



# MAXIMIZING THE VALUE OF VIRTUAL HCP EVENTS

Virtual events have become a pillar of modern training and meetings.

In fact, according to Market Research Media the overall market for virtual events is forecast to grow from \$14B in 2018 to \$18B just 5 years from now (2018). Pharmaceutical and other life sciences companies have been strong participants in this trend, and virtual meetings will continue to replace much of the live speaker and live training programs that in the past were mainstays of the industry.

Life sciences companies say virtual events are a win-win for both the meeting sponsor and participants, for three key reasons:

- Scarce budget dollars can be stretched much further with virtual meetings compared to live meetings, simply due to travel savings
- Busy internal teams and speakers can shave days – even weeks – of their already-packed schedules by avoiding meeting travel
- In contrast to live meetings, the greater use of technology found with virtual meetings can produce deeper customer insights and content that can be easily repurposed

As leading producers of peer-to-peer meetings, virtual training programs, technology-enabled remote advisory boards and other virtual event services, we receive a continuous stream of questions about best practices for virtual events, meetings and training programs. Next are some best practices for virtual events based on these questions.

# BE READY TO “STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT”

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Virtual meetings give you the ability to bring people together from around the globe in days, rather than weeks or months. When a hot new development with your brand occurs, it's smart to have a relationship already in place with a virtual event company that can help you act quickly and efficiently. MNG Health has conducted advisory boards and training sessions with less than a week to prepare, because the client had an urgent need. Ensure the supplier you select can respond in a similar timeframe, because the speed at which you can move can have a dramatic effect on the return you get on your virtual meeting efforts.

## CHECK LOCAL TECHNOLOGY & PROVIDE IN-MEETING SUPPORT

Your content for a meeting can be world class, but if the local audience and participants can't see it – or you can't engage with them – because of technology problems on either end of the virtual meeting, it can turn into a disaster. We work with a network of nationwide technology experts who can make premeeting site visits to ensure technology at a local restaurant or other meeting venue, or even at a speaker's home, is capable of supporting the meeting and enabling a great user experience.

Similarly, you don't want to leave your meeting participants unsupported in those critical minutes before a meeting, when a technical problem can easily derail a participant's experience. To prevent that, first rate virtual events suppliers usually provide an online support person about 30 minutes prior to the event and make them available throughout the event. Make sure your meeting supplier is capable of offering this level of tech-focused preparation and customer support, because it is often the difference between an event that is a great success or one that's an embarrassing failure.



## KEEP THE AUDIENCE ENGAGED DURING THE MEETING

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While meetings and events have an upside, unfortunately they also allow participants to multitask and be distracted from your content—unless you build in ways to prevent it. Including polling questions and surveys within the meeting and deploying attestation questions either during or at the end of an event can keep an audience engaged. These “check ins” also ensure that you have the right audience and that participants are absorbing your valuable content. Other techniques used by successful meeting sponsors are break-out sessions and interactive Q&A segments within the meeting or training session. These enable an event to feel more like a face-to-face meeting and connect participants.



# GET MORE OUT OF THE MEETING ITSELF

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As with any meeting, those who can't attend miss out on the live interaction that occurs during the event. However with virtual meetings, you can replicate much of the meeting experience – and add more reach by recording the meeting for later viewing and repurposing the content into other communication and engagement vehicles.

For example, many of our clients ask us to archive the meeting recording and related presentations online. We feature them in email or direct mail campaigns directed toward those who missed the meeting, as well as to serve as a reminder for those who attended. Additional information that may appeal to subsets of the larger audience can also be shared in other channels, allowing for more customized and personalized follow-up after the meeting. This additional postmeeting outreach can make the difference between having an attendee who “sort of” remembers your content versus one who absorbs it and takes action.

## MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION

Whether you have an existing virtual event supplier or are new to the concept, it pays to make an informed decision. Feel free to contact us to find out more about the virtual meetings and event offerings of MNG Health. Remember to ask about how we can make virtual events part of a larger and more effective multichannel HCP engagement program.



MNG Health is a healthcare communications company with a broad range of multichannel engagement solutions to connect you and your brands with your target HCPs.

Contact us today to learn how our experts can help you empower confident care.

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