Parties, People & Pixels

After a year of planning, don't forget to get pictures of the event itself! Once it's over, you'll forget exactly what the centerpieces looked like or how the stage backdrop looked against your speakers.

Set the Stage

Once everything is set up, take photos of all aspects. Even though these rarely get published, they provide a great record for future reference.

- Registration
- Auction area
- Table decor
- Stage setting

Picture Etiquette

Timing: The best time for people photos is the first 60 to 90 minutes, generally during the social or reception part of the event. After that, people are on their second or third beverage and it begins to show in their eyes.

Lineup

Try and have no more than four people in a photo. Two or four people photographed from the waist up is perfect for publication and makes it easy to see who is in the photo.

Table Shot

Often requested, but rarely published as it shows lots of table but very small people.

Beverages

Avoid photographing people holding a beverage. This is especially important with politicians and celebrities. Give them an opportunity to set down their glass and they will usually be happy to smile.

Names

Get the names of people in the photos, starting from left to right. Don't be shy - people like having their name spelled correctly.

Nametags

Ask people to take off their nametags for the photo.

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Key Shots
Before the party, make a list of people you want photographed, as well as the key "activities" of the program. Don't get so focused on the list that you miss some good candids - pictures of happy people at an event are always a plus.

Key People
This list generally includes:
- Event chairs
- Executive director
- Major sponsors
- Celebrities
- Board members
- Guests representative of the publication's demographics

Key Photos
"The Grip and Grin"
This is a photo of someone receiving a plaque while shaking hands and smiling at the camera, and one that is often printed.
- As the photographer, get ready for the shot by framing the presenter in one half of the frame - leaving room for the recipient in the other half.
- Pre-focus on the presenter by pressing lightly on the shutter release and hold it at that position. Then when the two turn to the camera, finish pushing the shutter button.
- Check the photo afterward and don't be shy about grabbing them for a re-shoot after the program.

"The Ribbon Cut"
This picture celebrates the grand opening of something, usually shot at the entrance with a row of people holding giant scissors.
- Lighting is often a challenge, so check your ISO setting.
- Try to get no more than five people.
- Have them look at the camera for a photo before they cut and then count off the actual cutting.

"The Big Check"
This picture is exactly like it sounds - people standing behind a giant check.
- Have them hold the check slightly angled toward the ground (eliminates reflection).
- Hold the check level with the middle of their chests.

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