



Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes at the city's most glamorous events? Event styling company 3 Degrees shares its vision

MASTER PLANNERS



We write about events quite often in *#legend* – brands throwing extravaganzas to celebrate the latest store openings, charity balls, film premieres and product launches.

We write about the glorious occasion, the celebrities who attend, the glitz and the glamour – but we rarely talk about the people behind the events, the ones who bring the parties to life from conceptualisation to completion. Here, we speak to 3 Degrees, an event styling company owned by three Hong Kong born-and-raised event planners who'd like to be known as J, M and V. Keeping their identities a mystery so as not to detract from the creative work they do, the team has more than 10 years of experience in planning weddings, corporate events and private parties.

How did 3 Degrees come about?

We have always had a fascination with events – their creativity, flair and innovativeness. Hong Kong is known for hosting numerous events throughout the year, but we noticed that a lot of them had the same flavour. The general consensus was the same concept, over and over again. Any type of unique and bespoke event involved an incredibly high budget. 3 Degrees was born to bridge this gap in the market. We wanted to demonstrate that events could still be memorable and different at any budget level. All it involved was picking the right team who had the creative prowess to do it – and we are definitely that team.

Who are your clients?

We've developed a pretty strong reputation within the arts and lifestyle scene in Asia, centred on Hong Kong, and increasingly we're a trusted partner of some really large corporates with operations across the region. Having said that, we still love doing the little intimate events as well. So we might do a charity fundraiser, help plan a gorgeous proposal, design an awards ceremony, advise on a bar mitzvah and run a Christmas party – all within the space of a single week!

What's the main aspect you take into consideration when you organise an event?

It's as simple as the client's needs. Every event is organised for a specific reason – whether it's a celebration of a special moment, a desire to drive content or even as a means to raise money for a charity initiative. We take into account our client's aims and aspirations for wanting to organise that event. That drives the concept, the theme, and the entire look and feel of the event. It's important that any and all messages are communicated, and the aim of the event is fulfilled.

Are there any differences in what your millennial clients are looking for?

When millennials approach us, they're always very aware of what's on trend, and often they have great ideas that they just need help refining or bringing to life. They typically aren't looking for something classic and elegant, and instead want edgy, unique, great spots for selfies. So we spend lots of time

thinking about creating spaces that provide unique photo-ops that can be shared across a variety of social media platforms. Like every generation, millennials want to be conversation starters, but it's just a new way of going about things. It's not just about being talked about by a small local group; rather, it's about creating content that travels through networks of communities – friends and family, colleagues, clients and classmates – and that eventually extends across the world.

How has the events market in Hong Kong evolved throughout the years?

People have started to see the value in events and there's undoubtedly a larger demand for them. But at the same time, at least in the corporate sector, there's more consciousness about budget allocation. This has forced us to apply our creativity strategically, coming up with cost-effective ideas and solutions for our biggest clients without compromising the quality of the event. The secondary benefit of this is that you now have really high-quality event production within the reach of even the smallest firms, as well as regular people looking for an amazing birthday, engagement, baby shower and so on.

What's been the most difficult event you've worked on?

The most challenging one yet has to be the FilmAid charity gala in 2017. We were given two-and-a-half weeks to not only create a vibrant and engaging space within the AIA Carnival, but also build an event from scratch that had to be worthy of the attendance of 260 VIPs and celebrities. We had to



Clockwise from far left: The most challenging event for 3 Degrees to date was the extravagant 2017 FilmAid charity gala; the fourth day of an intimate bar mitzvah; the grand opening of the Little Tai Hang hotel and serviced apartments; a lavish gold-themed party for a couple's joint 40th birthday celebration

think of everything – building a kitchen, bringing plateware, cutlery, glassware, tables, chairs and luxury Portalooos. To make it even more challenging, we had the Chinese New Year holidays in the middle of our lead time! We're very proud to say the event was a great success, and that the guests loved both the playful theme and the unique venue.

What's next for the year for 3 Degrees?

We want to continue to build our reputation as the go-to events company for the arts and lifestyle scene in Asia, centred on Hong Kong, and we are looking forward to seeing some original projects come to life. We would also like to challenge ourselves by expanding from our comfortable home market to work on projects in China and parts of Southeast Asia.