

Client Stories

American Cancer Society–New Orleans

For over 100 years, the American Cancer Society (ACS) has worked relentlessly to save lives and create a world with less cancer. Together with millions of their supporters worldwide, ACS helps people stay well and get well, find cures, and fight back against cancer.



Highlights

- With Greater Giving's GoTime tool, checking in the event's 1200 guests went smoother than ever before.
- The ACS New Orleans group adopted Greater Giving Online Bidding for the event, and it streamlined everything about the auction without a complaint or glitch.
- The Greater Giving Event Software's powerful reporting feature helped the auction team keep track of all their key information: packages, people, and phone numbers.
- Guests had no problem learning to use the new mobile bidding platform, and Bid Assistants were on site to help any guests who needed it.

Challenge

Every autumn, the American Cancer Society of New Orleans holds an annual "Belles and Beaus" Ball. This last year was ACS's 15th year putting on this popular event, where ten men and ten women in the community are honored as cancer activists.

This massive event brings in about 1200 attendees—and draws restaurants from all over New Orleans, who set up over 60 tastings throughout the venue. The event also features a silent auction, live auction, Fund-A-Need, and a beautiful presentation of all the Belles and Beaus.

The ACS auction team estimates that it takes 35 to 40 committee members just to prepare for the ball, and then another 75-100 volunteers are needed night of the event. With a silent auction that features about 100 items, and a jewelry raffle sponsored by a local jeweler, there's a lot to track and coordinate.

To help them manage this huge event and streamline their volunteers' valuable time, the ACS New Orleans group went looking for a software solution. The following year, they also decided to look into a mobile bidding solution to streamline their processes even more.

Solution

Adopting Greater Giving's event software solution made a huge difference during registration. Natalie Legendre, who completed all of ACS New Orleans's data entry, couldn't rave enough about it. "Go Time—I love it," she said, referring to Greater Giving's online check-in and check-out tool. "It's incredible!"

Not only did Go Time streamline check-in and check-out, but with Greater Giving, the team was able to obtain guests' names and phone numbers early—making it possible to move 1200 guests through registration and check-out, with no complaints. The software also enabled them to keep the massive event organized, and run powerful reports after the fact to help them prepare for next year.

Introducing Online Bidding presented the group with a bit of a conundrum. ACS New Orleans's event draws a wide range of ages, and while they knew millennials wouldn't struggle with the new mobile bidding technology, they were concerned about their older constituents.

Tips from American Cancer Society— New Orleans

- Train your event night-of volunteers early in the day, and be sure to establish clear expectations. Have the same volunteers work the same desk throughout the entire event for consistency.
- Start using the software and entering your data early in the planning process. Don't wait until the last minute, or you'll find yourself overloaded.
- Be organized and consistent with your data entry throughout pre-event prep.
- If you have a question along the way, call the Greater Giving customer support line—they're there to help.
- Check and make sure your Venue Wifi is strong and/or have back up plan

So the auction team targeted the problem by setting up a number of Bid Assistants around the venue. Equipped with iPads, the Bid Assistants were there to help explain things to guests who were just becoming familiar with mobile bidding. The Assistants learned the Online Bidding system easily, and by the time the event started, they were more than well-informed about how to use it, and were able to help out guests in need.

Results

After adopting Greater Giving's Event Software and Online Bidding products, every component of the auction performed better than the year before. Their professional auctioneer, Chuck Mutz, raised \$10,000 more than they were expecting; the Fund-A-Need, intended for the purchase of a new van for their Hope Lodge, brought in double what they'd hoped!

Using Greater Giving not only helped manage check-in and check-out, but most importantly, it kept everything in the auction organized. Introducing a mobile bidding component with Greater Giving's Online Bidding made the auction more efficient than ever, and gave a huge boost to dollars raised—which means the American Cancer Society of New Orleans can help even more people.

As the auction team tells it, good planning, good people, and a good system made for a record-breaking event. The combination of adopting Greater Giving Event Software, and introducing Online Bidding, helped ACS New Orleans exceed their fundraising goal by \$30,000!