



The Hybrid Event Playbook

Workbook

*A definitive guide to
hybrid events*

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1

Introduction To Hybrid Events

My Hybrid Event Name (working title):

Approximate Date & Time:

1.1 What is a hybrid event?

There are in-person events. There are virtual events. Combine the two, and you get hybrid events.

Hybrid events provide the experiential quality of in-person meetups and conferences with the reach and impact of virtual events.

At hybrid events, technology is used to reach a much bigger audience and drive interactions through live-streaming, recording, social media documenting, etc.

Since the pandemic, consumer attitudes towards events have changed. Hybrid events grow reach and remove the risk of losing attendance because an audience can tune in wherever they are.

If you want the immersive experience, attend in person. If you're going to take part, but can't get there, tune in online!

1.2 What's the difference between Hybrid Events and Virtual Events?

These days, event organisers are turning to hybrid events because they give the best of both worlds.

A virtual event is designed specifically for an online audience. This type of event is the easiest and potentially cheapest to organise. However, we humans are social creatures and like to meet in person.

An in-person event provides maximum human interaction. The problem is, in a post covid world, travel costs both time and money.

A hybrid event gives you the best of both, the human interaction and the opportunity to reach an audience at scale.

It's important to note that in-person and virtual audiences are different. So, when planning a Hybrid Event, be ready to manage the whole event for contrasting audience behaviour.

1.3 Should I run a hybrid event?

A hybrid event requires more consideration than virtual and in-person events, but the upsides are significant.

Maybe your event should just be virtual. Virtual events are generally cheaper, easier to organise and much more accessible. But with virtual events, you do miss the human interactions.

Instead of livestreaming, maybe your in-person event should just be recorded and shown at a later date to those people who can't attend.

Adding a real-time virtual element to an in-person event can impact your costs and event agenda. One critical factor you should always be aware of is managing an event for two unique audiences is challenging: **VIRTUAL AND IN PERSON AUDIENCES ARE NOT THE SAME!**

You can't just add a camera to an in-person event (well, you can, but that's a surefire way to a poor quality hybrid event).

When deciding whether or not to go hybrid, you should ask yourself these two questions:

- Can we afford to go hybrid?
- What is the benefit of engaging a virtual audience in real-time?

Ultimately, the modern event attendee demands a choice. Travel and time are costly! These costs are covered by attendees, not event organisers. Do you really want to risk missing out on attendees because you refuse to go hybrid?

Activity - Should we run a hybrid event? Make a note below of why your event should be hybrid. What is the benefit to your organisation of a virtual audience engaging with your event in real-time?

1.4 Vision for your Hybrid Event

Stage one of building your hybrid event is creating the vision. This can be abstract and doesn't need full detail. However, it's essential to use the vision to develop your initial action plan, beginning with the end goal in mind.

1.5 What is the purpose of your event?

A critical aspect of your hybrid event is knowing what you want to achieve. Is your hybrid event designed to:

- Generate income for your business
- Enhance reach and brand awareness
- Support lead generation

Be really clear on your purpose. A clear purpose will dictate all of your planning and execution. Otherwise, you risk losing focus.

Once you've identified the purpose, you can move on to the vision for the event.

Activity - What is the purpose of your hybrid event?

1.6 What is the Vision?

Again, at this stage, the vision is a somewhat abstract concept, but there are questions that you can ask yourself which will help create a clear picture of what you are trying to achieve. Get a notepad, and write down the answers to the following questions:

- How many people do I hope will attend?
- Where would I love to see this event take place?
- What type of speakers and content would I love to see?
- Which elements would be outstanding online?
- What would it say if someone came to me after the event with incredible feedback?

Activity - How would you describe the vision for your hybrid event?

1.7 How do I measure the success of the hybrid event?

The final aspect of visioning is to pick your KPIs. KPIs should ensure you maintain a focus on outcomes and can measure success. As simple as this might sound, it's easy to get wrong.

We've seen many events so focused on content that purpose gets lost. When this happens, all the excellent preparation is wasted.

Understanding your key performance indicators will help you to allocate resources.

Remember, attendees of events are highly likely to buy or follow up on a call to action. It takes effort and interest to attend an event. Consumers of your event are a primed audience, already some way into the sales funnel. Make it count!

Our top tip for KPI management is to pick ONE main KPI that can be actioned online and offline (how you action it may differ) and focus on that. These might be:

- Income orientated events - ticket sales, sponsorship income, in-event product purchases
- Brand Awareness raising - event reach, number of attendees*
- Lead generation - new enquiries, click-through on calls to action, in-person forms completion

* Often, brand awareness in events can come from promoting the event itself. Just because someone doesn't attend doesn't mean the event promotion hasn't helped drive awareness.

Activity - Highlight below the Key Performance Indicators you think will be important for your hybrid event?

Example Overview for the vision

<i>Purpose</i>	Generate sales enquiries for a new training programme due to be launched later this year
<i>Vision</i>	An industry leading event, with content focussed on learning, with key industry speakers, panel discussions and audience Q & A
<i>KPIs</i>	In-person - attendees to complete enquiry forms to book in follow-up sales appointments Online - Landing page campaign focussed on gathering contact details of attendees interested in a follow up chat

Activity - Fill in the vision summary below

<i>Purpose</i>	
<i>Vision</i>	
<i>KPIs</i>	

2 Introduction to Planning Your Event

With a vision and overarching plan for your hybrid event, you're ready to start focussing on the details.

Depending on the size and scale of your event, you want to give yourself plenty of time in the planning stage. We suggest you give yourself at least 3 months, even for the smallest events.

2.1 How do I Set an Event Budget?

You may have been handed a budget, you may have to raise funds yourself, or you may need to completely bootstrap your event.

There's always a way to deliver a hybrid event, whatever the situation. You just need to figure out which resource should go where.

Activity - Use the table below to start approximating the budget you will need for your event:

<i>Marketing</i>	Advertising costs, email campaigns, PR, sales, industry press, PPC/Social media	£
<i>Event Logistics and management</i>	Location hire, travel and transport, event refreshments, stationary	£
<i>Staffing</i>	Runners, security, catering assistants, health and safety staff	£
<i>Speakers</i>	Keynote speakers, MC, panellists	£
<i>Production Set-up</i>	Staff and camera crew	£
<i>Virtual Platform</i>	Webinar/LiveStream or Virtual Event platform	£

You won't know your exact budget until after the event, but at least that will help form the basis of your event next time.

2.2 How do I fund my hybrid event?

You might have an internal department willing to give you a budget to run your event. If not, you may need to consider alternative ways to bring in finance.

Activity - my internal budget for this event is:

2.2.1 Sponsorship

If there's a company that would like access to your attendees, there is potential sponsorship.

Potential sponsors are not always the most apparent company choice, and their motivations may differ.

In our experience, sponsors usually invest in events for 4 reasons

- Awareness and alignment
- Lead generation
- Support
- Budget to spend

Awareness and alignment - brands often like to be aligned with high-quality events. Ultimately, your target audience should match theirs.

Lead generation - are there ways to support your sponsors in winning website traffic or making valuable in-person introductions during your event?

Support - often, business community leaders like to support one another in localised areas and see events become a success. This type of arrangement might be altruistic in motivation but should still have some commercial alignment.

Budget to spend - some organisations, especially in the public sector, may have year-end budget that has to be spent. Knowing this information could be invaluable. Also, if your event aligns with charity partners, this may help you access industry support via Corporate Social Responsibility budgets.

Top tip - large brands, especially retail and consumer products, often seem a good fit for sponsorship but are challenging to engage. Just finding the right decision-maker in some organisations can be tricky. It's worth spending time thinking about which organisations may have local budget holders that would be interested in sponsorship. In B2B events, professional services (accountants and lawyers) often have easily accessible budgets.

Activity - make a list below of potential sponsors who could sponsor your event. Think about a tiered sponsorship package, from high to low value (Gold, Silver, Bronze) and decide on some target sponsors.

2.2.2 Contra-deals

The seasoned event planner will espouse the importance of the contra-deal. In a contra-deal, no cash changes hands. Contra deals could lead to massive savings. For example, will a web development agency exchange a promotional website for the opportunity to speak at your event? Could a sponsor provide one-time offers to your audience in return for catering?

Activity - make a list of costs to your event and some potential sponsors who may pay for these in return for advertising or footfall.

2.2.3 Ticket Sales

Managing ticket sales effectively are critical to cash flow management. Tried and tested marketing techniques such as building hype to create a mailing list, early-bird offers to generate cash, and FOMO (Fear of Missing Out) tactics are critical to maximising pre-event ticket revenue. Once you know your target audience, Facebook and Instagram ads are essential to generating clicks to ticket landing pages.

Planning forward, post-event offers on next year's tickets can help you build a cash war chest for the future.

Activity

I will build hype and create a mailing list by:

I will aim to start early bird ticket sales in:

How many tickets will you aim to sell in total and how much income will you earn?

2.2.4 Negotiating Payment Terms

You'll need as much cash on hand as possible to build up to your event. Make sure you negotiate payment deals that fall into place after the event giving you plenty of time to collect cash.

2.3 Hybrid Event Team and Roles

Hybrid events have so many moving parts. If you are on a budget, you may need to spread and share responsibilities. The teams and roles below give you some indication of how to allocate human resources.

2.3.1 Event Producer & Event Team (probably you if you're reading this blog!)

Can include the Event producer, events assistants and marketing staff

Key responsibilities:

- Overall planning and vision of the event
- Organising speakers and prepping
- Securing finance
- Assigning roles/building team
- Choosing and preparing locations
- Promoting event/marketing
- Ticket management & attendee logistics
- Managing the schedule of the event on the day
- Playing host to speakers and attendees on the day
- Driving the strategic focus of the whole event

Activity - my hybrid event team will be:

2.3.2 Production Team

Can include the director, camera operators, sound technicians, stream technicians, runners.

Key responsibilities:

- Delivering audio/visual aspects for in-person and virtual audiences
- Platform management
- Recording of all footage
- Connecting cameras to the Live Stream
- Technical location prep
- Set design
- Technical preparation of speakers around microphones and interacting with cameras

Activity - which aspects of a production team will I need for this size of event?

2.3.3 Host

Good hosts who can think on their feet are critical to the event's success.

Key responsibilities:

- Introducing speakers
- Engaging in person and online audiences
- Hosting Q&A sessions
- Keeping the event schedule on track
- Engaging the audiences in the event of a crisis situation
- Driving the focus on KPIs

Activity - Our Host for the event will be:

2.3.4 Speakers

Speakers and panellists are the backbones of the day's content.

- Plan and deliver content
- Promote event
- Prepare quality presentations and be engaging
- Attend speaker preparation sessions

Activity - The speakers I would like for the day include:

2.3.5 Location Coordinator

The location coordinator plays the connecting role between the event production team and the venue.

- Understands venue and troubleshooting
- Provides direction information and details of parking
- Handles audience to reach event space
- Any signage or equipment needs of the location
- Technical support for internet access on-site
- Connection to the on-site AV team if necessary
- Books any rooms in advance and organises room access

Activity - Our location coordinator is:

2.4 Location

Location selection is one of the most important aspects of a successful hybrid event. A crucial factor of any location is your ability to plug into an ethernet internet connection.

In a world of ubiquitous Wi-Fi, even the most robust Wi-Fi speeds present risk. Our advice is always to plug in when possible. You should also speak to the people responsible for the Internet to ensure it is straightforward to connect, or will a production team require temporary administrative rights to get online?

You'll also need to consider the size of the venue and how the production team will set up to film your event. Live Streaming requires ample space for camera production setups and distance between a stage and a camera. Always make sure you do a venue reccy first and take a technical specialist to assess the space.

Venue costs can often be negotiated. This could be a sponsorship contra-deal. Or, the venue might benefit from the increased footfall of your event. For instance, large function rooms in hospitality facilities may provide free room hire if attendees purchase food and drinks.

Public sector organisations such as universities and local government bodies generally have conference style facilities and may provide free access if your event offers some public benefit. However, if you have an ample budget, finding locations with established AV equipment and technical assistance would go a long way to reducing risks in your event.

Once you've identified your location and established the suitability of your room(s), you'll be ready to assess some of the detailed requirements.

Activity

Our location is:

Does the location have plugin internet?

Will we need site authorisation to connect to the internet?

Will we be able to access the rooms early in the morning, late in the evening or in the days before to set up?

Does the space have large screens available?

Does the space have projectors? If so, are they set up ready for your event (we've had one unfortunate instance where a projector decided to go into sleep mode three hours into a four-hour event)

How will the lighting be managed? (Always be wary of natural light in rooms with big windows)

Can seating be set up so a host can move around the in-person audience for Q & A if needed?

Where are the power points in the room?

How will attendees find their way from the building entrance to the event room?

Is car-parking nearby, and is it free or paid?

What is disability access like in your building?

How far are the restrooms from the event location?

Who will conduct a health and safety risk assessment?

Do we have the relevant insurance cover? (Public Liability)

2.5 Which Virtual Event Platform should I use for my Hybrid Event?

Choosing a platform is the most important technical decision you'll make when managing your virtual audience. There are so many options available, your choice will depend on how much engagement you'd like to have with the virtual audience and the amount of budget available.

2.5.1 Introduction to platforms

Attendee experience will differ vastly from platform to platform. Finding the perfect platform is almost impossible. The budget is critical.

Zoom is the default suggestion when we speak to event organisers and marketers. And once you start digging, the expectation is Zoom Meeting. We find that novices expect that all platforms have a streaming capability and breakout room functions. The truth is, they don't.

We typically summarise streaming platforms into four categories:

- Social media
- Bespoke Event platforms
- Meeting platforms
- Webinar tools

Features	Social Media (YouTube, Facebook)	Bespoke Event Platform (Remo, Hopin, Whova)	Online Meeting (Zoom Meeting, Microsoft Teams, G-Meet)	Webinar (Zoom webinar, Vimeo)
Free Option	✓	✓	✓	✗
Branded player	✗	✓	✗	✗
Virtual networking	✗	✓	✓	✗
Multiple speakers on stage	✗	✓	✓	✓
Scalable audience	✓	✓	✗	✓

2.5.2 Social Media

Social media platforms are perfect for Hybrid events on a budget. Most platforms have a Live Stream tool that you can generally plug into. The benefit is that you'll have an established audience who can engage with your event. Social media makes sharing easy and is typically free.

On the downside, you lose an element of control through social media. Branding for sponsors is more complicated, and it's much easier for an audience to disengage. You are restricted on attendee data. It is challenging to integrate audience engagement tools on a social media-based Livestream and almost impossible to bring in speakers from different locations unless you have a restreaming tool. Furthermore, virtual attendees must have accounts with the various platforms to attend.

e.g. Youtube, Twitch, Facebook

2.5.3 Meeting tools

Meeting platforms generally allow you to connect a camera set up and access engagement tools such as chat functions, polls and screen shares. Depending on the platform, you may be able to use a free version. In many cases, the standard meeting tools may provide enough capability for small events to add a Livestream element.

However, meeting tools are built for meetings. They are generally limited on the number of attendees at any given time (usually about 100), which prevents you from scaling an audience cost-effectively. Furthermore, they are not built typically for inputting complex camera production setups, so quality can't always be guaranteed.

E.g. Zoom Meeting, Microsoft Teams, Whereby, G-Meet

2.5.4 Webinar tools

We are big fans of webinar tools. Webinar platforms allow you to stream a quality event at high resolution to a large virtual audience which you can quickly scale. They can typically manage the high-resolution quality of a camera set up and manage event recording for you (to be edited post-event). Engagement is easy using chat, Q & A and Poll functions.

A quality webinar usually relies on a Stream Technician to invite people on and off the stage. Webinars usually allow you to bring in speakers from multiple locations, typically up to twenty speakers on-screen at any time. However, you can massively scale the number of people watching the webinar quickly, into the thousands.

However, the major downside with a webinar is that audience engagement is limited, with those watching unable to take part in breakout rooms if they want to continue the conversation. Furthermore, you don't tend to come across free webinar tools, and some can be pretty expensive.

E.g. Zoom Webinar, Vimeo

2.5.5 Bespoke Event platform

Like anything, you get what you pay for.

Virtual event platforms are generally highly dynamic and offer a great attendee experience. They typically combine webinar-style presentation tools with breakout rooms and virtual networking options. Event platforms tend to have an abundance of

branding options for the event sponsors and can manage attendee registration from the very start. Furthermore, you'll usually receive a full detail of attendee information, with data such as watch times.

However, virtual event platforms can be expensive. Often there are tiered offers, depending on the scope of what you want the platform to do, but the price can quickly start to grow. From an attendee's point of view, it can often take a little time to get used to the platform, which, if you are only running a small event, may take too long to get going before the event ends. Furthermore, we'd recommend having a team on hand in the virtual event platform to support attendees.

E.g. Hopin, Airtable, Whova

Activity - the type of streaming platform we are going to use is:

The reason for this type of platform is:

2.6 Promoting your Hybrid Event

Ultimately, event promotion is about driving attendance and is definitely one of the areas where a budget can vary greatly.

In our opinion, events shouldn't be seen as one-off occurrences. The initial planning should focus on a series of events or repetition over numerous years. That way, you give your event time to build an organic, profitable audience.

Many organisations will pin the success or failure of an event on the only time it happens and the amount of attendance. Your chances of success here become much smaller.

A well-delivered event promises return attendance and great word of mouth.

In the initial stages of promotion, there are numerous ways of raising awareness, many of which can be free, or you can add a budget where relevant.

Whatever channels you choose, it's worth spending the time to plan your marketing communications campaigns. If your event relies on ticket sales, you will definitely need a strategy for building hype. This means gaining leads and using FOMO through an early bird offer ticketing campaign to drive success.

If your event is free to attend, be aware that ticket 'registrations' compared to actual attendance will be much higher, and in some cases, you can expect up to 75% dropout (in-person and highly likely online).

Before you start communicating, try your best to identify the one buyer profile you are targeting with as much detail as possible. We managed to identify mothers aged 25-35 as the key decision-maker when purchasing family tickets for a winter wonderland event through targeted Facebook marketing. This campaign secured a cost per click of just 19 pence on a £12 average ticket price. This campaign alone secured over £40,000 in ticket sales in year one.

Our advice on promotion:

Start with PR and social proof where possible. Have your event story released in the relevant press or other influential stakeholders. This will help to build hype.

Have your landing pages ready before the news goes out with a specific domain URL. Before issuing tickets, we always recommend building interest. The best way of doing this is using a landing page to create a mailing list with 'Coming Soon.' Build hype early.

Once the news is out there, then start your own promotion. Use existing social media channels from the companies involved. If you have a mailing list building and some budget, consider using social media to create lookalike audiences.

- What is your audience, and where do they hang out online?
- Obviously, booking platforms such as meetup.com and Eventbrite allow you to build community and page followers over time.
- If it's a paid-for ticketing event, then building an early bird list with special offers is critical with tiered ticketing.

- Depending on the event's size, having some initial invitations will help you gain momentum and advocates who will help you push the event on social media.
- Create a media pack for all stakeholders involved with the event. You could do this on Canva to share with speakers, sponsors, and suppliers on a budget.

Activity

Our target audience for the event is:

We can get PR initially for the event from:

Social media channels we can use are:

We can get access to the following mailing lists to help promote the event:

The following stakeholders involved with the event can help to promote it:

We will use FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) in our campaign by:

2.7 Attendee Registration, Ticketing and communication

Attendee registration is a whole subject in itself. Eventbrite is the most widely recognised and easiest to use. The great thing about Eventbrite is charging is generally on a commission per ticket basis so no initial investment is required. We also like Meetup.com but event organisers need to pay for a profile.

You can also use some event streaming platforms to manage the ticketing solutions too (more on this later)

Using one platform to manage all attendees is critical to managing capacity.

Again, bear in mind with Free Tickets, you get higher than usual dropout rates of attendees.

When building your event registration system, you will need at least two ticket types - in-person and virtual. If you have two ticket types, people will often register for both. Keep an eye on this. Would you need to email these people before the event to clarify which ticket they will use?

Make sure you cover pre-event audience communication through your ticketing platform, for instance, directions for attendance and links to the webinar itself. Some event platforms and webinar platforms allow you to integrate event registration into them, such as Zoom, particularly for the virtual element. But, one ticketing platform for everything is probably better.

Beware, often ticketing platform emails go to spam or get lost. Make sure you have a specific mailbox for ticket enquiries. You'll usually get emails from someone saying they don't have the event link or directions on the day of the event, so you may wish to share these on social media that day.

Activity - The registration platform we will be using is:

2.8 Speaker Management and Host

We've seen a massive jump in the number of events post-pandemic. People want to socialise again, virtual events are easier to deliver, and the overall experience means events are a much more exciting aspect of the marketing mix.

One of the biggest challenges this rise in events has created is the increased demand for speakers. Booking speakers in advance is critical.

What type of experience will your speakers have? Are you ready to make it as straightforward as possible for them to just show up and present? Your reputation for managing speakers will be just as crucial as your attendees.

2.8.1 Pre-event Speaker Communications

Once you have booked your speakers, you don't want to inundate them with information. Remember, people are busy. Try to restrict communication to one or two emails, and ask speakers for an introduction to their marketing departments so you can get promotional support directly.

Throughout our whole engagement with speakers, we send them one big email. This contains all information they need, including logistical arrangements around travel and parking, marketing material attachments and the Speaker Guidance pack with bespoke best practices for virtual and in-person speakers.

Activity - My speaker confirmation email includes:

Directions

Parking Information

Marketing Information

Speaker Guidance Pack

Details of date/time

2.8.2 Speaker Presentations

We generally recommend very minimal use of slides (preferably none, but never more than 10 with image only or just a few words).

One of the defining aspects of any hybrid event is how capable speakers are at engaging two types of audiences; Virtual and In-person.

Virtual audience attention spans are hard to maintain. Anyone watching online will be surrounded by distractions and can escape the prying eyes of those in attendance to be able to work or sit on their phones whilst a presentation is being delivered. Speakers and hosts must use interactive tools such as polls and chats and interject audience questions in presentations to keep viewers interested. Simple true or false trivia and yes or no questions may be enough to trigger the audience's attention.

Likewise, the in-person audiences' attention will need to be maintained, but the dynamic of presentations should engage both audiences. Presentations should be short, sharp and snappy, with plenty of interaction. As a host, you should always be prepared that although you say 10 mins, there'll always be someone looking to deliver a 30-minute talk. Be prepared to cut them short.

2.8.3 Speaker Preparation Sessions

As Hybrid Event organisers, we always insist on Speaker Preparation sessions. Speaker Preparation sessions are usually allotted one hour via a virtual meeting about a week before the event. We ask the event organiser to be available as we present guidance to all speakers to ensure they are prepped for the event. We insist on taking a register of those present.

One of the most critical aspects of the speaker preparation session is guidance on the dress code. Everyone needs to have the appropriate dress for appearing on camera (stripes can be disastrous on a stream) and attaching microphones (baggy clothes often create horrible noises with a sensitive mic).

Ultimately, if you are an outsourced event organiser like us, there is always the risk speakers will let the event down with the quality of presentation. As a delivery partner, you want to ensure you have done everything in your power to at least offer training and guidance for everyone.

Activity - we plan to run speaker preparation sessions when and how? What information will we need to share?

2.8.4 Hosts

Hosts are critical to the delivery of the event. As well as being confident speakers on the subject, they need a close relationship with the production and event team. They are critical to moving the event along without offending or spoiling the value of the content. Also, there can often be downtimes with hybrid events, so it may need the host to be able to step in and keep the in-person audience entertained or fill in when a speaker doesn't show up. They have to be prepared to be flexible and have a bank of questions ready to ask throughout the day.

If possible, we recommend having a separate host for the virtual element of your event, dealing solely with the virtual audience. There will be times, during speaker transitions, for example, when the online host can act as an MC to keep the virtual audience engaged.

Activity

Our in-person host is:

Our virtual host is:

What training will the hosts need and when?

2.9 Production Requirements

Production is the part of the event that brings in-person elements to the virtual crowd.

Delivery of the audiovisual aspects of the event could be one person or a large team, depending on size and budget (but even for the most experienced technician, a team of one is tricky).

The production team can include a director, camera operators, sound technicians, runners and stream managers.

Unless you have a team in-house for this, you'll usually outsource production.

2.9.1 Essential Equipment

The most basic event setup could include a webcam and computer microphone, which for small intimate meetups may well be enough. At the top end, a multi-camera arrangement, PA System, mixing desks, switchers, stage lighting and much more could provide the pazzazz of a large international conference.

Our practical tools list and scenario summaries below detail all the equipment you might need and ideas of approximate budget:

Practical Tools

- Cameras
- Webcam - Logitech, in computer,
- Dslr - canon, sony,
- Pro cameras - Blackmagic, sony,
- Microphones
- Wireless Lav
- Omnidirectional - yeti
- Handheld
- WiFi/5g
- Switcher
- Blackmagic range

- Mixing desk
- PA
- Screens
- Lighting
- Recording device
- Auto-cue
- Stream software
- obs

2.9.2 Scenario Summaries

Low-cost hybrid event - for intimate events with a small in-person audience.

Laptop with webcam and USB microphone

Team needed: 1 person

Approximate budget: \$0 - \$4000 per day

Mid cost - for small to medium events with a medium audience

2 cameras and 2 mics into a stream switcher, screen for slides, PA system

Team needed: Operators, stream technician and vision mixer, audio mixer,

Approximate budget: \$4000 - \$15,000 per day*

High cost - for mid to large events with a large in-person audience

4 cameras, speaker lav mics, host mic, audience mic, switcher, mixing desk, big screens, PA, stage lighting,

Team needed: director, cam ops, audio engineer, runners, stream technician, vision mixer

Approximate budget: \$15,000+ per day*

*multiple days may help reduce setup costs.

2.9.3 Set design

The devil is in the detail. If you've gone to the effort of bringing in a production team and spent loads on marketing, then the last thing you want is a stage with a waste bin in the background.

You can add production value by staging your backgrounds. Basic banners and lecterns might add a focal point for speakers. Also, consider your seating options, bar stools or chairs for panel discussions (just remind speakers not to slouch). Be careful with rooms with big windows... a sudden explosion of direct sunlight might wreak havoc with your lighting.

2.9.4 Internet

We've said it before, and we'll repeat it... plugin when you can. Always test the Internet beforehand, make sure there are no administrative firewalls that may restrict your access, and get some 5G backup if possible.

2.9.5 Motion graphics

If you want to add quality animation to your footage, you'll bring an extra dimension to your production output. Names appearing on screen with titles for specific speakers and branded logos add extra quality. Also, prerecorded videos are great for those moments when nothing is going on, or there is a technical issue. And don't forget a bank of holding images or slides introducing the following speakers, or highlighting that "We'll be back soon" is always helpful. Finally, branded messages in streams with a Call To Action are the perfect prompt for you to meet those lead generation KPIs.

2.9.6 Crisis management and planning

Just like on Live TV, thanks can and do go wrong. Just keep an eye out next time you watch a live television programme. I bet you'll start to notice minor technical errors.

Hybrid events are no different. A sudden loss of sound or vision can happen. There are lots of moving parts. You must keep calm and allow the production team to identify issues quickly.

At these times, hosts need to be alert to keep the show moving. We also recommend having a stream manager and stream host at a different location who can quickly pop onto a live stream when things go wrong to keep the audience engaged.

2.9.7 Platform Management

We've mentioned platform management a couple of times. Platforms do need control all of their own during a hybrid event.

Ideally, two people managing the stream element are the technician and the virtual host. The technician should address issues such as connectivity with the production team, acting as a fallback to share slides or 3rd party video, and managing speakers on and off the virtual stage. Technicians can also help manage audience Q and A boxes. They're also helpful when unwanted guests occasionally make their way onto a virtual stage, or someone's questions go a bit far.

The stream host is perhaps a luxury but handy if you have the manpower. Your event may experience downtime, which a host can fill with independent discussion. They can also interact much more effectively with engagement tools such as polls and questions and serve as a link between the in-person host and virtual audience when needed.

Activity

Our production company is:

We will have a small/medium/high budget for production:

To ensure our set looks high quality we will need:

In the event of any technical issues with the live-stream we will manage crisis by:

Managing the virtual Q & A and encouraging virtual chat will be:

3 Delivering Your Hybrid Event

If you've made it this far, you've done very well.

Delivery of your hybrid event should start the day before. Your production team and event teams will need access to the rooms you are in to prepare and test everything.

Setup time will depend on the kit you use, but for a simple 2 camera and multiple microphone setup, you should plan for at least 2-3 hours before your event starts. If it's an early morning start, you may need access the night before. Check with building management that this is ok.

The event team should be in early. We recommend that staff wear clothing that identifies them as either event or production staff, which will help during the day to speed up communications.

If the day is split into multiple sessions, set time aside during the breaks to talk the upcoming speakers through their presentations. Try to get them in front of the camera to settle the speaker's nerves.

Work with your delivery team to reflect on the Purpose of the day and KPIs. These need to be at the forefront throughout. This is especially important for the host and the stream manager.

Ensure your event and production teams are managing the flow of speakers. There's nothing worse than a speaker going missing moments before their segment. We also have a speaker holding area where they should be before their talk, ready to be mic'd up for their session.

No matter how hard you plan, some things just fall outside your control. Technical challenges during a hybrid event provide the most significant risk. Projectors unexpectedly go into sleep mode. Power cuts just when you are about to go live in the stream. The backup webinar host is handy when technical issues arise.

Critically, it's challenging moments when the delivery team needs to keep calm. The host should be able to manage the audience and set expectations. It's helpful if the host mentions the risks early that a live production brings. "It's a live production, so anything can happen" is a useful encompassing caveat phrase.

Managing timings is particularly important for keeping the attention of the virtual audience. During the day, we've often seen schedule overruns. Always be aware of

segments that can be moved or reduced in time if catch up is needed. Q & A, for instance, can be managed in chat boxes rather than verbally if required.

Oh, and make sure there's plenty of coffee, water and sugar around. You're gonna need it.

Activity

The person responsible for refreshments will be:

On the day of the event, our on-site event team will consist of:

4 After Your Hybrid Event

Event completed.

However, the fun isn't over. The hybrid nature of your event means you've got ample opportunity to re-engage critical stakeholders and maintain relationships.

Some virtual event platforms will allow guests access for several weeks after, ensuring attendees can go back and catch up on any footage they missed. Some virtual platforms will allow you to build Community forums from attendees, bringing like-minded people together in the long term.

The best time to plan future events, like smaller networking catchups, is straight off the back of your main hybrid event.

4.1 Post-event content

The beauty of a hybrid event, especially if you choose to use a professional recording setup, is that you should have a bank of high quality recorded footage.

There are several ways to use recorded content of events for impact. Whatever you choose, ensure you repeat the call to action to drive critical KPIs further! Some top ways of reconnecting include:

- Re-engage the audience by emailing links to the content
- Create an evergreen impact by uploading the best videos to Youtube and embedding them on the website
- Create snippets to share on social media to build reach and audience and send to speakers to promote
- Generate leads for future events by gating the full talks on your website in return for email addresses
- Generate revenue by offering a ticket to view the content library or turn the presentations into digital products.
- And remember, all that footage will be perfect to start campaigning for your audience next year!

Activity - We will use post event content from our event to:

4.2 Debrief and Measure KPIs

In your post-event debrief, you'll have the chance to review your event, figure out what was right and wrong and what you'll change next time,

The most critical part of this process is reviewing those KPIs you set right back at the start.

Did you secure as many leads as you'd like? Did you get the audience size you wanted?

Post-event is the chance to also review viewing figures and watch times. Speak to the sponsors, too. Did they feel like they achieved the outcomes they'd have hoped for?

What went well in our event?

What could have gone better?

What will we change next time?

How did we do against KPIs?

4.3 Next Event & Legacy

The perfect time to start planning the next event is as soon as this one finishes. Here's your chance to get the VIP sign-ups for next year. Now is the time to get those Early Bird lists compiled.

Again, don't just think about building the event, though. Do you have the chance to make the community? A space for like-minded people to come together. Here is an opportunity to create a calendar of smaller events that allow all these people to keep the conversation going.

Activity

Now that we have all this information from our attendees, we will follow this up for next year by:

5

Conclusion

We hope your event went well! Onward to next year!