

SPECIAL EVENTS During A Recession? *Absolutely!*

Steps to take to bolster your special events during a recession:

- Start your planning early.
- Begin with a brainstorming session. Engage, engage, and engage your board members. Invite new people to the table that you want to involve and who will bring fresh viewpoints.
- Set a reasonable goal. Plan your event to reach and surpass it.
- Think “Outside of the Box.” Take advantage of fresh ideas.
- Brand your event and carry the style and substance through all your communications.
- Always include a statement about your mission and how your organization is changing the world.
- Make sure your database is clean. Create queries so you can easily target specific communications.
- Target your audiences - participants, donors, sponsors, board members, volunteers and prospects.
- Research how your target audiences like to get information.
- Focus your event communication to your specific audiences.
- Take advantage of social media.
- Use a combination of various communications channels: customized outbound email, micro websites or pages specific to your event, online registration, printed invitations (where necessary for your audiences), “Tell A Friend” web-based applications, tools that allow participants to invite their “Friends & Family” to support them.
- Explore creative ways to engage and retain sponsors: offer in-kind options and/or mix financial support with in-kind, consider payment plans for sponsors, add sponsor services to your auction and raffle mix.
- Look for ways to collaborate.
- Explore opportunities to participate in an established event and become their nonprofit partner.
- Set up evaluation sessions during the implementation process to correct what is not working.

