

TAKING CARE OF SPEAKERS

Make sure you find out what equipment your speakers need, what they will bring with them, and what you will need to provide. Ask about computer compatibility (both hardware and software).

BADGES AND NAME TAGS

Try not to place a ton of information on badges. Keep them simple with big, legible letters. You don't need the person's company and city. Their name and title is often perfectly adequate. Opt for badges that clip to a suit jacket, not the ones with safety pins. Or provide chains for hanging badges around the neck.

See if you can find a cheap laminator to neaten up badges and name tags

SIGNAGE THAT WORKS

Focus on legibility over cool graphics. Use velcro arrows to help point attendees to the right

place for meals, special breakout sessions and the message center. Avoid being cutesy at all costs. In addition, create meeting logo graphics for the podium and stage as well as signs for the airport pick-up spots and hospitality desk.

PERSONALIZE THE MEAL

A restaurant might be persuaded, for instance, to make a stencil of your logo so your company name appears in chocolate on the desserts.

CASH ON HAND

You will need cash for tips, cabs, etc., and for those occasions when credit cards won't be accepted. Who will handle the cash? How much do you need? Where will it be kept?

CREDIT CARDS

Make sure you have a credit card with the right limits on it. Arrange with venues (especially restaurants) ahead of time to discuss

what cards will be accepted. Who will be getting the restaurant bill? Let the staff know ahead of time.

WHAT ABOUT SPOUSES?

If there are events for spouses, tell everyone clearly what they are – and what they aren't.

One good rule of thumb on this topic: Don't hold a meeting at a exquisite resort and expect attendees to want to leave spouses behind. If you're choosing a romantic location that will be pleasant for those who want to extend their business trip into a vacation once the meeting is over, you can't tell spouses not to come.

DAILY NEWSLETTERS

If your meeting lasts several days, you might consider putting out a simple daily newsletter with the highlights of the previous day's sessions. This is particularly useful if there are a lot of breakout sessions.

A TYPICAL BUDGET

Here are some typical line items in a function planner's budget.

Not all will be applicable to all meetings or events.

	Budgeted cost	Actual cost		Budgeted cost	Actual cost
VENUE:			PRINTING AND MATERIALS:		
Meeting or event space rental	\$ _____	\$ _____	Meeting kit production and printing costs	\$ _____	\$ _____
Room setup costs	_____	_____	Shipping costs	_____	_____
Equipment rental and setups	_____	_____	Agendas	_____	_____
Taxes and gratuities	_____	_____	Signage	_____	_____
			Name tags	_____	_____
TRANSPORTATION:			Notepads and pens/pencils	_____	_____
Airfare	_____	_____	Invitations	_____	_____
Taxis or limos from airport	_____	_____			
Parking	_____	_____	SPECIAL SERVICES:		
Valet parking gratuities	_____	_____	Photographer	_____	_____
Transportation to and from various venues	_____	_____	Photo developing and printing	_____	_____
			Entertainment and speakers fees	_____	_____
ACCOMMODATION:			Corporate gifts	_____	_____
Sleeping rooms	_____	_____	Shipping	_____	_____
State accommodation taxes	_____	_____	Florals and decorations	_____	_____
Necessary gratuities	_____	_____	Contingencies	_____	_____
Hospitality suite	_____	_____			
Incidentals	_____	_____	AV COSTS:		
			Computer rentals	_____	_____
FOOD AND BEVERAGES:			AV equipment	_____	_____
Per person food costs	_____	_____	Setup costs	_____	_____
Wine and spirits costs	_____	_____	Gratuities	_____	_____
Break costs	_____	_____			
Taxes and gratuities	_____	_____	STAFFING:		
Transportation and setup costs (for off-site caterers)	_____	_____	Temporary help	_____	_____
Cleanup costs	_____	_____	Security costs	_____	_____
Staff costs	_____	_____	Gratuities	_____	_____
			TOTALS	\$ _____	\$ _____