



The good, the bad, and the absurdity of galas!

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Let's have a little
charity gala – it'll
be absolutely
fabulous darling...



Oh yes, we must
darling and it **will** be
absolutely
fabulous...and we
might even make
some money for
charity!

With thanks...



Hank Rosso & Associates

Mater Foundation

Sound Familiar?

It's planning time and the fundraising team adds a gala ball to the annual calendar.

There's a budget gap and the organisation holds a gala ball to offset the shortfall.

A well-meaning committee suggests the organisation holds a ball.

Rosso's Seven Points for Special Events

1. To educate the community as to why the nonprofit exists
2. To motivate and educate lay leaders, volunteers, and professional staff
3. To recruit volunteers
(and future board members and supporters)



Rosso's Seven Points for Special Events

4. To expand the nonprofit's network in the community
5. To market the nonprofit for the benefit of the community
6. To obtain endorsement for the nonprofit from community leaders
7. To receive financial support by achieving the first six goals.

When it works...

Links to strategy

Consistent with the organisation's image, purpose and mission

Fundraisers are not 'party planners'

Recognition and cultivation opportunity

Publicity does not sell tickets, people do

When it works...

There's a point of difference...it's a crowded market

R.O.I.

Measure against clearly defined objectives

Repeatability

Reaches new constituents

Mater Little Miracles Ball 2014 Operating Plan



1. Background
2. Strategic Goals
3. Target Audience (demographic, geographic, psychographic)
4. Key Learnings (2013) and Identified Opportunities
5. Analysis (current market)
6. Program Details (key activities, milestones, responsibility, KPIs)
7. Marketing and Communications
8. Program Budget
9. Other Metrics (non financial)
10. Expansion Plans (over three years)
11. Limitations and Risks
12. Contingency & Timing (alternative programs or resolutions and timing)
13. Stewardship, Engagement, Retention

1. Background



First held 1988 with a different name (Special Events Committee)

Was a fundraising event without strategic alignment

Repositioned the event 2009 – philanthropy,
Mater cause-related stories

Rebranded to 'Mater Little Miracles Ball' and is now part of the annual Mater Little Miracles Appeal (raising funds for babies and children at Mater)

Approximately 700 pax

ROI (0.26)

Held Saturday closest to Valentine's Day

2. Strategic Goals



1A – Position Mater as a top of mind community cause to support philanthropic association and fundraising engagement

1B – Actively advocate and position a culture of philanthropy within Mater and the broader community

1C – Realise the philanthropic potential of Mater through effective, diverse, sustainable and integrated fundraising programs related to general and specific Mater themes

1D – Ensure fundraising programs are based on market information, contemporary theory, established best-practice standards and professional experience

2A – Generate an agreed and sustainable level of funding for Mater partners

3A – To be regarded as effective and trusted stewards of relationships between donors, supporters and advocates and Mater

3D – To attract, develop retain and recognise excellent volunteer leaders who are aligned within the mission and values of Mater Foundation.

3. Target Audiences



Demographic:

Age: 40-55 years of age (Generation X and Baby Boomers)

Sex: Both M and F (most come with a partner)

MHS/MF Board/Committees and Senior Management

Corporate and major gift donors

Hospital suppliers

Geographic:

Brisbane

Psychographic:

Combination of aspirational and affluent

Mater connection (or their table captain has a Mater connection)

4. Key Learnings 2013 & Identified Opportunities

Successful against all measures:

- Financial – achieved budget
- Attendees – achieved budget
- Event organisation and logistics
- Venue planning
- Sponsorship
- Ticket sales
- In-kind donations (auction and raffle prizes)
- Cash pledges and donations
- Stewardship, engagement and retention of sponsors and guests

5. Analysis (Current Market)

- Crowded market
- Few gala events Brisbane/Gold Coast with same number of guests
- MS Ball, RSPCA gala ball, Think Pink/Wesley Choices Ball, Autism Queensland Gala, Surf Lifesaving Queensland gala no longer occur
- Opportunity to maintain strong foothold in the market (strong marketing and engagement, quality product offering including respected high profile entertainment and value-pricing strategies)
- February gives 'first mover' advantage
- Marketing and engagement challenged Christmas to February, requiring precision timing and planning.

6. Program Details

[illegible]

7. Marketing & Communications Support



1. Campaign concepts
2. Assistance sourcing graphic design in-kind sponsorship
3. Printed elements
4. Creation of EDM shell in campaign monitor
5. Dispatch of EDM to mail list
6. Facebook posts
7. Electronic requirements
8. Creation of patient story video/photo montage, writing scripts etc
9. PR support
10. Cross promotion

8. Program Budget



2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
\$103,397	\$107,646	\$110,000

9. Other metrics (non-financial)

Activity	Aim
Total guests	700 pax
Premium tables	11 to sell
Live auction lots	10 lots to sell
Silent auction lots	60 lots to sell
Key sales	315 keys to sell
Lucky envelopes	600 envelopes to sell

10. Expansion (over three years)

- Exponential expansion not likely (incremental \$ increases only)
- Continue strong relationship with major gifts and corporate teams
- Continue to main a position as one of Brisbane's premier social events through strong engagement and retention strategies to combat attrition, quality product offering including respected high profile entertainment and value pricing strategies

11. Limitations & Risks

- Competition for prizes and sponsorship both within Mater Foundation and externally. There is a need for a strong network of committee members and contacts who can help combat attrition to ensure the quality of prizes continues to be offered
- Force majeure

12. Contingency & Timing (alternative programs or resolutions and timing of these)

- In the event of a natural disaster the MLM Ball can be moved to later in the year (e.g. Brisbane floods)

13. Stewardship, engagement, retention

Stewardship

Engage and steward relationship with key 'non committee' contacts

- Tour of NCCU
- Christmas Breakfast invitation
- Meet

Engage and steward relationship with sponsors and high value prize donors

- Delivering on agreed sponsorship promises before and at event (February)
- Complimentary tickets to the event (February)
- Christmas Breakfast invitation (December)
- Meet (March, September)
- Sponsorship proposal and follow up phone call/meeting (September)
- Tour of NCCU (where/when relevant)
- Connections newsletter (quarterly)
- Annual review

Engagement and retention

Prize donors

- Thank you correspondence (March)
- Connections newsletter (quarterly)
- First approach for prizes (October)
- Second follow up correspondence (November)
- Third follow up phone call (January)

Past and prospective guests

- Save the date correspondence (November)
- Invitation (January)
- Personalised approach from event manager / Executive Director / relevant executive (high valued guests, VIP, board members, Premium Tables, hospital suppliers)
- First email reminder (January)
- Second email reminder (January)
- Third email reminder (February)
- Thank you email (post event - general)
- Thank you letter (post event – for any guests who make a purchase)
- Connections newsletter (quarterly)
- Facebook reminders
- PR in social diary dates
- Cross promotion to other relevant segments such as RWS, Breast Ever Brunch, Mater Golf Day, VMOs etc.
- Cross promotion in relevant internal media including Scope, Alumni News, Healthy Communities and M-Mag.

ROI (0.26)
But what else?

Small Group Activity

Do you agree with what has been presented?

Yes – why?

No – why not?

Other metrics?

Other experiences?

