



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY BAKERSFIELD - BUILDING AN OFFICE OF EVENTS

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Events

BACKGROUND

- CSU Bakersfield is located in Central California and is one of 23 campuses in the CSU System
- Over 8,000 students and 1,200 faculty and staff
- Historically events were managed by various departments
- A review of the event reservation processes began prior to my arrival
- This overall project was assigned to the division - University Advancement



IN THE BEGINNING...

SCHEDULING OF NON-ACADEMIC SPACE

- De-centralized campus scheduling of rentable space for events -
 - Academic Spaces
 - Athletic Facilities and Fields
 - Dezember Leadership Development Center
 - Dore Theatre - seats 500
 - Amphitheatre and Lawns
 - Parking Lots
 - Runner Café Complex
 - Student Recreation Center (opened in May 2009)
 - Student Union
 - Walter Stiern Library



IN THE BEGINNING...

RESERVATIONS

- Lack of consistent policy and procedure for events and reservation forms
 - Verbal
 - Fax
 - Email
- Difficult process to arrange for other resources such as parking
 - Email
 - Work Orders



IN THE BEGINNING...

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

- Unfriendly access to rentable space on campus by external community
 - No centralized area for facility use contacts
 - Had to make own arrangements for all event needs, such as parking, chair set-up
 - Costs were more subjective and inconsistent



DEVELOPING THE GAME PLAN

- University Leadership determined a need for a centralized system for scheduling non-academic space for events
- Project was assigned to the VP of University Advancement
 - Build an office that allowed for 'one-stop shopping'
 - Hire a Director of Events and an Event Coordinator
 - Update policy and procedures to ensure consistency
- Ensure that we were more community-access friendly for facility use and events



DEVELOPING THE GAME PLAN

ASSUMPTIONS

- Current system in place, just needed improvement
- Event resources were developed to support events
 - Facility coordinators had tools to manage requests
 - UPD began charging for parking, but inconsistent policy
 - Facilities management had limited resources such as equipment and staff
- An event coordinator could manage all reservations and facilitate all events, although unknown how many events we were holding



IMPLEMENTATION - PHASE 1

DIRECTOR OF EVENTS

- Evaluated the current process
 - Reviewed current facility use forms - more than five in circulation and each area had their own version, inconsistent use
 - Reviewed the work flow process of the reservation form
 - Met with various facility operators to discuss their expectations of the event coordinator
- Created a contact list -
<http://www.csub.edu/reservations.html>
 - Ensured we had appropriate contacts with areas
 - Posted to the CSUB website
- Began work on updating policy and procedures
- Created a 'special event guide'
- Challenges - Backburner



IMPLEMENTATION - PHASE 1

EVENT COORDINATOR

- Primary contact for all non-academic events held on campus
- Manage key areas as a facility coordinator
 - DLDC - manage set-ups, order AV, IT, parking and catering
 - Amphitheatre - seats more than 5,000 guests, primary rental space for outdoor areas and has other special needs such as a bio-survey
 - Other miscellaneous areas that included lawns, parking lots , etc.
- Create a 'one-stop' shopping experience
- Build a plan to market non-academic spaces to the external community
- Evaluate comps in the area to ensure we were in-line with best practices including hotels



IMPLEMENTATION - PHASE 2

OFFICE OF EVENTS - STRUCTURE

- Created the University Event Scheduling Office (UES) overseen by the Events Coordinator
- Facility Coordinators indirectly reported to the Events Coordinator
- Created a task force to include key stakeholders
 - Stakeholders included facility coordinators and support roles such as UPD, SRM, ITSS, and FMGMT
 - Determined rentable space and breakdown in to area - <http://www.csub.edu/events/venues.shtml>
 - Evaluated work flow process for scheduling space and approval of reservations and/or events
 - Started reviewing the current reservation forms and created 'universal' reservation form and impact on support services



IMPLEMENTATION - PHASE 2

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- Continued reviewing and updating event policy and procedure to match our new structure - <http://www.csub.edu/events/policies/>
 - This had a ripple effect to include other policies and procedures
 - Catering
 - Alcohol with Application
 - Insurance
 - ADA Compliance
 - Off-Campus Events
 - Worked with various stakeholders to review documents, such as SRM and Student Union
 - Started building template for events' website



IMPLEMENTATION - PHASE 2

MARKETING TO EXTERNAL GUESTS

- Began marketing the on-campus event space on campus to external community
 - Event Coordinator continued full over-sight of key areas that support the community
 - Created a full-service experience for our external guests - liaising with parking, safety and risk, etc.
 - Ensured a 'one-stop' experience
- Kaiser Permanente - Case Study
 - First meeting in October 2009
 - Retreat in April 2010
 - Led to small donation and then three-year larger donation to nursing department



IMPLEMENTATION - PHASE 3

P&P REVIEW

- Presentation of the improved Policy and Procedure and New Structure
 - Review and approval challenges
 - Informal Event
 - Presented through the Vice President
 - New issues on the table
 - Working with new stakeholders
 - More buy-in = more challenges
 - More participants = less solutions
 - New players in UPD and SRM roles
 - Commitment to review process and improve in six months
 - Needed to start to find the 'bugs'
 - Monthly reviews with the facility coordinator team
 - All events signed off by the cabinet after review from UPD and SRM for 90% of events



IMPLEMENTATION - PHASE 3

CAMPUS COMMUNITY ROLL-OUT

- Sent email regarding new reservation form
 - Did not include reference to the improved policy and procedures
 - Lack of consistency on following new P&P
 - No enforcement procedure in place
- Built and announced new Office of Events through Website - www.csub.edu/events
 - Promoted on our campus community boards
 - Promoted to off-campus guests
 - Used to organize information and communicate event information
- Established monthly event workshop forums with on-campus event contacts



IMPLEMENTATION - PHASE 3

ROLL-OUT CHALLENGES

- Shift from Autonomy to Centralized with Collaboration (facility coordinators)
- Unrealistic expectations of the events coordinator as 'one-stop' shop
 - More than 2,000 events
 - Lack of automation
- Most facility coordinators are part-time
- The 'on-line' form wasn't always used electronically
- New system overwhelmed the support services
 - Budget Constraints
 - Lack of systems in place to support need



JUNE REVIEW

FACILITY COORDINATORS

- Evolved the monthly Facility Coordinator to an Event Ops Meetings
- Discussed ways to improve the communication between the facility coordinators and event support team (i.e. athletic events)
- Encouraged facility coordinators and event operations team to reach out to the OOE/UES for support
- Discussed current process flow of the form approval and improvement without an on-line system
- Updated the facility use form from one per area to one form for all areas



JUNE REVIEW

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

- Reviewed and discussed areas of improvement with stakeholders; final revisions on hold for new event scheduling system
 - Policy and Procedure
 - Resources (tables, chairs, parking, insurance)
 - Billing
- Continued to improve customer service with external guests and increased use of CSUB space
 - Surveys
- Met with Student Leadership and Involvement staff to create Event Workshop for Students
 - Improvement on student events and proper paperwork



CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

- Working to implement a new event scheduling software system to improve the cumbersome facility use process - Spring 2012
- Event Operations Team is challenging the group to ensure that we follow the Policy and Procedure
- External guest use has increased 100% since 2008 and we continue to get compliments on our access



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Evaluate current state of affairs
- Create a task force group that includes key stake holders
- Research best practices from comparative institutions that fit your campus' needs
 - CSU San Marcos
 - Cal Berkeley
- Develop a plan and ensure you have an executive sponsor
- Ensure communication to all key stakeholders that assist with buy-in



TAKE AWAYS

- Building a centralized office of events in an academic setting
- Creating an event policy and procedure and implementation
- Review and improve during the process

