THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL VIRTUAL MEETING

- A step-by-step eBook, from CTI -

CTI
MEETING
TECHNOLOGY

Table of Contents

In today's fast-paced and interconnected digital world, virtual events have emerged as a powerful tool for organizations to connect, engage, and collaborate with their audiences. This format is anticipated to **expand by 21.4%** before 2030, which makes it a great opportunity for event planners.

Scientific conferences play an important role in facilitating the exchange of research, fostering collaborations, and advancing scientific knowledge. As an event planner, you can take advantage of virtual meetings to enhance these points, by connecting scientists, researchers, and experts from around the globe, going beyond geographical barriers and time constraints.

Let's explore some of the <u>benefits</u> that this format offers:

1 **Increased Efficiency:** Virtual events eliminate the need for travel and accommodating remote attendees, which also saves precious time and resources. Participants can connect from anywhere, allowing teams to seamlessly collaborate, share ideas, and make informed decisions without the constraints of physical location. This translates into higher productivity and better allocation of resources, ultimately driving overall success for organizations.

2 **Reduced costs:** Expenses such as travel, accommodation, venue rentals, and catering are eliminated or drastically reduced, which enables organizations to reallocate their budgets to other important initiatives, such as enhancing the event experience or investing in additional marketing efforts.

3 **Expanded reach:** With participants able to join remotely, organizations can engage with individuals from different locations. This expanded reach allows for a more diverse and inclusive event experience, fostering global connections and collaborations. Additionally, virtual meetings can offer attendees the flexibility to join sessions at their convenience, to accommodate diverse time zones and busy schedules.

WHY USE THIS GUIDE

After 40+ years of helping organizations hold successful conferences around the world, we know that the planning process is the most important step to ensure a satisfactory meeting experience.

However, event planners often overlook some of the planning steps, and with a relatively new format - the virtual meeting - it can be overwhelming to rethink this whole process.

The purpose of this eBook is to provide you with a comprehensive step-by-step guide for planning and executing virtual meetings that deliver exceptional results. Whether you're an event organizer, a business professional, or an entrepreneur, this guide is designed to equip you with the knowledge and strategies needed to host successful virtual events, from pre-planning to post-event evaluation.

Our goal is to empower you to maximize the full potential of virtual meetings and leverage them as a powerful tool to achieve your business objectives.

So, grab your drink of choice and get ready to embark on a journey that will transform how you approach events in the digital age.

UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF VIRTUAL MEETINGS

→ Advantages and opportunities of virtual meetings.

→ The different types of virtual meetings and their suitability for different objectives.

→ Key technologies and tools for hosting successful virtual meetings.

Virtual meetings offer a countless number of advantages and opportunities that have transformed the way organizations connect and collaborate. Understanding these benefits will help you fully grasp the potential of virtual meetings and how they can positively impact your business:

1.- Global Reach: Virtual meetings eliminate geographical barriers, allowing participants from around the world to connect without the need for travel. This opens up opportunities for international collaboration, and allows further inclusivity for those participants with financial or geographical constraints.

2.- Cost Saving: As mentioned earlier, virtual meetings significantly reduce costs associated with travel, accommodation, venue rentals, and catering. By eliminating these expenses, you can allocate your budget more efficiently, investing in other important aspects such as marketing, enhancing the virtual event experience, or developing valuable resources.

3.- Flexibility & Convenience: Participants can join virtual meetings from the comfort of their own homes or offices, without the need for commuting or adhering to strict schedules. This encourages higher attendance rates and greater engagement.

4.- Scalability: Virtual meetings are highly scalable, accommodating any number of attendees. Whether you have a small internal team meeting or a large-scale conference with thousands of participants, the right virtual platform can handle any scale of event

5.- Enhanced Data & Analytics: With the right virtual meeting platform, you can gather insights on attendee engagement, interaction, and participation levels. This data can influence future event planning and help you improve the effectiveness of your virtual meetings.

6.- Increased Accessibility: Participants with mobility challenges, geographical limitations, or time constraints can easily join and engage in virtual events. This inclusivity expands your reach and allows a diverse range of individuals to participate.

7.- Sustainability: Virtual events have a significantly lower carbon footprint compared to in-person events. By eliminating some of the features of traditional meetings such as travel, paper usage, or energy consumption in venues, this format contributes to a more eco-friendly approach to gatherings.

8.- Increased Audience Engagement: Virtual events provide unique opportunities for audience engagement with features like chat functions, virtual Q&A sessions, social media integrations, and interactive presentations.

9.- Extended Event Lifespan: Virtual events have a longer lifespan compared to in-person events. Recordings and on-demand access allow participants to revisit sessions they missed or rewatch valuable content.

10.- Adaptability to Dynamic Situations: In situations like travel restrictions, natural disasters, or global crises, virtual events can be quickly pivoted or conducted entirely online, ensuring continuity and minimizing disruptions.

Virtual meetings encompass a wide range of formats and can be tailored to different objectives. Understanding the various types will allow you to choose the most suitable format for your specific goals:

Webinars: Webinars are highly effective for educational or informational purposes. They often feature a presenter or a panel of experts delivering presentations or workshops to a larger audience. Webinars allow for real-time interaction through chat functions, Q&A sessions, and polls.

Video Conferences: This format facilitates real-time face-to-face communication and collaboration between participants. They are ideal for team meetings, project discussions, and client presentations. Video conferences provide a more personal touch compared to other virtual meeting formats.

Virtual Conferences: These replicate the experience of an in-person conference in a virtual environment, which typically includes keynote presentations, multiple sessions, networking opportunities, and virtual exhibition halls. They are suitable for larger events with a large amount of content and speakers.

Traning Sessions: Virtual training sessions are designed to deliver educational content and skill-building opportunities. They can be conducted in real-time or pre-recorded and offer interactive elements such as quizzes, breakout sessions, and hands-on exercises.

Hosting successful virtual meetings requires leveraging the right technologies and tools.
Here are some essential elements to consider:

Virtual Meeting Platform: Choose a reliable virtual meeting platform that aligns with your objectives and audience size. Look for features such as video and audio capabilities, content management, interactivity tools, and customizable options - among others. Our tip is to create a list of all the features required for your virtual event and choose the provider that can integrate most of them into their platform.

Collaboration & Communication Tools: Utilise collaboration tools that enable seamless communication and file sharing with participants. Some providers already have this feature included in their software, which simplifies this task.

Don't forget to include technical support for your team and for end-users in your list of requirements. This will ensure the meeting runs smoothly and takes off the pressure of dealing with participant issues.

Resource Management Tool: Virtual meetings require effective resource management to ensure smooth execution. Utilize resource management tools such as project management software to schedule tasks, allocate resources, and track project milestones. These tools help you stay organized, collaborate with your team, and ensure that all aspects of your virtual meeting are well-coordinated.
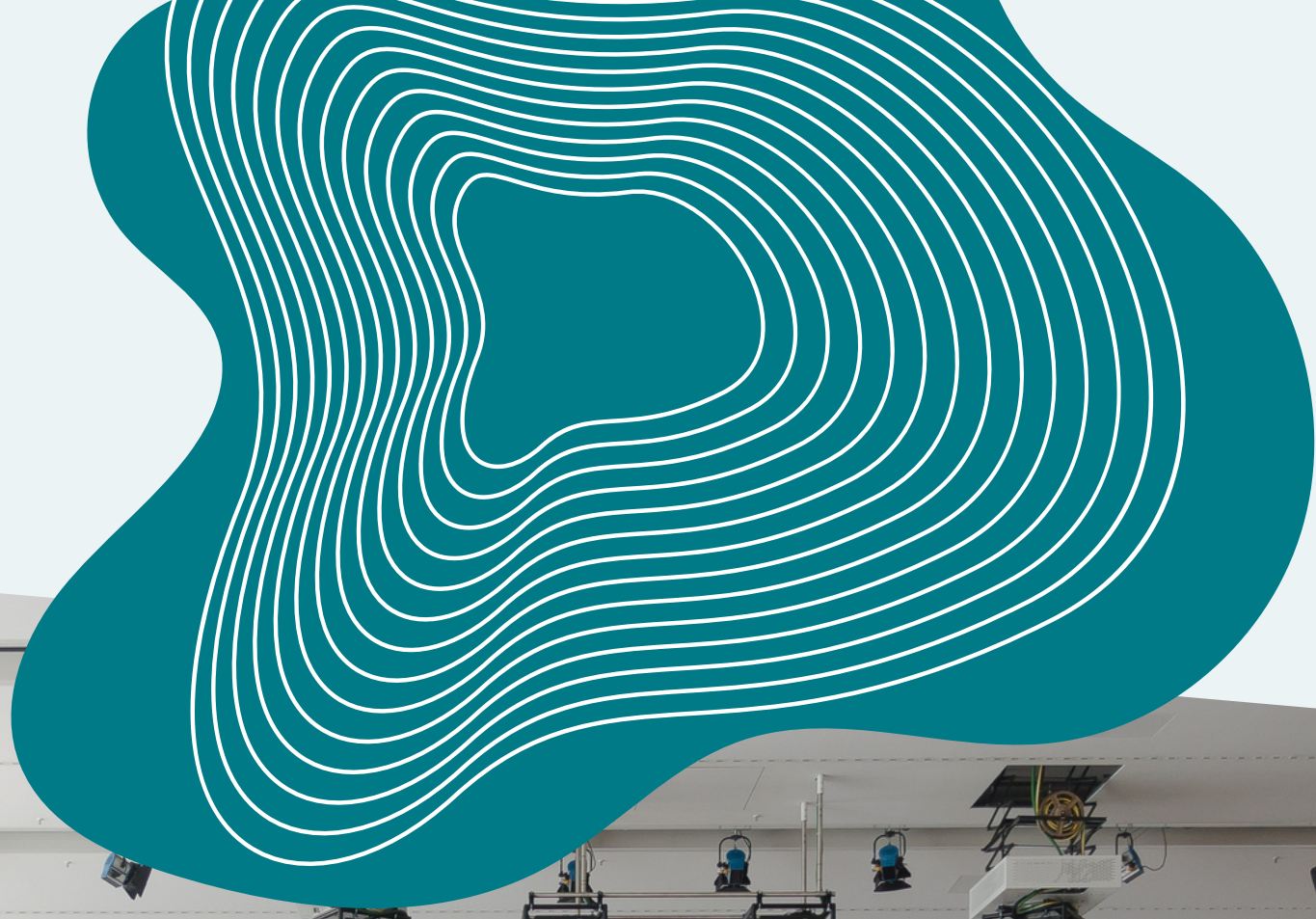
PREPARING FOR A SEAMLESS MEETING EXPERIENCE

→ **Your planning checklist**

→ **Determine the meeting goals and desired outcomes**

→ **Create a meeting agenda that aligns with the objectives, and tailor the experience to your audience**

→ **Setting up your website and social media strategy**

Planning your virtual meeting takes a lot of time and dedication. However, we have prepared a comprehensive checklist to make sure you cover all the essential parts of your meeting planning at the right time:

Your Planning Checklist

12 - 6 months before:

☐ Identify the purpose and objectives of the virtual meeting.

☐ Determine which format you will use.

☐ Establish a budget and allocate the resources.

☐ Research and select the appropriate virtual meeting platform that aligns with your goals and requirements.

☐ Begin building your team, and assign roles and responsibilities to each of them.

☐ Develop a timeline for the planning phase, including key milestones and deadlines.

☐ Start drafting the meeting agenda and outline the session topics and speakers.

" Your Planning Checklist

One week before:

☐ Prepare and send out pre-event communication to your speakers and attendees.

☐ Test the virtual meeting platform and troubleshoot any technical issues.

☐ Review and finalize all content, including presentations, videos, and other media.

The day before:

☐ Test the virtual meeting platform and ensure all content is allocated at the right place.

☐ Solve any technical issues that may arise (here's where a technical support team comes in handy!)

After the virtual meeting:

☐ Gather feedback from attendees and participants, and present it in a comprehensive way.

☐ Get reports and analytics from the virtual platform.

☐ Carefully analyze all the information to find areas of improvement.

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Determining your meeting goals and desired outcomes is a crucial step during the planning process that will impact the event's success. Let's see how you can effectively complete this task.

Clearly Define your Goals: Start by identifying the overall goals of your virtual meeting, and its purpose. For example, are you organizing the event to educate attendees on the latest research findings about a certain topic? Clearly articulate these goals to guide the planning process.

Break Down the Goals into Objectives: Once you have defined the main goals, break them down into specific SMART objectives (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound). Some examples of objectives may include increasing attendee engagement by X%, or generating X number of qualified leads.

Consider Other Perspectives: As a meeting organizer, you have to understand the perspectives and expectations of different stakeholders (attendees, sponsors, speakers, etc.) to tailor the meeting to their specific needs. For instance, attendees may seek knowledge acquisition and networking opportunities, while sponsors may be interested in brand exposure and lead generation.

Align with Organizational Objectives: Ensure that the goals and desired outcomes of the virtual meeting align with the broader objectives of your organization. This alignment helps demonstrate the value and relevance of the meeting to participants and sponsors, and it ensures that the meeting contributes to your organization's priorities.

Define Measurable Outcomes: Similar to the objectives, establish measurable outcomes that will indicate the success of the virtual meeting. These outcomes could include attendee satisfaction ratings, engagement metrics, or leads generated. Setting measurable outcomes enables you to evaluate the meeting's impact and identify areas for improvement in future events.

Review, Refine, and Evolve: Experience makes the expert. As you gain more experience in hosting virtual meetings, continuously refine your goals and outcomes based on lessons learned and participant feedback. Seek input from attendees, sponsors, and speakers to understand their expectations better.

Your Meeting Agenda:

Craft a comprehensive meeting agenda that outlines the <u>flow of the event, session timings, and breaks</u>. Ensure it aligns with the defined goals and desired outcomes.

Incorporate a variety of <u>session formats</u>, such as keynote presentations, panel discussions, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities.

Your goals, objectives, and desired outcomes may difere from competitors and from meeting to meeting. Carefully define them at the beginning of every virtual meeting you plan.

Tailor the content and session topics to cater to the <u>specific interests and needs</u> of the target audience.

Include ample time for <u>audience engagement</u> through Q&A sessions, live polls, and interactive activities.

<u>Communicate</u> the agenda clearly to speakers, moderators, and participants to ensure a smooth and engaging experience.

Creating a dedicated website or landing page for your virtual meeting is not mandatory, but it can prove very useful for promoting the event and attracting more participants.

➡ Make your website/landing page visually appealing, user-friendly, and informative. Include key details, registration information, session highlights, and speaker bios.

➡ Develop a strong social media strategy to generate buzz and promote the virtual meeting. You can use platforms like *LinkedIn*, *Twitter*, *Facebook,* and *Instagram* to share relevant content, speaker spotlights, and registration reminders.

➡ Use event-specific hashtags and tags to encourage attendees, speakers, and partners to share the event on their social media channels.

➡ Leverage email marketing campaigns to reach out to your target audience and provide updates, sneak peeks, and registration reminders.

➡ Monitor engagement on social media platforms, reply to user inquiries, and build a community around your virtual meeting.

By following these steps, you will have a strong foundation to keep working and refining your virtual meeting. Before you move into the next step of the planning process, make sure you have covered the points we outlined previously.

SELECTING THE RIGHT VIRTUAL PLATFORM

→ **Factors to consider: security, scalability, ease of use, and reliability.**

→ **Setting up and testing the chosen platform.**

When evaluating **virtual platforms**, consider the specific features that are essential for your meeting's success. Tools that enhance engagement and interaction, integrated communication, or content capture and distribution are some of the things you should look for. But let's take a look at the **essential features** that your platform must have:

Security: Security is essential when selecting a virtual meeting platform, as it ensures the protection of sensitive information and maintains the integrity of the meeting. Look for platforms that offer end-to-end encryption to safeguard communication and data transmission.

Scalability: Depending on the size and scope of your virtual meeting, scalability may be a crucial factor. Evaluate whether the platform can accommodate your expected number of attendees and concurrent sessions without compromising performance.

Ease of Use: The platform should have a clean and intuitive user interface that simplifies navigation for both organizers and participants. It should also support a range of devices and operating systems, including desktops, laptops, tablets, and smartphones, to ensure broad accessibility.

Reliability: Consider platforms that offer 24/7 technical support to address any issues or concerns that may arise during the meeting. Prompt and efficient technical support ensures a stress-free meeting experience for all participants.

Once you find the perfect virtual platform for your meeting, you will have to set it up for the event. But no worries! You can do it in 5 easy steps:

1.- Familiarize Yourself with the Platform: Take the time to understand the virtual meeting platform's features, settings, and customization options. Explore the platform's documentation, tutorials, and user guides to ensure you can make the most of its capabilities.

2.- Customize and Brand: Ideally, you choose a platform that allows you to customize it to align with your organization and event branding. Upload your logo, choose appropriate color schemes, and personalize the registration page and meeting interface to create a cohesive and branded experience.

3.- Test the Platform: Test the platform's features and functionalities, such as audio and video quality. You can even invite a small group of colleagues to join a test session to ensure everything works smoothly.

4.- Provide Clear Instructions to Participants: Communicate clearly how to access and navigate the virtual meeting platform. Provide guidance on technical requirements, recommended browsers, and any additional tools they may need to participate in your meeting.

5.- Offer Technical Support: Prepare a dedicated support channel or help desk to assist participants with any technical issues they may encounter during the meeting. Provide contact information or a dedicated support email where participants can reach out for assistance. Try to find a provider that offers technical support for end-users so you can remove this task from your list.

CRAFTING ENGAGING CONTENT AND PRESENTATIONS

→ Tips for creating engaging content and presentations in a virtual setting.

→ Structuring presentations to maintain participant interest and attention.

→ Interactivity tools to engage participants.

Now, as an event organizer you're not in charge of creating the content that will be presented at your meeting. However, you can provide useful tips to your presenters to create engaging content for a virtual setting.

1.- Use Visuals: In the virtual format, visuals play a crucial role in capturing and maintaining participants' attention. Use compelling visuals such as images, infographics, charts, and graphs to illustrate key points and enhance understanding. Consider incorporating storytelling techniques as well to make the content more memorable.

2.- Multimedia Elements: Consider integrating videos, animations, and interactive content into your presentations. Videos can be used to showcase real-life examples, provide training, or simply presenting the content in a more visual way.

3.- Leverage Interactive Tools: We will elaborate on this later, but virtual meeting platforms often offer built-in interactive tools that can help engage participants. Take advantage of these features to keep participants actively involved and encourage real-time interaction and feedback.

4.- Adapt the Delivery Style: In a virtual setting, consider adapting your delivery style to maintain participants' interest. Break down the content into shorter segments and vary the delivery methods. Use a combination of live presentations, pre-recorded videos, and interactive discussions to keep the session dynamic and engaging.

Maintaining attention in a virtual setting is not easy, but there are some techniques that your presenters can follow to keep your attendees interested and engaged.

1.- Start with a Compelling Introduction: Capture participants' attention from the beginning by starting with a powerful introduction. Use storytelling, thought-provoking questions, or relevant statistics to set the stage and establish the importance of the topic.

2.- Use a Clear and Logical Structure: Organize your presentation in a clear and logical manner to guide participants through the content. Use headings, subheadings, and bullet points to break down information into digestible sections. Additionally, consider using an outline at the beginning to provide an overview of the presentation.

3.- Incorporate Engaging Activities: This can include short exercises, group discussions in breakout rooms, or virtual brainstorming sessions. Encourage participants to ask questions, share their insights, and participate in polls to create an interactive and participatory experience.

4.- Real-World Examples and Case Studies: Use relevant examples to illustrate key concepts, showcase successful implementations, or highlight industry trends. This helps participants connect the content to their own experiences and understand its real-world applicability.

5.- Encourage Questions and Discussion: Allocate time for questions and discussion at the end of the presentation. Invite participants to ask questions, share their thoughts, or provide feedback. This promotes active engagement and creates an inclusive environment where participants feel their contributions are valued.

We have mentioned the importance of interactivity tools to improve attendees' engagement throughout the virtual meeting. But there are too many tools to choose from, here are the ones that you should really consider for your meeting.

Chat Functions

Chats provide an easy way for attendees to voice their questions and doubts without interrupting the presentation. For a better experience, you can designate a chat moderator that will go through the questions and approve or reject them before the speaker can answer. This is also useful to provide answers to questions that multiple attendees might have.

Polls

Similar to a quiz, polls provide a fun way to "test" your attendees' knowledge or discover their opinions about a certain topic. During the presentation, the question and options will be shown on the screen. Attendees can then vote by following a QR code. Presenters can check the knowledge of the audience and adapt their presentation to their needs.

Q&A Sessions

Allocate time after each presentation to directly answer questions from the audience. This will increase their overall attention during the talk, and improve the understanding of the topic covered.

MAXIMIZING PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT AND INTERACTION

→ **Methods for driving participant engagement and interaction in virtual meetings.**

→ **Tips for facilitating discussions and creating an inclusive virtual meeting environment.**

Now that we have covered the importance of maintaining participant interest and encouraging interaction, let's see some of the methods that you can use during your virtual meeting:

Interactive Polls & Surveys: We've talked about this already; polling is not only a useful tool to keep your audience engaged, but it can also provide valuable information and feedback. This is definitely a must-have feature in your selected software!

Group Discussions: Break participants into smaller groups using moderated breakout rooms, where they can engage in focused discussions on specific topics or tasks. After the breakout sessions, bring participants back to the main meeting room to share key takeaways or insights from their discussions.

Shared Documents & Whiteboards: Shared documents and virtual whiteboards enable simultaneous editing and brainstorming, which proves useful for participants to contribute their ideas, insights, or solutions, fostering collaboration and active engagement.

Incorporate Gamification Elements: Consider introducing gamification elements to make the virtual meeting more interactive and engaging. You can use quizzes, challenges, or competitions related to the meeting topic. Offer incentives or rewards for participation or achievement. Gamification adds an element of fun and motivation, encouraging participants to actively engage and pay closer attention to the information being presented.

Virtual conferences offer the possibility to join from anywhere in the world, which allows the participation of individuals that might have financial or geographical constraints.

However, this does not guarantee that your meeting will be inclusive. Some people may feel judged by their peers or have problems communicating through a screen. But no need to panic; there are many techniques that can boost discussions and make your conference more inclusive.

Let's talk about them:

1 **Set Clear Discussion Guidelines:** Establish clear guidelines that promote respectful and inclusive discussions. Emphasize the importance of active listening, open-mindedness, and respect for diverse perspectives.

2 **Create a Welcoming Atmosphere:** Begin your meeting with a warm welcome and introduction, highlighting the importance of everyone's contributions. Foster a sense of community and inclusivity by acknowledging the diverse backgrounds and experiences of participants.

3 **Icebreaker Activities:** Use icebreaker activities at the start of the meeting to help participants feel more comfortable and connected. Icebreakers can be simple questions, short exercises, or interactive games that encourage participants to introduce themselves and share a little bit about their interests or experiences.

4 **Encourage Equal Participation:** Use techniques like round robin discussions, where each participant has a turn to share their thoughts, or assign speaking roles to ensure balanced participation. Encourage participants to use chat functions to indicate their desire to speak.

5 **Foster Active Listening:** Encourage participants to listen attentively to others, avoid interruptions, and demonstrate empathy. This practice ensures that participants feel heard and respected, fostering a more inclusive and collaborative discussion.

6 **Moderate Discussions:** As the organizer, it's crucial to moderate discussions effectively. Set a respectful tone and manage the flow of conversation. Encourage participants to stay on topic, manage time effectively, and address any disruptive behavior. Monitor the chat and Q&A functions to address questions or comments and ensure everyone's contributions are acknowledged.

7 **Encourage Constructive Feedback:** Create an environment where participants feel comfortable providing constructive feedback. Encourage participants to build on each other's ideas, offer alternative viewpoints, and provide constructive suggestions for improvement and growth.

8 **Be Culturally Sensitive:** Acknowledge and respect cultural differences among participants. Be mindful of language barriers, time zones, and religious or cultural practices that may impact participants' engagement. Foster an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected regardless of their background or identity.

Keep in mind that the goal of any scientific meeting should be knowledge sharing and should foster further collaboration. By creating a more inclusive environment, not only your participants will benefit from the experience, but the whole scientific community will do as well.

MANAGING LOGISTICS & TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

→ **Best practices for managing virtual meeting logistics.**

→ **Guidelines for scheduling, sending invitations, and ensuring clear communication.**

→ **Tips for troubleshooting technical issues and creating contingency plans.**

→ **Sharing meeting recordings, minutes, or presentation materials with participants.**

As you can see, planning a virtual conference can be as demanding as the traditional in-person model! However, making sure you follow these **best practices** will ensure a more enjoyable experience for everyone involved.

Establish a Planning Timeline: Create a detailed timeline that outlines the key milestones and tasks leading up to the virtual meeting. Assign responsibilities and set deadlines to ensure smooth coordination and execution. You can use the checklist we shared before and check this off your list!

Coordinate with Speakers and Presenters: Communicate regularly with speakers and presenters to gather their presentation materials, technical requirements, and any specific instructions. Provide them with clear guidelines and deadlines for submitting their materials. This will ensure that all content is relevant and up to date when the virtual meeting day approaches.

Rehearse and Perform Technical Checks: Schedule rehearsals with speakers and presenters to familiarize them with the virtual meeting platform and test their audio, video, and screen-sharing capabilities. This helps identify and address any technical issues in advance.

Plan Breaks & Encourage Networking: Just like a traditional conference, incorporate breaks in the meeting agenda to allow participants to recharge and network. Consider scheduling virtual networking sessions or creating dedicated spaces for participants to connect and engage with each other.

To ensure the success of your virtual meeting, **communication is key**. Not only with speakers and presenters, but also within your own team. Make sure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities and tasks, and that the team works together towards the same objective.

Let's check some guidelines for **scheduling** and ensuring **clear communication**:

Choose an Appropriate Meeting Time: Consider the time zones of your target audience when scheduling the virtual meeting. Aim for a time that accommodates the majority of participants and minimizes conflicts. You should consider offering your content as on-demand after the meeting, so it's available to review or for those who could not join certain sessions.

Send Clear Information: When sending meeting invitations, provide all relevant details, including the meeting date, time, duration, and instructions on how to join the virtual meeting. Include any necessary passwords or meeting IDs to ensure seamless access.

Use Multiple Channels: Use multiple communication channels, such as email, calendar invites, and reminder notifications, to ensure that participants receive important updates and reminders before the virtual meeting.

Provide a Pre-Meeting Guide: Create a pre-meeting guide that outlines the agenda, expected participation, and any preparatory materials or tasks for participants. Prepare a short document that can help participants be well-prepared and set adequate expectations leading up to the meeting.

In a virtual context, there are a few added risks of things that can go wrong. It's important that you allocate some time to **identify and fix all technical issues** before the meeting, as well as designing a **contingency plan**. Here are some tips:

Conduct Technical Tests in Advance: As we mentioned before, test the virtual meeting platform and all technical aspects well in advance to identify any potential issues. This allows you to address any technical glitches or compatibility problems before the actual meeting.

Provide Technical Support: Offer participants a dedicated technical support contact to assist them with any issues they may encounter. Ensure that the support team is easily accessible during the meeting to provide real-time assistance. Provide clear instructions on how participants can reach out for help and include troubleshooting FAQs or resources.

Backup Connectivity Options: In case of internet connectivity issues or platform outages, have backup plans in place. Explore alternative platforms or communication channels that can be used as contingency options, such as a backup internet connection or mobile hotspot available.

Prepare a Technical Checklist: Create a specific checklist that covers all the technical aspects and settings that need to be checked before the meeting. This includes audio and video settings, screen-sharing permissions, and ensuring all necessary files or presentations are ready for sharing.

Content is the backbone of any scientific conference, so making sure it effectively reaches the target audience is essential. Seems too complicated? Keep reading to discover how you can leverage your meeting content:

Utilize Meeting Recordings: Sharing meeting recordings with participants who were unable to attend or for future reference enables you to reach a wider audience. Make sure that your provider of choice allows <u>easy integration of video content</u> for an easier and efficient process. After that, you can choose how to share the recorded content, but make sure you provide clear instructions to participants and highlight any restrictions or permissions required for sharing the recording.

Meeting Minutes: You can determine whether a session was successful or not by documenting how many minutes were watched. If a session was watched until the end by most participants, that means that the content discussed was relevant and engaging so you might consider including something similar in your next conference. This might seem more tricky to monitor, but many software providers are able to provide the minutes watched for each presentation.

Share Presentation Materials: Encourage presenters to share their presentation materials with participants after the meeting, such as ePosters or the presentation itself. Provide guidelines on how to securely share files or use cloud storage platforms for easy access. Consider providing options for participants to download the materials as well, or give them access to the content through a dedicated portal.

POST-MEETING FOLLOW-UP & EVALUATION

→ The importance of feedback, follow-up, and evaluation.

→ Engaging with attendees post-meeting to build relationships and nurture leads.

Your meeting is over now, congratulations! Even though you planned it carefully and it ran without any major issues, it's important to take some time to analyze it and identify any areas that need improvement.

Collect Participant Feedback: After the virtual meeting, gather feedback from participants through surveys, polls, or feedback forms. Ask about their overall experience, the effectiveness of the content, the quality of the presentations, and any suggestions for improvement.

Evaluate Meeting Objectives: Go back to your planning list and assess whether the meeting objectives were achieved and measure the success of key metrics, such as attendee engagement, session ratings, or leads generated. Analyze data from the virtual meeting platform to gain insights into attendee behavior and preferences.

Follow-Up Communication: Send personalized follow-up emails to participants, thanking them for their attendance and highlighting key takeaways from the meeting. Provide additional resources, such as presentation slides or recordings, to reinforce the learning and keep the conversation going. Additionally, encourage them to share on social media by tagging your organization and using the appropriate hashtag.

Keep Improving: Use the feedback results to improve future virtual meetings. Incorporate suggestions, address pain points, and refine your strategies to enhance the overall meeting experience. Regularly review and update your meeting planning processes based on the insights gained.

You can still leverage the success of your conference and nurture leads. There's so much more you can do once your meeting is over to build a relationship with your participants and encourage them to join future virtual meetings.

Conduct a Follow-Up: Tailor your follow-up communication based on attendees' interests and engagement during the virtual meeting. Send personalized emails or messages that reference specific sessions they attended or topics they showed interest in. This demonstrates your attentiveness and helps build a stronger connection with attendees.

Provide Additional Resources: Offer additional resources related to the meeting's theme or topics of interest. This could include whitepapers, case studies, or relevant industry reports. By providing valuable content, you position yourself as a thought leader and establish trust with attendees, increasing the likelihood that they will keep up with your organization and join future meetings.

Offer Virtual Networking Opportunities: Continue fostering connections by organizing virtual networking events. Encourage attendees to connect with each other, share insights, and collaborate on relevant projects. This not only builds a sense of community but also facilitates lead generation and potential partnerships.

Nurture Leads: Implement lead nurturing strategies to stay connected with potential prospects. This can be as simple as sending regular email newsletters, personalized content recommendations based on their interests, or invitations to upcoming virtual events.

WRAPPING UP...

Now that you've finished this eBook, you should be **well-prepared to host your next virtual meeting** without any complications.

Virtual meetings present endless benefits and opportunities, but also bring some challenges that you would not encounter in traditional meetings. Here's why it's crucial to find a software provider that fully understands your needs and can offer a complete solution for your next meeting.

Ready to unlock the full potential of your virtual scientific meetings? **Get in touch with us** today for innovative solutions, cutting-edge technology, and unparalleled support.

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