

# **Building a Successful Partnership with Your Audiovisual Vendor**

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F R E E M A N

# Some Misconceptions

- I need to understand how AV technology works
- I need to be able to describe what presentation technology I need
- I have to be an AV expert in my organization
- Low cost AV = Value
- High cost AV = Quality

# Communication

**“The common thread for  
success”**

# Communication

- Key to a successfully executed event
- Know how to get the right information to the AV supplier to get the right service
- Develop an information exchange system
- Agree to a level of expectation

# Where to begin?

- Referrals
  - Choose based on qualitative reasoning-not simply quantitative
  - Get to know the prospective vendor
  - Ask the right questions
  - Open dialogue

# Establishing the Relationship

- Be comfortable with the right AE.
- Things in common (i.e. sports, current events, children, etc.)
- Time knowing your vendor builds trust.
- Be attentive to their needs.
  - Prompt return of e-mails & phone calls

# Don't Be The Customer

- Drop the “customer” gloves
- Share your concerns and objectives
- Keep the dialogue open
- Make budget part of your dialogue
- Take time to visit their facilities

What you are trying to do is to.....

# **Develop a Trust Based Relationship**



# Understanding Presenter Needs

.....and letting them  
understand your budget  
constraints

# Knowledge for the Vendor

- Presenter's needs
  - Electronic (PowerPoint)
  - PC or Mac
  - Resolution
  - How Many PC's
  - Connectivity
    - Required Speed
  - Embedded Audio or Video files

# Knowledge for the Vendor

- Presenter's needs
  - Remind them to bring power supplies
  - Bring all adapters normally used
  - Come in well in advance to review set-up
  - Bring back-up of presentation
  - If using a live web site – back it up on storage media ahead of time

# Facilities

- Adequate move in and out time
  - *Straight time saves more than money*
- Storage and service location for AV
- Do rooms lend themselves to “Standard” sets?

# Facilities

- Ceiling heights
- Windows
- Columns
- Mirrors
- Loud closing doors
- “AIR” walls?

**Let your audiovisual vendor  
become an extension of your  
staff**

# Facilities



Don't always believe the brochures!



# Pretty Picture, Bad AV Set





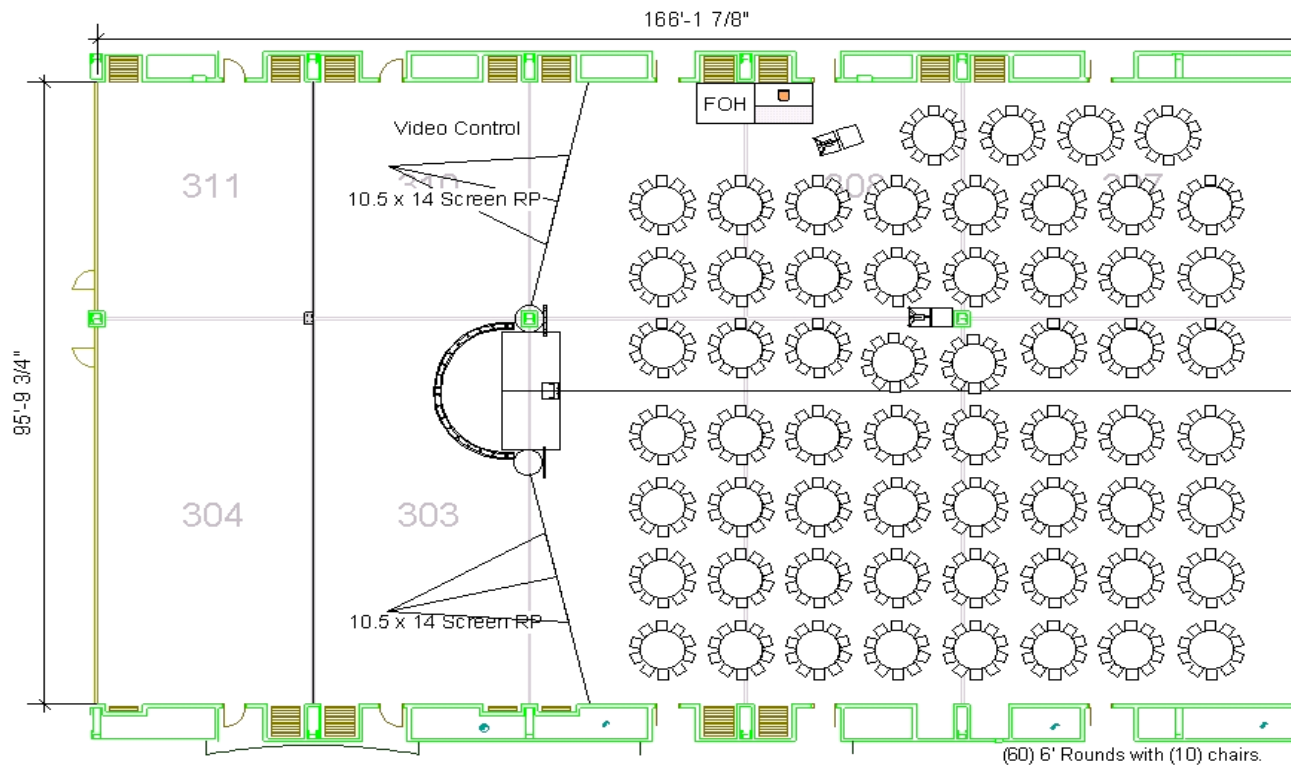
# Screen Height

The bottom of the screen should be at least 4  $\frac{1}{2}$ ' from the floor. To determine the tallest screen usable in a meeting room, subtract 4  $\frac{1}{2}$ ' from the unobstructed height of the room.

# Screen Placement for Optimum Audience Viewing

For best viewing, the first row of seats should be no closer than *twice* the width of the screen. The last row of seats should be no farther away than *six times* the width of the screen.

# Floor Plans

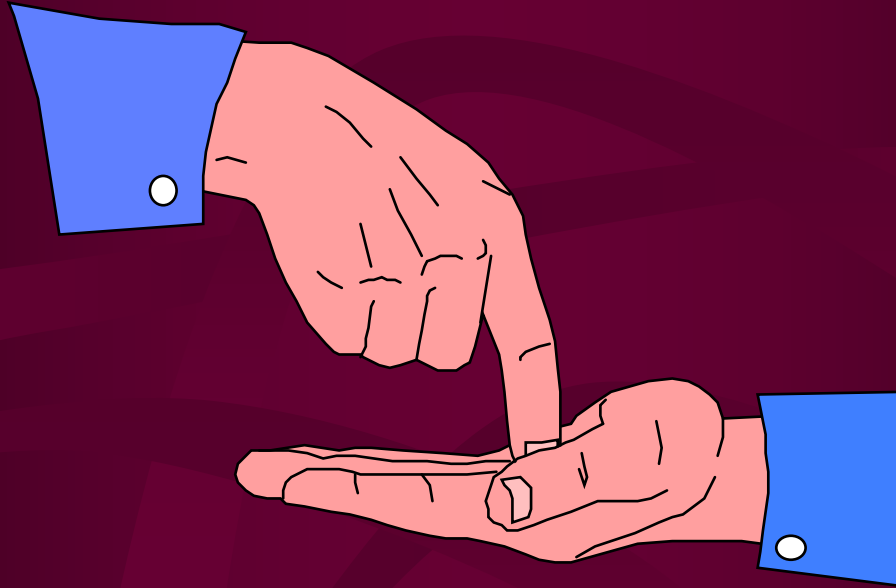


Seating for 600 People



**LISTEN TO YOUR  
VENDORS**

# Request for Proposal



What to include to get what you want

# Request for Proposal

- It is not detrimental to the event to let your vendor know the AV budget

*“Budget Boogie”*



# Request for Proposal

- History of the event
- The event theme
- Demographics of attendees
- Logistics, facilities, dates
- Meeting schedules
- Concurrent sessions
- General sessions

# Request for Proposal

## Information Exchange

- Storage and security
- Travel expenses
- Management and technical personnel
- Fiscal responsibility
- Accessibility



# Budgets

# Labor

- Unions
  - Minimums
  - Straight, Overtime and Premium Rates
  - Supervisory Labor
  - Trades – Teamsters, Stagehands, Electricians, Decorators, Carpenters, etc.
- Local Labor vs. Traveling Labor
- Exclusive Labor Contracts
- Facility Labor Handling

# Utilities

- Electrical Service
  - Power drops for general session, exhibits, etc.
  - Meeting Room Electrical-You may be surprised
  - Connections power strips, extension cords, etc.

# Computer Cost Impacts

- Computer Rentals
  - Makes, models, processors, speed, OS, software
  - Networking costs
- Broadband Connection
  - In-House Provider...who does the work?
  - Contract Provider...who charges for the work?
  - Typical “drop” can be \$1000+
  - Additional connections = Additional costs
- Added On-Site Support

# General Sessions

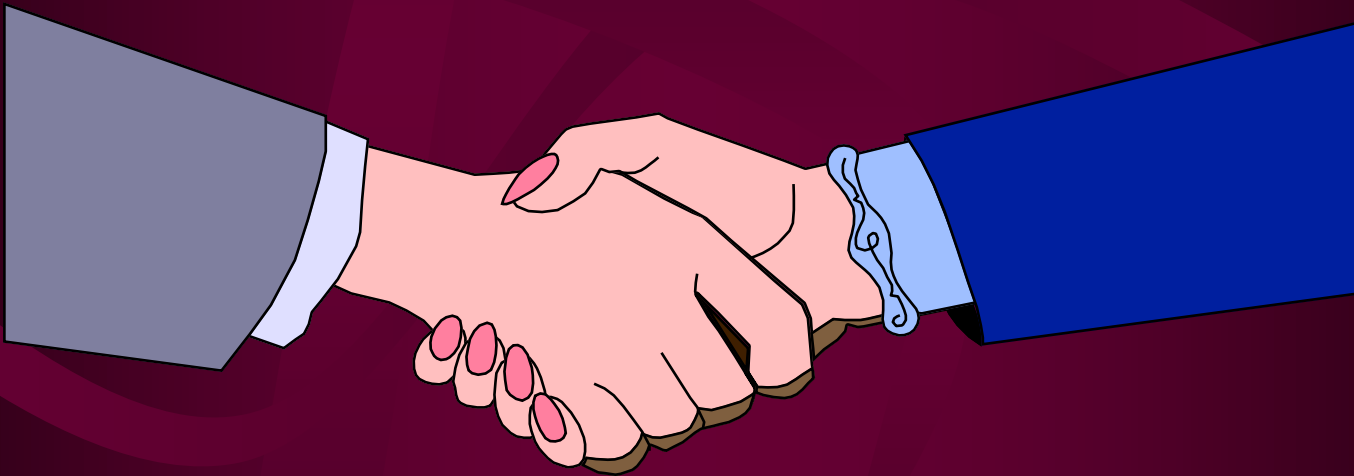
- Scenery
  - Consider “stock” rentals vs. Custom
  - Consider “framed fabric” scenic or “drops”
- Lighting
  - Can change the entire look of a room
  - Can make ordinary scenery look extraordinary
- Video
  - Video vs. Video (consider your audience)

# General Sessions

- Security providers
  - Armed
  - Non-Armed
- In-House Security
- Contractor's Equipment
  - Who is responsible?
  - What happens if it's stolen?
- So what's the value of Security?

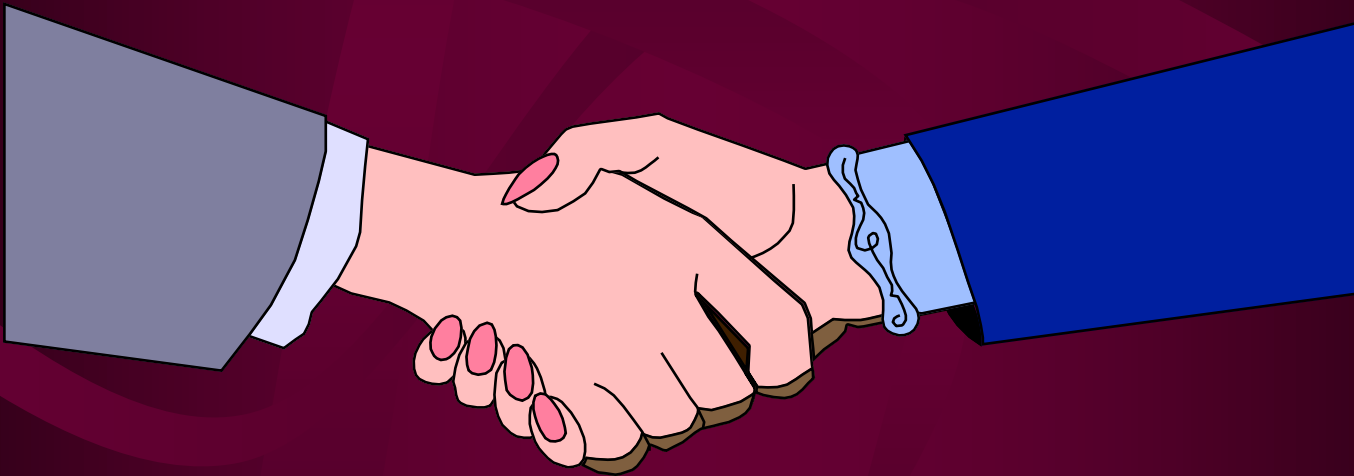
# Request for Proposal

Information exchange leads to a successful  
and cost effective event



# Request for Proposal

*Communication* exchange leads to a  
successful  
and cost effective event





# Goals to building a vendor relationship

- Build a trust
- Build a level of confidence
- Be satisfied with the decision you make
- Expectations are exceeded
- Solve the current problem while building for the future

# Goals to building a vendor relationship

- Strong relationship can convert potential problems into easy solutions
- Understanding how a vendor designs and builds your event based on the information you have provided them

# At the end of the day here's how you should feel....

“The relationship between our group and that of our audiovisual vendor has been like a story that unfolds revealing chapter after chapter of Trust, Loyalty and Teamwork. Its chapters are filled with memories of challenge, creativity and success. The professionalism and talent has enriched the story because the vendor plays a key role in providing the members with a quality event year after year”.





# THANK YOU

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