

Tips for choosing an event production company

Whether it's an AGM, corporate conference, gala dinner or product launch, the basic principles are the same. Choosing the right company is arguably the single most important step you'll take when planning your event. Choose the wrong one, and you could run into all sorts of problems.



EXPERIENCE

These days there is a growing trend for anyone who's ever organised a school disco or helped with a friend's wedding to call themselves an event manager. Add a slick looking website – which can be surprisingly cheap and easy to do – and you could easily be misled.

It pays to establish how experienced the company is. Ask about the events they've worked on before. They should be able to give you solid examples of past projects.

RELEVANT EXPERTISE

Whilst experience is of huge importance, it also needs to be relevant. Most event management companies will specialise in certain areas. It's less likely that they are experienced in all areas. A proven track record delivering high-spec fairytale weddings is great if that's what you're looking for, but the same company may be the right choice when delivering a corporate conference.

Look for a company with specific expertise in what you need.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Any experienced company with a solid reputation should be able to direct you towards the glowing testimonials they've received from happy clients. If they're not showing you their client feedback, don't be shy about asking for it.

Ask to see comments and photos from recent events. It's a good sign if a supplier has repeat business. If clients keep coming back, the chances are they're doing something right.

EQUIPMENT

Many AV production companies will hire in equipment as and when they need it. We believe that there's a real benefit to choosing a company who supplies their own. For a start, owning equipment allows your supplier to save on cost versus hiring it in. These savings will be passed on to you, ultimately making your budget go further.

More importantly, a production company will know their own gear inside out and can ensure its reliability.

INSTINCT

There are times when you just need to go with your gut – and business is no exception. It's important that you feel comfortable with your chosen supplier and that you can trust them to deliver your event and meet your expectations. Arrange to meet them face-to-face so that you can get a feel for one another and whether you can work well together.

The bottom line

Look beyond the shiny website and sales speak. Call them. Get a feel for the company and the way they work. Do you like them? Ask for solid examples of work they've done before, and evidence of happy clients.