Front matter: Budget

Why It's Important

A budget is the plan for your money before any of it is spent. It lists what you expect to earn and what you expect to spend, so the committee can approve the plan, watch spending against it, and avoid surprises. Kept up to date, it becomes the single clearest picture of whether your event will break even, raise funds, or run short. It is also the document sponsors and grant providers most often ask to see.

How to Use

1. Fill in the Income section first: ticket or gate sales, sponsorships, grants, vendor fees, donations, and any raffle or 50/50 revenue.
2. Fill in expected costs in the Expenses section, using the *Est. Cost* column.
3. Keep a contingency line of ten to fifteen percent for surprises.
4. As you sign contracts and collect money, record the actual figures and let the *Variance* columns show where you are off plan.
5. Watch the Summary for your bottom line: Total Income, Total Expenses, and Net.
6. Review the budget at every meeting and reconcile it within days of the event.

What You Need

- Quotes or estimates for your main costs.
- A realistic income forecast based on past events or comparable ones.
- Your financial policy on hand, since it sets approval limits and cash rules.
- One owner, usually the treasurer, who keeps the budget current.

Event Ready Budget template

Budget Template

Operational Best Practice: This template mirrors standard accounting practices. Record what you expect to earn (income) and what you expect to spend (expenses), then watch the summary to see whether the event breaks even, raises funds, or runs short. Maintain a 10-15% contingency line for unforeseen expenses. Use the "Notes" section to track contract clauses or specific vendor requirements.

Income

List every source of money coming in. For raffles and 50/50 draws, remember these need a gaming event licence in BC (see the Financial Policy template).

Category	Line Item	Source	Est. Income	Actual Income	Variance	Received?	Notes
Ticket / Gate							
Sponsorship							
Grants							
Vendor Fees							
Donations							
Raffle / 50-50							
Other Income							
TOTAL INCOME							

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Expenses

Category	Line Item	Vendor	Est. Cost	Deposit	Actual Cost	Variance	Payment Status	Due Date	Notes
Venue & Rentals									
Food & Beverage									
A/V & Tech									
Marketing & PR									
Staffing & Talent									
Logistics & Admin									
Sustainability									
Contingency									
TOTAL EXPENSES									

In-Kind Contributions

Donated goods and services are not cash, but recording them helps with grant reporting and thank-you lists. Note the item, who provided it, and an estimated value.

Item / Service	Provided By	Estimated Value	Notes

Summary

Line	Amount
Total Income	
Total Expenses	
Net (surplus or shortfall)	
Estimated attendance	
Cost per attendee (Total Expenses ÷ attendance, optional)	