

I'll be the judge of that!

What makes an awards entry a winner?

By David Preston, CEO, Realise

Realise CEO David Preston reveals the key things eventprofs should remember when entering industry awards...

What if you could increase your odds of being selected for fame and glory?

It starts with understanding what gets the attention of the judges.

I have been part of many judging panels, most recently the 2023 Eventex Event Technology awards. Here is my perspective on what makes an entry rise to the top of the pile.

Identify objectives

As a business owner, when I'm judging award entries, the thing that makes me say "Ring the bell, we have a winner!" is always **how well the company did in achieving results against their objectives**.

I'm not saying I only look at whether the event generated direct revenue; for example, if the objective was to entertain, then getting a 10 on the catering is a relevant performance measure.

And, if the objective was to engage, then measurements about your social media interactions – clicks and shares – are also useful.

But did you entertain the "right" people? Did you engage the "right" people?

You need to be able to define who your priority targets were and what you did to successfully have an impact on their decision to visit you, talk about you, take the next step in understanding or, yes, buying your product or service.

Long-term impacts

Visually creative award submissions are great. Photos. Video. Good storytelling. Those all help get a judge's attention.

At an event it is increasingly important to show your product or service in an intriguing manner. You need to get attention.

But, at the end of the event, what did your priority targets take away? What change did you manage to elicit in those who attended?

What are the longer-term impacts that we can see as a result of you putting on this event?

Tell me that in a clear way and you are ahead of most of the entries I see. Detail your impact – your results against your objectives – and **you have my vote**.