



Setting lights

There are professionals that are trained especially to set lights at events and offices. The information offered to you here, is to help you when you do not have the resources or the time to use a trained professional. To be able to set proper and visually pleasing lighting at an event, we will have to start by learning some basics.

The basics

It is said that we base around eighty percent of our decisions on what we see. Our sense of vision is, very simply put, a collaboration between the brain, the eye, the light and the object.

If lights are placed in an unflattering way we will end up with a negative feeling towards what we are seeing, whereas a good light setting will leave a positive memory. Try using a flashlight under your chin in front of a mirror, and you will know what we are talking about. Light has an enormous impact on what we see.

Colour reflection and light strength

The colour we see in objects depends on the way the object interacts with light. It is not the object itself that contains the colour; it is the light, which shines on it that reflects its colour. Any visible light that strikes an object becomes reflected to our eyes and will contribute to the colour appearance of that object. The object's role is that it contains atoms that will absorb or reflect the light.

Lighting conditions

Colours appear differently under different lighting conditions. Booth lighting should be used to draw attention to your product or message. A simple fluorescent light will always be boring, no matter how much money you have spent on the rest of your booth. Light sources can ruin or enhance colours. In a store, for example, good lights can make us buy more tomatoes than we intended. A lot of people think good lights equal lots of lights. However a wall that is flooded with light will only become a light wall and will not highlight your message. To catch the eye of the visitors you have to have collaboration between dark and light areas. A large stage light gives a lot of light, but will give you a flat and non-descript light. However if you are using spotlights with a thinner beams you will lift the objects or messages forward and tone down the surrounding area. Look at your booth as a stage setting, where your messages are your main characters.

Most people have no problem spending a large amount of money on the booth displays but are taken aback at the expense of good lighting. This is a mistake that can end up costing you sales.



With proper lights you can boost your sales and get your brand noticed! Do not underestimate the power of light.

Colour temperature

Colour temperature is measured in Kelvin (K). Low colour temperature implies warmer (more yellow/red) light while high colour temperature implies a colder (more blue) light. People in the north often choose light sources with a low Kelvin temperature (for example regular light bulbs) because yellowish light gives them a warm feeling like that of a fireplace. South Europeans tends to choose more blue light since it has a cooling effect.

1500 K	Candlelight
2680 K	40 W incandescent lamp
3000 K	200 W incandescent lamp
3200 K	Sunrise/sunset
3400 K	Tungsten lamp
5500 K	Sunny daylight, around noon
6500-7500 K	Overcast sky
9000-12000 K	Blue sky

Colour rendering

Rendering average (Ra) is a measurement of how well light sources render the colours of objects, materials, and skin tones. Different light sources have different abilities to render colours correctly. It is therefore important to choose light sources with a high Ra measurement. Maximum Ra is 100 %, you should make sure the light sources you are using have a Ra of at least 80 %. A regular, cheap single colour fluorescent light has a Ra of 50 % and can really ruin your display.

Some common light sources

Regular light bulb:

The light bulb is not is not a bad light source but is not a good choice in exhibition arena. Although the colour rendition is often good there are other problems such as short life span, poor lumen and it emits heat.

High-Intensity Discharge Lamps:

Because of the intense light they produce at a high efficacy, HID lamps are commonly used for outdoor lighting and in large indoor arenas.

Tungsten halogen:

The tungsten halogen lamp emits a whiter light than conventional incandescent lamps. Its light colour is in the range of warm white. The colour rendition is excellent. Its compact form makes the tungsten halogen lamp an ideal point light source.



Reflector Lamps:

Reflector lamps is a type of incandescent lighting – spread and direct light over specific areas. They are used mainly for floodlighting, spotlighting, and downlighting.

Metal Halide Lamps:

Metal halide lamps produce a bright, white light with the best color rendition among high-intensity lighting types. They are used to light large indoor areas, such as sports arenas and outdoor areas, such as car lots.

Display lights:

The light fixture can be mounted and demounted often and will not disturb the communication on the display system. When choosing a fixture make sure the light source has an extra wide spread of the light since the distance to your message is short. The widest fixtures on the market today is 55-60 degrees and has an international code: FNV.

Electrical limitations

Before starting to add a lot of lights to your booth, check out if there is electricity available at your event as well as how much you are allowed to use.