



Panoptic Events

USING THE FIVE SENSES IN EVENTS

BY PANOPTIC EVENTS

WE CREATE EXPERIENCES

Panoptic /pan'optik/ (Adj) "taking in all parts, aspects, etc, in a single view; all-embracing"

Meet The CEO



Craig McGee

I am a lover of travel, good food, learning from other cultures, passionate about self development, and football. My approach is "Choose life first."

Professionally, I have ran events all over the world for 18 years, from humble beginnings in Glasgow bars, to major Festivals in the USA and high-end MICE Events in Brazil.

Self-employed from the age of 18, I chose to follow my passion for Music & Events instead of an Economics course (whilst gaining a degree.)

From a background in the music industry, I set up Panoptic Events in 2014 and we have delivered over 3000 Experiences via Panoptic Worldwide in this time. Clients have included Microsoft, Audi, and Red Bull.

I also have a system I implement day to day based on Visioning.

www.panopticevents.com



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Introduction

The Five Senses with Panoptic Events

The five senses are essential to our understanding of the world around us and how we perceive it. If we lose one of our senses, it is said that our other senses get 'stronger' to try to counter the imbalance, but you will never be able to fully replace smell with better hearing.

When working in events it can be so easy to fall into the trap of only doing what is standard or expected of an event.

Here at Panoptic our goal is to take the standard and push it. Part of 'pushing it' involves proper implementation of engaging the five senses at every event. To facilitate this we spent some time researching the how, and here is what we found.



Sight

Events At First Sight

Sight is one of the easiest senses to engage in an event, and is the first sense we use within this setting. While this makes sight a simple sense to start using, it takes something extraordinary to fully engaging people's visual acuity.

Advertising

One way to effectively engage people's visual awareness of your event is to build hype weeks and months prior to it, through advertising. If the invites or adverts are bright and enticing it will engage people's attention and establish a standard of what to expect at the event.

The style of the advert will feed into the style of the event.

Event Lighting

On site is where the real magic of sight happens.

Event lighting is amazing for creating the required atmosphere and vibe within any event. No matter what is wanted for an event, there's a lighting style for it.

Want to draw the guests to a certain booth or stage? Highlight it. Want more ambient lighting to create a venue-wide atmosphere? Use discrete lighting all around the room to warm or cool the energy.



Sight

Colour Phycology

Did you know colours have unique meanings? Color psychology is "the study of colours in relation to human behaviour".

Not only do colours reflect emotions and states of mind, but their meaning can change depending on where you are in the world. With this in mind, it can mean the difference between a great colour scheme and accidental embarrassment when hosting events abroad.

One easy example of this is yellow - in Scotland it can represent sunlight and happiness, while in France it can represent betrayal and in Germany jealousy.

Colour Phycology Example:



Sight

What About The Stage?

Outside of the colour theory side of an event's visuals, there is also the structure to consider: What about the stage? Is it traditional or does it make a bold statement with some modern architecture?

Stage design, as well as venue dressing, can lead to some of the most interesting aspects of visual design. Projection mapping can create a much more immersive experience and once again, helps to draw the guests to a specific area. It can even be interactive!

OPPENHEIMER | Multi Sensory Exhibition Stands Case Study

Oppenheimer have taken the concept of using all senses within their event space and shown us a great example of what can be achieved. At Fine Food Australia 2019 Oppenheimer's stand was carefully designed to create engagement with all the senses, giving lots of opportunity for guests to touch, feel, smell and taste everything on display.

The stand was designed from the ground up to be inviting to guests, the front created the cosy feeling of a cafe, using bright coloured walls, natural wood counters and plants to create an eye catching scene, while also being a functioning kitchen.

The stand was also lit to encourage people to come in and engage with the demonstrations and products. The front, where the seating area was, was well lit to draw people in and highlight the seats and reinforce the cafe vibe. The stand also had two TV's on its walls, one of which was showing brand content, while the other was used to show the live demonstrations, allowing more people to see, not just those at the counter.



Sound

It's More Than A Soundtrack

Sound is another sense which is well used at events for many of the same reasons as sight, as both are easily incorporated naturally.

A soundtrack using a music streaming source, is an effective scene setter and helps to amplify the atmosphere and experience of the event.

However, audio is much more than just the soundtrack for an event.

Let's Talk Foley...

Something that many may not think about for live sound is ambient sound or the use of Foley - very specific and carefully created sounds to mimic other settings.

For example, if an event involves turning a hall into an indoor rainforest, discreet speakers placed throughout the venue playing rainforest sounds at a very low level will enhance the experience.

Such things as gentle drips of water and distant animal sounds go the extra mile to sell the experience of being inside a rainforest, not just an events hall.

This can also be done through more physical aspects, thus adding a water feature to an event could do the job of the ambient sounds as well as creating a centre piece that plays on multiple senses at once.



Sound

The Five Senses with Panoptic Events

Located in Berkshire, England is Heston Blumenthal's 3 Michelin Star restaurant, The Fat Duck. The restaurant is known for its experiential kitchen experience and is a very popular place - there is a three week waiting list for bookings!

Blumenthal's signature seafood dish, 'The Sound of the Sea' is sensory adventure like no other. The dish is accompanied by a media player and headphones to immerse the guests into a surreal food and seaside experience.

This is a sensory masterpiece. The food is presented beautifully, the sounds bring the experience to life, the smell and taste of the food, as well as the texture of it, all tie together not just in a meal - but a full five senses experience.

The Fat Duck continually produces amazing dishes and is most recently serving four 'volumes' of food for guests to experience.

One of these experiences includes 'The Coronation Feast Of James II And Queen Mary' - a recreation of one of the greatest banquets ever held in Britain.

[Click here for more information](#)



Sound

Using Sound To Inform

Event sound is not just there to set the scene: it is also there for the speakers or presentations to be heard. Almost every event will have some sort of speaker, whether it is for entertainment, education or simply housekeeping, there is always a need for people to be heard.

If someone is delivering a lecture you probably don't want any other sounds to distract the audience, but, if you have a motivational speaker who is trying to raise spirits and get people invigorated, this might be the perfect time to underscore the speech and add that extra dynamic.

To round off sound, there is much that can be done with audio design: the options and innovations are endless. Events will always need sound, but they also need accessibility.

While it may not explicitly be a sound, sign language is an essential part of keeping events open and accessible to all. While ambient effects may not work for those that are hard of hearing, having a clearly visible sign interpreter is essential to keeping talks and presentations accessible to as wide a range of people as possible.



Smell

The Most Difficult Sense To Nail

For many, smell or scent is the hardest aspect of an event to get right. Some events have ambient scents which can be both good and bad.

As with the other senses, it is essential to have the right balance and do everything you can to entice guests, while not overloading them.

Scent should not be the main focus: it should be a complement to the environment.

It All Starts With Food!

Similar to taste, the most obvious way to tie smells into an event is through the catering. Smell compliments taste a lot more than we think, as it actually helps with lightening our other senses.

Cooking uses lots of different flavours which lead to attractive aromas coming from the kitchen and following the food around the event.

This is the same theory as having the smell of freshly baked cookies for a house viewing: the nicer the food smells, the more likely people are to have some and engage with the event even more.

Case Study: The Smell of Trainers

There have been a few experiments over the years to see whether this theory actually works.

In a survey conducted by Dr. Alan Hirsch he used two identical rooms with a pair of trainers in them. The only difference was one room had a pleasant floral smell and the other had plain filtered air.

The result showed that 84% of people were more willing to buy the nicely scented shoes. While being only one example, this shows that pleasant scents help to sell products and can be applied similarly in events.



Taste

It's More Than Catering...

Every event needs food and drink to keep attendees happy and engaged. But taste isn't just about what there is on offer to eat at an event, it is about integrating the food into the event to create another experience.

Instead of your guests just eating it becomes another memorable part of your event.

Connect With The History

A great way to engage guests with taste and your catering is to relate it back to where the event is being held. Are you somewhere in the world with rich culinary history? **Use it!** That food history could lead to more engagement and memorability, as people will be inclined to ask or find out more about the foods if it is interesting or something new.

Also look into the cultural differences when arranging and selecting food. For example, within Japanese culture, they consider the amount of food on the table, whereas Brazilians focus a lot on the presentation of the food. First impressions last - take a tasting experience which is unique to your country and show people how its REALLY done - make it unforgettable; make it unique.

Stay Local, Stay Sustainable

It is always a good idea to use local suppliers to source food for an event: use farmers' markets and local suppliers instead of the industrial companies we are too used to. In addition to bringing a new aspect to your catering, using local suppliers can also help with sustainability by reducing the event's carbon footprint, plus it can assist with creating less waste from unused food.



Taste

What About The Drinks?!

Taste is also about more than food. Drinks have a great potential for becoming another way of engaging event goers and creating memorable moments within an event.

Bars have been a part of events since their inception: everyone needs refreshments and of course, the bar can supply them.

Bars can be part of the experience as well as practical, for example, the ever popular cocktail making demos and workshops are a great way to get a drink while being entertained and creating further engagement with the guests. This can also encourage more conversations and networking in a more casual manner, which in some events is essential.

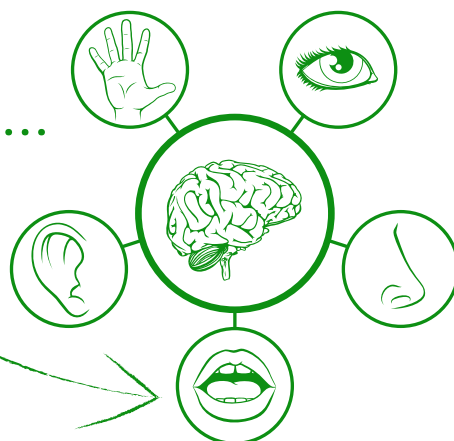
Did You Know?

Taste is known to create some of the strongest memories in the brain.

When the sense is tied into an event properly, it can keep guests thinking about a brand for weeks, even months after an event.

Like all the senses, taste alone will not make an event the best, but it is a key part of what will make an event stand out - one that goes above and beyond what people expect.

The strongest sense is...



Touch

The Thought Behind The Furniture

While it may seem unassuming, every piece of furniture in an event space will be carefully curated to be a mix of the right fabric, texture, comfort, pattern and shape. All of these aspects come together to create an inviting piece of furniture, whether it is a comfy seat to take the weight off your feet or a table to lean on while taking notes, all furniture is experienced through touch.

Without having to label it, the design of any furniture will give a context for its use and encourage its intended function. Of course, that isn't the only aspect of touch that is present within events, but it is constantly present and often not fully considered.

Jumping into Virtual Reality

There have been so many advances in technology over the years that things like virtual or augmented reality (VR/AR) have become increasingly popular to use at events.

Whether for a practical demonstration or just a bit of fun, VR and similar systems are creating an important aspect within events. While we are currently quite limited in what is possible, the potential is endless, especially with constant improvements being made to haptic feedback to mimic the feeling of objects in your hands.

Many people are tempted to think it's all a gimmick, but given the increasing use of technology in every aspect of life and events, it is most likely here to stay, and will only get better and bigger as time goes on.

VR is something that is going to be vital to the next generation of event professional, and a system they will be highly familiar with as they are born into this culture. As well as VR, they are also going to be comfortable utilising gamification to take events to the next level - definitely a space to watch in the future.



It's Time To Super Size Your Next Networking Event Through Touch!

Want to spice up networking space at an event? Why not use life size games to encourage spontaneous interaction?

Think of it like the chessboards in parks, but make it bigger, more approachable and totally irresistible.

Touch

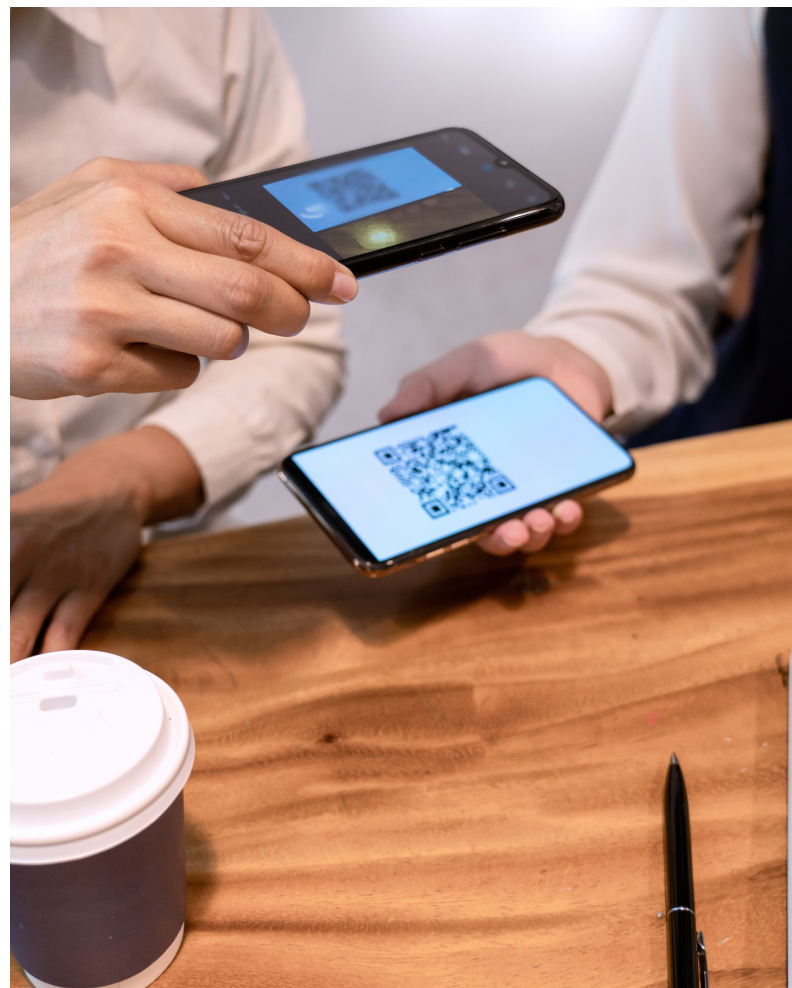
Measuring Success

How can you ensure your event has been successful? Engagement is an obvious metric for the success of an event: people communicate how much they enjoyed or disliked something just by doing or not doing.

But more can always be done to gauge the success of the various components of any event.

A tablet or touch screen for feedback is a great way to get more detail on people's engagement within an event.

Another increasingly popular method is through a QR code and app dedicated to the event, with all the polling or interactive elements required at everyone's fingertips through their own device!



Conclusion

This Is Only The Beginning

The five senses have always been essential to events, whether organisers have been aware of it or not.

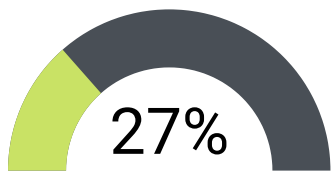
As an industry we have come so far from where we started and have so much potential to improve in the coming years.

All of the senses complement each other to create strong engagement and memories, leading to events being talked about for longer and fondly remembered well after the fact.

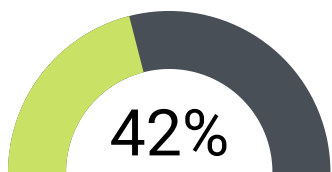
Did You Know?

A DMC company in Russia designed a destination event inspired by the Football World Cup, which engaged with all five senses, for an international group from Mexico. This experience took one and a half years to plan. Everyday the event team would discuss how they were going to make their event memorable and how they were going to include cultural elements (what they are going to eat, to do etc) into the full event experience.

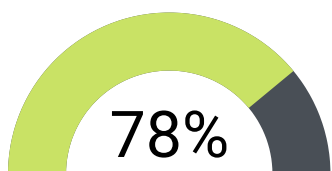
Preparing the design elements will influence the success of your event.



Of respondents believe all five senses are being used effectively throughout the event industry.



Believe sensory activations can help events stand out from the competition



Of surveyed planners believe multi-sensory events deliver more memorable and creative experiences for attendees.

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CREATE YOUR LEGACY NOW.

APRIL 2021

USING THE FIVE SENSES IN EVENTS

A large graphic of a stylized eye. The eye is composed of concentric circles. The outermost circle is a thick green line. Inside this is a grey circle, then a green circle, and finally a grey circle. The center of the eye is a green circle. The iris area is filled with a cluster of green and grey puzzle pieces. The eye is set against a background of two hands, one above and one below, holding it. The hands are skin-toned and appear to be holding the eye gently. The background is a dark, textured surface with some light rays or motion blur.

PREPARED BY

STUART WOOD OF PANOPTIC EVENTS, IN COLLABORATION WITH **ABIGAIL MCLOUGHLIN, CRAIG MCGEE** AND OUR 'EVENT DESIGN - THE FUTURE OF EVENTS' CLUBHOUSE ROOM GUESTS.

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