

Mastering the Pivot: Key Considerations for Shifting Your Tourism Event Strategy

By Brenley Kroeker

In today's dynamic tourism environment, unexpected changes and challenges are inevitable.

The ability to pivot strategically is essential for protecting revenue, maintaining audience

The First Ripple

When something happens, resist the urge to react immediately.

- What actually happened vs what is being reported?
- What information is confirmed?
- Who needs to be informed first internally?

Assess its Magnitude

Not every issue requires the same magnitude of response.

- **Small**- Minor issue and limited audience impact may only require internal communication.
- **Medium**- Growing attention and stakeholders are asking questions may require coordinated messaging.
- **Big**- High public visibility and reputational risk may require leadership team.

Choose Your Response Path

- **OPEN WATERS (Option A)**- Smooth sailing! Proceed as planned.
- **ADJUST THE COURSE (Option B)**- Modify the direction. Continue forward.
- **DROP THE ANCHOR (Option C)**- Pause or scale back to protect the event.

Call it Out

- Pause and align
- Identify your key audience
- Choose the right channels
- Create a clear message
- Stay on brand
- Monitor the ripple

What Pivots Look Like

- Weather disruptions
- Vendor changes
- Attendance fluctuations
- Operational realities

Decision Considerations

- Safety
- Revenue
- Audience experience
- Brand trust
- Operational feasibility
- Stakeholder impact

Navigate the Current

When a disruption **drops** into your event planning, the DROP method helps determine your next move.

- **D**- Do it as planned (Proceed)
- **R**- Relocate the experience
- **O**- Optimize or Modify
- **P**- Push the date (Postpone)
- **S**- Stop the event (Cancel)

Contingency Plan Worksheet

Planning for changing tides.

1. Event Overview
2. Risk Identification
3. Impact Assessment
4. Contingency Options
5. Communication Plan
6. Decision Team

Communications Plan

Start Upstream: Internal Alignment

- What is changing?
- Why the decision was made?
- What are the next steps?

Communicate Outwards:

- Sponsors and partners
- Vendors and suppliers
- Ticket holders or attendees
- Staff and volunteers
- Public audiences



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brenley Kroeker

Has spent the past decade working in the live events and tourism industry. In the world of live events, you quickly learn that no two events unfold exactly as planned. Through her education and years of experience, Brenley has had the opportunity to see and experience the impact of these unknowns from many perspectives — from event organizers and businesses to stakeholders and partners. Outside of her professional work, Brenley co-owns Thrive Dance SK in Saskatoon, is a loving wife, and a proud mom to two young boys and a blind dog. She is excited to be integrating back into the working world after maternity leave.