

BE A HOST WITH THE MOST

A GUIDE FOR COORDINATING MUSIC FESTIVALS

Eph Ehly

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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

Do you find yourself too busy to organize and produce a music festival? Too many things to do? *Relax!* This easy-to-use guide will help you get organized and stay organized. It outlines the major elements required to plan a music festival and offers specific explanations about the purpose and importance of each subject.

Over the past fifty years, I've been privileged to participate in more than 600 music festivals. I've seen many dedicated music educators take on the challenge of planning a music festival—all are well meaning and committed to providing a quality experience for their students. However, they are sometimes inexperienced in all that a successful music festival demands.

Because of my profound respect and empathy for these people, built on five decades of observing both successful and unsuccessful music festivals, I thought it appropriate to offer a few guidelines to help steady their nerves and direct their course of action toward a better opportunity for success.

Rather than attempting to provide a comprehensive text on the subject of planning a music festival, which could easily fill many volumes, my aim is instead to offer a brief and informal resource that will aid the festival organizer with tips and observations I have gathered over the course of my career. You might think that I have overemphasized a particular point or omitted an area that deserves more attention, and this, I'll admit, is due to the scope of my own personal experiences. My hope is that you will find the information presented here succinct, yet useful in building the confidence and skills needed to organize a successful festival.

Over the years, I have often been asked, "How does one get into the circuit of being considered for and invited to conduct music festivals?" Instead of answering that question within this book, I have put together a few guidelines for the festival conductor in a separate resource: *Eph Ehly on Conducting Music Festivals*, which is available as a free download. (Visit www.lorenz.com and search "35/1011H".)

Here's what you will find within the following pages:

Planning overview: this overview will help you get started by outlining the things that need to be done.

Suggestions and additional commentary: these sections offer more detailed information about each item on the planning overview, with specific explanations about the purpose and importance of each subject.

Checklists: these checklists are intended to keep you on track with last-minute details. One checklist outlines the festival organizer's responsibilities; the other checklist can be completed and sent to the festival conductor prior to the event, thereby ensuring him/her that all appropriate preparations have been made (see Appendices A and B, pages 37–43).

Thank you for taking on the worthy challenge of organizing a music festival. It is an invaluable opportunity for our young musicians. You are providing them with an experience that will shape how they view, appreciate, and share music with others for years to come.

Enjoy the process and have a great festival!