

EUROPEAN BLUEGRASS SUMMIT

Bühl, Germany, 7th & 8th February 2009

The IBMA European Summit sub-committee wish to thank Walter Fuchs and the City of Bühl for their assistance

THE AIMS

- To provide an opportunity for a wide audience of up to forty participants to meet face to face, bond and to get to know each other,
- To highlight some of the issues affecting the promotion of Bluegrass music in Europe,
- To explore the issues facing different countries and different cultures in Europe,
- To motivate people to work more closely and to communicate more effectively.

SUMMIT MEETING LOCATION

Bühl Civic Centre
Bürgerhaus Neuer Markt
Europaplatz
D-77815 Bühl

SUMMIT SCHEDULE

Saturday, 7th February

9:00 am	Welcome and Introductions
9:30 am	Current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
12:30 pm	Lunch Break
1:30 pm	Current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
3:30 pm	Ideas and options for the future
5 pm	Meeting adjourn for day

Sunday, 8th February

10:00 am	Review of Day 1
10:15 am	Ideas and options for the future
10:30 am	Prioritize options
12:30 pm	Lunch Break
1:30 pm	Resources needed and next steps
4 pm	Adjourn

Note: Teas, coffees and lunches will be available for purchase in the Civic Centre.
A Bluegrass Concert starring 'Night Run' will be provided free of charge and sponsored by the City of Bühl to welcome those participants arriving on Friday 6th February – The concert starting at 7-45pm, will be held nearby at Schüttekeller-Kleinkunst, Blumenstr.5, D-77815 Bühl

HOTELS

Hotel details can be found at www.bluegrass-buehl.de together with directions and a map of Bühl. Here are some hotels that are near the civic centre.

Tagungshotel 0049-7223-8085-110
Hotel Badischer Hof 0049-7223-93350
Hotel Grüne Bettlad 0049- 7223-93130
Hotel Sternen Bühl 0049-7223-9865-0

TRAVEL

To help you make your arrangements here are links to the local airports and bus services.

http://www.strasbourg.aeroport.fr/E/navette_train.php

There is a new rail shuttle from Strasbourg airport to the central station where there are onward connections to Bühl

http://www.badenairpark.de/sub_airport/index-en.html

From Karlsruhe-Baden, there is a bus to Baden Baden station with direct onward train services to Bühl

Summary of Discussions at IBMA International Summit October 2008

Strengths of Bluegrass globally

- 1 Good music/ musicians/ bands
- 2 Gatherings, festivals, concerts, shows
- 3 Organizations/ leaders
- 4 Media (print, radio, movies, internet)
- 5 Participation of jammers & fans
- 6 Positive, friendly, safe culture
- 7 Acoustic/ the instruments are appealing & unique & portable
- 8 All ages like it/ family oriented
- 9 Performers are accessible
- 10 Venues are not too crowded, comfortable, can see and hear
- 11 Outside your own country you are appealing as a novelty
- 12 Ideal structure to teach children

Weaknesses of Bluegrass globally

- 1 Lack of marketing/ exposure
- 2 Cultural obstacles (language, image, preferences for other music, stereotypes)
- 3 Financial obstacles
- 4 Attitudes/ behaviours/ relationships
- 5 Few participants/ fans/ venues
- 6 Distances
- 7 Lack of business acumen of practitioners/ ignorance about instruments, sound, venues etc.
- 8 Too much emphasis on weaknesses and 'fault finding'
- 9 Everybody jams, nobody wants to pay to listen
- 10 Hard to be taken seriously as a credible BG musician if not an American (at home)
- 11 Lack of professionalism (e.g. clothes, language, conduct)
- 12 Loose usage of the term 'bluegrass'

Opportunities of Bluegrass globally

- 1 Media promotion (radio, TV, videos, movies, internet, DVD, PSAs with celebrities)
- 2 Concerts/ Festivals/ tours
- 3 Quality acts (local & US)
- 4 Growing public interest
- 5 Association activities
- 6 Take advantage of rapidly emerging media opportunities
- 7 Strong growing grassroots interest in old-timey music and dancing (youth)
- 8 Government, cultural activities and schools
- 9 Help make travelling / touring cost-effective (block booking)

- 10 Openness to emerging/ targeted audiences beyond the 'converted'
- 11 World Music Scene is growing (ignoring bluegrass & old-time music so far)
- 12 Crisis in record business makes live experience an opportunity. Unduplicable experience. Experience 150-200 years ago
- 13 Sponsorship opportunities connected to alcohol
- 14 Growing interest in house concerts (lower cost structures)
- 15 Cooperating with local culture (e.g. acoustic string Irish music)
- 16 Retooling IBMA awards system and fairness; 'hit parade'/ drawing power/ celebrity focus
- 17 Education (e.g. conservatory specialty, guest chair, Country Music college)
- 18 Showcasing opportunities at IBMA (which gets bands credibility at home)
- 19 Cooperation with other 'oppressed' types of music (Barbershop)
- 20 Cooperation with popular & mainstream types of music
- 21 Advocacy roles in border-crossing problems
- 22 'Discover bluegrass' DVD: non-US content
- 23 IBMA take Leadership Bluegrass on the road
- 24 Send 'ambassador' US bands on world tours
- 25 Sponsorship from companies/ products which appeal to children (e.g. music lessons). 'Barbie's banjos'

Threats for Bluegrass globally

- 1 Conflicts over styles, national identities
- 2 Lack of visibility/ media exposure
- 3 Difficulties of travel (costs, permits)
- 4 Economic threats (costs, demand)
- 5 Aging musicians/ fans/ organizers
- 6 Competition from other genres/ activities
- 7 Egos, personalities, lack of leaders
- 8 Explaining what is so special about bluegrass so people will spend money, invest in it
- 9 Virtually no teaching of youth & public generally about bluegrass (Repurpose IBMA materials for international context)
- 10 Major acts no longer able to play small venues for small fees
- 11 Difficulty in attracting inspirational ambassadors from the USA (these spark enthusiasm & attention). Connected to costs of touring.
