

**How to Make A Maker Faire:**

# **The Mini Maker Faire Playbook**

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# Introduction

## So You Want to Make a Maker Faire?

Maker Faire brings together families and individuals to celebrate the Do- It-Yourself (DIY) mindset and showcase all kinds of incredible projects. At Maker Faire, you'll find arts and crafts, science and engineering, food and music, fire and water but what makes this event special is that all these interesting projects and smart, creative people belong together. They are actively and openly creating a maker culture.

In its simplest form, Maker Faire creates conversations with Makers. It is a show-and-tell format for people of all ages that brings out the “kid” in all of us. Maker Faire is a community-based learning event that inspires everyone to become a maker and connect to people and projects in their local community. Yet, Maker Faire is a “fair” which should be fun and engaging.

The first [Maker Faire](#) started in 2006 in San Mateo, California, organized by [Make Magazine](#). In its fifth year, our Bay Area event is a weekend-long celebration featuring 700+ Makers and attracting over 70,000 visitors. Similar large-scale Maker Faires have been organized in Austin, Detroit, and New York City. However, the idea of Maker Faire can work at almost any scale.

So, we've begun this great experiment to spread Maker Faire everywhere. As organizers, we know that we can't bring Maker Faire to all the communities that want one. We share what we've learned organizing Maker Faire, and we help others organize their local version to reflect the spirit and ingenuity of their community. We can't produce Maker Faire everywhere unless there are special people who take on the job of organizing local Maker Faires.

We call independently-organized events “Mini Maker Faires.” Community-driven Mini Maker Faires have sprouted up around the United States, with events in Ann Arbor, Sebastopol, Aspen, Kansas City, Durham, Oakland, and Boston. Canada now has two Mini Maker Faires, the first in Ottawa and the second in Vancouver.

We have created a process for individuals and organizations interested in organizing and hosting a Maker Faire. Of course, we have some concerns in opening Maker Faire and allowing others to produce events using the Maker Faire brand. We believe there's a vision and design of Maker Faire that we want all events to share. We want anyone who comes to a Maker Faire to have fun and be inspired. Each Maker Faire should contribute to the growth and development of maker culture. We also know from organizing these events ourselves that the planning and production of Maker Faire is demanding and difficult. In other words, doing a Maker Faire might sound fun, and it is, but it is also exhausting. Seeing Maker Faire come to life in your community and seeing what it means to people, not just during the event, but months later, is incredibly rewarding and deeply satisfying.

# What Goes Into Creating Maker Faire?

Maker Faire is truly a co-creation. It's a collaboration of many people, especially makers, who each contribute to the event. However, Maker Faire also requires a strong person or core group with the vision and passion to create the context for all this to happen. Maker Faire requires extensive preparation and planning in advance of the event and complex coordination with a larger team during the event.

## **BUILD A NETWORK OF MAKERS**

The first key to creating a successful event is building a network of makers, and making sure that this network is truly inclusive of all kinds of making that one can find in your community. It's not enough to just organize the members of a hackerspace or robotics club or local crafters. You have to find artists and engineers, scientists and crafters, and assorted makers who don't fit into any category. Think of the first step as community organizing, reaching out to find new makers and connect them together through the event. Makers may be individuals or groups. They may be institutions such as museums or libraries. They may be teachers or students.

## **CREATE A SHOWCASE OF CREATIVE WORK**

Our experience is that about 50% of the makers come in through our open application process and about 50% is the result of active outreach to identify and draw in work from the community. A core group must act as curators to locate and review create work in the community and understand how best they might be featured.

Maker Faire provides a venue for makers to show examples of their work and interact with others about it. Many makers tell us that they have no other place to show what they do. It is often out of the spotlight of traditional art or science or craft events. DIY often is invisible in our communities, taking place in shops, garages and kitchen tables. So the goal of the event is to make visible the projects and ideas that we don't encounter every day. Maker Faire, like any fair, might include traditional forms of making but it is primarily designed to be forward-looking, exploring new forms and new technologies.

## **OFFER ENGAGING, HANDS-ON INTERACTION**

Maker Faire is interactive and educational in all kinds of ways. Maker Faire is not a passive sit-down experience; it's a hands-on experience that you grab hold of. From simple conversations and detailed explanations to amazing do-it-yourself demonstrations, Maker Faire is all about participation and sharing. Many Makers develop exhibits with hands-on activities, and you should encourage them to do so. Others bring unusual objects that we don't see everyday, and you should feature them prominently. All of that creates a stimulating event, which is sometimes over-stimulating!

Maker Faire rewards curiosity. We get to learn how things work, and why. We get to try new things and understand that we can expand our own capabilities. We consider the *process* of making as important as the perfect, finished product. Sharing the process with others creates new opportunities for learning.

## **SUPPORT GRASSROOTS INNOVATION IN THE COMMUNITY**

Many makers are hobbyists and enthusiasts but they are also a source of innovation, creating new products and producing value in the community. Some makers become entrepreneurs and start companies. This is grassroots innovation that we can foster in every community. Maker Faire also celebrates the fun and freedom of being an amateur who create a stimulating environment out of which new ideas emerge.

## **ALL OF US ARE MAKERS**

Maker Faire offers the opportunity for us to see ourselves as more than consumers; we are productive; we are creative. Everyone is a maker and our world is what we make it.

## **What Maker Faire is Not**

Maker Faire is not a trade show. We see Maker Faire primarily as an opportunity for people to share ideas and projects. So Maker Faire is non-commercial in nature, in that we don't want it dominated by traditional sales and marketing. Instead, we hope to create authentic interactions that satisfy each person's interests. At the same time, we're not anti-commercial. We are grateful to have businesses as sponsors. We also allow makers to show their work and offer items for sale. We want to help makers succeed in starting a business, if that's their goal. However, we don't want to change the look and feel or spirit of the event.

Maker Faire should not become a platform for politics or religion.

## **Planning Your Mini Maker Faire**

Mini Maker Faires follow the larger Maker Faires in spirit and theme, and range in scale from intimate, 15-makers showcases to larger, regional and city-wide events featuring up to 100 Makers. We believe Maker Faire can succeed at different levels of scale.

Three components of scale are number of Makers, number of attendees and capacity of the venue. All of these impact the budget of your event. In general, you should value the *quality* of the Makers over the *quantity*. We've found that the number of makers participating will grow year to year.

Here's a depiction of the varying scale of "Minis:"

	Small	Medium	Large
Makers	5 to 15	25 to 50	50 to 100
Venue	1 room	1 building or tent	multiple bldgs
Attendees	300	1000	2500 to 6K
Length of Event	2 to 3 hours	6 to 8 hours	8 hours
Core Organizing Team	1	2	3 to 5
Additional Organizing Team	3 to 5	5 to 10	30 to 50+
Production Lead Time	3 months	6 months	12 months
Budget	under 10K	5K to 25K	15K to 60K
Marketing	very limited	some, perhaps through mother event	dedicated
Stage/Performances	no	maybe	yes
Attractions	no	no	yes
Workshops	no	maybe	yes
Security	no	maybe	yes
Insurance	maybe	probably	yes
Rentals	no	probably	yes

## Five Considerations for a Maker Faire

Before deciding to organize a Maker Faire, consider each of the following areas. This will help you complete the Mini Maker Faire Application.

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

To create a Maker Faire, you need a leader and a leadership team who will work to make it happen. A leader is essential. You must be devoted to the vision of the event and willing to organize others to bring it off. However, you can't do it alone. You must have several other people on the team whom you can count on. There are lots of tasks to do to produce an event of this kind, and a committed, core group of folks is required to get the job done. You will also



need to develop an extended community of volunteers behind you to physically produce and staff the event. (This is where a network of co-sponsoring organizations can really help.)

## HOST ORGANIZATION

Just about any scale of a Mini Maker Faire will require a host or partner organization. As soon as you begin to organize a venue rental, it will become clear that an entity will need to take the responsibility for signing on the dotted line. Ideally, this is a community-based non-profit. It could be a school, a library, museum or science center.

An existing organization may bring valuable infrastructure in the following areas:

- marketing and promotion
- payment processing
- receiver of money from grants or sponsorship
- a pool of volunteers
- access to existing relationships in the community
- relevant experience from hosting other events

Yet, it's also important that Maker Faire not be defined in a limiting way by that organization's mission and goals. Maker Faire needs to reflect the community's culture in a very inclusive way. Even with a host organization, as many decisions as possible should reflect community involvement from lots of different groups. It's key to their participation. Organizers of Maker Faire can help these groups reach important goals. For instance, a hobbyist club may have a goal of recruiting new members; a science center may have outreach programs that they'd like to bring to those who don't already go to the center. In fact, leveraging the different audiences, network and resources of several groups can really help your event succeed. But keep in mind that one organization will need to step up as the business lead.

## LOCATION

Your venue is the "frame" of your event. The design and feel of the space hugely influences the experience for Makers and guests. We have organized Maker Faire at public fairgrounds, science centers and history museums. Each venue has its own character and resonance.

Consider the following in choosing a location:

- indoor and outdoor space
- accessible restrooms
- sufficient parking nearby
- required permits
- convenient access for families and safe surroundings
- good load-in access for trucks, etc.
- electricity and Internet access

- protection from inclement weather

Some Mini Maker Faires have been co-located with other events. The host event can often take care of logistics and promotion, helping to provide access to an audience and reducing costs. A venue that requires rental fees will become one of your largest expenses.

## DATE AND TIME

Typically, Mini Maker Faires are single-day events, usually a Saturday, and they run from about 10am to 3pm. Some run longer. Most of our events take place in nice weather to take advantage of the outdoors.

In selecting a date, determine the best time of year for your event and, of course, avoid important holidays and other local events that might compete against yours. Ask the venue or host for available dates and consider how long in advance you must book the venue.

Make sure to allow sufficient time in advance to organize the event. As a rule of thumb, allow six months of planning for an average 25-maker first-year event. Allow a year for events with 50-100 makers.

## RESOURCES

Mini Maker Faires have been produced with a budget of about \$3K. Of course, each event will be different. Some find sponsors or sell tickets to underwrite costs. Sometimes the host organization contributes to cover costs. In-kind sponsors can donate supplies and equipment to reduce costs.

It's important to create a budget that identifies what resources are available to you and their associated costs. If nothing else, have a budget number as an initial target. Up-front costs you might have include:

- venue rental
- furniture rental (at a minimum, tables and chairs)
- advertising
- insurance
- security
- permits
- design and printing of marketing collateral
- equipment rentals
- fuel
- website and social media development

You'll likely need local sponsors to underwrite the event but it is not always easy to find funding.

There are some risks from a number of factors including weather, which could affect turnout. A first-year Maker Faire could very well *lose* money. Plan carefully and create a budget to estimate income and expenses. Make sure you have a core team member devoted to tracking costs and managing revenue.

## Apply for a Mini Maker Faire License

If you have decided to organize a Mini Maker Faire, please complete our [Mini Maker Faire Application](#). This will help us better understand your goals, resources and commitment.

Once your application has been received, we will send you a single-event licensing agreement to sign. This agreement is a simple legal contract that articulates basic requirements for producing a Mini Maker Faire in exchange for use of the Maker Faire brand. In plain words, the agreement states that you have a twelve-month period in which to organize one Mini Maker Faire, and that Maker Faire is not responsible for losses or risks associated with your event.

Once an agreement has been signed, you will gain access to additional resources:

- The Mini Maker Faire Playbook—an extensive production-planning resource PDF and wiki that covers planning, promotion, curation, budgeting, logistics, volunteers, design templates and much more.
- A custom Mini-Maker Faire logo.
- Access to the Mini Maker Faire producers' Google discussion group.

In the meantime, if you are serious about putting on a Mini Maker Faire, please invest the time in coming and experiencing a “big” [Maker Faire](#). We can write and write and write about a Maker Faire, but it's nothing like attending one yourself!

Thanks for your interest and we look forward to working with you.

# Welcome to the Mini Maker Faire Playbook

We'd like to help you produce a great Mini Maker Faire in your local community. The Maker Faire Playbook shares the knowledge and experience from those people that created Maker Faire as well as those who have already produced a Mini Maker Faire. The playbook is written for the local organizer who serves as a representative of the Maker Faire community at large and well as a leader and producer of the local event.

We have published this document so that it might grow and reflect new practices and current experiences. If you are reading this in a PDF format and would like to contribute comments via email, please address them to [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com).

NOTE: The Maker Faire Playbook was generously funded by a grant from the [Kauffman Foundation](#); the majority of it written by East Bay Mini Maker Faire producer Sabrina Merlo with input from Dale Dougherty, Sherry Huss and Louise Glasgow.

## Navigating the Playbook

This Playbook is organized to help guide you from conception and initial steps, through the event design and production process, all the way to your post-mortem evaluation and application for next year.

Here are the major sections:

- [The Mindset of Maker Faire](#)
- [Engaging the Community](#)
- [Planning the Event](#)
- [Finding and Recruiting of Makers](#)
- [Partnering with Maker Faire](#)
- [Funding Your Maker Faire](#)
- [Designing Your Maker Faire](#)
- [Producing the Event](#)
- [Marketing the Event](#)
- [Week-Of and Day-Of Production Reminders](#)
- [After Your Maker Faire](#)
- [Index of Assets](#)

This Playbook was conceived as a living document that will improve over time, as various Mini Maker Faire producers iterate and refine production methodologies that work.

This is but a start. Please dig in, and let Maker Faire grow!

# The Mindset of Maker Faire

It's hard to describe just what Maker Faire is. Yet, there is a mindset that is shared by the organizer and participants and it should be reflected at any Maker Faire of any size or scale. At the core, Maker Faire is full of fascinating, curious people who enjoy learning and who love sharing what they can do. Maker Faire shows off the best that a community has to offer.

- We celebrate what makers do -- what they make, how they make it and the enthusiasm and passion that drives them.
- We act as curators, which involves selecting, organizing and featuring makers with a simple vision of what is exciting and cool.
- We want everyone who participates in Maker Faire to see themselves as a maker and to participate in learning to do new things.
- We want to surprise and delight everyone who comes to the event, especially those who don't even know what Maker Faire is.
- We realize that Maker Faire is a bit rough-edged, messy and at times, overstimulating. Think punk rock.
- We want to offer plenty of opportunities for hands-on DIY interactions for adults as well as kids.
- We want to be open, inclusive, encouraging and generous in spirit.
- We see the lasting value of Maker Faire extend beyond the event, by expanding the connectedness of the community of creative and technical people that are brought together.

Finally, Maker Faire is about exhibition, not competition. We don't see makers competing against each other. We hope each maker gets positive feedback on what they exhibited, and that the feedback is useful to them.

Keep these in mind, and do refer back to our online introduction to producing a Mini Maker Faire (also in this document as an Introduction), "[So You Want to Make a Maker Faire?](#)," for grounding and guidance. But of course, there's nothing quite like experiencing a [Maker Faire](#) yourself to fully understand and appreciate the wonders of Maker Faire.

## Engaging the Community

One of the primary goals of Maker Faire is to build community among makers. This can happen on many levels: among individual makers practicing similar or vastly different craft; between organizations collaborating to produce a Maker Faire; between organizations and local businesses via sponsorship; and through the "conversion" of event attendees to the community of makers.

Seeing Maker Faire come to life in your community and seeing what it means to people, not just during the event, but months later, is incredibly rewarding and deeply satisfying.

## HOST ORGANIZATION

Just about any scale of a Mini Maker Faire will require a host or partner organization. As soon as you begin to organize a venue rental, it will become clear that an entity will need to take the responsibility for signing on the dotted line. Ideally, this is a community-based non-profit. It could be a school, a library, museum or science center.

An existing organization may bring valuable infrastructure in the following areas:

- marketing and promotion
- payment processing
- receiver of money from grants or [fiscal sponsorship](#)
- a pool of volunteers
- access to existing relationships in the community
- relevant experience from hosting other events

Yet, it's also important that Maker Faire not be defined in a limiting way by that organization's mission and goals. Maker Faire needs to reflect the community's culture in a very inclusive way. Even with a host organization, as many decisions as possible should reflect community involvement from lots of different groups. It's key to their participation. Organizers of Maker Faire can help these groups reach important goals. For instance, a hobbyist club may have a goal of recruiting new members; a science center may have outreach programs that they'd like to bring to those who don't already go to the center. In fact, leveraging the different audiences, network and resources of several groups can really help your event succeed. But keep in mind that one organization will need to step up as the business lead.

### Identifying Partners

There are pros and cons to working with partner. Generally speaking, upsides to recruiting event co-sponsors are: having a bigger team to get the job done, increasing your connections to makers (through email lists, Facebook groups, etc), expanding your communications resources to the general public (membership newsletters, advertising, websites, etc), and a larger overall budget to work with.

Downsides can include lack of clarity when it comes to division of labor and responsibilities, and perhaps tension over differing visions for the event. One possible way to avoid conflict is to identify an Executive Event Producer whose job it is to oversee the collaboration, help articulate the shared goals, and help the team stay on schedule. (More on team roles in [Example of Core Production Team Roles](#).)

If you are a smaller community group that specializes in one subject (say a hacker club), you might reach across the Maker Faire spectrum and propose a collaboration with another local organization of a similar scale but completely different focus. For example, perhaps the hackerspace partners with the local 4-H chapter, or a kite-making group.

Other partnerships opportunities can include educational institutions, museums, associations, neighborhood organizations, and clubs. And there are also business partners—any kind of local company that designs and/or makes things—that can partner both as a “sponsor” partner (see section on [Sponsorship](#)) and also possibly as a event co-sponsor.

### Spreading the Idea

Once you have some ideas about who to approach, it’s helpful to think about how you present the idea of your Mini Maker Faire. Even if you’re sure the other organization is an obvious ally, it’s quite possible they may have never experienced a Maker Faire.

When planning the East Bay Mini Maker Faire at Park Day School, we found it tremendously helpful to create a slide presentation so that when we had an audience (the Parent Participation Association, the teachers, the middle school) we had an organized and compelling way to present the idea and explain (in pictures!) what a Maker Faire is. We even put it up on [SlideShare](#) so that the entire school community had access to it. You can look at and copy the presentation [here](#); you are welcome to customize and re-use whatever is helpful.

Your website can also to some extent serve this purpose.

## **IDENTIFYING THE CORE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Maker Faire requires a leader and a leadership team who will work to make the event successful. A leader is essential. A leader must be devoted to the vision of the event and willing to organize others to bring it off. However, a leader can’t do it alone. A leader must have other people who can be counted on. A committed, core group of folks as part of a leadership team is also required.

NOTE: If after the first month of circulating the idea, you don’t have at least two other leadership team members, seriously consider the workload ahead and make sure the scale of your event matches your availability and expertise. We suggest you postpone your event without this extra support.

### Organizing a Maker Faire Committee (Intro to Roles and Functions)

Once partnerships have been clarified it’s time to evaluate which active members of the team have already volunteered, and find out what roles those originators see themselves “owning” as the larger committee takes shape.

Typical committee or team leadership roles (and their domains) are:

- Executive Event Producer (timeline, meeting coordinator)
- Maker Outreach (recruitment, data management)
- Registration (tickets and check-in)
- Accounting (budgets)
- Onsite Operations & Logistics (electrical, sound, seating)
- Marketing & Promotions (setting up a website, getting the word out, public relations, day-of event documentation)
- Design (posters, maps, signage)
- Food Concessions (vendors, permits, donations)
- Sponsorship
- Volunteer Coordination (recruitment, management)
- Stage & Performances Manager
- Workshop Manager
- School Outreach Specialist

Of course, in the case of smaller Mini Maker Faires with small leadership teams, individuals are likely to take on one or more of these roles. It's good to think about them separately, however, as you will undoubtedly want to plan for growth and greater participation from partners in years to come.

### Example of Core Team Roles

**Shared Roles:** Obviously every Leadership Team is going to be different. Our Leadership Team was already close-knit; we were friends, were pretty fluent with Internet technologies and comfortable with digital collaboration, and thus shared many of the primary responsibilities, especially:

- Maker Outreach
- Business Sponsorship
- Marketing & Promotions
- Media Sponsorships
- Website Design & Production
- Blogging & Tweeting

But we also had identifiable strengths, as well as different levels of availability. (For example, Leader 1 was able to devote three full-time months to the production of our Mini Maker Fair.) We broke down our tasks like this:

### **Leader 1's Primary Roles:**

- Budget
- Timeline
- Internal (School) Community Development
- Data Management (Google Docs spreadsheet)



- Maker Communications
- Site Planning & Layout
- Onsite Operations & Logistics (electrical, sound, staging)
- Food

***Leader 2's Primary Roles:***

- Ticketing & Registration Backend
- Workshop Curation

***Leader 3's Primary Roles:***

- Visual Design
- Core Crafter Sections (Swap-O-Rama-Rama)
- Vendor Communications

***Leader 4's Primary Roles — Employee of Benefiting Organization (School):***

- Venue Liaison (our event took place on a school campus)
- Permits
- Insurance
- Rentals

Next year we hope for another leadership team member whose primary focus will be sponsorship. Since our event is a charitable fundraiser, sponsorship is key to making the event raise more funds.

And of course, as we got closer to the event we involved many more people (see [Mobilizing a Volunteer Team](#) for roles that came alive the week-of and day-of event.)

**Getting Everyone Together**

Depending how tight your production schedule is, you might want to plan your first get-together to be social and fun. Bringing in a speaker or a panel of makers, hosting the gathering in a makerspace, and having a potluck are all good ways to break the ice, get everyone knowing everyone's names, and generate excitement about the amazing event you're about to bring forth.

Once you've been social—either as an intro to a more focused meeting, or at an earlier date—you will want to begin getting everyone oriented and on the same page. Have a big white board or giant sticky note tablets or big sheets of paper available to take notes.

Here's a sample agenda to help you imagine that first partnership meeting:

1. **Basics:** Start with reiterating the event name and, if you have them, the date and venue. Show your logo that Maker Faire made for you.
2. **Goals:** If you've come to the table with articulated goals for the event (X number of makers, Y number of attendees, Z dollars raised), then share those. If not, spend some time coming up with these together now.

3. **Roles:** Go over the list of team or committee roles in the section preceding. If some folks are already set in their position, introduce them—and then highlight what you know to be your holes.
4. **Date:** Discuss possible dates if you haven't chosen one yet, or reiterate the one that you have set.
5. **Venue:** If you don't have a location yet, brainstorm possible host sites for further investigation.
6. **Makers:** It will be really hard to avoid everyone piping up to share ideas for makers who should be invited to your Maker Faire. End the gathering this way, with someone taking copious notes!

“Getting everyone together” is a constant opportunity throughout the Mini Maker Faire process. Making a party of chores is what keeps volunteers coming back! Here are some more gathering moments to look for and create throughout the event process:

- Call for Makers is Open! Meet-up or Potluck
- Venue Open House and Q&A
- Sign-making parties
- Maker dinners or meet-ups
- Leadership team weekly potlucks

## Planning The Event

### SELECTING A DATE

Typically, Mini Maker Faires are single-day events, usually a Saturday or a Sunday, and they run from about 10am to 5pm. Some run longer, some are evening events at a smaller-scale. Most of the larger “Minis” take place in summer (or at least during nice weather) to take advantage of the outdoors.

In selecting a date, determine the best time of year for your event and, of course, avoid important holidays and other local events that might compete against yours. Ask the venue or host for available dates and consider how long in advance you must book the venue.

Make sure to allow sufficient time in advance to organize the event. As a rule of thumb, allow six months of planning for an average 25-maker first-year event. Allow a year for events with 50–100 makers.

## DETERMINING THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF YOUR EVENT

Mini Maker Faires follow the larger Maker Faires in spirit and theme, and range in scale from intimate, 15-maker showcases to larger, regional and city-wide events featuring up to 100 makers. We believe Maker Faire can succeed at different levels of scale.

Three components of scale are number of makers, number of attendees and capacity of the venue. All of these impact the budget of your event. In general, you should value the *quality* of the makers over the *quantity*. We've found that the number of makers participating will grow year to year.

The scale of your Mini Maker Faire affects the programming and resources you'll require. Here's a sketch of three scales you might consider for your event.

	Small	Medium	Large
Makers	5 to 15	25 to 50	50 to 100
Venue	1 room	1 building or tent	multiple buildings
Attendees	300	1000	2500 to 6K
Length of Event	2 to 3 hours	6 to 8 hours	8 hours
Core Organizing Team	1	2	3 to 5
Additional Organizing Team	3 to 5	5 to 10	30 to 50+
Production Lead Time	3 months	6 months	12 months
Budget	under 2K	2K to 5K	6K to 25K
Marketing	very limited	some, perhaps through mother event	dedicated
Stage/Performances	no	maybe	yes
Attractions	no	no	yes
Workshops	no	maybe	yes
Security	no	maybe	yes
Insurance	maybe	probably	yes
Rentals	no	probably	yes

## SELECTING A VENUE

Venue choice is a huge factor in the final quality and feeling of your event. It is the “frame” around your content and your makers, and it will greatly impact the attendees’ experience. And unless you have a sponsoring organization that is hosting the event and donating the space, it’s also the most expensive item in your budget.

Note that some Mini Maker Faires have been co-located with other events. The host event can often take care of logistics and promotion, helping to provide access to an audience and reducing costs. ([Mid-Atlantic Maker Faire](#) is an example of this approach.)

When considering possible venues (even the donated or co-located ones!), here’s a starting list of requirements to use for evaluation:

### Cost

Of course, what you can afford depends on your overall budget. Some venue variables will affect your overall budget greatly (e.g., how available and distributed is the power and Internet, does the venue have chairs and tables you can use, does it require insurance or additional security, etc.), so it’s good to be aware of them.

### Parking

How many spaces does the venue have? If your venue does not have sufficient parking, are there parking lots nearby that you can rent? Or is there sufficient street parking? Is there a lot or section you can dedicate to makers and vendors?

*HINT: If you go with an electronic, [Internet-based ticketing service](#), you can create custom survey questions like “How are you getting to the Faire?” to help predict and manage transportation and parking supply.*

### Proximity to Transit

Promote alternative methods of getting to your venue! Being near a train station or other transit hub will help people leave their car at home, as long as the station is walking distance to the event. If your event is large enough and the transit mode share is high enough, consider hiring shuttle buses to ferry people back and forth. As poor access to parking or bad traffic can negatively affect their impression of your event, consider offering incentives for carpools (“family tickets” for five or more people entering at the same time, for example) and public transit users.

### Walking and Biking Access

If you plan your event in a walkable and bike-able neighborhood (Are there sidewalks for pedestrians? Streets less than four lanes across? Bike lanes?), you’ll give people a chance to “make” their way to the event.

*HINT: In the San Francisco Bay Area, the bicycle advocacy organizations offer [bike valet parking services](#) to event producers for an affordable fee (usually around \$500). Not offering valet bike parking would be an outrageous offense at a Maker Faire in the Bay Area! If your local bike groups don't offer such a service, you can staff [your own valet bike parking service](#), or improvise some [inexpensive bike parking infrastructure](#) so that visitors can self-park.*

### Electrical Grid

You're going to need to distribute power to some of your makers (estimate 5 amps per Maker to get a sense of your needs). You'll also need power at registration, stages, and food vendor booths. How much power does your venue make available for your distribution? How distributed is it? Will you need to rent distribution boxes and extensive cabling? Will you need to rent generators because this venue does not have enough? (See [Equipment/Special Requirements/Power](#) for more on electricity.)

### Internet Access

Does the facility already offer a WiFi network or will you have to set up your own? If they say it does, test it! Walk around the venue with your laptop and test the signal by reloading a page every couple hundred feet. Make sure that promised WiFi reaches out to the corner gate where you plan to set up your maker registration. Sometimes the signal is just not strong enough; it's good to know in advance if you will need to add repeaters. Or better yet, plan for Ethernet cabling to any area where a failure would cause unpleasant delays for attend as they enter, for example, or for other critical needs. Also, sometimes a maker will need "wired" (Ethernet) access. Notice where the Ethernet jacks are, and find out if and where you can plug in.

### Equipment

Find out what comes with the rental of your venue and what does not. (See [Equipment/Special Requirements](#) and [Resources](#) sections.)

- a. Number of chairs
- b. Number of tables
- c. Staging
- d. Lighting
- e. Public address system
- f. Electrical extension cords
- g. Security staff
- h. Dollies and carts
- i. Cleaning staff and supplies (trash cans? recycling? compost?)

### Load-In

How will your logistics team and all the makers, vendors and performers load-in and load-out? Can makers drive up to the space and unload, and then go and park? Are there decent paved surfaces from drop-off or parking for carts and dollies to navigate? How will late arrivals (e.g. musicians with sound equipment) load-in?

If you have an multi-floor interior space, are the elevators large enough for carts? Are there double-door entrances to the building and do they swing all the way open?

### Variety of Spaces

Your makers' exhibits will vary greatly in needs; keep these possible requirements in mind when you are looking at the venue. (See [Layout Design](#) and [Layout Guidelines](#) for more on this subject.)

- a. Fire needs to be outside, on pavement, with no overhead foliage and lots of room
- b. Messy interactive exhibits need easy-to-clean environments
- c. Teaching / demonstration booths usually need relative quiet
- d. Noisy exhibits and stages need some isolation
- e. Farm-y exhibits work well outside (especially when they have animals)
- f. Exhibits with sensitive electronics need isolation from moisture (indoor)
- g. Soldering booths should have sufficient ventilation or be outside
- h. Art or sculpture works well when it's "framed" by space or backdrop

### Insurance

Arrange your event insurance first before signing a rental agreement. Sometimes there are hurdles to overcome with insurance; it is better to know this ahead of time before you commit yourself to an expense as large as venue rental.

### Safety Plan and Floorplans

Ask your venue manager if they have a safety plan and floorplans prepared and ready to share. It's helpful if floorplans are editable, but if not, you can always import a PDF as your base layer. Or just [go analog](#) and make your own map NOT in a computer.

## **CREATING AN EVENT BUDGET**

It's important to create a budget that identifies what resources are available to you and their associated costs. If nothing else, have a budget number as an initial target.

Below are some of the up-front costs and potential income you might have.

## Potential Expenses

- Venue Rental
- Parking Rental
- Valet Bike Parking
- Directional Signage
- Banners
- Posters
- Business Cards
- Postcards
- Day-Of Program/Map
- Visual Design
- Advertising
- Website URL
- Website Design
- Website Hosting
- Stickers
- Tickets
- Hand Stamps
- Portable bathrooms (port-a-potties)
- Stage
- Tables and Chair Rentals
- Fire Extinguishers
- Walkie Talkies
- Sound System
- Expendables (tape, rope, pens, sandbags, cleaning supplies, etc)
- Electrical Supplies/ Electrician
- Forklift
- Security Staff
- Cleaning Staff
- Volunteer Badges / T-shirts
- Volunteer Food
- Organizing Committee Food
- Maker Expense Reimbursements

## Potential Income

- Ticket Sales
- Vendor Fees
- Sponsorship
- Grants & Donations

### Sample Budget: Anticipated and Actual

This is a budget for a large-sized (2800 visitors, 100 makers), first-year Mini Maker Faire (East Bay Mini Maker Faire, benefitting a school). Note the huge difference in the “anticipated” and “actual” numbers.

You can also [access this budget as a Google doc.](#)

<b>Park Day School 2010 East Bay Mini Maker Faire Budget</b>			
<b>31-Mar-11</b>			
<b>EXPENSE</b>	<b>Anticipated</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>RENT</b>			
Park Day School venue	0	0	donation
Studio One venue	3500	3345	
parking lot	0	200	
<b>PERMITS &amp; LICENSING</b>	1000	1138	
<b>INSURANCE</b>	0	0	free rider to existing policy
<b>FEES</b>			
credit card	0	10	
Eventbrite fees	0	2092	
<b>MISC SUPPLIES</b>	1000	1048	
<b>FOOD BOOTH SUPPLIES</b>	0	2979	



<b>PAID HELP</b>			
set up	0	95	2 teens for a day
cleaning	0	0	missing - estimate \$250
Security (\$23/hr x X x 24hrs)	550	1932	
bike parking	500	300	will be \$500 next year
<b>RENTAL EQUIPMENT</b>			
stage rental w/ tent	300	877	
stage delivery	0	110	
portapotties	450	459	
shade (rain!) structures	0	200	Partial donation from a maker
tables and chairs rentals	300	0	used our own
Rentals: walkie talkies	300	0	donation
Rentals: generator	500	0	donation
Rentals: PA	0	0	donation
Rentals: garbage cans, brooms, misc	0	0	donation
forklift rental	0	0	did not use
<b>MAKER REIMBURSEMENTS</b>	2200	2175	split betw 6 makers
<b>ADVERTISING &amp; PROMOTION/PRINTING</b>			
website	50	0	missing – approx \$50
Facebook advertising	200	0	Didn't do

East Bay Express advertising	200	200	they said they'd want \$1200 2nd year!
1000 11"x17" posters	500	384	
postcards	0	0	didn't do
Linda Miller (PR)	0	297	school's regular PR person, did some placement
visual design (parent)	0	0	donation
wooden directional signs	0	250	parent donated additional \$200, free labor
misc printing	0	49	
day of program printing	200	200	
<b>EXPENSE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>8050</b>	<b>18340</b>	
INCOME			
ticket sales	10000	32689	
crafters booths	2000	1900	
sponsorships	500	750	
food booth vendor 10% revenue	250	350	
food booth revenue	2000	4186	
parking lot income	0	0	
<b>INCOME SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>14750</b>	<b>39875</b>	

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6700</b>	<b>21535</b>	

### Maker Expense Reimbursements

Sometimes makers will ask for a stipend or payment for their services. It's certainly true that in some cases makers go to great expense to build a large-scale exhibit, and can incur costs for expendables (e.g., trucking, propane gas, jars for butter making/shaking), or require a whole lot of staffing to safely staff an exhibit (e.g. pedal-powered rides) or put on a stage show. But paying makers outright and more generally is not advised by Maker Faire.

Fundamental to Maker Faire is the stature of *amateur*. Makers are being provided an eager, curious and often huge audience. We actively try and get media exposure for our makers, first on our own blog and second as referrals to press inquiries. If this isn't enough for your maker, there is a curatorial/executive production job there to see if your budget can warrant reimbursing expenses for certain makers. Those big, interactive exhibits draw attendees, create great marketing visuals, and leave big impressions. They might be worth some space in your budget.

Why reimburse expenses rather than just paying them? In the United States, if you pay someone a fee to appear or perform over a certain amount it requires the "employer" to issue a 1099 at the end of the tax year, and for the maker to report it as income. This is a lot of paperwork, and it's likely that the maker can easily instead bill you for reimbursement for expendables, thus avoiding this entanglement with tax law entirely. Besides, your budget likely will only be large enough to pay for travel and/or expendable expenses, so frame it as such and keep things simple.

And before moving forward with any maker reimbursements, be sure check policy and process with your organizational sponsor and their bookkeeping/accounting staff.

## **Finding and Recruiting of Makers**

Our experience is that about 50% of the makers come in through an open application process and about 50% is the result of active outreach to identify and draw in work from the community. A core group must act as curators to locate and review create work in the community and understand the best way to feature makers.

There are two primary methods for reaching makers: good old human networking, and an official Call for Makers application process

**Networking** ensures that those special makers, the gems in your pile of DIY treasure, agree to make an appearance at your event. Often a one-to-one, human connection is required to motivate the “rock star” or the “hermit” makers to devote the time and energy it takes to participate at Maker Faire.

**An official, online Call for Makers** opens the proposal process, making it accessible to a larger network of people than even a Maker Faire organizing committee collectively can know. Promoting an online form and pushing out reminders about the Call for Makers deadline helps promote Maker Faire in general, and get word about your upcoming event circulating through the tendrils of the Internet and social media outlets. It is also your formal information-collection device about your exhibitors, their content, and their production needs.

The Call for Makers also allows your team to have some curatorial control over who exhibits at your event. Perhaps some applications are weak, redundant, or completely off-the-mark. Perhaps you receive far too many applications for your venue. The Call gives you the opportunity to review and prioritize your applicants, and decline some.

## DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF MAKERS

A typical Maker Faire actually has a few sub-sets of Makers. The Call for Makers should address all of your potential participant groups.

1. **Makers.** These are the individuals or groups who are demonstrating a skill or craft, showing a finished piece of work and explaining it, and/or teaching a skill or leading a hands-on activity. Makers can be anyone from yarn spinners to hackers to terrarium makers to alt energy vehicles to the learn-to-solder booth.
2. **Vendors.** These are the folks or businesses that want to sell stuff at your Faire. They can be handmade craft vendors, techie kit companies, and even food/drink concessioners. Vendors are used to paying for their space; you should be prepared to share information about what you are charging (see [Designing Your Maker Faire/Vendors](#))
3. **Performers.** Musicians and dancers and snake charmers fit this group. They are the stage show.
4. **Speakers.** You might choose to have workshops or lectures or panel discussions at your Faire. Speakers might or might not have an actual booth at your Faire.
5. **Exhibiting Sponsors.** You won't use the Call for Makers for finding sponsors (it's really a hand-held, high-touch activity), but if and when you secure sponsors and they would like exhibit at your Faire, you will want to track them and feed them information like any other maker. Having them fill out a Call for Makers form (or you doing it for them) will ensure that these exhibiting sponsors receive all necessary production information.

Designing your Call for Makers application form so you can gather information relevant for all categories is helpful ([more below in Call for Makers Process](#)). Makers will be your primary respondents to the Call, but it's helpful to keep the Call open to the other categories.

*HINT: You can also choose to create separate forms for all five categories; this is one method for keeping the Maker/Vendor/Performer/Speaker data distinct. The disadvantage of making unique forms is that sometimes people self-select the wrong category and it's up to you to re-classify. And you will also have four links to promote instead of one.*

## MAKERS AND GROUPS TO ENGAGE

Your open “Call for Makers” will likely return half of your desired field of makers. To achieve an optimal [range of makers](#) you will need to get on the phone, send a whole lot of emails, and research on the Internet.

Besides researching and networking for independent, solo makers, you can also outreach to community groups and affiliations, both to spread the word, and to have their club exhibit at the event. Some examples of these kinds of groups are:

- Nationally organized groups with local chapters (e.g. 4-H, FIRST Robotics, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA and YWCA)
- Schools (especially certain tracks in Engineering, Art, Science, Crafts) — consider from pre-K to college
- Community art centers and art collectives
- Master gardening programs, bee clubs, urban greening groups
- LEGO user groups
- Hacker meetups and hackerspaces

## ENSURING A DIVERSE RANGE OF MAKERS

One of the most surprising, stimulating and identifiable traits about Maker Faire is the diversity of topics one might encounter there. Makers come from the worlds of craft, engineering, robotics, arts, education, ecology, gaming and more.

Maker outreach will likely challenge your team to look far and deep into the nooks and crannies of your community. Look at Maker Faire's tables below on the kinds of subjects covered; you can use it to drive your search and recognize what and who you might be missing.

Arts	Crafts	Engineering
AIA Local Chapters	4H Groups	3D Printers
Art Cars	Bazaar Bizarre	Amateur Aviation Groups

Art Museums	Bobbin Lace Makers Guild	Amateur Radio Groups
Blacksmithing	Book Making and Binding	Amateur Rocketry Groups
Burning Man	Boy Scouts	American Engineering Assoc.
Comic Groups	Card Making	Arduino Groups
Filmmaking	Ceramics & Pottery	ArtBot Groups
Fiber Artists	Children's After School Programs	ASME
Fire Arts	Clothing Making	Bicycle Groups
Holographic Groups	Craftster	CAPITAL Best Robotics
Jewelry Making	Crocheting	Car Repair Groups
Kinetic Art Groups	Doll Making	Catapult Groups
LEGO Users Groups	Embroidery (groups, associations)	Circuit Bending
Metal Arts	Etsy	CNC Groups
Neon Art	Felting	Combot Robots
Painting	Fiber Arts Groups	Computer Modders
Photography Groups	Folk Art	Computer User Groups
Pinball Groups	Girl Scouts	DIY Drones
Recycled Arts	Glass Blowers	DIY Energy
Steampunk	Jewelry Making	DIY Radio Groups
The Long Now Foundation	Journal Making	Electric Cars
Yoyo Clubs	Knitting	Engineers Without Borders
	Lacemaking	Fab Labs
	Model Makers	FIRST Robotics
<b>Food/Sustainability</b>	Moldmaking	Hackers Groups
Audubon & Bird Groups	Mosaics	IEEE
Beekeeping	Museums of Craft and Folk Arts	Insect Bots
Beer Brewing	Open Source Embroidery	Intel Computer Clubhouse Network
Cake Making	Origami	Kids and Technology Groups
Cheese Making	Painting	LED Art
Chocolate Making	Quilters	MIDI User Groups
Citizen Science	Renegade Crafts Fair	Model Railroad Clubs
Composting	Scrapbooking	Odyssey of the Mind
Cooking Classes	Sewing	R/C Model Clubs
Culinary Programs	Silk Screening Groups	Repair Groups
Edible Schoolyards	Smart Materials	Rube Goldberg Groups
Edible Communities	Soapmaking	Soapbox Derby
Farmers Markets	Swap-O-Rama-Rama	Solar Cars
Homegrown.org	The National Needle Arts (TNNA)	Tech Shop
Local Foragers	Weavers and Spinners	Underwater Robotics
Master Gardeners	Woodworking	WALL-E Builders
Molecular Gastronomy	YMCA	Women In Engineering Groups
Mycology	YWCA	HAM Radio Operators
Permaculture		
Preserving	<b>Green</b>	<b>Science</b>
Seed Saver Libraries	Calcars.org	Adult Education/Community Colleges
Slow Food	Co-Housing	Astronomy Clubs
Vegetarian Groups	Community Bike Groups	Chemistry
Wine Making	Composting	Childrens Museums
Youth Programs - Urban Roots	Eco Modding	Computer Museums
	Environmental Kids Groups	DIY Biology
	Fix Your Bike Groups	DIY Energy
<b>Music</b>	Green Arts Groups	DIY Forensics
Circuit Bending	Green Cleaning	DIY Science
Dance Groups	Hybrid Car Groups	Dorkbot

Electronic Music/Theremin	PARK(ing) Day	Exploratorium
Instrument Hacking	Recycling Groups	Kite Making and Flying
Instrument Making	Solar Groups	Paper Airplane Making
Jug Bands	Solar Ovens	Robots
Marching Band	Treehugger	Rocketry Groups
Music Classes	Water Groups	Science Museums
Taiko Drummers	Wind Power	Science Workshops
Theater Groups		Space Exploration
	<b>Other</b>	Teachers Resource/Support Groups
	Board Games	Telescope Makers
	Chess Groups	Tesla Coils
	Computer Gaming	University Programs
	Halloween	Zoology Groups
	Hula Hoops	
	Juggling	
	Meetups	
	School Groups	
	Star Wars Clubs	
	Wax Sculptures	
	Speciality Schools/Education	

Our committee found itself spending quite a bit of time on the “human networking” task, looking for holes in the breadth of types of makers who had applied, and making calls and sending emails to specific groups and individuals. This is one of those questions of scale, and how much energy and time the organizing team has to spend. But any Maker Faire should express the breadth of interests captured in the maker spirit, so do your best to represent a wide range of kinds of making at your event.

## YOUNG MAKERS PROGRAM

The [Young Makers Program](#) is a collaboration between MAKE Magazine, The Exploratorium, and Pixar Animation Studios. The purpose of the program is to inspire and develop the next generation of makers, creators, and innovators.

We are creating a community, both online and physical, that brings together like-minded teens, adult mentors, and fabrication facilities to make things. Kids bring ideas. Mentors help define and realize a project vision and collectively create a collaborative culture of innovation & experimentation. We hope to create an infrastructure to nurture older kids and teens who want to expand beyond the construction kits of early childhood.

The Young Makers Program continues to grow since our first pilot group in early 2010. You may find that there are Young Maker affiliates near your venue, or you may encounter classes and community groups whose work is a good match for the Young

Makers Program, and we encourage you to introduce them to the network and our resources and ask them to join.

The Young Makers Program is different in several ways from other activities such as robotics competitions and science fairs. In particular, *there are no winners and losers, and the projects are cross-disciplinary and youth-driven*. And, just like Maker Faire, *anything that's cool is fair game*.

[Projects made in 2010](#) include furniture that doubles as a hamster habitat, a fire-breathing dragon, and a mobile spy camera. Many of the Young Makers exhibit at Maker Faire—in fact, we devote an area to them, where they can display the fruits of their labor for short timeslots (rather than the full weekend.)

The Young Makers Program has grown in two years to have Young Makers or Young Maker Clubs throughout the Bay Area and beyond. We are encouraging the creation of clubs in all parts of the country (and the world, for that matter). We envision each of these clubs consisting of 6 to 10 Young Makers with access to shop facilities sponsored by a shop host. Where possible we feel it is helpful to have monthly meetings at public places such as libraries and science museums to build a sense of community, and to present work in progress. Having an event like a Mini Maker Faire to work toward is also helpful to encourage project completion. Start a Young Maker Club for your Faire!

For more information, visit [youngmakers.org](http://youngmakers.org).

## “CALL FOR MAKERS” PROCESS

The Call for Makers process involves five steps:

1. [Decide on your Call for Makers opening and closing dates.](#)
2. [Set up an online form.](#)
3. [Promote the Call for Makers.](#)
4. [Accept makers.](#)
5. [Decline some makers.](#)
6. [Collect Fire Safety Plans as necessary.](#)
7. [Receive signed Maker Participation Agreements.](#)

**1: Decide on your Call for Makers opening and closing dates.** Deadlines or calls to action are what make people perform. Committing to dates for the opening and closing of the Call for Makers will drive traffic to your blog/website and make people aware of both the event and your open application process.

The amount of time your Call for Makers is open depends on how much lead time you have, and also how big your event is. We recommend keeping your Call for Makers open for at least a month, and closing it no later than six weeks (up to 10 weeks) prior to



your event. This lead time will give you the space to continue a curated recruitment of makers for a few weeks until you really need to get into space planning and mapping. (See [Timelines](#) for more info on schedule.)

**2: Set up an online form.** Forms on the Internet are getting simpler and easier to use all the time. In 2010 we used Wufoo.com for our maker application form and a Google Docs spreadsheet to track our Makers. In 2011, we're likely to use Google Docs exclusively, as there's no exporting of data involved (it just flows instantly into a Google Docs spreadsheet). There's also easy embedding, so you can insert your form into a website. And Google Docs is free.

You are welcome to copy and customize this [Call for Makers form from the 2011 East Bay Mini Maker Faire](#) (from there select >File, >Make a Copy; view the finished [form](#) here).

Or you can make your own from scratch. Setting up a Google Docs form is very easy:

1. Open <https://docs.google.com>
2. Click on the "Create New" button to get a menu and choose "Form"
3. Follow the prompts to create your own form.

*HINT: Make sure to "Edit confirmation" (under the "More actions" button) to tailor the message that applicants receive once they have hit submit. This is your chance to ask them to "Like" you on Facebook, follow you on Twitter, and forward the Call for Makers announcement to their friends. You should also give them some indication of when they will hear "yay" or "nay" from you.*

**3: Promote the Call for Makers.** Broadcasting your Call for Makers far and wide is critical to having a successful mini Maker Faire. This is probably your first big PR outreach for your event, and it can involve quite a bit of work to get prepared to do it well. Of course, you will want to scale the size of your effort to your vision of your Mini Maker Faire. That is, if you expect to have a small event with just ten makers, you won't want to spread the word so widely that you have to reject 90 worthy applicants. Be strategic.

Here are some ways of doing it:

**Blog Post.** [Write a post announcing the Call for Makers](#) describing your event, the kinds of exhibits you are looking for, and the opening and closing dates for the Call for Makers. Follow this post with others announcing great "headliner" makers that you have already pre-booked (see "[Our First Maker](#)") to generate excitement, news coverage, and word of mouth. (Twitter and post on Facebook every time you publish on your blog—more on websites and social media in [Marketing the Event](#).)

**Email blasts.** Email a short blurb to all your contacts with a link to your form. To do this, start building your master database or a contact list of organizations and makers you want to invite. You can use a variety of tools for your master database or contact list (see [Maker Management Tools](#) for more information). Be careful when using a personal account not to email too many addresses at one time or your account could be tagged as a spammer. Consider using a (free) mail blast service like MailChimp.com.

**Facebook Posts/Twitter Posts.** Let the people do the work for you! Announce your Call for Makers and all updates about your event via your Facebook and Twitter feeds. Ask your audience to “RT” (retweet) and “share.” (See [Social Media](#) for more information.)

**Public Service Announcement.** If radio is big in your community, it’s really easy these days to write and record a 15 or 20 or 30 second public service announcement. (We used Garage Band on a recent MacBook to record our .mp3 file.) Here is an example script:

*Maker Faire is coming to Oakland on Sunday, October 24th. Over 100 exhibits, activities, workshops, rides, craft booths and bands—all in a spirit of Do-It-Yourself. Build a rocket, make a Halloween costume, and so much more! Get tickets for the East Bay Mini Maker Faire at [ebmakerfaire.com](http://ebmakerfaire.com).*

(See [Public Relations](#) for more information.)

**Celebrate!** If you have the bandwidth, do a meet-up at some bar or community gathering spot to honor the opening or closing of the Call. You’ll build community and get the word out.

**Press Release or Post Announcement.** Many print publications and broadcast outlets still appreciate press releases, and they often require a significant lead time to include your event in their calendar or to be considered as a story. Read, copy, and customize [this example of a Call for Makers Press release](#). (See [Public Relations](#) for more information.)

**4: Accept Makers.** It’s time to watch your event take shape! Makers need to plan ahead, so make sure you email a notification of acceptance to them on the date you promised. Send accepted makers an [acceptance letter](#) or [email](#), a [maker manual](#) if you have one, and a [maker participation agreement](#) if you have one. (Click on links for example documents you can copy and customize.) Include some information on next steps—for example, a “save the date” for an open house or walkthrough at the event venue.

You may find that you need to extend the deadline for acceptances. Even if you do not publicly announce the extension, at least you can leave open a webpage that can be a “back door” where additional applications might be submitted. After you’ve accepted

your makers, you may notice that you need to recruit additional kinds of makers to give a better balance to the content areas of your event. If you do extend the deadline, however, give your organizing team a hard deadline internally for accepting new makers.

You can drive yourself crazy rearranging floorplans and schedules to accommodate new gems in the final weeks and days before your event. Keep in mind that you can always have the last-minute makers at your next Mini Maker Faire next year!

**5. Reject applicants.** However hard it is to say “no”, do send those applicants who don’t fit your event or who don’t meet your standards a courteous decline note. You want them to walk away feeling good about your event and about continuing to make. We recommend saying very little of substance in the decline letter, as anyone who is particularly disappointed may read too much into what you wrote. Keep the tone neutral about their project yet encouraging of making in general. In our experience, most of the “declines” were small businesses trying to pose as makers to avoid the fee for being a vendor. We also decline some music performers for curatorial or space reasons. We also were limited on vendor spaces and thus had to decline about 30% of our craft vendor applicants. Mentioning an “overwhelming response” to the Call for Makers is polite. Some applicants will want to contribute to the event in other ways even if they cannot have a booth.

**6. Collect Fire Safety Plans as needed.** As you prepare for the event, you may have to get an approval from a fire marshal. For the well-being of your attendees and all your makers, vendors, performers, staff, etc., you will want to flag any exhibit that can pose a danger to the exhibitor or a visitor. Any exhibits or performances with fire, explosions, hazardous chemicals, launches, sharp or otherwise dangerous materials or tools should be accompanied by a safety plan. It will make both you and the maker more confident that you are all aware of the foreseeable risks, considered possible consequences, and have taken all the precautions you could to ensure everyone’s safety.

See [Propane, Gasoline, and Other Fuel](#) for more information on fire; you are also welcome to copy and adapt this [fire safety plan form](#) from East Bay Mini Maker Faire.

**7. Collect signed Participation Agreements.** If you are very organized you can have your makers sign a pledge of allegiance to your event. It can include maker guidelines, as well as any waiver information and media releases. [Copy and customize this maker agreement from Bay Area Maker Faire.](#)

At this step, you should also collect payments and signed [commercial maker participation agreements](#) from every commercial maker.

## COMMUNICATION WITH MAKERS

You'll want a flexible tool set for tracking, organizing and generating communications with makers. While the tool sets are getting easier, we found that there's still not just one perfect tool, especially when moving from spreadsheets or databases to email.

Here are some examples of the kinds of tool sets you will need, along with a recommendation for simple or free, shareable software:

**Data Management:** Google Docs spreadsheet

- Master list of makers (for outreach)
- Call for Makers response data
- Accepted makers
- Press/Media list(s)
- Sponsorship list

**Data Management:** Google Docs "Collection" or DropBox (paid)

- Picture library
- Design asset library (logos, banners etc)

**Mass Email generation:** Gmail, MailChimp

- Call for Makers promotion
- Maker acceptance/rejection letters
- Accepted maker communications
- Press releases and various promo
- Email announcements (for forwarding)

**Forms and Surveys:** Google Docs Forms, Wufoo.com, SurveyMonkey.com (paid for reports)

- Call for Makers form
- Emergency queries (Rain forecast: who has tents?)
- Post-event feedback

## Working with Maker Faire

Maker Faire is invested in the success of your Mini Maker Faire event. Maker Faire wants your event to be successful, to build Maker community, to share the DIY mentality, to engage and stimulate your school, town or region. That is why we have spent the energy to write this Playbook, why we will help promote your event, and why they have "open-sourced" Maker Faire and encouraged the Mini Maker Faire movement to flourish.

## PROMOTION AND SUPPORT FROM MAKER MEDIA

Below are some specific ways to engage with Maker Media; contact [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com) for more information.

### Promotion of Event

MakerFaire.com will list your Mini Maker Faire on its website under a section or widget called “Upcoming Events and Mini Maker Faires.” Please write [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com) if you don’t already see your event in this calendar.

### Maker Faire General Support

You can always write [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com) with questions. Please be aware that it may take a bit of time to get back to you. And please refer to this Playbook as well as the Producers’ Google Group for answers to as many questions as you can.

We are working on developing more resources for our Mini Maker Faire partners, including webinars and conference call trainings, as well as a gatherings around the flagship Maker Faire events. Please stay tuned to the Mini Maker Faire Producers’ Google Group for more information on these opportunities.

### Mini Maker Faire Producers’ Google Group

The purpose of the Mini Maker Faire Producers’ Google Group is to help each other, to generate discussion, and to share resources and ideas. If you haven’t yet been added to our Google discussion group for Mini Maker Faire producers and would like to be, please write [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com) and request to be added.

### Maker Promotion and Listing

MAKE Magazine and [makezine.com](http://makezine.com) are always looking to feature talented makers. Please see “Maker List” and “Maker Videos, Images and Other Rich Media” for ideas. You can also always email a list of your “top 3” with contact information and links to video or websites to [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com).

### MAKE Swag

Maker Faire wants to offer their Mini Maker Faire partners a few Maker Media items to use in promotion for their event. You can use these for give-aways, raffles, etc. Please write [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com) to get your Mini Maker Faire Support package sent to you.

## BRANDING

As part of the Mini Maker Faire license agreement, Maker Faire will provide your group with a unique Mini Maker Faire logo.

This brand is a great boon for your event—it allows you to leverage all of the brand awareness MAKE and Maker Faire have developed, and provides your event and your group with instant credibility. Your logo is valuable—treat it with respect!

**When you sign the Maker Faire license agreement, you are agreeing to use the logo in particular ways:**

- Use the logo only in conjunction with your event.
- The only thing you may alter about the logo is the size, and alteration in size must be proportional.
- Don't combine or overlay the logo with other elements.
- Keep the logo separated by white space (the required rule of thumb is “empty space around the Marks must be X, where X equals ½ the height of the Mark.”)
- Don't delete the ® symbol(s) or ™ mark in the logo.

Refer to your license agreement for current and specific compliance issues.

### Font, Color & Design Guidelines

Knowing the Maker Faire font, colors and how to use them is really helpful as you build design assets.

*HINT: You can buy Benton Sans fonts for about \$40 each [here](#). If you're only going to purchase one, purchase Benton Sans Bold.*

#### Maker Media

## Maker Faire Logos and Usage

### BENTON SANS FONTS:

**Benton Sans Bold**  
**Benton Sans Medium**  
Benton Sans Book  
Benton Sans Light

**Benton Sans Bold Italic**  
**Benton Sans Medium Italic**  
Benton Sans Book Italic

\*DO NOT USE BENTON SANS REGULAR

NOTE: If necessary, Helvetica family can be substituted for Benton Sans family



C=100 M=0 Y=0 K=0  
PANTONE Process Cyan C



C=0 M=100 Y=100 K=0  
PANTONE 185 C



C=0 M=20 Y=100 K=0



C=25 M=0 Y=80 K=30  
PANTONE 7495 C

## Maker Faire Branded Elements

Maker Faire has provided a variety of design elements (e.g. flags) as well as design assets you can use for design direction:

- Flags
- Crew T-Shirt Templates
- Volunteer T-Shirt Templates
- Credentials/Name Tags
- Business Cards
- Postcards
- Posters
- Banners

Please see the [Index of Assets](#) for links to these files.

## LANGUAGE

Throughout the production of your mini Maker Faire event, you will find yourself writing about and explaining Maker Faire events repeatedly. In an effort to help provide a baseline description of Maker Faire events, MAKE Magazine, and O'Reilly Media, as well as the relationship between your event and Maker Faire, we have come up with the following language.

**We also require that you use this language in an “About” page of your blog or website.** This language can also come in handy for the end of press releases and in grant or funding proposals.

### **About Maker Faire:**

The mission of Maker Faire events is to inspire, inform, connect and entertain thousands of Makers and aspiring Makers of all ages and backgrounds through the public gathering of tech enthusiasts, crafters, educators, tinkers, hobbyists, science clubs, students, authors and commercial exhibitors. The inaugural Maker Faire was held in San Mateo, CA and just celebrated its sixth annual Bay Area event with some 100,000 people in attendance. As Maker Faire continues to grow in popularity and relevance, it expanded to Detroit and New York City in 2010. Maker Faire is supported by MAKE Magazine and O'Reilly Media, the premier information source for leading-edge computer technologies. The company's books, conferences and web sites bring to light the knowledge of technology innovators. Community-driven, independently produced Mini Maker Faire events inspired by Maker Faire are now being produced around the United States, including [Licensee Event].

### **About MAKE magazine:**

**MAKE** is the first magazine devoted entirely to Do-It-Yourself (DIY) technology projects. MAKE unites, inspires, informs, and entertains a growing community of resourceful people who undertake amazing projects in their backyards, basements, and garages. MAKE celebrates your right to tweak, hack, and bend

any technology to your will. MAKE is published quarterly by Maker Media, the division of O'Reilly Media, Inc., that also produces the wildly popular **Make: Online** ([www.makezine.com](http://www.makezine.com)), **CRAFT** ([www.craftzine.com](http://www.craftzine.com)), the **Maker Shed** online store for DIY kits, books, and more ([www.makershed.com](http://www.makershed.com)), and the world's biggest DIY festival, **Maker Faire** ([www.makerfaire.com](http://www.makerfaire.com))

### About O'Reilly Media:

O'Reilly Media spreads the knowledge of innovators through its books, online services, magazines and conferences. Since 1978, O'Reilly Media has been a chronicler and catalyst of cutting-edge development, homing in on the technology trends that really matter and spurring their adoption by amplifying "faint signals" from the alpha geeks who are creating the future. An active participant in the technology community, the company has a long history of advocacy, meme-making and evangelism.

## SPONSORSHIP

If you are cultivating sponsorship, **we require that you include MAKE Magazine and the MAKE logo on the list of your highest level sponsors.** Please have that image link to [makezine.com](http://makezine.com).

You can also add Maker Faire (and link to [makerfaire.com](http://makerfaire.com)), but our priority is MAKE.

Download:

- [MAKE logo EPS file](#)
- [MAKE logo JPG file](#)
- [Maker Faire Logo](#) (multiple: EPS, JPG, GIF etc)

## MAKER MEDIA PRESENCE AT YOUR FAIRE

Maker Media's goal is to have a strong presence at your Faire. We want to share MAKE Magazine with your attendees, introduce them to the flagship Maker Faire events, and share the great resources we have developed in our online retail presence, Maker Shed. **As such, we now require that you reserve at minimum a premium 10'x10' space for a MAKE/Mini Maker Shed booth.** Please be in touch with [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com) three months before your event date to discuss the variety of Maker Media options available to your Faire.



## REPORTING AND FOLLOW-UP TO MAKER FAIRE

In exchange for promotion, support and branding, Maker Faire and MAKE appreciate your sharing some artifacts from your Faire.

### Attendee Post-Event Survey

Maker Faire has developed an online survey for distribution to every Maker Faire attendee. We want to work with you to customize it for your event, but we also are interested in asking certain baseline questions for every faire.

**To deliver this survey, we require that share the link to our survey with your attendee list within 3 days after the event.** We will share the response data with you.

Here is a sample email sent to the first East Bay Mini Maker Faire attendees you can adapt:

*Thank you for coming to the East Bay Mini Maker Faire last weekend! We were thrilled with the event, which is to say we were thrilled that your wonder and curiosity trumped the rain and made for a magical day. Each and every one of you made all the planning worth it.*

*[Both we as organizers and Maker Faire] would love to know what you thought of the event and to hear your ideas for next year. Please take a minute to fill out this simple survey:*

\_\_\_\_\_ (link to Maker Faire survey goes here)

*Speaking of next year, mark your calendars for **Sunday, October 9, 2011**. We'll send you an email later when we're ramping up, but given how crowded we were this year, there's a good chance we'll sell out, so be on the look out next summer.*

*Also keep an eye out for our Call for Makers, Crafters and Performers around June; this is when we ask everyone who'd like to exhibit to let us know and fill out our interest form on the [blog](#). Work on a great maker project this year, and plan to show it next October!*

*In the meantime, we'll keep the [Twitter stream](#) at @ebmakerfaire active with news of makers and maker-ish events around the Bay Area throughout the year. Follow us there, and on our [Facebook page](#).*

*Thanks again for sharing the Mini Maker Faire with us.  
- Sabrina, Jen and Corey*

Alternatively, here is more generic email text you can just simply use and "fill in the blanks":

*Thank you for coming to the East Bay Mini Maker Faire last weekend! We think it was a tremendous success, with over \_\_\_\_ makers and over \_\_\_\_ attendees*

*We'd love to know what you thought of the event and to hear your ideas for next year. Please take a minute to fill out this simple survey:*

\_\_\_\_\_ (link to Maker Faire survey goes here)

*Thanks again for sharing the Mini Maker Faire with us.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ (Your Team Here)

### Maker List

Maker Faire is building an international database of Makers and their projects with the ultimate goal of starting a Maker Guild. MAKE would also like to offer subscriptions to your Makers, as well as contact some for potential editorial coverage in MAKE or makezine.com.

**We require that within 30 days after your event that you provide .csv or .xls files of your Maker List data to [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com).** Please use these fields:

- Name
- Organization
- Website URL
- Exhibit name
- Exhibit description
- Email address
- Snail mail address, if you have one

### Maker Videos, Images and other Rich Media

Every day Makerfaire.com and [makezine.com](http://makezine.com) offer up incredible content about Maker projects. Both channels would love the opportunity to feature documentation from your Maker Faires on their websites. Here are the ways that you can share content with them:

- Make a 3 minute (or shorter) video documenting your Faire. One format is to get each of the exhibiting makers to introduce themselves and say "I Make..." Here is an example you can follow:
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Usw4t7NVnt0>
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cn9ST2ay6c4>
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRjNOoAHaGg>
- Share Maker interview videos or other videos you come across after the event with [makezine.com](http://makezine.com) by emailing a link to: [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com).

- Create a [Flickr](#) set or collection of photos and tag them “makerfaire”. License them as [Creative Commons](#) images, and then email the link to [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com).

### Producers’ Post Event Report / Survey

Our hope is to learn more about how we can support the Mini Maker Faire movement, and to know more about what works and what doesn’t. **To be eligible for a license for a follow-on event, you must fill out this simple Mini Maker Faire Producers’ Post-Event Survey within 30 days of your event.** It asks questions about your event like:

- How many attendees?
- How many ticket sales?
- What was your event budget?
- Who were your event sponsors? How much revenue from each?
- How many individuals? Children? Family passes?
- Did you break even? Profit?
- Most successful innovation?
- Priority improvement areas for next year?
- Will you apply again & do next year?

## SHARING BEST PRACTICES

Take a moment after your Faire to report back to this Mini Maker Faire Playbook as well as the Mini Maker Faire Producers’ Group. *Please* share what you learned.

The Playbook is intended to be a living document, evolving as the collective experience of the Mini Maker Faire community grows. Please email [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com) with comments.

## JOINING THE COMMUNITY OF MINI MAKER FAIRES

Here is a growing list of Mini Maker Faires (by year of origin), as well as links to their websites:

### **2009:**

[Ann Arbor Mini Maker Faire](#)  
Maker Faire Japan

### **2010:**

[Maker Fair Africa](#)  
[Ann Arbor Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Aspen Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Cambridge Mini Maker Faire](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire](#) (Oakland, CA)  
Maker Faire Japan  
[Kansas City Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Mid-Atlantic Mini Maker Faire](#) (Linthicum, MD)  
[Maker Faire North Carolina](#)  
[Ottawa Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Rhode Island Maker Faire](#) (Providence, RI)  
[Sonoma County Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Twin Cities Mini Maker Faire](#) (Minneapolis, MN)  
[Maker Faire UK](#)

**2011:**

[Maker Fair Africa](#)  
[Ann Arbor Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Atlanta Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Brighton Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Cambridge Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[East Bay Mini Maker Faire](#) (Oakland, CA)  
[Indy Mini Maker Faire](#) (Fishers, IN)  
[Kitsap Mini Maker Faire](#) (Poulsbo, WA)  
[Mid-Atlantic Mini Maker Faire](#) (Linthicum, MD)  
[Maker Faire North Carolina](#)  
[Maker Faire Kansas City](#)  
[Maker Faire Phoenix](#)  
[Rhode Island Mini Maker Faire](#) (Providence, RI)  
[Riverfest Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Pittsburgh Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Sarasota Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Toronto Mini Maker Faire](#)  
[Twin Cities Mini Maker Faire](#) (Minneapolis, MN)  
[Maker Faire UK](#)  
[UC Mini Maker Faire](#) (Urbana-Champaign, IL)  
[Vancouver Mini Maker Faire](#)

**Current Applicants for Mini Maker Faires in 2012:**

DOMESTIC:

Austin, TX  
Berkeley, CA  
Boston, MA  
Cambridge, MA  
Columbus, OH  
Chicago, OH  
Downey, CA  
Gainesville, FL  
Farmington, NY  
Haiku, HI  
Huntington Beach, CA

Little Rock, AK  
Mesa, AZ  
Orlando, FL  
Petaluma, CA  
Portland, OR  
Placer County, CA  
Seattle, WA  
Sylmar, CA  
Tampa Bay, FL  
Waltham, MA

INTERNATIONAL:  
Ahmedabad, India  
Bergwald, Germany  
North Umpireland, United Kingdom, Selangor, Malaysia  
Singapore, Malaysia  
Sydney, Australia

## Funding Your Maker Faire

Unless your Mini Maker Faire is entirely underwritten by a Fairy Godfather, you will need to articulate a plan to recoup expenses.

### SPONSORSHIP

Define levels for business sponsors to participate and have a presence at your event—this can be a great income source. You'll need to identify potential targets for sponsorship and devote time and energy approaching them, following up, and then representing them on your website and marketing materials.

Traditional Maker Faire demographics are a desirable audience for businesses (techies and smart families). Remember too that sponsorships are more valuable for the business the earlier they are arranged, so don't procrastinate.

Also, if sponsors participate at a level that allows them floor space at your event, you will need to fold the sponsor in with the makers, ensuring that they receive the same information on load-in and load-out, as well as possibly some coaching on how to design or orient their booth to a maker mindset. You also might like them to sign a Sponsor Agreement form. (See, copy, and customize [Maker Faire's 2011 sponsor agreement.](#))

Here are some example language and packages from the East Bay Mini Maker Faire:

Becoming a sponsor of the East Bay Mini Maker Faire is a great way for local businesses, media outlets, trade associations, and non-profit groups to get in on the ground floor of this exciting and enriching community and family-oriented event.

There are several sponsorship levels with a range of associated benefits that will help promote your work, cause, or organization. *Please email interest and/or inquiries to “info AT ebmakerfaire DOT com,” or contact us via our [contact form](#).*

**Event sponsors: \$2,000**

- Logo on print materials: poster, postcards and flyers, total printed pieces 2500
- Logo and link on homepage of website
- Logo and link on sponsor page of website
- Logo on ticket registration page
- Thank you in registration confirmation email to online registrants
- Logo on outbound emails
- Thank you on emails to Makers
- Mention in press release(s)
- Exhibit space in a featured location at event
- Thank you on Twitter and Facebook accounts
- 20 free tickets

**Sustaining sponsors: \$1250**

- Logo on poster
- Logo and link on sponsor page of website
- Mention in press release(s)
- Exhibit space at event
- Thank you on Twitter and Facebook accounts
- 15 free tickets

**Presenting sponsors: \$750**

- Logo on poster
- Logo and link on sponsor page of website
- Mention in press release(s)
- Table for materials at event
- Thank you on Twitter and Facebook accounts
- 10 free tickets

**Contributing sponsors: \$250**

- Text mention on poster
- Text mention and link on sponsor page of website
- Mention in press release(s)
- Thank you on Twitter and Facebook accounts
- Space for materials distribution
- 5 free tickets

*HINT: If this is your first year running your event, it's a little more difficult to pitch sponsorship, as you have no idea how large your audience will actually be. Remind them that, as a ground-floor participant, their business will be rewarded by this very loyal and passionate Maker Faire audience. Also, be flexible—you may have “wheel and*

*deal” a bit to secure sponsors.*

*And if you have limited resources, it is probably more rewarding to focus on your Media Sponsorship recruitment effort (see [Media Sponsorship Packages](#) "below). Get the crowds there, produce an amazing event and your sponsor dollars will follow.*

## **MEDIA SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES**

Having media businesses identify with your event typically will result in a huge boost to your PR and marketing efforts—especially if you are a first-year event.

Make a list of each media type (TV, radio, newspaper, weekly) and your preferred partners for each medium. Phone or email the appropriate person and pitch your event. Refer them to your business sponsorship packages on your website, and find out how they do things with community events like yours.

Essentially the media sponsor package will be a list of exposure opportunities—number of print ads, eblasts, website ads—with a dollar value attached. Given what you offer your business sponsors, you can gauge what kind of exposure to provide your media sponsor in return.

Review and adapt this media sponsor agreement from Maker Faire Bay Area: [Maker Faire Bay Area Media and Community Sponsor Package](#)

And see [Public Relations](#) for more on media outreach.

## **TICKETING PROGRAM**

Selling tickets to your Mini Maker Faire is another great revenue source, but also adds a huge amount of work to your endeavor. Managing the ticket sales tool, promoting ticket sales, and handling ticket taking/registration all take significant amounts of time, energy and even creativity. However, ticket sales generate income...and interest in making! Inviting thousands of your neighbors to your Mini Maker Faire may be one of your primary reasons for throwing this giant party.

There are many different ways of organizing your ticket sales effort. We looked around and decided on what we think is a smart and inexpensive tool and process. Here is our current recommendation: use [Eventbrite](#) and eschew paper tickets.

Eventbrite offers many sophisticated marketing tools to manage, promote and sell your tickets. It's free to use if you are not charging anything, and \$0.99 + 2.5% of ticket price

for each ticket sold if you do. (Using a credit card to purchase increases the total fee to 5.5%.) In exchange for this not insignificant cut, Eventbrite offers the following:

- Data collection and email addresses for all your ticket buyers.
- Freedom to create different ticket types (e.g., Student, Senior, family packages).
- Ticket types with optional escalating pricing deadlines that *really* help drive sales (e.g., Early Bird pricing, then Regular pricing, then Day-of pricing).
- Simple entry management tool (use laptops or even iPhones) for digital day-of entry. Also printed check-in lists for backup.
- Easy credit card, Paypal or Google Checkout transactions.
- Ability to process refunds.
- Limitless number of custom discount codes (we gave one to each maker and encouraged them to share with their fanbase and friends).
- Easy method (using a discount code with 100% off) for generating maker and volunteer passes.
- Ability to mass email your ticket buyers—good for last-minute reminders (Bring clothes for the swap! Ride your bike! Dress for rain!).
- Option to create custom survey questions (e.g., “How do you plan to get to Mini Maker Faire? Bike? Car? Bus?”).
- Post-event analytics showing who came and who didn’t.
- Wait lists for sold-out events.
- Easy affiliate marketing program (e.g., schools get a code and if tickets are sold using that code, the school gets a percentage of the sale).
- A custom event registration page and URL.
- Very good customer support. And more customization and tools.

No matter what tool you choose, there are some sure-fire ways to spur ticket sales:

- **Discount Codes or Partner Deals.** Makers, sponsors or other partners can offer 15% off to their fanbase if their community utilizes their maker code.
- **Staggered Pricing.** The threat of price increases will spur huge increases in ticket sales. Give your customers deadlines, promote heavily, and get them to buy early.
- **Sell Out.** You’re in it for the long run, right? Selling out your first year is never bad. It can give you leverage to increase ticket prices the following year, and will motivate folks to purchase next year’s tickets early.

And don’t forget:

- **Comp Tickets.** Invest in the future of your event. Give away tickets to the Mayor, to the venue neighbors, to potential sponsors and generate good-will, positive impressions, and community support.

(See [Registration & Entrance](#) below for more on day-of ticketing and registration.)



*HINT: Even if you want your event to be free, you might employ Eventbrite anyway to gather names and contact information. Then you will have a way to poll and communicate with your audience after the fact (including sharing the word about next year's Call for Makers and event information. **Eventbrite is FREE if your event is free**, and it's an amazing tool, so we recommend you check it out.*

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Connect with schools, colleges, preschools, local businesses, the HR departments of larger companies with local branches, youth centers, libraries, art centers, congregations, coffeeshops, gyms ... really anywhere that people experience community in your community. These contacts can help promote your Call for Makers and ticket sales, display posters, generate volunteers, and build community enthusiasm for your event. Offer comp tickets to those who really went above and beyond to help. Think about making one of your volunteer roles a guerrilla marketer, where you recruit a diverse set of people to spread the word about your Mini Maker Faire in exchange for tickets.

## FUNDRAISING

There may be community or family foundation grants available for your Mini Maker Faire. It's possible there could be city or other government agency grants available to get your event off the ground. Sometimes you can find the funding with a "planning grant." If you are partnering with a not-for-profit agency, get advice from the fundraising staff who may be able to suggest the right foundations to approach. Ask around.

There are also online fundraising tools available like Kickstarter.com and Indiegogo.com (there are many more – search crowdfunding or fundraising) that help you conduct pointed fundraising campaigns towards a specific goal. Rhode Island Mini Maker Faire has used this [tactic](#) successfully.

## Designing Your Maker Faire

Maker Faire is a "fair" in the old-fashioned sense of the word. It is inherently interactive because there are things to see and do and lots of people to talk to. In your job as a curator of a Maker Faire, you'll aim to achieve the right balance between diversely creative exhibits, interesting talks, engaging hands-on demonstrations and activities for people of all ages, and like-minded commercial vendors and sponsors.

You are designing an experience that is shared by all. Yet you cannot possibly control everything that's going on. This is why we say that Maker Faire is a co-creation. It demands that you allow everyone to participate and create the event; it's the only way for it to happen.

## CREATE A SHOWCASE OF CREATIVE WORK

Maker Faire provides a venue for makers to show examples of their work and interact with others about it. Many makers tell us that they have no other place to show what they do. It is often out of the spotlight of traditional art or science or craft events. DIY is often hidden in our communities, taking place in shops, in garages and on kitchen tables. So the goal of the event is to make visible the projects and ideas that we don't encounter every day. Maker Faire, like any county fair, might include traditional forms of making but it is primarily designed to be forward-looking, exploring new forms and new technologies.

### Themed Areas

You can decide to group related exhibits, which might be identified by a category or theme. There's a balance to be achieved between rigid categorization and serendipity. Not every exhibit neatly fits into a single category. Also, some exhibits which may be placed in the same category have different requirements, such as being indoors or outdoors. Not to worry. We like to have people discover and interact with exhibits they might not have sought out. That's a good surprise. Nonetheless, as Maker Faire grows, creating some kind of pattern for your visitors can be helpful, especially in developing a map for the event. It also gives you more signage and even sponsorship opportunities.

Here are some common theme areas:

- Electronics
- Music
- Young Makers (kids and school groups)
- Crafters
- Robotics
- Lego Park
- Bike Village
- Farm / Food

### Hands-On Elements

In your Call for Makers, encourage makers to design their exhibit for hands-on making and interaction. They will surprise you with their ingenuity. But there are some Maker Faire hands-on exhibits that have entered the lexicon of "greatest hits" that are possible to self-produce, if none of your makers are planning to provide them, and if you have the bandwidth:

- How to solder
- How to take apart anything
- How to build a simple circuit (like LED throwies)
- Science experiments for kids
- Make a rocket and launch it

- Make a musical instrument
- Fix your appliance
- Learn to knit or sew
- Clothing hack and swap: piles of donated clothing (encourage attendees to bring with them on day-of event) get picked through and transformed with hand sewing, sewing machines, silkscreening, gluing, and other decorating stations.

### Special Programming (Presentations, Music, Attractions, Demonstrations)

Some makers are better featured performing, or talking, or teaching, or interacting with other makers. And some attendees really enjoy moments of more passive “audience” experience to balance out their booth-cruising and hands-on-doing time.

Time your special programming throughout the day to give your event a real sense of a complete “happening.” A rich schedule also gives visitors a way of organizing their experience.

**Attractions.** What’s a fair without some large eye candy? Big installations and rides literally will draw a crowd. If you are aiming to produce a larger event, the visual attraction of something big and unusual helps to create momentum through your layout and just makes people smile.

**Performers.** Musical acts that feature homemade or altered instruments are a good fit for a Maker Faire stage. We also did a mini-showcase of local kid bands (“Kids Who Rock”) for our event. A go-go dance troupe performed, and also taught go-go dancing.

**Workshops.** Wrangle a “name” (local celebrity) and book them into a workshop—and leverage that “name” in your promotions! Other kinds of workshops like “How to Make Jam” and “How to Prune a Bonsai Tree” can originate from your community of makers.

**Demonstrations.** Kinetic sculpture performances (e.g. big robots) or demonstrations (e.g. the infamous [Mentos / Diet Coke show](#)) can be scheduled so as to not tire the maker, and to create “show” moments. Demonstrations might also be onsite builds where a maker sets up a shop and creates an item from scratch over several hours.

## VENDORS

Vendors sell goods at your event, but they should still echo the values and aesthetic of the DIY Maker movement. Many Maker Faire vendors aren’t just crass commercial enterprises. Preferably, your vendors are makers who have moved from amateur into the realm of “Professional.” These folks are ex-hobbyists who are trying to make a living by selling what they make. Support them!

Vendors should pay a fee for this sales opportunity. They may pay different amounts,

depending on their offering. How much you charge depends on the number of visitors you anticipate and how many competitors you are featuring at the event.

You may choose to have a contract for your vendors, with waivers and an articulation of your expectations. [Copy and customize the maker agreement.](#) You should also have them fill out your Call for Makers, or a special vendor application. (See [Call for Makers Process](#) for more on this.)

As far as accepting payments, you can either accept hard cash, checks, or share a Paypal account address for payments over the Internet (you'll pay a little percentage to Paypal, but it's nice to get the money fast).

*HINT: Farmer's markets are good resources for both pricing guidelines and for finding desirable vendors.*

### Commercial Makers

"Commercial makers" are those vendors selling (presumably local) handmade items. They are makers who are trying to generate a little (or a lot of!) cash from your attendees. They should go through the maker application process so you can see examples of their work and so you can curate a good exhibition of crafters. (You'll likely get duplicates of certain kinds of items like jewelry, t-shirts and clothing, so the application process gives you a chance to edit your selection of crafters.)

Commercial makers are used to paying for their space. (We charged our first-year 2010 East Bay Mini Maker Faire commercial makers \$100 for their booths.)

### Food and Beverage

Having great, affordable food available for your audience is absolutely necessary. Booking good, reliable vendors and providing a varied menu is part of the producer's challenge.

*How many food vendors should you book?* One professional street fair organizer advises: plan one solid savory vendor for every 1,000 visitors (assuming your day runs something like 10 a.m.-5 p.m.—if you are going through the dinner hour, you might increase that number.) Drink and treat vendors can be slightly more plentiful.

*How much should you charge a food vendor?* Do some research and ask around your local farmers' market organizers and local street fair producers to see what they charge food vendors. An East Bay street fair organizer thought a flat fee of \$300 plus permit costs to have a booth sounded fair, assuming we do our job to prevent duplicity in vendor menus, and to stick to the +/- 1000 visitors per savory vendor. The fee is to be paid up front, and to be submitted along with a contract in advance of the event.

You will want to have an application form for food vendors. [You can copy and customize this sample application from the 2011 East Bay Mini Maker Faire.](#) Once you accept them, you will want to ask them for that non-refundable, paid in-advance fee, and give them any paperwork they might need for Health Department permitting.

*HINT: Communicate with your vendors! Poll them individually after the event, see if they were happy with their sales, ask what their gross sales were, see what menu items sold well, and find out what they think could work better. You'll want the best vendors to come back and feed your visitors in future years, and following up quickly while their memory of the event is fresh will strengthen their loyalty to your event and improve your offerings from year to year.*

We found there are several types of food and beverage vendors, each with their own requirements. (See section [Interfacing with Local Agencies](#) for more on food permitting.)

**Commercial fair-food vendors (booths and trucks).** These are the businesses that specialize in temporary food vending. They show up at every kind of street fair and farmers' market. They are used to the permit requirements (almost always), and are all set with signage, menus, etc. Usually they are professional and good at managing surges in demand (e.g. lunchtime).

Keep your eyes peeled at public events leading up to yours for desirable vendors. Ask around for recommendations.

**Alternative food carts and trucks.** The Bay Area, like some other regions, has an amazing underground scene of a [new breed of street food vendors](#), from accomplished chefs who are seeking a forum with less overhead, to amateurs trying an alternate business model. Some have fancy, customized "taco" trucks, and some are bicycle-powered and fold out into ingenious homemade cooking rigs. Most utilize Twitter to publicize where their mobile eatery is setting up.

The carts especially embody the maker spirit, but unless they serve fully pre-packaged food from a professional kitchen and have permits, it's possible they may conflict with local health ordinances. They also serve a smaller crowd than your average professional booth or truck.

**Local restaurants.** Some local institutions are so popular that it's an actual audience draw to publicize their presence at your Mini Maker Faire. It's good to remember, however, that these are restaurants and may not have the gear to set up a Health Department-approved booth, and might not be quite as adept at serving crowds as your professional booths and trucks. Investigate, weigh your options.

**Fundraiser food booths.** The sponsoring organization may choose to coordinate and run its own booth. If you have a very capable head-honcho, along with paid or

committed volunteer labor, running refreshments booths can be a profitable venture. If you want to take on the extra risk and energy this task requires, try easy, pre-made foods like cookies (bake sale booth) or lemonade. Even simply selling individually wrapped snacks bought in bulk at a big box store (with some markup) can keep your visitors sated while they wait in line for other vendors. Coffee/hot chocolate stands or a popcorn booth are also relatively easy winners.

*HINT: The real money is in drinks. If your goal is to raise money, a beverage booth is the one to take on. [Pedal-powered smoothie or juice booths](#) can add the maker touch!*

**Alcohol.** Maker Faire is a family event. It's also more about "doing" and not standing around drinking and chatting. But it's true that if it's a hot day, a beer garden can be a lovely treat for thirsty adults. Are the event sponsors OK with serving alcohol? How about your venue? Are there any government restrictions or rules to consider?

If your leadership team and your venue are OK with doing it at a family event, and you have the people-power to pull it off, selling alcohol is another great opportunity raise money. Contact a local beer company—the more "maker" or artisanal, the better—and ask them to sponsor your event. (See [Funding Your Maker Faire](#) for more on sponsorships.) The ideal scenario is that the brewer or distributor receives publicity in exchange for the free kegs. If that is not possible, the cost of buying kegs will very likely be covered by your sales.

### Sponsors

If you are offering sponsorships to generate income for your event, some of the sponsors may want to actually participate at your Mini Maker Faire. And "participate" is an operative word here—try and get your sponsors to embrace the Maker Faire spirit by making their booth as interactive and attractive as possible to your crowd. It might be a change of pace for your sponsor, but if they are open, you can work with them to curate a presence that will appeal to your very smart and curious attendees.

Like vendors, exhibiting sponsors should submit a [maker application](#) so you can anticipate their production/power/space needs, and so they get in the same maker information feed regarding load-in, logistics, etc. And you may also want to have them sign a sponsor agreement. ([See Maker Faire's sponsor agreement as an example.](#))

## LAYOUT DESIGN

You might think of layout or site planning primarily as a logistical item (see [Layout Guidelines](#) in Operational Elements), but how people feel as they move through your venue and exhibits heavily influences their satisfaction in the end.

In the product design world, this factor is called "user experience design." Put yourself in the place of an attendee and move through the event with them in mind. Design for

human intuition and for ease of use. Lay the event out as if you are telling a story to someone you do NOT know. The story has a beginning, middle and an end—a narrative laden with surprises and digressions but with deliberate rhythm and pacing and closure.

Consider these layout “rules of thumb” as examples on way to think like (and plan for) a visitor:

- Place anchor exhibits throughout the event space and not all bunched together. Use them as visual cues to draw your crowd through the entire event.
- Imagine the path and line of sight from all entrances. How will your visitors know where to go? They’ll be excited to explore, and they may not have the patience to read signs and maps, but instead they will rely on that eye candy for visual cues.
- Find a good location for a stage so that amplified sound does not ruin conversations in maker booths. Place annoying and recurring loud sounds with similar sensitivity for your makers’ ear canal health. (Fireballs can be loud!)
- Place stages in a north/south orientation to avoid all-day sun in either performers’ or audiences’ eyes. (If you have a solar powered stage, you may need to go somewhere in between.)
- Create chill-out sitting and eating areas near food vendors.
- Put bathrooms out of the wind, and near food and children’s areas.
- If certain rooms have really poor acoustics, install more visual treats and installations (vs. activity areas that require teaching and focus).
- Art or sculpture or big attractions work best when “framed” by space or backdrop, and can be seen as a “draw” from a little way off.
- Consider lighting, and how you can easily improve the appeal of an exhibit or performance or feel of a room by using local (temporary) light sources instead of house lighting.
- Think about having a super-engaging kid exhibit near your craft vendors (kids play and parents shop).

*HINT: Visit your venue when it is busy well before your event to get an idea of natural crowd flow and any inherent design flaws that you might be able to overcome with planning and preparation.*

## Producing The Event

### PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Every Mini Maker Faire will have its own leadership team composition, timeline, budget, etc. Breaking down your task lists by area and time are a good way of managing yourself and your team so that you get to “showtime” on time, and in a good mood.

## **Task Lists by Time**

Tracking your tasks by due-date is a great way to gauge your progress and keep on track. This timeline below is culled from the second East Bay Mini Maker Faire, a fairly large Mini Maker Faire (75+ Makers, +/-4K attendees).

[A sample timeline for a “large” sized Mini Maker Faire is available here to copy and customize, in a Google Doc spreadsheet.](#)

## **Task List by Production Area**

Organizing your list of jobs by Job or Production Area is another way of dividing and conquering. To some extent, this is like a thorough job description. You can even incorporate the ‘weeks-out’ nature of the above Tasks List by Time and then really provide your team leaders with a clear understanding of what is needed when.

*HINT: Having your team leaders modify and update this timeline and task lists as you go will help immensely in years to come.*

## **General Team Communications (Meetings, Tools, Asset Management)**

Your communication habits and tools will depend on the closeness of your relationships to Team Members.

**Email.** We set up an [info@ebmakerfaire.com](mailto:info@ebmakerfaire.com) email address that all core members would receive. This was our shortcut for communicating with each other, and also our way of all knowing what inquiries were being generated from the website. You may also set up individual theirnamehere@XXXminimakerfaire.com addresses (aliases) for each leadership team member to use.

*HINT: Take a poll of your team members to make sure that they are email-friendly. If some are not committed to checking email at least daily (more frequently for leadership team members), figure out an alternate communication method, or come up with an independent job description that doesn’t require that level of contact.*

**Data Management Tools.** Google Docs is free and does not require much know-how. People can work on the same document in real-time, which is a huge advantage. Spreadsheets can host the data you are tracking. Documents like draft press releases and draft blog posts can be shared and edited (with complete version history available)

**Timeline Management.** We used a sheet in our Google Docs “Mini Maker Faire Headquarters” spreadsheet, but I can imagine other people using a [shared Google Calendar](#) to organize for deadlines and for meeting reminders.

**Meetings.** If your team is tight and composed of self-starters, you can really minimize the meetings you hold. Meetings are good for building community, socializing new team



members, boosting morale, and for launching milestones. Too many meetings are burdensome for busy and self-directed volunteers; sometimes there is a finite amount of time available and a meeting might take up precious time otherwise spent on getting something actually accomplished.

However, if your team is comprised of alliances from co-sponsoring organizations and aren't likely to be as in-sync, a regular calendar of meetings is needed. Make a conference call number available (Google "free conference call hosting") so that your members can tune into the discussion even when they are too busy to get across town.

Try to run meetings with a real emphasis on:

- Sticking to the agenda
- Articulating action items
- Identifying a person responsible for each action item
- Generate a due date for each action item

Share the meeting summary and action items with the group as soon as possible. The "Executive Producer" should track the action items and touch base with those folks assigned with tasks. Completed tasks get noted; uncompleted roll into the next meeting agenda.

**Visual Asset Manager.** It's nice to organize your promotional photos, logos, banners, etc. in a place everyone can access. Google Docs Collections seems to be a solid, free tool for keeping these assets neat and available in the "cloud." Other people pay for a subscription to DropBox for similar functionality.

### Budget Management

One person should be the budget-meister, tracking expenses and staying on top of projections, costs-to-date, able to produce regular profit and loss statements ("P&L"). This person hopefully has the checkbook and is able to process invoices.

If a larger institution is processing the invoices and issuing the checks, your budget-meister should be working closely with that accounting person, passing invoices through to that person, and getting frequent account updates.

Setting up accounting codes or categories is very helpful for monitoring expenses and analyzing your budget successes and failures. We kept it fairly simple:

#### **Mini Maker Faire Expenses:**

- Equipment rentals
- Permits
- Our fundraising booths (ex: food booth expenses)
- Marketing & PR
- Maker expense reimbursements and other consultants (e.g., cleaning help)

### **Mini Maker Faire Income:**

- Sponsorships
- Grants
- Vendor fees
- Our fundraising booths (ex: food booth income)
- Tickets - Eventbrite/paypal
- Tickets - cash or other
- Commercial Maker booth feeds
- Parking

Ideally the leadership team would be looking at updated budgets (projections & costs-to-date) every other week.

See [Creating an Event Budget](#) for more information on budget.

## **MAKER MANAGEMENT TOOLS**

Makers really appreciate organized producers who generate clear and timely communications. This section outlines some of the “formal” moments of interaction with makers.

*HINT: Replace the word “maker” with “vendor,” “performer,” or “sponsor” here and you can see how this works.*

### **Maker Application**

This is the primary information-gathering interaction between you and your maker. You want them to submit just about everything you will need to evaluate their idea/exhibit, and to promote them and their exhibit at the Faire. ([See this example maker application Google form.](#))

### **Maker Agreement**

Once you have sent a letter of acceptance to your makers, you will ask them to go online and fill out a maker agreement or sign and mail one back to you. This is your assurance from them that they are committing to exhibit at your Mini Maker Faire.

Maker Faire combines their agreement with a guide or manual. If you have that much information in advance, great; otherwise, use the agreement to cement the makers’ commitment to you and share the production information as you know it via email. [See a sample agreement here.](#) Also reference the complete [Bay Area Maker Faire Maker Manual](#).

## Maker Communications

Limit your communications to makers. Send well-crafted and clear messages, and use the subject line to create continuity between messages. Here is the list of emails we sent our makers throughout the entire project process (click on the links to see full copy):

1. [East Bay Mini Maker Faire says “Hello Maker!”](#)
2. [Makers Info #2 re: East Bay Mini Maker Faire](#)
3. [Makers Info #3 re: East Bay Mini Maker Faire](#)
4. [EBMMF Maker / Crafter Load In Information: 360-42nd Street Entrance](#)
5. [East Bay Mini Maker Faire: Four Days Later](#)

## Site Open House

We decided to host an open house two weeks before the event date to 1) give makers to get a first-hand look at the site, 2) let them see where they will be located, and 3) meet face-to-face and ask any questions they might have. If you have a site map designed already, give a copy to everyone who shows up and either lead a tour, or let them tour themselves using the map. It's ideal to have a rough draft of your maker layout at this point so you can share approximate location with the makers and deal right then with any production hurdles or questions.

There is an opportunity here to make this gathering more social (pot-luck or meet-up at a local bar), but the emphasis was really on generating clarity and getting makers excited about our incredible venue.

## Media Referrals

Most makers love the exposure Maker Faire brings to their work. Have your PR team or leader prepared with a list of different kinds of makers with contact information and a little description of their work. This will enable you to pass on reporters directly to your makers, giving them some well-deserved attention. (See [Public Relations](#) and [Managing Media Requests](#) for more information.)

## Maker Dinner

Makers love to mill about and talk to each other. They don't have much time to do this while the event is going on, so organizing a dinner or other gathering beforehand is a nice gesture and a great contributor to building maker community.

Maker Faire Bay Area has a maker dinner on the Friday night before the Faire. We tried to mimic this a bit, with an impromptu maker pizza party at the end of load-in hours the night before our Faire. A local pizzeria donated the pies and drinks, and a local beer maker donated a small keg. This was a limited success as the weather was not great,

and most people loaded-in the early morning before the event. I'm sure if we had promoted the dinner we would have had much greater attendance.

## OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

This section is dedicated to helping you with managing and pre-thinking the physical elements of the Faire.

### Layout Guidelines

When you are mapping out your site plan, keep these operational recommendations in mind. Check out [Layout Design](#) for more aesthetic layout suggestions.

#### **Maker booth grid**

- 10'x10' footprint for average maker.
- 10' pathways minimum
- Avoid one giant, long, unbroken line; make cross pathways every 5 or 6 makers.

#### **Themed areas**

- Brand these areas clearly with good signage.

#### **Maker exhibit requirements**

- Electronics need to be out of weather, wind and gravel.
- Messy interactive exhibits need easy-clean environments.
- Teaching booths need relative quiet.
- Noisy exhibits and stages need some isolation.
- Farm-y exhibits work well outside (especially when they have animals).
- Soldering booths should have sufficient ventilation.
- Art or sculpture works well when it's "framed" by space or backdrop.

#### **Stages**

- Think about direction sound will travel; don't put makers in the way of loud sound.
- Orient in north/south direction to avoid all-day sun in eyes of performers or audience.

#### **Anchor exhibits/attractions**

- Distribute around event, not all in one place.

#### **Kid play areas**

- Grass is nice.
- Plan restrooms nearby.

#### **Food & refreshments**

- Plan restrooms nearby.
- Try and arrange tables or grass for seating.

#### **Electricity (vs. no electricity)**

- Make your electrical distribution job easier by clumping exhibits not requiring electricity. (But don't sacrifice good event flow for this!)

#### **Drinking fountains**

- Make sure there are enough.
- Bring in water vendors or sell water if not.

**Seating & tables**

- Distribute in clumps around site.
- Create rest areas.
- Make sure there are tables and seats near food.

**Trash & recycling**

- Place near food and near exits and entrances.
- Label clearly.
- Staff the collection of trash and recycling to avoid overflowing bins.

**Restrooms**

- Make and stick to a cleaning schedule.
- Ensure sufficient distribution by supplementing your fixed restrooms with rentals.

**First aid / lost & found / information / security**

- These are peas in a pod—locate near each other, if possible.
- First aid should be very close to ambulance access, with radio access, near a sink, offer some privacy, and preferably be located near security.

**Bike parking**

- Put bike parking in a visible spot near your entrance/registration.
- Enclose and staff it if possible, or place security nearby. (See [here](#) for more resources on bike parking.)

**Parking**

- Put directional signage out on the street.
- Plan parking for rental vehicles and equipment.
- Reserve maker and vendor parking and segregate into one area.

**Registration / Main Entrances**

- Make the entrance visible with large banners.
- Create distinguishable lines for different kinds of attendees.

**Exits**

- Sign at 100' intervals.
- Do not ever cover existing exit signage.

**Maker Entrance**

- If possible, locate near maker parking lot.

**Maker Parking**

- Identify and reserve parking for your makers.

**Load-In Entrances, including during event**

- Locate near maker entrance, if possible.

**Accessibility for Disabled**

- See [Accessibility Plan](#) section.

**Mapping Your Site**

If at all possible, get an editable site plan from your venue. If the site plan is a PDF, you will need to import it as a layer or recreate it in a layout tool. Google Sketchup is free; Adobe Illustrator is another common design tool that can be used. You can also print out a blown-up version of your layout and mock it up with paper cutouts. (See this great homemade [Maker Faire Austin site plan](#) for inspiration.)

Whatever the tool, it's nice to be able to use different layers for different uses. For example, one layer might be for the fire marshall (exits, fire / cooking locations, etc); another for your electrical layout. Remember also to design one layer for visitors (can go in an event program).

### Equipment / Special Requirements

Rentals get expensive—and watch out for delivery fees! Be sure to check with your venue to see what it comes with (see [Selecting A Venue](#) section). And then ask your production team members and extended community before engaging party supply rental vendors.

Please see [Resources](#) section below for pricing guidelines and online resources.

### Staging

Party Rental supply stores rent simple stages up to a good size. Our main stage was 12' wide x 8' deep x 24" high. These dimensions fit the scale of our field and needs of our performers, but staging is very modular, and can easily expand in length, width and height.

*HINT: Professional event producers will likely tell you that a 2' high stage is barely worth your while—but that height worked perfectly for us, and generated the intimacy between band and crowd that we intended. Height depends on the size of your audience.*

*HINT: We used an additional 8x12" tent adjacent to the stage as a backstage/green room where performers would check in and deposit their equipment with the stage manager. You may also choose to rent and set up [crowd control barricades](#) instead of a tent, or to limit access to your backstage.*

### Sound

Number one thing about sound is that you definitely will want to identify or hire a sound person to help you spec out your equipment needs and to manage sound at your event.

Public address systems (PAs) are also easily rentable (Google “audio visual” rentals + your location). But ask around first—you may also find that someone on your team owns one, or belongs to a band that does. You'll need a separate PA for every stage, and you might consider simple ones for large workshops.

A PA system consists of a sound board (the control board with lots of knobs and holes on it) and a set of speakers. The sound board can either be set up on a table either adjacent to the stage (and walk out into the crowd to check on the sound), or if it is a bigger affair, you'll want the sound board and sound man isolated and elevated, out in

front of the stage in the audience. The speakers will likely sit on the stage on stands, facing out to the audience, or off to the side of the stage, on stands.

Depending on your talents' needs, you'll also need microphones, mic cables, mic stands, and monitors (monitors are speakers that face the performers on stage so they can hear what they sound like). If you are doing panel discussions or conversations or just want to be fancy, consider using lavalier microphones instead of microphones.

### Maker Setup

A standard maker exhibit footprint is a 10' x 10' space. On your maker application, makers have an opportunity to tell you if they need a different kind of footprint, but most makers should fit amply into this block.

The big Maker Faires provide their makers, upon request, one eight-foot folding table and two chairs, along with a standard sign saying who they are and what they are exhibiting. We also covered indoor makers' tables with rolls of butcher paper.

You can either ask makers to bring all their own gear—including tables and chairs—or provide a simple table/chair set-up for them. Advantages of providing the chair/table setup: chairs and tables are not that expensive to rent. Load-in is considerably less chaotic if makers are not lugging chairs and tables around. And labeling maker location is easier and more visible if there is a table to tag.

Beyond that, makers should be responsible for bringing anything else they need: signage, tablecloths, flags, stools, mirrors, extension cords, lights, pens, additional tables & chairs, handouts, etc.

### Signage

Helping your audience know where they are, where to go, and what they are looking at is key to their happiness. Several levels of signage are really important to pre-think, design, produce, and install.

*HINT: Remember that in crowded areas, signage will get lost unless it is positioned above eye-level. Plan accordingly!*

**Directional (inside event):** Orient your visitors. Walk through the site as if you had never been there before and sign accordingly. Sign the basics:

- Restrooms
- First Aid
- Information Booth
- Food
- Stage

You also have an opportunity to help people navigate your content (and have a little fun):

- Rides
- Coffee
- Soldering
- Goats & Bees
- Geeks
- Robots

*HINT: Someone at Maker Faire came up with [this simple, old-fashioned directional wooden sign system](#) that is cheap to produce, quick to label, and in keeping with the DIY spirit. You can also use them year to year.*

**Maker Identification:** Maker Faire generates an [11 x 17" laminated poster](#) for each maker. It is comprised of information gathered in the maker application (maker name, title of exhibit, description and an image). These not only help attendees understand what they are seeing, but also help the makers locate their space.

Maker Faire generates these signs from a database created from that maker application info. We are trying to figure out a cheap and easy way of replicating this, but at this time it seems like automating this is for the high-tech crowd!

Maker ID signs template creates visual branding consistency and also helps your visitors "read" the event.

**Exit:** Our fire inspector wanted exit signs with directional arrows posted everywhere. We created one 8.5 x 11" EXIT sign, and a separate 8.5 x 11" arrow. Then we could post appropriately as we walked the site.

*HINT: Plastic sheet covers (vs. laminating) can be a low-cost way of keeping these simple signs free of moisture for the duration of the event.*

**Banners:** Your Mini Maker Faire logo looks fabulous! Big banner logo signs (with grommets for rigging and slices for wind ventilation) posted at your entrance and as your [stage backdrop](#) give great bang for the buck.

*HINT: It's comforting to enlist a solid operations tech with some rigging experience to hang signs.*

**Sponsor:** Depending on your sponsorship agreements, you might want to feature hanging or standing signage of sponsors in addition to (or in place of) a booth presence.

**Parking and Other Exterior Signage:** Think through how traffic will move to your event. Assign someone to focus on the placement of directional street signage so as to minimize confusion and get people inside your Faire as quickly and easily as possible.



*HINT: Realtor open house A-frame signs can be covered with directional arrows for parking and entrance street signs.*

## Tents

Makers sometimes use tents (usually “[Pop-Up](#)” tents) to demarcate space and hang signage from. They also protect from light weather, and intense sunshine. These tents generally have a 10'x10' footprint. **However, Pop-Up tents are hazardous if even the slightest amount of wind picks up.** They turn into giant, dangerous kites that will take flight even in tied-together groups.

Watch weather forecasts, and if there is even the slightest chance of wind, we advise you weight each leg of each tent. You can message your makers to ask them to be sure to weight their tents, but ultimately the responsibility to keep your attendees safe lies with you, the event producer. Plan accordingly: buy/gather the weight materials and assign a team to ensuring every tent is weighted properly.

How to weight them? Since we had a playground with sand we could borrow, we bought cheap empty sand bags from Home Depot and had a team fill them up, wheelbarrow them around, and tie them down with rope.

[Giant tents](#)—like 100' long tents that create indoor space—are hugely expensive (thousands of dollars for each day) and likely out of your budget. Also, in our county, permits pulled at least 7 days in advance are required to erect big event tents. If you are still interested, Google “tent event rental” for your area.

## Power

Number one thing about electricity is that you definitely will want to identify or hire an electrician to help you spec out your equipment needs and to layout the power distribution at your event.

Be sure to ask how many “amps” (amperes) are available for distribution when you rent your venue. Also ask your makers how many amps they require on their maker application. Most will say 5 amps. Some might need 10 or even 20. Your stage might need 20 or 30 amps. Some special maker exhibits featuring electricity could ask for 220 volts or even three-phase power; forward these requests to your electrician.

Once you have a layout and a site map, you can label or color-code each maker space with the number of amps each space requires. Sometimes you will choose to shift your maker space assignments to balance power loads, or to eliminate unnecessary long power runs for just one maker.

*HINT: volts x amps = watts. This is a GREAT equation to remember when you're producing an event. In the U.S., most power is 110 volts (though electric dryers*

*typically need 220 volts). An average household circuit is 15 or 20 amps. Most consumer electronic devices have a little label on them that will tell you how many watts or amps they draw. If you know two of these three numbers in this equation, you can figure out the third. For example: if you have a stage light that is using a 500 watt bulb, and you know you are on 110 volt power or circuit, you can plug those into that equation and know that light will need about 4.5 amps. And if that light is on a 20 amp circuit, you can only add 3 more of those same lamps before you risk tripping that circuit breaker.*

## Internet

Ask your makers on their application if they will need Internet access. You can also choose to ask if they will need a “wired” or Ethernet cable drop, or if WIFI is sufficient. (Very few if zero will need an actual Ethernet cable drop, and if they ask for it, double-check to see that they *really* need it.) Find out from your venue what kind of internet network is available, and what passwords are needed to distribute it.

If the venue claims to have a network, test it! Use a speed test tool like <http://www.speakeasy.net/speedtest/>, and check the number of bars and speed of page loads with a mobile laptop in every conceivable corner of your venue. You do not want to be trouble-shooting internet access at the last minute.

You may find you don’t have enough signal and choose to install your own temporary network, or add repeaters to extend the existing network. If this is the case, you will want to designate or hire an Internet network person and rent the necessary gear.

*HINT: You do not want an open WIFI network at your event—your visitors will overwhelm it with cell phone data requests and your makers will be out of luck. Make sure it is password protected, and that your makers and your staff know the password.*

## Communications

Rent or borrow walkie-talkies for your event. If your event is large, rent high-end production radios (for improved range) from an event or film production rental house. High-end radios often come with headsets that can be convenient for hands-free multi-tasking.

You’ll need more radios than you think. Roles that likely need to be on radio include:

- Executive Event Producer
- Maker Assistant
- Registration/Check-In
- Maker Registration
- Operations & Logistics Lead
- Venue Liaison
- Volunteer Coordinator

- Stage Manager
- Workshop Manager
- Theme or Area Supervisors (Swap-O-Rama-Rama, Vendor Area, etc)
- Greeters (during load-in)
- Remote Parking Attendants
- Security Team Members

*HINT:* If you hire a security team, clarify whether they will supply their own radios and determine how they will interface with your channels/frequencies/brand.

### Vehicles/Equipment

Larger events may require forklifts, scooters, and golf carts for production purposes. Even though our site was pretty large (4 acres), we were able to get away with using carts and hand trucks and people. The larger equipment (staging) was rented, and it included set-up and strike labor.

### Food/Beverage

Food and beverage vendors should be self-sufficient. Your health department will provide you with guidelines that any food vendor (including yourself) need to adhere to. Don't procrastinate looking into these requirements! (More on permitting in [Interfacing With Local Agencies.](#))

You should plan for a certain amount of seating and shade near your food vendors, and also consider proximity of restrooms and portable hand washing stations.

*HINT: If your event is in a very hot climate, can you get a water company to sponsor free water coolers sprinkled throughout your event?*

### Restrooms

There is a good grid available [here](#) to help you figure the number of portapotties, handicapped restrooms, and hand washing facilities to rent. Remember to count the existing building and venue restrooms when calculating your rental needs.

### Cleaning

You want to make sure your restrooms and eating areas and trash receptacles stay tidy throughout the day of your event. Determine cleaning responsibilities ahead of time and plan accordingly.

*HINT: If your event is primarily volunteer-driven, spend money on good, reliable cleaning staff, both during and after the event. Volunteers don't want to clean or organize trash.*

## Insurance and Legal Guidelines

You will need have some kind of liability insurance for your event. If your organization owns the event venue site, you can call your current insurance company and ask them if you need to purchase an additional rider to cover the event.

If you are renting the venue, secure your insurance rider before signing a rental agreement. Essentially, you have to have the intent to hold a safe event. Part of demonstrating this intent is in the care you take with your makers, managing them well and by complying with all safety regulations and permits.

You can also articulate this intent via waivers. However, in the U.S., waivers are notoriously *not* a full-protection against lawsuits. You can take certain steps, however, to educate your participants, and remind them to be mindful and to act responsibly. Ways you can do this:

- Waiver language in your “event information” field in your online ticketing service.
- Waiver language in your online ticketing order confirmation.
- Waiver language in your maker, sponsor and vendor agreements.
- Waiver language on your printed tickets.
- Include waiver signing in your entrance registration in exchange for wrist bands that allow access to rides and other exhibits OR staff waiver/wristband at lines for specific exhibits and rides.

## Interfacing with Local Agencies

Permits! Depending on the scale and scope of your event and your local government guidelines, there you will probably need to pull some permits. You may find, as we did, that as soon as you obtain one permit, others will follow; you’ll likely need to be brave and draw a line at some point or they will overwhelm your budget! *Please be advised that this section is especially oriented for the United States’ government structure and habits.*

Start early. Many of these permits require beginning the permit process at least 30 days in advance. Giving yourself time means getting to know the administrators and making friends in “high” places, as opposed to rushing and hounding bureaucrats who have the power to make your event crumble.

Another reason to start early is that you may need the following documents already in place to even apply for your permits:

- Evidence of insurance.
- Rental contract with venue.
- Business license or proof of non-profit/charitable status.
- Site plan.
- Evidence of contract with security services firm.

- Copies of advertisements for event.

The kinds of permits that you are most likely to need are:

1. Special Event Permit, including Outdoor Sound Permit (Police Dept. or City Administration)
2. Health Permit (County Health Department)
3. Fire Permit (City Fire Department)
4. Alcoholic Beverage Permit (State Alcoholic Beverage Control Board)

**1. Special Event Permit.** In our city, any gathering over fifty people in a public place is required to pay a fee and provide information on the event. Obviously many events—especially those on private property—bypass this bureaucracy, but we discovered when we investigated getting a fire permit (which was the one we were most concerned with, as the fire department here is a notorious event-squasher) that we were first required to have an approved special event permit from the police department.

Getting the approved permit was simple enough: we called the local precinct and followed the referrals. One officer at a particular precinct with *very limited hours* was our contact. We filled out the form, submitted the form and check in person, and walked out with our approved special event permit.

**2. Health Permit.** Every agency will likely vary, but our county health department had two levels of permitting we were required to deal with: a “sponsor” permit that we had to pay, and individual “temporary” permits that the vendors needed to obtain. The health department is known for coming to inspect vendors for violations the morning of the event, so becoming familiar with the requirements is recommended.

**3. Fire Permit.** We knew some of our makers’ exhibits would be fire-centric, so protecting the public and following safety rules was important. Plus our fire department is known for shutting events down that don’t pull permits.

Besides flame-throwers, our fire permit also provided for *any* open flame—including bbqs and candles but also torches, furnaces, as well as other heat-generating devices or fuel like soldering irons, propane, and welders. They also cared about tents, stages, food booths, event layout, fire extinguishers, and exits. It turns out there was a lot to discuss about a Maker Faire with the fire department.

And you will likely be inspected. A majority of our city’s permit was explicitly to pay for staff time for the morning-of event / venue inspection.

*HINT: Before engaging the fire department, we asked a local cornerstone of our maker/fire arts community for advice. They provided contact information for a fire chief they recommended, who thankfully was already familiar some of our makers. Makers he*

*didn't know were required to submit a "fire plan" to him (see [Interfacing with Local Agencies](#) for more on this). We also took advantage of his willingness to come tour the site in advance and give us feedback on our site planning.*

**4. Alcohol Permit.** In California, temporary permits to serve beer or wine are available from a state agency. Your local health department may also require additional information.

*Hint: Our security company was willing to keep our security staff numbers (and cost) low because we were not serving alcohol. Obviously the proceeds from alcohol sales would likely have covered the increase, but it's good to remember the relationship.*

## Safety Plans

As host of hundreds if not thousands of people and children, you have a responsibility to ensure the safety of your guests. First get the venue's existing safety plan. Share it with your security team and your volunteers. Then craft your own point-by-point plan.

Your safety plan should encompass:

1. Exits
2. Walkways
3. Booth and exhibit layout
4. Crowd control & barricades
5. Fire extinguishers
6. Security
7. First aid
8. Lost people

**1. Exits.** Pre-think how your crowd would exit in case of emergency, and clarify this with your volunteers and security team ahead of time. If it's a larger event, staff security at exits and keep them open. Also place exit signage at regular intervals (our fire permit required them every 100 ft.; we made xerox copies of "EXIT" and of arrows going different directions, enclosed them in plastic sheet protectors, and then staple gunned and taped them in line-of-sight locations.) Never cover existing exit signage.

**2. Walkways.** Make sure people can move freely, including people in wheelchairs. Plan a 10' minimum across, and 20' minimum from any double-door access.

**3. Booth layout.** Too many booths in a row will prevent safe circulation of your crowd. Our fire department wanted walkways every 60 ft. Anything with fire will need adequate perimeter barriers, as well as protected fuel storage area.

**4. Crowd control & barricades.** Some maker demonstrations are either so popular or dangerous enough that you will need to cordon off a performance space. Renting [crowd control barricades](#) is the high budget and low-labor way of doing this, though moving them around a large venue can require a forklift. You can also use caution tape and [a-frame traffic barricades](#) or folding [traffic barricades](#), or put some makers or volunteers on improvising barricades with found materials. (The fire department may have something to say about your materials choice.)

**5. Fire extinguishers.** Never block or cover an existing installed fire extinguisher. Plant additional extinguishers at the ready at regular intervals throughout your space and orient your volunteers and security staff on how to deploy them. Either provide your “fire plan” makers with extinguishers, or require that they bring their own. Your fire department will instruct you on the particulars.

**6. Security.** A security staff can help you manage crowds, protect your exits, roam your event for dangerous scenarios and people, protect and transfer money, monitor grounds and exhibits for theft, offer directions and information, and be liaison to police if necessary. They should be on radio communication and be identifiable (shirts or other uniform).

While it is possible to man a security team with volunteers, like the cleaning crew we chose to pay for the peace of mind and reliability of a team contracted to provide the service. They promised guards who have been trained in certain situations, who had worked in teams, and who had expertise in the area far beyond us.

If you hire a security team, ask them to provide you with a written security plan. This should include the hours they are working and number of guards, where they will be stationed at what times (give them your site map). Ask them to articulate their process for emergencies. You will also need to agree ahead of time on in and out policies (hand stamps for exiting attendees so they can re-enter? re-entry at every gate or just the main entrance?).

*Hint: If you enable load-in to your venue the night before your event, you will likely need security on your site overnight.*

**7. First Aid.** Offer the public a home base for first aid. You can hire an emergency medical technician (EMT) team for your event, but we chose to staff this role with volunteer MDs from our parent community. We gave them shifts and they were on-radio for reporting to the first aid station when needed (but we didn’t get a single first aid request).

**8. Lost People.** This is a good reason for your volunteers and security staff be easily identifiable. Kids get separated from parents and parents get anxious; it’s nice if there are people around who look like they can help. Articulate a procedure for volunteers and use your sound system to broadcast any announcements of lost people.

*HINT: Never announce that you have a lost child over the public address system. Announce instead that you are looking for a lost parent or lost adult. When a lost adult is “found” and responds, ask the parent for the lost child’s name to make sure they are not an imposter. Watch the reaction to make sure the child is familiar with the “lost adult.”*

### Propane, Gasoline, and Other Fuel

It is very possible most Mini Maker Faire producers will never have to deal with fire permits or makers who excel in fire arts. However, if your call for makers attracts glass blowers, blacksmiths, or welders you will likely be entering the world of fire permits and fuel storage.

Food vendors using any fuel are likely required to be inspected by the fire department as well. Most of their compliance, however, comes via the health permit process. (Please see [Interfacing with Local Agencies](#).)

Vendors and makers utilizing fuel in exhibits and storing fuel on site will need to complete and submit a fire plan ([see a sample fire plan here](#)). A fire plan is a document that describes the use of fire in an exhibit, and articulates the risks and the risk mitigation strategies for using a fire in a public venue. Depending on your fire inspector, you may need to submit your maker fire plans to the fire department or the inspector himself as well.

There are many regulations around fuel storage at an event like a Mini Maker Faire. Your maker-with-fire should be familiar with these regulations; if they are not and are not able to assemble a quality fire plan, it is advised that you decline that maker’s application. You should also confer with your maker community for endorsements of a maker’s fire safety reputation. If your fire arts maker applicant is known in the community for safe and sane practices, they are likely responsible; if they are not known to others in the community at all, take a harder look. Make a studio visit, see the exhibit first-hand.

### Interactive Experiences

Maker Faire encourages exhibits to be as hands-on as possible. People might learn to hold a soldering gun, ride a goofy bike, silkscreen a piece of clothing, play a musical instrument, launch a rocket, operate a remote control robot, or explore a cardboard jungle.

Many of these interactions are completely new to your attendee. Here are some ways to design exhibits for the complete amateur:

- Offer as many “teachers” as possible.
- Use signage or hand-outs to help guide the user.
- Supply sufficient lighting and safety gear.



- Design your booth to manage the people you are interacting with (e.g., one chair per user).
- Provide a place for people to wait their turn.

*HINT: We found it difficult for the makers' written text descriptions to fully explain how their interactive exhibit worked. When in doubt, call your maker and have a conversation! You can accomplish much exhibit clarification and even improvement in just 5 minutes of talking.*

### Tools

People need to concentrate when trying new tools, especially ones that can injure. Try and locate these exhibits in quieter areas. Help the maker design the space so that there is enough real estate and enough teaching staff for the activity. Other tips:

- Soldering irons: enforce eye protection and individual instruction.
- Glue guns: use the lower heat versions.
- Sewing machines: have teachers floating, helping.
- Hand saws, hammers and nails: have Band-Aids nearby.
- Silk screens: people should be advised they may get ink on their clothes!

### Accessibility Plan

People with disabilities will come to your Faire. Your venue should already be [ADA](#) compliant, but you need to plan access routes and exhibits accordingly. (You are responsible for any of ADA requirements of structures you bring into the event.)

Some simple guidelines include:

- Plan 10' aisles.
- Plan 20' clearance from any double-doors.
- Purchase or rent "[yellow jacket](#)" cord covers for high-traffic walkways where wheelchairs might travel.

## RESOURCES

### Recommended Vendors & Pricing Guidelines

This table is included to help you formulate your draft budget for rentals and some basic event supplies.

**REMEMBER THAT ALL RENTALS LIKELY INCLUDE SIGNIFICANT DELIVERY AND SET-UP CHARGES THAT CAN GREATLY INFLATE COSTS.**

ITEM	NOTE	URL	AVERAGE COST
Maker Faire flags ("pennant strings" with red, yellow, green, blue, orange, white)	100' strings. Buy as thick of plastic as you can afford to maximize reuse (thickness is expressed in "mil" in product descriptions).	<a href="http://www.signoutfitters.com/chooseyourcolorspennantstring-9x12triangle-60ftlong.aspx">http://www.signoutfitters.com/chooseyourcolorspennantstring-9x12triangle-60ftlong.aspx</a>	100' = \$8.50
cable ties	volume pack for hanging flags	<a href="http://uline.com">uline.com</a>	
banners	Banners need to have either grommet holes or sleeves for hanging. Sleeves require PVC pipe inserts; they keep banners hanging straight in the wind.	<a href="http://aaaflag.com">aaaflag.com</a> <a href="http://psprint.com">psprint.com</a>	34" x 86" = \$150
directional signage	Avoid throw-away materials like foamcore and cardboard if you can. Go for the "maker" reuse or home-made aesthetic. Use fat, paint Sharpie markers for script.	<a href="http://bit.ly/gcb5aR">http://bit.ly/gcb5aR</a>	materials &
chairs			\$1 to \$3

tables			\$8 to \$12
picnic tables			\$8 to \$15
park benches			\$8 to \$15
posters	8.5"x11 " are practical sizes for mailing, but if you have a great poster design and intend to do a lot of postering, spring for the 11" x 17" size.	psprint.com	11" x 17" (500) = \$250
postcards		psprint.com	5x7 (5,000) = \$300, 8x5 (7000) = \$1,243 4x6 (6000) = \$525
stickers			
tents (large)	In the Bay Area you start needing special permits and paying fees for tents bigger than 20'x20'. "Festival top" tents look great - put Maker Faire flag pennant strings on before they are raised! Make sure delivery and set up include staking or weighting with water jugs.	topproductions.com; your local party supply and/or production events rental house.	10x10 = \$125 10x20 = \$250 20x20 = \$275 20x30 = \$375 20x40 = \$550
traffic barricades	Maker Faire buys tall cones instead of using A-frame construction traffic barricades.		\$4
crowd control barricades	Try to see if your police department or public works department will lend you these for discounted price or for free.	<a href="http://www.glenstents.com/barricade-rentals.html">http://www.glenstents.com/barricade-rentals.html</a>	\$11 each

forklift rental	Ask your makers - this is an expense you can likely avoid by borrowing one, or with volunteer labor and carts.		\$450
stages	Risers (stage pieces) come in 4x8' or 4x6' sections, and 24", 32" or 36" high; call your tenting or party vendor for details on configurations. Research your options for renewable-power stages that come complete with off-grid sound systems and lighting.		12 X 16 X 24 = \$280, steps an additional \$20, skirting another \$18.75
cyclone fencing	You can use cyclone fencing to section off areas for focused activity or bike parking. 4" high fence is friendly, but 6" high fencing allows for hanging signage.		\$1.50 - \$2 linear foot
misc prod. needs	download the Excel price list for many examples of items you may actually need to have on hand, and costs examples for renting.	<a href="http://ranahan.com/">http://ranahan.com/</a>	

*Again, REMEMBER THAT ALL RENTALS LIKELY INCLUDE SIGNIFICANT DELIVERY AND SET-UP CHARGES THAT CAN GREATLY INFLATE COSTS.*

## MOBILIZING A VOLUNTEER TEAM

### Recruitment

Your Mini Maker Faire event is going to require a labor force beyond the size of your leadership team. One of your leadership team roles will necessarily be event volunteer manager. This person's job is to work with the logistics team and the executive producer to identify the volunteer jobs, and then to promote and badger until he or she gets those slots filled.

Remember beyond sheer numbers, you'll also need some area leaders. area Leaders can help an overloaded leadership team members stay more available on the day-of the event. Examples: registration, tents, electrical, parking, clean up. Try and recruit these folks in advance.

Incentives help to recruit volunteers. If your Mini Maker Faire costs money, free tickets to the event is the obvious choice. Articulate how many hours of volunteering equal how many free tickets. Otherwise, swag (t-shirts, stickers, Make Magazines) or donated gift certificates can work too.

Publicize the Call for Volunteers through every means necessary: Facebook, newsletters, Twitter, CraigsList, newspapers, radio. Emails to individuals connected directly to your sponsoring organization(s) are likely to produce the most sign-ups. Ask your current volunteers to reach out themselves.

If possible, get volunteers to sign an agreement. (See [Volunteer Agreement](#) below.) You don't want people to flake out at the last minute; signing an agreement will likely filter the flakes in advance.

Train your volunteers. Gather them before the event to go over expectations, rules, the site plan, and the safety plan.

Identify your volunteers with [badges/credentials](#) or [t-shirts](#).

Lastly, after your event, celebrate your volunteers! Throw a pizza party, hand out swag, honor them in your blog.

*HINT: [WeJoinIn.com](#) and [Jooners.com](#) are easy, free, online sign-up sheet tools designed for this very purpose. Create an "event" and promote the link. Volunteers can sign-up online. Here are some sample, super simple WeJoinIn.com sign up sheets from our 2010 East Bay Mini Maker Faire:*

- [Day-before](#)
- [Day-of](#)
- [Day-after](#)

## Communication

No matter what way you get them to commit (sign up sheet or agreement), you'll need their email address and mobile phone number so that you can be in-touch with Volunteers both before and during the event.

Have a clear process and check-in location for volunteers at your Faire (this is important also so the manager can re-distribute labor as needed). Give them [t-shirts](#) or [badges](#) or some other identifying mark. Remember to thank them afterward, and offer them a survey or some other feedback mechanism for comments and suggestions.

Do your best to empower volunteers! Some of the jobs will require some training and orientation, or at least lists of tasks. Area managers should be able to make these task lists and/or articulate processes. They also are the ones to lead orientations.

Areas that should definitely have some orientation/pre-articulated processes:

- Registration / Ticketing
- Maker Check-in
- Information
- Security
- Parking
- Food Booths

## Volunteer Agreements

The large Maker Faires ask volunteers to sign a volunteer agreement to minimize no-shows and to increase commitment to the event. Write [minimakerfaire@oreilly.com](mailto:minimakerfaire@oreilly.com) if you would like to see an example of a volunteer agreement.

# Marketing The Event

## MARKETING PLAN SAMPLE

Articulating your marketing goals and strategies from the get-go will organize and focus your efforts—even if it's only an outline.

Here are some questions to ask and try and answer for your marketing plan:

- What are your attendance goals?
- Who are your audiences? Can you map particular outreach strategies for each audience?

- What are your primary vehicles for promoting your event? Probably these will include:
  - Media sponsorships
  - Website
  - Social media presence
  - Your Makers's Websites, Mailing Lists, etc
  - Editorial placement (news stories about your event)
  - Calendar listings
  - Public Service Announcements
  - Posters
  - Postcard mailings
  - Email blasts
- Are there any big challenges to promoting your event?

## TICKETING MECHANISMS

If you are using an online ticketing service like [Eventbrite](#) (see [Ticketing Program](#)), there are a plethora of marketing mechanisms that can really improve visibility for your event.

### Discount Codes

Giving your makers, vendors, sponsors and other partners a custom code that gives X% off to their community is a great way of marketing your Faire. That custom code name is just enough reason to push your partners to message all their community on your behalf.

This can include a comp ticket code for 100% off for passing on to VIPs, neighbors, elected officials, media and sponsors you want to court for next year.

### Affiliate Programs

Eventbrite also has an easy affiliate marketing program whereby partners can receive a % of a ticket sale. This is a good outreach mechanism for school PTA programs and other youth programs.

## WEBSITE

### Building A Site

Building a website has gotten easier, but it's still not "turn-key." Unless you have an individual on your leadership team who is an expert and is committed to owning the development of a custom website (no small feat), we recommend you utilize the blog building and hosting site, [Wordpress.com](#).

Basic Wordpress is [free](#) (though you can [pay](#) a little for some customization), and has a good [tutorial](#) on how to build a website using their templates and servers. It offers over 100

templates (designs) to choose from, clear analytics (usage data on your site), and an easy-to-use management interface.

Some basics to follow:

**1. Register your Domain name (URL).** GoDaddy.com is an inexpensive domain purchasing and registration site (don't purchase hosting). Or you can do it all at Wordpress: [registration](#), site building tool, and free hosting.

**2. If you used GoDaddy, or you already own your URL: Create your [Wordpress](#) account.** Again, the reasons to use Wordpress are for the excellent toolkit and the free hosting.

**3. If you used GoDaddy, or you already own your URL: Map your domain to your Wordpress site.** Wordpress names your site after them (e.g., "ebmakerfaire.wordpress.com"). You will want to promote your short, non-Wordpress URL ("ebmakerfaire.com") and make sure all the stats and ranking stays with the URL you own, not Wordpress'. To do this, you will need to tell your URL domain manager to redirect traffic to the Wordpress site. [Follow these directions](#) on how to map your domain. You'll need to login to GoDaddy or your domain registration service and copy some addresses over to the Wordpress back-end.

**4. Set up your email addresses.** Since you own your unique URL you can have email addresses to that URL. [Wordpress has instructions](#) how to set up free email addresses through Google Groups. Make sure to at least set up [info@\\_\\_\\_\\_.com](#) as an vehicle for the public to reach you (all 3 leadership team members were set up to receive this mail).

**5. Content: think through information hierarchy.** In other words, what are the main sections of your site (and highest level navigational buttons)? Here are some common pages you might use:

**Home.** This is your starting page, as well as where your blog rolls, most recent post up front. Logo should be in your header, with some additional very clear text on where your event is, When it is, and how to get involved and/or purchase tickets.

**About.** This is your event back story. Who is your group? What are your goals? And then please use [this About section text](#) to explain Make, Maker Faire and O'Reilly.

**Call for Makers (after the Call ends, replace with a list of participating makers).** Explain what you are looking for, when to apply, and either embed your application form or link to it. Once the Call is closed, the page can be replaced by a page called "makers" where you list all your participants (and link to their websites).



**Sponsorship.** If you are looking for either media or business partnerships, describe the levels of opportunities here. (See [Suggested Sponsorship and Exhibitor Packages](#).)

**Media Center.** Make it easy for people to promote your Faire. Things you can post for sharing & reproduction:

- PDF of press release.
- Banner ads.
- PDF of poster(s).
- Logo.
- Links to reproducible image sets.

**Buy Tickets.** You can devote a whole page to ticket purchasing, but it might be more effective (and one less click for your users) to insert a bright button on your website that drives traffic straight to your ticket sale page.

**6. Build your site.** Use Wordpress's [step-by-step how-to site](#). Use [widgets](#) to liven up the sidebars of your blog. There are widgets from Twitter (recent Tweets) and Flickr, and widgets for an author grid (to give credit where credit is due), recent posts, and tag clouds.

**7. Write static content.** Write and plug your text into the appropriate pages.

**8. Identify needed design assets.** You may need to design some buttons (“Buy Tickets Now!”). Proof and test—it’s always amazing what simple things get missed.

**9. Write and publish your first post!** See [Blog \(Website\) Content Ideas](#) below.

*HINT: Be sure to add plenty of tags with phrases and words related to Maker Faire (science, engineering, DIY, do it yourself, art, kinetic sculpture, hands-on, progressive education, maker faire, make...) These tags help Google find your website.*

**10. Promote your site.** Use your social media channels to drive traffic to your blog. Email everyone and let them know it’s live.

### Blog (Website) Content Ideas

The purpose of a blog is to allow for new content to populate or “post” to the site whenever you have any. It’s generally arranged chronologically, with the main “feed” of postings loading in the primary column of your home page.

Every time you publish a new article or “blog post,” you have an opportunity to drive traffic to your site and bring attention to your Faire. It may seem overwhelming to become a blogger in addition to all your other tasks, but it is a role that can be shared. Enlist your leadership team

and perhaps a volunteer journalist to take turns covering different aspects of the Faire they are focused on.

Here are some basic types of content that your audience will enjoy and that isn't too demanding to produce:

**About Maker Faire and Your Maker Faire.** Introduce your audience to Maker Faire and MAKE. Stir emotions with your passion for Maker Faire. Tell everyone why you're in it, and who is in with you.

Maker Faire also requests that you include particular About language explaining MAKE, Maker Faire, and O'Reilly Media. Please see [Partnering With Maker Faire](#) for the actual language.

**Meet the Maker.** Publish interviews or profiles of individual makers. This is where you can provide some payback to the makers that are providing all this gravity for your event. Show them off! Give them the attention they deserve. Check out [makezine.com](#) for [examples of maker interviews](#).

*HINT: Find a budding or real journalist and get them to volunteer to write and produce a whole series of "meet the maker" posts. Delegate!*

**Meet the Themed Areas—and Your Community.** Along the lines of meet the maker posts, you can do a survey of all the resources of a particular kind (e.g., hacker spaces, tool libraries, or urban gardening nodes) available to your town, region, or neighborhood. This kind of information is valuable to your audience, endears them to you, and is the kind of post that gets shared and forwarded in social media circles.

**How to be a Sponsor.** Promote your sponsorship opportunities and profile some early investors.

**Volunteer!** Describe the jobs that need to get done, and what folks will get out of it.

**Workshop Schedule and Performer Lineup.** Attendees want to know before they get to your event how they should organize their time. If you don't post this, they will ask for it.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a very inexpensive way of building momentum for your event. It's also a great way to build awareness and a year-round channel for maker events and opportunities in your area. You will also immediately begin to assemble an audience that will do the work of promoting your fun and interesting event for you.

## How can you use social media?

**Use social media to share news about your local maker community.** Cover beekeepers, the local biofuels collective and the Arduino users group. The diversity of content will immediately reinforce your public's understanding about what a maker and a Maker Faire is—and demonstrate that your “mini” Faire is the real thing!

**Give updates on the development of your Faire.** Did you just confirm some famous kite-maker for a demo? How did the maker open house go last night? Tweet it!

**Write teasers for every blog post you publish.** You spent time crafting that blog post, so drive traffic to it with a clever or intriguing Tweet or Facebook post.

**Promote ticket sales.** Push the earlybird deadline, your affiliate programs with the local school district, ticket giveaway campaigns, discount codes—share information about a market opportunity and a means for taking action (a link to your ticket sale site!).

Start your social media presence as soon as you have a confirmed license agreement. The primary channels at this point are Facebook and Twitter.

## Facebook

You have to have a personal identity to create a [page](#) on Facebook. (Groups are now for smaller, less public affiliations—kind of like Google Groups.) Facebook has broad reach, but you'll find that your personal identity is likely to be sacrificed a bit in your role as representative of the page. Why? Because to build affiliations and get their news in your Facebook stream (with the aim of sharing it), you will need to personally “like” the other pages. For this reason, you want the person who owns this page to be the authentic, central voice of the event.

## Twitter

Tweets are short: 140 characters maximum, likely including a link to some explanatory content. Twitter handles are short versions of your name, with an “@” sign in front of it. For example, the East Bay Mini Maker Faire Twitter handle is [@ebmakerfaire](#).

Twitter can seem like the latest way to waste time (since Facebook), but before you discount Twitter, you should understand the many advantages of using Twitter.

**Hashtags can introduce you to makers that you did not know.** [“Hashtags are a community-driven convention for adding additional context and metadata to your tweets... You create a hashtag simply by prefixing a word with a hash symbol: #hashtag.”](#) The hashtag for Maker Faire is #makerfaire.

Hashtags are especially useful around time-sensitive events (“trending topics”). For example: you're watching the President give the State of the Union Address. In real-time, you can read

immediate reactions to the Address by searching for Tweets with the hashtag #SOTU (State of the Union). (It's useful to use a free third-party application like [Tweetdeck](#) or Tweetwhirl to search hashtags.)

As you read that real-time community “news” stream, you will notice interesting people or organizations tweeting that you will want to “follow.” This is a good way of finding out about Makers and community groups that you were not yet aware of and—if you tweet and also use that hashtag—lets them know about you. This begins to build your Twitter identity.

The same thing happens with #makerfaire. People will use your handle (e.g. @ebmakerfaire) and #makerfaire before, during, and after your event.

**Twitter is an incredible tool for sharing real-time updates just before and during your event.** Announce when time-sensitive demos and workshops or performances are about to begin. Tweet when a parking lot is full. Tweet to promote under populated or hidden areas or super cool maker exhibits.

*HINT: You can [set up your Tweets to automatically post to Facebook](#). This allows you to share information in both worlds to both users at the same time. The downside? Links in your Tweet feed will not automatically expand when they post to Facebook, so your Facebook posts will be less visual. And Facebook users often get confused by Twitter conventions and symbols.*

## PRINT

Paper and other printed marketing materials are still very effective. They are expensive compared to digital media, so just budget accordingly.

### Business Cards

Print these as soon as you have a website URL and an email address. They are cheap, and they lend your Faire credibility as you meet-and-greet.

You can refer to these [Make Magazine staff business cards](#) or these [East Bay Mini Maker Faire cards](#) for design direction.

### Posters

Event posters convey the spirit of your event. Include “Who, What, Where, When” and compelling images of fabulous examples of maker genius and maker fun. Stick to the clear Maker Faire aesthetic—remember, your brand is golden!

Distribution of posters can be a challenge. Where they are hung and seen help create context for your faire and your audience. Try and have one or two people devoted to strategic poster placement.

Your extended network can pitch in too: encourage people to take a stack (offer it rolled up with a rubber band to protect the posters) and leave it in their car, along with a roll of tape and a stapler. Post anywhere they go—dry cleaners, coffee shop, school, supermarket.

You can also enlist volunteers from the community and offer free event tickets in exchange. Ask them to email photos of their placements (maybe 5?) once they are done—after receiving the evidence you can give them a comp or two.

You can refer to this [East Bay Mini Maker Faire 11x17" poster](#) or this [Maker Faire Bay Area 8.5x11" flyer](#) for design direction.

### Postcards

If you have a strong “snail-mail” list, you might find it worthwhile to print postcards. Just remember to budget in the postage.

You can also use them as your person-to-person hand-out item, or leave them in stacks with partners.

You can use [Maker Faire's postcard](#) for design direction.

### Banners

This is another chance to feature your fabulous, recognizable Mini Maker Faire logo. Hang banners at your entrance, behind your performers on the main stage (great branding in photos!), and in visible spots around your venue. Make sure you ask for grommets and/or sewn sleeves for poles, and have your supplier cut wind slits in them if you think you will use them outside.

### Program

Printed programs with a map and a schedule of events is a nice way to orient and welcome your guests. It's also a good way to thank your sponsors.

You can do this pretty cheaply. The East Bay Mini Maker Faire produced an 11x17" black and white piece that we folded in half to make a cover (where we thanked our sponsors), a center map spread, and a back with a program of workshops etc.

See this sample flyer design from the East Bay Mini Maker Faire for design ideas ([outside page](#) & [inside page](#) - folded in half).

## Other Design Assets

Here are some other assets from Maker Faire that you can borrow and customize (refer to Index for complete listing).

- [Maker Faire Crew T-Shirt](#)
- [Maker Faire Volunteer T-Shirt](#)
- [Maker Faire Maker/Staff Lanyard Credential](#)
- [Maker Faire Flags](#)
- [Maker Faire 300x250 Banner Ad](#)
- [East Bay Mini Maker Faire 300x250 Banner Ad](#)
- [East Bay Mini Maker Faire 150x180 Banner Ad](#)
- [East Bay Mini Maker Faire 720x90 Banner Ad](#)

## **EMAIL MARKETING**

Email is still a hugely effective way of promoting your event. Just use email sparingly; write carefully crafted, succinct messages, and don't send them too often.

Sources for email lists include:

- Sponsoring organizations' membership email lists.
- Ticket purchasers (if you are using Eventbrite.com or some other online service).
- Voluntary email subscriptions from your website.
- Master maker list (all the people you mailed Call for Makers announcements to).
- "Accepted" makers list.

Keep in mind that using a personal account to send vast quantities of email can get your address marked as a "spammer." E-blast tools like streamsend.com, constantcontact.com, and verticalresponse.com help you avoid that—and they all have free trials, low prices, analytics, and helpful email creation and management interfaces.

*HINT: "Members" of the sponsoring organizations (e.g., parents of the school, or especially active members of the museum) should be encouraged through email to forward promotional information about your Faire to other email lists they belong to. For example, almost every family in our school belongs to a sports team, book club, or some other activity group. Avoid HTML emails when you have this purpose in mind, as HTML is notoriously lost in translation when forwarded.*

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Editorial coverage of your event is free advertising. Maker Faire is genuinely interested, and you will likely get generous coverage of your event with minimal effort.

## Press Releases

The industry standard for communicating with newspapers, blogs, television, magazines and radio is to craft a press release for whatever message or news you are wanting them to cover. Opportunities include:

- Mini Maker Faire Call for Makers is Open!
- Mini Maker Faire Call for Makers is Closing on \_\_\_\_!
- Mini Maker Faire: Geeks and Families Come Together (or some other spin on the essence of your Faire, and why it's so fun)
- Famous Person \_\_\_\_\_ is Coming to the Maker Faire

You are welcome to copy and customize this [sample Call for Makers press release](#).

## Media Contact Information

Assemble or borrow contact information for relevant media outlets. Keep and grow your lists over time, and categorize them by media type. Some types have different requirements, lead times and interests: e.g. news departments don't really want your calendar announcement. Print magazines need at least 2 months advance notice; entertainment weeklies closer to one month.

*HINT: As the media market shrinks, it's more important than ever to build relationships with reporters. Minimize blasting releases and instead pitch writers individually for coverage. You'll get a better response in this competitive market if you demonstrate that you know who you are approaching and what they like to cover. Still send the press release, but start it with a personal note that introduces the content in your release. Also—your release is more likely to be read if it's included as email text (as opposed to an attachment).*

## Talking to Media

Identify your media liaison—who is best at explaining your Faire is, what makes it unique, and why it's going to be great? (You'll need to provide contact information for this person in your press release.) If no one is a "natural," write "talking points" to prepare spokespersons for talking with media. Anticipate the questions and write out the answers; practice saying them until they feel natural.

*HINT: A week before your Faire, prepare a list of a range of makers and their contact information for sharing with reporters. Save it as a draft in your email. This way when the newspaper reporter calls you in the middle of load-in, you have something valuable to share to get them started.*

## APPEARING AT OTHER EVENTS

Having a visible presence at Farmers' markets, street fairs, and other community events are great ways of getting the word out about your event.

- Use your banners and “table” at an event and distribute postcards and printed materials, talk it up. Collect volunteer sign-ups, maker applications, and even sell tickets.
- Staple posters on poles and tape them in business windows just before a street fair or other community event in that location.
- Flyer parked cars with inexpensive and small flyers at an event that draws a similar demographic.
- [Build your own portable plywood tower poster kiosk](#) and install it temporarily at big events, farmers markets, etc—creating your own 3-D central signage station.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Everyone has a digital camera these days; crowd-source your documentation task. Promote a Flickr tag (e.g. “ebmakerfaire2010”) in advance. You can also message attendees and volunteers to share pictures via email ([info@ebmakerfaire.com](mailto:info@ebmakerfaire.com)) or post to the Facebook page.

Do make an effort to recruit (or hire, if you have the budget) a professional photographer to document your Faire as well. Great images make marketing year #2 that much easier.

*HINT: After the opening rush has subsided, someone from the Leadership Team should make a point of visiting every booth at the Faire. If that person is not a good photographer, arrange in advance to have one tag along. Making that time to stop and appreciate what you've assembled, meet each Maker face-to-face, and deliberately document every exhibit is extremely gratifying.*

## VIDEOS AND RICH MEDIA

Makers make great moving images! Rockets, robots, glass, bikes, kids are all compelling blog content. Invariably someone in your Team's network dabbles in multimedia of some kind—offer them your audience and a chance to do their stuff. You can post them on YouTube, Vimeo, SlideShare and embed them in your website. Some ideas:

- “Meet the Maker” interviews and shop visits.
- Produce a video PSA / commercial, or an audio slide show.
- Embed videos your makers have already produced.



# Week-Of and Day-Of Event

## SITE PREP

Planning ahead so that you have sufficient labor for site preparation is really important. Get your “ducks in a row” before your makers and vendors start arriving so you can fully focus on helping meet their last-minute needs, documentation, media, and as well as start to focus more on details that make for great attendee experience.

Before makers arrive, make sure *at least* the following is already in place:

- Maker check-In
- Electrical installation
- Internet setup and access
- Stages
- Any signage or other rigging tasks
- Any big exhibits requiring extensive installation
- Maker setup (tables, chairs, signage)
- Load-In street signage
- Restrooms
- Garbage & recycling
- First aid

## SECURITY

Have a team meeting prior to the event and go over the security plan with your crew. If you can possibly do this before the morning of the event, great. If not, do it the morning of the event. (Later shifts will have to get oriented at another time.) Run through:

- Entrance and exit procedures
- Shifts and staff changes
- [Lost person plan](#)
- Radio protocol
- Emergency plan

## MAKER AND VENDOR CHECK-IN

First, it's smart to have your maker check-in in a different location than your attendee check-in. (At least have separate tables.)

How you manage maker check-in depends on how you've processed their complimentary passes. The simplest procedure is to have a printed list of your makers with the number of comps (and ideally the name of those comped volunteers). Cross names off when people arrive. If your list is long, divide it up alphabetically and make corresponding check-in “lanes.”

If you are using Eventbrite and you have Internet, you can process makers much like ticket purchasers (see [“Registration & Entrance”](#) below).

When makers check-in, distribute any other remaining information, swag, and some maker identification. Badges or stickers or lanyards will help your makers get in and out during the day, plus it sets the makers apart from the crowd, making them feel good and helping the crowd know who to pay attention to.

*IMPORTANT: Even if makers are pre-armed with excellent directions and maps, many will need help locating their maker space. Make sure to have sufficient volunteers on radio communication placed in strategic areas to help guide your exhibitors to their spots. They will likely arrive all at once, so train your volunteers and be prepared.*

## **PERFORMER CHECK-IN**

Performer check-in is again very similar to maker check-in, except that performers are likely to be checking in throughout the day (vs. all at once in the morning). If performers are bringing in gear mid-day, plan for car access to backstage, and/or dollies and carts to help move gear.

## **VOLUNTEER CHECK-IN**

Volunteer check-in is very similar to maker check-in, and you will likely want them to enter through your maker check-in booth or gate. Your volunteer management honcho should be stationed there, or on radio with a “lieutenant.”

*HINT: Keep your volunteers happy with a steady supply treats, snacks, coffee and drinks.*

## **SPONSOR CHECK-IN**

Some sponsors will likely be exhibiting something. If so, they will likely be processed like your makers, and will need to check in with makers. If they are not exhibiting, they can enter with comp tickets (or as VIPs) through the regular entrance gate.

## **LOAD-IN AND LOAD-OUT**

Be explicit in your messaging to makers about load-in. Include a well-labeled site map in their load-in message, if at all possible.. Things to be clear about:

- Exact load-in and load-out times.
- Exact locations of entrance gates.
- Exact location of booth.
- Where they can park temporarily and unload.
- Where they park for the day after they unload.
- What equipment (if any) will be available to them.
- How and where they can find help.

At the East Bay Mini Maker Faire, we had load-in opportunities both the night before and the morning of. Most people came that morning, but bigger installations and makers using fire were required to load-in the night before.

Staff load-in generously. Locate radio-empowered greeters with maps in key entry areas and on each floor of buildings to help guide makers to their spots.

*HINT: Close load-in a minimum of 30 minutes before showtime so all vehicles are off site.*

## REGISTRATION & ENTRANCE

Registration and ticketing is your “first impression” with your attendees, so being organized, informed and well-prepared will help your faire get off to a great start in many ways. It’s very important to remember that the foremost function of registration or entrance is to GREET your visitors and ORIENT them to having a great time.

### Design and Staffing

Thus staffing your registration and entrance with volunteers who are well-trained and friendly is really important. Make sure they not only know how to do their jobs, but that they also understand what the event is, who it benefits (if it’s a fundraiser), who is sponsoring it, and who to go to for help with tricky questions or problems. You might create an [FAQ](#) and go over it during your training/orientation.

Other event design hints for registration to keep in mind:

- Decorate the area with Maker Faire flag pennant strings and banners. Make it look fun.
- Pass out any printed materials here ([e.g. a program or map](#)), or have big informational signage available once people get through the “gates.”
- Consider staffing an information table and posting a blow-up site map and program of events nearby.

Of course, your entrance system varies greatly depending on whether or not your event is free, and again by what ticket methodology you have chosen. Design the physical experience of your visitors to map onto the various entrance scenarios you have

devised. Create different lines or check-in tables for different purchasing methods (e.g. printed tickets vs. credit cards vs. cash at the door).

## Process

Here are some things to think about for each of the various entrance scenarios:

**Free Events.** If the event is free, you still will want to use registration/entrance to welcome your attendees and provide them with any printed materials or program. You may also want to have a sign-in sheet where people can give you their names and email addresses.

*HINT: Even if you want your event to be free, you might employ Eventbrite anyway to gather names and contact information. Then you will have a way to poll and communicate with your audience after the fact (including sharing the word about next year's Call for Makers and event information. **Eventbrite is FREE if your event is free**, and it's an [amazing tool](#), so we recommend you check it out.*

**Printed Tickets.** If you have sold printed tickets and are collecting these tickets at the door, you might want to use a clicker counter to track people as they enter the gate. Sometimes that's easier than counting tickets afterwards. If you want to try and grab their email address as they enter, perhaps create a free raffle that they sign up for (using an email address). Or ask them to sign up for your mailing list when you are passing out a map or program.

**Online Sales.** If you go with an all-digital registration, your attendees will likely have been give a PDF ticket in their email confirmation. Some people will not remember to bring their tickets, though, so you will need to check them in.

At the East Bay Mini Maker Faire, we used Eventbrite and had people divide themselves into two lines: those who had pre-purchased a ticket, and those who needed to buy tickets. Then:

1. **If they needed to purchase tickets**, they went to a table where we accepted cash or Visa.
2. **If they had printed out PDFs of their tickets**, we took the printouts and let them go right in.

This meant, however, that to get accurate attendance metrics we needed to go back into our ticketing tool after the fact and manually update the attendee list to show that those people did attend. This year, Eventbrite's check-in by iPhone scanner application should be working properly, and so we will likely utilize a smartphone to scan the barcodes on the printed tickets as we grab them.

3. **If they did not have their PDF ticket**, we manually checked them in on an alphabetized paper list of ticket purchasers downloaded from Eventbrite. You could also instead have someone online on a computer verifying and checking them in (we decided it would be faster to use paper).

**Pay at the Door: Cash.** Have one cash box for each ticket sales table seeded with a good variety of change. Remember to ask these people to sign up for your email list when they pay and enter.

*HINT: It's smart to not have ALL your cash at the front door. Plan a schedule with your security team for swapping out full cash boxes and taking them to your main (and secure) office.*

**Pay at the Door: Credit Cards.** Everyone is used to paying for things with credit cards, so if you're selling tickets at the door, you should have some solution for processing credit cards.

Ideally your sponsoring organization has an existing credit card transaction mechanism, and all you are doing is swiping cards and collecting signatures. In the case of the Mini Maker Faire, our school (the sponsoring organization) had a merchant account, but did not own a digital, internet-connected "swiper." Instead of investing in one of these, we just used old-fashioned carbon swipers, and called in the transactions via phone the next morning.

Conceivably you could also have an internet-connected computer, and have your attendees pay through a PayPal interface, but that will likely slow your lines down significantly.

**Comps / VIPs / Media.** If you use the online ticketing tools, complimentary or free tickets can be secured and processed just like any other ticket (either printed out & scanned or on attendee list). You will likely have sent your VIPs a digital ticket in advance, and they will be in the system.

If you are not using the electronic backend of an Eventbrite-type tool, then you may go for the guest list table. Inform your VIPs, media, and guests in advance to enter and check-in at this "gate" or table. Separating these people out from the crowd can be helpful if you want to know when these VIPs arrive (you can have your person manning the table call or radio you when particular people enter).

## EXITS AND RE-ENTRIES

Even if your event is free you will likely want to manage your entrance and exits, even if it's just to count how many people attended. Plan how people leave. It is one of the last impressions you will make; make it easy and clear where to go (signage can take care of much of this).

If your event is paid, you will want to staff entrances so that people don't sneak in without paying. Also, you might want to offer a way for people to gain re-entry. (Your security team can likely serve this function by hand-stamping or offering wrist-bands.)

## **INSPECTIONS**

Be prepared from representatives from local agencies (fire and health most likely) to inspect the event premises the morning-of or night-before the event—right when everything is hectic and the executive producer is fielding questions and queries right and left. Plan ahead and assign someone to these relationships from the get-go. Have that person accompany the inspectors through their site tour, but have them on radio contact with the executive producer (or other appropriate team members) so as to answer any questions and efficiently and quickly.

## **MANAGING MEDIA REQUESTS**

If you've done outreach to press, reporters will start to call you just as things get really busy. One of the benefits of being really well prepared is that you can make time for reporters to give interviews and tours. Getting that during- and post-event coverage is a great way to seed interest for next year, so try and be available.

See [Public Relations](#) for more information on how to pre-arm yourself with maker contact information. Give away comps to press to get the coverage.

## **MEET YOUR MAKERS**

Make the time after the morning rush to go to each and every maker and vendor booth and introduce yourself. They will be excited to meet you after such a long digital relationship, and will be appreciative you took the time to make the rounds. Make it a ritual to force you to document each and every maker or vendor.

## **DOCUMENTATION**

If at all possible, assign multiple photographers and videographers to cover the event. Sure, plenty of people will take snapshots, but having someone with reliable skills and a good eye will ensure that your documentation is good and usable for promotion reasons next year.

# After Your Maker Faire

## MESSAGING & SURVEYS

### Attendee Surveys

Sending the Maker Media Maker Faire Attendee Survey is a requirement of the Mini Maker Faire partnership. Please see [Reporting and Follow-Up to Maker Media](#) for links and language.

### Maker/Vendor/Performer Surveys

Within one or two days after your Faire you should reach out to your different groups and offer them a chance to weigh in, offer suggestions, and give compliments. Use one of the survey tools (see [Communicating with Makers](#)) and get the inside scoop. Some of the “groups” include:

- Attendees (Eventbrite or your ticketing site should help you do this)
- Makers
- Vendors
- Food vendors
- Performers

### Blog Posts

Celebrate the event publicly with a couple of blog posts mentioning and thanking:

- Volunteers
- Sponsors and Donors
- Hosts
- Makers, Performers etc
- Attendees (How many came?)

Also share:

- Great images and links to sets of photos
- Videos
- Media mentions

You can also write a post announcing next year’s date.

### Post Mortem Meeting

You’ll be exhausted, but don’t move on until you’ve had a chance to meet with your team to talk through the event, list your findings, and articulate goals for next year. Agenda items for evaluation should include:

- Date

- Venue
- Budget
- Partnerships
- Marketing
- Attendance
- Makers & Maker Outreach
- Vendors
- Volunteers
- Operations & Logistics
- Registration
- Sponsorship

### Job Description and Timeline Updating

Before everyone disperses, ask your volunteers and team leaders to revise their job descriptions and timelines so that next year you all start with more intelligence than you did this year.

## **REPORTING AND FOLLOW-UP TO MAKER MEDIA**

Maker Faire and MAKE would *very much appreciate* your sharing some artifacts from your Faire. These assets help build the national and international community of makers, and enable us to invite makers and attendees to join the Make community by either being featured in our publications, or subscribe to them.

Please see Reporting and Follow-Up to Maker Media under Partnering with Maker Faire for a complete list of follow-up actions.

## **CONTINUING COMMUNITY MOMENTUM**

Your Faire has no doubt created personal connections and possibly organizational affiliations that will happily embrace the opportunity to meet again. Here are some ways to think about connecting makers after your Faire is over:

- Potlucks, movie nights, meet-ups, and other informal, open gatherings.
- Keep blogging and tweeting local maker news.
- Start a chapter of Make's [Young Makers Program](#).

## **APPLYING FOR NEXT YEAR**

Your Mini Maker Faire license agreement is good for a single event use. If you are planning to repeat your event (and we hope you do!), start the application process early.



# Index of Assets

## Forms & Documents

[Sample Fire Plan](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire Call For Makers Form](#)

**Maker Faire Bay Area 2010 Commercial Maker Agreement**

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire 2011 Food Vendor Application](#)

[Maker Faire Bay Area Maker Agreement](#)

[Maker Faire Bay Area Maker Manual 2011 \(with Maker Agreement\)](#)

[Maker Faire Bay Area Sponsor Agreement](#)

[Maker Faire Bay Area Media and Community Sponsor Package](#)

[Mini Maker Faire Producers' Post-Event Survey](#)

**Mini Maker Faire Attendee Survey:** TBD

## Miscellaneous Resources

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire 2010 Budget \(Profit and Loss\)](#)

[Sample Timeline for East Bay Mini Maker Faire 2011](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire 2010 "What is the East Bay Mini Maker Faire" Presentation](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire Sample Call for Makers Press Release](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire Sponsorship Packages](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire FAQ for Registration Volunteers](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire DIY Portable Kiosk](#)

[Maker Faire Austin Site Plan](#)

# Design Resources

[Maker Faire Logo](#) (multiple: EPS, JPG, GIF etc)

[Maker Faire Flags](#)

[MAKE logo EPS file](#)

[MAKE logo JPG file](#)

[Benton Sans Font](#)

[Make Magazine Staff Business Cards](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire Business Cards](#)

[Maker Faire Bay Area Postcard](#)

East Bay Mini Maker Faire Program: [outside page](#) & [inside page](#) (folded in half).

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire 11x17" poster](#)

[Maker Faire Bay Area 8.5x11" flyer](#)

[Maker Faire Crew T-Shirt](#)

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[Maker Faire Maker/Staff Lanyard Credential](#)

[Maker Faire 300x250 Banner Ad](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire 300x250 Banner Ad](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire 150x180 Banner Ad](#)

[East Bay Mini Maker Faire 720x90 Banner Ad](#)

[Wooden Directional Sign System Example](#)