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# Event Planning Essentials

*From venue and presentation details to staging, lighting and audio visual, this book details essential elements to consider when planning your next event.*



**There are many elements that go into creating a successful event. This reference guide provides a check list of what items you should consider before your next important meeting.**

- **Event Details**

Before you begin, finalize basic details

on your event including:

- Event Name
- Event Dates
- Event Location (City/State/Country)
- Audience Size



- **Venue Check List**

Complete the following Venue Check List to make sure you have all of the necessary information for your event:

- Is the venue union or non union? What about the AV department? Some union hotels may not have union AV departments.
- What is the loading dock availability and hours?
- Are there loading dock fees?
- When is the room available for set up and tear down?
- Are the meeting rooms secure over night? If not, can the venue provide security? At what cost?
- Is there additional storage space if needed? If so, is there a fee associated with the use of the space?
- Can the venue provide staging? Is there a fee? Can they accommodate the stage dimensions?
- Is additional power service available if needed? Are there charges for labor and/or equipment?
- If needed, are there weight rated points to hang AV equipment such as projectors, speakers and lighting?
- Is there a man lift available on property? Is there an operator for the lift? Are there fees for the lift/operator?



- **Venue Details**

- Name of Venue
- Hotel Contact Information
- Room Names
- Room Dimensions (L x W x Ceiling Height)
- Meeting Set Up (Classroom, Crescent Rounds, etc.)

- **Presentation Needs**

- Will the presenter need projection?
- Will they require technology for playback (i.e. DVD or music files)?
- Will they need a wireless cueing device or laser pointers?
- Will they want a wireless microphone?
- What other specific elements will they require?

- **Additional Rooms**

After you have finalized the details of your main event, determine any technology needs for break-out sessions, meal rooms and exhibits. It is important to specify details regarding how long or for how many days additional rooms will need audio visual and technology services as it can greatly impact equipment and labor costs. Information to determine includes:

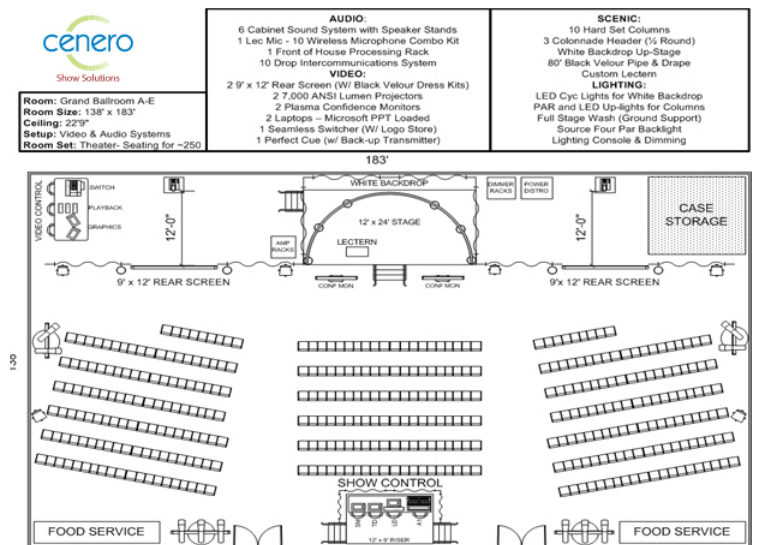
- Room names
- Meeting set up (classroom, crescent rounds, etc.)
- Number of break out rooms
- Expected audience size
- Each presenter's audio visual and technology needs for each additional room

## • Staging

- Pipe and Drape
- Tech Table Drape (generally 10-15ft required)
- Staging & Stage Skirting (generally provided by the venue)
- Podium (generally provided by the venue)
- Truss Sets
- Spandex Transformants
- Hard Sets
- LED Up-lighting

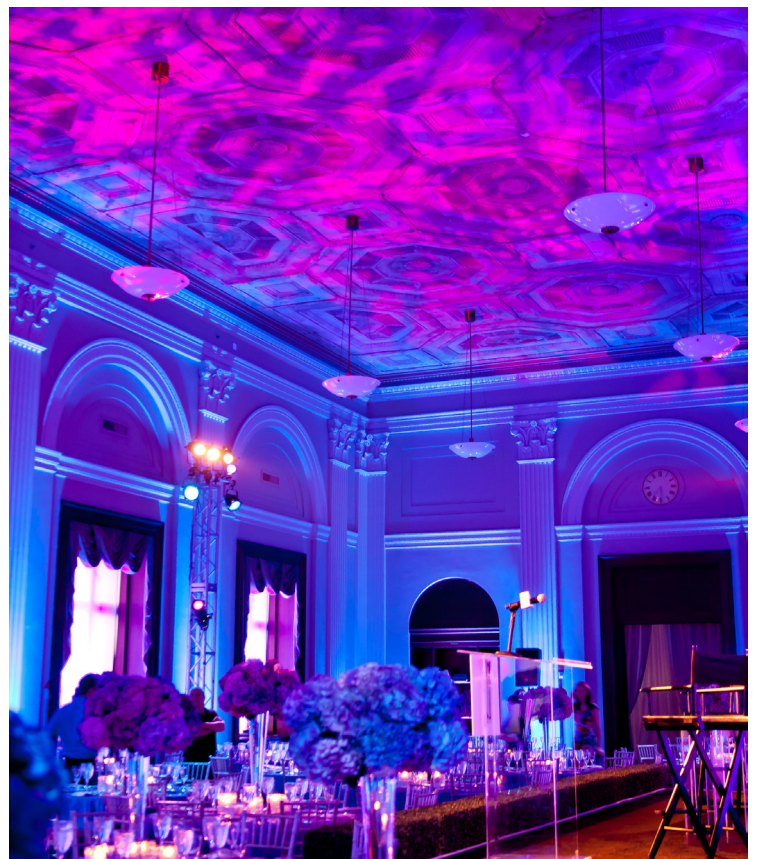
*Note: Most stages require some kind of stage wash (lighting), especially when using rear screen projection.*

*If house lights need to be dimmed, the stage becomes less visible.*



## • Lighting

- Front Wash
- Down/Back Light (recording and IMAG)
- Decorative Lighting (moving lights, LED lighting)
- Custom Patterns (graphics, symbols and company logos)
- Steel, Glass & Projection
- Dimming
- Console/Control



# Video

## • Screens/Projection

- Front projection vs. rear projection?
  - Room dimensions play a large factor
- Number of screens, screen size & placement?
  - Will multiple screens have the same content?
  - Depends heavily on audience size, room dimensions and ceiling height
- Projector brightness
  - 3000 Lumens for a standard 6x8 Fast Fold or smaller
  - 5000-10,000 Lumens for larger screens, when rigging or when a room is well lit
- Projector lens
  - A Long/Short throw lens is required when the distance between the projector and the screen is longer or shorter than the native lens of the projector.

### *Suggested Screen Size*

Screen Size	Minimum Ceiling Height Required
6 x 8	10 – 12 ft.
7½ x 10	12 – 14 ft.
9 x 12	14 – 16ft.
10½ x 14	15+ ft.

## • Media/Switching

- How many presenters will there be?
- What type of media will be used (PC, DVD, Video image, Video conferencing, etc.)?
- Does the PowerPoint presentation have sound or embedded video?
- Is switching required? Switching is always required when using:
  - PowerPoint and another form of media
  - ARS
  - IMAG
  - Two laptops to flip from one presentation to another or one primary and one back up to follow along, title slide, etc.
- Back-up laptops are always recommended for last minute changes and timely switching

*Note: Sometimes an additional video monitor will be required for the presenter's confidence, generally an LCD or Plasma. A "Confidence Monitor" will require a Distribution Amplifier for the video signal.*

## • Video Recording

*When video recording, it is always important to determine the purpose of the recording, is it for:*

- Archiving or documentation?  
If so it can be done with a standard video camera unless otherwise specified.
- Training/Educational?  
This option may require additional lighting to clearly capture the content being recorded.
- Live and Post Production?  
When the purpose of a recording is to present the finished product to an audience at a later date, a minimum of two broadcast cameras will be needed and require additional lighting, drape and/or set pieces.



# Audio

## • Microphones

When utilizing microphones, you should determine the following:

- How many people will be presenting at one time? Will they use a lectern microphone or a lavalier?
- How many microphones?
  - One extra wireless microphone is always recommended
- Will there be a Q & A session? Should you use wireless hand held microphones static on stands or “mic runners”?

*Note: Wireless hand held microphones are not recommended for presenters. Wired microphones are only recommended for panels or lecterns.*

## • Sound System

- Sound system size is determined by audience size, room size and the event style (presentation, celebration, awards dinner, etc.)
- Delay speakers may be required for larger rooms
- Fold back monitors may be required for Q & A, back stage waiting areas and/or registration areas.



## • Audio Recording

When setting up audio recording, you should determine the following:

- What is the purpose of the recording - transcription, training, broadcast, etc.?
- Will you be recording the presenter, audience or both?
- What type of microphones should you use- PZM or Delegate?
  - PZM microphones are not suggested when the source is to be amplified
- How important is sound quality? An Auto Mixer is suggested when sound quality is mandatory.
  - Auto Mixers or Smart Mixers have the ability to mute the microphones that are not in use, blocking out ambient room noise.

# Technical Assistance

*Considering the many technical aspects of the event, the right technicians need to be in place to manage the lighting, audio, video and all other elements. Your technology team should include:*

- **Technical Director** – A Technical Director oversees the event. A “TD” should be used regardless of the meeting size and can facilitate any audio visual needs and handle any troubleshooting.
- **PowerPoint Editor** – An Editor works with Presenters in the slide review room to customize presentations. A “PPT Editor” is only required when actual editing will take place (editing graphics, fonts, animation, etc.).
- **PowerPoint Operator** – A PowerPoint Operator can be used to make minor changes to a PowerPoint Presentation (i.e. change the order of slides, hiding and deleting slides, etc.).
- **Video Technician** – A Video Technician is used to set up and monitor a video system. It is important to note that when there are multiple tapes and many video sources, the Video Tech will need to direct his undivided attention to his role as Video Engineer (V1).
- **Audio Technician** – An Audio Technician is used to set up and monitor the sound system. It is important to note that when audio recording is required for the event, the Audio Technician will need to direct his undivided attention to his role as Audio Engineer (A1).
- **Lighting Technician** – A Lighting Technician is used to setup a lighting system and operate if required. A basic stage wash does not require a lighting technician onsite during the event.

