

Ask The Event Production Experts Column

Load In, Load Out

By James Moore, Mike Jorgensen & Terry Onustack, CMP

Each issue, we try to answer your production-related questions – from logistics to creative and beyond. We 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:

When I look at our Audio Visual (AV) budgets I see a large portion for “Load-in” and “Load-out” expenses. Why is that?

Answer:

For mid- to large-sized events, a good portion of the AV budget goes to labor, the bulk of which is for loading in the equipment before the show, breaking it down and hauling it away afterwards.

Load-in tasks may include: installing the rigging equipment for lights, erecting the screens, building scaffold for the projectors, installing the sound system and control board and setting up the control panels for lights and video projection. Once in place, the equipment must be connected to the control booth and tested.

The projectors must be powered up, aimed and focused. All imaging sources such as computers, video playback and cameras must also be checked. Lights must be aimed and focused. The sound system, including all microphones, must be tested.

Depending on the complexity of the show, the load-in can take a full day. To allow for set up and testing, the room should be reserved at least one day prior to the actual show. We also recommend an additional day be allowed for rehearsals, if necessary.

After the show takes place, the crew reverses the load-in process and loads-out the equipment. This takes less time but is still labor intensive.

It is tempting to reduce the crew count in order to save money, but with fewer people it will take more time and may run into the dreaded “overtime,” which can wind up costing more than having the right number of people to begin with.◆

*Editor’s note: **James Moore**, president of Moore Presentations, has worked in event production for more than 25 years. **Mike Jorgensen**, Senior Project Director for Moore Presentations, has more than 20 years experience in multi-media technology. Visit the website at www.moorepresentations.com. **Terry Onustack**, CMP, Meetings and Education Manager for IASP – a medical research association – worked in corporate meetings for nearly 15 years.*