

Repurposing Your Hospitality Venue

Christine Cleaver & Laurie Wu

Background

As the pandemic continues to affect building capacities and social distancing guidelines, hospitality businesses need to pivot to create engaging and profitable events for their consumers. With a strong emphasis to serve the small businesses practicing in the events industry, this report presents tips and advice on how to repurpose hospitality venues against such a broader backdrop.

Repurpose event/meeting space

First of all, a major trend reshaping the event/meeting industry centers around repurposing the event/meeting space. In particular, we call small business owners practicing in this space to pay attention to the following market trends in generating repurpose strategies.

- **Repurpose the Venue for Minimonies & Microevents** Propelled by the pandemic and more specifically the public health concerns, the demand for minimonies and micro-events are on the rise. When repurposing the space to tailor to such a rising trend, one should be attentive to the following new sets of experiential goals 1) create a small scale event that is for smaller groups of attendees , 2) utilize lighting and space designs to drive intimacy and deeper social connections and interactions, 3) make the experience and the environment more casual and cozy to make consumers feel comfortable and at ease, 4) ensure that the experience is safe and health cautious and 5) making the timing of the event concise.
- **Repurpose the Venue as Coworking Space** Moving forward, the need for coworking space may continue to be steady, as revealed in the recent PWC working space survey. To repurpose for that trend, hospitality venue providers should be attentive to the appropriate provision of dedicated space, fast WIFI, power outlets, printers, coffee, food and drink as well as a technology-based ordering system. Along such a process, venue providers should be cautious and actively engage in the process of risk assessment, consult on public liability insurance, abide by COVID-19 guidance and building booking systems.
- **Repurpose the Venue as Pop-up F&B Outlets** Repurposing the venue as pop-up F&B outlets is another opportunity for venue providers to consider and

capitalize on. Venue providers should pay attention to the federal, state and municipal rules regarding venue usage, develop partnerships to turn excessive supply of space into business opportunities, design and build the space according to new operational needs and promote and program the experience according to the new experiential goals.

Create Pandemic-friendly solutions

According to the report of the future of the events industry, some of the biggest challenges and obstacles for resuming events include: safety, physical distancing logistics, travel limitations, low capacity and expense management. The following solutions are thus provided to address such challenges.

- **1. Safety? Readiness and Planning!** It is imperative that you prepare and prepare to be safe. Guests are expecting to be safe. A venue must have a good operations plan that not only lays out safety protocols on-site, but also pre and post event safety protocols. The plan must be communicated to the guest to establish the best customer safety experience.
- **2. Distancing? Map out!** To facilitate the planning process in accordance with distancing logistics, event professionals may consider utilizing remote technology solutions such as event diagram software to sketch floor plans and design renderings to present to client venue design. In addition, some of such software also utilize team collaborations and therefore can be used for client communications and collaborations in real time.
- **3. Travel Limitations? Going Hybrid!** As we move to the new event norm, please note that hybrid is here to stay for the foreseeable future. You need to establish a hybrid program so all guests can be included in the event. Not every person will feel comfortable on site as well as many companies will be eliminating or cutting travel budgets. Consider upgrading your technology to create a welcoming environment both in-person and online.
- **4. Low Capacity? Partner up!** Turning your venue of low capacity into an opportunity for a local partner. For example, the recent collaboration between aka University City and Wall Street cafe in Philadelphia turned empty hotel rooms into restaurant dining spaces, providing consumers a three course dining experience for \$65, plus a \$50 room charge for three hours. Therefore, we strongly recommend you to connect with your peer businesses and actively seek opportunities for partnerships.
- **5. Expense? Watch out!** Do an assessment of your resources; think of how you can repurpose items within your resources. Consider partnering with companies and vendors to share resources.

Create engaging & repeatable models to fit the budget You don't have to reinvent the wheel. Find a think tank of colleagues, friends, students to help you sort out problems and challenges. Use models to help you mold and create creative ideas.

- **Research and Adapt Current Models**
- **Pre-Recording Location**
- **Partner Up and Brainstorm**

Conclusion

Moving forward, small businesses operating in the events and hospitality industry should continue to innovate and evolve to transform excessive supply of venue spaces to produce revenue-generating business opportunities. Presenting customers and with pandemic-friendly experiences while creating engaging and repeatable business models to fit the budget will be a major set of considerations to drive the success of small businesses.

Covid Event Resources For Safety:

Abiding by guidelines provided by credible sources is critical for events. It's imperative that you are monitoring new health and safety measures for contingency operations during a pandemic. A list of resources is provided below:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/considerations-for-events-gatherings.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/event-planners-and-attendees-faq.html>

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/personal-social-activities.html>

<https://www.pcma.org/coronavirus-business-events-professionals-need-to-know-faq/>

<https://www.eventmanagerblog.com/events-coronavirus>

<https://www.eventbrite.com/l/covid19-event-safety/>

<https://www.cvent.com/en/blog/hospitality/safe-meetings-events>

Check Lists:

<https://eventbrite-s3.s3.amazonaws.com/marketing/landingpages/assets/Illustrations/EventSafetyLP/Eventbrite-COVID19-Safety%20ChecklistV2.pdf>

<https://www.ustravel.org/toolkit/industry-guidance-promoting-health-and-safety-all-travelers>

https://www.travelpulse.com/news/hotels-and-resorts/hotel-association-develops-safe-stay-guest-checklist-for-travelers.html?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=news-junkie&utm_term=organic

Event Resources:

<https://www.socialtables.com/>

<https://www.smartdraw.com/>