

Putting on an event – the hidden costs

We've all done it – the hastily compiled back-of-a-beermat budget. And generally we do get the main points covered. Venue, food, drink and entertainment in bold CAPS – as they'll account for the principal spend - a photographer to capture the memories and a few minor extras such as table decorations and invites. Sorted.

Or is it?

Well, truth is that there are quite often a number of further costs that need to be factored into the budget. Precisely what they are will depend on the nature of your event, but here are a few to look out for. Worth doing so, because in some instances you could be talking about significant additional expenditure.

Set-up

Many venues will publish hire rates with rather stringent parameters for set-up and de-rig. In other words your hire charge will cover the event hours with little room left for caterers and DJs to load in and clear out at the end of the evening. Working additional hours into the contract will generally come with a price tag – and in some cases you'll do well to avoid them. Having equipment delivered say on a Thursday or Friday for a weekend event may also incur unexpected charges as the storage space at the venue may also come at a premium – particularly if the venue is hosting another event either side of yours.

Lighting

Good lighting can transform a tired room into something spectacular. Even a beautiful room needs the right lighting to provide ambience and atmosphere, but surprisingly few venues have good event lighting as standard. It either comes as an added extra or you have to bring in your own. DJ's will often bring in some lighting and visual effects but that will tend to cover only the dance floor area. Uplighters and a basic lighting package for the room won't cost the earth, but it is an added expense and one that pound for pound is probably worth its weight in gold.

Furniture

Bizarrely, many venues don't have their own furniture – not even the basic catering standards of round tables, trestles and banqueting chairs. So you may need to hire these in, as well as any more unusual items such as sofas, bars, poseur tables and the like. Check out delivery charges – as that also needs to be factored in – and if the hire company wants to deliver on a weekday (ahead of a weekend event), check that the venue can store without charge.

AV

Similarly, many venues don't have any AV equipment so screens and projectors will need to be hired in. Those venues that do have their own in-house kit will not only charge you a hire fee, but will insist that you use their own technicians – and that of course also comes with a price-tag.

Kosher Catering

While we generally expect kosher catering to be somewhat more expensive than non-kosher, it's not just the caterers costs that you need to consider. Many venues will charge an additional fee for an outside caterer to use their kitchen - on top of the dry hire fee they are already charging you. This can be quite substantial so you ought to address this right from the start.

Security

Some venues insist that you use their security firm to cover your event – another hidden but un-negotiable expense. That said, it's something that you ought to consider even if the venue make no specific demands. It's not only to keep unwanted guests out (in increasing concern in today's Facebook society) but also to keep the kids in – and stop them from spreading the party fun into areas they shouldn't be – like elsewhere in the building or out on the street. Believe me, it does happen!

Toilets

It's a minor point, but there's nothing more off-putting than walking out of the magnificent party room into a slightly shabby bathroom. Bathrooms need to be immaculate! Dress them with soaps, scent, tissues, candles and flowers. You can do it all for £20 – but it's still £20 that you probably won't have had on your beermat budget!

Damages

Here's the nasty one – we heard of someone receiving a rather shocking plumbing bill from a venue after someone had dropped a bottle into toilet with disastrous consequences. While potentially unruly guests are best avoided, accidents and minor misdemeanours do occasionally happen, so check the venue's damage policy in advance. If for example your caterer damages some of their kitchen equipment, who is liable? You or the caterer? All our caterers are fully insured against this kind of thing so in that scenario, our clients are safe. Best option however is to leave the venue exactly as you found it!

So in order to rectify our initial beermat budget that rightly included venue, food, drink and the rest of it, we simply need to take a second beermat, entitle it contingency, add in all the elements above, and we'll have a bottom line that's there or thereabouts.

Or call us at KP Events and we'll sort it all for you!