

From: Kathryn Evans [mailto:kcevans@utdallas.edu]

Sent: July 13, 2007 16:24

To: Huckaba, Richard C

Subject: Re: Planning and Assessing Events

Dear Richard:

Every year, my Events Manager and my Financial Officer prepare reports on the art season that summarize the following. This report is presented to Dean Kratz in May of every year.

Budgeted expense vs. actual expenditure

Revenue from ticket sales

Contributions from donors specific to the event

Attendance, with breakdown of public vs. UTD student, faculty and staff

Additionally, we hold a half-day assessment and planning meeting with the Art and Performance events staff (Events Manager, Financial Officer, two Technical Directors and Graphics Designer) in May of every year.

Some examples of how this affects our planning:

1. Our planning for the next season takes these factors into account. The One O'clock Lab Band returns every year for two reasons: attendance is either sold-out or nearly so every year; and revenue approaches the cost of the event (which is rare). This event is already in the Conference Center, our largest venue.
2. We made a decision to move our Guitar Series, including the annual Texas Classical Guitar Competition, to the Conference Center this next season based on the attendance figures at the guitar season events for the last two years: all but one event was sold out and we turned people away. Additionally, the largest population that could not get in was our guitar students, who have attendance requirements for concerts. Moving the Guitar Series to Conference Center for 2007-2008 will insure that all students who wish to attend will get in.
3. Lower attendance and revenue at the classical season for the last two years influenced our decision for 2007-2008 to invite a major chamber orchestra, rather than the smaller ensembles we had for the past two years and focus more of our identified budget for the Classical Series on that particular event.
4. All decisions as to venues are based on past experience and projected attendance. Our three venues are Performance Hall (200), University Theatre (300) and Conference Center (500). Increasingly, we are moving events to larger spaces or adding a second performance to accommodate the increased attendance, particularly in guitar, jazz and student concerts. We added second performances to two student events last year (UTD Chamber Singers and UTD Jazz Band) because the previous year sold out and we cannot

move these events to a larger venue. We will continue this practice this year, based on the sold-out performances this past season, in spite of the increase to two performances.

5. Limitation of staffing and budget required that we no longer have two events running simultaneously in two different venues. We do not have sufficient box office, usher and technical personnel to run high-level events in two venues. The 2007-2008 season eliminated any double-bookings, with the exception of low-tech, free student events. Additionally, we eliminated Sunday events from the 2006-2007 season, as we do not have sufficient staffing and it therefore required our technical and events personnel to often work 7 days per week, resulting in substantial compensation time. For example, we do not have separate technical personnel for the theatre/dance events and the concert series. We therefore cannot run a concert when a play is in production, since the plays require two technical directors on duty. While this has constrained our event season to some extent, it was a necessary move, until and unless we can get additional staff. This elimination of double-bookings and Sunday events was a direct result of the year-end assessment and meetings with the staff during our assessment period in May.

Let me know if you need any additional information (i.e. facts and figures).

Kathryn

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