

Film Festival Checklist and Networking Secrets



by Beth Rosen

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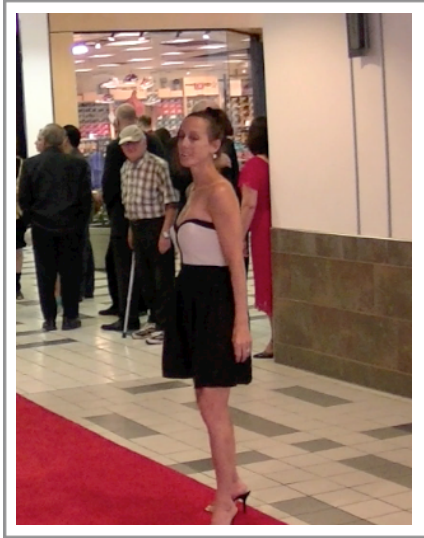
How to Make the Most of Your Film Festival Experience



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7 Ways to Promote Yourself and Your Film at a Film Festival

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Come Prepared to Network at a Film Festival

Once your film is accepted to a film festival, you want to make the most of the opportunity to promote yourself and your film because there will be influential people there. Distributors and film industry folks look for filmmakers who can promote themselves and their films because it shows that you are in tune with the business of Hollywood and you have what it takes to make it.

Here are a few tips that I've learned along the way that have worked for me and others in taking their film careers to the next level. If you know these networking secrets ahead of time, you'll come prepared and be able to shine and make the most of this extraordinary opportunity.

8 Ways to Promoting Yourself and Your Film

1. Show up and Show Off

Show up and show off. Dress to impress so you feel good. When you feel good, you look good and you're more apt to feel confident and talk to others. Be yourself. Be engaging and engage others. Don't be shy or let your mind take you out of the game. Everyone is there to network and meet people, and that includes meeting you! If the press is there interviewing people, introduce yourself as one of the filmmakers so you get interviewed.

2. Business Cards

Bring tons of business cards to hand out and make sure to ask people for their business cards. Send follow up emails and/or call the people you met so you can build on the relationships and begin working together.

3. Movie Poster

Bring a full size movie poster of your film and put it up in the movie theater where the film festival is taking place. People look at movie posters in deciding if it's a movie they want to see and film festivals encourage you to post them where your movie is screening.

4. One Sheets

Bring one-sheets with your film and the time it is showing. It is basically an 8 1/2 x 11 of your movie poster with the date, time and place on it. You will be able to put those out on a table for people to take so they will see your film. Make sure the one-sheet is professional, colorful and dynamic to capture their attention.

5. Post Cards

Bring postcards with your film information on it to hand out to the press and people in the film industry. It's best to use regular sized postcards rather than oversized postcards because people can fit the smaller size in a purse or pocket which increases the likelihood of them keeping it and contacting you. You can get stacks of them made with generic log lines, images and contact information and then print and add labels on the back of the postcard with the time, date and place for each festival showing as needed. This is a common practice in the independent film festival circuit. You can also add the official selection icons to your postcards.

6. Take Pictures and Videos

Bring a camera and take pictures of everybody. Post them on your websites and social networking sites and tag the people you met. Hollywood is about publicity and people love to see themselves looking glamorous, especially stars. It is also a great way to break the ice when you meet someone.

7. Movie Trailer

Make sure you have a teaser or movie trailer for your film on Youtube so you can bring it up on your smart phone to show people to showcase your talent and entice them to see your film.

8. DVD

Have a prepackaged DVD of your film to hand to influential people who cannot make the film screening.

Sample Movie Poster for Photo Finish Film



A SHORT COMEDY PHOTO FINISH

A SIGNATURE BETH PRODUCTIONS Film

Starring PEGGY MCGUINNESS, DANNY BOUSHEBEL, MICHELE MEISES and BOBBY BALLACK

Produced by BETH ROSEN Edited by BETH ROSEN Executive Producer BETH ROSEN

Screenplay by BETH ROSEN and MORT SCHARFMAN Directed by MORT SCHARFMAN

Sunday, June 3, 2012 at 8:00 pm, Hudson Cinemas

701 Route 440, Hudson Mall, Jersey City, New Jersey 07034

**SIGNATURE BETH
PRODUCTIONS**

**HOBOKEN
FILM FESTIVAL**

BETHROSEN.COM

**A HOME GROWN COMEDY YOU
DON'T WANT TO MISS**

backdoortohollywood.com

bethrosen.com

Elements of a Successful Movie Trailer



Importance of a Movie Trailer/Teaser

Every movie should have a teaser or sizzle piece to entice potential viewers to go see your film. You can create your movie teaser before or after you are done filming. One reason to create a sizzle piece before you actually film is to get investors to finance your creative endeavor.

The important thing is to always have it uploaded on to the internet so you can show someone. You never know when the right person will walk into your life so always be prepared with a great log line and a killer movie teaser you can show them on your smart phone.

6 Important Elements of a Successful Teaser/Trailer

1. Capture Your Genre

Make sure it captures your genre. Remember content is king but content is queen. That means if it's a comedy, make sure your teaser is funny and makes your audience laugh. If it's a suspense thriller, make sure you convey suspense. If it's a romance, make sure you include a romantic moment that speaks to the heart.

2. Keep it Engaging and Moving

Keep it engaging, short and moving from clip to clip. Many successful sizzle pieces are actually 50 seconds. The standard Hollywood teaser is 2 minutes or shorter.

3. Use Powerful Music

Use music that plays to your audience and elicits the desired emotional response. Make sure it's professional and blockbuster quality music.

4. Wet Their Appetite

Don't give away the story. Just wet their appetite. Show them enough to entice them to come see the movie.

5. Use Your Best Clips

Include some of the best or most exciting shots in the teaser. If you have stars in the movie, make sure you include them in the teaser.

6. Promote Celebrities and Stars

Make sure to include your own credits and make sure you spotlight your stars and any celebrities in the teaser with their names in big bold print.

Sample Teaser for Photo Finish Film

Here's a sample movie teaser I did for my film Photo Finish: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuIuPaz5eMw>



Some film festivals actually contacted me to submit my film to their festivals after seeing it on social media sharing sites.

My film Photo Finish was nominated for Best of the Audience Award at Hoboken International Film Festival - one of the ten biggest film festivals in the world.

The Press Kit



Once you get accepted to a film festival, you will need to supply them with a press kit. The requirements vary from festival to festival but these are some of the main elements:

A Teaser for Your Movie (in the form of a hyperlink and/or DVD copy)

Press Clippings and Press Releases about Your Film (Newspapers, Radio, Television, Online Press Releases, Magazines)

A Director's Statement

A Statement from a Member of the Creative Team

Head Shots of the Producers, Writers, Director, Stars, Co-Stars and Celebrity Actors

Still Photos from the Film and Set

Bio's for the Creative Team (Writers, Director, Producer, Stars, Co-Stars and Celebrity Actors)

Logline About Your Film

Short Paragraph Description of Your Film for the Festival Brochure and Website Ticket Sales

A One Page Executive Summary of Your Film

A Summary of Other Festival Screenings and Awards

Exhibition Copies (High Definition)

Movie Posters

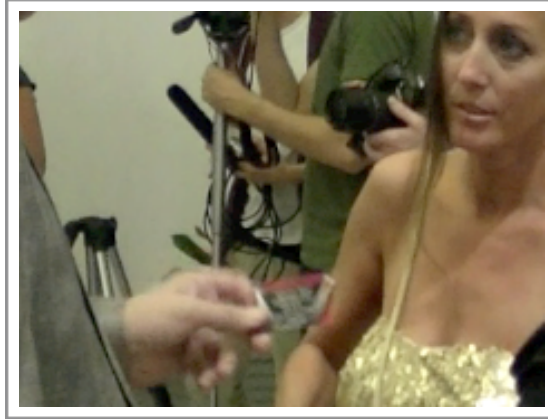
One Sheets/Flyers

Postcards

Website for the Film (in the form of a hyperlink)

Contact Information

Networking Secrets to Engage Industry Folk and Celebrities



Plan to Form Long-lasting Relationships

Remember that attending a film festival is an amazing opportunity for you to take your film career to the next level by mingling with industry folk. Long-lasting relationships in the business are often formed at film festivals so plan on meeting people and staying in touch.

Don't be shy. Be engaging because engaging people easily engage others. You will be pleasantly surprised to find out just how approachable and kind-hearted many industry people are, including celebrities, and how easy it is to talk to them, especially when you have a film that is being screened for competition in the festival. Whether you are aware of it or not, you gain credibility and legitimacy in the business by mere acceptance to a film festival, especially if it is a top 25 film festival.

With that in mind, here are some networking tips to help you engage writers, distributors, producers, executive producers, celebrities, directors and film festival board members.

Networking Tips

Attend the films of people you want to stay in touch with and talk to them immediately after the screening about their films. Make sure to congratulate them on their success.

Don't be shy about asking industry people for advice. Nobody is going to bite your head off for asking them how they did something. The truth is that people are often flattered when you treat them as experts and ask for their advice. If you talk to someone who has already succeeded in an area that you are unfamiliar with, such as getting distribution rights for your movie, asking for suggestions and tips is a quick and easy way to get free advice. They may introduce you to people who can help you or point you in the right direction. People who ask questions usually find answers.

Film high-lights from the festival with a hand-held video camera and do a short video or teaser from the festival. Let influential people know that you are filming it and tell them where you will be posting it on Youtube and websites so they look for it and stay in touch. Remember to tag everyone in the video.

Introduce yourself to people. Don't be shy about who you are, what you do professionally and what you do for fun. Common points of interest break the ice and often lead people to introduce you to other influential people.

Ask industry folks and celebrities about their current film projects.

Talk about the films that you have personally seen: what you liked best about it and what it was like for them to be part of that project. Ask them if they have any funny stories from the set.

Ask others to take a picture with you and then strike up a conversation during the photo opportunity. Often times it will lead to a much longer interaction.

Be light-hearted and make jokes.

If you would like to work on projects with people in the future, talk about it and see if they are interested. Often times they will ask for your business card and/or tell you to talk to their agent or manager when the timing is ripe.

Find out what they do for fun and their major interests.

How can you add value to others? Let them know. When you become clear in your own mind and can articulate it to others succinctly and confidently, you can then approach them with an energy of mutual benefit rather than wanting something from them, which can easily put people off.

Follow up with an email to stay in touch if you make a solid connection with someone.

If they are interested in working with you in the future and they give you their contact information, arrange to meet them for a cup of coffee. Don't be afraid to make phone calls if they give you their phone number. If they didn't want you to call them, they would not have given you their number.

If people have family members there, engage them as well so when you talk to them you have something in common.

Take pictures of everyone including celebrities on the red carpet so they look directly at you, make eye contact and smile for the camera. Smiles go miles and can immediately break the ice between you. You'll be amazed how quickly you'll be talking to people you believed were unapproachable within seconds after snapping their picture. Next thing you know you'll be taking photos with them.

If you have a radio show or podcast, offer to interview them and tell them where the interview will be posted.

Film any honors or awards they receive and offer to send them a copy of it once you get their contact information.

Have high energy when you talk to them. People love to be around high energy because it is uplifting.

Ask them what their favorite film project was and what their plans are for the future.

Take tons of pictures from the festival of everyone you meet and those you want to meet. Post albums on Facebook. Let people know where they can find those photos and make sure to tag them in the photos.

Attend all parties that celebrities attend because many influential film industry people are likely to be present. People let their hair down at parties so it's easier to engage them in conversation.

Offer to speak at film symposiums if you teach courses related to filmmaking. You gain instant prestige when you are a speaker.

Promote the festival to your email lists, friends, family and social network groups. When festivals see that you are willing to share in promoting, they will remember you and be more apt to connect with you in person.

Befriend people on Facebook and start to interact with them there.

Remember to perfect your elevator pitch and logline in case they ask you what your film or other projects are about. The last thing you want is to drone on and on or they will lose interest. If you can cut to the chase, you won't chase them away.

Press Interview Tips



Publicize Your Film

Hollywood is about stepping into the limelight and owning your own star quality. So if you attend a film festival, make sure you get publicity. There are usually press people at quality film festivals: radio, the local news, major networks, cable stations, prominent internet shows, newspaper reporters, magazine reporters and photographers.

Always introduce yourself to the person in charge of the press at a festival. If you can find out who it is ahead of time, contact them by email or phone and politely ask when the press will be available for interviews and how can you schedule one for you and/or your cast.

Don't be shy about introducing yourself to the press as one of the filmmakers, stars, writers, directors or producers of one of the films being screened at the festival. When you do that, they are likely to interview you on camera.

Have a friend film your interview so you can post it on Youtube and social networking sites.

Remember to ask the press where to find the interview so you can share the link and/or article.

Avoid negativity at all costs in an interview. Don't say anything bad about anyone or any film unless you are actually a movie critic.

Dress to impress. Keep in mind that you may be seen on television and the internet by your future fans and industry folk.

Be engaging and have high energy in the interview so it flows easily and they include your segment in their show. Remember they are interviewing many people so you want to make sure you stand out. Be entertaining since this is the entertainment business.

Hand the interviewer a postcard or one-sheet of your movie before the interview.

Get organized ahead of time as to what you will say. That means getting your elevator pitch down perfectly. One of the first questions an interviewer will ask you is what your film is about. Be clear and cut to the chase.

Remember to go with the flow when they ask you questions. They are professionals and they know how to make their interviews entertaining.

Mention celebrities and well-known directors, producers and writers associated with your film.

If you won any awards or were nominated for awards, mention it and thank the people in your film for their help in making it a success.

If you have members of the cast and crew with you, make sure to get them on camera with you and give them public accolades.

Plug your movie in the interview and let the public know the date, time and place of your screening.

Tell the listening audience where to find you and your film (i.e. your official website and/or the film's official website).

Thank the interviewer for the interview and look for the next press opportunity.

Once the interview is over, don't be shy about striking up a normal conversation with them as you mingle. It's always good to build solid relationships with the press.