



Events are **HARD** Work

Craft Events that Work Hard for You



- Founded Swell Fundraising in 2012
- Response to 16 years of event fundraising as a volunteer and staff
- Optimize the event to (1) reach more donors (acquisition), (2) target a demo our org needed (3) raise awareness (4) support sponsors.
- Built an event fundraising software platform



do you love
your event?
hate your
event?

**Some say the definition of
insanity
is doing the same thing
over and over again and
expecting different results**



Outcomes from a
hard-working event

- **Uploaded hundreds of new names & updated contact information into your database**
- **Reported a significant increase in new donors**
- **Annual fund / Next Ask increases measurably from new donors at event**
- **Sent a report to sponsors with event attendance (online + off), website reach/traffic, demographic/geographic reach and social reach**
- **Your team connected to community members important for future conversations**
- **Created awareness of your program that generated need**

A conceptual image representing digital revenue. A hand in a dark suit sleeve holds a glowing, circuit-patterned sphere with a large dollar sign. The background is dark with a network of white nodes and lines, and several other similar glowing spheres with dollar signs are floating around. The word "Revenue?" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Revenue?



**If revenue is the only
measure, cancel your event.**



Step 1: Define Your Goals

**events are the most
nimble aspect of your
development strategy**

Wine Auction Event:

- Budget Goal: \$150,000 gross (\$115,000 net)
 - Attendance: 150 guests
 - Corporate/Individual Sponsorships: 43% (\$65,000)
 - Ticket /Table Sales: 20% (\$30,000)
 - Individual Giving: 36% (\$55,000)
 - 36% Fund-A-Need
 - 18% Silent Auction
 - 46% Live Auction
- } 23% of whole / 65%+ of the work
- 15 New Donors (10-15% retention)
 - 0 online reach
 - 75%+ of individual giving from board members/past board members/long term donors

Revised Event Goals:

- Budget: \$150,000 gross (\$115,000 net)
 - Corporate/Individual Sponsorships: 60% (\$90,000)
 - Ticket Sales (if applicable): 15% (\$22,500)
 - Individual Giving: 25% (\$37,500)
- 75 New Donors
- Reach 10,000 unique online guests to advance sponsor and mission exposure
- Connect / Nurture 5 major gift prospects
- Reach a new group - expand the network



Step 2: Honestly assess where you spend your time

**does it align with
outcomes?**

We do a cocktail hour that includes a silent auction with around 180 packages, a Kendra Scott jewelry pull with 50 boxes selling for \$100 each, and a Whiskey, Bourbon and Scotch Pull 30 bottles at \$100 each. We made \$50,000 between the three and sold out of the jewelry pull and spirit pull and only had three items not sell at the silent auction. The silent auction is put online three days before the gala and sent to the entire database and is all electronic.

We also do a live auction and paddle raise plus allow guests to make anonymous donations or sign up for monthly donations at their tables.

This year the gala raised \$420,000.

Revenue: \$420,000

**Silent Auction (180 items), Jewelry Pull (50 boxes), Whiskey Pull (30)
Raised \$50,000 (12%)**

**what was the % of
staff time allocated?**



Step 3: Isolate opportunities to solve

**use outcomes list to
'see' opportunities**

Opportunities...

- Increase corporate sponsorships
 - Expand event reach through technology
 - Invite event committee members from the corporate partners
 - Listen to business needs
 - Event website, social media reach and analytics needed to support effort
- Target a new group of donors
 - Invite a social maven from that group to be involved with the event
 - Small, passionate small business sponsors related to that group
- Donor acquisition
 - Improved data capture
 - Connect with donors who cannot attend ****virtual has a role here**
- Expand individual giving through online efforts - start the Fund-A-Need early

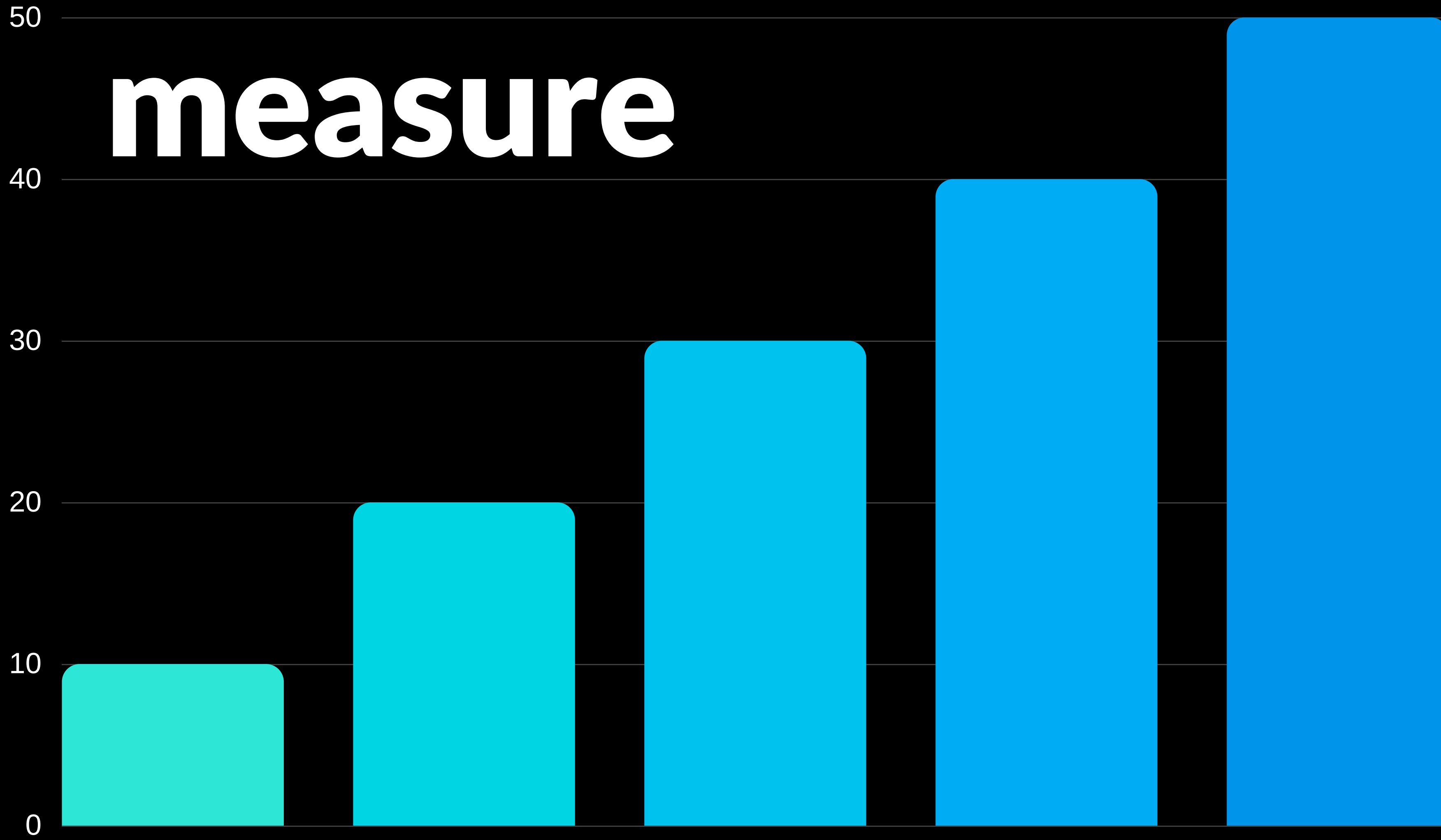
Opportunities...

- **New Donors**
 - Are you capturing donor data? (easily solved with better, low cost tech)
 - Is it easy to give at any level? and in any manner?
 - Is it too corporate sponsor heavy?
 - Is the nonprofit mission clear? **Are you throwing a fundraiser or a party?**
 - Auctions do not build donors - shrink / right-size the auction
 - Focus on funding the mission (peer)
- **Build awareness**
 - Does your event build any awareness? Local PR, Social Media Sharing by Committee/Board
 - Does the event support your organization brand?
- **Corporate sponsors**
 - Events are a co-branding or relationship opportunity. Understand which and foster.

**JUST PICK
ONE THING**



measure



happiness

is a 10% revenue increase from pre-event,
individual gifts

****replaced small but time-consuming auction**

First Light Dancing With the Stars

impact

Watch later Share

doubled event revenue for homeless shelter

****eliminated small auction and used time for social media promotion of teams**

Type your message

YouTube

DANCING WITH THE STARS OF THE MAGIC CITY 20

DONATE NOW

TOP TEAMS

\$97,280

Total amount raised



Alie B Gorrie and Victor Williams

\$17,950



Lindsay Davis and Megan Miller

\$17,896



Janell Ahnert and David Odenwelder

\$6,290



Sarah Elizabeth Moreman and Quinn Barrett

\$4,402

LUCKIE

A black and white photograph of two women sitting at a table, smiling at the camera. They are surrounded by other people in a social setting, possibly a conference or event. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a dark jacket. The woman on the right has short braided hair and is wearing a patterned shawl. There are glasses of water on the table in the foreground.

engage

420 donors acquired (data capture and reach)

increased revenue by 16%

inspired table hosts to share online



engage

used ticketing and receipt emails to increase engagement

- 17% downloaded research report
- 11% clicked on FB link to follow org online
- 42% watched a video link

long term health

- 50-55% donor retention and demonstrable growth of other fundraising campaigns
- Fueling the major gift pipeline and planned giving conversations
- Leverage your event to adapt to your organizational needs



Before



After

swell

FUNDRAISING

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