



**veritas events**

CREATE AN EXPERIENCE

# LIFT THE ROCKS, FIND THE DIAMONDS

## HOW TO STAGE AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENT

Whether it's arranging a celebration for your high performers or overseeing an industry function involving hundreds of clients, chances are you're going to find yourself doing some event planning at some point. How do you manage to pull it off successfully? A good start is to follow these four tips from Eugene and Kieran Kennedy at Veritas Events - the organisation that reimagined and reinvigorated the Australian *drinks* Awards in 2013.

### **Tip one: Get inside the heads of your guests**

Sure you know that X number of people from Y industry are attending but drill down much deeper than that. What's the demographic and psychographic profile? What are they likely to have already experienced at similar events? Working out what an attendee is expecting is the first step on over delivering on those expectations.

### **Tip two: Choose a unique venue**

You wouldn't have your annual conference at the neighbourhood diner so why would you hold what you're hoping will be a remarkable event in an entirely unremarkable hotel function room? "When a top financial institution hired us to put on a client forum for them mid last year, we chose the Barossa Valley to do it," says Eugene. "The Barossa is one of those places people want to visit but never get around to seeing. By having the event there, we'd created a unique experience for attendees from the get-go."

### Tip three: Own the building

“I love owning a hotel for an event,” says Eugene. “That way the whole of the attendee’s journey is within your control.” Once Veritas Events has seized control of a hotel it will typically do the following:

- Festoon the client’s point of sale material throughout the hotel so everywhere attendees go they are interacting with branding and messaging;
- Create a memorable check-in experience;
- Leverage the in-room TV channels for messages about the client’s business;
- Rename the bar around the client’s brands or its prominent identities. (The bar can even be manned by the client’s leadership team to facilitate interaction with attendees [provided they meet the requirements of the liquor service laws in your state])

### Tip four: Find the diamonds

“We like to lift the rocks and discover the diamonds underneath,” says Kieran. In less poetic terms, that translates to identifying and arranging experiences attendees couldn’t otherwise have. “With the Barossa event we got Maggie Beer, who lives in the region, involved,” says Kieran. “She was kind enough to agree to host us at her property for dinner. We created a beautiful ‘Jazz under the Stars’ theme with live cooking and a welcome from Maggie, who assisted in designing the menu.”

The delegates’ final night was at the Yalumba Signature Cellar, again a bespoke experience for guests who were served a very rare 50 year old Yalumba port. The service, food and overall theme of the night topped off a unique, one-of-a-kind experience for the group.

It’s that kind of experience, the kind that an attendee is very unlikely to be able to organise for themselves, which lives on in the memory and will make your event a huge success.

“I always tell the staff at Veritas Events they should choose to do the difficult things,” concludes Kieran. “Doing the difficult things takes time and effort but it will create novel, unforgettable experiences that will enhance the relationship between the company or individual putting on the event and the delegates attending it.”

Eugene Kennedy  
 Veritas Events  
 Eugene.kennedy@veritas.com.au  
 Tel: 02 8908 5600  
 Web: www.veritas.com.au

