

Alumni Leader Best Practices

Event Planning Checklist

Initial Planning (3-6 Months Before)

Define the event purpose and goals

- Networking? Fundraiser? Speaker panel? Mixed-purpose? Signature event?

Form event committee

- Roles: Chair, Communications Lead, Volunteer Coordinator, Treasurer
- Schedule regular planning meetings (in-person or virtual)

Plan the budget and funding

- Work closely with the treasurer
- Identify funding sources: chapter dues, ticket sales, university support, sponsors, etc.
- Determine the payment collection method; consider tax implications, especially for non-profit chapters

Location & Logistics (2-4 Months Before)

Select the date/time

- Avoid major holidays and University events
- Consider travel needs for out-of-town guests
- Confirm availability of special guests/University reps (if applicable)

Select the venue

- Central location and ADA accessibility
- Food & beverage options (including alcohol policies, kids' menu availability, tastings)
- Compliance with local regulations; ID checks with wristbands if alcohol is served
- Review rental fees, included services, and contracts
- Indoor/outdoor options and inclement weather plans
- Adequate restrooms, seating, parking, and overflow
- A/V equipment availability and electrical needs
- Transportation support (if needed)
- Options for venue-provided marketing assistance

Confirm permits and insurance

- Check local/state requirements for alcohol, food, fundraising, raffles
- Verify insurance needs and whether venue coverage applies

Identify additional vendors

- Catering, A/V, photography, live-streaming, signage/banners, décor, or set-up support

Determine ticketing method

- Advance sales recommended for larger events
- Online platforms are helpful, but be mindful of service fees and tax implications

Communication & Marketing (1-3 Months Before)

Submit event to WVU for inclusion on Alumni pages and marketing channels

Coordinate alumni outreach

- Request graphics/communications from WVU Alumni Association
- Review and approve materials promptly

Build your promotion plan

- Send a save-the-date email and initial social posts
- Schedule regular reminders across email and social media
- Encourage members to share and collaborate with the venue's marketing team

Prepare event materials

- Graphics, name tags, programs
- Event-specific signage
- Giveaways or branded items

Final Preparations (1-2 Weeks Before)

Event Readiness Checklist

- Confirm attendance numbers with venue/caterer
- Finalize seating and check-in arrangements
- Create and share detailed day-of schedule with staff, volunteers, and venue contacts
- Prepare talking points for speakers (if any)
- Confirm A/V, set-up needs, food/beverage, parking, and transportation with venue
- Send final reminder email to all attendees with event details and contact info

Event Day

Hosting a game watch? See the next page for a Game Watch Checklist.

Arrive early

- Ensure greeters are present to welcome attendees
- Test A/V and confirm it is working
- Set up food/beverage stations, merch areas, speaker spaces
- Install signage at entrance

Set up check-in area

- Staffed check-in with ticket scanning/collection
- Branded table materials (chapter flag, signage, name tags, swag, tablecloth, sign-up sheets)
- Cash on hand with 1-2 designated handlers

Capture marketing content

- Assign someone as point person for photography/video
- Post updates throughout the event as appropriate
- Capture content for future event promotion

Manage timing

- Keep the program running on schedule

Deliver opening remarks

- Acknowledge volunteers, venue, sponsors, special guests
- Reinforce event purpose and promote upcoming chapter events

Post-Event Follow-Up (1-2 Weeks After)

Post-Event Checklist

- Debrief and finalize all venue payments
- Send thank-you messages to attendees, volunteers, and sponsors
- Consider including a feedback request
- Share event photos on social media
- Reconcile the budget and report results to the chapter to illustrate event benefits
- Review and revise plan for event to improve for future events

Game Watch Checklist

- Chapter flag
- Email sign-up sheet for future information
- Exterior venue signage
- Welcome table signage (QR codes, drives, events)
- Giveaways (buttons, pens, stickers, etc.)
- Chapter koozies
- Tablecloth
- Bears & Blankets items/collection box
- Raffle tickets & bucket
- Cash to make change
- Square reader/electronic payment method
- Chapter swag for sale
- Raffle items & labeled buckets
- Pens, paper, scissors, tape
- Name tags (if applicable)