



Tips when choosing an event management company for your outdoor special event

Finding the right event management company to produce your Chicago event can be a daunting task. By asking the right questions, you can begin to gather the information needed to ensure a successful event. Below is a checklist to help guide you through the selection process.

Does the event management company have experience in the Chicago market?

Different Cities have different rules and regulations for hosting events. It is always good to find someone familiar with the market in which you plan to host your event. They should be knowledgeable about any necessary special event permits and have experience working with local community groups, the Alderman's office and the Chicago Police Department.

Does the event management company have experience in the type of event you plan to host?

Planning a wedding is much different than producing a festival or race. Ask the company for client references on projects similar to what you plan to host.

How does the event management company charge for services?

Be proactive by asking how they will charge for their services. There are more than a few different models and you need to ensure their compensation model aligns with your event structure. Some compensation models include:

- *Service fee (e.g. hourly)*
- *Vendor commission (i.e. the event management company upcharges for outsourced services and rentals)*
- *Food and beverage commissions*
- *Flat fee for the entire event*

Do they own all of their equipment? Can they assist with your marketing needs?

Find out what equipment, software, and supplies they own which could help you reduce costs. Also, find out if they have any social media outlets, mailing lists, or newsletter subscribers to help spread the word about your event.

Do they have the appropriate insurance and business license?

Depending on the type of event you plan to host, check to ensure they have adequate insurance coverage. Also, make sure it is a reputable company by checking on the status of their business license.

- *Look up City of Chicago business licenses - https://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/bacp/provdrs/bus/svcs/business_licenselook-up.html*
- *Confirm good standings with the State of Illinois - <https://www.ilsos.gov/corporatellc/>*
- *Check to see if they are listed on the Better Business Bureau website - <https://www.bbb.org/chicago>*