

The Benefits of Outsourcing Your Event Management Needs

Posted on [June 5, 2012](#) by [Todd Belebczuk](#)

Post authored by William F. Reed, FASAE, CMP, Senior Vice President of Strategic Sales at Experient

To outsource or not to outsource? Chances are, if you are responsible for your organization's meetings, conferences, tradeshow or events, you've probably asked yourself this very question at one time or another. The good news is—you're not alone. In today's busy climate, many corporations, associations and government agencies, finding themselves faced with overextended staffs and shrinking budgets, have re-examined their event strategies and turned to outsourcing for some or all of their event management needs.

So how do you know if outsourcing is right for you? The decision of whether or not to outsource and trying to figure out exactly what services are prime candidates for outsourcing can be difficult and requires a significant amount of research and deliberation. The first step towards making this important decision is determining your needs and gaining an understanding of how outsourcing event management can benefit your organization. To make things a little easier, here is a list of a few of the many benefits of outsourcing event management:

Time Savings. Planning an event can be very stressful and time consuming, especially when you have a small staff that is already working at or above capacity. Outsourcing allows you to leave duties such as site selection, contract negotiation, registration, housing, logistics and event marketing up to the experts, effectively freeing up your staff to concentrate on what matters most to your event—program content. Focusing on the tactical instead of the strategic and trying to do too much with too little often results in an ineffective event that provides little benefit to attendees, exhibitors, sponsors, and ultimately, your organization.

Experience. Typically, organizations may have some knowledge of event planning, but lack the complete set of skills and experience necessary to successfully plan and execute all aspects of an event from start to finish. One of the main advantages to outsourcing is that you are enlisting the expertise of individuals who are well-versed at managing meetings and events of all types and sizes on a regular basis. Seasoned, credentialed professionals who have seen and done it all can proactively suggest ideas, plug in the gaps, and make improvements based on best practices and past experiences to help create the total event solution that meets your goals.

Accountability. Now more than ever, responsibility, accountability and transparency are expected throughout all phases of the event process. In light of the recent [GSA conference scandal](#), there is not only an increased focus on controlling meetings spending, but also on proving the value of the event itself. Meetings are being scrutinized like never before, and working with an accountable third party meeting planner can help to provide metrics and reporting on everything from food and beverage spending to pre- and post-event attendee surveys, allowing you to develop justification and create a course of action to make future events even better.

Buying Power. Everyone wants to cut costs and save money. Having a partner on your side that has established relationships with the biggest and best hotels, convention centers, caterers, keynote speakers, audio/visual companies, content technology providers and travel companies will give you access to suppliers who are affordable, reliable and professional. You'll never need to shop around for the best provider with the lowest prices and you can rest assured that you won't have any unexpected surprises when the bill arrives. Maximizing your buying power and getting the most out of your budget can also help you to generate additional cost savings and make enhancements to other aspects of your event that increase the overall event experience.

Integrated Resources. When you have one go-to organization for all of your meeting and event services, you're never faced with the challenge of managing several different suppliers, contractors or other service providers. A centrally-managed approach makes life easier by coordinating all of your needs through one experienced company.

No Job Threat. Contrary to popular belief, even if you're a professional meeting planner, outsourcing to a third party for some or all of your event needs does not pose a threat to your job or the jobs of others within your organization. In fact, third parties often act as an extension of your staff and provide an increased level of expertise, service and support that would not be available otherwise.

When your event is executed flawlessly, comes in under budget, produces a significant return on investment and creates a memorable experience that attendees can't stop talking about, you're going to come out looking like a hero.

The next time you're tasked with putting together a meeting, conference, event or tradeshow, don't be afraid to consider outsourcing. When used correctly, outsourcing can provide significant time and cost savings for your organization while simultaneously elevating the event experience for everyone involved.