

10

ESSENTIALS FOR SUCCESSFUL HYBRID EVENTS

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The word 'event' promises something more exciting than everyday life. For many people now, everyday life is watching people talk on screens all day. If you want audience attention, break the 'everyday' pattern. Here's a checklist to get the best possible impact for your next hybrid audience.

01. SHORTER IS BETTER: HALVE YOUR PRESENTATION LENGTH

We've seen the data: an exponential drop in remote view duration after the first hour. Plus there are distractions and messages pinging in the background.

Think how much time you'd allocate for a presentation at a live event. Now halve it. If you planned a long event, consider breaking it up into shorter events over a few weeks.



02. A PROFESSIONAL MC MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

We've staged hundreds of major virtual events in the last few years. **The single biggest factor in their success is whether there's a professional host.** They give the event energy and flow.

Using company executives to host, no matter how likeable they are in the office, just doesn't work as well. Talk to your speaker bureau.

03. NO MORE BLACK DRAPES: A SET MAKES AUDIENCES PAY ATTENTION

A hybrid meeting is a live TV show. **When your audience sees a TV-style set, their subconscious mind says: this is an important presentation.** No matter how charismatic the presenter, if they're in a home office, it feels like Zoom and attention spans drop.

Likewise the classic conference black drape backdrop looks wrong on screen. LED screens, monitors, built sets or green-screen virtual sets tell the audience: it's show time.



04. BREAK UP THE TALKING HEADS WITH VISUALS

A single talking head on screen for more than a few minutes kills attention spans. Plan visuals, either full-screen or 'picture-in-picture', next to the presenter. Watch the TV news, and imagine it without the graphics and video: just the newsreader reading out stories. You wouldn't watch that.

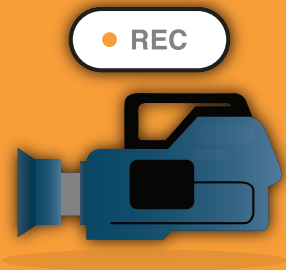
Photos and videos work best, rather than PowerPoint. If you must use words, limit it to 2-3-words. Not bullet points or complex charts. It's a small picture within a small picture.



05. PRE-RECORD TO GET IT PERFECT

If show time is limited, many clients now pre-record key elements of the show. Multiple takes give a much smoother presentation. There are no time over-runs by nervous speakers.

After playing the pre-recorded keynote, the crew cuts to the presenter live for Q&A, in the same clothes. It's good risk management for presenters not used to talking to camera.



06. TELEPROMPTERS REDUCE THE TENSION

Having the exact script right in front of presenters reduces risk. Presenters can look straight at the camera and focus on their delivery, rather than trying to remember the exact words.

Plus it keeps the talk to a set length, rather than improvised padding that makes events run over time.



07. SUCCESS IS CREATED IN PRE-PRODUCTION

Live events have traditionally had a triage approach to media and show cues. Presenters arrive on the day with media on USB sticks and it all somehow comes together. Hybrid events are far more complex and errors more visible. **There are hundreds of items to check in pre-production to make it work smoothly.**

Talk to your tech supplier about the details, but at the very least, get them all your media content in the days before the event to be checked and formatted.



08. SAVE SOMETHING GOOD FOR AFTER Q&A

Audience Q&A is unpredictable. You can do a great presentation, then things can fall a little flat if you let the audience write the script. **If your show finishes with "that's all we have time for, thanks for watching", your audience remembers that last bit.**

Save a minute or two for a strong recap of your core message to finish.



09. PRE-SHOW CONTENT

Rolling some relevant media material pre-show is so much better than a static slide "the online event will start soon".

Run some ads, product video or other branded material with a small countdown overlay. The audio and moving pictures also reassure remote audiences that the stream is working.



10. PLAN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND

Hybrid events are complex: more media, more cues, more incoming and outgoing video. On average, it takes twice the number of tech crew than a regular live event.

Who is in charge on the day? Who will be changing the slides? Who's telling the presenters when to go on? Who's in charge of the camera crew? These questions can't be resolved on the day.

Planned right, with everyone clear on who's in charge, it's a much calmer, safer experience for hybrid event clients. **People you might need in the hybrid era include:**



Floor Manager, who wrangles presenters on and off set and keeps it all running to schedule.



Show Caller, who steps through the run sheet and calls each video, audio and lighting cue for the operators.



Camera Director, who makes sure that the camera operators are in the right position for each shot.

For more information on how Scene Change can help make your hybrid events more involving, get in touch with one of the team:

Adelaide
Brisbane
Hobart
Hunter Valley
Melbourne
Sydney

Nick Waterman
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Adam Cox
Anna Robbins
Andrew Delaney
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