AV CONCEPTS

AV TIPS
TO SAVE YOU TIME & TEARS ON SITE

AS FEATURED ON MEETINGSNET

If **30 years in the events industry** have taught me anything, it's that **not all time is equal**—especially when it comes to the relative value of time **when planning events**.

Pre-production preparation is far less stressful and expensive than working on site, where issues become exponentially more complicated and costly to fix. That's why it's so important to leverage event technology partners who can make your audiovisuals come together seamlessly, and keep you in the loop every step of the way.

Here are five go-to AV tips for the RFP process to help ensure you find a partner who can save you time, headaches, and possibly tears on site:

1. Don't Confuse the Lowest Price With the Biggest Value

This seems like a no-brainer, but I can't tell you how many times I've seen disappointing results because some decision-makers went with the lowest bid instead of the partner that delivered the most value. Your best choice may not have the lowest price, but they will be competitive when you consider their track record for achieving client goals, and producing flawless events.

You'll know if you've chosen correctly early on in the process. They'll be the ones who invest heavily in things like R&D, team infrastructure, and internal processes to ensure the highest-quality customer service. They'll also want to be heavily involved in pre-production planning. If your provider isn't pushing to be included in the planning and design phase for your event, you'll be in for some rough times ahead.

2. Rely on a Few Versus Many

Having multiple vendors handling various aspects of a show is a notorious time-killer. Instead, try sourcing partners that have integrated creative and technical teams that can ensure smoother deliverables from pre-production planning through on-site execution. Having one team reduces the chance for misunderstandings and finger-pointing if something gets missed. One partner equals higher accountability.

3. Confirm Goals Up Front

Make sure the key decision-makers in your organization share your understanding of event goals and deliverables. A great partner can help present your vision at an early stage, so that everyone on your team shares the same benchmarks for success. Clear lines of authority must also be established early. Your event technology partners need to know who has the authority to make changes and approve budgets so they can help you manage your event P&L like a true partner should.

4. Make a Plan, Check the Plan, Work the Plan, Live the Plan

It's not enough to have great ideas and intentions. You need a roadmap that shows how everyone touching the project will work together, including deliverables, contingencies, and key milestones. If something changes, don't assume your team will automatically know—send up a flare. And most important, expect clear, consistent updates from your event technology partner. You should be getting updates weekly—more often closer to your event—and immediately if there are any issues.

5. Don't Take a Wait-and-See Approach

For bigger productions, invest in pre-event modeling—because the first time you see it should never be on site. Find an event technology partner with the desire and capability to do pre-event builds and test new solutions, so that you can have the confidence heading into your event knowing everything will run smoothly on site. By the time of your event load-in, you and your core team should have already seen it and lived it.

Don't get stuck in a time vortex at your next event. Use your time wisely, because it will have a huge impact on the overall success of your event.

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