



# Hybrid Meetings Events Playbook

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## New Meetings & Events Archetypes and Associated Business Models

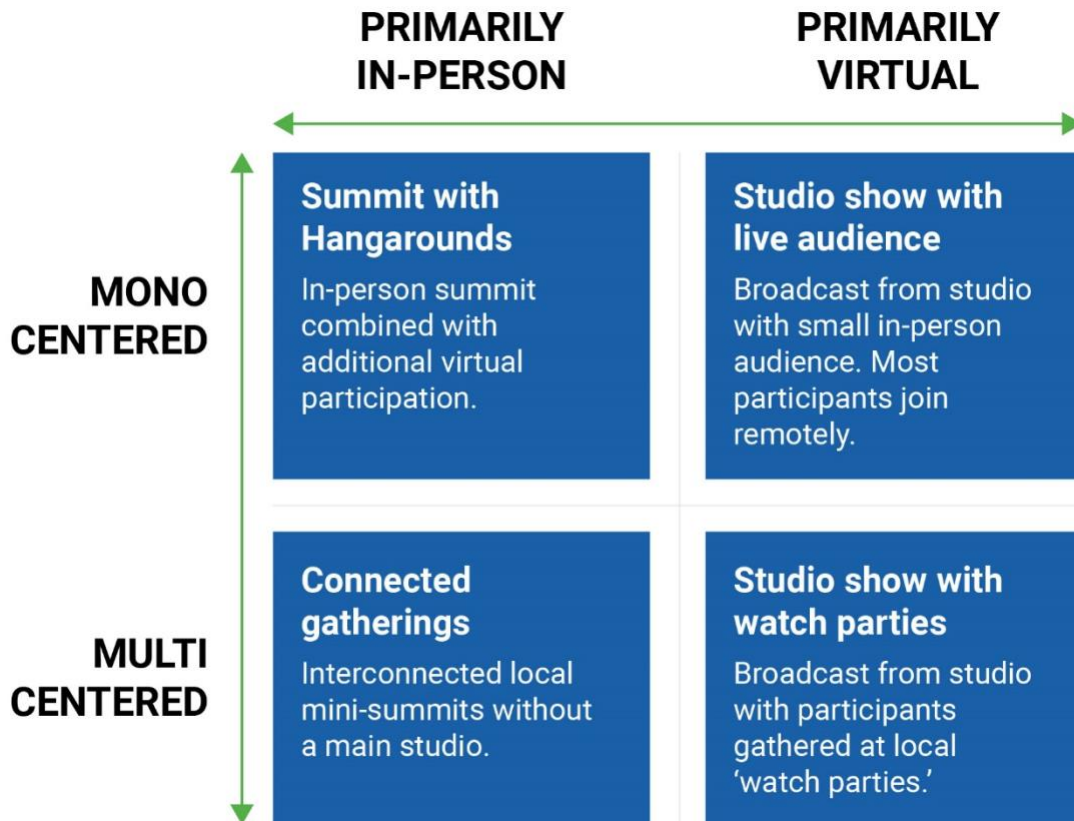


IMAGE 1: NEW ARCHETYPES AND BUSINESS MODELS<sup>1</sup>

New archetypes have been introduced into the meeting and event space, which provide hotels with new opportunities to serve their clients and create new revenue streams. Here's an overview of different types and how they intersect with in-person and virtual attendance.

<sup>1</sup> <https://workzchange.com/posts/hybrid-summit-matrix>



## SUMMIT WITH HANGAROUNDS

This is a physical summit with many participants in the room and virtual access, where presentations and other activities from the center stage are broadcast online. It's as close to a traditional in-person summit while still being "hybrid." This setup can add a lot of complexity to the planning and production. Designing a studio with visual content that works well for broadcast is significantly different from creating a solution that accommodates a live audience.

- *Critical considerations*
  - Is connecting with people in the room more important than creating a solid link with the people watching online? A small practical example: Should hosts and speakers address the camera, or should they look at the live audience while delivering their messages?
  - To what degree should the agenda be designed to accommodate screen fatigue and different time zones?
  - Should workshops and engagement activities include the audience as a whole, or is it okay that specific actions are "in-person only"?

## STUDIO SHOW WITH A LARGE AUDIENCE

This is a virtual event broadcast from a studio with a limited audience in the room. Most participants will watch online. It's as close to a pure virtual summit as possible while still being "hybrid." This setup is very similar in practice to making a broadcast show for television with a small live audience.

- *Critical considerations*
  - How can we ensure that the summit stands out to the online participants as something special?
  - Who do we invite into the studio, and how does this support our message?
  - How can we utilize the limited in-studio participants? Can they be activated in ways that deliver extra value to their colleagues joining online?

## CONNECTED GATHERINGS

This is where all participants participate in local in-person sessions, e.g., a country or regional leadership team. There is no main location or studio here, but all the local events are connected online. Primary content and activities such as keynotes will be streamed from one of the local sites to the rest of the participants. Some presentations and activities will be done locally, which offers an opportunity to adjust content and messaging to local conditions and needs.

- *Critical considerations*
  - How do you operate between time zones? Which activities need to be synchronized? Are there elements that can be pre-recorded or reused?
  - Where and how should the CEO and top executives join? Should they be spread out across locations or participate at the same site?



## STUDIO SHOW WITH WATCH PARTIES

The main show, broadcast from a studio, is combined with local in-person gatherings ('watch parties'). This solution makes it possible to combine virtual and in-person engagement activities – from online reflection teams, where colleagues are mixed across locations, to local workshops and team building.

- *Critical considerations*
  - To which degree must the activities at the various local gatherings be coordinated and aligned? What may we gain, and what may we lose?
  - How can we ensure that the broadcast show is engaging and relevant to all participants?

## Business & Consumer Confidence Considerations

Business and Consumer Confidence will be critical issues for meeting planners as the industry adjusts to the pandemic's effects on travel and gatherings. This section will identify stakeholders and their concerns, with ways to address and mitigate them.

## Stakeholders

### Attendees – In Person

- COVID infection levels will determine the percentage of in-person attendance versus online as the situation moves forward. In-person attendees will want to understand sanitization protocols at the venue and be confident that the meeting planner is making all necessary precautions. For health safety, Pre-communication from the meeting planners that includes the detailed expectations for all attendees who will attend the session in person is critical for the success of the meeting protocols. Each state or city may have different guidelines in place, and attendees must be informed of the need to mask social distance, have a temperature check, PCR tests, or if contact tracing may affect the session. Hotels need to be informed by planners about what protocols will be in place and if technology will be used for the meetings. Signage may be necessary if the session requires masks so any employees can comply with the session requirements if entering the space. Employer/Peer Perception is essential as some attendees may not be able to join the session if the health protocols are not clearly stated and in place to ensure the safety of their team when they return from the conference. Meeting Size Considerations are essential as extra space may be allotted to groups to ensure the ability to social distance, and Venue Types will also be important as many groups may decide to use open-air or outdoor locations for meals to reduce risk factors.

### Attendees – Hybrid (transition from in-person to online <or vice versa>)

- Attendees may decide that it is too risky to attend an in-person session and instead join the online format. The content and the experience must be consistent for these participants. A complete review of the venue, including technological and logistic



capabilities, platform stability, and bandwidth availability, must be completed to ensure a successful online experience compared to the in-person experience.

### **Attendees – Online**

- For online participants, the stability of the platform is a critical factor. This includes bandwidth availability to ensure the content is delivered seamlessly. Also, a focus on the event experience, the feeling of inclusion, and the ability for online attendees to network and interact in real-time is significant.

### **Hotel / Venue Staff**

- Business has changed with the pandemic, and there has been an impact at the property level. Groups have canceled or become smaller, and some are shifting to a hybrid format. The property must understand and ensure they have the capabilities to take care of these new demands. In addition, COVID 19 protocols for the events may change from group to group. The property team must be flexible to these shifting needs and the changing health environment.

### **Hotel / Venue Owners**

- Hotel and Venue Owners may have to invest in new technology or create filming areas to support online programs to help changing group needs. However, there is an opportunity to create a hybrid revenue stream, as groups use the property to film their programs with no attendees present. COVID 19 protocols and increased operating costs have impacted the events. Due to impact & capacity challenges, transparent communication to meeting planners of increases, such as food, beverage, and guestrooms, due to impact & capacity challenges is vital to ensure satisfaction. Owners will also need to ensure all health and safety protocols are in place as mandated to avoid liability risks and communicate with the event planners and attendees how they are being implemented.

### **Event Organizers – Professional Planner**

- Planning a hybrid meeting can be like planning two different events and is an increased workload for event planners. However, the additional value of recorded content and promoting online attendance and future viewing can draw more attendees. Also, fees can be applied to online attendance to create an online revenue stream. Health protocols cannot be underestimated in importance as gathering people together in person brings additional risk. Ensure all possible protocols (masks, social distancing, health tests, automatic contact tracing) will avoid creating a 'super spreader' event that may result in unwanted media attention. Association meetings and corporate events also work with very different budgets that can affect event planners. With the restrictions that many companies have on employee travel, association gatherings seem to be the first of the conventions returning. Event planners are also dealing with higher costs affecting registration fees and need to find ways to offset costs. There are many innovative ways to do this, including the



sponsorship of safety protocols to offset testing, sanitizer, masks, and contact tracing.

### **Municipalities / Governments**

- Another challenge is that COVID19 protocols vary by state, city, county, and country and can be challenging for meeting planners and venues to navigate. Regional requirements for tax collection (payroll & sales), liability, and how the enforcement of laws & bi-laws may affect your meetings are other considerations in event planning.

### **Event Organizers – Occasional Planner (Same as professional planner above, but often these individuals are less savvy to the changes in the event environment)**

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Event planners are also dealing with higher costs affecting registration fees and need to find ways to offset costs. There are many innovative ways to do this, including the sponsorship of safety protocols to offset testing, sanitizer, masks, and contact tracing.

### **Sponsors**

- As events become more hybrid-focused, sponsors' concerns that the return on investment for their sponsorship dollars is lessened. Sponsors need to carefully look at the opportunities to determine the impact, including options for ongoing exposure with sessions being available in the future.

### **Exhibitors**

- Exhibitors need to review any potential liability associated with in-person attendance, especially as COVID protocols change. They also need to check the ROI of sponsorship on a potentially more limited in-person audience and determine if there are opportunities for online audience exposure that will create a tangible win.

### **Presenters – in-person**

- Presenters need to consider the personal risk of traveling and joining conferences in person. Meeting planners will need to review liability concerns, COVID protocols, and logistics to ensure that speakers are kept safe and have minimal risk.

### **Presenters – online**



- Online presenters will need strict guidelines to ensure a professional, including rules for acceptable backgrounds, safeguarding the environment from distractions, and ensuring sufficient bandwidth and stability of the platform or infrastructure. Practicing sessions should be scheduled, ensuring that each speaker or panel feels comfortable with the process.

### **Platform provider**

- Online events depend heavily on the platform chosen to provide a consistent experience to all online attendees. A careful review of the bandwidth, network infrastructure, and capacity is critical to success. The attendee portal should be vetted for the following criteria: user-friendliness, multi-region language, and accessible technical support that is readily available by phone or chat.

### **Destination Management Companies/Destination Marketing Organizations**

- DMCs and DMOs need to understand the economic spinoffs that local businesses can benefit from with events. They also need to ensure that COVID19 protocols are extended through group transfers to make the entire experience consistent end-to-end. If a DMC/DMO is being considered for use, investigation of and mitigation of any potential liabilities must be done.

### **Off-site providers (restaurants etc.)**

- Off-site providers and venues can help mitigate risk when event planning. Investigate the COVID19 protocols at all off-site venues and ensure you are mindful of payroll & sales, capacity concerns due to social distancing, any additional liability, and compliance with local laws and by-laws.

### **Transportation providers**

- Transportation providers need to understand the positive economic impact of an event on local businesses. They should ensure that all COVID19 protocols are extended through group transfers to make the entire experience consistent end-to-end.  
Before hiring a service, investigate and mitigate any liability that may exist with the use of transportation providers.

### **Production Companies – in-person**

- The in-person Production company should understand and comply with all of the COVID protocols and local laws and by-laws that are in place. When using a production company, understand any changes that may affect their payroll and sales, limitations on capacity, modifications, or increases in liability.

### **Production Companies - online**

- Online Production Companies need to ensure platform stability and sufficient network infrastructure to enable online attendee inclusion. They should also have technical support available for attendees during the event.

### **Third-Party Providers**

- When using a third-party company, ensure that they understand and are practicing the COVID19 protocols in place and comply with local laws and by-laws. Changes





may affect their payroll and sales, limitations on capacity, and changes or increases to liability if changes are made.



## Regional Considerations

As you create events, being aware of regional differences is essential. Understanding the local restrictions and by-laws before scheduling the event will ensure that you are in compliance and have taken crucial risk mitigations, including any travel constraints that your attendees may encounter.

As closures and mandates change continuously, check in with local authorities often to stay up to date with the latest regulations.

Locale	Description	Link
U.S.	Live, State-by-State updates of closures, mandates, etc.	<a href="https://www.northstarmetingsgroup.com/News/Industry/Coronavirus-states-cities-reopening-COVID-19-new-cases">https://www.northstarmetingsgroup.com/News/Industry/Coronavirus-states-cities-reopening-COVID-19-new-cases</a>



## Bandwidth Requirements & Calculator

As you are planning the event, using a bandwidth calculator can assist with choosing the right platforms and providers to make it a success. This [tool](#) will ask you for the projected numbers of attendees, staff, and presentations to determine how much bandwidth is needed for the project.

## Health Technology Opportunities & Best Practices

For the industry to truly recover from the pandemic, travelers must be able to move safely around the world. Proof of negative COVID tests before arriving or boarding a flight is required in some countries. As vaccines become more readily available, proof of vaccination status is also required. To meet the need for an easy way to provide that evidence, the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the World Economic Forum, and various technology companies are attempting to produce a digital identity that would contain health records. Travel suppliers and planners will need to be aware of the current advancements in this field to participate. As the virus decreases, technology will continue to improve the US traveler experience, both from a health and safety perspective and customer-experience one.

In the US, the [Vaccine Credential Initiative \(VCI\)](#), in partnership with Microsoft, Oracle and Salesforce, EPIC, Mayo, and other companies, to create digital wallets that will contain immunization records stored on a digital cloud, as well as make paper copies readily available. . There are several options available, including Health Kit for iOS Digital Wallet, Android, and MyChart. [Common Pass](#) is another program in production by the World Economic Forum. These apps and programs are all based on an open API from [Smart on FHIR](#). European nations have launched the EU Digital Covid Certificate program, where each government controls the data but has access to the digital verifier to share information.

The World Travel & Tourism Council recommends that vaccination records and COVID-19 test results be issued as a "digital certificate" held within a digital health travel pass, such as a mobile phone app. WTTC believes this should only contain a traveler's COVID-19 status and be referred to as a "pass" and not a "passport," as it should not include irrelevant additional information. They also support and encourage the WHO, EU, and other national authorities to develop digital vaccine certificates and recommend governments swiftly adopt these guidelines and put in place a simple procedure for citizens who have already been vaccinated to obtain a digital version with their paper certificate. For digital test certificates, WTTC recommends governments adopt the minimum data requirements specified by ICAO in their Manual on Testing & Cross Border Risk Management<sup>3</sup>.

## Best Practices

Health passports are slated to become more common as the pandemic progresses. They offer convenience and ease for both the attendee and the on-site team. Still, they can also create new challenges based on jurisdictional differences at the local, regional, and national levels. Because of these differences, international users may find it difficult or impossible to use a



health passport. User privacy and data ownership are other considerations when using these services. Apps can combine the passport with health and contact tracing programs to create an efficient system that allows for vaccine information and test results for easy review. Specific operational considerations should be observed to make the process as convenient as possible for attendees, such as advanced communication to set expectations. Staff will need to be educated and trained on the regulations and policies for the event. If PCR tests are sent to the attendees, the instructions must be straightforward to follow.

A health app that allows attendees to do a symptom self-check or validate their test results is another option. It will also automate the code of conduct so that attendees will have to check off the requirements before entering the event. The self-check surveys should align with all current CDC guidelines, local regulations, and corporate policies and follow HIPAA guidelines by only storing the study results, indicating if they are safe or not to attend the event. Test result validation must also follow HIPAA guidelines to protect user privacy. One example of such a system is the Safe Access App. As with all elements of an event, clear communication of the health protocols is essential in creating a safe and productive atmosphere, including ensuring that attendees are notified about the app before arrival.

The ability to contact trace is crucial in limiting the organizer's and venue's liability if there is a COVID outbreak. This can be done manually but is not effective or practical in a significant event. Technological solutions, such as apps, SDK integrating into the conference app, or standalone contact tracing devices, are far more helpful when tracking large groups of people. The contact tracing can be combined with occupancy monitoring or social distancing analytics to ensure that protocols are being followed and provide data to help plan for future events. As with any other methods here, prior communication is vital not only to ensure that technology will be used but also to provide attendees with peace of mind. They should know how to let organizers know about a positive result and how they will be notified if they may have been exposed, including the level of risk they may have incurred. Tracing must be done with privacy as the primary concern, with it only done at the formal event, not at off-site or informal gatherings. This lets the attendees understand precisely where the tracing will occur and set their expectations accordingly. Attendees must also not be able to disable tracing, with systems built in to let the administrator know if it has been disabled or if someone is not wearing their device.

Thermal Imaging is a technology that can be combined with security services, such as weapons detection, to provide a maximum investment with additional peace of mind to attendees and organizers. While it can determine if someone has an elevated temperature, it can't diagnose COVID. Further diagnostics will be required to determine if individuals have COVID. The system's accuracy will also be dependent on how it's set up and who is operating and maintaining it. Protocols will need to be established to discretely handle the identification of individuals who have an elevated temperature to avoid embarrassment and reduce event disruption.



Occupancy Monitoring and Social Spacing, combined with contact tracing protocols, provide data to understand how close people are coming into contact with each other and where the highest density of people are congregating. This information can help manage capacity levels and identify densely trafficked areas that could present liabilities. However, because this is based on physical devices or apps, it can show inaccuracies due to human error. Additionally, tracing based on physical devices worn or held by a person can be difficult, as it is hard to mandate proper use.

Removing as much paper as possible from the meeting can save money and be environmentally friendly. It also gives attendees higher levels of confidence in the event. One effective way to do this is by using a meeting app that can provide agendas and other information, including attendee contact information. QR codes can also be used to fill out forms instead of pen and paper. Not having as much paper collateral will also encourage using an app or QR code. Attendees can be encouraged not to use paper business cards at the event. For these methods to be effective, event planners must provide adequate communication and education about the ways they are reducing paper before the event.

As hygiene is high on many people's minds, highlighting how cleaning is a priority will help assuage fears. One way to accomplish this is to track how and when areas are cleaned and disinfected using QR codes and blockchain technology. Locations, such as bathrooms, rooms, kitchens, and bars, are registered into the system. Every time an area is cleaned, it's notated in the system. Attendees can scan a QR code in each location to access these records. Contact tracing can also ensure that spaces used by an infected individual receive deep cleaning.

These tools will aid in liability mitigations, making it easier to build attendee confidence in the gathering and make it easier to identify and notify anyone who may have come in contact with COVID. For them to work, however, these measures must be communicated to all the stakeholders involved. Organizers must work with the venue to understand how they are safeguarding the space and then fill in the gaps with tools that can assure the appropriate level of mitigation. A data trail indicating that no one who reported symptoms or had an elevated temperature was allowed into the event is essential. A robust contact tracing system/protocols to tell that organizers took all reasonable precautions to mitigate further outbreaks if someone tests positive for COVID.



## Key Health Security Technology Platforms in the Market

As you consider the different solutions that work best for your event, here are some platform options to review:

1. Sharecare Health Security- [Health Security Verification \(sharecare.com\)](https://www.sharecare.com/health-security-verification)
2. [Amadeus Safe Travel - Amadeus Safe Travel Ecosystem](https://www.amadeus.com/en-gb/travel/health-pass)
3. [Clear HealthPass - Health Pass | CLEAR \(clearme.com\)](https://www.clearme.com/health-pass)
4. GE Wellness Trace - <https://go.geaviation.com/wellnesstrace-lp.html>
5. Common Pass - [CommonPass | Digital Health App](https://www.commonpass.com/digital-health-app)
6. IATA Travel Pass - [IATA - IATA Travel Pass for Travelers](https://www.iata.org/en/IATA-Travel-Pass-for-Travelers)
7. [SITA Health ETA - SITA | SITA Health ETA](https://www.sita.com/health-eta)
8. [IBM Health Pass - Digital Health Pass | IBM](https://www.ibm.com/health-pass)
9. [Volan Technologies - www.volantechnology.com](https://www.volantechnology.com)
10. SafeAccess Digital Health Verification - <http://www.safeaccess.app>



## Virtual Meetings Opportunities & Best Practices

Virtual meetings present new opportunities to provide value to event attendees without the hassles of coordinating in-person events. They require a comprehensive virtual event platform combined with embedded webinars and streaming solutions that allow for seamless viewing of content and easy event registration using direct entry or API from other sources. The webinar platforms will provide streamlined options for branding, chat, and live Q&A for remote audiences that can also engage in-person attendees for hybrid events. The on-site moderator will be able to view questions from the remote audience and answer them through the live stream or within the software. Some platforms give the option of bringing remote attendees into the video stream. Some of the software will also include RTMP streaming to have total video production on-site. If the software doesn't have this option, the webinar presenter must be able to hook in a direct camera feed. When considering the service to use, consider that Global CDN options must be available for all users.

## Group Business Marketing Best Practices

Hybrid events are the future, but brands may not recognize how they can benefit from them. Properties and venues can communicate those benefits to event planners while demonstrating the hybrid capabilities available. Hybrid capabilities at venues are generally not marketed at this time, which allows marketplace differentiation. Ensuring that this communication is part of your marketing efforts is essential for creating a thriving hybrid business.

Here are a few things to keep in mind when creating marketing collateral:

- What are Hybrid Meetings and Events? What are the possibilities associated with them?
- What are the meeting space differentiators for the venue? Partners, F&B, and health technology are just a few to consider.
- What kind of technological solutions does the venue have to accommodate Hybrid Meetings and Events? What A/V and bandwidth capabilities does the platform have those other options don't?
- How can the venue keep attendees safe and help event planners avoid risk?
- How easy is it for events to be booked at the venue?

Once the marketing collateral has been created, the venue website should be updated to reflect the benefits of hybrid meetings and highlight click-to-book meeting technologies. Social media marketing efforts should highlight the essential capabilities and differentiators to the event planning audience.



## Hybrid Event Design Best Practices: Technology and Physical Space

Meeting Component	Hybrid Event Design Best Practice	Attendee Consideration
<p><b>Portable Equipment</b></p>	<p>Some of the advantages of portable equipment include renting them on an event-by-event basis instead of owning them. They can be set up in any room and are not fixed. Typically, they will come with technicians to operate the equipment. They are also more customizable per event.</p> <p>However, they will need time to be set up, tested, and adjusted and will require more operational staff resulting in a more expensive cost per event. They also will need space for storage when not in use. It can appear temporary, and the poor aesthetics of cables, tech tables, speakers, and cameras can be distracting. They will also take up space in the room that could be used for other purposes. In-Person experience can also be affected, with challenges surrounding audio placement and visual presentation.</p>	<p>In-Person Attendee Experience may be affected by being distracted by temporary equipment setup. If the tech table is in the room, a distraction from tech chatter and activities is a concern. Lower quality sound and visual presentation are also concerns.</p> <p>However, the Remote Attendee Experience will have a high-quality view of presentations. There may be audio challenges in capturing speech from in-person attendees.</p>
<p><b>Built-In Equipment</b></p>	<p>Built-In Equipment can be pre-engineered for each space, not jury-rigged. No setup time is required, and it is pre-adjusted and ready to use. It's also more reliable, with cleaner, more professional esthetics and requires less staff. It can be enhanced with additional portable equipment, such as displays and cameras, if needed. Attendee audio will be of higher quality. It can also be more profitable for the venue in the long term.</p> <p>The disadvantage of Built-In Equipment is that it is specific to each space and will need to be designed, fabricated, installed, and maintained. It is typically limited to smaller or mid-sized rooms and will require trained venue staff. These may be purchased, financed, or long-term rented.</p>	<p>In-Person Attendee Experience will have a cleaner aesthetic with displays and cameras built-in and microphones for attendees in the ceiling. There will be no cables running around the room or tech tables, resulting in fewer distractions. Image and audio are typically much higher quality.</p> <p>Remote Attendee Experience will enjoy a typically high-quality view of the presentation and better audio from in-person attendees.</p>





<p><b>Hybrid Platforms</b></p>	<p>A hybrid platform can help create a cohesive experience for all involved and make it more convenient to stage the event. Examples of platforms are <a href="#">Eventcube</a>, <a href="#">Airmeet</a>, <a href="#">Filo</a>, <a href="#">InEvent</a>, <a href="#">UgoVirtual</a>, and <a href="#">Hopin</a></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Personnel</b></p>	<p>Venue Staff should have SOPs for outside production companies to follow, making it a more effortless experience.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Services</b></p>	<p>Some room issues for services to consider include lighting for video and ambient light control through windows. Background noise is another concern, with emphasis needed on acoustic isolation from adjacent spaces (interior/exterior) and hard wall/floor/ceiling surfaces. Guest and service access will need to be maintained while maintaining quality control concerns.</p> <p>Proper infrastructure, such as Internet connectivity, stable power, sightlines to displays and cameras, and cable pathways, is essential to ensure the events go smoothly.</p>	<p>N/A</p>



## Meeting Planner Checklist

Here's an example of a meeting planner checklist that can help ensure that all due diligence is met when sourcing a potential event venue.

Checklist ID No. (1-X)	Meeting Type Applicability	Operations Category	Value/ROI (\$-\$\$\$\$)	Impact on Experience	Operations Area/Name of Requirement	Description	Responsible Party	Done/ Not Done/ NA
		Hybrid Networking Event			Extend social events to hybrid capabilities to enhance sponsor value			
		Registration			Badging			
		Event Management			Program & Content Management	Long Virtual/ Hybrid events do not work well		
		Capacity						
					Analytics Management	Hybrid Platforms have rich analytics to drive decision-making		
		Sponsor Management			Extend Sponsor opportunities and analytics to online spaces			
		Risk Management			Liability & Terms and Conditions of Meeting	Do you have any materials that set expectations with planners and attendees around liability? Do you collect positive affirmations of agreement from each attendee		



## Hybrid Event Attendee Experience Management

The in-person and online experience must be equitable when putting on a hybrid event. Naturally, there are some areas where a different experience is expected, but the right platform can create an enjoyable experience. When choosing one, integrations are key. The overall event platform must be fully capable of event registration via direct entry or API from other sources and integrate with webinar and video streaming platforms to allow seamless content viewing.

When choosing the platform, global CDN options must be available. Some webinar platforms provide RTMP streaming into the webinar for total video production on-site. If RTMP streaming is not being used, then the presenter side of the webinar must also allow for a direct camera feed. Another consideration is the benefits of using a full-featured, cloud-based webinar platform versus an RTMP stream. The full-featured webinar platforms can provide options that RTMP cannot, such as access to chat, Q&A, and Cloud-based webinar platforms provide streamlined opportunities for branding, discussion, and live Q&A for remote audiences, even in a Hybrid scenario. The on-site moderator will be able to review questions and comments from the online viewers, and some webinar platforms allow for bringing remote attendees "on-stage." The on-site video team can present these on-stage monitors to the in-person audience. It also enables the virtual audience to feel better connected to the host/MC by interacting.

Another consideration is content management. With the right virtual event platform, content can be delivered at the desired times before, during, and after the live event, based on the event planner's permissions based on registration levels. According to registration data, session track management will guide attendees to the most pertinent content. If the platform has AI features, it can suggest content AND connections to attendees based on registration data and activity. Balancing event content also means that in-person and virtual guests can have an experience tailored to their needs and expectations. Chat moderation and Q/A sessions can be done virtually and live, allowing both audiences set to benefit from the experience. Depending on the tools and platforms used, trivia, scavenger hunts, quizzes, and certifications are other options to help create a dynamic event that engages in-person and online attendees.

Naturally, this requires expectation setting before the event begins so that everyone can appreciate the content and methods for receiving and interacting with it. Ensuring that a hybrid help desk is available before and during the event will make it easier for attendees to resolve issues efficiently.



## Virtual Attendee ROI / ROE Evaluation

How do you determine the ROI of virtual attendees at an event? Here are a few things to consider:

### Event Attendees

- Leveraging the attendee data and behavior provides a great deal of insight into events and how to make them more impactful. Technologies are available for in-person events that complement the digital platforms to learn attendee habits.

### Attendee Engagement

- That can help you track engagement across your event. Time online or attendee participation in discussions or gamification features can provide measurement.

### Attendee Retention

- Another vital measurement for event success? Attendee retention. Retention can be measured by repeat participants (if the event is recurring) or conversion rate directly linked with attendee engagement. Did attendees return from the previous year, or did they attend multiple sessions if your event is multi-day? Keep a close eye on attendee traffic numbers across sessions, virtual rooms, or booths. These metrics will give you a clearer picture of what's resonating with your audience and what's not.

### Online Metrics

- Hosting an online event provides a golden opportunity to access the World Wide Web metrics. Analysing the number of visits you have on your website, landing page or link clicks, downloads, and tracking the open, click-through, and unsubscribe rates of an emailed event invitation can be telling when it comes to gauging an event's success. Monitoring social media metrics can also be a derivative of success by measuring the use of your event's hashtag, follower count increase, or other engagement metrics such as the number of people reposting or tagging your event or social page.

### Revenue Generated

- All events and meetings impact an organization's top and bottom lines. The biggest challenge is understanding how to measure the impact. Like expenses, the influence on revenue from an event should be quantified and explained.

### Access to Sessions, Education, and Panels During and After the Event

- In-Person attendees can find value in accessing the content after the event that they may have missed. This can contribute to overall membership value for new members by having access to content from past events.

### Reduced Cost of Travel and Lost Time

- The new reality is that organizations maintain or even increase revenue with smaller travel budgets. Hybrid events are part of that change travel budgets and habits have changed; therefore, making content available online allows event organizers to



capture revenue from potential attendees that otherwise would not attend the in-person event.

### **Conversion Rates from Virtual to In-Person Attendance**

- A virtual event allows the attendee to understand what the occasion or organization offers and determine the value of an in-person experience in the future. Providing special offers for virtual attendees, such as a discount or a unique experience for registering for an in-person event, can be valuable to encourage them to join live next time.

### **Monetize Virtual Attendees**

- Offering virtual attendees access to recordings of the event for a fee is a popular way to monetize such events. Other monetization opportunities may be available based on the organization.

### **Hotel Branding in the Online Experience (as opposed to only the event planner branding)**

- Hotels and venues have the opportunity to reach a larger audience through virtual events by broadcasting from on-site locations that would intrigue visitors, such as the pool and other amenities. Videos could also be played to provide an overview of the venue.

### **Increase Reach (including globally) of Events to Attract Attendees that wouldn't Typically Participate in Physical Only Events**

- Virtual and hybrid events give event planners the ability to reach people from across the globe that may not be able to attend a live event for monetary or logistical reasons. It furthers their missions and provides opportunities for growth and revenue.

