



EUROPA GROUP

Uniting people, inspiring progress

BEST PRACTICES **in virtual events**

Ensure the successful transition of your physical meeting
into a digital event

In-house experts

Our team's wide experience in event management has enabled them to develop unique expertise in the organisation of both physical and digital conferences. Here are their 10 top tips for planning and delivering an engaging virtual event.



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A grayscale image of a virtual event stage. Several people are visible: one at a podium on the right, one at a desk in the center, and one standing on the left. Multiple screens display the 'LINNC MASTERCLASS' logo. A camera crane is visible on the right side of the stage.

10 best practices In virtual events

By Europa Group, the European leader in congress organisation

« The best way to predict the future is to create it. »

Peter Drucker

1.

Set realistic and achievable goals



One of the keys for a successful virtual event is to start by clearly defining its objectives.

Set aside those of the in-person meeting it's replacing: they can't be the same!

Do you want a financial return on investment? To carry out a training programme? To boost your reputation? To increase your usual number of event participants? To strengthen ties within your community?

Prioritising your objectives will help shape your event: its format, duration, the best distribution platform among the hundreds on offer and, of course, its means of production: video or studio?



2. Define the right format

« The RIGHT format for the RIGHT impact! »

Based on our experience, here's what we recommend for a virtual congress:

- One or two days is the ideal duration.
- Contrary to popular belief, lengthy sessions are as successful as shorter ones, so long as they are relevant and drive engagement.
- A virtual exhibition can enhance your participants' digital experience, and highlight the exhibitors
- Provide a clever combination of LIVE sessions, pre-recorded talks, posters, etc...
- Put rhythm on the agenda! Planning breaks in between LIVE sessions will not only ensure you maintain the attention of your participants, but also give them time to network!



3. Put the focus on interactivity!

During an e-event, it's essential to provide participants with the means and incentive to communicate and exchange with others, such as a video-room, live chat, quizzes, votes and polls.

The more interactivity there is, the more the participant's experience will resemble that of a physical congress.

There is an unexpected advantage to virtual congresses. During a physical congress the participant has a busy agenda, and has to find their way from one session room to another. There are countless people around, some of whom are acquaintances, but because they are in a hurry, there's no time for conversation. In addition to this, there is rarely the opportunity to come into direct contact with any of the VIP speakers

During a virtual conference, the experience can be quite different for participants and much more enriching in terms of exchange:

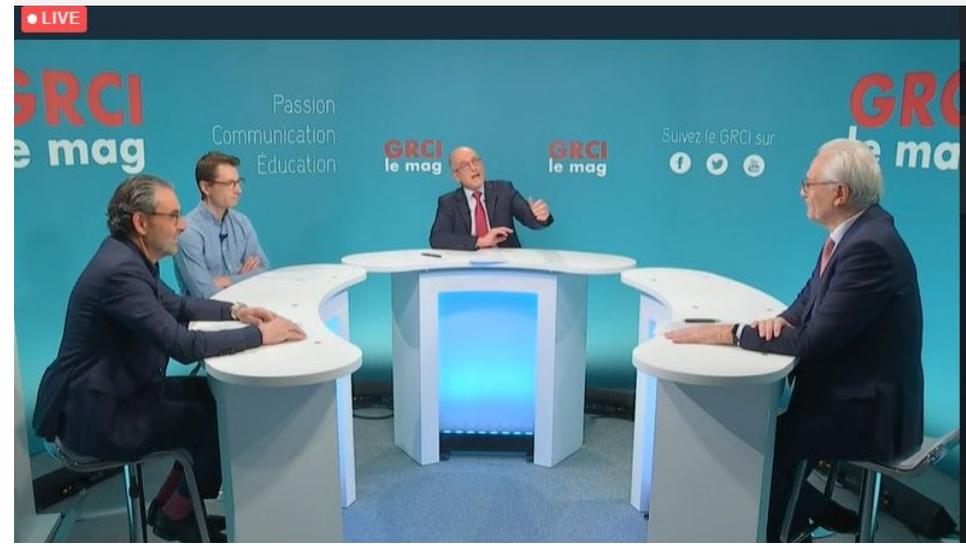
- They can ask as many questions as they like during the talks, using a live chat feed
- If you wish, you can enable them to contact and question VIP speakers directly, or even gather the two parties in a private video room
- They can enjoy quality video calls with industry representatives connected to their booths, and they will be much less frequently interrupted than during a physical congress
- They can use new ways of getting in direct touch with colleagues, for example while watching the same conference

4. Content is king!

As it has no physical identity, the content of a virtual congress is obliged to stand out even more than usual, both in substance and form.

Improvisation is not an option: LIVE interventions must be minutely scripted and rehearsed; recorded conferences must offer images and sound of the utmost clarity. This will guarantee a pleasant and seamless experience for the participant, and have a positive effect on the length of time they remain connected.

Select your speakers wisely, and coach them in addressing a virtual audience, as it is a very different affair to speaking in front of a physical assembly. Don't underestimate how essential it is that they feel at ease in this new exercise.



5. Live or pre-recorded?

Don't hesitate to use a mix of both pre-recorded content and live broadcasts!

Pre-recording ensures full control over content and high educational quality, because key messages can be spotlighted and any unnecessary footage edited out.

As for LIVE broadcasts, they foster great audience interactivity and collective emotion!

TIP: Shoot short videos of your premises, factories or staff with a hand-held camera and the assistance of a journalist or well-prepared colleague! Your participants will enjoy the upbeat pace this brings to your event.



6.

Set a budget that's consistent with your goals

Take your objectives into consideration before defining your budget.

The organisation of a virtual congress can be an investment, or a source of income!

Depending on its content and the means invested, your participants and partners could cover its cost.



To get the most out of your budget, you can rely on your Professional Conference Organiser to recommend the technical solutions best suited to your event.

7 ■ Charge a fee for your event

For a long time, we all believed that content on internet should be made available for free.

However, for a while now it has not been the case, and this applies in particular to virtual congresses.

It's important to charge a participation fee for your e-event for several reasons:

- To generate income and even out your budget;
 - To effectively encourage participants to connect on the day(s) concerned;
 - To enhance your event's worth: we are often wary of a complimentary conference, which we imagine to be of poorer quality.
- So, how much should you charge? We estimate that it's reasonable to bill between 30% and 60% of your usual 'in-person' rate.
- Your sponsors can continue to fund e-participants if they respect applicable regulations. Your PCO will be delighted to help you manage the allocation of grants.



You can be sure of one thing: your sponsors will back you up! Our experience proves that industry partners believe strongly in the future of virtual events. So, if you too have confidence in both your content and in them, they will be eager to invest in your venture!

In exchange, they will expect a return on investment, and data collection will serve that purpose in an extremely effective way.

Your strategy for e-participant data collection will therefore be key in planning your e-event. It should be anticipated early on, for example when selecting your technical platform.

If you are organising a virtual exhibition, consider coaching your sponsors in this new endeavour, so they gain maximum benefit. Running a digital booth is very different to a physical one.

For hybrid events, be sure to reserve a special space for sponsors so that they can link up with KOL.

You can also offer your partners additional services such as an online agenda via which they can schedule meetings with e-participants.

After having fostered much exchange between sponsors and participants during the event, the congress platform can also remain open and prolong the connection once it is over.

After your e-event, your partners can access attendance data for their booth and symposium.

8.

Support your partners to optimise their R.O.I



You can really sense the collective emotion during opening and closing ceremonies!



When participants can feel the scope of your event, they gather together to watch and participate, creating satellite classrooms!

9. Create an event, create emotion!

There's no doubt about it, the success of your virtual congress will largely depend on your ability to make it an **EVENT**, in the original sense of the word.

To ensure a resounding success, it is essential to create a buzz in your community, to gradually build up expectations, to organise a **LIVE** opening ceremony, and to generate emotion by broadcasting inspiring videos or talks!

Use social media as much as possible, recruit ambassadors among your VIP speakers and ask them to post news of their participation on Twitter or Instagram.

Bear in mind that you will be reaching a much larger audience than usual! On internet, the only limit is the language you use.

The issue of different time zones will be quickly resolved if you post your conferences on VOD just after their live broadcast.

It's crucial to adopt a vibrant and lively tone of communication, in order to spur the renown of your event.

Capture the attention of future participants in the days leading up to the event by encouraging them to post questions and photos... Forge a link before, during and after the event.

You will surely be surprised by the spontaneity and human warmth of some exchanges. They will reflect the enthusiasm of your members, joined together thanks to your initiative.

10. Post-event: a goldmine for your community!

It's true for a physical congress, and even more so for a virtual one: the post-event promotion of your scientific content is of major importance!

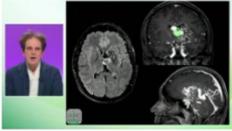
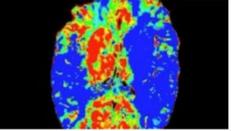


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<p>CASE DISCUSSION</p>  <p>December 17, 2020</p> <p><i>Masterclass #3: Distal and more distal thrombectomies: is the game worth the candle?</i></p>	<p>CASE DISCUSSION</p>  <p>December 10, 2020</p> <p><i>Masterclass #2: A deep AVM is not a cortical AVM deeply located. Its impact on endovascular management</i></p>	<p>INR SCOPE</p>  <p>December 10, 2020</p> <p><i>Simultaneous Isilateral mechanical thrombectomies on a COVID-19 patient</i></p> <p>Author: JABBOUR Pascal</p>
CASE DISCUSSION	INR SCOPE	INR SCOPE

Its value will prolong the benefit of your event, expanding its audience for weeks ahead (sometimes months, depending on the type of content). You will maintain the connection with your members, and may even generate new income.

For example, you could create a website to host your content: this will strengthen your image as a leader, and allow you to collect new data that you can promote to sponsors.



Are you keen to learn more about the organisation of virtual events for your community?

Contact us!



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