Hi, I'm Jonathan!

Founder of Hand-Off — the next generation event operating system.

Before building Hand-Off, I spent years as a producer at the Aspen Ideas Festival, managing the intersection of content and production for a 10-day thought leadership gathering with over 200 sessions and 600 speakers.

Through that experience, I learned a fundamental truth:
Keeping information updated, centralized, and delivered to the right people at the right time is everything.

Frustrated by endless updates across websites, spreadsheets, and emails, I started wondering what a connected event ecosystem could look like — and Hand-Off was born.

After producing thousands of event hours and managing thousands of speakers, I've learned that small operational choices often make the biggest difference. Here are my top tips for producing a successful, professional, and truly memorable event:

Tip # 1:
Simplify and Reduce Variables

As the event approaches, complexity should go down, not up.

I've been part of events that introduced flash mobs, breakdance performances, even augmented reality — just days before going live.

While flashy, last-minute additions often create more operational chaos than value.

Finalize decisions early. Avoid introducing new variables unless absolutely necessary. If you must pivot, Hand-Off is built to help your team adapt — and ensure the right people have the right information, instantly.

Tip # 2:
Flare, Then Focus

Planning an event will take as much time as you allow it to. The best teams know when it's time to brainstorm freely — and when it's time to focus.

Early on, dream big.
But about a month out, start tightening everything up.

Refine. Edit. Kill your darlings if you have to.

In the final stretch, clarity wins.

And if last-minute changes happen (they will), Hand-Off is flexible enough to keep your team aligned without missing a beat.

Tip # 3:
Under-Program to Over-Deliver

How many events have you been to where you find yourself thinking, "When is this over?"

It happens all the time — and it's a major signal that the program has overstayed its welcome. **The best events always leave attendees wanting more.**

Never give your audience a reason to check their watch and wonder when they can leave.

Over-programming drains energy, stifles connection, and overwhelms the senses. **When in doubt, cut it out.**

Which leads to the next point:

Tip # 4:
End On Time, Every Time

Ending on time isn't just courteous — it's a promise.

When you publish a schedule, you're setting an expectation. **Honor that trust.**

If your program is running long, communicate with your speakers and moderators. Shave a few minutes off panels if needed, or consider cutting lower-value content blocks to protect the audience experience.

Your audience will appreciate — and remember — that you respected their time.

Tip # 5:
Don't Forget About Transitions

Transitions matter more than you think.

It takes time for people to move — whether that's between panels, breakout rooms, or even across a ballroom floor. **People never move as fast as you expect.**

Build intentional time into your schedule for transitions — and never assume that a 10-minute break is enough (especially for the ladies).

Beyond logistics, these in-between moments are where real value is created: **Conversations. Connections. Serendipity.**

Give attendees room to breathe, wander, and connect. Design natural spaces for reflection, conversation, and spontaneous interaction.

Protect the white space — it's where the magic happens.

Hand•Off

Built for Teams Behind the Scenes

Learn more at
www.hand-off.co

Book a demo