

## 2009 SOS Submission: ASTD Orange County Nails, Knots, and Egg Grenades (Team-building in the Park)



**Submission Date:** 8/27/2009 6:58:55 PM  
**Chapter Name:** ASTD-Orange County  
**Chapter ID:** CH8091  
**Chapter Location:** Orange County, CA  
**Chapter Membership Size:** Large (301+)

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**Description of Effort:** Monthly Meeting with a fantastic return on investment. We have had some results in terms of an increase in at least some members' pride in and excitement about the organization, and increased credibility in the minds of some members, guests and prospects that may lead to an increase in renewals, referrals or new joins over time. A large number of members have initiated contact with me to discuss how excited they were about the TV spot, and another large number of members have told me how excited they were by the event itself (even many who couldn't make it) and how this is the kind of event that makes them excited about ASTD, stimulates them to come up with their own new ideas, etc.

**Need Addressed:** Providing innovative networking and professional development opportunities for training and development professionals.

**Does this effort align with your chapter mission?** Yes

**Does this effort align with ASTD's mission?** Yes

**Target Audience:** Facilitators of team-building activities

**Costs/Resource Use:** Cost of venue and box lunches covered by entry fee. The cost of the meeting was our normal \$28 per person for the meeting; \$28 is the fee for typical indoor monthly learning events

- o We had food—box lunches—from Panera (a medium-sized chain down here featuring sandwiches that are a few clicks above your typical sandwich place; they delivered)
- o Plus we brought drinks and ice—soda and water
- o The food and drinks totaled about \$16 per person.
- o The venue cost \$150.

**How did you implement:** We've sought add value to our members' investment in the Chapter by providing them with unique opportunities for professional development with each Learning Event. August's event on team-building was held outside, in a sports park, so the participants could experience the team-building activities rather than just hear about them.

**What were the Outcomes:** Fox News 11 was so intrigued by our out-of-the-box event that it will feature us on TV as part of a series Fox is running on Job Seeking in Southern California. The segment will focus on how in today's economic climate, joining professional organizations is one way to help you in your search, and the segment will focus primarily on ASTD-Orange County. Stimulated, satisfied participants—and non-participants; the event stimulated participants to:

- o Think outside the box when developing their own solutions
- o Consider outdoor venues for their own events
- o Replace some of the traditional "Speaker" portions of their own learning initiatives with active learning techniques

- o Incorporate more of the following elements in training: Movement / freedom to move; an attractive, upbeat, positive setting; opportunities for different types of interactions; unique or unusual event elements
- o In general, demonstrate best practices and out-of-the-box thinking to stimulate participants to find more effective, stimulating, creative and unique ways to address the needs of their internal and external clients

Big exposure benefits to 4 members whom Fox 11 met at the event and then interviewed down at their studio after the event. These segments were I believe 1 or 2 minutes each and aired separately over a series of weeks following the event; a great example we've been able to use in marketing our chapter to younger potential members ("Our chapter isn't a stuffy, old-fashioned organization; we do fun, outside-the-box, interactive events, etc..."); an improved credibility on our website where we play the Fox segment; an improved perception and increased excitement about the chapter.

**Lessons Learned:** 1) Find different ways to present topics, so that attendees to your events are active and engaged. We do this for the courses we create -- why should our meetings be any different? 2) Promote chapter efforts beyond your standard mailing list. This helps decision-makers outside your chapter see what you're doing. It's the principle of networking -- your biggest results can come from your weakest links -- maintain them.

**Specific ASTD chapter resources that helped guide you in the process of completing this best practice:** Chapter Blog, which is run in partnership with JobIng.com., our fantastic volunteer facilitators who came up with the Learning Event.