
Live Event Updates Amp Up Wakarusa Music Festival

Live event updates posted to the Wakarusa Music Festival Facebook page generated over **797,000 impressions in less than one week.**



Mercury 11

Wakarusa

Music and Camping Festival

A Case Study for Marketing Live Events on Facebook

EVENT OVERVIEW

Each June, over 22,000 live music fans flock to Mulberry Mountain for the Wakarusa Music and Camping Festival to enjoy what promoters call “a four day foot-stomping party.”



“

This year was the first year in our eight-year history that we felt like we could deliver THE festival we had in our mind's eye all along. The music, the production elements, the ambiance, the amenities, the layout, the staffing...were all finally able to come together like we always envisioned!

”

Brett Mosiman and Nate Prenger,
co-founders of Wakarusa



MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Increase the Wakarusa brand awareness, and use total number of Facebook post impressions to measure effectiveness.

Goal = 500,000 impressions during the week of the 2011 festival

Extend the festival's online marketing reach by increasing the total number of fans on the Wakarusa Facebook page.

Goal = 37,000 fans by the end of the 2011 festival

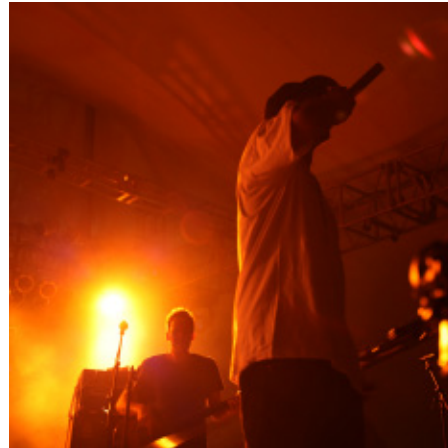
Increase the level of engagement with the Wakarusa fan base on Facebook to create engaging conversations, gain feedback, and spread future marketing messages.

Goal = 5,000 interactions during the week of the 2011 festival



INSIGHT

Great music festivals have noteworthy headliners, draw large yearly passionate fans, and bond people to a shared experience. Wakarusa not only delivers the table stakes of a beautiful setting; a great music lineup, and a wide range of cultural connections like live painters, costume contests, drum circles, mesmerizing light shows, and even a Friday morning breakfast that feeds 1,500 people for free, but more important, **it is an event that changes you.**



When 23,000 people participate in this four day festival, it is not just magical, it becomes mandatory for you to return. People return to Wakarusa not just for the bands but for the vibe of the tribe.


Mercury 11's core insight was to "show and share the magic people were missing if they didn't attend" by using selected photos of all the elements that keep fans returning to this live event year after year. Capturing these elements and the emotion behind them was the main ingredient for showcasing the festival experience in a way that would entice any fan who missed out on the 2011 event, to make sure they purchase their tickets early for 2012.

“

oh man, I'm savin up for next yr., looks like my kinda place to be :-)

”


Tammy,
Facebook user

 3 people like this.



Ricky Faber felt chills and huge regret when i saw this. that could've been me. :(but thanx for sharing these!! i feel much better!

June 5 at 4:56am • [Like](#)

 7 people like this.



Victor Jones I have been thinking lately Waka how wonderful you have made my summers. Thank you for being so inspiring to the music scene, and putting smiles on my face along with many others. See you in June my friend.

June 5 at 4:56am • [Like](#)

 43 people like this.



Angela Scroggins Almost like I was there. Almost!

June 3 at 7:58pm • [Like](#)



Misti Ritchie wish i was there ... maybe next year ...

June 3 at 8:14pm • [Like](#)

SOLUTION

Wakarusa hired Mercury 11 to develop and execute a marketing strategy in order to achieve its marketing objectives for the 2011 festival and set up the foundation for its 2012 marketing initiatives.



“Every festival has its own distinct ambiance. With Wakarusa, you had 23,000 people who came together for four days to share an appreciation for live music in a beautiful outdoor setting. **Our goal was to capture these unique elements—not just the musical side of the festival, but the overall experience.**”

Our team leader, Andy Murray, encouraged us to **focus on bringing humanity to the updates we posted, by showcasing the festival in a way that would allow people at home to see themselves in the experience.** Andy’s advice was very important to keep in mind as we posted event updates, and it ended up generating a lot of interactions on the Facebook page.” said Chance Chapman, Mercury 11 team member.

SOLUTION (cont.)

The Mercury 11 team arrived on the mountain a day before Wakarusa officially began to set up camp and get familiar with the festival grounds. Before the patrons arrived at the festival, the team hung flyers in areas that would receive heavy foot traffic. **The flyers encouraged event attendees to “Like” the Wakarusa Facebook page, upload photos, and post status updates of their own.** Although the Wi-Fi was very limited during the event, a portion of the fans reacted positively and posted their own photos to the Wakarusa Facebook page.



During the festival, the Mercury 11 team members broke into pairs to cover the full venue and capture the tribal elements from all angles. Each pair had at least one iPhone to snap quick photos and at least one high-resolution camera for capturing higher-quality shots. **Every three hours, the pairs would meet at the Mercury 11 campsite to edit selected photos and upload them to the Wakarusa Facebook page.** During the upload process, the pairs would browse through the fan page wall and previously uploaded photos to check for new comments left by fans.

“During your event, it is very important to check for new comments made by fans of your page and respond accordingly. **Responding to your fans will let them know that you value their opinion, and it will encourage more interaction by other fans that see you are paying attention,**” says Chance.

RESULTS

Approximately 300 real-time text, photo, and video updates were published to the Wakarusa Facebook page over the course of the festival. **The fan page updates generated over 797,000 impressions and over 10,000 fan interactions, and increased the total number of likes by 146% compared to the same week of the festival in the previous year.** The Wakarusa Facebook page now has over 38,000 fans, with a maximum capacity of 23,000 attendees for its annual event, and continues to see a steady level of engagement with fans.

The Wakarusa co-founders knew that the 2011 festival was going to be spectacular from a production standpoint, and they were thrilled with the results of the live event updates.

“The real-time updates during Wakarusa were incredible. We know we had a lot of folks following that couldn’t be there. Hopefully, that will encourage them to attend in 2012,” said Nate.



1

Before your event starts

- Make sure you have plenty of Wi-Fi access onsite. This is important in order for your promotion team to deliver live updates, and it will allow your event attendees to contribute to the updates as well. The more the merrier.

- At least one week leading up to the event, post messages on your Facebook page to let your fans know that you will be sharing real-time updates during the event. This will let those who cannot attend know that they can follow online from home.

2 During your event

- Create a custom landing page for your event that encourages new visitors to visit your FB page to click the “Like” button and become a fan.

- Use on-site signage to let attendees know there is Wi-Fi available.

- Include a direct link to your FB page in all your marketing materials, and encourage attendees to check in to your FB page when they arrive.

- Use a dedicated team to cover all angles of the event, and make sure they post regular updates (i.e., five times per day, or every three hours). Your fans will appreciate the consistent updates and will check back to your page often to see what’s new.

3 After your event

- Read through the comments left by fans of your page.

- Thank them for the compliments, address the negative comments, and use all of feedback to improve your next event and company moving forward.

- Keep the conversation going by sharing photos, videos, and blog articles you find that have been written about your event. The original authors of that content will appreciate the shout-out and will probably share a link to your Facebook page with their friends.