

How to Budget for an Event

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The amount budgeted for an event drives every aspect of planning. Since Skyline has planned and produced all types of events for over 25 years, we have a comprehensive event-planning checklist. This enables us to project the cost of all event elements for our clients. We offer you these guidelines necessary to begin the budgeting process. It will assist you in developing your own event checklists.

Skyline begins the budgeting process with a detailed analysis of the client's requirements, whether planning a citywide public event for thousands or a small fundraiser for your child's school. Determine the following critical elements that will impact each other and related costs:

1. **Date** (The day of the week and time selected will often impact charges.)
2. **Number of projected attendees** (The number of guests is a major cost factor.)
3. **Venue requirements** (Consider site location, room size, lighting, audio/visual requirements.)
4. **Event goal or purpose** (For businesses, define if the event is part of the marketing strategy such as a product launch or a building dedication, an awards dinner, board meeting or a social get-together for clients or employees.)
5. **Theme** (This is often a consideration for both private social events and corporate functions to add fun and excitement, such as Western, New Orleans, Las Vegas, Black and White, etc.)
6. **Style** (The tone or mood will be determined by a business style, casual, formal or theme.)
7. **Menu** (Determine the type of food service - a plated dinner, buffet or cocktails and hors d'oeuvres; combination)
8. **Media requirements** (A business program may require screens, projection equipment, microphones, etc.)
9. **Entertainment** (This can be a major element, for ambience or geared to a theme.)
10. **Design elements** (Determine your most important event design elements which may be the venue, theme, food, décor, entertainment or other.)
11. **Details** (This could include invitations, gifts, premiums, centerpieces, flowers, etc.)
12. **Logistics and services** (This could include valet parking, coat check, security, production services, other.)

Skyline works with our clients regarding all these event elements, as required. The more we know about needs and expectations, the better we can advise our clients on a range of prices they can expect to pay. We also work diligently to deliver the best value by determining which elements are most important and where compromises can be made without sacrificing the success of the event.

We help our clients prioritize these elements. Some clients have a pre-determined budget and others look to us to provide a price range based on their prioritized list. For some clients, food is the most important issue. Others are seeking a special décor and entertainment package - the look is the thing! Once preferences are determined, Skyline drafts a line-item cost analysis based on "must haves" and "wish list items". We can then develop a basic package, a mid-range event package and a high-end event for their consideration.

Once our client agrees on the details and related confirmed budget, we go to work to deliver an event that not only meets, but also often exceeds their expectations. We are privileged to have so many repeat clients and always look forward to working with new people for both business and social events.

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