

Event Checklist

By Jake R Brady

6 to 12 months in advance:

- Purpose** Choose the purpose of the event. Is it a celebration, a fundraiser, or something else? This will influence the kind of event you will hold.
- Theme** Choose a theme that is relevant, but also interesting. Cliche themes won't attract many guests.
- Site** Look around for places that can hold the event. Meet with potential space providers.
- Manager** You might need to appoint someone, or yourself, as event manager.
- Committees** Build committees if they are required. With a big enough event, you might need several of them and need to appoint a chair for each.
- Estimates** Get estimates for food, drinks, space and rental equipment. This will help with budgeting.
- Event entertainment** If providing artistic entertainment, hire well-known entertainers or hold auditions.
- Sponsorships** Determine if you will require sponsorships. Build a sponsorship sheet, with the different levels, so that potential sponsors know right away at what level they want to participate.
- Budget** Get an initial budget from the financial committee. This step is very important.
- Licences** Check if you need any kind of permit or license to hold an event or serve alcohol.
- Proposals** Review proposals for decorations and printing.
- Admission** If charging a cover, decide the price.
- Mailing list** Build a mailing list with potential guests or businesses to contact.
- Date** Choose a final date and check for conflicts with your providers.
- Designer** Choose your graphic designer and draft the documentation and invitations.
- Printing** Order the printing for invitations, hold-the-date reminders and other early stationery.
- Marketing** Build your marketing timeline with your public relations specialist.
- Reserve your professional photographer and have any pre-event photos taken.**

3 to 6 months in advance:

- Committees** Hold committee meetings regularly, and request reports.
- Funding** Send your requests for funding to your potential donors.
- Sponsors** Ask your confirmed sponsors for their logos for publicity printing.
- Stationery** Meet with your graphic designer and confirm the design for all printed material.
- Printing** Order the printing for posters and other stationery after the design is finalized.
- Tickets** If required, have the admission tickets printed and ready for distribution.

- Mailing list** Write down the final mailing list for guests, and print the letters or send the emails.
- Contracts** Sign the contracts with the entertainers.
- Posters** Build a list of potential poster locations. Send out people to verify the availability of space.
- Public relations** Plan your publicity and interviews with television and radio stations, and printed media.
- Catering** If serving food, build the menu with your caterer. Make sure you consider the dietary requirements of your guests.
- Permits** Request permits from your municipality if required.
- Insurance** Sign an insurance contract with your insurer.
- Celebrities** Confirm celebrity participation in writing.
- 2 months in advance:**
 - Pre-event party** Organize a party that coincides with the sending of invitations.
 - Invitations** Write personal notes for the invitations and have them mailed.
 - Posters** Have your posters distributed and placed at previously chosen locations.
 - Accommodations** Reserve accommodations for your VIPs, if required.
 - Transportation** Arrange transportation for your VIPs, if required.
 - Media** Confirm the presence of the media at your event. Assign journalist passes.
 - Sponsors** Confirm sponsorships and request logos for the final program.
 - Committees** Request final plans from each committee chair.
 - Budget** Review and finalize the event's budget.
 - Tasks** Build a final task list leading up to the event.
- 1 month in advance:**
 - Tickets** Follow up on ticket sales. Call any guests that haven't responded yet.
 - Publicity** Place your ads in newspapers, television and radio.
 - Staff** Hire staff for the day of the event.
 - VIPs** Confirm VIP participation in writing.
 - Space planning** Build space diagrams for the room or rooms, build a table plan and assign seats.
 - Catering** Provide guest estimate to your caterer, and request a final quote.
 - Timeline** Review the timeline for the event, and confirm the scripts with participants.
 - Traveling** Organize the traveling arrangements with VIPs.
 - Security** Confirm security needs and appoint a security agency.
- 1 week in advance:**

- Meetings** Schedule last-minute meetings with committees. Work out final details.
- Attendance** Confirm final attendance with ticket or table sales.
- Staff** Confirm the staffing for the event. Hire any necessary extra staff.
- Timeline** Provide the timeline to all event participants.
- Catering** Confirm final catering order.
- Beverages** Confirm final alcohol order if not provided by the caterer.
- Media** Confirm media coverage with journalists or stations.
- Rehearsal** Schedule and hold rehearsals if necessary.
- Cheques** Write the cheques that need to be given to providers on the day of the event.
- One day before:**
 - Attire** Lay out your clothes for the event. Prepare a change of clothes in case of emergency.
 - Supplies** Verify that all supplies are available or confirm with providers for their delivery time.
- Day of the event:**
 - Arrival** Arrange to arrive early to receive all deliveries and finalize last-minute details.
 - Inventory** Make sure that all supplies are on hand.
 - Timeline** Confirm scripts and timeline with VIPs.
 - Staff** Confirm positions and tasks with staff.
 - Technical setup** Make sure the lights and sound are working properly with your technicians.
 - Rehearsal** If holding a final rehearsal, have it a few hours before the event, after the sound and lighting have been set up.
 - Have a great time at your event!**