



RETAIN YOUR RIGHT TO USE AN OUTSIDE AV PARTNER

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT WORKING WITH AN AV PARTNER
INSTEAD OF THE “**IN-HOUSE**” AV COMPANY?

HAVE YOU EVER PAID FEES TO USE AN EXTERNAL **AV PARTNER**
AFTER BOOKING A VENUE?

Every event in the 21st century needs some type of AV. Whether you need sound for a small event, or you’re running a full-fledged production that has thousands of in-person attendees and millions more attending from the comfort of their home, AV is a must-have.

Choosing an AV partner is similar to choosing event essentials like the caterer or venue, although many people overlook this key component to a successful event. If you’ve booked a venue for an event before, you may have learned that many venues have their own “**in-house**” AV company but...

WHAT IF THE “**IN-HOUSE**” AV COMPANY ISN’T YOUR BEST OPTION?

If the venue has an in-house AV company, it’s likely that they will also have stipulations regarding how your company can utilize an external AV partner. As your eyes are glossing over from reading the lengthy contract with your venue of choice, you might miss some clauses for using an outside partner such as:

- Needing in-house supervising staff to oversee production
 - First right of refusal to match and win a bid
 - Being responsible for all fees associated with power and audio patches
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DURING THE **CONTRACT PHASE**, IT’S IMPORTANT THAT YOU, AS
THE CUSTOMER, RETAIN YOUR RIGHT TO **CHOOSE** THE
AV PARTNER THAT BEST FITS YOUR NEEDS.



Unfortunately, it's not uncommon for fees to be disclosed after contracts are signed. Know before you sign so that you are not caught off guard paying astronomical fees for basic AV services. Dare we mention Wi-Fi costs?

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN AVOID **HIDDEN FEES** FOR USING AN EXTERNAL AV PARTNER.

3 EASY TIPS FOR NEGOTIATING A VENUE CONTRACT WITH AV

1. Before you sign the contract, ask about stipulations and fees of the in-house AV company.
2. Kick things off with a request for proposal (RFP) which allows for a clause, like our sample below, that includes the freedom to bring in outside providers.
3. Specify your requirement of no additional fees for external AV services in your RFP.

NOTE: ALL FEES ARE NEGOTIABLE DURING THE CONTRACT STAGE.

“It is in everyone’s interests to ensure that freedom in the market-place is not artificially limited, and that meeting planners and AV companies are able to conduct their business without undue interference from meeting facilities. All customers must be free to choose their AV vendor based on what is best for them.”

**ACCORDING TO ESCA’S
“POSITION PAPER -
FREEDOM OF CHOICE”**



SAMPLE LANGUAGE TO PROTECT YOU

HERE IS A SAMPLE CLAUSE A MEETING PLANNER COULD USE IN THE RFP:

Due to the unique nature of our meeting program format, [Company name] has a partnership with an AV partner that is familiar with our needs. We will plan to utilize their services for much of our audio-visual meeting requirements. They in-turn may rent equipment and/or labor from the in-house company to augment their needs while on-site. When replying to this RFP, please address our requirement to exclude any fees, charges or requirements to [Company name] or to our AV partner such as, but not limited to:

- Penalties or flat rates for contracting with outside partners
- Supervisory labor requirements for load in and/or strike and removal of partner's equipment
- Changes to venue jurisdiction and/or union labor rates post contract execution
- Bandwidth & Wi-Fi expenses will be charged at the same rate as an in-house company
- Standard amenities included with meeting room rental: lights, air conditioning, heat, and standard power outlets

Do not be afraid to lean on your AV partner for advice when you head into negotiations. Their experiences working across multiple venues will be an invaluable resource when it comes to contract language, navigating venue production guidelines, procedures, policies, and terms.
