

Creating a Successful Cycling Event That Benefits the Community

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Introduction

Cycling events have been around for centuries, and they have evolved into one of the most popular and exciting ways for people to celebrate their love of cycling. Creating a successful cycling event, however, is a complex and challenging process that requires careful planning and execution. As an event director, you must be prepared to navigate a wide range of challenges, from marketing and volunteer management to food and beverage options and the environmental impact. Despite these challenges, the benefits of a well-executed cycling event are immense. Every cycling event from the biggest European stage races to your local fundraiser can have massive effects on the sport, the people, and its community. Whether you are planning a small community ride or a large-scale stage race, this article will provide you with the knowledge and tools you need to create a successful cycling event and make a positive impact in your community.

Establishing The Purpose

The first step in creating a cycling event is to determine the purpose and goals of the event. You can have a variety of goals because the Cycling industry has been accelerating recently, an article posted by NPD stated that “Cycling Industry Sales Growth Accelerated in April, Up 75%, Generating an Unprecedented \$1 Billion for the Month” (Powell). Your purpose can be things like raising awareness for a cause or organization, promoting cycling as a sport or activity, or simply bringing the community together. It is important to have a clear understanding of the event's purpose and goals so that it can be planned effectively. Without a clear purpose, it is difficult to determine the type of event that will be held, the audience that will be targeted, and the resources that will be needed.

In my experience as an event director, the purpose of the event is one of the most important aspects to consider. For example, if the purpose of the event is to raise awareness for a cause or organization, it is important to have clear messaging throughout the event that aligns with the cause or organization. Additionally, it is important to identify potential partners or sponsors that share the same values or goals as the event. To do this I sat down with the Ridgeline Outdoor COllebtice board and came up with our events purpose and the kind of message we wanted to send to people. In the end, it is important that your event help the community in some way whether it just bringing more people into the town or donating the money, anything helps.

The Route

The next step in creating a cycling event is to plan the route. This includes determining the distance, terrain, and safety of the route. It is important to consider the needs of the participants, such as rest stops, water stations, and medical assistance. Additionally, it is crucial to ensure that the route is properly marked and communicated to the participants.

Creating a well-planned route is essential for the success of the event. A poorly planned route can lead to confusion among participants, cause safety concerns, and lead to negative reviews of the event. Before planning the route, it is important to conduct research on the area to identify potential hazards or issues. For example, if the event is in a city, it is important to consider the flow of traffic and ensure that the route is not on busy roads. An article by Bicycling magazine confirms this, they stated: "The roads with the least traffic make for a safer experience"(Coté). Something that I did to ensure my events route was as easy to follow and as well put together as possible was I pre-rode it multiple times. Each time I did this I would think of new ways to add or change the route to improve it. No matter the kind of cycling event that you trying to plan the route is a major factor to consider.

Advertising / Promoting

Another important aspect of creating a cycling event is promoting the event. This can include advertising through social media, flyers, and word of mouth. It is important to target the desired audience and promote the event in areas where cyclists are likely to see the advertisement.

Creating a comprehensive marketing plan is essential for promoting the event. The plan should identify the target audience and include clear messaging that aligns with the purpose and goals of the event. Additionally, it is important to use multiple channels to promote the event, such as social media, flyers, and word of mouth. Partnering with local bike shops and cycling clubs can also be effective in promoting the event to the cycling community. BikeReg is an online website used by almost all cycling events to promote and mainly allows participants to have a smooth and intuitive registration process for any cycling event. In an article posted by *BikeReg*, details the different ways to do this using their site when registering, like using the merchandise section so participants can easily view and purchase items ("Online Cycling"). One of the ways that I promoted the event is I created flyers with scannable codes that took you to the registration site. I printed these out and took them to my other races. I would pass them out at the race giving people an easy way to register and further promoting my event. Doing this is also giving your sponsors advertising which helps the community. This is way promoting your event is one of the most important things to do.

Day of The Event

The day of the event requires extensive preparation to ensure that everything runs smoothly. This includes coordinating with volunteers, vendors, and law enforcement to ensure the event is safe and enjoyable for all participants. It is also important to have a plan in place for emergencies and unexpected situations.

Having a well-organized event is essential for creating a positive experience for participants. The day of the event should be well-coordinated, with clear communication among volunteers, vendors, and law enforcement. Additionally, it is important to have a designated communication plan and emergency response team in place. This can include having a first aid station, a bike repair station, and communication devices that can be used to coordinate with volunteers or law enforcement in case of an emergency. Sean Curran is my mentor and an expert in branding, marketing, and creating events. Event co-director Sean Curran agreed with me stating, “The only way to have a successful event of any kind is to make sure you are as organized as possible”(Curran). One of the things that I did to make sure the day of the event went as smoothly as possible was I was up and working at 4:00 and to make sure I had enough time to do everything that needed to be done. It is also important to be organized the day of the event because if something goes wrong or delays the event it not only reflects badly on you but on the town and the community. So whether you’re planning your own cycling event or wedding, being organized is essential to your success and helping the community.

Delegation

Delegation is a crucial component in creating a successful cycling event. As the event director, managing every aspect of the event on your own can quickly become overwhelming. It is important to create a committee that includes individuals with expertise in fundraising, public relations, and event planning. Additionally, it is essential to tap into personal networks, including friends, family, riding buddies, and community organizations, to find the labor for the event.

The key to effective delegation is to divvy up the duties and assign a chief to each area. These areas can include registration, course setup, food management, money management, and mechanical support. As *Bicycling Magazine* explains, "The key is having chiefs who know their line of work and can quickly train and lead their volunteers." By assigning specific chiefs to these areas, event directors can ensure that the right person is in charge of each aspect of the event. This allows them to focus on their own responsibilities as event directors and ensures that every aspect of the event is handled by an expert in that field. Alan Cote, event director, stated in his article about important points for making cycling events "Managing everything solo will stretch you thinner than worn-out spandex. You'll need a committee that includes expertise in fund-raising, public relations, and event planning"(Cote). By effectively delegating duties and creating a strong team, event directors can avoid being stretched too thin and ensure that their cycling event runs seamlessly. One of the ways that I used this was to delegate groups of people to go out and mark the course with tape and arrows before the vent and clean it up afterward. Having a committee with chiefs who have expertise

in their areas, and a group of volunteers who are trained and ready to handle their assigned tasks can be the key to a successful cycling event.

First Impressions

Creating a cycling event requires an incredible amount of planning and coordination. As an event director, it is your responsibility to ensure that every aspect of the event is perfect, and this includes making a great first impression on all participants. The registration and start areas are the face of the event, and it is essential to make sure that they are comfortable and welcoming for all attendees. One key element of this is finding an indoor space, such as a school gym, to accommodate registration and provide shelter from the elements. This will ensure that volunteers are comfortable and that the event runs smoothly. Furthermore, it is crucial to ensure that there are enough portable toilets stationed in the parking lot to accommodate participants' needs. Preride nervous urination is common among participants and having more than enough toilets can help to alleviate any stress or discomfort.

As highlighted in Bicycling Magazine, having a PA system for announcements and instructions can help to keep chaos and confusion in check, which is especially important at the start of the event. In addition to this, playing music can help to create a festive atmosphere and get participants excited about the ride ahead. Finally, as the registration and start areas are the face of the event, it is crucial to ensure that they are clean and well-organized. By providing clear signage and making sure that everything is in its proper place, participants will have a positive impression of the event and will be more likely to recommend it to others.

In addition to making a good first impression on participants, it is also crucial to ensure that the event has a positive impact on the local community. Cycling events can have a wide range of effects on the areas in which they are held, from boosting the local economy to promoting cycling as a mode of transportation.

Supporting Individuals and Helping the Community

Cycling events can have a positive impact on individuals and communities. Research has shown that cycling can improve mental health, and physical fitness, and reduce stress levels. Cycling events can also promote tourism, stimulate the local economy, and bring communities together. And there are only going to be more opportunities to make cycling events. According to Blue Weave Consulting, “the global mountain bike market reached USD 12,619.0 million in 2020 and is projected to reach USD 22,768.5 million by 2027, growing at a CAGR of 8.95%” (BlueWeave). Sean Curran stated that, “Cycling events can also have a positive impact on local communities. They can bring people together and promote a sense of community. Additionally, they can help promote healthy living and physical fitness, which can have a positive impact on public health”. No matter the scale of your event just the act of pulling one off is bound to help your community and this will only get easier with the increase in the global cycling market.

Conclusion:

The rewards of successfully organizing a cycling event can be significant and when they are put together thoughtfully and carefully they will have a massive impact on the community. From the Tour de France to the smallest local rides, cycling events bring people together and offer a fun and healthy way to enjoy the sport of cycling. In the end, cycling events are not only a celebration of the sport, but they also offer a unique opportunity to bring people together, promote healthy living, and create a positive impact on communities and the environment. Whether you're an experienced event organizer or just starting out, the possibilities are endless and the impact of your event can be far-reaching and long-lasting. So why not start planning your own cycling event today and be a part of something truly special?

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