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Maxene Fernstrom
Director, CivicFest
President, Fernstrom Inc.

Since 1983, Fernstrom Inc. has provided strategic and communications counsel to a wide range of business, professional and political clients.

President Maxene Fernstrom has served as a business development advisor and political and marketing strategist for a number of organizations, including Advanta Corp., Shire Pharmaceuticals, Independence Blue Cross, the law firm Wolf Block, AT&T, Sojitz Corporation of America, Firsttrust Bank, SmoothFitness.com, Tinderbox.com, Philadelphia Newspapers, LLC, and the National Associations of Homebuilders, Realtors and Mortgage Bankers.

She currently serves as a consultant to the Minneapolis Saint Paul 2008 Host Committee, overseeing the design and production of CivicFest, a non-partisan civic event being held in conjunction with the Republican National Convention. CivicFest is a celebration of Minnesota and American history, democracy and the U.S. presidency, and includes more than 35 world-class exhibits, a 60,000-square-foot marketplace and a media center.

Fernstrom has participated in national presidential nominating conventions since 1976, and twice been appointed deputy convention manager for Republican National Conventions. For the 1996 convention in San Diego she directly supervised the Political, Logistics and Operations, Legal, Administrative, Program and Official Proceedings, Critical Path, Finance and Media Operations divisions and oversaw the production of the first-ever live Internet broadcast of convention sessions. At the 2000 convention in Philadelphia she managed the 300 staff and 10,000 volunteers required for the \$65 million event that attracted 45,000 participants, including 30 governors, 200 members of Congress and 16,000 journalists. Convention firsts included: Politicalfest, a political "world's fair"; an HDTV convention broadcast feed; a media intranet; a cable TV broadcast to 70 million households; and a free transportation system for delegates, guests and media.

She was the United States representative to the inaugural meeting of the International Women's Democratic Union.

Fernstrom spent four years in early post-communist Central and Eastern Europe as an advisor on democratic election processes and small business development. She worked with the 17-party Electoral Commission of Hungary to design and execute its national public information campaign. Subsequently she designed and directed a three-year national small business development initiative in Hungary for the U.S. Congress' Central European Small Business Development Commission. Fernstrom has also worked as a consultant to aid democratic movements in Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Haiti.

Fernstrom has lectured on political and communications strategies at the Washington D.C. Campaign Management College, the American Campaign Academy and the JFK School of Government at Harvard.

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