most critical or interesting to the media or its audiences. After reading your lead paragraph, what questions do you think you'd have to answer for them next? The most interesting or pertinent info should follow the lead paragraph, with less critical details following in subsequent paragraphs in order of importance.

You can also think about your body paragraphs as elaborations on each of the items you identified in your lead. For example: a paragraph about the Why (perhaps a synopsis or a description about your news item), a paragraph about the Who (a cast list, biographies, and/or company information), and so on.

Let's add body paragraphs to our sample YEG Rock City release lead paragraph:

YEG Rock City features a day-long showcase of Edmonton's brightest indie talent, highlighting the breath of the city's music talent. The inaugural festival's line-up includes performances by veteran rockers The Low Talkers, rising hip-hop artist Clumsy Drummer, young up-and-comers Hi!Karate, 2011 Albertus Prize-winners The Scissor Kicks and headlining band Ms. Whispers. To conclude the festival, each of the day's performers congregates on-stage to perform a suite of brand-new songs by The YEG Rock Star Collective.

(The first body paragraph expands on the WHAT, providing more detail about YEG Rock City.)

The YEG Rock Star Collective (YRSC) formed in 2002 to help foster home-grown music talent by providing composition workshops, vocal and instrumental lessons, funding and development advice, and recording space. Conceived by Tre Vanderson (The Scissor Kicks) and Melody Munsen (Ms. Whispers), YRSC includes Stan Stephansson (The Low Talkers), Tina Wright (Ms. Whispers), Edwina Smith (The Law Talkers) and Randy Kraft (aka Clumsy Drummer).

(The second body paragraph expands on the WHO, providing more detail about the YEG Rock Star Collective.)

Art for Youth is a non-profit organization providing the city's youth-at-risk a haven from street life via the arts. Volunteer artists give youth creative direction in writing, music, visual art and fashion, inspiring young minds to make positive changes in their lives and in the community.

The Conclusion

While some have a tough time getting the media release started, I struggle the most with the conclusion. The conclusion is a concise summary of your release's primary message. It provides the reader a sense of finality by providing a call to action for the public. It may reiterate key information, such as the 5W's, as well as provide additional, but less important, details like ticket prices or discounts, parking or transit instructions, content warnings or show run times.

The inaugural edition of YEG Rock City runs one-day only, July 22 in Louise McKinney Riverfront Park (9529 Grierson Hill). Tickets, available at The Independent Record Store and TIX On The Ave, are \$15 for adults, \$10 for students/seniors and free for children under 12. Parking at McKinney Park is extremely limited, and patrons are encouraged to use Edmonton Transit to access the Festival. For more information about YEG Rock City or The YEG Rock Star Collective, go to www.yegrocks.com.

Note that the conclusion re-iterates important information about the event, as a tie in to additional details (Festival runs at Louise McKinney Park, parking is limited; tickets are available at The Independent Record Store and TIX On The Ave, prices are \$15/\$10/free.)

Media Release Formatting

In addition to following the inverted pyramid shape, media releases feature other standard technical elements, making them identifiable as releases:

- **Media Release** should appear at the top of the release.
- A release date should appear following **Media Release**; **your release date should reflect not only the day you plan to distribute the release, but also the date the information in the release is relevant.**
- **For immediate release:** date, year (the date you distribute the release.)
- Media contact information should appear either following the release date or at the end of the release:

Media contact: Jane Doe, The Publicity Pros

(780) 555-4555 or Jane.Doe@publicitypro.com

- A headline should appear immediately above your opening paragraph; it should provide a clue to the releases subject, as well as stand out.

EDMONTON'S NEW SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVAL

- A sub-header is optional. If you use one, it should appear in italics below the headline, and give additional information about the release.

Ticket proceeds benefit youth at risk

- Denote the end of the release with a **-30-** or **###**. These are standard in media relations, letting the reader know that no additional information for the public follows.

Let's put all of our sample elements together:

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release: June 15, 2012

EDMONTON'S SUMMER ROCKS WITH NEW MUSIC FESTIVAL

Ticket proceeds benefit youth at risk

The **YEG Rock Star Collective** presents **YEG Rock City**, Edmonton's first annual one-day indie rock festival, **July 22 from 11am to 11pm** in **Louise McKinney Riverfront Park**. Festival tickets available now at **The Independent Record Store** (8765 Gateway Blvd.) or at **TIX On The Ave**, www.tixontheave.ca or **(780) 555 4356**. Partial proceeds from ticket sales benefit **Art for Youth**.

YEG Rock City features a day-long showcase of Edmonton's brightest indie talent, highlighting the breath of the city's music talent. The inaugural festival's line-up includes performances by veteran rockers **The Low Talkers**, rising hip-hop artist **Clumsy Drummer**, young up-and-comers **Hi!Karate**, 2011 Albertus Prize-winners **The Scissor Kicks** and headlining band **Ms. Whispers**. To conclude the festival, each of the day's performers congregates on-stage to perform a suite of **brand-new songs by The YEG Rock Star Collective**.

The YEG Rock Star Collective (YRSC) formed in 2002 to help foster home-grown music talent by providing composition workshops, vocal and instrumental lessons, funding and development advice, and recording space. Conceived by **Tre Vanderson** (The Scissor Kicks) and **Melody Munsen** (Ms. Whispers), YRSC includes **Stan Stephansson** (The Law Talkers), **Tina Wright** (Ms. Whispers), **Edwina Smith** (The Low Talkers) and **Randy Kraft** (aka Clumsy Drummer).

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-30-

Media contact: Jane Doe, The Publicity Pros

(780) 555-5555 or Jane.Doe@publicitypro.com

Other Media Release Formatting Items

Here are a few other formatting items to keep in mind:

- Use your preferred word-processing software to draft your media release.
- A media release written for reporters, not general public. Assume that media will cut and paste elements of your release directly into any coverage they give you, so don't address the reader directly in the release (example: you can buy tickets; check out the festival July 22).
- Keep your release neat and easy to read.
- Make sure your release is grammatically correct and spell-checked, and never rely on spell-checking software to do this for you! This can mean the difference between inviting media to the *pubic* library and the *public* library.
- Use a simple, universal font. Not all media have state-of-the-art computers or up-to-date software, and the fancy font available on your computer may not be readable on some media personnel's.
- Use a font size that is easy to read. Although some fonts are fun or compact, they can be really difficult to decipher if you have a visual impairment of any kind.
- Keep it short, simple and to one page wherever possible. You're not writing the next great Canadian novel, you're providing media clear, concise and complete information they can use as the foundation for a story or their own.
- Occasionally, your media releases will be more than one page. In these cases, mark the bottom of the first page with **-more-** or **...½**.
- Use bold typeface sparingly to highlight points of interest.
- Use white space at the top, bottom and sides; this increases your media release's readability. Don't sacrifice it to stay to one page.
- Feel free to use your organization's logo or a small photo at the top of your release. Always make sure these are low resolution; giant file sizes will slow down your media release distribution at best, and crash your recipient(s) computer(s) at worst.
- Whether you mention sponsors and funders in your release or following the -30- is at your organization's discretion. Make sure to honour any agreements you've made with sponsors or funders. I tend to avoid including these in a release, simply because they are not items of interest to the media. If you're including media sponsors on a release, you may sometimes alienate their competition, meaning less coverage for you.
- Make sure you get your release approved by your organization prior to distributing it. The approval process ensures you're getting correct information to your audiences and representing your organization properly.

Following up with the Media

“Journalists want two things from publicists: your facts have to be reliable and your material must have a news angle that makes it different and interesting. It doesn’t matter if you are trying to get publicity for newspapers, magazines, radio, television, or websites; all journalists insist on newsworthy material. Otherwise, their readers will lose interest, their medium will lose market share, their advertisers will go elsewhere, and they won’t have jobs anymore.” (Yale, 2001)

Angles

You have already found a newsworthy media angle and used it as the topic of a media release. Once you send it to the media, they are not all going to want to cover the same story.

Think back to the last time you looked for a job. You likely distributed several resumes to provide prospective employers a general understanding of your work experience and education. You might have also written a cover letter specific to each employer and distributed them with your resumes. Whereas a media release is like the resume, a clear, concise and general outline of facts, the angle and pitch are like the cover letter, giving additional information of interest to its recipient.

Developing a list of media angles relating to the newsworthy item in your media release will help you match the aspects of your event/organization with the most appropriate media outlet. It will also help you provide the media with specific information of the most interest to their readers, viewers or listeners.

The media angle:

- Is what you have to talk about.
- Should inspire the media to provide you coverage.
- Is a newsworthy item that highlights a unique or interesting aspect about your event or organization.

Angles are best when they are:

- Factual.
- Don’t make up stories to feed the media or offer up an angle you’re not able to provide an interview or additional details for.
- Follow the five W’s.
- Focus on a tangible aspect of your event or organization.
- Thorough.
- Provide enough detail to pique media’s interest, and ensure you can provide someone who can interview to the subject.
- Localized.
- Keep your angle focused on one specific item, rather than several different topics.
- Unique.
- Try to find story ideas that you don’t hear about every day.
- Visual.

- Your angle should either paint a picture with words, or have photography/footage to enhance it.
- Of human interest.
- People relate to other people; as often as possible, come up with angles that focus on a person involved with your organization or event.

You can find angles the same way you find newsworthy information for a media release:

- Research your organization, its event and/or key personnel. Look at photos from past events, watch any footage you may have on hand, attend rehearsals, read scripts, listen to music, and review storyboards... You can find inspiration in a lot of places!
- Read biographies.
- Brainstorm with others in your organization. Stage managers, directors and other artistic staff often have interesting stories or anecdotes to share.

Try to find an angle for each of the media outlets on your list. You can either make a list of angles or match the story to a media outlet, or you can create an angle based on what you know about a media outlet's preferences, audience and deadlines. Remember, the more angles you find, the more you can maximize your coverage. Not every angle you pitch will turn into coverage, so it's best to come up with as many ideas as possible.

The pitch

Pitching is the process of encouraging media to cover one of your angles. You are not asking for publicity, you're providing journalists with a story they can use. That makes all the difference in your approach and ultimately your success.

Once you have a list of media angles related to your media release, make the pitch. Pitching to a reporter for the first time can be nerve-wracking, but if you have done your homework, (understanding their role at the media outlet, writing a newsworthy media release, brainstorming unique media angles just for them), you'll be prepared to offer some great ideas to assist that journalist.

Keep in mind you are not asking for publicity, you're providing journalists with a story they can use. Also, remember you are not entitled to coverage from any media outlet, no matter how great your angles are. These factors make all the difference in your approach and ultimately your success.

Pitching your story means practicing good media relations:

- Choose how and when you'll contact the media by determining individual preferences.
- Find out ahead of time who prefers email to the phone, who likes to come up with their own angles, who never checks their email, who is on holiday, and so on. Get to know reporters' beats, audiences and reporting styles.
- Abide by media deadlines.
- What's the use pitching great media angle to a reporter after his or her deadline has already passed? Keep in mind different sections of a paper will have different deadlines, for example the City section may have daily deadlines, while the Style section has weekly ones. Different outlets within the same medium may also have diverging deadlines; Vue Weekly, The Edmonton Journal, The Globe and Mail and the Edmonton Sun don't all follow the same print schedule. Finally, different mediums (print, television, radio and web) have differing deadlines.

- When pitching print, radio or television media, make sure to let them know:
 - You can help set up interviews.
 - You have photos, music or b-roll (footage) to go with a story.
 - You can provide additional information should they need it.

Make all pitches:

- Short and clear.
- Conversational in tone but not overly familiar.
- Friendly and respectful.

When pitching by email:

- Indicate what your email is about in the subject line.
- Keep your message short, two or three small paragraphs.
- Write your pitch in the body of your email, and include a media release and other background information as attachments.
- Use links to background material, photos, sound clips and your website.
- Ask whether you should send high-resolution photo, video or sound clips via email in your initial pitch.
- Provide your contact information following your signature.

Not only is the way you deliver your message important, your working relationship with the media is key. Make sure you:

- Are professional.
- Are honest.
- Follow-through.
- Are reliable, respectful and reachable.
- Understand the media process.
- Go the extra mile.

Media Contacts

TIX on the Square distributes media releases upon request to an extensive art, culture and lifestyle focused media list. To make the most out of this service, it's best to follow up directly with the media regarding your performances following the distribution of the media release. TIX on the Square will include you on the distribution list for the media release, that way you will know exactly when it is delivered to the media.

Your event will likely appeal to a very specific set of reporters based on its content and it is always a good idea to do some research to identify these individuals in advance.

Media contacts change rapidly! Visit the link for each media outlet listed for the most up-to-date staff listings. Look for reporters who cover areas specific to your artistic practice.

Edmonton Journal

- <http://www.edmontonjournal.com/about-edmonton-journal/contactus.html>

Edmonton Sun

- <http://www.edmontonsun.com/contact-us>

Vue Weekly

- <http://vueweekly.com/contact/>

CKUA

- <http://www.ckua.com/pages/contactus>

CBC

- <http://www.cbc.ca/edmonton/contact/>
- News Tips | newsedmonton@cbc.ca
- Online News | webedmonton@cbc.ca

Radio-Canada

- News Tips | nouvelles.alberta@radio-canada.ca

City / Breakfast Television

- <http://www.citytv.com/edmonton/contact-us/>
- <http://www.btedmonton.ca/contact/>

CTV

- News Tips | cfrnnewsassignment@ctv.ca

Global

- News Tips | edmonton@globalnews.ca

4. Public Relations

Public Relations is the broadest and most comprehensive of the three functions of promotions: advertising, media relations and public relations. It is concerned with the organization's relationships with all groups that have an interest in the organization: board members, staff, donors, funders, government agencies, community groups, etc. Here, we discuss two public relations practices relevant to event promotion: complimentary tickets and social media.

How to Use Comp Tickets Effectively

Complimentary tickets are a promotional strategy that can support your event in three main ways:

- Gives the arts & culture community the opportunity to connect directly with your work.
- Build word-of-mouth support for your work with key influencers that can help foster future audiences.
- Creates a full house for your artists to play for on hard-to-sell performances.

When deciding who to provide comp tickets to and how many comp tickets to give in total, ask the following questions:

- What kinds of people do I want in the audience & why?
- Which performances am I anticipating will have a smaller paid audience?
- What is the cost of providing comp tickets?

For example, if a community choir is presenting a series of four holiday concerts at a local church in December, the answers might be:

- Media, church elders, and owners of Christmas décor stores.
 - These people are influential and have access to potential new audience members.
- The first concert is likely to have the smallest audience and have the most tickets go unused by a paying audience.
- Tickets are \$20 each. If we reserve 10 comp tickets the cost would be \$200. We will have more than 10 seats open at the first concert, so it makes sense to use comp tickets. We tend to sell out our last concert and would lose money if we provided comp tickets to this performance.

Once you have answers to the three questions above, you can invite your comp ticket guest list to attend select performances. Make the most of your comp tickets by asking guests to help spread the word about your product in very specific ways:

- Media will already be aware that their ticket is a professional courtesy and will likely let you know in advance if they are reviewing the performance.
- Provide community guests with social media tools to help spread the word. Have a small written sheet available to them that includes information on the upcoming performances, as well as any social media handles and hash tags you would like them to use.

Sample Comp Ticket Guest Sheet:

Thank you for joining us for tonight's performance! We have a few upcoming events and would be very grateful if you helped us spread the news to your fans, followers & customers:

Holiday Concerts at Local Church

- 111-1111 Avenue
- 7:30 PM | December 5, 10, 15 and 20
- Tickets \$20 at the door; Families are welcome for a flat \$40 fee | www.tixonthesquare.ca

We're on social media:

- @Christmas Chorus on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Hashtags #yegarts, #yegchoral and #yegchristmas

Happy holidays to you & yours!

Christmas Chorus

Social Media Best Practices

Social media is one stream of communication that you can use to engage target audiences, including potential audiences, sponsors and the media. Keeping in mind some best practices will make the time you invest in social media worthwhile and a meaningful extension of your efforts in the off-line community.

Dos & Don'ts

- Do use social media to showcase your talent and abilities.
- Do use social media to build a network of contacts.
- Do use social media to have a conversation with your target audiences.
- Do match social media platforms to specific goals:
 - Youtube: best fit for showcasing action
 - Twitter: best fit for dialogue and crowd-sourcing information
 - Facebook: best fit to form a community and promote events
 - Blog: best fit to share an experience
- Don't expect social media to solve all your problems.
- Don't use social media to shout your opinions.
- Don't feel obligated to use all social media platforms; choose to use a few platforms well.

In Practice

- Set goals and objectives in advance. Know what you want to achieve by participating in social media and let your on-line practice be guided by your objectives.
- Use a consistent voice across social media platforms. Your voice on-line should reflect your off-line voice.
- Showcase your work on-line in ways that best represent your talent. Performance based work is best related to the public through video and images, find ways to integrate these tools into your on-line presence.
- Social media is about creating relationships through dialogue. Commit to responding to individuals who connect with you over social media platforms and keep them up-to-date about your efforts.
- Ask questions & solicit feedback from your fans and followers. Make your on-line community an active part of the creation and presentation experience. Provide the on-line community with exclusive content and encourage them to connect with you off-line at performances, showcases, classes and even tweet-ups.
- When in doubt, ask for assistance. Are there people on social media you think do a great job? Connect with them and follow their lead.

Platforms

There are a number of social media platforms available to you to interact with patrons, artists and volunteers. Some of the most popular platforms for promotion of events and venues include:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Youtube
- Vine
- Pinterest

TIX on the Square loves to have artists interact with them on Facebook and Twitter

- On twitter: always use the #yegarts hashtag when possible. This means if someone searches the hashtag your tweets will come up.
- Facebook: Remember to include the name of your event in your post as well as the #yegarts hashtag.
- Have your social media image match the image featured in the rest of your promotional materials. This creates one visual identity for your event online.

Identify social media allies and come up with a plan together:

- Are there artists in the same venue that you can cross promote with through social media platforms?
- Are there additional people outside of the artistic community who support you? Ask them to re-tweet your tweets, attend your FB events and change their profile picture to match your production.

Privacy – what do I need to know?

Canada has two federal privacy laws, the Privacy Act and the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act. These laws protect citizens and give individuals the right to access and request correction of personal information about themselves held by government organizations and set rules for how the private sector may collect, use or disclose personal information in the course of commercial activities.

Personal information includes:

- Name
- Opinions about the individual
- Birth date
- Income
- Physical description
- Medical history
- Gender
- Religion
- Address
- Political affiliations and beliefs
- Education
- Employment
- Visual images such as photographs, and videotape where individuals may be identified

When you are using social media, be aware of the types of information that you are posting about yourself and others. Something you might think is fairly mundane can be considered a breach of personal privacy, for example tweeting about a friend's injury in rehearsal.

Here are a few common courtesies to keep in mind:

- Ask permission before posting pictures or video to social media platforms; if the pictures and images are of those under the age of 18, gain signed parental consent before posting pictures and video on professional social media sites.
- Ask permission before broadcasting un-finished work from a director or producer;
- If you are inviting parents, the public or media into a performance or rehearsal to take pictures or images, give performers the opportunity to "opt-out" by wearing small-red dot sticker and making an announcement about the request in advance.
- If someone makes a request for you to make a change to your social media postings in relation to their personal privacy, make changes quickly and take time to review your approach to privacy protection.

Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada's resource web page: www.priv.gc.ca.

Response Matrix:

A response matrix is a guide for how to respond to a variety of post types on social media. This chart will take the guesswork for your staff and volunteers on how to deal with almost any kind of situation in the digital world.

Interaction	Response Priority	Specific response consideration	Additional Assets	Additional Sign-off
Highly negative and untrue (possibly slanderous)	Immediate (but after quick strategic assessment)	Next response should correct the misinformation	Link to reference content that supports your response. Record entry.	Notify Board of Directors or Executive Staff.
Critical but wrong	Quick	Gently correct misinformation. Commenter should not feel embarrassed.	Link to reference that supports response.	None
Critical but grounded in fact	Immediate	"I'll look into that." Thank poster for bringing it to our attention.	Follow up with post with additional information, reference initial commenter.	Notify volunteer or staff person with the most knowledge of the specific situation.
Question about your work or company.	Quick	Response should address the question simply and directly.	Link to a relevant information source (website, blog, other SM post)	None
Negative comment, correctly pointing out a minor error/broken link	Quick	Thank commenter for bringing comment to their attention, repost working link.		None
Positive comment	Quick	Response should thank commenter directly.		None

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