

AV Spending Checklist

Keep your budget in check with this easy-to-follow, step-by-step guide.



Event Planners Know

that show production is key to the role. But without a Hollywood budget and limited timelines to orchestrate lights, camera, and action, you need cost-effective ideas.

Follow this checklist when planning your AV needs to keep your budget and schedule on track.



Timeline

Set your budget

This allows your AV partner to provide a plan that is realistic for sticking to your bottom line. Look for transparency in process and budgeting to avoid hidden or a la carte fees.

Send out RFPs

Submit any RFPs (request for proposals) early in the process for the best pricing and availability of top tech talent. At least six months early will give you more options, and for larger shows, think 12 months.

Choose vendors

Selecting vendors early allows you to lock in rates and avoid vendors getting booked by other organizations or brands.

Add language to the Terms and Conditions that allows you to update specifications once solidified, without fees.

AV Support

Compare in-house and external production companies

If the venue's in-house production team doesn't have all of the capabilities necessary for your event, this may increase costs with additional outside services and fees.

Evaluate AV providers

Compare multiple providers for competitive pricing and service quality. Request case studies to check and confirm capabilities.

Inquire about multi-year contract options

This request may help you get better pricing and helps with service continuity when partnering with AV providers.

Review contract carefully (before signing)

Check the contract for policies, requirements, and costs for items such as rigging, AV, rooms, electricity, internet, etc. Ask to include a clause allowing you to bring in outside vendors.

Partner with a full-service AV team

Having one holistic partner to produce your show, session, event, etc., is more cost and time efficient (and less stressful) than having several vendors and juggling various aspects.





On-site

- Assess logistical options**
Be aware of rigging points, loading docks, and venue-specific quirks to avoid surprise costs for adhering to venue requirements.
- Choose room for keynote, general sessions, and breakouts**
Review flexible options for room setup with your AV team to account for behind-the-stage needs (storage, green room, etc.), the stage production, and audience sections.
- Reserve the general session room**
Grab a reservation before the room gets booked and with enough time to avoid overnight setups or not enough rehearsal time, which increases expenses and risk.



Schedule

Plan for installation time and set rehearsal times

Include load-in days to minimize setup and breakdown times, reducing labor costs.

Provide all materials to the production team

Send materials at least one week prior to the event for testing as well as presenter and technical run-throughs. Last-minute changes often incur unexpected costs for labor and/or staffing.

Plan meal locations

Avoid serving meals in general session rooms, as it's disruptive and often requires overnight setups, which increases labor fees.

Equipment

Determine AV equipment needed

Compare options for setup (example: ground projectors or LED may be a cost-effective option compared to rigging). Ask your AV provider to provide information on the latest technologies and ways to achieve high impact at lower costs.

Leverage existing equipment

While the venue may not always have the same capabilities as an AV provider, it can be cost efficient to use select venue AV equipment to balance budgets.

Ask about LED opportunities

LED paneling is a flexible, cost-efficient way to integrate branding and bring in sponsorship opportunities to help offset event costs. [Find out more about the benefits of LED.](#)



Post-Event

Review expenditures

Work with your AV provider to conduct a cost analysis and identify areas for future savings.

Check in with attendees

Survey your attendees to find out what they liked (or didn't) to help identify areas that deserve more (or less) budget next year.

Get more insights

For a more strategic look into producing a show-stopping event without blockbusting your bottom line, check out our [6 Tips for Stretching Your Event Budget](#).



Ready to get plugged into budget-friendly AV?

Get in touch

