



Evaluate Your Preservation Week Event

Share Your Success

Regardless of the size of your Preservation Week event, you can choose a simple, quick way to collect information to a few questions. Asking a few questions can make the difference between interesting the media, showing your success in a concrete way, and answering questions about the value of a program or other activity. The questions can provide you with concrete things to share about your organization’s programs or other activities. Of course you’ll know some kinds of information you want, but you may find other valuable information just by reading your users’ comments on a quick “Tell Us What You Thought of Our Program” form. Believe it or not, this is evaluation doesn’t have to be extensive or time-consuming.

Below are some standard items of information you may find useful for telling people about your program after it’s held. It’s all available from records most organizations usually make (e.g. sign in, registration, gate count, seats filled or unfilled, etc.; where any funding came from; partners...) combined with a few questions to your users or visitors. Here’s one example.

SAMPLE SHORT QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK YOU for attending “Session Title: ABC Event.” Please fill out this form before you leave the event. Your feedback is very important to us and helps us plan appropriate, effective programs here at “your institution.”

1. List three tips from this session that you might use:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

2. What did you like best about this program?

3. How would you improve this program?

Thank you so much for your feedback. We hope to see you at another program soon!



WHAT DID YOU LEARN?

TALLYING THE RESULTS

The most-time consuming part might be creating a paper table with columns for tick marks for things you want to count, or a computer spreadsheet to record the same information and add it up for you. It's worth the time to help you tell a compelling program story.

REPORTING

Use this list to determine things you might want to include in your report, and easy ways to get that information.

HOW MANY PEOPLE PARTICIPATED?

Useful because: Shows how much the program interested your community; shows who in the community was most interested (or was available) when you held the program or event.

Zip codes can show how far participants traveled and may help you estimate which segments of your community participated. They might tell you if a new segment participated, which can be useful for comparing participation to that for previous programs.

Information sources: As appropriate for the program and your normal procedures, use:

- sign-in sheets (ask for age and zip code, not names)
- gate count
- registrations
- count of seats filled or unfilled

WHO WERE YOUR PARTNERS? WHAT DID THEY PROVIDE? WAS THIS YOUR FIRST PARTNERSHIP TOGETHER?

Useful because: Shows who your organization is connected to; shows possible future partners; shows the value of the partnership (funds, assistance, audience reach, venue, etc.); shows whether this would be a good future partner for a similar or different program.

Information sources: Personal knowledge of staff; records of the partnership, or partnership agreement

HOW DID YOU PUBLICIZE THE PROGRAM?

Useful because: Shows who probably saw your poster, web calendar, or other "advertisement." Combined with how many participated, who participated, and when and where you offered the program, this can show if your strategy was probably successful, or might be improved.

Information sources: Personal knowledge of staff combined with your brief questionnaire. If you really want to know what worked, add the question: How did you hear about this program?

HOW DID PARTICIPANTS LIKE THE PROGRAM?

Useful because: Shows the most enjoyable or useful parts of the program, which can help you make future programs stronger and more enjoyable.

Information sources: In the survey responses, look for patterns and especially interesting answers—there will always be some of both. You can usually ignore answers like “the food” unless that was an important draw.

WHAT WERE PARTICIPANT SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT?

Useful because: can give you practical ideas to make a future program stronger and more enjoyable.

Information sources: In the survey responses, look for patterns and especially interesting answers—there will always be some of both.

WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM?

Useful because: you’ll learn what participants learned from the program and what they will do differently or better because you offered the program and they participated.

This should be the core of your reporting, because it’s usually the most interesting information to those outside your organization.

Information sources: Survey responses.

DID NEW USERS PARTICIPATE?

Useful if one of your goals was to attract new users (e.g., by age, community segment), you’ll want to know if you did.

Information sources: Add a survey question, like, “Was this your first visit to a program offered by our organization?” Or, “How often do you usually come to our organization?” (circle: never, weekly, monthly, annually, every few years)

Note that events, programs, and other kinds of activities differ, and different questions might be useful to answer and report. We used *program*, but it can stand for any special service, or any routine service adapted for Preservation Week or another theme.

When you've completed your report, [send a copy to the Preservation Week Working Group via our online form](#). We will add it to the ["Share Your Story"](#) section of this site.

ABOUT PRESERVATION WEEK

Memories and treasures should last a lifetime and be passed on to future generations. Preservation Week is a time to inspire actions to preserve personal, family, and community collections, in addition to library, museum and archive collections.

It also raises awareness of the role libraries and other cultural institutions can play in providing ongoing preservation information. Institutions are asked to do one thing in their communities to celebrate Preservation Week, even if the action or activity is small.

Preservation Week is an initiative of the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS), a division of the American Library Association (ALA) and other founding collaborators.

