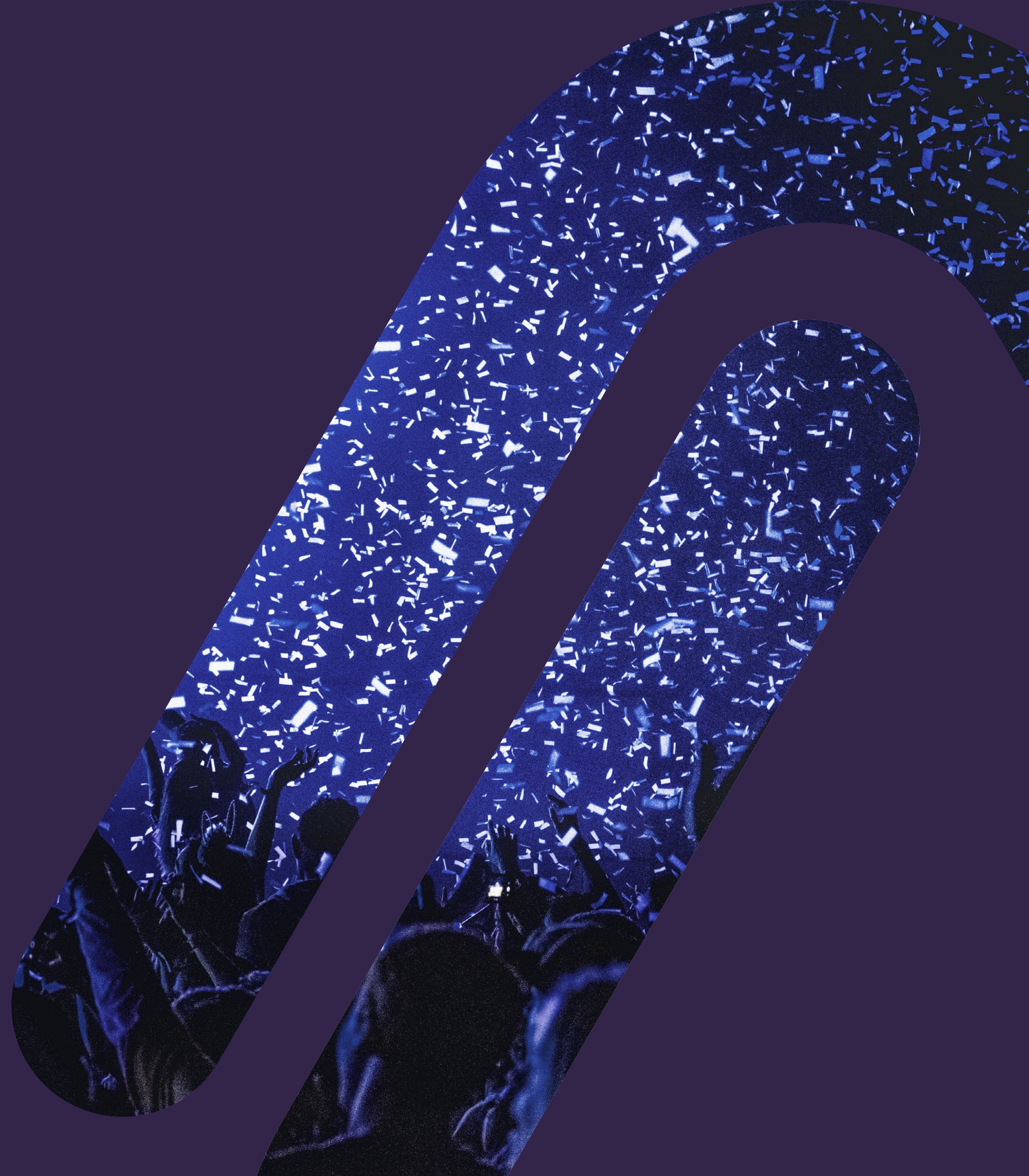




Event Planning

The Complete Guide



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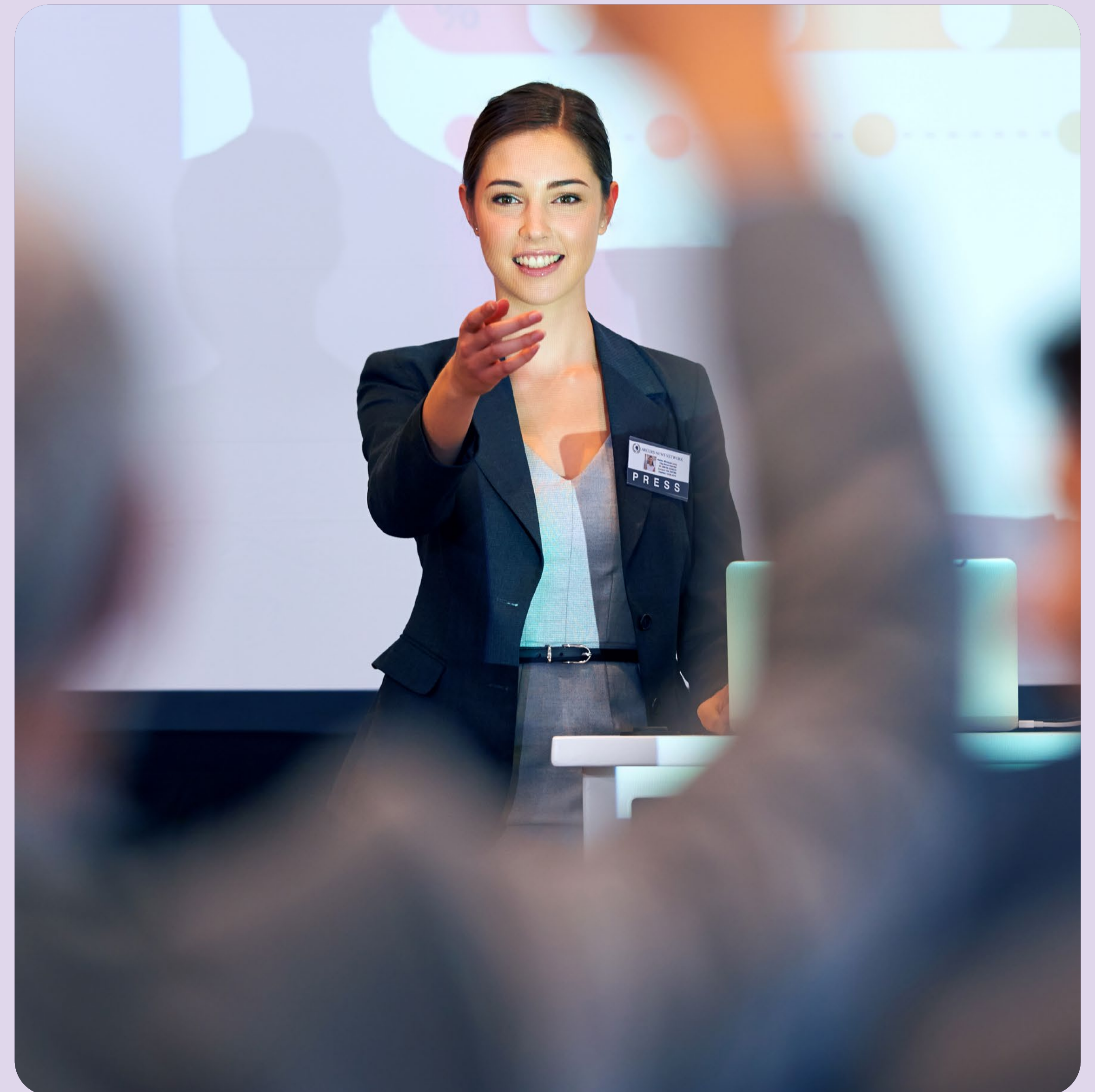
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Introduction



How we plan and attend events and conferences has changed in the last few years, presenting fresh challenges as well as lots of new opportunities within the industry. Post-pandemic we are seeing the return of in-person events, the rise of hybrid events and a greater demand for sustainability amongst other emerging trends such as inclusivity and accessibility. In this guide, we'll be sharing our insights and top tips for overcoming challenges and successfully planning events and conferences.



01

The current landscape





Challenges

What challenges are professional event planners and conference organizers facing?



Event professionals are responsible for creating experiences that delight and engage attendees, and while overcoming roadblocks and hurdles is a core part of the job, even the most experienced professionals can find themselves facing difficult situations. In this section, we'll explore some of the common challenges event professionals face and provide tips and strategies for addressing them.





Budget

One of the most common challenges event professionals come up against is budget. Decreasing budgets is a top concern for planners at present, with recent research showing 65% of planners are reducing their requirements to cope with stretched budgets. Additionally, it can be easy to go over budget when you don't have an established budget or an effective way of managing your cash flow. One way of combatting this is to make it the starting point when you're planning your event or conference. Check out the budget section of this guide for more tips on putting together a detailed and realistic budget.

Building the right event team

Without the team behind the scenes, there would be no event. But finding great staff can be a challenge, especially with the current skills shortage in the events industry in the wake of workers leaving during Covid-19.

“ 69% of events professionals say

The skills shortage is affecting their organization's ability to recruit, even before the pandemic, this has only been compounded post covid.

In addition to finding great people, it can also be challenging to know how many you will need. Whether it's due to hiring difficulties, budget concerns, sickness, or underestimating your needs, being understaffed can lead to unnecessary stress and make the difference between a successful event and an unsuccessful one. Though less common, on the other side of the coin, overstaffing can present problems too.





Technology

As the event industry continues to evolve, so too does its technology. Attendees are now demanding hybrid experiences, flexibility, and seamless, innovative experiences. With this, comes various challenges

Technical difficulties

From lagging speakers, AV issues to the Wi-Fi going down, technological difficulties often feature in planners' nightmares! Low-quality audio for instance can be detrimental to your event — from the speaker and attendee experience to recordings that become unusable, it can be a costly error to make. Be sure not to cut corners and choose a trusted production company with good reviews. Check out the [logistics section of this guide](#) for more about safeguarding against technical difficulties.

Flexibility

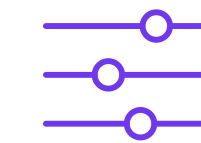
A set time and place for events are fast becoming a thing of the past. Attendees are now looking to participate in events or conferences that fit with their schedule, which is driving demand for hybrid events on-demand sessions rather than sessions that begin at a particular time. When events are easily accessible, attendees are more likely to engage with them before, during and afterwards. However for event planners, this can seemingly double the work.

Event management technology

Finding the right end-to-end event management platform that seamlessly integrates with existing tech stacks is key challenge for event professionals — but it's also an opportunity. In the coming years, we can expect to see more technology that makes remote event attendance a better experience for attendees as well as an increase in personalization, the use of apps, and ever-more experimental event formats.

Event planners are looking for systems to support and automate these processes, that are secure, compliant, and easy for their teams to use. Experienced event planners recognize the need to streamline their platforms rather than inefficiently bundling several different solutions. The more tech-savvy an event planner can be — the better. Keeping up with the latest trends and innovations will allow you to gain an edge over your competitors as you offer the best experiences for attendees.

If you're interested in streamlining your event planning solutions, why not [try a personalized demo of our transformative events planning platform?](#)



Keeping track of the process

The world of event planning can be a fast-paced business with lots of balls up in the air — it can be easy to lose track of what you need to be focusing your attention on next. This guide can be used to create a workable plan that will enable you to develop detailed timelines and checklists to help you and execute successful events and conferences.

Risks

What are some of the risks involved in organizing an event and how can they be managed?



No matter how much you plan, there's always a possibility that something won't go to plan. Having a solid risk management strategy to identify and mitigate internal and external risk factors should form the basis of your event planning. In this section, we'll delve into what some of these risks look like, and how you can mitigate them.





Identifying and mitigating risks at events

The best way to mitigate any unexpected occurrences or emergencies at your events is to have a risk management plan for each one. This affords peace of mind that should the worst happen, your team will know exactly what to do. All risk management plans should include:

Hazard identification

Recce your venue and its surroundings to identify any potential hazards for your attendees and team. You will need to consider technological, natural, contractual, and environmental hazards as well as hazards to humans. The risks involved in organizing an event include but are not limited to:

- Health and safety
- Communication gaps within your team
- Cybersecurity
- Venue capacity and restrictions
- Financial implications
- Supply chain issues
- Attendee behavior
- Security

Risk assessment

Complete a [risk assessment matrix](#) to ascertain the potential impact of a hazard and assess the level of risk. Once done, you prioritize mitigating the most significant risks.

Risk control

With the help of your team, you can begin implementing solutions starting with the highest-level risks.

Why is workplace health and safety important when conducting an event?

Without health and safety measures in place there's no way for you to mitigate risks and keep everyone safe. Should any health or safety emergencies arise, your company may also be liable for any damages to life or property.

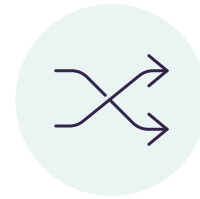
It's therefore important that you identify all health and safety risks and adequately induct everyone working on your event with the relevant safety information such as:

- Health and safety
- Communication gaps within your team
- Cybersecurity
- Venue capacity and restrictions
- Financial implications
- Supply chain issues
- Attendee behavior
- Security



Event planning and risk in a post-pandemic world

Having put the events industry on hold for so long, Covid-19 presented challenges never faced before and has fundamentally changed how we approach event and conference planning with regards to risk. Some things to consider include:



Space and attendee flow

The pandemic highlighted the importance of considering the space in which you host your event from a health perspective. Consider how attendees will move around the venue, how many attendees you can safely accommodate, and how you can space them out. For example, could you stagger entry and exit times or operate a one-way system? Could you use breakout rooms and separate spaces for particular activities?



Food

Deciding what refreshments to offer is a key part of planning any event. Pre-Covid-19, self-service buffets were a popular way of feeding event and conference attendees. However, providing food in this way is less hygienic as it involves multiple people touching the same surfaces, introducing the opportunity to spread germs or contaminate the food. One way to address this is by offering food that has been served onto plates or providing team members to serve at buffets. This is likely to require more money than the buffet alternative so will need to be factored into your budget.



Cleaning

Implementing thorough cleaning protocols around and during your event is crucial to infection control if this is not already taken care of by your venue. Ensure all areas are regularly cleaned and disinfected, especially high-traffic and contact areas, and provide sufficient and well-signed handwashing and sanitization systems in suitable locations.



Cybersecurity

With event planners having access to so much valuable data, cybersecurity presents an increasingly pronounced risk and data management and security must be considered from the outset.

According to the 2022 Cyber Threat Report, most industries saw an increase in ransomware attacks — with governments worryingly seeing a majority of these. The events industry is not immune to such attacks either, with over 5 million guest records stolen from [Marriot hotel in 2020](#).

How you look after and store any data you collect from your customers — whether it's names, addresses or phone numbers, needs to adhere to the [1988 Privacy Act](#) or your country's particular privacy laws.

Event Wi-Fi encryption

Leaving your Wi-Fi on an open network leaves you and your guests vulnerable to data breaches, so ensure that your Wi-Fi network is password protected.

Secure data storage and management

Storing valuable data in an Excel spreadsheet or notebook is no longer an acceptable way to manage your data. There are plenty of purpose-built software solutions that will allow you to securely store your data, like EventsAir. You should have a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) on your website for instance. These encrypt the links between a web server and a browser, keeping data transmitted between the two encrypted

Be aware of mobile apps

Before you start using a mobile event app, research the technology provider to ensure they have adequate security measures in place. Read the terms and conditions thoroughly to ensure they don't have any right to use your data and their authorization process for giving access.





Opportunities

The future is bright,
the future is hybrid.



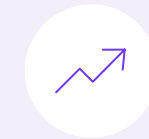
Arising out of necessity during the pandemic, hybrid events are here to stay. By offering a way to attend an event virtually or remotely, hybrid events can be a fantastic way of complementing an in-person event, extending the reach of your content, and delivering more engagement opportunities. In this section we'll take a closer look at some of the benefits of the hybrid event format and best practice for engaging remote and in-person attendees.





Why deliver a hybrid event?

Hybrid events can offer a way of reaching more people at a low and profitable cost as they leverage the existing live event production and are managed as a singular event rather than two different ones. Some of the other benefits include:



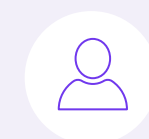
Increased ticket sales

Hybrid events open up attendance to consumers who otherwise may not have been reachable, including the time poor who can't take time out of their day-to-day roles to attend an event in-person, the budget-constrained, those who are unable to attend in person due to location or ability, and those who decide to attend last-minute.



Increased inclusivity

Accessibility features such as closed captions, sign language interpretation and a screen reader delivered via an event platform make your event more inclusive for those attending virtually.



Greater interaction

Hybrid events can foster additional opportunities for interaction and building connections safely and creatively.



Attract more sponsors

With the increased reach of a hybrid event, your event will be more appealing to sponsors and exhibitors. Additionally, the virtual elements will provide more advertising and exhibition spaces, which can give your event more depth and bring in additional revenue.



ROI

Having a virtual audience will give you access to a range of attendance and engagement metrics that are useful not just for sponsors and exhibitors who want to know if they're making a good investment, but for your own understanding of ROI



Capture leads

From feedback forms to lead capture, data retrieval is much easier and quicker for virtual attendees, and customers can be nurtured faster than trying to follow up with someone in-person.



Increased focus on sustainability

The need for sustainable products and services is set to grow as event planners seek to reduce their carbon footprints. Events that adopt green technologies and demonstrate a commitment to sustainability will be in high demand. Giving your target attendees the chance to join your event remotely is a positive for the environment as it reduces carbon emissions from travel.



Reduced costs

By inviting remote speakers you can reduce the typically expensive costs associated with their travel and accommodation. Virtual attendees help achieve a higher yield revenue too as there are no catering or venue costs associated with their attendance. Streaming your sessions can be kept at a relatively low cost by utilizing existing AV and PTZ cameras which can also be recorded and monetized later as on-demand content.

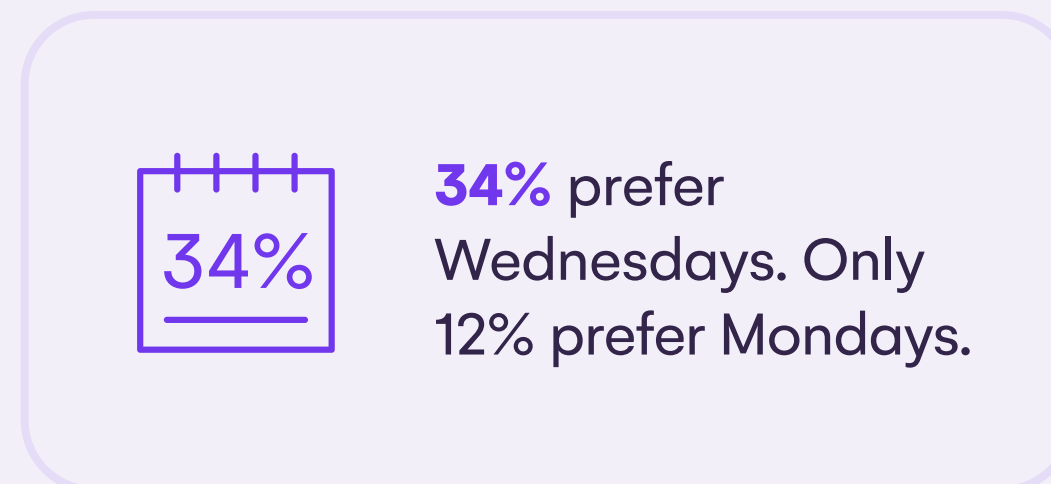
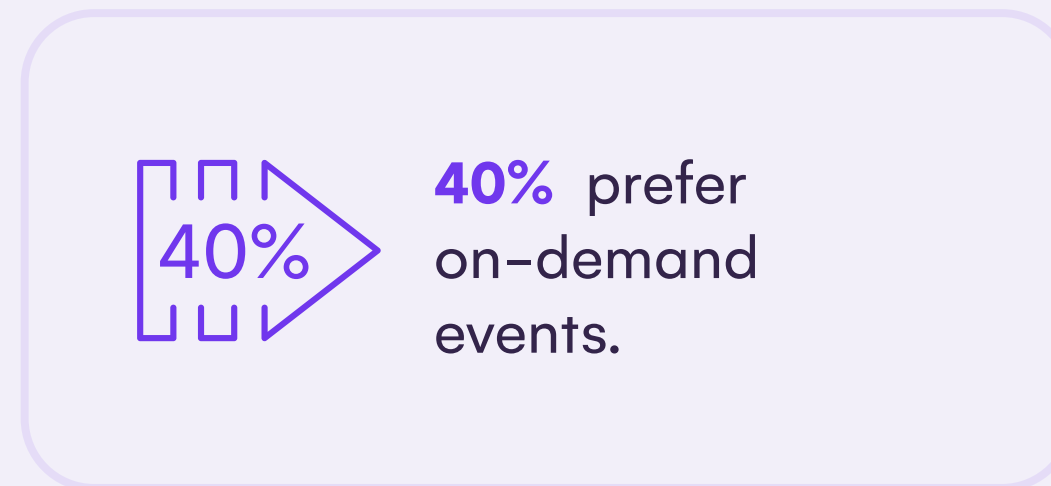


Understanding the different needs of attendees: in-person, virtual and remote

When planning a hybrid event, you must understand and balance the needs of your in-person and virtual attendees simultaneously and ensure that all attendees have equal engagement opportunities, maximizing the value they take away from their experience of your event.

What the remote event attendee wants

Virtual audiences usually access events by tuning into live streams. Virtual attendees may also prefer to watch content on-demand at a later time that suits them. Being able to access an event virtually has numerous benefits with the most obvious being that attendees can tune in from wherever in the world they choose.



Data: ROX Event Staff

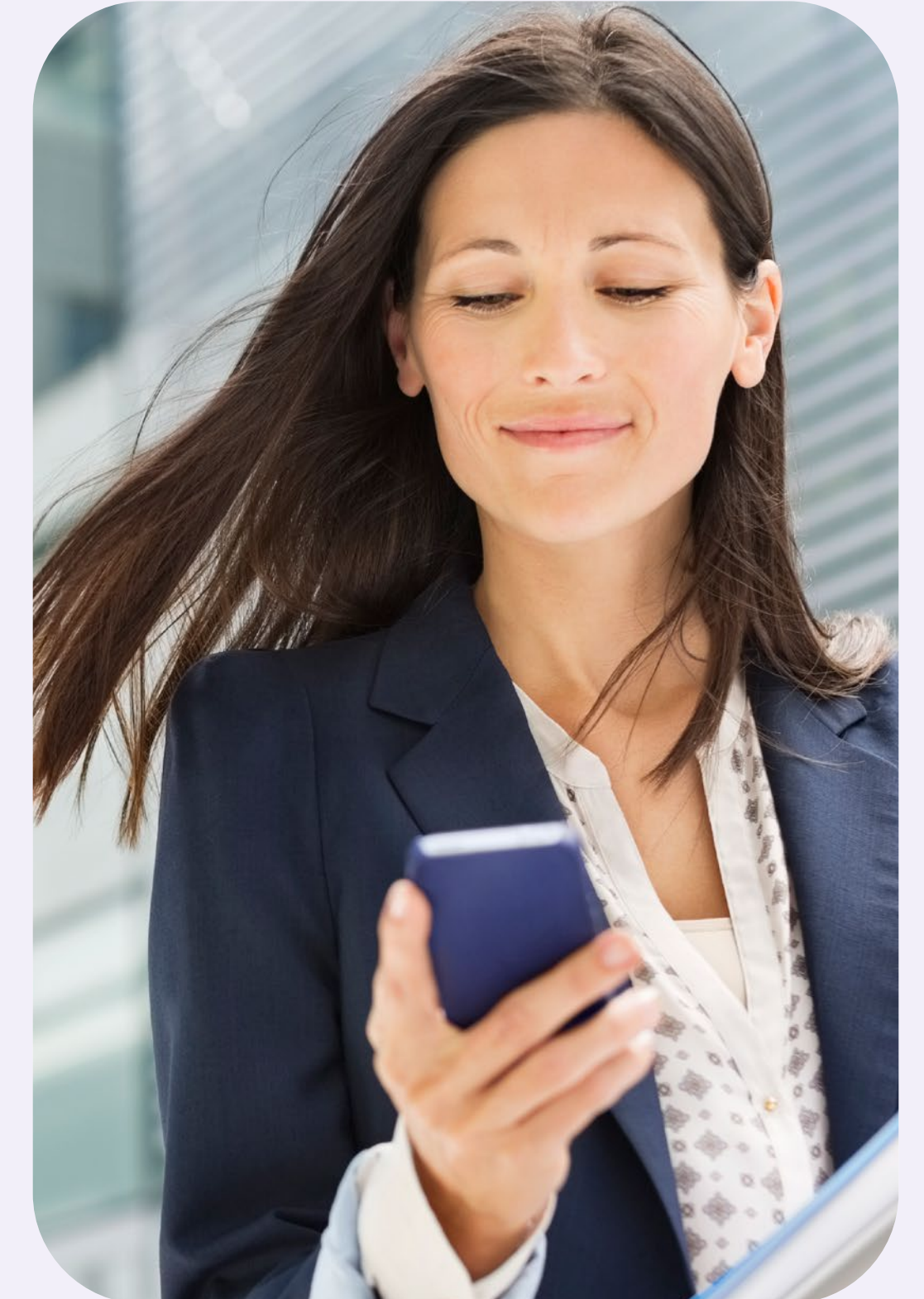
What the in-person event attendee wants

Those that attend events in-person are looking to connect and network face-to-face with other attendees, speakers, exhibitors, and sponsors. A recent study shows that 72% of people prefer an in-person event. This is because:

1. Networking is much easier face-to-face than it is virtually
2. Audiences are better able to identify body language and subtle communication
3. Question and answer sessions as well as demonstrations are easier to facilitate and understand in-person

They want to know that the organizers have taken care of all the little details, and everything will run to plan. Ensure your attendees are kept well informed with an event agenda so they can easily access those details:

- Session titles and descriptions
- Speakers
- Times
- Location
- A map of the venue
- Where they can find exhibitors and sponsors





Engaging attendees in a hybrid world

Just because you're running a hybrid event, it doesn't mean you have to make the experience exactly the same for both virtual and in-person attendees. You can choose to stream only certain sessions to virtual attendees and make others available on-demand, for example, which can help you save costs while extending your exposure and engagement. Here are some of our other tips for getting the balance right.

Choose the right speakers and hosts

Choose the right speakers for your event and pair them with personable hosts to moderate and keep the conversation flowing can go a long way to maintaining your audience's attention (and help to entice them to attend in the first place!). You could also consider having a host dedicated to moderating for the online audience.

Create a two-way experience

Most remote attendees will be watching from their desks with all of the usual distractions around them — their phones, other people, and their day-to-day obligations. To keep them immersed and engaged in your event you need to create a two-way experience, creating opportunities to interact with the event, each other, and the speakers — replicating the experience of in-person attendees.

Importantly, facilitating interaction for both in-person and remote attendees often hinges on the speaker or facilitator's ability to lead these interactions and communicate clearly and easily with both audiences. So be sure that all your speakers are confident in using all the technology they'll need to facilitate, be it microphones, live chats, or other digital aids.

Here are some ways to create opportunities for interaction:

Creating an event app that is useful to in-person and remote audiences and can help bridge the physical divide between them by providing a place for them to interact and network together, engage with event content, and discuss event topics.

Finding ways to give your remote attendees the chance to **interact with sponsors and exhibitors** in real-time.

Building in sessions for **remote attendees to network with one another** and the in-person audience i.e. matchmaking attendees based on their preferences.

Gamifying aspects of your events with incentives and rewards to encourage engagement. This might include leaderboards that track attendance of sessions or trivia quizzes on your website or in-app.

Using interactive features like live chat, polling, and on-video Q&A snippets.

Creating specific events and sessions for remote attendees — i.e. a post-presentation Q&A session where questions are answered by the virtual audience.



Offer on-demand content

Whether attending remotely or in-person, not everyone can attend all the sessions they would like to at an event. By recording all your content or even the most anticipated sessions, you can then give your audience the chance to watch them back on-demand which you can monetize and use as another revenue stream.

Make it personal

Traditionally events have been organized around a one size fits all approach. But this is beginning to change as event organizers realize the need to cater to the individual needs of attendees. This is leading to an increase in personalized event experiences — from sending out dynamic email content to offering VIP experiences at conferences and exhibitions.

With influencers becoming commonplace in all industries, offering VIP experiences, or having invite-only socials around your events can turn attendees into ambassadors for your event and company. This attention to detail makes attendees feel valued and appreciated and can go a long way to getting them to return in the future.

Optimize your production for a remote audience

Picture and sound quality are extremely important if you want to offer optimal virtual event attendance for your audience. Poor quality will have people leaving your events and thinking twice about attending any in future. There is a common misconception that adding this live-streaming element and the associated teams will drive event costs up, however, the revenue generated from your remote ticket sales will cover the overheads. You can also leverage existing camera equipment to make your hybrid operation more cost-effective.

In addition, as your attendees might be watching on laptops, tablets, or smartphones. Ensure all text, video, and imagery are legible and displays comfortably on various screens sizes.



Best practices for virtual events

There are a few best practices you will want to consider when it comes to hosting virtual events such as:

Have a support team on hand to assist with technical difficulties

You can test as much as possible before an event, but you never know what might happen on the day. With a support team on standby, you can be assured that any problems will be quickly resolved, and you can carry on with your event.

Include breaks during your virtual event

Reduce fatigue and allow your attendees to absorb session content with regular breaks of between 10 and 15 minutes, making sure to get up and move around if attendees have been sat down for an extended period of time.

Highlight your sponsors

With a virtual event, you will need to think more creatively about how you showcase your sponsors. Will you highlight them in breaks? Consider all of the digital real estate at your disposal and the formats available to you to help maximize their touchpoints with attendees.

Delivering content in short digestible chunks

alongside complimentary visuals will capture your audience's interest better than a traditional keynote-length session.

Record the event

Give your audience the choice of accessing your content later by recording it and allowing them to access it live or on-demand at a later date.

Follow up with your attendees afterwards

Email your attendees after your event thanking them for their attendance and asking them for feedback. This can be in the form of a survey which will then inform your next online event.

Using an all-in-one virtual event platform

Platforms such as EventsAir make it easy to plan and execute immersive virtual and hybrid events that are secure and scalable. With this end-to-end solution, you can rest assured that you have all the tools you need at your disposal to plan and deliver events that meet your goals and your attendee's expectations.



Sign up for your personalized EventsAir demo [here](#).

02

A step-by-step
guide to planning
and managing
your event





Step One





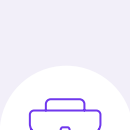
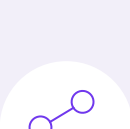
Setting your event up for success with clear goals and objectives.



Without goals and objectives in place, there is no way to track the progress of your event planning or determine its success afterward. Having clearly defined objectives will help you to limit resource wastage by sharpening your focus and keeping you on track. In this section, we'll explore how to define your event's purposes, identify your target audience, and create measurable goals according to budget.

Do your research

To define the purpose and desired outcomes of your event and give your event the best chance of success it pays to base your planning on solid research. You'll need to consider:

-  The most popular event types and formats for your target audience
-  The best location based on demographical information
-  Event themes that will appeal to your target audience
-  What your competitors are doing well and what opportunities they're missing
-  Sponsorship opportunities for related businesses
-  Your business priorities and how this event fits within your broader strategy





Answer the 5 Ws

A simple exercise you can do to determine your event's purpose is to answer the 5 W questions. These are who, what, when, where, and crucially, your why.

Who is attending your event?

Your audience are your customers and therefore your event goals need to directly align with their wants and needs. Remember that your audience is likely to be a mix of different people, including existing customers, prospective, repeat attendees and first-time attendees, so you'll want to ensure that your goals suit their needs too.

It's also important to consider your team and stakeholders. Knowing who you will be working with to plan and execute your event allows you to set realistic goals in accordance with the skills that they bring to the table.

Your stakeholders such as your event sponsors, partners, exhibitors, and suppliers will have their own expectations and needs of your event — if you're not already aware of these ensure you seek clarity before you start planning in earnest.

What?

Events are defined by their 'what's'. To help you pinpoint yours, try answering:

- What do I want my attendees to gain from my event?
- What type of event is it — will it be a conference, an exhibition, a training day, or something else?
- What does value look like to my sponsors and stakeholders?
- What are my business goals concerning the event?

Where?

First, you'll want to establish whether your event is going to be in-person, virtual or hybrid. For physical events, you'll need to consider the location, capacity, accessibility, and logistics of any potential venues.

For virtual events, you'll need to consider the platform you'll be hosting it on — does it streamline your event's production? How will you direct your audience there and keep them engaged with your event's proceedings?

When?

Timing is everything and can have a bearing on your event's goals. The day, month and time of your event need to be convenient for its attendees and stakeholders. Ensure the date you select suits your target audience, doesn't clash with key holidays and isn't close to other events that your attendees might consider attending.

Why?

Without knowing why you want to put on the event, you can't formulate goals and measure its success effectively. Once you know the why of your event, you can streamline all your planning to achieve it and identify how you're going to deliver value to your sponsors and attendees.



Setting SMART event goals

SMART is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. SMART goals by their very nature are more likely to be realized over more vague goals as they need to meet the following criteria:

S — Specific: Vague goals don't produce results. What would you like to achieve and by when? For instance, you may wish to sell out your event by the end of June.

M — Measurable: To measure this goal, you need to know how many tickets would sell out at your event — say it's 1,000. This gives you a benchmark to measure your sales. You could even break your goal down into time-bound steps such as 'sell 250 tickets by the end of February'.

A — Achievable: Consider whether your goal is accomplishable. While you want your goal to stretch you and deliver results, you also want it to be realistic.

R — Relevant: Is the event's objective aligned with your company's goals? Are they a good match?

T — Time-bound: When will you start measuring the progress of your goal and when will you stop? In our example, the aim is to achieve the goal before the end of the event. The event is three days long and therefore that is the time you have to achieve the goal.

SMART goals and objectives will guide your entire event planning process from choosing a venue to formulating your attendee feedback survey.

Setting and measuring goals and objectives for virtual events

With virtual events becoming more viable and popular, knowing how to define and measure event goals and objectives will help inform your planning strategy and keep you on track to achieve them.

Many of the metrics that you'll want to track in accordance with your goals will be the same as those tracked for in-person events, you will just need to consider how you will track these using online tools. These might include:

- Registration numbers
- Event or session attendance
- Event engagement
- Leads generated
- Feedback generated from surveys and polls
- On-demand content watched
- Email click-through rates
- Attendee engagement with sponsors
- Sponsor banner engagement

With the right tools, you can delve deeper into your event analytics and explore valuable insights such as:

- Number of registrants vs actual attendees
- Attendee activity and responsiveness
- Social shares and advocacy

There are lots of analytical tools out there specifically for virtual events such as **EventsAir** that have in-depth analytics dashboards which can help you track your most important metrics such as attendee engagement and demographics, sponsor interaction and more.



Step Two

Identifying the target audience and tailoring the event to their needs



Knowing your event's ideal outcomes will make identifying your target audience easier. To efficiently tailor your event to their needs you'll need to know as much about them demographically as possible, such as:

- Age
- Gender
- Occupation
- Marital status
- Income level
- Education level
- Geographic location
- Hobbies

From there you can build an attendee persona profile — a defined example of your ideal event attendee. For example, the ideal attendee for a conference for surgeons could be someone who is around 48 years old, male, and working in the medical profession, ideally as a surgeon.





Look at past attendees

If you've previously organized a similar event, you'll already have an idea of what your target demographic looks like. This is why it's important to gather information about your attendees during the registration process, the event, and in post-event communications. You will hopefully have attendee feedback as well, which will give you a head start to tailor the event to the needs of your ideal attendee.

Look at the competition

If you don't have access to any data of your own, you can look at who is attending similar events and those of your competitors. Do competitor analysis by looking at:

- The aesthetics of their website
- Their tone of voice in their marketing
- How they promote their events on social media and other platforms
- What kind of content they use (blogs, social platforms, photography, video, audio)
- The engagement they receive and their sentiments'

Ask your audience

Rather than guessing, try asking your current audience what they want to see. First-party insights from your followers and mailing list subscribers will enable you to make informed decisions about your event.

Questions you could ask include:

- Who would you like to see speak at this event?
- What key topics are of interest to you right now?
- What would convince you to attend this event?
- Where do you keep up with events like this?
- What exhibitors would you like to engage with?

Offering an incentive like a discounted ticket or a ticket prize draw may further convince your audience to take a survey — especially if it's a lengthy one. Set a reasonable cut-off point in the future for the survey to end and then begin building the insights into the planning of your event.



Discover your audience's why

In the case of a surgical conference, it can be fairly obvious why someone is attending — usually to expand their knowledge and network — Surgeon's conferences are usually around particular specialisms or ailments. But there will be secondary audiences whose motivations are important to understand too — such as suppliers looking for business and exposure and other events industry personnel. Dig deeper and consider all your potential audiences so you can position your event as the go-to and boost attendance numbers.



Step Three

Developing a comprehensive budget and measuring ROI



An event's budget is based on lots of different variables but needs to accurately forecast all costs associated with it — from obvious ones such as the venue hire to the not-so-obvious ones like lanyards or hiring space for a coat room. Once you have a top-level event plan in place you can then start to forecast the costs — both fixed and variable for your event.

Fixed costs are your overheads that cannot be changed such as rental costs, utility bills, and payroll. Variable costs are those that can change from event to event such as material and labor costs. Gather quotes for everything from vendors and service providers and start assembling your budget.





Don't forget to account for:

Marketing: You'll want to entice people to attend your event so you'll need to let them know what it entails, where it is and why they should come. From creating websites to running online advertising to email marketing, you'll need to determine these costs ahead of your event.

Staffing: From security to cleaning staff, you'll need to consider the personnel you'll need to ensure your event runs smoothly and account for them in your budget. You may be able to engage a temporary staffing agency or specialist recruitment service to help you hire the appropriate people.

Venue: Whether in-person or online, you'll need somewhere to host your event. Check out our section below for tips on selecting a venue.

Food and drink: In-person events require refreshment provisions which you may be able to source from the venue, a temporary staffing agency or a caterer. Consider any associated costs such as storing or delivering the food.

Equipment: From PA systems to generators and audio-visual equipment, there may be additional costs to account for if certain pieces of equipment are not included in the cost of your venue hire.

Travel and accommodation: Consider whether you will need to cover any transport costs for equipment, speakers, or staff. Will they need to stay on or near the site to fulfill their role in your event?

Unforeseen costs: It's impossible to account for everything that will crop up in your budget, so allocate a portion for emergencies or last-minute contingencies.

Event technology: Using an all-in-one event management platform is often more cost-effective than bundling together several bits of subscription-based software to help you smoothly organize and run your events. While there are several options out there, it pays to be mindful of the different pricing models. Some companies charge based on the number of attendees which can be hard to accurately predict. It's worth looking at transparent pricing models that allow you to scale up or down as per your need. [Why not try a personalized demo of EventsAir here?](#)



Step Four

Venue selection and management



The venue you choose has the power to make or break your event and there are lots of variables you'll need to consider to ensure it's appropriate for your attendee and exhibitor needs. These will differ between in-person and hybrid events.

In-person events

To define the purpose and desired outcomes of your event and give your event the best chance of success it pays to base your planning on solid research. You'll need to consider:

Location. There is no use hiring a fantastic venue if your target audience is not within reasonable proximity to comfortably attend. Identify the target audience, their location and consider parking, and public transport links in your choice of venue.

Venue capacity and spaces. Think about how you will be using the space throughout your event — ensure that there will be enough space to accommodate the expected number of attendees, any required equipment or decorations, and space for networking and breakout rooms.

Facilities such as catering, audio-visual equipment, Wi-Fi, parking, a coatroom, and accessibility for those with disabilities.

Health and safety protocols. Ensure they align with your event's requirements and policies.

Cost. How will the venue cost affect your ticket price, consider negotiating or looking at several different venues to ensure you get the best value for money.

Virtual events

To define the purpose and desired outcomes of your event and give your event the best chance of success it pays to base your planning on solid research. You'll need to consider:

Platform features. Identify the type of virtual event you want to host and select an appropriate platform that aligns with your event's goals. Ensure the platform supports the features you require, such as video conferencing, chat rooms, polling, and screen sharing.

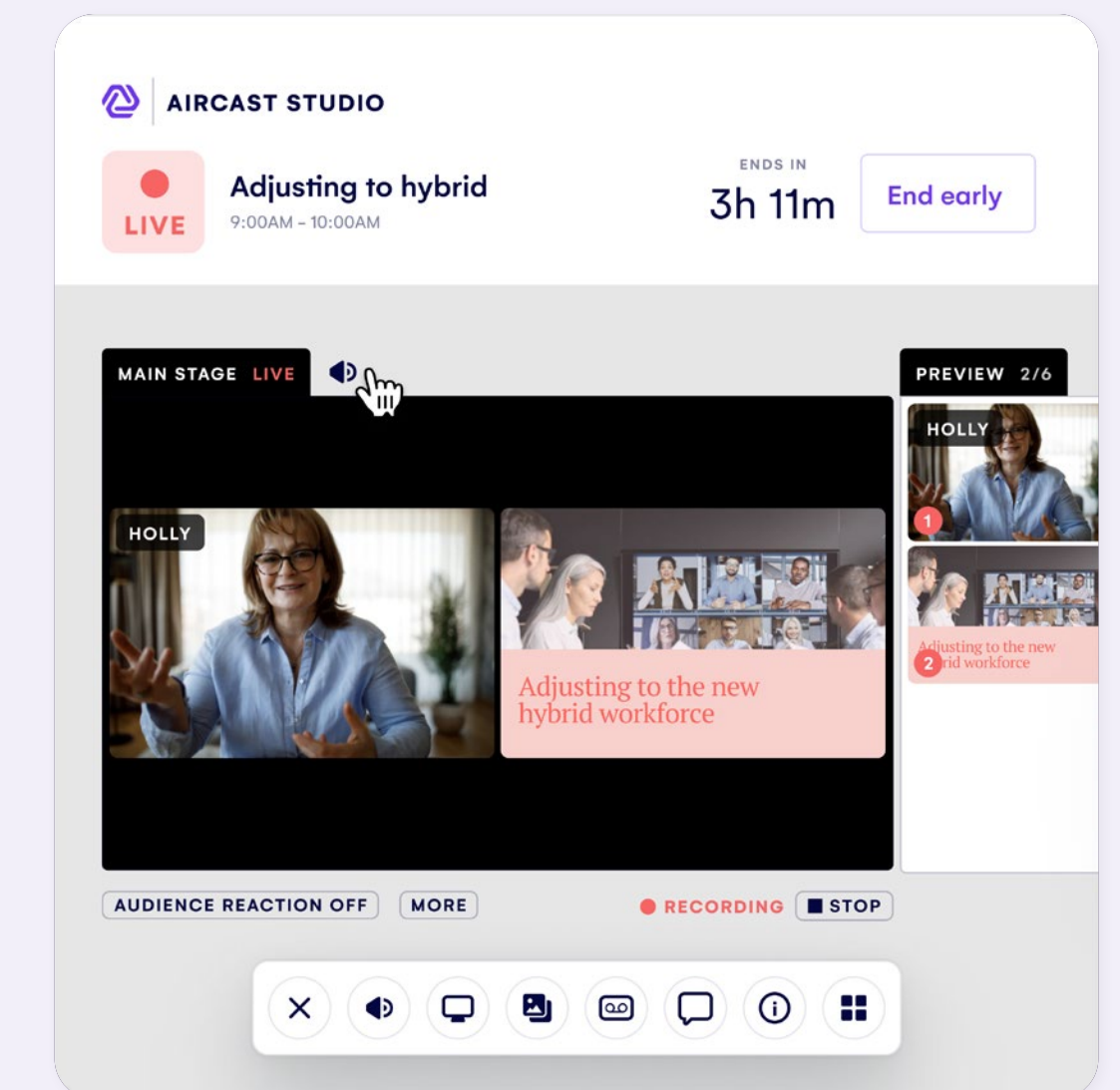
Technical requirements of the platform and ensure that your attendees can access it without any issues.

Tech support. Look for a platform that offers reliable customer support to help you with any technical difficulties during the event.

Cost. Consider platform cost and ensure it aligns with your event's budget and goals.

Overall, the key to selecting the right venue for both in-person and virtual events is to know your event goals, target audience, and requirements and select a venue that aligns with them and provides good value for money.

If you'd like to streamline your systems to help you transform your events, we can help. Click [here](#) to request your personalized demonstration of EventsAir.





Step Five

Managing logistics for your event



Logistics are a fundamental aspect of event management. From arranging transportation and accommodation to organizing catering and arranging the equipment, there is much to consider. The more you have a handle on your event's logistics, the better your attendee's experience will be.

Whether it's an in-person, hybrid or virtual event, here are some best practices to help you to keep your event running smoothly.





Assign clear roles and responsibilities

Communication is key to the success of any event so ensure everyone knows what they should be doing and when. Make sure everyone is well-trained and prepared for your event, whether they are staff, vendors or sponsors and keep communication channels open.

Arrange transportation and accommodation

Evaluate whether you need to book airport transfers, shuttles, parking and any accommodation for attendees and speakers. Consider the location, cost, and availability.

Adequate staffing and security

Physical safety and security are a big concern with running any event so it goes without saying that if you're planning a large event you will need to ensure your event is adequately staffed with employees and volunteers and you have qualified security personnel. Controlling the concentration or density of people in any one space will also help to lower risks to health, safety and security at any event. Managing staff can be challenging, so having a good rostering and employee management or volunteer management

system like EventsAir is a must.

Test everything

Conduct tests of all equipment, technology, and logistics before the event to ensure everything is working correctly and there are no issues. Where possible it's great to run dress rehearsals with MCs and key speakers, including testing AV, visuals, live-streaming, recording and any other event technology.

Monitor the event

Your work isn't done when the event starts. You'll need to continue to monitor the logistics closely, respond to any issues that arise, and adjust if necessary.

How to coordinate and collaborate effectively with vendors

Establish clear communication from the outset with regards to expectations, timelines, and budgets. Ensure that you have regular check-ins and provide feedback on their performance.

Select vendors carefully. Select vendors that align with your event goals and values. Research potential vendors and check their references and past work.

Negotiate contracts: Clearly outline vendor responsibilities, timelines, and payment terms in a contract to minimize misunderstandings and miscommunications.

Define roles and responsibilities of vendors in the planning and execution of the event. Ensure that everyone is on the same page and has a clear understanding of their responsibilities.

Set realistic, clear deadlines for vendors to deliver their products or services.

Provide clear instructions to vendors on what is expected of them, including deliverables, quality standards, and timelines.

Be flexible with vendors, as unforeseen circumstances can arise. Work with them to find solutions to problems that arise.

Build relationships with vendors, as they can become valuable partners for future events. Treat them with respect and professionalism and ensure that they feel valued and appreciated.

Provide feedback to vendors on their performance, both during and after the event. Be constructive and specific and provide suggestions for improvement.



Step Six

Event tech for automating and enhancing your event



Event planning is stressful and hinges on keeping abreast of thousands of details and keeping to tough deadlines. A far cry from drafting attendance lists contact by contact and being limited by traditional mediums such as print for advertising, the events industry now has access to an array of technologies that support the whole lifecycle of an event from planning to post-event analysis.

With the help of event automation tools, event planners are now able to claw back more time from repetitive and labor-intensive tasks, streamlining processes, and reducing stress levels and enabling attention to be directed elsewhere.

What to look for in your event tech:

Attendee app: An app built just for your event can include features such as a personalized agenda, attendee-to-attendee networking, and table seating selection.

Project management: Project management tools give you the power to manage tasks and resources at all stages of your event. You can configure these to automatically notify your team of pending tasks and completion dates.

Attendee apps: An app built just for your event can include features such as a personalized agenda, attendee-to-attendee networking, and table seating selection.

Event website: Drag-and-drop website builders allow you to create a beautiful website to promote your event without the need for any coding.

Registration site: Optimize your registration flow with a drag-and-drop site builder which allows you to create logic and advanced rules according to your own criteria.

Budgeting: Managing your budget should be a hassle-free process with a suite of budget management tools that will help you optimize your event for success.

Agenda builder: Automate your event's timetable with Agenda Builder tools which allows you to easily assign presenters to sessions, manage function and session details and instantly share your agenda to event websites, attendee apps and virtual event portals.

Self-check-in: Make onsite check-in a breeze with a variety of tools including attendee app check-in, self-check-in kiosks, and staffed check-in stations.

Badge printing: Save time by easily printing name badges in advance of events or onsite with badge printing tools. Includes attendee details and personalized agendas and photos.

Run sheets: Support your onsite event teams with powerful run sheets to help them manage the many tasks needed to stage your event successfully.

Reporting: Comprehensive reporting tools allow you to run detailed reports and data exports for all aspects of your event from check-ins to financials, attendance, accommodation and more.



Step Seven

Marketing and promotion



All events require marketing and promotion to boost registrations and sell tickets. Unfortunately, there's no perfect one size fits all event marketing strategy as no two events are the same in terms of budget, format, and target market. In this section, we will explore how to put together a comprehensive marketing strategy and how to utilize digital marketing to reach your ideal audience.





Developing a comprehensive marketing strategy

Your event marketing can be broken down into six stages:

1 Pre-event

This is the stage before you open up ticket sales or registration for your event. This is when you want to generate buzz for your event via your email list and socials.

Build momentum: From speaker announcements to sneak peeks of the setup or backstage, it's important to consistently generate momentum and excitement around your event. Post updates that include imagery or video to keep people interested. Be sure to actively engage with your audience by replying to all comments and messages.

Using social media and digital marketing to promote your event: With the high prevalence of the internet in our everyday lives, the online world has become the first place we hear about new events. It's therefore imperative for you to consider how you market your event online via social media, content marketing, paid advertising, and email marketing.

2 Event launch

The event launch is all about brand awareness. Here is where you will work with the press, sponsors, and influencers to get your event in front of your target attendees. You may also consider print advertising whilst continuing to utilize your mailing list and social media channels.

Early bird registrations: A popular way of securing ticket sales is to sell them at a lower price for a determined amount of time. This can help you to build a sense of urgency and encourage people to talk about it, which can further your event's reach.

Leverage speakers networks: Provide social media graphics and text to all of your speakers encouraging them to share the launch of the event with their networks to maximize your reach.

3 Day-to-day

This stage lasts from the event launch up until the moment you close ticket sales or event registration, it's where the bulk of your marketing strategies will be taking place.

Social media marketing: Social media is where most people find out about events these days thanks to the ease with which details can be shared amongst industry and niche groups. Utilizing dedicated Facebook and LinkedIn event pages and event hashtags will help you to generate buzz, reach your ideal attendee, and keep all event-associated content in one place. Make your hashtag unique, memorable and not-too-long, place it on all promo material and encourage your target audience and sponsors to use the hashtag too to build a community around it.

Paid advertising: Advertising on social media is a budget-friendly way of reaching more of your target audience. Eye-catching ads that use a mix of imagery and video will bring your event to life and direct more traffic to your website, generating ticket sales.



Content marketing: Blogging on your website as well as guest posting on other relevant websites in your niche can help you establish thought leadership and attract more people to sign up for your events. These blogs should be SEO-optimized and offer lots of value to your ideal attendee.

Paid search: If you want to get your event in front of as many people as possible then you will need to consider paid advertising channels such as Google Ads, retargeting ads, influencer marketing and sponsored posts.

Email marketing: Email marketing is a powerful tool to have in your marketing mix when it comes to promoting your event. You can organize email campaigns to align with the various stages of your event from pre to post and promote any new announcements or offers.

When optimized and targeted correctly, these channels can provide you with great short-term results that help sell tickets or secure registrations. Consider outsourcing any paid activity to an expert to save time and help you get the most out of your advertising budget.

Sponsor promotion: Provide your sponsors and exhibitors with a promotional kit, include things like social media graphics and posts, and banners to add to their email signature or company newsletters. It's in their best interest to boost attendance numbers so this is a great way to scale awareness of your event.

4 Final push

In this stage, you'll be doing as much as you can to maximize ticket sales or event registrations. This might include activities such as sending out last chance to register email and social campaigns, citing how many people have already done so. You could also include countdowns, combining them with offers in your emails and social posts to further create a sense of urgency around purchasing a ticket.

5 On the day

Your marketing efforts should end just because your event day arrives. You'll want to encourage as many attendees to post about the event on social media as possible — be sure to ask them to tag your company and use the official event hashtag if you have one. This is the perfect time to gather marketing collateral

to drip feed during the event but also to use when it comes to marketing your next one. Some good ideas include:

- Recording live vox pops and testimonials from attendees
- Recording snippets from speakers following their talks
- Posting polls
- Reposting user-generated content

6 Post-event

The event may have ended but this is a crucial stage for gathering feedback from your attendees, sponsors, and exhibitors. This information will help you to organize and market future events.

Social media after the event: Your social media marketing does not end with your event. Keeping it fresh in your attendees both past and prospective will encourage people to return to your next one and draw in new crowds too.

Here are some tips for posting on social media after the event:

Post the highlights: Sharing event photography or even a video highlights reel of the event with appealing visuals and a great soundtrack is a fantastic way of reliving the event and evoking a sense of nostalgia amongst your attendees — a powerful tool in and of itself.

Share attendee feedback: Social proof is a big driver of event ticket sales, so invite your attendees to leave feedback and make sure you respond to and share it. It will make your attendees feel valued and catch the eye of anyone who may be interested in attending a future event with you.

Tease your next event: Drop hints and generate curiosity by teasing your next event on your social media pages. Offer sneak peeks and glimpses, ask your audience questions, and keep them involved and intrigued to boost attendance numbers at your next event.



Step Eight

Sponsorship and exhibitors



For many events event sponsorship is the key to securing the much-needed funds to execute them. Sponsorships are usually mutually beneficial relationships whereby the sponsor supports the event by providing capital in exchange for something of value.

Event sponsorships can include:

Title sponsorships

The highest level of sponsorship where the sponsor's name is prominently featured in the event's title and will often include exclusive marketing and branding opportunities.

Venue sponsorships

A sponsor provides financial or in-kind support in exchange for the right to brand a specific area of the event, such as the main stage or VIP area.

Product sponsorship

This is where a sponsor provides products such as food or beverages to be consumed or sold at the event. The sponsor, in exchange, is typically recognized in some way via signage, announcements or via marketing online and at the event.

Speaker or session sponsorship

This is where a sponsor provides financial support for a specific session or speaker at the event. In exchange, the sponsor may be able to give input on the content, speak on a panel or have their branding prominently displayed during the session.

Supporting sponsorship

Sponsors can benefit from being exposed to affinity or in-market audiences, access to attendee data, speaking opportunities, exhibitor space and more.

Media sponsorship

A sponsor provides media support, such as advertising or promotion in exchange for recognition at the event.





How to increase sponsorship of an event

Identify the right partners

Take some time to think about the kinds of companies that would be a good fit for your event and contact those brands and businesses only. To help you identify the right partners, consider whether you're in the same or adjacent industries and whether your values align.

Research similar events

Do your research into the sponsors of similar events to yours — chances are that the brands who sponsored those events may be interested in also sponsoring yours. Reach out with an attractive proposal and see what happens!

How to create an attractive event sponsorship proposal

Once you know who you want to target, it's time to pitch to them with an event sponsorship proposal. Here is how to make yours as attractive as possible to potential sponsors:

Do thorough research

Discover who the key decision maker is and what makes them tick. Consider how you'll show them that sponsoring your event will help them to meet their marketing objectives and the value both you and the attendees will derive from their partnership. This will help you to create a customized pitch that speaks directly to the company and their values.

Communicate value

No one is going to sponsor your event out of the goodness of their heart. They want to know that there will be an equal exchange of value. Make your pitch about the company you are targeting rather than your event and focus on the benefits for them such as revenue, reach, ROI, and brand awareness. Outline all the potential avenues that are available for them to connect with the event's audience as well as the specific mediums.

Build rapport and good communication

A successful partnership with sponsors is built on excellent communication. You must have a common language and be in alignment with one another's business goals and outcomes. Having a collaborative environment and offering as many opportunities to access your audience as possible will aid you in building rapport.

Optimize your website

Be sure to include sponsorship information on your website including why companies should think about sponsoring your event and any notable information on past or current sponsors. This can help potential sponsors to feel more confident about partnering with you.

Connecting sponsors with attendees using technology

Before sponsors come on board, they will want to know the specifics of how they will get to connect with the event's attendees.

There are numerous opportunities available for in-person, hybrid, and virtual events and lots of technology that can streamline the process such as:

- Mobile event apps with announcement features, advertising space and messaging systems.
- Wi-Fi analytics that can help you gather details on attendee internet usage.
- Proximity technology such as RFID and Bluetooth low-energy beacons give insights into how attendees behave on trade show floors or prompt them to visit booths.
- VR and AR can personalize the event experience and add an interactive dimension.
- Virtual Booths that allow attendees and sponsors to connect in real-time with live presentations, polls, chats and 1:1 video conversation.

Decide which mediums are right for you and build them into your sponsorship packages, which can be tiered and thereby offer potential sponsors great value at an agreeable price point.



Step Nine

How to seamlessly manage event registration and ticket sales



Managing registration and ticket sales for events can be a daunting task, but it's essential to ensure that the event runs smoothly and that all attendees are accounted for. To manage these processes seamlessly, it is essential to have a solid plan in place.

Firstly, it's important to choose reliable event management software that can handle the registration and ticket sales process. This software should allow attendees to register and purchase tickets online and provide organizers with real-time updates on ticket sales and registration numbers.

Secondly, it's critical to have a clear and concise registration process. This means providing attendees with all the necessary information upfront, including the event schedule, ticket prices, and any other relevant details.

When it comes to ticket sales, it's important to make the process as straightforward as possible. This means providing multiple payment options, including credit card and PayPal, and ensuring that the checkout process is secure and easy to navigate.

Finally, it's essential to have a plan in place for managing any issues that arise during the registration and ticket sales process. This includes having a dedicated support team to answer any questions attendees may have and having backup plans in place for any technical issues that may arise.

By following these tips, event organizers can manage the registration and ticket sales process seamlessly, ensuring that the event runs smoothly, and all attendees are accounted for.



Improving the attendee experience

The key to improving the attendee experience lies in communicating and engaging with attendees, using the appropriate technology, and ensuring they are as comfortable as possible during the event. It involves:

Communicating clearly

Ensure attendees have all the necessary information before the event as well as being easily accessible for the duration. Things like the event schedule, direction and session times will help them to plan their day and feel more comfortable. All of this can be managed via an all-in-one event management platform such as EventsAir that includes end-user tools like native attendee apps where attendees can access all information at their fingertips.

Providing interactive experiences

Involve your attendees as much as possible via workshops, networking sessions, games, and Q&A sessions.

Use technology such as apps, microsites, and social media to help attendees feel more connected to the event and enhance their overall experience. Platforms that include the capacity to live poll your audience during sessions and run live Q&A sessions will enhance your events significantly for attendees and speakers alike.

Gamification can also help to support your content, generate hype, sustain attendee engagement, foster networking and give your sponsors another 'in' with your audience. From missions to competitions and leaderboards, gamification presents lots of opportunities to make your event even more interactive. This could look like this:

- Gamified polling and feedback
- Challenges or icebreakers
- Rewarding desired actions such as session attendance
- Quizzes

Make it comfortable and convenient

Provide amenities like seating, water and charging stations to help them stay energized and engaged throughout the event.



Step Ten

Post-event: how to collect feedback and measure success



Return on investment is often the first port of call when it comes to evaluating an event's success. This is understandable that an event's primary purpose — especially in the corporate world is to make money. On average, the return on investment for events is between 25 and 34%.

However, calculating your event's value is about more than the tickets sells — it can come from sponsorships and partnerships, leads generated and the satisfaction of your attendees and exhibitors. Crucially, you'll want to consider whether your goals and outcomes for the event were achieved — both sentimentally and financially.





How to calculate your event's ROI

There are a few different ways of measuring your event's ROI and each has its own strengths, weaknesses, and differing complexities. These include:

The return/investment model

This is ROI in its most native form — how much did you make vs how much did the event cost? It's easy to calculate but it doesn't separate out the profit generated.

The incremental revenue model

With incremental revenue, you're looking at the event profit over the event expense by looking at what you yielded and how much profit you got for your investment. This is calculated by taking your event expenses away from your event's revenue and then dividing it by your event expenses. It considers your profit but doesn't consider the cost of goods sold.

The incremental margin model

For a deeper look into your event's ROI, you may want to consider the incremental margin model.

This takes the gross margin into account rather than the event revenue. You calculate the gross margin by subtracting the cost of goods sold (COGS) from the event's revenue. This gives you a better sense of your event's return on investment.

The importance of ROI in event evaluation

Knowing your ROI is important for evaluating the success of any event because it helps event organizers to:

Measure the financial success of an event concerning the investment made.

This can help you to determine whether the event was profitable or not, which is always going to be a number one priority for stakeholders.

Identify areas for improvement — By calculating your ROI, you can identify areas for improvement to increase the profitability of any future events. These might include reducing costs, increasing ticket sales, or increasing the budget.

Make informed decisions — Knowing your ROI can help you to make informed

decisions about whether to continue with the event in the future or not. It can also give you a clearer picture of whether to invest in aspects of the event such as marketing or entertainment to increase its profitability.

Provide data to stakeholders —

Investors and sponsors will want to see tangible data to evaluate the success of their investment in the event and decide whether they will reinvest in the future.

In summary, ROI is an important metric for event evaluation as it provides valuable insights into the financial success of an event and helps event organizers to make informed decisions for future events.



Post-event analysis

The end of any event marks the start of your post-event analysis. The insights you uncover will be essential for determining its overall success and shape any future events you put on, in this section we will answer the most frequently asked questions we get when it comes to analyzing your events:

How do you conduct a post-event evaluation?

This involves collecting data from your attendees, vendors and staff via surveys, feedback forms and social media metrics. You'll want to analyze all of this against metrics such as revenue, event costs and attendance to determine what was good and what could be improved.

What should be included in a post-event report? Post-event reports need to include:

- An executive summary
- Reporting on all key metrics
- Feedback from your attendees, sponsors, and vendors
- A summary of the event's financial performance
- Recommendations for future events

Your summaries will need to highlight the most important aspects of the event, including any key figures for attendance or revenue rather than documenting every single thing that happened.

What is a post-event strategy?

Your post-event strategy will come from doing the necessary analysis following your event. Once you can identify the highlights and learning opportunities from your event, you will be able to pinpoint how to promote and execute any future events.

What post-event survey questions should I ask?

Any feedback surveys should be as short and to the point as possible — keeping them concise means you're more likely to get responses.

Don't be afraid to ask specific questions that will help you to understand your attendees and sponsors' experiences either. The three basic questions you should include in an event feedback survey include:

- How satisfied overall were you with the event?
- What are your thoughts on the speakers and content of the event?
- Which improvements if any would you suggest for the event?

Quantitative data vs qualitative data

Quantitative data looks at the numbers involved such as the amount of revenue made, how many people attended or what percentage your social media reach went up by. Qualitative data looks at how your event was perceived and deals with sentiment and feelings such as 'a majority of the attendees rate the event as perfect for their needs.'

Both types of data are important to have when it comes to weighing up the overall effectiveness of your event.



Conclusion

As we navigate the post-pandemic world of events it's clear that shifting attendee behaviors as well as emerging event technology will continue to shape how we plan and deliver events. By tapping into the potential that hybrid events offer, the industry at large can mitigate the negative effects we are facing post-pandemic such as diminishing budgets, understaffing and new regulations. By opening up attendance of events to the virtual world, you can increase your reach and therefore your revenue whilst reducing the environmental impact of your event too.

Adopting event technology within the event management and execution spheres also lies at the heart of attracting and engaging both attendees to your events as well as sponsors.

If you're looking to streamline the tools and processes, you need to manage all aspects of your events from start to finish then why not request your free personalized demo of EventsAir [here](#) today?



Sign up for your personalized EventsAir demo [here](#).



EventsAir has been innovating in event technology for more than 30 years with our simple mission of helping event planners deliver the WOW in their events with the world's most powerful event management platform.

Our story began in 1990 when a group of event organizers and software developers set out to challenge the status quo and create unique event technology solutions that made the impossible possible. Since then, we've developed some of the biggest innovations in event management history including:

350K
events worldwide

30M+
registrations

4M+
online attendees

50M+
streaming hours

Additional resources and support

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