



## MESA / MPI PLANNER FORUM – 6<sup>th</sup> June Event Planners and Event Suppliers in Conversation For an Enhanced Relationship Building Process



Thank you for attending the MESA & MPI June Planner Forum. Thank you to [Maja Mistic](#), Head of Sales at [Limos4](#), MESA Member, for the MESA Pledge reading. Some key points made during the call were:

### CHANGES

- There has been a **lot of changes** after Covid. Things have got more expensive – it takes a longer time and quality may be less as we must dig for more information
- With the swing back to **in-person events**, there has been a high demand and prices have risen

### TRUST & HONESTY

- **If we don't share** – then we get a big surprise. We must share information and trust each other
- We need to be **responsible**
- Too much **over promising** leads to disappointment on expectations – maybe planners were expecting something else
- Less sales in bidding process – **lower the expectations** for less disappointment
- Suppliers have a frustration in needing to answer in the **minute detail**
- **Clients may not know what they want** – they may want the huge white elephant but only have the budget for the small white mouse. **Honesty is key** as to what can be provided
- Sometimes the organisation is too busy doing work in order to do their work ([Stephen Covey – 7<sup>th</sup> Habit – Sharpen the Saw](#))
- Many suppliers have difficulty in **saying 'no'** and then may not be happy at the outcome and not want to work with the client again (and vice versa)
- **Honesty** – if done in the right way and the right language, planners can love that suppliers care for them – if you tell them the truth. Don't risk a relationship by being scared to say 'no'.
- **A close and honest relationship is our goal** – where both parties can say 'no'. There will also be no budget discrepancies if we are completely honest
- If you have a 3-week lead time for a 3-month project – you should expect the quality of a 3-week planned event

### ASK QUESTIONS / TERMINOLOGY

- How precise are planners in their wording about what they need – how good are suppliers in **asking and clarifying?**
- The amount of effort that goes into an RFP – suppliers can answer with the same language (e.g., tickets, registration) to suit the prospective client – **but is the terminology understood** in the same way on both sides?
- Sometimes **questions are ambiguous and confusing** – cross education is necessary
- We need a **glossary of terminology**
- There has been a **shift in the buying process** and suppliers need to go through a purchasing office more now than the event planner – **do we speak the same language?** The whole terminology that was used is gone and suppliers don't know what planners are asking for and don't have time to find out
- **Initial confusion in terminology already starts with the word 'events'** – so many things are events (weddings, concerts, congresses, corporate meetings)
- **Ask questions in a timely manner** and ensure you have the correct answer – if you don't get the answer you need, ask again, and make it clear that your question hasn't been answered
- You may be asking for 'onions' but actually want 'apples' – **what is it you really want and are you sure?**

## TECHNOLOGY

- **Technology has changed!** Many planners / PCO's are overwhelmed with the new technology since Covid.
- We are now back to **in-person events and new technology is emerging**
- What are **the new trends in the industry in simple words** – planner teams are not 'tech' people.
- **We don't see these types** of rapid changes in other industries e.g., construction
- With the new technology during the pandemic, planners have had to learn a new job, somewhere between event management and production
- **AI – We will adapt to it**, and it will help our events become more interesting – just as we adapted to other technologies, we will with this too

## SUMMARY

**Trust** - In what suppliers say and in everything to avoid too many mistakes on all sides. Trust underlies everything

**Time & better understanding** – Working toward a flawless event – do it together to create the perfect event and ultimate ROI

**Stop complaining** – If it's raining outside, there is not a lot you can do (get an umbrella!) – have values, and do good together

**Adapt** – Change our mentality – we cannot keep up with everything, speak to people about the tech you need if you don't understand it yourself. Talk, and be honest with each other

### Similar outcomes were from the forum in December 2022 about:

- **Transparency** in the offer - clarity of what exactly is offered - what does a tech supplier supply and what not? Where does the offer end?
- **An industry wide glossary** (in proposals) - what is what - explaining the terminology
- Both suppliers and planners really want the same thing: **communication and trust**
- **Clear expectations and deadlines** within the relationship

You are viewing the poll results (shared by nost)

## Polls

1. How satisfied are you with your relationships when building successful events? (Single Choice) \*



2. What is your top concern at the moment in organising an event as a supplier or meeting planner?  
(Single Choice) \*



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THANK YOU TO OUR PANELLISTS & HOST

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