Strategic Meetings Management

Services

- Venue Sourcing
- Site Inspections, Analysis and Recommendations
- Contract Negotiations
- Budget Development and Oversight
- Creation and Distribution of Event Specs
- Hotel and/or Host Facility Management
- Third-Party Vendor/Supplier Procurement and Management
- Space Planning and Design
- Site Decor and Signage Development
- Food and Beverage Planning and Management
- Speaker/Entertainment Procurement and Management
- Special Event Planning and Management
- Ancillary Event Management
- Hybrid and Virtual Meetings
- Graphic Design and Event Marketing
- VIP Management including Travel and Transportation, Gifts and Amenities
- On-site Event Staffing Procurement and Management
- Invoice Review and Reconciliation
- Cost-Saving/Process Improvement Implementation

Certifications

- Certified Meeting Professionals
- Certified Digital Event Strategists
- Certified Pandemic Compliance Advisor
- Certified Exposition Managers

Memberships

- Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA)
- American Society of Association Executives (ASAE)
- International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE)

When you decide to work with SPARGO, you immediately gain access to a robust team of meeting and event professionals. Not only does this include your core account team, but you also benefit from the collective knowledge and expertise of our team with a combined total of over 100 years of experience.

Our planners have deep venue-specific experience across all major hotel brands and every major convention center in the US, strong contract negotiation experience, and significant international event planning experience. As a result, AAG immediately benefits from augmenting its in-house meetings team with logistics staff from SPARGO.

Our goal is to allow your team to elevate in their role as business events strategists while leaving behind-the-scenes logistical tasks to us. Other SPARGO clients have implemented this model with great success.

We welcome the opportunity to work with AAG as it enters a new era in the fresh produce and floral industry!

International Experience

Planning international meetings and events requires an additional level of expertise.

From navigating language barriers and cultural differences to different planning standards and regional nuances, SPARGO has successfully planned and executed global events across North America, South America, Europe, Africa/Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific region.

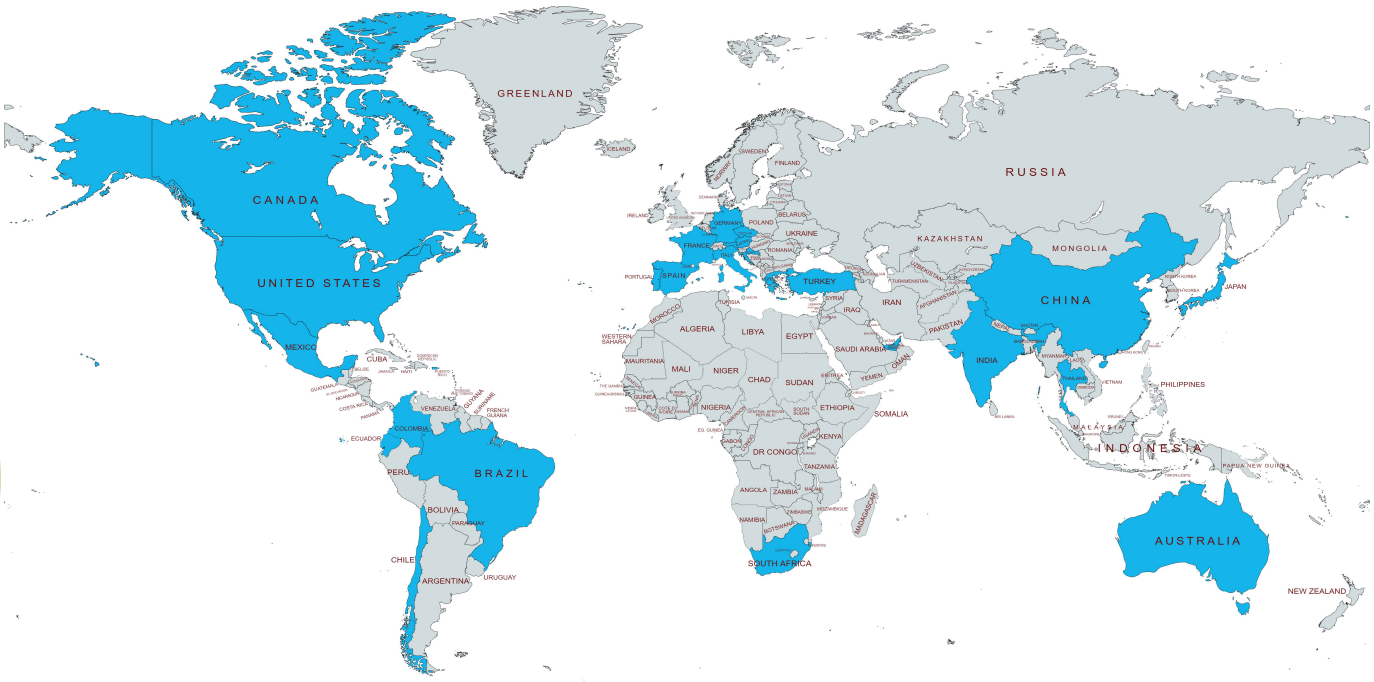
Our robust experience lets us easily plan small- to mid-size events without a local partner, ultimately saving the association money. For large-size international events, our existing relationships with congress centers, DMCs, PCOs, stand builders, and other vendors across the globe enable us to undertake the planning effort rapidly.

In addition, all client teams with any level of international meetings include a senior planner, who is astute in the logistical nuts and bolts and skilled at assessing, monitoring, and responding to any potential risks associated with the event or host location. For instance, we have relocated events, brought in additional security, and arranged on-site daily COVID testing to mitigate significant risks for our clients' international events successfully.

Further, our team can work nontraditional hours when planning and executing international events. For example, we adapt our planning process to the event's time zone for early morning or evening planning calls.

While the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in most of our client's international events converting to virtual, we successfully planned and executed an in-person event in Vienna, Austria, in September 2021.

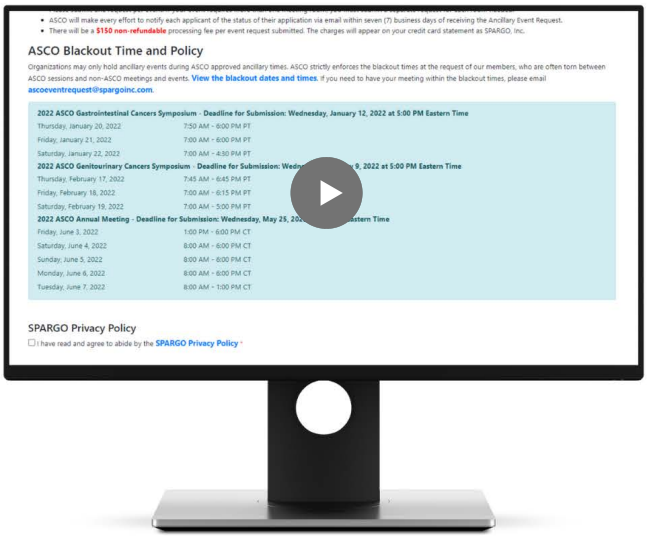
Below is a map of our global experience.



Ancillary Event Management

An often-cited source of angst for our clients is the management of ancillary/in conjunction with (ICW) events. SPARGO has revolutionized the ICW event request process through our proprietary software for our clients with a large volume of ICW events. This in-house software allows:

- ICW event hosts to submit event request(s) including preferred hotel choices, and obtain automatic electronic confirmation of their submission(s) upon successful payment of processing fee
- SPARGO staff review each request against clients' ICW hosting guidelines
- Hotels in official client room block with meeting space can be contacted directly for their availability
- ICW event hosts receive notification of approval or request to modify event requirements to meet approval
- ICW event host, selected hotel, and any key vendor (like the official audiovisual vendor) can be automatically noticed with further instructions to direct ICW event host to begin contracting directly with hotel and necessary vendors
- Online reporting is available to clients to view event submissions and other details



Click on the above screen to view a demo video of our ancillary event management platform.

Benefits to AAG

- Ensure ICW events do not compete with official AAG programming
- Better serve valued AAG exhibitors and sponsors
- Gather valuable metrics on ICW event volume, size, and scope
- Use metrics to negotiate better hotel contracts for future AAG events

In 2024, SPARGO processed nearly 5,500 ICW event requests on behalf of clients.

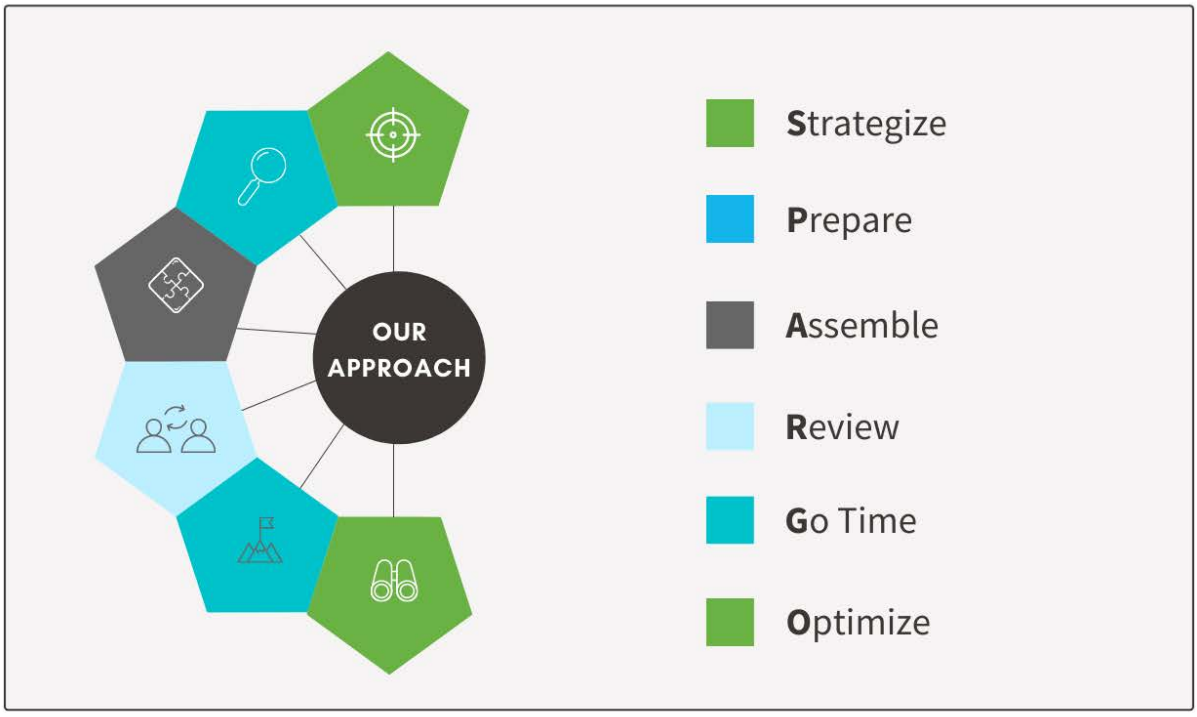
The S.P.A.R.G.O. Approach

We believe every event is unique and should be approached with a fresh vision and custom approach. We deliver tailored, transformational experiences by immersing ourselves in your mission and becoming an extension of your staff.

In a partnership with a client with an in-house meetings team our overarching goal is to allow existing staff to transition and elevate their role as business event strategists. With a seat at the senior leadership table, internal staff can focus on crafting the vision for each event, developing stellar content, curating a unique event experience, and leading the cross-functional planning team. SPARGO then becomes the behind-the-scenes arm that assists with the detailed advanced logistical planning and on-site execution of each event.

SPARGO is well-equipped to assist SDFM in its mission to to promote thought leadership, professional development, and ethical behavior in all aspects of defense financial management. Our nearly 50 years' expertise in meetings management combined with our well-honed ability to pivot and transform events over the past 52 years is unprecedented. This depth, breadth, and continued innovation means we can rapidly get up to speed and aid in planning and executing SDFM events.

How do we accomplish this? Through our namesake framework--**The S.P.A.R.G.O. Approach**.



STEP ONE:

Strategize

THE WHO

We discover the ins and outs of your organization, events, and attendees. We work with you to determine the best intersection of your organization's strategic objectives and business events. Ultimately, we become advisers and an extension of your team.

THE WHY

We always begin with the end in mind. Why is the event taking place? What is the purpose? What are the event's goals? Are they SMART (Strategic, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Timely)? Ideally, an event charter is created soon after.

THE HOW

We ensure the planning framework and event design aligns with the goals and objectives of the event. All strategic decisions, cost-saving measures, and expenditures that support the event's goals and objectives are documented.

THE BUDGET

We work closely with your team to develop and maintain a detailed budget for each event. With strong financial acumen, our team of planners can assist in forecasting and adjusting the budget as needed with minimal impact to the event experience.

STEP TWO:

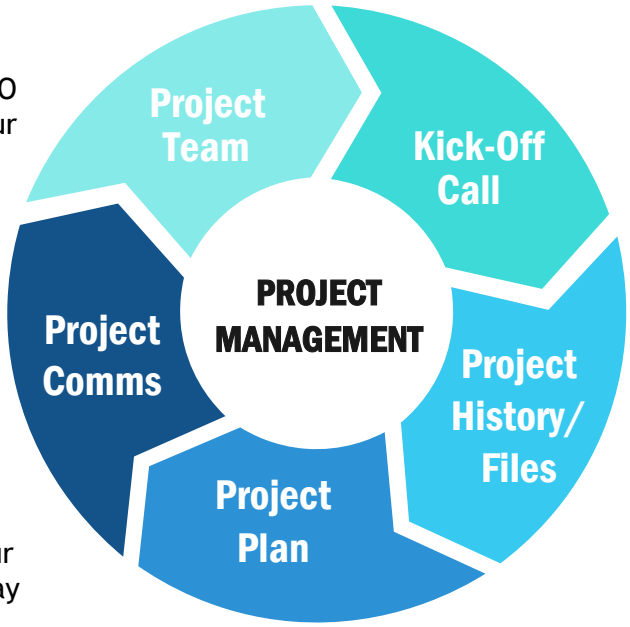
Prepare

SPARGO employs project management methodology to coordinate and execute our client's events.

While the planning for most events follows the traditional waterfall PM method, SPARGO employs a hybrid approach, combining elements of waterfall methodology and agile methodology. This method allows for the planning of conventional meeting elements in a sequential fashion and allows the project team to regroup frequently and adjust the overall event plan as needed.

We have found this approach is not only nimble but necessary in a world of innovation and transformation.

PROJECT TEAM:: The depth and breadth of our expertise ensure that each event, regardless of size, is staffed appropriately both in advance and on-site. Outsourcing planning functions to SPARGO ensure continuity irrespective of staff turnover at your organization.



PROJECT KICK-OFF: We begin each new client engagement with a kick-off call with all key stakeholders. This call allows for introductions and an opportunity to review the scope of work and address any high-level questions to ensure we begin the planning on the same page.

PROJECT HISTORY/FILES: After the initial kick-off call, we will provide a list of files needed to aid in our rapid onboarding. We understand that not all files may be available, especially for newly-created events. However, know what questions to ask to prepare for the overall event planning.

PROJECT PLAN: The typical planning phase varies from one month to 18 months. Utilizing project management software, we develop a custom-tailored plan accessible 24/7. Having a robust library of project plans allows us to quickly onboard a new client and engage all stakeholders immediately.

PROJECT COMMUNICATION: At the onset of each new client engagement, we set up a central repository for file sharing and project communication. We will also establish regular planning calls with the necessary stakeholders.

STEP THREE:

Assemble

SOURCING & CONTRACTING: SPARGO will work closely with AAG to source, negotiate, and contract vendors with the necessary experience and resources through a competitive RFP process.

SPACE PLANNING: Our planning ensures that all space is used effectively, from education session rooms to unique experiential spaces. We will work closely with AAG staff and vendors to provide a visible brand, easy-to-navigate space, and engaging experiences for attendees.

VENDOR MANAGEMENT: Upon budget approval and contract signing, SPARGO will work closely with each vendor in coordinating their services for each event including regular communications with all vendors. All documents and files received from vendors are reviewed in advance to ensure they meet AAG's expectations and requirements.

RISK MANAGEMENT: We place strong importance on contingency planning, including the preparation of emergency preparedness, risk management, and health and safety plans, as well as evaluation of possible threats and resulting contingencies to mitigate the impact to attendees.

STAGING GUIDE: Managing the collection of detailed and accurate specs is critical for a successful event. We use proprietary, in-house database to input and distribute event specifications. In addition, SPARGO uses Smart Draw to prepare to-scale floor plans for meeting rooms and event spaces not covered by the overall GSC floor plan or an audiovisual floor plan.

We review detailed function sheets and corresponding floor plans with the necessary stakeholders at AAG. Upon approval of all function sheets, we distribute a complete staging guide or function book to facilities and vendors. SPARGO's standard is to distribute the initial staging guide between 4-6 weeks before the first move-in day of each event. In addition, our database allows our team to input updates to various functions and distribute a weekly change report to facilities and vendors.

Vendor Management

Approach

- Request for Proposal
- Contract Negotiation
- Kick-Off Meeting
- Budgeting Updates
- Site Visits
- Regular Communication
- Final Production Meeting
- On-Site Collaboration
- Post-Show Debrief

Successful meetings are not possible without great partnerships with best-in-class meeting facilities and industry vendors.

SPARGO prides itself on its strong collaboration and communication with vendors across every industry, product, and service offering. We do not accept any commissions, kickbacks, or rebates from vendors. All savings obtained through the RFP process and strong contract negotiations are passed directly on to our clients.

Vendors receive critical information early and often. We hold regular status meetings and conference calls throughout the planning process. In addition, we conduct a final production meeting to run through the entire move-in to move out schedule to ensure all moving parts have been identified, reviewed and confirmed. Furthermore, vendors have real-time access to key planning documents throughout the planning process.

Post-show debrief meetings are conducted with all vendors to discuss lessons learned and suggestions for improvement for the next year's event.

"It's been such a wonderful opportunity to work with a great team and wonderful team leader. I really respect and admire the way you run the show and lead the staff & vendors. Looking forward to another great year."

Venue and Vendor Relationships

Below is a small sampling of the venues and vendors we have extensive experience with. SPARGO has also coordinated and executed events in every major U.S. convention center. These venues and vendors are familiar with our approach, which allows for a seamless transition during the onboarding phase with new clients. We have also reduced operational costs, increased revenues, and reduced the number of third-party providers required to produce their events for many of our clients.

Hotel Brands

ACCOR
CENTARA HOTELS & RESORTS
Hilton HOTELS & RESORTS
HYATT
IHG HOTELS & RESORTS
Kempinski HOTELIERS SINCE 1897
Marriott INTERNATIONAL
OMNI HOTELS & RESORTS

Industry Vendors

aramark
Centerplate
CLEAR
encore
EVENTFORCE CONFERENCE AND EVENT STAFFING
Event Transportation Systems We go where you go.
Freeman
GLOBALCONNECTIONS, LLC
GES
INA
KUSHNER & ASSOCIATES Meeting and Convention Transportation
Levy
RA CONSULTING
SafeEXPO WHERE EVENTS & SAFETY MEET™
Shepard
showNets Custom Internet Solutions

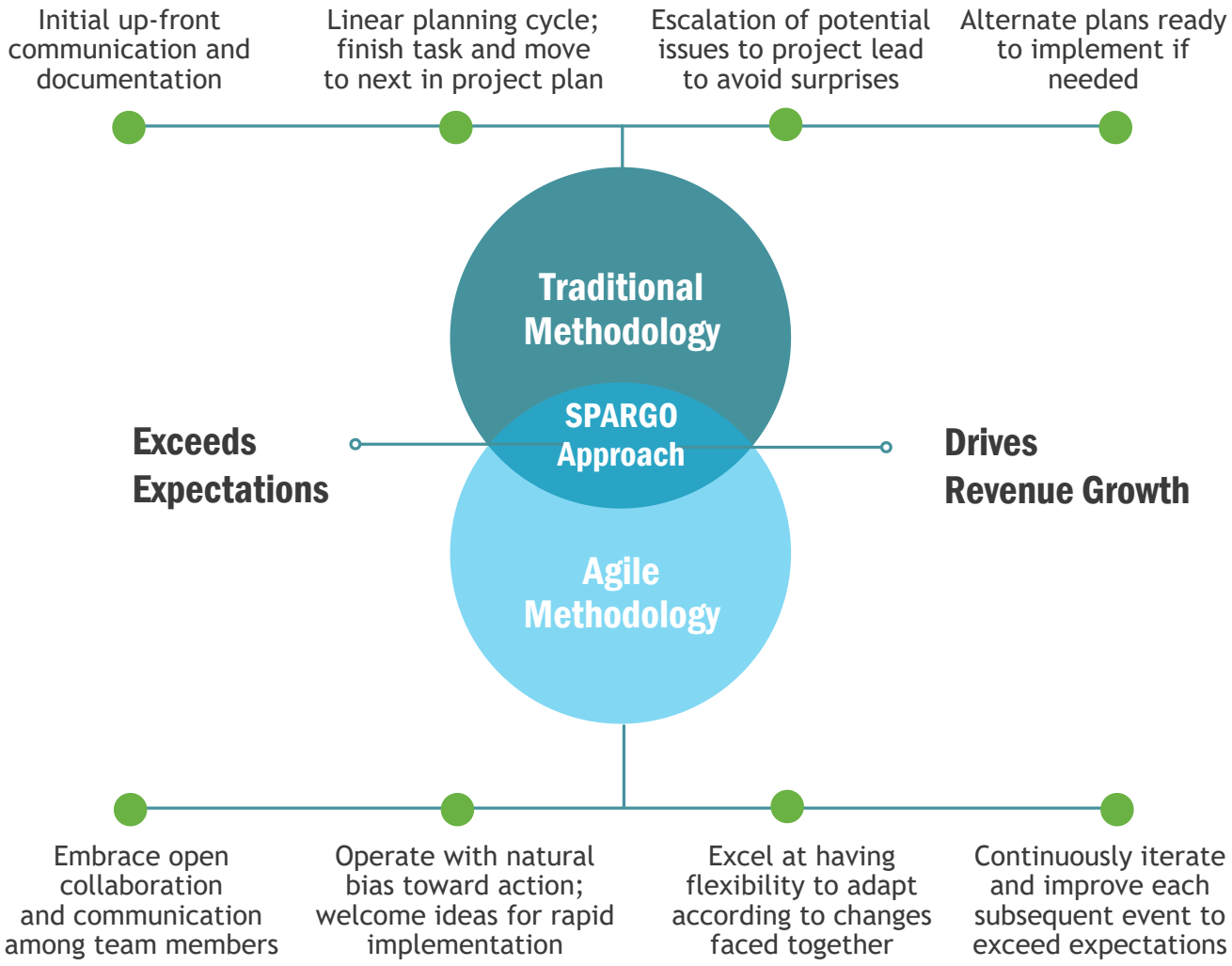
STEP FOUR:

Review

Our goal is to be an extension of your staff. We hold regular status meetings with clients to review the project plan status. Our project management tools allow for in-app communication to reduce the volume of emails while retaining a central repository for event communications.

These tools mean you know exactly where things stand at all times. Our understanding of project management methodologies ensures that the overall timelines, task durations, dependencies, and key milestones are accurate and appropriate for your events. We also believe embracing elements of an agile ideology leads to successful events that exceed expectations and drive revenue growth.

SPARGO'S PROJECT MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY



STEP FIVE:

Go Time

It's now time to execute a successful in-person AAG event! While the bulk of this phase occurs at the event, we begin this step with one crucial final planning meeting.

THE PRODUCTION MEETING

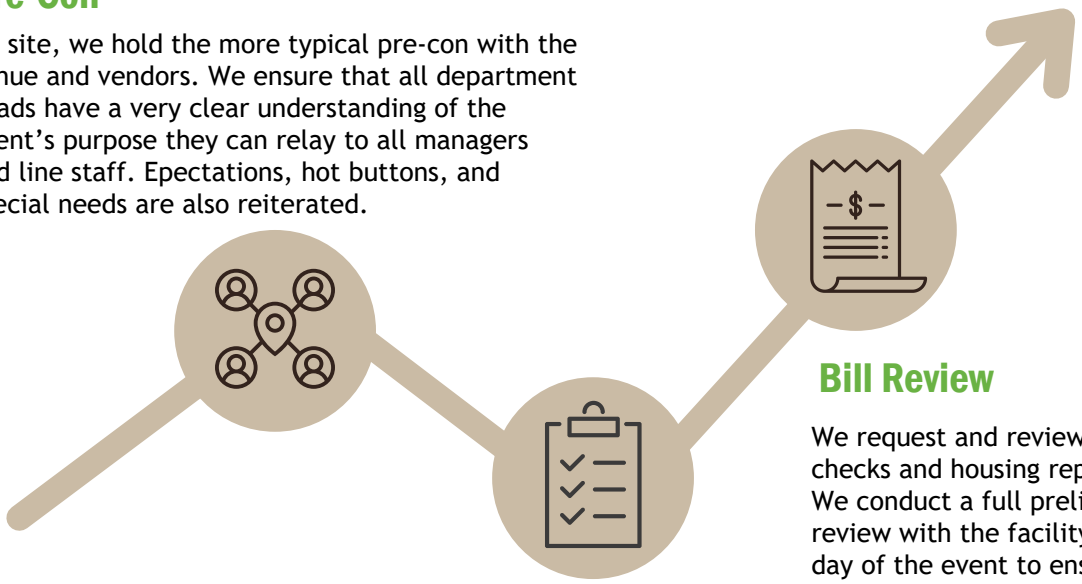
The traditional pre-con may be too late to address major challenges. We hold an advanced pre-con, or what we call a Production Meeting, typically 2-4 weeks before an event to review all specs and production schedules in detail with all key players.

By holding this meeting, we have successfully avoided numerous challenges that would have been difficult to overcome on site. This meeting also reveals the level of attention we need to apply to each vendor in the final remaining weeks leading up to the event. Invariably, we have worked with vendors who are on top of every little detail and others with whom we ensure constant follow-up occurs to ensure a flawless event.

ON SITE EVENT EXECUTION

Pre-Con

On site, we hold the more typical pre-con with the venue and vendors. We ensure that all department heads have a very clear understanding of the event's purpose they can relay to all managers and line staff. Epectations, hot buttons, and special needs are also reiterated.



Daily Meetings & Walkthroughs

We lead daily meetings on site with key staff and vendors to ensure all challenges are resolved efficiently. We also review the next day's major elements to ensure everyone is on the same page.

We also routinely walk the event spaces and rooms, during move-in and event days, addressing necessary items to ensure the attendee experience is stellar.

Bill Review

We request and review banquet checks and housing reports daily. We conduct a full preliminary bill review with the facility on the last day of the event to ensure discrepancies can are resolved immediately.

We also distribute thank you cards and gratuities, if approved by the client.

STEP SIX:

Optimize

We aren't done once event concludes. We like to conduct debriefs as soon as feasible while information and details are still fresh in everyone's minds. Further, we ensure each invoice is reviewed, reconciled and coded in accordance with each client's budget and accounting systems. Lastly, we prepare a post-event report to guide planning for the next event. This final step is how we optimize and improve events year over year.

DEBRIEFS

We believe debriefing after each event is critical for improvement. We hold debriefs with internal staff, client staff and vendors to capture feedback from all sources on what worked and what could be improved. A debrief report is prepared and referenced throughout the next planning cycle to ensure improvements are incorporated.

INVOICE RECONCILIATION

We review each invoice for accuracy and work with venues and vendors to resolve any discrepancies.

Finally, we reconcile and code all expenses against the budget before submitting to client for payment.

POST-EVENT REPORT

A post-event report including metrics that demonstrate a clear ROI along with a final line-item budget vs. actual expenditure are submitted to close out the event.

We also review event evaluations and attendee behavioral data to better inform our planning decisions in the next cycle.

We work with clients to analyze their current meeting planning functions and make recommendations to streamline planning and spend efficiencies.