

A Guide to Preparing an Audience Survey

Depending on how a survey is constructed and administered can often result in a better understanding of the successes, shortcomings and opportunities for organizations that host festivals and cultural events. While a survey is not yet a required element in the application process for the Non-Profit Festival Marketing Funding Program, the number of organizations that conduct surveys in all forms is increasing.

A casual intercept where the person conducting a survey may only gather a limited amount of information; however, more sophisticated approaches, such as online or using trained survey technicians at the event can identify more specific audience attributes than by relying on “counting heads” or wristbands.

The CACVB is working toward a more uniform approach that will allow for an apples-to-apples comparison with festivals and cultural events. We suggest that you as you consider making revisions to your existing survey or are working to complete one that’s new to your event, the following questions be included:

1. How did you hear about the festival: answer options can include but should not be limited to, social media, attended in the past, local print advertisement, regional print advertisement, local radio, email blast, word of mouth;
2. How far did you travel to get here? Use – 0-25 miles, 25-50 miles, over 50 miles
3. If you traveled more than 25 miles, how did you travel here? Plane, Train, Auto
4. If you traveled more than 25 miles, how many nights will you be staying in the area? 1 night, 2 nights, 3+ nights
5. Where are you staying while attending the festival? (or, if survey is administered after event, Where did you stay when attending the festival?) Live here, staying with friends and family, hotel, B&B, airbnb, campground, other
6. During your visit, how many meals do you plan to enjoy at one or more local restaurants? 0 meals, 1 meal, 2 meals, 3 meals, 4+ meals, N/A
7. Other than you, how many others were in your immediate travel party? 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5+
8. Approximately how much money do you estimate spending while attending this festival, other than money for lodging? Under \$100, \$100-\$199, \$200- \$299, \$300 or more
9. What is your zip code?

Having quantifiable data can be extremely valuable, especially if applying for other grants or funding opportunities offered by the Virginia Tourism Corporation, Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, Historic Preservation, and more. The CACVB offers this as a helpful suggestion.

Here’s an excellent source for learning more about online surveys:

www.idealware.org/articles/fgt_online_surveys.php