



Music is Magic Symphony Ball

A gala fundraiser to benefit the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra

Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra Orchestra Size: Group I MSA Pop. 1,756,000
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Presenters

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Project Goals

Primary - Raise funds for the five education programs of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra.

Secondary – Engage the community and ISOA membership for recruitment and retention of members; mentor and train members for future leadership roles; gain public interest in attending and supporting the ISO.

Project Description

An exquisite evening embracing the theme “Music is Magic” featured a black and white to pair with month of May excitement of the Indianapolis 500 Mile Race. Included in the gala celebration was an array of distinctive donations that emphasized personal entertainment and one-of-a-kind experiences. Silent and live auction items included special dinner parties in private homes, getaway packages, and unique recitals by ISO musicians. Along with gourmet dining, music, and dancing, a competitive raffle topped off the evening. Highlights included a bagpiper in full uniform, a magician, and professional ballroom dancers.

Timeline

July & August: Organize committee; write job descriptions. Recruit committee chairs and members. Have each ISOA affiliate group appoint a member to sit on gala committee to coordinate internal PR.

September: First meeting. Request that ISO staff attend all monthly meetings. Apply for state raffle license.

October: Interview and choose cellular auction company for silent auction. Seek a major event sponsor. Begin silent and live auction procurement. Recruit table captains. Choose venue. Choose theme and colors. Design invitations, Save-the-Date, and program.

November: After obtaining ISO approval, mail solicitation letters for silent auction parties to businesses, companies and college presidents. Mail Save-the-Date post card.

December: Break

January: Design centerpiece and decorations. Name Honorary Chairs and request their bio information for program. Hire auctioneer for live auction. Contract magician and dance orchestra.

February: Prepare timeline for PR – print, radio and TV spots. Choose hospitality gift for patrons and benefactors. Invite TV personality to emcee. Decide upon and secure raffle items.

March: Organize parties for silent auction, including ISO assistance in securing guest artists. Mail invitations - second week of March. Invite youngest members of the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra to serve as greeters.

April: Food tasting and menu selection at JW Marriott. Secure wine for evening. Organize video equipment and prepare ISOA promotional video to be shown during dinner. Organize auction items, write descriptions, number items, and prepare auction program.

May - Day of Event: Set up auction; decorate. Have a wonderful time and make lots of money.

Post Event: Write thank you letters to corporations and business, sponsors, individuals, ISO musicians who offered parties, ISO staff and committee members.

June Celebration Party: Committee chairs bring detailed reports of month-by-month activities. Report to include recommendations. Go over prepared statement of costs, money taken in, and money outstanding. Evaluate what went well and what was learned. Emphasize importance of pairing seasoned planners (as mentors) with new committee members. Ask for feedback from new committee members.

Revenue

All sources: \$140,065
Expenses: \$ 36,502
Net: \$103,563

Collaborations/Partnerships

- Numerous business, individual, and ISO staff support and donations
- Printing
- Wine discounted
- Floral decorations
- Vodka (specialty drink created for the evening)
- Professional ballroom dancers
- Donated silent and live auction items

Volunteers

About 50 total. After date and venue were secured, we organized committees to handle the myriad aspects of the event. The number of members on each committee depended on the amount of work required. During monthly meetings, committees reported their progress. Members exchanged helpful cross-committee ideas.

What we would change

We would look at ways to improve the silent auction. While it was a success, we could generate even more money by advertising it more widely and much earlier.