

Events & Festivals Paid Media Playbook

Version 1.1

Meta Ads · Google Ads · TikTok · Audience Strategy · Creative · 90-Day Plan — complete ticket sales growth strategy for UK events and festivals

Selling tickets through paid media is one of the most time-sensitive and creatively demanding forms of digital advertising. You're selling an experience that doesn't exist yet, to an audience that hasn't committed, against a hard deadline — and the window between too early and sold out is often narrower than organisers expect.

Ravens Agency has worked with festivals and live events across the UK, managing paid media through every phase of the campaign lifecycle. This playbook gives you the complete ticket-selling system — from ad hooks and creative anatomy to phased **campaign structure**, audience **architecture**, **CPA** benchmarks, and a 90-day **growth** roadmap.

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CHAPTER 01

Ad Hook Examples — Copy That Sells Tickets

The hook is the **first** line of your ad copy or the **first** two seconds of your video. For events, the hook has one job: make the person feel like they're already missing out. These are the **proven** hook formulas for ticket-selling campaigns across every event type.

01 The FOMO Hook

Fear of missing out is the single **most powerful** emotional driver in event marketing. The hook has to make the reader imagine everyone they know at the event without them. Works across all event types — festivals, club nights, family events, concerts.

- 'Everyone's going. Are you?' — simple, direct, maximum FOMO.
- 'Last year sold out in 48 hours. This year won't be different.' — urgency backed by proof.
- 'Your mates have already got their tickets. Don't be the one who missed it.'
- 'Rave Kidz Blackpool is back — and the kids are already asking.' (family events)
- 'The one Sunday in August everyone in Blackpool will be talking about.'
- 'If you've ever been, you know. If you haven't, this is your year.'

TAKE ACTION

Write one FOMO hook per event tier — early bird launch, mid-sale, and final push. Each should feel different in urgency but consistent in FOMO energy.

02 The Lineup Reveal Hook

Every artist or headliner announcement is a hook moment. The reveal creates an emotional spike — someone sees a name they love and their thumb **stops immediately**. Use lineup drops as paid media trigger points, not just organic posts.

- 'He's back. Andy Whitby. Blackpool. Sunday 16th August.' — short, punchy, name-**first**.
- 'JUST ANNOUNCED: &Friends; headline Sunset Rave Barcelona.' — announcement framing creates urgency.
- 'Alien Ant Farm. CKY. Co-headline. November 2024. UK tour.' — bullet-style works for tours.
- 'We've been waiting 3 years to announce this. Worth the wait.' — mystery before the reveal.
- 'The headliner everyone asked for. Tickets on sale Friday.' — tease before the name drops.
- 'Sunday 16th August just got very, very interesting.' — intrigue without giving it away yet.

TAKE ACTION

Pre-write your lineup reveal hooks before each announcement. Have the paid ad ready to launch within 2 hours of the organic post going live.

03

The Social Proof Hook

Past attendee numbers, sell-out history, and crowd shots are your **most credible** conversion triggers. People trust what other people are already doing. Specific numbers beat vague superlatives every time.

- '3,000 families came last year. This year we're going bigger.' — scale builds confidence.
- '1st release sold out in 6 hours. 2nd release live now.'
- 'Rated 4.9 by 847 attendees. Here's why they came back.'
- 'Sunset Rave Barcelona — 5 years running, **never** missed a sell-out.'
- 'Join 12,000 people who already have their tickets.'
- 'The reviews from last year speak for themselves.' [with real quote overlay]

TAKE ACTION

Collect specific attendance numbers, sell-out times, and review quotes from your last event. These become your **most powerful** social proof hooks.

04

The Sell-Out Milestone Hook

Every ticket tier that sells out is a paid media moment. Sell-out milestones activate loss aversion — the strongest psychological purchase trigger available. Pre-build these creative assets before the event goes on sale so you can launch within the hour.

- '1st Release: SOLD OUT. 2nd Release just dropped — don't wait.'
- '**50%** of tickets gone. Half the crowd is already sorted. Are you?'
- 'Last 200 tickets. Not a sales line — genuinely the last 200.'
- '2nd Release SOLD OUT in 72 hours. Final release on sale now.'
- 'This time last year we had 500 tickets left. They were gone by morning.'
- 'Final release. When they're gone, they're gone. No exceptions.'

TAKE ACTION

Design sell-out milestone creative templates before the event goes on sale. One per tier milestone — ready to activate, not ready to brief.

05 The Experience Hook

For **first**-time buyers who don't know your event yet, the hook needs to sell the feeling before the facts. Atmosphere and experience content — crowd energy, artist moments, festival vibes — converts **cold audiences** better than lineup graphics alone.

- 'This is what 3,000 families raving together looks like.' [show crowd video]
- 'Barcelona sunset. World-class DJs. The only Sunday that matters.'
- 'Bring the family raving — Rave Kidz Blackpool, the event that started a movement.'
- 'Alien Ant Farm haven't played the UK in years. November is going to be special.'
- 'Not just a gig. An experience. Alien Ant Farm celebrating 25 years live.'
- 'The sun sets over Barcelona. The music starts. This is Sunset Rave.'

TAKE ACTION

Pair every experience hook with atmosphere footage from your last event — crowd shots, stage visuals, people genuinely having the time of their lives. Shoot this at every event you run.

The event ad hook must create one of two feelings immediately: I need to be there, or I'll regret missing this. If your hook doesn't trigger one of those two responses in the first two seconds, rewrite it.

CHAPTER 02

Ad Creative Examples & Anatomy

Six real event ad examples across three event types — family rave, festival, and concert tour — broken down by the four core elements every ticket-selling ad needs: Hook, USP, UVP, and CTA. Study the structure, not just the style.

01

The Four Ad Building Blocks – Events Edition

Every high-performing event ad has the same four components. The only thing that changes is the creative treatment – the structure is universal whether you're selling family rave tickets or rock concert tours.

1. HOOK – the **first** thing seen or heard. Names the event, the feeling, or the FOMO. 'Bring the Family Raving' or 'Celebrating 25 Years' – it **stops** the scroll.
2. USP (Unique Selling Points) – the specific reasons to attend: the lineup, the venue, the date, the family-friendly angle, the milestone celebration. What makes THIS event different.
3. UVP (Unique Value Proposition) – the one emotional reason to choose this event over staying home or going somewhere else. 'Crazy Family Fun' or '25 years of anthems live.'
4. CTA (Call To Action) – one clear next step. 'Tickets: www.ravekidz.co.uk' or 'Get Tickets at Ticketmaster.co.uk.' **Never** more than one CTA. Clarity converts.

TAKE ACTION

Audit your last three event ads. Can you clearly identify all four elements? If the CTA is buried or the USP is missing, that's your conversion problem.

Example 1 – Rave Kidz Blackpool (1:1 Square · Meta Feed / Carousel)

1:1 · Instagram Feed · Facebook Feed · Carousel



AD ANATOMY

HOOK

'Bring the Family Raving' — leads at the very top, above everything. Sets the emotional frame before a single detail is read. **Instantly** differentiating.

USP

Named headliners (Andy Whitby, Ben Jammin Motion), specific date (Sunday 16th August), specific venue (Viva Showbar, Blackpool). Every key detail visible at a glance.

UVP

'For All Ages' and 'Crazy Family Fun' — two UVP badges that directly address the parent's objection: is this appropriate for my kids? Answered before it's asked.

PROOF

The crowd imagery with kids and the DJ in festival wear shows the experience rather than describing it. Visual proof that this is genuinely fun for families.

CTA

'Tickets: www.ravekidz.co.uk' — single, clear, at the bottom. Exact URL so no one has to search. One action, no confusion.

Example 2 — Rave Kidz Blackpool (16:9 Landscape · YouTube / Display)

16:9 · YouTube · Google Display · Facebook Banner



AD ANATOMY

HOOK

Same 'Bring the Family Raving' hook adapted to landscape. The hook is **fixed** – only the format changes. Brand and messaging consistency across placements builds trust.

LAYOUT

Landscape format allows wider crowd imagery – more visual impact, more atmosphere. The event name and date remain **immediately** readable in the centre.

USP

Lineup and venue details adapted to the wider format. The horizontal layout suits YouTube pre-roll where viewers see the full width before skipping.

CTA

Ticket URL persistent at the bottom – **critical** for YouTube where viewers may be watching on TV and need to note the URL rather than tap it.

Example 3 – Sunset Rave Barcelona (16:9 · Facebook / YouTube)

16:9 · Facebook Feed · YouTube · Google Display



AD ANATOMY

HOOK

'SUNSET RAVE BARCELONA' — the event name IS the hook. When the brand is strong enough, the name alone **stops** the scroll. Atmosphere photography does the emotional work.

USP

Three-stage lineup (Main Stage, Club Stage, Rooftop Stage) communicated in a clean hierarchy. Depth of lineup signals scale and value — this is a serious event.

UVP

The sunset atmosphere photography delivers the UVP visually without words. Palm trees, golden light, crowd energy — the image sells the feeling faster than any headline could.

CTA

Brand logos (Aura, WR) at the bottom act as social proof rather than a traditional CTA. For established festivals, brand recognition does the conversion work. Add a ticket URL for paid ads.

Example 4 — Sunset Rave Barcelona (1:1 Square · Instagram / Meta Feed)

1:1 · Instagram Feed · Facebook Feed



AD ANATOMY

HOOK

Date and venue top-left (Sun, June 14 · Barcelona) — contextual hook that **immediately** answers the two questions every event buyer asks: when and where.

LAYOUT

Square format with geometric design elements. The diagonal shape treatment creates visual energy and hierarchy without relying on photography — works well when strong photography isn't available.

USP

Stage-by-stage lineup breakdown (Main Stage, Club Stage, Rooftop Stage) gives buyers a sense of scale and choice — this isn't a single-stage event. That commands a higher ticket price.

UVP

The sunset colour palette — deep purple to warm orange — does the atmospheric heavy lifting. Colour communicates mood before a single word is read.

Example 5 — Alien Ant Farm UK Tour (1:1 Square · Meta Feed)

1:1 · Instagram Feed · Facebook Feed · Carousel



AD ANATOMY

HOOK

'Celebrating 25 Years!' – milestone framing is an exceptionally powerful hook for returning fans. It triggers nostalgia AND FOMO simultaneously. This is a once-in-a-generation show angle.

USP

Co-headline format (AAF + CKY) – two bands for the price of one is a clear USP that justifies the ticket price and **doubles** the potential audience. Make this visible **immediately**.

UVP

'Co-Headline Shows November 2024' – the rarity of the co-headline format in November (indoor season) creates genuine event-level urgency. This specific combination of artists won't happen again.

CTA

'Ticketmaster.co.uk | AlienAntFarm.com' – dual CTAs work here because one is the **primary** ticket platform and one is for the artist's fanbase. Both relevant. Keep dual CTAs only when both serve a different audience segment.

Example 6 – Alien Ant Farm UK Tour (1:1 Photo · Meta Feed)



AD ANATOMY

HOOK

Real band photography above — authentic, not illustrated. For existing fans of AAF and CKY, seeing the actual band members **stops** the scroll **immediately**. Illustration and photography versions serve different audiences.

LAYOUT

Same tour information, completely different creative treatment. This version targets the existing fanbase with authentic imagery. The illustrated version (Example 5) works for broader **cold audiences** who may not know the artists' faces.

USP

The tour date list serves as both USP and CTA — a full UK tour communicates scale and commitment. Seeing your city on the list creates personal relevance **instantly**.

CTA

Running both creative versions as **separate ad sets** lets you test which resonates more with your audience. **Never** assume — test authentic vs illustrated, and let **cost-per-ticket**-sale decide.

Run multiple creative versions for the same event. Illustrated vs photography, square vs landscape, lineup-led vs atmosphere-led. The one that converts best isn't always the one that looks best to you.

CHAPTER 03

Campaign Phasing — The 4-Stage Ticket Sales Calendar

A flat **always**-on campaign does not work for events. Ticket sales follow a predictable curve, and your paid media **must** map to it — with different objectives, creative, and budget at each stage.

01

Phase 1 — Announce: Build Your Audience Before You Sell

The announce phase is not a sales phase — it's a **pipeline**-building phase. Get your event in front of the right audience and build the **warm pool** you'll convert in phases 3 and 4. Brands that skip this phase pay **3x** more per ticket in the sell phase.

- Objective: Reach or **Video Views** — not Conversions
- Creative: announcement video, date/venue reveal, atmosphere from previous year
- Audience: broad interest targeting — genre, similar events, past attendee **lookalikes**
- Budget: 15-20% of total campaign spend
- Timing: 3-6 months before event date for festivals, 8-12 weeks for club nights and concerts
- Goal: build a warm **retargeting pool** of minimum 20,000 people before phase 3 launches

TAKE ACTION

Map your event date back 16 weeks. That's your phase 1 launch date. Protect that budget before allocating anything else.

02

Phase 2 — Build: Lineup Drops as Paid Media Moments

Every lineup announcement is a paid media trigger. Boost announce content with Page Post Engagement objective within 2-4 hours of going live. Engagements cost a fraction of website clicks and rapidly expand your **warm pool**.

- Boost lineup reveals with PPE (Page Post Engagement) objective — build **warm pool** cheaply
- Retarget engagers with ticket ads within 48 hours of each lineup announcement
- The emotional peak of a reveal is your **highest-converting** retargeting window — don't let it pass
- Have paid creative pre-built before each announcement — launch within 2 hours, not 2 days
- Budget: 25% of total campaign spend across the build phase
- Each stage announcement, headliner drop, or special guest reveal is its own activation moment

TAKE ACTION

Create a lineup reveal activation checklist. Assign one person to own the paid boost for every announcement. Pre-build the creative the week before.

03

Phase 3 — Sell: Direct Response Ticket Campaigns

The sell phase is where you shift from awareness to conversion. Direct response creative, ticket links, and your largest budget allocation. This is where the **pipeline** you built in phases 1 and 2 pays off.

1. Objective: Conversions (Purchase) or Traffic to ticketing page
2. **Primary** audience: warm retargeting — **video viewers 50%+**, event page visitors, Instagram engagers, email list
3. Secondary audience: 1% **lookalike** from past ticket buyers — your best **cold audience**
4. Creative: specific lineup names, prices, clear CTA, urgency if a tier has sold out
5. Budget: 45-55% of total campaign spend — your heaviest allocation
6. Timing: 8-12 weeks before the event date, or **immediately** after early bird launch

TAKE ACTION

Confirm your ticketing tier structure before phase 3 launches. Build creative per tier so you can swap **immediately** when each tier sells out.

04

Phase 4 — Urgency: Sell-Out Momentum and Final Push

The urgency phase is triggered by sell-out milestones and hard deadlines. Every tier selling out is a paid media moment. Pre-build the creative so you can launch within the hour — not the day.

- Every tier sell-out triggers a new ad: '1st Release SOLD OUT — 2nd Release live now'
- Round-number milestones trigger ads: '**50%** of tickets gone', '500 remaining'
- Final week countdown: 'Last chance — event is X days away'
- Objective: Conversions. Audience: retargeting + warm + email non-buyers
- This phase often delivers the best **cost-per-ticket**-sale of the entire campaign
- Budget: 15% of total campaign spend — concentrated into a short window

TAKE ACTION

Design urgency creative templates before the event goes on sale: tier sell-out, **50% gone**, final 200, final 48 hours. Store them ready to launch within 60 minutes of each milestone.

The 4-phase model only works if phases 1 and 2 are funded properly. Underspending on Announce and Build is the single most common reason sell phase CPP (cost-per-purchase) is high.

Audience Architecture — Building Your Ticket Buyer Pipeline

The quality and size of your **retargeting pool** in phases 3 and 4 is determined almost entirely by how well you built it in phases 1 and 2. Here's the full audience strategy.

01 Past Ticket Buyers — Your Most Valuable Audience

People who attended your event last year are your **highest-converting** audience by a significant **margin**. Upload your **CRM** or ticketing platform data to Meta as a **Custom Audience**. Build a 1% **lookalike** from confirmed buyers — not enquirers, not page fans.

- Export previous attendee data from your ticketing platform (Eventbrite, Skiddle, DICE, etc.)
- Upload to Meta as a **Custom Audience** — match rate typically 50-**70%** for UK lists
- Build 1% **lookalike** from confirmed ticket buyers — your best **cold audience**
- Segment by ticket type where possible: VIP buyers get VIP-focused creative, family tickets get family creative
- Refresh upload monthly — past buyers are also your best early-bird audience for next year
- Use past buyer list as an exclusion on broad prospecting — they're already sold

TAKE ACTION

Export your previous event's complete attendee list from your ticketing platform and upload to Meta before your announce phase launches.

02 Interest and Artist-Name Targeting

For cold prospecting, the most precise interest signal is the specific artist name — not the genre. Someone interested in 'Alien Ant Farm' is more qualified than someone interested in 'rock music'. Layer genre interests for scale, artist names for precision.

- Target specific artist and headliner names — higher relevance than genre alone
- Layer with music festivals interest, similar named events, and live events interest
- For family events: target parents of young children, family festival interest, soft play and family activities
- For club nights: target specific DJ names, **electronic** music subgenres, nightlife interest
- Test three **cold audience** variants: narrow artist-name stack, broad genre, and **lookalike** from past buyers
- Run all three simultaneously for 7-10 days and let **cost-per-ticket**-sale decide

TAKE ACTION

Build three **cold audience** variants before phase 3 launches. Document CPP for each — the winner is rarely the one you'd predict.

03

Build Massive Warm Pools with Engagement Objectives

Video view and page post engagement campaigns cost a fraction of conversion campaigns per impression. Use them in phases 1 and 2 to build large **warm audiences** cheaply — people you can then retarget with ticket ads at **significantly** lower **cost-per-ticket**.

- **Video view** campaigns: target people who watch **50%** or more of your reveal and promo videos
- Page Post Engagement: boost lineup announcements to build engagement pool fast
- A **50%**-video-view audience is a qualified warm lead — they've invested attention in your event
- **At scale** you can build a **retargeting pool** of 50,000–200,000+ for a few hundred pounds of spend
- Combine: **video viewers** + page engagers + Instagram profile visitors + website visitors
- Minimum **retargeting pool** for phase 3: 20,000 people. Below that, expand phase 2 investment.

TAKE ACTION

Check your current **retargeting pool** size in Meta **Events Manager**. If it's under 20,000, you need more phase 1-2 investment before scaling sell phase budget.

04

Geo-Targeting — Local vs Destination Audiences

Most events draw from a local catchment but also attract destination attendees willing to travel. Run separate geo audiences with different creative and budget ratios based on your previous year's attendee data.

- Local radius (50–80 miles): direct ticket messaging, practical logistics creative, date and venue prominent
- National / key cities: destination framing, experience-led creative, travel-friendly messaging
- Family events: tighter local radius — 30–50 miles, as families are less likely to travel far
- Concerts and tours: national targeting is viable — fans travel for their favourite artists
- Starting budget split: **70%** local, **30%** national — adjust based on previous year's postcode data
- Review your ticketing data: where did last year's attendees travel from? Use this to set your geo split.

TAKE ACTION

Pull a postcode report from your last event's ticketing data. Map the top 10 postcodes. This is your **geo-targeting** foundation.

05

Email List Custom Audiences — Your Highest-Intent Pool

Your email list — past buyers, enquirers, and newsletter subscribers — uploaded to Meta is your **highest-converting** paid audience outside of past ticket buyers. Upload and refresh monthly throughout the campaign.

- Upload your full email list to Meta **Custom Audiences** — typical UK match rate 50-**70%**
- Segment buyers vs enquirers vs newsletter subscribers — each gets different creative
- Past buyers: loyalty angle — 'You came last year. Here's why 2026 is bigger.'
- Past enquirers who didn't buy: re-engagement angle with new information or offer
- Newsletter subscribers: **first** access angle — 'You heard it here **first**. Tickets available now.'
- Refresh the upload every 4 weeks throughout the campaign as your list **grows**

TAKE ACTION

Export your email list today. Upload to Meta as a **Custom Audience**. Segment buyers and non-buyers into **separate ad sets** with different creative.

The difference between a £3 and a £15 cost-per-ticket-sale is almost always the quality and size of the retargeting pool. The sell phase almost runs itself when phases 1 and 2 are properly funded.

CHAPTER 05

Creative Strategy — Photography, Video & Dimensions

Events creative **must** do one of two things: make people feel something, or make them afraid of missing out. Usually both. Here's how to build the creative library that drives ticket sales at every stage of your campaign.

01

Photography — The Event Creative Shot List

The **most powerful** event photography is captured at the event itself — not staged, not stock. Brief your photographer or videographer with this shot list at every event you run. These assets become the foundation of next year's campaign.

- Crowd energy shots: hands up, faces lit by stage lighting, genuine joy and excitement
- Artist/DJ performance shots: stage presence, crowd reaction, lighting impact
- Family moments: parents and kids dancing together, face paint, glow accessories (family events)
- Behind-the-scenes: soundcheck, backstage, crew setting up — authenticity builds trust
- Venue establishing shots: the scale of the space, stage setup, crowd size context
- Attendee close-ups: genuine smiles, spontaneous moments, real reactions — not posed
- Merchandise and atmosphere details: wristbands, decorations, signage, production quality
- Golden hour / atmospheric shots: lighting conditions that make the event look magical

TAKE ACTION

Brief your photographer or designate a team member with this shot list at your next event. Shoot in RAW or highest quality JPEG. These images are your next campaign's biggest asset.

02

Video — What to Shoot at Every Event

Video is your **highest-converting** creative format for events. The **priority** order: atmosphere and crowd **first**, artist performance second, behind-the-scenes third. **Cold audiences** respond to feeling; **warm audiences** respond to artists and specifics.

1. Atmosphere reel (30-60s): crowd energy, stage lights, people genuinely having the time of their lives. No talking, no voiceover — just music and visuals. This is your **cold audience** ad.
2. Artist highlight (15-30s per artist): performance clip with the artist name overlaid. This is your **warm audience** ad — served to people who already know your event.
3. Attendee testimonial (30-45s): real attendees on camera — 'Why did you come?' and 'Would you come back?' Minimal editing. Highest social proof format.
4. Event walkthrough (60s): one continuous shot walking through the venue — entrance, crowd, stage, atmosphere. Removes **first**-timer anxiety. Reduces the barrier to **first**-time purchase.

TAKE ACTION

Designate a content capture role at your next event. Their only job for 2 hours is filming crowd energy and attendee reactions on a phone. No production kit needed.

03

Ad Dimensions — Every Placement for Events

Events campaigns typically run across Meta, TikTok, Google Display, and YouTube simultaneously. Export every creative in these formats from a single shoot to cover all placements without reshooting.

- Meta Feed (recommended): 1080×1350px — 4:5 portrait. Best mobile performance across feed.
- Meta Stories / Reels: 1080×1920px — 9:16 vertical. **Essential** for Reels and Stories ad placement.
- Meta Feed Square: 1080×1080px — 1:1. Works across all placements including Marketplace.
- TikTok: 1080×1920px — 9:16 vertical only. No exceptions on TikTok.
- Google Display landscape: 1200×628px — 1.91:1. YouTube and Display Network.
- Google Display square: 1200×1200px — 1:1. Display Network responsive ads.
- Carousel cards: 1080×1080px — 1:1. Use for lineup reveals or multi-artist showcase.

TAKE ACTION

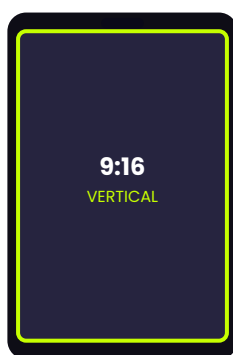
For every event creative shoot, export in 1:1, 4:5, and 9:16. One shoot produces assets for every platform. Brief your designer or editor on this multi-format requirement before the shoot.

AD DIMENSION REFERENCE

Every Placement, Every Device

Get your creative dimensions right the **first** time. Build every asset to these specifications so nothing is cropped, stretched, or rejected. The recommended feed format is highlighted — start there if you only produce one size.

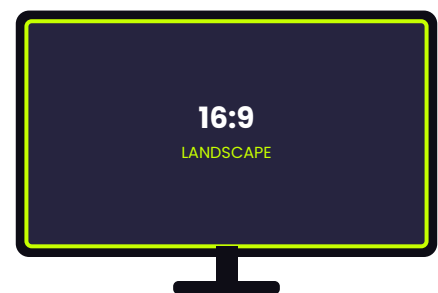
THE THREE CORE ASPECT RATIOS



PHONE
1080 × 1920
Stories · Reels · TikTok



TABLET
1080 × 1080
Feed · Carousel



DESKTOP
1200 × 628
YouTube · Display

PLATFORM-BY-PLATFORM SPEC REFERENCE

META Facebook & Instagram	TIKTOK All placements	GOOGLE Display & YouTube
Stories / Reels 9:16 1080×1920	In-Feed Ad 9:16 recommended 1080×1920	Display Landscape 1.91:1 recommended 1200×628
Feed Portrait 4:5 recommended 1080×1350	TopView 9:16 1080×1920	Display Square 1:1 1200×1200
Feed Square 1:1 1080×1080	Spark Ad 9:16 1080×1920	YouTube Skippable 16:9 1920×1080
Carousel 1:1 1080×1080	Brand Takeover 9:16 1080×1920	Demand Gen 1.91:1 1200×628

CHAPTER 06

UGC Content Rules — Authentic Event Video

User Generated Content (UGC) style video is the **highest-performing** creative format for event marketing — phone-shot, authentic, unpolished. But there are rules. Follow these and your **UGC** will **outperform** produced content at a fraction of the cost.

01 The Walk-Through: Venue to Stage

One of the **most effective** and trust-building **UGC** formats for events is the walk-through — a single continuous handheld shot arriving at the venue, walking through the crowd, and ending at the stage. It shows **first-timers** exactly what to expect and removes the anxiety of the unknown.

1. Start at the venue entrance or queue — show the scale and the excitement building
2. Walk through the doors into the crowd — let the atmosphere hit naturally
3. Pan across the crowd to the stage — show scale, lighting, production quality
4. End at the stage with the crowd in full energy — this is the payoff shot
5. Keep it one continuous handheld shot — the unbroken walk feels real and immersive

TAKE ACTION

Film one venue walk-through at your next event. Keep it under 60 seconds. No script, no voiceover — just the experience, unfiltered.

02

The 60-Second Rule — Non-Negotiable

Every **UGC video** for events **must** be 60 seconds or under. Attention drops sharply after that on every platform. The discipline of 60 seconds forces you to cut everything that isn't **essential** — and for events, everything **essential** fits in 45 seconds.

- Hard ceiling: 60 seconds maximum. Aim for 30–45 seconds for **cold audiences**.
- Hook in the **first 2–3 seconds**: event name, date, or crowd energy — **immediately**.
- One message per video — don't combine lineup reveal, ticket pricing, and venue info in one clip
- Shoot vertical 9:16 for TikTok and Reels — **never** landscape for **UGC** formats
- If the content needs more than 60 seconds, split it into two separate videos
- Review every **UGC video** before publishing — if it's over 60 seconds, cut it down

TAKE ACTION

Review every **UGC video** before it goes live. If it exceeds 60 seconds, cut it — no exceptions, regardless of how much you love the content.

03

The CTA Rule — In Copy AND at the End of the Video

Every event **UGC video** needs a clear call to action in two places: written in the ad copy, and spoken or shown at the end of the video. Viewers who watch to the end are your warmest prospects — **never** leave them without a next step.

1. In the ad copy: end **primary** text with the ticket URL and a clear CTA — 'Get your tickets now: [URL]'
2. Spoken at end of video: the person on camera says it — 'Tickets are at [website]. Don't miss it.'
3. Visual at end of video: on-screen text with event name, date, and ticket URL in final 3–5 seconds
4. Match the CTA across copy and video — ask for the same single action, not two different things

TAKE ACTION

Audit your current event video ads. Confirm every one has a CTA in the ad copy AND a spoken or visual CTA in the final seconds of the video.

04 UGC Production Rules for Events

Event **UGC** works because it looks like content a fan filmed, not an ad an agency produced. The moment it looks produced, the authenticity — and the **conversion rate** — drops.

- DO film on a phone — iPhone or Samsung. No cinema cameras or production rigs.
- DO capture genuine crowd reactions at the event — the energy is real and it shows.
- DO use the event's actual audio in clips — crowd noise, music, atmosphere.
- DO add captions — **85%** of social video is watched on mute, including event content.
- DON'T over-edit — no complex transitions, no corporate intro, no stock music overlay.
- DON'T exceed 60 seconds — the single **most common UGC** mistake for events.
- DON'T forget written **consent** for anyone appearing prominently on camera.
- DON'T film in portrait and crop to landscape — shoot in the format you intend to publish.

TAKE ACTION

Brief your on-site content team with these rules before every event. Create a one-page brief they carry on the day.

Your best event ad is filmed at your last event. Every event you run without a dedicated content capture plan is a missed campaign asset. Assign the role before the event, not after.

CHAPTER 07

CPA Benchmarks & Scaling Scenarios by Event Type

Every event type has a different average ticket value, **margin**, and acceptable **cost-per-ticket-sale**. These benchmarks are based on UK event campaigns and assume a 12% lead-to-buyer **conversion rate** on **warm audiences**. Use these to set realistic targets and know exactly when to scale.

01

Ticket CPA Benchmarks — UK Events 2026

Your target **cost-per-ticket**-sale should be set as a percentage of your average ticket value. The benchmarks below use 10-15% of ticket **revenue** as a sustainable **acquisition cost** — above that, you're eroding **margin**; below that, you have room to **scale aggressively**.

- Club Night / Small Venue (avg ticket £15-25) — Target CPP: £1.50-3.00. Max CPP: £5. At 10% **margin**: scale only when CPP is under £2.
- Family Event (avg ticket £20-40 family) — Target CPP: £2.50-5.00. Max CPP: £8. High **lifetime value** — return families justify higher **acquisition cost**.
- Concert / Single Artist (avg ticket £35-75) — Target CPP: £4.00-8.00. Max CPP: £15. Fan loyalty means higher **conversion rate** from **warm audiences**.
- Festival Day Ticket (avg ticket £60-120) — Target CPP: £7.00-15.00. Max CPP: £25. Longer decision cycle — invest more in phases 1-2.
- Festival Weekend (avg ticket £150-300+) — Target CPP: £15-35. Max CPP: £60. Premium ticket, premium **acquisition cost** acceptable.
- VIP / Premium Tickets — Target CPP: 8-12% of ticket value. Max CPP: 20%. VIP buyers are **high-intent** — smaller audience, higher value, **lookalike** from previous VIP buyers.

TAKE ACTION

Calculate your actual **cost-per-ticket**-sold from your last campaign. Compare to these benchmarks. If you're above max CPP, **fix** the **campaign structure** before increasing budget.

02

How to Read Your Metrics — Scale, Hold, or Pause

The three metrics to review weekly are cost-per-click (**CPC**), click-to-purchase rate on your ticketing page, and **cost-per-ticket**-sold (CPP). The combination tells you what action to take.

1. Low CPP + strong ticket velocity = **SCALE immediately**. Increase budget 20% per week.
2. Low CPP + slow ticket velocity = creative is working but ticketing page is converting poorly. **Fix** the **landing page** before scaling.
3. High CPP + strong click-through = audience is interested but ticket price or value proposition is the barrier. Test a price-led creative or early bird offer.
4. High CPP + low click-through = creative problem. Hook isn't working. Test new hooks before any other change.
5. Rising CPP week-on-week = **creative fatigue** or audience saturation. Refresh creative or expand geo before scaling.
6. Volume dropping = **warm pool** exhausted. Need more phase 1-2 investment to refill retargeting audiences.

TAKE ACTION

Build a weekly events campaign dashboard tracking **CPC**, click-to-purchase rate, and CPP by campaign. Review every Monday — don't let a week pass without acting on the data.

Family Event Campaign — Scaling Scenarios (e.g. Rave Kidz)

SCALE — Budget: £800/mo · CPP: £3.20 · Conv rate: 14%

Monthly budget	£800
Cost per click	£0.45
Clicks to ticket page	~1,780
Purchase conv. rate	14%
Tickets sold	~249
Cost per ticket	£3.20
Avg ticket value	£28
Est. revenue	~£6,970

Scale immediately to £1,500/mo. Exceptional ROAS. Priority campaign — increase budget weekly.

HOLD — Budget: £800/mo · CPP: £6.50 · Conv rate: 7%

Monthly budget	£800
Cost per click	£0.65
Clicks to ticket page	~1,230
Purchase conv. rate	7%
Tickets sold	~86
Cost per ticket	£6.50 — near max
Avg ticket value	£28
Est. revenue	~£2,408

Hold at current budget. Test new hooks and review ticketing page conversion. CPP approaching max threshold.

PAUSE — Budget: £800/mo · CPP: £10.50 · Conv rate: 3%

Monthly budget	£800
Cost per click	£1.20
Clicks to ticket page	~667
Purchase conv. rate	3%
Tickets sold	~20
Cost per ticket	£10.50 — above max
Avg ticket value	£28
Est. revenue	~£560

Pause all spend. CPP is above max threshold. Rebuild creative and audience strategy before resuming.

Concert / Tour Campaign — Scaling Scenarios (e.g. AAF UK Tour)

SCALE — Budget: £1,500/mo · CPP: £5.80 · Conv rate: 11%

Monthly budget	£1,500
Cost per click	£0.55
Clicks to ticket page	~2,727
Purchase conv. rate	11%
Tickets sold	~300
Cost per ticket	£5.80
Avg ticket value	£55
Est. revenue	~£16,500

Scale aggressively — 11x ROAS. Increase to £3,000/mo immediately. Priority campaign.

HOLD — Budget: £1,500/mo · CPP: £12.00 · Conv rate: 5%

Monthly budget	£1,500
Cost per click	£0.90
Clicks to ticket page	~1,667
Purchase conv. rate	5%
Tickets sold	~83
Cost per ticket	£12.00
Avg ticket value	£55
Est. revenue	~£4,565

Hold. Test lookalike from past buyers vs interest targeting. Review ticketing page for friction.

PAUSE — Budget: £1,500/mo · CPP: £22.00 · Conv rate: 2%

Monthly budget	£1,500
Cost per click	£1.40
Clicks to ticket page	~1,071
Purchase conv. rate	2%
Tickets sold	~21
Cost per ticket	£22.00 — above max
Avg ticket value	£55
Est. revenue	~£1,155

Pause. CPP above max. Campaign may be too early in buyer journey — increase phase 1-2 investment before phase 3.

A high CPP is not always a disaster — if the ticket value supports it. A £12 CPP on a £200 festival weekend ticket is excellent. A £12 CPP on a £20 club night ticket is catastrophic. Always benchmark CPP as a percentage of ticket value.

90-Day Growth Checklist — All Channels

Three 30-day sprints mapped to the event campaign lifecycle. The timing assumes an event approximately 90-120 days out. Adjust sprint dates to match your actual event date — the ratios stay the same.

01 Days 1–30: Foundations & Announce Phase

Everything in this sprint is a **prerequisite** for what follows. Don't skip items to get to the ads faster — the foundations determine the ceiling for everything in sprints 2 and 3.

- Meta: Install **Pixel** and implement **Conversions API** — **non-negotiable** before any spend
- Meta: Upload past attendee list as **Custom Audience** — build **lookalike** before prospecting launches
- Meta: Launch announce phase campaign — Reach or **Video Views** objective, atmosphere creative
- Google: Set up conversion tracking on ticketing page — verify it's firing correctly
- Google: Launch Brand Search campaign — protect your event name from competitor bidding
- TikTok: Create Business account and **Pixel** — post 3-5 organic videos before paid spend
- Social: Announce event on all channels — date, venue, early bird ticket link
- Social: Set posting schedule — minimum **4x** per week across Instagram and Facebook
- Email: Send launch email to full list — early access or early bird pricing for subscribers
- SEO: Create event **landing page** optimised for event name + city + year

TAKE ACTION

Complete every item on this list before spending a single pound on phase 3 (sell) campaigns. These foundations determine your **cost-per-ticket**-sale.

02 Days 31–60: Build Phase & Lineup Drops

By day 31 your **warm pool** is **growing**. Now introduce lineup content, test creative, and build the retargeting audiences that will power your phase 3 sell campaign.

- Meta: Launch lineup reveal activation for every artist announcement — boost within 2 hours
- Meta: Retarget **video viewers** and post engagers with ticket ads within 48 hours of each reveal
- Meta: A/B test hooks — atmosphere vs lineup-led, FOMO vs social proof
- Google: Add event category keywords — 'festivals [city] [month]', 'events [city] [year]'
- Google: Launch competitor event campaign — target similar events in your genre and region
- TikTok: Launch **first** paid **Video View** campaign — £10-15/day, build warm TikTok audience
- Social: Post lineup reveals across all channels — Reels and Stories **priority**
- Email: Send lineup announcement emails — segment by interest where possible
- Content: Publish 2 blog posts per week — lineup previews, venue guides, what to expect
- Check: Verify warm **retargeting pool** is above 20,000 — if not, increase phase 2 budget

TAKE ACTION

At day 45, check your **retargeting pool** size and **warm audience** volume. If below 20,000 people, **do not** launch your phase 3 sell campaign yet — extend phase 2 investment **first**.

03 Days 61–90: Sell Phase & Urgency Activation

This is the **revenue** sprint. All the **pipeline** work from sprints 1 and 2 converts here. Heavy budget, direct response creative, and urgency triggers deployed at every ticket milestone.

- Meta: Launch phase 3 sell campaign — Conversions objective, warm retargeting + **lookalike audiences**
- Meta: Deploy urgency creative at every tier sell-out milestone — within 60 minutes of each
- Meta: Scale winning ad sets by 20% per week — **never** jump more than **30%** at once
- Meta: Launch Spark Ads on TikTok — boost best-performing organic event content with paid budget
- Google: Add **RLSA (Remarketing Lists for Search Ads)** — bid **30%** higher for past website visitors
- Google: Launch **Demand Gen** campaign for retargeting — YouTube and Discover placement
- TikTok: Scale to £20-30/day on winning video ad — sell phase urgency creative
- Email: Send urgency emails at each tier sell-out — 'X tickets remaining' subject lines
- Social: Post sell-out milestone content organically — boost **immediately** with paid
- Countdown: Activate countdown creative in final 2 weeks — days-to-event overlay on all paid

TAKE ACTION

At day 90 (or post-event), run a full campaign audit. Calculate **cost-per-ticket**-sold by channel. Reallocate budgets and document learnings for the next event campaign.

The 90-day plan only delivers if phases 1 and 2 are treated as seriously as phase 3. The sell phase is the harvest — phases 1 and 2 are the planting and growing. You can't harvest what you didn't plant.

CHAPTER 09

Channel Strategy — SEO, Social, Meta, Google & TikTok

Each channel plays a specific role in the ticket sales system. Here's how they work together and what the minimum viable activity looks like on each.

01

SEO & Local Search — Own Your Event's Search Terms

People searching for your event name or events in your city are already in a buying mindset. Own these **search terms** with an optimised event page and **Google Business Profile**.

- Create a dedicated **landing page** per event — not a homepage CTA, a full event page
- Optimise the page title: Event Name · Date · Venue · City · Tickets
- Target long-tail keywords: 'family rave Blackpool 2026', 'events Blackpool August 2026'
- **Google Business Profile**: update with event details, dates, and a booking link post
- Local press and event listing sites: submit to Skiddle, Ents24, Resident Advisor, Songkick
- Backlinks from venue, artist, and promoter websites — each link builds event page authority

TAKE ACTION

Check your event page's Google ranking for 'Event Name + city' today. If you're not in the top 3, your SEO is costing you organic ticket sales.

02

Social Media — Content Calendar for Events

Social media for events is a trust-building and FOMO-amplification engine. Post **consistently** across all phases and treat every announcement as a content moment, not just an organic post.

- Instagram: **4x** per week minimum — Reels **priority** (lineup reveals, atmosphere, behind-the-scenes)
- Facebook: mirror Instagram posts + share in relevant local community groups
- TikTok: **3-5x** per week — event walkthrough, lineup reveals to camera, crowd energy clips
- Instagram Stories: daily countdown sticker in final 30 days, poll content (who's coming?)
- Respond to every comment within 2 hours — engagement signals trust to potential buyers
- Repost attendee content from previous year — authentic social proof that money can't buy

TAKE ACTION

Build a social content calendar mapped to your event phases. Every lineup reveal, ticket milestone, and countdown moment needs a planned post and a paid boost.

03

Meta Ads — The Primary Ticket Sales Channel

Meta is your **primary** ticket acquisition channel for events. It's where audience building, lineup promotion, and direct ticket sales all happen across the 4-phase **campaign structure**.

- Phase 1-2 budget: **40%** of total Meta spend on awareness and **warm pool** building
- Phase 3-4 budget: **60%** of total Meta spend on direct ticket sales and urgency
- **Advantage+ Sales** Campaigns: test alongside manual campaigns for phase 3 sell
- **Creative refresh** cadence: new creative every 2 weeks in sell phase, every 4 weeks in build phase
- Track **cost-per-ticket-sold** (not cost-per-click) as your **primary** performance metric
- **Never** spend in phase 3 without a **retargeting pool** of at least 20,000 warm people

TAKE ACTION

Map your total Meta budget across the 4 phases before the campaign launches. Lock in the allocation before you spend anything.

04

Google Ads — Capture Intent at the Bottom of the Funnel

Google captures people actively searching for your event or events like yours — the **highest-intent** traffic available. Most event organisers underinvest here and over-rely on Meta.

- Brand campaign: event name + tickets. **Essential**. Protect your brand from reseller and competitor bidding.
- Event category: '[genre] festival [city]', 'events [city] [month]', 'things to do [city] [date]'
- Competitor events: similar events in your region and genre — these audiences have intent
- YouTube pre-roll: 15-30 second atmosphere clips to **warm audiences** — pairs with your TikTok content
- **Demand Gen**: YouTube, Discover, Gmail retargeting — keeps your event visible during the decision phase
- **RLSA**: bid **30%** higher for people who've already visited your ticketing page — they're ready to buy

TAKE ACTION

Launch a Brand Search campaign for your event name before any other Google campaign. It's the cheapest and **highest-converting** campaign you'll run.

05 TikTok — Reaching New Audiences for Events

TikTok's event audience skews 18-34 and is underserved by most event organisers. **CPMs** are **significantly** lower than Meta and organic reach is still substantial — a genuine competitive advantage for early adopters.

- Organic **first**: post 5 TikToks before spending any paid budget — algorithm response informs paid creative
- Best performing content: walk-through videos, countdown to event, artist and lineup reveals
- Paid objective: **Video Views first** (build warm TikTok audience), then Conversions for retargeting
- Spark Ads: boost your best-performing organic event content — most cost-efficient TikTok format
- Target: broad age and location — let TikTok's algorithm self-select. It's strong.
- Budget: start at £10-15/day in build phase, scale to £25-40/day in sell phase for winning videos

TAKE ACTION

Post 5 organic TikToks about your event this week before launching any paid campaign. Identify the top performer by organic views — that format is your **first** paid ad.

Meta sells tickets. Google captures intent. TikTok finds new audiences. SEO builds long-term discoverability. Run all four in parallel — they amplify each other. Running just one is leaving significant ticket sales on the table.

BUDGETING FRAMEWORK

How to Budget & Scale an Events Paid Media Campaign

Budget allocation for events **must** follow the campaign phases — not split evenly across the campaign period. The table below shows the recommended starting allocation for a single event campaign. Scale individual channels based on **cost-per-ticket**-sold performance, not vanity metrics.

Channel / Phase	Budget Allocation	Objective	Key Metric
Meta — Announce & Build (Ph 1-2)	20% of total	Reach / Video Views	Warm pool size
Meta — Sell & Urgency (Ph 3-4)	40% of total	Conversions	Cost per ticket sold

Google Search — Brand	5% of total	Conversions	Cost per ticket
Google Search — Category	10% of total	Traffic / Conversions	Click-to-purchase rate
Google Demand Gen / YouTube	10% of total	Awareness / Retargeting	View rate / CPP
TikTok — Build Phase	5% of total	Video Views	Cost per video view
TikTok — Sell Phase	10% of total	Conversions / Traffic	Cost per ticket sold

Total recommended minimum budget for a 500-capacity event: £1,200-2,000 across all paid channels over the full campaign period. Scale based on capacity — a 3,000-capacity event should budget £4,000-8,000+ in paid media.

Scale rule: when **cost-per-ticket**-sold is below your max CPP threshold for two consecutive weeks, increase budget by 20%. If a sell-out milestone occurs, re-allocate urgency phase budget **immediately** — these windows are short and high-converting.

AUDIT CHECKLIST

Full Events Campaign Audit — 45-Point Checklist

Run this audit at campaign launch, at each phase transition, and post-event for next year's planning. Score yourself honestly — fewer than 28 ticks means significant ticket sales are being left on the table.

Foundations & Tracking

- Meta Pixel firing correctly on ticketing page — verified in Events Manager
- Meta Conversions API implemented server-side
- Purchase conversion event configured and tracking ticket completions
- Google Analytics 4 tracking ticketing page and purchase completion
- Google Ads conversion tracking verified on ticketing page
- TikTok Pixel installed and purchase event configured
- Past attendee list uploaded to Meta as Custom Audience

Campaign Phasing & Structure

- Announce phase launched 8+ weeks before event date
- Separate campaigns per phase — not one always-on campaign
- Lineup reveal activation process documented and ready
- Sell-out milestone creative templates pre-built and stored

Urgency creative ready to activate within 60 minutes of each milestone

Budget allocated per phase before campaign launches

Retargeting pool is above 20,000 people before phase 3 launches

Audience Building

Past ticket buyer Custom Audience uploaded and active

Lookalike audience built from confirmed ticket buyers

Email list uploaded and segmented – buyers vs non-buyers

Retargeting pools built from video viewers 50%+ and event page visitors

Geo-targeting split between local radius and national audiences

Artist-name and interest targeting tested as separate ad sets

Creative

Atmosphere video in rotation for cold audiences – not lineup graphic

Lineup-forward creative reserved for warm and retargeting audiences

Previous event UGC and crowd footage in creative library

Sell-out milestone templates created and stored

Creative assets available in 1:1, 4:5, 9:16, and 16:9 formats

All video UGC under 60 seconds

CTA present in ad copy AND at the end of every video

Google & TikTok

Brand Search campaign running on event name

Event category campaign running

Competitor events campaign active

Google Demand Gen / YouTube retargeting campaign active

TikTok account active with organic content posted before paid spend

TikTok Spark Ads running on best organic event content

Performance & Optimisation

Cost-per-ticket-sold tracked and reviewed weekly by channel

CPP benchmarked against ticket value thresholds from this playbook

Click-to-purchase rate on ticketing page tracked weekly

A/B creative test active – minimum one test running per campaign

Creative refreshed when frequency exceeds 3 for cold audiences

Phase transitions actioned as planned — not delayed

Post-event debrief scheduled to document learnings for next campaign

WORK WITH US

Let's sell out your event.

Ravens Agency has worked with festivals and live events across the UK, managing paid media through every phase of the campaign lifecycle. Free initial campaign consultation available.

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