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The Logistics of Event Security

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Guard Services: The Logistics of Event Security

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In so many levels, 9/11 drastically altered the event security landscape. Event security has evolved from the ‘bouncer’ mentality of yesteryear, which featured se-

curity decked out in yellow jackets emblazoned with “SECURITY” in block letters to today’s concierge security professional which features highly trained security professionals with access to cutting edge tech-

nology including artificial intelligence.

Event security staff assist from pre-planning stages through post-show wrap-up; working with the client from start to finish. Today’s event security team plays

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By Corey Meredith



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ushers and VIP/talent escort. Event security professionals wear business attire for VIP escort and red-carpet events, with their attire varying accordingly dependent on what other roles they assume.

Given the world stage we all live on which includes volatile times and acts of terrorism, people want to know they are going to events and venues that are safe and secure. Guests want to see security at these shows.

Guests are accommodating to waiting in line for bag checks or pat-downs because they understand the overall purpose event security has for mandating these initiatives. Well-executed event security has the power to create magical moments and memorable experiences for live audiences with safety and security as a first mindset.

Event security is fluid and ever-changing with crowd movement and dynamics. During these turbulent times, ensuring the safety and security of event participants at entertainment conferences like National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) or other high-profile events including the Academy Awards, NASCAR, NBA or NFL sporting events demands the use of cutting-edge technology paired with well-trained, highly screened security professionals.

Staffing is Critical

Hands-down, employees are the most valuable assets of any event security company. It is vitally important for an event security firm to adhere to strict guidelines for hiring and training. In addition, the event security's management team should be coaches and mentors to all front-line employees.

Through the combined capabilities of Allied Universal, our event services division is now a single-source solution for everything from temporary staffing, consulting and security for all events. Our event services team addresses convention, sporting and concert events and trade show's complex challenges from a security and staffing perspective.

Event security staff gravitate to this sector, often, because they enjoy and thrive in its multi-faceted and exciting environment. For example, a senior executive member of my team, Thushan Rajapaksa,

says that he “loves live entertainment and live music” and feels like he has “the best job in the world because he is able to “create magical moments and memorable experiences for live audiences.”

Experienced, trained security professionals, who are licensed, and who have undergone background checks and drug testing, are the foundation of event security.

Continual Training Vitrally Important

Detailed, comprehensive training is vitally important for event security personnel. Training methods include classroom training, field training, hands-on simulation training, table top exercises, workshops, E-learning, certification courses, Guard Card courses and annual refresher classes.

Event security is a dynamic sector that demands that the security professionals engage in extensive training which includes how to deliver First Aid and CPR, understanding the signs and symptom of heat stress, how to handle attendee slips, trips and falls, workplace fire safety, workplace violence and active shooter, emergency response and disaster planning, hazardous materials and best practices for arenas, stadiums and amphitheatres.

In addition, there is venue specific training including crowd management that includes technical and guest services skills, line control, front of stage, ushers, roamers and overall venue security and safety.

Training on how to effectively communicate is of paramount importance. We call this ‘verbal judo’ which is learning how to stay calm in the midst of conflict, deflecting verbal abuse, and offering empathy.

Supervisors essential. Event security professionals should have an open line of communication to their supervisors. A 10 to 1 ratio of security professionals to supervisor is recommended to ensure that there's continual communication and that expectations are exceeded.

Details, details and more details. Event security entails far more than staffing the venue with security personnel. The process is complex and requires extensive coordination, communication and advance plan-

a multi-faceted role that includes alcohol enforcement, audience management, bike patrol, crowd control, ID checkers, 24-hour event security, access control, parking services, red carpet staff, ticket takers,



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ning. Every venue requires its own specific strategy and road-map which includes extensive facility orientation.

Advance planning requires teamwork with the venue's facility management and local law enforcement to put together a "best practices" methodology that can be used to address a myriad of emergency scenarios.

DHS Safety Certification

The ASIS safety certification program, which my company has secured, is the first and only program of its kind to be awarded a coveted Designation by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) under the Support Anti-Terrorism by Fostering Effective Technology (SAFETY) Act of 2002. The purpose of the SAFETY Act is to ensure that the threat of liability does not deter manufacturers of anti-terrorism technologies from developing and commercializing new products that could significantly reduce the risks or effects of terrorist events.

Companies that supply products and services that can be used to detect, defend against, or respond to acts of terrorism can apply for and receive coverage under the law. Event security firms should declare their commitment to the DHS Safety Act by applying and receiving this critical safety designation as it demonstrates to clients that the company has a system of risk and liability management benefits in place to providers of anti-terrorism products and services.

Ever-evolving Technology

Technology is constantly changing. Security supervisors put into place a network of people, processes and technology to deter and mitigate threats. Law enforcement is a partner with physical security and may ask to access video footage. Today's access control


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includes biometrics with video analytics with facial recognition.

Video analytics is also able to measure and gauge crowd behavior, detect suspicious packages, and instantly alert security and law enforcement so that preemptive action can be deployed.

Social media platforms are monitored using specific key word analytics to assess if there are any potential issues that are happening.

Security professionals and law enforcement are able to work together to leverage multiple technologies and share information to understand and mitigate potential threats.

Ultimately, it is vitally important to determine the policies and procedures that are in place that allow security personnel, law enforcement and other entities to effectively work together as a blended team. Understanding what the policies and procedures are for all concerned parties enables them to work cohesively to better mitigate the risk for any and all types of threats. 

Corey Meredith is president of Allied Universal Events Services.