



Ray Didinger & Dave Spadaro Engage Wawa Retirees at Appreciation Event

Customer

Wawa

Audience

60 Wawa executives and their spouses

Location

Newtown Square, PA

Challenge

After 3 years of investment speakers, Wawa has seen a drop off in event attendance and were looking for a new engagement to excite attendees.

The Solution

- 1-Hour Fireside Chat with Q&A

Results

Ray Didinger and Dave Spadaro reignited excitement for this annual event. Their personal stories and thoughtful reflections struck a chord with an audience that was contemplating next steps after their long and fruitful careers.

By blending humor, personal insight, and reflections on sports and life, the event delivered on its goal of fostering engagement and connection. Attendees left feeling not only appreciated but inspired, with new perspectives on retirement, collaboration, and the future ahead.

The One Creative Wawa Client Appreciation Night was a unique and highly anticipated event designed to honor Wawa corporate employees and retirees. Held on Wednesday, April 3rd, 2024, at Teca Restaurant in Newtown Square, PA, this event brought together approximately 60 Wawa executives and their spouses, as well as special guests from Creative Financial. Over the years, Wawa has fostered a strong bond with its employees, and this appreciation night aimed to celebrate that long-standing relationship.

This 4th annual appreciation event sought to provide an engaging experience for attendees, many of whom have spent 20 to 30 years working at Wawa. Previous years featured investment speakers, but with attendance numbers waning, the decision was made to shift the focus towards a more dynamic and relatable engagement. To that end, Ray Didinger and Dave Spadaro, two Philadelphia sports icons, were invited to host a fireside chat, sharing personal stories from their illustrious careers and engaging with the audience in a way that felt both authentic and entertaining.

The event was attended by lifetime corporate-side Wawa employees, primarily retired or nearing retirement, aged between their 50s and late 70s. This audience has seen substantial financial success, with retirement plans largely tied to Wawa's Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). Many attendees have grown their savings to impressive figures ranging from \$1 to 12 million. Despite this financial achievement, the group remained a mix of individuals, from cafeteria workers to engineers, with a near-even split between male and female attendees.

Given the audience's unique makeup, the fireside chat needed to strike a balance between sports-related content and more personal, life-reflective stories, ensuring broad appeal. Topics of interest included Ray's journey into retirement, reflections on Philadelphia sports, and stories tied to Wawa itself, a company that Ray grew up closely connected to, living just a block away from the first Wawa store.

Ray and Dave's 30-40 minute discussion was a blend of lighthearted reflections and insightful commentary. Starting with a question about Ray's own transition into retirement, they built on the theme of life after work, offering parallels to the experiences many Wawa retirees were facing. This connection resonated deeply with the audience, who often wondered, "What am I going to do now that I'm retiring?"

The discussion also touched on the evolution of Ray's career in sports broadcasting, drawing comparisons to Wawa's transformation over the years, a story intimately familiar to the attendees. Ray's detailed recount of Philadelphia sports through the decades, especially the Eagles' journey, brought moments of nostalgia and excitement to the room.

Following the fireside chat, a 20-30 minute Q&A provided an opportunity for more intimate engagement with the audience. The questions ranged from Ray's experiences in sports to his personal thoughts on life in retirement, as attendees sought advice on what to expect in their own lives after decades of work. Dave and Ray navigated the room with ease, offering thoughtful answers and adapting their responses to the interests and energy of the crowd.

Ray and Dave's presence provided a refreshing and lively change to the usual investment-focused agenda, reigniting excitement for this annual event. Their personal stories and thoughtful reflections struck a chord with an audience contemplating their own next steps after long and fruitful careers.

By blending humor, personal insight, and reflections on sports and life, the event delivered on its goal of fostering engagement and connection. Attendees left feeling not only appreciated but also inspired, with new perspectives on retirement, collaboration, and the future ahead.

With the event wrapping up by 8 PM, complete with raffle drawings and photo opportunities, the evening was both enriching and celebratory—ensuring that this year's Wawa Client Appreciation Night will be remembered as a turning point in both attendance and engagement for years to come.



Frequently Asked Questions



Who is the Mollie Plotkin Group?

The Mollie Plotkin Group is about more than hiring a professional speaker or entertainer. It's about working together to create unforgettable live and virtual events, filled with engaging content, extraordinary stories, and enduring lessons.

As a Keynote Speaker & Entertainment Agency, we have established personal connections with our keynote speakers, experts, and entertainers.



Why do we create case studies?

These case studies focus on the distinct, specific impact our talent has had on hiring organizations. When considering a keynote speaker, entertainer, or any paid appearance, it is easy to understand a speaker's unique background. It can be harder to demonstrate the impact and return on investment for your organization.



Why do we focus on motivational speakers?

We aim to illustrate the transformative influence motivational keynote speakers have on organizations. Whether it's motivating your sales staff, inspiring your organization during tough times, or reminding your team to stay hungry during good times, motivational speakers have a significant impact on your annual performance. However, that profound impact can be lost during year-end financial analysis.



Why do organizations hire Ray Didinger?

Organizations hire Ray Didinger because he offers a captivating blend of sports history and storytelling. His deep knowledge and passion for sports will engage and entertain audiences of all backgrounds.