



Glenn Thayer interviews Jerry Rice, a National Football League Hall of Fame wide receiver, during last year's ICBA national convention.

WHO'S THE HOST ON STAGE?

Glenn Thayer returns to help guide this year's ICBA national convention

By L.M. Harteker

One thing leads to another ... which Glenn Thayer can certainly attest to. Little did he know when he agreed at age 13 to don an elf costume and be the emcee at Santa's Village in Lake Arrowhead, Calif., that it would eventually lead to hosting and moderating the ICBA national convention for a second time.

With a background in music, production and business, Thayer brings a wealth of varied and interrelated experience to the conference stage. A musician, former band promoter and disc jockey, he also holds a business degree, and he ran his own entertainment production company prior to transitioning into conference hosting.

He is looking forward to reconnecting with the ICBA community and being part of another great and memorable conference.

"Creating a memorable event is about building relationships and having

great conversations," Thayer says.

The red and green outfit aside, he learned a lot from his early stint as an elf emcee and still remembers that first thrill of connecting with an audience. That connection is still the best part about what he does, he says. His interviews run the gamut from business executives to political officials to celebrities and sports figures.

"I love that my job involves engaging with people from many different backgrounds and diverse perspectives," he says. "When I interview speakers and sponsors or interact with the audience, I always learn something new and unexpected, and the conversations that unfold are fascinating."

As a professional event host and moderator, Thayer believes his primary responsibility is to facilitate a meaningful and resonant dialogue between conference participants and those he is interviewing. "Regardless of whom I'm interviewing, I try to put

myself in the shoes of the audience and ask the kinds of questions that help them discover and share the ideas and connections that mean the most to them."

The best conversations, Thayer finds, are those that are loosely scripted. "Yes, it's more challenging and requires me to do my homework, think on my feet and keep things on track, but the result is a more genuine and engaging conversation."

Thayer has hosted conferences across a variety of industries and associations. His favorite events to be involved in are those driven by a strong sense of community, such as the ICBA national convention. "What I strive for is to create those 'aha' moments that give people something to take back and apply to their own specific situations," he says.

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