

→ special effects



Top to bottom: A lit centerpiece by Finer Points Planning; Lighting envelops the DJ at an event produced by The Arrangers.

Top 10 Lighting & A/V Tips

Use gobo lights.

>> A gobo is a thin circular plate with holes cut in it to create patterns of projected light. Michele Willett, Finer Points Planning, recently used gobos for an employee event she planned for Photobucket. “Gobos were used to express the Photobucket logo around the room with light, instead of using multiple printed signs,” notes Willett.

LEDs create impact.

>> Harold Richter, Richter Scale Productions, recommends using LED walls or fiber-optic curtains. “They’re more environmentally friendly because they use less power,” he says. Willett adds that she has used colored LED lights to shine upward onto ballroom walls, noting that the vertical effect makes ballroom ceilings seem taller and more spacious.

Use lights in centerpieces.

>> Rebecca Moore, The Arrangers, says battery operated LED lights in your color of choice can brighten centerpieces. “Some can even be emerged in water and double the fun when resting on the indispensable mirror round,” she adds.

Movable lighting units.

>> “Do as much as you can with moving lights; they give you the most flexibility and the most color choices,” says Gareth Heyman, MorEvents.

Color is everything.

>> Lighting can easily change the mood of a room. Blue lighting might accompany an emotional story, red lights are used to energize, and green to calm, notes Richter.

Video and lighting intertwined.

>> Richter recommends incorporating video elements as part of the lighting design to create active motion.

Think “green.”

>> In addition to the more energy-efficient LEDs, biodiesel generators are a great option for a power source. Whenever possible, Richter likes to use these generators, which typically run on recycled cooking oil and do not require electricity. These portable power units are often a better solution for outdoor events or events that require some flexibility with set design.

Signage alternatives.

>> Using LEDs, screens and lighting instead of paper or vinyl banners and backdrops is not only environmentally friendly, it’s a cooler way to make an impact. Moore notes that these are reusable and are often better than having something custom made.

When there’s dancing involved.

>> Moore also suggests using a white dance floor in place of traditional parquet, as light projects on a white floor with much more impact. She also recommends selecting a DJ that uses a computer and an Apple iPod and can mix music on the spot. “Optimize by knowing the demographic of your group with customized song play lists prepared in advance.”

Think high definition.

>> HD and high resolution seem to be gaining ground and moving from the home and into events, Moore says, as people get more comfortable with technology. —by Dana Lauren Berry



PHOTOS COURTESY OF: KATIE VAN BUREN; THE ARRANGERS.