

**IT'S RED APPLE AUCTION TIME****Silence Doesn't Sell  
Charity Auctions Need Sound Systems**

Growing up, I remember an advertising slogan used by Coty perfume. "If you want to capture someone's attention, whisper."

You might attract a lover with that approach, but you'll never attract a bidder at your benefit auction.

Auctions require a professional sound system that enables the auctioneer's voice to be heard with clarity and distinction.

Contrast this to the sound required for a band. Unlike a music concert in which an audience finds it acceptable to hear the melody and feel the beat, a successful auction is dependent upon bidders understanding the numbers. Guests will sit on their hands if they don't know what the auctioneer is saying. Sound systems designed for a band blend the instruments for better overall sound; sound systems for auctions support the clarity of a single voice.

**Q: Where should we put the sound system?** A: Wherever you plan on selling something.

In the silent auction area, the auctioneer will be making announcements about raffle tickets, closings, and "please make your way to a dinner table so we can start the program." During the live auction, your auctioneer will cry bids for the sale.

If all of your group's activity takes place in one room, you'll only need sound for that room. But if the silent



This was a good sound system. See the speakers lined up in the silent auction?



These speakers are stationed in the silent auction of this school auction.

is in one area and the seated post-tournament dinner with live auction is in another, you need sound in both areas. Depending on the equipment, that might be two different sound systems or one sound system with speakers run by wires to the other location.

**Q: Can't the auctioneer just shout?**

**A:** Not an option.

An auctioneer's voice is his profession. If I shout at your benefit auction, I can't work the next day at someone else's event. Don't ask the an auctioneer to perform without a microphone.

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Welcome to  
**Red Apple Auctions**

As a specialist in fundraising auctions  
This is where it is the money.



(Cont)

**Q: We've got a DJ. Can we use his sound system?**

A: It's not ideal, but it might work.

From a cost and complexity perspective, I understand the desire to use the DJ's equipment.

The smaller the crowd (think 200 and fewer), the better the odds that it will be fine. Fortunately most of the golf tournament auctions we work tend to be in the 150-180 guest range and – when used – the DJ systems have worked. But if you've got a larger event, beware! DJ systems are designed to support music, not an auctioneer's voice.

**Q: Do you (the auctioneer) have a sound system we can use?**

A: Some will and some won't. Auctioneers who have a system often charge a nominal fee to rent it, which – bonus! — is often less than the cost of using an outside company.

It will just depend on how elaborate your event is as to whether this idea will work. Sound systems are often one of the first elements to be set into a room. Tables and decor are placed around the wires and speakers once the system is set up. Sometimes room set-up is scheduled the day before or very early on the day of the tournament. As most auctioneers wouldn't arrive onsite until shortly before the golfing ends, setting up a large sound system might be cumbersome at that time.

**Q: Will the auctioneer spec (specify) the equipment or brands?**

A: Most probably won't. If the auctioneer isn't bringing her own equipment and you're using a professional sound company, a good A/V company will know how to support the event.

In general, you'll want to have what is called "multi-source" sound, meaning you want to have sound fill the room from multiple speakers ... not one or two speakers blasting from the front of the room.

Your quality audio system will go a long way in encouraging guests to keep raising their hand at the auction.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Don't auctioneer Sherry Truller, CMP, BAE teaches planners of fundraising auctions how to maximize revenues for greater success with their nonprofit or school gala. Her expertise has been tapped by national publications (e.g. *Town & Country*, *The Washington Post Magazine*), *AUCTIONEER*, the *Event* television programs (e.g. *E! Style*, *TLC*), and conferences (CMP Conclave, National Auctioneers Association Conclave, regional MPI groups). Her company, Red Apple Auctions, offers auctioneers, classes, and products. Learn more at <http://www.RedAppleAuctions.com>.

## DONOR SURVEY REPORT

### Where Philanthropy is headed in 2011

#### Synopsis

There is considerable optimism among respondents in this year's study. 79% expect to give the same or more to charitable causes this year, while only 7% will give less. Once again, donors under the age of 35 were most likely to say they would increase their giving, but the news is also good among donors whose philanthropy is substantial. 23% of the study's most generous donors (giving \$10,000 or more last year) plan to give more in 2011 while only 10% expect to give less.

#### Read all:

<http://www.cygnusresearch.com/files/free/US-2011-Cygnus-Donor-Survey-Report-Executive-Summary.pdf>

### Men & Women playing golf together etiquette tips!

(From Golf Digest Woman)

#### On-Course Relations

##### Hilarious!

Golf Digest Senior Editor Stina Sternberg gives five rules to follow when playing golf with a woman. (Click on photo)

