With the onset of COVID-19, the need for virtual gatherings and hybrid events has become imperative as we constantly pivot to keep people safe and meet health-related guidelines.

What is the difference between a virtual and hybrid event?
Virtual events are meetings that take place 100% on-line. Attendees interact via an on-line digital platform. Guests can attend from anywhere in the world as long as they have access to the web and an electronic device. A physical location is unnecessary when hosting a virtual event.

Hybrid events have both in-person and virtual components. Attendees can choose to attend sessions either face-to-face in a physical location or on-line. People who choose to attend virtually can watch live streams of the event to interact with others in a virtual reality.

We agree the best way to build loyalty and trust is to meet live and in person however with today’s technology and the more we use it is one of the best ways to keep business going.

About Our Team - Projection
We are here to provide a way to give your meeting attendees peace of mind while providing them with the experiences they enjoy. The Convention Center in house AV Company, Projection, offers services to customize your event theme and agenda. Hosting a virtual or hybrid event may seem daunting, but it doesn’t need to be, we are here to help.

Projection delivers tools that enable conference planners to reach attendees throughout the event facility and to deliver meeting content anywhere. Our services include:

- Expert production planning and presentation management that support an array of live and remote event plans.
- Remote presentation management using our Projection Net service.
- Help desk provides personalized support for presenters.
- Virtual event platform software content management.
- Graphics creation for dynamic general session presentations.
- Presentation studios for live, in-person programming.
- Content capture and overflow throughout the event facility.
- Live-stream tools to reach audiences of any size, anywhere.
- Technical management of studio and remote presentations.
Presentation Capture
Projection’s presentation capture systems provide a simple and scalable solution to help organize content for on-demand viewing. Capture systems enable the sharing of presentations, easy to edit files, and fast delivery of meeting content. Services include:
• Projection’s presentation capture systems can record live presentations that can be shared to virtual platforms for on-demand viewing or archived.
• We can support a single meeting room or dozens of concurrent recording in dozens of concurrent presentations at once.

Simultaneous Overflow
• Simultaneous Overflow transmits programming from one meeting space to additional meeting spaces. Whenever a room exceeds seating capacity, our system can instantly send audio and video where it is needed.

Start Planning Your Event
Crafting a successful virtual event plan can be as challenging as planning an in-person conference. In order to design a rewarding experience that is engaging for your attendees, we need to consider how best to position meeting presentations, exhibitors, sponsors, and audience engagement. Identify how to best translate the elements of events you value in the live event space to the virtual environment. Education, networking, sponsorship, selling, and community building can all take place with the right planning.
Here is a list of questions we believe every meeting planner should ask to guide planning your next virtual meeting.

Big Picture Questions
• How many people will be viewing on-line?
• Will you have live programming?
• How will attendees access the virtual meeting?
• Do you work with a registration company?
• Do you need to feature sessions or speakers?
• Do you need to track Continuing Education credit?
• Do you plan to have a keynote?
• Do you need to live-stream presentations?
• How do you support remote presenters?
• Should content be available for viewing post event?
• What kind of audience engagement is essential?
• How do you incorporate exhibitors and sponsors?

Focus Answers - Determine
• When is the best time to start planning your next virtual meeting?
• How do you support a large number of presentations to capture and organize?
• What are the best strategies to organize and execute a live Keynote with multiple presenters?
• How do you choose between Webinar (Zoom, GotoMeeting) and Live-stream services?
• How do you incorporate virtual networking successfully?
• What ways can you drive leads to exhibitors and sponsors to ensure their participation?

Virtual Options to Think About
Virtual events usually consist of activities that bring users together through an on-line experience. Types of events could include:
• Behind-The-Scenes Tours
• Classes
• Company Gatherings
• Concerts
• Conferences
• Departmental Meetings
• Demonstrations
• Expos
• Interviews
• Job Fairs
• Performances
• Presentations
• Sessions
• Training
• Team Building
• Tutorials
• Trade Shows
• Webinars
TIPS AND TRICKS
Here are the best tips and tricks we recommend to help your next online event be as successful as possible.

Create A Game Plan for Your Event
Whether your event takes a hybrid or virtual approach, you'll need to have a strategy in place to ensure your success. It's a good idea to start with a key goal, then get the ball rolling from there. The earlier you can get planning, the better. Before hosting a virtual or hybrid event, consider the following questions:
  - What kind of experience do you want to deliver?
  - Will the event be live, on-demand or a combination of both?
  - What day(s) and time(s) will work best for the event?
  - How will you go about promoting and advertising your event?
  - Will you work with an advertiser or event planning partner?
  - Will registration be required? If so, how will people register?
  - How will people access your event's videos, webinars and sessions?
  - If the event is hybrid, what venue will you utilize for in-person attendees?
  - Will people still have access to event content once it is over?

Send A Registration Packet with Important Event Information
Registration tables are one of the first points of contact a person has when they arrive to an in-person event. A virtual event shouldn't be any different! Attendees want to feel prepared and know what your event has in store for the day. Sending a registration packet, snail mail, is a great way to provide attendees with the information they're looking for. This can be a swag bag with sponsor items, gifts, and include the printed agenda. Branded name tags are fun too! Your virtual attendees will feel a part of the live event and build anticipation for your online program.

Find Ways to Increase Virtual Event Attendee Engagement
When it comes to optimizing for virtual engagement, a good place to start is to look at your in-person event agenda and make a list of all your networking, wellness and social activities.
Begin to think of ways these activities could be done virtually or think of new activities with a similar goal that have been done virtually and are easy to replicate. Check out this list of activities to increase attendee engagement:
  - Host a live game or competition (winner gets a prize!)
  - Have a "virtual background" contest within your video platform.
  - Feature real-time illustrations during event sessions.
  - Host a “Learn & Learn” on an interesting topic in your industry.
  - Gather attendees for a relaxing happy hour at the end of the day.
  - Host a live Q&A featuring an industry expert or panel of speakers.
  - Employ live polling to gauge audience insight and interests.
  - Instruct attendees to post event photos and leverage your event's hashtag.
  - Have a few for-fun sessions that focus on health or wellbeing.
  - Ask viewers to submit questions in comments or through a chat tool.

Leverage Data
75% of virtual events include a Q&A, chat and interactive features.
69% of virtual events use a webinar format
62% of virtual events leverage live stream speakers.
Source: Statista
Event data is powerful. The right metrics can help you prove the success of your event and make necessary improvements for the future. When it comes to virtual events, there are a variety of data points you should observe once everything is said and done. **Start by looking at the following points:**

- Costs, benefits and ROI
- Attributed revenue
- Number of total registrations
- Number of registrations per session
- Demographic information
- Post-event survey results
- Session ratings
- Session feedback
- Number of new attendees and/or leads
- Buying interest
- Social media engagement and reach
- Key performance indicators

Be sure to measure it, so you can manage it. The data you collect can drastically increase your event’s success and help you make data-backed decisions in the future.