

Corporate Events vs Public Events: 5 Major Differences



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Have you ever wondered what the key differences between corporate and private events are? The term 'corporate event' covers a wide range of events such as team-building events, networking events, incentive events, national meetings, and end-of-year parties that are generally within a company. Public events, as the name suggests, are open for members of the public to attend and generally require a fee or at least a registration of attendance. Popular types of public events include conventions, lectures, and trade shows (which may also be attended by employees of various corporations). But what are the 5 major differences between the two types of events, and how do these differences affect planning?

Marketing is more important for public events

[Marketing](#) will look very different for corporate and public events. If marketing for a corporate event is necessary, the advertising will usually only be displayed within the company. If an event is only for employees of a company or their clients, a simple card or email of invitation to the people on the guest list may be the only marketing required.

Marketing is often more extensive if the event is public. Marketers will usually create more tailored advertising on multiple platforms to reach their target audience. Therefore, the marketing budget for a public event will often be much higher than for a corporate event.

Corporate events are limited to specific guests

Corporate event guests are usually the employees or clients of the company in question, while public events are usually open to anyone who buys a ticket or registers. Event planners must ensure they reach their target audience when advertising a public event – nobody wants to invest their time and money into planning an event that ends up being cancelled when not enough tickets are sold.

Funding comes from different sources

Companies usually fund corporate events out of their own budget, while public events are mainly funded by ticketing and [sponsorship](#). Corporate events sometimes rely on sponsorship, too, depending on the type of event.

Venues are always important

Choosing the right [venue](#) is very important, whether you are managing a corporate event or a private event. People in charge of organising a place to hold an event must think carefully about factors such as how many guests will attend, how much light they will need, or whether the event will need

to provide amenities such as WiFi.

A beautiful venue can do wonders for the enjoyment of the people attending an event. Organisers of corporate events may be less concerned with aesthetics and more with function, while organisers of public events – who must sell the importance of their event to outsiders – may be more interested in how sleek and attractive a venue looks. Regardless of the type of event, organisers must set aside enough time and resources to find the best venue to match the tone of the event.

Planning time may vary

Smaller corporate events may be more straightforward to plan than public events, since organisers usually already have a solid idea about who will be attending and because their budget probably won't rely on sponsorship or ticket sales. There isn't a hard-and-fast rule: sometimes corporate events involve even more planning than public events. However, when planning corporate events, planners will need to take into account the company culture as well as the age ranges of the employees and clients invited, to ensure the event is a success.

Sponsorship Acquisition for Festivals and Events – A Tactical Guide

For anyone that has worked in the festival and event industry, it's quickly apparent that one of the most important elements keeping festivals alive is the amount of sponsorship dollars

they are able to pull in. It's not an easy job, and newer festivals have more of an uphill battle in convincing potential sponsors to invest money or in-kind trades into an unproven entity. Being successful at landing sponsorships requires a skilled balance of tenacity, delicacy, honesty, vision, and a bit of luck.



To help those starting out in this world, [The Sponsorship Collective](#), a Canadian company based in Ottawa, has generously [created a free guide](#) for those looking to source sponsorship revenue for their event or festival. This guide includes the following:

- Sponsorship Proposal Template
- 34-Point Sponsorship Checklist
- Sponsorship Valuation Template
- Valuation Checklist
- Fulfillment Report Template
- Discovery Questions
- Email Templates to Get the Meeting
- Valuation Infographic
- The Sponsorship Journey Infographic

The Sponsorship Collective also has [free webinars](#) that you can sign up for to gain even more insight and useful tips on all thing sponsorship.

In addition to the above, they wrote an excellent article about the “[Seven Deadly Sins of Sponsorship](#)”, which talks about the pratfalls of in-kind sponsorships vs cash deal, not understanding the sponsorship sales cycle, and the importance of a sponsorship activation budget.

Of course, don't forget to also check out our own FEP [Sponsorship Guide](#) that includes downloads to sponsorship deck examples from other festivals along with additional tips and strategies.

One final point that all festivals and events should abide by – **NEVER rely on sponsorship sales (or, worse, the projection of future sponsorship sales that aren't confirmed) to pay for your event.** Always have enough cash onhand to pay all of your expenses regardless of what sponsorship revenue you acquire. Same goes for trying to pay for your expenses with ticket sales that may or may not be enough to cover all of your costs. Producers who do not heed this advice often end up not able to pay their bills, all but ensuring the event or festival will be cancelled (and perhaps some legal action as well).

Armed with all of this new information, you should be in a fantastic position to properly acquire sponsorships; if any of you have success stories as a result of these guides, please post in the comments.



Sometimes, all it takes for a successful sponsorship activation is just giving your guests a place to lay around.