

What to do if you cancel your special event



MAP

MISSION ADVANCEMENT



Objectives for Today

- *Tangible / practical ideas to take back to your team*
- *Hope in the midst of chaos*



Everyone is
experiencing the same
unprecedented anxiety

Be a calm & collected
voice of reason



A young boy with short dark hair, wearing a light blue and white striped shirt, is sitting on a wooden table. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. In front of him is a large stack of books. The background is a blurred library or bookstore with bookshelves filled with books. The overall lighting is warm and soft.

DISCERNING THE BEST PATH FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

WHAT TO DO IF YOU CANCEL YOUR SPECIAL EVENT



YOUR EVENT IS CANCELLED....
NOW WHAT DO YOU DO?

- 1 Nothing**
- 2 Reschedule**
- 3 Something New / Virtual**



*Most Important Question
to Answer.....*

**Why do we do
special events?**





PRIMARY REASONS FOR EVENTS GENERALLY FALL INTO 3 BROAD CATEGORIES:

- Raising money
- Connecting with/engaging people
- Sharing our mission





IN LIGHT OF AN EVENT CANCELLATION, THE QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED:

- Can we connect with/engage people?
- Can we share our mission?
- Can we raise money?



Who are the stakeholders in special events?



SPECIAL EVENT STAKEHOLDERS

- › Sponsors / Donors (those who commit early)
- › Attendees
- › Staff / Volunteers

PEOPLE



What do these people care about?

WHAT TO DO IF YOU CANCEL YOUR SPECIAL EVENT



SPECIAL EVENT STAKEHOLDERS

- › Sponsors / Donors
- › Attendees
- › Staff / Volunteers

Nice
Dinner?

Mission / Impact?

Auction
Items?

Entertainment?



WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT PEOPLE?

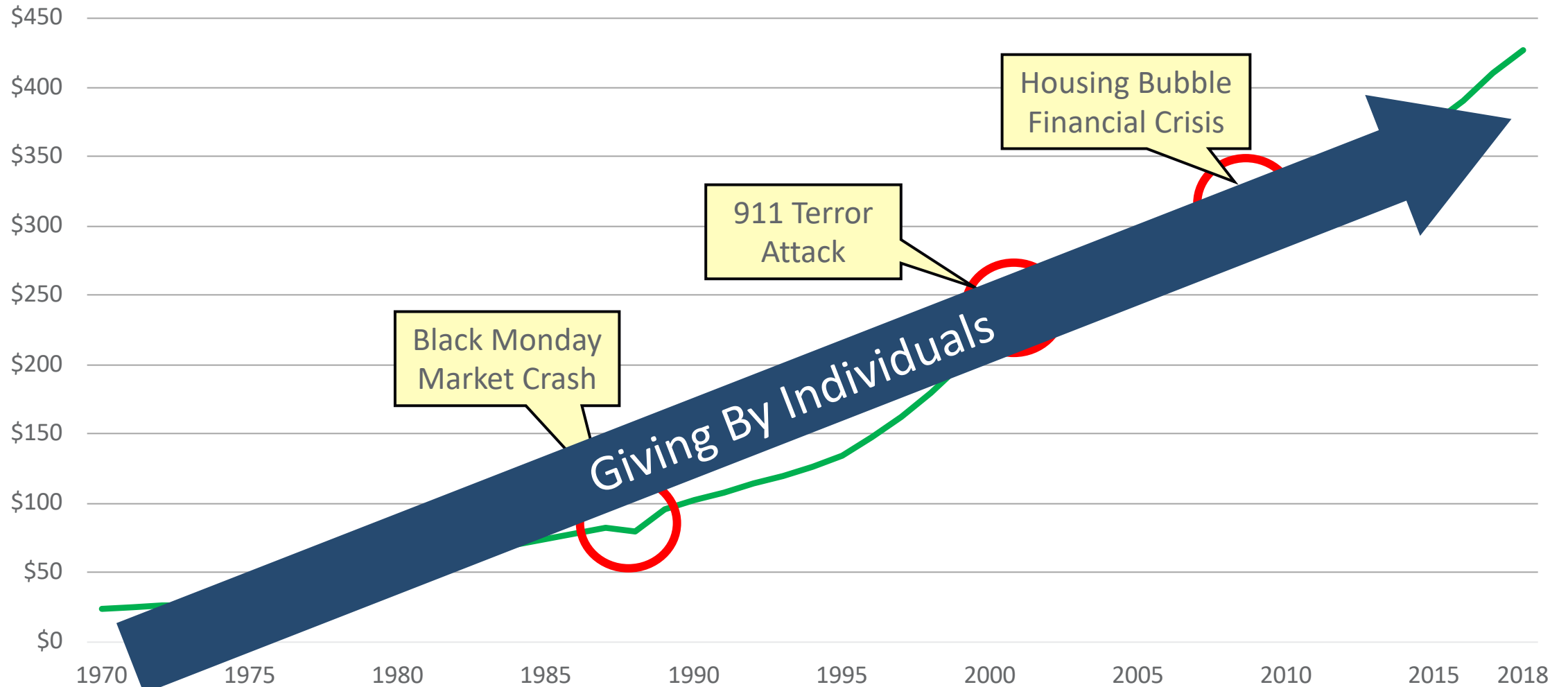
INDIVIDUALS WILL GIVE...

- Giving in the U.S. has risen consistently over the past 60+ years
- There are two exceptions to this year-over-year growth – 1987-88 and 2007-09
- Philanthropy in America in those two time periods fell less than 4% in each instance
- But giving from individuals did not drop in either instance
- Giving from individuals accounts for over 70% of all philanthropy in America and has been the most consistent and sustainable funding



Source: *Giving USA*

USA Giving in Billions



WHAT TO DO IF YOU CANCEL YOUR SPECIAL
EVENT

THE CASE AGAINST “NOTHING”

- If people care about your mission, you owe it to them to communicate your circumstances and needs
- Your mission continues to be vital during this crisis and/or will be vital post-crisis
- If you choose “nothing,” your donors will be listening to (and possibly responding to) someone else



YOUR EVENT IS CANCELLED.... NOW WHAT DO YOU DO?

1 Nothing

2 Reschedule

3



Is rescheduling the right path for your organization?



WHAT TO DO IF YOU CANCEL YOUR SPECIAL EVENT

CONSIDERATIONS FOR RESCHEDULING

- › Cash flow
- › Fiscal year
- › Venue availability
- › Other competing events / conflicts
- › Staff / volunteer availability



If rescheduling is right
for you, what happens
between now and then?



COMMUNICATION PLAN DURING EVENT “RECESS”

- Personally contact top supporters (event sponsors, large individual givers)
- Ask how they are doing, how have they been impacted?
- Let them know what is happening in your organization
 - Mission impact
 - Fundraising & communication plans
- Update them on rescheduled event & commit to keeping them in the loop personally!
- What should they expect from you in the coming weeks/months? If appropriate, how can they support you?



Opportunities brought about by rescheduling...



OPPORTUNITIES WHEN RESCHEDULING

- Review the event objectives (non-financial)
- Is our mission front and center?
- How can we improve the current format?
- Evaluate revenue-to-cost ratios and ensure the event is doing what you need it to do!
- Don't be afraid to ask tough questions



YOUR EVENT IS CANCELLED....
NOW WHAT DO YOU DO?

- 1 Nothing**
- 2 Reschedule**
- 3 Something Virtual / New**



Opportunities brought about
with something new...



WHAT TO DO IF YOU CANCEL YOUR SPECIAL EVENT

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?

- Connect with people
- Share our mission
- Raise money



OPPORTUNITIES WITH SOMETHING NEW

- Immediate communication with supporters
 - How are you?
 - Impact on our mission & our event
 - What are our next steps?
 - What do you think?
- Engage creative resources
 - Board members
 - Community leaders / partners



OPPORTUNITIES WITH SOMETHING NEW (CONTINUED)

- Mission Impact Stories – tell your story in a new way
 - Digital / virtual options
 - Bring mission to life in different ways
 - Personal stories of hope / healing / impact
- Reinvent the Event!



What is best for your organization?



WHAT TO DO IF YOU CANCEL YOUR SPECIAL EVENT

DISCERNING THE RIGHT PATH

- Determine reality of short-term revenue needs
- Convene with organization leadership to weigh pros and cons of all options
- ASK your top supporters, board members, and other stakeholders
- Engage those closest to the organization in the discernment process



*It is impossible to know or
understand the mindset of
your support base unless
you ASK them*



*Six months from now, what
will you wish you would
have done more and/or
better during this time?*



NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST!

- ☐ Discern the best path related to your event – do nothing, reschedule, or something new/virtual
- ☐ Develop an “event recess” communication plan
- ☐ Understand the concerns and mindset of your top supporters – maintain personal contact
- ☐ Keep your mission in front of your full support base during this time – do not apologize for communicating your needs!
- ☐ Use the opportunity of time to evaluate your event and make it better / mission focused
- ☐ Engage board and community partners in the creation of new strategies





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Go to our website: MissionAdvancement.com

Development Strategies During COVID-19 Crisis

Mission Advancement is offering you and your organization a free 30-minute consultation with one of our development professionals – no strings attached.



YOUR QUESTIONS





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