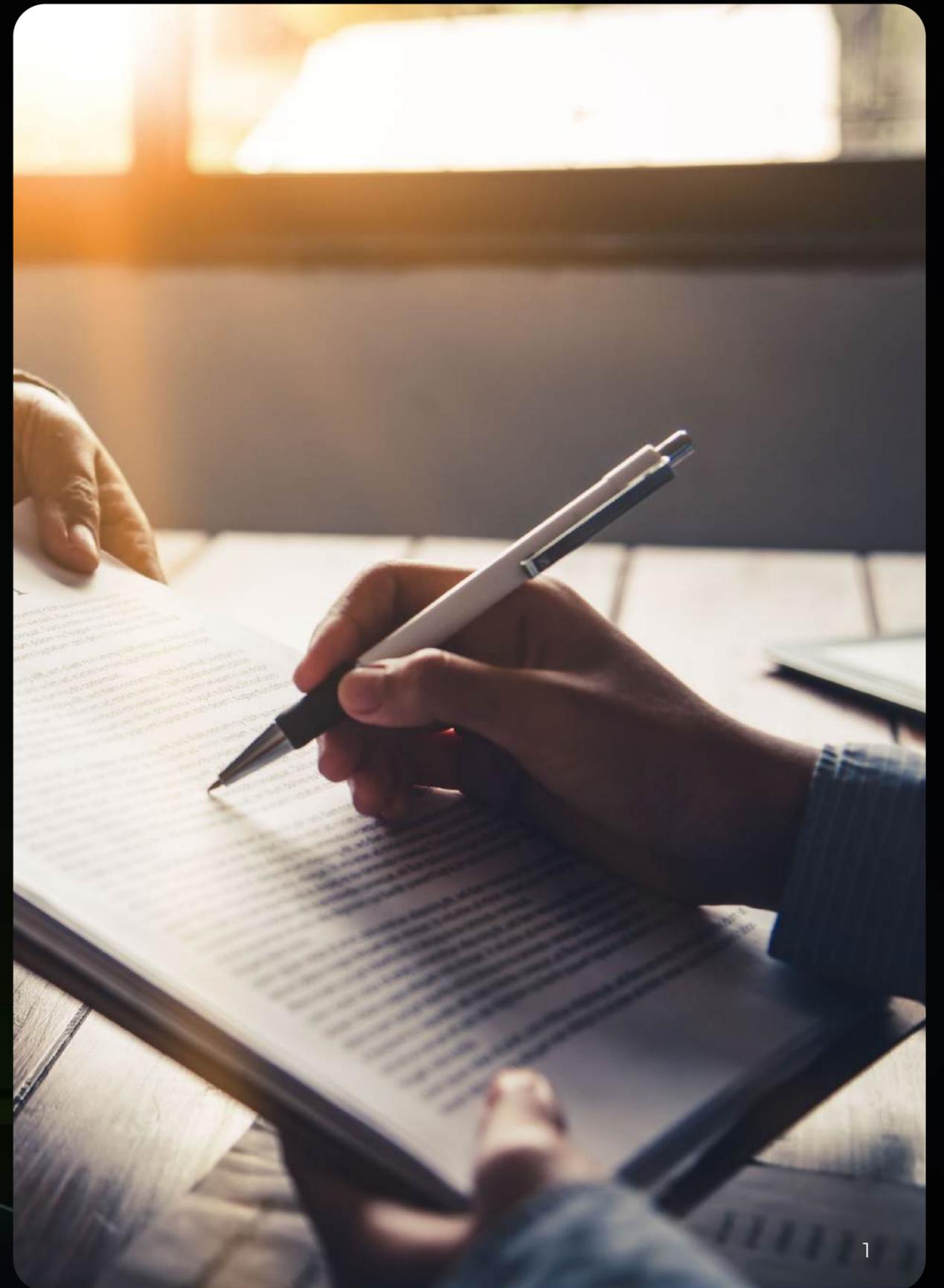




The Ultimate Guide to Venue Contracts

Anticipate Hidden Fees & Plan Like a Pro



Preparation is key!



As you prepare to sign any venue contract, asking the right questions upfront is essential. Reviewing **production guidelines** and consulting with trusted AV experts will ensure a smooth, cost-effective event from the start.

Use this guide to anticipate hidden fees and dodge the common pitfalls, setting yourself up **for a successful, stress-free experience.**



Production Guidelines

Let's be real, venue contracts can be tricky. But don't worry, we've got your back. Always ask for the venue's **production guidelines** (sometimes called **in-house rules** or **hotel rules**) before signing anything. This is where you will find all the hidden gems that could come back to bite you later.



What is in the production guidelines?

These are the venue's rules and regulations; **they are your safety net for anticipating surprise fees.**

The good news? You can stay ahead of the game by reviewing them with a trusted AV expert who can help you interpret the fine print.

01

Identify Those Hidden Fees

Pay special attention to the penalties for not using the venue's in-house AV provider.

02

Determine Key Dates

The production guidelines will often contain key lead times. Note them and include them in your event planning timeline. This helps you anticipate logistical chaos and fees.



Fees to Anticipate: Rigging

Every venue has strict rigging guidelines; for a good reason, it is all about safety. Most venues will require you to use their **exclusive rigging provider**.

01

Read the Fine Print

Make sure you understand the lead times (often 30+ days) and any approval requirements for rigging requests and diagrams.

02

Understand How the Venue Defines Rigging

Rigging is not just about hanging from trusses. Sometimes, rigging can come from the floor, not just the ceiling. Do not assume. It is more complex than you think.

03

Visqueen & Labor Fees

Venues protect themselves from damage, so you might need floor coverings like Visqueen and extra labor fees. Plan for these costs upfront.



Loading Dock

We love a good load-in, but do not get caught by surprise with hidden fees.

01

Early Access

If you can not reserve the loading dock, request early access to the space.

02

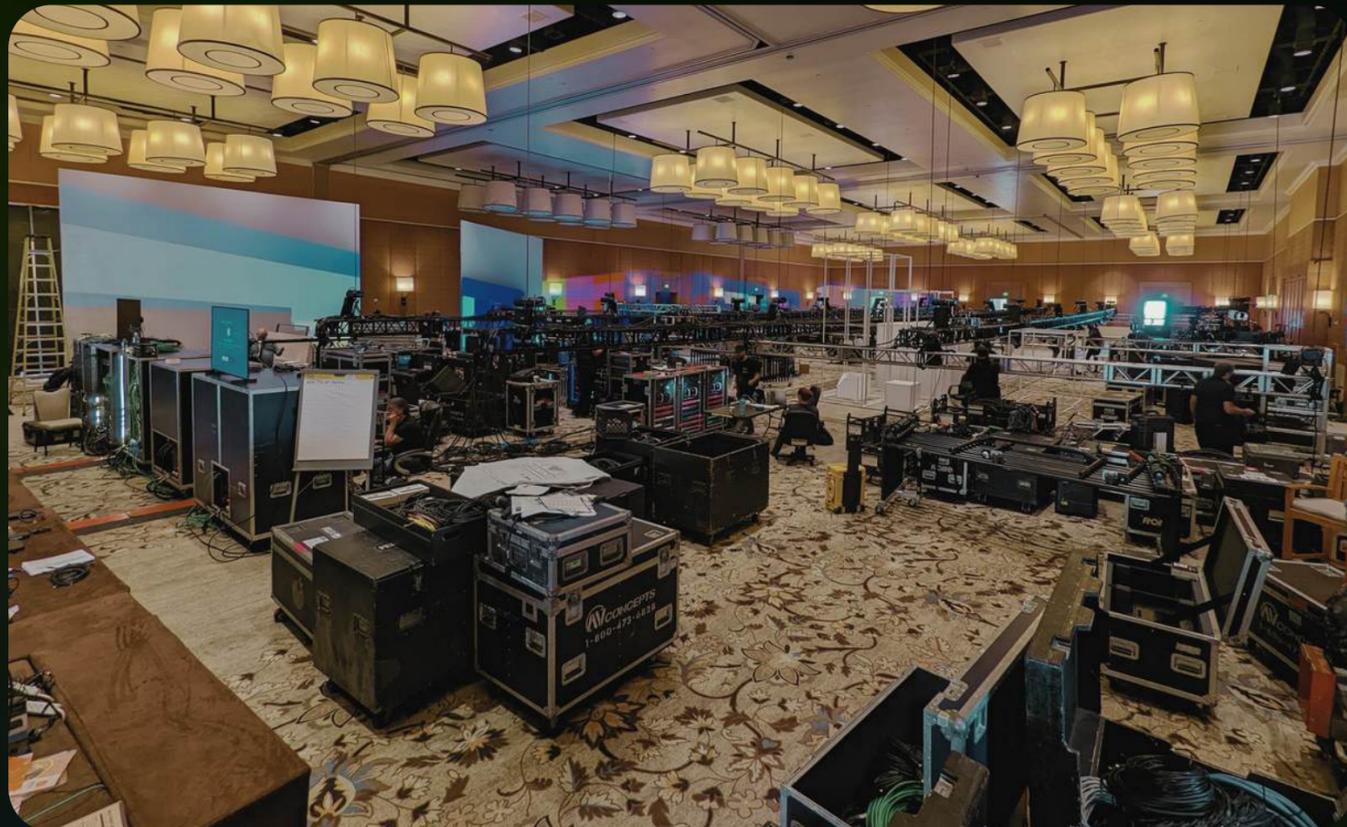
Elevator Fees

Elevator operator fees are on the rise. Keep an eye out.

03

Load-in/Load-out Supervisor Fees

Typically, these fees used to only apply on event days, but many venues now charge daily fees. Make sure you are prepared.





Labor

If you are hosting an event in a union city, you have to be prepared. Union rules can impact your labor needs, and you will want to navigate them carefully. You do not need to be an expert. **Let your AV Partner be the guide.**

01

Unions

With your AV partner as a guide, they will work with a local union labor broker, who will give them a non-biased education on union rules and regulations so you are not blindsided.

02

Labor Rates and Roles

Expect labor minimums, overtime, and double-time rates, plus rules on how many technicians are needed (including shadow labor).

Safety First

Safety is not just a buzzword; it is essential.

01

Fire Marshal Approval

Every event diagram needs fire marshal approval, but check who is responsible for the approval—either the hotel/venue or your AV Partner.

02

Haze

If you are using haze, be prepared to add a fire-watch with a daily fee.

03

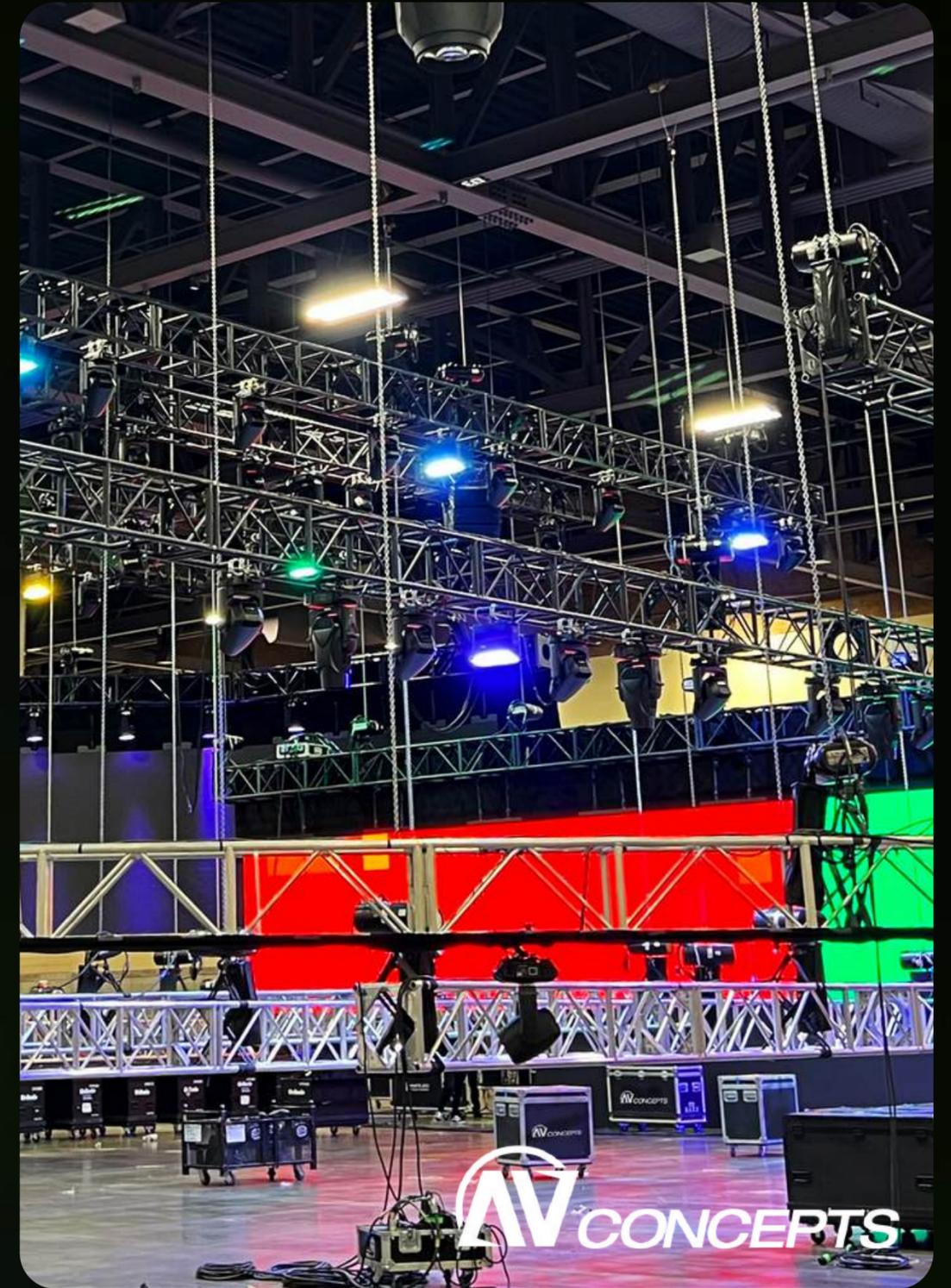
Emergency Precautions

Expect your production company/AV company to take ownership of safety by providing exit signs, cable ramps, and open fire exits.

04

AV Road-Case Storage

Do not assume there is enough room for AV storage in the meeting room. We recommend requesting a separate storage space near your general session.



Built-in AV

Considering the venue's built-in AV? Unfortunately, it is not free. Most venues charge for built-in LED walls, screens, monitors, and lighting, so budget accordingly.



Meeting Space

Here is a pro tip: Do not rush setup and strike time, and do not assume everything will run smoothly without some extra time.

01

Set-up and Strike Time

Allow at least 5 hours for setup and strike time. Depending on your needs, it could take 2-3 days.

02

Build in Rehearsal Time

Allocating ample time for rehearsals will ensure the event is a stress-free experience for presenters and you.

03

Speaker Ready Room

Consider a dedicated space for speakers to prep. A quiet, comfortable room helps them focus and perform at their best when it is showtime.



THE INTERNET TRAP!

Let's talk about the internet. This is where many planners get stuck with the in-house provider. **Here is how to anticipate the trap and keep your options open.**

01

Determine Your Needs

Forecast how much bandwidth you need before you make decisions. You can easily find your needs with a simple Google search. Try searching "Event Bandwidth Calculator".

02

Include Internet in Your Venue Contract

Be specific. Determine your budget and lock in your internet price when negotiating your venue contract.

03

Backup Plan

If you have already signed your venue contract and were not able to include internet, here is your fallback plan:

- Request an internet quote from the venue, and lock it in before you commit to any AV provider.
- **Do not let the internet limit your choices** for selecting the right production partners for you.



Ask Yourself: Custom Login for attendees?

If you want your attendees to have a custom log-in (SSID) for your event's network, now is the time to ask

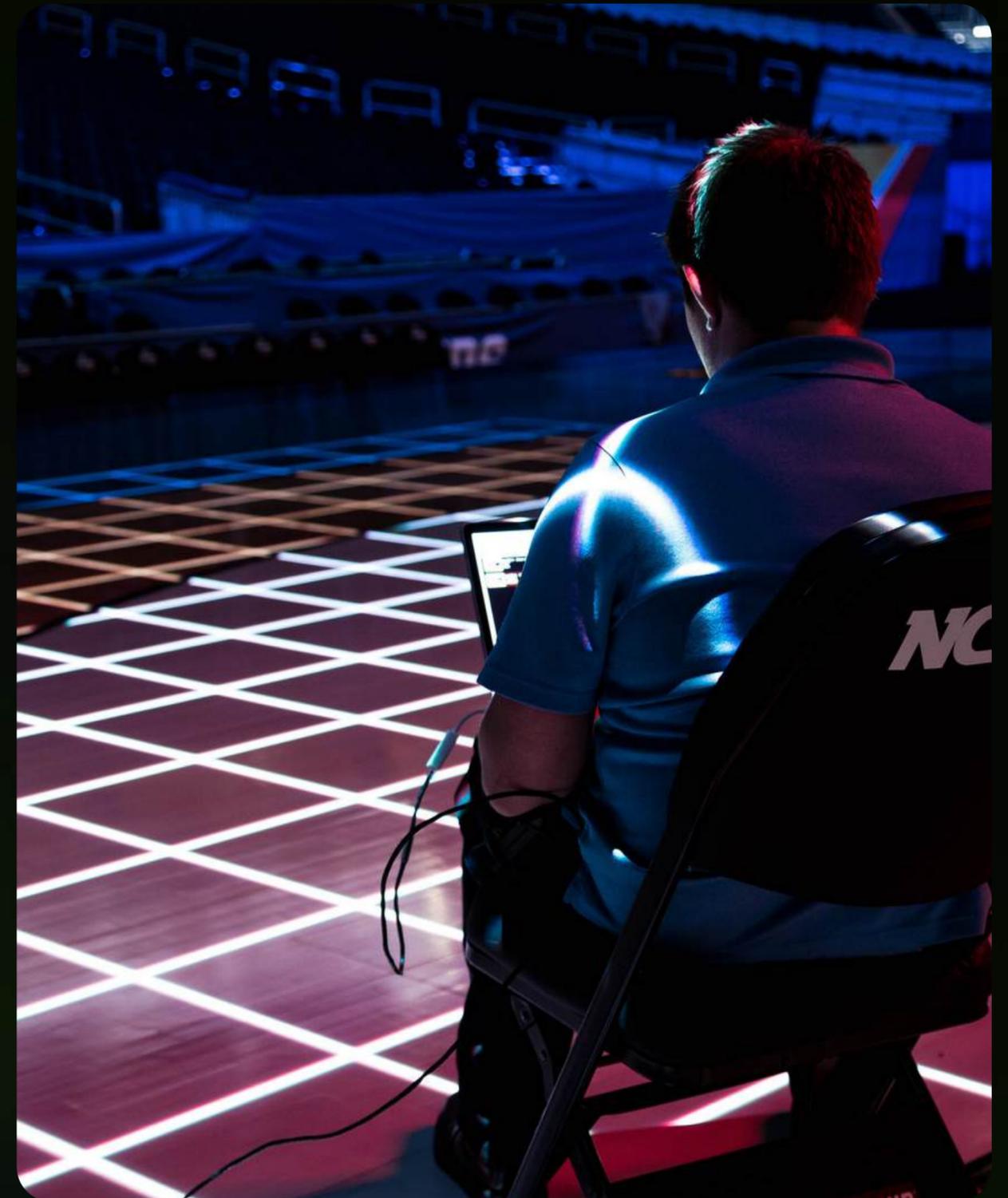


Consult with a Trusted AV Partner

We are your trusted AV experts. As both a **national production partner** and **in-house AV provider**, we know what it takes to ensure your event is flawless.

Let us help you dodge the hidden fees, anticipate the stress, and create a truly memorable experience.

[Let Us Guide You Today](#)





Remember, **you are in charge of your event's success.** With the right AV partner, you will always plan like a pro.

Let's Bring Your Vision to Life

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