



IFEA Coronavirus (COVID-19) Forum



QUESTION & ANSWER SECTION

The Impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic on Festival & Event Sponsorship

March 25, 2020 Webinar

After each IFEA COVID-19 Forum Webinar, we have quite a number of questions from the attendees that we did not have time to answer. All those submitted to the IFEA post-Webinar, will be sent to the speakers from each Webinar, and answers are provided here.

Question: Would any of the panelists be willing to share materials / communications / documents (letters / email / social media messages, etc.) that they have developed to send to their constituents / shareholders that could be used as a template and adapted by other smaller festivals (IFEA members) that may not have access to some of the resources to developing those resources themselves?

Answer:

- **SunFest** - In their communications, they stressed to everyone that every message they sent out have the same tone as the below two linked statements (upbeat) and that it's about the attendee and the community . . not about the festival.
 - [Statement](#) to the Media, Ticket Buyers and Social Media (this was customized for sponsors, volunteers and contractors)
 - [Important Message to Ticket Holders](#) (Follow Up Email from the above, that went to ticket buyers.)
- **National Cherry Blossom Festival:**
 - [Letter to the Stakeholders](#) and sponsors that has other links embedded with key messages, materials, website portal (virtual Festival), etc.
 - [Standard COVID-19 Message](#) on the home page of their Website.

Question: Who was the ticketing agency for SunFest? And did he have to refund everyone's money?

Answer from Paul Jamieson: Complete Ticket Solutions, and they were fantastic. Our belief is that we did. Postponing was not a viable option for us and the ticket was purchased for a festival that was now not happening. Plus people may well need their money. At this point roughly half of the buyers said they be happy to carry it over to 2021. I realize that everyone's cash position is different, but I cannot emphasize enough how positive the reaction to this stance has been.

Question: Could SunFest send out a list of the resources he is using for applying for money?

Answer from Paul Jamieson: They're researching that now and will aim to have a list next week. If anyone has any other resources they can share, please let IFEA know and we'll share them here.

Question: I know the city jumped the gun – but what was Paul's original plan on announcing the cancellation? I'm in the process of cancelling my event, and trying to figure out who I need to tell before I tell the public, how I tell the public, how I work with vendors, ticket holders, sponsors, etc.

Answer from Paul Jamieson: Our plan was to get our Board's buy in, agree with the City, and then release to everyone (meaning press, sponsors, media, volunteers, contractors, ticket holders, social platforms, our general data base) at the same time. Our belief is that news travels fast and we wanted everyone to hear it from us first. We saw how true it was that news travelled fast when we were unexpectedly cancelled. Our phones (business lines and personal cells) blew up immediately.