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WORKTANK

*The Busy Person's
Blueprint for*

STELLAR
VIRTUAL
EVENTS



WORKTANK



BLUEPRINT OVERVIEW

Introduction

Your 10 Essential Steps for a Stellar Virtual Event

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The Worktank Way



INTRODUCTION

So you're planning a virtual event? Congrats! Whether you're looking to improve inter-company communications, train employees, or generate leads and drive growth, virtual events are an affordable and time-saving tool that will help you achieve your business goals.

We know you're busy (you've got an event to plan!) **so we've kept this guide short n' sweet, but packed with exactly what you need to know to put on a hugely successful event**--one that exceeds your organization's expectations and earns beaucoup kudos and pats on the back.

In this guide you'll find:

- **10 Essential Steps** to creating an insanely successful event
- **Critical (but simple) tweaks** you can make to drive engagement
- **Must-do's after the event** to maximize your investment
- **A free checklist** to help you plan your event from start to finish

We recommend that you read through this guide and then print off the checklist, so you can use it as a quick reference as you plan, promote and present.

Warning: Don't skim through this guide too quickly - you'll miss the critical post-event strategies you can use to drive even more engagement long after your event wraps up.

Let's dive in!



10

ESSENTIAL STEPS

FOR A

STELLAR

VIRTUAL
EVENT

STEP ONE:

UNDERSTAND YOUR AUDIENCE

Selecting the right topic for your webinar or webcast starts with **knowing your audience**. So many organizations miss this critical first step. They forget that everyone on the planet's tuned into **WIIFM: What's In It For Me**.

Any rockstar event begins with deeply understanding your audience. In fact, this step is so important we suggest you stop reading right now...

And take a minute to consider your audience:

- What are their worries, struggles, fears?
- What problems are they trying to overcome?
- What goals do they have for the future?

Feeling stuck? Here are some things you can do to **get unstuck**:

1. Ask your sales team what questions they are frequently asked.
2. Review any customer data you collect to determine who they are, what their habits are, and any other commonalities.
3. Ask current customers what topics they're interested in.

When you've completed your research use it to brainstorm a list of possible topics. Then send the list to a coworker to get their ideas. Once you have a beefy list, start eliminating topics that are too narrow or too broad until you have a winner.

A WINNING TOPIC IS KEY.



STEP TWO:

PICK THE RIGHT CONTENT

Okay, so you've got your audience nailed down. And you've got a list of topics that you know they'll be interested in.

Now it's time to drill down into specifics.

First, select an **overarching theme**. An overarching theme is the overall goal and topic. Once you've figured out the core of your virtual event, hone in on a particular aspect of that theme.

For example:

A marketing company might choose an overall theme of social media, then focus specifically on best practices for creating Facebook ads.

Above all, **choose a topic that your audience will find:**



USEFUL



INFORMATIVE



VALUABLE



STEP THREE:

CHOOSE YOUR PLATFORM

As with any type of technology, features and prices vary from one provider to another. You'll want to spend some time analyzing which platform **best suits your needs**.

Because we're a bunch of tech geeks (and because virtual events are kinda "our thing"), we've spent years testing out and working with a variety of virtual event platforms.

This gives us deep insight into what does and doesn't work based on specific business goals.

Here are six of our favorite platforms for virtual events:

- Skype for Business
- ON24
- Zoom
- Adobe Connect
- WebEx
- VE Connect



STEP FOUR:

SET REGISTRATION & ATTENDEE GOALS

As the saying goes: Energy flows where attention goes. So you want to make sure you've got your **SMART goals** in place long before launch day.

A SMART goal is defined by criteria that helps you make better goals that are more likely to succeed. Each letter of SMART stands for the different category criteria:



SPECIFIC



MEASURABLE



ACHIEVABLE



RELEVANT



TIMELY

Without a goal in place, **how can you measure success?**

Start with your virtual event attendee goal first and work backwards, keeping in mind that **webinars and webcasts typically have an attendance rate of 25%**.

For example, if your goal is to have 1,000 attendees you know you will need to collect 4,000 registrants.

As you start promoting your virtual event, be sure you're tracking your performance on a regular basis. **We suggest measuring your performance on a weekly basis.**

This way if you fall behind on your goals and have low initial registration numbers, you still have time to ramp up your marketing efforts and fix the problem before it is too late.



STEP FIVE:

CHOOSE A HOST OR EMCEE

This one is a no-brainer.

Your presenter is the heart and soul of your event. So be sure to pick someone who's going to bring energy and enthusiasm on your launch day.

This position will set the stage and mood for your audience as well, so it will be important to make sure they are not only prepared but also that they identify and communicate well with your target audience.

In our experience, **even the most social butterflies sometimes get stage fright.**

That's why we provide presenter training and practice. And when necessary we'll even provide a professional emcee for you.

Here are a few tips in helping **prepare your host for your big event:**



PRACTICE

Be sure to schedule practice sessions into your pre-planning event timeline. It may not seem as critical as everything else, but it will ensure the actual event runs smoothly.



TRUST YOUR CONTENT

The most important element of your event is the actual content. Make sure it's valuable and insightful. Knowing your audience is just as important as making sure all the tech stuff runs smoothly



PLAN FOR HICCUPS

Brainstorm a list of potential problems that might occur. For each problem, devise a solution and make sure your team is prepared in exactly how to solve it on the fly.



STEP SIX:

CHOOSE THE TIME AND DATE



Choosing when to hold your virtual event is just as important as choosing what platform to hold your event on.

Hard data and our own experience both suggest that:

- Weekends don't have great attendance
- Mondays and Fridays are the worst days for attendance
- Wednesdays or Thursdays generally get higher attendance

Your decision ultimately boils down to knowing your audience.

You'll want to steer clear of any major events that might be occurring in your industry. Like, for instance, don't schedule your event on the same day as a huge industry trade show, as your target viewers might not be available.

After you've nailed down your day, you'll need to choose the time.

Afternoon virtual events seem to have more traction, however, this too will depend on your audience.

For example, do you have a local, national, or even global audience?



STEP SEVEN:

GIVE REGISTRANTS AN INCENTIVE TO ATTEND

Remember WIIFM?

Now that you've got a topic you know your audience needs and wants, you've got to find a way to get them to attend.

That's where incentives come in.

There are a couple of ways to do this, which also have the added benefit of promoting your virtual event in the process:



Hold a contest. For example, ask people to tweet something related to the event, or share the event on their LinkedIn page. Announce that the winner will be selected at the end of the virtual event.



Give away free stuff. Maybe it's something as simple as a free individual consultation for all attendees. Or free tickets to an event, gift cards, or a discount on a product that correlates to your event.

Once again, knowing your target audience will help you decide how big you need to go with your giveaway. The key is to think of things that will get people excited and talking about your event.

EXCITED PEOPLE = EXCITED REGISTRANTS = EXCITED ATTENDEES = AWESOME EVENT



STEP EIGHT:

DESIGN AN EFFECTIVE LANDING PAGE

Think of your landing page as the **GATEWAY TO YOUR EVENT**. The sole purpose of your landing page is to answer this one question:

Why should people attend?

A well-executed landing page will ensure you get people in the door.

You can use the following tips as guides to get started:

- Use the 5-W framework--who, what, when, where, why
- Offer a clear and simple promise
- Don't make promises you can't deliver
- Use bullet points
- Give people a simple way to register
- Focus on the benefits (i.e. the real value)
- Highlight what you're providing that people can't get elsewhere



INSIDER'S TIP: When people sign-up via the landing page, make sure you send them a thank you email and registration confirmation. This is expected these days, but you'd be surprised how many companies overlook this detail.

The confirmation lets them know that their form submission worked, and allows you to remind them about your virtual event. We also recommend including an easy way to add the event to their calendar.

Remember, people often sign up weeks in advance, and often need reminding that they signed up for your event (more on this to come).



STEP NINE:

PROMOTE THE PANTS OFF YOUR EVENT

You'll want to promote your virtual event effectively, utilizing as many different platforms and sources as possible to **maximize your reach**.

And don't rely on the **"spray and pray"** technique with social media--the modern equivalent of throwing a bunch of fliers off the back of a motorbike.

Be smart and calculated in your strategy.

This often requires a combination of:



**SOCIAL
MARKETING**



**EMAIL
MARKETING**



**CONTENT
MARKETING**



**PAID
MARKETING**

In addition to your efforts, make sure your speakers are promoting the virtual event on their end, particularly if you are utilizing a guest speaker. Make sure they're leveraging their own personal connections, social accounts, and email lists.



STEP TEN:

SEND OUT 3 EMAIL REMINDERS

Think about how many times you've signed up for something and then..... **forgotten all about it.**

You can bank on people not just forgetting when your virtual event is, but also what it's about in the first place. Remember, unlike physical events, people aren't buying tickets, booking flights, or reserving hotel rooms for virtual events.

So you better be sure you're keeping your event top of mind with (gentle) reminders.

After the initial reminder, you'll want to send out two final reminder emails, because let's face it, **things come up and people forget.** These should go out the day before and the day of your event

This gives people time to rearrange their to-do list so they can attend. It might seem like overkill, but trust us, the higher-ups will thank you when you have a "full house" during your webinar or webcast.

A FINAL NOTE: practice makes perfect. As you plan for your event, be sure to schedule time for a couple dry-runs.

And that's a wrap!

Next you'll find your go-to checklist, which will show you at a glance everything you need to know for a remarkable event, from start to finish.



Keep Your To-Do's In Check With This

HANDY CHECKLIST



Step 1 (Week 1): Set the stage for success

- Define (in detail) virtual event goals
- Frame the topic
- Choose the presenter
- Understand the audience
- Pick the format

Step 2 (Week 2): Pick your core team

- Producer: responsible for technical infrastructure
- Promoter: responsible for driving registration
- Presenter: responsible for crafting content and presenting

Step 3 (Week 3): Craft your remarkable message

- Pick an exciting title
- Highlight key benefits
- Write the abstract: a brief breakdown of what you'll cover
- Identify the creative direction: images, tone, brand voice, etc.

Step 4 (Week 3): Create Marketing Deliverables

- A high-converting landing page
- Promotional emails
- Confirmation email flow
- Display ads for web and social
- Homepage banner
- 1:1 sales email template

Step 5 (Week 4): Setup Infrastructure

- Prepare the console in the webinar platform
- Import creative elements (background image, prominent logo placement, text)
- Request tracking codes for marketing programs
- Integrate with CRM or marketing automation software
- Test, test, test

Step 6 (Week 5): Promote, Promote, Promote

- Email your prospect database
- Put promotional banner on homepage
- Email partners
- Get speakers involved in promotion
- Send personal invitations from sales reps
- Get social: Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn

Step 7 (Week 6): First Dry Run

- Review drafts of slides
- Review language & messaging
- Insert interactive tools like polls and surveys
- Determine questions for polls and surveys
- Update & review audience demographics

Step 8 (Week 7): Final Dry Run

- Presenters know how & when to hand off to one another
- Slides & content are finalized
- Platform training for team members involved
- Audience interaction training done
- Offline communication methods established
- Final registration numbers reviewed
- After dry run no additional changes allowed!

Step 9 (Week 8): All Systems Go for Launch

- Everyone on event team calls in 30 minutes before
- Last minute mic check
- Presenters are in a quiet room with good audio
- Don't let presenters call in from a cell phone or speakerphone
- Assign 1 or 2 sales people to manage Q&A

Step 10 (Week 8): Post Event

- Send out "sorry we missed you" email and include link to recording
- Send out "thank you for attending" email and suggest next steps in the buyer's journey
- Update landing page to read "on demand" and list event
- Use social to share interesting poll data or facts from presentation with link to recording
- Score your leads: look at your data and determine who's ready to move further down the sales pipe.



PRO TIP: PRINT THIS PAGE OUT

This is your ultimate checklist to keep you on target with your event. Print this page out, hand out to your team and start each week with a plan to get each task done.





The Worktank Way

Feeling overwhelmed by everything you've got to do before your event goes live? Give us a call and we'll take that To Do List off your hands. With **16 years and more than 20,000 events** under our belts, you can be sure our events are "virtually" flawless.

And what's better than not having to worry about all that tech? Not having to manage someone else's team. At Worktank, we give you a single point of contact from start to finish, so you don't have to waste time and energy on a whole bunch of back-and-forth.

Getting started is as easy as...



Give us a call.

Tell us about your specific goals and challenges for the event.



We give you a plan.

We'll design a solution for your event that fits your specific needs.



Schedule your event.

We handle everything else, from registration to recording and beyond.



Relax and enjoy the show.

Lead capture. Production. Polls. Group chat. Q/A. Yep, we've got you covered for all that and more.

Call us at **206-658-2587**



Think you know someone who might find this guide useful? Look like an industry expert and **share it!**



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YOU HAVE TO
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