
The Complete Guide to Live Events

Everything you need to plan a
successful live event.

ConnectIn

Your Live, Hybrid and Virtual Event Management Specialists



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Planning a live event is a complex operation that requires thorough planning, teamwork, and vision to succeed. Whether you’re organising a conference, seasonal party, or charity gala, there are a number of factors that, in combination, can create truly memorable experiences.

From choosing the right venue to managing budgets and timelines, every little detail plays a role in the overall success of event production. If you’re new to the process it might first seem daunting, or even overwhelming. However, breaking the journey down into manageable parts and adopting a meticulous approach will pay off in the long run.

In this guide, we’ll look at everything you need to know to transform your event plans into reality. Whether you’re a seasoned planner looking to refresh your skills, or a newcomer eager to dive into the exhilarating world of live events, there will be something for you. We hope you take away valuable insights that will **turn your next occasion into one to remember.**

The 9 Steps to Live Event Excellence!

Taken on face value, the factors you need to address when planning a live event might seem overwhelming. However, when you break them down and tackle each stage methodically, the process starts to become much more straightforward.

Set Your Objectives

What are you hoping to achieve and what is your live event’s target audience?

Build a Winning Team

A well-rounded team offers ideas, enthusiasm and overall accountability.

Fix Your Budget

Make sure you hit all of your targets with a clearly defined, accurate budget.

Incorporate Themes

Unify your event and make your mark with a suitable theme and design.

Create an Event Plan

Keep track of your event planning tasks and factor them into a timeline.

Find the Right Venue

The venue you choose can make or break an event. Learn how to get it right.

Time to Get Technical

From planning apps to stage design, you’ll need to master the technical elements.

Make it Sustainable

Sustainability is important to modern audiences. Make yours an ethical event.

Enjoy Your Event!

The months of planning are over. It’s time to enjoy the results of your work.



From the outset, it's important to state your event objectives and keep coming back to them. Start by asking yourself the purpose of your occasion, which could be anything from telling employees about a business change to winning new customers.

Everything you do builds from here.

Set Your Objective

When setting objectives, first ask yourself why you're planning the event. The answer could be something as simple as attracting an audience of 300 and getting 50 new leads. Whatever your specific targets might be, defining your goals will give you a measurable figure that sets the benchmark for success.

This is the time to dig into what you're hoping to achieve by answering some essential questions and *thinking S.M.A.R.T.*:

Definitions

Specific: What outcome is expected?

Measurable: Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure success.

Achievable: Time to abandon the ice skating lions? Set achievable targets.

Relevant: What were the company's goals ahead of the event?

Timebound: Set clear timelines and deadlines for each phase of event planning.

S.M.A.R.T in Action

"I want to create an engaging event".

"I want to increase last year's attendance figures by at least 20%".

"I need expert speakers to deliver presentations. Are they available?"

"My company is really pushing sustainability. Does this stand out?"

"The event is taking place in six months."

"Does this give me time to plan everything?"





When it comes to planning a live event, no person is an island. This means accepting that you won't be able to do everything alone and instead making sure that you have a great team around you.

Work With a Specialist

There are a number of ways in which a capable and dedicated team can make a difference to live event planning, including:

- **A Broader Skill Set:** Every team member offers something unique.
- **Delegation:** Tasks will be delegated based on skills and experience.
- **Shared Ideas:** A rounded team is more likely to find better solutions together.
- **Fresh Thoughts:** A versatile team can bring a range of fresh ideas.
- **Time Managed:** Avoid last ditch rushes by delegating tasks properly.
- **Minimise Risks:** A multi-skilled group can anticipate issues.
- **Raise Standards:** Experts will challenge processes and talk constructively.
- **Communication Skills:** Keep your stakeholders completely in the loop by delegating roles.
- **Reduce Stress:** Spread the load to promote healthier working habits.



Before setting pen to paper, there are a few important questions you should answer to finalise your budget. These will help you to be more ruthless when deciding what to include and what to leave out.

Fixing Your Budget

Setting a realistic budget is one of the foundations of any live event. Answering the following three questions will help you to plan ahead with total confidence:

1. Have You Taken Time to Reflect?

Think about last years' events. Being critical about previous occasions can be useful for budgeting. If costs spiralled, think about why... and how best to adapt this time around.

2. Is This Essential or Optional?

There are a few staple fixtures for events, including venue-hiring, audio/visual, travel costs, and catering. Once these have been included, you'll need to be decisive with variables like entertainment.

3. Are You Ready For the What-ifs?

Even the best prepared occasions can come unstuck at some stage in the process. Prepare for last minute hitches by having a small emergency fund to cover unexpected changes in costs.



Every aspect of your live event can be tied together visually with the right theme and design. But deciding on a unifying theme isn't always enough to be assured of success.

To make your mark with an audience, you should aim for a fresh, exciting spin on what's gone before.

Freshen It Up in 5 Simple Steps

1. Research Your Audience

The more insights you have into your audience, the easier it will be to tailor your theme to suit them. Find out what makes them tick using surveys and social media.

2. Set Objectives

Think about the main message you want to impress on your audience and how you plan to get it across. Knowing your primary goal will help with decision-making.

3. Share Ideas

It's important that you don't overthink this stage, so just fire out ideas as and when they come. There's no such thing as a bad idea, some just need refining more than others.

4. Choose Your Theme

Whittle your ideas down to a small shortlist, based on relevance, practicality and innovation. If possible, ask for outside opinions to test the water before making a final decision.

5. Use Your Theme

Apply your theme across every aspect of the event, from marketing and stage design to your choice of venue. Ask for feedback to see which elements worked best for the audience.

Incorporating Event Themes and Designs

The theme isn't just window dressing. When it's done well it can unify the whole live event, drive engagement, and play a major role in the atmosphere you create. The theme you choose can also help your occasion to stand out from the crowd and sell your message in new and exciting ways



While it might be tempting to get by with scribbled notes and reminders, it pays to be on top of the details. It's important to not only have a comprehensive list of everything you need to do, but to also have a timeline in mind. And remember, past events can offer genuine insights into what succeeds and which areas might need more work.

Creating an Event Plan

Splitting the event timeline into separate sections makes it easier to keep track of everything. Once you've classified tasks as being either pre-event or on-the-day, you can add them to your calendar to ensure they're completed on time.

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Pre-Event Tasks

- Choose a venue
- Arrange transport
- Book guest speakers
- Plan activities
- Hire entertainment
- Arrange catering
- Promote the event online
- Agree sponsorships
- Install registration software
- Hire A/V equipment
- Buy insurance
- Tackle waste management
- Confirm venue accessibility

On-the-Day Tasks

- Set up registration desk
- Dress/theme the venue
- Fit signage/branding points for the venue
- Inventory of food and drink
- Distribute schedules/running order
- Oversee catering
- Ensure first aid is ready
- Liaise with security teams
- Share post-event surveys



Finding the Right Venue

There are so many options out there when it comes to venues that it can be tricky for the uninitiated. Concentrating on the following should make your decision much simpler:

Four Tips For Finding Vibrant Venues

1. Consider the Cost

It's common for different places to charge in different ways — some will insist on a minimum spend, others might charge per person, while the rest could offer a flat rate. If you're on the lookout for the ideal spot, you can save money by being flexible over dates, comparing venues, and looking for deals well in advance of the actual event.

3. Don't Overlook Layout

Room layout can have a big impact on an event's atmosphere. But this element goes beyond aesthetics. It can elevate your message and contribute towards a truly seamless experience. Ideally, layout options will be flexible, allowing you to play around with the available space. The venue should also align with your theme, so consider how it supports event design.

2. Think About the Location

Is the venue easily accessible? There's not much point hosting a great event if only half of the guests turn up because the location is inaccessible and doesn't offer accommodation. Start by canvassing opinions, to see which places work best for guests. Think about which venues are best suited to your occasion regarding catering, capacity, AV, and layout.

4. Check the Venue Facilities

Event facilities will need to suit your plans. There are a few factors to consider here, from technical stuff like a fast internet connection to whether the venue does catering or not. At the most basic level, you will need to know if the venue has a reliable internet connection, catering options, and the capacity to stage whatever entertainment you've got planned.



There are a range of technical factors that comprise event production excellence. However the benefits of technology aren't limited to wowing guests — they can also have a huge impact offstage.

Time to Get Technical

A range of technical elements is required for high-level event production. While these requirements will vary according to the scope of your event, many will be essential.

Expertise is also needed in the background to keep everything running smoothly.

Technology for Event Production

Audio/Visual

- Sound system
- Lighting
- Projections/video

Set Design

- Stage Dressing
- Props
- Rigging

Equipment

- Computers
- Cameras
- Wi-Fi Connection

Recording Gear

- Microphones
- Video Cameras
- Editing software

Interactive Tech

- Engagement Apps
- Virtual Reality
- Augmented Reality

Accessibility

- Interpreters
- Listening Devices
- Closed Captions

Technical Help With Planning

Web Pages

Bespoke web pages can promote your event's schedule.

Event Software

Useful apps can help with planning, and registration.

Technicians

Technicians will take care of A/V, lighting, etc.

Project Oversight

An expert can oversee all key aspects of the project.





Sustainable event production is the act of planning, organising, and executing an event in a way that minimises any negative environmental, social, and economic impacts. It also looks to promote more positive relationships with the wider world surrounding the event, the people, and the environment.

How to Make it Sustainable

There are a number of reasons why sustainable event production is so important. These include making an effort to improve the environment around you, raising awareness, reducing waste, and cutting costs. Planning a sustainable event is also a great way to minimise its environmental impact and boost your brand.

How to Plan a Sustainable Event

1. Select an Appropriate Venue:

Consider the sustainability impact of your chosen venue, including transport links. Where possible, prioritise places with energy efficient lighting and renewable energy sources.

2. Develop a Sustainability Plan:

A detailed sustainability assessment will highlight the potential environmental impact of your event. Use this to inform the sustainability practices you aim to put in place.

3. Apply Waste Management System:

A comprehensive waste management system can be a critical part of a sustainable event. Putting measures in place to efficiently manage waste can significantly lower your footprint.

4. Offset Carbon Emissions:

If you have adequate financial backing, you could attempt to calculate the estimated carbon footprint of your event and offset these emissions through reforestation initiatives.

Connect With the Event Management Specialists

If you're thinking about planning a live event, it's clear that arranging them can be time-consuming and intricate. From event design and production, to venue-finding and technical requirements, there are a number of essential factors to consider when staging an occasion.

Therefore, if you want to boost your chances of success, it helps to work with an experienced event management company. ConnectIn Events has become established as **one of the UK's leading live event planners** by adopting a fresh approach with each client. Our work across a variety of industries means we're just as comfortable organising cosy drinks receptions for housing sector groups as we are product launches for brands or glitzy awards shows for tech companies. Versatility is a big part of what makes us a popular choice among businesses of all shapes and sizes.

We provide an end-to-end service and work efficiently to make sure that everything comes in on budget and on schedule. Nothing is too much trouble for our friendly team and you'll always understand what is going on and what comes next. So, whether you already know what you want or could benefit from our expertise, we can make sure that your event has guests talking long after the lights go down.

Contact Us

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Connect with the Event Management Specialists

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