

SELECTING VENUES IN 2025

1



Start Early and Be Flexible

ACTION

Begin venue research 12–18 months ahead, especially for large events. Identify multiple potential dates and destinations to leverage flexibility for cost savings.

"Not having flexible dates is the #1 reason for high budget expenditures."

Rigid dates limit options and bargaining power, often leading to inflated costs.

PRO TIP

Booking during off-peak seasons or weekdays can significantly reduce costs.

2

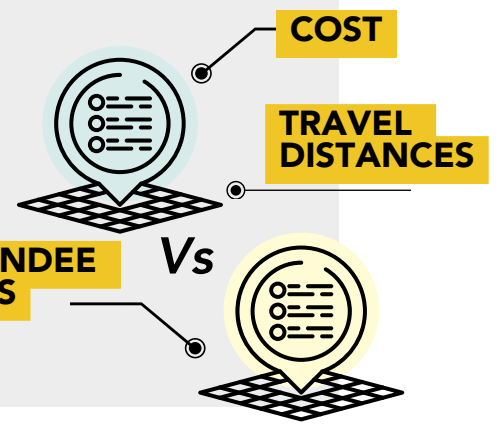
Compare Multiple Locations

ACTION

Evaluate venues in at least two or three cities to compare pricing, accessibility, and attendee preferences.

PRO TIP

Use attendee demographics to match the location to their convenience.



3

Manage Attrition Rates for Late Registrations



ACTION

Review the attrition clause and cut-off dates in contracts to ensure they accommodate last-minute attendee behavior.

PRO TIP

Always avoid paying attrition fees before arrival by having these discussions early.

Key Steps:

- Get a minimum 21-day cut-off for room blocks and menu adjustments to reduce penalties.
- **Negotiate** reduced penalties for last-minute changes.
- **Discuss** anticipated challenges with hotel sales teams before signing contracts.

4

Optimize Food & Beverage (F&B) Planning

ACTION

Confirm minimum spend commitments and dietary accommodations. Ask about F&B tastings and detailed menu breakdowns.

PRO TIP

Choose a mix of crowd-pleasers and options that cater to dietary restrictions.

5



Test Wi-Fi, AV, and Tech Capabilities

ACTION

Test Wi-Fi speeds, mic systems, projection screens, and hybrid event capabilities.

PRO TIP

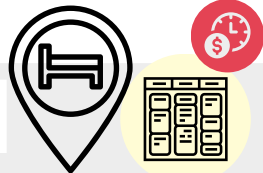
Ensure the venue has a dedicated technician and backup solutions for tech failures.

Key Decision:

- Can you use an in-house AV or an external AV vendor?
- **In 2025 20% budget goes to AV**
- Verify any restrictions or additional fees for using external AV providers.

6

Strategize Room Block Management



ACTION

Utilize historical data and consider attendee booking behaviors. **Do not overcommit!**



IDEA Reallocate unused room block inventory to services like RoomRite.

PRO TIP

Start your search early to secure better rates and options.

Key Steps:

- Plan for the right number of rooms, expecting a 10–20% drop-off.
- **Negotiate** flexible cancellation or adjustment terms.
- Use incentives like discounted registration for attendees booking within your block.

7

Audit Space Functionality and Layout

ACTION

Confirm that rooms fit your event's seating needs (*theater, banquet, breakout*). Review ceiling heights for staging and lighting setups.

PRO TIP

Check for easily accessible breakout spaces near the main session areas.

8

Ensure Accessibility, Safety, and Sustainability

ACTION

Verify ADA compliance, fire exits, and security measures. Ensure your venue supports seamless access for all attendees while incorporating sustainable practices.

PRO TIP

Incorporate sustainability into your event by sourcing local vendors and utilizing eco-friendly signage.

Key Steps:

- Check for energy-efficient lighting, waste reduction policies, and recycling programs.
- **Opt** for venues that offer reusable tableware or minimize single-use plastics.

9

Know Your Cancellation and Refund Policies

ACTION

Review penalties for cancellations, date changes, and unexpected weather issues. Ensure the contract includes a rain plan for outdoor events.

PRO TIP

Negotiate to reduce cancellation penalties by offering extended commitments or repeat bookings.



10

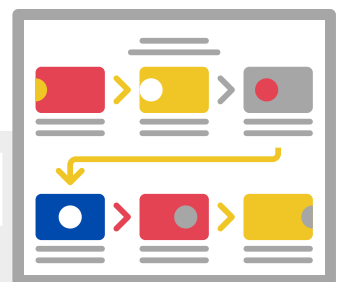
Run a Full Walkthrough

ACTION

Schedule a walkthrough to confirm event flow, tech functionality, F&B setups, and wayfinding signage.

PRO TIP

Roleplay an attendee's journey from check-in to exit to identify bottlenecks.



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