

2010 FESTIVALS & EVENTS ASSOCIATION
55TH CONVENTION & TRADE SHOW
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI, U.S.A



BEST PRACTICE MISSION
SEPTEMBER 14-17, 2010

Submitted to:

The Nova Scotia Department of
Tourism, Culture and Heritage



The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS) and the Nova Scotia Tourism Human Resource Council (NSTHRC) in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage (DTCH), and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), facilitated a Best Practice Mission, to the **2010 Festivals & Events Association 55th Convention & Trade Show** in St. Louis Missouri from September 14-17, 2010.

The purpose of attending the IFEA Convention was to upgrade the skills of Nova Scotia's festival and event organizers. Nova Scotia has long been a leader in festival and event coordination and it is imperative we maintain that leadership in this sector. We must continue to gain knowledge to expand and enhance the quality level of current festivals and events and identify opportunities to develop new ones.

Nova Scotia was represented by a group of five delegates, each attending different and various sessions. The Convention had many concurrent sessions (sometimes as many as 10 at a time) on topics such as sponsorship, public/private partnerships, financing, proposal and grant writing, green events, marketing, and volunteer recruitment. Participants were expected to share the information with their boards and communities and help advance a business approach to managed festivals and events in Nova Scotia.

The following report outlines best practice findings from the mission participants, listing the lessons learned that will be shared with the Nova Scotia Industry. Participants attended convention meetings and shared the workload of covering the vast amount of sessions offered. The Nova Scotia delegates gained valuable information and conducted some networking. In addition to the Nova Scotia delegates, there were other Canadians in attendance from Prince Edward Island, Quebec and British Columbia.

The NSTHRC and TIANS gratefully acknowledge the cooperation and support of ACOA and the DTCH for their support of the IFEA Best Practice Mission. We look forward to enhancing community tourism development and the Nova Scotia tourism experience through sharing lessons learned during this initiative.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Nova Scotia celebrates annually with over 550 festivals and events featuring everything from music, arts, seafood, history, seacoast, outdoor activities, and more. These events showcase the province's history and culture, and provide many opportunities for the visitor to have an authentic experience.

Festivals and events are important to the social and economic development of our communities. Traditionally, the contribution of festival and events to economic development has primarily been justified on the basis of the economic spinoff that they generate as a result of the rise in the number of tourists.

Festivals and events can also be the impetus for extending the tourism season. The Celtic Colours International Festival, held every October in Cape Breton since 1997, is an example of how a season extending festival grew to be recognized as a world-class event, both locally and internationally.

Tourism is a key economic sector, and festivals and events, particularly in small communities, help boost tourism and contribute to the economic development of the province.

MISSION OBJECTIVES

The Best Practice Mission provided professional and educational development for all the participants through:

- Building broader understanding of and knowledge for more efficient management of existing festivals and events and methods used to develop new festivals and events
- Gaining an understanding of new products and how to introduce and incorporate the products into existing festivals and events
- Learning of collaborative private sector promotion and advertising strategies for responsible marketing of festival based tourism through awareness of marketing initiatives
- Providing an opportunity for participants to establish business contacts and networks and develop sponsorships from the corporate community
- Further professional development in Nova Scotia through the distribution of the conference proceedings during the Annual Tourism Summit in Halifax from November 28 - 30, 2010.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Participants selected for the mission were expected to identify opportunities to improve their own festival and events, and to share lessons learned with colleagues in the tourism industry upon their return.

- Event Managers will develop the skills and negotiation techniques to identify unique partnering opportunities.
- Participants will begin to re-examine their current festivals and events for opportunities to enhance their events.
- Brainstorm ideas on how to promote festivals and events in Nova Scotia.
- Participants will learn how to maximize their resources to develop their festivals and events.
- Community leaders will learn from other destinations successful paths and potential pitfalls to avoid in festival and event development.
- Participants will discover ideas for enhancement of present festival and event efforts.
- Opportunities for professional development seminars for Nova Scotia operators will be identified.

PARTICIPANTS

Guidelines and an application process were established for potential applicants for the Best Practice Mission. Recruitment was facilitated through contact with Regional Development Authorities and Regional Tourism Industry Associations. Directly contact was made with a short list of specific festival and event organizers. The following applicants were selected:

- **Frank Bruleigh** - Special Events/Festivals Cape Breton Regional Municipality
- **Joan Clannon** - Development Isle Madame Association, Grow Isle Madame, Arichat
- **Beth Groom** - Village on the Canal Association, St. Peter's
- **Sadie Thomas-Frye*** - Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage (Group Leader for the Best Practice Mission)
- **Leah Whitehead** - Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo, Halifax

*Expenses covered separately

BEST PRACTICE LESSONS LEARNED

MARKETING, BRANDING AND MEDIA RELATIONS

Topic: Integrated Marketing Online
Speaker: Doug Rousch, Director Online Marketing
doug@edgeworksgroup.com 866-888-7313 x 709

The session reviewed the elements involved in integrated online marketing, as a results-driven approach to generating audience, volunteers and sponsors through a website. The presenter covered some of the most recent changes in how Google ranks websites, important tools for determining site effectiveness, site design ideas, tips on how to improve site usability, new online marketing techniques, and social media.

- June 8, 2010 Google launched Caffeine which is much faster, and moves into real time with some linking strategies. Google Instant Search was launched September 8, 2010.
- Announced Aug 17, 2010 that Bing is taking over Yahoo Search and thus, it is important for marketing your event online, to start getting ranked in Bing now with anchor text and more page text.
- Doug stressed that for SEO (search engine optimization): 1). maintain unique fresh content on your site and 2). Track user behavior/conversions on your site.
- Doug features online web classes through his company Edgeworks Group at www.edgeworksgroup.com.
- 95% of new phones sold have internet capabilities (90% of US has cell phones) and 20% of US homes have no landline.
- There are more mobile devices than televisions and desktop computers combined. Operators should consider opportunities, such as mobile ticketing as 37.4 million transactions took place in 2008 approximately with 1.8 billion in the US by the end of 2010.
- Four too common Online Marketing Errors 1) social media in half measures and not a campaign -- it's a commitment; 2) finished websites - are finished; 3) content errors - non-unique, duplicate, lacking; 4) no calls to action.

Topic: Who Knows You? Power Marketing! Formulating Winning Marketing Strategies

Speaker: Gail Lowney Alofsin, Director of Corporate Partnerships, Newport Harbor Corporation www.gailspeaks.com

This session focused on building sustainable, successful and powerful relationships with internal and external customers. It's not about who you know - it's all about who knows you!

- Gail focused on “community” and made some great points about sponsoring little league teams and putting logos on pizza boxes. For example, if Honda is sponsoring an event, get everyone to show their key to get their name entered in a draw.
- Always be on your game with enthusiasm.
- The importance of unplugged face-to-face relationships and networking is important at your office and the event.
- Human touches make big differences at large events, such as flowers in the bathrooms, meeting key sponsors at the door and walking them into the event. Having quarterly touch points with your audience and volunteers.
- An empty can that may be purchased with money donated to a food bank.

SPONSORSHIP/REVENUES

Topic: What Did the Recession Do to Us? The 2010 IFEA Economic Forces, Trends and Forecasts Study

Speaker: Seungwon Lee, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Tourism and Events Management, George Mason University

The focus of the session was to help attendees understand that even in tough times, the best thing that leaders may do is to use the lessons learned to prepare for the future. The IFEA partnered with George Mason University in the United States and Queen Margaret University in Scotland in a survey project. The study may help festival and event leaders and others to better understand the impact of the current global recession on the festival and event industry, how to better prepare for future economic challenges, and how to best navigate the current path to economic recovery within the industry.

- It was suggested to increase marketing efforts and in particular, the use of technology. For the next two years, festivals and events will concentrate on using social networking to promote their events in order to boost sales

and attendance. Organizations plan to continue the use of technology to manage sponsors and volunteer networks.

- The speaker stated that the industry leaders will employ strategies based upon increasing marketing efforts, diversifying revenue sources, employing technology and utilizing on line social media and accepting and adopting change.
- The executive summary on this study concludes that festival and event organizers be: innovative/creative: drive new idea generation; diversify revenue sources: develop financially sound practices and monitor economic trends, and; develop political support for festivals and events as a public domain.

Topic: The Gateway to Successful Community Sponsorships

Speaker: Mary McMurtrey, President, Gateway Center for Giving; Kathy Reeves, Corporate Community Relations Manager, Enterprise Rent-A-Car; Robert Cox, Senior Vice President, Emerson and Erin Budde, Senior Vice President, Head of Community Affairs, Wells Fargo Advisors

A panel of top Saint Louis sponsorship professionals shared their tips on what makes a successful sponsorship for everyone.

- The presentation was relevant for any event that is seeking sponsorship or partnership. It is important for event organizations to understand the mission and objectives of the organizations that wish to partner.
- Do your homework when preparing proposals - research the company. What are the objectives of the company and what is their strategy? Be sure to review your materials for mistakes and typos before submitting.
- Talk about the opportunities to grow the sponsors audience - tailor a package to suit the needs of the sponsor - they may want awareness and not expect immediate sales.
- If you do not have a contact or channel to obtain a meeting, follow up your proposal with a call.
- Send in proposal a year out as companies prepare budgets well in advance.
- Keep the conversation going with your sponsor - provide reports or meet to debrief. Get prepared for the next year.
- Be transparent with sponsor so that they know who the partners are.

- There are companies that can assist events to find corporate sponsors. For example, IEG Sponsorship consulting at www.sponsorship.com
- The panelists employed different methods when dealing with events, but, they all felt strongly about event organizers having a good understanding of their companies before preparing proposals for their review. They also referenced that regional offices and corporate head offices sometimes have different objectives to reach the main companies' goals. As an example, a local branch of a bank may look to engaging the local public in order to increase deposits. The corporate branch may wish to give back to the immediate locality.
- Helpful tip from Bruce Erley and Sylvia Allen at the “*Viva la Difference: Two Styles to Sponsor*” session was to look at companies going out of business and contact their sponsors.

Topic: Beware of the Wrong Rapunzel: 10 Things You Must Know to be Successful in Sponsorship Sales

Speaker: Gail Lowney Alofsin, Director of Corporate Partnerships, Newport Harbor Corporation

Sponsorships that “work” will be renewed. Gail provides ten principles that will guide a business, service, event or program in the right direction.

- If you are meeting and creating a relationship with the wrong person in the company then you have the wrong Rapunzel. Make sure you are dealing with the decision maker.
- Customize your approach depending on who you are dealing with. Don't think that everyone is the same or wants the same things.
- Always leave with an action.
- Social media will go further if it comes from someone that is not affiliated with your group or event. Get a fan, or someone to add good stuff about you on a social network.

OPERATIONS

Topic: Creating BIG Success in a small Town

Speaker: Kay Wolf, CFEE, Director, Borderfest Association

The session focused on how small towns can do a great event, and how sometimes the most creative ideas come from those who have to do the most with the least.

- It is important to create strategic alliances.
- Bring public and private sector together to plan the strategy which will allow them to benefit. Could be set up as an advisory group.
- Educate your council, volunteers and industry people of the significant impact of events on the community and the stakeholders.
- Promote the economic impact of the specific event. Don't underestimate the value of your festival.
- Involve community partnerships, including the business chamber, volunteers, and schools. This will build community pride and foster spirit.

Topic: Engaging Youth at Your Event: New Answers to an Age Old Challenge

Speaker: Ken Ashby, President, Maris Segal, Executive Producer, Prosody Creative Services

This session looked at why you want to engage youth at your event, who are the teens, and practical ideas to engage them, on their terms, in ways that are meaningful and will build loyalty.

- Some excellent ideas to engage youth, such as including teens on an internship, getting them to “cover” your event (media); or having a teen night or location exclusive to those under 19 years of age.
- Establish a Teen Advisory Council - and give them responsibility and accountability. This could include creative challenges through music, theatre, etc.
- Reward teens with prize items that they want such as iTunes cards, etc. - not t-shirts.

- Enlist teens and make them your ambassadors. Volunteers, regardless of age, need a structured environment to be retained and this helps with the continuation of volunteer development for the future.
- Teens buy impulsively, so have products that they would like in an accessible place.
- If you need technology help - use teens. Many organizations are utilizing teens to develop a social media which will allow them to connect with their peers and market/sell the event and products.

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

Topic: Building a Multi-Level Event Strategy

**Speaker: Sally Edwards, General Manager, Operations & Communications
Events New South Wales, Australia**

Sydney is well recognized for its record in securing and hosting mega events. In 2007, the New South Wales Government recognized the importance of a strong managed program of events and established Events New South Wales, the State's events organization. Events New South Wales is positioning Sydney and New South Wales as a preferred destination for events through the New South Wales Master Events Calendar and its integrated whole of government and industry wide approach to events.

- This organization is a private venture governed by a board responsible to the Premier of New South Wales. It operates with government funding and has the function of attracting significant events and providing assistance toward the development of iconic events. Although it will assist with the development of new events and assist existing events, it does not deliver events.
- Events New South Wales has developed a master events calendar with a carefully selected range of events unique to Sydney and New South Wales. This calendar features anchor events (large scale events with substantial economic and marketing impacts) with smaller local activities that provide community benefits.
- Two key or anchor events include Sydney's New Year which includes celebrations from the Sydney Opera House - an iconic Sydney location and Crave Sydney International Food Festival. Sydney's New Year's Eve attracts a global visual audience of over a million spectators and welcomes 50,000 persons from overseas. Both events feature iconic locations

within the city and have a broad appeal with residents and visitors and huge marketing and economic benefits. The new and very popular 'Breakfast on the Bridge' (one of the Crave Sydney International Food Festival) employs a lottery system; whereby, 6000 applicants are selected to take their breakfast picnic on the iconic bridge that spans Sydney Harbour.

- Event NSW has focused on Sydney; yet, is also working with localities in the state of New South Wales to foster local events that can deliver economic benefits.

Topic: Is Your Volunteer Program Professionally Managed?

Speaker: Florence May, President, TRS

The two-part session focused on thinking in critical terms about the status of your festival volunteer program. Volunteer management expert, Florence May, guided participants through a written self assessment. Discussions focused on key volunteer management topics including legal and insurance risk topics. Participants were asked to bring copies of their volunteer handbooks, liability waivers, and volunteer job description samples.

- Ensure proper volunteer training prior to the event. Does your organization supply a volunteer handbook with standard operating procedures, event policies, dress code, site map and emergency protocols including training on completing incident reports?
- Create realistic job descriptions so that recruitment can be specific for the job/task. Specify financial costs to volunteers including parking, food, etc.
- Have adequate risk controls in place such as insurance, background checks and waivers. All event volunteers are not covered by personal homeowners and motor vehicle insurance.
- Organizers should be prepared for worst case scenarios and whether there is sufficient insurance coverage. Check with your insurers as many liability policies will cover employees, but not volunteers.
- Have volunteers evaluate their experience. Software is available to manage volunteers. *Survey Monkey* offers free online surveys that you can use to have your volunteers evaluate your event and their experience, and can tabulate results. Evaluation of your volunteer program should include feedback from leaders and frontline volunteers.

- Recruit next year's volunteers at this year's events. Hire co-leaders for succession planning. Wrap up sessions should take place while the event is still fresh in everyone's mind.
- Demographic cohorts indicate that the type of volunteers you will have includes: Boomers (1946-1964) may be looking for recognition; Generation X (1965-1980) who are generally informal, want fun, love technology; Nexters or referred to as Millennial Generation cohort also called Generation Y (1981 and after) will be more interested in jobs that make an impact and helping people directly. Younger volunteers also are likely to expect good use of their time and talents.

OTHER:

- Purchase items that can be versatile to various events, and from year to year.
- Establish a decorating budget with priorities, with 3-4-5-year plan.
- For heavy lifting required of volunteers, call police department to see if offenders are available. Check with school teams (football) and make donation in return.
- You have to change your event and its activities from year to year to keep people coming back.
- Create packages with half off entry to festival with two or four-day packages. Partner with hotels.
- When people are in a line-up, have riddles on one side of the sign and on the other side have the answer.
- Brand the idea of "sister events" with exchanges of staff, performers and ideas, as well as the importance of working with neighbouring communities.
- Keep things fresh by having an annual theme. Have artists participate in a competition on designing floats for a parade.
- The most important quality of festivals that kept people coming back was hands-on experiences.
- Edinburgh has an "Edinburgh Events Festival Passport" where you get entry into three events for a fixed price.
- Capture everything you can through photos and video.
- Use consistent signage

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Websites

<http://blog.theregistrationsystem.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/Managing-Volunteers.pdf> - Managing Volunteers
<http://blog.theregistrationsystem.com> - volunteers going green
<http://csg-sponsorship.com>
<http://www.theregistrationsystem.com>
www.edgeworksgroup.com - Doug Rousch - Integrated Marketing Online -
www.epms.net - website of Keynote Speaker, William (Bill) O'Toole
www.eventbright.com - 2D scanning tool for free
www.eventmarketers.com - Event Marketing Resource
www.facebook.com
www.feeddemon.com - Web news and content reader/resource.
www.gailspeaks.com - Gail Lowney Alofsin - Marketing
www.internationaleventsltd.com/publications - case studies
www.linkedin.com - Social connections and relationships
www.relationshipeconomics.net - Business connections and relationships
www.sponsorship.com - IEG Sponsorship consulting - corporate sponsors
www.surveymonkey.com
www.tompeters.com - Success Strategies
www.zoominfo.com - Business connections and relationships

APPENDIX “A” IFEA SCHEDULE

APPENDIX A ANNUAL IFEA CONVENTION & EXPO SCHEDULE

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 15

IFEA Registration Desk Open

7:00 AM

'Ideas in the Round' Roundtable Sessions

Roundtable: Actionable Problem Solving: Solutions to Creative and Operational Roadblocks

Roundtable: Award-Winning Events - Preparing Your Pinnacle Award Entries

Roundtable: CFEE - Achieving Your Professional Certification through the IFEA

Roundtable: Creative Applications to Meet Sponsor and Event Goals

Roundtable: First-Timer's Welcome and Keys to a Successful Convention

Roundtable: Linking Your Events to the New IFEA Career Network

Roundtable: Maximizing the Event - Tourism Agency Partnership

Roundtable: ROI: Using IFEA Economic Impact Studies to Quantify Your Event

Roundtable: Simplified Cash Management and On-Site Merchant Services

Roundtable: The Basics of Doing A Green Event

Roundtable: The Power of Social Media with Events

Roundtable: The Value of the 'Middle Man' When It Comes to Entertainment

Roundtable: Win-Win: New Revenue Sources through Event Raffles

IFEA Foundation Auction Items Display.

8:00 AM

Opening Morning Breakfast Reception

9:00 AM

55th Annual IFEA Convention Opening.

10:00 AM

Global Outreach: How the Festivals & Events Industry is Touching the World

11:00 AM

'Connections' International Cafe

11:15 AM

Beyond Marketing: Engaging Your Audiences Once They Have Arrived

Is Your Volunteer Program Professionally Managed? Part One: Assessment

Lasting Impressions: The When, Where and How Much of Successful Fireworks

Speed Meeting: Growing Your IFEA Network Firsthand

The Gateway to Successful Community Sponsorships

12:30 PM

IFEA / Haas & Wilkerson Insurance Pinnacle Awards Luncheon

2:00 PM

IFEA Foundation Auction Items Display

2:15 PM

Crowdsourcing: Could the Next Big Idea Come From Your Customers?

For the Common Good: Understanding the ROI of Events to Cities

In Focus: New ADA Expectations from the U.S. Department of Justice on Festivals.

Integrated Online Marketing: The New Frontier

Is Your Volunteer Program Professionally Managed? Part Two: Measuring Risk

3:00 PM

IFEA/Haas & Wilkerson Insurance Pinnacle Awards Winning Entries Display

3:30 PM

Building a Multi-Level Event Strategy

Globe Trotting Ideas: An Inside Look at Selected Events from Around the World

King of Beers, King of Sponsors: The Anheuser-Busch Legacy

Operations 'Open Mic' : Peer to Peer Input and Solutions for Any Operational Event Question

The Evolution of Newspaper Partnerships

4:45 PM

Affinity Group: Arts Events

Affinity Group: CEO's

Affinity Group: Municipalities / Tourism Agencies

Affinity Group: Operations

Affinity Group: Parades

Affinity Group: Sponsorship

Affinity Group: Volunteer Programs

Affinity Group: Young Professionals (Under 40)

Affinity Groups 'Common Ground' Discussions

5:00 PM

Expo Vendor Orientation Meeting

6:00 PM

EXPO 2020 World's Fair Exploratory Session

Free Evening for Attendees

9:00 PM

Zambelli Fireworks Convention Spectacular

10:30 PM

dfest/Dixie Flag Event Services Team Hospitality Suite

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 16

7:00 AM

IFEA/Haas & Wilkerson Insurance Pinnacle Awards Winning Entries Display

8:00 AM

An Insider's Guide to the NEA (National Endowment for the Arts), Funding Opportunities and Effective Grant Writing.

Behind the Success of Canada's Urban Winter Festivals

Creating BIG Success in a small Town

Live Site Website Clinic: An Interactive Forum

Run It Like a Business: The Keys to Successful Event Financial Management.

9:15 AM

Creating a True City-Event Partnership: Raising the Value of Events with Stakeholders

Industry Compass: A Discussion of Global Trends, Issues and Opportunities Impacting the World of Festivals and Events

Managing Your Risk: What You Don't Know CAN Hurt You!

Sponsorship Proposals and Follow-Up Reports: The New Expectations of Current and Current and Future Sales Tools

Who Knows You? Power Marketing! Formulating Winning Marketing Strategies

10:30 AM

Audience ID: Qualitative Analysis of Who's Attending Your Event

Before the Parade Passes By: Reinvigorating a Community Icon

Beware of the Wrong Rapunzel: 10 Things You Must Know to be Successful in Sponsorship Sales

Creativity and Quality: Standing Out from the Crowd

Industry Compass: A Discussion of Global Trends, Issues and Opportunities Impacting the World of Festivals and Events

11:30 AM

IFEA Expo: Gateway to Success - Day One

2:45 PM

Building Public/Private Partnerships

Engaging Youth at Your Event: New Answers to an Age Old Challenge

Maximum Creativity with Minimum Costs

Mobile Marketing: Driving Success to Sponsors and Events

Project Management for Festivals & Events

4:00 PM

First Impressions: Understanding the Uses and Power of Decorations

Maximizing the Employment Market for Your Event and Yourself

Viva la Difference: Two Styles to Sponsor Sales

What Did the Recession Do to Us?: The 2010 IFEA Economic Forces, Trends and Forecasts Studies

When the Show Can't Go On: Insuring Against the Unimaginable and Other Risks

5:00 PM

Free Time

6:00 PM

IFEA Hall of Fame Awards Dinner and Foundation Auction

11:00 PM

dfest/Dixie Flag Event Services Team Hospitality Suite

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 17

7:00 AM

IFEA Registration Desk Open

8:00 AM

IFEA Expo - Day Two

10:00 AM

Diversifying Revenues: Creating New and Sustainable Income Streams

Inside Perspective: The Saint Louis Art Fair

Maximum Marketing on a Minimum Budget

QuickBooks for Events: Budgeting and Tracking Made Easy

The New International Risk Management Standard (ISO31000/2009) and How It May Apply to Your Event

11:15 AM

Fast Track: Lessons Learned from a 30+ Year Career in the Events Industry