

EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis

The May 25, 2006 dinner was EAC's first Promotion event. The purpose of this document is to pass a knowledge base to the next year's EAC Promotion Dinner organizer, and we recommend that this document be updated after each future events. We hope that by providing this knowledge of our observations and opinions, future problems can be avoided or minimized. To this end, we also recorded some of the things we did that worked, therefore we prepared this document in two sections, and are not presented in any particular order:

1. What went astray
2. What went right

(Contact information can be found at the end of this document)

Purpose of the Promotion party:

In order for us to understand what we perceived as problems encountered, we need to understand the reason behind the actual event.

We billed the event as:

“This party is to honor those individuals, like you, who have contributed to EAC functions by being a committee member and/or volunteer at EAC sponsored events. At this event we would also like to solicit new membership to the Employee Activities Committee.”

Recognition of volunteers are important, however, one of the more important aspect of this party was to solicit new members. Therefore, anything that can publicize the event and increase attendance is paramount.

What went astray:

The following were most of the notable known problems encountered during the 2006 Promotion Dinner:

- 1) **Some people were reluctant to attend the dinner, because they fear they will be recruited to EAC.**
 - a) What happened
 - i) For funding issue, to be reimbursable, we must have the event major reason as a recruitment to EAC, even though the main reason was to show the appreciation of the volunteer work our members and helpers performed
 - ii) As a result, we were compelled to announce the event as a “Recruitment” dinner, and called the event as “Recognition/Recruitment Party.”
 - iii) People do not like to be hassled into joining committees.
 - b) In 2007 the fliers read EAC Appreciation Party. Today Announcements read “Whether or not you're a volunteer, come join.....” Still attendance was low. Comments from others indicate that
 - i) They did not know everyone was invited
 - ii) They never saw a flier or email
 - (1) Discovered emails sent through AdminNet are not always passed along to staff nor is the flier printed/posted as requested.

EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis

- c) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) We have included/stressed in the announcement of the event that one of the main reason of this event was to recognize and appreciate volunteer contribution.
 - ii) Today Announcements stated not just for volunteers...
 - d) Possible future solutions
 - i) We have renamed the event to “EAC Promotion Party,” pending approval from UCAR management
 - ii) Flier and banners need to be designed so it is clear everyone is invited and RSVP necessary – do not put an RSVP date on fliers, tent cards, or banners – just name of person (email/phone) receiving the RSVP.
- 2) The event was planned and executed in a very short time (less than 30 days)**
- a) What happened
 - i) As this event was new, we did not plan the event until about 20 days before the event. This caused considerable rush in the planning and execution of the event.
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) Unforeseen problem
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) We have now scheduled this event as one of our main events, so advance planning can be done more easily and efficiently.
- 3) Less than ideal schedule party time and day did not encourage attendance (On a Thursday before Memorial Day holiday)**
- a) What happened
 - i) For some, having the party on a Thursday night makes some people reluctant to come, as the next day might be a work day. In 2007 also held on Thursday afternoon but not near a holiday.
 - ii) For others, they are getting ready for the long weekend, and already planned to be away.
 - iii) Start the party after five caused a long gap between end of workday and start of the party. Many people do not want to go back home, then return for the party. In 2007 party was scheduled from 3:30 – 6:30 in order to accommodate this issue – still attendance low.
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) Unforeseen problem.
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) Book the party as far in advance as possible to enable Event Services to assign a more ideal time/date.
 - ii) Plan the party on a Friday – try this for 2008 event!
 - iii) Schedule the party day away from any holidays

EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis

- iv) Start the party about 3:30. In 2007 party was started at 3:30 and did not help attendance.
- 4) EAC members forgot to bring their ID badge**
- a) What happened
 - (1) No EAC members brought their badge to the event
 - (2) Badges are to identify members to guest and thus make it easier for potential members to make contact with us.
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) Unforeseen problem.
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) We need to send out a reminder to all the members to bring their badges on the day of the event. In 2007 members were emailed and all showed up with badges or requested new ones printed for them.
- 5) Some people forgot to attend the dinner.**
- a) What happened
 - i) Some of the people who RSVP'ed to attending, including our own members, forgot to come.
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) We have announced the event and received RSVP from them.
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) Have another announcement closer (day before?) in Today@UCAR. In 2007 announcement did run the whole week of the event reminding staff of this party.
 - ii) Send an email reminding those RSVP'ed just before the day of the event. In 2007 all who RSVP'd did receive at least two emails reminding them of the party, date, time, location.
- 6) Getting Rick Anthes' signature on the certificate needs considerable effort**
- a) What happened
 - i) Because there were over a hundred certificates to produce, having Rick sign them manually is not feasible. Therefore, an electronic signature was requested to Rick, and granted, to incorporate his signature into the certificate.
 - ii) For security reason, Rick's office restricted the access of the signature file to one person.
 - iii) That one person was responsible to produce all the certificates.
 - iv) As this is the first time we have this event, we have no idea how many and who would actually attend the party, thus we produced all the certificates at one time.
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident

EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis

- i) Unforeseen problem.
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) As this is the first time we have this event, we have no idea how many and who would actually attend the party.
As it turned out, very few people for whom we produce the certificates were present at the party. This being the case, print only those attending for Rick's actual signature, and leave the rest for later manual or electronic signatures.
 - ii) In 2007 decision made by co-chairs to print out certificates with invitation to the party and interoffice mail them to all the volunteers and new hires. No certificates were handed out at the party. This was good. Takes too much time and people become disinterested.
- 7) Room too spread out for the occasion**
- a) What happened
 - i) We were expecting at least over hundred participants, thus a large room was booked for the occasion.
 - ii) As the party was smaller than planned, the attendees were thinly spread throughout the large room and intimacy is lost
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) Unforeseen problem.
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) Move the tables closer to the stage and isolate the serving line to the back
 - ii) Consider closing off unused room at the start of ceremony/party.
 - iii) In 2007 this worked out well even though attendance was low.
- 8) We did not an assigned person to adequately greet and accompany guests.**
- a) What happened
 - i) The main purpose of having guests is to induce them to join EAC
 - ii) We did not have adequate active members to keep guests company and make them feel more welcome.
 - iii) We missed one guest. Without knowing who that person was, the recruitment opportunity was lost.
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) Unforeseen problem.
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) Greet guests as soon as possible upon their arrival. Get their name/email address/extension, and assign a member to accompany them for the rest of the evening.
 - ii) Have more members attend with a specific goal to recruit guests by making them feel more welcome.

EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis

- iii) In 2006 and 2007 a Meet & Greet bistro table was set up right inside the door. Those entering were asked to sign in and make a badge. Also, in 2007 raffle tickets were handed out at that time.
- 9) The party was not covered in Staff Notes.**
- a) What happened
 - i) We missed the publicity for EAC, because the following month's Staff Notes was already full.
 - ii) We did not contact Staff Notes personnel in advance of the event
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) Unforeseen problem.
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) Inform Staff Notes of the event as soon as we know the schedule of the event
 - ii) In 2007, Communications was contacted 6 weeks prior to the event.
- 10) List of volunteer have to be created from scratch.**
- a) What happened
 - i) A consolidated list of volunteers were not available for event solicitation.
 - ii) The creation of the list was long and tedious.
 - iii) Some requested list was submitted late and incomplete, thus compounding the work.
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) Unforeseen problem.
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) After each major event, update the volunteer list.
- 11) Karaoke requests miskeyed, causing awkward moments on stage.**
- a) What happened
 - i) With the large number of songs, it is necessary to identify the songs number and to quickly key-in the request.
 - ii) Some people did not write their karaoke request on the provided request slips complicates the song selection, causing confusion of the selection
 - iii) Written requests, prepared using regular pen, were difficult for the MC to read.
 - b) Measures taken to prevent the incident
 - i) Slips of Song Request were on each table (but not used consistently).
 - c) Possible future solutions
 - i) Have felt pen for song requests for easier reading.

EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis

What went right

The following items are the items we did at the Promotion Dinner that helped us make the event a success. We suggest that they be incorporate into future events.

1. We had fun!
2. For the first event of its kind, we fared rather well. We have adequate attendance to make the evening fun. We expect that in the next one, we'll do better.

Having UCAR senior management being part of the attendee were indeed an honor.

3. The karaoke session was fun and members agree to have that as part of next year's event. We're even considering to include karaoke into the Spring Fling event.
4. Advance coordination of the sound system for the party with Eron Brennan (both the system test days before the party and pre-party time), have resulted in a smooth operation of the karaoke session.
5. Even though we have only three EAC members involved in the planning, we have sufficient number of organizers, although more people would make the planning even easier. Having three people as Promotion Dinner co-chairs helps make the planning smoother.
6. Having Event Services handle the setup and cleanup makes the event much easier to execute.
7. Having nametags for everyone helped us identify attendees, especially guests. Having the nametags personalized with drawn-on flowers increased the festive feeling of the event.
8. We learned how to produce Certificates of Appreciation in mass, and the procedure has been included into the EAC document archive.
9. We learned to use the UCAR Communication Gateway to send out mass email.
10. We now have a detailed list of volunteers for future events

Additional notes – 2007 Appreciation Party & Dinner – Black & White theme

- Dining tables were set up with white tablecloths and black toppers. On this for the centerpiece was a 12x12 mirror with 4"square glass base to hold appetizer white tray. Each table had cheeses, olives, and crackers.
 - i. Scattered around the centerpiece were coiled black & white fabric ribbons and black/white dots/circles
 1. these were also scattered around on the buffet tables

EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis



- For the raffle drawing six black/white posters were purchased and framed in simple inexpensive black frames. These were displayed on black poster backboards and raffled off once karaoke started – approx every 15 minutes. Large roll of raffle tickets still available – see Pat Steinkamp.
- For decorations going with the black & white theme –
 - i. many dots/circles in black & white were cut out and pinned, taped, or glued onto surfaces:

EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis

1. Stage black skirting
 2. Black backing board holding posters
 3. Buffet table tops
- ii. White streamers and white pipe cleaners to also added to the black backing board to enhance the white on black theme.



EAC Promotion Dinner Post Event Analysis

- iii. Two large 27 inch circles were cut from poster board (one black, one white) and black/white dots/circles put on them. These 27 inch poster board circles were attached to two floor standing sign holders (also decorated with black streamers and white adhesive stickers). Then attached to the sign holder where a vertical cluster of black/white balloons. These two sign holders were put on either side of the stage



Contact Information:

Promotion Dinner Co-Chairs:

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|-----------------|--------|-------|
| • Robert Tan | ML515a | X1105 |
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| • Aneka Finley | ML | X1655 |