

# **How to Create a Mini- Country Music Festival**

## **A checklist from Country Music Mama.com**

### **The Vision**

- Define the purpose for the music festival-
- Holiday?
- Charity?
- Community effort?
- Promotion of artists?

Country Music songwriter and artist, Eli Mosley, created a mini-festival as part of Bartow, Florida's 4th of July festival. His purpose was to bring a quality music show to his small hometown. He also wanted to make a place for some rising young artists to be introduced to the area. He was also excited to enhance the Independence Day celebration.

### **Decide how large you want it to be**

- How many artists do you want to involve?
- How long will the show be? ( you'll have to work with the city on that)
- What size crowd would you like to attract? What amenities are available for crowds? Restrooms? Food trucks? Seating area?

- What facility do you have available?

The city of Bartow has a large city park with a bandshell for performances. There are also baseball fields, a community center, a library and a lake where thousands gather to watch the fireworks.

One of the most interesting sites for a music benefit concert was in a ranch rodeo arena. Several pick up truck beds and a large lawn cart created the stage! So, only your imagination limits where it can be held.

### **Throw out a few trial balloons**

- Ask prospective artists if they are interested in participating in your event. How about the times and dates? ( It helps if you can get a commitment so that you can promote your idea to sponsors.)
- Promote your ideas to the City Chamber of Commerce Council Committee handling the events. ( Give details but be open to add their ideas too). It helps to get one or two members on board in advance to help please your case.

## **How to Promote Your Event**

- After getting the green light from the city or venue, approach local business sponsors who might be happy to participate at the event.  
Try music stores, radio stations, Western Wear stores, Truck dealerships ,etc...
- Promotion materials like posters need to be made and placed in local businesses. ( If it's a city event they will make and distribute them for you, but you can offer to help get them out)
- Set up a radio interview to promote the artists and the festival ( the morning shows often interview local or visiting artists on their shows)
- Set up newspaper articles in local papers about the festival and the artists who are performing (send them bios and articles that have already been published about you and the papers are happy to have an easier writing task)
- Don't forget Facebook and all the social media sites!
- Tell everybody you come in contact with about the show!
- Offering to launch a campaign to promote the event along with the city will go a long way to win you favor.

### **How do you set up the show?**

- Check out the area where the show will be held- know what you're dealing with.
- Draw up plans for your stage set up
- Make a list of everything necessary to go on the stage
- Check with your artists to see what they need for their performances
- If you need a place for sales of your merchandise- make arrangements to have tent, tables, and chairs set up and include room for your guest artists to display theirs merchandise also.
- Put up sponsor's banners or signs where they can be seen
- Have a banner or sign with your own name, email or website info

### **Expect the Unexpected**

- Always bring anchors or weights to hold things down during wind gusts.
- Rain! It's a given in Florida summer afternoons! You need tarps to cover speakers and electrical wires and instruments. Plastic sheets

to cover merchandise tables. Ponchos, raincoats, umbrellas, or large garbage bags for you and your stuff.

### **What do you do with the Artists?**

- Make arrangements for water and food for your performers. ( Some venues will provide these free for entertainers)
- Make arrangements for your artists to get out of heat or cold and have a place to dress for the show.
- Let the artists know that you expect them to participate setting up and taking down the stage and doing the work needed to get the show on. They need to arrive on the scene with that in mind. It's all about team work. At this stage you probably don't have a road crew to do it all for you.
- The artists need places to live and meals while in your town ( They love to dorm together to get to know each other )
- If you can help long distance bands or artists book places to perform while in your area, it helps make their trip more valuable.

### **How the Performance Roster was set up**

- The youngest or least experienced artist is good for an opening solo spot of about 30 min.
- A more experienced duo is good for the next spot- 30-45min.

- A full band to open for the main act - 45-60 min.
- The main band attraction- 60-90 min.

### **Extra Special Features**

- If you have military personnel near you that can join you as you perform a patriotic song and use it to honor them and veterans, it adds value to your show. Sometimes Eli has Marines from the local recruiting station, or police, fireman, or National Guardsmen join him on stage.
- Promoting young artists- Eli is sponsored by a local music store. They provide Eli with a good child size guitar to give to a child in the audience who shows exceptional interest in the music. Usually the child is air playing and singing along with the band. He usually looks for a child about 8-12 years old. They join him on stage, he signs the guitar and encourages the child to learn to play.

**Have A Great Show!!**