**A Fashion Show for Tractors**

My field trip out of the office was pleasantly surprising, and much closer to an actual field than expected.

The most striking part of my first auction was how much fun the employees were having. Both new team members like myself, who were there to observe, and the seasoned auctions team seemed fully engrossed in the event. It’s hard not to be. From the adrenaline-filled rhythm of the auctioneer to the sense of community you get from being in the same place at the same time as all these strangers, it’s the human side of the auction that makes it something worth driving out for.

When I first entered the auction facility in Wills Point, the lobby, reminiscent of an airport check-in desk, gave me a “corporate” first impression that I was not expecting. That first impression quickly scattered after passing through the air-conditioned lobby to the yard, where I regretted my choice in wearing sandals as I navigated mud, actual piles of bugs, and clusters of old men in overalls. I grew up in rural Texas (the attractions of my hometown consist of a church, a gas station, and a taxidermy office suspiciously turned burger joint) and this was still one of the most country things I’ve ever been a part of. This wasn’t a bad thing, as it meant everyone was exceptionally welcoming and ready to offer help or a friendly conversation on their way to getting things done. Regardless of being out of my element, I had the comfort of knowing I wasn’t the only one. The photographer who showed up in “skinny jeans” was bound to be more confused than I was.

When it came to the auction itself, I was impressed. While I can’t speak to the details of what makes an auction successful, I can recognize people who are good at their jobs when I see them. The auctioneer slid through more words in five minutes than I speak in an entire day, and the team members calling bids on the floor were clearly having a great time in a situation that would have had me completely overwhelmed. The whole team in Wills Point was simultaneously in perpetual motion and seamlessly paused to engage with customers should the situation arise.

I’ll admit I had some negative preconceptions about the efficiency of an auction – I didn’t know exactly what to expect, but the idea of haggling over each piece of equipment seemed time-consuming. In my mind, I pictured a lot of people in cowboy hats yelling. I was right about the cowboy hats, but the only people yelling were the designated yellers; the “ringmen”. Bidding for each item was over almost before I realized it had started, and the auctioneer wasted no time in moving on to the next one. It was a stark contrast to the easy pace that characterized the hours leading up to the auction, where customers could be seen taking their time conversing and walking through the yard. Even the Equify team members, who I knew had no shortage of pressing things to do, moved with purpose but didn’t rush. It all went a long way toward creating a low-stress atmosphere for everyone present.

At times, the competing rhythms of the auctioneer and the auction regulars shooting the breeze while waiting to bid verged on sensory overload, at which point a walk outside offered a glimpse of the equipment being queued up for display. It reminded me of a fashion show for tractors; these auctions really do have something for everyone to enjoy.

Although I don’t have prior auction experience to compare it to, I have a feeling that Equify onsite auctions are a unique experience. The combination of modern accommodations like online bidding and the traditional values of southern hospitality make for an auction that is comfortable even when it’s not familiar. While I, personally, enjoy the convenience of taking care of business online, I can appreciate the time and personal touch that goes into putting together an event like this. As a means of showing customers and new employees exactly what makes Equify different from competitors, an onsite auction can’t be replaced. Like the people that run them, auctions have a lot of heart and character. I had a great time.