

The Event Planning Glossary:

Top Acronyms, Terms and
Lingo from A to Z

100+
Entries!



The meetings industry is filled with acronyms, abbreviations, and terminology. While shorthand can save time, it can also leave professionals feeling excluded if they do not know the meaning of a term or phrase.

We want to empower every event professional to participate in meaningful conversations and speak the language of event planning. This glossary is filled with terms, acronyms, lingo, and catchphrases to help you level up your professional game — one acronym at a time.

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Common Event Planning Terms and Phrases

Ready to master your event management terms? Keep reading to find our A-to-Z list of conference terminology, event planning vocabulary, catering terms, and everything in between.



Air Walls

Air walls, also known as convention center partitions, are portable panels used to divide an open space into smaller sections. Air walls are useful for creating temporary meeting rooms within a convention hall.

ADAAG

"Americans with Disabilities Act" Accessibility Guidelines

Requirements and regulations, as stated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), that ensure ease of access for people with disabilities. All public events are legally obligated to meet ADA requirements.

APEX

Accepted Practices Exchange

An initiative by the Convention Industry Council (CIC) that develops and implements voluntarily accepted practices that enhance efficiencies at meetings, conventions, and exhibitions.

Attrition Penalty

A charge from a hotel if an event or conference uses fewer hotel rooms than were reserved in the signed contract.

A/V

Audio/Visual

An encompassing term for technology used to display video, images and/or broadcast audio at an event.

AR

Augmented Reality

The concept of adding to or expanding the real-world experience through immersive technology (i.e. mobile app, computer-generated graphics, or wearable smart glasses). AR projects images that attendees can see in the real world, and assists with gamification, experiential marketing, and digital wayfinding at conferences.

B2B Event Marketing

Business-to-Business Event Marketing

A marketing strategy that uses events to facilitate business relationships between manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers. B2B events help businesses explore solutions, improve customer retention, increase event revenue, promote sales, and boost brand awareness.

B2C Event Marketing

Business-to-Consumer Event Marketing

An event marketing strategy where exhibitors will showcase products and services directly to potential buyers. Attendees of B2C shows (also known as consumer shows) come to interact with brands, discover new products, and shop while on-site.

Banquet Captain

The lead person responsible for supervising the staff, operations, and guests of banquet experiences at hotels, conferences, and special events.

BEO

Banquet Event Order

A guiding document used by hotels and event professionals to outline event details. Like a mini-contract, a BEO serves as a guideline to help event teams execute and communicate key logistics. A BEO may be used to describe a planner's use of meeting space and banquet services.

B/L

Bill of Lading

A contract issued by a carrier to a shipper that covers the type, quantity, and destination of the goods being carried. It is a receipt for shipped goods and can help prevent asset theft.



C

CAD

Computer-Aided Design

A process that uses software to design the layout of an event. CAD eliminates the guesswork of figuring out the perfect configuration for your event. Event professionals use CAD software like Allseated or Social Tables to decide where to place tables, chairs, staging, dance floors, bars, furniture, audio/visual equipment, food and beverage, and decorations.

Certificate

A document that shows you have completed a specialized course with an educational program. Not all event planning certificates are recognized by the industry, but most will supplement your existing knowledge and help you explore niche topics.

Certification

An industry-recognized credential from a professional association. Event planning certifications are granted after passing a standardized exam and may result in a designation after one's name (i.e., CMP, CMM, DES, etc.)

CRM

Customer Relationship Management

A system that helps businesses manage customer data, information, and relationships. Event professionals can use CRM software to gather attendee analytics, pinpoint trends, see event performance metrics in real-time, and track attendee engagement.

CRS

Central Reservation System

A reservation system used by hotels, restaurants and large event venues to store reservation information. A CRS can also make reservations, share information on availability, track rates, and handle upgrades.

CSM

Convention Services Manager

A job title that describes a venue employee who is assigned to and works with event professionals.

CVB

Convention and Visitors Bureau

A destination marketing organization that promotes travel to a particular area. CVBs work to create awareness, promote tourism, generate revenue, and encourage overnight lodging for a destination. A CVB might also be called a travel bureau, visitors' bureaus, welcome center, tourism bureau, or information center.

D

D2C

Direct-to-Consumer

The business process where a brand manufactures, markets and/or distributes its own products. In events, a D2C brand might participate in a consumer show to distribute products directly to consumers.

DE&I

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The concept of making an event more welcoming and inclusive for all attendees, particularly those who come from a less privileged background. Event professionals can use DE&I initiatives to maintain Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, increase their bottom line, and create a more equitable event experience.

DMC

Destination Management Company

A third-party firm that helps corporate event planners coordinate out-of-town event programs. DMCs provide insight into destination spots and provide professional services to make travel experiences work for event professionals and attendees alike.



E

EAP

Emergency Action Plan

A formally written document that identifies potential emergency conditions at events and creates procedures to minimize or prevent loss. Emergency action plans increase guest safety, reduce the likelihood of injury, and prevent property damage in case of an unplanned situation like a fire, natural gas leak, life-threatening situation, violent incident, medical emergency, or other scenarios.

EDT

Estimated Departure Time

The time when a person, group of people, vendor, supplier, or item is expected to depart from a certain location.

EMS

Event Management Software

A wide range of software products that enable event organizers to manage event-related activity. An EMS can be used to streamline an event's lifecycle, promote events, improve the attendee experience, and measure event performance analytics.

ETA

Estimated Time of Arrival

The time when a person, group of people, vendor, supplier, or item is expected to arrive at a certain place. ETAs can be included in event plans to decrease confusion.

F

F&B

Food & Beverage

A term that encompasses preparing, presenting, and serving food and beverages to event attendees. Anything being consumed by guests will be listed in the Banquet Event Order (see "BEO").

FAM Trip

Familiarization Trip

A trip that lets event professionals learn more about a destination, hotels, services, and offerings. Typically hosted by a city, visitors bureau, or supplier, a familiarization trip helps event managers gain a better understanding of how their events would work before proposing ideas to clients.

Floor Order

An order for additional services after a trade show installation has begun. A floor order usually calls for exhibitor items like electricity plug-ins, Wi-Fi, or furniture rentals.

Floor Plan

A custom layout that shows the size, location, and components of exhibitor space. For instance, an event floor plan may show measurements of the room, windows, doors, fixed furniture, tables, chairs, power outlets, designated areas, and more.

Force Majeure Clause

A common clause in a contract that explains what would happen if a natural disaster or 'Act of God' were to prevent an event venue from following through with a contract. Flooding, fire, rioting, or war are examples of force majeure events that might prevent a venue from upholding its side of the contract. The force majeure clause protects both the event company and venue, since these situations would let both parties off the hook.

G

Group Resume

Information for an event venue's internal team that describes who will attend an event. A group resume may include the type of group, why the event is being held, notable demographics, arrival and departure details, special accommodations, and more.



I

I&D

Installation and Dismantle

The process of setting up and tearing down components of an exhibit at a trade show, conference, or event.

K

Keynote

A headline speaker or presenter at an event. Keynote speakers are often used to kick off events and inspire event attendees. Their appearance can also be used as an event marketing tactic to encourage more event registrations.

L

Livestream

Online event footage that is sent over the Internet in real time, without first being recorded and stored. Live streaming an event is a great way to let attendees watch and participate in activities in real-time.

Load In

A window of time when exhibitors can set up their booth, install equipment, test audio/visual equipment, make last-minute floor orders, and more.

Loadout

A window of time when exhibitors can break down their booths, prepare equipment for shipping and exit the venue. Loadout can also be referred to as "breakdown" or "strike."

M

MICE

Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions

An acronym used in the meetings, hotel, and travel industry to refer to meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions. The terms "meetings industry" and "events industry" have gained popularity over the MICE acronym.

Micro Event

Short, custom-tailored experiences that provide value to an organization's target audiences. A typical micro-event takes place live (either in person or online), costs little-to-no money, and lasts no more than one and a half hours.

P

Pipe and Drape

Adjustable pipes (aluminum or steel) that are connected, draped with fabric, and supported by a weighted steel base. Pipe and drape is used for event backdrops, decoration, or vendor booths at conventions.

Post-Con

Post-convention [Meeting]

A meeting between an event planning team, venue, and contractors to discuss the successes and challenges of an event after it concludes. This can be held in person the day after the event or via phone, typically within a week.

Pre-Con

Pre-convention [Meeting]

The meeting between an event planning team and Convention Services Manager (CSM) to discuss the Banquet Event Order (BEO), food and beverage (F&B), audio/visual (A/V), and group resume prior to guests arriving.



R

RFP

Request for Proposal

A document that outlines and identifies the needs of an event, typically sent to event venues and contractors that may be interested in bidding on providing services and/or the space.

RFQ

Request for Quote

A document that details pricing options for a service or product. In event management, an RFQ is used during the procurement process and allows planners to properly evaluate all solutions based on price, terms, and product details.

Room Block

A reservation for 10+ hotel rooms. Room blocks not only save time and money, but also help ensure attendees have a place to stay during a conference, expo, or event. On average, group rates are 15% to 40% lower than standard hotel rates.

Room Night

The number of nights a single hotel room is occupied by a guest. For instance, a guest checking in on Monday night and checking out on Friday morning uses the same room for four room nights. This term is helpful when working with host hotels and booking room blocks.

S

Satellite Event

One event that's hosted in multiple locations or venues, giving attendees the flexibility to participate in event programming simultaneously, no matter their location. Satellite events use multi-room broadcasting and video conferencing technology to connect attendees with those from other locations.

Seasons (Low, Shoulder, High)

The different times of year on which a hotel bases their room rates. Seasons are largely based on the hotel's historical occupancy, with low seasons meaning low room rates, shoulder season meaning average room rates, and high season meaning high room rates.

Site Visit

A trip to an event venue to see the space, typically done prior to signing a contract. Depending on the event team's needs, site visits can occur as early as a year or as late as a month before an event's date.

U

ULC

Universal Lead Capture

A mobile application that enables exhibitors to gather attendee information and sales leads with a single, consistent application. Universal lead capture apps eliminate the need to manually transcribe business cards or rent lead-scan devices at exhibitions.

V

Virtual Event

An online event that allows event organizers, speakers, attendees, and sponsors to interact within an online environment rather than an in-person environment. Virtual events empower attendees to join and participate from anywhere in the world if they have access to the Internet.

VR

Virtual Reality

A type of event technology that uses a control system (and sometimes a headset) to let attendees enter a virtual world. Virtual reality is an immersive experience that uses a simulated world to keep attendees engaged.



Event Certification and Designation Acronyms

Earning an event planning designation is the perfect way to access new job opportunities, impress clients, and gain knowledge that produces measurable results. But what's the difference between the CMP, CSEP, and CMM? Here's a list of event planning certification acronyms to help you learn the difference.



CAE

Certified Association Executive

An association management credential that certifies professionals who demonstrate the wide range of knowledge needed to properly manage an association.

CDME

Certified Destination Management Executive

A certification that prepares senior executives in the destination and tourism industry to approach challenges from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

CED

Certified Event Designer

A certificate earned from a 3-day program that teaches event professionals how to create compelling events through event design best practices.

CEM

Certified in Exhibition Management

A designation that is globally recognized as the highest professional standard for exhibition and event management. This program is backed by the International Association of Exhibitions and Events (IAEE).

CMM

Certificate in Meeting Management

A training program that focuses on business management skills in the events industry. This program is backed by Meeting Professionals International (MPI) and the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA).

CMP

Certified Meeting Professional

One of the most well-known and globally recognizes marks of excellence in the meetings industry. The CMP program is hosted by the Events Industry Council.

CPCE

Certified Professional in Catering and Events

A nationally recognized program designed with catering and event professionals in mind. This program includes eight core competencies including accounting, beverage management, catering services, contracts, food production, event management, HR, and sales/marketing.

CSEP

Certified Special Events Professional

A designation that recognizes event professionals who demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to perform special events. This designation is endorsed by the International Live Events Association (ILEA).

CTSM

Certified Trade Show Marketer

A program designed by Exhibitor Magazine to enable event professionals to elevate their mastery of trade shows and corporate event marketing. This program is self-paced to allow busy professionals to earn their certification on their own time.

DES

Digital Event Strategist

A designation that enables event professionals to host successful, engaging online events. This program by PCMA teaches participants how to reach untapped audiences, monetize digital events, create hybrid event sponsorship strategies, and create engaging online experiences.

VEMM

Virtual Event & Meeting Management

A certificate offered in partnership with Meeting Professionals International (MPI) that gives meeting management professionals the skills needed to plan and execute live, virtual, and hybrid events.



Event Organizations and Associations Acronyms

Most event professionals already know of organizations like MPI and PCMA, but it's never a bad idea to familiarize yourself with other association acronyms. Read on to find a comprehensive list of notable event planning associations, plus their acronyms.



ACCED-I

The Association of Collegiate Conference and Events Directors International

An organization that caters to event professionals who plan collegiate conferences and events.

ADMEI

Association of Destination Management Executives International

A premier association for the destination management company (DMC) industry. ADMEI also provides certifications and accreditations to professionals and organizations.

AEP

Academic Event Professional

A conference that shares best practices for honing professional event skills in an educational environment.

AMPs

Association of Meeting Professionals

A non-profit association focused on the educational and professional needs of those in the meeting management industry, delivering educational and networking programs to hundreds of planners and service provider members.

APA

American Planning Association

An association that elevates and unites the planning profession for event planners at every stage of their careers.

ASAE

American Society of Association Executives

A leading organization for association management that represents almost every sector of the economy.

CEMA

Corporate Event Marketing Association

An association that helps develop and support the skills of senior-level corporate event marketers.

EIC

Events Industry Council

A global voice in the events industry that works to promote high standards and professionalism. The EIC offers the CMP credential, a globally recognized badge of excellence in the events industry.

ESPA

Event Service Professionals Association

An association that offers education and networking to event service professionals at hotels, convention centers, visitors' bureaus and tourism bureaus.

GBTA

Global Business Travel Association

The world's largest professional association representing the business travel industry.

GMIC

Green Meeting Industry Council

A council dedicated to improving corporate event sustainability through education, outreach, and support.

IACC

International Association of Conference Centers

An association created for event professionals, venue managers, vendors, hospitality faculty, and certified management companies.



IAEE

International Association of Exhibitions and Events

An association for the exhibition industry that brings professional development and exhibition best practices.

IAVM

International Association of Venue Managers

An association for managers and senior executives of event venues, auditoriums, arenas, convention centers, stadiums, exhibit halls, performing arts centers, amphitheaters, and university complexes.

ICCA

International Congress and Convention Association

An association for event professionals and suppliers who handle large scale, global events.

IFEA

International Festivals and Events Association

A non-profit organization that provides festival and event professionals worldwide with education, certification, resources, contacts, programming, benefits, and support.

ILEA

International Live Events Association

A global association that caters to planners, producers, live event suppliers, business owners, and emerging event professionals.

MIA

Meetings Industry Association

The principal association supporting the business meetings and events industry in the UK. MIA is the keeper of AIM, the UK's only recognized quality standard for the meetings industry.

MPI

Meeting Professionals International

The largest meeting and event planning association in the world, focusing on business best practices and high-level education for members.

NACE

The National Association for Catering and Events

An organization that offers professional networking opportunities for catering and event professionals.

NCBMP

National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals

A non-profit organization that works to enhance the professional status of African American association executives and meeting professionals through educational opportunities and training.

PCMA

Professional Convention Management Association

A key association for any professional who plans, executes or partners with conventions to create live events.

SGMP

Society of Government Meeting Professionals

A society that seeks to enhance and promote the expertise of government meeting professionals through education, CGMP certification, resources, and networking, as well as awards for exceptional planners, suppliers, and partners.

WIPA

Wedding International Professionals Association

An association for wedding planners, officiants, hoteliers, and other wedding industry professionals.



Event Presentation and Breakout Session Types

There's no limit to the fun and creativity you can have with conference presentations. Provide attendees with the best breakout session experience possible by understanding the difference between popular presentation types.



Birds of a Feather

A small, informal gathering designed to identify commonalities, build networks, and explore ideas.

Braindates

A networking discussion where two people are matched together to discuss a topic of shared interest.

Debate

A moderated discussion where two or more debaters discuss differing viewpoints on a given topic.

Demonstration

A visual presentation that physically shows how to use or apply a concept, tool, product or item.

Expert Lecture

A formal presentation given by an expert who shares concepts, methodologies, and industry innovations.

Expert Panel

A formal presentation featuring multiple experts on one overarching topic.

Fireside Chat

An 20-minute, informal presentation between a facilitator and speaker who invite questions from the audience.

Keynote Presentation

A headline presenter used to kick off events, inspire event attendees, and encourage more event registrations.

Live Polling

A session that uses mobile apps to collect votes, share opinions, and provide anonymous perspectives on a topic.

Pecha Kucha

A rapid presentation that changes slides every 20 seconds to expose attendees to a range of topics in quick succession.

Poster Presentation

A visual presentation style that uses posters to display information. Posters may be judged and ranked by a jury.

Roundtable Discussion

A small group discussion where ideas are equally exchanged by participants on a given topic.

Soapbox

A presentation that grants individuals a short amount of time on stage to present on a topic that is important to them.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

A breakout session that brings attendees together to discuss and explore a shared interest or topic.

Think Tank

A small group discussion ending in the opportunity to reconvene, discuss ideas, and increase understanding of a topic.

Workshop

An interactive experience that focuses on teaching a specific skill, concept, or idea through hands-on activities.





pc/nametag: Your Partner in Planning

Hello, planner! We're pc/nametag, and we're excited to meet you. If you're like us, there's nothing you love more than seeing an event come to life, and we're here to help you transform your vision into reality.

We are passionate about helping our customers create memorable experiences that bring people together. Here are just a few of the many ways our team can help you reclaim time in your day, increase efficiency, boost return on investment, and improve attendee satisfaction:

Same-day Shipping on In-stock Products:

Explore hundreds of in-stock products, many of which ship the same day you order them. This way, you'll always have a great selection of supplies on hand for your events.

Online Product Customization Tools:

We want you to have confidence in your purchase! From lanyards to badge ribbons, experiment with our online customization tools to see exactly how your product will look like before you buy.

Custom Badge Printing Services:

Save time and money with Name Badges to Go®, a pc/nametag-exclusive service that eliminates the need to prepare your own name badges for meetings, events, festivals and more. We'll do the coordination, printing, assembly, organization, and packaging for you. Then, ship your order directly to you anywhere in the world.

[Explore Name Badges to Go](#)

Free Tools, Resources, and Insight:

tag/talk, our weekly blog, fuels curiosity by covering the latest industry trends, tips, tricks, stories, and advice you won't want to miss. Plus, you'll gain access to free ebooks, guides, checklists, cheat sheets and more, sent straight to your inbox.

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