

Encompass Event Group and Staging Solutions team up to deliver best-in-class audio, video, and lighting solutions for a large-scale event

###

Bringing a Large-Scale Event to Life

In March 2024, a global medical supply manufacturer and distributor held its annual week-long sales event at a resort and convention center near Denver, Colorado. In addition to the general session, the event featured keynote presentations, awards parties, breakout sessions, and a vendor fair, all of which allowed the three thousand industry professionals in attendance to network and learn about new products.

The size of the event and its offerings meant the event had significant audio, video, and lighting requirements. To ensure such a large-scale event went smoothly, the client brought in Staging Solutions, an experiential marketing company specializing in live event production, content creation, design and fabrication, and brand activation.

“All of our clients have a fantastic story, and we bring it to life. We expand upon that,” said Rusty Bumgardner, Executive Producer of Staging Solutions. “We try to create a lasting experience, one that resonates.”

To create memorable events, the Staging Solutions team designs custom show items and builds unique sets. However, instead of supplying the needed audio and video equipment for this particular event themselves, they preferred to connect with another vendor.

“We wanted a team that specialized in show operators and equipment and was built for this size and caliber of show we were looking to do,” Rusty said.

Though Staging Solutions had an array of options in terms of event production companies, the choice was clear from the start: Encompass Event Group.

Streamlining Operations with a Strategic Partner

Encompass Event Group offers technical design, deployment, and equipment for live events throughout the Denver area. Prior to the client’s event, Encompass Event Group had worked with Staging Solutions on several occasions, albeit not to the same scope and with different teams.

“I hadn’t done anything with the Encompass team until this event, but some coworkers who had worked with them gave great feedback on their equipment, preparation, and personnel,” said Tim Yager, Technical Director and Production Manager of Staging Solutions. “Though it was a shot in the dark for me to work with Encompass, I trust my coworkers with everything, so I didn’t have any worries about teaming up.”

Aside from already having a positive working relationship, the Staging Solutions team wanted to bring in Encompass Event Group to relieve themselves of dealing with the technical details so they could better concentrate on set fabrication and content.

“We knew that the Encompass team had great systems, great gear, and great people, so partnering with them allowed us to focus on the client’s other needs while they focused on the technical aspects,” Tim said. “I gave Encompass autonomy to just run with it while I worked in other directions.”

Working with an outside company was also a practical decision from a logistics standpoint.

“When you’ve got to send a truck somewhere—even if it’s just halfway across the country—that adds up,” said Matt Manternach, Senior Solutions Coordinator at Encompass Events Group. “You’re talking about adding \$15,000 to an order just to get the gear there. So in some cases, it might make sense for people to hire local instead of bringing in equipment.”

But Staging Solutions selected Encompass for reasons beyond just the provision of equipment and an existing relationship.

“We wanted a partner, not just somebody to bring in the gear,” Rusty said. “We were looking for a partner who was really good at the production, management, and logistics and shared our zeal and enthusiasm. We needed a company that was well organized, maintained their gear well, and had a skilled crew. Encompass ticked all those boxes.”

“Partnering with the Encompass team allowed us to go above and beyond our normal setup because they’re very similar to us as far as how they approach and execute,” Tim added. “So it was just a great opportunity to bring them into the fold and have us both bounce ideas off each other from a technical perspective, knowing that we had a larger budget to work with this year and could do some cooler things to step up the set.”

Transforming Designs into Real Solutions

Staging Solutions handled the audio, video, and lighting design, and Encompass’s role was to acquire and provide the equipment that would fulfill those designs.

“Our process started with a discovery call to learn more about the event so we could determine what the scope and design might be,” Matt said. “Then, once we built it all out, the labor needs and responsibilities fell into place.”

“We were there to work with the Staging Solutions team and guide them on how they would work best with our packaging,” said Eric Satre, President and General Manager of Encompass Event Group. “They had a great audio design with acoustics and speakers, so it made it easy to deploy. They thought everything through.”

In addition to developing the audio plan, Staging Solutions designed the event’s large-scale video build set. The initial drawings originally featured a substantial amount of projection, but both teams knew they could do something more impressive.

“We went back to Staging and said, ‘Hey, why don’t we talk about doing some LED? That could be a better look and reduce some costs,’” Eric said. “The Staging team then supplied us with the specs of what they wanted to do, and we figured out how to do it from there. We had a couple of unique things in our inventory, like seamless corners, that allowed us to hit the design that they were looking for.”

The video build set wound up involving flown rear projector screens and more than 650 tiles of LED, including approximately 510 ground-supported tiles on the stage and a delay screen with over 100 tiles. It also included a custom video wall with egresses leading in and out.

“The video setup we did was pretty intricate,” said Tim. “It was all done pixel for pixel and 4K resolution, and it took the client from an archaic way of doing things and into the next realm. The client is not going to want to do projection again.”

Though Encompass’s inventory wasn’t a strong match for Staging’s lighting design, communication between the teams led to solutions.

“We went back and forth about how to make their design work within what was available to us locally,” Eric said, “and we had no issues there at all.”

“If there was stuff that we didn’t have or we didn’t own, then we either made substitutions, found the equipment locally, or got stuff shipped in from out of town,” Matt said.

Encompass Event Group was also able to help the Staging Solutions team repurpose the gobo lighting they had on hand but thought they wouldn’t be able to use without expensive rigging.

“No one gave up, and because of the persistence, it happened and looked good, and I was really happy that we were able to do this for the client,” Rusty said.

Ultimately, the Encompass Event Group team wound up supplying the vast majority of the equipment, including LED lighting, monitors, switching recording equipment, and cameras, as well as the stage. They also provided suggestions for additional local labor to help with set up and strike.

“Staging Solutions had all the leads covered, but we had a couple of stagehands on site as insurance policies just in case any of our equipment went down or if there were issues with it,” Matt said.

“Kudos to the Encompass team for working with us,” Tim said.

Conquering Challenges to Ensure Event Success

Ensuring the smooth production of such a large-scale event was not without its challenges. Due to back-to-back events, the teams were short on set-up time. The venue itself presented other challenges: The ballroom where the event took place wasn’t close to the loading docks, and all equipment had to go through elevators, one of which was broken. Working together, though,

Encompass Event Group and Staging Solutions were able to successfully overcome these obstacles.

To take advantage of the allotted set-up time, the teams created a schedule that had people working different shifts on one long day instead of having all workers at the venue trying to work at the same time.

“That allowed us to take better advantage of time and resources,” Eric said.

It helped that Encompass was already familiar with the venue.

“We’ve been there a lot, so Staging relied on us for our local knowledge of it when coordinating labor and estimating set-up times,” Eric said.

Regarding Encompass Event Group’s experience and commitment, Rusty recalls how snowy weather forced the client to move the live band inside an exhibition hall with concrete floors and walls. This move required fast and thorough soundproofing to eliminate the reverberant effect, and Encompass Event Group rose to the challenge.

“The Encompass team was more than willing to accommodate us in getting that done,” Rusty said. “They just jumped in and made it happen at the last minute—and during a snowstorm. The resort had their staff stay overnight because the weather was bad enough to where even the locals couldn’t drive in it. But Eric and his team came out and delivered everything early. It was a huge thing in the world of customer service.”

Minor technical issues with video arose mid-event, but all the planning Staging Solutions and Encompass Event Group put in paid off.

“We design our video systems with backups, so we were able to switch to that, and nobody knew that anything had changed,” Tim said. “We also had a couple of video cards to swap out. Again, we got that done without anybody even knowing that it happened because of Encompass’s system, the way we wired it, and the efficiencies we built in the backups.”

Even with the challenges, Rusty describes the event as being “very easy.”

“The hours were long, of course, but it was not super stressful,” Rusty said. “It was a pleasure, just a lot of fun—just like you want these events to be.”

A “Flawless” Execution

Staging Solutions and Encompass Event Group both consider the event a success, as does Staging Solutions’s client.

“The event from the client’s perspective was flawless,” Tim added. “We went outside of our normal bounds and did something the client had never done before. There’d never been that kind of reveal coming from the back of house rather than just coming from the audience. I know that aspect alone really stuck with the client.”

“Like with every show, there were ups and downs, but to my knowledge, the event went well from start to finish,” Eric said. “We all left with a smile.”

“It was a proud moment to walk out of there with the Encompass team and say, ‘We did it,’” Tim said. “It was just very rewarding at the end of it all.”

“Communication Is Key”: The Foundation of a Productive Partnership

The client’s satisfaction was paramount, but Encompass Event Group and Staging Solutions believe that what made this event so successful was their partnership.

“It’s always a challenge when you start to mix a couple of different teams,” Matt said. “Our team and the Staging Solutions team have both got our own way of doing things. But once we gelled all that together and those guys were comfortable with how we were doing things, everything just took off and started running real smooth.”

Both teams attribute their successful and productive partnership to strong communication.

“Communication is key—we say it all the time,” said Matt. “I reached out to Staging even when the show was six months out, just to make suggestions and see how things were going and if they needed anything from me. I wanted them to know they could reach out to us at any time as well.”

“As soon as we started the process with Encompass, it was like night and day compared to our other vendors in terms of being proactive and responsive,” Tim said. “We had some funky lighting things happen, and Eric jumped on the phone with me immediately on a Sunday after five. The Encompass team was always available and willing to do whatever it took.”

“It was nice working with the Staging Solutions team—they knew what they were doing and how to ask for it,” Eric said. “There was just complete transparency, and that made it a little bit easier on us.”

Eric also appreciated that the Staging Solutions team trusted him and his team to provide good information and gear and effectively handle their part of the work.

“They cared more about the outcome than they cared about the tiny details. They knew that we were going to have their back and make sure that it went off,” Eric said. “When we have clients that just let us take care of everything that we need to do the job, it becomes a lot easier. Sometimes too many cooks in the kitchen can start to cause problems. But Staging Solutions trusted us to do what we needed to do.”

Staging Solutions knew it could depend on the Encompass Event Group team based on the passion and dedication they have when it comes to their work.

“If the management is very passionate about what they do, that’s going to trickle down to the guy that’s in the warehouse prepping the cable trunk,” Rusty said. “I say that because I actually took a picture while we were there of a cable trunk, and everything was very labeled. It was very

well organized. You could tell the guy that prepped those cables cared about them, and that part of his role, his or her role, was important to them. It's those little things like that that tell so much. It's not just about the equipment—it's definitely about the people and their attitude.”

“It was a privilege to work with the Encompass team,” Tim said. “If there's an opportunity that we can do it again, I'll be the first one to put my hand up and say, ‘Encompass.’ I'm excited about the future possibilities of the partnership between our two agencies. I think there's a very bright future ahead of us.”