

Temporary exhibitions

Your venue is considering whether to host the 'Wonderful' sci-art exhibition.

What could go wrong?

Muddling your mission	Practical Issues	Public Perception
Why enjoyable? It's not hands-on or interactive.	Programming	Too challenging, fear factor
Not known for art – a message too far?	Will it fit through the door?	Public prejudice
Falls between two stalls for media and public	Health and safety	Competition
How does it fit with future plans?	Will it be safe, accessible and appropriate for my children?	Hands-on visitors, is this appropriate
	When it leaves, what happens next? Picking up after it is gone.	Will my questions get answered?

The challenges and solutions

Challenge: muddling your mission

Solutions:

- Know it!
- Does the temporary exhibition link to it? Or can it? Be creative.
- Make it part of a programme, with targeted programming and activities – consider the mission of temporary exhibitions.

Challenge: practicalities

Solutions

Consider the following:

- Physical and technical requirements = power, IT, technical requirements of exhibitions
- Health and safety covers all basic procedure – it's our space
- Timescales + communication – good planning with clear milestones
- Staff training about the exhibition content, brief on operational procedures, could sell merchandise
- Be flexible with what you take
- Education and interpretation – need time in advance
- Have a good project manager
- Have a link area between the exhibition and the rest of the space. Possible a child zone. To enable adults to linger.

Challenges: public perception

Solutions

- Have accurate publicity which is explanatory
- Distribute marketing materials to different venues
- Be welcoming to your traditional audience, and to new audiences
- Give positive feedback while the audience is in the space
- Have guided tours
- Print family friendly guides
- Have good staff training.

One-off or special events

Your venue is hosting a one-off, special event that is different to your typical programme. **What could go wrong?**

Staff	Rationale Effort	Technical Planning Logistics	Internal and external expectations Marketing	Content	Budget	External factors
Get your staff on board	How do you evaluate the success of the event	Set-up and breakdown including staff time. Physical logistics	Perception of value - what do you usually deliver - what are your aims	Quality of speakers	Awareness of the dangers of hidden costs	Ensure it does not clash with local or national events
Staff training	What will it look like if you get it right?	Getting security, insurance and inspections right	Who is the target audience. Why?	Selecting content to cover.	Costs	Consider external party politics
	Is this event worth doing? Will it solve the problems you have?	Technical equipment failing or not having other essential materials	Predicting audience uptake to avoid over or under sell	Think about what to leave out	Marketing – limited budgets. - niche audiences can be challenging	
	Ensuring the event helps to meet the organisational aims.	Getting the critical path right – do things in the right order	Expectations – yours and theirs			
	Being certain its worth the trouble or cost					
	Justifying the amount of staff time for a one-off project					

The challenges and solutions

Challenge – public expectations

Solutions

Marketing – consider messages and design

Initial impression – signage, personnel (including security), reinforcing calm

Decompression - - allow for absorption and evaluation of experience

Follow-up – feedback, issues for next time

Challenge – ensure that you don't alienate existing visitors

Solutions

Be mindful of conflicts of interest

Think about the timing of activities, consider staggering your audience

Ensure event runs AS ADVERTISED both from the organisations point of view and from the guest speakers

Challenge – how to engage staff effectively

Solutions

Be fully inclusive, have bottom up management

Talk – up, down and sideways within your organisation

Thank people, motivate and inspire them. Thank them again

Challenge – know what you want and why. Is it really worth it?

Solutions

Define your objectives clearly

Consider whether the event fits in with your mission statement.

Know why you are doing your event. Is is:

- Demand driven (know your audience through market research)
- Something your organisation wants to do (do you have an audience for the event – market research)
- Something you have been told to do (find an overlap between your aims and your audience)

Consider the impact on your community – contentious issues may alienate people, there may be apathy towards mundane issues

Evaluate all through the project. Be prepared to stop!

Challenging audiences

Your venue wants to get more teenagers inside. **What could go wrong?**

Competition	Expectations	Benefits	Venue
From other events	That a science centre will be educational and not entertaining	Is it relevant?	Location – is it accessible
Ensuring your programme or event activity is more attractive than anything else on in town/ their lives that day and that it is relevant	Is it appealing to the age group?	Entertainment value – is there one?	Setting – the design and building
Trying to attract teenagers to a venue which is designed for families and school groups	How is it framed?	Repeat visits	Transport – how do they get there?
	How will it be interpreted?	Updating out dated exhibition	Cost – the entrance fee
	Peer-pressure – is it 'cool'?		
	How to change the mind set of visitors.		
	Counteracting stereotypes		
	Regarded as irrelevant or uncool or babyish		

The most important challenges to solve

Challenge - competition

Solutions

Partnership with 'the competition'

Ambient marketing

Outreach – consider taking the exhibition out

Involve teenagers in the programming and sharing responsibility with them.

Challenge - expectations

Solutions

Get to know your audience – respect and understanding of audience

Don't badge as science – in context, eg ipods, they are digital natives!

Challenge - satisfaction

Solutions

Go for it. Let them get involved, their way.