

Grand Old Planners: LogiCom Builds on Political Event Roots

By: Joe Morris
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After putting together events surrounding the Bush inaugural, last week's state GOP dinner featuring Vice President Dick Cheney wasn't too much of a task for LogiCom Project Management. But partners Steve Robinson and Steve Tolman weren't leaving anything to chance.

"Our name, LogiCom, is an amalgam of logistics and communications, which is what we do," Robinson says of the six year-old firm he founded, as Secret Service agents scoured the Nashville Convention Center. "It's the day-to-day grind of events, from entertainment booking to video, lights and sound. We're not all things to all people, but we've had the opportunity to produce some really cool events of all sizes."

"We'll do as much or as little as the client wants," Tolman says. "In some cases we just do entertainment, with others it's everything from the ground up. What we've had happen in some cases is that we'll just do one thing one year, and then they ask us back the next year and give us more responsibilities."

Such has been the case with the Tennessee Republican Party which capitalized on LogiCom's Capitol experience.

"They're always great to work with," says Bryan Kaegi, Finance Director for the state GOP. "This time in particular with the Vice President, we had so much Secret Service. We also were in a new location, the convention center, so it was great to have their

experience with the major events in DC, they knew what was going to be needed, and what to do. It was a huge load off our shoulders."



Mark Humphrey/AP Photo

The company's political involvement goes back to its roots. Robinson and a former partner began the company after a stint with Lamar Alexander's presidential campaign, during which time they saw "such a void" in production companies handling political events. With a GOP client base assembled immediately, the company set forth. After his partner decamped to return to Washington, he was joined by Tolman, who has worked on developing the company's corporate and nonprofit event base.

The political calendar is getting larger and larger with less down time," Robinson says, "but we still want to do more corporate business to fill what dead time we have."

The two utilize part-time assistance in Washington and Las Vegas, but say they don't want to send too much work out.

"Our whole reason for being is that six years ago the trend was towards outsourcing," Robinson says. "Companies used to try to

keep in-house event planners and they realized it wasn't an economical use of their staff. With that in mind, it's never made sense for us to have a large staff. We have two video companies that we use for nine out of ten events so we feel like they're in-house, and we have sound and lights

companies that we use often as well.

Although a disproportionate number of the company's 60 to 70 events per year are in the nation's capital, the two partners say they plan to keep their Nashville base, continuing to work with their strong corps of country music contacts to provide entertainment at events for which they might be doing little, or nothing, else.

"Every year we do two major GOP events here, so we always have those to plan around," Robinson says. "But now we've done events in 42 states, so we definitely will be traveling more than we already are. I guess we're still waiting for an average year."

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