

ISES EVENTWORLD 2009

—AN INSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT—

5 Things You Need to Know About Production Schedules

Heather Henderson, CSEP, CMP
Cisco



ISES EVENTWORLD 2009

Session Objectives

- Fundamentals of Production Schedules
- Importance in the event process
- Best-practices for implementation
- 5 Keys to Success



ISES EVENTWORLD 2009

Welcome!

- Disciplines – who is here?
- Experience – how long have you been at it?
- Familiarity with Production Schedules?
- Why did they pick me to teach on this topic?



ISES EVENTWORLD 2009



All Photos courtesy of ClickPhotography, 2009





ISES EVENTWORLD 2009



Why are Production Schedules important?

- Ever show up on-site to install the linens only to find out the tables/chairs the event manager was supposed to have ordered...didn't get ordered?
- Or carpet is installed in the Expo Hall prior to internet and power being laid?
- Or the AV company arrives to rig truss and lighting but tables, linens and florals have already been set?



Key: PRODUCTION SCHEDULE!

- Aka On-site Timeline or Action Plan
- "Working document developed to ensure all event stakeholders and participants have a CLEAR understanding of event elements for successful execution"
- Roadmap to a successful event!
- Saves \$\$ and valuable labor time!



Simple but VITAL to Success!

- Effective Client/Supplier relationship
- Key information for all involved
- Ensures seamless event flow (hopefully!)
 - Flexibility a necessity
 - Solution-oriented attitude



Key Things to Know

- The RIGHT detail
- Form follows function
- **One** (1) facilitator/owner
- Clear communication
- Accuracy



1) The RIGHT Detail: The 5 W's:

- Similar to marketing a product
 - Who?
 - What?
 - Where?
 - When?
 - How?



- **WHO** is responsible for the action/task?
 - First & Last
 - Include all contact information in document
- **WHAT** is the action/task?
 - Brief description
 - Clear to ANYONE reading
 - Examples:
 - Caterer arrives with equipment
 - Rental company picks-up tables
 - Remove chairs and place in storage



- **WHERE** is the action/task taking place?
 - Briefly describe placement and/or location of action
 - Examples:
 - Move chairs from Salon A to Salon C
 - Pipe & Drape set in Hall D
 - Internet drops placed per diagram (Exhibit A)
 - Busses staged at pick-up location in South Hall drive



- **WHEN** is the action/task taking place?
 - Several ways to list
 - Examples
 - Start time and list end time later in schedule
 - Start time / end time per action
 - Start time / Duration
 - Date started / date due / completion status



- **HOW** is the action/task taking place?
 - What additional equipment/tools might be needed?
 - Examples
 - Move pallets of rentals from Hall D to storage. Need forklift and operator. See order placed June 2, 2009
 - Be sure additional equipment/labor orders listed prior to the action taking place



2) Form: Timeline & Production Schedule

- Chronological format
 - Scroll list: numerical sequence by date
 - Graphical: Bar chart or calendar
- Style/Format depends on complexity of event
- Schedule will shift from broader calendar perspective to daily and hourly (or even minute)
- Goes from **Timeline** to **Production Schedule** as event nears



2) Form: Production Schedule

- Column format with qualifying factors (who, what, where, when, how, start time/end time)
- Print a variety of ways
 - Use at reg table
 - On clipboard at the receiving doc
 - Enlarged to poster size and mounted in show office
- Form follows function; facilitate effective communications



3) Facilitator/POC

- 1 POC gathers all data and distributes doc
- Fax/Email to all stakeholders for review
- Respond fax/email with approval
- Responsible for incorporating all changes
- Usually on-site contact managing “traffic”



4) Clear Communication

- Initial distribution 3-4 months prior (Draft)
- For updates, schedule should be dated “as of” or “revised”
- **Highlight** revisions from last version
- After multiple revision cycles (it happens), print **FINAL** version on **colored** paper for on-site management/usage



5) Accuracy/Scheduling

- Plan backwards!
- Collect specification data and duration estimates on all event elements
- Determine the interdependencies in the activities
- Establish deadline for each task
- With deadline noted, move backward the amount of time it will take to establish start date or time.



5) Accuracy

- Have a change control process
- Highlight Key Milestones that impact ALL stakeholders/suppliers
 - Doors open; Load-in begins; etc.
- Schedule review cycles/walk-through with stakeholders



Importance in the Event Cycle

- Creative Development
- Coordination/Planning
- **Implementation/Execution**
- Evaluation

Production Schedule is the key to success for implementation/execution



Best Practices

- Use a format that works for you
- Tailor to your specific event/program needs
 - MS Word / MS Excel / WebEx Connect
- Collaborative Workspace/shared drive
- Key Milestones
- Engage stakeholders (suppliers/client/event mgr)
- **Highlight** changes on new versions!



Examples

- Diversity Leadership Program, January 2006
- Henderson/Thomas, April 2007
- Eventworld Hawaii, August 2007
- Cisco Live 2009, June 2009



Sources

- "Professional Event Coordination"
– Julie Rutherford Silver, CSEP
- Cisco Global Meeting Services
- Cisco Corporate Event Marketing
- George P. Johnson



Questions?

- (Hopefully) helpful answers ☺



Thank you!

Heather Henderson, CSEP, CMP
Operations Manager – Cisco Live
Cisco Corporate Event Marketing

ISES Treasurer 2008-09


