



MORE THAN
GOLD

Technical advice for big screen and large events

The success of a More Than Gold event lays in careful planning and preparation. This guide helps you get the practical and technical side of things right.

At the same time, when it comes to the big picture, don't fall into the trap of being over complicated. The simplest plans work best and the less complicated the solution, the less can go wrong.

Key questions to resolve

Make sure you are clear on the fixed points you have to take account of -

- How many people are you allowing for? Define the minimum, the maximum and the ideal number
- When does the event start and end? And how long is needed to set up and take down?
- How will the site/space/room be set out?
- Will it be dark when you are setting up or taking down?
- What amenities are needed - site lighting, toilets, fresh water, waste bins, catering, disabled access, etc?

Showing the Games on a big screen

Permission: The BBC is happy for their broadcast of the Olympics to be shown in public so long as the content is not changed or charged for.

The small print from the BBC on what they allow can be found at the end of this guide.

You may need to show evidence of having a TV licence that covers what you are doing. So make sure you have one.

Getting in early: For the Olympics there will be huge demand for equipment. So make your arrangements early, otherwise you run the risk of either paying through the nose or getting nothing at all.

Coping with daylight: The Games begin just after 8pm on the 27th of July. Unless it is a very cloudy evening there will

be too much light to go straight to use an outdoor screen you may have erected.

Here then are some options.

Plasma screens .Plasma screens and light emitting screens are available for hire up to 50 or 60 inch - measured diagonally across the viewing screen surface.

However, you may want to borrow one or even have someone buy one as the prices are approx £1000 - £1,500 and often less. Search on line or go to a shop like Currys and talk with them.

Larger plasma screens are very expensive, but check out what may work for you.

Note there is an absolute relationship between the size of the screen and the engagement you will have with what you are watching.

For every incremental step smaller, your audience will have less of an experience. In your planning, go to the space you intend to use and cut out something the size you are planning and see how you respond to it.

If you start watching on a plasma screen and then switch to a larger screen when the sun has gone, this will be not as clear. However the size will compensate. Be sure to tell your audience what is happening.

This is not the best way to run a smooth event but most understand that you will be saving a lot of money by using this option. For the changeover, pick a low moment and use an engaging MC tell people what is going on.

It is also possible to **hire a full-size LED screen** – the kind used for large public events. However the costs start from about £3k and, depending on just how big you want to go, can cost a lot more. For more information on this, email Pete Allison at mtg@eandms.com .

Projection. Projection onto a rear or front projection surface is the cost-efficient way of getting a larger image – but you need to use a projector between 3.5k lumen and 18k lumen or more. Otherwise it will still struggle in outdoor and sunlight conditions. Even a bright room or a white marquee is a challenge for lower powered projectors.

And don't allow the sun to play onto your screen. Think about the angle you're placing a screen at and what the sun will do as it moves across the sky.

The ways to source a suitable projector include -

- Hire or borrow a van or a box truck and put the fastfold screen in the back opening and a rear projector in the 'box'. Even if it has an opaque roof you can black out using drapes of material. Your sound system can sit behind the screen.
- Use a garage with the screen in the front and project from the rear.
- Get help – from anyone in your community who you may be able to help you find a way forward. It may be the technical person in your church or at school or perhaps someone who runs a technical shop.

Transmission: You are going to need –

- A digital receiver
- An aerial
- An output to your TV screen
- A technical person to pull it together.

Sound

When it comes to making sure everyone can hear clearly, what do you want to achieve? Does it include -

- Just the sound for the broadcast?
- An MC leading people through the programme?
- Emergency announcements and public information – from 'lost children' to 'the food is ready'
- A roving mic for interviews
- Enough for musicians and performers?

However small and simple, you might want to have a small mixing desk in the system so you can turn a mic up and talk to the audience.

Ideally you need someone who knows what they are doing and most larger churches these days have someone. They will be aware that –

- For TV or video replay, the sound stream provided is on the assumption there is a reasonably good bass response. So you might want to have some 'sub' capability for the system.
- To avoid being a nuisance to neighbours, use a system with clarity in the mid – high frequency. Remember that it is in this frequency that people's hearing deteriorates with age.
- A system can be turned down, so a better system that is slightly larger will give you quality, but be aware of nuisance.

Set lighting

If it is going to be dark at the end, you'll need some simple stage lighting at the very least - maybe one light on each side of stage - that you can switch on as needed.

If you have a signer for those who are hearing impaired, you need to light them so they can be seen.

And just a little light to 'lift' someone who is taking part can lift the overall effect. And presentation will be smoother if the lights are on a dimmer.

Site lighting

Health and safety issues feature big time when it comes to making sure people can see clearly and walk safely.

Consider -

- Will people leaving through pinch points like gates or narrow exits?
- Are there trip hazards?
- Is the car park dark?
- Will those taking the event down be able to see what they're doing?
- Will your guests be able to see the signage around the site when the light fails?

These are all reasons why you should think carefully about the lighting on the site for the public.

Security

The reality is that equipment 'walks' if you don't 'nail' it down, watch it 24/7 and more. And no matter how careful you intend to be, make sure you are fully covered by insurance.

Safety

As an event organiser, you have a responsibility to conduct basic risk assessment on the site and all aspects of the event you are planning,

Working on ladders and at height with unfamiliar equipment is dangerous. Don't overcomplicate your solution and don't ask people to try to do things they're not confident about.

Your duty of care means you should also make sure you have public liability cover.

Site power

Everything covered above needs a power supply. In many cases, this will be a temporary.

It is important that you calculate the load you will put on the supply you install. Cables and connectors must not be overloaded, MCB (overload protection) and RCCB (earth failure protection) need to be installed, tested and in good order. This is especially important in an outside context, and a requirement by law.

Electrical safety is enshrined by law. It's your responsibility as an event organiser to make sure *ONLY* a person qualified with 17th edition electrician's qualifications works on connections that are not a simply plug and socket assembly.

If a generator is used it must -

- be properly earthed
- have suitable protection breakers
- have the capacity to deliver the power you need.
- be accompanied by fire fighting precautions
- have enough back up fuel

And remember *NEVER* refuel a generator when it is running.

Stage and Platform Structures

If anything of any kind is to be said from the front you need some kind of raised platform so the audience can see comfortably. So, at the very least, think about a small platform that can be stood on, lit when it's dark and where a mic is based so that you can address your guests.

Many churches or a local school may have a small (1m x 1m maybe) platform. Make sure it's sturdy and that any step you use is solid and won't give when stood on. 2ft or 600mm is often found to be a good height for this purpose, though 1ft or 300mm may do.

At 3ft or 1m or higher, handrails are a legal requirement to any edge that that is not the leading performance edge. You will also want to think about hand rails for steps up to a larger height.

If you're planning a bigger stage, with performers, make certain –

- multiple blocks are locked together and won't separate,
- there are no protruding bolts, screws or hard edges that will damage people.

For this reason, standard scaffold is not a good idea, though a scaffold company used to building stages for the public can build viable structures. Further health and safety advice from someone experienced in events is strongly recommended if you work with scaffolding.

There are proprietary staging products such as Lite-deck and Steeldeck are worth discussing if you are looking to hire a stage. These are well respected and should be sturdy as long as they are constructed properly.

Facilities for those less able

When presenting a public access event you have obligations under the disability discrimination act. So for a mid-sized event be sure you have a small platform for disabled viewing, remembering that hand rails; appropriate ramps and anti-slip surfaces are important features of a disabled platform.

Also, do you need to install a temporary loop for people with impaired hearing? This is neither difficult, nor expensive.

Next steps

We hope this brief survey of what we would describe as 'production issues' has been useful. It is based on the experience that the team at Event & Management Services have gained since 1981 delivering events including a village fete, a touring show, a corporate presentation or festival sites such as Greenbelt or Wychwood.

If you want a further opinion, then we'd be happy to talk as part of our support for More Than Gold. You can call the office on 01242 245444 and ask to speak to Pete Allison, or email us at mtg@eandms.com .

Note on what the BBC will allow regarding public performance of their Games coverage

The following are the conditions under which the BBC will not object to the public performance of their Games coverage. However, the International Olympic Committee may yet issue its own guidelines for the public performances:

1. BBC will not supply a direct feed to any user. Any access to the BBC transmissions must be off-air
2. It is event organiser's responsibility to have obtained all the necessary consents to enable the public performance of an off-air broadcast, such as the statutory Television Licence
3. The BBC transmissions of the Programmes must be received and shown simultaneously with their transmission by the BBC, in their entirety, without any cuts, alterations, modifications, interruptions or superimpositions. In particular, all credits, or messages must be broadcast in full off-air. There can be no imposing of any other commercial messages into or over the broadcast
4. No payment or charge, either direct or indirect, may be made to the general public for the privilege of viewing the performance of the Programmes
5. The presentation of the public performance described above (for example but not limited to branding and marketing) must not pass off the event organiser company itself or the provision of the public performance or any associated element of the public performance as endorsed or associated with the BBC

Provided the above conditions are met in full, the BBC will not object to the provision a public performance of the Programmes as described above.