



Canadian
Heritage

Patrimoine
canadien

GUIDE TO SPECIAL EVENTS FUNDRAISING

by

Ken Wyman, CFRE

Director

Ken Wyman and Associates, Inc. Consultants

Suite 200

64B Shuter Street

Toronto, Ontario

M5B 1B1

(416) 362-2926

Do You want to Reprint Part of This Book?

Charities and non-profit groups are welcome to copy and adapt portions of this book for internal use, on the condition that you give full credit to the author and copyright owners. Written permission isn't required. However, the Program would find it useful to know how this material is used, so please write:

Voluntary Action Program
Canadian Heritage
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0M5

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information on the subject matter covered. Please use it with the understanding that the author is not engaged in rendering legal or accounting advice. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, consult a competent professional. The analysis contained herein represents the opinions of the author. In no way should it be construed as either official or unofficial policy of any government body.

Published by the
Voluntary Action Program
of Canadian Heritage

© Her Majesty the Queen as represented by the
Minister of Supply and Services, 1989.
Portions as marked are
©Ken Wyman

2nd Edition, corrected and reset, 1990

Set in 12pt Bitstream® Dutch type
(a proprietary version of Linotype Times Roman®)
By Douglas McKercher
Using WordPerfect® and Bitstream software.

ISBN 0-662-18400-9

Introduction - A Cautionary Tale	1
1 Ethics and Special Event Fundraising	7
2 More than Money - What Can You Gain from Special Events?	13
3 What Makes Special Events Winners or Losers?	19
4 What are the Different Types of Events?	25
5 Selection of Ideas - Winners You Can Use and Losers to Watch Out For	31
6 Getting (Almost) Everything Donated to Reduce Your Costs to Nearly Zero	49
7 How to Guarantee Income Before You Sell Your First Ticket	53
8 Nine Ways a Souvenir Programme Increases Effectiveness	63
9 Challenge Grants Can Add an Element of Fun	69
10 Hidden Gold - Extra Income After Events and Raffles End	73
11 Auctions Encourage Top Donors to Give the Limit	77
12 Getting Bigger Bucks from Any Crowd	91
13 How to Get Musicians and Celebrities to Give Their Time and be Glad They Did	101
14 How to Get Enough Good Volunteers	107
15 Secrets of Scheduling Time for Maximum Effectiveness	115
16 The Mathematics of Money at an Event - Avoiding Surprises	123
17 What's Deductible? Revenue Canada and Other Legal Matters	129
18 Avoid One Shot Ideas	137
19 The Event Ability Quiz	141
20 Resource Guide to Organizations and Publications	151
21 How Could This Book Be Better?	167
About the Author	170

Introduction

A Cautionary Tale

In a disaster that has now passed into fundraising legend, a Boston-based group snared what seemed like an extraordinary opportunity. Reggae musicians Bob Marley and the Wailers would play free at a benefit.

They made careful plans. About 400 volunteers toiled for many weeks to organize the event. On the big day, 13,000 people spent seven hours in the summer sun enjoying a star-studded cast.

Unfortunately, there were some unanticipated costs. They had to pay return air fare from Jamaica for Marley, his band, and a backup crew complete with cook. There were hotel rooms for the entourage, tons of equipment to rent, and the cost of the hail.

The net take for the evening was a stupendous \$50,000 — in the red.

You can lose big money in the best of causes. You can also make big profits. How? Simply cut costs and maximize revenue.

If that sounds too simplistic, this handbook will spell out some of the methods for you.

Is this book for you?

This is a self-help handbook designed to guide the beginner. Experts, too, will discover new ideas and rediscover basic principles.

It will help with difficult decisions. What kind of event should you hold? How can you maximize the returns? What human resources are needed?

The goal of this book is to help Canada's voluntary organizations expand their share of public support and funds, through special events.

Special events are probably the most widely used technique to raise money, attract publicity and educate the public.

All kinds of non-profit organizations use special events. With minor modifications, they fit large and small, urban and rural. They work for registered charities and for unregistered non-profit advocacy groups. Almost identical ideas raise money for francophones, anglophones and every other ethnic group. Adaptions customize methods for groups with wealthy patrons, or for low-income self-help organizations.

Highly paid professional event managers can be hired to run them. More often, volunteers make it all happen.

Events can raise a million dollars “in just one night.” Of course it really takes months of planning behind the scenes.

At the top end, Canadians paid \$1,500 per person to attend a gala birthday party and support a political party. At the other extreme, organizations charge no admission and raise less than a hundred dollars by passing a hat. In between are auctions, theatre nights, bingos, casinos, film nights and many more variations on the theme.

They can and do go wrong, wasting hours of work, losing money, and embarrassing the organizers. The opportunities for difficulty are plentiful. Concerts, for example, frequently lose money. One celebrated Canadian singer/actor had to apply for welfare after spending all his own money organizing a benefit concert for native peoples. Despite free performances from Dinah Christie, the Parachute Club and other well known artists, the event didn't even break even.

Several large and well organized charities have also had serious difficulties while raising money by raffling off a house. One group lost over a half million dollars this way.

Even when they do make money, groups often complain that the financial returns simply do not justify the volunteer hours consumed.

There are many success stories too, of course. This book will document some of the techniques that reduce the labour, increase the income and remove the dangerous uncertainties.

This book is a unique Canadian look at the subject. While fundraisers have published some material in the United States, it is of limited value here. There are substantial market differences. Tax regulations governing ticket sales and donations are completely different. Little of the American material is available to most people, in any case.

This book doesn't say everything there is to say about special event fundraising. That would take an encyclopedia. Or two. It does cover the most important points, in a format that's quick and easy to read.

Thanks to ..

Mary Hancock, an Associate at Ken Wyman and Associates. Her hours of research produced valuable details on effective events all across Canada.

Alexandra Montgomery, a student in York University's Master of Volunteer Administration programme, who volunteered to research the material that launched this book.

Lyn McDonell, an Associate at Ken Wyman and Associates. Lyn contributed substantial material for this volume - particularly on volunteers and on time management.

Nancy White, the singer/songwriter, performs at so many benefits that she has become an expert on how to do them. She contributes her wisdom in the section on musicians.

Bany Baker of Easter Seals, who suggested the fundraising formulas and gave me permission to print them in the chapter on *The Mathematics of Raising Money at an Event*. Barry is one of the top Canadian experts.

And many others, including *Fred Gardiner* for graphics and for keeping the office managed so I had time to write. *Marta Valencia* for typing parts of this (but any errors you find are mine, not hers). *Don McRae* of Secretary of State for ideas, encouragement and patience. The *Canadian Centre for Philanthropy*, particularly *Laura Oda*, the Director of Training and Development, who arranged a national seminar tour on special events that put me in touch with many important people, and *Rose van Rotterdam*, the Manager of the Resource Centre, who gathered information and quickly answered the oddest questions. *Leueen MacFarlane*, who collaborated on ideas and provided moral support. *Greg Bums*, Director of Recreation for the City of Cambridge, Ontario, who has an excellent thesis full of many good ideas that couldn't be fitted in here. And literally hundreds of other people who contributed ideas, whether I was interviewing them, consulting with their organizations or leading a seminar.

Thanks to you all!

1

Ethics
and

Special Events Fundraising

1 .. Ethics and Special Event Fundraising

The ethical considerations of events deserve special consideration. Depending on the group, these can be complex. Don't be overwhelmed by the long list that follows. It is meant to identify the issues, and offer solutions.

First of all, the money raised must actually be spent for the non-profit group's purposes. The public is increasingly suspicious that fake charities are raising money from unsuspecting donors, and use the money for personal gain. There have been several cases of abuse of the public. The worst of these involved telephone sales of tickets to a show supposedly benefiting disabled children. Apparently the show was oversold, few disabled children saw it, and the non-profit group was misrepresented by salespeople who were paid commissions.

Responsible non-profit groups will have to counteract this understandable hardening of the heart.

It is also essential that fundraising costs be kept to a minimum. Special events can be costly operations. It behooves us all to keep expenses as low as possible. Laws have been passed in parts of the United States that set maximum fundraising expenses at 10% to 15% of the money raised. Similar legislation is being discussed in Canada. This extremely low limit can be hard to achieve. The reaction is understandable, however, given a few highly publicized cases where overhead expenses consumed 70% or more of all money donated.

Fundraisers must also be careful not to give special treatment to suppliers. If, for example, a job is given to a Board member's printing firm without getting competitive prices, others may object. Exercise extra caution when dealing with suppliers who are not at an arm's-length arrangement. Beware of conflicts of interest. Avoid finders' fees, kick-backs or incentives from suppliers. In extreme cases, people flying on non-profit business have been criticized for using accumulated frequent flyer points for their own benefit, instead of the non-profit's.

Community standards must also be respected. Strip-athons, and bachelor auctions may sound like fun, but they can hurt an organization's image. Avoid anything that smacks of sexism, racism or age-ism.

Eating contests, pie-throwing and similar activities are also becoming less acceptable. As the public becomes more conscious of hunger in Canada and around the world, food wastage and conspicuous over-consumption become moral issues.

Alcohol is another problem area. For many religious groups, it is simply

prohibited. For others, religious or not, only moderate drinking is acceptable.

This goes beyond ethics, too. Several lawsuits have also demonstrated that the person pouring the drinks is responsible if a drunk driver is hurt or hurts someone else. Non-profit groups that serve alcohol at events must pay heed. Drinking contests are not a good idea. Raffles for alcohol are now illegal in many areas. When serving alcohol, the current trend is to include no more than one free drink as part of the price of admission to an event and that is usually only done at dinners. A cash bar is provided for those who want to drink more.

Smoking is also increasingly an issue. Non-smokers feel that 'clean air' areas should be provided at all events. If that isn't possible, it may be preferable to ban smoking entirely.

Gambling presents another contentious debate. Again, many religions prohibit it. People also criticize lotteries and bingos as a tax on the poor. While people of every income level do participate in these activities, there is a disproportionate representation from the people who can afford it least. Consider carefully before involving your non-profit group in any gambling activities. This includes casinos, raffles, bingos, 50-50 draws, lotteries, Nevadas and similar games of chance. Double-check all local, provincial and federal laws on the subject.

Accessibility is important, too. This extends far beyond groups dealing with people who have special needs. Non-profit groups have a responsibility to lead social change. In the arts, religion, education and any community building, sensitivity to these issues has earned groups high praise.

Inspect any premises you may use for an event to make sure it is wheelchair accessible, from ramps to special washrooms. Speakers and entertainers should be interpreted into sign language for people with hearing impairments. Offering child care can make an event more accessible for single parents. In some cases, you may need to arrange special transportation, too. Some people have special dietary needs. Offer to make arrangements on request for those who require special food because of health, religion or other reasons. Most cooks can accommodate the arrangements if given reasonable notice.

Multi-cultural issues must also be addressed. Should you provide English-French bilingual materials? Perhaps other languages should be included, such as Ojibway or Cree, Vietnamese, Italian, or Ukrainian, to name just a few of Canada's largest ethnic populations. Be sensitive to inter-faith issues, too. When saying grace, invoking the blessing of Jesus can offend Jews, Moslems, Sikhs, Hindus and many others. Similarly, referring to God as "He" will anger those battling sexism. Avoid scheduling events during major holidays, for example. During the Islamic fast of

Ramadan or the Jewish feast of Passover, meals can become more complex. English Canada sometimes forgets that Quebec offices are closed for St. Jean-Baptiste.

Boycotts present yet another problem. Many groups do not want to use products from repressive countries, strike-bound companies, or businesses targeted in campaigns. For example, one Canadian brewery is partially owned by South African interests. Some university campuses and union halls forbid the sale of any of their brands. Others are concerned about California grapes, toxic chemical dumpers, and products made in countries like Russia, Chile, or South Africa, to name a few.

Corporate co-sponsorships are also a problem. Disabled people's groups, for example, often feel angry at drug companies that charge high prices and insurance companies that are slow to pay premiums. Environmental groups are concerned about resource extraction companies and polluters. Feminist groups, Native peoples, people on both sides of the abortion issue and many others have strong grievances against specific businesses. Often, these antipathies cross over from the business itself to include those who own them, invest in them, or work there. Throughout history, there have been people who hate the rich. Be careful of the company you keep.

Charges of elitism are a thorn for those planning high-priced special events. Many people argue that expensive admission charges, upper-class entertainment styles and special privileges for those who can give more money are all inappropriate for a non-profit group. This sets up, they say, a two-class system of benevolent givers and beholden receivers, in the worst traditions of paternalistic charity. Others respond that the purpose of a fundraising event is to make as much money as possible, not to provide a party as a public service.

Although this situation crops up most often in social service and health organizations, it also arises in arts and sports groups, and political parties from the New Democrats to the Progressive Conservatives. There are few solutions. Sometimes it helps to offer a sliding scale of admission fees, with discounts for seniors, unemployed, disabled, or students. Ultimately, a group must decide: will the event be open to all, or will it cater to the wishes of those who can give the most?

If those who have money are *persona non grata*, should you raise money from the poor? Many groups are equally vehement that the people they are helping can't afford to support the group financially. They often refuse to ask members / clients / patients / service-users to donate or buy a ticket to an event. This, too, can be a kind of paternalism. In many cases, poor people have shown that they not only will contribute, they take pride in doing so. This participation

helps transform a non-profit group from an alienating bureaucracy into a participatory self-help tool.

What's more, studies by The Canadian Centre for Philanthropy show that poor people are extremely generous. They give a substantially larger portion of their income to non-profit groups than the rich do. While the availability of services should never depend on anyone's donations, it is reasonable to ask if they would like to join in the efforts. Avoid asking anyone who may be hurt by a public disclosure of their connection, of course.

Finally, non-profits must respect each other. Most groups are friendly and open about sharing information with other non-profits. This is as it should be. A few groups, however, have tried to steal others' fundraising ideas. That hurts everyone. While there aren't many, if any, truly original fundraising events, it is dangerous to copy too closely. New techniques reported in the media quickly become trends as dozens of groups pick them up. Using the same idea too often can render it totally unproductive for everyone.

All of these factors must be taken into account in choosing the right special event. It can seem daunting to deal with them all, yet the public expects higher standards of morality from charities and non-profit groups than from anyone else. Be sure you live up to a reasonable standard of ethics.

2

**More Than Money:
What Can You Gain
From Special Events?**

2 .. **More than Money** What Can You Gain from Special Events?

Good fundraising must provide an opportunity to gain more than just funds. In fact, if that's all it raises, it may not truly be a success in the long-term.

The money may finance important work. All too soon, though, the income is exhausted and more is needed. The needs are so endless, and the available funds are so limited.

Fortunately, events can produce more than just money.

They also communicate image and information about your organization and its projects to the public. These are called "warm fuzzies". They're intangible, but very real. If this is done well, it makes it easier to raise money again the next time. Warm fuzzies are more than Public Relations. The list below will show you some of the possibilities.

Too often, however, warm fuzzies are used as an excuse. After an event that doesn't raise much money, the organizers might console themselves and try to mollify the Board by pointing out all the warm fuzzy results. They may be over-estimating the reality.

Warm fuzzies aren't an accidental by-product. You must plan on developing them from the beginning.

It's also easy to measure the results.

You may have shown your new slide show about your projects, for example. Did people learn anything new? Were you preaching to the converted?

Try a simple before-and-after test. Decide 5 or 10 points you want people to know. Before the show begins, ask them to fill in a 60-second multiple choice quiz. Afterwards, have them do the same quiz again.

Did they score high marks before they even saw the show? Then it's too simplistic for them. Have the scores improved? You've got a winner! Did the scores go downhill? Yes, it really happens. That means you've confused them.

Here's another common misconception about warm fuzzies: overrating media coverage. You may have had your group's name in the media, but will people remember it? Was the name linked to positive values that enhance your

image, or clarify your mission? Was it in media that your most important donors respect? Don't measure your media exposure in column-inches or seconds of air time alone. Quality is more important than quantity.

Even more important than warm fuzzies is the enhanced ability to raise more money in the long run. Call this "hot flashes".

An event is worth more than the money it raises if it makes it easier to raise still more. For example, will the people who participated do so again? Did you get their names and addresses? Do you have a plan in place to contact them again soon?

After an event that's done right, the donors and even the volunteers may feel energized. They may look forward to the next event, instead of dreading it. The organizers have learned new skills, made new contacts, and feel rewarded.

Your human resources should feel invested, not spent.

Here is a sampling of possibilities in three categories:

Cold Cash (Once you spend it, it's gone!)

- cash
- cheques
- money-orders
- credit card donations
- in-kind donations of goods and services
- post-dated donations
- pledges

Warm Fuzzies (The good feelings that open doors tomorrow.)

- publicity
- image
- contact with people
- credibility
- education
- motivation
- increased commitment
- good community relations

Hot Flashes (Enhanced ability to raise more in the long run.)

- 'repeat-ability' of good ideas
- leadership training
- new volunteers
- re-invigorated volunteers and staff
- names and addresses of new donors to ask again
- diversified sources of funding

3

What Makes Special Events Winners or Losers?

3 .. What makes special events winners or losers?

There are thousands of different ideas, but they all boil down to “give donors something for their money.”

What’s the biggest advantage? People nervous about asking for money find it easier to make a request. As well, events can help a group educate people, gain publicity and find new friends.

What are the problems?

Running an event is really very similar to starting a business. Many non-profits don’t like to think of themselves as having anything in common with the business world. Yet the similarities are striking.

Have a dinner and you’re opening a restaurant for one night. Put on a concert and you’re in show biz! Design and sell your own Christmas cards and you’re into manufacturing and retailing.

Profits can be slim in any of these businesses, even when professionals run them year round. Restaurant corporations go bankrupt every year. Musicians’ poverty is legendary, except for a handful of stars. Greeting card companies report declining sales as postal rates soar. Most small businesses expect a 3- to 5-year struggle before they are profitable.

How much more difficult is it for amateurs to do well? Who else would expect to open a business, operate it for a single night, and immediately generate substantial surplus income? Yet it can be done!

The profits may come from surprising places, however. In the cinema, for example, the sales of popcorn and refreshments can be more rewarding than admission charges.

Major recording artists often don’t break even on tours. Large audiences paying top dollars for tickets and buying expensive souvenirs may not produce enough revenue. Tours frequently must be subsidized by government arts grants. Even the biggest stars have concerts co-sponsored by soft drink companies, brewers or car makers. Ultimately, the value of a tour is usually measured in promotional publicity that increases record sales in stores.

It is no surprise that non-profit groups sometimes lose money on events despite countless hours of hard work by many volunteers. The surprise is how often they succeed.

Why do special events fail?

Costs are *too high*.

Prices are *too low*.

Not enough tickets are sold.

Expectations are *unrealistic*.

Here are some of the most overlooked problems:

1. Front money is needed to pay bills before revenue comes in. Many groups do not have a source of capital to bankroll the investment phase. If they use operating funds, a loss - or even a delay in payments - can interfere with programs. Some board members will advance personal funds, or co-sign a loan. Although this can be risky, it is often the only solution.

2. Underbidding cuts income by setting prices below what a donor might give. Frequently, organizations decide the price by the lowest common denominator. The non-profit doesn't want to exclude any supporters who can't afford high prices. As a result, a fundraising event turns into a community party that just breaks even - or worse, loses money.

Even when prices are higher, there are always some people who would give you as much or more as a pure donation, if you asked properly. Whether you offer a ticket for \$15 or for \$150, few people will offer to give more than the ticket price. Yet some of them can afford \$25, or \$250. They might give that much, if you asked. It's often your organizational goals they care about, not the event itself.

They might even be happier to give you money if they don't have to attend the event! Yet you incur expenses, and get less than they'd like to give.

3. A 'careful consumer' attitude makes donors reluctant to pay for tickets. Sell \$15 tickets for a dinner worth \$10, and they question the value. They may forget that you are not putting on the event to offer them a bargain, but to raise money. In addition, they believe they gave your organization a \$15 gift, not \$5, since that is their out-of-pocket cost. The expenses are not apparent to the donors.

This problem becomes most acute when selling products. A souvenir sweat shirt may cost your organization \$10 to produce. You may sell it for \$15. The donors may compare it to one at a discount store for \$5.

4. Disaster planning is overlooked too often. Murphy's Law applies to fundraising events. It remains true that if things can go wrong, they will.

One group researched the entire meteorological history of their community. They wanted to determine the one day statistically least likely to rain, for an outdoor event. It rained, of course.

Rental of a tent, or alternate scheduling are essential for outdoor activities.

In the same way, contingency plans should be made in case of every emergency. Ask yourself every possible "What If" question. Figure out the answers in advance.

What if not enough tickets are sold? What if the main speaker or entertainment cancels at the last minute? What if a tight breaks Out? What if someone gets drunk and wants to drive home? What if...

4

What Are The Different Types
of Events?

4 .. What are the Different Types of Events?

There are so many kinds of events that it's hard to select the right one. Here are some rough categories to simplify the choices. You can use the list to spark some ideas:

§ 1 Extravaganzas

Examples include gala dinner-dances, benefit concerts, cruises, and major sporting events.

The same ideas can also produce low-cost variations, with lower ticket prices. Examples include community beer-halls, religious celebrations, or ethnic picnics.

People come to these events for a good time as well as to support your cause. They also come to see and be seen with the right crowd. Incidentally, "The Right Crowd" is not always the richest or most fashionable. People may want to attend to spend the evening with a crowd that is the most political, or the most fun, or the friendliest.

This category includes events that can justify high admission prices and/or attract large numbers of people. There is also a high degree of risk, and some organizations have lost fortunes.

Until recently, the Canadian record for ticket prices was \$1,000 per person. Mila Mulrone and Peter Pocklington organized one such event. It included an exhibition game between the Edmonton Oilers and the Montreal Canadiens, and dinner at the Prime Minister's residence. That raised \$1.5 million for Cystic Fibrosis research. The Toronto Symphony also charged \$1,000 per plate for a dinner honouring Walter Hamburger.

The new record is now \$1,500 per person, \$3,000 per couple. The occasion was a birthday party for real estate developer Elvio Del Zotto. The beneficiary was the federal Liberal Party. Mr. Del Zotto is the president of the Ontario wing. Interestingly, at about the same time a fundraising dinner with Liberal leader John Turner as the guest of honour was only \$300. One with Prime Minister Brian Mulrone was only \$400. Equally interesting, the guest list included several prominent Conservatives. Perhaps they were all attracted by the unusual opportunity to see his spectacular home.

In the US, tickets have gone as high as \$10,000 per person.

Often the sponsors go to a great deal of trouble to create a memorable evening. That's not always necessary.

Instead, why not let someone else put on the show? Devote the group's energy to the most important part selling the tickets!

Examples include premieres of new movies, theatre nights, or ball games.

Many theatre groups and sports teams are happy to sell tickets at a discount. The charity makes money by charging more than it paid for the tickets. Mark-ups of 20% to 40% are common.

Where no discount is available, the charity may buy full-price seats and create a value-added package. By combining the tickets with a reception or dinner, or perhaps transportation by chartered bus, a special combination can justify premium pricing.

Unsold tickets can usually be returned for credit, given enough lead time. If not, careful planning is required to be sure the non-profit group does not get stuck with expensive unsold seats.

§ 2 Bargain Hunters and Gamblers

Examples include bingos, raffles, casino nights, garage sales, rummage sales, auctions, flea markets, and bake sales.

People come for a good deal. Those attending may not even know which organization is hosting the event.

These can be modest events for small groups. They can be on a grand scale.

- Symphonies and society groups have thrown dream auctions with over a thousand items promoted in special supplements to the daily paper.
- Prizes for draws have included a round-the-world vacation, a house or a Rolls-Royce. The runner-up may win a pair of matching Porsches.
- One hospital closed its 11-storey parking garage for a day to hold the world's largest garage sale.

The most successful have the prizes or merchandise donated. Raffle tickets maybe as low as fifty cents or as high as \$250 each.

§ 3 Educational events

Examples range from bringing in a major speaker with a world-wide reputation, to putting on a slide show in a community centre basement.

People come to learn, or to be reinvigorated and reassured.

Non-profit groups are constantly trying to tell people about their work. Usually they pass the hat for donations afterwards. The results can be dismal.

Some groups have discovered that people will pay to attend an educational session, if it's done right. They may make a profit on the admission fee. They may also attract people they can win over as donors.

Authors who have recently published a new book are particularly promising. The publisher may pay part or all of their travel costs. They also generate media interviews, which promote interest in the event.

A free seminar on ethical investing might draw community minded people capable of making larger donations. A session on estate planning could attract people who might leave money in their wills to the group.

5

Selection of Ideas:

Winners You Can Use
and
Losers to Watch Out For

5 .. **Selection of ideas** Winners You Can Use and Losers to Watch Out For

Fit is the most important factor in choosing which event you should chose. There are thousands of event ideas but which is for you?

Here is a list of major factors to consider. You may have others to add.

The right idea will fit your...

§ **Human Resources** (volunteer and staff)

- Talents
- Time available
- Interests
- Contacts

§ **Financial Resources**

- Available Front Money/Investment Capital
- Goals for needed net income

§ **Organizational Image**

- Preferred profile
- Ethical limitations
- Specific message to communicate
- Seriousness/Fun style

§ **Audience**

- Interests
- Availability
- Ability to pay/donate
- Long-term connection
- Demographics (age, gender, income)

§ **Timing**

- Advance planning time
- Competing events
- Seasonal suitability

¶ What a Good Idea for a Special Event!

Too many organizations waste creative energy trying to come up with new ideas that may or may not work. You get no extra marks in fundraising for originality, only for productivity.

Some ideas do get worn out from over-use. This doesn't happen as often as most people think, however. Better to succeed by repeating a proven method than fail inventing something new.

Don't steal other groups' ideas. It's not only unethical, but may be unproductive too. An event that works well in your community once a year might fizzle if tried twice a year. Both groups could suffer.

You may be able to borrow an idea from another city, with modifications. Before you borrow, check with the group that originated the idea. They may already have plans to implement it in your community. Since they thought of it first, they can probably do it better. On the other hand, if they don't see you as a competitor, they may be willing to share their techniques with you.

Consider adapting a classic tried-and-true event like one of these:

§ 1 The 'Stay at Home' Event

People buy a ticket to a non-event, entitling them to stay home and relax. Since most people buy tickets primarily because a friend asked them, actually holding an event may be needless work.

Explain how much money the charity is saving by not arranging a hall, food and entertainment. Point out how much the donor saves, with no expenses for a hair-do, baby-sitter, parking, gas, rented tuxedo, and so on.

This is especially good if your target audience are people who are constantly on the go, who crave a night at home. If your supporters are "party animals" who look forward to a chance to get together, this may not be the right fit.

An extra benefit can be had by scheduling the non-event for the same night as an important television show related to your cause. This could be an investigative report, or a movie dramatizing your issues. It could be a concert starring your artists, or a game your team is playing. Urge people to watch it, and learn more about what you do.

Attach a teabag - donated, of course - to the ticket.

As a modification, you can even encourage the donors to throw their own neighbourhood fundraising tea party. This do-it-yourself event may result in dozen of mini-events on the same night. Each can raise a little money, at minimal cost and send it to you. They can even compete for titles such as ‘Most Money Raised’ ‘Most Fun’, or ‘Most Innovative’.

§ 2 Give Someone an Award

When someone receives an award, all their friends, relatives and admirers will buy tickets to attend the ceremony. When a business leader gets one, their co-workers, customers, suppliers and hopeful hangers-on buy tickets, too. Even their business competitors may attend. That’s why some of the most successful events are dinners in honour of big business leaders. A great many people feel the “invisible command” to attend.

Who you honour profoundly affects who attends and how many tickets are sold.

One group presented awards to two religious leaders and an ambassador in a single ceremony. The staff were disappointed that ticket sales were low. In previous years, they had honoured business leaders, and had much a larger turn-out.

The religious people were stalwarts, prominent and deserving. They were also brilliant speakers who made the evening entertaining and moving. Yet they could not draw a crowd.

The business leaders had few of these attributes. However, hundreds of people attended. They saw the awards dinner as a chance to network with colleagues and advance their careers.

Advocacy groups that often use confrontation may feel uncomfortable honouring people. Exceptional circumstances may allow it, however. One leader may have shown some progress, no matter how marginal. Recognizing that publicly can be an effective incentive in a social change programme.

A Roast may provide an opportunity to poke fun at someone’s foibles, while raising money through their circle of influence. Be careful of the fine line between clever digs and embarrassment. Surprise Party Roasts are seldom a good idea.

§ 3 Rich/Poor Dinner or Third World Feast

At your fundraising dinner, serve some guests a lavish feast of meat, wine, and rich desserts. Others, to their surprise, get rice and beans. Or perhaps a bologna sandwich and a glass of water is their repast. Everyone at the event pays the same price.

The unequal dinners help provide an educational message to all who attend. A brief speech may explain the facts of hunger to all.

The distribution might be completely random, to show the degree to which luck controls our fortunes.

Or if the point is education about racism or sexism and the economy, discriminate against one group for an arbitrary feature. Choose something startling and novel as the feature that results in inequality, such as wearing glasses, or having big ears.

Sometimes it's up to the dinner guests to arrange a better distribution of the scarce resources. Other times, the organization brings out additional high quality meals once the educational point is clear.

§ 4 The Food Fair

To keep the costs down, it's ideal to get all the food and drinks for a dinner donated. Restaurants and suppliers can't always donate all the food for a gala. They can usually afford to give a portion, however.

Chefs from several restaurants, hotels and caterers might each contribute one special signature dish to a gala buffet. The restaurant gets publicity and the guests get a gourmet treat.

Sell the public tickets as for any dinner. Ticket prices can go quite high for this kind of all-you-can-eat buffet if the quality is good.

There are many variations:

- Vineyards, cheese makers and importers might donate a wine and cheese tasting.
- Brewers might offer a chance to sample exotic beers from around the world.

- Pizzerias could contribute several pizzas each, so people could have one mini-slice from each for a taste comparison.
- Chocolate has been used as a theme for events with names like Chocolate Sunday, Chocolate Orgasm, and Death by Chocolate. They offer candy bars, ice creams, cakes, hot cocoa and so on.

Food fairs can also feature dishes by amateur cooks. They usually agree to pay for all the ingredients. Sometimes the non-profit group can get the ingredients donated. Avoid paying for ingredients, though.

Here are some examples:

- Celebrity chefs such as media stars, politicians, authors, business leaders or clergy could each contribute one dish.
- The best home cooks provide their specialties.
- An old-fashioned fall fair-style pie-tasting competition can still draw a crowd.
- Men who don't ordinarily cook could compete for the title of Barbecue King or Chili Champion.
- Gourmet box-lunches can be auctioned to office workers at a major downtown tower.

Dream up your own theme! This is essentially a bake sale, modified to increase the income and decrease the labour.

§ 5 Unusual Telegram Deliveries

- Donors pay you to send a message to friends in a clever way.
- On Halloween, tuck a message inside a pumpkin with a carved glad/sad/mad face. Write it in icing on a giant cookie for Mother's Day. Draw it on a balloon for Valentine's Day. Have it delivered by someone in costume on any festive occasion. Some groups have sent belly dancers, clowns, even exotic strippers of either sex within limits! Others send Christmas carollers to sing the message. Someone even tried offering a bouquet of dead flowers for someone you don't like that idea didn't work

too well. It could be anonymous or personalized. The limit is your creativity.

Imagine the messages.

“Boss, I quit!”

“Happy Mother’s Day from all the kids.”

“Marylou, I love you. Please marry me.”

“Even your best friends won’t tell you... here’s some mouthwash.”

“Happy Birthday, Dad, you’re the best.”

Sell the service for a reasonable fee. Set up a booth in malls, offices, schools, service clubs, or religious centres. Organize teams of volunteers for publicity, sales, creative services, and delivery.

§ 6 More Tickets for Your Money Raffle

Sell donors 3 tickets for \$2 (or whatever amount) instead of just one. Don’t sell fewer than three as a minimum purchase. It feels like a bigger bargain, and if there’s more than one prize, actually increases odds of winning.

It’s probably best not to offer a discount for multiple purchases, however. Many groups have tried arrangements such as offering tickets at \$2 each, 3 for \$5. In many provinces this is illegal. Even where the law permits it, discounting makes accounting needlessly complex.

§ 7 Put a Price on Everything

Thinking creatively can reveal many more income sources at an event. Organizers routinely charge extra at a cash bar, but why stop there?

the floral centrepiece

If you have flowers at an event, someone will take them home. Why not sell them instead? This works especially well if it is an arrangement of dried flowers that will last for a long time.

Get the flowers donated in the first place, of course! Ask florists, garden

clubs, or a flower arranging class at a school. One group even got the flowers second hand from a funeral home - don't tell the guests!

the photo opportunity

If you have a special guest of honour, have someone with a camera take pictures of people with the guest. Sell the pictures.

A simple cardboard frame, sold at most photo supply shops, can be personalized as a souvenir item. Add a printed design, a sticker, label or business card.

A Polaroid camera is best. The immediacy is exciting. Each photo can be autographed. On the other hand, with negatives some people may order several copies of the picture.

Make sure the guest agrees in advance. Time restrictions will limit the number of photos. Make that a selling feature. Advertise "limited quantities only!"

Some groups charge anywhere from \$5 to \$50 for a photo. If the guest of honour has a sense of humour, they may charge even more not to have your photo taken with him/her.

the encore auction

At a benefit concert, the performer can auction off a choice of encores. The audience can vote with the money they contribute. Anton Kuerti, the classical pianist, has raised thousands of dollars extra this way. He has auctioned up to three encores, for several hundred dollars each.

§ 8 The Hug-a-thon

Friends sponsor a 'racer' to hug as many people as possible in a fixed time, with a donation for every hug. Or a group of people (possibly in couples) pay an entrance fee for a mass hug-in, all at the same time.

Aside from raising money, it reaffirms the positive psychological value of hugging. Donations are raised the same way as with any 'thon. This is an excellent choice for non-profits concerned with children or mental health.

§ 9 The Quit-a-thon or Slim-a-thon

Friends sponsor people to raise money by giving up smoking. They make a donation for each smokeless day, or even for each cigarette less than the usual habit. Or they sponsor people who are losing weight, offering a few cents or dollars for each gram or ounce lost during the event. This can last weeks or months!

HOT TIP: How to collect than pledges

The hardest part of most thons is collecting the pledges. This is true for marathons, quit-a-thons, swim-a-thons, dance-a-thons and every other kind.

Collect the pledges in advance! Ask each participant to get the cash as soon as a sponsor promises to help. Make sure they also get the name and address so you can send the tax receipt and ask the sponsor to give again another time.

This method also collects the most money. Collecting after the event brings in only 50 to 90 % of the pledges.

Second best is to have the non-profit send a letter and reply envelope to each sponsor directly. Do it the day of the event, while it's still fresh.

The least efficient method is to send the thon participant back to the sponsors to collect the money and send it in. Too many won't be bothered.

§ 10 Construct-a-thon or Clean-a-thon

Too many thons raise money and burn calories, but result in no socially useful by-product. Instead, volunteers can be sponsored to clean up garbage in a river bed, or along a roadside. Or they can build wheelchair ramps, renovate a community centre or rehabilitate housing for seniors.

Some groups have even built an entire church in a matter of days. Shades of the old-fashioned barn-raising so common in Canada's past!

Donors sponsor the activity at so many dollars per hour of work, or metres of progress.

¶ **What a Bad idea for a special event!**

Not every idea works. There are some that it is probably wisest to avoid.

While some ideas are fundamentally sound, they fail because of improper planning and execution. Others are hard to do well under any circumstances.

However, no idea is universally bad. Some groups have had successes with all of the following. Proceed with caution!

- **1 Charity Car Washes don't produce much money**

Many people start their fundraising careers as a student running a car wash. Many end their careers that same day. It is hard to make a lot of money at a car wash. The fees charged at nearby commercial operations keep the non-profit's price low. Customers can be scarce. Volunteers get soaked and dirty. Bad weather can ruin the event entirely.

- **2 Bachelor Auctions and Slave Sales may be embarrassing**

Every few years, bachelor auctions reappear as a hot trend in fundraising. Then groups discover the problems involved, and they ebb again. Avoid them.

In a bachelor auction, one or more men offer to escort the highest bidders on a special occasion. They may also provide lunch in an elegant location, limousine service, tickets to the theatre or opera, or an invitation to a special party.

Recent media accounts reported one bachelor auction in Canada that grossed \$200,000! Contacted behind the scenes, the organizer admitted that the net income was considerably lower. In addition, he said, controversy over the ethical questions nearly split the Board.

Others have had similar problems with bachelor auctions.

One group reported that the behaviour of the audience at their bachelor auction became so boisterous that it resembled a strip show. In fact, one otherwise

level-headed Member of Parliament actually did begin to strip on stage. This causes embarrassment.

Another group reported difficulties when one of the bachelors propositioned the woman who had purchased his companionship for the evening. She expected innocent fun. He thought it should go further. Again, there was embarrassment.

A third group selected men they thought would bring high prices. Bidding was low, especially for some who could not be present that evening. The men felt insulted that their value wasn't higher.

Instead, have special people host an occasion. Buyers could bid on a lunch for six at a celebrity host's home. Or four couples could have dinner with a famous husband and wife. A winner could accompany a restaurant critic on assignment. This can be fun, and a popular auction item without the problematic connotations of a "Bachelor Auction."

• **3 House Raffles Have Lost Big Money**

Giving away a home or cottage seems like an exciting first prize in a draw. Yet one group lost over \$600,000 raffling off a home. They were not alone.

Many groups have had difficulty.

Some provinces have reportedly declared house lotteries illegal. The Ontario government routinely cautions applicants to avoid the scheme. Here are excerpts from a warning letter sent by the Entertainment Standards Director, Business Practices Division, Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations:

1. A number of major house lottery schemes have experienced difficulties. One scheme reported a loss of \$600,000.
2. Once the scheme is initiated, the organization is obligated (under Ontario law) to proceed in accordance with all license Terms and Conditions. If you have concerns about the viability of this program, or your ability to satisfy license Terms and Conditions, I would urge you not to start it. We would refund your license fee and cancel the license.
3. No request for delays in the licensed draw dates will be considered by the branch.

Please consider your position carefully. If you decide to proceed, I wish you much success.

There are several major problems. First, small lotteries aren't as attractive as the major government-run lotteries. It's hard to compete with multi-million dollar jackpots. Some non-profit groups try to make their draws more attractive by offering very few tickets for sale. This increases the odds of winning, but usually drives the price high as well.

Second, the purchase price of a lottery or raffle ticket is not considered a tax-deductible gift under Revenue Canada rules. This means there is no added financial incentive to buy a ticket from a charity.

Most people have fixed ideas about where they want to live. They have visions of their dream house. They're fussy about neighbourhoods, commuting distances, schools and so on.. They don't get excited about a property that may or may not fulfil their ambitions. While they could sell the house if they win, that seems like too much work.

Worse yet, many non-profit groups pay for the house. This can cost thousands of dollars. It's difficult to sell enough tickets to recover the costs. Occasionally, non-profits have had houses or land donated for this purpose. Usually the donor is a property developer who wants to draw attention to a new sub-division that is not selling well. This may indicate that the property won't be an attraction for the draw, either.

Finally, many people have ethical concerns about gambling in general. They don't want to encourage it in any form. This can be disruptive for your group. It can also cause public relations problems.

For all these reasons, and given the negative experiences of several groups, house raffles in particular are not recommended.

• **4 Selling Products Is Fraught with Problems**

Many groups hope to raise money by selling something. It may be chocolate bars, fruit, or spices. It could be buttons, t-shirts, sweat shirts or hats. It could be coupon booklets offering discounts in restaurants, hotels and retail outlets. All have been tried, and more.

They seem attractive, because the people who buy the products get something for their money while they support the organization. It also seems like less work to persuade someone to buy the product than to explain your cause.

With a few notable exceptions, most groups that try product sales are

unhappy with the results.

Clearly this is not the case for all. Guides (or their parents) still sell cookies and calendars, and Scouts have Apple Day. UNICEF not only continues to sell Christmas cards and calendars, it has expanded into other product lines. In the US, some groups have whole catalogues of merchandise.

The major problem with sales is paying for the goods. This can require a substantial amount of investment capital. If you judge the quantities incorrectly, it can result in expensive over-supply. If the material is customized with your group's name, it may not even be possible to sell it elsewhere.

Consignments are the most acceptable solution. The wholesaler or manufacturer should agree to take back unsold stock with no penalty.

Many companies approach non-profit groups promoting their product as perfect for fundraising. They usually offer to let the organization keep about 40% of the purchase price, while they get the rest. That may be a perfectly fair split. However, it is usually not a special offer for charitable groups. That is a normal mark-up on wholesale price. You could probably get the same share on any other product you might want to sell.

Delivery of the goods to the consumer presents another problem. Shipping by mail is expensive, and can be unreliable. Materials that arrive late or broken can cause ill will. For bulky or odd-sized items such as sweatshirts and buttons, wrapping can be a problem. Direct delivery by volunteers can consume time, gas, and patience. Allow for the costs of packaging materials, shipping and returns in your calculations.

Finally, it's easy to over-estimate how easy it is to sell products, when gripped by enthusiasm. Volunteer sales forces are usually less excited at the prospect of going door-to-door, approaching friends and family, or sitting at a booth in a mall or arena. The potential customers, too, will compare your products to similar items for sale in nearby stores. Merchandising can be very competitive.

Product sales have been very successful for many groups. However, if you are considering such a project, investigate all the problems carefully.

- **5 Beware of Calendars, Dated Products and Perishable Goods**

Of all the products groups sell, the riskiest are those with a short selling life.

Calendars, in particular, have brought grief to many groups. Typically, the idea is proposed in September or October. By the time artwork is approved and printing is completed, it is November, December or even January. If it's early, the potential sales force is busy doing their own Christmas shopping. If it's late, all the stores have already started discounting their unsold commercial calendars. By mid-January, unsold calendars are often given away, or sold to paper recyclers.

In those rare cases where calendars work, the creative process begins no later than February, and the finished product is available for sale by June or July.

One international agency decided to illustrate each month with coloured postcards of Third World scenes. They buyers could detach these and send them to friends. Although the calendar was well produced, sales were poor. Fortunately, the group managed to pull out the post cards and sell them individually and in bundles. Years later, they still had a plentiful supply of cards.

Another group decided that a calendar would be a fitting way to keep their mission on supporters' minds year-round. Instead of selling them, they produced a calendar as an insert to their magazine. It was sent out free in the November issue. With a cover, one month per page, and a photo to accompany it, it only took up 14 pages in the publication. While it produced no direct revenue, it was a PR success.

Adding the date or even the year to any product, can reduce its longevity. Some groups flourish by selling different souvenir items each year to collectors. But others find it easier to have an undated product, so that the surplus can be sold until it's all gone.

For example, during a festival, one community centre decided to sell T-Shirts as a fundraiser. At the end of the festival, they had sold only a portion of the supply. Had they not included the date in the design, they might have been able to keep selling them in future years. Instead, they gave away the left-overs to staff and local transients.

Material that is perishable and needs refrigeration is the most risky. Two major health charities sell flowers each spring. They must arrange quick shipment, refrigerated storage and rapid sales. Each has begun supplementing fresh flowers with artificial flowers and plastic pins or cloth emblems. Although potted plants, bulbs and seeds are somewhat easier to handle, they can still be difficult. The problems are similar, but slightly lessened in the winter for groups selling holly, poinsettia and cut Christmas trees.

Fruit and food are even worse. They must not only be kept fresh and away from pests, they must pass health inspection tests. They also have to be unbruised and uncrushed, and tasty when eaten.

While there are exceptions that prove it can be done, there are probably easier ways to raise money.

- **6 Avoid Fundraising Companies That Charge a Commission**

A handful of companies in Canada offer to raise funds for non-profits on a commission. They promise that if no money is raised, the non-profit will not have to carry the loss. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Commission-based fundraising is against the Code of Ethics of the Canadian Society of Fundraising Executives, as well as several similar professional organizations in the United States. They feel that commissions take unfair advantage of the non-profit, and may actually reduce the amount of money raised.

Commissions put all the emphasis on immediate income. This may be a disincentive to treat potential donors well if they are not making a contribution right away. Donors who might make a larger gift at a later date, if cultivated properly, may be pressured to give a lesser amount during the campaign, so the fundraiser can collect a commission.

Commissions also discourage the fundraiser from training the non-profit's own volunteers in the art of fundraising, since it is hard to collect commissions on the money they raise. Instead, emphasis is put on paid canvassers. This may drive up the cost of the campaign.

In some cases, commission-oriented companies are paid a commission on the net funds left after expenses. There have been allegations that the fundraisers then steer much of the production costs to companies they own, have interests in, or receive kick-backs from. In this manner, they can collect a commission that appears relatively small while collecting large sums under the table.

One typical pattern is for fundraising company to offer to put on a show on behalf of the non-profit, and sell tickets for it. Investigative journalists have accused at least one company of using high pressure tactics to sell the seats. Donors have been asked to buy one or more seats for disabled children to see the show. The journalists claim that few disabled children were brought to see the show. They also say that many more seats were sold than were ever available. Finally, they say that the charity involved was misrepresented to potential donors.

The company investigated by the journalists blamed a few unscrupulous former employees. While they accepted no responsibility for the problem, they did say they had cleaned up the difficulties. Many people remain sceptical.

Other companies offer to put out year books or programmes for non-profit groups. They promise to sell all the ad space and cover printing costs. Small businesses often feel pressured to advertise in these, although they receive little return.

Even when no shady practices are involved, commission fundraising can be expensive. In many cases, the charities have received less than 30% of the money raised, while the promotional company claimed the rest for expenses. While these abuses are documented most thoroughly in the US, there are Canadian cases.

One small Canadian charity, which received only a tiny fraction of the money raised on their behalf, also had to fight the fundraising company to get a list of the names and addresses of the people who had donated. Finally it received the charitable tax receipts that the promoters had issued for the contributions. They then discovered that the company had consistently gotten the name of the group wrong.

In defence of these fundraisers, it is fair to acknowledge that the costs of putting on a show and conducting a telephone or mail campaign can legitimately be high. If a rock star offered to give 30% of the proceeds from a concert to a non-profit group, he or she would be praised. No one would ask where the other 70% had gone. It's also true that many non-profits have received thousands of dollars they might not have otherwise raised.

Commission-oriented companies particularly prey on groups dealing with children, health issues or disabled people. Small self-help organizations are especially vulnerable.

Although it can seem an attractive offer at first, extreme caution is advised. Most non-profits should avoid commissions.

6

Getting (Almost) Everything
Donated
to Reduce Your Costs to Nearly Zero.

6 .. Getting (Almost) Everything Donated to Reduce Your Costs to Nearly Zero

In many special events, the charity barely breaks even on the ticket sales. The income results from savings when donors provide free goods and services.

At any type of special event, the best way to increase income is to lower costs by getting in-kind donations.

Experience shows that almost anything you might pay for you can also get for free. Often the contributed item is higher quality than you could afford to pay for. Here are some examples:

Examples	Considerations
Wines, especially Canadian	A hall or hotel may charge a “corkage fee” for opening the bottles. That may make it cheaper to buy from them.
Foods	Several restaurants may give one dish each to a gourmet fair. Look for restaurants that are about to open, or are new. Make sure the hall isn’t contracted to a caterer.
Printing	Not usually from printers - they are reluctant to give away their livelihood. Instead, look for businesses that own a printing plant of their own. Chain stores or major corporations, for example, have donated printing. So have newspapers, and priority classes in schools. Allow extra time, so the printer can squeeze a free job in between paying clients.

Other free items to pursue: raffle and door prizes, the services of advertising agencies, hotel rooms (especially on weekends) and restaurant dinners. Books, especially last year’s coffee table art books, make popular prizes and are

easy to get donated.

Businesses will often donate goods for garage sales and bazaars. Retailers and manufacturers will give end-of-line, shop-worn and second-quality merchandise. Some will contribute brand new, high grade products and services as well. Many department stores have reputations for extraordinary generosity.

Keep a sense of perspective. Don't waste precious staff or volunteer time working all day to get \$25 worth of goods donated.

You can give a donor a receipt for goods received, but never for services. Further information on this, and other Revenue Canada regulations, is in the chapter on tax laws.

7

How to Guarantee Income Before You Sell
Your First Ticket

7.. How to guarantee income before you sell your first ticket

Some expenses must be paid in cash. Use someone else's cash!

Many organizations will co-sponsor an event with a non-profit. This frequently makes the difference between success and failure.

Large or small, groups may find a partner who can make it easier to produce a successful event. If this is your first time, you don't need to go alone.

Sponsors can:

- pay some or all of the bills
- add experience and expertise
- provide labour power
- strengthen your credibility
- offer publicity
- donate goods and services for the event

A sponsor may be a business with a related product. Or a service club that is doing good work. Or another non-profit that will split the expenses and the revenue with you.

Radio stations can be valuable co-sponsors. They gain in public goodwill, and you gain from promotional services. Corporate sponsors who want publicity are attracted when radio station co-sponsors promise free air time.

Many radio stations are willing to do this as part of their community relations programs. TV stations and newspapers are much less involved in this sort of arrangement.

The station may offer a specified number of minutes of Public Service Announcements (PSAs). They may also arrange to have announcers mention the event during their broadcasts. Personalities may appear at the event as well.

Enrolling one radio station as co-sponsor usually does reduce your publicity on other stations. Make sure you chose the best co-sponsor. Pick a station that reaches the people you will want to reach. A hard rock station will not reach chamber music enthusiasts or senior citizens very effectively.

One classic example of radio co-sponsorship is the "Soda Pop Castle."

With this technique a local bottler of a popular soft drink donates dozens of cases of pop. The fundraisers build a castle or fort of stacked cases in a shopping centre parking lot or some other central area. A local DJ is then trapped in the middle, with broadcast equipment to do a radio show live from the site. Supporters set the announcer free by buying the drinks .usually at a discount. The proceeds go to your organization. If the castle is large enough, the DJ may be there for days . provide a bed, a portable toilet, and food!

Service clubs also make good co-sponsors. They can provide an army of talented volunteers ready to take on good work. Many have experience in fundraising, and can help a new organization learn the ropes. Since many service clubs are populated by business-people they frequently have the skills and contacts to sell tickets.

Some service clubs want part of the proceeds from events they co-sponsor, for their own charitable projects. Make sure all the details are clear beforehand.

Firefighters also have a remarkable reputation for generosity for a variety of causes. They are often willing to collect public donations of goods at their fire hall. Examples include used clothes for children, food for hunger programs, and even recyclable materials. In some towns, the firefighters will erect a “tollbooth” on a major road and collect donations from every passing car.

Some companies will donate samples of their products or services for your event. One or two large items are good as door prizes, or for an auction. They may offer enough smaller items for each guest, as a party favour. For example, a perfume manufacturer might provide a tiny vial of a new scent for each guest.

Other sponsors may allow you to show off unusual or luxurious houses or apartments. People will pay for a tour, or to attend a dinner party there, if only to see the interior of the homes.

Multi-Level Sponsorships

Multiple levels of sponsorships are also worth considering. They provide opportunities to involve several sponsors. Each may give a different amount.

Call the largest sponsor a benefactor, for example. They may get the event named after their company or service club. Their logo would appear on a large banner in a prominent place. They might also receive 3 seats at the head table, passes for 10 people, and a full-page ad in the program.

Sustainers might be the next level. They may give 2/3 of the funds, and get smaller signs offering recognition. They get two seats at the head table, passes for 8, and a 2/3-page ad in the programme.

Three companies might share the honour of being the guarantors. Each could sponsor, for example, all the costs of one of three meals at a conference. Or they could sponsor one performance of a show, and so on.

Each level gets a little more recognition for their investment. All get good value for their money.

Caution is needed with this approach. Charities that put too much emphasis on the public relations benefits available for sponsors may find themselves competing for the advertising dollar. Usually, a non-profit deals with a donations officer who is interested in the value of the project for its own sake. Instead, you may face the ad department. There you have to prove the PR value of the event is greater than spending the money on ads. This can be difficult.

Major Sponsorships

Major sponsorships can be worth thousands of dollars. Systems of matching non-profits with corporations are highly sophisticated.

For example, breweries, distilleries and wineries all take major roles in sponsoring sporting events. Tobacco companies have given to the arts. Pharmacies and drug manufacturers often host community health fairs.

Careful advance preparation is needed to arrange these major liaisons. The competition is stiff.

American Express Canada, for example, reportedly “received 440 requests for sponsorship in 1987, of which 114 were for cultural events. Of these 114, American Express selected eight to sponsor,” according to *The Sponsorship Report*, a Canadian newsletter. Here are excerpts from this newsletter, covering a speech by Gustavo Galluzi, president and general manager of American Express Canada. He was speaking to the National Conference on Tourism, Culture and Multiculturalism in Montreal, in April 1988. Many other businesses have similar policies.

Our motives for corporate sponsorship are twofold. We believe that sponsorship of culture and the arts is our duty as a good corporate citizen. We also believe that it is a worthwhile investment, especially where the event is of national or international repute and can increase travel and tourism.

Those organizations that receive sponsorship from American Express are ones that have a profile and image similar to ours. When you solicit future sponsors, it is crucial for you to find the right fit.

Although you don't have to know a company inside and out before you ask for corporate sponsorship, you do need to know a few basic things about the company before you make the approach. You must know the demographics of the consumers to whom they market . in other words, who the customers are, as categorized by income, age and geography.

In the area of sponsorship, the target groups of the cultural event and the potential sponsor must share similar characteristics. Unless they do, most companies will not chose to spend their limited funds on an event.

Moreover, the images of the cultural event and the sponsor should also mesh. Ensuring this is particularly tricky...

What can you expect a sponsor to do for you?

The bottom line for most requests is usually financial funding. Occasionally, only the use of the company name is sought.... If the fit is particularly good between the cultural event and the sponsor, the company may help you do your marketing. When this happens, the happy result is that the cultural entity's usually meager marketing budget (and sometimes marketing expertise) is vastly amplified.

So who were the lucky eight? In 1987, American Express Canada sponsored the following cultural events:

- Alberta Theatre Projects
- Festival of Festivals
- Montreal Symphony
- Royal Ontario Museum
- Shaw Festival
- Stratford Festival
- Toronto Symphony
- Vancouver International Film Festival

You may find it particularly useful to know how Canada's largest bank views sponsorship. The Royal Bank was a major sponsor of the Calgary Olympics. They also sponsor smaller projects every year. Here is an article written by a vice-president of The Royal Bank, explaining their procedures.

Establishing a Model for Corporate Sponsorship

by Peter Case

Reprinted from **Special Events Report**
with permission of the author and publisher.

Before the Olympics, The Royal Bank of Canada, the largest bank in the country and the sixth largest in North America, created a model for negotiating implementing and evaluating sponsorship. Below, Peter Case, Royal Bank's vice president of advertising describes the model and the process the bank used to develop it.

A sponsor must have a sponsorship model; it is the only way to maximize sponsorship dollars.

We have learned that we cannot afford to assume event organizers know our sponsorship goals or the nature of our business, despite the fact that banking seems to be such a straightforward subject. To know the bank's goals requires an intricate understanding of our business strategies, priorities and trade secrets. The onus is definitely on corporate sponsors to develop criteria that not only help specific sponsorship needs, but also ensure sponsorships will work for the company.

With those thoughts in mind, we set out early last year to build a Royal Bank sponsorship model. We think we have succeeded because our model has since become critical to the bank's assessment, internal collaboration, negotiation and implementation of sponsorship activities.

Royal Bank sponsorships, such as our role as official bank of the '88 Calgary Olympics, are built solidly on our ability and desire to generate

measurable business returns from sponsorship investments. That approach is an important departure from our earlier sponsorships, many of which were assumed for vague "image enhancement" reasons.

We define sponsorship as an external communications vehicle that, when integrated with the bank's marketing mix and promotional activities, produces measurable returns in support of business unit marketing goals.

Perhaps the most important word is "integrated" with business unit goals and other marketing communications functions. We worked hard with groups in our organization to develop event marketing and sponsorship guidelines. This all-important, internal involvement helped us match business goals with sponsorship opportunities and derive business gains through sponsorship.

We formalized the business of defining and exploiting event marketing opportunities last January when we appointed Patrick Kahnert, the bank's former manager of corporate communication services, to the newly

created position of Manager, Event Marketing.

We had a wealth of previous experience in sponsorship from which to draw, but we found we really had not controlled our own destiny. We frequently failed to ask the right questions and we regularly bought properties that did not provide meaningful payback to the bank.

By dedicating a management resource to the task of building a sponsorship model - of negotiating, refining and applying it - we can ensure that control, focus and pay-back remain the backbone of our event marketing and sponsorship activities. We tailor-made the sponsorship model ourselves - we did not buy it - with help from some of the best event marketing consultants in Canada.

A Disciplined Sponsorship Evaluation Process. Kahnert spent considerable time counselling both internal and external groups that had sponsorship requests and proposals. While his frequent declines soon earned him the nickname “Dr No,” we stayed out of sponsorship until we had clearly identified value objectives, cultural parameters and evaluation tools.

Today, each sponsorship proposal that appears to have merit is first reviewed by us from an event marketing perspective to see how it fits with other activities we’re doing or want to do. We then circulate the proposal, with comments, to appropriate areas within the bank to identify specific marketing needs that would justify the investment.

By using sponsorship proposals as “discussion points” throughout the bank, we have added to our capacity to understand and support the marketing goals of various units. Indeed, we have an open-door approach to proposals because they enable the bank to define more clearly and precisely what sponsorship can or cannot achieve.

Because clear guidelines now exist, most decisions on sponsorship proposals can be made with a high degree of consistency by Royal Bank managers other than ourselves. We can act as advisers or catalysts in those deliberations, ensuring for the bank the key elements: control, focus and payback. The guidelines have been well received throughout the organization because they fill a huge gap.

To make sure we remember our lessons, we internally distribute regular event marketing status reports summarizing each sponsorship proposal and the reasons the bank either accepted or rejected it.

The common reasons we decline sundry sponsorship include: an unreasonable fee, too many co-sponsors, or organizers will not permit association of relevant bank products or services. Tickets and bank logo recognition are not enough to justify sponsorship.

Royal Bank Sponsorship Model.

We now have a good idea of what event properties we should buy or create ourselves. Our evaluation model puts existing or prospective sponsorships to the acid test. It demands the articulation of specific business-generation goals, the

identification of target audiences including real names versus broad demographic statements and setting of measurable sales targets.

Here's how it works. First, we identify the fit of proposals with our *raison d'être* providing banking services. We'd like to think that if a major event is good enough to sponsor, it's good enough to bank with us.

Next, we flush out the marketing potential of a proposition, specifically in terms of product or service goals with a clearly defined target audience.

Then we look for specific business development and client relations opportunities. We are getting better at making sure events are of interest to our customers.

Although image enhancement is our fourth criterion, it is a vital consideration; an event's cause and its organization must be compatible with the bank's corporate reputation objectives. However, image enhancement as a sole reason for event sponsorship is more often than not a "copout." I've seen very few arguments on behalf of image stand up to scrutiny.

If these criteria collectively provide the bank with measurable business returns, we move to the "control" box in our model - we negotiate maximum value for the bank. A relevant sponsorship niche must be available: appropriate exclusivity rights, right of first refusal, and a clear position for the bank to exercise control over the promotion of its products and services.

When we make a fee offer to event organizers - please note the use of the word "offer" - we base it on the potential business and marketing value to the

bank. We don't always accept the organizer's notion of a reasonable fee. We want to be sure we can derive, within a specified time-frame, a reasonable return on our investment.

And then the key to sponsorship success begins - the implementation of strategies to exploit the rights we purchased to meet specific objectives. The only elements restricting success in this vital step are imagination, creativity, money and time.

The sponsorship model in itself does not assure payback; that requires follow-through. A lack of follow-through is a major reason many companies walk away from sponsorships shaking their heads about whether they received their money's worth.

We applied our sponsorship model to our Olympic sponsorship. Besides marketing bank services to groups involved in the Games, including organizers, sponsors, suppliers, sport groups, athletes and spectators, we extended our role to embrace the bank's entire Canadian branch network. We accomplished the latter by offering Olympic souvenirs, and promoting and selling Olympic coins. Banking services and coin sales will liquidate the lion's share of the bank's investment in the Games.

As for business development, we used our involvement, in good measure, to get closer to our preferred clients. And the bank's reputation as "the helpful bank" was enhanced thanks to the commitment of our Alberta district headquarters and branch network.

The bank's sponsorship model fits the culture and *modus operandi* of the bank. It applies equally to our sponsorship of the Olympics and local curling bonspiels. This is important because not all sponsorships have to be corporate undertakings. Our event marketing program is able to be implemented at all levels.

While the sponsorship model is a solid foundation, it is not cast in stone. We are quickly learning to adjust our event marketing strategies.

We've also learned, the hard way, that a deal

is only as good as the ability of both sides to do what they promised. Partnerships are not always made in heaven.

The Royal Bank of Canada has 1,467 branches in Canada and more than 1,600 operating units in 39 other countries. Assets at the end of fiscal 87 were \$102.2 billion; international operations account for a third.

The Royal Bank of Canada
Telephone: (416) 974-5151

The Royal Bank information above was reprinted from *Special Events Report*. It and *The Sponsorship Report* are two useful publications you should know about. Both help beleaguered fundraisers find the right matches. They also help corporate representatives do their jobs better.

For more information on these newsletters, please refer to the Resource Guide at the end of this book.

8

Nine Ways
A Printed Souvenir Program
Can Increase Your Effectiveness

8 **Nine Ways A Printed Souvenir Programme Can Increase Your Effectiveness**

A programme booklet can help you in several different ways. A programme can be as simple as a piece of paper with information photocopied on both sides and folded into a 4-page booklet. It can be elaborate, multi-paged and colourful. No matter how modest or fancy, here's what to do:

§ 1 Thank donors and volunteers publicly in the program. The size of a donor's often gift relates directly to the amount of publicity it generates. Some business sponsors may appreciate free ads in the programme.

HOT TIP: Protocol at an event

When inviting government leaders, diplomats, religious dignitaries, and other people with positions of honour, there's a right and a wrong order to list them in printed material. This affects the order in which they walk in a procession to the head table, too.

Always ask such a guest's office staff for the correct order of precedence or check with your local library.

§ 2 Include educational material about your work in the program. Everyone attending should learn more about your organization. This is especially important at events like casinos, where donors may not know your group very well.

§ 3 Tuck a donation request inside the cover. Some people may want to send in extra contributions. You might use a postage-paid reply envelope, if you expect people to send gifts after the event. Only a few will respond, of course, but they make it worthwhile.

§ 4 Get the printing donated. This helps keep costs low. Be extra sure to include a thank-you to the person or group who prints the program in the program itself. This can encourage more donations of printing. It also reassures your other supporters. Donors like to know that their gifts go to the organizational mission, and are not spent on printing. You must not only be a wise steward of their money, you must appear to be.

HOT TIP:

Reusing art work

When a printer arranges typesetting, artwork, and layout of printed material for you, be sure to pick up the working material afterwards. With minor changes, it may save money in producing next year's programme, or on other printing jobs.

§ 5 Recruit new volunteers. Tuck a simple form inside the programme, possibly in combination with other response forms. Ask people who might like to volunteer to fill in their names and phone numbers. You might also ask what kind of volunteer work they'd like to do, or what their skills are. If your event is enticing, more people may want to get involved with you.

§ 6 Offer to contact people who want more information. One group reported a \$10,000 corporate gift, resulting from a contact made at a special event. They provided a coupon marked "please contact me" with spaces for name and address.

§ 7 Ask for anonymous comments to evaluate the event. When asked face-to-face, people often say they enjoyed an event more than they did, rather than seem rude. An anonymous questionnaire gets more honest answers, and more detail.

How could it improve next time? Rate various factors, such as the room, the refreshments, the speeches, the entertainment. Don't rank them on a scale of 1 to 10, because people are often unsure whether 1 is the highest or lowest. Instead, ask people to circle one of Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor, Very Poor. Leave plenty of room for comments, too.

§ 8 Sell the program, especially if it is high quality. Fans at rock concerts, sporting events and art shows often pay top dollar for souvenir programs. Prices of \$5 to \$25 are not uncommon. This is only appropriate if the program is optional, and interesting enough to be good value for the price.

Here's how one group did it. The Hadassah Bazaar decided their annual sale was so large everyone needed maps to find their way around the bargains. The Toronto Sun agreed to produce the maps, add editorial copy, and sell ads. The reported result was a gross of \$60,000, netting \$40,000 on the map booklet alone.

§ 9 Sell advertisements in the program. Do this only if it's an efficient use of volunteer and staff effort. Ad sales people from a local newspaper or radio station may help on this. Be careful not to waste too much energy if the returns are low.

9

**Challenge Grants Can Add
An Element of Fun**

9.. Challenge Grants Can Add an Element of Fun

So many groups run special events that supporters in a community can feel overwhelmed. Which should they support? A challenge can add needed excitement. For people who enjoy the competitive spirit, it can add extra zip. Challenges can build spirit and loyalty - to a group, a school, or a community. They can also multiply the total money raised.

How do they work? A person or organization donates money (or goods) to your cause, and challenges others to match it. Challenges can go back and forth, raising enthusiasm and money for the cause. Here are examples of several different types you can use.

Community spirit

“I challenge all the other motorcycle riders to bring a teddy bear for the kids.”

“South Side High challenges all the other secondary schools to a 24-hour fundraising dance marathon.”

Announcements like these are often heard during telethons, on radio and TV. Service clubs, fraternities, sports clubs and high school councils often get into the spirit. Two cities can challenge each other, with the mayors' active participation.

The Commercial Connection

“Sam's Gas station will give The ___ Charity 50 cents for every person who fills up this Saturday using our coupon.”

“On ‘Buck-a-Cup Monday’ everyone who buys coffee for \$1 at Mickey's Muffin Heaven gets a free muffin. All the proceeds go to _____”

Petro-Canada did this on a large scale as part of the Olympic Torch Relay. McCain Foods redeemed discount coupons giving consumers a 50-cent discount on their products plus a 50-cent donation to an African water project for the Canadian Hunger Foundation, totalling \$100,000. McDonald's franchisers regularly have fundraising McHappy Days. Many local merchants and small businesses will participate in similar efforts.

Conditional Gifts

“Joe will give \$2,500 if someone else will.”

“A Foundation will give \$75,000 if we raise \$25,000.”

Some people want to start the ball rolling. If they worry that the project won't raise enough to get launched, a conditional gift is perfect. If 100% funding isn't found, they are off the hook. Foundations are using this now to prevent non-profits from becoming dependent.

Government Matching Grants

“The provincial government will give \$3 for every \$1 the public sends to victims of the tornado/drought/flood/fire.”

Federally, CIDA will match donations for international development up to \$9 for every \$1 given. They will usually include provincial matching grants as well. That can mean \$18 available for Third World work for every dollar residents in certain provinces give.

The Employee Match

“Our company will give \$1 for every \$1 one of our employees gives to the university.”

Most common for university and educational institutions, matching grants are often available. The match varies from 50% to 200%. Usually the employee must fill out a company form requesting the match.

Where can you get a list of companies that offer matching grants? Try the nearest university Alumni Affairs office. They usually have that data to get extra gifts from their own grads. They may be willing to share the information with you. IBM, Levi Strauss and Manufacturers' Life are among many companies that have offered generous matches.

Some companies also prefer to give grants to non-profits where employees are active volunteers. Ask your donors where they work!

10

Hidden Gold:
Extra Income
After Events and Raffles End

10 . . Hidden gold

Extra Income After Events and Raffles End

The names and addresses of people who buy your tickets, whether for an event or a raffle, can be valuable. Those who support you once will probably do so again.

How do you get the names and addresses?

Door prizes are the most effective method. There should be more than one prize perhaps a dozen or more. A greater chance to win will make people more likely to join in.

Simple prizes will do. They should be donated, if possible. Perhaps a local restaurant will provide a free dinner for two. A cinema might offer passes for the movies. A publisher could give a coffee-table art book. For more ideas, see Chapters 6, *Getting (Almost) Everything Donated* and 11, *Auctions*.

Petitions are excellent for advocacy organizations. They provide a list of names and addresses of people who feel strongly about the same issue as you do. Yet most groups never get in touch with these supporters. Tell those who signed what the results of the campaign were. Ask for their help for the next phase. This provides an opportunity to build a politically and financially rewarding relationship.

A guest book at the door works in certain circumstances, where other techniques may be inappropriate. However many people will pass it by, especially if there is a crowd at the door. Others may write illegibly, or leave only a partial address.

A fish-bowl draw can work at public facilities such as a community centre, library, swimming pool, gym, or an art show. Ask visitors to drop a business card into a bowl or box near the high-traffic areas. Provide paper and pencil for those with no cards. Offer prizes for a draw.

This provides you with added information:

people's occupations - perfect for recruiting skills you need for volunteers, such as accountants, writers, sales people

contacts for corporate donations - if managers come to your facilities, consider asking them for support in applications

statistics on major users for grant requests - if you can show that a significant number of a company's staff use your facility, you increase your chances of getting a grant from the company.

What do you do with the names?

Contact people often - at least once a year.

Send a note right away. Within a week or two of a special event you can thank people for coming. Tell them how successful the campaign was. Ask for extra donations to reach the goal, or to launch phase two.

Within 3 to 4 months, write or phone to ask for help on different projects.

Invite them to the next special event. If they had fun at an annual event, 50% or more will come again. If you offer several events a year, it may be appropriate to invite people who attended one to attend others. Use discretion here. For example, you may not want to invite the entrants in the Pig-Out Pizza Eating Contest to your \$175 per plate Gourmet Buffet.

11

Auctions
Encourage Top Donors
To Give the Limit

11 .. Auctions

Encourage Top Donors to Give the Limit

Fundraisers too often set ticket prices as low as possible, so more people can attend. This practice ignores the generous few who could and would give more if you made it appealing.

Auctions are an easy way for people to give exactly as much or as little as they want.

Auctions work well because:

- People give to their own limits.
- People get something in return.
- People have fun memories.

Professional auctioneer Joe Small expands this list. He's raised over \$20 million in 1300 charity auctions since 1975, in the US and Canada. Here's his list as it appeared in *Fundraising Management* magazine:

Advantages of an Auction

1. Attract new money from new sources..., in substantial amounts, usually earmarked for a special project.
2. A "media event" often results in excellent newspaper and television exposure.
3. A fun-filled, enjoyable evening for all.
4. Image enhancement for the sponsoring group.
5. Find new donors.
6. Find new volunteers
7. Build enthusiasm toward an annual auction.
8. Discover an efficient method of channelling the energies of those many persons who wish to help you but don't know how.
9. All money paid up front, not in delayed payment pledges that often shrink or prove difficult to collect.
10. Your group has increased its annual income substantially and broadened its donor base.

Reprinted from *Fundraising Management* magazine, March 1988

What should you auction off?

The best items have emotional and psychological value, not market value. That's because there is no obvious pre-set upper limit.

On items that have a market value, like a video recorder, bidding usually stops just below the normal retail value. With items that fulfil fantasies a market price is not clearly established, so bids run much higher.

One example which several charities have found successful: used ballet slippers from a dancer such as Karen Kain. Used dance shoes frequently sell for hundreds of dollars, and have gone as high as \$1,000. The National Ballet Company does give them to worthy causes, especially national charities, depending on the supply. Other dance companies may do likewise. If you'd like a pair, make a request in writing to:

The Publicity Department
National Ballet of Canada
157 King Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 1G9

Autographed hockey sticks, baseballs and other sports items can round Out your collection for auction. In one small community, a fan bid \$1600 for Wayne Gretzky's hockey sweater, donated by the Edmonton Oilers before the trade. The purchaser then donated it back to the charity, and it was auctioned a second time the same evening. This time it raised \$2,000 more.

Like most hockey clubs, The Edmonton Oilers will give non-profit groups a souvenir stick. They give out about 12 a month. These can be autographed by the entire team, or just the player of your choice. They also give Oilers hats and photos. Sweaters are given on very rare occasions, when approved by the player, or team owner Peter Pocklington. Sports teams of all kinds have similar policies. If you'd like to request a souvenir item, write with as much information as possible about your group to:

Community Relations
Edmonton Oilers Hockey Club
Northlands Coliseum
Edmonton, Alberta
T5B 4M9

Consider asking a company that owns a hot air balloon to take people for rides. Increasingly popular as advertising items, custom balloons and blimps are owned by real estate brokers, breweries, tire companies, and pizza chains.

Media stars and politicians have donated ties or other memorabilia. Musicians, like the popular singing group The Nylons, have provided the customized jackets worn on their tours, albums and free sets of tickets. Radio stations have allowed the top bidder to co-host a show and sit in for the day behind the scenes. Sports reporters can take people to watch a game from the press box and meet the players in the dressing room. Driving the bulldozer or swinging the wrecking ball to demolish a building are two other popular auction items.

The list is limited only by your imagination.

Even without major contacts, anyone can find valuable services. A local amateur cook can prepare a fine dinner. Teenagers can mow the donor's lawn all summer.

Celebrity and fantasy items alone do not provide something for everyone. A good mix is essential. Here are some other items recommended by auctioneer Joe Small, depending on your audience:

All items should, with rare exceptions, be either brand-new or genuine antiques. Examples of popular items include air fare to anywhere, a garden tractor, use of a billboard for a month, matched luggage, season tickets, landscaping service, a gourmet dinner for 12, brass or bronze items, paintings, cameras, home entertainment centres, new or antique furniture, stained glass windows, condos in Vail or Acapulco, a fishing boat, a Jeep, a diamond ring, a bicycle built for two, an expensive watch, a fur coat.

The choice should be so wide that everyone will get excited about something, even if they didn't plan to buy in the first place.

Enhance the value of commercially available items by arranging novel combinations. For example, a video player may include a movie every week for a year from a local rental store. Or offer a custom home movie or rock video by a professional producer. An airline trip can include hotel accommodation in a hotel, and spending money donated by a travellers' cheque company.

Where do you get items to auction off?

Prizes should almost always be donated. The exception is when it takes more time than it would to buy the item.

Many businesses are delighted to donate items if they believe they will receive exposure to potential customers. One group in Hamilton, Ontario, recently got an outraged call from a jeweller. He was angry that the charity was auctioning off a ring donated by a competitor, and hadn't asked him! He demanded the right to donate one of his custom-made \$2000 diamond-and-gold rings. The charity graciously accepted.

"Goods and services are vastly easier to obtain than money," Joe Small notes. Instead of financial contributions, a charity may find it easier to get something they can convert to cash at an auction.

What's the difference between a live and a silent auction?

There are two major types of auctions.

The **live auctioneer** is perfect for a small number of items that are:

- more expensive - \$350 and up
- easy to understand
- popular with almost everyone.

A live auctioneer gets everyone's attention, and can increase the bids. On the other hand, it is hard to listen to a live auction for a long time. It can also leave out some people who can only bid on low-cost items.

The live auctioneer sometimes varies the pace. Some of the techniques include:

Lightning Rounds - Very short time allowed. Builds energy.

First Come/First Served - Give items for absurdly low prices to the first person brave enough to bid. Gets the bidding going.

Top Up - Each bidder actually adds the difference between his/her bid and the previous bid to the pot. Amounts are smaller, but can add up. At the end, the bidding becomes rapid as people realize they could get the item for just a dollar or two. Telling people there is a time-limit increases participation. Don't reveal what the limit is.

Tombola - The winner gets to choose from mystery boxes, without knowing what the contents will be. It works best if some contain fabulously expensive items and others funny consolation prizes.

There are other variations. Haimish Robertson, of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation (JDF) of Ontario describes their Tombola as “a glorified fish pond.” People pay for a chance to reach into a drum and pull out a slip of paper. Some win nothing, and the slip says “Sorry! Thanks for donating to JDF.” Others win small prizes. These are often the items too small to auction, such as a cup and saucer. JDF recommends charging from \$2 to \$5 for each chance, depending on the size of the community and other factors. Tombola works very well in combination with a Monte Carlo, where players buy chances with their chips, instead of cashing them in.

The **silent auction** is for a large number of items that are:

- less expensive - \$50 to \$250 retail
- require thought
- of special interest, such as insulating your home, having a lawyer prepare your will, or free orthodontic work.

Silent auctions provide less distraction from the other fun, such as dinner and chatting with friends. As a result they help round out the evening. On the other hand, they are easier to ignore and take longer.

To conduct a silent auction, display the item to be auctioned off. Attach a sheet of paper for the bids, or mount a cardboard bid register nearby. Bidders write in the amount they will pay and sign their name, or secret code number. Each higher bidder supersedes the previous bid. People may bid as often as they wish.

Time limits on some of the items will keep the pace brisk. These are usually secret, so no one knows when bidding will close on the item they want.

How many items can you auction?

The live auction should last no more than one hour to an hour and a half. In that time you can auction from 35 to 45 items. Allow about 90 seconds per item, with some time in between.

The silent auction can include 250 to 350 items.

TV and radio auctions can last several days. Some groups auction up to 3,000 items that way.

How many people should you have at an auction?

Auctions come in all sizes, depending on the ability of the non-profit group to draw a crowd. Joe Small reports that they normally range from 200 to 650 people. However he has seen them run effectively as small as 75 people, and as large as 1,650.

What else should happen at an auction?

Too many distractions can reduce the income at an auction. Don't combine it with a casino, a major speech or a star studded concert. Keep people focussed on the auction.

Joe Small recommends the ideal combination to be an auction with a fundraising dinner. There should only be one speech, he suggests. It should be about 7 minutes long, by a well known and beloved figure. The speech says little more than 'Thank you for coming. Here's an exciting project that the money raised will fund. Let's get started.'

As the auction begins, a one-minute mock auction may educate the crowd on how to bid. During the auction, the auctioneer may vary the pace with a joke or a story. Beware the auctioneer who tells a tale that is off-colour, or not funny. The auction itself is the entertainment, and it had better be good.

Should you charge admission?

There should be an admission charge that covers the costs of the event itself.

This charge should reflect the cost of renting the hall, sending invitations, providing food and general administration costs.

Don't undercharge. One group insisted that the fee be \$35, not \$50, for fear that some supporters would not attend at the higher price. However, supporters that could not afford the extra \$15 admission would not have purchased much at the auction either.

Don't skimp. "Remember that saving pennies here may cost you dollars later," Joe Small says. "For example, a dinner/auction in a highly respected hotel ballroom would be a comfortable setting for a higher income group. Other halls

cost less, but not as many from this socioeconomic strata will come to a vacant warehouse, and if they do, their bids will be lower.”

On the other hand, don't charge extra for the auction programme, the bidding paddle, or other essential ingredients. Other than a cash bar, if you serve alcohol, the admission fee should cover all expenses. Let them spend their money on the auction itself.

Who should be the auctioneer?

A good auctioneer is essential.

Someone who knows what s/he's doing can get the prices higher, or read the crowds for signs of fatigue. They can pace the expensive items with the low-cost fun ones.

Involve the auctioneer as early as possible. He or she may have valuable advice on how to organize the event for maximum results.

A professional auctioneer may be willing to volunteer time. Joe Small cautions that some otherwise competent professionals don't have experience in the fundraising setting. They may not be patient with people who have never been to an auction before, and don't understand the system. Or they may show off their high speed auctioneer's patter, which is too hard for a non-auction going crowd to understand. As a result people may not bid, for fear of embarrassment.

Local celebrities are sometimes good, if they make a living by talking, such as a radio or TV announcer, or a politician. If you go this route, it's a good idea to have two celebs. They can pace each other through the hour. And, if one cancels at the last minute, another is already in place.

Joe Small is one of a handful of professionals who specialize in charity auctions. They can not only run the auction itself, but advise on how to do it well.

Small charges \$1450 US plus expenses, to provide an auctioneer only. He also offers a full-service package. This includes the auctioneer, a clerk and 2 experienced ring men to spot the bids. That's more complex than it sounds. In addition, you get an orientation meeting several weeks in advance, to set up the system, and unlimited consultations by phone throughout the process. All the special forms necessary, bidding paddles and other equipment are included too. This package costs up to \$4500 US plus expenses, depending on the size of the auction.

A good auctioneer can increase the income substantially, compared to a do-it-yourself arrangement. Small estimates the difference runs from 30% extra income to double the money.

When should you hold an auction?

Hold an auction almost anytime in the normal “social season” from September to May.

Avoid the summer months, when people are often away. Avoid the height of the Christmas season, from early December -to mid-January.

October through early December can be good timing. Many people will see your auction as an opportunity to buy unusual presents.

What is tax-deductible at auctions?

See Chapter 17, *What*s deductible? Revenue Canada Regulations and Other Legal Matters.*

What are the problems with auctions?

For all their advantages, auctions can cause problems. Here are a few to be wary of:

Art auctions

Avoid art auctions in most cases. Unless the art is very good, bids may be low. Low prices can embarrass everyone involved.

One group of artists in Vancouver put on an auction of their own works, in a gallery that had donated space. Few people but the artists themselves and their relatives came. They sold very little.

If you have an art auction, have a jury of respected critics and curators choose acceptable submissions. Prepare for the difficult task of turning down some items.

Several groups have had auctions of ‘The World’s Worst Art.’ They purchased items at garage sales and flea markets that are amusing in their

awfulness. It takes a special group to carry this off, and to get the audience to buy the stuff!

Professional art auction companies will run the entire show for some groups. They are expensive, however. Since they provide the art, the advertising materials and the staff, the costs are high. While this may not be unreasonable, it leaves little for the charity after expenses. Other types of auctions may be more profitable.

Don't hesitate to auction off a few works by respected artists, however. Canadian wildlife artist Robert Bateman has a well deserved reputation for generosity in donating his prints. A group in the Northwest Territories auctioned one of his prints for over \$1300. Many others have done likewise.

Restrictions on use of an item

Some auction items carry restrictive conditions. Be sure buyers are aware of this before they make the purchase.

For example, airlines and hotels may restrict use to low seasons. People providing services may be willing to comply only when they aren't busy. Someone may have to pick up a heavy item at the factory, or pay extra for delivery.

One person was angry to discover that a hot air balloon ride she had purchased at an auction was for one person only. If she wanted to take her husband, she'd have to pay \$135 extra. This was bad publicity for the charity.

At the same time, it is to your advantage to try to ensure that buyers take advantage of services they purchase. An individual who offers to prepare a gourmet dinner may be upset if the buyer never collects. If the item or service is not used within a reasonable time, the donor may not be willing to donate again.

Bachelor auctions

See "What a bad idea for an event".

Failure to plan

Auctions require a great deal of advance preparation. Joe Small estimates that the auction is 80% over before the first bid is placed.

Allow enough time. Set up committees with care. Enlist volunteers early. Get advice from professionals at the beginning, and follow it. Joe Small puts it this way:

Committee heads - the top 12 - should be chosen for their leadership qualities, not because they volunteer... Pair these with 70 to 75 enthusiastic

volunteers who will form the committees that will make the event a success... Even though the bulk of the work will be done by 25 to 30 people. In addition to a chairperson, committees are needed to:

- obtain merchandise for the auction
- run the auction
- promote the auction
- put times on display
- be sure the people who bought the items actually leave with them
- distribute an advance list of items to be sold
- sell tickets
- register bidders and pass Out information
- collect the funds at the end of the evening
- thank those who donated items and those who placed large bids
- plan door prizes
- establish a theme, handle the decorations, and more.

Where can I get more help on auctions?

1. *The Auction Book* U\$26
by Betsy Beatty and Libby Kirkpatrick
The Society for Non-Profit Organizations
Suite 1
6314 Odana Road
Madison, Wisconsin 53719
USA

2. *The Auction Encyclopedia*
Missouri Auction School
1600 Genessee
Kansas City, Missouri 64102
USA

(816) 421-7117

Joe Small wrote a chapter for this encyclopaedia on how to set up charity auctions. It is written for professional auctioneers. The average charity may find it too complex.

3. Joe Small Auctioneers, Inc.
Suite 112
10859 Switzer Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75238
USA

(214) 503-9155

(800) 521-2066 (US only)

Joe Small has raised over \$20 Million for charities through 1300 auctions. He has spent some time in Winnipeg, and is familiar with Canada. If you contact him, he'll send a free copy of his excellent article from *Fundraising Management* magazine's March 1988 issue. It's called "Is an Auction in Your Future?" He has also offered to provide advice to any reader of this book at no charge. He will accept collect calls from Canada.

12

Getting Bigger Bucks
From Any Crowd

12 . . Getting Bigger Bucks

From Any Crowd

Too often at special events, non-profits earn relatively little money for hours of labour. Admission charges, cash bars and passing the hat sometimes barely bring enough revenue to cover out of pocket costs.

Experience in many events shows that blank cheques and a good speech can multiply donations. In many cases, this can be so successful that free admission to the event becomes more effective than a cover charge.

Board and staff feel pressure to set ticket prices to the lowest common denominator. They don't want to exclude anyone.

Yet many people could and would give more money if asked properly. You may worry that this might annoy good supporters. Done right, however, it actually builds greater support - both financial and psychological. You'll find out what to say below.

Provide blank counter cheques. Urge donors to use them if they don't have their own cheque books handy. Blank cheques increase the average gift dramatically where you might ordinarily pass a hat.

Why provide blank cheques? Less than 25% of men carry their cheque books with them routinely. Among women, 30% to 40% typically do not have cheque books with them. Fewer women carry cheques at formal occasions, because smaller purses do not allow space.

People with cheques are free to give generously. With cash, however, they wonder if the money in their wallets will last till their next trip to the bank.

Typically, when passing the hat, most people put in coins or small bills - \$2 or \$5. A \$20 bill usually means someone has taken change.

When blank cheques are available, donations at mass public events have typically averaged \$10. Some people will donate up to \$100 or \$200. People also have the option of writing one or more post-dated cheques. This makes it even easier to be generous.

Donors can also get a tax-deduction receipt for a cheque, but not for anonymous gifts of cash. Possibly more important, the organization captures the

name and address of each donor for use in future fundraising. These people are likely to be frequent repeat givers.

The Words that Win Larger Contributions

Ask just before intermission. Afterwards people may leave. Earlier people aren't warm enough.

- § 1 **Tell people right away** that you are going to ask for money. Don't surprise them.
- § 2 **Use humour.** You might tell people you are the 'commercial.' Some actors satirize TV preachers. Others prefer to play it straight. Make sure whatever you do is appropriate to the audience and to you.
- § 3 **Relax.** If you are nervous, take a partner up with you to take turns making parts of the appeal. This way one can fill in what the other might forget. Also, consider telling the audience you're nervous. They may be feeling uncomfortable too, and such an admission will help everyone relax.
- § 4 **Use audience participation.** People may feel restless, particularly after hearing serious speeches or music. In preparation for asking them to give, ask them to be part of the event, not just observers.

Start quietly. Most people are shy, and reluctant to join in public participation. Then build momentum and volume to create excitement.

For example, a peace group asked people to whisper 'We want peace now.'

"Say it silently as a prayer. Now repeat it loud enough to be heard outside. Now loud enough to send a message downtown. Louder now, to carry all the way to Parliament Hill. Louder still for Washington. Even louder for Moscow. As loud as you can, so the word is heard all the way around the world."

The phrase can be adapted infinitely. Consider asking the audience to call out phrases like these:

“We want safe streets.”

“Kids need a place to play.”

“A mind is a terrible thing to waste.”

“Art is civilization made visible.”

Musical groups might ask people to sing along in a short song, perhaps in a round. Sports groups can also sing out.

Clearly this is suitable only for certain types of groups, and on selected occasions. The effect is powerful when it is used, however.

- § 5 **Tell people what the money is for**, concretely. Explain the problems and the solutions. Break projects into bite-size chunks. Perhaps \$5 will buy schoolbooks for one child, immunize 10, or educate people on the need to do so.

Guided visualizations are very effective. In a controlled test without this special method, donations dropped 25%.

Here’s how it works in a conservation example. You can easily adapt it to schools, health care, arts, sports, social service or advocacy.

Ask people to close their eyes. “Imagine \$30. Now imagine that in pennies. Imagine how much 3,000 pennies weighs, and how much space it takes. Now, in your mind’s eye, spread the pennies out on the ground, with an inch or two between them. Now imagine each penny turning into an acorn, sprouting and growing. It’s a seedling now, a sapling, a young grove growing as you watch. It’s a sun-dappled woods, and now a mighty oak forest sheltering animals, protecting the soil, providing a natural retreat for us all. Three thousand acorns. That’s how many are needed to reforest one acre. And each acre costs \$30. Won’t you contribute an acre of forest tonight?”

If your work is in advocacy and public education, suggest “each penny turns into an educational pamphlet.- That’s all they cost to print .one cent each. Imagine the pamphlets lined up end to end down the sidewalk. That would stretch 20 blocks long. Imagine one person reading each pamphlet: 3,000 people. Some may throw it away, of course. But others will pass it on to a friend or two. Each is one more person who understands about the issues. Your \$30 gift can reach out to 3,000 people.”

§ 6 **Tell people “guilt will not be used** to get donations tonight. For those who cannot afford a gift tonight, instead please tell a few others about our work .that is an important contribution. For those who can afford \$15 or \$25, thank you... we will make sure the money is put to the best possible use.”

§ 7 **Encourage large donations.** Say, “I know there are one or two people here who can afford to give \$100 or \$200 tonight. No one will be mentioned by name, but you know who you are. We hope you will give to the best of your ability.”

This phrase consistently leads to at least one or two donations in this range. Others in the audience give \$50 and \$75, because they upper limit has been set high.

§ 8 **Give out cheque blanks** at this point during the fundraising appeal. Have volunteer ushers hand a stack to people at the end of each row, or at each table, to pass along.

If that’s not possible, plan in advance to include the blank cheques inside the program for the evening, if each person gets one.

Explain, “The cheques blanks are to help those who want to give more, but don’t have your cheque book with you.” Tell people using their own cheques the proper name of the group to which the cheque is payable.

§ 9 **Now get a public pace-setting donation**, if at all possible. Arrange in advance for a well known supporter to make a larger donation on stage. This should be a person the audience will respect and identify with .not too rich. People do follow an example.

§ 10 As you finish the fundraising speech, **pass buckets through the audience to collect donations.** Don’t just ask people to hand in donations at the door, or at a literature table. In the crush as people leave, some who want to give may not get through, or may just forget. The bucket should be large enough not to overflow, and to afford privacy. It is a good idea to ‘prime the pump’ with a folded blank cheque and a few large denomination bills.

§ 11 While the buckets are being passed, run through a few other details. This is important information. It also fills the few minutes while

people concentrate on their gifts. **Don't break for intermission until the buckets have been around.**

Here are the points to cover.

- a) "If you don't know your chequing account number, just put your phone number below your address. A volunteer will call you in the next day or two." Make sure you have people ready to do this.
- b) Give out pens for people who need them.
- c) Assure people you do still accept cash.
- d) You will want to get as many names and addresses as possible, including those who can't give. Ask them to be part of an urgent action network, or a phone tree. The least effective thing to say is "add you name to our mailing list." Invite people who aren't giving to put their names and addresses on the back of a cheque blank and put it in the container.
- e) Encourage post-dated cheques. Suggest that some people may prefer to give \$25 a month for 4 months, or \$10 a month for 10 months. This makes it possible for people to give larger amounts painlessly.
- f) Tell people how to fill in the cheque blanks, line by line. There are always a few who forget to sign it, or put the wrong date on.

§ 12 **Close strongly, reinforcing why the need is so urgent.**

§ 13 Later, **before the event ends, come back and announce the total given.** Thank everyone thoroughly. This makes them feel appreciated. More important, it encourages late donations. About 10% more money comes in if you do this.

A Few Words on Blank Cheques

Check with the banks first. Banks may charge extra fees on blank cheques because they do not have the account number encoded in magnetic ink. The

person who writes the cheque usually pays the service charge, unfortunately. Banks may lift the extra charge for a non-profit group. If they can't do that, they may let your group pay the service charge instead of the donors. On large donations, that's worthwhile. If not, phone donors who have accounts at offending institutions. Explain the situation, and ask them to send a replacement cheque.

Encourage people to use their own cheques whenever possible. However, blank cheques will make it easy for those who do not carry their cheque books to be generous.

What should the blank cheque look like?

Blank cheques can be typed and photocopied, or purchased at stationery shops.

In the upper left corner, provide spaces for the donor's:

- name;
- address, city, province, postal code;
- phone number.

In the upper right, give blanks for:

- the date;
- the amount in numbers.

In the middle:

- payable to (the official name of your group),
- a large blank to write in the amount in letters.

In the lower left, blanks for:

- name of bank, trust company or credit union
- branch address
- account number.

In the lower right, the signature line.

Leave the bottom ½ inch blank for the bank's coding machine.

Somewhere on the cheque, include the name and address of your group. Since someone may take the cheque away, make it easy to send in a donation later - but don't encourage this! If the donation is tax deductible, give your group's charitable registration number here.

On the left, provide a tear-off stub as a temporary receipt. This encourages people to record their contribution in their cheque-book balance sheets later, reducing the number of cheques return marked Not Sufficient Funds (NSF). Avoid embarrassing

requests for replacements and costly bank charges.

You may also offer blanks for credit card donations. These tend to be 20% higher than donations by cheque. You don't need to make an impression of the credit card with the familiar little machine. It is sufficient to write in the card number, expiry date, amount and the person's name and address. If you are not set up to take credit card donations, most banks and trust companies can show you this simple and inexpensive process.

Optional extras include boxes to check if people wish to volunteer, or want more information, or require a tax receipt.

The cheque should be on a separate piece of paper, not part of a flyer or other document. This makes it easier to use, without tearing off pieces. It can, if necessary, be stapled to another document.

<p>THANK YOU!</p> <p>Date _____</p> <p>Amount \$ _____</p> <p>For Donation to NAME OF THE GROUP 123 Any Street Bigtown, Prov. AIA 1A1 Phone (123) 555- 1234</p> <p>A government registered charity # 12- 13-4567890</p>	<p>T E A R O F F</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes I want to (fill in your cause)</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____ Date _____ 19</p> <p>City _____ Prov _____ Postal Code _____</p> <p>Phone() _____</p> <p>Pay to the order of NAME OF YOUR GROUP AMOUNT \$ _____</p> <p>SUM OF _____ / 100 DOLLARS</p> <p>Bank or Credit Union _____ SIGNATURE _____</p> <p>_____ Branch _____</p> <p>ACCOUNT NUMBER _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me more information</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> VISA <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard Account # _____ Expires — / —</p>
--	---	--

13

How to Get Musicians and Celebrities
to Give Their Time and
Be Glad They Did

13 . . How to get musicians and celebrities to give their time and be glad they did

Having celebrities or first-rate musicians at an event can attract a lot of people. It is possible to get them to appear and perform free.

The celebrity might be...

a movie star,
a media personality,
a politician or an ambassador,
a famous athlete,
an artist, or
an author.

It is usually easier to get a celebrity than a musician. Musicians make their living from public performances, and must work hard when they play. The celebrities may view it as an opportunity to support a cause they believe in and promote their careers with a minimum of labour.

However, don't try to solicit a free performance by touting how much free publicity the performer will get. Unless you're having an unusually large event, the benefit to the performer will be negligible. He or she could probably get more publicity more easily in other ways.

The easiest way to get a celebrity guest is to look for someone who will be in the area anyway. If the celebrity is nearby filming a movie, playing in a tournament, visiting family or friends or performing, it may not be much more effort to participate in your event.

Be reasonable in your expectations. It might be wonderful to have the celebrity perform for you. However that might require costumes, a complicated set, lighting, sound equipment, back-up musicians and other paraphernalia.

Having someone famous appear at a simple reception in their honour might be much better. It puts less demands on the celebrity, and on you. Your guests may also prefer having an opportunity to chat with the celebrity face to face, instead of just being part of the audience. It's more intimate, more exciting, and more fun to brag about.

A reception before or after a performance can be the perfect special event.

Instead of trying to arrange your own performance, with all the complications involved, piggy-back on a concert or show that is already coming to town. A commercial promoter is better equipped to arrange the show. You invite the star to the reception, and sell tickets to both the public show and the private reception. Because the expenses are lower, the net proceeds may be just as high as if you put on the show yourself.

Look for someone who has some connection to your cause. An Ottawa hospital, for example, looked through the records of babies who were born there. They discovered impersonator Rich Little on their list. Not only did he agree to perform in a benefit for them, he arranged to bring along a friend .Frank Sinatra. The hospital raised thousands of- dollars.

Check your list of participants and former participants! Whether you call them clients, alumni, patients, or community members, you may find useful connections.

Another charity heard that a rock star liked trout fishing. Happily, some of the world's best trout fishing is near the charity's facility. They invited the star for a week of fishing at a community leader's private lodge, in exchange for an appearance at an event. The star came, the event was a success, and the fishing was great. Everyone was content.

By reading the entertainment pages of the newspaper and show biz magazines you can find out quite a lot about celebrities' personal likes and dislikes. This can help you arrange a benefit performance.

When trying to contact a performer, avoid going through the agent if at all possible. The agent's job is to protect the performer from people who want freebies. After all, the agent is usually paid a percentage of the jobs he or she arranges for the star. A star who's doing a benefit isn't available to earn income and 10% of zero doesn't pay the bills.

Instead try and contact the performer directly. The best people to help you with this are the entertainment reporters from the local media. They can contact performers for an interview and raise the subject at that time.

Many performers are members of unions, as musicians, actors or writers. Please ask them about arranging clearance for the performance. In some cases, restrictions may mean you'll have to pay the union scale rates - which are not high.

How one musician sees it

Nancy White sings at a lot of benefits, for all kinds of causes. At a Grass Roots Network lunch in Toronto, she candidly explained how people ought to treat performers. Here are excerpts from her notes.

On asking for a free show: Do say, 'It would mean so much to us.' Or try, 'When your name came up, everyone cheered.' Or even, 'I saw you play and you were incredible.' Don't say what one person said to me: 'Someone gave me your name and number - what is it that you do?'

It's a two way street. You should support the musicians you ask to support you, by going to their show before you ask.

Sometimes a letter is more effective than a call, because you can enclose enticing material.

On money: The most important thing to realize is that a concert is not an easy way to make a lot of money. In fact, if you break even, you'll probably have had quite a success.

It's very expensive. Rental of a hall, a PA system and lights, hiring sound and lighting crews, doing publicity. Doing lots of publicity. Printing posters, tickets, programs, if it's a class act.

The star may be willing to play for free, but don't expect it of the back-up band. Negotiate a reasonable fee with them - even if it's just an honorarium of, say, \$50 per person. Pay expenses.

Of course, a benefit can do other things besides make money, particularly if it's done well. It raises the profile of your organization. With luck, you'll attract people who just come for the music but might get interested in the cause. It's a chance for you to get names for your mailing list, give out your literature, and perhaps sell posters or tapes.

On the musicians' sacrifices: When you ask a musician to play, you're asking for more time than the concert itself. Musicians have to come to the hall in the afternoon. They drag down all their instruments and equipment. Setting up can be hours of dull work. Everyone must do a sound check. A group may have had to have a special rehearsal.

It may also cost them money to do your show. They have to give up work not just that night, but for the whole week. Few bands can play weekdays, but tell the commercial promoters they aren't available for the big Saturday night crowd.

A benefit concert can also serve to take a performer out of circulation. If I do a benefit in Saskatoon, I won't be able to do a regular concert there for perhaps another year. There's a limited audience for singers, and it can only be tapped so often.

On staging a good programme: It's important not to have too many acts on the bill! Imagine the frustration: you plan a programme, wash your hair, change your guitar strings, get to the hall. Then you're *told*, not asked, 'Could you cut your act down to ten minutes?'

The ideal is a warm-up act of 20 minutes. They're followed by intermission. Then the main act goes on for 45 minutes to an hour.

On speeches: It's best to keep the speeches to a minimum unless you have a speaker who really moves people, or an exciting announcement to make.

On professionalism: If I'm singing at a benefit and the sound is terrible, and I'm lit by a volunteer holding a flashlight under my chin, it can really damage my career. Someone in the audience who's never heard me sing before is going to think I'm awful... For people who have paid something like \$8 a ticket or more, it's not fair.

On when to call: Performers work late nights and odd hours. Never call a musician before noon. They react to a 9 a.m. phone call in the same way you might react to one at 5 a.m. Not the best time to ask a favour.

14

How to Get Enough Good Volunteers

14 . . How to get enough good volunteers

One of the great problems of special events is the shortage of volunteers. Events do take a lot of labour-power. A small board can be overwhelmed. Staff alone can never keep up. If you hire people to run the event, the costs go through the roof.

Fortunately, there are some people who love organizing events. You may not know any now, but you can recruit them, more easily than you think. Here are the secrets.

§ 1 Do the homework of special events fundraising

Find out how to organize the event. What jobs will you need to create and recruit individuals for?

Do this homework by reviewing the plans and results of previous events of a similar nature. Look at the experience of your own organization. Examine events hosted by another agency in your community. Experienced organizers will alert you to essential volunteer roles you might not discover you need till it's too late!

§ 2 Create an organizational chart

An organizational chart is helpful for two reasons:

- * First, you will have a chance to clarify roles and relationships between various players in the special event organization.
- * Second, you have a tool to use to recruit and orient others. Then everyone knows how he/she fits into the big picture. You may want to include a Volunteer Recruitment Coordinator in your plan, so that there's someone designated to recruit others.

§ 3 Do a basic calendar of organizing

Plot a schedule. Base it on your research, your own experience and your planning skills. Work backwards from the date of the event to be sure you have enough lead time for each activity. Allow time for mistakes, delays and a little procrastination by your organizers.

§ 4 Develop job descriptions for each task within the plan

Before you recruit volunteers, you must know what they have to do. In addition, people are entitled to know what's expected of them before they agree to take on a task. Including the purpose and responsibilities of a job is fundamental to good volunteer management. Include notes on:

- time required
- length of commitment
- qualifications or skills required
- orientation or training provided, and
- benefits to gain.

You can sometimes find example in files of past events. Or perhaps you can ask someone who has done the job before to write down what the task involves. Get it on paper.

§ 5 Recruit the best possible person for each job

Make sure everyone knows you need help. Post the job descriptions on public bulletin boards in your office. Include "help wanted" ads in your newsletter. Contact the Volunteer Centre in your community and ask for help in these activities.

Volunteer Job Fairs are being held in more and more communities. Here's how they work. Several non-profit groups get together on the same day with tables displaying information on their work and their need for volunteers. The public is invited to browse among the booths looking for a volunteer opportunity that suits them. These can be sponsored by a volunteer centre, or a corporation. ManuLife Insurance, for example, has held them in the cafeteria of their main office building.

Volunteers can also be recruited from specific groups. The Junior League, a national service organization of women, for example, has an excellent training programme to improve its members' skills. They place members on the boards of non-profit groups to help them improve their systems.

Retired people are another source of extraordinary talent. In some communities, you can recruit with the help of organized senior citizens' associations. There are also special interest seniors' groups, such as the Canadian Auto Workers Retirees Club, or the Retired Rotarians.

Open recruiting like this is the process of telling the world you need help and waiting to see who will apply. It's fine for the troops who do all the day-by-day work.

For specialized skills and campaign leaders, you need a different technique. Face-to-face recruitment is the most successful way to get the people you need,

While thinking of the qualities you need for each job, go through a list of your members, supporters and contacts. Include outsiders who might be friendly. Consider who might be the best fit. Make a list of potential candidates for each job, prioritizing the names to contact.

§ 6 Encourage the event's leaders to contact the potential candidates

The chairpeople of the event should interview the potential candidates, just as if they were hiring for a job. Even if there is only one possible candidate, this communicates your seriousness. It usually makes the task more attractive. Use the job descriptions, calendar and organizing chart. The chairperson's goal is to determine if the person is interested, able to do a good job, and available.

§ 7 Immediately recognize the recruitment of volunteers

Send each volunteer that you select a letter confirming his/her appointment. Include a copy of current plans for the event. Invite him/her to an organizing meeting.

§ 8 To be effective, volunteers must have information and perspective

Keep in contact with volunteers. Be sure they are fulfilling their responsibilities and catch any problems early. Help them if problems do occur. Encourage their creativity and commitment. Keep them apprised of the overall picture.

§ 9 Confirm everyone's involvement *before* the Big Event

Have a pre-event coffee meeting the day before the event to be sure all will go smoothly. Halifax organizer Ray Pierce says, "Don't trust anybody! If you haven't checked it, it hasn't been done."

§ 10 Recognize hardworking volunteers - at the event itself and afterwards

Recognition consists of both saying “thank you” and being open to constructive criticism. Remember these people came to know the realities of a job. Collecting their comments soon after an event improves the event next time.

What jobs do you need to fill?

There’s nothing more frustrating than discovering at the last minute that you forgot to fill a crucial job.

There are hundreds of different volunteer roles in all the different types of events. It would be impossible to list every one of them. But it is possible to suggest a few you should consider.

Here is a list of types of volunteer activities you may find useful in organizing your special event:

- Overall Event Co-ordinator
- Beer/Wine/Liquor Co-ordinator
- Car Parking Organizer
- Clear up Crew
- Decorations Co-ordinator
- Emergency Crew (in case of no-shows)
- Entertainment Co-ordinator
- Financial Management/Accounting/Banking
- Food Co-ordinator
- Graphics Designer: ensure coordinated theme
 - printed materials
 - decor
 - costumes (if any)
- Media Liaison
- Patrons/Head Table Co-ordinator
- Person to get licenses, permits, check laws
- Production Co-ordinator
 - printed program
 - invitations
 - tickets
 - posters
- Program Committee
 - determine agenda
 - arrange speakers, and so on

- Publicity Co-ordinator
- Secretary
- Security people
- Signs/Directions Aide
- Solicitors of in-kind donations
- Souvenir Supplier
- Special Arrangements Aide
 - access for the disabled
 - child care
 - sign language interpretation
 - special diets
- Technical Equipment Aide
 - sound equipment
 - lighting equipment
- Ticket Sellers
- Union clearances
 - for musicians, actors
 - for serving staff, if needed
- Ushers/Hosts
- Volunteer and Donor Recognition Co-ordinator
- Volunteer Recruitment Co-ordinator
- Welcoming Committee

Add your own special volunteer needs to the list:

! _____
 ! _____
 ! _____

15

Secrets of Scheduling Time
for Maximum Effectiveness

15.. **Secrets of scheduling time for maximum effectiveness**

Not allowing enough time to prepare for the event is one of the most serious mistakes. It's also one of the most common.

Successful events are months in the making. Many start six months to a year ahead. Major conference organizers now book hotel meeting rooms up to five years in advance.

Some events can come together more quickly, with luck and experienced people. Excessive speed may be an invitation to disaster, however.

The length of time needed varies depending on the type of event, of course. No standard recipe can cover all situations. Here are some tips on developing your event's unique calendar accurately:

§ 1 Don't set the date until you analyze the time required

Too often groups establish the date of an event first. Then they realize how much work it requires. They try to compress the time needed for each task to fit into an impossible schedule. It seldom works.

Sometimes you must meet an externally imposed deadline. If that is the case, simplify the event to something possible in the time available.

§ 2 Involve several people in planning

Don't expect any one person to anticipate all the tasks that need doing. A team is more likely to catch the missing elements.

You can make a game of the brainstorming sessions. Set up teams of 2 to 5 people. Encourage the teams to think of all the tasks they can. Then compare notes and combine the lists.

Break each task into bite-size chunks, to make sure nothing is overlooked. Define the action steps needed.

Write each task on a separate Task Card. Large removable Post-It Notes™ are excellent tools for this task.

Next, challenge the group to get them in the right order.

§ 3 Estimate the time required for each task

Mark the estimated hours right on the Task Card. Note if it is one person doing the whole job, or several. Sometimes it doesn't matter if you have a group involved but occasionally it matters a lot.

For example, a task could take 6 person-hours. If the task is stuffing invitations in envelopes, it could be done equally well by 6 people working 1 hour, or by one person working 6 hours. Carrying a piano up several flights of stairs, however, will take 6 people at least one hour. One person cannot do it in six hours.

Don't underestimate the time. In fact, most people recommend you increase the time estimates by a minimum of 20%. Many suggest you double the estimate. If you overestimate, and finish ahead of schedule, it is unlikely to cause problems.

Allow a few extra days between stages, in case of delays. When stuffing invitations, for example, make sure the printer's deadline calls for delivery of the finished product a week before. Then, if they actually arrive a few days later than expected, you have built-in protection.

§ 4 Determine inter-dependent tasks

Note which tasks must be complete before others can begin. Make sure the people doing these key tasks understand the consequences if they are late.

The people who will mail the invitations, for example, can't do their job until their predecessors have:

- prepared the address list
- booked the hall
- confirmed the entertainment
- settled the price
- printed the invitations
- purchased envelopes and stamps.

§ 5 Post the schedule on the wall and give everyone pocket-size copies

Everyone should be able to see the progress quickly and easily. Problems should be instantly obvious.

Use flip chart paper, rolls of newsprint, or blackboards to create a master calendar. Put the weeks across the top. Down the left side, list the key work areas

such as publicity, printing, entertainment, food, ticket sales and so on.

Mark specific work to be done in the week it must begin. Then mark the due date. Showing only the date the work is due leads to last-minute panic.

Make a small copy, and give one to every person involved. Highlight the tasks that involve them personally with a coloured marker. In another colour, highlight the tasks that cannot be done until he/she successfully completes his/her tasks.

If the schedule changes, make new copies for everyone. It may be a lot of work, but it will save annoyance. Date each new edition, so everyone knows they're working on the same version.

Encourage everyone to book the time they'll need in their personal day-planning books.

§ 6 Determine “Do-or-Die” Dates

Establish deadlines for essential tasks. Mark these in red on all calendars.

If they are not done on time, cancel the event.

Know what commitments make it impossible to cancel. Once you've booked the hall, it may not be possible to cancel without enormous penalties or losses. Even re-scheduling may be impossible.

Establish contingencies for less critical problems. “If X doesn't happen, then we can't do Y. As a back-up, we'll do A or B.”

Don't wait to figure out what you'll do at the time of the crisis. It may seem like a waste of time to sort out all the alternatives in advance, but it is an essential step.

§ 7 Check progress before delays become a crisis

Determine when work should begin, to be completed on time. Set benchmarks at intervals to see if the work is on schedule. If there is a problem, you must know about it before the deadline is upon you.

Check progress along the way. Don't just trust people. With the best of intentions, they may not follow through. There are two good methods:

The first is to give one person the responsibility of checking progress. As a gentle nag, the right person can do wonders. Knowing it is an institutionalized role reduces the emotional stress for both the nagger and the naggee.

Alternatively, assign crucial tasks to two people, as co-chairs. Encourage them to use the buddy system to check progress. Be careful the work doesn't fall between the cracks, as each co-chair thinks the other is responsible.

In either case, he or she should call well in advance of due dates as a reminder. Say, "I see you'll be halfway through the invitation list next week. How's it going? Anything you need help on? Will they be ready for the stuffing-party September 15th? If there's a problem let me know now!"

If the invitation stuffers expect to go to work September 15, for example, here are some of the previous benchmarks. Your time allowances may vary, of course.

- July 7 All leaders agree to provide names and addresses for list
- July 7 Budget approved
- July 25 Text and rough design approved
(will anybody you must consult be away?)
- Aug. 1 Material sent to the printer
- Aug. 1 Typing of list begins
- Aug. 20 Final approval of printed material
(allow extra time for vacations and the long weekend)
- Aug. 20 List half-done
- Sept. 7 Back from the printer
- Sept. 7 List ready

§ 8 Assign personal responsibility for tasks

Make sure one person feels personally responsible for every crucial task. Don't assign a task to a committee - it may fall between the cracks.

Find out what support your leaders need to get their tasks done. Don't give people responsibility without the power to do the work.

Schedule the date by which you must have a capable person in each role. These are critical "Do-or-Die" Dates. If no one is available, you may have to pull the plug.

§ 9 Anticipate the follow-up work

After the event is over, a great deal of work always remains. Have your work crews in place for these tasks well in advance. A last-minute scramble can cause trouble.

Don't ask people who are tired from doing all the other tasks. Have a fresh crew ready.

Some of the tasks that get overlooked include:

- Clean up after the guests have left.
- Count the income and make the night deposit.
- Return rented supplies or excess inventory.
- Send receipts for donations and thank-you letters.
- Send thanks to volunteers and supporters.
- Close off the account books.
- Evaluate the event and produce a report with recommendations for next time.

§ 10 Have a flying squad of troubleshooters

Inevitably, some aspects of the work will be overlooked. Have a team of skilful generalists who will look after any emergencies. Give them the authority to act. Make sure everyone knows who to call, and how to reach them night and day.

§ 11 Reward people for jobs well done

Provide incentives for getting the job done ahead of schedule and under budget. People do respond to rewards, even though they may think they will not.

For example, offer a prize for the first person to sell their allotment of tickets. On a team-work night, schedule the job to finish by 9 pm and order pizza for delivery then. At the event itself, mention people who deserve extra recognition for their work. Ask a hotel to provide a free room, and have the volunteers vote for the person who deserves a reward most.

16

The Mathematics of Raising Money at an Event
- Avoiding Surprises

16 .. The mathematics of raising money at an event

· avoiding surprises

Everyone has questions. What does it cost to run an event? How many volunteers do we need? How much money will we make? How many tickets will we sell? A formula would make it so simple to operate events.

It's not that simple, of course. Every event is different. Every non-profit group is unique. There are thousands of factors you must consider.

Yet with all that, some standards can be suggested. Although these are only rough guidelines, they may help you with your planning. Please note the wide range of variations:

Rule # 1, Cost per dollar raised:

Expect to invest 50 cents for every one dollar raised.

This allows for a 50% profit, which is not bad by any standard. Some do better, some do worse.

Groups occasionally report that they run events without spending a cent. This is admirable, but may be incorrect. They may not count Other People's Money (O.P.M.). A co-sponsor may invest substantially. Include that money in your budget, as both an expense and as income.

In addition, groups often fail to count the cost of staff time and overhead expenses involved in putting on an event. This may lull planners into a false sense of contentment. The costs are real, and should be included.

Groups lose money from time to time, of course. They may spend two or three dollars for every dollar raised.

Depending on what other goals are achieved, expenditures of more than 50% may be quite acceptable. An event may be considered a success with little or no income, if it is staged primarily to:

- win media attention and publicity
- thank donors, volunteers or staff
- educate the public
- find new donors or volunteers
- involve clients/patients/users in activities.

Rule # 2, Volunteer work needed:

Expect to invest 2 volunteer hours for every hundred dollars raised, in addition to financial investments.

This means that volunteers 'earn' \$50/hour for the organization. That's the surplus value they produce.

There is considerable variation, of course. The minimum goal should be \$10/volunteer-hour. Many groups require 4 volunteer hours per \$100, or \$25/hr.

It is essential that you estimate the dollar per hour ratio you anticipate, before you begin. Otherwise you may not have enough volunteers on hand. Reevaluate your estimate throughout the process, and adapt as necessary.

Many groups do not even record how many hours volunteers work. That should be considered an essential.

Rule # 3, Maximum ticket sales:

One person can sell ten tickets, on the average.

For every hundred tickets you plan to sell, you must have ten volunteer ticket sellers. Many groups overestimate how easy it will be to sell the tickets. The results can be disastrous.

As the price goes up, the number of tickets one person can sell goes down. Clearly, it is easier to sell \$1 tickets than \$100 tickets.

This rule appears to be consistent whether the tickets are for an event or a raffle.

Tickets are most easily sold by friends asking their friends. Tickets can often be sold in a shopping district, a mall, or a community centre. However, aggressive sales tactics usually produce better results. It is not sufficient to have two people sitting behind a table chatting to each other. They must ask people to buy.

Sales from ads in the media are usually far less than groups hope they will be. Frequently, they don't repay the cost of the ads.

It is often the case that 20% of the volunteers sell 80% of the tickets.

Unfortunately, it isn't always possible to predict who the star salespeople will be, in advance.

Beware those who buy the tickets themselves instead of selling them. It can result in a partly-empty hall. This embarrasses organizers. Worse, it can hurt the performers' careers if critics believe they can't attract a crowd.

If there may be empty seats, you must have a contingency plan. Some halls can be made smaller by unfolding a portable wall. In multi-level concert halls, a balcony can be closed. Sometimes empty space can accommodate displays on your group's work.

Alternatively, you can fill it with specially invited people. This is called "papering the hall". Depending on the event, these may be seniors, school children or clients of a social service agency.

People who pay full price might be upset if they accidentally discover others came free or at a discount. One solution is to announce the special guests are there as a community service. Ask the paying guests to welcome them with a round of applause.

17

**What's Deductible?
Revenue Canada Regulations
and Other Legal Matters**

17 .. What's Deductible?

Revenue Canada Regulations and Other Legal Matters

Registered charities can offer donors receipts to reduce the amount of tax they pay. Unregistered groups can't, of course.

Not having tax-deductible status may not hurt donations, however. Many individuals happily contribute to causes they care for without concern for a tax deduction. Even when they can, many don't claim their deductions. Corporations can take their tax deductions without official receipts, as explained below. Foundations can only give to registered charities, however.

Here are the basic rules:

- ¶ Gifts of *money* are tax deductible, whether made in cash, by cheques, via credit card or money order.
- ¶ *Pledges* are not deductible until they are paid.
- ¶ Gifts of *goods* are tax deductible.
- ¶ Gifts of *services* are not deductible. It is legal to *exchange cheques* to solve this problem.

Receipts for in-kind donations of services

Services are never tax-deductible; only goods are. A gourmet cook, computer-programmer, lawyer, accountant, or painter may offer their services. These are services and labour. You cannot give them a tax-deductible receipt.

You can, however legally exchange cheques. This requires that you pay for the service. Then the individual donates the money to your charity, and you issue a tax-deduction receipt for the gift.

Unfortunately, this is seldom worthwhile for the donors. They must declare the money you paid for the service as part of their taxable income. This usually offsets the advantage of the deduction.

Receipts for in-kind donations of goods

If someone gives you goods, you may give a tax receipt for their donation. It is not necessary to exchange cheques first. There are a few exceptions for used goods of little value.

On the tax receipt, show that it was an in-kind donation, and show the ‘fair market value’. That’s what the item usually sells for. You may need to get outside estimates to confirm the value.

For example, if someone gives you a photocopy machine that sells everywhere for \$600, you can give them an official charitable tax receipt marked “Gift in kind \$600.” It doesn’t matter how much they paid for the machine, as long as it is clearly worth \$600. If you are not sure how much it is worth, establish the ‘fair market value’ by asking knowledgeable people to evaluate it. Get a written estimate for valuable items.

Corporate donations

When companies make a contribution, they do not need a charitable tax-deduction receipt to write off the gift. They can claim a tax deduction for it as a cost of business, usually as a public-relations or promotional expense. This applies equally to gifts of cash, goods, and services.

That’s not to say you can’t issue a receipt, only that it is not necessary for Revenue Canada purposes. The company may wish a receipt as an acknowledgement, but doesn’t need an official charitable tax receipt for the government. (In the case of services, of course, an official tax receipt *cannot* be issued.) This is important for groups that are not set up as government-registered charities.

A business can’t take two tax deductions for the same expense. If they’ve already written it off as a cost of business, they can’t write it off again as a charitable gift. It is not the charity’s responsibility to enforce the rule .you can issue the receipt. The business must decide whether to use it.

What is tax-deductible at auctions?

Revenue Canada has special regulations about auctions which registered charities must follow.

The ‘fair market value’ of goods given to a charity to auction off is the amount that the donor would have received on the open market at the time he made the gift.

For example, Mrs X gives you a painting for which she paid \$1,000. She has the receipts to prove it. You give her a receipt for \$1,000. At the auction, perhaps someone will buy it for \$5,000. Perhaps they will buy it for \$500. Either way, Mrs X is ‘protected’ from a change in the fair market value because she gave the painting in good faith as a gift worth \$1,000. Any subsequent transaction between the charity and its customers is irrelevant.

Receipts for items purchased

People who buy an item at a charity auction are not entitled to a tax receipt. They have made a purchase, not a donation.

This applies even if they pay excess value. For example, Mr Z may pay the charity \$1500 for an item that normally sells for \$1000. He cannot claim the extra \$500 as a tax-deductible gift, according to Revenue Canada.

When a company purchases an item at an auction, it is tax-deductible, just like any other corporate purchase. They may deduct it as a promotional expense. If they use the materials for business, it's a deduction for acquisition of materials. Art work can even be deducted as a legitimate decorating cost, if the art is kept on the business's premises, though probably not if it's kept in someone's home, of course. This suggests that auctions may produce higher prices when the bidders are buying for their businesses.

Purchase of tickets

How much of the admission price to an event is deductible?

- a) *only the excess over fair market value is deductible; or*
- b) *only the amount above what the charity actually paid is deductible.*

Here are the three variations:

The normal case: dinners ordinarily sell for \$25 each, and the charity pays \$25. It charges \$35. The deductible portion is \$10.

The charity gets a bargain: Dinner ordinarily sells for \$35 each, and the charity pays \$25. It charges \$35. The deductible portion is nothing. The fair market value is \$35, with no allowance made for the saving of the charity.

The charity loses money: Dinner ordinarily sells for \$25 each, and the charity pays \$50 because not enough tickets sold. It charges \$35. The deductible portion is nothing.

For these reasons, the amount that is tax-deductible cannot actually be calculated until the event is over.

Raffle tickets

The amount someone pays for a raffle ticket is not deductible as a charitable

donation. Revenue Canada considers draws, lotteries and raffle tickets as purchasing a chance to win, not as a gift.

The price of the raffle ticket is not relevant. The rule applies equally to \$1 tickets and to \$100 tickets. The fact that a major portion of the ticket price is used to benefit the charity's projects does not make the ticket-price deductible. The only exception is if the prize to be won is of negligible value.

This has serious implications if you include a draw as part of an event. It could ruin plans to have a portion of the ticket price deductible. One solution may be to make the draw free, not conditional on purchasing admission.

Revenue Canada toll-free information service

For more information, call Revenue Canada's toll-free charity regulations information service, at 1-800-267-2384. Ask for copies of *Interpretation Bulletin IT 297R* and *IT 110R2*.

Other laws and regulations

Many provinces and municipalities also have laws affecting non-profit organizations. Be sure to check with local authorities before launching a special event. These most frequently affect:

- lotteries, raffles and draws,
- liquor regulations,
- permits for use of public or private places,
- parade permits,
- restrictions on telephone canvassing,
- maximum amount of proceeds that can be used for administration and fundraising costs.

Regulations vary from one community to the next. Neighbouring communities may have regulations that contradict each other. Be especially careful if you are planning an event that crosses several jurisdictions.

Insurance

It's worth the cost to insure your event against eventualities such as:

- injury to someone attending your event, either on your site or after leaving, whether as a result of accident or of alcohol consumption - especially if you are selling the alcohol

- damage to the premises where the event is held
- theft of property during an event.

Some groups have also taken out insurance to compensate the charity if the event has to be cancelled because of bad weather, or the failure of the entertainment to appear. This can be expensive, but may be worthwhile if the event itself is costly.

In a light-hearted mood, some charities also offer “hole-in-one insurance for golfers”. This pays up to a million dollars to the golfer who hits a hole in one – with a witness! The charity charges people to participate in the golf tournament.

Contact:

Mancil Davis
National Hole-In-One Association
730 Campbell Center
8350 North Central Expressway
Dallas, Texas 75206-1679

Toll free phone in Canada and U.S. (800) 527-6944

18

Avoid One-Shot Ideas

18 . . Avoid One Shot Ideas

Your first special event is not to make money. It's to make mistakes! The *second* time is for money.

No matter how experienced you are in running special events, each different type is unique. It takes time and money to learn how to do it well. Be sure your organization can repeat the successes.

If you're only going to do it once, be sure it makes a *lot* of money that one time. Most ideas don't. They improve with age. They become part of the community's traditions. So be sure to follow these rules:

¶ Keep good records

- Who gave how much?
- What were the sources of free goods and services?
- Who displayed volunteer talents (or problems)?
- Who should you ask again?
- How much time did it really take?
- What were the hidden costs?
- What were the problems to avoid?

¶ Train new leaders and retrain old ones

- Select an understudy a year in advance.
- Allow people to retire before they burn Out.
- Keep retirees as advisors.

¶ Build on a winner

- Don't constantly look for new ideas... improve the best of the past.
- Research ideas that are new to you carefully.
- Don't guess about how it works, ask others who have done it before.
- Share your information with 'competitors'. Everyone wins.

19

The Event-Ability Quiz

19 .. The Event-Ability Quiz

How well does your special event plan stack up? Try this simple self-scoring quiz. While it's not a scientific system, it *is* a fun way to estimate how successful your event might be.

The Event-Ability Quiz

© 1988 Ken Wyman

The Organization's Experience POINTS

10 points for each fundraising special event your group has run in the last 5 years. _____

An additional 10 points for each time your group has run the same event you're currently considering. _____

Deduct 9 points for each of the previous events above if there are no detailed records evaluating the event and showing how to do it better. _____

Deduct 10 points if none of the current staff who will be involved with the event were on staff during the previous events. _____

Add 15 points if a staff person has had major involvement in running an event very similar to this for another organization. _____

Volunteer Team

2 points for each volunteer who will take an active part in running the special event. _____

5 points for every volunteer who has experience as a leader in previous special events, for your group or any other non-profit. _____

1 point for every 10 hours of volunteer time you can realistically count on in running the event. _____

2 points for every volunteer who will personally sell 10 tickets or more. _____

100 points if you create job descriptions for each lead volunteer that specify what is required in terms of the number of hours of work, the length of commitment, and the qualifications, and also specify the support! training you'll offer, and the benefits of the job. _____

25 points for each new volunteer you recruit specifically because she or he has ability to do the job, not because you were desperate - for *any* warm body to help. _____

Add 2 points for each new volunteer recruited specifically to help on the event who you expect will still be active with your organization afterwards. _____

Deduct 5 points for each current volunteer who will not do any further work with your organization without resting 6 months or more after the event. _____

250 points if you have a system to ensure that all the people involved are doing their jobs on schedule, before a crisis hits. _____

100 points if you have a plan to reward and recognize the volunteers. _____

Invited Guests and Supporters

In the following, count only those to be contacted in person, on the phone or by mail, not by ads or posters. _____

1 point for every person you'll invite who attended your group's last special fundraising event, provided the event was considered a social success. _____

1 point for every 25 people you'll invite who haven't attended a previous event, but have given your group money. _____

1 point for every 50 people you'll invite who participate in or are spectators at non-fundraising public events your group holds, such as sports events, art shows, seminars, health clinics, etc, or use your facilities, or are clients/patients/service-receivers.

1 point for every 75 people you'll invite who haven't had direct contact with your group.

50 points if the people you'll invite, or their families, are personally affected by the issues your group deals with.

Public Profile

1 point for every time your organization was mentioned positively in your community's media in the last year.

1/2 point for every time the issues you are addressing were mentioned, but the cause was not.

2 points for every time the media will mention your organization in a positive way as a result of this event. You may not give yourself any points for this unless you have a realistic media plan to make this happen.

10 points if your group is a registered charity.

Costs and Income

1 point for every \$100 of income you realistically expect.

Deduct 1 point for every \$100 the event will cost to run.

Add 1 point for every \$50 of in-kind donations of goods and services (not counting volunteers) you will receive to offset the costs of the event.

Deduct 50 points if the group has to borrow the front money needed for running the event, or won't have enough for the programs and projects if the event loses money.

Add 100 points if the plan includes income from an auction or a fundraising collection using cheque blanks so donors can decide for themselves how much to give. _____

Add 100 points if you raise more than \$50 per volunteer-hour worked. _____

Type of Event

Deduct 50 points for every time another group has run a similar event in your community in -the last year. _____

Deduct 100 points if this is a brand new event idea and you have never heard of anyone running one like it before. _____

Add 25 points if the people attending the event will understand your organization's cause better afterwards. _____

Add 2 points for each name and address you expect to add to your mailing list as a result of this event. Points awarded only if you will send them a fundraising appeal within 6 months at most - preferably sooner. _____

Add 2 points for each potential new volunteer recruited at the event. _____

Add 50 points if the event could be repeated at least once a year for the next few years. _____

Add 50 points if a celebrity is part of the attraction at the event. _____

Add 50 points if you have given the invited guests an invisible command" to attend, by honouring (or roasting) someone who is important to their financial or personal future, such as a local business leader or politician. The guest of honour must agree to attend. _____

Add 50 points if what happens at the event is directly related to the work your organization does. _____

Add 50 points if the event enhances your organization's image. _____

Deduct 100 points if the event could possibly damage your organization's image. _____

Add 75 points if more than 50% of the people who attend will want to attend another event your organization runs. _____

Add 10 points each time you use one of the 9 ways a printed programme can increase your effectiveness: _____

- Thanking donors and volunteers _____
- Educational material included _____
- Donation request included, with reply envelope _____
- Printing donated _____
- Asking for new volunteers _____
- Offering to contact people who want more information _____
- Asking for anonymous comments to evaluate the event _____
- Selling the programme _____
- Selling ads in the programme _____

Planning _____

10 points for every month of advance planning time you have allowed, maximum 18 months unless you are planning to raise \$100,000 net income from a single event. _____

100 points if you have a schedule that shows how much time each task will take, and deadlines for each. _____

An additional 100 points if it is possible to get all the tasks done before the event, despite the inevitable delays, without working midnight shifts. No points allowed if anyone involved shouts, cries, gets an ulcer, or burns out. _____

Deduct 100 points if the lead staff person is expected to do most of the work in setting up the event - either because the volunteers are 'too busy' or because the staff person can't delegate. _____

Deduct 100 points if you are planning an outdoor event and do not have a contingency plan for inclement weather. _____

Deduct 50 points if you don't have volunteer follow-up crews included in your plan to clean up, send thank-you letters, or handle donations and other details. _____

Add 100 points if you have a co-sponsoring organization or company that will reduce your work load, contribute financially or increase your chances of success. _____

Add 15 points if someone in your group has-checked federal, provincial and municipal regulations that might affect the event, and made all necessary arrangements. _____

Add 25 points if you have checked to make sure there are no competing events planned during your event that could keep away your audience, such as other fundraising events, elections, Stanley Cup games, Royal Visits, etc. _____

Add 25 points for each time you contacted other groups that have run events like this and they gave you information on how to do it right. Don't spend too much time researching - maximum 150 points. _____

Add 100 points if you have consulted professional fundraisers on how best to run the event, or reviewed materials on events (in addition to this book) at one of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy's libraries or a public library. _____

Add 200 points if you will create a workable how-to manual, so the event is easier to run next time. _____

YOUR TOTAL _____

How to rate yourself:

If your score is...

<i>Less than zero</i>	Cancel the event immediately before you lose a fortune. Go back to the drawing board and correct your problems.
<i>0 - 249</i>	See ' <i>Less than zero</i> ', but don't be as hard on yourself.
<i>250 - 999</i>	You might be able to succeed if you make some changes, and are really lucky.
<i>1,000 - 1,999</i>	Your prospects look reasonable, but you'd better look after some of your shortcomings right away.
<i>2,000 - 2,999</i>	Looks pretty promising, but there's still room for improvement.
<i>3,000 - 3,999</i>	Well planned . looks like it should be a winner. But don't take any chances . review all the details.
<i>4,000 or more</i>	Either you've got a great plan, or you're kidding yourself. Re-evaluate some of your answers to make sure they are realistic.

20

Resource Guide
to Organizations and Publications

20 .. **Resource Guide** to Organizations and Publications

This guide is a compilation of resources that may be useful to you. It is not a complete bibliography there are many other organizations and publications that may be of use. If a favourite of yours is missing, please let **KW+A** know for a future edition.

A listing here is not a recommendation or endorsement. Being left out is not condemnation. These are suggestions only.

Please contact the groups listed before you send them any money. Prices may change. Some groups charge extra if payment does not accompany your request.

American prices are all payable in US funds. Most US suppliers prefer a postal money order or cheque from a US bank. They must sometimes pay extra bank charges for 'foreign banks' even when a US dollar account is used.

Organizations

§ *Canadian Centre for Philanthropy*
Suite 200
1329 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5R 2C4

(416) 368-1138

Covers all aspects of organizational management as well as fundraising. Extensive reference library open to public (over 1500 volumes in Toronto and smaller satellites in Winnipeg and Edmonton - more cities to follow). Annual conference/seminar in late fall. Special seminars on a variety of topics. Monthly newsletter - includes *The Eventful Calendar*. Offers computerized foundation searches. Co-sponsors courses with Humber College, Ryerson Polytechnical University and Grant MacEwan College. Membership fees and charges apply to some services.

Publishes these books, among others:

- *Canadian Directory to Foundations*
- *Canadian Index to Foundation Grants*

Editors: Allan Arlett Ingrid van Rotterdam

These two books give details of what funding is available, cross-indexed by subject, geography, and individual names. The *Directory* outlines the criteria and interests of every Canadian foundation and many American foundations that give to Canadian charities, including the name and address of the person to write to.

The *Index* examines each foundation grant, shows exactly how much was given, to which charity, and for what purpose. There are also excellent articles on how to get foundation grants. You must read these before submitting applications.

If your organization is an Associate of the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, the directories cost \$43 (tax incl.) Ontario residents and \$40 for non-Ontario residents. If not, costs are \$69 per directory for Ontario residents and \$65 for non-Ontario residents. Most public libraries should have them, however.

§ *Canadian Society of Fundraising Executives, Toronto Chapter*

c/o George Henderson, The Martin Group
Suite 720
36 Toronto Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5C 2C5

(416) 868-6611

§ *Canadian Society of Fundraising Executives, Nova Scotia Chapter*

c/o Kevin McNamara
Cobequid Multi-Service Centre
70 Memory Lane
Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia
B4C 2J3

(902) 865-5750

Individual memberships for professional fundraisers. The Nova Scotia chapter publishes an annual directory of fundraising plans in Atlantic Canada. Consult it to avoid conflicts and to gain new ideas. Both chapters have monthly lunch seminars.

All members get a Canadian newsletter and the *American National Society of Fundraising Executives Journal*. Experienced practitioners can write a certification exam to qualify as a Certified Fundraising Executive (CERE). There are also discounts on U.S. conferences. Membership fees and charges apply to some services. New chapters may form in other parts of Canada.

§ *Financial Development Association*

Suite 708
1155 West Pender Street
Vancouver, British Columbia
V6E 2P4

(604) 682-7447

Active in Vancouver and Victoria. Brings people together for regular sessions on fundraising.

§ *Grass Roots Network*

Suite 321
366 Adelaide Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M5A 3X9
(416) 361-5802

Brown Bag Lunch Meetings	free
<i>The Brown Bag Papers</i> newsletter	\$25 per year

Informal network of small and progressive groups concerned with fundraising and publicity on low budgets and (often) controversial causes. Monthly lunches focus on a major topic. Bring your own lunch. All welcome, no reservations needed. *Brown Bag Papers* gives helpful 4- to 8-page coverage on a single practical topic. Back issues for \$15/yr as available. Write or call for a schedule.

§ *Ottawa Fundraising Executives*
c/o Fran Lowe, Chairman
RR#1
Limoges, Ontario
KOA 2M0

(613) 835-3680

A group of professionals whose main function is fundraising. The primary purpose is professional development and networking opportunities for individuals.

§ *Ottawa Fundraisers* Network*
#18
250 Cooper Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K2P 0J4
Hope MacLean
Mahonri Young
Raymond Van Der Buhs

(613) 233-5309

(613) 235-6140

(819) 684-7434

The Network brings together fundraisers in the national capital area to exchange ideas and experiences for mutual benefit. Participates in giving courses at Algonquin College.

§ *The Sport Marketing Institute*
1220 Sheppard Avenue East
Willowdale, Ontario
M2K 2X1

(416) 495-4048

Sports groups will find useful suggestions on how to raise money and manage their teams.

Books

§ *A GuideBook to Fundraising for Disabled Person*s Groups*, by Ken Wyman.

Free.

Publisher: Disabled Persons Participation Program Department of the Secretary of
State, Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0M5

(819) 953-2681

All kinds of organizations find this manual's advice is quite transferable, no matter what issue you deal with. Covers special events, working with volunteers, hiring consultants, corporate giving, and major individual donors. Also helps answer the most important question of all: "What's the Money For?" Also available in French.

§ *Everything You Need to Know to Get Started in Direct Mail Fundraising* by Ken Wyman.

Free.

Publisher: Voluntary Action Directorate,
Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0M5

(819) 994-2255

A 270-page mini-encyclopaedia in English and French. Full of specific instructions, charts, and success stories. Includes a resource list on direct mail with information not listed here.

§ *How to Raise Top Dollars from Special Events* by Mira Sheerin

Publisher: Public Service Materials Centre
111 North Central Avenue
Hartsdale, New York 10530
USA

Good advice on all kinds of events. Special chapters on awards and testimonial events, the charity ball, theatre parties and special performances, movie premieres, one-time gala performances, fashion events, and art exhibits and auctions.

§ *Handbook of Special Events for Non-Profit Organizations* by Edwin R. Leibert

Publisher: Association Press
New York, New York
USA

Tested ideas on fundraising and public relations

§ *101 Ways to Raise Resources*

by Sue Vinyard and Steve McCurley

Publisher: Heritage Arts Publishing.
1807 Prairie Avenue
Dainers Grove, Illinois 60515
USA

Interesting ideas and great cartoons. One of several they wrote in the Brainstorm Series.

§ *Resources for Community Groups*

\$2.50

Ontario Government Bookstore
880 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1N8

(416) 965-2054

An excellent handbook of useful ideas from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Culture. Get it no matter what province you're in.

§ *Fundraising For Non-Profit Groups*

by Joyce Young

\$4.95

Publisher: Self-Counsel Press
1481 Charlotte Road
North Vancouver, British Columbia
V7J 1H1

(604) 986-3366

Written for grassroots organizations. Must reading. Short, easy to digest.

§ *Fundraising For Stability: Strategies for Community Fundraising*
by Robert Doyle and Catharine de Leeuw
\$10.

Publisher: Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto
Suite 1000
950 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 2J4

(416) 961-9831

A good book on general fundraising. Really understands the community perspective. Key topics include principles, planning, sources of support, preparing a proposal, innovations.

§ *The Grass Roots Fundraising Book*
by Joan Flanagan
U\$ 4.75

Publisher: The Youth Project
1000 Wisconsin Avenue NW
Washington DC 20007
USA

§ *The Successful Volunteer Organization*
also by Joan Flanagan
\$8.95

Publisher: Beaverbooks Limited
150 Lesmill Road
Don Mills, Ontario
M3B 2T5

Both of these are thorough, pragmatic, useful, upbeat texts.

§ *Fundraising is Fun: A Guide For Local Anti-Apartheid Groups*
by Bernadette Vallely

Publisher: The Anti-Apartheid Movement
13 Mandela Street
London MW1 ODW
United Kingdom

tel. (01) 387-7966

A clever and useful book, giving novel twists to familiar event ideas. Brief instructions on how to run a variety of projects.

§ *Fundraising for Social Change* by Kim Klein

Publisher: Center For Responsive Governance Press
PO Box 42120
Northwest Station
Washington, DC 20015
USA

Good detail on all aspects of fundraising. Packs a lot into 208 pages. Klein is co-publisher of *Grassroots Fundraising Journal*.

§ *Canadian Taxation of Charities and Donations*

by Arthur B.C. Drache, QC
\$125.

Publisher: Richard DeBoo Limited
81 Curlew Drive
Don Mills, Ontario
M3A 3P7

(416) 455-4940

An excellent book, updated as new regulations are released. It is expensive, but your lawyer and accountant should review it on any difficult matters. Any supplements as legislation changes are invoiced, usually \$20 to \$40.

§ *The Taft Group*

Public Service Materials Centre
5130 MacArthur Boulevard NW
Washington, DC 20016

(202) 966-7086

The Taft Group provides dozens of useful books. Ask for their free catalogue.

Sources: The Directory of Contacts for Editors, Reporters and Researchers
\$15 per issue

Suite 402
9 Saint Nicholas Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4Y 1W5

(416) 964-7799

Sent free to all journalists, semi-annually. You have to pay to be among listed groups. Vital if you want writers to contact you when they are working on a news item or a feature story that involves you. And the writers do call.

§ *Canadian Key Business Directory*

Dun and Bradstreet
365 Bloor Street East
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 3L4

(416) 963-6500

Research data on corporations allows you to double-check names and addresses before applying.

§ Donors & Dollars
Epsilon Data Management
Free.

50 Cambridge Street
Burlington, Massachusetts 01803
USA

(617) 273-0250

A handy pocket-sized 20-page booklet with very useful charts on the financial side of fundraising. Epsilon has a variety of other publications and a newsletter. Tell them about yourself, so they can decide what to send you.

§ *The Auction Book*
by Betsy Beatty and Libby Kirkpatrick
US\$ 26.

Publisher: The Society for Non-Profit Organizations
Suite 1
6314 Odana Road
Madison, Wisconsin 53719
USA

§ *The Auction Encyclopedia*
Publisher: Missouri Auction School
1600 Genessee
Kansas City, Missouri 64102
USA

(816) 421-7117

Joe Small wrote a chapter for this encyclopaedia on how to set up charity auctions. It is written for professional auctioneers. The average charity may find it too complex.

Periodicals

§ *Sponsorship Report*

\$ 195/yr

Kenneth Scott, Publisher
Suite 303
156 Front Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5J 2L6

(416) 595-0840

Monthly. Usually 4 pages. Half the subscribers are charities, the other half corporations. Gives tips on corporations looking for sponsorship opportunities! Also produces the annual Financial Post Conference on Sponsorship, usually 1 day, in the spring. 1987 fee was \$425.

§ *Special Events*

Free to qualified charities, or \$35/yr

Miramar Publishing
2048 Cotner Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90025
USA

(213) 477-1033

Includes behind-the-scenes information on the requirements of special events, for example lighting, PA systems, restaurant arrangements. Case studies, such as the unveiling of the renovated Statue of Liberty. About 20,000 subscribers.

§ *Special Events Report*

US\$ 185/yr

Publisher: Jon Ukinan
International Events Group
Suite 303
213 West Institute Place
Chicago, Illinois 60610
USA

(313) 944-1727

Concerned with corporate sponsorship of events from the corporate perspective. Biweekly. Usually 8 pages. Who's doing what. Tips on sponsorship, such as

insurance and legal matters. Does cover Canada, recently including what Royal Bank looks for before sponsoring an event (reprinted here), and Petro-Canada on the Olympic Torch Relay. Also publish annual *Official Directory of Festivals, Sports, and Special Events*, listing over 1700 entries in the US and Canada. Directory is included in subscription; or can be bought separately for U\$ 119. Seminars, books, tapes and consultations also available.

§ *Fundraising Management*

U\$ 43/year

Hoke Communications
224 Seventh Street
Garden City, New York 11530-5771
USA

(516) 746-6700

The industry magazine. 'How-to' articles, news, fascinating ads, conference announcements. Has a monthly column on special events. April 1987 issue has several articles on events, including 'There's More to Special Events than Raising Money', by Thomas J. Mulligan, and "Secrets of Success in Special Events", by Alice H. Davidson. FRM is mostly for larger US charities, but will help any serious fundraiser.

§ *Fundraising Institute Monthly Portfolio*

U\$ 55/yr

P0 Box 365
Ambler, Pennsylvania 19002-0365
USA

(215) 646-7019

Only 8 to 12 pages a month, but succinct 'how-to' directions. Worthwhile. Usually includes special direct-mail tips in the "FRI Letter Clinic". They also publish many handy manuals. Ask for the catalogue.

§ *Grassroots Fundraising Journal* U\$ 20/yr
517 Union Avenue
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902
USA

(615) 637-6624

Quarterly. Recognizes that small organizations are different. Solid articles introduce techniques worth knowing.

§ *The Non-Profit Times*
Free.

P0 Box 7286
Princeton, New Jersey 08543-7285
USA

(609) 520-8300

Useful tips and general background information in a tabloid newspaper. Trade news and trends.

Audio-tapes

§ *The Centre for Philanthropy* records seminars live on tape. From the dozens of selections available, here are a few on special events. Most are 90 minutes. Sound quality varies. Order them directly from the Centre:

- *Special Events: How to Get Started*
- *Special Events: Getting More for Less Work*
- *Big Benefits for Big Bucks: Putting the 'Special*' into Special Events*

Other Services

§ *Revenue Canada Charity Law Hotline*
Free: 1-800-267-2384

Provides official answers for charities, non-profits and donors on regulations under its jurisdiction. You can call anonymously.

§ *National Symposium on Lotteries and Gambling*

Public Policy Program
Department of Continuing Studies
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, British Columbia
VSA 1S6

(604) 291-3793/4565

Held in 1988. Sessions on gaming revenues and non-profit/charitable organizations, psychology of gambling, legal/ethical/moral issues and trends. Special instructional workshop on bingo.

§ *Joe Small Auctioneers, Inc.*

Suite 112
10859 Switzer Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75238
USA

(214) 503-9155 or toll free from US only 1-800-521-2066

Joe Small has raised over \$20 million for charities through 1300 auctions. He has spent some time in Winnipeg, and is familiar with Canada. If you contact him, he'll send a free copy of his excellent article from *Fundraising Management* magazine, March 1988, called "Is an Auction In Your Future?". He has also offered to provide advice to any reader of this book at no charge. He will accept collect calls from Canada.

§ *National Hole-In-One Association*

Mancil Davis
Executive Director
730 Campbell Center
8350 North Central Expressway
Dallas, Texas 75206-1679

Toll free phone in Canada and US:
(800) 527-6944

Information on hole-in-one insurance and charitable golf tournaments.

21

How Could This Book Be Better?

21 . . How Could This Book Be Better?

Your comments on this book will help make future attempts better. Please copy this form and send it to:

Ken Wyman
Ken Wyman and Associates
Consultants on Fundraising, Volunteers, Communications
Suite 200
64B Shuter Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5B 1B1

(416) 362-2926

Things I liked best about this book include:

Things I liked less about this book:

Things I learned from this book:

Next time include more, information on:

We had success using this idea (whether or not in the book):

We did not have success using this idea (whether or not in the book)...

Other comments, suggestions, ideas:

Optional Information

Name

Title

Group

Address

City

Province

Postal Code

Phone no. ()

About the Author

Ken Wyman is a specialist in helping groups grow through better fundraising, volunteerism and communications.

Hundreds of people have participated in his seminar, *Making the Most of Special Events*, a workshop hosted by the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy in eight cities across Canada.

Ken is the founder of the Grass Roots Fundraising Network's *Brown Bag Papers* and seminars. He's a member of the Canadian Society of Fundraising Executives. The Canadian Centre for Philanthropy and Humber College jointly retained Ken as co-ordinator of the first certificate program in fundraising management in Canada.

This is Ken's third book for the Department of the Secretary of State. The Voluntary Action Directorate also commissioned Ken to create *Everything You Need to Know to Get Started in Direct Mail Fundraising*. Earlier, Ken wrote *The Guidebook to Fundraising For Disabled Persons* Groups*.

0-662-18400-9