

A - Z of Events Management



Presented in bite-sized form, this A-Z explores some key areas of consideration when tackling an events project. It looks at the practical methods and techniques you can use in events management, and at the key areas, principles and issues that events entail.

It explores topics you might be familiar with and others which might be completely new. Many of the hints and tips are based on our own experiences of delivering a rich, varied array of events during more than 20 years working in the industry.

We've combined insights from our experience along with those of experts from a range of fields - from AV to event design, venues to delegate management, and virtual events to face to face engagements.

We hope you will find this handy, practical guide both supportive and inspirational in your future event planning.



BIBI

EVENTS

Audiovisual

At nearly every event, be that a conference, dinner, live performance or product launch, it's needed in some shape or form to ensure your message gets across loud and clear. When we refer to AV, the three main areas one usually needs to think about are sound, lighting and visuals.

SOUND. It doesn't matter how big or small your audience is, you need to make sure your speaker can be heard. A small room being used for a 30 person workshop or a 20 person dinner probably won't need a PA system or sound support but a larger event will. There's nothing worse than your message getting lost by half the audience because people at the back can't hear the speakers. You also need to make sure you've got the right microphones for the task in hand. One speaker on their own will need a static lectern microphone or a lapel mic if they want freedom to move around the stage.

Panel sessions can use static desk mics or all the speakers can have lapels too (especially good if the panel are sat on comfy chairs for a more 'fireside chat' set up). Handheld mics are useful for Q&A sessions, especially in larger spaces or for more informal evening events and short speeches. Our preferred option for all events if possible would be lapel mics for sound quality and flexibility.



Audiovisual

LIGHTING. The right lighting package can absolutely transform a venue from day to night and create an incredible atmosphere (as well as look awesome in photos!). The right colours can make a venue seem warmer, cooler, or echo the ethos of a brand. Uplighting is a cost-effective and simple way of lighting a venue for an evening event. Moving and static gobos can be projected to walls and ceilings to provide additional décor, messages or a company logo.

VISUALS. Whatever the message of the event, it needs to be seen. Be that via Powerpoint, keynote, video or an alternative. Ensure your screens are large enough for your content to be seen from the back of the room. Think about additional repeater screens around the room if there are going to be issues with sightlines. We always try to use rear-projection if we can, and go for widescreen format. LED screens are amazing for crystal clear imagery and are well worth the additional investment if your budget can stretch.





Budget



Whatever size of event you are putting on, you'll need a detailed event budget drawn up before you start. Subject to the brief, where possible we would usually give a client an indicative ballpark budget and would then fine tune this into a more itemised budget as we progress with the event details and supplier selection. For larger events, the budget is always a bit of a moving feast from start to finish in the planning process.

It goes without saying that it's key to ensure that all your working costs are tracked throughout so you can keep on top of spend, and the same goes for ticket or sponsorship sales if it's a revenue driven event. Ensure you've allowed some contingency in your event budget too, as things can often change as plans progress and you don't want to be caught short or run out of money before the event is delivered.



Budget



Here is a high-level summary of the key line items we would usually include in the budget for a conference hosted in a hotel:

AV

- Staging & screens
- Sound
- Lighting
- Crew
- Video production
- Live streaming

Speakers

- Speaker hire
- Speaker expenses
- Speaker gifts

Marketing

- Advertising
- Websites
- Mailings
- Event promotion
- Social media

Venue Hire

- Accommodation
- Main meeting space hire
- Breakout space hire
- Day delegate rates
- Food and drink
- Service charges (usually 12.5% - 15%)

Printing

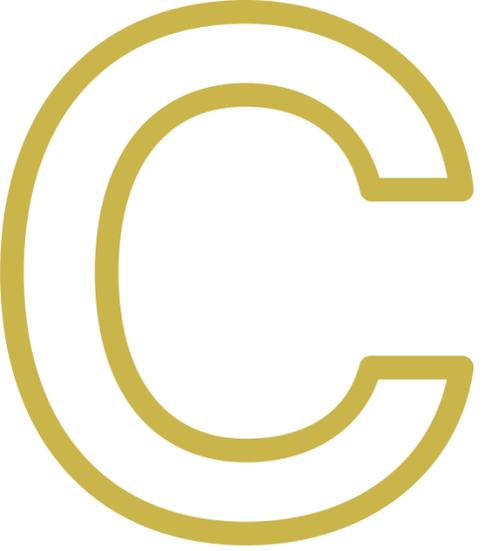
- Brochures & flyers
- Tickets
- Branding & signage
- Badges
- Agendas
- Menus

Décor

- Flowers
- Candles
- Linen
- Furniture hire
- Equipment hire

Other

- Event tech
- Photographer
- Insurance
- Staffing costs
- Expenses
- Management fees



Content

We live by the saying that 'Content is King'. From your event title and strapline, through to the creative, agenda content and speakers, a consistent message through all event communications is critical. This should be reinforced at every delegate touchpoint from your initial outreach via a save the date to your post-event follow up.

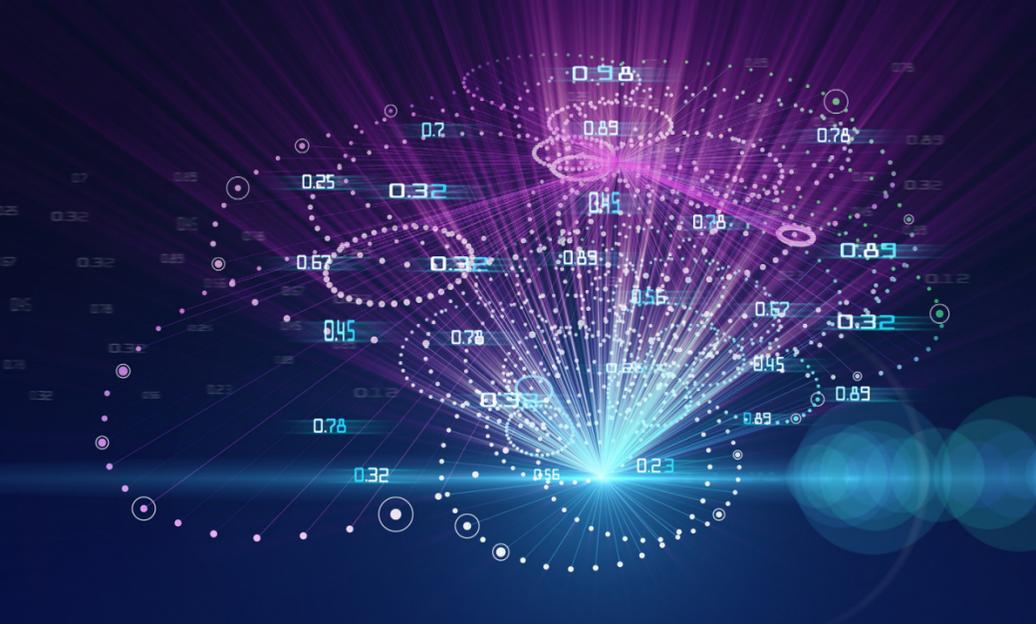
At every corporate event, a well-crafted agenda is a crucial driver of delegate registrations. But the choice of speakers can make or break an event, so it's important choose wisely and ensure they will help promote and focus your event theme and core message.

We always recommend that the right content is something that inspires discussion and debate. Nobody wants to attend an event to be sold to, so leave your sales pitches at the door and ensure instead you are positioning your brand as a thought-leader or an expert in the field instead. People want to attend so they can learn, so make sure your content reflects that.

At each stage of an event, the content you create serves a specific purpose. Before the start of your event, you will want to drive engagement, encourage your target audience to register, and showcase the major event details. During the event, the goal of organisers is to keep the audience tuned in, to simplify connection building, and to provide comprehensive direction in real time. Lastly, post-event messages usually relate to the establishment of long-term relationships with the audience members as well as the collection of insight and feedback. All of these goals can be translated into content that embraces various forms.

Is your content easily accessible and sharable? If your attendees want more information on a session they attended (or want content they may have missed due to scheduling), it should be right at their fingertips. From keynotes to breakouts, a mobile event app that enables content-sharing can often be very useful for event success.

Social media and the power of hashtags can also become an essential part of your event content campaign. They will encourage customer engagement before, during and after your event and take it outside the confines of simply what happens in the face-to-face environment.



Data

Often massively overlooked at the start of the event planning process, good data is absolutely key if you are trying to attract new prospects to sign up to attend your event. With email and telemarketing forming the basis of most event marketing campaigns, accurate data is critical to reaching your target audience successfully.

As a benchmark, we work on the premise that for every person you want to attend your (free) event, you need to invite 50. For paid events, it's closer to 100 invites for every one delegate that you want there. In short therefore, the larger and more accurate your database, the better! The make-up of the database also needs to match your preferred target audience – if you want 20% CEOs in the room, then 20% of your database needs to be CEOs – in the right type of business and in the right location.

D A good CRM system which is kept regularly updated by your sales team will come into its own when sending out invitations for an event. Any CRM that you use should ideally be integrated with your email marketing system to ensure your communications are joined up across all channels. It's no good having your data in hundreds of excel spreadsheets as that makes it impossible to run targeted marketing campaigns.

The warmer and more regularly used your database is, the easier it is going to be to get the right 'bums on seats'. A good database is the very foundation of successful event marketing so do not underestimate its importance.

Engagement

How to engage your event audience is a key consideration to bear in mind throughout the entire event planning process and is crucial to your event success. If your audience isn't engaged in your event then what's the point in hosting it in the first place?

With the technology and social media channels available at our fingertips today, it is much easier to encourage engagement from your audience before the event even starts than it used to be. Your pre-event marketing campaign should get your audience excited to attend. Consider pushing out snippets of content from some of your key speakers as teasers to encourage sign-ups and to maintain momentum as the event approaches.

Collect questions and feedback from your audience in advance of the event to help curate content and ensure the event is worthwhile for them to attend. Blog posts, an event hashtag and relevant industry influencers can all be leveraged to build momentum and engagement.



Engagement

At the event, make sure you are interacting with your audience throughout. There are plenty of tools out there which make surveys and live polling easy and can provide you with valuable data for post-event write ups and reports. Live tweeting is a great way to keep your audience engaged. You can share speakers' quotes, photos of what's happening, and retweet your attendees who use your event hashtag.

Event apps also allow networking amongst the audience and engagement with potential sponsors. It's important not to forget to leave time for the attendees to connect with each other. Networking will be one of the key reasons they are there, aside from the chance to learn from your content and speakers. Creating an environment that encourages personal connections to be made means people leave with only positive thoughts of your brand and message(s).





Face to Face

"You will never see eye to eye if you don't meet face to face."

Warren Buffett



Live events are and will continue to be one of the best forms of communication and promotion for businesses. The benefits of events are indisputable. Building brand awareness and recognition, communication of key messages, lead generation, and the development of new and existing relationships are just some of the many advantages of live interaction.



Face to face contact is an infallible method of connecting people. We're all human after all and we have a fundamental need to connect with others, be it for business or simply for pleasure.

Good relationships aren't built on digital communication, they're built by meeting in person, by live experiences and, let's not forget, also by having fun.

Face to Face



Brands can be powerful, but the better the customer experience, the more memorable your brand. And people remember experiences. We all remember the first concert we went to, we won't ever remember the first marketing email we were sent or the first tweet we responded to. Think about an event that left a lasting impression on you. Was it the finer details of a presentation or the personal connection you made with another attendee that you remember?

If you really want to engage people then you need to get in front of them, in real life. Over the course of an event, relationships are formed, deals are made and teams are strengthened. As the saying goes "people buy from people". Enabling face to face contact with your customers and developing a good relationship with them during the buying cycle can only come from human engagement over time and events will always help progress these connections.



Gamification

Event gamification in short means incorporating game-like components into your corporate event to enhance the experience of your attendees. The theory behind it is that it taps into our innate drive for competition and rewards, as a bit of friendly competition releases the feel-good hormone dopamine into our brains. And if we feel good, then we're obviously more engaged and interested in what we're doing.

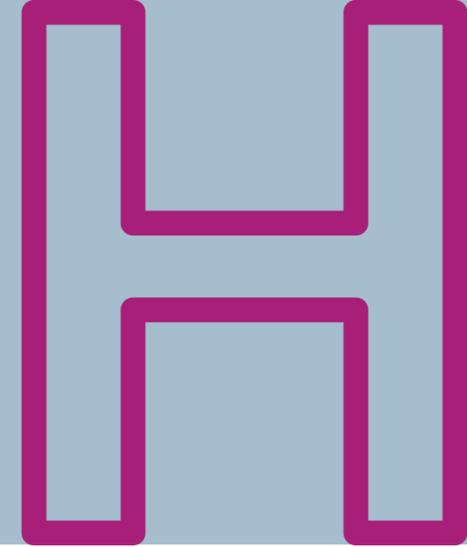
Whilst the overarching aim of including it in an event is to encourage attendee engagement, this can be broken down into multiple subsidiary purposes. The most common are to encourage discussion and commentary, increase connections and networking amongst the attendees, improve event ratings and recommendations, and drive the event profile on social media by liking, sharing, posting and tweeting.

Although often delivered via the medium of an event app, gamification doesn't always require the use of technology. Scavenger hunts, bingo cards, visiting specific stands at an expo to get stamps in a passport... can also all be classed as event gamification.

In order to achieve these gamification objectives you might incorporate competitions with a point scoring system and rewards or prizes, or problem-solving tasks into particular sessions on the event agenda, or to the event as a whole. Some games require the attendees to work together in teams rather than alone, and these are great for encouraging interaction, team-building and better performance in the workplace – and of course, they can make the event more fun too.



Hybrid



Within the events industry, there seems to be an overwhelming prediction that when we come out the other side of the Covid-19 crisis, the vast majority of events will become hybrid events. A hybrid event is an event that mixes both the physical and the virtual together meaning that the event will take place in a physical venue with a live audience attending, but there will be an online audience joining in too.

The obvious advantages of a hybrid event are the fact that they are more cost-effective and they can have a much greater reach than a purely physical event. If you host an event in London, you can still reach potential prospects all over the UK or even further afield who can dial in to participate in the event. In terms of your event ROI, the costs are much reduced as you only need to host the one event in the one location rather than multiple events in different cities.

In hosting a hybrid event, you must make sure that your content is relevant for the whole audience and not just the attendees who will be there in person. Live streaming your physical event does not constitute a hybrid event, you must make sure that your online audience can get involved in the event as much as the physical audience can. They should be able to network and communicate with the other attendees, join in Q&As with speakers, and vote in any event polls just as those that are there in person can do.

The right technology platform is key for delivering a successful hybrid event along with the right technical crew on site at the event to film and livestream the event to the platform. But with the right mechanism in place, the possibilities and potential reach of your event are endless.



Invitation Process

Planning your marketing and communications strategy to get people to attend your event is another key part of your event planning process. People are busy, and getting time in people's diaries is challenging at the best of times. The more notice you can give people of your event the better. We recommend a minimum of 8 weeks but ideally at least 12 weeks and that would be for a breakfast or dinner event which involves limited time out of the office. For a full day event or conference an even longer lead time would be advised.

If you don't have all the details finalised (i.e. speakers, agenda, timings) then don't let that stop you letting people know the event is happening. A save the date with nothing more than a date and a venue on it can notify people that more information will be coming and to keep the date free.

Don't just rely on email invitations as a means of getting sign ups to your event. Use your social channels, leverage any influencers and PR opportunities, and don't be afraid to get on the phone. If you have a busy sales team who have other priorities aside from your event, we would always recommend external telemarketing support to follow up on event invitations and help drive registrations. You'll be amazed at the difference it makes to get those all important 'bums on seats'.

For professionalism, we would always recommend a dedicated event website or landing page for registrations but there are also other platforms out there such as Eventbrite which can be used instead. Otherwise a dedicated email address or inbox to track your responses is a suitable alternative for events simply requiring a yes/no reply.

Juggling



Every event is a monumental juggling act. There are multiple moving parts from venue finding, negotiating, contracting, supplier management, agenda construction, the invitation process, marketing and communications, right through to managing speakers and content, delegate management, event collateral creation, set-up and the on-site running of the entire event.

If you're not a good multi-tasker or you don't have time to dedicate to the organisation of your event then you could find yourself in trouble. You need to have eyes on all the moving parts of the event from start to finish and dropping the ball on any of them can spell disaster for your event.

We grant you that event management is not rocket science, you don't need a specific degree to be able to do it. But it takes a certain type of person to be able to do it well, and to be able to keep all those balls in the air without falling apart under the pressure.

You might have a small team that is already overworked, or it might just be you who is tasked with delivering a key event for your company on top of an already busy remit. Either way, an event that goes wrong can be disastrous for your brand and its reputation. It's therefore key to make sure that all the juggling that goes with the event planning can be managed successfully. If you don't think it can, then perhaps it's time to think about hiring in some external support.

KPIs



Along with determining the strategic overall objective of your event before you start, setting some key performance indicators (KPIs) will also help to focus your event strategy on the path to success.

Although they are likely to be different for each style and size of event you might host (the KPIs for a gala dinner may be very different to those of a one day conference for example) it is good to set these in advance so that you can measure progress along the way. This will help you focus on areas that need improvement and can help you determine what is going smoothly.

Some example KPIs might be based around your event email engagement rates (opens, click-throughs) or your overall registration numbers. You might want to drill down into more detail on your registrations and set targets relating to job titles, target accounts or existing customers. Other KPIs might be based on ticket sales, exhibition booths or gala dinner table sales, or even sign-up numbers for certain conference breakout sessions.

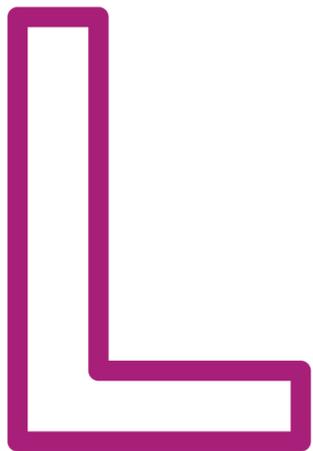
Tracking KPIs over time can give you valuable information which you can use in the future to help your event marketing campaign. For example, were your event registrations steady over time or were there certain announcements that spiked a greater number of them? Did any early bird pricing promotions boost your ticket sales or not? Which of your social channels has helped prompt registrations the most? Which of your email invitations had the most clicks or opens to help you craft your email content better in the future? All of these learnings will help you develop greater ROI for your event going forwards.



Leads

Events usually make up at least a quarter of an overall marketing budget and it's easy to understand why. Nothing beats the power of face to face engagement – particularly when it comes to generating new business opportunities. They bring together people who are all interested in a similar topic and offer them a chance to get actively involved in your product or service. No other form of marketing gives you such an opportunity to present your brand and its values, and to start to build face to face relationships with potential buyers.

If live events aren't a part of your lead generation strategy, you're missing out on an opportunity to accelerate your sales cycle and grow your business.



To generate high quality leads, however, you need to ensure your event strategy encourages your target market to sign up to attend your event in the first place. Make sure you understand your audience and ensure your content is relevant for them. Add value and position your business as a thought leader on the subjects and areas of business that will be relevant for them. Ensure targets and KPIs are clear from the offset. Most importantly ensure your post-event follow up strategy is clearly defined.

Leads

It is key to ensure any conversations and information gained from attendees at your event is documented in case they fall into your sales pipeline at a later stage. If the event is well planned and interesting to invitees then they are more likely to be open to discussions when they are there, and you never know where these discussions may lead down the line.



If your event is well executed and your business positions itself as a thought leader, it should provoke discussion and debate. Your attendees are more likely to be open to sharing their pain points at your event, offering an ideal opportunity to see where and how you can help them, and simultaneously progress them slowly into your sales funnel.



MC

M

At any corporate event, having an MC can help keep your agenda flowing as smoothly as possible and your audience engaged. You can either hire in a professional speaker specifically to do the job, or alternatively it's common to use a member of a business' senior management team. If the latter, then you need to ensure that they have the personality to carry off the role and will be able to 'work the room'. Commanding a stage in front of an audience is no mean feat and it is a challenge to keep the energy in a room high throughout an event.

A good MC will set the tone and help maintain the flow of the event. They are responsible for moving from one topic to the next to create a logical flow, and at the same time help reinforce the key messages you want to get across to your audience.

They will introduce your speakers and help keep the event to time. They can break up the sessions and can often provide light relief where content might be lengthy or slide heavy.

A good MC knows how to get people involved. If you're hosting a fundraising gala dinner, then you'll need an MC who can convince people to donate their money, buy raffle tickets or bid on auction items. MCs can help pick up the audience when they are flagging, pace the speakers and awards, and encourage people to get back in the room on time. When people laugh, they learn. If they are bored, they simply switch off and all the corporate messages in the world won't get through to them.

Negotiation



The negotiation of supplier contracts is a crucial aspect of the pre-event planning process. It is particularly important when it comes to contracting your chosen event venue as this usually forms the largest part of your budget.

An event agency can often use their good relationships with venues to negotiate deals to your advantage.



Negotiation



If you are managing the contracting process yourself, then these are some of the key areas you should focus on when reviewing your venue contract:

Cost

Are you getting the biggest bang for your buck? Where can the costs be negotiated down or alternatively can additional items be included in the contract to add value instead? For example, can you negotiate some free pastries on arrival in the morning or free wi-fi if there is a charge for it at the venue? These extras can all mount up to substantial cost savings.

Safety

What happens if there is a terrorist attack in the location, can you postpone or rearrange the event in a sister property elsewhere?

Flexibility

What are the options for making any changes to what you have originally contracted? When are your cut off dates for final confirmation on numbers for accommodation and catering numbers. You want these to be as late as possible so you can guestimate as accurately as possible based on your latest registrations.

Attrition Rates

Review attrition details especially if it is an external audience attending and make sure that the minimum numbers are realistic from the outset.

Competitors

You do not want to hold your event in a venue where your biggest competitor is having theirs at the same time. Clauses can be included to make sure the venue doesn't book any competing business over the same dates, and alerts you to any enquiries that they receive.

Cancellation Terms

Review carefully to mitigate financial & logistical risks. Flexibility keeps you protected and allows for adaptability in case the event needs to be rescheduled or canceled due to unforeseen circumstances.



Objectives

As is the case with any element of the marketing mix, it is absolutely critical that you commence your event planning with clear, well-defined and SMART objectives. It is essential that these are laid out and agreed at the start of planning although, as your project progresses, they may be developed or refined.

Start by thinking about your high-level goals and what you are aiming to achieve with your event:

- What's its purpose?
- What is the primary motivation behind running it?
- What impact are you hoping for and upon whom?
- How will you measure your success?

Also look at the big picture by aligning the event with your brand's marketing strategy and your company's mission statement, this can be really useful.

Objectives

Once you have established the event's aims and strategic direction, then go on to set specific objectives as to exactly what you need to do to achieve the desired impact. Break your aims down into specific targets and decide how to facilitate your event's delivery and evaluation.

Ensure you set objectives in relation to the different areas of your event. Financially, what are you hoping to both spend and gain? From a marketing perspective, who are you targeting, how and what results are you aiming for? At the event, what do you want delegates' involvement to be and how will this be facilitated?

Ensure that your objectives are 'SMART'; Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-based. This helps provide targets to aim for, benchmarks to measure against and statistics to evaluate success by. Working closely with your sales teams will help identify performance goals and track results. If not measurable in a quantitative form (sales achieved for example), evaluate qualitatively using techniques such as surveys.

Finally, keep event objectives genuinely achievable by focusing on content and issues facing your attendees. This is what will resonate most with your audience.



Project Plan

Every event needs a project plan. This is produced before the event gets underway as it allows you to almost pre-plan everything that needs doing for the event through from start to finish. They are especially useful if you have a number of different team members working on the event, or even multiple teams (ie sales and marketing) involved in the event as they help clarify who is doing what and where responsibilities for each of the different components lie.

The best project plans follow a timeline and logical sequence, with each action or task reinforcing the last. With most corporate event project plans it is feasible to include all the aspects of the event management in the same plan so it will touch on your delegate acquisition strategy, your marketing and comms plan, your logistics, your creative and print assets, and the deadlines relating to your event suppliers.



Break big tasks down into bite-sized tasks that seem much more manageable. For example, when it comes to securing a venue, your individual steps might include research, site visits, signing the contract on your chosen venue, and paying the deposit. Set deadlines so there is an ultimate date that each task should be done by. Set milestones along the way so you can measure your success.

You will end up with a master schedule that everyone can use to ensure the event planning is kept on track, key milestones are met and tasks are allocated and resourced appropriately.



Questionnaires



Regardless of the type or size of event you are running, gauging audience views at different stages throughout will encourage improved transparency and delegate engagement and assist in the successful planning and execution of any future events. Event surveys and questionnaires will also greatly support interaction with different stakeholders, from delegates and exhibitors to sponsors and speakers.

Pre-event, the use of surveys to ascertain demographics and interests will help you better understand your audience and therefore more accurately target potential attendees. A greater understanding of your audience will also help you shape the content of the event ahead ensuring it's more in line with attendee needs and expectations. Why not go as far as to ask delegates in advance exactly what they'd like to hear about?

Throughout your event, you can track attendee satisfaction in real-time so if there are any issues, you can deal with them there and then. Event apps enable you to do this whilst also giving speakers and sponsors much wider interaction opportunities with delegates.

And post-event, you will have a gut feel as to the success of your event and should be tracking quantitative figures (attendee numbers and sales opportunities created, for example). However, human experiences vary and to accurately assess true event success you will need qualitative insight. Post-event surveys will help you gather constructive feedback to help inform future decisions and improve future event planning.

ROI



Events are memorable, engaging, support your brand and can make a business money. But for a lot of marketers the ROI from an event is often hard to define. As the costs associated with putting on an event are usually much higher than most other elements of a marketing campaign, it makes sense that every marketer will want to track the return on their investment. When you can understand, calculate, and communicate ROI for the meetings and events you produce, you can prove the true value of the events.

Overall the calculation of your ROI is the perceived value of the event divided by the cost. Once you have determined what the objectives are for your event, you can then work out the metrics you are going to track to ascertain your ROI.

For events which rely on ticket or sponsorship sales, it can be much easier to do a financial calculation on the ROI if your objective was to increase revenue. For other less quantifiable goals, for example increasing brand awareness, you will need to look at the data you have that you can track against this goal such as increased registrations, social media impressions, website traffic etc. The more metrics you can track as you plan your event, the greater your chance of measuring your ROI will be.



Sustainability

Sustainability is defined as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs”. In event terms, this effectively means organisers being more aware of the environmental, social and economic impact of their events and doing what they can to reduce negative impact where at all possible throughout the running of their event.

As an organisation that holds events or as an event organiser, you have a responsibility to ensure that sustainability is a key part of your event strategy. The main areas to look at during the event planning process would include; an event’s minimal impact on the environment, responsible sourcing of physical products, an accessible, safe and inclusive setting for guests, and encouragement of sustainable behaviour. Major events, the Olympics for example, may go one step further to look at how they may leave a positive legacy once completed.

Sustainability

So how do you go about making your events more sustainable? Your first step is to ensure that your company is behind the initiative and responsibilities have been assigned accordingly. Then determine sustainability scope and obligations for each event that your organisation is running in the year ahead.

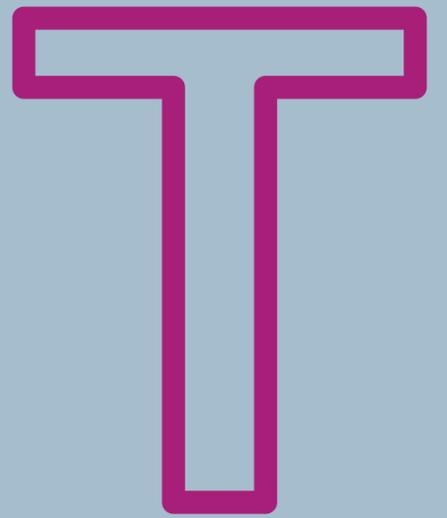
Start with the basics: Delegate transport, plastic reduction, recycling during your event etc. Then go on to look at your partners: What are the sustainability initiatives of venues, sponsors and suppliers? Work with those who have set sustainability standards.

Conform to sustainable event management standards. ISO 20121 is a good place to start and offers fantastic guidance and best practice guidelines to help you manage the sustainability of your events.

Work with charities who support environmental initiatives. We have chosen to partner with TreeSisters and on behalf of our clients plant one tree per attendee for each event we organise. There are so many to choose from!



Thought Leadership



If the objective of your event is to sell your product or get some more leads into your buying cycle to sell your product or service later down the line, then a thought leadership-driven event is going to be your best friend.

Nobody wants to be overtly sold to by a pushy sales person. Instead we want to get to know more about the product or service available, get to know the people behind it, and find out more about what the brand stands for. People buy from people they like and trust, after all we're only human.

The best thought leadership events will bring together a group of like-minded people in a discussion-based scenario and allow them the time to talk freely about their common problems and pain points. In a face to face environment, we recommend this takes place over breakfast or dinner to minimise time out of the office.

In a virtual environment the timings are not so important but what is key is that you are not demanding too much of someone's time. People are busy and if you are asking them to commit too much, they just won't attend.

The event should be based around a key subject or topic they will be interested in. It should NOT be about your product or service. An expert practitioner or external speaker who can talk with authority on the subject from an independent viewpoint will attract people to attend. Someone from your business as your main speaker will not.

Frame the event around key discussion points (that can be suggested by your attendees in advance) and listen during the event to what your attendees are telling you. You should be able to pick up key themes and common issues and then work out how your product or service can help them.



USP

No two events are the same, but if you want to attract the right people to attend yours, then one of the first steps you need to take in your planning is to ensure you have a carefully crafted value proposition or unique selling point (USP). This should be closely aligned with your target audience and what they care about. If your event content resonates with your audience then they are more likely to attend your event over someone else's.

Your event could be unique because of its content, location, venue choice or event format but you need to keep your potential audience in mind when differentiating it. You might want to host it in a very cool and unusual venue but if your chosen topics are deemed irrelevant, this won't encourage your audience to come.

You need to avoid trying to create a 'unique' element of an event that is in reality just a feature of it. The key to having a really strong USP for your event is if you can explain to your audience how your event is going to provide them with a unique and valuable experience and what is going to be in it for them.

Your event needs to be the mechanism that in some way can help to solve their current problems or challenge. Your narrative (through your event marketing and promotion) needs to clearly define this and thus compel them to register to attend.

Venue Finding



Any experienced event planner knows that choice of venue is paramount to the overall success of an event. Given that it can often take up the largest share of your event budget, it's also financially critical that you get it right. So, what considerations should one make to select the perfect venue?

Location, location, location. You can choose the slickest venue but if it's in the wrong place and is difficult to get to, your attendee numbers will be low as a result. A venue close to a city with good transport links will attract a higher number of delegates than one which requires great effort or expense to access.

Sounds simple but select a venue that's entirely fit for purpose. Think about style, layout and expected attendee numbers. You're safer opting for a venue which may be slightly too large – a venue that's too small

means discomfort for guests which is what they'll remember upon departure. However, go too large and you'll lose atmosphere and focus. Also ensure your venue can meet the tech spec for your event, and will allow you to work with your chosen, trusted suppliers.

Happy guests are well fed guests so choose a venue that can offer high quality refreshments in a comfortable environment. Also consider where and when guests will eat and drink in line with the event programme. Staff clattering coffee cups mid-presentation guarantees distracted delegates – ensure you have ample areas available.

And finally:

Go for as much 'wow factor' as budget allows. Unique, ultra-stylish, or a la mode venues will be sure to heighten your attendee numbers.

Website



If you want to provide a seamless event experience for your attendees, then this should start from your very first outreach to them, all the way through to your post-event follow up.

A bespoke event registration website can help set the tone for your entire event as well as showcase your chosen event creative and brand throughout the delegate experience.

More complex corporate events such as conferences will potentially require multi-page websites to ensure all the pertinent details an invitee will need to know are included. Website tabs can include relevant details such as event overview, agenda, speakers, venue, and registration. Simpler events which have less information that needs to be conveyed to an audience can work well with just a basic landing page and a simple registration function.

If you don't have an internal web team who can produce your registration pages for you, there are lots of event technology platforms out there which can help you build a fully-branded event website and make event registration an easy process for attendees. Some such as Eventbrite are free (for free events) and offer a simple registration functionality, others such as Swoogo offer a paid subscription but the ability to create a fully branded event website for your event.

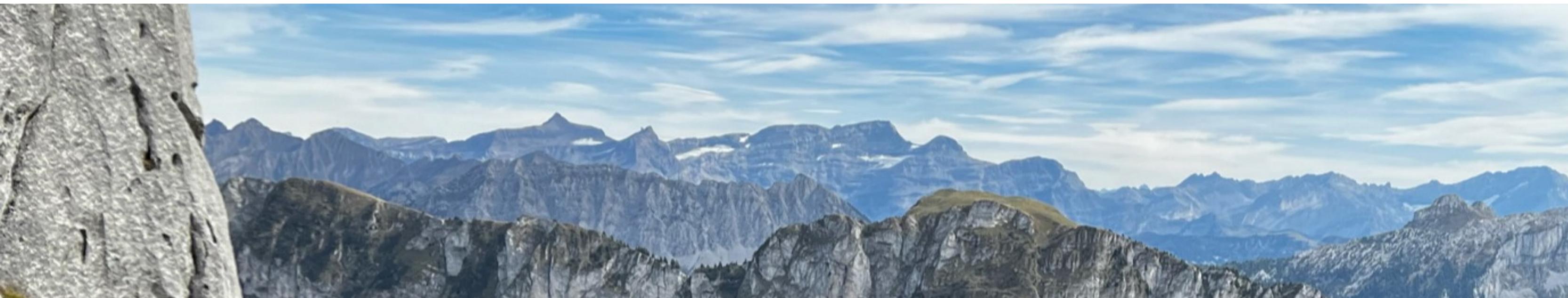
eXtraordinary



OK so we cheated here slightly, but we need a bit of creative license for these last few letters....!

Events are all about feelings, experiences and emotions. Creating events that focus on providing positive and greater than expected experiences is at the core of strong event management.

How do you make sure your event is one that makes an impact and is remembered? And what do you need to do to catapult an event from just plain old ordinary to extraordinary?



eXtraordinary



Invest your time in it properly. Too many people don't spend enough time thinking creatively about their events and the experience of the audience. The result is a boring, bland event that nobody remembers. If you don't have the time to focus on it, then find someone else who does. Live events are expensive so you should be maximising the opportunity you have. Virtual events are more cost effective but the premise remains the same. Make it count.



Try and create something original and impactful - be this in your marketing, content, video, creative, venue or agenda.

Maximise the number of touch-points with your attendees.

Get them involved and engaged from the start.

Ensure your objectives and KPIs are clear and are kept in mind during the planning process.

If you can inspire feelings, experiences or an emotion, then you have created an extraordinary event.

Let your audience know why your event is different from all the rest and what they will gain from it.



Yacht

...the ultimate venue I hear you cry! And yes, indeed – a superb corporate hospitality choice. Luxurious, exciting and, most importantly, exclusive. But with so many options to choose from and significant investment required, how can you ensure that you provide the best experience for your hospitality guests and it's a huge success?

The purpose of a corporate hospitality event is to help develop and strengthen commercial relationships with key contacts including clients, business partners, future customers and also colleagues. Once an event has been agreed, adopt key internal ambassadors to ensure that highly valued people are invited, and the event is being promoted both internally and externally to encourage attendance.

Yacht

Collect the appropriate information on prospective attendees to decide the best hospitality choice. Ensure you don't book Gleneagles if 25 of your 30 prospects have no interest in golf! Also, it is critical to get the mix of people right. This will ensure that conversation flows, there are no awkward interactions, and everyone enjoys themselves.

Engage your guests throughout the day. Don't invite so many guests that representatives from your organisation don't have the opportunity to have an in-depth conversation with each and every attendee. Lavish surroundings combined with attentive interaction from the host(s) will make guests feel incredibly special.

Be thoughtful, considerate and put great effort in to ensuring guests have a great time – your actions won't go unrewarded!





Zeal



Zeal and passion for what you do are the difference-makers, transforming ordinary gatherings into exceptional experiences. Passion is a catalyst for innovation and creativity in event planning. It ignites the spark that inspires you to think beyond conventional boundaries and explore new possibilities. Passion should permeate every stage of event conceptualisation and execution. If you zealously aim at pushing the envelope, seeking fresh ideas and innovative approaches, then any event you undertake promises to be a unique and immersive experience.

When you're genuinely passionate about the purpose and goals of an event, your enthusiasm becomes contagious, captivating attendees and stakeholders alike. When you focus on connecting your passion for purpose with the passions and interests of attendees, you create an event that resonates with audiences on a deep level, ensuring the experience leaves a lasting impression and forges meaningful connections.

Moreover, zeal and passion serve as the driving forces behind overcoming challenges and delivering exceptional results. In the face of unforeseen obstacles or demanding timelines, a passionate team remains unwavering in their dedication. Let your passion fuel your resilience, enabling you to navigate complexities with grace and poise. A zealous commitment to excellence ensures that any event you undertake is executed with meticulous attention to detail and exceeds expectations.

We're a zealously passionate team at 1331 Events, both for achieving extraordinary results with flair and panache, as well as for making our clients' event dreams come true. In our experience, being complete zealots – chasing after an ideal of events perfection – is what enables us to create events with more impact. A final word of advice – tap into the transformative power of passion if you'd like to see your event dream morph into a total fantasy come to life.

Ready to create events with more impact?

Contact us:



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