



60 seconds with the chair: Michelle Baldwin – AEV Event Managers Working Group



After graduating with a BSc.(Hons) in Product Management, Michelle joined Barclaycard Arena as a catering coordinator, before being offered a role as an event manager at NEC where she built her considerable expertise managing renowned shows including Spring Fair, BBC Gardeners' World, The Motorcycle Show and MODA.

Michelle became a senior event manager in 2012, one of three running the NEC's event management department, and since then her passion for the event industry has led to her heading up Team NEC's education stream, working with schools and universities to nurture future talent within the industry and chairing the AEV Event Managers Working Group.

What brought you into the event industry?

I started working at the ICC at the age of 17, and I truly thought that Event Management was glamorous. After building up work experience in Event Management I decided it really was what I wanted to pursue, even after I discovered it wasn't all heels and clipboards, so much as high viz and steel toe caps!

Why did you get involved with the association working groups?

I am deeply passionate about the Events Industry, the excitement, the variety and the amazing people who work within it. It's great to be part of a working group of like-minded professionals that can help mould the industry and reflect on common issues and it's the best way to share insight within our specialisms, so we all benefit.

What do you think the best show, exhibition or conference was last year?

Difficult question! I think there are many shows that really stand out. This year I have helped plan Commercial Vehicle, Autosport, Moda, BBC Gardener's World and Summer Good Food to name a few. Gardeners was great as we had the weather and it was such a feel good show but I have to say I was excited by the Vapeshow and what the Organisers have achieved and the quality of stand build was excellent.

What will be the next big change in venues?

I think with the recent tragedies, especially in Manchester, I think we will see security levels increase. I would imagine that they are here to stay. Experiential offers and the visitor experience are a drive within the Industry so I believe there will be a much greater element of creativity coming back into stand design, and I think that there will be more broadly interactive events, as the future unfurls.

What's your favourite quote, saying or motto?

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world" – Gandhi.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever been given?

"Be careful what you wish for!"



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Which historical event would you most like to host at your venue?

Live Aid would have been amazing, I remember watching it as a child and thinking "Wow!" - This event was watched by millions and millions, and unquestionably changed the world.

What film, book or TV series have you been recommending to others recently?

Versailles has been a great watch lately but if I am honest it seems to be all about "Love Island" at the moment (my guilty pleasure).

What music are you listening to at the moment?

My last music purchase was Rag N Bone Man's debut album "Human" and it makes excellent listening.

If you could attend any event, in the past, present or future, what would it be?

Anything with David Bowie! He was a true musical hero I regrettably never saw live. I would love to be transported back in time to the early 80's, or even to Live Aid, to see him perform.