


THE ULTIMATE *checklist* FOR SITE VISITS



Having the right size rooms or a good location isn't enough to guarantee a venue is right for your event. Make sure you overlook nothing, with this comprehensive checklist for venue site visits.

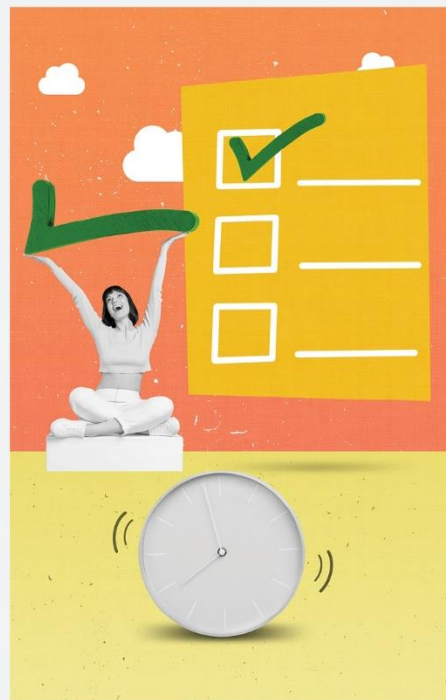
Once you've found what looks to be the perfect venue in these pages, which can accommodate your anticipated attendee numbers and dates, you'll need to arrange an in-person site visit to check first-hand that it meets all your requirements, and possibly to discover any extra benefits or limitations that are useful to know. Using a checklist is a useful way to make sure you cover everything you need to, and to gather information in a uniform way – making it easier to compare venues if it comes to this.

TOP TIP: Ellen Oosthuizen, chairperson of the PCO Alliance Network, also recommends you find recent online reviews of the venue. This will give you a good sense of the level of service and guest experience, and any potential problems to investigate during your site visit. 

SITE VISIT CHECKLIST

Don't forget to have a camera or fully charged phone for taking photos, as well as a notebook, tape measure, and this checklist. Also confirm beforehand which areas and services you would like to see.

Note: Not all these checklist items will be relevant to every event. Pick and choose as appropriate.



YOUR IMPRESSIONS

- Accessibility of the venue from airport/city/accommodation (note road conditions and travel times)
- Aesthetics and upkeep of the property
- Staff friendliness, helpfulness, knowledge and professionalism from arrival to departure

GENERAL

- Venue rates
- Any taxes or hidden fees that could affect you
- Deposit requirement and date
- Cancellation policy
- Penalties for late payment/attrition
- Health and safety compliance
- Any security concerns
- Evacuation procedure
- Medics on-site or closest hospital/clinic
- Level of insurance coverage for events on the premises
- Backup power availability, and cost
- Generator service record
- Backup water supply
- Accessibility (e.g. wheelchair access to all areas your event will use)
- Availability and cost of parking
- Planned construction for your dates - if any
- Other events booked for your dates - and their possible impact on your event
- Where event branding and directional signage are allowed, and cost

- If the venue will help to market your event, and how
- Nearby attractions and activities for attendees
- Whether there is a courtesy bus or preferred supplier for transport
- Query any concerning issues that came up in the online reviews

Also request some references for similar events to the one you are planning, so you can follow up with them about their experience at the venue in question.

VENUE

- How do attendees reach the venue/s?
- Where can registration be set up?
- Where will refreshment breaks be served?
- Capacity for the desired seating arrangement
- What tables, chairs and tablecloths are available, at what cost (request to see these)?
- Check door, pillar and power outlet placements
- How is the temperature controlled?
- How is the lighting controlled?
- Acoustics
- Staff availability on the day, dedicated contact person
- Organiser's office, and cost
- Setup times, and cost
- Breakdown times, and cost
- Procedure for courier deliveries pre-event
- Storage space, and cost
- If you are using outdoor areas, confirm a contingency plan for poor weather



STANDS, AUDIOVISUAL & TECH

- How do stand builders and technical crew reach the venue/s, are there loading bays and how easy is access?
- Is rigging allowed and a lift available, at what cost?
- Ceiling height limitations
- Access to floorplans
- Are a stage and podium available, at what cost (request to see these)?
- Is there any AV included with the venue (request to see these)?
- Is additional in-house AV available, at what cost (request to see these)?
- Availability of an in-house technician, and cost
- List of AV vendors, and contacts
- Are you able to bring in external AV suppliers?
- Does the venue have any other tech available to use?

WI-FI

- Is Wi-Fi included, at what speed and reliability, and how do guests access it?
- Is alternative internet connectivity available and reliability, at what cost?
- Is in-house support available for connectivity issues, at what cost?
- List of internet vendors, and contacts
- Can you bring in external suppliers?

FOOD & BEVERAGE

- In-house or specified vendors, and contacts

- Are you able to bring in external vendors?
- Catering for kosher, halaal, vegetarian, vegan, plant-based and allergies, and cost
- Are there any discounts or special packages?
- Minimum numbers
- Deadline for confirming numbers, menus, special diets and needs, procedure and deposit
- Food labels
- Are staff able to answer questions on ingredients?
- Where and when will refreshments be served?
- Service charges

SUSTAINABILITY

- Are you able to share energy use readings for the event?
- Are you able to share water-use readings for the event?
- Is water bottled on-site?
- What waste system is used - such as composting and recycling - how is it managed, and how much waste typically goes to landfill?
- Is excess food donated to charities?
- What can you as the planner do to improve energy and water efficiency, and minimise waste?
- Is the venue involved in social investment projects that you could contribute to?
- What other sustainability advantages are offered?