

# Best Practices for Virtual Event Planning and Execution

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# Outline

- **Event Planning**
- **Event Scheduling**
- **Event Promotion**
- **Event Delivery**

# Virtual Event Best Practices

## What to Expect – Industry Benchmarks

### Event Profile

- Live event duration: 1.5 days
- Archived days: 90

### Content

- Exhibitor Booths: 15
- Leads per Sponsor: 348
- Conference Sessions: 5/day

### Attendee Behavior

- Attendee time at event: 2.5 hours
- Locations Visited: 16
- Attendee Interactions: 13
- Downloads per attendee: 5

### Demographics

- U.S. Attendees: 58%
- International Attendees: 42%

# Virtual Event Best Practices

## Event Planning Cycle

- **Successful virtual events require extensive planning**
  - ...but are far easier to execute than physical events.
- **Planning best practices**
  - Maintain direct lines of communication between the client and event service provider.
  - Take advantage of service provider program management experience on scheduling, promotion, and event design.
  - Expect a full 12 week planning cycle.
  - Take content deadlines seriously.
  - Build in content review cycle before event goes live.

# Virtual Event Best Practices

## Event Promotion

- **Promotion and quality of content are most important factors in driving attendance to virtual events.**
- **Promotion best practices:**
  - Promote using multiple media partners to generate broad awareness and reduce list saturation.
  - Build time into promotion plan to meet creative deadlines.
  - Don't schedule overlapping virtual events/webcasts to same or similar audiences.
  - Write compelling marketing content designed to support great event content. Be brief, targeted, and benefit oriented.
  - Rely on media partner expertise with their target audience for promotional tactics and messaging.
  - Cross promote virtual and physical events.

# Virtual Event Best Practices

## Event Scheduling

- **Scheduling virtual events requires a focus on other events and activities competing for your audience's attention.**
- **Scheduling best practices:**
  - Schedule your event to begin with the most compelling keynote content and presenter available.
  - Open the show at the same time as the first keynote.
  - Schedule the event to begin on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.
  - Schedule important show content to attract multiple time zones, or consider repeating sessions on a follow-the-sun schedule.
  - Distribute live days over the quarter or year to drive higher attendance.

# Virtual Event Best Practices

## Event Execution

- **Virtual events offer a seamless blend of live presentations, pre-recorded content and attendee interactivity options.**
- **Best practices:**
  - Pre-record critical content and presenters for smooth event day delivery.
  - Plan extra production time (1 month) for delivery of translated and localized events.
  - Train booth staff on proper show etiquette and responsiveness to attendees.
  - Include ON24 in direct communications with client for translation, booth rep training, and presenter preparation.

# Working with Exhibitors

- **Top reasons exhibitors participate in tradeshows:**
  - Collect qualified leads from prospective customers.
  - Launch new products or re-launch existing products.
  - Meet with current customers, build relationships and/or write orders.
  - Conduct research among your target audience.
  - Find partner organizations.
- **How exhibitors decide which shows to participate in:**
  - An opportunity to participate in a unique event.
  - Ability to reach an audience of the right demographic.
  - Opportunity to participate alongside other important sponsors in their industry or marketplace.
  - An overall exhibitor/sponsor package which is a good value.

# Guidelines for Exhibitors

- **Make sure booth graphics are clear and compelling.**
- **Train booth team on products relevant to the show's target market.**
- **Conduct “booth selling” skills session.**
- **Empower a “booth leader” to enforce booth policy.**
- **Provide incentives to booth staff for achieving goals.**
- **Create a realistic staffing schedule with breaks to keep the booth team fresh.**
- **Make sure booth reps understand the importance of being responsive to booth visitors.**
- **Never leave the booth un-staffed during show hours.**
- **Record all follow-up action items required.**

# Virtual Event Best Practices

## Top 10 Virtual Event Best Practices

1. Pick an experienced service provider
2. Create an event strategy and clear goals
3. Educate sponsors and then sell them
4. Provide administrative tools to make sponsors self-sufficient
5. Maximize attendee time at the event
6. Drive traffic to sponsor locations
7. Proactively interact live with attendees
8. Promote the event on-demand after the live event
9. Qualify and prioritize leads
10. Conduct an ROI analysis