Time TO Burn 2025
AFTERBURN REPORT

Event: Time TO Burn 2025

Date : Sep 27th, 2025

Location: Motorista Studio

Event Overview

The Time TO Burn was a one-night decompression-style gathering designed to reconnect participants after the summer burn season. We had the opportunity to put the systems we designed, the relationships we built and the planning we did at the last event, to the test. Where the first spring event was a proof-of-concept and fundraiser, this was the first of what we hope will become an annual event, held on the third weekend of September each year.

We saw a more than 10% increase in ticket sales (over 360 participants) with more than 30 subsidized tickets offered and used. There were three sound zones: a large outdoor space with several art installations and an art car; several theme-camp-activated spaces; more than a dozen art installations; and a chill plunge area. Once again, we created a temporary, participatory space for celebration and community that guests appreciated and described as "burner vibes." The leadership team consisted of 12 dedicated volunteers who met regularly starting in July. The event was made possible thanks to a wide range of volunteers, performers, and contributors who helped at every stage, from ideation to teardown.

Highlights & Wins & Learning By Department

Arts & Activities & Music

- Multiple sound environments operated successfully, including an outdoor sound area that benefited from strong technical execution.
- The event benefited from experienced contributors, who ensured high-quality audio and smooth transitions between performances.
- Art installations and social spaces were well received, though late confirmations limited the ability to promote specific activities in advance.
- Once art grants or placements are confirmed, contributors should submit standardized content and contact details to support promotion.
- Earlier coordination would allow stronger pre-event storytelling and visibility.

Venue

- The venue supported the event effectively. Despite the outdoor space being changed late in the planning process, requiring last-minute adaptation, it was extremely well received and created a true “second space” with a different atmosphere and temperature.
- Load-in and teardown were compressed, increasing complexity during strike.
- Confirm all indoor and outdoor spaces in writing earlier in the planning cycle.
- Photograph spaces during setup to simplify teardown and restoration.
- Label equipment clearly on load-in to streamline load-out.
- Plan teardown logistics with multiple vehicles where possible.

Bar & SOP

- Bar sales totalled $7,825 (incl. tax), netting a profit of $2,627.
- Bar operations were successful overall.
- A last-minute staffing gap required on-site flexibility to maintain service continuity.
- Equipment challenges included insufficiently chilled fridges and ice shortages during peak hours.
- Finalize bar staffing, equipment, and supply lists earlier.
- Plan ice supply, storage, and retrieval more robustly.
- Clarify with the venue in advance what bar equipment and infrastructure are available for use.

Security & Safety

- The event experienced no major safety or conduct incidents.
- Security staffing levels were appropriate for the event's size and layout.
- Some confusion arose regarding entrance and exit policies, underscoring the need for clearer pre-event alignment between the door, venue and security teams.
- Confirm and document all entry and exit procedures before doors open.
- Consider a second door lead to allow flexibility and coverage.
- Establish a clear policy for escorted walkthroughs or “vibe checks.”

Volunteers

- Volunteer turnout and performance were strong overall.
- Some volunteers had not secured tickets close to the event date, creating last-minute coordination needs.
- Communication tools and channels worked, but would benefit from consolidation and clearer ownership
- Consider assigning tickets to key contributors earlier in the cycle.
- Explore lightweight CRM or tracking tools for managing volunteers and contributors.
- Develop a master schedule or run-of-show document shared across leads.

Door & Ticketing

- Ticket sales remained strong, with a significant portion of attendees purchasing close to the event date.
- Door flow was smooth throughout the night, with no sustained lineups.
- A $60 door price was well received and generated no meaningful friction.
- Online ticketing functioned reliably overall, though venue Wi-Fi limitations required staff to rely on personal mobile data at times.
- Online ticket sales should remain open later into the night, with a clearly communicated door closing time.
- Reminder emails or messages prior to the event could reduce ticket lookup delays at the door.
- Discount codes should be planned, issued, and tracked centrally in advance.

Load-in / Load-out (Set up / Teardown)

- The load-out took longer than expected; based on notes from our last event, we assigned separate teams for teardown and returns. However, we could further improve efficiency by having separate return teams for disparate geographical areas.

Marketing & Communications

- Marketing efforts were limited by timing and content availability.
- Searchability was a challenge, and some potential attendees reported difficulty finding event information.
- Social callouts lacked consistent links back to the event page.
- Prepare marketing assets before the summer burn season and schedule releases in advance.
- Ensure all promotional posts include a clear link to the event.
- Improve website SEO and event discoverability.
- Assign responsibility for short-form video and post-event content creation.

Financial Summary

Gross Income		
Ticket Sales		$14,484.96
Bar & Coat Check Sales		$6,924.78
	Income Total	$21,409.73
Expenses		
Venue Rental		$8,000.00
Security		$1,350.00
Bar		$4,832.64
Coat Check		$763.27
Van Rental		$751.06
Insurance, SOP, Incorporation		$1,448.87
Rentals, Sound Equipment, Hardwear, POS		$1,348.73
Food for Volunteers, Swag		$1,179.96
Venue Damage Reimburments		$1,154.87
Promo, Website, Deco		$470.87
Art Grants		$1,318.95
	Expense Total	$22,619.22
	Gross Profit	**($1,209.48)**

Lessons Looking Ahead

- Start planning even sooner. (as soon as people are willing to start!)
- Lock in venue and insurance before tickets go on sale, ideally early 2026.
- Finalize discount strategies before tickets go on sale.
- Strengthen bar, ice, and refrigeration planning.
- Improve teardown logistics and equipment tracking.
- Clarify photography policies and communications.
- Invest earlier in marketing, content creation, and SEO.

Vision for the Future

The September event achieved its core goal: delivering a successful decompression using the systems, partnerships, and workflows developed in the spring. With improved lead time, clearer policies, and more robust communications, future events can scale with confidence while preserving the intimacy and culture that make these gatherings special. We also plan to build a more robust art grant strategy to ensure we can help support the artists and creators in our community.

We thank everyone who brought their weirdness, work, and wonder to this event. Let's keep the flame alive!