



Fast Fundraising Facts & Other Essentials

Make Your Special Events “Special”

Why do special events work so well when they are properly planned and executed? Many people attend or participate in special events for the event itself, not just to benefit your organization or cause. This is good news, because it allows you to extend your “reach” beyond your traditional base of donors and supporters. So think outside the box and try some new special event ideas to tap into new target markets. You’ll likely raise more money and tell new people about your organization while you are at it!

Necessities

Several things are necessary for a successful event. **Plan** well in advance, involving all volunteers and key staff. Ensure the plan speaks about *what* needs to happen, *who* is responsible for each step and *when* it will be accomplished. **Budget** early, based upon the plan and the **goal** for the event. This allows you to adjust expenses or revenues accordingly.

Of course, **volunteers** are critical to a special event. Look to nontraditional sources of volunteers, such as service groups, churches, colleges and universities, fraternal groups, etc. Put volunteer responsibilities *in writing*. The more complicated the volunteer’s task, the more important it is to make the responsibilities perfectly clear.

PR and Publicity

Use the traditional resources of print and electronic media. Target your message to those who will want to attend. Use email announcements. Fax invitations instead of mailing them. Promote events on your web site and allow for ticket processing electronically. Billboards. Bus panels. Celebrity spokes persons. Proclamations. Company newsletters. Get creative!

Revenue Sources.

At some point, your revenue will be capped by the number of tickets sold, size of space, or participants possible. Here is where sponsorships can have a positive impact. Budget carefully and recruit sponsors or in-kind contributors for every expense item from food to program to printing to decorations.

Thanking and Recognition.

Well, *duh!* Of course you will thank and recognize every contribution of time, money, goods or services. Thank sponsors at least three times—when the pledge is made, when the money is received and after the event to show what that

contribution leveraged, the results, what the money was used for, etc. Thank volunteers in a meaningful manner. You want them back again next year! And finally, be timely with your thanking. Don’t put it off for several weeks because you are too busy with other things.

Life Cycles

All events have a life cycle. It looks like a bell curve, and you should be aware of whether your event is rising, flattening out or declining in revenue. Before the decline begins, look at what you can do to breathe new life into the event. Change the date. Change the place. Change the theme. Or realize that it is time to replace it with a different event. Plan ahead and phase in a new event before the current event is worn out.

Some Great Special Events Ideas.

Nonevents are great ways to get creative and have fun without all the hassles of a real event. Try a virtual event handled entirely by email, for example. Visit www.nonevents.com for some good ideas.

Raffles can be great revenue additions to special events. Sell an arm’s length of tickets at time (get an additional one “free”). Try a raffle to win a box of gift certificates grouped by theme or category. Make the drawing a media event with local or national celebrities.

Corporate/Business Events. Looking for ways to get corporations involved? Try a corporate spelling bee, an indoor golf tournament, a crazy Olympics with a rubber chicken toss, paddle balls, etc.

Auctions are traditional, so make yours new and exciting. Display the silent auction items with pizzazz. Use a celebrity auctioneer who cruises the silent auction tables with a microphone to increase interest in bidding. Group smaller items together. Use Mystery Boxes.

See other special event ideas on my web site (www.jblockinc.com). Purchase your copy of *Fast Fundraising Facts for Fame & Fortune* and see a full chapter on special events ideas and their success factors.

Things to Know ... Places to Find Them

IRS Questions

If you are confused about nonprofit tax law or have questions about the IRS Form 990, there is help available from the IRS. *The Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Tax-Exempt Organizations*, publication 4221, is a compliance guide that explains record keeping, return filing and disclosure rules. You can download it free at www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p4221.pdf or order it by calling 1-800-829-3676.

Cause-Related Marketing is Growing

US Corporations are embracing cause-related marketing and plan to increase funding for these types of programs according to the *2004 Manufacturer and Retailer Cause-Marketing Attitudes and Practices Study* (www.causemarketingforum.com). While corporations still view cause-related marketing as providing social benefits, they are increasingly expecting these types of programs to deliver profits as well, according to a national marketing study performed by PowerPact and commissioned by the Cause Marketing Forum.

In fact, 81% of the companies polled stated that sales impact is a top factor when deciding whether to adopt a cause-related marketing program. Some of the key

factors in developing effective programs included the ability to localize the causes, customize programs and determine the degree to which businesses can engage their employees. Another study (www.sponsorship.com) estimates that cause-related marketing will approach \$1 billion in corporate spending in 2004.

Nonprofit Jobs on the Increase

A recent report, *Employment in the Nonprofit Sector*, found that the growth rate for US nonprofit sector was 2.5% while the growth for business was 1.8%. 42% of all nonprofit workers are employed in health care; 22% in education. Social services employment showed the largest growth. You can see the entire report at www.independentsector.org.

AFP Compensation & Benefits Study for 2003

The Association of Fundraising Professionals has released its 2003 survey. To see the full report at no cost, you must be a member (www.afpnet.org) but a summary was published in the September/October issue of *Advancing Philanthropy*. Nonmembers can purchase the full study for \$65 through the AFP Education and Career Development Department at (www.profadv@afpnet.org).

New IRS Regulations Regarding Donated Vehicles

It was inevitable. A charity comes up with a great idea for increasing donations, other charities pick up on the idea, aggressive taxpayers start abusing the idea, and the government reacts to the abuse by creating stricter reporting requirements for the donors and donees. Such is the case with vehicle donations. As a result, the disclosures required by both taxpayers and charities for vehicle donations will change for contributions made after December 31, 2004. Inflated charitable deductions are not usually the fault of the recipient charities; nevertheless, the new reporting requirements fall squarely on the charities.

For donations of motor vehicles, boats, and airplanes made after December 31, 2004, and valued at more than \$500, the taxpayer must file with the tax return a written acknowledgement from the charity. The charity must also provide a copy of the acknowledgement to the IRS. If the charity sells the vehicle (such as in fundraising) without intervening

use or material improvement, the amount of the deduction for the donor will be limited to the gross proceeds of the sale. It is the charity's responsibility to notify the donor of the sale price of the vehicle. If the vehicle is to be used by the charity in the performance of its exempt function, the acknowledgement must be provided within 30 days of the contribution of the vehicle. If the vehicle is to be sold to raise funds for the organization, the acknowledgement must be provided within 30 days of the sale of the vehicle.

There are significant penalties for organizations that fail to provide the acknowledgements as prescribed by regulation or that provide false or fraudulent acknowledgements. Therefore, it is imperative that all charities that receive or will be receiving donated motor vehicles, boats, and airplanes be aware of these new regulations.

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Internet Resources For Nonprofits

There is a great monthly newsletter about special events called **Special Events Galore!** You can order it for \$79/year from Stevenson Consultants. Their web site is www.stevensoninc.com or call them at (712) 239-3010. I received 3 sample editions and they are terrific! They also have other interesting newsletters, so check them out.



The Corporation for Public Broadcasting is making major gifts and planned giving training and web tools available for development people. The site is

majorgiving.cpb.org.

Speaking of planned giving, check out the **National Committee on Planned Giving** site at www.ncpg.org for useful and timely updates, legislative affairs and training programs.

Remember, if you are devoting at least one hour every week to Internet research, you are leaving money and opportunity on the table!

Lots of the sites I've found are hot linked from my web site. Of course, from time to time, organizations and sites disappear, so if you find a broken link on the site, please send me an email (jean@jblockinc.com) and let me know. Thanks!

TWO GREAT BOOKS AVAILABLE NOW:

THE ABCs OF BUILDING BETTER BOARDS and FAST FUNDRAISING FACTS FOR FAME & FORTUNE

Now you can add two great books to your agency library. **The ABCs of Building Better Boards** is just what you need to improve your Board's potential. It includes ideas for recruitment, retention and recognition and has some great forms for you to copy and use.

Learn how to deal with unproductive Board members and how to better define the roles of staff and Board. There is a chapter on financial and fiduciary facts, one on simple parliamentary procedure and much, much more.

Discover how Board Job Descriptions and annual Commitment Letters will dramatically improve your Board's effectiveness. See how a truly effective Nominating Committee will lead to a better Board.

Get good ideas for more efficient Board management and administration, including how to set up and manage effective committees.

It's only \$24.95 plus shipping and handling. Take advantage of a volume discount of up to 20% and give this book to all new Board members as part of their orientation.

The 3rd edition of **Fast Fundraising Facts for Fame & Fortune** is full of ideas to improve your fundraising, including how to ask effectively, special events essentials, the Board's role in fundraising and new ideas for fundraising.

Help volunteers get over the fear of asking for money and in-kind resources for your organization. Learn how marketing principles will make fundraising easier.

Learn about **Jean's Ten Rules for Fundraising Success** and apply them to your organization immediately. This book puts the **FUN** into **FUND**raising and gives good examples and ideas that really work, rather than using hard to follow formulas and theories.

It's only \$24.95 plus shipping and handling. Take advantage of a volume discount of up to 20% and give this book to all new Board members as part of their orientation.

Or buy both books for only \$45.00 plus shipping and handling.

HOW CAN I HELP YOU? TAKE THIS QUICKIE QUIZ

Q: Is your Board of Directors functioning at its highest level?

Q: How successful is your current fundraising?

Q: Do volunteers need help asking for money and in-kind resources?

Q: Does your organization have a dynamic strategic plan?

Q: Are you having fun?

**Please give me a call if you want to turn any
NO into a YES.**

I can help with:

- turning your Board into a dynamic group of volunteers,
- facilitating a strategic planning session,
- analyzing your current fundraising and suggesting some new ideas, and
- training volunteers and staff in becoming more effective fundraisers.

"You certainly shifted my paradigm. After hearing you last Friday, it is the first time in 11 years as an ED that I was excited about fund development. And you got my Board members to that point as well."

Kay Hopper

RDC for Children, Richardson, TX

"Your seminar in Dallas was the best I ever attended. You are wise and hilarious."

Mary Jo Dorn

Catholic Charities of Dallas

"Jean conducted an extremely well organized and productive [Board] retreat, one that I can say with confidence that our members count as the finest ever conducted for us. Jean's follow-up report was in-depth and meaty, and both Board and staff have referred to it time and again. The knowledge of boardsmanship the members took with them has made a remarkable difference in their levels of commitment and support."

Eileen Cook

Casa Esperanza, Albuquerque, NM

"Jean Block is a powerhouse in the nonprofit world. You don't move about these circles long before her name is prominent in the conversation. Her commitment to training, fundraising, motivating, and cultivation is unsurpassed. To say she is an influence is to miss the point. You don't know Jean, you experience her! She is a force unlike any other I have ever met."

Randy Gleason

UNM Children's Hospital

"Your training was invaluable to me. I dreaded doing this because I couldn't even sell someone a candy bar in the past but I was inspired by your advice to try. I raised about \$377,000!"

Joan Shepack

Keystone Botanical Garden, El Paso, TX

"I attended the Corporate Sponsorship Workshop - WOW! You were amazing! What an OPPORTUNITY for me! Your presentation style was EXCELLENT. By far the best workshop I've been to in a long time (content and style both!)."

Vicki Kopplin

Epilepsy Foundation of Minnesota