



10 Questions to Ask *before* You Plan a Virtual Event

Virtual events are part of the full range of proven tactics that can help you build awareness, create demand, and close sales. But like any marketing effort, they require careful thought and planning to get the best results. Here are key questions to ask when planning a virtual event:

1. Set Goals

What are your goals, objectives, metrics, and budget? This sounds very basic but knowing exactly what you want to accomplish right from the start is critical.

2. Know What You Want to Say and What Your Audience Wants to Hear

Who is your primary target audience? Targeting your audience carefully helps ensure you reach them with the right content, messages and offers. Building out a clear content strategy map is essential.

3. Decide on Your Agenda Format

Will you get more attendees if your content is offered over multiple days or as a single day or a single hour? What's the optimal time of day to offer the most important content? Knowing these answers will ensure you're creating an agenda that works for your audience.

4. Select the Right Delivery Platform

What's the most effective way to communicate this information? Once you have a clear content strategy then it's time to choose the medium that best suits

your content (not the other way around!). There are a wide range of options on how to deliver your content including live streaming video, simulative sessions, on-demand webcasts, interactive e-learning workshops, social media widgets, and the list goes on.

5. Get Social

Do your attendees want to interact with each other? What type of interaction will work? What level of interaction is required? As the platform options have grown so have your options for leveraging interaction -- Skype, Group Chat, Avatars and Twitter just to name a few. Remember to select the option that works best for your audience.

6. Consider Adding a Trade Show

Will it enhance your attendee's experience to include a trade show component? In the virtual world you can create a space that is designed to showcase your products, services and solutions. This is also a great way to involve your business partners and generate sponsorship income.

7. Spread the Word

What's the most effective way to market the event? As with any event or program, your promotional strategy should be based on knowing what's the most effective way to reach your audience. Once you've got their interest, you want to drive them to an effective event site to highlight key content and get them to register and then continue to engage and communicate with them leading up to your event to ensure they attend.

8. Stay On Brand

How will your brand translate to a virtual environment? You've invested considerable resources building your brand. Now you need to consider how to effectively carry your branding throughout the virtual experience.

9. Measure Success

How will you measure the success and effectiveness of virtual events and conferences? Starting with key performance metrics and ensuring you have the appropriate tracking tools in place to measure all aspects of your event helps you to understand what worked. Post event attendee evaluations are also very effective.

10. Know What's Next

What do you want your attendees to do after the event? Defining clear next steps, actions, and offers helps your audience continue on the path you've created and keeps the momentum going during the sales progression process.

About Acacia Marketing Group

Virtual events are about creating a powerful, positive experience for your audience. With Acacia, we'll help you explore a wide range of events—multi-day conferences, ½ day events, e-learning workshops, events that mix live and virtual elements, and more—going beyond standard virtual events. With years of experience, we know what works and what doesn't. And we know how to make your event as efficient and effective as possible.

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