



# Event Planning Glossary

## 100+ Must-Know Industry Terms



Planning an event can be amazing, but with so many moving parts, it's easy to get overwhelmed. This glossary is your tool to navigate the world of event planning with confidence. We'll break down key terms you'll encounter, explain why each section is important, and help you impress everyone with your new event planning expertise!

### Table of Contents

1. Foundation
2. Event Types
3. Attendee Types
4. Logistics & Registration
5. Food & Beverage (F&B)
6. Setting the Stage
7. Event Technology
8. Marketing & Promotion
9. Event Metrics
10. Other Important Industry Terms

## 1. Foundation

**First things first!** This section covers the basics that form the core of any successful event. Think of it as your event's DNA, the essential building blocks that will guide your planning process.

Knowing these terms will allow you to communicate effectively with vendors, manage your resources wisely, and ensure a smooth-running event from start to finish.

### Event Planning [🔗](#)

The art of coordinating everything from the initial idea to the final details, including budget, venue selection, vendors, marketing, and logistics.

### Event Planner:

The event professional who oversees the entire event planning process, making sure everything comes together.

### Agenda:

A detailed roadmap outlining the event's activities, from speaker presentations to networking breaks. Your event schedule to keep everything on track.

### Budget:

Your financial roadmap for a successful event. It outlines all the expected costs and potential revenue associated with the event (like ticket sales).

### Venue:

The physical location where your event comes to life. This could be anything from a conference hall to a rooftop garden.

### Day Delegate Rate (DDR):

The amount a venue charges per attendee per full-day event. The cost usually includes equipment, room hire, and catering.

### Vendor:

Businesses or individuals who provide goods or services for the event, like caterers, entertainment companies, and decorators.

### Back of House:

Refers to the teams and support not usually seen by guests, such as culinary, tech, or service staff.

### RFP (Request for Proposal):

A document sent to potential vendors outlining your event needs and requesting proposals with pricing and service details.

### Run of Show (ROS):

A detailed timeline outlining the sequence of events throughout the day, including speaker presentations, breaks, meal times, and other activities. This is like a minute-by-minute plan to keep things running smoothly.

### Technical Rehearsals:

A must-have for any type of event, but especially for hybrid and virtual ones. You should rehearse all the technicalities to make sure everything will run smoothly on the day of the event.

### Banquet Event Order (BEO):

Details the timings of the event, space or room setup, menu selections, audio visual requirements, and how the event will be run.

### Contract:

A legal agreement between you and a vendor, outlining the scope of services, fees, and payment terms. This ensures everyone is on the same page.

### Site Visit:

Event organizers go onsite to a potential venue to see whether it's a good fit for their event.

### Contingency Plan [🔗](#)

A professional way of saying 'backup plan'. You should create a contingency plan before your event so that all those involved know what to do if there's an emergency or if there are any last-minute changes.

### Force Majeure Clause:

Included in most venue contracts. It states that the event venue is not responsible for events such as war, labor disputes, or natural disasters out of their control such as hurricanes, floods, or fires that could result in your event being canceled.

### Sponsorship:

A financial contribution from a company in exchange for marketing opportunities at the event.

### Rider:

Refers to requests that a speaker or performer requests to have backstage (ex. food and drinks).

### B2B (Business to Business):

Events focused on connecting businesses with each other.

### B2C (Business to Consumer):

Events focused on connecting businesses with potential customers.

## 2. Event Types

**This section dives into the various event formats** you might encounter in the event planning world. Understanding these types will help you choose the most suitable format for your goals and audience.

### **Conference:**

A large gathering featuring presentations, workshops, and networking opportunities for professionals in a specific industry.

### **Trade Show:**

Business-centric events where companies showcase their products and services to potential customers and partners.

### **Workshop:**

Focused sessions with hands-on activities or deep dives into a particular topic.

### **Expo:**

A large exhibition showcasing products, services, and companies from a specific industry. Similar to a trade show, expos often have a commercial focus, but may also include educational components like conferences or workshops.

### **Convention:**

A large, formal gathering focused on a particular industry, profession, or cause. Conventions typically feature a combination of educational sessions, networking events, and exhibitions. They may also include awards ceremonies or policy discussions relevant to the field.

### **Consumer Show:**

When you want to present a new product or service to potential buyers. It's a B2C event that can be in-person, hybrid, or virtual. In-person: Attendees physically attend the event at a designated venue.

### **Hybrid:**

Events that combine in-person and virtual elements, allowing for remote or on-site participation. Virtual: Events conducted entirely online, enabling attendees to participate from anywhere.

### **Virtual Booth:**

A digital space within a virtual or hybrid event for sponsors and exhibitors to connect with attendees.

### **Simulive (Simulated Live):**

Pre-recorded content scheduled to play at specific times during your event, mimicking a live experience.

### **Video on Demand (VoD):**

Pre-recorded content that attendees can access and watch at their convenience.

### **General Session:**

A large gathering for all attendees, often featuring a keynote speaker.

### **Micro Events:**

Smaller, localized events that expand the reach of a larger event. Breakout Session: Smaller, focused discussions or workshops within a larger event.

### **Concurrent Sessions:**

Multiple panels or presentations happening simultaneously, allowing attendees to choose based on their interests.

### 3. Attendee Types

**This section of the focuses on the different roles** you'll encounter in the event planning world. Whether you're managing attendees, collaborating with partners, or building your event team, understanding these are key.

**Attendee:**

The general participants who register to attend your event.

**No-Show:**

Attendees who register but don't attend.

**VIP:**

Attendees who receive special treatment like access to exclusive lounges, priority seating, or speaker meet-and-greets.

**Sponsor:**

Companies or organizations that provide financial backing for the event in exchange for benefits like brand exposure, booth space, or speaking opportunities.

**Speaker:**

Individuals who deliver presentations or workshops, ranging from industry experts and thought leaders to attendees with a relevant story.

**Host:**

The person overseeing the entire event or a specific live session.  
Moderator: Guides speakers and panelists through content and discussions, including managing attendee questions.

**Vendor:**

Companies or organizations selling products or services relevant to the event's theme or audience. They typically have booths to showcase their offerings and interact with attendees.

**Contractor:**

Companies or individuals hired to provide essential services like catering, security, or audio/visual support. They ensure the event runs smoothly behind the scenes.

**Exhibitor:**

Companies or organizations that rent booths to showcase their products, services, or brand. Similar to vendors, but their focus might be on brand awareness and lead generation rather than direct sales.

**Keynote Speaker:**

A prominent speaker delivering a main presentation, typically a well-known figure in their field and a major draw for attendees.

**MC:**

The person who introduces speakers, manages the event flow, and keeps the audience engaged.

## 4. Logistics and Registration

**Now that you have the foundation, let's get down to the nitty-gritty!** Logistics and registration are the unsung heroes of event planning. They ensure a seamless experience for your attendees, from signing up to finding their way around the venue.

Mastering these terms will keep your event organized and prevent any confusion for your guests. Imagine the feeling of accomplishment when everyone arrives and knows exactly where to go – that's the magic of well-oiled logistics!

### **Registration:**

The process where attendees sign up to participate in your event (online, by phone, or in person). This is how you know who's coming!

### **Early Bird Ticket:**

A discounted ticket offered to attendees who register for an event in advance.

### **Promo Code:**

Or discount code, lets attendees save money off the price of their tickets.

### **Check-In:**

The process where attendees register or pick up their badge upon arrival at the event.

### **Badge:**

An identification card worn by attendees, granting them access to the event. It's like their VIP pass!

### **Signage:**

Directional and informational signs displayed throughout the venue to guide attendees. These are like wayfinders to help people get around. There are different types of signage including banners, floor stickers, and digital signs.

### **Logistics:**

The behind-the-scenes magic that ensures your event runs smoothly, from transportation and security to keeping things clean.

### **Installation & Dismantle (I&D):**

The process of setting up (installation) and taking down (dismantle) exhibits, booths, and other event infrastructure.

### **Q&A:**

Portion of event, typical at the end that your attendees can use to ask questions to further the discussion.

### **Accessibility** [🔗](#)

Creating an inclusive experience for everyone attending your event, regardless of their abilities. It means removing barriers and providing accommodations so everyone can participate and enjoy themselves fully.

## 5. Food and Beverage (F&B)

**Food and drinks are a crucial part of any event**, whether it's a formal conference or a casual gathering. These terms will help you create a menu that delights your attendees and complements the overall ambience of your event.

### Catering [🔗](#)

The company or service that provides food and beverages for your event. They handle everything from menu creation to preparation and service. These are your food and drink pros!

### A La Carte:

A menu where each item is priced individually. This is a good option for smaller events or when you want to offer a wider variety of choices.

### Buffet:

A self-serve option where attendees can choose from a variety of pre-prepared dishes. This is a cost-effective way to feed a large crowd and cater to different dietary needs.

### Beverage Package:

A predetermined selection of drinks offered to attendees for a set price. This can include soft drinks, juices, coffee, tea, alcoholic beverages, or a combination.

### Cash Bar:

A bar where attendees pay for their drinks individually.

## 6. Setting the Stage

**The way you arrange your event space sets the tone for the entire experience.** Choosing the right layout can help you achieve your event goals, whether it's facilitating brainstorming sessions, encouraging interaction amongst attendees, or keeping everyone focused on the speaker.

So next time you're planning an event, think about the kind of atmosphere you want to create and choose the layout that will help you bring it to life!

### Floor Plan:

A blueprint of your venue, crucial for planning logistics and ensuring smooth event execution, especially for in-person events with multiple moving parts.

### Banquet-style:

Round tables for larger groups, ideal for galas, award ceremonies, or fostering conversation.

### Boardroom-style:

Chairs arranged around a table (various shapes) to facilitate discussions and interaction.

### Cabaret-style:

Round tables facing a stage, ensuring good sightlines for everyone.

### Chevron/Herringbone/V-shape:

Rows of chairs angled in a V-formation, typically pointing towards a stage or focal point.

### Circle-Style:

Chairs arranged in a circle for a more intimate feel and to encourage open discussions.

### Classroom Seating:

Traditional rows of tables and chairs facing forward, suitable for presentations or lectures.

### Theater-style:

Rows of chairs facing a stage or platform, ideal for large presentations or performances.

### U-shape:

Similar to a horseshoe layout but with a closed end, creating a more inclusive environment for presentations and meetings.

### Breakout Rooms:

Smaller rooms for focused discussions or sessions within a larger event.

### Business Center:

A designated area with office supplies and services to support your event team's needs.

## 7. Event Technology

**The world of event planning is constantly evolving**, and technology plays a huge role in that. These tools can enhance your event by providing attendees with valuable information, increasing accessibility, and creating a more interactive experience.

### Event App:

A downloadable mobile application specifically designed for your event, providing attendees with schedules, speaker information, networking tools, and other event resources.

### QR Code (Quick Response):

Scannable barcodes that link users to websites or specific event information upon scanning with a smartphone camera.

Live Streaming: Broadcasting your event live over the internet, allowing virtual attendees to participate in real-time.

### Hybrid Event:

Events that combine in-person and virtual elements, expanding your reach to a wider audience.

### Webinar [🔗](#)

Presentations, sessions, or seminars delivered online, ideal for remote participation and knowledge sharing.

### Audio/Visual (AV):

Equipment used to manage sound, lighting, and video for your event. This includes microphones, speakers, projectors, screens, and lighting systems.

### Augmented Reality (AR):

Overlays computer-generated images onto the real world, allowing attendees to interact with virtual objects in their physical environment.

## Badge Design Key Terms

### Badge Shell Layer:

The pre-printed background design of the badge (usually color).

### Badge Print Layer:

Registrant data printed in black text on the front of the badge during the live event check-in using Thermal Printers.

### Formed Badges:

The combined badge shell and print layers, used to create and assign the badge(s) for your event.

### Full Bleed:

Artwork design that extends at least 1/8" past the edge of the badge shell edge (left to right and top to bottom) to ensure a seamless print.

### Virtual Reality (VR):

Creates a completely immersive computer-generated world that users can experience through headsets.

### Gamification [🔗](#)

Incorporating game mechanics and elements into your event to boost attendee participation and make it more fun.

### Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Utilizing AI-powered tools for tasks like chatbots to answer attendee questions or recommendation engines to personalize the event experience.

### Webcast:

Similar to live streaming, but can also be pre-recorded and offered for on-demand viewing later.

### Public Address System (PA):

Equipment that amplifies sound from a central location to designated areas within the venue.

### Customer Relationship Management (CRM):

Software that stores attendee contact information and facilitates communication and relationship management.

### On-Demand Badge Printing [🔗](#)

Allows for badge printing onsite, eliminating the need for pre-printed badges and offering more flexibility.

### Crop Marks:

The marks added to the badge design that show the printer where to cut.

### CMYK Colors:

Used in print designs. It is essential to ensure your designs are in the CMYK color scale to ensure accurate color reproduction when badges are printed.

### RGB Colors:

Used in digital display designs. If you are using RGB for designing, it is essential to convert to CMYK before submitting for print to ensure accurate color production.

## 8. Marketing and Promotion

**The best event won't be successful if nobody knows about it!** This section equips you with the vocabulary of marketing and promotion. These terms will help you develop a strategy to reach your target audience and generate excitement for your event.

### Marketing Plan [🔗](#)

This roadmap outlines your overall promotional strategy for attracting attendees. It should encompass all the marketing channels and tactics you plan to utilize, along with a timeline and budget allocation.

### Landing Page/Event Website:

A dedicated web page specifically for your event. This serves as your online hub, providing comprehensive event information like the agenda, speaker profiles, registration details, and contact information.

### Public Relations (PR):

Involves managing how the public perceives your event or organization. Effective PR strategies can generate positive media coverage and enhance your event's credibility.

### Social Media Marketing:

Leveraging social media platforms like Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, X, and Threads to promote your event, engage with potential attendees, and build anticipation.

### Email Marketing:

Targeted email marketing allows for personalized communication directly to potential attendees who have opted-in to your list. This is a powerful tool for promoting your event directly to their inbox and driving registrations.

## 9. Event Metrics

**This section dives into the world of data and measurement**, equipping you to assess your event's performance and identify areas for improvement. This is crucial because event success goes beyond just the number of attendees!

### ROI (Return on Investment):

A financial metric that calculates the net profit from your event compared to the investment cost.

### ROE (Return on Event):

Considers not just financial gain but also brand awareness, customer engagement, and other factors that contribute to your overall business goals.

### KPI (Key Performance Indicator):

These are measurable values that track how effectively your event is achieving its objectives. Depending on your goals, KPIs can include things like attendance numbers, lead generation, social media engagement, or revenue generated.

### Attendance Tracking:

Monitors how attendees interact with your event throughout its lifecycle, from registration to post-event follow-up. This data can reveal valuable insights into their behavior and engagement levels.

### Attendance Rates:

Tracks how many people who register actually show up (attendance rate) and how many who don't (attrition rate). Analyzing these rates can help you identify areas for improvement in your marketing and registration processes.

### Net Promoter Score (NPS):

A standardized metric used to gauge attendee satisfaction and loyalty by measuring the likelihood of recommending your event to others. High NPS scores indicate positive attendee experiences.

### Post-Event Evaluation:

This is the process of assessing your event's success after it's completed. This typically involves gathering feedback from attendees through surveys or focus groups, analyzing data from various sources (registration, engagement tools), and identifying areas where you can improve future events.



## 10. Other Important Terms

**There are always a few extra terms** that come in handy throughout the planning process. Knowing these terms will allow you to navigate conversations within the event industry.

### Event Industry Credentials

**Certified Meeting Professional (CMP):**

A well-respected professional certification program for event planners.

### Event Industry Resources

**Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB):**

An organization that provides resources and information to event planners, including news, event calendars, supplier lists, and accommodation directories.

**Destination Management Company (DMC):**

A private company that offers local expertise and support to event planners from outside the area, assisting with planning and execution of events.

### Event Industry Acronyms

**SKO (Sales Kickoff):**

A meeting to motivate and educate a sales team.

**MEEC (Meetings, Expositions, Events, and Conventions):**

Refers to the various sectors within the overall meetings industry.

**CEC (Continuing Education Credit):**

A credit earned by attending educational sessions or workshops, often required for professional development.

**MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions):**

An internationally used term encompassing different types of business events.

**Remember:** This glossary is your guide, not a rulebook. As you gain experience, you'll develop your own event planning style. But with a solid understanding of these key terms, you'll be well on your way to planning events that are both unforgettable and stress-free!

## Glossary

A La Carte – p.6	Contingency Plan – p.2	Post-Event Evaluation – p.8
Accessibility – p.5	Contract – p.2	Promo Code – p.5
Agenda – p.2	Convention – p.3	Public Address System (PA) – p.7
Artificial Intelligence (AI) – p.7	Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) – p.9	Public Relations (PR) – p.8
Attendee – p.4	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) – p.7	QR Code (Quick Response) – p.7
Audio/Visual (AV) – p.7	Day Delegate Rate (DDR) – p.2	Q&A – p.5
Augmented Reality (AR) – p.7	Destination Management Company (DMC) – p.9	Registration – p.5
Badge – p.5	Early Bird Ticket – p.5	Rider – p.2
Badge Design Key Terms – p.7	Email Marketing – p.8	ROI (Return on Investment) – p.8
- Badge Print Layer – p.7	Event App – p.7	ROE (Return on Event) – p.8
- Badge Shell Layer – p.7	Event Planning – p.2	Run of Show (ROS) – p.2
- CMYK Colors – p.7	Event Planner – p.2	RFP (Request for Proposal) – p.2
- Crop Marks – p.7	Exhibitor – p.4	Sales Kickoff (SKO) – p.9
- Formed Badges – p.7	Expo – p.3	Signage – p.5
- Full Bleed – p.7	Floor Plan – p.6	Simulive (Simulated Live) – p.3
- RGB Colors – p.7	Force Majeure Clause – p.2	Site Visit – p.2
Banquet Event Order (BEO) – p.2	Formed Badges – p.7	Social Media Marketing – p.8
Banquet-style – p.6	Full Bleed – p.7	Speaker – p.4
Beverage Package – p.6	Gamification – p.7	Sponsorship – p.2
Back of House – p.2	General Session – p.3	Sponsor – p.4
Boardroom-style – p.6	Host – p.4	Technical Rehearsals – p.2
Breakout Rooms – p.6	Hybrid – p.3	Theater-style – p.6
Breakout Session – p.3	Hybrid Event – p.7	Trade Show – p.3
Buffet – p.6	In-person – p.3	U-shape – p.6
Budget – p.2	Installation & Dismantle (I&D) – p.5	Vendor – p.2
B2B (Business to Business) – p.2	Keynote Speaker – p.4	Vendor – p.4
B2C (Business to Consumer) – p.2	KPI (Key Performance Indicator) – p.8	Venue – p.2
Business Center – p.6	Landing Page/Event Website – p.8	Video on Demand (VoD) – p.3
Cabaret-style – p.6	Live Streaming – p.7	Virtual – p.3
Catering – p.6	Logistics – p.5	Virtual Booth – p.3
Cash Bar – p.6	Marketing Plan – p.8	Virtual Reality (VR) – p.7
Certified Meeting Professional (CMP) – p.9	MC – p.4	Webinar – p.7
Check-In – p.5	MEEC (Meetings, Expositions, Events, and Conventions) – p.9	
Chevron/Herringbone/V-shape – p.6	Micro Events – p.3	
Circle-Style – p.6	MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions) – p.9	
Classroom Seating – p.6	Moderator – p.4	
CMYK Colors – p.7	Net Promoter Score (NPS) – p.8	
Conference – p.3	No-Show – p.4	
Concurrent Sessions – p.3	On-Demand Badge Printing – p.7	
Consumer Show – p.3		

Thank you.

