

Innovative Marketing | Film Hub Wales notes

Areas of familiarity and concern:

Concerns:

1. Attracting young audiences
2. Connecting with the community (local, regional etc)
3. Going 'beyond Lady in the Van', advertising specialist titles
4. How to develop a more coherent strategy
5. How to measure and analyse various marketing activities

Some suggestions:

1. Attracting young audiences

Let young people do the work for you!

>> Speak to Hana about **Film Hub Wales' Young Programmers scheme**, or perhaps just start a conversation with young people about what they might like to see and how they might like events to be presented.

>> Is there a **local youth group** that you could partner with? Perhaps holding those events at a venue that young people are already comfortable attending...

>> **Talk to young people about what they value**, including what motivates them to attend various events. Even if the answer is 'free sweets', then perhaps you offer free popcorn or locally made cakes! Or find a local games shop that might offer a discount to anyone with a community screening ticket...

>> Is there a tie-in you could do with **local schools**? My introduction to independent cinema was through a French language teacher who loved French cinema and used it as a teaching aid.

>> Listen to young people about their **concerns and aspirations**. Are there films you could program that empower them to respond either through social action or self-development? By many accounts, young people are aware of the issues in the world and want to find solutions. If you do a quick Google search, there are lots of organisations looking to encourage young people into social action too. Perhaps there are partnership opportunities there.

>> Partner with **youth volunteering schemes** like Duke of Edinburgh or the apprenticeship scheme.

>> **Let them teach you:** there might be films, experiences or other live streamed events that young people are interested in seeing. Perhaps by doing an event specifically catered to teenagers (a live streaming of *Pretty Little Liars*, a Twitch broadcast of a live game... whatever they are excited by) might get them more comfortable with a community cinema setting and empowered and inspired to try something else. It's a question of building trust and relationships.

2. Connecting with the local community

Use the rich resources in your community!

>> Whether it's a local bakery, a painter who can create a bespoke billboard, a choir or any number of other local groups, why not **invite your community to be involved**? Sell the cakes, advertise the artist's work, showcase the choir! A general invitation can reap rewards – perhaps offer the idea of collaboration to your neighbours and let the ideas come to you. Celebrating your community will hopefully mean they do the same for you.

>> Why not **establish cross-promotional schemes for members**? This can also combine with loyalty card schemes. I suggest creating actual members' cards (these can literally be made from cutout card) that offer you 10% off in local establishments in return for 10% discount on wine at your events. Or similar. Do you have a local residents' scheme? In Bushwood where I live, being a BARA member leads to lots of discounts and some really fun events. We have a local film club that's always shared among residents.

>> Try to **think laterally about the themes of upcoming films** and find unusual touchpoints for outreach. For *The Eagle Huntress*, is there a local birdwatching group / RSPB branch / wildlife protection organisation? Or perhaps a WI / Girl Guides or other organization focused on Female Empowerment and Womens' Equality? For *A Streetcat Named Bob*, is there a local animal shelter you could work with? Or a famous local cat that you could use for promotion?

>> Can you have a **presence at community events**? Could you contribute a film round to a local pub quiz? If you have a local art trail, could you showcase posters or artwork from past screenings or events? If there's a historical society, is there a cinematic angle to any upcoming events that you could explore?

>> Building on the success of sharing and pooling businesses like airbnb, zipcar, blahblah car and so on, why not **create a local carsharing group** for trips to the cinema or community screening? This is something that could easily be set up as a Facebook Group (look up the Pasty Connection as an example), via Twitter using a #, or simple on an email group. What a good way for people in your community to meet each other too.

3. Advertising Specialist Cinema Titles

Use collective power and social media to create buzz!

>> Perhaps there is a way to establish a **Film Hub Wales or Moviola hashtag** so that community cinemas can share buzz about particular titles. Sharing photos, reviews, video vox pops between community cinemas could help to build buzz around a title. So for example: #moviolaEagle #moviolaAllied etc. This way you can search for titles that have been shown elsewhere and build on word of mouth from previous screenings.

>> As above, make sure you're not missing **connections with unusual local groups** that are connected with the film title in an unusual way. Charities in particular are often keen to support film screenings, as are educational groups, voluntary or action groups and so on.

>> Why not **use reverse psychology or comedy** to advertise 'difficult' titles? Human curiosity is a powerful thing! Tantalise potential viewers: eg. The best Icelandic Farming movie you'll ever see / Finally! The Icelandic comedy about elderly shepherds you've been waiting for! You won't think you'll want to see this film... but you'll be glad you did etc. [Look up The Room (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/culture/story/20160212-the-room-why-so-many-love-the-worst-film-ever-made>) for a fun example of this!]

>> For foreign language titles, perhaps there are **persuasive tie-ins** you can offer that sell the experience of the evening alongside the film. Food or wine from the country of origin. Is there someone who can provide any other traditional activities (eg. for a Spanish film is there a local dance teacher who could offer a taster Flamenco session, for an Icelandic film is there a baker who could offer an insight into making traditional Icelandic buns etc.)

4. Developing a more coherent strategy

Think across the year as a whole and not only in relation to specific titles!

>> Remember that **the calendar** offers ample opportunities for marketing inspiration. Whether it's Valentine's day, Halloween, Film Festivals, Film Awards or specific cinematic anniversaries, you can keep in touch with your members and remind them of the magic of cinema regardless of upcoming titles.

>> Create a marketing strategy that notes **weekly and monthly opportunities** to advertise your upcoming screenings. This can cover:

- local press (editorial, what's on listings, advertisements)
- local and regional listings in magazine and online outlets
- local radio (including online radio)
- local online film reviewers, bloggers, podcasters etc.
- your newsletter / email
- facebook, twitter, instagram
- flyers and posters
- your email signature! (This can be quite powerful! Think about how many emails you send. Why not mention your cinema in your signature? You could even embed a youtube trailer from an upcoming film...)
- local events

>> **Work with your team** to make sure you're not missing any opportunities between you. Collectively you'll have more insights and reach. And always keep a note of what marketing has appealed to you – keep learning!

5. How to Measure and Analyse

The digital era is designed for data, so use the tools it provides!

>> **Facebook and Twitter both offer insights** and analytics. If you are confused there are online guides that will help you to decipher what they mean Eg. <https://blog.kissmetrics.com/guide-to-facebook-insights/>

>> **bitly link shortening** and tracking is probably the most useful tool I've found in measuring the success of online marketing and sales. You can use it to create a

bespoke link to any page online, and it will track how many people have clicked on that link and when. It will tell you if people are interacting with your marketing, the times of day that they are most active and how they are coming to that particular page (referrals). It will also tell you where they are. It's magical. Use it for every link that you share and you can see which are the most impactful. www.bitly.com

>> **Google Analytics** are wonderfully useful if you have your own website or blog. There are handy guides online so I won't repeat the work they've already done: https://static.googleusercontent.com/media/www.google.com/en//grants/education/Google_Analytics_Training.pdf and <https://moz.com/blog/absolute-beginners-guide-to-google-analytics> are examples.

>> You can also **collect simple data** from your events! Numbers of attendees, information on how they heard about the event, quick thoughts on pricing, accessibility or choice of film can all be gathered easily and on paper!

>> And never forget about **the power of qualitative data**: feedback forms, reviews, vox pop videos or audio interviews can all be super useful in informing both you and your audiences about the experience of coming to one of your events! Testimonials are powerful – why not ask your members to give you a testimonial that you can share on your website, in your emails, on your social media?

Familiarity:

1. Successful email campaigns directed at us
2. Unique / local advertising (painted signs, flyers in school bags etc.)
3. Speaking in your own voice
4. Top 10s / 20s / 50s
5. Local news

1. Successful email campaigns directed at us

You are your own audience! Knowing what works for you is a powerful resource!

>> Why not **keep a record of emails that you enjoy**, that you always open or that you find irritating and dislike. Assess what appeals to you about the content – is it the look and feel, the tone of voice, the relevance of the content or something else? See if these are lessons you can apply to your own emails.

>> **Use mailchimp** for your marketing campaigns. Mailchimp is incredibly easy to use and designed for purpose. It allows you to send one email to multiple hidden email addresses (so no need to send in batches), and allows you to create a design that you can use again and again. It also tells you how many people are opening your email, where they are clicking and it does all the legal work for you with regards unsubscribing. If you have all your member email addresses in a spreadsheet it is incredibly easy to import them too. <https://mailchimp.com/>

2. Unique / local advertising (painted signs, flyers in school bags etc.)

Your community is your best resource!

>> This is mostly covered above but **tap into the skills of your team and your community** to advertise your work. If you know a keen artist perhaps they'd like to paint a billboard for you, but equally they might want to design your flyers or offer advice on a logo. If you know a keen photographer, perhaps they'd like to take photos of your next event to share online or put on your website or in your newsletter. If you know a keen local journalist, perhaps they'd like to interview one of your team about running the cinema, or write reviews of your films for free to share online. And so on.

3. Speaking in your own voice

You have a unique voice! This doesn't have to change online.

>> Why not **keep a notebook** handy and write down reminders of stimulating or fun conversations you have about cinema? If you say something profound or funny, write it down and use it – chances are, with a slight tweak or two, your written voice won't be that far from your spoken voice.

>> Alternatively, you could **record yourself speaking** about a film or upcoming event and transcribe what you say. It might be easier to think out loud and then use your own words to write with.

>> Imagine your newsletter, website or social media is being **addressed to a friend** who thinks you're fabulous?! What would you say to them?!

4. Top 10s / 20s / 50s

The 21st Century seems to love lists...!

>> We all love lists. **Take inspiration from upcoming screenings, events or relevant dates** to make Top 20s. These can be created by you and your team or can be an easy discussion starter on social media. This can be everything from favourite movie stars and top recommendations for foreign movies to favourite cinemas in the world, best film festivals to attend, or even competitions for the furthers you've ever traveled to get to a cinema.

5. Local News

The news needs us! We are not fake news!

>> As pointed out in the session, **local newspapers are keen for content**. Make sure you think of them as partners in advertising and exploring your screenings and your community's relationship to you. Whether you offer them an interview with your team, an opportunity to review the film in return for a comp ticket, or perhaps inspiration for a weekly column, try to make friends with your local arts journalist. You can then work together on ideas to promote your work 😊

For any comments, questions or suggestions, please feel free to email or tweet me:
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Thanks and good luck!