

How Do People Find You?

I am sure that Judi and I are not the only ones who visit out-of-town festivals and events. While I am normally able to find most places, there are some smaller towns that need the help of directions to find them. It is important, therefore, for festival organizers to include direction or better still, a map, to their town. These directions should also include directions to the festivals location. This, however, is not enough! This brings me to my greatest complaint against festival organizers. Most festivals have few or no directional signs. They seem to expect that out-of-town visitors will just know where the local fair ground or community centre is. The problem is, out-of-town visitors don't know where these locations are. I can tell you from experience that having to drive around looking a festival site is very frustrating and usually takes the fun out of visiting the festival. All that is needed are few well placed directional signs scattered strategically around town. I don't think organizers are lazy (just the opposite) or are trying to save money. I think they are so familiar with where everything is located in their town that they think very one else is too, even out-of-towners. Festival organizers must get out of this mind set and start imagining themselves as festival visitors, not festival organizers. By doing this their festival will become more visitor friendly which will eventually lead to greater attendance. Greater, more diversified attendance will help the festival grow and prosper. If you think this is an isolated problem, I can assure you it is not. Of the 40 plus festivals we visited this past year, over 90 percent has poor to no directional signage. This is not a good statistic. Those who did put out directional signage did a very good job. I would like to point out one festival that did an exceptional job in this area. Most festivals won't even consider putting festival signage on a major 4 – 6 lane highway. They are afraid the Ministry of Transportation will tear them down and then give the town grief. The festival feels that it is "better to ask for forgiveness than permission" Each year they put their big highway directional signs out. The Ministry seems to turn a blind eye to this indiscretion. The signs tell drivers which exits to get off at. Smaller signs just off the highway lead festival goers to their large parking area. This festival, of course, is a well run, interesting event.