



# A Point-By-Point Comparison of Event Planning vs. Project Management

*This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:*

["Event Planning vs. Project Management Software"](#)

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## Introduction

At first glance, project management tools can seem like a great fit for event planning. Your team has a list of tasks that need to get done by certain dates and times, and you want to divvy up those tasks and assign them to team members. No problem.

But as your team gets going and the event looms closer on the calendar, you realize that you'll need a new spreadsheet to keep track of the budget, a doc for sharing the schedule the day of the event, and another doc to organize team travel... before long, you've got **a horde of different spreadsheets and docs...** just to keep track of one event.

Now imagine you have to do this for 10, 50 or even 100 events per year... and you can begin to see that this approach just isn't scalable. **Thankfully, there is a better way!**

## Knowledge Projects vs. Real-World Events

Project management tools are great for **knowledge projects**. If you're building a new website or managing a digital marketing campaign, a project management tool gives you and your team everything you need.

Got a new graphic for the website design? No problem, just attach it to the project. Same for any file, doc or knowledge work product really. They can all fit directly into the project management because they're **digital files**.

But what happens if your project is offline, in a real-world, physical environment?

### How is planning live events different than planning knowledge projects?

<b>Space constraints</b>	Venues available for limited hours and capacity
<b>Time constraints</b>	Participants and venues available for limited hours
<b>Loose knit collaboration</b>	Larger teams of "loose-knit" collaborators, playing small or one-off roles in individual events
<b>Physical deliverables</b>	Design, production, printing, shipping are all much more complicated when producing live events
<b>Higher stakes, expensive</b>	Events are often big investments for companies and the results can will be seen by thousands of customers and influencers

Offline projects like **real-world events have complicated logistics** that you'll need to deal with, like time and space constraints, a lot more "loose-knit" collaborators and generally higher stakes, given the costs and likely importance of the event to your org.

Finding work deliverables is not longer as easy as a quick search across digital files. Out in the real-world, maybe on a UPS truck being delivered across the country. The physical factor creates **different things to track**, like planned vs. actual costs and shipment tracking numbers.

The bottom line? Generic project management tools aren't designed to help manage all of the logistics that go into planning live events.



## Designing Tools for Event Planning

What would a management tool look like if it were built, from the ground up, for live, real-world events?

Our team at EventGeek has talked to literally hundreds of event planners to understand exactly that. Event planners for virtually every type of event, from trade show exhibits to

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sales incentive trips to annual customer conferences, told us about the software tools they use and how those apps do and don't fit their specific requirements when it comes to planning events.

We distilled their feedback down into a list of **10 essential requirements for event planning tools** that we're excited to share. Feel free to consult this list whenever you consider buying new event planning software. We've used it to design our platform at EventGeek, but this criteria applies to any event management software tool.

Finally, it's important to note that only a few of these 10 requirements are available in typical, generic project management tools. These requirements are **truly unique to event planning!**

## 10 Essentials for Event Project Management

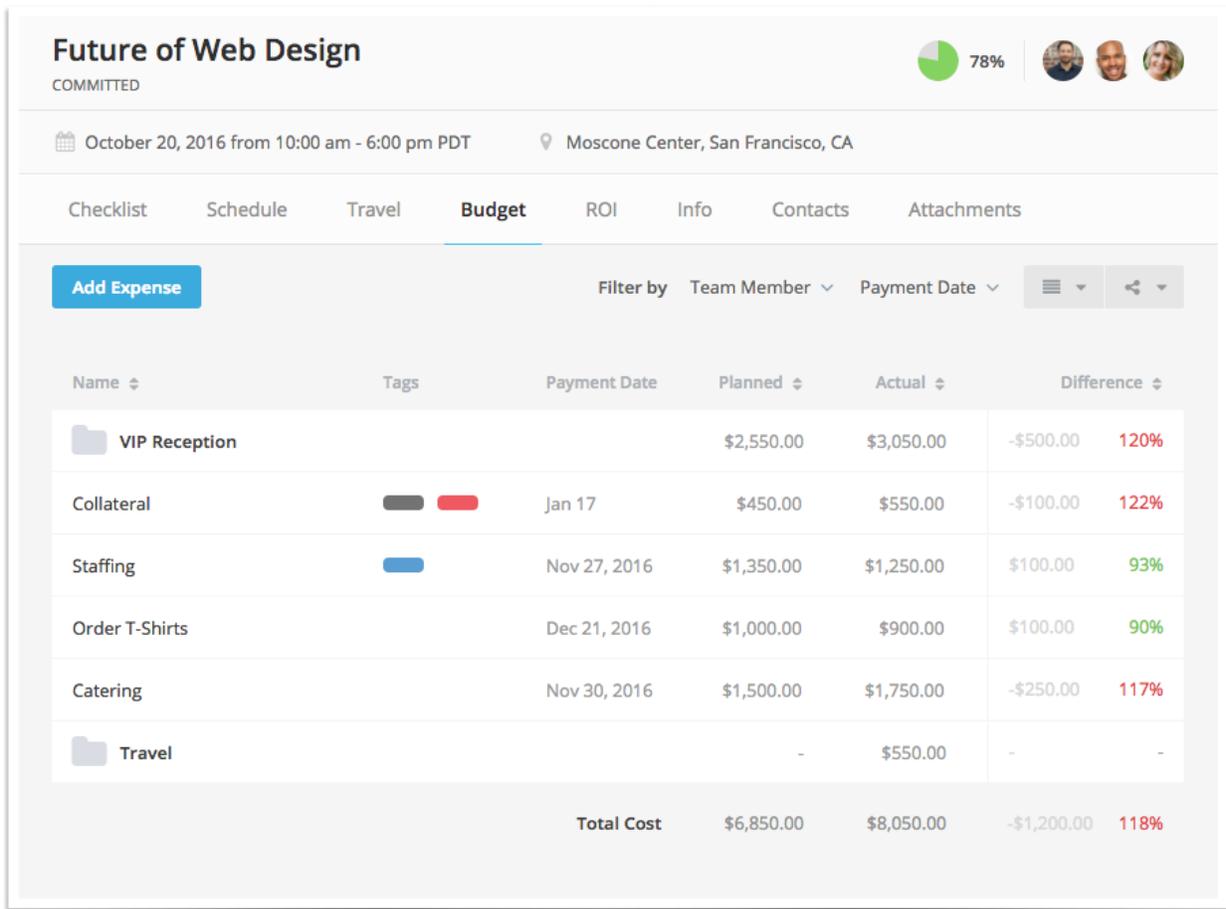
<b>“Loose Knit” Collaboration</b>	Where knowledge projects tend to have core group of regular contributors, events have many <b>one-off collaborators</b> , such as speakers, booth staff, finance, etc.
<b>“Easy In, Easy Out” access</b>	Loose Knit collaborators should be able to <b>get info they need quickly</b> and in preferred formats (print, web page, calendar, etc.) without having to sign up or download anything.
<b>Budgeting</b>	Events have <b>many different expenses, including offline expenses</b> . Invoices and receipts for printing, shipping, venues, and travel. All need to be tracked as <b>planned vs. actual costs</b> .
<b>Scheduling</b>	Project management supports “due dates” but events require down to the hour or even <b>minute-by-minute planning for the day(s) of the event</b> .
<b>Travel planning</b>	Travel is essential for events and should fit seamlessly into scheduling and budgeting. Companies should be able to <b>integrate existing travel management workflows</b> .

<b>Shipping</b>	Shipping is an essential service for many events, especially road shows with booths and collateral. Shipments should be a part of an event schedule, including <b>shipping delay alerts</b> .
<b>ROI reporting</b>	Events are the largest category in marketing budgets, yet have the least ROI visibility. With <b>Surveys and CRM integration</b> , software should help to close the ROI reporting gap.
<b>High stakes reliability</b>	WiFi and cell signals aren't always reliable on-site, at event venues, when teams need connectivity most. Apps need to <b>work without a reliable internet connection</b> .
<b>Lifecycle framework</b>	Event planning is an iterative process. Event planners should <b>learn from experience</b> , with tracking that uncovers the insights to help produce better events and <b>boost event ROI</b> .
<b>Templates</b>	Event planning is an iterative process. Planning tools should <b>streamline workflows with templates</b> to save time and effort.

## The Future of Event Planning

Savvy event planners continuously experiment to deliver the best events and ROI. When new apps help them to organize, tech can drive better results for less effort.

At [EventGeek](#), we've worked closely with event planners to develop a brand new management platform. Together, we've developed a new platform that solves event project management, scheduling, budgeting, travel planning and ROI tracking.



The screenshot shows the 'Budget' tab of the EventGeek interface. At the top, the event title 'Future of Web Design' is displayed with a 'COMMITTED' status, a 78% progress indicator, and three team member avatars. Below this, the event details are listed: 'October 20, 2016 from 10:00 am - 6:00 pm PDT' and 'Moscone Center, San Francisco, CA'. A navigation bar includes 'Checklist', 'Schedule', 'Travel', 'Budget' (selected), 'ROI', 'Info', 'Contacts', and 'Attachments'. The main content area features an 'Add Expense' button, a 'Filter by' dropdown set to 'Team Member', and a 'Payment Date' dropdown. A table lists budget items with columns for Name, Tags, Payment Date, Planned, Actual, and Difference. The items include 'VIP Reception', 'Collateral', 'Staffing', 'Order T-Shirts', 'Catering', and 'Travel'. A 'Total Cost' row is at the bottom of the table.

Name	Tags	Payment Date	Planned	Actual	Difference
VIP Reception			\$2,550.00	\$3,050.00	-\$500.00 120%
Collateral	<span>■</span> <span>■</span>	Jan 17	\$450.00	\$550.00	-\$100.00 122%
Staffing	<span>■</span>	Nov 27, 2016	\$1,350.00	\$1,250.00	\$100.00 93%
Order T-Shirts		Dec 21, 2016	\$1,000.00	\$900.00	\$100.00 90%
Catering		Nov 30, 2016	\$1,500.00	\$1,750.00	-\$250.00 117%
Travel			-	\$550.00	- -
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$6,850.00</b>	<b>\$8,050.00</b>	<b>-\$1,200.00 118%</b>

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