



TECH TIPS: ROOM-DIAGRAMMING SOFTWARE

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IN the “What did we ever do before we had ...” category, room-diagramming software claims a spot near the top of the list. And in this arena, no programs have given event pros a better tool both for creating winning proposals and for avoiding design disasters than those that produce 3-D room renderings. Here, software makers reveal how planners can use their products to create picture-perfect events.

TIP: Be resourceful.

Sure, Toronto-based Cast Software’s Vivien Virtual Event Designer offers the ability to create two-dimensional floor plans, virtual views and 3-D images that resemble photographs rather than renderings. And, yes, Vivien works with a CAD (computer-aided design) engine that is, according to Cast Software’s Litsa Rorris, “completely compatible with other CAD software products,” allowing users to open and convert existing venue CAD drawings.

But the real power of the newest version of Vivien lies in the program’s resource tools. These include a Tent Wizard as well as a Pipe and Drape Wizard, both introduced last year, and a Projection Wizard and Import Floorplan feature, launched in March as part of Vivien version 1.2.

Then there are Vivien’s many libraries of event supplies and equipment, such as tables, banquet fixtures, lighting, trussing, stairs and doors. Used in a variety of combinations, Vivien’s tools enable “the automatic creation of seating arrangements, venue design and room layout in just a few steps,” Rorris says.

And because “Vivien automatically produces all the components needed for professional presentations and proposals” — including 2-D and 3-D plots, renderings and bills of materials — clients “have a better grasp of the vision and are more likely to grant the contract,” Rorris says.