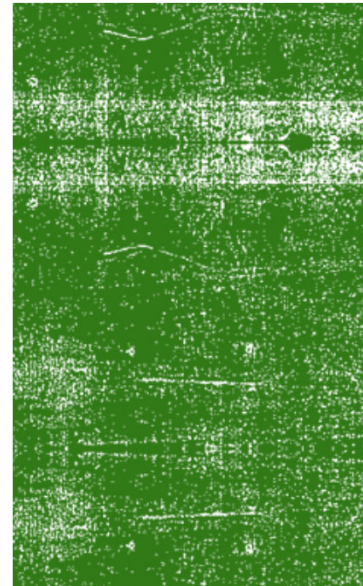

Best Practices for Vendor Management & Relationships

BRANDI EBNER,
DESCHUTES COUNTY FAIR & RODEO





About Me

- Grew up in events industry
- 6 years at Benton County Fairgrounds
- 8 years in the Chamber of Commerce industry
- 7 years of owning Festivals
- Almost 3 years at Deschutes County Expo Center
- 20+ years in the events world!
 - Fun Runs, 5 & 10k Runs
 - Conferences & Conventions
 - Trade Shows & Expos
 - Trainings & Meetings
 - Fairs & Festivals
 - Fundraisers & Banquets
 - SOOOO many vendor events.....

Current Events



Deschutes County Fair & Rodeo

170,000 attendees over 5 days

40 food vendors

250+ commercial vendors

Vendor committee (3 amazing ladies)



One Decision Management, LLC

Prineville Western Days – 150+ vendors

Prineville May Market – 75+ vendors

Creators & Culture Festival – 75+ vendors

Me, Myself, and I = the committee!

My Mantra

“I am only going to please 95% of the vendors...

I plan for 5 to not be happy out of every 100!”

Recruiting Vendors



- Is your website and social media updated?
- Is your vendor packet available BEFORE they sign up?
- Have you announced your future event date?
- When will applications be available?
- Look like you have it together all year!
- Go to other events to find vendors
 - Have business card to hand out
 - Take their card or info and follow up
- Not all vendors fit into all events
- Be honest with your attendance, demographic, etc.
- Listen to them, take their ideas/experience

Application

- Have it out as early as possible (winter)
- Paper versus electronic
 - DCFE uses Eventeny (approximately \$2,800 per year)
 - I use Cognito Forms (free to low cost)
- Questions
 - Electrical Needs
 - Photos of set up booth and products**
 - Stock trailer/Storage Needs
 - Who is contact for contract/payment
 - Who is contact onsite checking in

eventeny

 **Cognito Forms**

- Camping Needs
- Other events they have attended
- References (and call them!!)
- What area do they want to be in
- Want the same space (no guarantees)



Application considerations

- Application does not = contract
- Returning vendor deadline
- New vendor or final deadline
- When will you alert them on your decisions?
 - Earlier the better for more professional vendors
- Who is making the decisions?
 - Just you
 - Vendor committee
 - Board

Selection Process

- Weigh the number of vendors who offer similar products
 - Limit the number of booths 1 vendor can have in different places
- Start smaller, add more vendors as needed
 - Too many vendors potentially means less revenue for all of them
- COMMUNICATE frequently pre-event, during event, post event
 - Alert all applicants whether selected or not as soon as you can
 - Send them contract with rules/regulations, get deposits or booth fees
 - Event layout changes – let them know soon
 - Schedule – trailer vendors before tent vendors?
 - Map - where to enter for check in?
 - Hotels, RV Parks, etc.

Planning Considerations



- What is the plan if there is a storm?
 - Water run off?
 - Ponding?
 - Electricity goes out?
 - Internet goes out?
- Take into consideration other event elements that will share space and utilities
- Commercial vendors do not like to be near vendors who sell similar items
 - Will you do exclusives?
- Reserved vendor parking?
- Stock truck parking?
- Enter/Exit gates

Layout

- Traffic flow for set-up and tear-down
- Sound and smell from other fair elements
 - Entertainment, Stages
 - Animal exhibits
 - BBQ and other food vendors
- Utilities
 - You only have so much electrical!
 - Water – hot tubs, etc.
 - Lighting
- High Traffic areas (charge more)
- Low Traffic areas
- Different schedule (1-day vendors, rodeo only, special hours)
- In/Out times
- We do food vendors a day before commercial



- 1 4-H Exhibits
- 2 Open Class Exhibits
- 3 Indoor Vendors
- 4 Coastal Small Animal Pavilion
- 5 Dairy Barn
- 6 Sheep Barn
- 7 Swine Barn
- 8 Coastal Farm & Ranch NPRA Rodeo
- 9 Smith Rock Electric Beef Barn
- 10 BMX
- 11 Fair Office/Administration
- 12 Michelob ULTRA Deck
- 13 Crown Royal Chute 9 Stage
- 14 Center Circle Stage
- 15 Food Court Stage
- 16 Kendall Toyota of Bend Summer Concert Series
- 17 Food Court
- 18 Buckaroo Lawn
- 19 Kids Carnival
- 20 Major Carnival
- 21 Sea Lion Splash
- 22 Republic Services
- 23 Midstate Electric Co-op Demo
- 24 Camel Rides
- 25 JD Platts K9 Kings
- 26 Cirque Adventure
- 27 Faith, Hope Charity Wine Garden & Makers Market
- 28 Clown College

MAP KEY

Restrooms & Water	Parking	Guest Services & Information
First Aid	Handicapped Parking	ATM

Space Issues

- Lots of issues with our 5 foot rule
- Expansion out of front, sides, up
- Adding a space to the back without paying
- Awnings, etc. going over 10x10 footprint
- Staff soliciting outside of booths
- Walls blocking other vendors and sightlines
- Plan for lines (like Face Painting, etc.)





Sponsor Space

- Sponsors need to be accounted for as vendors
- They need to follow same rules
- Entitled, rule breakers
- Vehicle displays
- Vehicles coming/going from space



Duplication



Political, Religious, Controversial



Questionable Products, Displays

- Cheap imitations
- MLM companies
- Not clean or attractive
 - Handwritten signs
 - Messy display
 - Cooking under the table!





Don't Allow the Pirates

- Don't allow in the pirates
 - Solicit other vendors customers
 - Breaks space rules bad (like blocking aisles)
 - Sells expensive items with no warranty
 - Scams attendees
 - Brings items that we did not approve

Not Nice Vendors

- Don't be afraid to kick out the jerks
 - Vendors who do not follow rules
 - Vendors who constantly complain
 - Vendors who are entitled
 - Vendors who negatively talk about your/your event
 - To Other Vendors
 - On Social Media
 - Smoke, drink, etc.
 - Other vendors will support you support your rules!



Accountability

- Vendor team watches 24/7
- Track in Eventeny Vendor Notes every time there is an issue
 - Patti: Thurs – 9 am, verbally warned regarding 5' rule
- Warning notes
- Have copy of the vendor agreement to show (all my team has a copy on iPads)
 - Be prepared to pull the signed copy if needed
- Vendor team meetings daily to review offenders
- Notification if not allowing to return or warning about rule breaking
- Reject application in future

Rip-Off and Re-Use!



https://oregonstatefair.org/business-center/exhibitor-application/

**The Oregon State Fair returns
August 25 - September 4, 2023!**

**We are now accepting applications to be a Commercial
Exhibitor at the 2023 Oregon State Fair!**

**NO PHONE CALL COMMUNICATION. EMAIL
ONLY. PLEASE READ AND APPLY!**

1. Read the **2023 Commercial Exhibitor Handbook**. We ask that all applicants read the entire Handbook carefully before submitting their application.
2. **Download the Application to your desktop**. This is a fillable PDF file. Download the file to your own desktop before filling it out.

Check In Packet

- Highlight key event rules
- Event days/hours/gate schedules
- Schedule for services: ice delivery
- Contact phone numbers for Vendor Coordinator, Police non-emergency, office
- Schedule for key event elements
- Map of venue with: ATM, restrooms, major activities (concerts, rodeos, competitions, etc.), Lost & Found, Lost Kid protocol, Security/Police
- Contact information for local suppliers: grocery stores, club warehouses, ice, propane sales, gas stations, RV dump stations, recommended restaurants, lock out services, etc.
- Incident & Emergency planning information

Insurance

- Standard is: ***Comprehensive General Liability*** insurance (primary policy) with coverage limits of at least:
 - \$1,000,000 per occurrence;
 - \$2,000,000 aggregate;
 - naming “XYZ and its officers, employees, agents and volunteers” as additional insured
- Verify with carrier for validity
- Send example certificate to vendors

Contracts

- Clear details – cover everything
- Have an attorney review
- Have them initial key elements
- Clause to allow event to make changes as needed
- Clause for cancelation (protect you)
- Clause for removal

Vendors see way more than we do

Train them to watch for suspicious activity

How to report, what is the hierarchy

Help them train their staff: handouts, flyers around the event, etc.

Coats in warm weather

Single individuals watching kids

People looking nervous

Strange patterns

Danger Emergency Watch

National Independent Concessionaires Assoc.

- Focus is strengthening relationships with the Fair, Festival, and Special Events Industries
- Membership includes over 1,000 mobile food and retail Concessionaires, Fairs, Festivals, and Associate Members in Industry-related companies

Join Us in Vegas
November 10-13, 2024

TOGETHER WE WILL SHARE
IDEAS, NETWORKING,
PRODUCTS, AND SERVICES

TUSCANY | LAS VEGAS
SUITES & CASINO

Registration & Room Details Coming Soon to nicainc.org/marketplace



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