

Introduction

To help you with your future event planning efforts, we've compiled a list of the 10 most important factors for event professionals to consider when choosing the right event venue. Keep these in mind when it comes time to start looking into where you'll host your next experience for the best possible outcome.

Source: <http://blog.eventfarm.com/10-factors-for-event-planners-to-consider-when-choosing-the-right-event-venue/>

1. Type of event

The type of event that you're planning should be one of the first things that you take into account when choosing your venue. Certain types of events, like press conferences, shareholder meetings, board meetings, and other formal affairs will require a different type of space than more casual gatherings like theme parties and networking sessions.

2. Expected number of attendees

The amount of space that you and your attendees have considerably affects your event's overall feel. If your venue is too small, guests will be crowded and uncomfortable, and may not stick around to experience everything that you have to offer. On the other hand, having too much extra space can make your event feel deserted and under attended, which could have a similar effect. Having a solid estimate of your expected number of attendees will help you choose a space that's just right

Pro tip: if you're still unsure how many people to expect, go with one of the larger spaces that you're considering. The venue will be able to accommodate additional tables, chairs, and other furniture or decorations that will cover up the extra space and make it seem more inviting.

3. Location

A venue's town or city may seem like a great place to hold your experience, but before you commit, make sure that the spot is easily accessible to most (if not all) of the attendees. Give some thought to how your attendees will get there and back. How long will it take door-to-door? If the event is in a city, are there public transportation options for those without vehicles, or do you plan on offering a shuttle to and from the venue? Is parking ample? Taking a little bit of time to consider your attendees' logistical planning should help improve your response and attendance rates..

4. Budget

Unfortunately, when it comes to event planning, the sky is almost never the limit when it comes to budget. Before you start shopping around for a venue for your soirée, make a detailed list of all possible venue-related expenses. This should include things like facility costs, food and beverage expenses, equipment rentals, staffing needs, office services, payment options and more. You also ought to inquire and see what they might be able to include for free, or at a discounted cost as a part of a package. It never hurts to ask!

5. Food and beverage

First, you'll need to decide if you're looking for a venue that has a kitchen on-site that can provide catering services for your event, as well as if they have a liquor license to serve alcoholic beverages. If this is the case, you should see if the venue is willing to waive the facility fee, perhaps opting instead of a deposit and food and beverage minimum. If not, inquire about any partnerships with food and drink vendors, or see if you're permitted to work with company of your choosing. In some cases, the venue may charge additional fees to work with vendors outside of their preferred network, or may have exclusive relationships that would prevent you from doing so..

If your venue doesn't have a liquor license, or is only permitted to serve beer and wine, ask and see if it's possible to bring your own liquor to cut down on costs — and don't forget to check local liquor laws to see whether or not alcohol can be served at all.

6. Décor

How you choose to decorate is one of the best ways to customize your venue space, as well as convey your event's theme and tone to your audience. It also gives you additional opportunities to deepen your attendees' engagement with your event, and provides additional sticking power after your event is over. Do you or your venue have somebody on staff to execute décor without a hitch? If not, you'll need to find somebody that's highly regarded, trustworthy, and really understands everything that your brand is trying to convey with this event..



7. Layout and signage

Factors like space layout, seating and table arrangements and signage, can really make or break your event, especially when it comes to how people will flow through the space. This is especially important if you have things like keynote speakers or a performance that will need to be on a stage, and also tends to get more complicated as you deal with larger spaces. If you don't have something to help you with this, you might take a look at an app like SocialTables to make the process easier for you..

8. Facilities and equipment

Stemming from our discussion about budget, you'll also need to make a list of all of your different equipment needs. This includes things like tables and chairs, silverware, dishes, tablecloths, decorations, visual or audio equipment, electrical supplies, lighting, and whatever else you may need. Once you've done this, you'll be able to see what your venue has, what they do not, and if there are any needs that they won't be able to accommodate. If you do need to outsource any of your facilities or equipment needs, see if the venue works with any preferred suppliers that they know and trust, or that could offer you a discount.

9. Acoustics

While we initially didn't think of this one ourselves, the acoustics of a venue came up time and time again in our discussions with seasoned event planners. Acoustics are particularly important at any event with key attractions like notable speakers or live performances. You don't want your experience to be so loud that your guests lose their hearing and voice, or that the sound is so diluted or warped that they miss one of the highlights of the evening.

10. Venue policies

Before you sign anything finalizing your venue selection, make sure that you're aware of any terms and conditions they may have, many of which might deal with timing. Ask to hear how much advance notice the venue staff requires to avoid fines or penalties for things like event cancellation, receiving shipments. Additionally, you may have specific time windows during which you or the event staff can handle tasks like receiving shipments, set-up and breakdown, and more.

