

STARCRRAFT® II BARCRAFT EVENT STRATEGY GUIDE

TIPS AND TACTICS FOR RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL STARCRRAFT II VIEWING PARTY (v.0.2)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

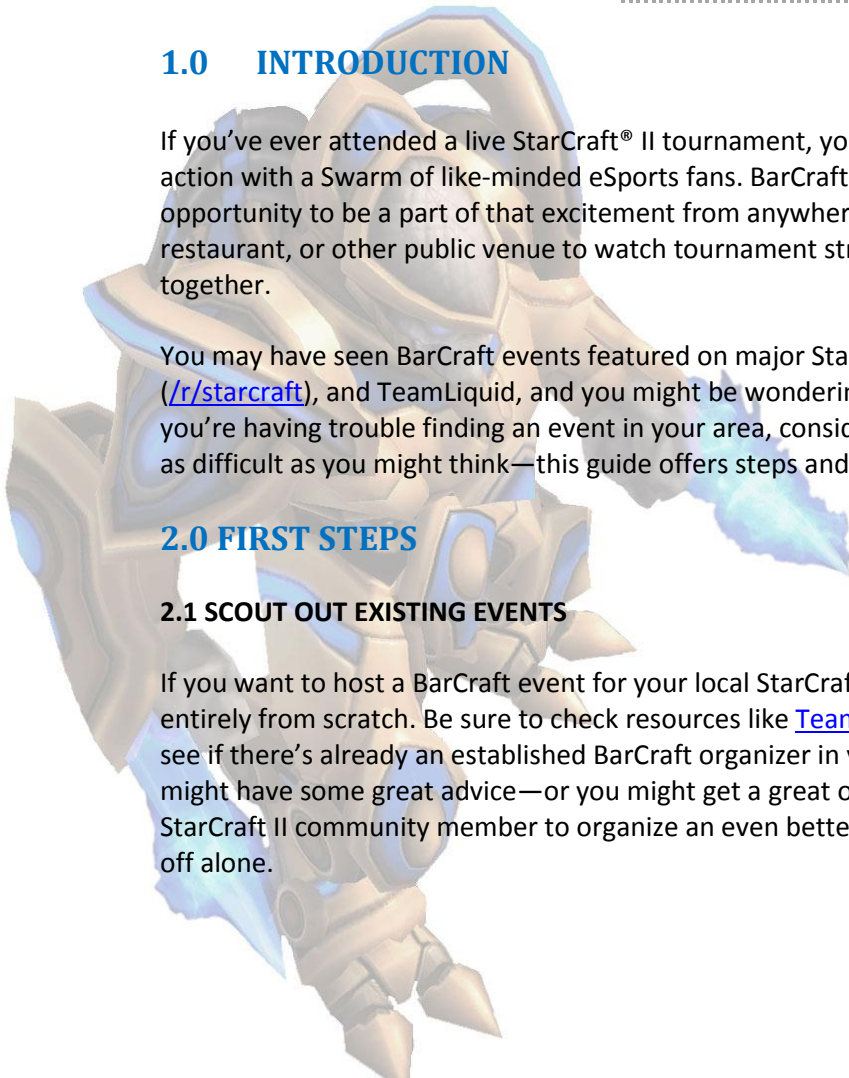
If you've ever attended a live StarCraft® II tournament, you know how awesome it can be to catch the action with a Swarm of like-minded eSports fans. BarCraft events give local StarCraft communities an opportunity to be a part of that excitement from anywhere in the world by meeting up at a bar, restaurant, or other public venue to watch tournament streams and cheer on their favorite players together.

You may have seen BarCraft events featured on major StarCraft II tournament streams, Reddit ([/r/starcraft](https://www.reddit.com/r/starcraft)), and TeamLiquid, and you might be wondering how to be a part of the action yourself. If you're having trouble finding an event in your area, consider hosting a BarCraft event yourself! It's not as difficult as you might think—this guide offers steps and ideas to help you make it happen.

2.0 FIRST STEPS

2.1 SCOUT OUT EXISTING EVENTS

If you want to host a BarCraft event for your local StarCraft II community, you might not need to start entirely from scratch. Be sure to check resources like [TeamLiquid](https://www.teamliquid.com), Reddit ([/r/barcraft](https://www.reddit.com/r/barcraft)), and Facebook to see if there's already an established BarCraft organizer in your area, and reach out to him or her. They might have some great advice—or you might get a great opportunity to work alongside another StarCraft II community member to organize an even better BarCraft event than either of you could pull off alone.



2.2 THE RESEARCH PHASE

Before and during your event-planning phase, attend other similar events with a critical eye toward figuring out what makes them fun. You can attend a variety of different types of events to get ideas for your BarCraft event: karaoke nights, basketball games at the local bar, etc. What keeps people coming back to these events? What advice do the organizers and venue hosts have to offer? Try to learn from what you feel is successful and fun at those events, and apply that toward your own BarCraft events.

2.3 IDENTIFY AN EPIC EVENT

Check places like the official StarCraft II website, TeamLiquid, and eSports tournament partner websites for tournament and match schedules to find the right date and time to host your BarCraft event. You'll want to give yourself around four to six weeks of planning time total for the event to find a venue, plan your event, and promote it. Double- and triple-check event dates and times, and be aware of time zone differences. It might sound exciting to host a BarCraft event in Los Angeles for the World Championship Series Korea Season 1 Final, but keep in mind that's the middle of the night in L.A., and attendance could be low.

You'll want to check what other events are being held on the weekend that you'd like to host your BarCraft, too. If there is a major sporting event taking place that weekend, for example, bars may already be booked, and you might have trouble finding a venue to host your BarCraft event.

2.4 FIND A VENUE

Choose somewhere easily accessible by a number of people, like a bar located downtown or near a college campus. You can start your BarCraft venue hunt online, but it's critical to talk to the bar owner and visit the bar in person to see the venue.

Once you've found a potential BarCraft event location, first email or call the bar owner/manager to introduce yourself, let them know what you'd like to plan, and—if they're new to the idea—give them some information on what StarCraft II and a BarCraft event is. Then, schedule a meeting in person to view the facility and to discuss the event in detail (preventing situations where you wind up dropping in at inconvenient times and better preparing the bar staff for an event discussion). Be prepared to educate the bar manager with news articles about BarCraft events, videos of successful BarCraft events, and information about the StarCraft II tournament that you'd like to watch at your BarCraft event.

When you're at the venue, check for ample seating and good viewing screens. Sports bars are a good choice because they're accustomed to showing sporting events. A venue that has distinct rooms or floors can be great for hosting BarCraft events because owners can set up an area specifically for the eSports crowd, while still leaving room for their regular patronage.

Don't forget to check if the bar is all ages or 21+ only. You may have more success with an all-ages venue, especially if the venue is near a campus.

Before committing to the venue for your BarCraft event, be sure to test the Internet speed—it's one of the most important factors in choosing a venue, and it's something that BarCraft organizers often overlook. If you want to watch a 1080p stream, you'll want a minimum download rate of 600 kbps for a smooth viewing experience. Verify whether the venue's Internet connection is publically accessible to

bar patrons, or if it will be dedicated to your event. A public connection can reduce bandwidth availability if other patrons are using the connection while you are streaming. If the bar doesn't have the speed and bandwidth you need, consider if the bar may be able to upgrade their connection for the event. If cell data is strong in your area (4G/LTE), then a wireless hotspot may be a good solution.

Finally, be sure to review the audio/video (A/V) system that the bar uses, and verify that the system has the ability to take a computer input (VGA, DVI, HDMI, Component, Composite, or S-Video, and Audio), and that attaching a computer will provide the desired output to the bar that you want. Some setups only allow connection to one single TV, while others can output to all of the bar's TVs at the same time.

3.0 PLANNING YOUR EVENT

What will make your BarCraft event unique? How can you make sure the event is social, and geared toward building a local StarCraft II community that'll want to keep coming back? Give your attendees a reason to think "That was so much better than watching the stream at home!"

While the matches speak for themselves, you should also make plans to fill downtime between matches. Raffles, giveaways, games, and icebreaker activities are great ways to get your audience engaged and entertained. Check if it's possible to set up extra computers so attendees can play their own games during stream downtime. If you're able, organize a King of the Hill tournament or encourage show matches between friends to keep things lively and give the crowd a wider variety of things to do.

Making custom drinks or a cool StarCraft II-inspired menu is a great way to add a StarCraft II touch to your event. Talk to the bar owner in advance about customized drinks named after your favorite in-game units. Not every bartender will be willing to do this, but keeping the drinks simple and the ingredients low-cost might make them more likely to say yes. If the manager isn't open to customized drinks, they might be willing to name a few of their regular menu items after StarCraft II for the night. If you do end up with StarCraft II-inspired food and drinks, be sure to make a menu to show the attendees what's available to order—and, of course, get the bar owner's input and approval on what you create beforehand.

4.0 HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR EVENT

Once you've picked the date and planned the event with the bar manager, it's time to promote your event! Be sure to advertise on StarCraft specific sites like TeamLiquid, your local StarCraft II Facebook group, /r/barcraft, and iBarCraft, but don't be afraid to try non-gaming sites like MeetUp.com and your city's relevant subreddits, too. Local newspapers and free printed publications generally offer free event listings on their website and will sometimes even choose certain events to put in the paper. Advertising on broad platforms can be a bigger help than you'd imagine. Contact your local Collegiate StarLeague team, and personally invite them to your BarCraft event. Make a Facebook event, and invite all of your friends!

Be sure that the information in your BarCraft event listings is clear and concise. Is the most basic information—time, date, location, venue rules and restrictions—easy to find? Do people have to read a wall of text before they get to the when and where of your BarCraft event? Provide a map, clear

directions to the venue, and instructions for parking. Check your ads and reply regularly to any questions that may come up.

Announce your BarCraft event ahead of time . . . but not *too* far ahead of time. People may forget the date if you announce your BarCraft event two months in advance. Announcing three weeks prior is generally a good balance, and it's an excellent idea to plan the majority of your reminders, updates, and social media pushes for the two days after the announcement and during the two days before the event.

5.0 PRODUCTION TIPS

5.1 GATHER YOUR GEAR

Make sure you have access have the right equipment. You'll almost certainly need to bring your own gear, though just how much and what kind depends on the venue and the scope of your plans. With that in mind, here's what you'll typically need to provide:

Hardware:

- A computer that can proficiently output HDMI video
- Adapters and cables to connect to the venue's A/V system
- A power strip and extension cord (if the venue doesn't have one available)
- Internet connector (ethernet cable if required)

Support:

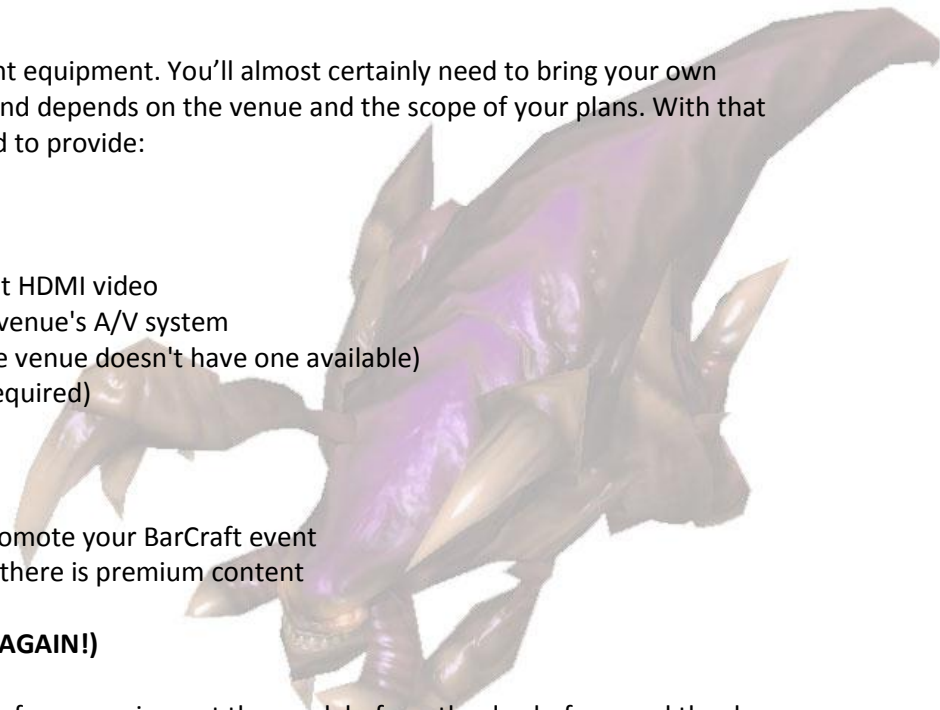
- Forum and social media accounts to promote your BarCraft event
- Viewing account for the tournament if there is premium content

5.2 TEST YOUR EQUIPMENT (AND TEST AGAIN!)

This is the most important step! Test all of your equipment the week before, the day before, and the day of your event. Test your Internet speed to ensure that there's enough bandwidth and that the viewing experience is going to be great. Check what the stream output looks like, especially in full screen, and how high a resolution your setup can handle, keeping in mind that some factors (such as Internet bandwidth) might be different the day of your event. Experiment with your computer's resolution and graphic settings to improve the output quality. Test your audio and make sure no matter where you're standing in the venue, you can hear the stream clearly. Test your setup while watching both recorded videos and live streams on Twitch.tv to ensure that both work well. You can never test your equipment enough!

You should not expect the venue owner or bar staff to be able to help you in the event that you do have an equipment malfunction. You never know what might go wrong, and being prepared for the worst-case scenario is essential. Even if everything goes smoothly, you'll have peace of mind that you're ready to deal with any problems that could arise. Bring extra cables, wiring, audio equipment, and even have an extra computer for running the stream if possible.

6.0 IT'S EVENT DAY!



6.1 GETTING THE PARTY STARTED

On the day of your event, test your Internet speed, audio, and equipment again! Ensure that your equipment is well secured and out of the way to avoid food or beverage accidents. Ask the bar manager and staff for advice about this.

When the stream goes live, display it on the screens as soon as possible so attendees can start watching those epic StarCraft II games.

6.2 THE LIVE SOCIAL EXPERIENCE

During the event, be social! Introduce yourself to people and thank them for stopping by. Greet everyone who comes to your BarCraft event warmly. Whether it is a big group of friends or a lone eSports fan, everyone wants to feel welcome and at home. Introduce people to one another to help grow your local eSports scene and get people who love StarCraft connected!

If you get along well with an excited attendee, ask if he'd be willing to volunteer his time to help with the next BarCraft event. Think about how much better you can make your next BarCraft event if you have someone to help with the planning, promoting, and running of the event. And don't be afraid to ask for feedback—it can only help you make your next event even better.

Are you in a location where it might be convenient for a popular StarCraft II personality to drop by your event? Invite local shoutcasters, pro players, or eSports personalities in your area to your BarCraft event. If they're willing to be included in your promotions (with their permission, of course), this can be a great draw for attendees . . . and what StarCraft II personality doesn't want to enjoy his favorite game with a pint and a dozen wings?

6.3 SOCIAL MEDIA

Take advantage of social media tools to continue promoting your event during the tournament. Think about creating a special Twitter #hashtag so you share your experience via social media together during the event. Tweet to the tournament Twitter or to shoutcasters at the event with photos of your BarCraft event, and post pictures of the crowd to /r/starcraft. The more attention you can give your event, the more likely people will be willing to check it out next time . . . or even the next day if it's a multi-day event.

Take plenty of photos during the event and encourage others to do the same so you can use them as references later on. Invite attendees to follow you on Twitter or to like your BarCraft Facebook page. This allows you to update them about future events!

7.0 POST-GAME ANALYSIS

At the end of your event, evaluate how it went and what you can improve on for next time. Gather feedback from attendees and your friends on what they thought of the BarCraft event.



Be sure to thank your attendees on your TeamLiquid post, Facebook event page, or your BarCraft event website. Thank everyone for coming to your event, and let them know if you plan to have another in the future. Tell them to bring their friends to your next event! Start building and strengthening those relationships with your attendees.

Thank the bar owner or bar manager for his or her help on the day of the event. Ask for feedback on the BarCraft event from their perspective. If that venue and location worked well, find out if the owner would like to host another BarCraft event in the future. After you've thanked the bar owner or bar manager in person, consider mailing a thank-you card, too.

If you do plan on hosting future BarCraft events, don't do too many too close together! It can be hard to retain attendees if there are events taking place too frequently. And in the meantime, think about how you can improve on your BarCraft event and your promotional activities to get more people out to the next one.

8.0 MORE INFORMATION & SUPPORT

Setting up a BarCraft can be a bit of a challenge, sure, but it can also be extremely rewarding. There are plenty of people willing to help you out on your endeavor . . . and a local StarCraft II community that can't wait to zerg rush your event.

If you're hosting a BarCraft event, email your BarCraft event details to BarCraft@blizzard.com to have your event added to the official StarCraft II blog BarCraft event listings.

For more information and advice on how to host your BarCraft event, visit [/r/barcraft](https://www.reddit.com/r/barcraft), London BarCraft's '[How to BarCraft](#),' and [One Nation of Gamers](#).

Good luck, and have fun!

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