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**MATRIC NO.: 16/SMS06/007**

**COURSE CODE: TEM 416**

**COURSE TITLE: EVENTS PLANNING, SALES AND SPONSORSHIP**

**QUESTION 1A**

Fantasyland, Beach Paradise, Snow Kingdom – they’ve all been done! How do top event planners develop unique themes for the world’s top events?

A well-conceptualised event theme can make all the difference to the success of any occasion, whether it is a New Year’s Eve soiree or a corporate conference. Every event’s main purpose is to be unforgettable and the right theme paired with your event’s objectives is sure to create a memorable experience for each guest. The overarching concept you decide on must tie all aspects of the event together – before, during and after – and is the most important part of the planning process.

It may seem like a daunting task to be responsible for creative theme conceptualisation, but a tip from top planners in the business is to follow a strategy of sorts. It is a must if you are to come up with unique ideas one after the other. The unwritten rulebook of event planning urges every planner to keep 5 principles in mind when developing an event theme –

It must alter your guest’s sense of reality It must affect the experience of space, time and matter It must integrate space, time and matter into a cohesive whole It is strengthened by creating multiple places within a place It must fit the character of the enterprise staging the experience

Event themes should be unique, original and authentic in design. Events are created as a form of escapism and themes can be aligned to the fantasy worlds of those attending. While letting your creative juices flow it is important to have regard for cultural sensitivities. Events are staged for a diverse global audience and what is acceptable in one part of the world may not be acceptable in another. It’s a safe bet to stay away from anything religious, political or historically sensitive.

The chosen theme must drive all elements of the experience toward a unified storyline that captivates each guest with the ultimate WOW factor. Every shared detail related to the event must be tied to the theme to ensure consistent messaging to your guests. A well-considered theme can build excitement long before the event takes place. An enticing angle offers the opportunity to create exciting content that is likely to be shared by your intended audience, growing your reach. Unique new themes are interesting and can draw the right crowd.

Implementing the perfect theme, and ultimately hosting a successful event, all comes down to knowing your audience. What do they care about? Who do they identify with? An interesting theme encourages participation and offering a unique experience will ensure your event is remembered for all the right reasons.

It’s always a good idea to stay ahead of the trend and surprise your guests by making a unique connection between the event objective and the chosen theme. For instance, a construction theme can add a creative touch when you are offering training about building team relationships, constructing a new location or launching a new system or department. Be creative, yet logical, when making this connection. If the theme needs to be explained you have missed the mark.

Transforming a meeting space for an all-encompassing theme will make your event more memorable than simply utilising a standard hotel meeting room, but don’t just limit it to one space. Your theme should flow through the entire event, from the moment participants receive their first communication about it until the final follow-up e-mail is sent. It is a meaningful reflection and interpretation of your event’s goals and objectives. It functions as the elevator pitch for your event and helps people understand what your event is trying to accomplish.

Find the right suppliers to make your dream theme a reality with Eventerprise.com, your partner in event planning from start to finish.

**QUESTION 1B**

**Themes Create Buzz**

A well-selected theme can generate buzz and excitement for your attendees. An event theme doesn’t necessarily have to be something never done before. Themes can relate to anything and everything – popular categories include locations, eras, colors, films, and entertainment.

**Event Caterers Can Design Menus Around an Event Theme**

An event theme gives your caterer a starting point when designing your event’s menu. For most events, the food is arguably the most important.

Your caterer can get creative about matching your food to a theme, potentially based on geography, appearance, ingredients, or season. An arrangement of exciting and unique food will not only emphasize your theme but also give your guest something to talk about both during and after the event.

**Event Planners Can Use Event Themes for Decoration and Design**

Planning an event from scratch can be challenging. Event themes give planners information about what type of decor they should invest in. Certain themes lend themselves very well to specific colors, patterns, and decorations. All of this ultimately simplifies the process of planning.

**Themes Create Social Sharing**

When selecting the decor of your themed event, think about creating social media excitement to help guest to promote social sharing during and after the event. The goal in this instance is to use styling, props, and entertainment to generate maximum impact and get people engaging and interacting with the theme.

**Themes Make The Event Memorable**

People generally remember the parties that offer maximum entertainment. Special programs, performances, and the utmost fun associated with these themed events make a pleasant memory. Themed events are a treat to attend, as well as plan.

A theme is not only the creative passion of an event. It is also a meaningful reflection and interpretation of your event’s goals and objectives. It functions as the elevator pitch for your event and helps people understand in a very short period of time what your event is trying to accomplish.

**QUESTION 1C.**

1. [Trello](https://trello.com/)

Trello is a great free app which revolves around adding cards to a shared board, so everyone can see what needs doing, what’s progressing and what has been completed. There is a free plan for individuals, and then a per user fee for pro features and teams.

1. [Basecamp](https://basecamp.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

Slightly less visual than Trello, but arguably more fully-featured and aimed at larger projects and enterprise teams, Basecamp is pretty much the grand-daddy of project management software and its continued success is a testament to how much people love it. You can sign up for 30-day free trial, then pay a flat fee of $90 per month, with no per-user fees.

1. [Google Drive](https://www.google.com/drive/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

This isn’t really a project management system, but then not everyone wants to learn new software of workflows. If you just want a simple place to be able to store your excel sheets, word docs, presentations and photos; and share them with whoever you want without having to email large files, this could be the choice for you.

1. [Slack](https://slack.com/)

Ditch those hours scrolling through team emails and try Slack instead. Organize your team conversations in open channels for a project, a topic, a team, or anything—everyone has a transparent view of all that’s going on. Or, you could create private groups or direct message certain team members. Slack isn’t just for messaging; all your files, images, PDFs, documents, and spreadsheets can be dropped right into Slack and shared with anyone you want, centralize all your assets in one place. You can also search through your archive and find items with ease.

1. [Pocket](https://getpocket.com/)

Pocket is the ‘save it to read later’ app. There’s just so much to read online (yes, this blog included) that you’ll probably always have a reading list of articles you mean to catch up on at some point. Well, rather than bookmark them, or worse, forget about them, you can use Pocket to keep them all in one place, conveniently waiting for when you’re ready to read them. It’s also completely free!

1. [Evernote](https://evernote.com/)

When you have finished reading something from your Pocket, and if you like it, you can keep it for reference in Evernote (they sync directly). However, you can save just about everything in Evernote, from doodles to photos, pdfs to voice recordings. It helps you keep everything organized into notebooks and with tags. Indispensable for anyone who needs to keep track of multiple inputs and ideas each day. It’s also free to use the vast majority of its functionality.

1. [Feedly](https://feedly.com/i/welcome)

Searching for fresh content from one site to another can be highly time-consuming. Thankfully, Feedly exists to save you time and help manage third party content. Search by subject or keywords to find relevant content sources, create a sidebar listing the different subject matters, then add the sources to the relevant tabs. Newsfeeds showing the most recent content from each source will then be displayed for you to scroll through all in one place. You can also save content to read later, or even share with other team members.

1. [Hootsuite](https://hootsuite.com/)

 Most of the best ideas come from your audience and community, so it’s important to have a simple way of keeping track of what they’re talking about, and then ideally to save them straight to Pocket (or Evernote). Hootsuite lets you do this, sorting conversations by topic (via hashtags or keywords), by followers or by lists. It also has a fantastic free option.

1. [Pinterest](https://www.pinterest.co.uk/)

Scrolling through pages and pages of text, searching for inspiration, soon gets very boring. With Pinterest, you’ll be able to find inspiration through beautiful images on all kinds of topics. Create your own boards and pin the images you find inspiring to create your own mood board. When you need some ideas, jump into your board, and hey presto! Inspiration galore!

**QUESTION 1D.**

**1. Begin Early**

Begin planning as soon as you possibly can. If your event is a large event you should realistically begin planning it four to six months in advance. Smaller events need at least one month to plan. To keep the final run up to the event flowing smoothly, try to ensure that all vendor contracts are completed a few weeks before the event.

**2.** **Remain Flexible**

Over the course of planning the event, things are going to change. Whether it is event times, locations or even the type of event you’re hosting, you need to ensure that you’re flexible and can meet the changing demands.

**3**. **Negotiate**

Despite what many vendors will tell you, everything is negotiable. Remember that with every event there will be unforeseen costs, so try to negotiate as low a price as you can. Determine your budget before meeting a vendor, and offer to pay 5-10% lower than this figure. Your vendor may put up a fight, but ultimately, they want to win your business.

**4. Assign Responsibilities**

Break up the various elements of the event into sections (e.g. registration, catering, transport), and assign a section to each member of your team. As they are solely responsible for their own section, they will be much more clued into small detail changes.

**5. Create a Shared Document**

With the cloud comes many benefits, and collaborating with your team couldn’t be easier. In order to keep everyone on the same page, create a central manual or document that details everything to do with the event, including vendor contracts, attendee information, and the floor plan. With a shared document everyone can refer back to it if they are unsure, and your entire team can spot if something is out of place.

**6. Have a Backup Plan**

It is rare that an event is ever pulled off without at least one issue, an item may not turn up or an important person may arrive late. Assess the most important assets your event will have, and create a backup plan for each. If a number of issues arise in the future, triage them and decide whether an alternative can be found, or if it should be cut entirely from the event.

**7. Do a Run Through**

About two weeks before the event, do a run through of the entire event process. Organize a meeting with your team and mentally walk through everything, from initial set up to the follow up process. Often complications are highlighted at these meetings, and you will have time to correct them. A few days before event organize another run through at the venue.

**8.** **Photograph Everything**

Pictures paint a thousand words, and posting positive photos online is an excellent way to demonstrate the success of your event. If you have the budget hire a professional photographer, they will be more clued in to the kinds of photos that are required and will approach you for specifics. Ask for a number of shots to ensure you cover all bases like a snap of the full room, photos of event branding, and lots of photos of attendees enjoying themselves.

**9. Get Online**

An event is the perfect way to up your social media presence. Create a custom hashtag for your event on Twitter and encourage your followers to tweet about it. Similarly create an event on Facebook, and encourage your followers to tag the event in relevant posts. Upload your photos once the event is over and actively encourage users to tag themselves./p>

**10.** **Follow-up Immediately**.

Once the event is over, many organizers fall into a common pitfall – taking a break. While the logistics may be done it is important to be proactive in following up with attendees, be it over email or on social media, to demonstrate the success of the event.