



De's Dazzles – A Day in the Life of a Director

Recently, I had the privilege of participating in the Southwest Valley High School Career Fair and hosting the FBLA students on a business visit to the Corning Opera House. At both events I was asked what I like the most about my job and what *do I really do*. I have had adults ask me what could possibly take so much time!

For the easy short answer, I like the people, variety of work, and the opportunities to travel. I have rubbed shoulders and talked to famous people, comforted the grieving, shared joyful celebrations, and encouraged youth, among other things. I have had the privilege of speaking at a national conference in Philadelphia, received awards in Dallas and DC, toured over a hundred different performing arts venues and other exceptional trips.

As for what I do, takes much longer to explain. One aspect is arranging events (meeting, party, wedding, concert, etc.) All events start with sharing a few emails, phone calls, and sometimes on-site visits before contracts are signed. A performer's contract can go through several revisions before it is finally signed. One performer wanted grilled salmon in January and because I would not agree to that one item, that broke the deal. Fun fact about contracts, performers put in strange requests such as only serve green M&Ms at the concession stand or must have a red towel on stage. These are to make sure you read the entire contract. If a renter is signing our contract, we discuss details such as who is setting up tables, do you want to rent tablecloths, do you need a microphone, and so on.

Then there's marketing or advertising – a full time job! After contracts are finalized, the dates go on all the calendars: our website, Facebook event, Google Post, website calendars for Travel Iowa, local radio stations, ACEDC and depending on the event some others. The latest marketing experts say a person must see something 7-12 times before they will take notice of it, stop, and read it, or check their calendar to see if they can attend it. EVERY event that is open to the public is made into flyers, social media posts, reels, videos, area newspaper press releases and ads, newsletter articles, brochures, radio talk shows, send to area chambers of commences and more. What is your trusted source of information? As for software I use Word, Excel, Canva, Ripl, Legend, VideoScribe, MailChimp, and Eventbrite ticketing to name a few.

The Corning Opera House averages about five drop-in tours a month, they usually take one to two hours. Then there's the stuff nobody knows about that I must open the building for, such as inspections for fire sprinklers, elevator, kitchen and food service, geo-thermal software updates, repairmen and the list goes on. This week it was the printer repairman.

Education for a job such as this includes event management, business, marketing, and the person must be detail orientated and enjoy being and working with others! This is the most fulfilling, draining, inspiring, challenging, awesome position I've held. I like to work hard, have fun and make a difference. I am grateful to be a small part of God's big plan!

Sincerely,

De Heaton

Executive Director

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