



About the Author:

Lara Burnes, General Manager of Premier Events & Experiences at Melbourne & Olympic Parks, is no stranger to the events space. With over a decade of experience, Lara is driving their newest venue [CENTREPIECE at Melbourne Park](#), scheduled to open late-2021.

How to work with your event partner on rescheduling events

As we move into these unprecedented times, supporting businesses and industry has become more important than ever.

With the weeks and months that lie ahead, there will be a lot of uncertainty – but what's for sure, is that we'll all be tested on how we work together and embrace opportunity.

Lara shares her key insights on how to work with event partners on rescheduling events to ultimately support and keep the industry afloat.

1. **Contact your event partner, even if you don't know what the future holds.**

Venues, suppliers and partners are all doing it tough, just like you. While you might not know if you can reschedule your event, or if your event at a later date is going to be impacted, contact your partner to discuss your options.

Weigh up the possible scenarios – and begin to problem-solve together.

2. **Keep moving. Detail a new timeline, even if only rough.**

We must remember that venues will re-open and events will happen again soon. With this in mind, begin to map out new timelines, even if only rough. It's important to keep on top of key dates and update your event partners accordingly.

To avoid congestion when everything is back to normal again, don't be afraid to begin locking in dates. While there are still a lot of unknowns, confirming sooner than later will ensure that you have your top pick for your next event.

3. **Be flexible, prepare for the *what-if*.**

Remember a lot of event organisers will be facing the same challenges.

Once life returns to normal, demand will be high for venues and event resources – this means dates and availability may be limited and you might not get your first, or second, choice on dates. Use this time to prepare for the what if, and be flexible.

Remember, dates can change. It's the experience your event offers that will be unique to your brand and the point-of-difference. Think about the busy and quieter periods of your industry and the 12-month calendar. You may even find some of your later choices in date pique interest of customers and drive a larger audience attendance.

4. Get planning.

Your event might not be happening next week or month, but that doesn't mean you can't continue to refine the experience to make it the best event yet.

At Melbourne & Olympic Parks, we have five venues and all venues are busy rescheduling and planning events for when this all blows over. Our business is operating from home, and the team are available to take enquiries, plan rescheduling events or just be there for a chat over a cuppa – and a virtual hug if needed!

Ultimately, while it might not feel like business as usual, venues are here and available to continue planning as normal. Most businesses are operating remotely, with the benefit of having the time to really invest on your event. Use this 'downtime' as an opportunity to brainstorm how to make your event the best one yet.

5. Think differently and embrace change.

When we emerge from this, the world will have changed and we will have adapted along the way. Embrace the changes and think about how you can incorporate them into your event.

Some of your attendees may not be able to travel due to budgets, health or simply because travel won't be a priority for their business. Work with your event partners on ways to enhance your event experience, such as working with a charity partner, local suppliers, or incorporating the digital space into your event with a live stream.

6. Be empathetic and kind.

We're all in this together. People may be slower at getting back to you than usual or battling personal and professional challenges on different fronts.

Be empathetic and be kind, and remember that our actions now will shape our industry's future.