

ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

BlueJeans Events

It's no secret that virtual events, webinars, and live stream productions have replaced in-person events this year. Organizations who either hosted or sponsored live events prior to COVID-19 have shifted budget from tangible, live experiences to digital programs in the hope of maintaining business continuity. But most people agree there's something big missing from the virtual experience. And that something continues to be described as Engagement.



Engagement Matters

The engagement generated by live events helps promote brand loyalty, market awareness, and lead generation which all impact the bottom line. But how do you transform a highly immersive, multi-sensory, in-person experience to a purely digital event that delivers valuable business outcomes?

In a post COVID world, event planners and marketers can't expect the same ROI from virtual events just because it's the closest alternative to live events. Thanks to Netflix, YouTube, and other digital platforms, quality production, easy navigation, and real-time engagement are now table stakes. Audience expectations and attention spans require modern interfaces, comprehensive collaboration options, and experiences that provide more than just a slide deck with voice-over.

[In a 2020 article by Hubspot](#), data cited from a Wyzowl survey showed that 88% of video marketers reported that video gives them a positive ROI. This signals widespread adoption and confidence among marketing teams to amplify their message and products with influential video content.

Shift Your Strategy

From award ceremonies and press conferences to wine tastings and 20,000 person festivals, all live event plans must shift to consider new requirements to optimize virtual engagement. We've compiled a few key considerations to help shape a virtual strategy.

What business outcomes are you trying to achieve?

Lead Generation: Keep your registration process simple and think about how your brand will be perceived by someone new. What kind of message does it send if you're using antiquated webinar tools with poor audio?

Customer Appreciation or Feedback: Live video provides an opportunity to meet face to face and gauge emotions, body language, and in some cases tangible results.

Is your audience invite-only or for the masses?

Virtual event tools aren't always one-size fits all. Would you use a large-scale broadcasting solution for a small in-person breakout session? Can your technology scale without bandwidth constraints? Does your virtual event solution integrate with social media and live streaming platforms to maximize audience size?

How will you convey creativity and innovation?

What are the customization options to showcase your brand? What are the must-have integrations to create end-to-end promotion and follow-up touchpoints? Will the production, video, and audio quality meet the expectations of a high-profile attendee?

How familiar are your attendees with your brand and each other?

Expecting wallflowers? Better have a handle on the best engagement tactics to bring them into the conversation. Anticipating a room full of social butterflies? Make sure your solution allows moderators to keep track of all communication streams to quickly field questions and comments.



Trust Your Tactics

Don't reinvent the wheel. The same engagement tactics used at in-person events can be applied virtually. The key is frequent, multi-channel communication before, during, and after the event. And make sure you have enough event managers to facilitate conversations during the event.

Registration questions

During registration, ask qualitative questions like "what do you hope to achieve by attending?" It may require an extra minute of time but explain why the answers will help improve attendee experience for the better. Then finetune the event to the audience's engagement style.

Pre-event teasers

Considering a physical aspect like a swag bag or event props? Ensure it arrives shortly before your event date to keep interest and excitement high.

Start social media communications far in advance to build anticipation and community with peer to peer conversations that translate digitally.

Emails should provide clear, actionable instructions about how, when, and where to engage on the virtual platform. Don't be afraid to over-explain the polling, chat, Q&A, and raise hand options.

Conversation starters

Just as questions are seeded at large keynotes, the same should be done in live chat. Sometimes it just takes one person to kick off the questions for others to feel comfortable chiming in.

Interact with vocal attendees. Call them by name or ask them to come on screen!

Send personal messages in real time to strengthen connections and better qualify opportunities for follow up.

Engagement analytics

Share session-specific handouts, on-demand recordings, Q&A, and next steps after the event. Tailor messages to reflect chat conversations and polling stats.

Whether building advocacy or sales pipeline, keep track of those vocal attendees and prioritize them for follow up.

Tools of the Trade

We may not be utilizing screwdrivers, badge printers, or gaffer tape these days, but event professionals still require a set of tools to build and manage events. BlueJeans Events is like a Swiss Army knife for virtual events, offering a broad set of features designed to enhance audience engagement.

Video on

Presenters and moderators should have video on with a clear and strong connection. Audiences are much more compelled to listen to speakers if they can see non-verbal cues and put a voice to a face, creating an emotional tie. When appropriate, ask the audience turn on video too! This encourages them to pay attention!

Moderator panel

An advanced moderator dashboard shifts the focus from software navigation and troubleshooting to the actual content of the event. This gives event managers and organizers a 360-degree view of all participant activity for complete control and security.

Integrations

Use marketing automation, CRM, and live streaming platforms to your advantage. For example, BlueJeans Events integrates with Facebook Live providing a wide reach on an interface many attendees are comfortable with. For promotion and lead tracking, integrate BlueJeans Events with Marketo and Salesforce to create a streamlined nurture and follow-up experience.

Q&A + chat

Moderators should actively monitor and respond to Q&A and chat. Audiences are much more likely to engage if there is an active chat conversation going. And who better to start the conversation than the host?

Polling + survey

Have an audience that prefers to remain anonymous? Polls and surveys are a great way to get real-time feedback and increase participation.

Raise hand feature

Promote an audience member to a presenter, just like bringing an attendee onto a live stage or handing them the microphone. This is the highest form of engagement — it allows the audience to participate at the same level as speakers to establish brand trust and create a human-to-human connection.

Device agnostic

Reach your audience wherever they are on whatever screen is most accessible. The experience is similar across all devices and eliminates friction, and improves attendee numbers and screen time.

Summary

Given the myriad outreach strategies that marketing teams use to capture and retain audience, interactive virtual events have the highest impact on brand awareness and product promotion. They give your organization an opportunity to be the first face that attendees connect with and can initiate the customer lifecycle. As an advocacy platform, engaging your contacts with compelling video content maintains and strengthens loyalty to your products and services.



BlueJeans Events, a globally trusted live video streaming solution, is an easy-to-use virtual event platform for engagement marketing, customer activation, and demand generation.