





ARE WE SAFE YET?

JASON HENSEL

Dr. Ben Goss always carries a sack-pack into events. He hates to carry things in his pockets, and it comes in handy when he picks up one or two souvenir items. The pack is a small bag with a drawstring and is smaller than most women's purses.

Goss was attending the Bayou Country SuperFest, a two-day outdoor country music show at Louisiana State University's Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge. Before he entered the gates where tickets were scanned, he was subjected to the routine bag-check procedures—bumping the bottom of the bag and a glance inside the bag's open top. Standard procedure, with no unusual signage or verbal instructions about bags to be seen. He even checked the event's Twitter feed for any kind of change in

backpack policy. His ticket was scanned, and he was admitted without incident.

Goss had a seat in one of the stadium club suites. As he proceeded to the elevator, two deputies stopped him and said he could not carry his pack into the suites and would need to take it back to his car. He showed them the size of the pack and pointed out that it was smaller than a woman's purse, but they told him they had rules to follow.

"I told them it had been checked, and they told me I shouldn't have been allowed in with it at all," said Goss, an associate professor of entertainment management at Missouri State University who will be at Stetson University in August. "I asked why, and they said that was the rule this year and they worked to hustle me outside. I asked how I'd be able to get back in, and they said the people at the gate would let me back in."

The deputies took Goss to a gate supervisor who reassured him she'd let him re-enter. On the way back to his car, he stopped to talk with some police officers and asked them if a

I FELT THAT I WAS BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST BY NOT BEING ALLOWED TO BRING IN MY SACKY-PACK.

"no backpacks" policy was really enforced at the event. One officer told him it was, and that he could thank the Boston bombers for it.

When Goss returned to the gate, the supervisor who was to let him in was gone. He explained his story to the scanner why

his ticket wouldn't scan, and she let him in without question.

"On the way back in, I stopped to complain to one of the event personnel at the foot of the elevator who'd seen what had happened," Goss said. "I told her that she needed to pass the word to her supervisor that I'd bought two suite tickets (worth over \$300 each) for all four years, and that if women could bring in large purses, I felt that I was being discriminated against by not being allowed to bring in my sacky-pack."

The event personnel said, "Sir, that's all been resolved."

Goss looked at her like she was a lunatic.

"No, it wasn't," he said. "I don't have my pack, and I would have preferred to have it."

At that time, one of the deputies came over and said, "Didn't you see us call the marshall?"

Goss said he hadn't seen them call anyone. The deputy said that after he left, one of them called to check the policy, which stated that he actually could bring in his sacky-pack.

"I took to Twitter every 15 minutes for the next two hours to express my displeasure at the severe lack of communication between all security and event parties involved with Bayou Country SuperFest," Goss said.

After the event, Goss stopped to ask the same deputies from earlier about the pack policy for the next day.

"They gruffly assured me that I could bring my pack into the event the next day, which indeed was the case without hassle, although I went in through a different gate and elevator entrance," Goss said. "Needless to say, I enjoyed the second day much more than the first, but I'm still dubious about buying tickets for next year's event, which should concern [the organizers], because attendance was down at least 20 percent this year."

ON THE OFFENSE

Security gets increasingly tighter across locations and events after every large-scale attack. The Boston Marathon bombing brings new scrutiny to backpacks. The shoe bomber led us all to walking barefoot through airport security. (By the way, it's surprising that the underwear bomber didn't challenge the safe-



THIS SIGN AT THE CAPE TOWN STADIUM IN SOUTH AFRICA ILLUSTRATES THE CHALLENGE OF ANTICIPATING EXACTLY WHERE TROUBLE MIGHT COME FROM.

ty of our undergarments). If someone wants to attack a group of people, that attack will take place with the most inventive means possible. Security can only go so far before we acquiesce to a military state. No manager or attendee wants that. All anyone wants is to believe they are secure, but that's a challenge.

"Creating safe places is challenging work, particularly since most event managers are forced to work within the confines of structures (or open areas) designed without their input," said Tamara D. Madensen, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. "Some structural designs—including narrow or steep walkways, inadequate restroom facilities, non-individualized seating and lack of shaded areas—tend to encourage dangerous or disorderly behavior. Still, event managers can and do influence attendee behavior by manipulating environmental features and establishing/enforcing policies for both attendees and staff."

Steven Wood Schmader, CFEE, agrees that it's impossible to protect against every scenario.

"Event [managers] don't want the primary thought of their guests to be fear and anticipation of something potentially bad happening," said Schmader, president and CEO of the International Festivals and Events Association. "The best things our events and venues can do, as a common industry, is to have a well-thought out (and rehearsed as possible) safety and security plan in place, working closely with local law enforcement, health-care and other government agencies, as well as our professional industry associations and peers, that addresses every possibility—prevention of an incident, reaction scenarios should something happen and coordinated communication efforts in all cases."

Organizers can, however, take advantage of training from FEMA, DHS, IAVM and organizations that offer the most current and effective information on venue safety, says James D. Tucker, president, CEO and general counsel of the International Association of Fairs and Expositions.

"It behooves event organizers to share with their respective communities and attendees what steps they have taken to educate themselves and through the use of emergency planning to be able to react quickly and effectively to incidents that may occur," Tucker said. "Media coverage of training exercises conducted at the venue by joint responders (if appropriate in the interest of safety) would showcase a proactive approach."

Schmader says that if attendees see that event staffs have taken safety seriously, have involved them in the process as feasible (i.e., "If you see something, say something."), have partnered with the appropriate professionals around them and have communicated to them what they need to know to plan their own responses to a bad situation (e.g., location of exits, who to contact for various situations, how to dress and prepare for the weather, family meeting spots should they get separated), they will feel as safe as any "new normal" allows them to as individuals.

"A visible presence by police, security and medical forces on site (without appearing to be a police state) carries with it a message

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they were taking all precautionary steps to protect their own guests and event against the potential of a similar scenario. Unfortunately, we live in a new and changing world; a world where we must take every feasible step to create ‘safe havens’ for our attendees.”

GOOD BEHAVIORS

When managing crowds in general, Madensen says, the most effective behavior management approach involves making “good” behaviors seem like attractive options, while making “bad” choices seem less attractive to attendees.

“People are more likely to follow rules if we make it easy and rewarding to do so,” Madensen said. “If breaking rules appears to be risky, unrewarding and inexcusable, we are more likely to elicit compliance from attendees.”

The 17th-century philosopher Thomas Hobbes recognized that humans have an inherent need to feel safe, and that is why they give up individual rights.

“It’s important to think about how many features—in fact, all the features of your daily life—rely on an assumption of a certain kind of stability, a certain kind of predictability,” said Yale University Professor Tamar Gendler, Ph.D., in her course “Philosophy and the Science of Human Nature.” “Without that kind of stability and predictability, says Hobbes, there’s continual fear and danger of violent death.”

This is where experienced managers can shine, because they are able to tell the types of triggers that set off negative crowd behaviors.

UTILIZE STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS WHO EXCEL IN GUEST SERVICES AT CRITICAL POINTS, SUCH AS AT BAG CHECKS OR METAL DETECTORS.

interventions for any scenario that can be envisioned. Pre-planning allows us to take steps to mitigate potential threats.”

Creating a stable, safe and predictable environment can be tricky, though, because if you go overboard you risk alienating attendee experiences.

“This concern is understandable if managers only use overt and aggressive security tactics to address harmful threats,” said Madensen, who will speak at the 2013 IAVM International Crowd Management Conference in November. “However, some of the best interventions are simply built into the physical environment (e.g., structures or signage that facilitate pedestrian flow and eliminate hiding spaces) or encourage positive interactions between crowd members and staff (e.g., training staff to engage in conversations with attendees who act suspicious or agitated). These ‘prevention’ measures serve to increase safety and enhance the overall guest experience.”

of preparedness and protection,” Schmadler said. “Following a tragedy like the Boston Marathon, other events may find that offense is their best defense. The Kentucky Derby Festival held a press conference shortly following the Boston bombings to extend condolences, while reassuring everyone that

It’s true, Tucker says, that steps involving interacting with attendees to provide security will have an impact on the attendees’ experiences.

“Working people through bag searches and perimeter security, for example, will take time and may cause an attendee to feel intruded upon, but it is part of what attendees have to be prepared to experience today,” he said.

Tucker suggests utilizing staff or volunteers who excel in guest services at critical points, such as at bag checks or metal detectors.

“The bottom line is that attendees are going to have to adjust their expectations, and I think they are and will continue to do so as we enhance security,” he said.

CONTINUE IMPROVEMENT

There will always be overlooked elements in any kind of security preparation. The hope is that they are minimal and overlooked by would-be attackers, too.

“It is human nature to think that ‘it won’t happen here’ or ‘we are doing all that we need to,’ and become complacent,” said Harold C. Hansen, CFE, director of life safety and security for IAVM. “Venues and event organizers must always work on continuing improvements to their security and patron safety. Additionally, training is a key building block of any security plan. Everyone on the front line must know, understand and be able to execute their part of the plan. Adopting an ongoing training program is essential.”

Even though, Goss says, most ordinary entertainment and sport events aren’t high-value targets for organized terror like that seen in Boston, like Tucker he suggests inclusion of security measures as part of the media/PR effort prior to an event.

“This can be cached as an outreach to fans, which again can serve multiple purposes by informing fans what to expect ahead of time, as well as making terrorists think twice about approaching the event,” Goss said. “Certainly, not all security measures need to be disclosed, but if shown the tip of the security iceberg, most folks will know a sizeable unseen mass of it also exists. If terrorists know the event will be secured in a high-profile, thorough and systematic way, suddenly their plans need to climb to a higher strategic level, which isn’t their preferred mode of operation. History tells us that they want to follow the path of least resistance. Accordingly, a concerted, ongoing effort to close every single imaginable gap in security should be undertaken, because every event can have soft underbelly spots that create just enough opportunity to be seized by terrorists.”

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ENSURING CONFIDENCE

Every expert spoken to says the same thing: Communication is the No. 1 way to mitigate an attack. Whether through training staff, encouraging attendees to speak up if they see something suspicious or coordinating a media effort to broadcast security efforts, it comes down to human contact. New technologies such as biometrics and room sensors will increase in popularity as security devices, but it is person-to-person interactions that will

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BOARD TABLE



Valuable Resources at Your Fingertips

I look forward to the IFEA convention every year. It provides an opportunity to reenergize and rejuvenate with our peers and to reflect on the year's accomplishments and challenges. It is one of the highlights of my year.

I attended my first IFEA convention in St. Paul, MN in 1994. I was a volunteer for a regional festival and paid for the convention myself. We drove to St. Paul and three of us shared a room. It was love at first sight. I had finally found people who knew what it was *I did the rest of the year* and shared my passion for festivals and events. This will be my 20th convention and I still have the same sense of anticipation and enthusiasm that I did 20 years ago. Where else can you connect with so many talented and passionate festival and event industry professionals, establish relationships with producers of global events, and

learn about the current industry trends and practices in three days?

The theme for the 2013 convention is "Building Bridges." The bridges you build with your peers through IFEA will last a lifetime. I hope that you make the most of your convention experience by paving your way to valuable relationships and building strong bridges with your peers. Make the most of the opportunity to benefit from their expertise, knowledge and experience.

The network of connections that I have made through my involvement with IFEA has proven to be an invaluable resource whether facing overwhelming challenges or searching for innovative ideas and best practices.

I was looking through some IFEA files and found this top ten list from a couple of years ago and thought I should share them with you. I would add *Create a Network of Industry Professionals* to the Top Ten List. A professional network can help diminish the most daunting challenges and contribute to the most brilliant successes. The enormous depth and wealth of the knowledge and experience of fellow attendees is immeasurable.

TOP TEN LIST *Why You Should Be Affiliated with the IFEA!*

- #10 Attend Seminars and Conventions Worldwide
- #9 Access Unlimited Educational Resources
- #8 Find the Best Festival and Event Vendors
- #7 Train to be a Certified Festival and Event Executive
- #6 Pick Up The Phone for Industry Advice

- #5 Participate in online educational Webinars
- #4 Seek Interns or Employees through the IFEA Job Bank
- #3 Network at the dfest®/Dixie Flag Event Services Hospitality Suite at the Annual Convention
- #2 Receive Invitations from Festivals Around the World
- #1 Meet People Who *KNOW* What You Do the Rest of the Year.

A lot has changed in the festival and event industry in 20 years, but what has remained the same are the intrinsic core values of festivals and events. While our events and locations are extremely diverse, the core principles of successful events worldwide are the same.

"From small, localized celebrations to mega-events with global outreach, festivals & events bring hope and joy that burns bright among those who attend. In fact, events have brought more people together, peacefully, than any other world entity or profession, creating memories, milestones and magic around the world." IFEA Value Statement

As event professionals, we are fortunate to be involved in one of the most exciting and inspiring industries in the world. Festivals and events continue to lift people's spirits, fuel their imagination, and create memorable experiences. Join us as we celebrate the accomplishments of 2013 and explore exciting new ideas and products for the future at the 58th Annual IFEA convention.

I look forward to seeing you in Pittsburgh, PA, September 16th-18th!

Becky Genoways

2013 IFEA World Board Chair

Email: clerick@culturalfestivals.com

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be the best defense.

"Through training and operations, security and guest services staff should do their jobs effectively and visibly," Hansen said. "Being on duty and paying attention to their environment conveys a sense that the venue staff is here, working hard to create a safe environment, [which] does a lot to create confidence. Positive guest service experiences tend to motivate good behaviors by the attendees."

Consider publicizing standards of behaviors, Goss says, as well as what security measures attendees can expect to experience, as well as to very visibly and immediately intercede to eliminate undesirable behaviors.

"If people know what to expect, if they know what's considered good and bad behavior and if they know that those standards will be enforced, almost all of them will comply," Goss said.

Then that sacky-pack wouldn't have been an issue. FM

Jason Hensel is a writer and editor who has covered the meeting and event industry for the last 10 years. You can reach him at davincitx@gmail.com. This article is republished with permission from IAVM's Facility Manager magazine.