

# ISES EVENTWORLD 2009

—AN INSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT—

## **5 Things You Need to Know about Nonprofit Events**

— *Creating an Experience to Further your Mission*

Jim Leighton  
*Children's Cancer Research Fund*



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## ISES EVENTWORLD 2009

### **Session Objectives**

- Understanding the fundraising elements that make nonprofit events unique
- Learn the elements that are critical to creating a great event experience
- Gain a greater understanding of how nonprofit events can benefit your business



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## ISES EVENTWORLD 2009

### **F E B S**

- **F** Fundraising; Financial
- **E** Education; Experience
- **B** Branding
- **S** Systems/Logistics; Sponsorship; Stewardship



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## F E B S

- **F** Fundraising; Financial
  - Fundraising
    - Identify monetary goal
    - Determine fundraising activities
      - Entry fees
      - Auctions
      - Raffles
        - » Know the local and state laws
      - Fund in need
      - Pledge programs
      - Merchandise sales
      - Other opportunities
        - » Heads & tails
        - » "Everyone is a winner"



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## F E B S

- **F** Fundraising; Financial
  - Financial
    - Be realistic and conservative when setting your budget
    - Check into your locals laws concerning tax exempt status
    - Don't bank on in-kind donations
    - Quid pro quo laws
      - Only the value of a donation that is greater than the goods or services received is tax deductible



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## F E B S

- **E** Education; Experience
  - Education
    - Consistent messaging
    - Focus on "The Morning After" when creating messaging
    - Mix of emotional and intellectual appeal
      - Intellectual appeal encourages a long term commitment to your cause
    - Choose your speakers carefully
      - Can they articulate the message?
      - Can they stay on schedule?
      - Do they have credibility with the audience?



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### F E B S

- **E** Education; Experience
  - Experience
    - Experience starts at the curb
      - Valet/Parking; Registration; Clear signage; Proper staffing/training
      - Have a weather contingency plan
    - Establish and stick with a timeline
    - Design and décor
      - Continuation of your overarching messaging
      - Don't go over the top, remember it is a nonprofit
      - Be aware of sight lines (No large centerpieces)




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### F E B S

- **E** Education; Experience
  - Experience
    - Food
      - On a tight budget wow them with presentation
      - Offer entrée alternatives for allergies or other customs
    - Drinks
      - Cash bar vs. hosted
    - Don't forget about the exit experience




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### F E B S

- **B** Branding
  - Branding
    - Awareness of the cause can be as important as the fundraising at an event
    - Carry out consistent branding from the pre-event collateral all the way through your post event acknowledgements
    - Customize the message based on the event
      - Appropriate signage for outdoor events
      - Use take away as another branding opportunity
    - Corporate partner recognition
      - Integrate into overall design




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### F E B S

- **S** Systems/Logistics; Security; Sponsorship; Stewardship
  - Systems/logistics
    - Don't underestimate the importance of efficient registration system
    - Identify your volunteer needs early on and recruit more than you need; volunteer training
    - Cross train key staff about the systems in place so there is always a back up
    - Create crisis management plan




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### F E B S

- **S** Systems/Logistics; Sponsorship; Stewardship
  - Sponsorship
    - Identify your assets both tangible and intangible
      - Tangible – tables, bars, stage, etc.
      - Intangible – the cause
    - Do your research and value your assets accordingly
    - Identify key stakeholders to influence sponsors
    - Start early




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### F E B S

- **S** Systems/Logistics; Sponsorship; Stewardship
  - Sponsorship cont.
    - Make sure you give your sponsors what you have promised
      - Document your agreement
    - Acknowledge, acknowledge, acknowledge
    - Post event follow up
    - Continue relationship throughout the year




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### F E B S

- **S** Systems/Logistics; Sponsorship; Stewardship
  - Stewardship
    - Vendors
      - Get to know your vendors and use the same vendors for multiple events when possible
      - Create a partnership
      - Establish a written agreement
      - Set up clear expectations
      - Expect a fair price but DO NOT assume a "hand out"
      - Trade in-kind services for recognition
      - Refer them to your donors and colleagues




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### F E B S

- **S** Systems/Logistics; Sponsorship; Stewardship
  - Stewardship cont.
    - Donors
      - Identify the key donors in the room prior to the event
      - Provide names of key donors to Development staff and Board members
      - Make sure all guests feel "special"
      - Follow up after event. This year's guests may be next year's sponsors.




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### Session Conclusions

- Be realistic with your financial expectations
- Create an experience that makes your donors want to further the mission
- Don't underestimate the power of seamless execution
- Focus on the "Morning After"
- Treat your vendors as partners




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