

## **international touring guide**

### **introduction**

The prospect of taking your work or expertise abroad is attractive for so many reasons. Visiting different countries, different continents, working collaboratively with other artists and makers, discovering new audiences, making new friends – it's all an irresistible call.

The reality, of course, is that it's pure graft; imagine the work involved in producing a national tour then add the international extras. Finding those elusive contacts, building relationships, the research, the long-term development and the nuts of bolts of putting it all together can be time-consuming and sometimes just a little nerve-fraying.

This guide can help you make sense of an often-bewildering to-do list while offering practical advice and alerts of how to avoid potential problems.

There is rarely one answer for the many variables involved in international work, particularly with different regions in the world having different challenges. The information here though, will give you the broad brush strokes and hopefully offer you the right tools to fill in your own details.

### **who's it for?**

This guide will be useful for any individual, touring company, festival or producing venue who may be interested in investigating the potential in working internationally.

For those with experience of working internationally, the guide can offer a one-stop-shop for information and top tips, giving you a handy point of reference in an accessible format.

As a warmer, have a look at it this paper on the Stan's Café site:

<http://www.stanscafe.co.uk/helpfulthings/internationaltouring.html> It's a rather personal and endearing view of what it means to work internationally.

### **about the author**

Gary Hills has been one of the Caravan mentors since its introduction in 2008. He was a Brussels-based international promoter for five years, during which time he produced tours of independent theatre and dance as well as visiting West End productions. Gary runs the Independent Theatre Council's Touring Abroad course and continues to work with individuals and organisations on their international arts development.

## **why, what, where**

### **why tour abroad?**

This is an important question that needs serious thought. The answers can fundamentally change the way you operate and have far-reaching implications for your artistic and business development. Just thinking that it's a great idea isn't enough. There has to be good reason for doing it with clear outcomes and benefits for you and your partners.

each organisation will have specific reasons for wanting to embrace international work. They could include:

- inward and outward collaboration
- artistic development
- bringing benefit to the home audience
- becoming more outward looking
- financial considerations
- skills sharing
- improving your brand/profile at home and abroad
- new partnerships

Whatever the reasons, they will need to become an integrated part of your development and be included in your business plan and mission statement. This will give you a clear idea of your capacity and how the international element of the your work fits in with what you do regionally or nationally.

“International touring has formed the core of Lone Twin’s schedule for many years; the responses from international venues and audiences was something unique right from the beginning. Touring internationally promoted the company to reaches beyond the UK and established many co-commissioning relationships for new pieces of work, allowing the company to grow in ambition and profile.”

Catherine Baxendale, Lone Twin  
[www.lonetwin.com](http://www.lonetwin.com)

It's also important to discuss your aspirations with your board, funders and other partners so you have their buy-in and support. As there could well be costs involved in international development you may need to approve budgets and amend job descriptions.

Arts Council England does support international aspirations, so always discuss them with your officer. They will want to see that it's a good fit with your other operations and to see evidence that it will inform your core work and benefit home audiences and partners.

**Top Tip:** *run an informal audit of your organisation to assess whether you're ready for international work. Look at such things as capacity, staffing, finances and your style of work (see below). In general, you need to be in a strong, confident place before you take on this demanding level of development.*

### **what to tour**

The natural assumption is that working internationally means touring a ready-made production to overseas venues or festivals. This is an accepted model but once you have done an analysis of *why* you want to work abroad, it will become clearer what it is you wish to offer.

### **ready-made production**

Touring work that has been created for the UK requires you to step back from your carefully-nurtured artistic baby and take a hard, objective look at the product. Some questions you may want ask:

- Has the work been made with internationalism in mind from the start?
- Is it regional or UK specific?
- Does it have universal appeal?

- How would the language work for international audiences?
- If it's culture or language specific, could it benefit from subtitles?
- What visual/technical hooks does it have?
- How practical is it in terms of set and technical requirement?
- How many cast and crew on the road?
- How saleable is it to promoters?
- How saleable is it to audiences?
- What are the costs likely to be?
- What added value can you offer a promoter?

also see **performance fee model** on finance page

### collaboration or co-production

This is all about sharing and/or developing work in partnership with international collaborators. The key to this happening is a well-developed relationship and a whole heap of trust and shared values.

The real bonus lies in creating work from the bottom up rather than simply presenting a finished piece to a potential booker. Some festivals, for example, Manchester International Festival - <http://mif.co.uk> and Kunstenfestivaldesarts - [www.kfda.be](http://www.kfda.be) base their artistic and business model on developing co-productions with invited companies. But venues too are seeing the benefits of co-production as this example from Analogue shows.

“Analogue’s latest show 2401 Objects is a co-production between the company, a UK venue and Oldenburgisches Staatstheater in Oldenburg, Germany. The company developed this relationship when their first show Mile End was invited to the Staatstheater’s PAZZ festival in 2008 after the Edinburgh Fringe. This performance was such a success, the theatre offered to co-produce a future show. Because the funding system is so different in Germany, the theatre is well-resourced with plenty to offer a collaborating company. For 2401 Objects, the Staatstheater has:

provided members of staff as creative team – designer, lighting designer, assistant director, dramaturg

built the set in their in-house workshop

provided a month of rehearsal space

flown the company to Germany to make the show there

For Analogue, it’s a massively useful opportunity to create better-resourced work and to begin making international connections – both creative and touring. For Oldenburgisches Staatstheater, they are able to co-produce a piece that feels very different to their usual in-house work and will have a touring life far beyond Oldenburg.”

Ric Watts, Producer, Analogue  
[www.analogueproductions.blogspot.com](http://www.analogueproductions.blogspot.com)

**Top Tip:** *always consider collaboration or co-production as a possibility when talking to overseas venues, festivals or promoters. They may not be taken with a particular piece of finished work on offer but they may be interested in your style and inspiration. They may also be interested in you adapting work to suit their home audience or commissioning you to create a new piece. Keep all doors open!*

For examples of this approach, see Rachel Henson - [www.rachelhenson.com](http://www.rachelhenson.com) and Blast Theory - [www.blasttheory.co.uk](http://www.blasttheory.co.uk). Remember that working in this way entails site visits, so make sure you build travel and accommodation for preparatory work into your agreements. And don't forget that

international collaboration isn't always about you travelling out. Inward partners, coming to work with you in the UK, are as equally valuable.

To download a new booklet on international co-producing, commissioned by the Informal European Theatre Meeting (IETM) - <http://www.ietm.org/?p=information&q=resourcedetail&id=125>

### non-performance work

Of course, internationalism can also be about non-performance work. The sharing of skills is eminently exportable as are discovering new cultural influences on making work, exploring language, movement and technical ideas. A high profile example of this is between Akram Khan with his British-Asian influences and Sidi Larbi with his Belgo-Moroccan background. Both grew up in the west but both draw on their double cultural identity as a source of inspiration.

It's not always the performance that is the most important; it's the discovery, the sharing and learning – something that can easily be brought back to inform your work at home.

A good example of this is Action Transport Theatre who have had long-standing relationships in South Africa. In 2004 ATT exported their own expertise to help Vulavulani, a young people's theatre company, create their first piece of theatre. This collaboration continues today as they work with South African playwrights to develop their work.

### where to go?

No-one but you can answer this question but there is usually a core starting point for deciding. Where to go is usually dictated by a personal contact, an invitation or by the theme and nature of the work.

For obvious reasons, it would be sensible to cut your teeth in the countries in the European Union, especially if you are a novice and it's your first outing. Tricky visa issues don't exist as long as everyone in the company has a passport issued in an EU state (this also applies to associated countries such as Switzerland and Norway who are in the European Free Trade Association).

**Top tip:** *Each country, however friendly, will have its own foibles, so do your research well.*

Travelling further afield will increase the amount of lead-in time and preparation you need. The USA in particular can be a challenge and it is essential that you work with a local agent or promoter. Similarly the Middle East, Far East and Australasia, though existing links are strong through organisations such as the British Council and Visiting Arts.

If you have definite ideas about the region you wish to work in, it's worth checking with the British Council and Visiting Arts what their geographic priorities are – for example, Visiting Arts has an ongoing two-way exchange with arts practitioners in Iran.

**Top tip:** *Never attempt to put together your own international tour with multiple venues as you would in the UK. Always work with a local partner or promoter who's on the ground and who knows the country. Even then, be wary of lots of tiring travel with get-ins-and-outs. Imagine the strains of a UK tour and multiply it!*

### check list:

- Discuss with your team why working internationally would be beneficial
- Make sure you are in a good capacity and financial position to take on the extra work
- Get buy-in from the team, board and stakeholders
- Assess the work you wish to do – is it appropriate?
- Investigate the type of work you wish to undertake – touring a production, a co-production or other skills-based projects
- Investigate the regions best suited for the work
- Are you aiming to work at festivals, in venues or with other arts organisations/individuals?

## research, partnerships and casting your net

### making connections

Perhaps the most time-consuming part of the journey you need to make to leave the country is in finding people to connect with. Then turning this into a fruitful, longer-term relationship. It takes time, persistence and more than a little tenacity – everyone's busy, everyone has their own established partnerships to nurture and projects to manage. Promoters, festivals and venues are usually inundated with requests.

And it's fair to say that a good number of requests are unsuitable for their organisations. This is why it's so important to research potential partners thoroughly. If a festival's core business is all about new work, it's unlikely they will be interested in a Chekhov play, even if it is updated.

**Top tip:** *take time to get a feel for who you want to contact and invite to see your work. Blanket coverage rarely works, it's the same as dropping a brick in a pond to see if a fish jumps out.*

The only way to start finding potential partners is to talk. Start talking to other arts organisations that already work abroad. Find out how they started, the connections they have and pick up some tips and pointers. Also talk to partners, stakeholders and funders; they may well have useful information or direct access to key people.

At the same time, do your own research. The web is your best friend for this but try to keep your searches structured and relevant. See 'organisations' and 'networks' below for good starting points.

**Top tip:** *Don't send cold-call emails, they are rarely answered. It's always best to try for phone contact first. At this stage you will be able to assess if there is any interest or whether the contact is appropriate for both parties. If the call is positive, the follow-up email is then personalised and relevant.*

essentially there are different types of potential partner to target:

**Promoters.** These are people based in the country where you wish to work who organise your tour for you. Independent promoters have no specific affiliations but will have strong relationships with venues and festivals. A promoter should look after all practicalities at their end.

**Festivals.** Research these thoroughly as they are often quite specific about the type of work they are looking for. Try to find one contact name that you can deal with rather than sending an email to an info address.

**Venues.** These are often difficult to crack and the most fruitful outcomes are usually by personal contact and an invitation. It's the promoters who have the strongest network of venues. Venue-to-Venue potential is good as they both start from common ground.

**Other companies.** International performing arts companies – or individual artists – with shared values are worth exploring. This is a good starting point for true international collaboration.

**National organisations.** Building relationships with organisations such as the British Council and Visiting Arts can take time but it does get you on the radar.

**Top tip:** *If at first you don't succeed . . . Trying to make first contact can be frustrating and it can take a few tries before you get through. Be persistent without being a stalker.*

## being present

Using the phone and internet is only one part of your connecting toolkit. Nothing beats the face-to-face meeting and for that to happen you need to be out and about.

This is why it's important to audit your financial capacity as you will need to budget for transport and accommodation costs if you are going to start attending workshops, network events and festivals. It's at these that the real work can be done.

**Top tip:** *Most international connections are made at a very personal level. Five minutes in a room with someone can save you weeks of trying to connect by phone.*

## starting points

Below are some useful links to help you with your research and development

## organisations

Arts Council England International Policy - [www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication\\_archive/international\\_policy](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication_archive/international_policy)

British Council - [www.britishcouncil.org](http://www.britishcouncil.org)

Visiting Arts - [www.visitingarts.org.uk](http://www.visitingarts.org.uk)

UK Trade & Investment - [www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk](http://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk)

The International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People - [www.assitej-international.org/english/home.aspx](http://www.assitej-international.org/english/home.aspx) and [www.tya-uk.org](http://www.tya-uk.org)

International Theatre Institute - [www.iti-worldwide.org](http://www.iti-worldwide.org)

## European information

EU culture portal - [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/index_en.htm)

EU Cultural Contact Point - [www.culturefund.eu](http://www.culturefund.eu)

European Cultural Foundation - [www.eurocult.org](http://www.eurocult.org)

Culture Info - [www.culture.info](http://www.culture.info)

Euclid - [www.euclid.info](http://www.euclid.info)

On the Move - [www.on-the-move.org](http://www.on-the-move.org)

## networking and showcasing

caravan - [www.caravanshowcase.org.uk](http://www.caravanshowcase.org.uk)

Edinburgh - [www.eif.co.uk](http://www.eif.co.uk) and [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com)

Informal European Theatre Meeting (IETM) - [www.ietm.org](http://www.ietm.org)

Australian Performing Arts Market (APAM) - [www.performingartsmarket.com.au](http://www.performingartsmarket.com.au)

Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) - [www.artspresenters.org](http://www.artspresenters.org)

International Society for the Performing Arts - [www.ispa.org](http://www.ispa.org)

European Festival Association - [www.efa-aef.org](http://www.efa-aef.org)

Dance Web Europe - [www.dancewebeurope.net](http://www.dancewebeurope.net)

## **finances**

### **budgets and costings**

Working overseas is essentially a commercial prospect, so assume that any work you do must at the least break even and at the best earn some profit for the company. If it ends up costing you money, then you must question why you are doing it. Arguments for profile raising, getting known or getting a foot in the door may work as a one-off but is hopeless for long-term sustainability.

Before you tackle a budget, you need to know on what basis the work will take place. Assuming you are touring a ready-made production the most common is:

### **performance fee guarantee**

the promoter (or any buyer):

- pays you an agreed fee for the presentation of your work
- pays for transport of people and set
- pays for accommodation
- pays local per diems
- pays costs associated with the venue

in return, you:

- provide press and marketing materials, including photographs according to agreed deadlines
- assist with finding competitive transport costs (as all transport originates in the UK)
- provide relevant information for passports, visas, customs declarations
- ensure the company and set is adequately insured
- provide any extras such as after-show talks or workshops (cost negotiable)

All revenue from ticket sales is the promoter's (minus any royalties) as well as any sponsorship or funding deals he/she may have achieved. Your income is the fee plus associated benefits.

### **box office split**

This is not so common but may still be presented to you as an option. It is not so uncommon in the USA. The split works in much the same way as in the UK, with an agreed percentage split on box office income.

**Top tip:** *Do not accept a straight box office split, it's too risky. If no-one buys a ticket you are in serious trouble and the costs involved are much greater than those at home. If a split is offered you must negotiate a fixed guarantee before any split comes into play. Ideally that guarantee will be your break-even price so that any subsequent split is profit.*

### **shared costs**

Obviously, if you are working collaboratively or co-producing the financial model is more flexible. Just be sure that any agreement is clear and that there are no surprises. You will want to ensure you cover your basic running costs – wages, insurance, for example – during the development of the work and you may also put your own money into a project; regard this as an investment rather than a loss.

**Top tip:** *if you can't afford it, don't do it!*

### **expenses only**

There are still examples of this as an offer. It's your call. If you feel the opportunity is worthy of investment and the outcomes are truly beneficial then you may wish to consider it. You'll be responsible for wages but everything else should be covered. The above top tip applies most emphatically here.

### your fee

Knowing how much to charge for your work is a common problem and there is no set rule for how to come up with a figure.

The British Council had a basic formula for a one-week outing which equated to £1000 per person on the road. So a show with five cast and two crew would equal £7000 for one week. With inflation and increased costs this may no longer be reasonable but at least it's a start point.

some things to consider when costing your work:

- research the buyer to get a feel for the sort of work they present
- understand the promoter's costs (see previous, Performance Fee Guarantee)
- research the ticket costs; this gives you some idea of the promoter's potential income
- research – or ask – what other, similar companies can achieve
- be prepared to share your budget with promoters; this is happening more frequently as they need to see the costs involved in what they're buying
- know what your break even is (your basic running costs plus any pre-tour costs)
- investigate if there are any opportunities for saving costs such as having a set built locally

**Top tip:** *Always cost for a week. By the time you travel, get-in, maybe offer a rest day, the week is taken up and people need to be paid. Even a short Eurostar hop to France for a one-nighter will take a minimum of three days.*

Finally, treat your promoter as a partner rather than a consumer of your product. Talk openly and honestly about pricing and negotiate a deal that both parties are happy with. At the same time be careful not to undersell yourself.

### budgeting

The basis of any budget is the standard one you prepare for making the work at home. This will have the solid structure of showing income and expenditure for a particular project. Then you can add the extras that come with international work according to the financial model you have accepted.

Don't forget to be clear about who is responsible for which cost. There's no point including flight costs if that is covered by your promoter but who is responsible for the cost of getting everyone to the airport?

**Top tip:** *beware of hidden costs. Ross Harvey, producer at Proteus Theatre Company, tells of the extortionate cost of premium-rate phone calls when trying to make appointments at the USA embassy for visa interviews.*

The Canada Council for the Arts has a useful blank budget sheet (Excel) for international touring that can be amended according to your needs. You can download it here - <http://www.canadacouncil.ca/NR/rdonlyres/5866020D-FD4A-4D43-888B-FB04A6DD725D/0/InternationalFillableBudget.xls> ]

### check list:

- use your domestic budget as a basis
- know your weekly running costs
- calculate any international extras according to the financial deal
- what hidden extras are there?
- build in a 15% contingency
- have a good idea of your costs and charges before speaking to promoters/partners
- check your fees with colleagues, a second opinion is useful
- be clear with creatives and crew about what is on offer for them
- also see 'contracts' for further information and tips

## **practicalities**

### **logistics**

Unless you get that magical, out-of-the-blue invitation (it does happen!) it's important to remember that developing international work is a slow burn. The biggest mistake organisations can make is to decide to stick an international week on the end of a national tour. It rarely works like that.

Bearing in mind all the preparatory research and development already discussed as well as preparing yourselves for the extra work involved, you should really be looking at a minimum of 18 months to prepare yourself for a project.

This means making the decision about international work even before the work is made. Apart from the necessary groundwork of meeting people and researching potential partners and markets, you can start building the international word into everything you do.

**Top tip:** *right from the start, ask questions. How will this set design work if we need to take it abroad? What about the marketing and print materials? Are the themes in the new work we're developing universal? What cultural implications are there for the work if we want to work in the Middle East or Japan?*

It's worth putting some dedicated time aside each week just to concentrate on your international development. Build it into a job description. Check your website, your mission statement, your business plan. Are you coming across as an international company? It's been mentioned before but you must have the capacity in the office to carry out these plans which will happen on top of, not instead of, the usual demands.

"Having mastered the art of national touring in a Nissan Micra, by which I mean being able to fit it all in, international touring is a whole different ball game and one which requires much more thought and pre-planning. When going to Australia, not only did we have to think about transporting the show set alongside our personal things, there was the additional challenge of organising visas, booking flights, and, as our show involved a food stuff that could not be purchased in Australia (Battenberg cake in quite large quantities), checking the policies on bringing certain items into the country. We were very lucky as it was allowed through customs but, as a huge part of our show it was a significant issue that we had never had to consider before...."

Clare Beresford, Little Bulb Theatre  
[www.littlebulbtheatre.com](http://www.littlebulbtheatre.com)

### **negotiating**

Don't be afraid of negotiating, rather view it as a two-way discussion between you and your international partner. A good outcome for all parties involved – and this includes the audience – is a win-win situation where everyone is happy with the deal, even if small compromises have been made.

**Top tip:** *another essential outcome of negotiating is that there are no surprises for anyone, so pay attention to detail.*

With all this in mind, be clear in advance of what you would ideally like to achieve. Mark areas where you believe there can be compromise and those that are essential for the success of your work. Be yourself, you're having a conversation not a stand-off.

**Top tip:** *always follow up your negotiations with a written summary of what you agreed. This is good groundwork for the contract.*

see caravan website to download a negotiation check list.

### contracts

The contract is a natural progression from your negotiations and follow-up written agreement. The contract should be a clear and concise document that lays out the agreement between you. It also covers for certain eventualities.

Wherever possible, use your own contract. Standard contracts from promoters and festivals tend to be broad in nature, covering a whole range of activities. If you do use theirs, don't be afraid to add detail and delete anything that's irrelevant to your project. Never feel pressurised to accept contract clauses – keep negotiating and offering alternatives until you are happy.

#### **Top tips:**

- *don't forget that a contract means nothing until it is signed!*
- *You may wish to include minimum travel and accommodation requirements such as direct flights, no less than 3\* hotel, single rooms, including breakfast.*
- *For fuller documents, refer to them in the contract and add as separate schedules*
- *the technical rider should already have been agreed. It is important to sign this too.*
- *Only sign a contract that is in English.*
- *Check on Withholding taxes (see below, Nuts and Bolts)*
- *Always quote in Pounds Sterling. If there really is no alternative (China, for example will only pay in USD) agree an exchange rate and include it in the contract*

see caravan website to download a contract checklist

### nuts and bolts

The devil, as we say, is in the detail and there is a never-ending list of things to consider at the planning stage. It's impossible to cover everything here but here are some top tips to help you on your way.

in no particular order:

**visas.** You need to do your research on this and involve your promoter who will know what the local requirements are. Give yourself plenty of time, months rather than weeks

**passports.** Physically check passport expiry dates yourself. For some visas or visas-on-arrival, there needs to be at least six months unexpired on a passport from the time of entry.

**freight.** Never do it yourself! If you are airlifting set, costumes and technical equipment, use a shipping agent. An agent will look after all customs documentation, airport and customs clearance and be responsible/insured for pick up and delivery.

**carnets.** These are an inventory of goods for customs purposes in your shipment (usually not needed for the EU). You must list everything, down to the smallest item. You must also ensure that everything on the list is packed again for the return journey. Some countries will also want serial numbers for electronic goods. Your promoter and shipping agent can advise.

**withholding tax.** Each country will have different requirements, though some will withhold nothing. Check with your promoter and do your own research to avoid surprises.

**travel delays.** Allow plenty of time to reach the final destination. Anything can happen at any stage of the journey from volcanic ash to an overturned pig lorry on a Belgian motorway (true!). Plan, as much as you can, for a contingency.

**crib sheet.** Prepare a handout with all useful information in one place: phone numbers, addresses, emergency numbers, bus/metro information and a map of the local area with the hotel and venue clearly marked. Involve the team in researching bars, restaurants, health centres, tourist spots etc.

**electricals.** You can never have too many extension leads or adapters.

**bills.** Be clear with your team about any bills they may be responsible for: mini bar, personal laundry, phone calls. Also research the cost of mobile phone roaming as a warning!

**briefings.** Brief the team about the destination country: cultural issues, clothing, the weather, the way to greet people, some basic language for politeness.

**daily reports.** Ask the company or stage manager to complete a daily show report. This is most useful for helping with feedback, evaluation and future planning. Also include practical information including hotel problems, transport issues, technical issues, repairs.

## **marketing**

there are two main types of marketing you will need to consider:

- marketing your company and work to promoters
- marketing you work to audiences

### **marketing to promoters**

The days of the burgeoning A4 marketing pack are mercifully over. This is not say that the pack still doesn't have a place but it no longer needs to be stuffed with every bit of print information you can find. Put yourself in the promoters' shoes; your pack will be just one of dozens thrust in their hands.

This is where your website really can become your best friend. All that basic company and show information can now be looked at with one click. Of course, there will still be times when you would want to hand over some print material, particularly at a face-to-face meeting. Below are some tips for both web and print marketing to promoters.

web:

- make sure your web site is up to date
- audit your site from the viewpoint of someone who doesn't speak English as a first language – is it easy to navigate and to find stuff? Are big blocks of text broken up?
- are the contact details clear?
- have plenty of downloadable photographs, reviews, articles, links to videos
- consider having a specific promoters area, password protected if you like. Here you can upload technical requirements, budgets, touring plans, FAQ, education packs
- include links to your social network sites and blogs: Facebook, Twitter, Wordpress, Flickr etc
- connect with potential partners so you can share news, information and build relationships

print:

- a printed pack should only contain the most relevant, up-to-date information
- print the inserts yourself
- don't include a back catalogue – flyers and reviews of past productions are not useful
- make a one-page compilation of review extracts rather than pages of full-length photocopies
- make sure there are clear links to your web sites
- include a business card with contact details
- if you include a DVD, make sure it contains different excerpt lengths. It's unlikely the promoter will have time to watch a full show at these initial stages
- consider different formats – A5 fits more easily into a bag

### **marketing to audiences**

A large part of the responsibility for this will rest with the promoter who understands the local audience and will look after distribution. However, you are still responsible for supplying the materials. You will need to design a marketing plan that both you and the promoter can sign up to.

Your website (see tips above) is an important tool for audiences, especially the pages dealing specifically with the work. Consider asking your promoter for a translated summary of the work to include on the site. Audiences also like to hear from the actors, so consider asking them to write an occasional blog about the process.

here are some tips for your marketing plan:

- agree what you will supply at the soonest opportunity
- agree on delivery deadlines
- don't spend too much money on posters – sites for these are becoming rare and expensive.
- the venue may want posters, check.
- as well as flyers, consider postcards – certainly in Europe, cafés and restaurants have postcard racks

- when you originally design your print materials, check them for reuse. If one side is full of UK touring dates, for example, you may have to go to reprint
- is there a blank overprint space?
- make sure all your photographs have credits and ensure the credit is used
- if you are selling programmes, check in advance who will sell them, at what price and whether the promoter/venue will want a cut. Similarly with CDs and other merchandise. This may need to be included in the contract
- discuss the possibility of press interviews and television news
- discuss who will provide and pay for translators
- remember the press and PR potential at home too

see caravan website to download ten top tips for tip-top marketing.

## **finally**

After you've got home, had a drink to the success of the work and spent a couple of nights in your own bed, it's time to do some evaluation and tidying up.

## **feedback**

It's important to gather as much information you can about the project. It's useful not only for internal use as a debrief but as information for other stakeholders such as your board and funders. It can also stand you in good stead for forging ahead with a new project.

useful information to have:

- the daily show and tour report from the company stage manager
- feedback from the creative team – you may wish to prepare a simple questionnaire for this
- feedback from your promoter – ditto
- gather any audience feedback you may have received
- reviews
- a team meeting to review the schedule, logistics, successes and challenges
- don't be afraid to ask everyone involved about what improvements could be made

## **financial report**

You'll obviously need to wait for all financial transactions to work their way through the system but you need to look at the income and expenditure actuals as soon as you can. This will be of huge assistance when it comes to planning the next project.

two big-picture things to assess:

- was our deal right and is the income what we needed?
- did we end up paying for things that we hadn't foreseen?

## **follow-up**

Spend some time to write letters or mails of thanks to anyone who helped you with the project, both at home and abroad. Don't forget the team who may have been left behind in the office – in fact you'd better support that with a nice gift from the country you've just been working in!

People do remember these things and it puts a decent punctuation mark on the end of it all.

Until the next time.

“International touring is incredibly important to StopGAP. Not only are substantial tours important to the business of the company and for income generation, it feeds the company artistically. Working in other cultures and engaging in the debates our work ignites often gives us another perspective that inspires or challenges our thinking. It is incredibly important to have an understanding of where we fit globally as much as nationally, and where possible we try and work with local artists as we find that exchange invaluable. It always results in us reflecting on our practice, which can only make us better ... our perpetual ambition!”

Vicki Balaam, Artistic Director, StopGAP Dance Company  
[www.stopgap.uk.com](http://www.stopgap.uk.com)