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April 22, 2007

MATRIX ONLINE!

Matrix is sold out, but you can attend – electronically.

! The first-ever **Matrix Online Auction!** Bid on once-in-a-lifetime events and help our scholarship fund at the same time. The incredible experiences up for bid include:

- i Lunch for 2 with **Meredith Vieira** and **Matt Lauer** on the set of the *Today* show.
- i Invitation to **Roz Abrams'** inaugural women in media "salon" at her home, with political and media friends including Tyra Banks and Dan Rather
- i 4 tickets and a meet-and-greet with the **Women of *The View***
- i 4 VIP tickets to Ellen Tracy during **Fall Fashion Week**, compliments of Liz Claiborne

And many more exciting items. Go to the [NYWICI homepage](#) starting on Monday, and running through May 14.

- ! We're planning to blog from Matrix. You'll get a first-person account as it's happening. What's Martha wearing? What's Rosie saying? The answers to these and all other question will be on the [NYWICI homepage](#) real-time on Monday.
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- ! The Matrix Awards will be broadcast on NYCTV Time Warner Channel 25 or Cablevision Channel 22 on Thursday, May 3rd and on Saturday, May 6th at 8 pm.
- ! 5 award winners held interviews with GreenStone Media's [Lisa Birnbach Show](#), and you'll find the audio on NYWICI's homepage .
- ! Post-awards, we'll have red-carpet video on the website as part of our coverage.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF PLANNING GREAT EVENTS

Jennifer Brisman, the President of Events New York, is also the Secretary on the Board of NYWICI, and also one of NYWICI's key event planners and Chairpersons on The Matrix Awards Planning Committee for over 5 years now. We asked her what are the key do's and don'ts for planning a successful event.



Here are her answers:

DO'S

- ! Communicate clearly about the creation of a viable budget. That's the one area where problems often arise. You have to have a clear, realistic budget — and adhere to it. Before your first meeting with the client, do research so you know what's reasonable. It's always better to under-promise and over-deliver.
- ! Communicate with Clients. It's not good enough to handle the planning and execution of an event via email. Clients need the personal touch -- they need to hear your voice, and they need to know you're involved, not just handing off all the tasks to staffers. Event planning is a big business, and it's more important than ever to be proactive.
- ! Think through the client experience and the guest experience — two different things. What's the guest seeing, hearing, tasting, etc.? And all decisions related to that have to be weighed in terms of the client experience: Will the decision cost the client more money or more time?

First I think through the whole experience. If, based on my mental try-out, I have a good feeling about the concept or idea, I'll pitch it to my staff. If they give it a thumbs-up, I'll present it to my client.

- ! Problems always occur — that's a given. The question is how you deal with them. Clients are savvy and they know everything isn't going to be perfect. When there's an issue, it's important to come up with one or two livable solutions. Get on top of the situation right away — that's critical. Problems seem to happen in groups — if one

thing goes wrong, other things will pop up too. But as the planner, it's important to treat the client as you would want to be treated and be proactive about problem-solving.

DON'TS

- I Don't ever "promise" anything. As soon as you say, "I promise this will be the perfect party," things will start going wrong. For any event, there are a lot of key players, and you can't control all of them.
- I Don't leave anything to chance: Always put agreements in writing, even if the tasks seem small or if you're working with vendors who are like family, or the best in their fields. And by writing, I don't mean email. Don't assume an email acts as a contract or a confirmation — get a document with a signature. If the person you're e-mailing has left her position, for example, where does that leave you when the work needs to get done or a payment made?
- I Don't shy away from being honest with clients. Clients can have great ideas, and they can have bad ideas. You really owe it to yourself and your client to be straightforward about what you don't like and why you think it won't work. Find a tactful way to be on record with your concerns. Put in writing something like, "As you know, I've stated that I anticipate that if x, y, z were to happen, then such-and-such poor result could occur."
- I Focus on on bottlenecks and guest conveniences when you're planning the event. I work with my staff at venues to find where people might congregate — the bar, food stations, getting in and getting out. The better the flow of traffic is, the more positive the experience.
- I Don't think about the event as just the program itself. The event begins when the first communication (print, email, phone, etc.) goes out to guests and doesn't end until guests are actually home. Before the event, you have to think about the visual consequences of the mailings: Are they clear, inviting and interesting? Post-event, consider the guest's final impression. Was it easy to get a cab? Did she appreciate what was in the gift bag?

Remember, when planning an event, it's the totality of the experience that's important.

Jennifer Brisman owns Events New York (212-588-0007) a boutique, full service Event Planning firm. Her company plans and orchestrates corporate, social and charity events. [Email](#) her, and visit her [site](#) for more information. .

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NIGHT OF THE ROUND TABLES 2007

Members and guests enjoy great insights and conversation at NYWICI's networking event

By Patricia O'Connell

The only difficulty with the annual Night of the Round Tables was deciding which discussion group to join. There was something for everyone at every stage of career development. For three hours on March 28, members and guests filled 20 tables in two rooms at the New York Helmsley for an

interactive evening of networking.

Skilled professionals facilitated 50-minute sessions on subjects that covered mastering the art of cold calling; getting organized and overcoming procrastination; dealing with difficult people in your workplace; negotiating with confidence; building a network; creating a personal style; demystifying and structuring your website; and much, much more.



Throughout the evening there was the nonstop buzz of questions being asked and answered, problems aired and analyzed, and success stories applauded.

Patricia O'Connell, a former NYWICI President, is a member of the Communications Committee.

[Find more photos on the website.](#)

Coming Soon: Annual Membership Survey

How does NYWICI determine its programs, benefits and events? We count on your opinions and suggestions.

We'll be sending you the Annual Member Survey soon after the Matrix Awards Luncheon. The NYWICI board will use your invaluable input at its strategic planning meeting soon thereafter.

There will be prizes! We've pulled together some exciting rewards for a drawing you'll automatically enter if you take the survey — dinner for two at a romantic NYC restaurant and a case of wine, to name two.

TO BLOG ON THE WEBSITE:

if you'd like to contribute to the blog, send your story idea to: websitecommittee@nywici.org, subject line: NYWICI Blog.

Please send us your feedback. Let us know what you think of the articles and what you want to see in upcoming editions. If you're interested in contributing, shoot us an email at websitecommittee@nywici.org.

Michelle Lodge, Editor, NYWICI Now

Mistina Bates and Deirdre Wyeth, Co-Chairs, Communications Committee

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