Best Practices for Planning Hybrid Events
Life Sciences Marketing Meeting- June 2021

Planning Agenda and Content

- Adopt an event producer's mindset when planning agendas and creating compelling content for both in-person and virtual audiences.
- Consider staggering event's agenda to serve audience segments from different time zones. This may improve attendance and engagement.
- Examine staffing needs to properly cover events that span different time zones.
- Introduce new content every 7-8 minutes to keep audiences engaged, per recent studies.
- Build breaks into the virtual agenda allowing audiences to stretch, get water, and use restroom.
- Select and rehearse with two emcees: one for the in-person audience and one for the virtual audience.
- Decide what content will be live streamed vs. pre-recorded.
  - Pre-recorded content may include:
    - Teaser videos to build excitement leading up to event
    - Messages from company executives
    - Customer testimonials
    - Product demos
  - How to decide what content should be live streamed vs. pre-recorded
    - Live content tends to be spontaneous, authentic and engaging.
    - Pre-recorded content can sometimes come off as scripted and dull.
    - Be mindful of the potential risk of failure associated with live streamed content.
- Rely on AV experts to capture high quality video and audio tracks as the content will reflect your brand.
- For pre-recorded content, consider not editing speakers’ imperfections because those imperfections make the pre-recorded material sound more human.
- Pre-recorded content may need to be reviewed and approved by legal, regulatory, and other corporate groups. Build in time for those reviews and approvals.
- Seek opportunities to reuse all content to increase your marketing ROI.
Engaging the Virtual Audience

• Keep the virtual audience engaged through polls, chats, and breakout room discussions.
• Be sure to monitor and respond quickly to questions and feedback from the virtual audience.
• Be creative. Try new things for networking opportunities.
• Read articles, listen to podcasts, and talk to meeting planners to borrow ideas for networking, such as:
  • Drawings
  • Trivia games
  • Escape rooms
  • Live musical performances
  • Mixing cocktails from kits sent to event registrants in advance of event.

Planning for the In-person Audience

• Be proactive in planning exhibits.
• Hire on-site AV experts to support events.
• Have a backup plan for content if AV problems arise (e.g., a general video you can segue to).
• Plan exhibit with social distancing in mind.
• Have hand sanitizing stations and masks available for use.
• Avoid hospitality suites or serving food at the exhibit.
• Examine budgets vs. actual costs as costs for lumber and labor have increased significantly.
• Avoid late fees and/or service delays by submitting exhibit work orders early.
• Consider having smaller, exclusive in-person events that prioritize quality engagement with targeted prospects over reaching a larger audience.

Goals Setting and Metrics

• Use metrics from virtual events to understand what content resonates with audiences to help plan future events.
• Metrics to track:
  • Number of attendees (virtual vs. in-person)
  • Engagement (comments, questions, likes)
  • Length of time virtual attendees consumed content
  • Number of leads generated
  • Number of conversions (e.g., revenue generated, product demos requested, requests for proposals)