

Hosting a Style Event

Hosting a style event in collaboration with supplier partners or to celebrate milestones, such as anniversaries, relocations, or rebranding can be an effective strategy with impressive results. Such events provide a valuable opportunity to reconnect with both lapsed and active patients while also engaging your local community, depending on your goals. They encourage patients to revisit your store and make purchases during what might typically be a quieter period. This approach not only boosts revenue for the month but also fosters loyalty.

Overview

Style events give you the opportunity to:

Recognise loyal patients and **create advocates** for your practice by rewarding them with a special day/night out (in this case, sales at the event are considered a bonus).

Re-engage patients you haven't seen for some time.

Acquire new patients e.g. extend invite to family/friends;"

Drive a commercial outcome by selecting patients who are more likely to purchase at your event (e.g. bigger spenders or wearers of brands).

Launch a new fit out/relocation/anniversary campaign by celebrating with loyal patients and local businesses.

Create a PR opportunity when local press and your own social media channels are leveraged.

Support from ProVision

ProVision is here to support you with your style event by providing graphic design services at a highly competitive design rate and as an added inclusion, helping you with timelines, print and production and strategy implementation. This guide highlights how we can assist you at each step of planning your event. If you prefer to handle it independently, the guide provided will still help you determine what needs to be done to run a successful event.

ProVision's graphic design hourly rate:

Comprehensive Members	Essential Members
\$85 per hour plus GST	\$95 per hour plus GST

Planning Your Style Event

1. Will you be showcasing a supplier/brand?

Offering your guests an exclusive preview of a diverse selection of eyewear, including new releases and brands, is often a crucial element of hosting a style event. When choosing suppliers, it's essential to assess which brands or suppliers will resonate most with your audience. This is important because aligning with a supplier that can attract your patients to your store and encourage them to attend the event will greatly enhance engagement.

You can certainly involve multiple suppliers at your event. Consider partnering with two frame suppliers and one sunglass supplier, or even including a lab partner if appropriate. Many practices have successfully hosted events with a single supplier, but collaborating with two contrasting brands can help you appeal to a broader demographic.

To ensure a successful partnership, initiate discussions with your shortlisted suppliers as early as possible, ideally **at least three months before your planned event date**.

Don't hesitate to ask your suppliers how they can support you!

2. Event Details

Establish the specifics of your event, including the date and time. To maximise attendance, it's essential to select a time that will appeal to your guests. While style events have traditionally been held in the evening, many practices are now hosting them during the day, either in a single session (1 – 2 hours), across multiple sessions or for the full day. If you're uncertain about what will work best for your practice, it's a good idea to consult with your Business Coach or the ProVision marketing team.

Additionally, be mindful of public holidays when choosing your date.

Events scheduled in the spring, summer, and autumn months tend to attract more attendees compared to those held in winter, for instance.

To move forward with planning, it's crucial to first determine how the event will run. Once you identify your target audience, along with the event's timing and duration, you can confidently make key decisions about the additional elements needed to host a successful and well-styled event.

3. Determine Who You Will Invite

Identifying your invites is a crucial step in planning your event. Your invitation list should align with your objectives for the event. For instance, are you looking to nurture relationships with loyal VIP patients and show appreciation, or do you aim to reach a broader audience, such as individuals who actively engage with the supplier or brand? There are several factors to consider.

Here's a list to help guide your decisions:

- **Retain/Recognise loyal (VIP) patients** – top spenders for the last 2 years
- **Re-engage lapsed patients** – top spenders that have not been in for 3 – 5 years
- **Acquire new patients** – local business owners, influential people within the local community OR invite existing patients to bring along a friend/family member.
- **Entire Database** – a typical approach for longer daytime events knowing that attendees will all arrive at different times.

Once you've identified your target audience, create a shortlist of potential guests based on the type of event you're hosting, whether it's more intimate or larger in scale. Determine your ideal number of attendees, considering factors like your venue size, available staff, and the event's goals.

For intimate evening events with a shorter duration, guest numbers typically range between 25-30 or 50-60. If you're hosting a daytime event, attendance may be more staggered, allowing you to invite a larger audience. This can work to your advantage, offering more personalised interactions with each attendee rather than being overwhelmed by too many guests at once.

Keep in mind that, for both types of events, guests will likely arrive and leave at different times, so it's rare that everyone will be present simultaneously.

If you are wanting to organise a more intimate event, its recommended that you export a list of around 80-100 names and prioritise them accordingly.

It's advisable to save this database of the patients you've chosen to invite, as it will be useful when sending out the invitations. Be sure to include their email addresses, residential addresses, and mobile phone numbers in the spreadsheet.

4. Plan Your Catering

Offering catering is highly recommended, as it significantly enhances the overall guest experience at your event. The type of catering should be tailored to the nature and schedule of the event. Consider whether it takes place during the day or evening, as well as the event's duration. If the event is held in multiple sessions or spans a specific time frame, this will impact your catering choices. For instance, serving hot canapés may not be ideal for events with intermittent attendance throughout the day, as there could be times when only a few guests are present.

It's essential to decide the atmosphere you want for your event. Are you aiming for a lively, party-like vibe, or something more relaxed and low-key? Once you've established this, it will help guide your choices for food and beverage options, ensuring they align with the overall feel of the event.

Shorter Evening Events

For an intimate event lasting 1-2 hours, hiring a caterer can elevate the experience. You might opt for finger foods paired with beer or wine for a casual gathering, or canapés with champagne for a more upscale, fashion-oriented event.

Keep the menu simple, high-quality, and non-greasy, as it reflects your brand's image. Cutting corners on food can send the wrong message to your guests. Since these events often serve to reward loyal patients, making them feel special is key. Partnering with a local caterer, restaurant, or café can also add a personal, community-focused touch to the event.

Long Daytime Events or Sessions

For a longer daytime event, it's best to offer novelty items that can sit out for extended periods without losing their appeal, unlike hot food. Consider options like personalized cookies, candy bags, or cupcakes. For beverages, light refreshments such as soft drinks, beer, or wine work well, or you could enhance the experience by providing a coffee stand or partnering with a local café for a special attendee deal. Always keep in mind what will best suit the style and flow of your event.

Additionally, some suppliers may be willing to co-fund the event by providing staff or covering catering or entertainment costs. Ideally, designate one person to serve drinks to guests for a more organised experience.

5. Offers and Giveaways

When planning an event, it's important to think about what will encourage your patients to RSVP and attend. While the involvement of suppliers and brands can be effective, pairing this with special offers or giveaways provides a strong incentive for attendees to make purchases during the event. Consider what would excite and motivate you to participate in an event for a business you are passionate about. Below are some examples you can consider:

- 1. An Enticing Offer:** A fabulous way to encourage patients to return to your practice. For active patients, it helps maintain loyalty and shows appreciation for their trust. For lapsed patients, it provides an incentive to come back, and for new patients, it gives them a reason to experience your services. For example, 20% off frames and lenses. These offers can be discussed with your suppliers for support.
- 2. Giveaways:** Offering giveaways or prizes can boost sales by requiring a minimum spend to enter the draw. This is a great way to encourage patients to make a purchase during a particular time and invite them back to practice. For example, a competition to win 1 night's stay in your local area or door prizes for those who

attend. Other offers can be 'win eyewear/frame on the night (often supplier partners will offer a prize pair of frames as part of their support). Be creative with your offering and ensure it resonates with your audience and your brand.

Considerations

- Will you have an offer?
- When will the offer be available?
- What are your terms and conditions?
- Is there a minimum spend?
- How and when will the winner be announced for any giveaways?

6. Entertainment and Complimentary Services

Elevate your event by incorporating entertainment or complimentary services to celebrate in style. Just as special offers enhance the appeal of your event, these additions create a memorable experience for your guests. Depending on the time of your event, you could consider live music entertainment, a colour consultant or stylist or magician or manicurist.

Feel free to get creative with your ideas and make sure they resonate with your audience.

7. Staff Planning

Practice Setup: The specifics of mechanics and staffing will vary by practice, but generally, practices avoid booking regular patient appointments during the event. However, if the event runs all day, having an optometrist on-site for any emergency needs is ideal.

Staffing Levels: Having the event appropriately staffed is crucial to avoid making guests wait to ask questions or try on products. Staffing needs will depend on the practice setup and the type of event.

For evening events, it's generally recommended to have one staff member per 15 guests. For premium, fashion-focused events, consider increasing the staff-to-guest ratio to meet higher service expectations. For daytime events, you can generally operate as usual.

VIP Events: For VIP or celebratory events, the practice should ensure that each patient's prescription is up to date beforehand, allowing the event to focus more on retail and celebration than clinical matters.

If you need assistance with staff planning, it is recommended that you speak to your ProVision Business Coach for advice.

8. Inviting Guests

It's essential to also consider how you are going to send invitations directly to your database list. You can do this through a tailored email or by mailing a letter or postcard to the patient's home address. When organising a special event, allocating a budget for patient communication is crucial. Review your database to determine the most effective ways to reach your target patients.

Try to use multiple touchpoints, such as email, SMS, in-store handouts, and printed invitations. *Remember, don't underestimate the value of traditional print marketing.*

For intimate evening events, it's recommended that you engage with direct patient communications, but we've also seen great success from personalised phone calls to the patient. Refer to 9. Phone Call Invitations.

Invitation Designs – what should I include?

- Date and Time
- Supplier partners and brands showcased
- Any special offers including the terms and conditions
- Any complimentary services
- RSVP details
- Practice details and contact numbers

How Can ProVision Help?

Design Service

ProVision's Local Area Marketing department provides graphic design services at an excellent rate for both Comprehensive and Essential Members. We specialise in creating professional and eye-catching invitations in various formats, including print materials like letters, postcards, DLs, posters, and social media assets. To learn more about this service, please email marketing@provision.com.au.

Ordering and Finding Print Suppliers

ProVision not only assists with designing these items but also sourcing affordable print quotes. We manage all communications with suppliers to ensure everything is ordered, paid for, and delivered on time for your event. ProVision will cover the invoice, which will then be reflected on your ProVision statement.

Copywriting

When collaborating with ProVision to design additional collateral, we also offer a copywriting service free of charge to help streamline the process.

Strategy Execution and Timelines

Our Local Area Marketing team can help you establish timelines for your event. We'll help guide your patient communications to ensure you stay on track and have a clear plan to follow.

Approximate ProVision Design Quotes

The spreadsheet below outlines some of the design elements we can create along with estimated design times. Keep in mind that these costs may vary based on the complexity of the design and the specific items ordered. This serves as a general guideline. Additionally, please note that design time is separate from production costs; any printing and installation services will be quoted separately. Refer to Approximate Production Costs for an approximate breakdown.

Design Elements	Design Hours
Postcard or Letter	2-3 hours
Bespoke Emailer for Mailchimp	2-3 hours
Poster Design	2-3 hours
DL Design	2-3 hours

Approximate Production Costs

Here is an overview of the estimated costs for some of the most popular design elements ordered by our Members. Please keep in mind that prices may vary based on the quantity you order and your delivery location. ProVision is here to help you stay within your preferred budget and offer recommendations on activations that will deliver the best results. Before moving forward with the design process, we typically provide quotes for your review and approval.

Design Elements	Approximate Costs	Delivery Costs
Standard Letter	\$2.15 per letter	inc. Shipping
Postcard	\$2.00 per letter	inc. Shipping



Mailchimp Set-Up	Free for less than 500 contacts Check pricing here >	-
Free Text SMS on ProMarket	9c – 17c per SMS	-
DL Printing	Refer to Officeworks pricing. Found here >	Click and collect options available or small delivery fee

Please be aware that these prices are subject to change.

9. Phone Call Invitations

This is only recommended for intimate evening events.

We know from Member experience that personal phone call invitations will result in the best turnout for your event. Not only is the personal touch appreciated by invited guests, but it also allows you to gauge attendance numbers very early in the process.

We suggest that calls start 4-6 weeks prior to the event as guests are more likely to be available with this lead time.

In the phone call, let the guest know that this is a special event and that's why you're ringing to extend a personal invitation, describe the theme, product/brands being showcased, and mention the catering and entertainment that will be provided.

It is advisable to offer consult appointments during the phone call, so the guest has a current prescription.

Confirm your guest's current mailing and/or email address so that you can post or email them an invitation (consider this like inviting someone to a special dinner party, so mail is preferred and more likely to be seen over email). Work down your list of top spenders until you reach your target number of acceptances.

Be prepared for the fact that some guests won't show up, despite accepting, so you may want to ask a few more along.

