

Belhar Internet Fiesta report
Lessons learned for future Internet Fiestas

Internet Society, South Africa chapter (ISOC-ZA)

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Introduction

On the 19th and 20th of March, 2005, the first Internet Fiesta in South Africa was held in Belhar, Cape Town. This 31-hour event was organised by the South African chapter of the Internet Society (ISOC-ZA) in partnership with the community of Belhar.

The Internet Fiesta is an annual event made up of different community projects aimed at exposing people from mostly disadvantaged backgrounds to the Internet. The Fiesta is designed to be a fun-filled event, such that people from all backgrounds and ages are encouraged to attend. People are provided with free Internet access over a number of days in a festive atmosphere of music and entertainment, dispelling the often-intimidating image technology has to people who are unused to it. ISOC-ZA wanted to test this concept in South Africa, as part of their activities in the areas of outreach and education.

This report comprises a set of observations from the Fiesta as well as a critical account of how the Fiesta was planned. It identifies the most important issues to deal with first and why. Wherever possible, examples are given to strengthen the suggestions made. The main areas of the project are first described, followed by a list of tips for future project managers. And some pitfalls are outlined, and how to avoid them.

For experienced project managers, some of the suggestions made here may be standard practice. But for the many who have little first-hand experience of working in partnership with a disadvantaged community, this report hopes to provide information to enable the re-shaping of conventional project management guidelines to this environment. This report presents some useful information applicable to any Fiesta, and makes some broad statements about what works best. Since every community is different, this report is not intended as a set of guidelines or a prescription for success. It is simply intended to be a useful resource for planning future Internet Fiestas and possibly other, similar community events.

□ **Community feedback**

The impact of the Internet Fiesta could only be assessed by talking to the people who participated, to gain an overall sense of its effect on the community. Although there are no measurable outputs, based upon the opinions and ideas of the community as well as those of the volunteers, we believe that the goal of reaching out to 1000 people who had not yet experienced the Internet was most successfully realised. More so, we were touched by the experiences of interacting with local individuals.

Below are a number of anecdotes, comments and impressions recorded by the project manager during the Fiesta. They paint a picture of a community amazed, even baffled initially, by what the Fiesta had to offer. We spoke to elderly people who had never touched a computer before, eager to send email to relatives overseas; young mothers who took the opportunity to write up their CV, while their children played on the bouncy castle outside; local business men who wanted to see what their competitors with websites had to offer; and a multitude of excited children tumbling over one another to play networked games and look up their favorite pop stars.

Denver and Sean, the unemployed teenagers

Two scruffy teenagers shuffled into the hall around 1am. They were known around the area as general layabouts and often suspected of being up to no good. One had dropped out of school in Standard six, the other in Standard four, and neither had any qualifications or work experience. A volunteer asked them if they needed help, to which they simply replied, "We've come to see the Internet". Neither had used a computer before and were given a quick tour of the Firefox web browser to get them started. Being somewhat uncommunicative, they were left to it.

Five hours later Denver and Sean remained glued to the screen. At around 6am, the same volunteer went over to speak to them, and discovered two teenage boys transformed by their first experience of

the Internet. By sunrise, both had learned basic desktop skills, how to surf the web and navigate to the information they were most interested in. The volunteer was completely amazed by how animated the boys had become. Both were keen to learn more about computers, and told her they wanted to change their lives but "didn't know how". Denver and Sean are now considering returning to school to finish their education.

Don, 70 years old

The first thing Don told me, was that he had never seen a computer up close. I caught him loitering, a little unsure, at the hall entrance and guessed that the noise and number of children might intimidate him. Disbanding a group of youngsters who had been hogging a computer in the corner for longer than was fair, I seated Don down and started by identifying the CPU, monitor, keyboard and mouse. Learning to control the mouse took some time. I got him to follow my finger as it moved across the screen from side to side, up and down, and around. Gradually the movements became less jerky, but what proved more difficult was teaching him to keep the mouse still as he clicked on a link. After several attempts at positioning the pointer over the link, Don would lift his hand off the mouse to depress the left mouse button with his forefinger. In doing so, the mouse would inevitably move off the link, and this pattern repeated until he got the hang of keeping his hand on the mouse at all times.

Once Don had mastered the absolute basics he wanted to dive straight in and set up a webmail address, which I helped him do. Interestingly I encountered the exact same mouse issues with Isaac and Jon, two elderly friends who also wanted to set up webmail addresses to contact relatives in the UK. Trying to explain what the Internet is to people with little idea of what a computer itself is, is extremely challenging and requires some well thought out analogies. But Don was thrilled to be given the chance of surfing the web, and described the experience as "very very good".

Trevor, the casual handy-man and gardener

Trevor clears the grounds of litter for the Educare centre, for a small amount of cash each week. Shy at first, Trevor's curiosity overcame him at 5am on Sunday, when he entered the hall and asked to be shown how to use a computer. A Fiesta committee member, who had only learned herself that morning, showed him. I asked him what he had been looking at on the Internet, and with great enthusiasm he replied "cars!" "What sort of cars?" I asked. "Red Ferraris!" he said, beaming from ear to ear.

Ria, local resident and ACP member

Ria gave a wonderful insight into the social aspect of the Fiesta and what she felt it had brought to the community. It was the first time she could remember white people coming to the area and interacting with local people on a one-to-one. She was referring in particular to the volunteers, most of whom had IT backgrounds and happened to be white. Like many of the Fiesta participants, she had been pleasantly surprised at the relaxed, friendly manner of the volunteers when helping people. Belhar, like its surrounding areas, is predominantly a "coloured" area, and there is something of a sense of being "left out" in the new South Africa. Many claim this stems from the apartheid policy of keeping all "colours" separate, but since 1994, they had seen little change in their area. Ria felt the Internet Fiesta was the first event that was truly by the people, for the people, and put them on an equal footing with white people. In her opinion, the Internet Fiesta had at the very least succeeded in achieving a sense of social upliftment and put Belhar on the map.

Step One: Establish community outreach goals

□ Raise awareness of the Internet

One of the four pillars of the Internet Society is "education and outreach". Due to the low penetration

of the Internet in South Africa, the goal to raise awareness of the Internet and contribute to e-literacy in disadvantaged communities is a focus of the ISOC-ZA.

The executive committee pondered over this goal for 8 months. Initially the element of education was focused upon but after interacting with the Senegal chapter, the Internet Fiesta idea was incubated as a globally proven model for Internet Society outreach. It was agreed that an Internet Fiesta would be an excellent project for the Education and Outreach activities of ISOC-ZA, and a pilot project was made a priority for the first quarter of 2005.

□ **Learn from a pilot project**

Internet Fiestas have been run in several developing countries (a loose, web-based organisation exists to coordinate efforts, mostly between Francophone countries), yet there is no manual on how to run one. Hence this first Fiesta was intended as a pilot project, to test the concept in South Africa and extend the education and outreach activities of the organization.

□ **Partner with a community and have fun**

ISOC-ZA went ahead with a good idea of what to aim for, but no specifics. We deliberately insisted that the community take ownership of the event, define it for themselves and ensure that it's fun for all ages and all groups of the community. This gives the Internet Fiesta a much greater chance of success and ensures genuine outreach.

Lessons learned from step one: These three high-level goals all proved most successful and are recommended to any organization attempting to host their first Internet Fiesta.

Step Two: Agree on a high-level plan

The high-level plan was initiated more than six months prior to the event and completed within four months prior to hosting the event. This plan was written to ensure congruence of expectations for all key stakeholders including the hosting community, sponsors and organizing committee volunteers. In order to ensure this a number of iterations was required so as to ensure involvement and inputs from each.

□ **Committee and community**

The first draft plan was used to document the expectations and reasons that the ISOC-ZA Education and Outreach committee approached various communities. Because few people in South Africa have ever heard of Internet Fiestas, it was important to first explain the idea, its origins and purpose. This proposal is a good source of background material and will be useful as an initial template for future Fiestas¹.

Six months prior to the date, a number of community halls in disadvantaged areas were identified and visited. Venues were assessed against the following criteria:

- Location in a poor, disadvantaged community;
- Adequate size, both inside the hall, and the outside grounds for entertainment and food stalls;

¹ See our website to obtain a copy at <http://isoc.org.za/outreach>

- Accessibility to people in surrounding areas;
- An adequate electricity supply (at least 60KVa was required for the Belhar Fiesta);
- No difficult security issues;
- Availability of the venue, for exclusive occupation by ISOC-ZA for 3 days, including one over night at a weekend; and
- Cost.

The initial plan included the development of a draft timeline, which required identification of the key areas for project management. Each of these areas must be agreed as the responsibility of a committee member. High-level milestones were set for six weeks, and one week before the date of the Fiesta.

A date was initially chosen to coincide with Internet Fiestas in other countries, although this idea was not built upon for this particular Fiesta. Any area of activity that could be handled by the community had to be agreed upon by individuals and the committee chairperson (project manager) acted as a point of contact and coordinated all areas. The following table shows the areas of activity used for the Belhar Fiesta, and the teams responsible for them.

Table of Fiesta Activities and Roles

Project Area	People Responsible
<i>Logistics</i> : deals with all issues to do with the venue, including electricity supply, furnishing, permission from the authorities, and parking	Logistics team, made up of community members
<i>Finance</i> : deals with all sponsorship money, invoices and payments	ISOC-ZA financial officer
<i>Technical</i> : deals with all issues around the technical installation and support	ISOC-ZA Fiesta sub-committee and technicians from any sponsors of the technical infrastructure
<i>Communications</i> : develops and runs the marketing strategy	Communications team, made up of community members
<i>Security</i> : secures the site for the duration of the event and controls access to the hall	Security team, made up of community members
<i>Entertainment</i> : provides a PA system and a variety of entertainers for the duration of the event	Entertainments team, made up of community members, aided by local businesses with relevant experience if possible
<i>Catering</i> : supplies local caterers selling a variety of food and drink for the duration of the event	Catering team, made up of community members
<i>Cleaning</i> : provides a rota of cleaners for the duration of the event	Cleaning team, made up of community members
<i>Volunteers</i> : put together a list of technically-skilled volunteers and arrange coverage for the duration of the event. Separately ensure a list of volunteers prepared to provide demonstrations and talks at appropriate intervals.	ISOC-ZA Fiesta sub-committee member

□ **Sponsors and goal refinement**

The other key stakeholders that must be considered in the plan are the potential funders. Sponsors

will want to know if and how the Fiesta fits with their corporate social responsibility programme, and if there is likely to be any resulting business following the event.

We agreed to set a more tangible goal, in the form of a minimum number of attendees from the local community. In this way, the expectations of potential sponsors would be enhanced, as would the chances of attracting sponsorship.

After initial talks with the chosen community (see next step), this proposal set the target goal to be 1000 individuals that had previously little or no exposure to the Internet. Aware that the funding cycle for some companies ends in December, the proposal was sent to prospective sponsors before the Christmas break.

Lessons learned from step two: Compile an initial list of contact names, numbers and responsibilities and circulate; a large, manila folder is useful (with sides, so papers cannot fall out), for the numerous bills and quotes that you will collect; need access to a fax and email; a small note book was very useful for jotting down odd things to remember; ensure at least one spare copy of the proposal (and budget) is available at all meetings.

Step 3: Select the best community partner

A community leader, or “local champion”, who is highly motivated, respected and liked in the community was deemed a critical success factor. Belhar was a primary community candidate as a community leader was already an active member of ISOC-ZA, and he approached us directly after hearing of our plans. Chris Hartzberg lives in Belhar and not only lives in the community and has the first hand knowledge of local issues, he is also chairman of Africa Community Projects (ACP), an NGO made up of members of the Belhar community. ACP runs a variety of voluntary initiatives in Belhar aimed at raising the standard of living of local people. Our first meeting was an opportunity for ISOC-ZA to learn something of the conditions for people living in Belhar; to work out whether an Internet Fiesta would serve its purpose in this area; and whether the expectations of the community could be met.

ACP saw the Fiesta as part of their plan to hold a number of events in the area, to celebrate ten years of democracy in South Africa. Their interest lay in using the event for social upliftment, kindling a sense of solidarity among local groups, and raising the profile of the area. ACP also recognise the benefits technology can bring to people in disadvantaged communities and have a long term plan to raise e-literacy levels in the area. Fortunately they had recently obtained the lease on a community hall, which the council had committed to repair and decorate in preparation for re-housing the local Educare crèche. Concurrently they had approached the Universal Services Agency (USA), who following the Fiesta plans agreed to install a telecentre in the hall around the time of the Fiesta. Ways in which we could possibly collaborate with the USA for the Fiesta were discussed without any conclusion.

Having found a community to work with, the proposal was circulated among key community members. Around 40 local people attended a meeting in Belhar in early January 2005, at which members of the ISOC-ZA Internet Fiesta sub-committee introduced themselves and the Fiesta concept. A partnership between ISOC-ZA and ACP was agreed upon, and from this point onwards, weekly meetings were held in Belhar with the project manager from ISOC-ZA. ACP formed teams of two or three people for each activity area (see table above), headed by a team leader.

Lessons from step 3: Ensure the purpose and scope of the Fiesta is clear to all community members, and that it is understood to be an all inclusive, secular, one-off event. Team leaders must be motivated, active people with both the time

and desire to help their community. So, it is advisable to be crystal clear from the outset that any involvement is purely on a voluntary basis.

Step 4: Engage in work with the community

At the initial meeting it was agreed that regular community meetings be held. These lasted between one and two hours and required close time management as the issues of five areas had to be dealt with. Detailed task lists were generated and a spreadsheet was regularly updated and circulated via email the following day.

The community lead was taken with respect to dividing the project into activity areas that they had to handle. They delegated teams of people - known to them - and engendered a sense of community ownership and value around the Fiesta.

One of the biggest, unforeseen problems for the Belhar Fiesta was communication between the project manager and team leaders outside of meetings. Only two people had email access, so mobile phones were relied upon heavily. But mobile phone credit is too expensive for anything but the occasional, short conversation for most. SMS was used as often as possible, but the cost of mobile phone calls was a fairly serious problem for this project, especially in the final stages. In the last two weeks, the sundries budget was well exceeded due to the high costs of mobile airtime.

Lessons from Step 4: There are the tensions that arise in the community as the event nears and pressure rises. The project manager will be required to play the role of arbitrator, to diffuse situations and act as overall co-ordinator.

Agree a timeline in each responsible area and remain aware that this is not a commercial project and since these are volunteers the timelines will change.

Add numbers to the original contact list for key technical staff, the electrician and the local authorities (we learned in Cape Town those responsible for Disaster Management must be involved as they can stop the event). Add them to your mobile phone address book and keep a paper copy. Ensure everyone on the list has the list themselves.

Make sure anyone that needs access to the hall knows who has the keys and has their number.

Ensure you always have airtime on you phone and you can always be contacted.

Don't take any holiday in the final month.

Keeping track of what each team is doing gets complicated. This project used a spreadsheet to track tasks on a weekly basis, see Annexure 2 for an example.

Step 5: Secure the sponsors

Although the original proposal contained an estimated budget, this must be agreed upon or changed - until agreed upon - by the organizing committee. Following initial meetings with the community, the project manager agreed to the initial proposed amounts for sponsorship in three different areas. These areas were defined as logistics (including venue, food and entertainment, marketing and

community involvement), technology (including 60 workstations and a local area network and gateway) and connectivity (including a 2Mb/s connection) to be managed over the period of the Fiesta.

The benefit - as a social responsibility project - is to introduce at least 1000 people to the information society. Due to excellent relationships between industry and the community all aspects were kindly sponsored within a few days. The Provincial Government of the Western Cape (PGWC) sponsored the logistics², The Shuttleworth Foundation sponsored the workstations³ and LAN and The Uninetwork sponsored the connectivity⁴.

Lessons from Step 5: Write a good proposal and put forward fair value for the project and you will receive the sponsorship. There are a number of agencies locally and internationally that are willing to sponsor this type of outreach activity.

Step 6a: Community logistics planning

Once the first five steps are completed, the following are all considered to be critical logistical areas of consideration and planning to ensure the event comes to successful fruition.

These are split into two separate areas of logistics (step 6a) and technical (step 6b), as the community volunteers generally handle the logistics and the technical function and setup is handled by ISOC-ZA. In the case of this event the sponsor also assisted with the technical function.

□ Draw a floor plan of the Fiesta and inspect the grounds

One of the most important initial activities is to make a thorough inspection of the hall and grounds and draw a diagram of where everything will be. For example include the location of a marquee for entertainment, where food stands will be erected, and layout of the parking area. A safety issue came to light two weeks prior to the Belhar Fiesta, when a number of organisers met at the hall to remove litter from the grounds. On close inspection, a large amount of dangerous refuse was discovered hidden beneath the sand. Unable to clear the area sufficiently, the logistics team was forced to plead with the local council to clean up the area in time for the event. The council did not do so in time and all entertainment and catering had to be located on the open ground outside the hall premises for fear of causing injury, especially to children.

□ Speak to the authorities at least two months prior to the Fiesta

The floor plan for the Belhar Fiesta remained vague until the final planning stages due to uncertainty over permission to use the open ground outside the hall premises. This arose largely through internal changes at Disaster Management, such that the procedure for obtaining permission to run a public event had changed, and had become more complex. For example, we were unaware until one week before the Fiesta, of a mandatory 4.5 meter space required between any structure that houses people, and a boundary. In our case, this would have meant the marquee had to be erected at the furthest point from the fence surrounding the hall premises, placing it right in the middle of the grounds over a "jungle gym" that could not be dismantled. We were therefore forced to locate the

² For more info about the PGWC please see their website at: <http://capegateway.gov.za>

³ For more info about The Shuttleworth Foundation please see their website at: <http://www.tsf.org.za>

⁴ For more information about the Uninetwork please see their website at <http://www.uninetwork.co.za>

marquee outside the fence, which was actually the right decision anyway, due to safety issues with the hall grounds (see above). The point is, dealing with the authorities was a more complex and lengthy task than anticipated, and will have an impact on how the Fiesta is planned.

□ **Establish dialog with a local, qualified electrician at least one month prior to the Fiesta**

One of the outputs from the technical installation meeting (see section on Technical Installation below) was to find a local, qualified electrician to report back on the power supply to the hall, and to be on standby for the duration of the event. Unfortunately, it took the logistics team longer than expected to find such a person. The power supply was not inspected until roughly two weeks before the Fiesta, where upon it was decided that there was only sufficient power to run the computers and nothing else.

For this event, we had a power supply of 60KVa. The electrician persuaded Eskom (the local power utility) to increase this to 70KVa for the weekend. This proved to be sufficient for the network, but power generators had to be hired last minute for anything requiring electricity outside the hall. In addition, the quote for installation of plugs and a standby service was late and unexpectedly costly, forcing us to purchase double adapters to run 50 computers on a maximum of 30 plugs we could afford.

□ **Establish a marketing campaign**

The communications team handled marketing. In this, their knowledge of where local people meet and local activities was essential. A list of people and organisations to contact was compiled early on, which included local churches, schools, clinics, creches and other NGOs. The Government Communication and Information Systems (GCIS) assisted in sponsoring posters and flyers, but not surprisingly, it was not easy to get a Government department to work to the timeline set by the communications team. GCIS also assisted in getting the event organisers a slot on a local, community radio show, and advertising on another.

It is important to adhere to the timeline for marketing; otherwise opportunities for spreading word of the event are easily lost. Posters should go up at least 10 days before the Fiesta. If the press release is to be used to attract volunteers, make sure it goes out in good time, before people book up their weekend with other activities.

Any communication should contain clear directions to the Fiesta, and preferably a map. This will avoid the project manager having to deal with numerous phone calls and emails asking for directions. The Fiesta can also be advertised on the front page of the ISOC-ZA web site, with the map, although it must be remembered that local people will likely not have Internet access.

□ **Running the Fiesta**

Whilst there were many heartwarming stories mentioned in the introduction of this paper, there was a great deal of experience we hope to build upon.

The hall was full of children before the initial opening at 11am on Saturday, and children continued to dominate for the duration of the event. While the organisers wanted to encourage the youth, this had an effect of intimidating some adults, some of whom took one look and assumed – or portrayed this assumption that - it was an event for children. As one may expect, children generated noise and some unruly behavior. Few old people attended and mothers were more concerned with chaperoning their children than being able to use the computers themselves. Between 11pm and 7am, the hall was only occupied by adults. This experience suggests the need for an improved strategy to encourage all ages to attend the Fiesta.

Entertainment was provided for the duration of the Fiesta. The entertainments marquee was used for the official opening by the project manager and to make one or two announcements. Inevitably, during the course of the event, some of the performers failed to arrive, which the entertainments team catered for by having CDs on hand to play. Karaoke proved to be extremely popular, but also extremely noisy, which added to noise levels in the hall and disrupted demonstrations somewhat. Again, it is advisable to locate the entertainments area as far away from the hall as possible. On Sunday morning, jazz was played at a lower volume while people attended the church, adjacent to the site.

Caterers were encouraged to provide local food, and cook on gas rather than using electricity, as hot plates consume a lot of electricity and would require an extra generator. There were no problems with catering although the project manager did catch one group attempting to run a cable into the hall to sneak electricity. It is therefore important that the catering team makes it clear to caterers what will be provided at the event and what will not. For example, we did not provide each stall with lighting after dark, a decision that had to be reversed and resolved on the fly.

It is useful to have a checklist for the end of the event. Inevitably various articles, (some of which may belong to hire companies that will not collect until Monday) will need to be located and stored safely. The project manager needs to stay to the end to resolve last minute issues.

Lessons from step 6a: Venue and logistics

Liaise with the Local Council, 'disaster management', local police and fire department as soon as possible. All will require letters of intent on headed paper. A permit to hold a public event must be obtained from Disaster Management, who will inspect the site just prior to the event. Be aware that the rules have changed recently, and the application must go through the Building Inspectors first who have their own set of requirements. If they pass the floor plan, Disaster Management will authorise the event on payment of a refundable fee. The local council will want details of the event, and in our case all residents directly adjacent to the grounds had to be informed by letter, giving them sufficient time to object. These rules apply to the Cape Town municipality; they may differ in other provinces, countries or states.

Conduct a detailed survey of the hall in terms of size, exits, security issues, heating/cooling issues, noise, current occupation and when it is available before the event for the technical installation and testing. Inspect the grounds closely bearing in mind health and safety, the requirements of 'disaster management' and the Local Authority. *Ensure there is some sort of gate, or physical barrier at the hall entrance. This proved useful for preventing the hall being over run by children, who were allowed to use the computers in shifts. It also allowed security to deal with the odd drunk at night.*

Compile a standard email with (accurate!) directions to the Fiesta, and a (low KB) map. Advise those whom distribute posters to take a ladder with them and hang them high up on lampposts, to avoid them being stolen for cardboard by the homeless. Take heed of language issues with all communications (half our posters were printed in local language {Afrikaans in this case}). *Be sure to invite any dignitaries in good time.*

Step 6b: ISOC-ZA logistics

The responsibilities of the ISOC-ZA committee, technical support and Treasurer are seen separately from the community logistics (step 6a). The responsibility for this element (step 6b) of the Fiesta is entirely that of ISOC-ZA and any sponsors that they may attract.

□ Technical installation

The goals for the technical installation were to ensure a good user experience of Internet applications. This included a broadband connection with good capacity and flash enabled browsers were included in the initial specifications.

The ISOC-ZA Fiesta sub-committee met with the Shuttleworth Foundation that sponsored the thin-client workstations, servers and network, together with Uninetwork the local ISP that sponsored a 2Mb/s Internet connection.

Although the community was consulted regarding a list of services and applications they thought would be most popular, with very little knowledge of computers and the Internet, this was left largely to the technical team. The outputs of this meeting should include a network diagram, a staged plan for installation, a plan for hardware redundancy and robustness, a plan for 31 hours of technical support (onsite and remote), a plan for testing, and a list of all applications and services that will be provided.

At the Belhar Fiesta, computers were used primarily for gaming, email and browsing the web.

Future Fiestas should aim to ensure an appropriate ratio of servers to thin clients, an acceptable level of redundancy to cater for disk crashes, or a faulty network card, etc. Ideally a minimum of 128MB RAM per workstation is needed. A Gigabit Ethernet is preferable for the server in a thin-client arrangement, especially if networked games become popular. Some specific technical detail was included in Neil Blakey-Milners (a volunteers) weblog of the Fiesta:
<http://mithrandr.moria.org/blog/409.html>.

It is necessary to have someone on site throughout the Fiesta with the skills to resolve server problems. At the Belhar Fiesta, we were lucky to have a few key, dedicated people able to do so, but nothing official in place. We relied on remote support from the sponsors between 3am - 8am on Sunday morning, as with much lower numbers of people in the hall (and in particular, no children playing games) the system was highly unlikely to crash.

Lessons from step 6b: Technical installation

Make sure a network diagram is drawn up by the technical team and circulated. The electrician will need this, as will all those involved in the technical infrastructure. Ensure the appropriate amount of RAM and network bandwidth required per computer is well specified in the requirements. These depend largely on the applications installed, and expect that those, which are most popular, require the most resources. Allow a full day after the installation for testing of the system. Security will have to be arranged prior to this. The logistics team must have completed all their work, and the furniture must be installed before the technical installation can proceed. Make sure the tables - which may need to hold two or three computers each - are strong enough to take the weight.

Rotations for cleaning and security must be thoroughly understood and agreed on all sides. Any changes must be put in writing.

Purchase a carbon-copy invoice book and make people sign for even the smallest amounts of cash. Ensure invoice numbers are recorded in the budget spreadsheet.

□ Budget and Finances

The initial budget was developed with the aim to extend it to include more detail. Although more detail was added, in order for the budget to be accurate it is crucial that sufficient time is spent with team leaders flushing out the details of each area of activity. The project manager must understand exactly what is involved in each one, despite the fact that it may be new and confusing territory. For example, for entertainment, ISOC-ZA initially budgeted for entertainers, a PA system and "equipment". In the end we only had to pay for one entertainer (the rest were free), but had unforeseen high costs for a stage, lighting, a sound engineer and transport of the equipment.

Again, communication costs should not be underestimated. Significant airtime was spent getting quotes from vendors and coordinating between teams. A budget line of at least R2000 for airtime vouchers, a number of which are for team leaders, is not unreasonable.

Sundries are another budget item requiring sufficient funds. Typically sundries are difficult to convince a sponsor to agree to, but are essential for a community event like the Internet Fiesta. Examples of sundries we needed, some of which were not foreseen, were: signs to the Fiesta on A3 laminated cardboard, glue, tape, coloured cardboard, balloons, string, petrol for electric generators, transport costs for extra pieces of equipment, extra electric cabling, and refreshments for volunteers.

Most hire companies want a 50% deposit up front; some request a cheque deposit, to be torn up once their equipment has been returned in working order. Cash was needed for a variety of things, for example, cleaning equipment had to be bought before the event. Security and cleaning staff, as well as entertainers will expect cash-on-delivery, which is difficult to manage. To avoid carrying cash around, the project manager insisted electronic transfer was the means to pay everything that could be. Nevertheless, cash was needed for a variety of small things, for example airtime vouchers, and invoices had to be kept of absolutely everything.

An important note here is the time it took for inter-bank transfers: a minimum of two working days. This meant that people paid on Thursday evening did not see the money in their account until Tuesday afternoon because the Monday after the Belhar Fiesta was a public holiday. This caused some tensions.

The ISOC-ZA treasurer handled finances for the Fiesta. A spreadsheet containing one expense per row

was shared between the financial officer and the project manager. Change management of this file became an issue toward the end of the project, as the project manager used it to keep track of payments, and who was owed what, on a daily basis. A tight grip was kept on the finances by keeping this file as up to date as possible and regular review by phone. At the end of the event, items on the spreadsheet could be cross-referenced with invoices kept by the project manager. This may be necessary if a sponsor requires detailed financial accounting. In this case ISOC-ZA could cover the small shortfall. Establishing a good working relationship and channels of communication between the project manager and financial officer was crucial for this project.

More lessons learned from step 6b:

Be clear about budgetary limits for each area of spending. Team leaders must be encouraged to use the resources they already have and not to ask for items that are in fact not absolutely necessary and that they expect to be able to keep after the event. For example, the security team wanted to purchase portable radios, which turned out to be unnecessary for this as a single event. Team leaders will need topping up with mobile airtime or put in place controls of policing this (for example if radios were available a single point for outbound calls may resolve this problem).

Keep cash available for the Fiesta: Working in a poor community means virtually no one has the means to pay for even small items out of their own purse and reclaim the money later. To avoid spending excessive amounts out of his or her own bank account, the project manager needs to cater for this with some sort of slush fund, agreed with the financial officer. There will always be last minute, unforeseen expenses. Get someone to act as a runner, to convey messages between the entertainments team and the hall. If you don't have an assistant, you will spend a lot of time chasing people around the site trying to resolve last minute problems.

Some unforeseen costs for the Belhar Fiesta: 1. Hire of power generators for anything requiring electricity that was not part of the technical infrastructure in the hall. Eg, flood lights for outside, lights for food stalls, power for the PA system and jumping castles. 2. Petrol for power generators: we had 2 generators running for approx 30 hours and spent about R400 on petrol. 3. Transport of various items (some of which require pick-up trucks {bakkies}, for example, gazebos and power generators). 4. A stage (try to arrange this for free, as a stage and lighting is very expensive to hire. We ended up using tables from a local school, which is not ideal and may soon be outlawed). 5. Extra tasks required of the electrician (we were lucky in having a community spirited electrician who did not charge us for extra work, for example, providing lighting to the food stalls). 6. The security bill increased with the number of days guards were needed on site to secure the equipment prior to the event. 7. The cost of mobile airtime. 8. Cost of food and drink for the volunteers and poor children.

Step 7: Volunteers for support and Demonstrations

ISOC-ZA considered the e-literacy component to be a key element of the Internet Fiesta. A database of volunteers was compiled, with names, numbers and what subjects they could teach. Volunteers

were asked to commit to being on site for a minimum of four hours, but not surprisingly, it was difficult to find volunteers for the early hours of the morning. At the Belhar Fiesta, we were fortunate to have a dedicated few that stayed until around 2am, after which ACP members were on hand to offer basic assistance. Volunteers reappeared before 9am on Sunday morning.

Demonstrations were also considered an important part of the Fiesta. ACP was asked for a list of subjects they thought local people would want to see demonstrated prior to the event. This list included how to browse the web, set up a web-based email account, use Internet banking, and basic web design. At the Belhar Fiesta, we had a large plasma screen sponsored by the Provincial Government of the Western Cape, to which a laptop was attached for live demonstrations.

Although only three demonstrations were given to adults the large plasma screen did come in useful on Sunday afternoon for occupying the small children with movies, while their parents used the computers. The main reason few demonstrations were possible was since the ratio of adults to children was too low in the hall at any one time. Although there were at least 100 people in the room at any one time, the majority of visitors were children. We did not have the expertise to provide appropriate level demonstrations and hence they generated a great deal of background noise. Although adults were prioritised, with hindsight some strategy is required for limiting the number of children present at any one time, and encouraging more adults.

The blog mentioned above <http://mithrandr.moria.org/blog/409.html> also includes some discussion on this point.

Lessons from step 7:

Be aware that demonstrations will probably have to be done on the fly, so be flexible. Ensure there are a sufficient number of volunteers able to speak the predominant local language at the appropriate level. Advertise for volunteers at least three weeks before the Fiesta, to ensure the event makes it into people's calendars. Be prepared to be flexible with the time volunteers are asked to spend at the Fiesta, as it is voluntary, weekend work. Ensure refreshments and transport for volunteers is provided (put it into the budget).

Demonstrations can only be run with either minimal background noise, or a small PA system. Expect the noise and acquire a system. Try to place loud entertainment areas as far away as possible from the area in the hall where demonstrations will be held.

Demonstrations need to be more elementary than people will anticipate. Start with one or two very basic demonstrations, to be repeated on the second day. The speaker needs to answer questions like "What is the Internet?", "What is a web page?" and demonstrate how to use a web browser. These are likely to be completely new concepts to most of the audience. Using culturally relevant, day-to-day analogies is useful to explain technology concepts: give some thought to this before the Fiesta and consult the community.

Announce demonstrations ten minutes before hand over the PA system in the entertainments area. Use a black/white board at the hall entrance to advertise the time of the next demo.

Step 8: Extra things to note

We call this step 8 as they are basically afterthoughts that could have been better planned. I hope that you're still reading this and don't reach here after your Fiesta 😊

Other lessons to consider:

Several times, youths were found viewing pornography and were immediately removed from the hall. Rules must be well communicated and offenders immediately banned from the venue and made examples of.

Plan to collect the information you want afterwards. Record, during the Fiesta, for example, photos, anecdotes and interviews.

Watch out for security guards smoking dagga and going to sleep while on duty.

Do not sell alcohol and make sure security can deal with drunks and other troublemakers promptly.

Make sure you label any equipment lent to you (or your own), with the owners name, before the event.

Have a timetable of when hire companies are coming to collect their things (eg, tables and chairs cannot be taken away before the computers are dismantled and removed!).

Any project manager doing this on a voluntary basis must be aware of the amount of time this project will consume, especially in the final stages. It is essential to ensure you have the support and agreement of your employer before you begin.

Conclusion

There are numerous documents that form part of the lessons learned from the first Internet Fiesta held by the ISOC-ZA, please refer to our website at <http://isoc.org.za/outreach>

The Belhar Internet Fiesta created a spark of new hope for many. We are all encouraged by its success and hope to ensure this is the start of a wider programme of Internet Fiestas across the country and the globe.