

PR Magic

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS • PUBLIC RELATIONS

Case Study

The Pacific Orchid Exposition

Background

The San Francisco Orchid Society (SFOS), host of the Pacific Orchid Exposition, wanted to utilize an orchid show as the non-profit organization's major fundraiser and looked to the Larose Group to grow the event, increase exposure, and gain more profits that could be used for educational and horticultural development programs.

Frances Larose, CEO of the Larose Group, LLC, took on the Pacific Orchid Exposition as one of her first clients over 20 years ago. At the time, the show was hosted at the modest Hall of Flowers venue in San Francisco. It was a small community orchid show that produced very little profit and had a small attendance of around 3,000 people.

Actions

The Larose Group (TLG) realized that the show needed to be held in a large venue where they could attract a wider array of vendors and increase their profits from exhibitor booth fees. After moving to the larger venue, TLG maximized the amount of time the event ran by creating a Gala Benefit Preview Night and a scholarship to a local horticultural student. The new addition of Gala Night was a great success and, after 10 years, it expanded to offer wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres, live music and an auction component. All of these allowed the SFOS to sell tickets to the Gala Night at a much higher rate than the general show.

With the implementation of the Gala Night, the larger venue and a larger crowd, TLG began to arrange sponsorships for the show with media and horticultural focused companies. These sponsorships allowed the SFOS to collect additional money that could be put back into educational programs and orchid conservation efforts, such as the Conservatory of Flowers in Golden Gate Park and the Helen Crocker Russell Horticultural Library.

Results

Two decades later, what started as a basic orchid society show is now been rated by the American Orchid Society as the largest Orchid show in the United States. The show has grown to attract nearly 20,000 people throughout the entire weekend and consistently outperforms other orchid shows in the area.