

## AuctionStuff Consignments Recession-Proofing Your Event Procurement

Imagine offering your bidders a private 7000 sq. ft. Villa on the beach in Bali. A Luxury Condo on the Beach in Cancun with a Marlin Fishing Experience or day of swimming with the dolphins. Or how about an African Photo Safari? Perhaps your guests would rave over a trip to St. Andrews, Scotland where you have a chance to play golf on the Old Course, or take a trip to Paris where they have the opportunity to participate in a cooking class at the famous Le Ritz Escoffier? Or would they love to have an authentic Masters Tournament pin flag autographed by Tiger Woods hanging in their living room or study?

Certainly these are amazing items – in some cases a once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, and auction guests will pay top-dollar for a chance to take or own one of these premier trips or items. But, it's rare, particularly in this economy, to find these types of items, much less have them donated to your event.

### What are Consigned Items?

Say the word “consignments” to some people and they’ll immediately advise you against them. A “consignment” is an item that is provided for sale at your auction by a supplier with the intent that it will sell for higher than the cost paid to that supplier. You pay for the item after it has been sold, and if the item does not sell, it may be returned to the supplier (if it's a physical item), or simply not purchased (in the case of an intangible trip or experience).

Many organizations have had negative experiences with companies that offer to bring in a collection of items, such as sports memorabilia, jewelry, or art, and agree to share the proceeds with your charitable organization. Problem is, at the end of the event, when the vendor deducts its costs, you find you've actually made only 40/30/20% or less from these items.

### When to Use Consigned Items

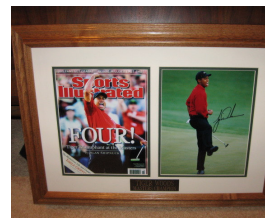
Clients frequently ask us about the wisdom of adding what are essentially “purchased” items to their auctions. Historically, we have recommended against charities using consignments, but recently conditions have changed such that, under specific conditions, consignments make good sense.

Ideally, you'd get all your items fully donated, but when that isn't possible, -- or aren't getting the premium items you want to differentiate your event from the many others competing for constituents' dollars, -- carefully choosing one or two unique trips or items may be right for your organization. Moreover, with the challenges of the current economy having an effect on what items and at what value people or companies are willing to fully donate, consigned items that can contribute to raising incremental revenue may make a significant difference in your guests' experience as well as your event's bottom line.

### What can you offer?

Through our relationship with many different vendors and suppliers, we can offer you:

- Trips, both domestic and international (with airfare or without)
- Unique experiences
- Villas and other luxury properties
- Art
- Sports/TV/Hollywood Memorabilia
- Collectibles
- ...and more





## How We're Different

You may have seen or heard of other companies that offer to help you with your auction procurement process. But, after the event, by the time you've paid for their items and services, you find you end up with only 30, 20, or even as little as 10% of the "revenue" you thought you'd made! You'll find in working with us, we'll only offer you items where we (and you!) can be very sure that the maximum return is to your charity, not to the auction company or its vendors! And, unlike some of our competitors, we're always happy to provide you with references!

Other companies and agents sometimes require you to make a payment payable to them, specifically, not to the supplier or vendor who is ultimately providing the trip or item. There are potential problems with this scenario including the risks that:

- The item you included in your auction actually had a much lower cost than what had been represented to you by the intermediary at the time you accepted the placement.
- You have no idea that the trip or item came from a reputable source that will stand behind the placement should there be any problem with an item or redemption of a trip or experience.
- In the worst case, the "agent" placing your trip may accept the money from your organization, but never pass it on to the trip or item supplier. If that "agent" or organization goes out of business, or disappears, you will have a host of unhappy winners who have paid for their auction items, with no way to fulfill their purchase.

We always have you make the payment for items or trips we represent payable directly to the vendor or supplier we work with, after your event is over and the item has sold. That's the best way to avoid any potential problems, and keeps you informed of who is actually providing the trip to you, your charity, and your winners so you're never in the dark about what you paid for, to whom, and how much it really cost or was really worth.

## About our Service

Rather than just show you a generic collection of items and expect you to decide what will work best for your event, part of the service we offer to our charity clients is that we will consult with you to ensure the items you select are ideally suited to your specific audience, based on several factors. These may include:

- Demographics of your audience (what is their spending appetite, typically, what has sold well in the past, their general interests, etc.)
- Your event goals
- Number of attendees
- Financial goals: Are you trying to make a major jump in revenue, or just incremental increases?

The inventory of what we have to offer changes continually, so it's our job to keep up with what's available, what's working well, even what's an upcoming trend. We can even often find VERY unique items that can match your event theme or specific need – all designed to help your items not only sell, but sell *well*.

## Getting Started

As a first step, you may want to check out our website: <http://auctionitems.maestroweb.com>. On this site you will be able to view some spectacular items provided by our list of donors who want to help your fundraising effort. Through our relationships with several vendors and donors, we can offer these items for your charity auction or fundraiser to jump-start or supplement your auction procurement.

As you look through the site, we want you to know that these items are only a very small subset of what can offer – there are literally *hundreds* of pages of items we can provide, so many we can't keep up. You'll also see dollar amounts that represent the *value* of the item, not the cost. For planning purposes, you can use 50% of the value of the item shown as your approximate cost. We'll give you exact costs of items before you decide to use them.

## For more Information

Let us help you with getting one or two unique items that'll make YOUR event stand out and will help you raise those precious dollars for your cause. For more information, call or email us at: [auctionitems@maestroweb.com](mailto:auctionitems@maestroweb.com). One of our representatives will get back to you right away!