

# Backstage

*The Rise of*  
**VALUE-LED  
PARTNERSHIPS**

Why the old  
procurement  
logic is no longer  
fit for purpose

THE *Human*  
**ADVANTAGE**

Connection still  
beats technology in  
unforgettable  
events

# TAKING FLIGHT

Encore lifting Amway China's  
biggest celebration to  
extraordinary heights



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# Sky-High Spectacle

## HOW ENCORE REDEFINED CORPORATE EVENTS FOR AMWAY CHINA

### Setting a New Standard in Event Design

When your audience has seen it all, the only way forward is up – literally! For the 2025 Amway China Leadership Seminar in Melbourne, Encore was tasked with creating an experience so extraordinary it would captivate 16,000 of Amway's top performers - delegates who have attended the world's most lavish corporate events.

#### The result?

A month-long spectacle that redefined what's possible in event design.

### From Imagination to Impact

At Encore, we don't just plan events - we engineer spectacles. For an audience as discerning as Amway China's top performers, the bar isn't just high, it's stratospheric. Our creative process begins with a single question:

*What would make someone stop in their tracks and say, "I've never experienced anything like this before?"*

We draw inspiration from art, architecture, technology, theatre, and nature, then fuse these influences with cutting-edge event technology. The now-iconic 35-metre hot air balloon with 3D projection mapping was born from a simple sketch and a conversation about "elevating" the guest experience - both literally and emotionally.

Every idea is mapped to the client's brand and audience. We design sensory journeys, choreograph every moment, and obsess over details — from the cascade of a spotlight to the synchronisation of audio and animated LED visuals.

### Collaborative Creativity in Action

Our best ideas come from collaboration. Designers, technicians, choreographers, and producers work together to transform a simple theme - like '30th anniversary celebration' - into a fully immersive, multi-sensory journey. For Amway, this meant engineering a stage that supported a 30-person flash mob, integrating motion-triggered lighting cues, and unfolding a visual narrative across LED screens, live performance, and interactive installations.

Every element was prototyped, rehearsed, and refined. When the curtain rose, there was no second take - just seamless execution. →





## The Experience: A Vision Beyond the Expected

From the moment delegates landed in Australia, they were immersed in a curated journey. Branded welcome installations greeted them at 12 hotels across Melbourne, setting the tone for a four-day experience blending business, culture, and awe-inspiring entertainment.

### The Gala Dinner:

The crown jewel was the gala dinner at the Melbourne Showgrounds - a production that fused technology with theatrical storytelling. At its heart stood a 35-metre hot air balloon, a world-first in corporate event production! This kinetic sculpture lifted 30 metres into the air, wrapped in 3D projection mapping and synchronised to a custom soundtrack, leaving even the most seasoned delegates breathless.

### Immersion at Scale:

Encore transformed the venue with over 2,500 square metres of LED screens and 190 metres of projection surface. The 15-minute opener alone featured 85 performers, eight costume changes, and a whirlwind tour through global destinations; each brought to life with dancers, opera singers, BMX riders, and a confetti-blasting three-metre cube gift box.

### Culinary Theatre:

The gala dinner was a performance in itself. Guests enjoyed 4.5 tonnes of wagyu beef, 11,000 lobsters, and 16,000 jars of branded lollies, all while being serenaded by a violinist elevated on a scaffold and a six-minute drum solo synchronised with a light and graphics show. Every detail, from commemorative programme booklets to 3D glasses displaying hologram visuals, was designed to surprise and delight.

## Precision Meets Passion

Behind the scenes, Encore's team clocked over 11,000 hours of labour, coordinating 65 technicians and a global cast of performers. The logistics were staggering — activating up to 12 hotels in one morning, delivering six full-scale shows across April, and managing a production timeline that spanned nearly a year. The result was seamless, spectacular, and deeply personalised.

### The Encore Effect

At Encore, we don't just respond to briefs - we reimagine what's possible. The Amway China Leadership Seminar was a canvas for innovation, immersive storytelling, and precision production at its best. Our relentless creativity, fearless imagination, and collaborative culture enable us to deliver experiences that don't just impress - they resonate long after the doors close. ■



*I sincerely thank the Encore team for creating an unforgettable celebration for Amway China's 30th anniversary.*

*From the creativity of the performances to the breathtaking hot air balloon that became the symbol of our celebration, every element came together seamlessly. The feedback from our delegates has been overwhelmingly positive.*

*Encore didn't just produce an event; they created a moment in time that truly reflected the spirit and pride of Amway China."*

Simon Wu  
Special Events Amway China

See the Spectacle | [encore-apac.com/amway-25](https://encore-apac.com/amway-25)



# Experience Makers in the Digital Age

## WHERE HUMAN CONNECTION STEALS THE SHOW

**In a world obsessed with tech, it's the human connections that make events unforgettable – where moments become memories. Here's why connection always wins.**

Ever noticed how the best event memories aren't about the gadgets or screens, but the people you meet and the stories you share? Sure, AI and digital platforms are changing the game, but it's the human touch that lingers long after the lights go out.

### CONNECTION OVER COMPLEXITY

Tech is brilliant for creating wow-factor event – AI-curated content, engaging storytelling, immersive environments, personalised experiences. But ask anyone what they remember most, and it's always the connections - the networking, the feeling of being seen, those spontaneous conversations that spark new ideas. The real magic

happens when tech and people work together, with technology elevating the story rather than stealing the spotlight.

Take Encore's DEEPAL S07 launch at Bondi Beach.

Yes, there were curved LED screens, ambient lighting, and interactive zones – all the latest cutting-edge gear. But what truly set the event apart was how guests felt the brand's story come alive. The tech wasn't just there to impress; it was there to connect, engage and inspire.



### STORYTELLING BRIDGES THE GAP

If technology just delivers information, it's forgettable. But add a story, and suddenly an LED screen becomes a portal, a hologram a messenger; a soundscape and the heartbeat of a crowd. At Encore, we always start with the "why" – the purpose and the people – so every digital element becomes a connector, not a distractor.

### DESIGNING FOR EMOTION

Putting on events is more than pure logistics; it's about how you make people feel. Do they leave inspired, understood, uplifted? AI can suggest, but empathy anticipates. Automation streamlines, but authenticity surprises. We design for emotion first, using tech to amplify those moments – not drown them out. Personal touches and unexpected delights make guests feel part of something truly unique.

### THE ENCORE DIFFERENCE

At Encore, we understand the importance of making human connections at every event. It's the foundation



of every meaningful experience. Our teams listen deeply, understand client goals, and design with connection and engagement front of mind. Clients come to us for more than just the latest gear – they want vision turned into emotion, needs anticipated before they're spoken, and service that feels genuinely personalised. That's the Encore difference: creativity, care, and connection, woven into every experience.

### THE FUTURE: EXPERIENCE MAKERS

The best events of tomorrow's won't stand out by having the biggest screen – they'll stand out by weaving humanity into every aspect of event design and delivery. The most successful creators see themselves as experience makers, blending technology and creativity with the timeless need for connection.

Next time you plan an event, ask yourself: how are you making people feel connected? Let's chat about how we can help you create moments that matter. ■

### About the Author

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# Smarter Events, Still Human

Creativity where AI can't compute

## WHY THE HUMAN TOUCH WILL ALWAYS MATTER IN EVENTS

Let's face it – the events world is buzzing with talk of artificial intelligence. Some say AI is coming for our jobs, others say it's just here to help us orchestrate the perfect VIP seating arrangement and decode special meal requests with the precision of a chess grandmaster.

Will AI really replace event planners? Or will it simply make our lives easier, leaving us more time to do what we do best – create magic, solve chaos, and keep the show on the road?

### THE ROBOTS ARE HERE (BUT THEY STILL CAN'T FOLD A NAPKIN)

AI is already working behind the scenes – automating registrations, sending out reminders, and even matching delegates for networking. According to the *Event Industry News AI Report 2025*, nearly half of event organisers are using AI to streamline the boring bits. That means less time on spreadsheets, more time on showstoppers.

### EFFICIENCY UNLEASHED – CREATIVITY UNCAGED

Here's the good news – AI is brilliant at the repetitive stuff. Scheduling, data crunching, and those endless "Have you RSVP'd?" emails? Sorted. That leaves planners free to focus on the big ideas – the wow moments, the creative flourishes, and the personal touches that make guests feel like VIPs.

A recent report from the *World Economic Forum* found that while AI excels at automating and analysing routine tasks, it cannot replicate the nuanced decision-making required when a high-profile guest's unexpected request demands immediate, creative problem-solving. That's where human planners shine – drawing on experience, intuition, and empathy to navigate complexity and deliver seamless experiences, even under pressure.



“AI can help us plan smarter, but it can't replace the heart and soul of an event.”

### MAN AND MACHINE – THE DREAM TEAM

The future isn't about humans versus robots – it's about working together. The World Economic Forum emphasised in its *Future*

*of Jobs* reports and related publications that the most successful organisations will be those that harness the strengths of both AI and human talent. Think of AI as your backstage crew – efficient, reliable, and never asking for a coffee break.

Besides, have you ever seen a robot charm a client, calm a nervous presenter, or negotiate with a supplier who's "just popped out for lunch" but hasn't been seen all day? Didn't think so.

### THE HUMAN TOUCH – STILL IRREPLACEABLE

AI can help us plan smarter, but it can't replace the heart and soul of an event. It can't sense the mood in the room, improvise a plan B (or C, or D), or create those goosebump moments that guests remember for years. That's the magic only a human planner can deliver.

### THE HUMAN ELEMENT: STILL THE STAR OF EVERY SHOW

So, will AI replace event planners? Not a chance. It will make us faster, sharper, and more creative – but the real magic will always come from the people who know how to turn a vision into reality, even when the Wi-Fi drops out and the keynote speaker's stuck in traffic. ■

# Designing Event Experiences That Connect

## PERSONALISATION, TECHNOLOGY AND THE HUMAN TOUCH

Planners and producers across APAC are under more pressure than ever to deliver meaningful, memorable, and measurable experiences. Attendees expect connection. Clients expect impact. And brands expect every moment to work harder than the last.

At Encore, we've seen this shift play out across conferences, galas, product launches and incentive events throughout the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region. With more organisations competing for attention, personalisation, purposeful engagement, and carefully considered use of technology have become the core drivers of Return on Experience (ROE).

### WHY PERSONALISATION MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

Personalisation isn't a trend for modern events; it's an expectation. Attendees

want to feel seen, understood and valued – and event planners now have unprecedented tools to deliver this.

Encore's creative and technical teams regularly build tailored audience journeys for events across APAC, combining design, content, staging, and technology to shape experiences that reflect brand identity while still adapting to individual needs. From interactive content to AI driven event design, participation and evaluation, our approach places the attendee at the centre of the experience, not just in the room.

Personalisation can be as simple as tailored content tracks or as immersive as dynamic multimedia that reacts to audience behaviour. When people feel the event is speaking directly to them, their engagement, satisfaction and retention skyrocket. →





“When people feel the event is speaking directly to them, their engagement, satisfaction and retention skyrocket.”



**HUMAN CONNECTION WILL ALWAYS BE THE HEART OF EVENTS**

Despite the rise of digital and hybrid formats, the APAC market continues to value authentic human connection as a primary reason to gather. Shared experiences – from networking to celebration moments to brand storytelling – are what make events memorable long after the final cue.

Encore’s largescale productions across APAC are designed around this principle, using rich storytelling enhanced by technology and immersive scenic environments to

spark collective emotion and shared energy. Whether it’s an impactful announcement or product reveal, a CEO hologram connecting live from overseas, or a bespoke networking area to bring communities together, the goal is the same – bringing people closer.

**AI’S GROWING ROLE IN ENHANCING EVENT EXPERIENCES**

AI isn’t here to replace the craft of event planning – it’s here to enhance it.

Encore’s investment in AI powered innovation gives planners powerful tools to improve accessibility, engagement and

responsiveness across the attendee journey. Across APAC, we’re already implementing:

- AI Translate for real-time multilingual audio and text translation
- AI Engage for audience perception analytics and behavioural insights
- AI enhanced content creation to accelerate design and ideation workflows
- AI-enabled event design creating life-like renders in real-time
- AI supported hybrid tools such as intelligent meeting cameras to improve participation and inclusivity
- AI session summaries tool that analyses live speech and transforms it into idea clouds, meeting summaries, key takeaways and transcripts.

These AI solutions help eliminate accessibility barriers, create richer engagement data, and help planners build more responsive and inclusive experiences. Importantly, they also free up time and budget for planners to focus on strategy, creativity and storytelling – the human elements AI can never replicate.

This aligns with the principles outlined in Encore’s global guidance on content personalisation and ROE, including the role of AI in tailoring content and improving audience insight (source reference provided by the user). →



## ENHANCE YOUR DELEGATE'S EVENT EXPERIENCE WITH THESE IDEAS

Here's a mix of creative, human-centred and tech-enabled strategies you can deploy to elevate ROE at your next event. All are drawn from Encore APAC's real production practices and solutions.

### 1. Personalise the Content Journey

- Create multiple content streams so attendees can self-select sessions aligned to their interests.
- Use AI translation tools like AI Translate to deliver content in attendees' preferred language – essential for multicultural APAC events and breaking down the barriers for inclusion.
- Tailor multimedia and visual storytelling so different audience groups see themselves reflected in the narrative e.g., market specific versions of opening videos.
- Offer customisable digital agendas powered by event apps to make each participant's schedule feel curated and deliberate.

### 2. Design for Human Behaviour and Emotional Connection

- Use theatrical scenic and lighting design to set emotional tone and build anticipation – a hallmark of Encore's largescale productions across APAC.
- Craft shared "wow" moments such as projection mapped reveals, immersive 3D LED environments or choreographed audiovisual cues.
- Create social spaces that encourage organic networking, whether through interactive installations or purpose-built lounges.
- Use storytelling as the anchor – ensure every transition, visual, and message contributes to a cohesive emotional arc.

### 3. Leverage AI for RealTime Engagement and Accessibility

- Use AI Engage to understand what parts of your event resonate most. Adjust content on the fly or use insights to improve the next session.
- Enable real-time multilingual accessibility through AI Translate, ensuring every participant can fully engage regardless of language.



“AI solutions help planners build more responsive and inclusive experiences”

- Use AI assisted cameras to enhance hybrid attendee visibility and presence – bridging the gap between in room and remote participants.
- Deploy AI analytics post event to understand behavioural insights, dwell time, sentiment and engagement peaks.

### 4. Build Multisensory Immersive Experiences

- Combine lighting, sound, scent and kinetic staging to create deeper emotional layers (Encore APAC frequently uses multisensory design in gala and incentive productions).
- Use interactive digital elements such as touchscreens or motion responsive content to increase engagement.
- Incorporate live instruments, cultural elements or movement to tap into local identity and connection – particularly powerful for APAC regional events.

### 5. Make Every Touchpoint Seamless and Considered

Use integrated creative + production + technology teams (Encore's signature model across APAC) to ensure every transition feels intentional.

- Craft a seamless, effortless guest journey – from registration to final farewell.
- Use technology to enhance, not dominate – ensure digital interactions feel natural and add value rather than creating complexity.



## ENCORE TRANSFORMS EVENTS

As a global leader in creative event production with extensive APAC experience, Encore has invested in cutting-edge technology, creative capability and immersive production techniques to support event planners in elevating every touchpoint of the attendee journey.

Encore's combination of creativity, scale, and innovative technology solutions positions planners to elevate every moment – from the first invite to the final applause. In a world where audience expectations are rising, the winners will be those who design experiences that feel personal, purposeful, and impossible to forget. Whether transforming an ice rink into a high-end sales incentive celebration, creating world first hot air balloon projection-mapped experience, or a fully personalised, multiday program for thousands of delegates, the focus is always the same – designing events around people and amplifying their emotional connection to the content, brand and purpose. ■

A large crowd of people at a night event, with a DJ in the foreground and a saxophonist playing a golden saxophone. In the background, a large screen displays a white 'Y' on a red background. The scene is lit with vibrant colors and features sparks or fireworks in the air.

# The Power of Sound

**WHY SOUND IS THE INVISIBLE FORCE SHAPING EMOTION, MEMORY AND CONNECTION IN LIVE EVENTS**

When people talk about immersive events, the conversation often starts with visuals. LED walls, projection mapping and scenography all play a role. But one of the most powerful and under-used tools in experience design is sound. Audio shapes emotion, guides attention and transforms how people feel within a space.

For event planners, creative use of audio is no longer just about ensuring microphones work and music cues land on time. It's about designing sound intentionally, using it as a storytelling device that deepens connection and elevates the overall experience.

## Why sound matters more than ever

In live environments, sound is often the first sense to register and the last one people remember. Even before a stage comes into view, audio sets expectation. A low ambient hum can calm a room; a rising music cue can create anticipation; silence can sharpen focus.

As events compete harder for attention, planners are recognising that audio is not a background element. It is a primary experience driver that influences emotion, energy and memory in ways visuals alone cannot achieve.

## Designing soundscapes, not playlists

Great event audio is rarely accidental. Rather than relying on generic playlists, leading planners are designing soundscapes that evolve throughout the program. Arrival, transitions, breaks and key moments each benefit from a distinct audio identity aligned to the audience's emotional journey.

Custom soundscapes can subtly shift mood without drawing attention to themselves. They help guests move seamlessly from networking to learning, from anticipation to celebration, without explicit direction.

## Using audio to support storytelling

Storytelling sits at the heart of effective events, and sound is one of its most powerful tools. A carefully chosen soundtrack can transport audiences, reinforce narrative themes and create continuity across a program.

Audio cues can also be used to punctuate key moments: signalling a reveal, introducing a speaker, or marking a transition. When audio and visual elements are choreographed together, the experience feels intentional and immersive rather than fragmented.

## Spatial audio and audience immersion

Advances in event audio technology now allow sound to move within a space, not just fill it. Spatialised audio, directional speakers and zoned sound design create moments where audiences feel surrounded by the experience rather than observing it from the outside.

This approach is particularly effective for immersive dinners, brand activations and experiential showcases, where sound can guide movement, focus attention or reveal elements in sequence. →



“A carefully chosen soundtrack can transport audiences, reinforce narrative themes and create continuity across a program.”



### Enhancing accessibility and inclusion through sound

Audio design also plays a critical role in accessibility. Clear, balanced sound ensures content is understood by everyone, while assistive listening, multilingual audio and real-time translation help events reach more diverse audiences.

For planners, inclusive audio design is no longer a nice-to-have. It is central to delivering experiences that feel considered, professional and genuinely welcoming.

### Sound as a strategic planning tool

The most successful events treat audio as a strategic layer rather than a technical afterthought. Early collaboration between creative, production and technical teams allows sound to be designed alongside content, spatial layout and lighting.

When audio is planned early, it becomes an amplifier for impact rather than a constraint, helping planners create environments that feel immersive, intentional and emotionally resonant.

### Designing with intention

Immersive events are not defined by technology alone, but by how thoughtfully it is applied. Sound has the unique ability to influence mood, behaviour and memory in real time. For planners looking to elevate their next event, designing with audio in mind is one of the most effective ways to create experiences that linger long after the final cue. ■

# IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES UNLEASHED

## RE-IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR YOUR EVENTS.

Step into a world where creativity meets innovation. From jaw-dropping conferences to show-stopping galas, Encore transforms your vision into unforgettable moments.

Picture this... your most ambitious ideas brought to life with stunning visuals, cutting-edge technology, and flawless execution. With Encore, your imagination takes centre stage, creating indelible memories that linger long after the final curtain falls.

LET'S MAKE EXTRAORDINARY!  
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# How Storytelling Shaped the Million Dollar Lunch

## A REIMAGINED 1920S DREAMSCAPE SET THE STAGE FOR GENEROSITY TO SHINE BRIGHTER THAN EVER

When the Children's Cancer Foundation marked the 20th anniversary of the Million Dollar Lunch, the brief went beyond staging a premium charity gala. The goal was to honour two decades of impact, celebrate generosity, and redefine what a modern corporate fundraising event could feel like.

Encore responded with a complete creative transformation of Crown Melbourne's Palladium Ballroom, reimagining the space as a contemporary expression of 1920s glamour designed to heighten emotional connection and philanthropic momentum.

### A 1920S THEME, REDEFINED

Rather than relying on familiar period clichés, Encore treated the 1920s as a strategic design framework. Drawing on Art Deco influences, the team developed a visual language that blended historic opulence with modern restraint through emerald tones, gold geometry, reflective finishes and sculptural lighting. The result was an environment that felt timeless rather than retro, positioning the event as an elevated world of luxury aligned with the Foundation's legacy.

### COLLABORATION AT THE CORE

The success of the event was driven by close collaboration across creative, styling, technical production and fabrication teams. Designers and technicians worked in parallel from the outset, ensuring creative ambition was matched with practical execution.

A custom Art Deco-inspired chandelier anchored the room, while velvet-lined installations, sculptural staging added depth and texture. The guest journey was carefully choreographed from arrival through to the candle-lined Hall of Fame staircase.

### STORYTELLING IN EVERY DETAIL

Encore's multimedia team extended the visual identity across motion graphics, LED content and screen design. Even functional elements such as donation prompts were treated as part of the narrative, reinforcing a cohesive emotional arc throughout the evening.

### PRECISION UNDER PRESSURE

Live performances introduced dynamic shifts across the program. When MC Toni Childs moved into the audience, Encore's crew adapted in real time, adjusting camera, lighting and audio to maintain seamless coverage. This responsiveness reflects the production discipline required for high-profile, high-stakes events.

### WHY IT MATTERS

The Million Dollar Lunch demonstrates how legacy events can be reinvented without losing their identity. By aligning creative strategy, storytelling and technical mastery, Encore elevated the guest experience while supporting meaningful fundraising outcomes.

For event planners, the project is a reminder that thoughtful design and collaboration can transform a brief into an experience that resonates well beyond the room. ■



“By treating the 1920s as a strategic design framework rather than a theme, Encore created an experience that felt timeless, not retro.”

# 5 Pressures Re-shaping APAC's Event Industry in 2026

MOMENTUM IS BACK, EXPECTATIONS ARE HIGHER, AND THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT ARE SHIFTING FAST. EXPLORE WHY 2026 DEMANDS SMARTER PARTNERSHIPS, SHARPER DELIVERY, AND FUTURE-READY TEAMS



The APAC events industry enters 2026 with something it hasn't felt in years: momentum. According to the Encore's *'Industry Trends & Intelligence Report 2026'*, confidence sits at an extraordinary 88.4 percent – with a large number of event leaders saying they're ready to deliver on ambitious programs. But beneath that optimism sits a harder truth: the market is shifting faster than many organisations can adapt. The pressures shaping the year ahead aren't about demand. They're about delivery, capability, and the widening gap between what audiences expect and what internal teams can execute.

What's emerging is a new performance threshold for the APAC region – one where reliability, creative intelligence, and strategic partnership matter more than ever.

## 1 The partnership pivot

For the past decade, procurement shaped the way events were bought. Today, that logic is collapsing. Event leaders are deprioritising price and elevating value – specifically reliability, creativity, technical mastery and problem-solving. They're no longer asking, "Who can deliver the brief?" but rather, "Who can elevate it?" Encore's research confirms that organisations are actively moving away from transactional suppliers and toward long-term strategic production partners. The expectation has shifted from "deliver what we asked for" to "help us think smarter."

## 2 Execution pressure at an all-time high

Confidence is high, but so are stakes. Most senior stakeholders now expect flawless execution – seamless delivery, tight project management, zero drama. Good isn't good enough anymore. Planners feel it; suppliers feel it; executives demand it. The real challenge of 2026 isn't selling events – it's delivering them at a higher standard, with more complexity, fewer buffers, and faster decision cycles.

## 3 Technology demand outrunning capability

Immersive environments, real-time analytics, hybrid broadcast capability and audience

engagement platforms are no longer "nice to haves." They've become essential infrastructure. Yet many organisations lack the internal capability to implement them – a gap that's widening as expectations rise. Planners face a paradox: technology is critical to engagement, but very few teams have the time, budget or expertise to deploy it effectively. The pressure lands squarely on partners who can integrate creativity, technical systems and experience design seamlessly.

## 4 Sustainability: a mandate without a roadmap

Sustainability has become a board-level conversation – but operational readiness remains low. Only 30.5 percent of respondents say their organisations have sustainability targets, and a mere 14.3 percent track carbon impact at all.

Planners know sustainability matters. Leadership expects progress. But the tools, frameworks and reporting systems simply aren't in place. This disconnect is creating growing demand for partners who can bring real solutions – not just rhetoric.

## 5 The data & measurement imperative

If 2020–2024 was about returning to live experiences, 2025–26 is about proving their value. Senior leaders want post-event intelligence, not post-event anecdotes. They want engagement analytics, behavioural insight, ROI narratives, and evidence for budget allocation.

Encore's research shows a clear chorus from respondents: the need for reporting, clarity and executive-level insight has never been louder. Events are now treated as performance assets – and planners are expected to demonstrate impact with the same confidence as digital channels.

## Future-ready teams

The future belongs to teams who blend intelligence, creativity, operational excellence and partnership thinking, and who can prove the impact of every experience they create. ■



# Turn Any Event Brief into a Styled Masterpiece

## EVENTS AREN'T JUST GATHERINGS – THEY'RE MINI UNIVERSES WAITING TO BE DESIGNED

In the world of events, attention is the ultimate currency. Today's audiences don't just want to attend – they want to feel, interact, and remember. At Encore, we believe creativity isn't a luxury; it's a necessity. And the good news? You don't need a blockbuster budget to deliver a show-stopping experience. With the right design elements, any event brief can be transformed into a styled masterpiece. Start with the unexpected. Imagine walking into a ballroom where the ceiling isn't static – it's alive. Suspended above guests, kinetic spheres perform a choreographed ballet of light and motion, responding to music and mood. These dynamic installations create a sense of theatre from the moment guests

enter, turning the ceiling into a living canvas. Perfect for gala dinners, product launches, or even conferences, kinetic spheres add drama without dominating the space. Layer in illusion. Transparent LED and holographic screens that blur the line between physical and digital, displaying visuals that float like magic above the stage. Picture a keynote with the presenter appearing as a hologram, or a gala where cultural motifs shimmer in mid-air. These elements don't just decorate – they immerse, creating a multi-sensory experience that feels futuristic yet accessible. Shape your story. Forget the standard rectangle. Our shaped LED panels and spherical LED installations

allow you to frame content in bold, unexpected ways. From stunning, ornate-inspired arches to glowing digital spheres, these designs add cultural depth and visual intrigue. Add a touch of iridescence. Iridescent film brings colour-shifting magic to any space. On a grand scale, it can wrap scenic panels or stage backdrops, creating surfaces that shimmer and change as guests move. For smaller details, think centrepieces wrapped in dichroic film – scattering rainbow tones across the table and sparking conversation. It's a simple way to turn ordinary décor into a styled masterpiece. Add movement and interaction. Motion tracking technology can sync graphics to live performers,

making every gesture trigger a cascade of visual effects. Combine this with programmable LED props, and you've got entertainment that feels like art in motion. For high-energy finales, kinetic choreography paired with laser shows and confetti cannons guarantees a crescendo guests will never forget.

Light up the dancefloor. LED floors are a showstopper for gala dinners, product activations, and high-energy parties. Imagine guests dancing on a surface that pulses with colour, displays brand graphics, or reacts to movement. It's immersive, interactive, and unforgettable – a perfect way to make the entire room feel alive. Or an LED DJ booth isn't just functional – it's a visual anchor. Wrapped in dynamic LED panels, it becomes part of the entertainment, synchronising beats with light and motion.

Why does this matter? Because events are no longer static – they're stories told through light, sound, and emotion. These creative elements aren't just for show; they serve a purpose. They guide guests through spaces, reinforce brand narratives, and create Instagram-worthy moments that amplify your message far beyond the room.

The best part? These ideas scale. Whether you're planning a 200-person conference or a 2,000-guest gala, creative technology can be tailored to fit your vision and budget. Want subtle sophistication? Opt for glowing centrepieces and architectural lighting. Need high-impact spectacle? Cue the kinetic spheres, holographic screens, and iridescent walls.

At Encore, we don't just design events – we design wonder. By blending cultural storytelling with cutting-edge tech, we create experiences that captivate, connect, and linger in memory long after the last spotlight fades. ■

# The Rise of Value-Led Partnerships

## WHY THE OLD PROCUREMENT LOGIC IS NO LONGER FIT FOR PURPOSE

For more than a decade, procurement dictated how event partners were chosen: compare quotes, pick the lowest acceptable number, and assume most suppliers were interchangeable. It was a system designed for cost control, not experience design – and it worked only as long as events remained predictable, linear and low-risk.

That world is gone.

The latest industry intelligence shows an events landscape that is confident and ambitious but operating under growing pressure. The challenge heading into 2026 isn't generating demand – it's navigating the complexity, expectations and delivery risks that come with modern experience design. And in this environment, the old "lowest price wins" approach has become a liability.

Planners now look for partners who reduce risk, elevate thinking and strengthen outcomes – because transactional relationships slow teams down, while value-led partnerships enable them to meet the moment.

Across the region, event decision-makers are making one thing clear: price is no longer the point.

Value is.

## A Quiet Revolution: What Planners Want Has Changed

The research reveals that organisations are no longer choosing partners based on who can execute a list of requirements – they're choosing the partner who can elevate the brief, bring intelligence to the table, and offer creative and technical leadership long before a cue sheet exists.

When asked which criteria matter most in selecting a production partner, respondents overwhelmingly prioritised:

- Reliability and delivery confidence
- Creative thinking and design capability
- Technical mastery across production disciplines
- Proactive problem solving
- Strategic understanding of business objectives

These are not vendor level expectations. They are partnership level expectations. In other words, organisations aren't buying production. They're buying confidence.

## From Order Taking to Outcome Shaping

If procurement defined the last decade, partnership will define the next. Price tells you nothing about whether a partner can keep a show alive when something fails at 8:17pm.

Price does not predict creativity, resilience or the ability to read a room. Price cannot guarantee that the partner understands brand strategy, audience psychology or business outcomes.

And that is precisely why the industry is shifting. Event leaders in the study repeatedly emphasised a desire for collaborators who can think with them – not just for them. The shift is so pronounced that the traditional question: "Who can deliver the brief?" has been replaced with a more strategic one: "Who can help us think smarter?"

That alone signals a new level of maturity in the region's event ecosystem. It also raises the bar for production partners, who must deliver not

only flawless execution, but also perspective, foresight and creative intelligence – qualities clients increasingly see as essential to navigating stakeholder pressure and rising audience expectations.

## Why This Matters Now

Confidence in the events industry is high – 87% of leaders surveyed report strong optimism for 2026. But optimism does not equate to ease. What's actually happening is a widening gap between expectation and internal capacity.

The pressure to deliver high impact events has intensified. The need for cross functional creative, technical and strategic integration has increased. And hybrid teams, strained timelines, and rising executive scrutiny demand deeper partnership, not lighter.

Transactional relationships – once sufficient – now slow planners down. Value led relationships accelerate them. →





## The Real Value in Value-Led Partnerships

This shift isn't about spending more. It's about spending smarter.

Planners told us they want partners who:

- Anticipate problems before they emerge
- Translate business strategy into experience design
- Bring data, insight and measurement to the table
- Think creatively within constraints
- Guide internal stakeholders with authority and clarity

These expectations reflect a universal truth across the comments and data from Encore's APAC Event Trends Report 2026:

Event leaders don't just want a production partner. They want a thinking partner.

- Event leaders don't just want a production partner. They want a thinking partner.
- One who brings reliability when stakes are high.
- One who brings creativity when audiences demand more.
- One who brings strategy when leadership wants results.
- One who brings problem-solving when timelines compress and complexity rises.

In short, the industry wants: A partner who multiplies capability, not one who fulfills an invoice.



## A Future Built on Partnership, Not Procurement

If you're an event planner in APAC, the implications are significant.

This new partnership paradigm frees you from the limitations of vendor management and opens the door to a more collaborative, strategic way of working – one that positions events as performance assets, not operational line items.

And if you're a production partner? The expectations have never been higher – but neither has the opportunity to lead.

The winners in 2026 will be the partners who show up not only with solutions, but with insight; not only with craft, but with curiosity; not only with capability, but with the ability to elevate every stage of the experience.

The industry has spoken. Price doesn't drive partnership. Value does. And in a year defined by rising confidence and rising expectations, value is the currency that matters most. ■

# The minds behind the magic

MEET THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT LOOK EASY (...EVEN WHEN IT ABSOLUTELY ISN'T)



## CREATIVE MAVERICK

**Julz Partington**

As Creative Director for Encore APAC, Julz's creative team that transforms blank spaces into immersive stories. Blending scenic design, multimedia, content and light, she creates human-centred experiences that balance bold creative expression with elegance and precision.



## TECHNICAL TRAILBLAZER

**Jack Poulos**

Jack is Encore's technical expert, translating ambitious creative ideas into reliable, high-performance delivery. From rigging and LED to audio, lighting and show control, he ensures complex productions run smoothly under pressure.



## CONDUCTOR OF COLLABORATION

**Katherine Pfahl**

Katherine partners with hotel brands and venue owners across APAC to elevate their event offering. She helps organisations unlock the full potential of their spaces by connecting guest experience with clear commercial outcomes through long-term partnership.



## PARTNERSHIP PIONEER

**Amanda Vella**

Amanda works at the intersection of creativity and commercial thinking, building strong partnerships across Singapore. She connects venue partners and clients through strategic collaboration that turns conversations into practical, high-value outcomes.



## COMMERCIAL ALCHEMIST

**Michael Magafa**

Michael leads Encore APAC's commercial function, guiding client experience teams to turn ambition into outcomes and vision into value. Known for aligning creative, marketing and commercial streams, he builds trusted partnerships and drives execution anchored in clarity, storytelling and service excellence.



## PRECISION PRODUCER

**John Schryver**

John brings creative ideas to life through disciplined production and flawless execution. Aligning run sheets, suppliers and show calling, he turns complexity into clean, well-timed experiences that allow audiences to feel only the magic. His calm, considered approach ensures every moment lands exactly as it should.



## COLLABORATION CATALYST

**Hayley Lemon**

Hayley brings a fresh perspective to every brief, helping clients move beyond "the way it's always been done." She thrives at the intersection of imagination and execution, shaping collaborative pathways that feel both exciting and achievable. Expect conversations that spark ideas, pathways that didn't exist before and partnerships that grow.



## CONNECTION ARCHITECT

**Sophie Pouzin**

Sophie builds genuine, productive venue relationships through thoughtful collaboration and a strong ability to read the room. She turns conversations into momentum, supporting partnerships that are built on trust and shared success. Her calm confidence helps teams navigate challenges with ease, and her instinct for connection ensures every project feels like a shared win. ■

# Horoscopes for Event Planners



## Aries (March 21 - April 19)

Your bold ideas take centre stage this month. A last-minute venue hiccup could actually lead to an even better solution - trust your instincts. Clients will admire your confidence, so let your vision lead the way.



## Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Slow and steady wins the gig. You'll find beauty in the details others overlook, especially around décor and run-sheet timing. A budget surprise works out in your favour - think creative re-purposing rather than overspending.



## Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

Communication is your superpower right now. Expect a networking moment that turns into a long-term collaboration. Just be sure to double-check your emails - a tiny mix-up could change the mood of a whole event.



## Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

Your nurturing side shines as you create spaces guests rave about. You'll intuitively know how to manage tricky stakeholders. Mid-month, take extra care of your own energy - burnout doesn't RSVP, it just turns up.



## Leo (July 23 - August 22)

Spotlight's on you, and you're absolutely ready. A creative risk you take with a theme or activation pays off brilliantly. Just avoid over committing - even Leos can't be everywhere at once (no matter how glamorous you look doing it).



## Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

You're the master of precision this month. Spreadsheets align, timelines behave, and suppliers appreciate your clarity. Don't be shocked when people call you a miracle worker - you've earned it. Celebrate small wins; they add up.



## Libra (September 23 - October 22)

Balance returns to your workflow. A tricky decision about event styling finally becomes clear once you listen to your gut rather than the committee. Partnerships flourish - lean into the collaborators who energise you.



## Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

Your focus sharpens, making you unstoppable when solving complex event challenges. A negotiation goes your way, but stay open - a mysterious new opportunity is forming behind the scenes.



## Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)

Adventure fuels your planning this month. You'll be drawn to bold colours, unfamiliar venues, or immersive experiences. Travel inspiration may strike unexpectedly, so keep notes - your next proposal might rely on it.



## Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)

Your ambition pays off. A project you've been quietly investing in finally gains traction. You'll impress senior stakeholders with your reliability, but remember: perfection isn't always necessary - impact is.



## Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

Innovation guides you. Tech-forward ideas, sustainable elements, or unconventional layouts win people over. Be ready for someone to ask you to lead a new initiative - they've noticed your originality.



## Pisces (February 19 - March 20)

Your creativity flows effortlessly. A dreamy concept becomes a practical reality thanks to your intuition and timing. Stay grounded mid-month when emotions run high - clear boundaries will help you deliver brilliance.

# Find-A-Word

CAN YOU FIND ALL THE HIDDEN WORDS?

L	K	M	C	A	K	O	M	A	E	R	T	S	E	V	I	L	M	I	D	A	S	O
F	T	U	A	B	Z	P	Z	T	P	C	L	L	G	I	L	F	M	R	O	G	E	E
O	L	S	M	T	M	O	B	H	I	C	U	A	R	H	L	P	M	E	H	U	N	S
Y	R	I	E	N	Y	H	S	S	X	A	V	U	E	R	P	B	E	X	G	R	C	U
Q	O	C	R	E	E	S	E	T	E	T	U	S	T	M	E	E	T	I	N	G	O	P
L	L	N	A	M	J	K	A	E	L	E	Y	I	P	K	C	Q	S	M	T	M	R	E
T	T	T	G	N	G	R	T	C	T	R	R	V	M	P	N	L	Y	R	E	R	E	R
X	R	R	E	I	N	O	I	H	O	I	E	O	O	V	E	I	S	E	G	A	S	H
G	A	E	N	A	I	W	N	R	T	N	C	I	R	K	R	G	D	K	D	L	C	E
N	D	I	D	T	K	V	G	U	E	G	O	D	P	B	E	H	N	A	U	A	R	A
I	E	F	A	R	R	B	M	N	M	X	R	U	E	E	F	T	U	E	B	C	E	D
T	S	I	T	E	O	Q	O	S	S	Y	D	A	L	X	N	I	O	P	H	J	E	S
E	H	L	H	T	W	H	G	S	Y	W	I	T	E	P	O	N	S	S	L	W	N	E
E	O	P	H	N	T	M	Z	Y	P	B	N	Y	T	D	C	G	X	N	P	Y	R	T
M	W	M	C	E	E	M	C	Z	R	E	G	I	S	T	R	A	T	I	O	N	U	A
N	Z	A	V	E	N	O	G	B	M	R	S	V	P	E	T	G	U	E	S	T	S	B

Find the following hidden words in the puzzle. Words can be found in any direction.

- |               |           |        |
|---------------|-----------|--------|
| ENTERTAINMENT | AMPLIFIER | GUESTS |
| REGISTRATION  | RECORDING | ENCORE |
| TELEPROMPTER  | WORKSHOP  | MIXER  |
| AUDIOVISUAL   | LIGHTING  | MUSIC  |
| PIXEL TOTEMS  | CATERING  | RSVP   |
| SOUND SYSTEM  | TECH RUNS | CAMERA |
| CONFERENCE    | MEETING   | SCREEN |
| NETWORKING    | SPEAKER   | AGENDA |
| LIVE STREAM   | SEATING   | BUDGET |
| TRADESHOW     | HEADSET   |        |



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