



SEEKER EVENTS NETWORK — BUYER'S GUIDE

How to Choose an Events Calendar Platform for Your Destination

From calendar management to AI-powered event discovery, this guide equips you with everything you need to evaluate, compare, and choose the right local events platform for your destination.

1 Define Requirements

2 Your Stakeholders

3 Understand the Market

4 Build Your Shortlist

5 Run Your Demos

6 Evaluate Cost & ROI

7 Plan for Go-Live

8 Assess & Optimise

1 STEP ONE

Define Your Requirements

Before you talk to a single vendor, get clear on the problem you're actually trying to solve. The clearer your requirements going in, the more focused and productive your evaluation will be.



YOUR OBJECTIVE

Document the specific problems your current approach isn't solving, and define what success looks like 12 months after go-live. This becomes your evaluation filter for every vendor conversation.



Discovery & Coverage

How complete is your calendar today? Are events missing because no one submitted them, or because your platform can't find them?

- ② What percentage of events in your destination do you estimate are currently on your calendar?
- ② What types of events are most likely to be missing — community, recurring, hyperlocal?
- ② How many hours per week does your team spend manually entering or chasing event submissions?
- ② Make a list of 10–20 specific websites — local venues, partner orgs, community groups — that you want events from. Bring this list to every vendor conversation.



SEO & Visitor Experience

Is your events page driving organic search traffic? Can visitors find individual events on Google, and do those event pages live at URLs on your own domain?

- ❓ How does your events page currently perform in search (organic traffic, rankings for "[city] events")?
- ❓ Do individual event detail pages have URLs on your domain?
- ❓ Can your GA4 track what visitors do inside your current calendar?



Management & Operations

How much of your team's time goes into keeping the calendar clean and current? What operations pain is your current setup creating?

- ❓ How do you currently handle duplicate listings?
- ❓ How painful is it to update recurring events, batch-change categories, or correct bad data?
- ❓ How do community partners and local orgs currently submit events? What's the drop-off rate?



Integrations & Stack

What does this platform need to connect to? A calendar that doesn't talk to your existing tech stack creates more work, not less.

- ❓ Are you on Simpleview, Tempest, Madden, or WordPress? Does the calendar need to sync with your CMS?
- ❓ Do you need an API to surface event data in trip planners or partner sites?
- ❓ What website platform are you on, and how will the calendar be embedded?



Turn your answers into a one-page requirements doc before your first vendor call. Share it with vendors in advance and tell them you'll be evaluating against it. Vendors who read it and customize their demo accordingly are the ones worth talking to.

Requirements Checklist

Use this to capture your requirements and set priorities before you start vendor conversations.

REQUIREMENT	NOTES / YOUR CURRENT SITUATION	PRIORITY
DISCOVERY & SOURCES		
Automated event discovery (not just submissions)		High / Med / Low
Unlimited sources — no cap on the number of sites crawled		High / Med / Low
Can crawl any website URL we provide		High / Med / Low
Discovers new sources without manual setup		High / Med / Low
AI deduplication across sources		High / Med / Low
Image scraping — extract event details from flyers, social graphics, Instagram posts		High / Med / Low
View original source URL for any discovered event		High / Med / Low
Review-before-publish editorial queue — discovered events reviewed before going live		High / Med / Low
SEO & DELIVERY		
Event detail pages live on our domain (not vendor subdomain)		High / Med / Low
Google can index event content (no iFrame)		High / Med / Low
GA4 tracks visitor behavior inside the calendar		High / Med / Low
SEO landing pages (e.g. "Live Music This Weekend")		High / Med / Low

REQUIREMENT	NOTES / YOUR CURRENT SITUATION	PRIORITY
Ticketing links preserved and displayed on event detail pages		High / Med / Low
Original website links preserved on event detail pages		High / Med / Low
EDITORIAL MANAGEMENT		
Batch updates (category, status across many events)		High / Med / Low
Advanced recurring events — different dates, times, and venues per occurrence without duplicating records		High / Med / Low
Whitelist trusted sources (auto-publish) and blacklist unwanted organizers or venues		High / Med / Low
Featured events — ability to pin or promote specific events		High / Med / Low
Organizer profiles and management		High / Med / Low
Edit events post-discovery (title, description, image, category)		High / Med / Low
Create events manually in the dashboard		High / Med / Low
Automatic AI categorization against your custom taxonomy		High / Med / Low
Custom category taxonomy (define your own categories)		High / Med / Low
CALENDAR PRESENTATION		
Multiple calendar views (list, month, agenda, map) — mobile responsive		High / Med / Low

REQUIREMENT	NOTES / YOUR CURRENT SITUATION	PRIORITY
Automatic city / location filtering for multi-city destinations		High / Med / Low
Per-category filtered calendar embeds (e.g. "Live Music Only" widget)		High / Med / Low
Calendar branding and visual customization		High / Med / Low
SUBMISSIONS & COMMUNITY		
Low-friction event submission for local orgs		High / Med / Low
Embeddable event submission form (standalone, separate from calendar)		High / Med / Low
Pre-fill submission form from a URL (fetch event details automatically)		High / Med / Low
INTEGRATIONS & DATA		
CMS integration (Simpleview, Tempest, Madden, WordPress, and others)		High / Med / Low
API access for third-party distribution		High / Med / Low
Data export in standard format (CSV, JSON)		High / Med / Low



HOT TIP

Pull your Google Analytics data before any vendor conversation. How much traffic does your current events page get? Where does it come from? What's the bounce rate? This baseline makes the ROI conversation in Step 6 much more concrete.

2 STEP TWO

Your Stakeholders

An events calendar touches more stakeholders than you might expect. Getting the right people involved early prevents surprises at the contract stage and makes implementation faster.



YOUR OBJECTIVE

Identify who needs to be involved and what each stakeholder cares about. Appoint a project champion who owns the evaluation and keeps it moving.

STAKEHOLDER	THEIR PRIMARY CONCERN	QUESTIONS TO ANSWER FOR THEM
Digital / Marketing Director	Calendar completeness, SEO performance, visitor experience, team bandwidth	Will this calendar actually reflect what's happening in our destination? Will it help or hurt our organic search rankings? How much staff time will it save?
Executive Director / CEO	ROI, partner relationships, board optics	What's the business case? How does this compare to what we have? Will our destination partners and stakeholders see the improvement?
IT / Web Manager	Integration complexity, data security, implementation burden	How does this embed on our site? What's the IT lift for implementation? Who owns the data? What are the security certifications?
Content / Events Staff	Day-to-day usability, submission workflow, moderation tools	How much manual work does this create versus eliminate? What does the moderation queue look like? How do we handle problem events or bad data?
Destination Partners	Ease of submission, visibility for their events, reliability	How do local organizations submit events? Will their events actually show up? What's the approval turnaround?

STAKEHOLDER	THEIR PRIMARY CONCERN	QUESTIONS TO ANSWER FOR THEM
Local Businesses & Venues	Their events getting found without extra work on their end	Does the platform find their events automatically, or do they need to submit manually every time? Is there a simple way to claim or verify their listing?
Arts Councils & Cultural Orgs	Comprehensive coverage of arts and cultural programming across the community	Will smaller arts organizations and independent venues get the same visibility as major institutions? Does the platform understand arts event categories?
Main Street / Downtown Organizations	Visibility for district events, foot traffic, and local business activities	Can the calendar be filtered or embedded by neighborhood or district? Will pop-up markets, sidewalk sales, and informal events get picked up?
City / Chamber Partners	Civic events, public programs, and community initiatives showing up accurately	Can government or chamber events be given a trusted/featured status? Is there a way to co-manage or share editorial access?
Local Media & Publishers	A reliable, comprehensive events feed they can embed or reference	Is there an API or embed option that lets local media display the calendar on their own site? How current and reliable is the data?



HOT TIP

Use your requirements doc from Step 1 to build a simple internal business case. Quantify the current cost: staff hours per week on manual entry × hourly rate × 52 weeks. That number usually makes the budget conversation straightforward.

Understand the Platform Landscape

The local events calendar market covers platforms built for DMOs, arts councils, local media, chambers of commerce, and community publishers — often with very different architectures underneath. Most fall into one of three categories. Understanding the differences saves time during evaluation.

TYPE 1

Legacy Calendar Platforms

Purpose-built calendar management. Good admin UI, submission workflows, moderation. Events get in because someone submits them or your team enters them. No autonomous discovery.

- ✓ Solid management and moderation tools
- ✓ Established submission workflows

- ✗ No event discovery — only what gets submitted
- ✗ Often iFrame delivery or separate vendor URL — event content doesn't

TYPE 2

AI-Claimed Crawlers

These platforms market AI-powered discovery but work from a fixed list of sources they manage internally. They can crawl that list well — but adding a new venue or partner site means requesting it from the vendor, who builds a custom scraper. Those scrapers break when sites update, and you're dependent on the vendor to fix them. Anything outside the list falls back to manual submission.

- ✓ Reduces some manual entry for major platforms

TYPE 3

AI-Native Discovery + Management

Built from the ground up to crawl the open web — not a maintained list of known sources. New venues and orgs are discovered automatically. Full management layer for editorial work at scale.

- ✓ Crawls any site, not just a pre-approved list
- ✓ Continuous, not scheduled — events appear within hours
- ✓ Real deduplication across sources
- ✓ SEO-first delivery — events on your domain

live on your domain

- ⊗ Manual entry burden never goes away

- ⊗ Source list is fixed — you can't add sources yourself

- ⊗ Adding a new source requires vendor to build a custom scraper

- ⊗ Deduplication often shallow

- ⊗ Thin management layer for destination-scale work

- ✓ Full management layer for destination teams

QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING ABOUT DISCOVERY

Every platform describes its discovery capabilities differently. These questions help you understand what's actually happening.

Discovery is the part of the platform that's hardest to evaluate in a demo. Good vendors are happy to walk through the specifics. These questions give you a clear way to understand exactly how each platform finds events and how well their approach fits your destination.

ON SOURCE COVERAGE

"How does a brand new venue that opened last month get into your system — if they've never submitted an event and they're not already on your source list?"

A platform with open-web crawling will explain how their system discovers new sites automatically. A platform that relies on a maintained source list will typically say something like "they can submit" or "we can add them." Both are valid approaches — knowing which one you're buying helps you set the right expectations.

ON HYPERLOCAL DEPTH

"Show me an event from a local business — a restaurant, a yoga studio, a community center — that only posts events on their own website. No Eventbrite, no Facebook. Just their own site."

A live example is the clearest way to see open-web crawling in action. Any platform that crawls the open web should be able to pull up a recent event from a site that wasn't explicitly added to a source list.

THE LIVE SOURCE TEST

"Here's a URL — a local venue or community org we've struggled to get events from. Can you show us right now how your platform would acquire events from this site?"

Bring a specific URL from your source list to the demo. A platform with true open-web crawling can point it at any URL and start pulling events. A platform working from a fixed source list will need to "add it" through a manual process. The difference will be immediately obvious.

THE MOST USEFUL BENCHMARK QUESTION

"What percentage of events on a typical customer's calendar came from automated crawling versus submission versus manual entry by the DMO team?"

This gives you an apples-to-apples benchmark across vendors. A platform with strong automated discovery will have high crawl percentages for active markets. Understanding the mix helps you set realistic expectations for how much your team will still need to do after switching.

HOT TIP

Consider sending these questions to vendors before the demo. It gives them time to prepare a thorough answer, and you'll get more useful information than if they're caught off guard on a call.

Which type fits your situation?

The right platform depends as much on your organization type and team size as on the feature list. Here's what tends to matter most for each.



Small-City CVB or Chamber

1–3 person team. Calendar maintenance is one of six jobs. Manual entry is taking more time than anyone planned for.



Regional DMO

Dedicated digital staff. Multiple community partners. Calendar needs to cover a multi-city or county-wide footprint.



State Tourism or Large CVB

Multi-market coverage. Multiple staff. Existing DMS and CRM. SEO and analytics are organizational priorities.

- Discovery that meaningfully reduces manual entry
- Lightweight, intuitive management UI
- Low ongoing maintenance overhead
- Pricing that fits a lean budget

- Discovery breadth across the full region
- Low-friction partner submission workflow
- Batch management at scale
- Reporting for board and stakeholders

- CMS integration: Simpleview, Tempest, Madden, WordPress
- Multi-market calendar with regional permissions
- SEO architecture: event URLs, structured data
- API access for trip planners and partner sites



Arts Council or Cultural Organization

Managing events across multiple arts venues, galleries, and performance spaces. The calendar is a primary community resource, not a secondary feature.

- Discovery that finds venue events without manual submission
- Flexible category and tagging for arts disciplines
- Clean, visual presentation for a public-facing audience
- Simple submission workflow for small arts orgs



Local Media or Community Publisher

Events calendar as a community service and traffic driver. Completeness is a direct reader value proposition — gaps hurt credibility.

- Discovery breadth: genuinely comprehensive coverage
- SEO-first delivery to drive organic search traffic
- Brand-customizable presentation
- API access to syndicate events across the site



In Active Platform Transition

Switching from something that isn't working. Migration questions matter as much as feature questions.

- Data portability: can you export your history cleanly?
- Migration support from the vendor
- Realistic timeline to a live, populated calendar
- Redirect strategy to preserve any SEO equity

4 STEP FOUR

Build Your Shortlist

Aim for two to three vendors before you book a full demo. A focused shortlist makes it easier to compare consistently and keeps the evaluation process manageable. Each vendor that makes the shortlist should clear a basic set of criteria first.



YOUR OBJECTIVE

Build a shortlist of 2–3 vendors worth a full demo. Use your requirements checklist to evaluate each one before committing time to a full walkthrough.

Minimum criteria before any vendor makes the shortlist

1

Solves your #1 requirement

If your biggest problem is calendar coverage gaps, a submission-only platform doesn't make the cut regardless of how good the UI looks.

2

SEO delivery matches your needs

If organic search is a priority, iFrame delivery is a disqualifier. Confirm delivery architecture before booking a demo.

3

Live integrations with your stack

If you're on Simpleview or Tempest, confirm a live production integration exists before spending time on a demo. "We have an API" is not a live integration. Simpleview, Tempest, Madden, and WordPress are the most common.

4

References in your market type

Ask for two live customers similar to you in size and geography. If they can't produce references, that tells you something about their install base.

5**Fits your budget range**

Get a ballpark number on the first call. Don't invest 3 weeks evaluating a platform that's 4x your budget before finding out.

6**Answers your discovery questions directly**

Use the questions from Step 3 on the first call. Vendors who can't answer them clearly don't make the shortlist.

7**Engineering team with real depth**

Event discovery at scale is a hard technical problem. Ask how many engineers are working on the discovery infrastructure. A small team can't maintain a crawler that handles site structure changes, image parsing, and deduplication at destination scale.

**HOT TIP**

Send your shortlist criteria to vendors before the discovery call. Vendors who read it and come prepared are the ones worth demoing. Vendors who show up with a generic deck didn't read it.

5 STEP FIVE

Prepare for and Run Your Demos

A structured demo is more useful than an open-ended walkthrough. Send your scenarios in advance so vendors come prepared, and score each one right after while the details are fresh.

**YOUR OBJECTIVE**

Run structured, comparable demos for each shortlisted vendor. Both your decision-maker and your day-to-day user should be on the call. 60 minutes. Score immediately after.

Scenarios to send vendors in advance

DISCOVERY TEST

Ask the vendor to come prepared with a live example of an event discovered from a local business with no Eventbrite or Facebook presence — just their own website.

"Show us the source URL it was crawled from, when it appeared, and how your platform handled deduplication if it appeared on another site."

SEO TEST

Ask the vendor to show you how to build a category landing page — something like "Live Music This Weekend in [Your City]" — and walk through what's included out of the box.

"Show us how to create the page, what schema and sitemap entries it generates automatically, and where it lives in our site's URL structure."

MANAGEMENT TEST

Ask the vendor to demonstrate a batch update live — changing the category on 40 events at once. Then ask them to show a recurring event where one date has a different venue.

"Walk us through how many steps it takes and how many records we'd need to touch."

SUBMISSION TEST

Ask the vendor to show the event submission experience from the submitter's side — as a local restaurant owner would see it, not the admin view.

"How many steps does it take? Does the submitter get a status update? What happens if the event gets rejected?"

LANDING PAGE TEST

Ask the vendor to show you how to create a landing page like "Live Music This Weekend in [Your City]" and walk you through what's built in automatically.

"How quickly can we set this up? Does it include structured event schema? Does it generate a sitemap entry? And does the page live on our domain?"

YOUR SOURCE URL TEST

Before the demo, identify a local venue or community org website you've struggled to get events from. Share that URL with the vendor during the call.

"Walk us through how you'd add this source and what the timeline looks like to start seeing events from it — similar to how Google Search Console works when you submit a new site."

Score each demo against this matrix

CRITERION	WHAT STRONG LOOKS LIKE	RED FLAG	WEIGHT	SCORE
Discovery depth Critical	Live example from unknown local business site, named source URL, explained process	Only demos Eventbrite/Facebook events. Can't show a hyperlocal source.	25%	-- / 5
Discovery freshness Critical	Specific timeframe in hours with technical explanation of what triggers it	Says "up to 24 hours" or "we check regularly" with no technical detail	15%	-- / 5
SEO delivery	Event URLs on customer domain shown in Google. GA4 tracks inside calendar.	iFrame delivery. Event pages on vendor domain. No GA4 tracking inside calendar.	20%	-- / 5
Deduplication	Live demo showing same event from 3 sources producing one clean record	Same event appearing multiple times. Team flags manually.	10%	-- / 5

CRITERION	WHAT STRONG LOOKS LIKE	RED FLAG	WEIGHT	SCORE
Management tools	Batch update demoed live. Recurring exception shown. Organization-level controls exist.	No batch editing. Recurring events require duplicating records.	15%	-- / 5
Submission experience	Shown from submitter side. Simple. Status visibility. Mobile-friendly.	Only shown from admin side. Long, confusing form. No status for submitters.	5%	-- / 5
Mobile experience	Demoed on a real phone live. Map, filters, and event detail all functional.	Screenshot or simulated view only. Won't show on a real device.	5%	-- / 5
Integrations	Named live customer using Simpleview, Tempest, Madden, or WordPress integration in production today.	"We have an open API." No live customer example of the integration with your specific CMS.	5%	-- / 5

Red flags and green flags

⊗ Things to Dig Into

ⓘ AI claims without specifics — ask where in the pipeline it applies (ingestion, dedup, categorization, QA). Specificity here is a good sign; vagueness is worth following up on.

ⓘ If the live examples only come from Eventbrite and Facebook, ask to see something from a local business's own website. That's where you'll see how deep the discovery actually goes.

⚠ If the calendar is iFrame-delivered, confirm how that affects your SEO and whether event detail pages will have URLs on your domain.

⚠ Multiple roadmap answers for features you consider important — especially with no committed delivery dates. It's worth clarifying what's live today versus what's planned.

⚠ If producing a data export requires a support ticket or significant time, ask about the process and what formats are available.

⚠ "We have an open API" when you asked about a specific CMS integration. Ask for a live customer example using that integration in production today.

⚠ Vague answers about team size or engineering capacity. Event discovery is a genuinely complex technical problem — crawling arbitrary HTML, handling site changes, image parsing, deduplication at scale. Ask directly: how many engineers are working on the discovery infrastructure?

✔ Signs of a Strong Fit

✔ Names specific AI stages — ingestion, deduplication, QA — and explains what each one does. Specificity here is a good indicator of platform depth.

✔ Shows an event from a local business's own website, names the source URL, explains the discovery process.

✔ Shows a live customer event detail page in Google Search on the customer's domain — not demonstrated with a screenshot.

✔ Demonstrates batch updating live: "here's how we'd update 40 events at once" with a real walkthrough.

✔ Can produce a sample data export quickly and in a standard format (CSV, JSON).

✔ Names a live customer using your specific CMS integration in production and offers to connect you with them.



HOT TIP

A useful closing question for any demo: "What have we not asked about that we should have?" It often surfaces capabilities or considerations that didn't come up naturally in the conversation.

6 STEP SIX

Evaluate Cost and ROI

Platform cost is only part of the picture. The cost of your current approach — staff hours on manual entry, an incomplete calendar, partner frustration — is almost always higher than it looks on paper.



YOUR OBJECTIVE

Build a complete cost comparison that includes platform subscription, implementation, and ongoing maintenance — against the measurable costs of staying where you are.

📄 Current state costs to quantify

Staff time on manual event entry and maintenance $___ \text{ hrs/wk} \times \$___/\text{hr} \times 52$

Staff time chasing partner submissions and following up $___ \text{ hrs/wk} \times \$___/\text{hr} \times 52$

Events missing from your calendar that visitors can't find elsewhere **Hard to measure; very real**

SEO opportunity cost: organic traffic lost when event content isn't indexable on your domain **Estimate with GA4**

Partner and stakeholder friction from an incomplete calendar **Relationship cost**

↗ New platform costs to get clarity on

Annual platform subscription — what's included vs. add-on	Ask each vendor
Implementation and onboarding — is it included or billed separately	Confirm in writing
DMS integration cost — one-time or ongoing	Confirm in writing
Data migration from your current platform	Ask about history
Cost to scale — per user, per market, per event volume	Get in contract
Source limits or per-source fees — some platforms cap how many sites they'll crawl	Ask explicitly



ALSO ASSESS THE COST OF NOT SWITCHING

Most destinations are running calendars built into their CMS — Simpleview, Tempest — that have no discovery engine. Every week your team spends manually entering events, chasing submissions, and still ending up with an incomplete calendar is a cost that compounds. The events your calendar is missing are real. Your visitors are looking for them somewhere else.

7 STEP SEVEN

Plan for Go-Live and Post-Purchase Success

Implementation is where platform choices that seemed equivalent start to diverge. A clear go-live plan — with defined milestones, a data migration approach, and a partner communication strategy — determines whether your calendar launches strong or limps out.



YOUR OBJECTIVE

Choose the right vendor and plan for implementation, data migration, partner onboarding, and what success looks like at 30, 60, and 90 days post-launch.



PRE-LAUNCH

Implementation and Configuration

Work with your vendor to configure the platform before any events go live. This is the time to set up your category structure, approval workflows, and source preferences — not after launch.

- Define your event category structure before the platform is configured
- Compile your source list — every venue, partner org, and community website you want events from — and provide it to your vendor on day one. This is the most important onboarding input.
- Set up approval workflows and organization-level permissions
- Configure your CMS integration (Simpleview, Tempest, Madden, WordPress, and others) and test the data flow
- Confirm your event detail page URLs are on your domain and set up redirects from old URLs
- Set up GA4 event tracking inside the calendar before launch



PRE-LAUNCH

Data Migration

If you're migrating existing event history, establish a clear plan before you sign. Not all platforms support importing historical data, and the format requirements vary.

- Export your existing event data from your current platform in a standard format
- Confirm what historical data can be imported and in what format
- Decide whether to migrate all history or only active/future events
- Verify data integrity after migration before going live



LAUNCH WEEK

Partner Communication

Your destination partners and local event organizers need to know how to submit events to the new platform. A brief communication to your partner network at launch prevents the confusion that creates gaps in the calendar.

- Send a brief launch announcement to your partner org list with the new submission URL
- Update any website pages or resource guides that reference your old calendar or submission process
- Brief your front-line staff on the new process so they can answer partner questions



30 DAYS POST-LAUNCH

What Good Looks Like

Set a 30-day check-in with your vendor. By this point you should have a clear picture of whether the platform is delivering on its core promise.

- How many events are now on the calendar vs. before? What's the coverage increase?
- Are events from community orgs and local businesses appearing without submission?
- Is your events page showing up in Google for local event searches?
- What does your GA4 show for calendar engagement that wasn't visible before?
- What's still broken or missing? What does the vendor's support response look like?



90 DAYS POST-LAUNCH

Establish Your Ongoing Cadence

At 90 days, the novelty has worn off and the real operational picture is clear. This is when you lock in your ongoing management process and set benchmarks for the year.

- Set a regular check-in cadence with your vendor rep — monthly or quarterly
- Document your ongoing moderation and QA workflow for the team
- Pull your first organic search report for event-related keywords
- Set annual benchmarks: calendar coverage %, organic traffic to events page, staff hours saved



HOT TIP

Ask your vendor how many customers go live within 60 days of contract signing. Platforms with strong onboarding processes can answer this specifically. Platforms with complicated implementations often can't.



TAKE THIS INTO EVERY DEMO

The Demo Checklist

Keep this open on a second screen during the call. Check items off in real time. Unchecked items at the end of a demo are follow-up questions — not deal-breakers on their own, but they need clear answers before you sign.

The Core Flow — Discovery to Published Calendar

- ☐ They showed the Discover Feed — a live queue of newly found events from crawled sources, not yet published to the calendar.
- ☐ They clicked into a specific discovered event, showed the original source URL it came from, and demonstrated editing the title, category, and image before publishing.
- ☐ They published the event to the calendar and showed it live — on the customer's own domain, not a vendor-hosted page.
- ☐ They showed a local business event (no Eventbrite or Facebook presence) in the Discover Feed — proof the crawler goes beyond major platforms.
- ☐ They demonstrated deduplication: the same event from multiple sources appeared as one clean record in the feed.

Management & Editorial Control

- ☐ They demonstrated a batch update live — changing categories across 40+ events at once.
- ☐ They showed a recurring event with a per-occurrence exception — one date at a different venue — without duplicating the record.
- ☐ They showed how to blacklist an organizer or venue so their events never appear again.
- ☐ They showed how to whitelist a trusted source so its events publish automatically without manual review.
- ☐ They showed a featured event — pinned or promoted above the standard listing order.

- ☐ They showed the organizer management view — creating or editing an organizer profile.

Submissions & Community

- ☐ They showed the submission experience from the submitter's side — not the admin panel.
- ☐ They showed the pre-fill feature — pasting a URL into the submission form and having event details populate automatically.
- ☐ They showed the embeddable submission form — the standalone version that can be placed on any partner org's page.

Calendar Presentation & SEO

- ☐ They showed all calendar views — list, month, agenda, map — and switched between them live.
- ☐ They showed automatic city filtering — how a multi-city destination can filter the calendar by location.
- ☐ They showed a per-category filtered embed — a "Live Music Only" widget that could go on a specific page of the site.
- ☐ They showed how to build an SEO landing page ("Live Music This Weekend in [City]") and what schema and sitemap entries it generates.
- ☐ They showed the calendar on a real phone — map, list, and event detail all functional on mobile.
- ☐ GA4 tracks visitor behavior inside the calendar (searches, clicks, event views) in your own analytics account.

Integrations & Data

- ☐ If you use Simpleview, Tempest, Madden, or WordPress: they named a live customer using that integration in production and offered a reference contact.
- ☐ Data ownership confirmed — you own the data, it's exportable at any time, termination doesn't mean losing your history.



AFTER THE DEMO

Score each vendor right after the call while it's fresh. Any unchecked items become follow-up questions to send in writing. How a vendor responds to follow-ups — the speed, specificity, and tone — is itself useful signal about what it's like to work with them.

8 STEP EIGHT

Assess Performance at 3, 6, and 12 Months

Signing the contract is not the finish line. The platforms that look equivalent in a demo often diverge significantly in the first year. Build a regular assessment cadence so you can course-correct early and hold your vendor accountable to what they promised.



YOUR OBJECTIVE

Establish clear benchmarks at go-live and measure against them at 3, 6, and 12 months. Use your requirements checklist from Step 1 as the evaluation scorecard.



30 DAYS

Baseline Assessment

Set your baseline numbers now so you have something to measure against. Pull everything that was true before the switch.

- How many events are now on the calendar vs. before? What's the gap closure?
- What's your current organic traffic to the events page? Capture this as your baseline.
- How many hours per week is your team spending on manual event entry vs. before?
- Are community events, venue events, and hyperlocal happenings appearing without submission?
- What's still not working? Document it and raise it with your vendor now — not in 6 months.



3 MONTHS

Discovery Quality Review

By 3 months, you have enough data to assess whether the platform's discovery is actually working for your destination — not just in demo conditions.

- Spot-check the Discover Feed: are events from small local businesses and community orgs appearing regularly?
- Review your source list: are all the sites you provided being crawled successfully?
- Check deduplication quality: are duplicates slipping through at a rate that creates manual work?
- Review AI categorization accuracy: what percentage of events are being correctly categorized automatically?
- Talk to two or three local partners: do they feel their events are showing up? Is the submission process working for them?



6 MONTHS

SEO and Traffic Review

Six months is enough time to see early SEO signals. Google will have crawled and indexed your event pages, and you should be able to see whether the calendar is starting to drive organic traffic.

- Pull your organic traffic to events pages — compare to your 30-day baseline.
- Check Google Search Console for event-related queries you're appearing for that you weren't before.
- Review GA4 engagement inside the calendar: searches, clicks, time on page, return visitors.
- Assess your SEO landing pages: are "Live Music This Weekend in [City]"-style pages getting impressions?
- Compare staff hours on calendar maintenance to the 30-day baseline. Is the trend moving in the right direction?



12 MONTHS

Annual Value Assessment

At 12 months you have a full picture. This is the conversation to have with your vendor before renewal — and the moment to decide whether the platform is delivering on what was promised in the sales process.

- Run through your original requirements checklist from Step 1. How many are fully delivered vs. still outstanding?
- What's the total reduction in manual entry hours over the year? Calculate the staff cost saved.
- What's the organic traffic growth to your events content year-over-year?
- What features were promised on the roadmap that haven't shipped? Hold the vendor to them before renewal.
- Would you recommend this platform to a peer DMO? If the answer is uncertain, that's the answer.



HOT TIP

Schedule your 3, 6, and 12-month reviews with your vendor rep before you go live. Vendors who are confident in their platform will welcome the structure. Put the benchmarks in writing — ideally in the contract or onboarding documentation — so there's no ambiguity about what success looks like.



WHY SEEKER EVENTS NETWORK

The Only Local Events Calendar Platform Built Around Discovery

You've done the evaluation. Here's what Seeker Events Network delivers — and why DMOs from main-street chambers to statewide tourism offices choose it.

How Seeker Meets Every Requirement

Here's how Seeker Events Network maps to the requirements checklist from Step 1.

REQUIREMENT	HOW SEEKER DELIVERS IT	
Automated event discovery (not just submissions)	AI crawler finds events across the open web continuously	✓
Unlimited sources — no cap on sites crawled	No source limits. Connect your entire partner network.	✓
Can crawl any website URL we provide	Point Seeker at any URL — venue, org, partner site	✓
Discovers new sources without manual setup	Adaptive crawlers find new sites automatically	✓
Event detail pages live on our domain	Native DOM rendering — your domain, your URLs	✓
Google can index event content	No iFrames. Events are fully crawlable by Google.	✓
GA4 tracks visitor behavior inside the calendar	Standard GA4 tracking works natively	✓
AI deduplication across sources	Automatic dedup before events reach your queue	✓
Batch updates across many events	Bulk edit categories, status, tags across any selection	✓
Advanced recurring events — different dates, times, venues per occurrence	Per-occurrence overrides without duplicating records	✓
Whitelist and blacklist — trusted sources and blocked organizers/venues	Whitelist auto-publishes; blacklist permanently blocks	✓
Low-friction event submission for local orgs	Simple submission form with status visibility	✓
SEO landing pages ("Live Music This Weekend")	Build category landing pages in minutes with schema	✓

REQUIREMENT	HOW SEEKER DELIVERS IT	
Multiple calendar views (list, month, agenda, map)	Four views, all mobile-responsive	✓
CMS integration (Simpleview, Tempest, Madden, WordPress)	Live production integrations with named customers	✓
API access for third-party distribution	Full API for syndication to trip planners and partners	✓
Data export in standard format	CSV and JSON export available at any time	✓
Review-before-publish editorial queue	Discover Feed shows all found events before they go live	✓
Automatic city / location filtering	Filter events by city across multi-city deployments	✓
Featured events	Pin and promote events at the top of your calendar	✓
Calendar branding and customization	Logo, colors, and layout match your destination brand	✓
Embeddable submission form	Embed a standalone form on any partner page	✓
Pre-fill submission from URL	Paste a URL, Seeker fetches the event details automatically	✓
View original source of any event	One click to see the exact page the event was crawled from	✓
Ticketing links on event detail pages	Original ticketing URLs preserved and displayed	✓
Original website links on event detail pages	Links back to the organizer's site preserved	✓

REQUIREMENT	HOW SEEKER DELIVERS IT	
Organizer profiles and management	Create, edit, and manage organizer records	✓
Edit events post-discovery	Edit title, description, image, category after import	✓
Create events manually	Add events directly in the dashboard	✓
Automatic AI categorization	Events auto-categorized against your taxonomy on discovery	✓
Custom category taxonomy	Define your own categories and subcategories	✓
Image scraping	Extract events from flyers, social graphics, Instagram posts	✓
Per-category filtered embeds	Embed "Live Music Only" or any category on any page	✓

AI Native Platform

Core Differentiator



Adaptive AI Crawlers

Trained to extract event data from any website and adapt automatically when source sites change structure. No manual source maintenance required.



Unlimited Custom Sources

Connect every partner business in your network. AI built for scale — hundreds of sources crawled continuously, not on a schedule.



Image Scraping

Extract event details from flyers, social graphics, and Instagram posts — not just structured text. Events that only exist as an image still get found.



AI Quality Assurance

Duplicate detection, missing information flags, formatting issues, and data inconsistencies caught automatically before anything reaches your review queue.

Proven at Scale

Live Customers

From main-street chambers to statewide tourism offices, Seeker Events Network is the only event discovery platform designed to scale across every deployment size.

MULTI-CITY NETWORK

SF Peninsula

Before Seeker, SF Peninsula relied on partner submissions and manual entry across San Mateo County — leading to frequent errors and incomplete listings.

- ✓ 16+ cities covered
- ✓ 500+ connected sources
- ✓ Large-scale partner network

STATEWIDE DEPLOYMENT

Tennessee Tourism

Statewide event discovery at scale — surfacing events across Tennessee to drive visitation and give travelers a complete picture of what's happening.

- ✓ Statewide event discovery
- ✓ 200+ connected sources
- ✓ Visitation driver

ENTERPRISE CO-OP

Tourism Calgary

Four independent organizations sharing a single editorial workflow and discovery feed — one unified calendar for the entire Calgary market.

- ✓ 4 independent organizations
- ✓ 300+ connected sources
- ✓ Shared editorial workflow

Built to Rank

SEO-First



No iFrames. Ever.

iFrames prevent search engines from reading your event content. Seeker's widget renders natively in your page's DOM — fully indexable by Google.



Designed to Rank

Build landing pages like "Live music this weekend in [city]" in minutes. Every event includes structured schema markup. Every widget includes a dynamic sitemap.



Event URLs on Your Domain

Every event detail page lives at your URL, not a vendor subdomain. Years of event content build SEO equity for your destination — not someone else's.

Management & Experience

Day-to-Day



Bulk Updates & Editorial Control

Update categories, tags, or status across hundreds of events at once. Whitelist, blacklist, archive — full control over what appears on your calendar.



Smart Categories

AI automatically classifies events into categories according to your custom taxonomy. Events arrive organized, not as a raw data dump to sort manually.



A Calendar Worth Putting on Your Site

Grid, calendar, and map layouts. Faceted search. Fast. Responsive. Three views out of the box, fully customizable to match your brand.

THE TEAM

Founded by the team that built Webdam.

Seeker is founded by Jody Vandergriff and Steve Rabkin — creators of Webdam, the market-leading cloud digital asset management platform acquired by Shutterstock. They know what it takes to build a category-defining SaaS platform and scale it to enterprise.



Jody Vandergriff

CEO & Co-Founder



Steve Rabkin

CTO & Co-Founder

webdam

shutterstock

bynder



Your events calendar on autopilot.

[Try Seeker Events Network →](#)

This guide may be shared freely. Platform comparisons are based on publicly available information and Seeker's direct market experience.

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