



2024/25

The State of the Industry.

Exploring the 5 biggest challenges for AV, Events & Media Production companies.

Foreword

Throughout my 17+ years in business, I've been immersed in the AV, Events, and Media production industries.

I've seen a lot of change, a lot of growth, and a whole lot of challenges. In fact, throughout my discussions with clients and community members, several challenges kept popping up.

Issues like inefficient quoting, last-minute changes, and poor equipment management are just a few of the topics that came up in our conversations.

At Rentman, it's our mission to simplify the lives of AV, Events, and Media production professionals by tackling their biggest hurdles. That's why we teamed up with Sapio Research, a leading UK research agency, to better understand what are the top challenges across these industries.

We surveyed **hundreds of decision-makers** to discover how these challenges impacted them when working on productions, booking crew, and equipment.

In this report, you'll read about **Quoting, Planning, Communication, Equipment tracking, and Profitability** challenges to learn more about the state of the industry.

By understanding what we face as professionals, we can start making changes to improve our operations in the future.

I learned more about the industry's key challenges through these insights, and I'm thrilled to bring them to you. Enjoy the read!



Roy van den Broek

CEO of Rentman

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Chapter 1

Quoting.

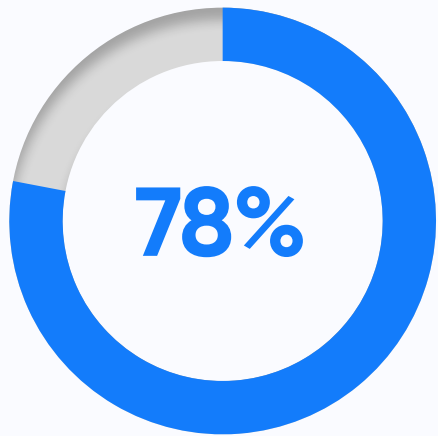
"The biggest issues we face are pricing and fitting customer requests into their budget. Pricing out gear, transportation, labor, etc."

— Research survey participant

One of the first challenges our respondents pointed out comes at the beginning of the production process, at the quoting stage. From the time lost having to cross-check information to unreliable data and client budget adjustments, **getting quotes right and profitable is difficult.**

Accuracy isn't guaranteed

33% confirmed their quotes were somewhat to very inaccurate.



Quoting is a part-time job

78% of professionals said they create **up to 20 quotes/week.**



Each quote takes time

75% said a quote can take **up to an hour** to prepare.

Not to mention that unconvincing quotes can lead to **losing out on productions.** Issues around quoting have a negative impact on your business, **reducing your overall win rate.**

The three biggest quoting challenges



Adjusting quotes to client budgets

Uncertain client budgets add to the quoting complexity. This opens the door to errors.

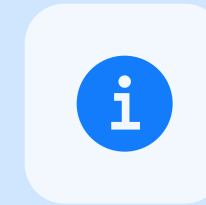
42% of participants mentioned adjusting quotes to meet client budgets was their **#1 challenge**.



Making accurate price calculations

As account managers work across various platforms, they don't have updated information on crew availability and equipment costs.

37% said this issue topped their list of concerns, leading to profit loss.



Getting real-time information on availabilities & costs

31% struggle with **real-time visibility** into crew and equipment availabilities.

This is challenging when trying to determine additional costs and actual budgets.

Quoting challenges aren't just aggravating for account managers. Yes, these issues make their jobs more difficult and stressful. However, they also lead to **lost revenue, damaged client relationships, and delayed productions**.

DID YOU KNOW?

Quoting mistakes in **AV rental** have a greater impact on profit margins (**77%**) compared to **media production** organizations (**47%**).

Chapter 2

Planning.

"One of the biggest challenges I face when working on a production and booking crew and equipment is coordinating schedules across multiple parties, which can lead to conflicts and delays."

— Research survey participant

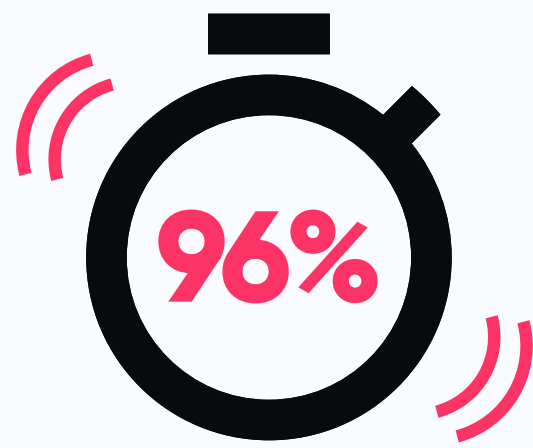
Planners face some of the toughest challenges in the industry. Their jobs are made more stressful by a lack of visibility into crew or equipment availabilities. Not to mention miscommunication across teams.

These **challenges were similar**, whether they booked **crew or equipment**. The difficulty comes down to coordinating resources. Constraints like scheduling conflicts and tight budgets create issues down the line.

Whether it's **paying overtime labor or subrenting equipment**, lack of reliable data leads to last-minute changes. These cause productions to go over budget.

"The biggest challenges in production and booking crews or equipment stem from scheduling conflicts, budget constraints, and communication breakdowns."

— Research survey participant



Struggle with last-minute changes

96% of planners need to be agile and adaptable.

The three biggest planning challenges



Ability to adapt to last-minute changes

38% of equipment planners and **41%** of crew planners cite this as their **main challenge**.

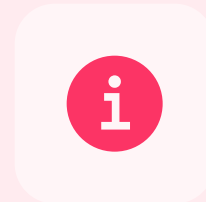
This underscores the need for flexibility in planning. Poor management can cause disruptions and added costs.



Ensuring all accessories are included

A lack of comprehensive equipment oversight can lead to incomplete preparations and delays.

For **27%** of equipment planners, including necessary accessories is the **second most common issue**.









Finding reliable availability information

30% of crew planners struggle to find reliable availability and cost information.

No real-time visibility can lead to double bookings, shortages, and timeline compromises.

No single source of truth



53% of planners use up to 5 tools for planning.

DID YOU KNOW?

Last-minute changes, whether to crew or equipment, are the **leading source of issues globally across all industries** surveyed.

Chapter 3

Communication.

"Communication between teams upstream of the project is a challenge. People do not all use the same platforms and most would be reluctant to use a tool developed internally."

— Research survey participant

Communication and collaboration come up consistently in our community talks as serious issues. This is true because communicating across teams, locations, and time zones can become complex quickly.

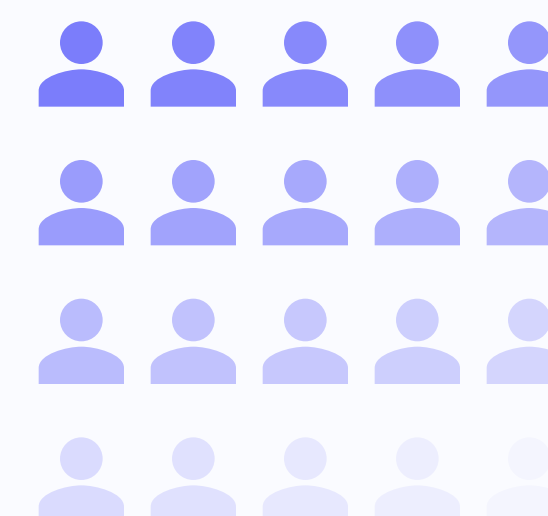
Communication is a hurdle

98% of organizations have experienced negative impacts due to **communication issues**.

Information is often siloed across different tools, and communication is spread over different media. All of which leads to costly miscommunication.

We found that whether it was managing crew, freelancers, or warehouse inventory, all of our respondents struggled with communication. This is a key challenge to their daily efficiency.

In fact, **34%** of respondents said that **up to 50% of their productions are negatively impacted by communication issues**.



Too many touchpoints

23% communicate with **20+ people**, which can get very time-consuming.

The three biggest communication challenges

#1

Overtime or needing additional labor

Miscommunicating crew schedules impacted **55% of professionals**. As communication falters, it creates an inefficiency cycle that can jeopardize a production's success.

#2

Budget bloat

41% struggle with budgeting. Correcting mistakes, like finding last-minute crew or forgotten items, adds up to the overall production costs.

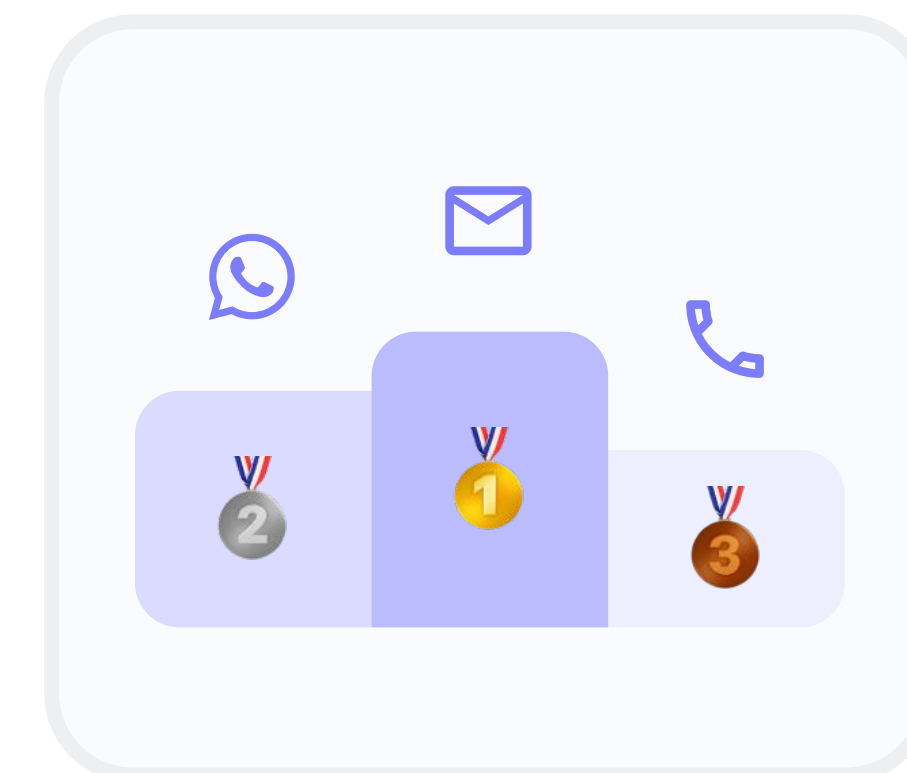
#3

Duplication of work

34% lack a central source of truth, so there's no clarity on task completion. Multiple people take on the same task instead of focusing on higher-priority jobs.

Most companies use multiple communication tools. The top 3 are **email, WhatsApp, and telephone calls**.

With **29% needing to communicate last-minute changes**, it's easy to see how it can get complicated fast.



Communication is time-consuming for planners juggling multiple projects. Constant check-ins without actual project visibility have a huge impact on the completion of tasks.

Miscommunications among different teams—such as account managers, warehouse staff, and production crew—often result in errors. This ultimately **impacts deadlines, budgets**, and overall **project success**.

**DID
YOU
KNOW?**

57% of Dutch teams use **WhatsApp** to communicate with crew. Only **12%** of North Americans use this app.

Chapter 4

Equipment tracking.

"One of the biggest hurdles is ensuring that the right equipment is available when needed. This can be particularly challenging during peak seasons or for high-demand projects if specific equipment is booked elsewhere."

— Research survey participant

Making sure everything gets packed up and out the door (and returns in the same condition) is a huge challenge for many in the AV, Events, and Media production industries.

Failing to track equipment properly can have serious consequences. For instance, if an item is out for repair but improperly tracked, it might be booked for an event while it's unavailable.

This leads to last-minute issues to fill the shortage, with either owned or subrented equipment. The cost of subrentals again adds to the production costs.

"Availability issues happen because there are many media firms that want to use the same equipment for the same day and therefore causing shortage of equipment. The impact on my company is delay to production."

— Research survey participant

63%
of teams

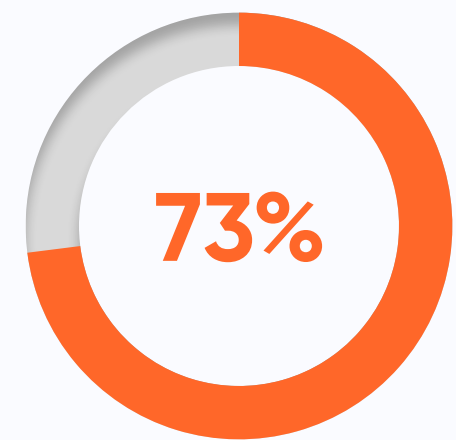
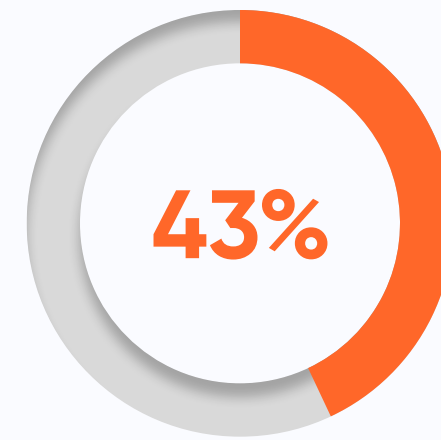
struggle with
production costs
due to **equipment
loss and damage.**

\$15K+
in repair costs

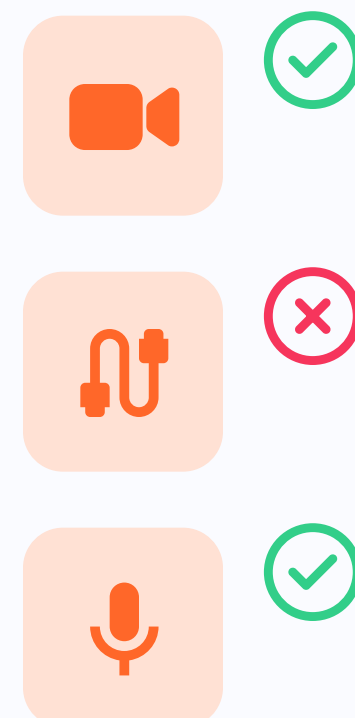
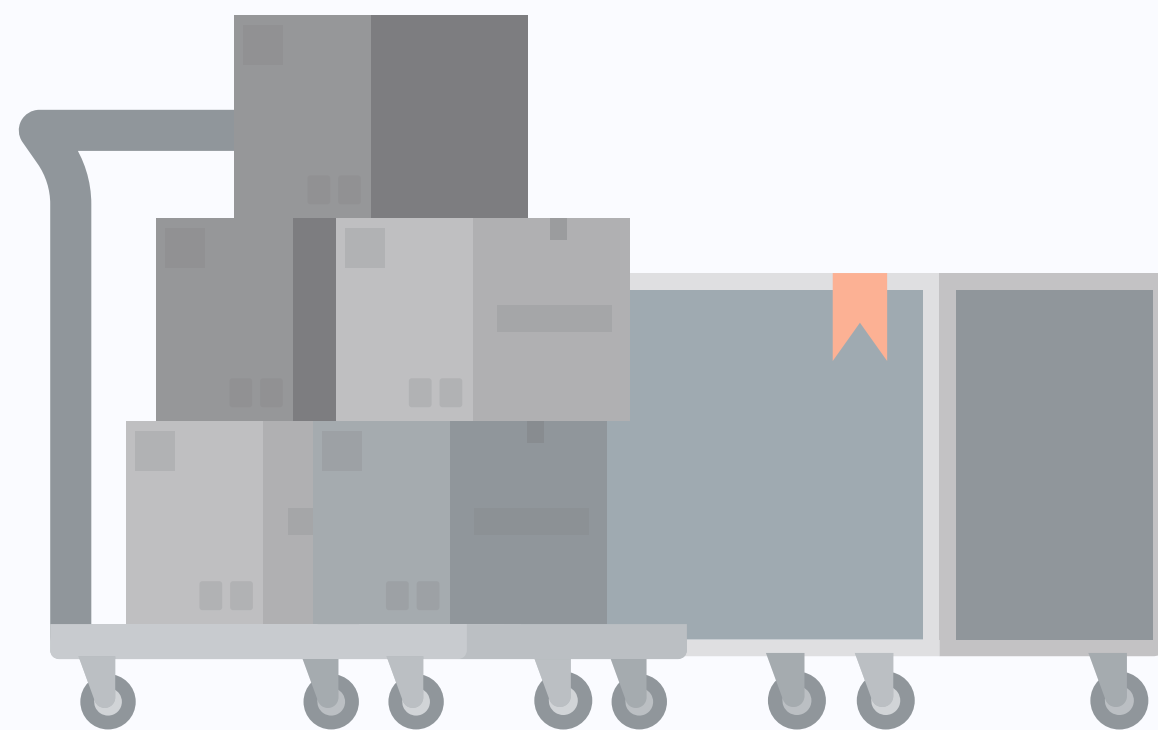
21% invested
\$15,000+ annually
to repair or replace
equipment.

Missing items

43% of respondents said their crew are making mistakes in packing equipment at least occasionally.



While **73%** said they **trust their crew** to pack unsupervised, this doesn't change the fact that **mistakes are still made**.



If the **equipment doesn't get sent out** – or the wrong item goes in its place – the last-minute hustle to correct the mistake impacts costs. Factoring in these unexpected issues is just **one expensive challenge** when it comes to equipment tracking.

Similarly, if **equipment gets damaged, stolen, or lost** but not accounted for, it influences the **completion of future projects**. This causes more issues down the line.

Ensuring warehouse managers and packing crew have the information needed requires a real-time inventory overview. Relying on **manual tracking methods** like spreadsheets and clipboards **slows down the process**.

Missteps in equipment handling, limited visibility, and manual processes lead to **costly errors and confusion**. Particularly for freelancers unfamiliar with the business.

DID YOU KNOW?

Event Rental & Media Production companies are more likely to have **\$50,000+ annual costs** to replace or fix damaged or lost items.

Chapter 5

Profitability.

“Rental costs for sound production have escalated sharply this year and we have a difficult time occasionally just breaking even.”

— Research survey participant

Controlling costs and projecting accurate revenue come down to visibility across all lines of your business.

Is this easy in an industry where last-minute changes can upend an entire production? No. Is it essential to staying afloat? Absolutely.

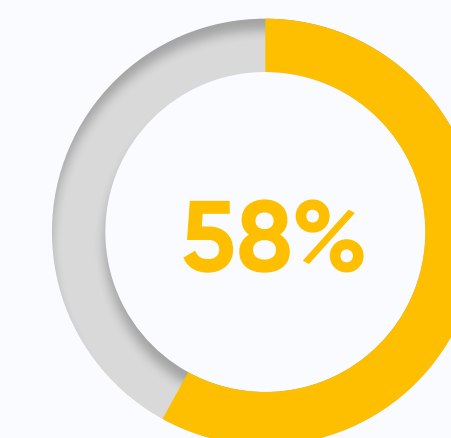
Profitability is a huge concern. With **no single source of truth** and **data spread across different sources**, balancing budgets is tricky. Being able to immediately see when budgets are surpassed or production costs go up can be difficult.

With limited visibility into what led to the budget overrun, fixing it for the future becomes complicated. Growth and profit margins are then limited. And this has a negative effect on the entire business.



Production costs

61% said that their productions go over budget by **more than 10%**.



Repair costs

58% agreed that last-minute changes were the **#1 factor** for **budget issues**.

Challenges of productions going over budget

#1

Profit loss

According to **69% of participants**, the main consequence of exceeding budgets is a loss of profit. This directly **impacts the business' bottom line**.

#2

Damaged client relationships

40% pointed out that exceeding budgets damages client relationships. This **negatively affects client retention**.

#3

Damaged business reputation

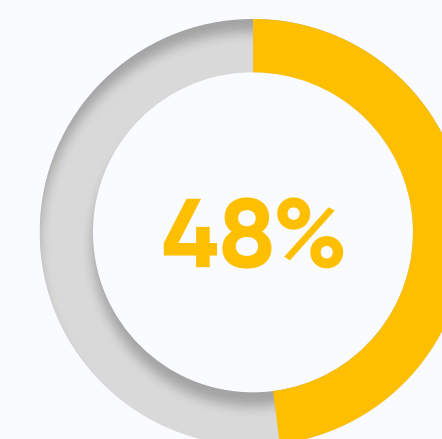
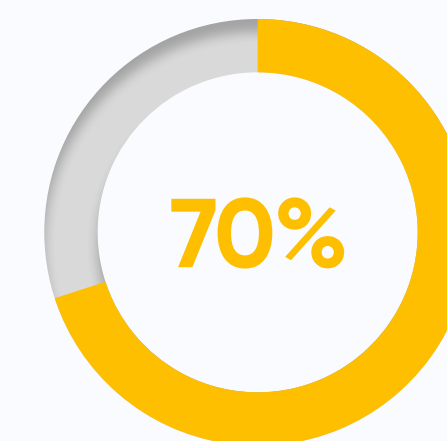
32% believe that their ability to control costs impacts their business reputation. Ultimately, it **reduces the ability to win more jobs**.

Quotes can be inaccurate. Productions can go over budget. Add to that some equipment issues and last-minute changes can turn the entire production on its head.

While having visibility into the company's financial situation doesn't seem to be an issue, the **accuracy of the information** is what **impacts the success of a business**.

Cost visibility

70% said they had visibility into their business's financial situation.



Budget accuracy

48% said they **don't have the information** needed to **budget productions accurately**.

**DID
YOU
KNOW?**

Media Production companies have clearer visibility into their business's financial situation (**74%**) compared to **AV Rental companies (54%)**.

Conclusion

So what does all this mean?

The AV, Events, and Media production industries are undoubtedly complex and dynamic, requiring adaptability and precision. From scheduling changes to equipment availability, **these challenges demand a unified system** that simplifies and streamlines the entire process.

Relying on a mix of multiple tools and communication channels only fragments information and complicates workflows, underscoring the need for **a centralized solution**.

At Rentman, we believe that by **consolidating tools** and **centralizing information**, you not only address last-minute issues but also **drive improvements** across your overall business performance.

This approach elevates your business's reputation, enhances operational productivity, and **boosts profitability**—even in the face of inevitable, last-minute adjustments.

Methodology

Together with Sapio Research, we surveyed **319 decision-makers** in **Media production, AV rental, Event production, Broadcasting, and Event rental**.

Location

Survey participants joined from the United States, Germany, France, Canada, Netherlands, Sweden, and Finland.



Seniority



Management level Other

Industry



Media production Event production AV & Event rental



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