

Over the years, Frontline's team has evaluated and project managed scores of events. We have learned a great deal about what it takes to make an event successful. Here are some tips we would like to share with you:

1. Your local community is your greatest asset

Your area and your event are inextricably linked. Visitors to your event will stay in local hotels, travel on local transport and shop in local shops; and they'll speak to all of them. If the local community are supportive of your event, they will do your marketing for you. If they aren't you'll, have a mountain to climb.

It is therefore prudent to do everything in your power to ensure that your event causes the least inconvenience possible to local residents. This was part of the reason for the recent success of the 2014 Commonwealth Games, during which local leisure facilities were closed. Frontline worked in partnership with Glasgow Life to ensure that any community leisure activities that were scheduled to take place in Games venues found a new and suitable home, and that nobody had to miss out on a game of squash or a yoga class while the Games were taking place.

Remember too, that it is only by making the most of the assets around you, including local food, architecture and crafts that you can make your event stand out from the crowd. Using local vendors as much as possible is therefore a good way of creating an event to remember, as well as generating community buy-in.

2. Let funders know you value them

Successful events cost money, and people rarely give you money without expecting something in return. Meeting and exceeding funder expectations is therefore key to delivering a profitable and successful event.

In the case of private sponsors, you should use every opportunity to promote your sponsors, for example by re-tweeting their tweets, placing their products in your promotional videos, and displaying their logos prominently on your website and at your event. You can also offer them free market research by including sponsor supplied questions in your visitor survey.

If your business receives funding from the public sector, it will be important to understand what the strategic objectives of your funding partner are, and to obtain an evaluation report that provides clear evidence to show how your event contributed to these.

The organisers of the Tour of Britain cycle race are a good example of people who do this well. Last year they commissioned separate reports on each of the eight individual stages of their Tour, all designed to demonstrate to their local authority sponsors what impact the event has had on their particular area, and to inform each of their private sponsors on the impact the event has had on public recognition and perceptions of their brands.

3. Do things by the book

As any event organiser knows, putting an event together involves an incredible amount of bureaucracy. You need to take out numerous insurance policies, conduct risk assessments, obtain safety certificates and write accessibility statements. The list can seem endless.

It is natural to think of these things as an unnecessary hassle, and there will be an understandable temptation to do the minimum amount necessary to obtain the required certificates. However, it is important to recognise that all of these rules exist for a reason, and that if anything were to go wrong at your event the implications could be catastrophic.

Furthermore, doing all that is necessary to make sure that things run smoothly on the day, and ensuring that visitors with disabilities and mobility issues can enjoy the day without obstacles, can help make your event stand out as a success and an exemplar to others.

One organisation that really grasped this was the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG), who made every effort to ensure that the construction of the Olympic Park followed all of the latest health and safety guidelines. As a result it became the first Olympic Park ever to be built without any serious incidents, and the risk of severe adverse publicity was avoided.

4. Shout about your successes

Remember that your event this year is the best marketing tool you have for the event you will run next year. It is therefore crucial that you gather as much material as you can from this year's event for use in future marketing, and that you disseminate this as widely as possible. This includes getting:

- testimonies from visitors on the good time they are having
- testimonies from pitch holders on how profitable a day they are having, and
- as many photos and videos as you possibly can (remember that, if you don't have time to gather your own content, you can always invite visitors to the event to submit their photos to your website)

Steven Findlay - a senior economist with Frontline, Steven can help you evaluate and evidence the impact of your event, and develop robust evidence which you can use both for marketing and to make a persuasive case for future funding. His work includes:

- **Economic impact of the Tour of Britain and Tour Series:** Steven has worked with the organisers of these events to produce individual impact reports for every Tour of Britain and Tour Series stage held since 2008 (over 100 reports in total)
- **Research in to the value of Scotland's event catering sector:** Steven conducted this study for Scottish Enterprise and Event Scotland to help them understand the contribution events make to the Scottish Food and Drink Sector, and how this could be enhanced
- **Support for in-house economic impact assessments:** Steven provided support and advice to Tweedlove Cycling Festival, Tour O' The Borders Race and Borders Book Festival to help them to develop their own economic impact reports on their events



Zoe Awty - a qualified sports scientist and experienced project manager, Zoe will work with you to put the correct systems and procedures in place to ensure that your event is a success. Her experience in this area includes:



- **2014 Commonwealth Games Sport Readiness Project:** Zoe worked with Glasgow Life to develop and implement a governance structure and project management office to coordinate 7 key workstreams responsible for delivering the many tasks required in order to have each of its venues ready for the games.
- **Evaluation of Construction Management Regulations for London 2012:** Zoe led the data analysis of this project to understand the impacts of regulations put in place by the Health and Safety Executive to improve construction safety in the run-up to London 2012
- **Evaluation of the Active Lifestyles Programme:** Zoe worked with North Lanarkshire Council on this programme: aimed at engaging 17-24 year olds in the most deprived areas of North Lanarkshire in physical activity

How we can help you

Our events team offers a range of services to help make your event a success, including:

- **Economic impact assessment (EIA) and evaluation** - conducting research and developing economic impact reports and models to help evidence the economic impacts of your event (including visitor, organiser and participant spend) and the strategic impacts (including encouraging participation in sporting and cultural activities, and impact on the profile of the host area)
- **Preparing a funding case** - gathering the evidence and articulating the arguments that can help you to present a persuasive case to public bodies for funding support
- **Training and support** - providing you with the EIA and evaluation training or support your need to conduct your own evaluations, thus giving you with the skills to evidence the impact of your event every year it takes place
- **Project management** - helping you to identify, monitor and manage all of the processes involved in staging a successful event, to ensure that everything goes to plan

What Next?

To find out more about Frontline's work in project managing and evaluating events, please contact:

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