



Event Management Best Practices

Managing an event can be one of the most time-consuming things that will ever come across your desk. Refer to these event management best practices, and keep on top of the most important aspects of your event.

With every event you manage, the devil is in the details. A successful event may hinge on what seem to be very minor items, so keeping organized throughout the event planning process will help to ensure your event's success. And those stressful moments that are bound to occur on-site will be much easier to handle!

If you can build a group of people who are willing to work together as a team, then you can feel comfortable delegating the many responsibilities surrounding the event, and focus more of your efforts on keeping communication channels open between all involved.

Don't get bogged down with committees; instead, work with senior management to get some autonomy and independence around the planning of your event. This will streamline the management, shorten the meetings, and allow you to continually move forward.

Need more help? Ask us for the Brainium Corporate Event Guide, with more tips to keep you on the right track.

Hotel Logistics / Meeting Planning

- Determine two acceptable date ranges for your event
- Use the "Add Holidays" Feature of Microsoft® Outlook™, and begin tracking holidays that may affect your attendees, to ensure you don't plan your event during an important religious holiday
- Search for hotels that are appropriate to the management level of your attendees
- Conduct site visits whenever possible and objectively rank each venue
- Pre-plan all meals (including off-site) as well as all event activities, to ensure proper space allocation
- Include set-up and tear-down time in your venue contract
- Pre-plan décor for special events to determine cost and set-up time
- Plan guest programs and off-site functions
- Set up transportation to/from venue for VIPs, speakers, attendees, and off-site functions
- Determine if there are any union labor concerns that may affect shipping/receiving, set-up and tear-down
- Conduct a post-event analysis of the venue; will you use it again in the future? If so, plan your next contract now!

Content Development / Speakers

- Determine the top three objectives of producing your event
- Determine the top three attendee benefits of attending your event
- Develop an event theme tied to these objectives and benefits
- Plan the agenda and develop topics that relate back to the theme
- Invite key executives to attend early (12 weeks out at the latest)
- Work with a speakers bureau to help in your expert speaker search
- Determine audio/visual needs for all speakers (video, PowerPoint, etc.)
- Survey attendees for feedback on content and speakers

Attendee Travel/Registration

- Determine the best way to accept registrations (web, email, phone, fax?)
- Gather/purchase prospect lists into one main invite list
- Determine the required data to capture during the registration process
- Determine credit card acceptance, and if so, ensure merchant accounts are active
- Design registration website using the chosen event theme and creative direction
- Determine if you will be assisting attendees with travel arrangements
- Contract with transportation company for airport transfers
- Determine if you will have any gifts/handouts for attendees at on-site registration desk
- Design confirmation letters to include key data such as the dress code, weather, agenda changes, etc.
- Have venue re-key your on-site registration office for security
- Pre-print badges for registered attendees ahead of time
- Determine your on-site badge printing options for late registrants and edits

Pre-Event Marketing

- Determine all of your marketing channels; pre-block ad space early
- Determine where your prospects get their information, and market your event there
- Determine licensing issues for photo/graphic use
- Create multiple URLs for direct marketing pieces to determine effectiveness of all pieces
- Develop production schedule and mailing drop dates
- Be consistent with copy style
- Determine any co-op marketing opportunities that may be available with your event's sponsors

On-Site Event Collateral

- Determine where your messaging can be seen on-site, and develop collateral for each of these prime locations
- Develop production schedule
- Print multiple items together to save on overall printing costs
- Design all collateral consistently, and be consistent with copy style
- Gain sponsorship revenue by allotting space for sponsor use (ads, exhibits, workshops, etc.)
- Get venue measurements to be sure your collateral fits the space (signs, banners, exhibits, etc.)
- Schedule time on-site to set up collateral
- Determine on-site staff to be responsible for setting up all collateral
- Think about designing event collateral so that it can be used at future events – saves money

Event Staging & Audio/Visual

- Determine A/V needs for general session room, breakout rooms and special events
- Are all meeting rooms on 24-hour hold? If not, develop a plan to re-set the rooms each morning
- Schedule pre-event rehearsals and due-date for presentations
- Determine music licensing needs
- Schedule on-site rehearsals and walk-throughs
- Pre-load all PowerPoint presentations on “show laptop”, and bring back-up CDs or USBs
- Develop a “show flow” with moderator script and cue points for slides, music, videos, etc.

Special Programs / Activities

- Determine the top three ideas for activities that fit your schedule and attendees the best
- Consider your event location when determining special programs
- Include transportation costs and distance into your planning
- Provide multiple activities/options whenever possible
- Be aware of the physical limitations of attendees
- Include sign-up for activities during event registration process
- Consider networking time when planning special programs