

# What NOT to do when going virtual

## Pocket Guide



# What NOT to do when going virtual

Let's be honest here; "Zoom fatigue" is real. Even though most event planners have done some form of virtual events over the past 18 months, they're still far from perfect.

So we've made you **a pocket guide with the biggest mistakes we've come across when running a virtual event**. We can't promise you a perfect event without any hitches, but at least **you'll know exactly what mistakes to avoid when planning your next online meet-up!**

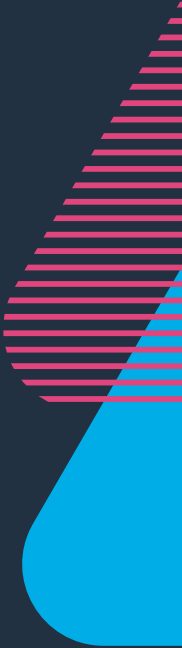
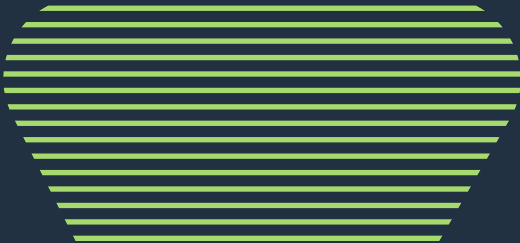
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# DON'T:

- 1. Use a boring conference call tool ..... 2
- 2. Leave engagement for last ..... 2
- 3. Underestimate the power of social media ..... 3
- 4. Price your event too high ..... 3
- 5. Keep the platform closed before the event ..... 4
- 6. Immediately close the platform ..... 4
- 7. Skip dress rehearsals ..... 5
- 8. Avoid speaker prep ..... 5
- 9. Imitate an onsite experience ..... 6
- 10. Cut out having a host or MC ..... 6



# 1. DON'T

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## Use a boring conference call tool



This one is pretty straightforward - **if you want to run a successful virtual event you need to use a platform that's** specifically designed for events. They need to be immersive experiences that help participants feel connected.

An event needs a venue. Even if it's run online. **So give your online audience a home in the form of a virtual event platform.**

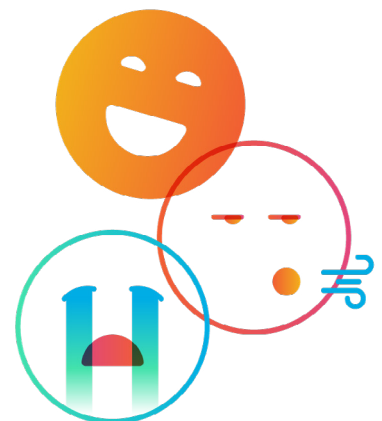
# 2. DON'T

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## Leave engagement for last

You don't want to see your audience get bored because there's no way for them to interact and get engaged. **Joining an event from home makes logging off a really easy option for attendees if they aren't feeling motivated or connected to a session.**

Bet on features such as Q&As, group chats, real-time polls and surveys, emoji reactions, word clouds, and other tools that bring the audience's opinions to the forefront of your content. **The more you can get your audience to feel involved, the less likely you'll see them dropping out of sessions.**



## 3. DON'T

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### Underestimate the power of social media



Social media is basically free advertising and hype for your event.

Include a **virtual photo booth** and get attendees to post selfies on social media. **Use an event hashtag** and encourage attendees to use it whenever they share anything associated with your event. **Have competitions on social media** during the event – **added attention on social media creates buzz for your brand.**

## 4. DON'T

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### Price your event too high

We get that it costs money to run an event and deliver valuable high-quality content. But without the fun dinners, cocktail parties, face-to-face meetings and other “real world” encounters, it **wouldn't make sense to charge the same prices for entrance.**

Since you've cut out these costly elements, let that **translate into a lower cost for your attendees.** They're sure to appreciate your honesty!



## 5. DON'T

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### Keep the platform closed before the event



The pre-event period is prime time for business networking.

**Research** shows that over 95% of leads are generated in the pre-event period at a 1-day long virtual trade show, 80% of leads in a 2-day long virtual trade show, and a little over 60% during a 3-day virtual show.

**So open the online platform ahead of the event day!**

You should also put together an effective communication strategy that pushes exhibitors and attendees alike to **use the platform in the days or weeks leading up to the event.**

## 6. DON'T

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### Immediately close the platform

Just because the event is over, doesn't mean that networking & business opportunities are over with it! **The data** shows that inbound **messages and requests from attendees to exhibitors peak after a live trade show.**

If you end up closing your platform the day after your event, you're missing out on crucial business opportunities that are basically falling into the laps of your community members.



## 7. DON'T

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### Skip dress rehearsals



Be prepared for every potential disruption that's coming your way.

**Unstable connections, power outages, technical problems, server issues, equipment failure, you name it, they've all got the potential to derail a virtual session.**

Make sure to run through your event or sessions to ensure you're prepared for everything and have backup plans in case of emergencies. **You'd rather have disastrous practice runs than bomb on your big day.**

## 8. DON'T

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### Avoid speaker prep

**Take the time to have 1-on-1 prep talks and run-throughs with speakers at your virtual event.**

You might be familiar with all of the features and tools available on your virtual event platform, but that doesn't mean the person running the session is as prepared as you are!

Talk them through all the engagement and interaction features so that **they're comfortable with the technology and know-how to incorporate it into their session.** Come event day, they'll basically be pros.



## 9. DON'T

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### Imitate an onsite experience



**Focus on the best content that virtual experiences have to offer rather than trying to replicate a physical event.**

Certain content or speakers work better for live events and don't translate into a very engaging experience for audiences at home. And that's okay!

**Try to include interactive sessions where audiences can participate and engage with speakers directly.** For example, online roundtables where speakers can invite attendees "on stage" so they can ask their questions and interact directly with the speaker. This isn't always feasible at onsite events, but they're a hit at virtual ones!

## 10. DON'T

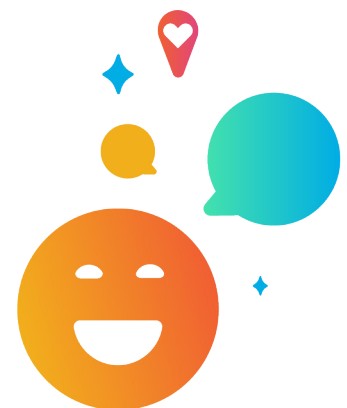
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### Cut out having a host or MC

Last but not least – **you might think that having a host or MC for your virtual event is an added and unnecessary expense, but that would be a mistake!**

Not only are they your timekeepers, making sure that everyone stays on schedule, but they also help maintain the flow of your event by providing smooth transitions between sessions as well as introducing upcoming sessions and speakers.

**Boredom is your enemy when it comes to virtual events**, so pick an MC will energize your audience.





# Moral of the story...

And there you have it. The top 10 mistakes to avoid when running your next virtual event.

**Remember:** invest in a good virtual event platform, keep it open long before and long after your event, make sure your audience is consistently engaged, keep it cheap, and finally make sure your speakers and MCs are prepped and experienced!

There's been a lot of trial and error as we learn what works and what doesn't in the online world.

**Luckily, we're only getting better with time!**





# Your open invitation

Feedback on the Evolve Community is welcome any time of the day, night, or year.

Have suggestions to help us improve our platform?  
Want to see more of this or that in the newsletter?  
Looking for different content or networking opportunities?

Whatever it is, every voice in this community counts.

Now get out there and enjoy all that the Evolve community has to offer!

And remember, you've got an open invitation to **share your comments or suggestions with us anytime.**

**What's on your mind?**

**evolve**  
COMMUNITY

