

NOMADIC 6



**Our Complete In-person  
Event Strategy Guide  
for Distributed Teams**

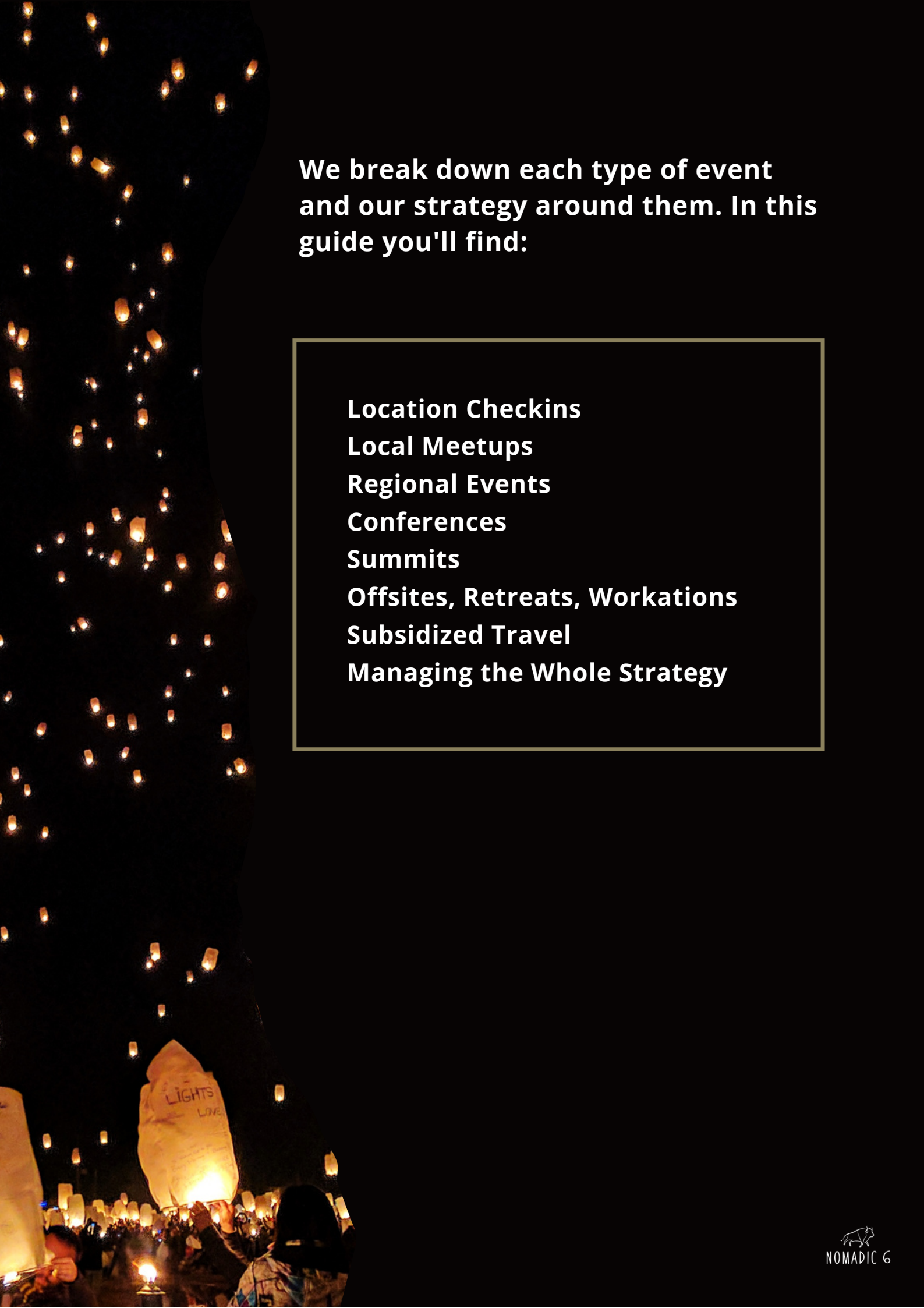


## NOMADIC 6

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Daunting is the word used to describe a complete event strategy, especially when it falls to members of your team that have far larger fish to fry. Shout out to all the HR leaders out there who have now had to become expert experience designers. We've heard your call for help, and we hope this break down will pave the way.

Let's set the scene. You have an organization called XYZ Inc with 100 members all around the globe. You are committed to in person interactions because you know it builds a stronger company culture and connection. You want to provide unique opportunities to learn, share, and grow as individuals amongst the collective whole. Great! Now how do we start gathering all these epic humans?



**We break down each type of event  
and our strategy around them. In this  
guide you'll find:**

**Location Checkins**

**Local Meetups**

**Regional Events**

**Conferences**

**Summits**

**Offsites, Retreats, Workations**

**Subsidized Travel**

**Managing the Whole Strategy**



# Location Checkins

To best plan events, we need to know where everyone is. Keeping a shared custom map through services like **My Maps** by google allows you and your teams to always know where each other are. All that's required is that everyone updates there location when they are on the move. Nomads, this includes you!



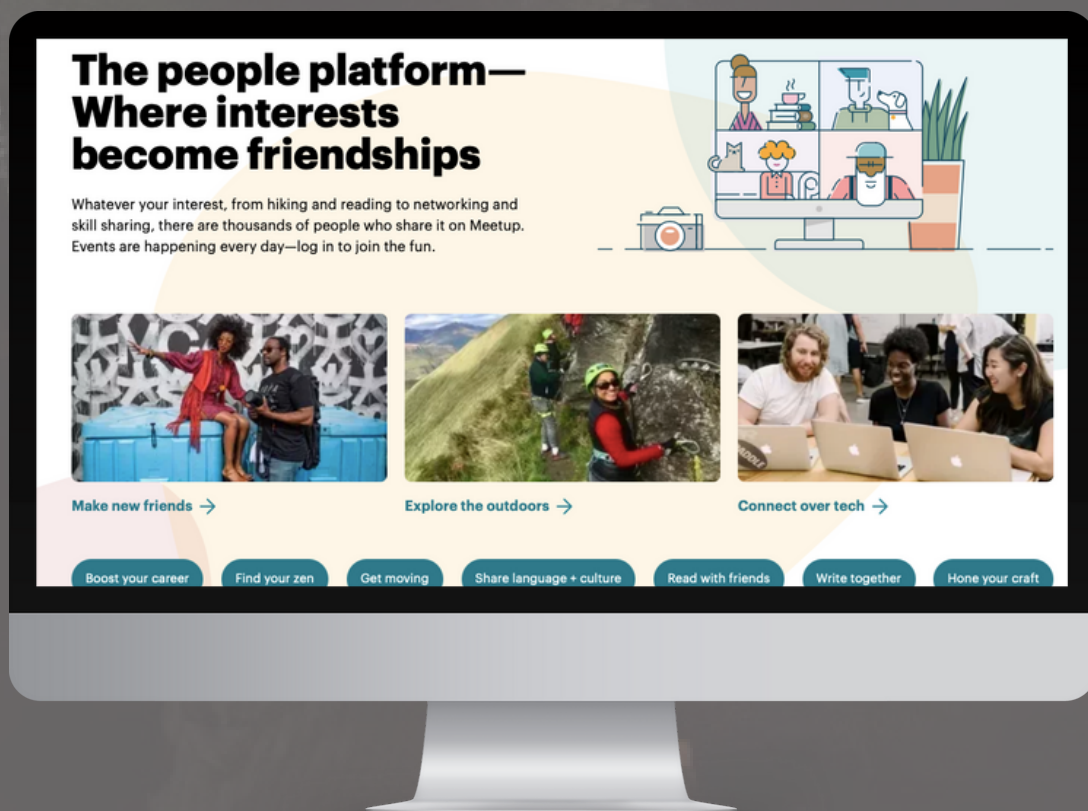
**Pro tip:** Adding the locations of key clients, vendors, or partners can allow for spontaneous business development opportunities to happen.



# Local Meetups

Now that we can track where everyone is, let's organize events that are easier to attend. When there's a group in the same city, Meetups are always a great idea afterwork or on weekends. When colleagues can gather without the pressures of agendas, they're more likely to form genuine friendships. Using a resource like [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) can allow you to tap into local communities and their events so that you can tell your team on fun things to do near them!

Celebrating holidays, attending festivals, or hosting coworking days will foster a sense of belonging amongst your team. This provides a positive experience in the city they're in, and a support structure for the events we talk about below. (A little foreshadowing there.)



**Pro tip:** If you have a large collection of people in one city, create your own meetup group and appoint a community manager! This way you have someone on the ground to plan events for your group and network at large.

# Regional Events

We're taking one out of Chase Warrington's book here. By planning "mini retreats" in different locations around the world, you can pull team members in for a few days at a time. All without requiring exhaustive 30 hour travel days.

**Mini-retreats overview**

**All reservations made** 1

- Frontend in Prague 🇨🇪  
DRD: Craig ; Participants: 13; Date...

+ Add task

**Ready for takeoff** 3

- Marketing in Mexico City 🇲🇽  
DRD: Dani; Participants: Airbnb (d...
- Product in Istanbul 🇹🇷  
DRD: Rain, Participants: 4, Locatio...
- CX Operations in Prague 🇨🇪  
DRD: Ashika; Participants 24; Date...

+ Add task

**Mission Accomplished** 4

- Backend in Paris 🇫🇷  
DRD: Bidu; Participants: 10; Locati...
- Apple in Prague 🇨🇪  
DRD: Carrasco; Participants: 8; Lo...
- Design in Athens 🇬🇷  
DRD: Panos ; Participants: 16; Dat...
- Android in Istanbul 🇹🇷  
DRD: Olga ; Participants: 7; Rooms...

With Chase's new program at ToDoist:

- They coordinated eight retreats with 91 people from 32 cities, 100% asynchronously.
- They templated and automated everything via ToDoist so it is repeatable for years to come.
- They reduced expenses, workflow interruption, the number of people involved in the planning process, and the total number of hours spent coordinating offsites.
- They increased: participation, approval, and engagement ratings.

For your teams, a nice little weekend retreat away is always going to be exciting. Especially if it gives them an excuse to visit a city they haven't spent much time in. Layer it with your incentive programs and now we have something worth working harder for!

# Conferences

After attending the Running Remote Conference in Lisbon, we can say there is value in connecting with your fellow attendees. More likely than not, conferences designed for your specific industry will immerse your people in a community that shares the same interests, goals, values, and time together. This is verbatim how we define community. The content being shared is really just the icing on the cake.



Running Remote 2023. Lisbon Portugal

Sending members of your teams to attend different conferences allows them the opportunity to work together. With defined conference goals, team work is a must. New clients, new services, or maybe the sessions are all so valuable and yet the schedule overlaps. Good thing you have a few people there to cover it all.

**Pro tip:** Have your team de-brief at the end of each day with updates, reports on the workshops, and plan how to approach the next day.



# Summits

Your leadership teams need time together too, potentially more than your other ones. When tough decisions have to be made, or new initiatives launched, sometimes the big conversations are better facilitated in person. We recommend summits be more secluded, out in nature where there are few distractions.

Retreat centers and luxury boutique hotel are great for these type of events as they are often spaces designed for human thriving. What does that mean? They cater to the physical, mental, nutritional, and productivity needs we seek when living life more optimized. Spas, yoga classes, libraries, scenic views, etc.



**Pro tip:** For these type of events, we recommend no more than 10 people per week's duration. If you're dedicating more time to the event, then you can add more people. 14 days, 20 people, 21 days, 30 people, etc.



# Offsites, Retreats, Workations

We talk about the differences between these events in our other post but quickly put:

- Retreats are typically focused on rest, relaxation, and personal growth.
- Offsites are often more focused on work.
- Workations are a combination of work and vacation.

Regardless of the type of experience, all in person events are important for remote teams and organizations. When team members work remotely, they may feel isolated and disconnected from their colleagues. These experiences provide an opportunity to come together in a shared physical space, build relationships, and foster a sense of community.



The power of forming shared memories cannot be overstated. When team members have shared experiences, they develop a sense of camaraderie and a stronger connection to each other. This can lead to improved collaboration, better communication, and increased job satisfaction.

# Subsidized Travel

Savings on real estate – and the litany of associated costs with operating one or more offices – is a key financial reason for a company to organize itself as completely remote. Consider returning some of those savings to employees by subsidizing travel costs associated with visiting colleagues around the globe.

GitLab's Visiting Grant incentive is one such example. While some colleagues may prefer to stay put, there is value in transparently encouraging colleagues to spend time with one another in a physical space. When a colleague travels to visit someone else, they are immersed in a new place and new culture, which leads to greater empathy and understanding.



This also reinforces a company's ability to create a more geographically diverse and inclusive work environment.



# Managing the Whole Strategy

There are plenty of tools and software out there to help manage events. Using one concise database keeps all the above initiatives in one place. We use **Airtable**, a low-code platform for building collaborative apps.

People use Airtable to manage every department of their business which is the beauty of the platform. In this case, we can manage A to Z logistics of any event we plan, while keeping it connected to the overall event strategy for your team.

|          | Name                        | Category | Owner        | Start Date | Due Date  | Status    | Vendor          |
|----------|-----------------------------|----------|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| CATEGORY |                             | General  | Count 2      |            |           |           |                 |
| 1        | Confirm production timeline | General  | Becky Mak    | 5/1/2018   | 3/19/2023 | Completed | Print & Graphic |
|          | Confirm event schedule      | General  | Becky Mak    | 4/23/2018  | 3/19/2023 | Completed |                 |
| CATEGORY |                             | Venue    | Count 2      |            |           |           |                 |
| 3        | Research venues             | Venue    | Andrew Busse | 4/23/2018  | 5/1/2018  | Completed | Venue           |
| 4        | Confirm venue               | Venue    | Andrew Busse | 5/1/2018   | 5/4/2018  | Completed | Venue           |
| CATEGORY |                             | Budget   | Count 8      |            |           |           |                 |
| 5        | Research budget needs       | Budget   | Andrew Busse | 4/18/2018  | 4/25/2018 | Completed |                 |
| 6        | Confirm vendors             | Budget   | Andrew Busse | 5/1/2018   | 5/11/2018 | Completed | AV Company      |
| 7        | Full budget submission      | Budget   | Andrew Busse | 4/23/2018  | 4/23/2018 | Completed |                 |
| 8        | Working budget agreed       | Budget   | Andrew Busse | 4/27/2018  | 4/27/2018 | Completed |                 |
| 9        | Contract sign off           | Budget   | Andrew Busse | 4/30/2018  | 4/30/2018 | Completed |                 |
|          | Set stage invoice issued    | Budget   | Andrew Busse | 5/1/2018   | 5/1/2018  | Completed |                 |

## Why are we gathering at all?

Ah friend, this is the root of the work we do. I'll turn the question around and ask you the same; why do you want to gather your team? Go deeper. Is it because you want to celebrate? Strategize? Play? I always recommend [Priya Parker's book](#), *The Art of Gathering* to help answer some of these questions.

In her words:

"As much as our gatherings disappoint us, though, we tend to keep gathering in the same tired ways. Most of us remain on autopilot when we bring people together, following stale formulas, hoping that the chemistry of a good meeting, conference, or party will somehow take care of itself, that thrilling results will magically emerge from the usual staid inputs. It is almost always a vain hope.

When we do seek out gathering advice, we almost always turn to those who are focused on the mechanics of gathering: chefs, etiquette experts, floral artists, event planners. By doing so, we inadvertently shrink a human challenge down to a logistical one. We reduce the question of what to do with people to a question of what to do about things: PowerPoints, invitations, AV equipment, cutlery, refreshments.

A facilitator is someone trained in the skill of shaping group dynamics and collective conversations. My job is to put the right people in a room and help them to collectively think, dream, argue, heal, envision, trust, and connect for a specific larger purpose. The art of gathering, fortunately, doesn't rest on your charisma or the quality of your jokes. (I would be in trouble if it did.) Gatherings crackle and flourish when real thought goes into them, when (often invisible) structure is baked into them, and when a host has the curiosity, willingness, and generosity of spirit to try."

# Let's Create Memories

We love this stuff, and we know not everyone does. If you need help building your event strategy for your distributed team, want to save your HR team's time and resources, or just want to brain storm some ideas with us, [book a discovery call!](#)

We're not a tech company nor a sales team, we're event people. We can jam on human connection experience design for hours. If it makes sense for us to work together, great! If not, I hope this guide is able to help in some way. Thanks for reading and taking a step towards connecting your teams IRL!

*-The N6 Team*