

# Synapse Libate & Learn: Future of Events

06.30.2020

Thank you to our panelists!

[Corie Leaman](#), Director of IT Nation Events, [ConnectWise](#) - cleaman@connectwise.com

[Kimberly Wander](#), Owner & Event Planner, [Elevated Events](#) - kwander@elevatedevent.com

[Basha Ferdinand](#), Accelerator Program Manager, [Tampa Bay Wave](#) - bferdinand@tampabaywave.org

Watch the episode again, or share with your peers: <https://vimeo.com/synapsefl/review/435177574/d7a1ac34b2>

## What are some of the positives of digital events coming out of COVID?

- You can reach so many more people with a much lower cost.
- You can divert resources towards swag bags and gifts for the attendees.
- Attendees can view content at their own time and pace, increasing visibility. Flexibility is important to some people.
- There are convenience factors from not having to travel, find parking and or wait in lines to get in.
- Easier access to great keynote speakers and some (not all) have reduced fees.

## Look into your crystal ball. How do you see in person events rebounding and what best practices are key?

- Education & being adaptable is key from a planner's perspective. Having a close eye on your audience is important.
- Likely slow at the beginning with smaller events at first. Hybrid events with in person and digital content will be an important tactic. We have to get used to gathering again and progress from their to larger events.

## Best practices for hosting digital events:

- Consider your audience, especially if they are in multiple time zones. Consider recording/alternating times.
- Consider their tech abilities, keep it simple.
- Have someone focus on offering tech assistance to troubleshoot issues. Have designated roles for speaker management and in-event Q&A's.
- Do a "dry run" with speakers to make sure they have what they need to present and speak well in advance of the event. Extra prep is key.
- Be as transparent as possible with your vendors, partners and sponsors so you can have a smooth, effective event with satisfaction all around. Expectation setting is important here.
- Consider working with a professional production company to enhance the quality and manage the experience.

## Considerations of deciding a hybrid event:

- Know your audience, poll them to establish they are comfortable with being at an in person event vs. digital so you can allocate resources appropriately. Are they ready to be in person and what PPE will they expect?
- Consider adding a digital component regardless to increase your reach.
- Evaluate if your team has the ability to pivot, manage, and run the digital platform you're going to use to host the event or should consider contracting with a vendor to provide support for a smooth experience.
- Be transparent with a venue about needs for extra space, F&B and clauses for cancellation if you can no longer hold the event in person.

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## Attendee Engagement - Keep people connected and interacting during digital events:

- Chat rooms are important and should be broken out by topics if possible.
- Allow attendees to request 1 on 1 meetings with each other before, during and post event.
- Gamification is key to help set the stage for open networking and better participation.
- Think out of the box, use outside resources and in event experiences like wine tastings, competitions, mixology classes, "gala in a box".
- On a recent Event Manager Blog live webinar, a company called [SongDivision](#) created an original song based on the 4-hour program content. Attendees got to vote via poll throughout on the genre of music, keys/notes, and rhyming words. A great way to get and keep the attendees involved. He debuted the song at the conclusion which also gave attendees a reason to stay tuned until the end. Go to the site below and provide your email address to access it:  
<https://www.eventmanagerblog.com/virtual-event-engagement>
- Incorporate a *surprise* performance from a band or illusionist/magician. This will help break up the content and provide transition time in between speaking sessions. Also gives the attendees a minute to use the restroom and not miss any live content.
- Consider a "movement break" like guided yoga or meditation.

## Virtual Sponsor Benefits

- Just like on TV speakers can use branded drink cups or even shirts with the sponsor's logo.
- Sponsor banners during the live stream and pop-ups during the transitions or breaks.
- Companies can sponsor and lead an Ice Breaker and/or the Q&A sessions on the end.
- Companies can sponsor a pre or post virtual networking happy hour.
- Companies can sponsor a "Workout Break", "7th Inning Stretch" (yoga, pilates, meditation, stretching), Mixology Class, or virtual Cooking Class. Good way to have fun and break up the day. You could even have people pre-register for these and mail them the ingredients ahead of time to make the drink together live or mail a care package of sponsor branded workout gear.
- Digital goody bags with coupons, trials, etc.

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## Other Ideas/Resources

- Consider hosting your event it outdoors.
- House Party Gala or Virtual Awards Show ... inquire to Kimberly for details
- [Elevated Events](#)
- [Event Manager Blog](#)
- [Socio](#)
- [Northstar Meeting Group](#)
- [Connect Corporate](#)
- [Event Industry Council](#)
- [PCMA](#)

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