

The benefits of using an outside AV provider

 By [Glenn van Eck](#)

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Using a hotel or conference centre's in-house audio visual equipment and team may seem like a quick and easy solution.

But, by working with an outside provider, meeting planners and event organisers can consistently save on costs and expect excellent service. Here are the top reasons to consider using an outside Audio Visual (AV) provider for your event needs.

Because you can!

An in-house AV team is not the only option. Some venues make a commission when booking AV services through a contracted provider, and that's why those facilities recommend preferred suppliers. Your venue cannot prevent you from bringing in your AV partner, and negotiating any restrictive clauses out of the contract is easy to do.

Access to the latest technology and experience

External AV providers consistently purchase new equipment and phase out older or worn-out products. You're much more likely to get the better and latest equipment, and access to professional AV technicians when choosing an AV partner. Even if you don't need the newest projector or laptop, an outside AV company will have many options so you can choose the solution that fits your needs. And if you do need a high-tech solution because your brand is high-tech, venue equipment tends not to be designed for plug-and-play presentations, thus not suitable for the brand experience you want to create for your guests.

As equipment isn't a venue's core service or focus, if no maintenance is carried out on projectors, say, their brightness could be dull due to high lamp hours and need replacing. Plus, if the projector is ceiling-mounted and out of reach, and hasn't been correctly lined or bumped you can't adjust it, meaning your professionalism isn't conveyed because your venue's AV has let you down.

The right solution for your event

Each event has its individual needs, and in-house AV equipment tends to be less flexible. And as an event organiser, you're unable to tailor the AV to your event or design the sound for the room.

Venues tend to utilise ceiling speakers, though these have advantages, for a staged event they tend to be unable to handle the high volume or impactful video audio.



A recent set design.

Often sound in a venue is limited, only allowing for very basic EQ and volume adjustments; this is suitable for speech but comes with the risk of feedback as you can't make proper adjustments. In a small space, it is often better to project your voice than to use a mic as the quality can be impaired. And if you play music, it sounds tinny and distorted. And how many times have you had a background buzz or noise on the installed system, because no-one on-site knows how to troubleshoot the problem?

External suppliers also don't just do AV; many offer solutions that can give an event a premium edge: such as sets, lighting design and advanced video playback options, like blended screens or video mapping. The right partner will supply what is required and has the professional insight to make suggestions and enhancements for your event.

Dedicated, on-site technicians

In-house AV companies are often responsible for multiple events happening at the same venue. By bringing in an outside provider of your choice, you pay for dedicated, on-demand support.

As an example, imagine a conference where there is an array of laptop brands and models with just as many default resolutions, which don't always match the projector. By having an on-site technician you don't need to worry about knowing the laptop settings and that of the projection equipment to get it right every time. You'll often find some venue equipment just doesn't allow for adjustment as the cable from the laptop goes directly into the projector. In this situation, having a scaler would help to adjust these settings.

Last-minute additions are easy to accommodate

No matter how carefully planned the event, sometimes last-minute additions become necessary. While in-house providers may have an on-site store, the specific gear you need may not be there or may already be in use at another of the venue's events.

More equipment and service options

An outside AV company will have many AV equipment and service options. This allows you to select different price options to stay within your budget.

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ABOUT GLENN VAN ECK

Glenn is a true entrepreneur. From the age of 16, he has been involved with Magnetic Storm, initially by assisting his brother with the setting up and de-rigging of AV equipment and thereafter maintenance of equipment; and at 25 years of age Glenn purchased Magnetic Storm. Fast forward to 2016 and Glenn is still at the helm of the business, and has grown a two-man disco to a full-service events and tech company with offices in Port Elizabeth and Cape Town, servicing the entire country.

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