EventOS

FIELD GUIDE

SHOWBOOK

The Event Owner's Operating Map

27 disciplines. Five clusters. One connected way to see your event operation.

Steve Scott | Founder, EventOS

A NOTE BEFORE YOU START

No two events are alike.

But the operating disciplines behind them repeat.

Over more than 30 years in live events, I've heard the same sentence at the start of almost every project: *"No two events are alike, so we need to start from scratch."*

The first half is true. The second half is where the opportunity hides.

Think about buying a car. No two cars leave the lot exactly alike, yet every one is built on a structured design. Some buyers choose from what's available; others customize. Events work the same way. A private board meeting and a 20,000-person conference look nothing alike, but the disciplines behind them are the same.

I count 27 of them. Strategy, budget, venue, contracts, AV, registration, speakers, catering, risk and more, ending with the one most often cut short: learning from what just happened.

The person running an event is a conductor. Every discipline is an instrument, often played by a different company, and the music only works when each one comes in at the right time.

This guide is a map of the whole orchestra. It won't tell you how to play each instrument; your team and your partners already know how. It's meant to help you see how the pieces connect, where your operation is strong, and where a little more structure would make the next event easier than the last.

One idea runs through all of it: **learn it once, and the whole organization learns it.** For most of my career, that wasn't practical. With today's AI, that becomes practical at a different scale.

Steve Scott
Founder, EventOS

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Four steps, about an hour.

1

Scan the Operating Map

See all 27 disciplines in five clusters, with a one-line picture of what good looks like in each. (Pages 4 to 6)

2

Take the self-check

Ten questions about how your event operation connects. Yes, Partly or Not yet. No score. About ten minutes. (Page 8)

3

Question your event files

After your next event, put four questions to the files your team already has. (Page 9)

4

Try the worksheet

Make one discipline's ownership, dependencies and decisions visible on a single page. (Page 10)

OPTIONAL, AND FREE

Want a second set of eyes?

Request a free, one-page Event Operating Snapshot, prepared personally for your event operation. Details on page 11.

THE EVENT OPERATING MAP

27 disciplines. Five clusters.

These disciplines already exist in your event. The question is whether they run as one connected operating model.

Direction and Governance

- Strategic Planning
- Project Management
- Event Objectives
- Legal & Compliance
- Risk Management
- Stakeholder Management

Audience and Program Design

- Event Design
- Marketing
- Social Media
- Registration
- Speaker Management
- Attendee Engagement
- Entertainment

Financial and Commercial Control

- Budgeting
- Financial Management
- Sponsorships
- Contract Negotiation

Site and Production Delivery

- Venue Selection
- Logistics
- Site Management
- Catering
- Exhibitions
- Audio-Visual, Lighting & Staging

People, Technology and Continuity

- Human Resources
- Technology
- Sustainability
- Post-Event Evaluation

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

A one-line picture of each discipline

DIRECTION AND GOVERNANCE

Strategic Planning	The event's purpose ties to a business goal everyone involved can name.
Project Management	One plan shows milestones, owners and dependencies across every partner.
Event Objectives	Success is defined in measurable terms before planning begins.
Legal & Compliance	Permits, contracts, privacy and accessibility each have a named owner.
Risk Management	Risks are identified early, owned and rehearsed, not discovered onsite.
Stakeholder Management	Every stakeholder knows their role, their decisions and when they're needed.

FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL CONTROL

Budgeting	The budget reflects approved scope, with contingency and visible changes.
Financial Management	Commitments, invoices and actuals reconcile without weeks of detective work.
Sponsorships	Sponsor commitments are delivered, documented and reported back with results.
Contract Negotiation	Agreements are fair, clear and aligned with the approved scope.

AUDIENCE AND PROGRAM DESIGN

Event Design	The experience is designed around the outcome, from arrival to follow-up.
Marketing	The right message reaches the right audience and drives the right registrations.
Social Media	The event's conversation extends its reach before, during and after.
Registration	Registration is easy for attendees and produces data the team can use.
Speaker Management	Speakers arrive prepared, on brief and well supported.
Attendee Engagement	Attendees participate, connect and leave with a reason to return.
Entertainment	Entertainment serves the event's purpose and runs to time.

Each discipline, continued

SITE AND PRODUCTION DELIVERY

Venue Selection	The venue fits the program, the audience and the budget.
Logistics	People and materials arrive where they're needed, when they're needed.
Site Management	The site runs safely to plan, with clear authority onsite.
Catering	Food and beverage fits the schedule, the guarantees and every dietary need.
Exhibitions	Exhibitors are set up to succeed, and the floor serves attendees well.
Audio-Visual, Lighting & Staging	Production needs are defined early and shared with every partner who depends on them.

PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY AND CONTINUITY

Human Resources	Staff, crews and volunteers are briefed, scheduled and supported.
Technology	Systems share information instead of asking people to re-enter it.
Sustainability	Goals are set early and measured honestly.
Post-Event Evaluation	What was learned becomes the starting point for the next event.

MANY COMPANIES, ONE EVENT

Everyone working from the same picture.

Most of these 27 disciplines are delivered by different companies: venues, producers, suppliers, crews, speakers and technology platforms. Each brings real expertise and its own tools. The opportunity isn't to replace any of them. It's to give all of them the same understanding of the event: what it is, who owns what, what's been decided and what changed.



SELF-CHECK

Ten questions about how your event connects.

Answer Yes, Partly or Not yet for the event or portfolio you know best. There's no score.

		Yes	Partly	Not yet
1.	Is the event's purpose and definition of success documented and available to every accountable leader?	○	○	○
2.	Does one Event Owner have clear authority to resolve cross-functional decisions?	○	○	○
3.	Is there a named owner and approval path for each essential discipline?	○	○	○
4.	Can every partner see the current approved scope, timeline and key commitments?	○	○	○
5.	Are budget changes visible and approved before work proceeds?	○	○	○
6.	Are dependencies and handoffs clear enough that the next owner knows what is needed, by whom and when?	○	○	○
7.	Can providers execute from current information without repeatedly re-entering or reconciling it?	○	○	○
8.	Are decisions, risks, exceptions and changes captured where the relevant people can act on them?	○	○	○
9.	Does leadership receive a current picture of readiness, risk exposure and unresolved decisions?	○	○	○
10.	Does closeout create a usable starting point for the next event rather than a static recap?	○	○	○

Notice every answer marked "Partly" or "Not yet." Each is a possible starting point, not a failure. Choose the area or areas that matter most right now. If every answer is "Yes," you have a strong foundation to carry into the next event.

If you would like a second set of eyes, email me at **scottproductlabs@pm.me** with a few times that work for you. I will confirm one and send a Zoom link.

AFTER THE SHOW

Four questions to put to your event files.

Most teams finish a show and go straight into the next one. This review takes about an hour and makes the next event easier.

Set up once

Gather four files your team already has:

- **Budget to actuals**, with the contracted amount for each line and any notes
- **Every version of the run of show** you saved, with the date in each file name
- **The registration export**, including session choices
- **The attendee survey**, with ratings by session

Then ask

1. "Compare what we contracted with what we actually spent. List every line that changed, by how much, and what the notes and run-of-show versions may help explain."

2. "Which parts of the program changed most across the run-of-show versions, and how close to the event did each change land?"

3. "Which sessions drew the most registrations, and how did attendees rate them? Where do popularity and ratings disagree?"

4. "Using everything above, draft a one-page brief for next year's planning kickoff: what to keep, what to change and what to decide earlier."

Keep human judgment in charge. Require every finding to point to the supporting file and row. Check the numbers, cut what does not hold up, and decide what matters.

Protect your data. Remove personal attendee details first and follow your organization's data policies.

These questions can be used in a team debrief, your existing analysis tools, or an organization-approved AI workspace.

SAMPLE PLANNING WORKSHEET

One discipline, made visible.

Type directly into this page. One discipline is shown; every discipline in your event has the same shape.

EVENT	DISCIPLINE
	Audio-Visual, Lighting & Staging
ACCOUNTABLE OWNER	**APPROVER**
PARTNER COMPANY	**CURRENT STATUS / DUE DATE**

What this discipline needs

INPUT NEEDED	FROM WHOM	BY WHEN

What depends on it

WHO DEPENDS ON THIS	WHAT THEY NEED	BY WHEN

Decisions pending

DECISION	DECIDED BY	BY WHEN

Changes

WHAT CHANGED	DATE	WHO IT AFFECTS	NOTIFIED?

One discipline on one page is manageable. Twenty-seven, across several companies and changing every day, is where a shared operating system earns its place.

FROM CHECKLIST TO OPERATING SYSTEM

What changes when all 27 connect.

Every discipline in this guide already has capable people and good tools behind it. What EventOS adds is the layer they share: one governed understanding of the event that people, partners, systems and AI can all work from.

Ownership, decisions, dependencies, approvals and changes live in one place. When something changes, everyone it affects sees what changed and what they're responsible for next. And when the event ends, what was learned carries into the next one.

That's the idea in one sentence: **learn it once, and the whole organization learns it.**

FREE, AND NOTHING CONFIDENTIAL REQUIRED

Request your Event Operating Snapshot

Share your name and email, plus as much or as little context as you like. Your self-check answers are optional. I'll personally prepare a one-page snapshot covering:

- The areas where a shared operating model would help most
- What good looks like in each
- One practical next step you can take on your own

If you'd like, we can walk through it together in a 20-minute call.

Request it at eventos-platform.netlify.app/showbook

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