

Ask The Producer Column

Ask the Producers By The Moore Presentations Team

Over the past several years, as our society has become even more fast-paced and media-driven, business meetings have transformed from basic and formal to elaborate and fun. More and more business leaders are turning their business sessions and sales rallies into “corporate theater” events, staging creative masterpieces designed to entertain, motivate and educate their audiences.



But no matter the complexity of an event, basic knowledge about audio-visual, production and graphics is critical for meeting professionals so they can maximize the value of their meeting’s budget.

Each issue, we’ll answer your questions about all things visual – from production to creative, we’ll find the answers and share the tricks of the trade to help you be better prepared for your next big event. No question is too small to handle. Please submit your queries to us at info@moorepresentations.com.

Dear Producers,

Question: We are starting to plan a series of regional employee meetings for next spring. What are the key considerations relating to staging and audio-visual that should be taken into account when choosing our venues?

Answer: The most obvious answer might be to choose a location that will accommodate both your attendees and your A/V equipment. But... actually there is more to it than that.

Invest in success! The first thing we’d recommend, if at all possible, is to have a technical consultant of some kind visit the site before you sign a contract. Whether an event producer, a set designer, an A/V expert or a technical director, they can evaluate a room’s capabilities and compare them to the needs and goals of your event.

Ask The Producer Column continued next page

Ask The Producer Column Cont.

It's easy to fall in love with a gorgeous room, a brand new facility, or one that's strategically located, but sometimes those venues cannot appropriately promote the educational objectives of your meeting or physically accommodate your production needs. Venue drawings and floor plans often do not note such things as chandeliers that reduce ceiling height, nor do they account for things such as projection pitch or electrical circuitry.

Think about it! When preparing to choose a venue, carefully consider the following:

- What is the largest size your audience might be? Will they be required to sit at rounds or classroom-style tables? When planning for a stage with rear-screen projection, a good rule of thumb is to set aside approximately one-third of the square footage for your sets and A/V.
- What are the technical requirements/needs of your meeting or event? Will there be a need for image magnification (I-Mag) or special acoustics?
- What types of presentations will be delivered? Do you need a large stage or tall ceilings? Does there need to be a dance floor or space for attendees to participate in activities?
- Are there adequate hang points from the ceiling?
- Where is the loading dock and how easy is it to access from the meeting space?
- Are there adequate power sources for the room? Multiple circuits? Are there additional fees for power?
- Will you be conducting live webcasts or telecasts from the site? Does the meeting room have the necessary connectivity to support this?
- Are you required to use an in-house A/V provider and crew? Is a premium charged to bring in an outside A/V vendor?
- Are there features of the room that will affect your show (e.g. a wall of windows, limited loading dock access, ceiling height, pillars or excessive noise from hallways, streets or nearby rooms)?

Get the answer straight from the horse's mouth! While the venue sales reps are great general resources about the property, many are not technical experts. Questions relayed between the sales team and technical staff can be misinterpreted and create problems later on. If you're unable to include a technical consultant on your site inspection, be sure to speak directly to the in-house A/V representatives to present your technical questions.

Size does matter! Ultimately the size of the room will be the most critical factor in creating an environment most conducive to your meeting and educational goals. If the attendees are not comfortable, your objectives may be swept right out the door. ♦

Editor's note: Moore Presentations is a full-service presentation design and management company specializing in visual communications and event execution. James Moore, president of the company, has worked in video production, presentation design and event execution for more than 25 years. Mike Jorgensen, senior project director, has more than 20 years experience in multi-media technology. Terry Onustack, CMP, director of operations and marketing, spent nearly 14 years as a corporate meeting and event manager before joining Moore in July.