



PRESS RELEASE
March 2009

Behind the glamour a unique opportunity – Henley Festival offers real benefits to local businesses

The Henley Festival is well-known to its patrons for its glitz and glamour, as a 'must-do' summer event and a glorious party offering some of the very best in international arts and entertainment. But strip back the obvious and you find something very special – a high profile arts Festival that exists in order to give back to its community. This spirit, coupled with a unique and personal approach to giving sponsors what they require, provides real benefits to local companies wishing to be at the heart of the community and aligned with one of the best-loved arts festivals in the country.

Each July the Festival welcomes large audiences to one of England's most beautiful locations for five nights 'under the stars, with the stars'. What is less well-known is that 100% of the Festival's surplus and Festival 'Friends' membership fees fund one of the most active and go-ahead of all community and education departments in the British arts world. This is only made possible through sponsorship.

Young people and the disadvantaged all benefit from the Festival's generosity each year. A year-round educational outreach programme gives in excess of 800 school children each year the opportunity to get involved in high quality arts projects in a way that wouldn't otherwise be possible. The Festival also brings hope to the brain-injured through its funding of a music therapy programme in partnership with national charity Headway and music therapy specialists Nordoff Robbins. Special Schools benefit from art residencies, young people showing real musical talent receive help with tuition and instrument purchase and last year the Festival launched its very own

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young people's orchestra. These are just a few of the fantastic programmes made possible by the Henley Festival and its supporters. (see below for full list of activities)

So there really is more to The Henley Festival than first meets the eye. From a business point of view there are huge opportunities to being associated with a vibrant and exciting experience that delivers the best in classical music, jazz, opera, comedy, dance, street theatre, rock and firework spectacles, all set against the breathtaking backdrop of the River Thames. The Festival's sponsorship team ensures that relationships with sponsors are very much a two-way and very personal process – allowing organisations to lead the way towards something that's going to be really effective for them. The team also actively encourages sponsors' staff to get involved in some of its charitable activity, giving another benefit to the package. And apart from this personal touch there are multiple branding and profile-raising opportunities in front of 23,000 visitors, a large proportion of whom come from a successful and influential group of people within the Thames Valley.

Says Stewart Collins, Artistic Director of the Festival; 'I think perhaps the strongest message is that, at a time when sponsorship and giving has to be firmly focused and aligned with 'something worthwhile', the Henley Festival offers companies the chance to engage with the local community at a deeper level. In fact, we rely on support of this nature if these invaluable projects are to take place at all. And it's probably worth saying that we're not just after jumbo sums of money. Many of our projects are on a modest scale but they still reap huge rewards and have a lasting impact on the groups involved.'

Adds Sir John Madejski, a long-term sponsor of the Festival; 'I'm a keen supporter of the arts, and The Henley Festival has always been a favourite of mine. The Festival offers sponsors a great package and everything they do, they do well. The Festival itself is a great party, but the work that it funds for artistic causes in the community is wonderful, and really worthy of support".

Companies wishing to explore sponsorship and partnership opportunities should contact

Sam Gordon Clark on 020 7581 1894 or Jenny Ingram on 07956 577912, or email sgc@henley-festival.co.uk or JIngram@henley-festival.co.uk

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Note to Editors: Henley Festival Trust

As in previous years, all net proceeds from The Henley Festival 2009 will go direct to parent charity The Henley Festival Trust, to finance Henley Festival's charitable and community activities. Examples of this valuable, and much appreciated work include providing: visual arts workshops at the Chiltern Centre for Disabled Children, music therapy for brain-injured attendees at Headway day centre in Henley-on-Thames, music and arts workshops in local schools, and instruments for promising young musicians.

1] In excess of 800 school children each year from 17 schools and colleges involved in the Festival's year round SHOUT! projects with nationally recognized performance companies in residence, ranging from carnival to dance, from singing to theatre

2] Since 2003, groups of 30+ brain injured clients receiving year round music therapy sessions funded by the Henley Festival Trust in association with national brain-injury charity Headway and the Nordoff-Robbins music therapy charity

3] The purchase of an entire symphony orchestra's worth of instruments (50!) to create an orchestra of new young musicians

4] Special one-off projects with Bishopswood (SEN) School

5] The commissioning of 6 major performance pieces

6] A county-wide poetry slam competition involving over 1,000 teenagers from 12 Oxfordshire secondary schools

7] Grants given to 16 separate local amateur performance and arts organizations to help them develop their work - Henley Symphony Orchestra, Henley Choral Society, Kids @ Art, Henley Art Trail, St Mary's Parish Church, The Henley College Pathways Course, Langtree Sinfonia, Kenton Drama Festival to name but a few.....

8] The funding of research into the development of plans for a new purpose built arts centre for Henley

9] Assistance given to talented young performers to help with specialist courses and musical instrument purchase and with opportunities to perform at Henley Festival

10] The championing and support of the annual Henley Youth Festival

11] The organisation of the Festival's special free events in Henley town centre

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12] The purchase of special facilities to aid the redevelopment of performance venues in Henley such as the historic Kenton Theatre and the Henley College's drama studio

13] Visual arts residencies and workshops in local schools

14] Subsidised musical theatre courses in school holidays

And much, much more...

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