

**Download
This Free Ebook
Written by
Auctioneer Team,
Ron and Debbie Hitzel
of Impact Auctions**

**Expect to Raise More
With A Live Auction!
Written For
Charity Fundraisers
looking
To Raise MORE!**

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTED TO RAISE MORE:

Fundraiser's Guide to Optimizing the Live Auction



Bestseller to aid not-for-profit organizations

Free
EBook for
Fundraiser
Coordinators

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE EXPECTED TO RAISE MORE:

Fundraiser's Guide to Optimizing the Live Auction

Live Auctions statistically raise more money than any other fundraisers in one night when the right attendees are in the audience and the correct professional auctioneer is on stage. Learn what questions to ask when interviewing potential auctioneers for this crucial task. Event coordinators need to understand the specific timing sequence for when a live auction should begin at the event to optimize funds raised. Charity live auctions have critical steps that build upon each other guaranteeing the live auction success. Learn the top secrets from a professional auctioneering team that will boost your net profit to RAISE MORE money than expected at your next live auction.



By Ron and Debbie Hitzel

*owners of Impact Auction: a live auction turnkey solution

*professional charity auctioneer team

*have raised millions of dollars *for non profit organizations*

Debbie and Ron's Story: Impact Auctions Founders

Debbie and Ron Hitzel, founders of Impact Auctions, have been in the fundraising business for over a decade raising money for special causes close to their hearts. When Ron's nephew was diagnosed with leukemia in 2003, Ron joined the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's Team-in-Training to help raise money for blood cancer research where he quickly assumed the role of fundraising coordinator for his team because of his passion. Through trial and error he found silent auctions to be an effective way to raise "just enough" money. Over time, he realized that securing silent auction items was a tedious task that demanded much energy and time that exhausted his volunteers as well as himself. Meanwhile, Debbie had begun working for a fundraising company and quickly saw the benefits of raising MORE with live auctions at charity events. With her event planning guidance, Ron tried his skills as an auctioneer at their next charity fundraiser. The outcome spoke for itself as the **net-profit was doubled** in thirty minutes. Debbie and Ron's new passion for helping fundraisers with live auctions had begun.

Ron soon became an apprentice and then licensed auctioneer performing events for a reputable fundraising company in Florida where the couple traveled all over the United States helping raise millions of dollars for charities such as: "Big Brothers Big Sisters", "Make A Wish", "Give Kids the World", "USO", "Zonta Club", "Wine, Women, & Shoes", "Florida Hospital", "SPCA of Tampa", "Baptist Health", "Naples Zoo", and "United Way" just to name a few. Today, Debbie and Ron are pleased to continue helping thousands of organizations raise money to support special causes all over America with live auctions.

Impact Auctions was created as a service to provide charity organizations a "live auction turnkey solution." Wouldn't it be great to have an

event planner who specializes in live auctions at your fingertips that can provide award winning trips to auction? Wouldn't it be nice to be guaranteed a talented professional auctioneer who actually cares about your organization up on stage?

[WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN EXPECTED TO RAISE MORE: A FUNDRAISER'S GUIDE TO OPTIMIZE THE LIVE AUCTION](#) was written to share strategies with fundraising coordinators for live auction success. Ron and Debbie have walked in the shoes as the fundraising coordinator, and now as the auctioneer team, want to give honest advise that will surely optimize your next live auction in raising MORE. What else would you expect?



With respect for what you do,

Debbie and Ron Hitzel

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Is a Live Auction Right For Your Next Event?

What If...

You have never tried a live auction or

Your event has your guests leaving early or

Your revenue is just not making enough profit or

Your organization has never hired a professional auctioneer team or

You don't have quality items to auction or

You just don't have the time to add another "to do" item to your list



...then look no further.

We understand that most fundraising event chair coordinators do not want to add another item to their already busy plate. Most are already dealing with a general lack of volunteers, the usual economic woes, and competing charities that seem to be more innovative.

But, **what if** adding a live auction to your fundraising event left the event chair and the volunteers with "less work," while gaining "more profit" at the end of the event? What if the "live auction" was the main program that was hosted by a charismatic professional auctioneer that engaged your guests and had them laughing and bidding happily? What if amazing "award winning travel" was available without seeking donors, and attendees bragged about winning a bucket list trip of a life time? What if a "trusted" auctioneer and his team were committed to your charity organization and helped incorporate proven strategies into your fundraiser that enhanced the entire experience of having a live auction?

What To Expect When Expected To Raise More: Fundraiser's Guide to Optimizing the Live Auction wants to educate fundraising organizers how a live auction can easily be implemented into their fundraiser and why to EXPECT MORE profits raised. Learn some of the top secrets to make your next fundraiser the most profitable event ever. **What if?**

EXPECT MORE WHEN CHOOSING YOUR AUCTIONEER

Congratulations! You have decided to have a live auction at your next event. One of the first steps is to find an auctioneer that meets your goals. The best auctioneer's dates fill up fast, so don't delay on selecting the auctioneer of your choice. There are three types of auctioneers that may approach your organization that you could choose from:

The **volunteer** is a wonderful choice for the Master of Ceremonies but most often unskilled in raising money. They usually do not make adequate charity auctioneers and will leave much money in the room at the end of the night costing your organizations thousand of dollars. Steer clear of the volunteer auctioneer. Just remember, you get what you pay for in most cases.

The **traditional auctioneer** is professionally trained in the auctioneer chant and may use his skills selling cars, tobacco or cattle. In most cases, the traditional auctioneer will charge a flat fee and probably has no experience in how a fundraising auction and their guests differ when selling from the stage. Usually this auctioneer shows up to do the auction at a certain time and leaves right after the auction is over taking with him his paid

flat fee. Because of this, they have no skin in the game.

The **professional charity auctioneer** should come from an accredited auction school and possess a professional auctioneer license. These auctioneers have the requisite professional experience on stage, and the fundraising knowledge required to ensure your event's success. Always ask for current references and for raw video. Look for important traits like:

1. How the auctioneer engages with the audience. (This is probably the most important skill to look for because no one likes to buy from someone they cannot relate.)
2. Can you understand what is being auctioned off?
3. Professionalism and expertise should be noted.
4. Does the auctioneer bring excitement to the stage and look like he enjoys what he does?
5. Google the auctioneer's name and peek at the website.

Professional auctioneers usually charge a percentage of the live auction's gross raised. A professional auctioneer should supply a team of spotters to enhance guest bidding.

Questions to ask when selecting your Professional Auctioneer

Does your auctioneer have current references and videos to watch?

How does the auctioneer get paid?

Does your auctioneer have a professional auctioneer license and is he trained in charity auctions?



Does your auctioneer have a team of spotters that will assist him/her at the auction?

Can the auctioneer provide any live auction items for the event?

Does your auctioneer have a certain method on how to order the live auction items?



The Tale Of Two Auctioneers

The Volunteer Auctioneer

A fellow committee member agreed to be the auctioneer at this year's black tie gala. He volunteered to be the auctioneer in-order to save the organization money. On the night of the event the doors swung open and guests were seated at their tables. Dinner was served promptly at 7:00 p.m. The guest dined and mingled at their tables until dessert was served around 7:30 p.m. At 8:00 p.m. The organization's program began with a welcome from the chairman followed by the awards and many long speeches. (Can we say, "Boring!") Finally after what seemed like hours, it was time for the live auction. The volunteer auctioneer took his place on stage in the dimly lit room. Half the audience was getting nudged to wake up, while the other half of the guests had excused themselves from the presentations and relocated to the noisy open bar outside. When the auctioneer began his, "Testing, Testing, can you hear me?" a few guest, with their awards waving their good bye to their friends at their table, headed for the exit. The volunteer auctioneer tried to engage the sleepy audience by starting with the highest valued and most featured item of the night. With no one bidding and half of the guest not even in the room yet, the auctioneer sold it for minimum reserve. The auction ended with most items being sold for a fraction of what they were worth.

Net Profit: \$15,000

Professional Charity Auctioneer Takes The Stage

This night started months ago when the organization hired a professional auctioneer. Together imperative decisions were made on the timeline of events and auction item order. On the night of the event, the auctioneer team arrived early to the black-tie gala to discuss any changes that might have occurred. Doors opened promptly at 7:00 p.m., guests were seated, and dinner began being served immediately. About 7:30 p.m. when the last dinner plate was down, the auctioneer and his team took their places as the live auction was about to begin. The spot light on stage was extinguished, house lights brightened, and all open bars shut down before the auctioneer made his welcoming comments. The professional auctioneer began by engaging the audience with a few auction rules, intermixed with some jokes that had guest laughing, just as dessert was being served. The auctioneer brought a team of spotters who were mingling with the audience helping encourage guests to bid. The auction items were being displayed on the big screen as they were being auctioned in this order: (1) *The first items auctioned generated excitement because of their popularity* (2) *The middle items began building value with most featured item being auctioned 3/4 of the way.* (3) *The last few auction items were of moderate value so that unsuccessful bidders could still win an item.* The live auction came to a close when the last item was sold, however, the professional auctioneer began his next task immediately asking for money donations for Fund-A-Need. This allowed unsuccessful bidders that still wanted to help the organization donate a certain level of money. By 8:20 p.m., the auctioneer and his team had completed the most successful live auction this charity had ever done. Now it was time for the celebration to begin with the presentations and awards to be given.

Net Profit: \$70,000

Auctioneers Expect More From Fundraising Coordinators

10 Key Expectations For The Coordinators

1 Mission Statement and Attendees



The **MOST** critical job for the organization is to have committed attendees and A-list donors in attendance at the event that have a passion for the mission of the fundraiser. The more committed guests you have, the more successful the event will be. As the saying goes, you can't get blood from a turnip.

2. Find a Professional Auctioneer Team That Cares About Your Cause

Too many times we hire the first auctioneer who comes along that sounds like they might do a good job. Research your auctioneer and make sure he/she is the right fit for your organization. (see "Tale of Two Auctioneers" on page 4) Auctioneers are a dime a dozen, but a professional charity auctioneer who can be trusted and is committed to helping your organization raise the most money, is worth the extra effort to locate and secure.

3. Live Auction Goes On Early In The Evening

When planning your event's agenda, time is of the essence when it comes to having the live auction. Some donors will begin to leave between 9:00 to 9:30 p.m. Usually by 10:00 p.m. the event room becomes a ghost town and all is left is the party crowd. Make the live auction the

focal part of the evening while dinner is being served. Organization presentations including speeches should be after the live auction.

4. Use Social Media To Help Advertise Your Items.

Social Media is FREE so don't be intimidated to use it for advertising your fundraising event. It is a great way to share the live auction items. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat are just a few to check into and take advantage. Make your own free fundraiser APP that can be downloaded on guest's phones for updated last minute changes. This is especially appealing to the fifty-five and under crowds. It's a great way to gain new supporters too.

5. Event Programs: List all Live Auction items and display on a Multi-Media Big Screen

It's very important to have a detailed list of descriptions of the items being sold in the correct auction order in the program so guests can follow along with the auctioneer. When each item comes up for bid, a picture of the item should be displayed on the big screen for guests to see visually.

6. "Unique" Experiences and Trips Sell

Start early in finding unique items that can't be bought anywhere else. Items of an "experience" are big money makers – far better than something with a tangible value. What's the experience of a locker room visit to the Carolina Panther's next game or a sold out concert worth...priceless!

Auctioneers Expect More From Fundraising Coordinators: 10 Key Expectations For The Coordinators (Continued)

7. Group Silent Auction Items into Theme Baskets.

Most organizations like to believe that the more silent auction items, the more money they will make. Our suggestion is to consolidate like items into theme baskets. For example, you have a restaurant gift certificate for \$50. The most you will ever get for the gift certificate is the face value. Make a theme basket and throw in candles and a couples massage for a theme NIGHT ON THE TOWN. The entire basket is now worth \$150. The bidding begins and sells for \$250. The idea is to limit silent auction items to a ratio of one item to every four guests. Having too many silent auction items can be distracting for guest.

8. Sponsorships Worth Cheering

Corporate Sponsorships are a fantastic way to include your community and form long lasting partnerships that become a win-win situation. As you ponder about what companies are a good match, begin with asking this question to yourself, "What can our organization do for them?" Brain storm ideas and make that the focal point when approaching businesses for their help. Free advertising for companies is a great perk.

9. Good Lighting and Great Sound System

"Testing Testing, can you hear me?" It's now time for the live auction. Bring up the house lights and extinguish the stage spotlights when the live auction begins. Lighting is crucial to be able to see bids. Also, and most important, have a professional sound system for the auctioneer that has been tested before the guest arrive. He/she needs a hand held wireless microphone and a back up one just in case. Being able to be seen (having a stage) and being heard (professional sound system) increases the revenue and are key components that are typically overlooked which can be a costly mistake.

10. Centerpieces



Guests usually don't like huge centerpieces at the table and neither does the auctioneer. This is a great place to cut costs in your budget and it will allow your auctioneer team to be able to see your guests bidding happily. Don't have centerpieces that will cause visual interference for your live auction team.



"There are two 'i's' in Fundraising – they should stand for inspiration and innovation."



Take C.A.R.E. of your donors,
and they will take care of you.

Communicate
Appreciate
Reach
Evaluate

Impact Auction

4 keys components that show how much you
CARE about your donors.

How To C.A.R.E. For Your Donors

1. **Communicate!** Each donor for your organization should have a database file with imperative information to access frequently to help communication between the organization and the donor. Access the database for birthdays and anniversaries and reach out to them with a card or flowers on those special occasions. When new fundraising events have been scheduled, get the word out quickly, asking them to personally save the date. **C**ommunication is key.
2. **Appreciate!** When donors have given a donation or have attended your latest event, hand write a personal detailed thank you note informing them how the donation will be used. Remember, don't just appreciate your donors when they have done something, pick up the phone just to say hello and express how much you appreciate their loyalty to the organization. Have a special place on your website to recognize businesses and individuals who donate or support your cause. Forming partnerships with these donors and showing **A**ppreciation for what they do will certainly help future donations and sponsorships.
3. **Reach!** Readily reach out to your donors months before the fundraiser and ask for input regarding "travel" ideas or "experiences" they would like to see in the live auction. Catering to your A-list donors and past winning attendees can ensure securing the correct auction items bidders want to bid on and win. **R**eaching out to donors and getting first hand opinions will save you time and energy.
4. **Evaluate!** After working for months and dedicating their heart and soul to an event, the last thing any Chair of the event wants to hear is criticism. Take a few days to recover, but within the first week send a survey to your donors and ask for constructive feedback. Fundraising organizers need to have an open mind when suggestions are given and implement good ideas into future events. **E**valuate each fundraiser and make the next one even better. Take **CARE** of your donors and your donors will continue to support your organization.

What is FUND-A-NEED

The idea behind Fund-A-Need is to identify a specific need within the organization and ask for donations.

Immediately following the live auction, usually a brief video will play before the Auctioneer, or a Fund-A-Need representative starts encouraging donations.

All donations given through this effort will be added to the Live Auction total for the night.

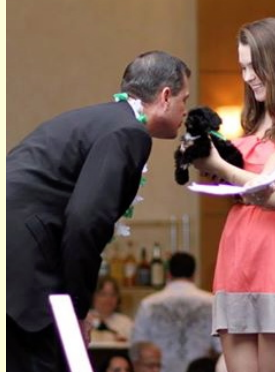
Sometimes, you just have to ask.

Social Media

Social networks are key. After email, reach out to potential guests via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, etc. This may be the most important marketing tool you can use for advertising your event. If your organization needs help with social media, Impact Auctions can help.



Cute little puppies and kittens can and will generate excitement.



Although most guests don't come to an auction with the intention of bidding on a precious pet, most guests get caught up in the moment and walk out elated.

Be a Problem Solver

Problem: Closing the open bars during the live auction is a crucial step not to be missed when planning for the night's agenda. Closing the open bars during the live auction can make some guest angry. How would you solve this situation?

Solution: Have a wine stop (a table) stocked with donated bottles of wine for purchase in the back of the venue's room to buy before the live auction begins. Have the MC make the announcement that the bars will be closed during the live auction, but the wine stop is available to purchase a bottle of wine for your table NOW. Make all bottles of wine a set price or ask for a donation. This is another way to make some additional revenue and to keep your guest bidding happily during the live auction.

EXPECT MORE WITH IMPACT AUCTIONS

Impact Auctions understands that all fundraising events need to add revenue to the organization's bottom-line. It is about delivering your non-profit organization's critical message to your guests. It is about creating an atmosphere of giving. It is about treating your guests with kindness and sincerity. It is about your guests leaving delighted to have attended your memorable benefit and most importantly setting the stage for them to look forward to giving generously again at your next fundraising event.

Impact Auctions helps clients that are providing loving care for the developmentally disabled, building new playgrounds in areas that have lost hope, speaking on behalf of groups whose voices cannot be heard, funding music, theater and the arts to bring emotion into our lives, caring for the elderly, finding cures for the sick, feeding and sheltering the less fortunate, and educating children to be our future leaders. We know that every dollar raised can help to change the world!!!

Impact Auctions understand the difficulty in supplying enough quality items for a live auction, so we have taken that burden away. We are partnering with companies offering quality trips that you can choose to auction that will enlighten your guests into bidding happily. A live auction turnkey experience is what you can expect when hiring Impact Auctions.

Impact Auctions is built on integrity and ethics. We promise to enter each charity benefit fundraising assignment with creativity and a deep understanding of your desires and purpose. It is our pledge to approach each benefit fundraising event with pizzazz and passion, which in turn, will motivate your audience to donate more money which will make your organization smile. After all, this is what you would expect, right?



Ask for References

"Debbie and Ronnie Hitzel from Impact Auctions were the auctioneers for Palisades Episcopal School's recent Gala & Auction in Charlotte, North Carolina. They were a pleasure to work with -- professional, personable and knowledgeable about hosting nonprofit fundraising events. Ronnie and Debbie provided wonderful pre-event suggestions to help enhance the evening, and arrived early to get to know our guests so they could maximize the funds raised from the live auction. They also helped increase the bids on a number of our silent auction items, and raise the most we have ever raised from a fund-the-need open ask. Our 2014 Gala & Auction was our most successful event to date, and we appreciate Impact Auctions for helping make this possible."

Monique Gilbert
Palisades Episcopal School

6 Myths for Charity Live Auctions

1. All fundraising events should have a live auction.

Myth: Live auctions work best at events where the guests are passionate about the cause and A-list donors are in attendance.

2. The more silent auction items the event has, the more money made.

Myth: Most organizations like to believe that the more silent auction items, the more money they will make. Our suggestion is to consolidate like items into theme baskets. For example, you have a restaurant gift certificate for \$50. The most you will ever get for the gift certificate is the face value. Make a theme basket and throw in candles and a couples massage for a theme NIGHT ON THE TOWN. The entire basket is now worth \$150. The bidding begins and sells for \$250. The idea is to limit silent auction items to a ratio of one item to every four guests. Having too many silent auction items can be distracting for guest.

3. Charity auctions are boring.

Myth: Charity Auctions are exciting because they encourage both generosity and participation of people who typically do not directly gain anything for their contribution. Charity auctions work by challenging the competitive spirit of people and are more fun than simply asking for monetary donations.

4. Organizing a live auction event is too much work.

* This can be “true” if you try to do a live auction without guidance from the experts.

Myth: Hiring Impact Auctions makes this statement a myth. Impact Auctions will help you set your live auction goal, supply award winning trips to offset efforts you expend to solicit for live auction items, mentor how to use social media to advertise, train your live auction volunteers, and provide the professional auctioneering team.

5. Auctioning of the live auction items has no rhyme or reason for order.

Myth: This is one of the biggest mistakes that might happen if you don't hire a professional. Professional auctioneers have a distinct order on how to make the most money: 1.) warm up item to teach the audience to bid. 2.) The next few items are popular or high interest items for the audience. Builds momentum! 3.) The most expensive item about 3/4 of the way. 4.) The last few items are less expensive, but the bidders who didn't win the most expensive item, have a chance to bid again. Sometimes these items can top the most expensive item.

6. Live auctions should have as many items to auction to make more money.

Myth: It's all about attention span of the audience and limiting their choices to bid. Six to nine items will keep the audience's attention, and by limiting the auction items, encourages more bidding.

Silent Auction Guidelines

To Make Everyone Happy



Benefits Of Fewer Items

Focusing on quality items will save you time and generate more money. Here's how:

Higher Sales Price

With fewer items in your auction, attendees will bid more on each, pushing your total sale prices higher.

Bidding Wars

If everyone else is bidding high on a package, other bidders will be attracted to it and also want to bid.

Happy Donors

Those who donate items are always pleased

when they find out their item sold above value, which means you're more likely to get auction items from them again in the future.

Saves Time

By focusing on fewer, quality items, volunteers and staff will find the workload is less, and the monetary return is higher making it a win-win.

Guests Approval

Smaller auctions are better for guests because browsing the package selection is easier and the check-out process is shorter.

Makes For A Grand Finish

With fewer, high-value items, you also have fewer winners, meaning there's less to coordinate at check-out and item pickup.



IMPACT AUCTIONS

Dear Fundraisers,

We hope you enjoyed WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN EXPECTED TO RAISE MORE: FUNDRAISER'S GUIDE TO OPTIMIZING A LIVE AUCTION. We have so much more to share to help optimize your live auction fundraiser. This is just the tip of the ice berg, as they say. Impact Auctions has made fundraising easier for the coordinators with a turnkey live auction solution that will make your next fundraiser MORE profitable, but with less work. What else would you expect?

Contact us soon! The most popular dates for 2015 are filling up fast. Until then, fundraise on!

With respect for what you do,

Ron and Debbie



We enjoyed working with Jordan Gross of the Carolina Panthers.



Website: www.impactauctions.info



Phone: Debbie at 407-267-8988



Like: Impact Auctions on Facebook



Email: ImpactAuctions@impactauctions.info



Linkedin: Impact Auctions

Impact Auctions philosophy is simple: *Be Committed To The Cause*. Impact Auctions is committed to listen to your organization's needs, build on your strengths, and form a partnership to raise revenue year after year. Impact Auctions is committed to your non-profit organization.