

Theater Comedy

productions

A Complete Entertainment Company

Specializing In Fundraising, Marketing & Your Event

LAUGHTER ★ COMEDIANS ★ REAL MAGIC

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Fundraising Event Production Checklist

A Step-by-Step Guide to Filling the Room and Maximizing Your Fundraising Success

1. Select the Venue

- Choose the location.
- Example: **Stangl Stage – Flemington, NJ**
- Confirm:
 - Rental fee
 - Capacity
 - Available dates
 - Included equipment (lighting, sound, seating)
 - Insurance requirements
 - Load-in and load-out times

2. Secure the Date

- Reserve the venue.
- Record the rental cost as part of the event budget.
- Example:
 - Venue Rental: **\$400–\$500**
 - (Approximately half of the normal Saturday rental rate.)

3. Book the Entertainment

Determine exactly what you are promoting.

Examples:

- Stand-up Comedy
- Variety Show

- Magic
- Music
- Guest Speakers

Confirm:

- Performer agreements
 - Arrival times
 - Technical requirements
 - Promotional photos and biographies
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4. Plan the Event Setup

Create a detailed production plan for the venue.

Include:

- Stage setup
- Seating layout
- Tables
- Lighting
- Sound system
- Backdrops
- Microphones
- Signage

Designate areas for:

- Tricky Tray
- 50/50 Drawing
- Silent Auction
- Raffle Tables
- Merchandise
- Sponsor Displays
- Vendor Tables (Pampered Chef, Tupperware, Mary Kay, etc.)

Reminder: Organizations conducting raffles, auctions, or games of chance should obtain all required permits and licenses from the municipality and state.

5. Define the Goal

Establish measurable objectives.

Examples:

- Sell out the venue
- Raise a specific dollar amount

- Increase awareness for the organization
- Build an email list
- Attract new supporters

Your primary goal should always be:

Fill the room.

6. Marketing Strategy

Determine where all marketing efforts will direct potential attendees.

Create:

- Event webpage
- Ticketing page
- Social media campaign
- Email campaign

Decide:

- Which ticket platform will be used (Eventbrite, RegFox, etc.)
- Which bank account receives ticket proceeds
- Who pays processing fees (buyer or organization)

Develop:

- Sponsorship packages
- Advertising opportunities
- Event program

Include:

- Donor recognition
- Sponsor advertisements
- Event schedule
- Performer biographies

Determine:

- Printing costs
 - Number of copies
 - Color or black-and-white
 - Cover design
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7. Ticket Sales Strategy

Decide how tickets will be sold.

Offer:

- Online tickets
- Printed tickets

Printed tickets can be distributed to:

- Civic organizations
- Churches
- Schools
- Service clubs
- Community groups

Possible fundraising partnership:

Example:

- Ticket Price: **\$40**
- Partner organization keeps **\$20**
- Event retains **\$20**

This creates an incentive for outside organizations to promote the event.

Establish:

- Final ticket price
- Attendance goal (Example: 100 paid admissions)
- Estimated gross ticket revenue
- Net proceeds after expenses

Prepare income projections based solely on ticket sales before including sponsorships, raffles, concessions, or donations.

8. Food & Beverage

Determine whether food will be included.

Options:

- Food trucks
- Catered buffet
- Snack bar
- Cash bar

If using food trucks:

- Vendor handles required permits
- Determine whether food is included in admission or sold separately

9. Advertising & Promotion

Develop a complete promotional campaign.

Consider:

- Newspapers
- Community calendars
- Radio
- Email marketing
- Social media
- Local Facebook groups
- Posters
- Flyers
- Postcards
- Press releases

Identify local reporters who regularly cover:

- Nonprofits
- Community events
- Fundraisers

Encourage every performer and participating organization to promote the event using provided graphics and marketing materials.

Explore partnerships with local media personalities such as Steve Trevelise and local radio stations for interviews or event promotion.

10. Additional Revenue Opportunities

Expand the weekend beyond a single evening.

Examples:

- Educational seminars
- Workshops
- Magic classes
- Filmmaking presentations
- Music instruction
- Children's programs

Possible Sunday programming:

- Opera workshop
- Filmmaking seminar
- Comedy writing class

- Magic seminar

Additional programming can generate extra revenue while increasing community involvement.

11. Security & Event Operations

Plan guest arrival and event logistics.

Include:

- Parking attendants
- Ticket collection
- Check-in procedures
- Ushers
- Crowd management
- Emergency procedures

Uniformed security or local police presence often provides guests with an increased sense of safety.

12. Build the Budget

Calculate all projected expenses before determining ticket prices.

Include:

- Venue
- Entertainment
- Advertising
- Printing
- Ticketing fees
- Insurance
- Food
- Decorations
- Security
- Equipment rental
- Miscellaneous expenses

Then calculate:

- Break-even attendance
- Expected profit
- Fundraising goal
- Net proceeds to the nonprofit organization

A successful fundraising event begins with careful planning, disciplined budgeting, and a comprehensive marketing strategy designed to put people in the seats. Every decision should support that objective while maximizing the financial return for the benefiting organization.

