

“Outstanding Awards”

***Reward, inspire and entertain
Your winners and guests***



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Introduction

Award ceremonies, whether for major industry events, large corporate incentives or smaller company conferences share similar challenges. The key to success is keeping the awards pertinent, aspirational, entertaining and well produced. In this whitepaper we look at simple ways to maintain impetus, engage the audience and reward the winners.

Before you start

Firstly, just as with any other event, consider:

Objectives - Why are you holding the awards? What do you want the audience and winners to feel, think and do?

Key messages - What do you want the awards to say about your organisation and the recipients?

How much - What is an appropriate and realistic budget?

What form will the awards take – A simple thank you or an elaborate show?

Where - What sort of style would enhance the occasion and fit your production requirements? Should it be on the premises, high-tech, a well known venue or a unique setting? How will the guests get there and back?

When - The awards need to be timely so they are still relevant for the recipients and audience. The date and time will also be important and should be communicated well in advance.

Who – Which people will you invite and why?

How - Who will run the event? Do you have the time, resources, creativity and expertise to manage the awards in-house? If not, then consider hiring a professional production company who can handle all or part of the event.

Objectives

Common reasons for holding an award ceremony, whether it is a high profile industry event, a major company incentive or a smaller thank-you, are to:

- Reward winners and those who have made a notable contribution.
- Recognise excellence and effort.
- Encourage others to aspire to win.
- Engender team spirit.
- Create a convivial event during which colleagues, teams, peers and industry groups can network.
- Position and raise the profile of corporate initiatives, charities, sports and industry associations.

Challenges

Meeting these objectives involves some common challenges:

- How to attract the right guests.
- How to keep the audience involved and engaged.
- How to build anticipation.
- How to engender the desire to be a winner.
- How to efficiently manage the onstage action.
- How to keep the event slick, seamless and on time while creating a welcoming, fun and intimate atmosphere.
- How to make the winners feel truly recognised, at ease and rewarded.

10 rules to ensure your awards are successful

It goes without saying that if you can overcome those challenges then the end result will be an outstanding event. While it is not possible to provide a hard and fast solution to fit all occasions there are a few general rules that should be observed:

1. Ensure the presenter is dynamic, fully briefed and comfortable in the role. Be honest about the expertise of internal presenters and use a professional if at all unsure.
2. Include pertinent personal information, such as landmarks in achieving the award, challenges, deciding factors, any changes the award will make to circumstances. Keep it upbeat.
3. Engage the audience by recognising team effort. Without their support the company and individual couldn't succeed.
4. Rehearse and run to a strict schedule.
5. Include music, lighting and entertainment to introduce categories, punctuate the show and maintain audience engagement.
6. Ensure the room layout makes the audience feel included and that everyone can see and hear.
7. Look at the event as a whole and check everything from the initial invitation to the close of the awards is dynamic and adheres to your objectives.
8. Avoid cramming too many awards in back-to-back. The audience will lose interest and the honor will be diluted for the winners.
9. Give the awards a strong and relevant visual identity or theme.
10. Ensure all technical elements are professionally produced and managed to create a seamless event. Technical hitches seriously interrupt the flow and are particularly embarrassing for those on stage. Bad management will lead to an amateur show which lacks impact and credibility.

Summary

A well conceived award ceremony is a tremendous way to boost morale and team spirit, raise an organisation's profile or publicise an initiative. Like all events though it does need careful planning. A poorly run show which does not meet the audience or winners expectations will do more harm than good. To achieve a balanced production, that flows professionally and smoothly, yet maintains momentum and gives a sense of anticipation calls for considerable skill, creativity and authority. Whilst some organisations have many of these skills in house, investing in the right production agency can strengthen the team, diffuse politically difficult situations and provide a wealth of ideas that will mean the difference between budget wisely spent and false economy.

About Mirage

Mirage is a full-service live event management and production company.

We continue to delight clients, and exceed expectations, for the simple reason that Mirage does not produce events to a formula. We tailor our creativity to meet your brief and create a memorable, vibrant event, which is professional without being predictable. We help define your objectives, refine your messages and then we inject fun, velocity and life into your content, ensuring your key messages are understood, reinforced and embraced.

Mirage has an impressive portfolio of blue-chip clients whose events range from product launches, conferences, roadshows, business forums, AGMs through to themed parties and fun days, award ceremonies, team-building and motivational activities. Our complete range of services includes venue selection, programme content, logistics, staging, print and electronic media, delegate management, guest speakers and celebrities, video conferencing, speaker support and AV.

Our experience of running successful awards ranges from large and small company award ceremonies through to high profile industry events such as the Glenfiddich Food and Drink Awards and Haymarket's Autosport Awards, which we have been producing for 22 years.

To learn more about how your events could have greater impact, relevance and creativity call us on +44 (0) 1883 740400, email diane@mirageemail.com or visit our website at www.miragewebsite.com or visit our party planners site: www.mirageparties.co.uk.



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