



## Being an Effective Organizer

Almost anyone can be a good organizer -all you need is the courage to talk to strangers and the discipline to stay organized. If you've never done anything like this before, here are some points to keep in mind:

1. As a neighborhood organizer you will talk to many, many people each week, and will need a system of keeping track of the people you talked to, and what they said. Being an organizer is mostly a matter of being organized. We will send you spreadsheets, sign-up sheets and other tools. The important thing is to set up a system for your team and actually use it.
2. Make Music Los Angeles takes place on one day -June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012. This is our deadline. It will not change. If you organize 200 musicians in time for them to perform in August, it won't do us any good. We have firm deadlines for signups, permits and media listings -please take them seriously and stay on schedule.
3. When you talk to musicians about MMLA, take a realistic attitude. You should be able to know shortly after introducing yourself whether the person will take part on June 21. You should not spend a lot of time convincing musicians to take part -that is not to say you shouldn't pitch them to do it; you should. But either they like the idea, or they don't. Not everyone will want to join and that's fine. It's much better for them to say "no" than to say "yes" and then not show up.
4. Every musician and venue you talk to should leave the conversation knowing EXACTLY what they've just agreed to do. They should understand and be able to answer the following questions:  
WHAT is "Make Music Los Angeles?"

WHAT will they be doing on June 21?

HOW will they promote their concert?

HOW will they set up their equipment?

WHERE will they perform?

HOW will they get there?

WHEN will they play?

WHY is it essential to show up in the right spot on June 21?

WHEN will we be back in touch with them?

5. You're not asking people to devote themselves to a life of poverty; you're inviting them to have a party in their neighborhood and play music. There's no need to be shy, to grovel, or beg. Just be straightforward and ask.
6. When you've gone around to businesses for an hour asking them all to host musicians, it's easy to feel like you're reading a script, just saying the same thing over and over. If you feel this is happening, beware! Don't sound like a bland salesperson; be yourself. Pay attention to the person in front of you and have a real conversation.
7. It often helps to introduce yourself as a volunteer -this gives you credibility, since it demonstrates that you actually care about the project. (No one volunteers to sell insurance door-to-door.)
8. If people ask you questions about permits (for example), and you're not 100% sure of the answer, don't fake it -just say "I don't know, I'll get back to you," and then bring the question up at your weekly call.
9. If people want to take part, tell them how to sign up on the website...and also get their name, phone number and email address. Send them a two sentence note within 24 hours, thanking them for talking to you, and giving them a link to the site. They will be delighted to get it.
10. Keep in mind that Make Music Los Angeles is a shoestring operation involving thousands of people. Not everything will work out perfectly; the important thing is to improvise, adapt and overcome.