

## Choose Local, Cut Costs

- When seeking speakers for your event, look in your own community. Finding a local expert to speak at an event will save your organization in travel fees, per diems and hotel stays. Check local professional association sites for an educated speaker within driving distance of your event.

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## Tips for Creating a Period Event

How will your event attendees know they are experiencing World War II days? How can they witness what it was like to be a part of the fabulous '50s or decadent '60s?

The atmosphere you are able to create for a period event will make for a memorable experience and keep participants coming back for subsequent years' events. Here are a few helpful tips for enhancing periods in time:

- Have all workers and volunteers wear clothing of the period.
- Create a menu reminiscent of the era.
- Incorporate music — live or otherwise — that sets the mood of that time.
- Include program remarks that cite what happened "on this day in ....."
- Select a location conducive to creating that time period.
- Be creative with the event's details — laminated newspapers of that era used as placemats, silent and live auction packages with period themes, period favors for each guest and so on.

The mood established by a special event plays an important role in determining the degree of enjoyment participants experience. Your attention to creating that mood will help distinguish your event from others.

## ACCOMMODATING CELEBS

## The Scoop on Hosting Celebrity Guests

From Hollywood stars to local personalities to writers or politicians, celebrity speakers and guests can boost an event's impact and appeal. They also add another facet to event planning. What does booking a celebrity involve? Would it be good for your event? Donna Iacobazzi Pecci, executive director of Revel Global Events (Chicago, IL), offers the following tips:

1. **Ask yourself, "Why?"** "I would consider your reason for hiring a celebrity in the first place. Are you trying to attract guests? Is it to raise awareness on a specific issue or topic? Or is it to raise the level of the event? Being able to answer these questions will help you establish what type or level of celebrity you need to achieve your goals."
2. **Establish your "all in" budget.** "There can be a lot of unexpected costs associated with securing a celebrity for your event. You are almost always responsible for expenses outside the performance fee. These can include air travel, accommodations, styling, meals and more. If it is a musical or speaking engagement there will most likely be a technical rider as well. Be sure to factor these costs into your final budget."
3. **Location, location, location!** "Once your budget is established, start by trying to find someone who is already on a speaking tour or has an appearance within your geographical location. Just rerouting someone as opposed to starting from scratch could elevate your chances of booking them quickly and will save you money on travel, etc."
4. **Get the most for your money.** "When contracting a celebrity, think about other elements outside the performance that can help you achieve your goals. For example, if you are trying to grow your audience, consider requesting a social media element. Would a post on the celebrity's personal pages boost your following or help promote the event?"
5. **Consult a professional.** "I strongly recommend hiring a professional to negotiate on your behalf. A professional talent buyer knows how to navigate through the world of agents, managers, publicists, riders, contracts, etc. They can give you the information you need to establish your goals, facilitate the contracting process, manage the celebrity on-site and usually save you time and money."

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