Planning an Event in a Hall or Large Room which will require a Sound System, Data Projector and Internet Connection

Planning the Event.

Many meetings or events will take place in a venue that will have some form of sound reinforcement and data projector installed or available on request, especially if the venue is used for this type of event on a regular basis.

If this is the case you need to find out the following information about the venue (and visit it in person) before you decide to book it.

Here are some of the main questions to ask the event location provider:

1	How many participants can the venue hold, and is the seating fixed of moveable? Is there an outline plan or drawing of the room available (with dimensions if possible)?	
2	**Sound System**	
	Is there a sound system fitted in the Hall/Room? Are there any good quality radio-mics available, and if so how many? Does the system have an audio mixer to control the microphones and the sound output from a computer? (via usb or via a 3.5mm headphone jack on the computer to a stereo input on the mixer) Can the mixer output the mixer sound signal via a usb port? (For a Hybrid Zoom meeting or recording the meeting) Is there a trained technician available to operate the sound system or do you have to do it yourself?	
3	**Data Projector**	
	What type of projector is fitted in the venue and how is it accessed? Is the projector connection via HDMI, RGB or ethernet lead? What resolution is the projector capable of providing? i.e. Full HD, SVGA or VGA How bright is the projector (in lumens)? Under 5000 lumens will require the room lighting to be dimmed and the windows to have blackout curtains. Below 2,500 lumens on a large screen will mean the picture is too dull to be legible. Where is the projector connection located? Is it next to the mixer desk? (If yes, then the computer for the 'PowerPoint' slideshows needs to be within 20m of the speaker' lectern for the slide advance presenter to operate reliably). How large is the screen and is it large enough for attendees to be able to read the projected slides from the back row. (At more than 20m distance you need at least a 15m wide screen) Can the speaker see the screen easily from the lectern?	
4	Can the equipment be left set-up if the meeting runs over several days, and is the venue lockable?	
5	Is WiFi or Ethernet available and at what speed?	

If the venue you plan to use does not have any, or only some of the facilities you require then the first thing you need to do is draw up a of the meeting room to scale which shows door locations and direction of swing, power sockets, and the Screen (or large plain white wall) location.   Measure the room yourself if the vendor cannot supply it.

You should also measure the WiFi speed and strengths at various locations in the room so that you can connect to the internet if needed. (I can guarantee that you will always get a speaker who requires internet connectivity as part of his talk even if all the speakers have been warned in advance there is none available!)

Once you have your plan make about 10 photocopies – you will need them as you try to work out how to fit everything in for the meeting.

In a Venue that has no built-in facilities

Data Projection equipment

- Start the room layout by marking the most suitable position for the data-projector which should be stood on a small desk high table or a solid projector stand.

- Does this screen position allow a clear view for ALL the participants?

- Do NOT mount the projector any higher than about 30cm above the table-top as you will block the view from behind the projector reducing the seating capacity.

- Keep a clear area between the projector and the screen about 1m wide to give access to the projector.

- Leave the routing for the power and HDMI cables until later in the planning.

Next the sound and computer equipment

- Do the talks/guest speakers require high-fi stereo sound or simple a PA system? If the first then you need to plan on pairs of speakers on both sides of the hall rather than having the speakers located down one side of the hall.

- How many loudspeakers does the venue need to allow everyone clear sound

- It should be noted that if you plan on one set if speakers located at the front of the hall then the sound level will be drastically louder at the front than the rear of the hall.

- You should plan on at least two pairs of loudspeakers (on stands), if possible, one pair about 2m in front of the stage/lectern and another pair about half-way down the length of the hall. If you do decide to stand the speakers on the floor you will halve the sound level through the hall – people absorb sound!

- Next, where is the best position for the sound/computer control desk location? Ideally this is at the rear of the hall with clear line of sight to the projector screen and the speaker's lectern. If this is more than 15-20m from the speakers lectern the slide advance 'presenter' will not work reliably unless you have a very high powered one which has a range of around 100m – cost about £15 and works with both PC and Mac.

- Finally you can plan the cable runs such that there will be no trip-hazards for:

  o The data projector mains power from the nearest socket and data (HDMI) from the computer.

  o The power for the sound mixer and other equipment from the nearest mains outlet – allow for an extension lead with at least 6 (six) outlet sockets

  o The loudspeaker leads back to the power-amplifier

  o If you have no radio-mics you will need to run XLR cables from the mixer to the Front for a lectern mic and a hand-held mike for the MC.

Finally power-up the computer and sound system and test the sound is what you expect, including the channels are correct for the left and right.

Power up the data projector, focus and adjust the optical zoom and that the picture fits the screen with the trapezoid correction adjusted.   Test the slide presenter remote from the Lectern!