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**the bottom line:
getting the most out
of your budget.**



THE BOTTOM LINE: GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR BUDGET

One thing is certain with event budgets – they are a moveable feast.

Event budget creation is a skill requiring solid experience to know how to manage responsive reworking due to program changes, varying requests through the planning process and in some cases, outright budget cuts. The goal is to build up and manage the budget to provide maximise visible benefit to the attendees, including all possible scenarios and requirements, whilst keeping a firm eye on the bottom line.

The initial event budget presents a high level overview with general recommendations for each stage of the program. It covers components such as two or three destination options, travel, hotel, food and drink, speaker fees, team and other activities, awards, merchandise and gifts, ceremony and awards events. These cost comparisons provide management a clear method to assess the funding and destination approval and authorise the team to proceed to the planning stages.

This first stage assessment provides an informed and realistic view. The budget is then further refined through the planning process to the post-conference summary. Budget inclusions should present a line-by-line overview of event ideas, options and contingency allocations. Once the initial destination and program outline have been approved, the budget will become more detailed working through the specifics and keeping line items updated as planning firms up. It will be a constantly updated record to capture changes and variations right up until completion of the event.

FUNDING THE BUDGET

Funding an event can be done a number of ways, from complete funding by the business to financial support from sponsors and/or ticket sales to attendees. This is a decision by management and these revenue assumptions assessed in the initial budget review. The business may fund the event or a portion of the program as part of an annual budget and historical tradition.

If funding support includes sponsorship, the development of sponsor packages needs to be undertaken early in order to gain sponsorship revenue commitment. This is one of the fluid variables that can impact the nature of the budget.

Ticket pricing for business partners and attendees to attend the whole event or specific and relevant sessions, or sponsored dinners and the like, need to be calculated. The ticket sales also affect the budget throughout the pre-event period.

making a difference

“ I love it when we deliver exceptional buying power to our clients. We call this negotiated savings. When we commence planning a program and drafting a budget, we know with our expertise that we can deliver great savings and value adds across the board through knowing how to leverage and come out with a win-win for clients and suppliers. On a conference, this can be in excess of \$50,000 as a starting point. This then enables us to use these savings to either lower the budget, or afford some of the higher impact items such as dynamic content and AV solutions, or more fun and engagement in their social activities. Why wouldn't they use a PCO!

Taking the risk, time and stress out of the conference planning, leaving our clients to take care of their business and people. ”

EXPERIENCE LEADS TO COST SAVINGS

Invest in the things that will be most noticed by attendees or are a fundamental 'must-have' for the event to succeed. Ensure suppliers receive sufficient value from your business, but always ask if there can be opportunities for savings or ways to represent value where possible. It's the small savings that when pooled together create openings for further budget investment in another area.

Hotel and venue negotiation are crucial and dependent upon the skill of the PCO. Negotiations should provide savings and maximise benefits, such as offsetting any room hire costs with food and drink spend or option to include breakfast with room rates. Paying on consumption for just the people that turn up to breakfast, which can be less than 80% of the attendees, will save money over contracting breakfast for the entire group. In this case, the venue would be provided a guarantee that 70-80% of the attendees will be at the meal depending on the historical pattern of the group.

Hotels generally want to charge for their concierge team to meet and greet guests and ensure bags are taken to guest rooms. Aim to negotiate this cost out of contracts if possible or obtain a drop-off of a welcome gift or conference pack to guest rooms with the bags.

Using your own team of external trusted AV suppliers pays for itself, particularly if the destination is hosting more than one event and its own AV staff are under-resourced. The local team can add value or sub hire their equipment if it's up to standard and is competitively priced. Bringing in the experienced AV team ensures a high level of expertise ready to counteract any situation that may arise for the speakers, entertainment or any trouble-shooting and program requirements.

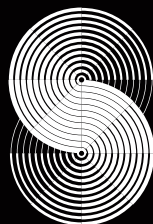
Other savings can be made spreading the equipment rental cost over the conference period instead of daily hire rates, while the trucks used to transport AV equipment can also be used to transport event merchandise to the destination saving on additional freight charges. Bringing your own AV supplier and equipment can cost significantly less than some island suppliers charge and you'll have the latest technology and expertise to operate it.



**we create events that awaken, ignite
and motivate your people, building a
renewed sense of connection and
commitment to your organisation.**

WE LOOK FORWARD TO SPEAKING TO YOU!

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