



Thirteen Scary Event Mistakes

From Episode 107

Event planners and producers tend to be detail oriented people. However, there are a number of things that can happen that turn your otherwise successful event into a nightmare. This is especially true when you are working in a venue (such as hotel or convention center) that you don't have total control over and you must please your client (and attendees) while being a good "guest" in someone else's facility.

In this episode of Sparkplug, Kelly Shores, President of Sparksight, talks about thirteen often-overlooked pitfalls that can add unnecessary stress to an event, and, of course, how to avoid them.

1 Don't Forget to Book the Room For Set Up

Event planners often book the room for the duration of the event; however, it is important to book the room at least a day or two in advance if you have a big set-up. This allows you to get in, set-up and do rehearsals so you can kick-off your event without a hitch!

2 Watch Out for Bridezilla On Your Heels

Make sure you also have time allotted for tear-down. There is nothing more stressful than ending an event to find out there is a wedding or Bar Mitzvah in the morning.

3 Crew Members aren't Captives

Provide meal breaks and if budget allows meals for your crew. An over-worked, grumpy crew can lead to imperfect execution as well as bad vibes.

4 Create Signs with Venue in Mind

Check with the facility before producing banners, signs, and set branding pieces. Make sure you know your venue's sign restrictions before spending time and money on cool signage only to hear, "You Can't Hang That Here!"

5 Load-In Coordination is Key

No Room at the Loading Dock?! Coordinate with security so that you can load-in and set up with plenty of time for your event.

6 Avoid Freight Elevator Fright

Inquire about the freight elevator's health and availability. If the freight elevator is unavailable it can be a logistical nightmare that puts you behind schedule. Ensure that if it is unavailable you have a back-up plan and are financially compensated to hire more help carry the additional weight.

7 Find a Place to Park the Truck

Scout out a place for truck parking. If your event requires you to park a truck for three days, be sure to that parking is available in advance! It is highly unlikely you can squeeze in between that Scion and the Mini Cooper.

8 Prevent Distortion Disaster

Wrong aspect ratio can wreck all of your hard work on videos and presentations. Coordinate with your A/V and video departments before building show assets.



9 **Convince the Keynote to Rehearse**

Visualization does not compensate for a walk through. Help your all-star perform at their highest level by familiarizing them with the stage and making sure the set-up enables a solid presentation.

10 **Make Sure There is Internet Access**

Be sure the ballroom isn't the only place in the city you can't get online. If a speaker courteously e-mails you an updated presentation minutes before arriving getting online is crucial. At minimum, provide Internet access for yourself and your set-up crew.

11 **Power Up for Big Presentations**

Coordinate power availability with the hotel's A/V or engineering departments. You can't run an event on daisy-chains. Video projections, lighting and sound systems require extra power and often require a special tie-in.

12 **Check the Contract Before Signing**

Check over your contract to avoid "gotchas." This allows you to bring in your preferred production company or negotiate with the facility to protect your budget from penalty charges.

13 **Communication is Key**

Everyone is on a need to know basis when running an event. You want everyone to be on the same page. Send everyone the floor plans and schedules; introduce hotel liaisons to the DMC to your production company to your company. This will allow your team to communicate well and help you run a seamless show.

