

# HOW TO RUN A GREAT LOCAL/ COMMUNITY SCREENING MOVIE EVENT

## Welcome!

Our team at Heritage Films is so glad you've decided to run a local screening event for one of our powerful films. Whether you're planning on watching a film with 20 friends or are looking to pack out an entire venue, we're here to help your event and planning run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. We've been working in this area for over fifteen years, so we've gathered our top tips and tricks together to make this as easy and enjoyable as possible. We love the thought of our films engaging with your family, friends and community across churches, charities, sports clubs, local halls and all forms of community gatherings!

Thanks for your partnership with us in bringing these movies and their messages of hope and to communities across Australia and New Zealand. We couldn't do this without you!

With great thanks from the team at HERITAGE FILMS

## CONTENTS

- 2 SETTING UP YOUR EVENT
- 2 INVITATIONS
- 4 PROMOTIONS
- 6 ABOVE AND BEYOND - KICKING YOUR EVENT EXPERIENCE UP A NOTCH
- 7 ON THE DAY/NIGHT
- 8 FUNDRAISING
- 8 CONTACT US

# 1. SETTING UP YOUR EVENTS



We've designed the process of creating a local event to be as simple as possible. If you're interested in hosting a screening, please visit our website to submit an enquiry. Our team will be in touch shortly to work with you to confirm your booking.

We recommend using Eventbrite to manage event attendance - it's a great option for issuing both free and paid tickets (for those who are using an event as a fundraiser). By setting your event up in Eventbrite, you can easily sell/give away tickets and monitor audience numbers .

If you're yet to set up your Eventbrite event, here's our helpful guide to doing so.

## 2. INVITATIONS



Now that you've got your brand spanking new event set up, it's time to start inviting!

There's a number of ways you can reach out to your friends, family, community and beyond to encourage attendance and ticket sales.

### **Social Media Invitations**

Social media platforms are often the way most people organise upcoming events. By creating an event on Facebook, you can use its platform to invite connections within the Facebook space.

### **Creating an event on Facebook**

Creating an event on Facebook that mirrors your Eventbrite description will let you engage with a wide range of attendees in a natural, high-traffic setting.

When you press the 'create event' button on Facebook from within your Events page, you'll be given the choice of a Private or Public Event. Even if you choose a Private event, you can still set this event so your guests can invite other guests, which is helpful for ticket sales and local engagement.

By copying over the text from your Eventbrite description and using the same photo, you can make your Facebook event mirror your Eventbrite event - just add the Eventbrite link in the description so it's easy for people to click through to access tickets.

Once you've created your Facebook event, invite those on your contact list you'd like to know about the screening, and encourage those who display interest to consider who else they could invite to the same event. This Facebook event is also a great place for you to post updates, resources, teaser content and to generate excitement and enthusiasm for your upcoming event

## Email Invitations

Using an existing email database or simply emailing contacts you believe may be interested in your screening is a great way to continue to get the word out. Here's some simple wording that can be used to accompany an email invite...

*Hi \_\_\_\_\_,*

*I'm running a local screening for \_\_\_\_\_ movie (movie title) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date).*

*(Tip: how about inserting a short note here about what motivated you to organise this group screening and why you're excited to enjoy this film as a community together?)*

*I'd love for you to join me at this screening on \_\_\_\_\_ and to invite any friends or family members you believe this experience would be valuable and enjoyable for. Here's a link to book your tickets (add your Eventbrite link).*

*Thanks for taking a look, I look forward to seeing you there and watching this wonderful film together!*

*Thanks,*

*\_\_\_\_\_ (Your name)*

By filling in the blanks (and making any changes you like - this is just a suggestion!) you can easily communicate the who/what/where/when/why and engage your audience over email.

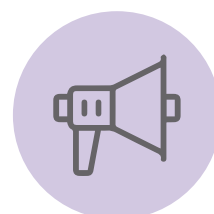
## Inviting your church, community groups, school groups and more

If you're a part of one, we wholeheartedly recommend you engage your church community around your community screening. Here's some tips for how to do so...

- If you're not a part of church leadership, speak with your pastor about this film and share your vision for your local screening. Ask if they'd be willing to play the trailer to Sunday congregations once your event is set up and tickets are ready to go.
- Download our customisable printing resources and take a bunch of flyers to church with you. Handing these out with your specific event information on them is a great way to lead people to book tickets and provides them with further information to take a look at when they get home.
- Put up a poster on your church's bulletin board (physical or digital!). Simply print out your customisable flyer in A3 size and you've got yourself a good looking poster.
- Ask your church administration team if your event can be included in weekly emails to your congregation.

If you're running this community event entirely outside of church walls, amazing! There's so many local community groups who may be great to reach out to. Think local sports groups, mother's groups, daycares, swim schools, business groups, community organisations... the list is long and full of potential. You can use the strategies above of reaching out to a key contact and asking for their assistance in communicating the event to their group and database.

## 3. PROMOTIONS



So you've set up your event, sent invitations out far and wide, and are watching as more people book in their tickets to join you... great! What's next?

We're passionate about the potential each event has to grow in numbers and impact far beyond your, and our, initial expectations. How incredible would it be to look around the cinema on the night of your event and see 300 people packed in together for this beautiful experience?

Whatever your attendee goal, we believe this will be a rich and shared experience in the twos or the two hundreds. However, we want to ensure as many people as possible receive the opportunity to see this film on the big screen in community, so we'd love to equip you with simple tools to increase engagement and attendance and make sure this film is seen by people far and wide throughout your community and spheres of influence.

Here's some simple ways to get the word out!

### **Local radio**

Your local radio station is a great place to help spread the word. They often have easy options to let locals communicate about the events they are running. Check in and find out how to do this in order to get your event on air and on their community notice boards online as well.

You may even discover that they get interested in helping with some editorial content going to air. This is a great way to really extend the awareness for the film and for your event. We can provide you with content if you'd like to do this - simply contact our team at [info@movieschangepeople.com](mailto:info@movieschangepeople.com).

If you're running a fundraising event, you may consider giving the radio station a double pass to give away as an incentive to put your details to air. This investment of a couple of free seats could be well worth it in the long run.

### **Local influencers**

Who do you know that can help carry your load and could bring additional enthusiasm to the table?

Have a brainstorm about who you know who's influential in your local community, and how you can tap into their network to ask them to share the word about your event.

This could be your own pastor, or the pastor of another church in your region. It might be that person you know who has a regular presence in social media and who people respect and trust.

Make a list and then approach these individuals - you may even offer these people a free ticket to your event.

### **Brainstorming - Spheres of influence**

- School connections
- Work colleagues
- Local politicians
- Local business people
- Individuals with online reach and who are also known in your local community
- Pastors and leaders of other churches
- Community organisations (Lions etc.)
- A local business might be keen to 'sponsor' your event by providing refreshments or treats/gifts of some sort for all of your guests. You'd need to check with the cinema about this, however, this isn't an unusual arrangement and is a fun way for you to value add on the night - plus, the business benefits from great exposure at a live event.

### **Keep up your social media presence**

That Facebook event you created earlier is one of the most efficient way to continue to create interest and encourage your existing event attendees to bring along more friends and family. Our social media resources are rich with videos, quotes, images and memes, giving you plenty of options when it comes to posting in the event page regularly. As your event gets closer, we recommend posting 2-3 times a week to remind attendees and encourage last-minute bookings. We can provide you with plenty of social media resources - check out the film's specific page via [www.movieschangepeople.com](http://www.movieschangepeople.com) or our Facebook feed to find out more.

### **Working with your local cinema**

If you decide to run your event in a cinema setting, here's our tips and tricks.

Firstly, your local cinema will love meeting you. You see, your group booking event represents something that's very special for local cinemas. Your enthusiasm is going to bring in some good business for them - they should be very enthusiastic to work with you to help your event be a great success.

When you initially book the cinema, you can start with a smaller sized cinema and then ask your contact there if there's scope for you to increase the capacity of the room based on your ticket sales.

You may begin with a 100 seat auditorium. If you see ticket sales going strongly and approaching 80-90 tickets sold, you could get back in touch with them and ask what the next size auditorium is. Let's say it's 150 - in this scenario, you could increase the available tickets to 150, allowing you to host more people as momentum builds..

If you're holding an event that is a private screening of the movie, the cinema will be charging you for every seat in the auditorium and so starting small and growing as ticket sales come in is a great way for you to manage both risk and growth.

Chat more with your local cinema about how this can work and ultimately we encourage you to build a strong relationship with them as this event unfolds. They are usually a great group of people and will do work with you to help your event run well and achieve all the goals you have for it as well.

## 4. ABOVE AND BEYOND - KICKING YOUR EVENT EXPERIENCE UP A NOTCH



Once you've got your event locked in, tickets are selling, and you're regularly engaging with your attendees about your upcoming event, there's some 'optional extras' you can explore in order to further shape your event and attendee experience. These are just some ideas - you may have your own!

### **Organise a post-film panel discussion**

One powerful way to increase the event experience is to host a post-screening Q&A. Ask your cinema/community venue if they can provide 1-2 microphones and if you can set up some chairs at the front of the film after the screening. You don't need 'experts' on your panel - consider requesting the involvement of individuals with a heart and passion for others, as well as people who are able to hold an audience's engagement. There's plenty of people within your community who could be great Q&A panel candidates for your local event.

If you decide to venture down this track, we can provide you with additional resources. We're here to help and to add value to this experience in any way we can. For more information about this, please contact us via [info@movieschangepeople.com](mailto:info@movieschangepeople.com)

### **Find a local cafe/restaurant partner for post-film mingling and conversation**

Why not reach out to a local cafe or restaurant close to the cinema and ask them if you can bring your attendees along for a post-film mingle, conversation, coffee or drink? Take a look at the venues close to your screening location - you may even be able to wrangle a sizeable discount by turning up with a decent amount of people and arranging it in advance!

## 5. ON THE DAY/NIGHT



The big day is finally here... your hard work has paid off! Time to get to the venue and experience this movie sitting alongside those who make up your community.

### **If your event is in a cinema - arrive a little early**

By getting to the cinema approximately 30 minutes before the event will begin, you can check in with staff, get your bearings, and be on hand to greet attendees as they arrive.

It's best to begin by asking to meet with the Manager on duty and introducing yourself to them. They will be there to assist you with everything you need and this may include things like...

- A table to set up on to check off names and collect tickets
- A space to hand out any additional collateral or gifts or treats as per the sponsor's idea above.
- A place to put up any kind of branding you might want to have in place on the night like a pull-up banner etc.
- Details about the start and end time of your event. You'll find they may have screening of other movies in the cinema where your event is being held both BEFORE and AFTER your screening and as such there may be certain logistics for you to be aware of.
- Any technical details with things like the microphone etc.

Once all of this is clear for you, it's really just a matter of ensuring you keep to the timeline that the Cinema Manager has highlighted to you. These guys are great and do these sorts of events all the time so will be happy to assist.

Oh yeah ... it's always nice to find the Cinema Manager at the conclusion of your event when everyone else has left and say a big thanks for their help and support. Its surprising how many people don't ever thank them and they are a key part to your event being successful on the night. Plus, you just might make a new friend!

## 6. FUNDRAISING



We welcome the opportunity for you to use our movies as a fundraising event for any cause or organisation you are passionate about. Movie fundraising events can be lots of fun and quite meaningful.

To start with, it's not too hard to raise a decent amount of money this way. Once you lock in your price per seat, you are free to set up on Eventbrite and sell the individual tickets at a higher price. In the past we've seen ticket sales for these sorts of events anywhere from \$20-\$25 and sometimes the ticket price includes refreshments. At these sorts of prices you should be able to see significant funds raised for your cause.

You can also approach the cinema and ask if you can show a short video before the movie screening or perhaps you just want to address the audience about your organisation (if you're hosting your event in another venue, you should have no issue doing the same). Either way, make the most of gathering people together in one room and sharing about the cause you are passionate about.

## 7. CONTACT US



We're here to support your local screening journey from Day 1. Don't hesitate to reach out to our team if there's any way we can be of further assistance in ensuring your event runs without a hitch.

**Online:** [www.movieschangepeople.com](http://www.movieschangepeople.com)

**Email:** [info@movieschangepeople.com](mailto:info@movieschangepeople.com)

**Phone:** +61 7 5370 2007

**Instagram:** @movieschangepeople

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/MoviesChangePeople/](http://www.facebook.com/MoviesChangePeople/)