Virtual Events: Where we go from here.
• Founded in 2001, we are an Audio-visual production company based in Chandler, AZ.
• Produce live events of all types and sizes.
• Specialize in corporate events.
• Clients you may recognize:
  • The Motley Fool
  • Harkins Theatres
  • PetSmart
What is a Virtual Event?

- Virtual Events are defined arbitrarily.
- We will define virtual event as: any event held online that is not a single track – direct click, multiway meeting (ie Zoom call).
- This is a broad definition, but there are a wide variety of virtual events.
Reasons to use Virtual Event platform

• Built in Agendas
• Single registration
• Enhanced branding
• Value for sponsors
• Networking/Social potential outside of main meeting
• Monetization via selling tickets
• Multiple ticket tiers – each with own agenda/sessions
• Centralized analytics
• Mixed session formats
• Allow attendees to watch on their own time (Video On Demand)
• Higher production value
• Increased attendee engagement
Post Registration
Two sides to a virtual event...

Platform & Production
Platform

- Platform serves as the container for your event.
- Platform will handle the following:
  - Landing page
  - Registration
  - Networking/Social functions
  - Agenda
  - Pages with embedded or linked Production
- Each platform does these slightly differently.
Similarities between most platforms:

• Registration usually very similar

• Most are priced on a PER EVENT basis

• Most provide some sort of overall event agenda

• All have lead times for event production – the Virtual Event industry is very busy right now
Where they differ:

- Pricing varies GREATLY
- General design/landing page
  - Some offer a clean, responsive website
  - Some try to emulate look of real conference/event space
- Some allow you/your production team to edit site, and some require you to purchase full white glove service packages
- Some work well with livestream and video on demand – others emphasize live
- Networking/Social functions vary greatly. These are a big selling point for individual platforms
- Exhibit booths – both style and functionality
- Integrations with other platforms
Networking & Social

• Major point where platforms differentiate

• Most have user profiles for attendees, speakers, exhibitors

• Other networking/social features:
  • 1 to 1 messaging (some allow 1 to 1 video)
  • Built in meeting scheduling (can be 1 to 1 or group)
  • Dedicated roundtable area
  • Speed networking (Chatroulette style)
  • Attendee introductory “selfie” videos
  • Integrated gamification
  • Exhibit booths – how they are implemented varies widely
Platforms worth demoing

From most to least expensive:

- Social27
- Pathable
- Bizzabo  (Note: We are partnered with Bizzabo)
- Hopin    (Very low cost – but seems like a startup – make sure to vet/test thoroughly)
Alternative Platforms

• Virtual events do not HAVE to use a fully integrated platform...

• For things that do not need registration, agendas, integrated networking functionality:

  • Facebook Live
  • Youtube
  • Twitch
Production

• Production is what your actual event/sessions look like

• Choice of production type will depend on your event goals

• Some platforms limit what production types you can use
Production Types

- **Zoom**
  - Zoom can be used either directly or via livestream to host supported by your platform
  - Low cost and most presenters already know how to use
  - Production value is usually low, but it does have some integrated Q & A etc. type features
  - Can bring people “on stage” from audience relatively easily
  - Great use case was the “Zoom Happy Hour” – easy to bring many non tech savvy people together
Production Types

• Interactive meeting room
  • Teaching style rooms with high level of audience participation and interactivity
  • Production value (video quality for webcams etc.) is usually lower
  • Usually easy to run and can be lower cost (less production equipment/labor)
  • Very content focused
  • Examples: Adobe Connect, Bizzabo Interact
Production Types

• **Livestreaming - Overview**
  - High video quality
  - Production value can vary depending on your event needs
  - Seamlessly switch between live and prerecorded content
  - Integrates with most platforms
  - Most attendee friendly way to receive content – less risk of technical issues on attendee side
  - Can range from DIY set ups to full production studios
Production Types

- **Livestreaming – “DIY”**
  - Can be done free/low cost
  - OBS Studio
  - Streamlabs OBS
  - Many people use the above software and their own equipment to livestream every day (See: Twitch, Youtube)
  - If no budget to work with and goals are relatively simple, this may be a solution
  - Does leave you at the mercy of your own internet connection, hardware and computer expertise
• Livestreaming – Professional
  • Production value will vary by goals and budget
  • If kept simple, costs can be low with relatively high production value compared to DIY (See: Governor Ducey’s COVID addresses)
  • For more complicated events, production value is essentially unlimited – can reproduce a live television show type feel with graphics, seamless switching, cues.
  • Other ways beyond just streaming and switching to enhance your production value
Meeting in a Box Rental

- All in one, turn-key kit with high quality streaming equipment
- Includes laptop, webcam, desktop lights, desktop microphone, optional wireless earbuds (sales item – not returned)
- Plug and Play – sets up in under 10 minutes
- Tech support included
Enhanced Production

**In-house and Mobile Studio**

- High quality production equipment for livestream and recorded content
- Green screen, LED wall and hard scenic backdrops available
- Can seamlessly integrate with remote presenters/panels via webcam
- Cameras operated remotely to ensure social distancing
- Studio can be set up at any location/venue
Recap: Things to consider

- **Goals of event**
  - Content focused, networking, social, experiential, promotion/branding?
  - List based on importance

- **Platform**
  - Do you need an integrated Virtual Event platform?
  - Which needs are flexible and which are not?
  - Estimate your number of attendees
  - What is your budget?
  - Will you be presenting live, pre recorded, do you need VOD for people to watch post event?
  - Demo multiple platforms before deciding on one.
  - Do not forget about platform lead time – EARLY planning is better.
Recap: Things to consider

- Production
  - Decide level and type of production that best fits your event/budget
  - Most Virtual Events have mix of production types
    - Ex: General Session done via highly produced livestream, while breakouts are done via interactive meeting room
  - Make note of how many presenters/panelists you will want “on stage” for each session
Recap: Things to consider

- **Production (continued)**
  - Do any/all sessions need recorded/hosted as VOD?
  - Are we mixing live and pre recorded content?
  - Pre recording is not bad – it removes variables that could derail the event and can be presented in a way that the audience is completely unaware
  - Is everyone going to present via webcam? Do they have proper equipment?
  - Rehearsal/test days! Build these into your schedule. Rehearsals are a MUST for Virtual Events
Warning about copyrighted content

- Do NOT use copyrighted content on virtual events/livestreams
  - Audio
  - Images
  - Video
- Copyrighted audio has a very real chance of getting your content flagged and possibly removed (especially on free/public hosts – YouTube, etc.)
- There are sites that offer royalty free images/music/video:
  - Audiojungle.net – music and audio tracks
  - Pond5.com – music, images, video tracks
  - Vectorstock.com – vector images
Thank you!

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