

Post event analysis and lessons learned of the Sri Lanka Night held on the November 4th 2023 at the Londonderry Community Hall.

Observations

Planning: The intent of having a cultural show and a dinner dance was discussed only in late May and the decision was made to have it in early November. Most of critical issues such as selecting a venue, selecting a caterer, selecting a DJ had to be finalized without getting competitive prices due to the tight schedule.

Attendance: The expected attendance was 200. Based on ticket sales there were 97 members, 84 non-members and 11 children. In addition the number of performers who were given free tickets is estimated as 10. So, the actual attendance was same as expected.

Facility: Hall was almost at full capacity with 200. The stage did not have curtains and lighting. The kitchen was equipped enough for cooking for 200. The bar area was very small. Parking spaces were not sufficient for a crowd of 200. The facility was rented for two days for \$ 1150.

Food: Food supply was contracted out to a Sri Lanka caterer. Food was tasty. The number given to the caterer was 200. However, with the DJ team (three), bar tenders (two) and the cleaning crew (two) the total should not have exceeded 210 unless there were people who came in without tickets. Those who came towards the end did not have some of the food items. Even though the food was tasty, the cost was comparatively high. \$ 35.00 per person was used in the budget and ticket prices were established accordingly. However, ended up with \$ 41.25. There was no discussion of the prices for different ranges of attendance. When the attendance number was established at 200 there was no option available other than agreeing to caterer's inflated price.

Bar: The bar sales generated a profit which was not expected. The quantity of liquor consumed was greater than the theoretical quantity based on tickets sold. It appears that liquor has been served without tickets. JV Black Lable, Chivas Regal, Rum, Gin, Vodka, Single Malt Whisky, Beer, Red and White Wines were made available at the bar. Demand for white wine was very low. All left over liquor were sold (bought back) at the purchased cost. Bar space was just sufficient for two people and that made it difficult to monitor bar tickets. Bar tender came late and did not have a wine bottle opener with him.

Souvenir: The estimated profit from the souvenir was \$ 2,000 and the actual profit was \$ 2,550. The souvenir was printed in colour instead of black & white as planned originally. Edmonton Copy & Printing at 8927G – Whyte Avenue gave the best quotation and printed books quickly.

Cultural Show: The show was well presented and was limited to one hour. Most students of the dancing class held over last few years at the association cost refused to perform at the event. With the short notice given Manosha Perera managed to get few kids trained to a higher level and performed at the cultural show.

DJ: DJ provided sound and lighting for the event. The payment of \$ 2,000 for DJ services seems to be very high. The original agreement was \$ 1,500 for both sounds and lighting. Just because he was asked to have sounds and lighting done on the Friday instead of doing it on Saturday, additional \$ 500 was charged.

Ticket sales: Ticket books were distributed among the EC members. Each EC member was provided with a list of members to contact for ticket sale. Some member and non-member ticket books have been handed over to others out side EC and they have sold member tickets to non-members. There was a confusion on the performers who get free ticket.

Gate admission: Gate admission control system was not in place when people arrived for the show.

Recommendations from lessons learned.

Planning: Sufficient time should be allowed for planning. Every detail should be looked at and all options should be evaluated. Availability of facilities, caterers, DJs, bar tenders etc. should be looked at and finalized with firm prices.

Facility: The real seating capacity should be established based on the programme needs rather than the facility operators number. This will help in budgeting, ticket sales and catering.

Food: Several quotations from potential caterers should be obtained. These quotations should have the detailed menu and prices for different ranges of attendance and any other terms and conditions. It is worth to consider how much extra to pay for a Sri Lankan meal compared to similar type of food prepared by non Sri Lankan caterers.

Bar: It is important have close supervision at the bar to ensure liquor is served only for tickets. Option of getting few volunteers from the community complete the AGLC ProServe certification at SLCFA cost and get them to manage the bar should be looked at. Bar space should be included in the facility selection. Consider hiring a non Sri Lankan bar tender if possible. Establish the duties and responsibilities of the bar tender before hand and explain the process of liquor sales.

Souvenir: Publishing a souvenir is very cost effective way of getting a revenue. Should put more effort in collecting advertisements.

Cultural Show: A show with limited number of items limiting to a total of one hour is better than having a lengthy show of many items.

DJ: Should obtain several quotations for DJ services and select the best.

Ticket Sales: Member tickets sales should be limited to EC members only. EC members should be either allocate a group of members or provide them with the list of members. Every one who collect ticket book should be responsible to settle back the full value of the sold tickets. Collecting money from those who purchase tickets should be the responsibility of the one who sold the ticket. The categories who are entitle to free or concessionary tickets should be established at the time of finalizing the budget. One EC member should be assigned to issue free & concessionary tickets.