Best Practices for Hybrid and Virtual Events
A Hybrid Event

Proprietary and Confidential
What’s a Hybrid Event?

A Hybrid Event is a live event with simultaneous delivery of the content via online platform with engagement. The engagement of the online audience separates a hybrid event from a mere broadcast such as we are all familiar with on TV.

A Hybrid Event exists to build, inform and connect online and onsite audiences in order to advance the objectives of the event organizer and their overall community of members or other stakeholders.
## Elements of a Hybrid Event

### Presenters
- Speakers with great material and content for consumption

### Emcee
- An experienced facilitator for cohesion and speaker interviews

### Onsite
- A physically gathered audience
- Production equipment and related labor for camera, lighting, sound
- Venue, sound delivery, décor and furniture

### Online
- An audience connected via the Internet
- Delivery platform/streaming technology
- Audience engagement tools
- A representative serving as the online audience ambassador

**Sponsors or paid exhibitor videos and messages**
Best Practices of a Hybrid Event

• A truly hybrid event melds the online & onsite experiences to engage individual attendees as part of a community.
• Online and onsite audiences must be built with separate marketing practices proven effective for each group.
• Hybrid (and virtual) events are timed appropriate to shorter online consumption and time zones relevant to community.
• Hybrid and virtual events should include an emcee/host to create continuity and engagement both online and onsite.
• Interaction (Chat and Questions) are vital tools for the online audience.
Best Practices of a Hybrid Event

• Social media hashtags and activity should be deployed to further encourage networking across the audiences.

• **Attention** must be paid to converting *online audiences* to onsite registrations in the future, and online options should be used to **keep interest of onsite**.

• **Sponsors** must be recruited to understand the **overall value** of the experience and embrace their likely different method for **branding or lead generation**.

• **Measurement** of registrant numbers, engagement points, speaker approval, onsite conversion, sponsor touchpoints and dollars **over life of customer** should be taken.
Why Invest in Going Hybrid?

- Use as a **Marketing tool** for future registrations
- Consider it a **Membership driver** and benefit
- Registration revenue
- Sponsor **revenue**
- Offer **new way** for community to connect
- Position organization as thought leader with **new tech & tools**
- Open to **new markets** not currently served by live event
- Put **more attention** on more speakers
- Repurposed content **opportunity** throughout the year
- Audience is better prepared today **more than ever** to consume digital content

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Timing the Event

Have a stream re-watch event with the speaker available for personal interaction.

Make breaks on livestream days long enough for those at their desks to take meetings in between sessions.

40 minutes on, twenty minutes off works for many.

Break down your intended audience by time zone and consider their normal work day.

Do what you can to create a schedule that is timed for strong engagement.

Make recordings available afterward for those you miss.
Locations of the Event

- **A hybrid event** can be streamed from rooms where you are currently offering live content.
- **Keynote Room** – If you are setting up for full AV, don’t waste all the tech in the room on one speaker a day.
- **Breakout Room** – Load up one room with speakers intended for the live stream.
- **Trade Show Floor** – Break down the conference and exhibition barrier with live educational sessions streamed from a booth.
- **Any content** can be streamed for virtual or hybrid events from:
  - **AV Studios** – Companies across the country offer studios for live stream broadcasting.
  - **Homes & offices** – Speakers are being more comfortable with creating their own setup.

3 Important Factors

01 Location!

02 Location!

03 Location!
Social Media

Take ownership of a hashtag by using and promoting it.

The hashtag channel helps pull together your online and onsite audiences.

Use the hashtag across platforms including Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Encourage speakers, exhibitors, sponsors and participants to use the hashtag before, during and after the event.

Caution all about overuse and straight-selling on social media hashtags.

Filters, badges and geo-tagging can be more fun ways to engage audiences on social media.
Quality Streaming Considerations

Elements of the livestream, particularly the first two, must be high quality regardless of location from which material is presented.
Trade Show Floor Tie-Ins

- **Break down the conference** and exhibition barrier with live educational sessions streamed from a booth
- **Education is a draw** to the trade show
- These sessions can be **sponsored by exhibitors** or a value-add for bigger sponsors
- Sessions can be organizer content and **streamed from your own booth on the floor**
- Time sessions on the short side with plenty of breaks to **encourage traffic flow** throughout the day
- Create content just for the online audience such as a **tour throughout the hall**
- A **content zone** could also be created at registration or a community hub that is open more hours than the trade show
Engagement
Deepens with Networking

- Platform must include feedback loops, question capabilities and chat rooms
- Inclusion of social media hashtags take the conversation across channels
- Speakers must be taught to encourage assimilation of info and personal connection
- Speakers can take online questions frequently and thank the submitter by name
- Online moderators should work the chat room, posting opinions, encouraging input
- Speakers and moderators can push audience to chat with each other and boost their personal profile in whatever platform (ie, put your twitter handle in)