



Part A

Exhibitor Playbook :

Unlocking the Potential of Virtual Events for Exhibitors

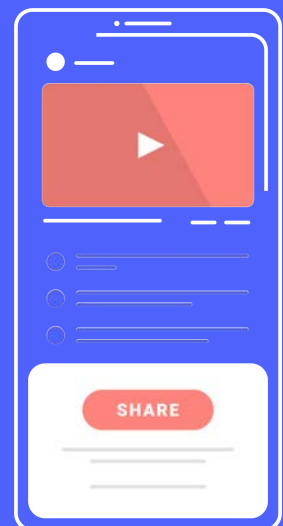
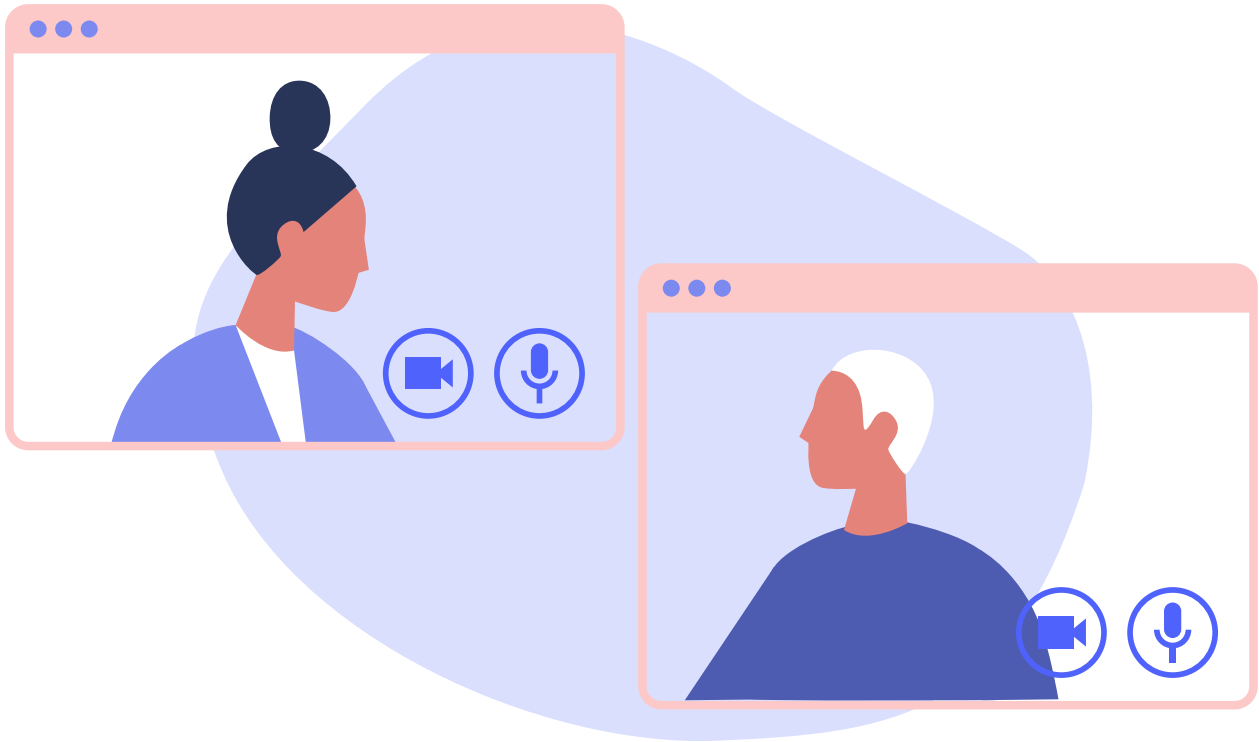


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Introduction

When you consider shifting the venue of your exhibition from physical to digital, a lot of concerns would be plaguing your mind.

But worry not, because we've got you covered.

This e-book addresses the changing scenario of the events industry, the different benefits that virtual events have to offer, and the power of data in creating successful events.

Along with this, there are specific measures that you can take to provide your exhibitors the same value, even if your event format and location has changed (i.e. from physical to virtual).



Virtual Events Take Center Stage in the New Normal

Winds of Change

One of the collective shared experiences of 2020 has been watching numerous events get cancelled; from corporate meetings, workshops, and local events to global annual trade shows, conferences, job fairs and the like.

Regardless of the industry you consider, events lie at the core of its business function. However, with travel and hosting in-person gatherings becoming impossible, event stakeholders were left with the question: What do we do now?

While some decided on a full cancellation or postponement, many others resolved to transpose their event to the virtual space. And although virtual events are not a new-found concept, what the pandemic did was accelerate their widespread adoption. As a result, a completely new marketing landscape was born.

It is astounding to see how quickly the events industry has adjusted to this new normal. As a matter of fact, Virtual Event Platforms have established themselves as a viable solution in the last couple of months.

Yet, it is understandable that despite all this change you may still be apprehensive about making the switch for your upcoming event, with various questions consuming your mind, such as: Will a virtual replica of my previous event(s) work just as well? How can I guarantee that my exhibitors and sponsors will get the desired value and return on investment? How can I ensure attendee engagement with the change in the event format? And what should be my new event strategy? Chances are if you are planning your next event, all these questions will make you feel overwhelmed and also dubious of the capabilities of a virtual event. But the reality is virtual events offer plenty of benefits (some of which even physical events are unable to provide).

Virtual Event Benefits

Yes, online events may never fully replace the physical event experience but with strategic planning, they can help you meet many of the same event goals; be it dissemination of industry information, raising awareness, recruitment, celebrating excellence through award-giving, or even networking and building long-lasting connections. In fact, the last couple of months have demonstrated that virtual events can fill in the gap left by large-scale cancellations and other restrictions stemming from the current situation.

Furthermore, with the right choice of [virtual event platform](#), virtual events can offer some substantial advantages:

Savings

Virtual events are cost-effective. They eliminate the need for venue rental, travel, accommodation and also the cost for additional services such as staffing and catering. The reduction in these operational costs, significantly increases their ROI potential. And even better, you can save a huge amount of time on planning and setup! This means you can easily shift your event to the virtual space, rather than stressing about postponement or cancellation.



(Psst...on average our clients take up just 3-5 days to get their virtual event up and running!)

Mileage

With the help of a virtual event platform, virtual events can amplify business and reach. This is because the digital venue can facilitate the participation of key stakeholders from across the globe, making your event more accessible.



Networking

The intuitive technology offered by virtual event platforms can take the virtual event networking game to the next level. Through bespoke matchmaking and communications features such as 1:1 chat, group chat, virtual breakout rooms, networking lounges and a private face-to-face meeting option, you can create a personalized ecosystem for business-driven conversations to occur.

Education

You can also use the online sessions and event agenda option to disseminate useful content to your attendees, through both live and pre-recorded sessions, while encouraging audience participation via Q&A, polls and chat-boxes.



Engagement

Gamification in the form of virtual contests and leaderboards can be utilized to not only retain attendees' attention but also enhance their [engagement with the event](#). Similarly, a Facebook- like event feed can also help with user retention.

Branding

Exhibitors and Sponsors can be provided with unique branding opportunities, from overhead banner placement across the virtual event and sponsored push-notifications to branded sessions and contests, giving them even more reason to be a part of your event.

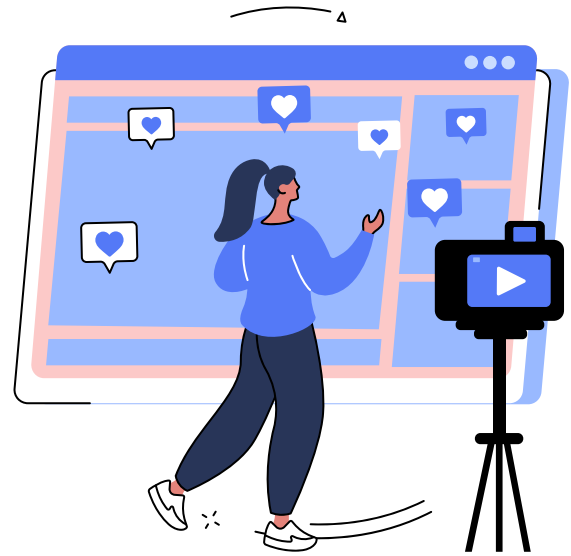


Measurability

Each aspect of the event can be **tracked and measured**, in real-time, to judge audience reaction and predict the event's success, giving you the leeway for continuous improvement (without having to wait for your next event to implement the feedback!)

Safety

And last but most important! You can host your event safely without fearing for the health of your attendees, speakers, exhibitors and sponsors. And they can tune into the event, right from the comfort of their homes.



Data: The Selling Point of Virtual Events

Essentially, when you set up a virtual event, the advantage of everything **being** digital is that everything **is** digital.

The online venue of the event offers the capability of not only storing the information submitted by the attendees but also capturing each and every action performed by them, layer by layer, in ways that weren't fully realized until recently. The best part? All this is done in real-time, with detailed reports available for download as and when required.

An event's success is greatly determined by the data collected. And virtual events offer unlimited opportunities to unlock data insights! From ticket sales and revenue generated to details on attendee demographics, attendee behavior, attendee preferences, live event analytics and lead generation data.

To give you an idea, here are some of the data points that can be tracked and downloaded to better understand attendees and also to gauge the overall event performance:

For the Event Organizer



Total user and Logged in user data



Feed Activity Analytics
(No. of photos, videos, comments & likes)



Attendee Activity Analytics
(No. of Profile Views, Bookmarks, Notes taken, Messages, Meetings Data, & Business Cards shared)



Speaker Analytics
(Profile Views and Ratings)



Session Analytics
(Session-wise Attendee Count, Likes, Q&A & Chat details)



Sponsor & Exhibitor Analytics



Leaderboard Data



Contest Data



Live Polling Data

For Exhibitors and Sponsors



Profile Views Report



Meeting Report (for Staff Members)



Attendee Engagement Report for their profile



Document Downloads Report



Potential Leads Report



Product Image Report (Image Views and Attendee Names)



Active users on their profile



Product Views Report (Video Views and Attendee Names)



Lead Status Details (bifurcated into
'HOT', 'WARM', 'COLD')



Lounge Meetings Data



Business Cards Dropped by
Attendees



Chat Report (for Staff Members)



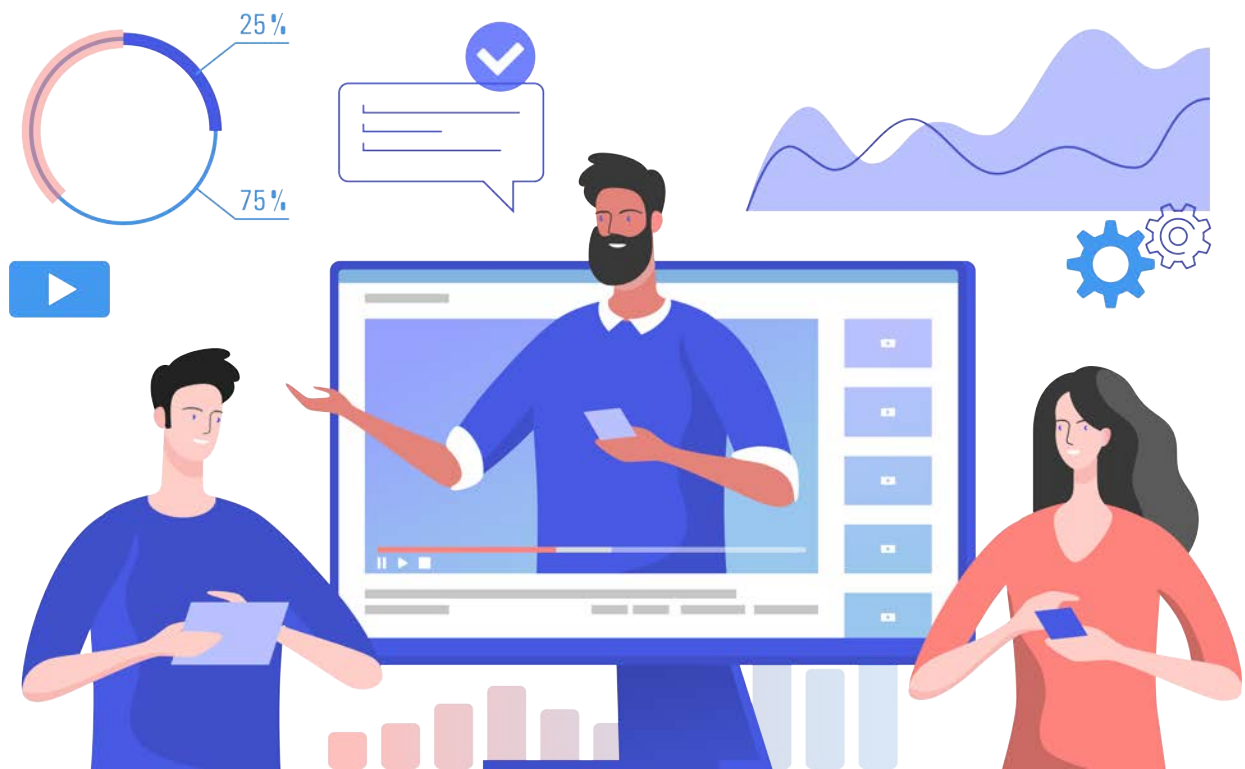
CTA Report

While this information is useful for you when you analyze the event performance and then plan and market future events, it is also valued greatly by your exhibitors and sponsors. Why? Because if you provide them with substantial access to data insights, they will have very precise metrics to calculate their ROI.

Remember, you and your exhibitors have a complimentary two-way relationship. If your virtual event brings them the value they seek, they will look forward to signing up next time. So, make sure that well ahead of your event, you figure out how you will be leading your exhibitors to the digital data-mine and make it your biggest selling point!

Look at your cancelled events as an opportunity to design new experiences for all your stakeholders. Craft virtual events that generate both engagement and revenue. Also, ensure you consult with your virtual event partner to find out the best ways you can tailor the platform to fulfill your event needs and also your stakeholders'.

To find out more about how you can help your exhibitors meet their marketing and sales goals, dive into the next chapter.



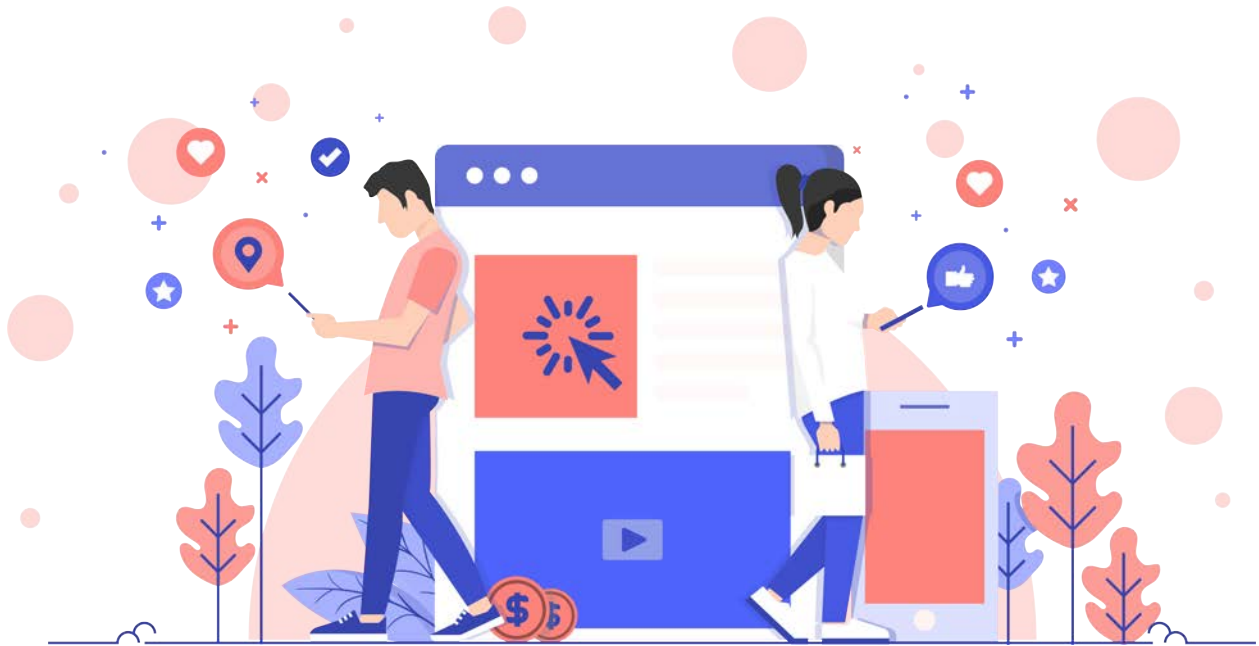
How can you add value to your exhibitors in the virtual events landscape?

When you make the decision to take the event virtual, bear in mind that your exhibitors may still be apprehensive to make the shift. The primary challenge that you need to address is how they can get the same opportunities for brand awareness and lead generation, without the presence of a conference floor or physical stalls.

Simply having a virtual booth in the form of a digital profile may not satisfy them. So be open to changing the way you've typically done things. In fact, think of this as an opportunity to create customized exhibition opportunities to match the unique needs of exhibitors. Talk to your revenue partners early in the virtual event planning process. Ask them about their marketing goals and discuss the ways you can help them meet those goals through the virtual event.

Remember, your exhibitors are equal partners to your event's success! While you may have communicated the overall virtual event benefits (as highlighted in the Chapter 1) it is also important to specify the exact value that the event's digital location has to offer and how best they can leverage it. Once they know and understand how they can boost their business, there are higher chances that they will embrace the change, especially when it speaks to their bottom line.

Virtual event platforms like Hubilo offer a bespoke functionality, consisting of a wide array of features, that can enable your exhibitors to meet their goals and generate the desired ROI. Here are specific actions that you can take to leverage them and address your exhibitors' needs:



a. Give Your Exhibitors Visibility and Brand Exposure

1. Marketing and Promotion

- Give exhibitors mass visibility by displaying their logo on your website landing page.
- Utilize push-notifications, SMS and the event feed to give them shoutouts and remind attendees to visit their virtual stalls.
- Put up their community banners to highlight them at the top of your virtual event platform.

- Allow them to sponsor sessions for an additional visibility opportunity. In this case, their clickable logo will be displayed on the agenda page and above the chat window of the sponsored session, which will directly take visitors to their booths.
- Provide them an opportunity to sponsor networking lounges and breakout rooms.
- Promote them through gamifications activities.

2. Virtual Booths

In the absence of physical stalls, exhibitors need a dedicated space to showcase themselves, along with an interactive listing on the exhibitor page.

Give them the option to create and manage a highly personalized virtual profile through your virtual event platform.

In their respective booths, exhibitors can add information about themselves in the description box, put up simple banners or autoplay video banners, highlight their contact details, showcase their offerings through video and image carousels, provide their social links, upload downloadable content, and even add profiles of team members that visitors can meet and chat with. Along with this, exhibitors can display a custom CTA to provide attendees with an event-specific offer or to drive them to their website or app.



b. Facilitate Their Relationship-Building and Lead Generation Process

- Provide a medium for exhibitors and attendees to interact via the virtual event platform's networking features such as meet and chat and dropping e-business cards.

- Let your exhibitors get detailed insights about attendees visiting their profiles, so that they can tailor their messaging accordingly.
- The intuitive functionality of a virtual event platform auto-labels each visitor as a 'hot', 'warm' or 'cold' lead. This means you can offer your exhibitors so much saving on time by giving them the chance to reach out to only the most relevant leads.
- Add a premium matchmaking functionality within the platform via which both the attendees and exhibitors can engage in more valuable conversations.

From the exhibitor's end, it will appear on the "Potential Leads" tab, with details of suggested attendees they should reach out to. Similarly, attendees will be shown exhibitor recommendations through the "My Matches" window pane.

- Map breakout room(s) to your exhibitors' profiles, by adding their team member as the moderator. What this will do is allow attendees visiting the exhibitor booths to directly access their respective product demos, sponsored activities or even participate in focused group discussions hosted by them.
- Networking lounges are great for open conversations to occur. Just like at an in-person exhibition, attendees can come and grab a seat at a lounge sponsored by the particular exhibitor.



c. Offer Real-Time Analytics

Data analysis is the best way to measure return on investment. Make sure you provide detailed and on the fly analytics so that exhibitors can analyze engagement on their profile during the event and even use it to move leads up the sales funnel during and after the event.

The best part of using a virtual event platform is that each and every action that occurs on the exhibitor profile can be tracked and made available to the exhibitors, such as:

- The number of profile views i.e. total visits to their booth
- Overall profile rating score (given by attendees)
- No. of users currently visiting their profile
- No. of document downloads and who downloaded them
- No. of chats with team members
- No. of meetings scheduled with team members
- No. of lounge meetings
- No. of CTA clicks
- No. of product (image/video) views
- No. of e-business cards dropped
- No. of clicks on social links and which attendees took those actions

This information is updated on a real-time basis and also available for download in the form of a spreadsheet, allowing your exhibitors to easily analyze their ROI.



Conclusion

The relationship you have with your exhibitors is changing. With the now-indispensable virtual event platforms that can help your stakeholders participate in a more meaningful manner, you can promise and even deliver significant measurable benefits to your exhibitors.

But make sure you carefully select your virtual event platform based on the features, functionality and flexibility offered. Because the result you show to your exhibitors can be miles apart, depending on a single decision. Ultimately, you want to show your exhibitors how your virtual event can be an even more valuable investment than ever before.

And while you are at it, also strategically plan out how you will be meeting your own ROI goals through your exhibitors. Establishing registration tiers that will, for a higher fee, provide different levels of visibility and lead generation opportunities to your exhibitors is one way, but you can also consider an a-la-carte model.

How these can be executed will be explained in more depth and detail in the PART B of this e-book.

Hubilo is a global intelligent virtual events platform(hub) that brings Experience & Intelligence together. Hubilo is re-imagining the marketing landscape that will emerge around virtual events and unlock massive insights for key stakeholders such as CMOs, event organisers, and sponsors to track attendee engagement, lead quality and other event-related data.

Founded in early 2020, and headquartered in San Francisco, Hubilo is trusted by a growing list of global brands like the United Nations, Roche, Informa Markets, Tech In Asia, Fortune, GITEX and many more.

If you are also planning to pivot to a virtual or hybrid event, book a demo to take a tour of our virtual event platform.

BOOK A DEMO 