

STEP 2

PLACE

- *A particular position, point, or area in space*
- *A location*

VENUES 2 EVENTS

PLACE FRAMEWORK

Venue choice is paramount to any event. The place you select sets the scene for the entire conference. Your venue selection will determine if guests decide whether to attend or not. What does the venue say about the brand of your client?

STEP 1 – VENUE BRIEF

Before we start looking for a venue let's use all of our great research in **PURPOSE** to help us find the perfect venue. This is where we create our Venue Brief. A simple, yet detailed document that outlines our event requirements and what we are looking for in a venue.

We create a Venue Brief for the purpose of:

- Being clear on what we want from a venue
- Supplying exactly the same information to each venue
- Saving time

Things to keep in mind:

- Be as detailed as possible
- Include every single aspect of your event

VENUE BRIEF TEMPLATE

Occasion:	
Client:	
Guest Numbers:	
Event Date:	
Set-up:	
Timing/Agenda:	
Menu:	
Beverages:	
Client Budget:	
Commission:	
Audio Visual:	
Parking:	
Accommodation:	

Tips on creating your Venue Brief:

You have already give some thought to the sections below during your first step, **PURPOSE**. Let's go through each item in detail:

Occasion

Tell the venue why your client is holding their event. Venues sales teams have seen many events in their venue and may have some really great ideas for you. In order to do this they need to understand why the conference is being held and what you are trying to achieve.

Client / Company

Tell the venue who is holding the event, you may like to include a couple of sentences about the company.

Guest Numbers

If you have an event with guest numbers that may fluctuate it's better to use a guest number range eg. 80 – 100 guests. This way your venue understands from the beginning what your expected minimum to maximum guest numbers may be.

If you provide a guest number range, let the venue know how many guests you would like your quotation based on. This ensures you receive quotations from each of your venues based on the same number of guests.

Event Date

It is advisable to include your preferred date along with alternate dates if you have them. If your event date is not flexible, highlight this as it can save time by eliminating venues that don't have availability.

Event Set-up

What did you decide during **PURPOSE**, which event style did you decide best suited your conference?

If your event requires multiple rooms this is where you ask for them. Detail the amount of rooms you will need, in which set-up style and for how many guests.

Plenary Room - The Plenary is the main conference room catering for your total number of guests. When booking your venue ensure the Plenary can cater not only for your number of guests, but also any display tables or extra space that may be required.

Break Out Rooms - Break out rooms are used when your conference splits into smaller groups, they ensure each session can be run without the disruption and noise level associated with several groups in the same room at the same time. Ensure your venue has enough break out rooms in the right size to accommodate all of your sessions so they can run simultaneously.

Timing / Agenda

We suggest including the following times:

- The time you would like access to the room to bump-in
- The time guests arrive
- Break times (morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea)
- The time guests will leave
- The time you need the venue until to bump-out

Menu

Will your event be catered? Here are a few things to consider when it comes to menu:

- If you select a 3 course meal do you want alternate serves for entrée, main and dessert?
- Will you have arrival canapés?
- If you are holding a cocktail event do you need to add substantial menu items if the event is close to dinner?

Beverages

Will you be providing beverages for your guests? Here are a few things to consider when it comes to beverages:

- Have you considered coffee and tea on arrival?
- Would you like continuous tea and coffee available throughout the day for your guests?
- Would you like a beverage package or beverages on a consumption basis? Or are you going to run a bar tab?
- It is essential that you can select 2 white wines and 2 red wines?
- Would you like to see a basic or upgraded beverage list?

PLACE – BEVERAGE FORMULA

	Mils Per Bottle	Serves Per Bottle	Mils Per serve
Bottle of Wine	750mls	5	150mls
Bottle of Beer	700mls	4	175mls
Soft Drink	1125mls	6.5	170mls
Bottle of Champagne	750mls	6	125mls
Bottle of Orange Juice	2200mls	13	170mls

Duration of Function	Female			Male		
	Glass of Wine	Glass of Beer	Soft Drink	Glass of Wine	Glass of Beer	Soft Drink
1 hour	2	1	1.5	2	2	1.5
2 hours	2.5	1	1.5	2.5	2.5	1.5
3 hours	3	1.5	1.5	3	3	2
4 hours	5.5	1.5	2	3.5	3.5	2
5 hours	4	2	3	4	4	2.5
<i>ADD 25% FOR CONSUMPTION RATE IF FUNCTION IS ON A FRIDAY OR SATURDAY</i>						

EXAMPLE

Function held on a Thursday evening for 100 people on a basic package with a split of 50/50 on two hour duration function

50 x Females

2.5 glasses of wine = 25 bottles
 1 glass of beer = 12.5 bottles
 1.5 glasses of soft drinks = 11.5 bottles

50 x Males

2.5 glasses of wine = 25 bottles
 2.5 glasses of beer = 31.5 bottles
 1.5 glasses of soft drinks = 11.5 bottles

Total

Bottles of wine = 50
 Bottles of beer = 44
 Bottles of soft drink = 23

Budget

What was the allocated budget for the venue during **PURPOSE?**

Event planners are often wary of letting the venue know what their budget is, thinking they may end up paying too much. It is entirely up to you however by disclosing your budget it may end up saving you time as some venues may not be able to offer what you need for your allocated budget.

Sometimes venues may want to win your business, so by disclosing your budget amount they may in fact reduce some costs to meet your budget. Just keep in mind when looking at your venue proposal that they haven't included their premium beverage package (instead of the basic package) if their basic packages comes in under your specified budget.

Commission

Let the venue know if you would like a commissionable rate. This way everyone is on the same page from the beginning.

You can ask for commission on:

- Accommodation
- Catering (Day Delegate Package)

Not all conference venues pay commission. Some will pay commission on accommodation only and others on both accommodation and catering.

* We like to ensure that the price is not increased to allow for commission back to us.

Audio Visual

Try and detail each of your audio visual requirements. Audio visual is usually one of your bigger expenses during an event. You want to avoid costly additions to your budget after you have booked the venue.

On most occasions the venue will have a limited amount of in-built audio visual equipment. Venues often have an audio visual company they work with to supply the additional equipment you require. This means you need to contact the audio visual company to gain a quotation.

Include the audio visual equipment you will need on your event brief. We want the venue to provide a quotation on these costs as well, not just the venue hire and catering. Audio visual is often the item that will create the biggest price difference between venues.

A/V CRASH COURSE

Screens

Presentation material is projected onto a screen.

- In-built – Screen built into the venue (ceiling or wall)
- Fastfold – Screen on a frame



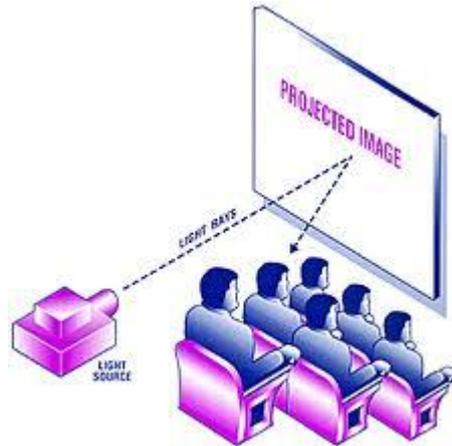
- Tripod – Screen on a tripod stand



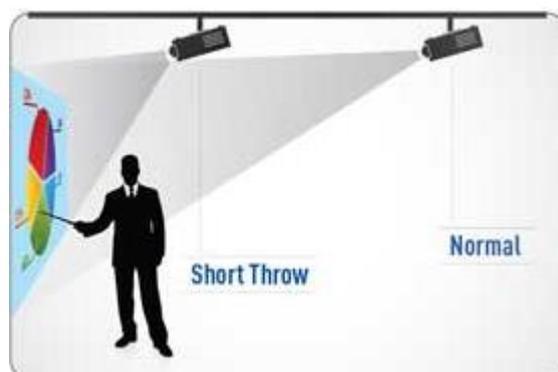
Data Projector

Projects your image onto a screen or wall.

- Front projection, when the projector sits in-front of the screen



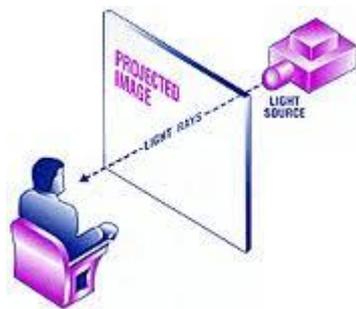
- Front projection also happens when you have a ceiling mounted projector that is usually installed into the venue. It would be worth asking if the projector is a short or long throw, as you don't want your presenter to cast a shadow onto the screen



- Rear projection, best used when you have presenters that walk the entire length of the stage. This option eliminates them casting a shadow onto the screen, or getting the projection light in their eyes.

This method provides a seamless look to your screen and also allows more room for your guests as there isn't a projector and table sitting among the first few rows.

You will need to ensure there is enough room behind your screen. The 'throw distance' you will need depends on the size of your screen and the type of projector. You can get projectors with a short throw lens to reduce the amount of space you will need.



PA System

Speaker system either installed into your venue or free standing. If using the venue installed PA system ensure it is powerful enough for your needs. Also ensure the speakers are strategically placed around the room so guests at the back can hear clearly.

Stage

Presentation area. Ensure you have a stage large enough for everything you need to do. Your stage size will be dependent upon:

- Do you have a band? How much room do they need?
- Is there a lectern and table for water, how much room does this take?
- Do you have a panel of guest speakers?
- Is there more than one person on stage at any one time?
- Are there any plants or couches to be placed on stage?

Stage Wash

Soft lighting that highlights the stage and presenters on the stage. You should always have a stage wash to light the stage area.

Table Pin Spots

Tiny but powerful spotlights that are positioned to point at the centre of the table. This allows guests to see what they are eating without anyone having a spotlight shining directly into their eyes. Table pins spots are usually an additional charge as a scissor lift is used to position the spots after the tables have been placed as per your event requirement.

Gobo

A template placed in-front of a light source used to emit light in a certain shape eg. your logo, word or shape.

Up-lights (parcans)

A light placed or designed to throw light upward.

- Gel – white light with a gel (cellophane like) colour placed over the top of it
- LED (Light Emitting Diode) – LED lights can be programmed to shine in individual colours

Remote Mouse

A mouse, with no cord, that sends a signal to the presentation laptop allowing the presenter to advance slides or go backwards. They often include a laser pointer.

Vision Switcher / Seamless Switcher

A piece of equipment that allows you to switch from one media type to another *seamlessly*. For example switching from a PowerPoint presentation to a video or PowerPoint to an internet application. The switcher will enable the vision to remain constant without a break, glitch or blue screen.

XLR Feed

An XLR feed is needed if you are audio or video recording your conference sessions. An XLR feed goes from the AV desk into the video camera to capture everything that is said on a microphone.

Holding Slide

Save onto a USB an individual PowerPoint slide to use as your holding slide. This is the slide that will be shown during breaks, at the end of presentations or if there is a problem with the presentation computer.

Foldback Monitors

Plasma televisions set at the front of the stage or on the ground. Allows the presenter on stage to see what slide they are up to without having to turn around and look at the screen, this makes for a better presentation and guest experience.

You can have 2 x foldback monitors. The first one will display the 'current slide' and the second one will display the 'next slide'. This is an even better situation for your presenters as they can see which slide is coming up next.

* If you are using 2 x foldback monitors you will need 2 x presentation computers, one computer will feed to the 'current slide foldback' and the other computer will feed to the 'next slide foldback'.

Szikla Cue King

The Cue king is used when you have 2 x foldback monitors. It is essentially a remote mouse but it advances both the current and the next slide for your presenters.

Timer Package

A timer package is a great idea to keep your conference running on schedule. For around \$40 you can hire a timer to sit at the side of your foldback monitor which show the presenter how much time they have left on stage.

* Make sure you provide an AV run sheet to your AV technician so they know how long to set the timer for each presenter

Microphones

- Lapel – wireless microphone that attached to the lapel of your presenter. Ideal for longer presentations and presenters who move around the stage.
- Handheld (wireless) – Handheld microphone without a cord attached to it. Make sure you have spare batteries and your presenters know how to turn the microphone on and off.
- Microphone on stand – These can either be cordless or have a cord attached to them. Usually used by band members. Make sure band members and presenters know how to adjust the microphone to their height.
- Lectern – The lectern should have one to two microphones on it. It would be wise to ensure the lectern comes with microphones as they are sometimes an additional cost.

TOD (technician on duty) Charges

Most venues will have an in-house audio visual company. If you are looking to bring in an external or your preferred audio visual company the venue may charge you for a 'TOD' as they understand how to operate the venue equipment.

Technician

A technician or technicians will be there to set-up your audio visual equipment. It is a good idea to factor into your budget a technician to operate your presentation and ensure everything runs smoothly.

A/V Tips:

- If you are supplying any of your own audio visual equipment the venue will usually require that it has been tagged and tested by a licensed electrician.
- Find out what AV is included in the venue hire (don't pay for items twice)
- Is it an option to bring in an external AV supplier? Discounts for loyal customers.
- Could it be a nice branding idea to have a lectern sign printed?

Parking

You may ask the venue to supply information about their on-site parking or nearby parking options and applicable rates.

It may also be an idea to ask if they can supply any on-site car parks for yourself as the organiser, your clients, presenters and VIP guests.

Accommodation

If you need to book accommodation rooms it is advisable to do this in conjunction with booking the venue, to ensure you can secure the amount of rooms you need.

Hotels will usually provide a room rate including breakfast. A tip here is to evaluate your guests and look at asking for breakfast on a consumption basis.

How many rooms will you need?

Do they all have to be the same type of room or are you looking for some VIP accommodation rooms as well?

Would you like a bed and breakfast rate or breakfast on consumption?

STEP 2 – VENUE HUNT

Before you start the venue hunt let's take a minute to think about what style of venue you are looking for. Now that you have your Event Brief you know what your event requirements are.

We believe there is the perfect venue out there for every event. We believe every event has its own personality and we need to find a venue to match it!

What styles of venue are available?

Tiered Theatre
Resort
Restaurant
Boardroom
Basement/Underground
Conference
Outdoor Courtyard
Contemporary
Heritage
Water View
Boat / Cruise
Bar / Lounge
Hotel with Meeting Facilities
Warehouse
Bar / Lounge

How do you find venues?

➤ Venue Directories

Venue Directories offer a free way for event planners to find venues. In most cases you can input information about your event and or the type of venue you are looking for. Hit search and they will display venues that match your needs.

We recommend using venue directories that display contact details for the venues and a link through to their website. If they do this you can be fairly certain that the directory doesn't take commissions, leaving you to deal directly with the venue and secure the best rate.

The pros:

- Venue directories can save you a lot of time, by matching venues that suit your event needs
- You deal direct with the venue
- View information and photos for various venues and select your favourites to contact
- Email multiple venues at the one time

Things to look out for:

- Make sure you can contact the venue directly
- Find a directory that provides search criteria relevant to the style of venue you are searching for
- Find a directory that can really help narrow down your venue selections if you are looking for a very particular style of venue

www.venues2events.com.au

www.eventconnect.com.au

www.venues.com.au

www.alistguide.com.au

www.thevenuezone.com.au

➤ Venue Finders

A venue finder by definition provides a free service much like a mortgage broker. You contact them, tell them about your event and they recommend venues that suit your event. There are two different ways they will work from here:

1. They take your event details and contact suitable venues on your behalf. They come back to you with the options and pricing and once the contract is signed you deal directly with the venue.
2. They take your event details and contact suitable venues on your behalf, the venues then send proposals directly back to you. You then deal with the venues direct and make the booking.

So how do venue finders make their money? Once you have confirmed your venue and the contract is signed a venue finder will gain a commission for that successful booking. The percentage can vary depending on what agreement is made between the venue and the venue finder. Commissions will usually range between 5% - 15%, higher commissions are usually paid in off peak seasons.

The pros:

- Venue finders can save you a lot of time, one phone call and they can match a selection of venues that suit your event needs

- Usually the process is fairly quick and you can have answers and prices within a 2 day turnaround

Things to look out for:

- Venue finders will only recommend venues that pay them commission, as this is how they make their money. What if there is a venue out there that is perfect for your event which hasn't been recommended because they don't pay commissions to venue finders?
- Some venue finders will not disclose your company name to the venue. I believe it is important to understand who the client is and the purpose of the event. This allows the venue to tailor a suitable quotation and put further ideas that are relevant to the event and the style of company they are dealing with. For me it's all about transparency, being open and honest and getting the best result for the event and the client.
- Understand how they are getting paid, what percentage do they receive from the venue?
- Working with a reputable venue finding service will help to ensure that the price a venue quotes you isn't increased to allow for their fee, which ultimately leaves you paying more for your venue. You should be able to find terms and conditions on their website.
- You may end up paying more for your venue as some venue finders may not negotiate lower rates as the more you pay the more money they make

www.thevenuezone.com.au

www.keyconferencesolutions.com.au

9 things you should keep a note of when looking for a venue:

When in amongst the venue hunt it's easy to lose information or forget where you found or saw a particular venue, especially when browsing on-line. Try creating a handy table to keep a track of your favourite venues.

	Venue 1	Venue 2	Venue 3	Venue 4
How did you find the venue?				
Venue name				
Venue Location				
Venue website				
Venue Phone number				
Venue Contact person				
Venue Contact email address				
Date you contacted the venue				
Date proposal received				

- *Event Tip:*

If you have the time, call each venue prior to sending your event brief. Have a chat to them about your event and gauge their customer service.

STEP 3 – VENUE PROPOSALS

You have your proposals back from your favourite venues. Now to look at them, and we mean REALLY look at them.

Venues proposals will come back in all manner of formats.

Things to look out for when looking at venue proposals:

- Room access time, has the venue allowed enough time for your event bump-in and bump-out? Are you being charged extra for this time?
- Has the venue placed a hold on the date you have enquired about and how long does this hold last?
- Have the venue quoted on your audio visual requirements or do you need to contact their preferred audio visual team separately to gain a quotation?
- What are the minimum guest numbers and or minimum spend required?
- How many parking spaces are there and what is the cost per space?
- Does the menu include 1 selection or 2 selections for a plated meal or if you are holding a cocktail function how many canapés per person have they included?
- Do you get to select the arrival canapés or are they chef's selection?
- Does the beverage package include two selections of red and white wine or only one?
- If you have asked for beverages on consumption (pay for what your guests consume), is there a minimum amount that needs to be spent on beverages per guest?
- Does the venue include note pads, pens, water and mints on each table?
- Can you deliver items prior to the event and have them stored at the venue?
- Have you asked for an accommodation rate in your quotation? If so, have the venue provided a bed and breakfast rate or bed only?

- What is the 'wash rate' or 'attrition rate' on your accommodation block. This is just a fancy way of saying what are your cancellation fees?
- Is the quotation inclusive or exclusive of GST?
- Are there any items the venue has included complimentary?
- Is there enough room for all of your guests in the set-up style you have requested including a stage and your audio visual equipment? A good idea here is to ask the venue for a floor plan of each function room in your requested set-up style.
- Is there space for your registration desk?
- Is it easy for guests to move from your main conference room to the breakout rooms? Do they have to travel in a lift to another level?
- Are there other conferences that could be sharing your pre-function space?
- Does the day delegate package include one or two options for morning tea and afternoon tea? This once point can cause a big price difference between venues.
- Does the day delegate package include coffee and tea on arrival or is this an added cost?
- Have you been sent photos of each function space, if not it's a good idea to request them so you can create a venue comparison for your team in the next step.
- Do you have a floor plan of the function level including each function room and pre-function area?

STEP 4 – COMPARE

You have analysed, pulled apart and been ruthless with your venue proposals. You have also gone back to the venue with questions on any items that were missed or simply items you have questions about.

Comparing Price

It's now time to create a comparison chart which helps you to analyse and compare each of your favourite venues.

Create a chart (or use the template we have included in this step) including fields that are relevant to your decision making.

* Please note, the comparison chart template is there for you to modify. We have added a few 'common' items that will help get you started but of course each event is different so jump on in and delete and add prices as needed.

Event Tip – Go back over pages 24 and 25 of this manual and cross check against our list of 'things to look out for when looking at venue proposals'

Comparing the Space

In addition to cost it's also important to compare the location, facilities and general suitability of each venue.

We create a simple word document with 1-2 pages for each venue and include the below items:

- Venue location
- Photo of the function room/s that have been recommended
- Floor plan of the function space
- A list of pro's and con's for each venue

It's not always about selecting the venue at the lowest price. It's about finding the right venue for a reasonable price.

STEP 5 – SITE INSPECTION

What are the things we should be looking at during a site inspection?

What questions should we be asking during a site inspection?

STEP 6 – NEGOTIATION

Am I able to negotiate rates with venues? If so, what is up for negotiation?

Anything is up for negotiation, you just have to ask.

Items we have negotiated are:

- Room drop rate (delivering items to accommodation rooms)
- Parking spaces (complimentary parking / discounted parking)
- Secretariat (complimentary conference organiser room)
- Accommodation rooms (for every 25 rooms booked, 1 room complimentary)
- Lunch in the restaurant as opposed to in the conference room
- Reduction to room hire
- Reduction to catering package
- No room re-set charges (no charge to change the room from theatre to U-Shape)
- Extended bump-in and bump-out times
- Internet access
- Extend payment terms / deposit split into two payment amounts

Some ideas to help save some of your event budget:

- Having flexible dates

- Asking for chefs selection canapés instead of selecting items

- Ask if there are any items on the menu that are cheaper to buy in and produce

- Shared dessert platters or roving dessert

- Buffet menu option, shared platters

- Ask venues what they may be able to include complimentary (linen, centrepieces)

- Instead of a 3 course sit down meal could you consider a substantial canapé menu or food stations?

- Consider holding your event on a weeknight
