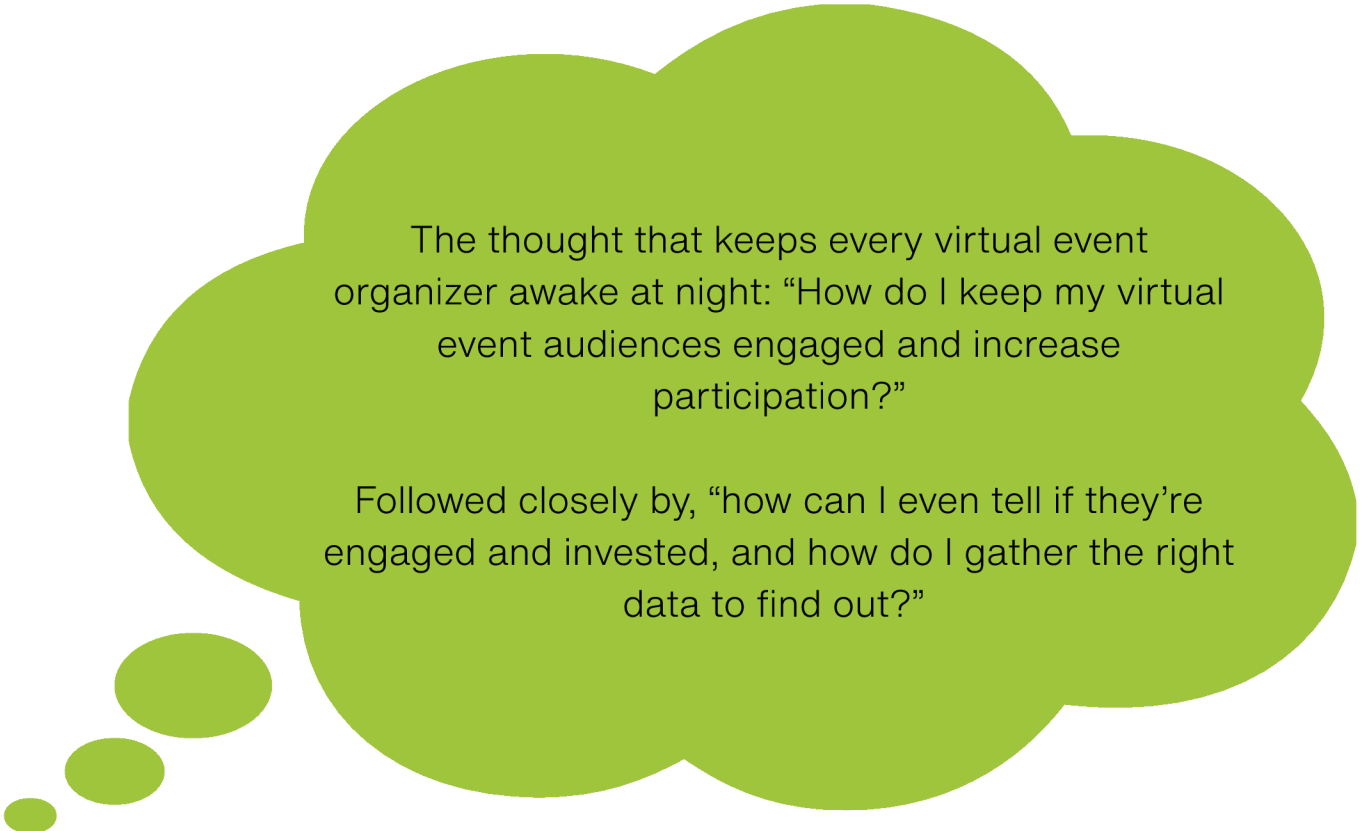


THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO VIRTUAL EVENT AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT



INTRODUCTION



The thought that keeps every virtual event organizer awake at night: “How do I keep my virtual event audiences engaged and increase participation?”

Followed closely by, “how can I even tell if they’re engaged and invested, and how do I gather the right data to find out?”

Asking the right questions of your audience and knowing what to do with the results provides you with the vital information you need to grow and improve your virtual events, continually exceed your audience’s expectations, and funnel valuable, qualified leads to your sales team.

So, what do you ask, how do you ask, and how do you plan engagement strategies for the entire event lifecycle? We’ve got you covered!

Learn what you need to keep your audiences interested and the momentum going with our guide to effective questions, polls, panel discussions, Q&A questions, and surveys.

Welcome to The Insider’s Guide to Virtual Event Audience Engagement!

INTRODUCTION - BEST PRACTISES

This guide will take you through the best practises in:



- ✓ Pre-event and mid-event polling
- ✓ Designing Q&A and panel sessions that will inform and engage your audience
- ✓ How to design feedback surveys that maximize responses while delivering valuable insights.
- ✓ Effective sample questions to use in surveys, polls, Q&As, and panels.
- ✓ How to use the data you collect from polls and surveys

QUESTIONS OVERVIEW

Why Do Questions Matter?

Event managers already have more than enough on their plate. Developing a feedback program, engaging attendee polls, and canned Q&A's can be tough. That said, putting in the time to ask questions and strengthen your analytics gives you the opportunity to streamline your events, improve your marketing, and develop a better understanding of the wants and needs of your customers.

Asking good questions will:

- Generate more leads.
- Give you an understanding of what worked and what didn't, from your attendees' perspective.
- Get the best out of your expert speakers by coming prepared.
- Prove the success of your events with statistics, winning you a bigger budget and more opportunities.



What to Ask, and When to Ask It

Asking good questions is important; the timing of your questions is just as critical. We'll take you through what types of questions will tell you the most about your audience, and when best to ask them, with samples of great questions you can put to use to make your next virtual event better than ever.

QUESTIONS - REGISTRATION

Questions for the Event Registration Page

Your registration page is your audience engagement starting line. That's where the wealth of data gathered before your event even begins can help you shape your live event and post-event engagement strategies, tailoring your event to your registrants based on what you learn.

Best Practises:

- Keep your registration form relatively short and sweet. Name and email notwithstanding, adding more than four questions will risk turning your potential customers off before your efforts are even off the ground.
- Offer registrants additional opportunities to engage with your brand through blogs and newsletter links, helping you gather valuable information and keep the conversation going.
- Leverage your event software's source tracking features to assess how your promotional strategies are working.



Sample Questions

- What's your job title/industry?
- Do we have your consent to send you email communications? (opt-in)
- How much experience do you have with (event topic)?
- Are there specific products/services you're interested in hearing more about?
- What do you expect to get out of this event?
- Have you used (your organization's) products/services before?



QUESTIONS - LIVE EVENT POLLS

Live Event Polling Questions

Polls are a great way to encourage participation, gauge knowledge levels, and qualify leads. They're also solid ice breakers, engaging your attendees early in your event and gaining engagement momentum. Asking poll questions regarding the subtopics your audience is most interested in also offers an opportunity to tailor Q&A and panel discussions to your attendee's stated interests.

Pro Tips:

- True/false poll questions can help gauge the audience's perceived knowledge of the event's topic.
- Sharing the poll results live is a great way to engage your attendees and generate conversation.



Sample Questions

- Which of these topics/trends/areas are you most interested in covering?
- On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your understanding of this topic?
- True/False: (Statements about the event's topic)
- What's the top challenge facing your organization?

QUESTIONS - Q&A SESSIONS

During the Event: Canned Q&A Questions

We've all experienced it in an online conference or webinar: the awkward silence when there's a lull in the Q&A portion of the virtual event. People tend to wait for someone else to come up with a question. Navigate that potential pitfall by planning ahead and having some thoughtful questions ready for your moderator to ask, helping you keep the Q&A sessions on track and flowing naturally. Use the data collected in pre- and mid-event to inform and guide the questions for your speakers/presenters.

Pro Tips:

- Designate a specific time on your event agenda for Q&A.
- Your moderator should ask the pre-planned questions as if an attendee asked them. Instead of saying, "let me see what canned questions we have," say, "I see we have a question from Sarah. She asks..."



QUESTIONS - LIVE EVENT

During the Event: Panel Questions

Panel discussion events are a great way to connect your audience with your event speakers. Prepare thought-provoking questions based on the information gathered during registration and mid-event poll results to get an understanding of what your audience is most interested in. For audience questions that come in during the live portion of your event, assign a moderator or host to field them and/or assign questions to members of the panel.

Tips for creating Q&A or panel questions tailored to your event:

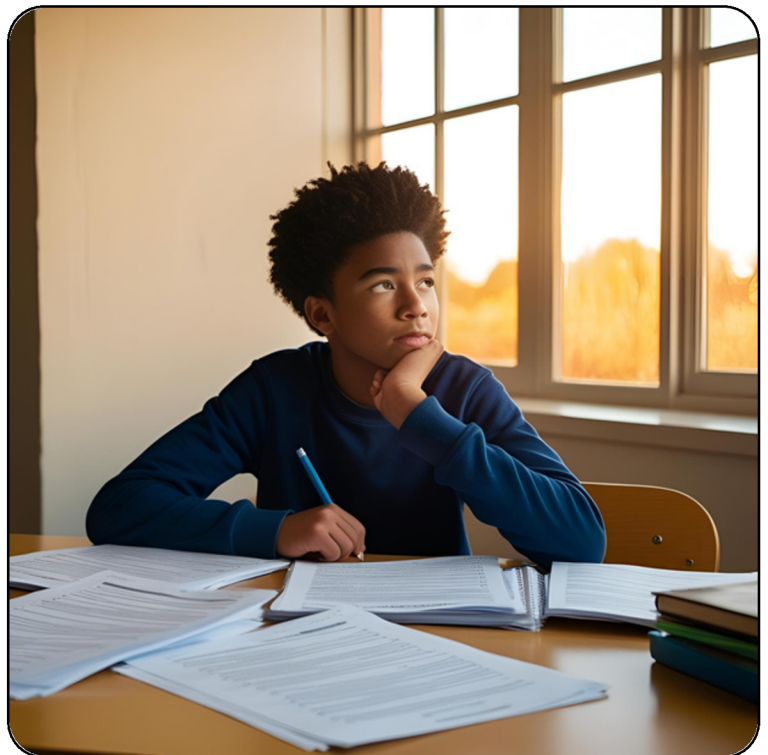
- Know your audience. Use your Q&A questions to let your speakers spend more time on the topic that is most interesting to them.
- Share your questions ahead of time with your speakers. This will give them a chance to think about their answers, delivering more valuable responses.
- Ask questions that add value. Familiarizing yourself with your speakers' presentations will help you craft thoughtful questions that inspire your audience to contribute as well.

POST EVENT SURVEYS

Post-Event Surveys

Sending a post-event survey to your attendees is a necessity: the event doesn't quite end when everyone signs off. Done well, with thoughtfully crafted feedback questions and sent in a timely manner, the data and feedback you receive can be an invaluable resource for improving future events and shaping your strategy.

A General Guideline: The sooner you send out a survey, the more responses you're likely to receive. Ask about the speaker, the content, the format, what they would change or improve, and their likelihood of recommending you or your events.



POST EVENT SURVEYS

Survey Considerations

Appeal to the Middle:

When creating your survey, think of questions that appeal to the “middle” of your audience; those who did not love or hate your event. Their input is arguably the most valuable. For example, online product reviews demonstrate that those giving out one and five-star ratings are biased, and quick to share their opinion. It's the three star ratings, those in the middle, who will give you the most balanced and honest feedback of your event. Straightforward and succinct questions are also more likely to garner responses from this group, as they likely won't have the same motivation to fill out long, complex surveys as those who loved or hated your event.

Audience Size:

Consider the size of your audience when developing your survey. Quantitative questions tend to be easier to measure and interpret, which makes them a good fit for events with hundreds of attendees. Attempting to glean useful insights from hundreds of written responses is a time-intensive undertaking that requires resources and analysis. Qualitative questions are great for smaller events, as they can provide tremendous insight into what attendees truly valued or thought could stand improvement. Beware of positivity bias! Asking open-ended questions gives the attendee the opportunity to be truly honest. Don't shy away from the opportunity to receive honest – even if it's less than positive – feedback.

POST EVENT SURVEYS

Sample Survey Questions



Net Promoter Score Question (NPS): How likely are you to recommend this event to a friend?



Did you think the sessions were too long, too short, or just right?



Rate the event content on a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being the least valuable and 5 being the most valuable)



Which speaker or topic was the most valuable to you?



Were there any products/services/topics you hoped to hear more about?



What would you change to make this event even better next time?



On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate your understanding of this topic now?



Can we contact you for follow-up?



Anything else you would like to share about the event?

HOW TO CREATE KILLER SURVEYS

Anyone can pull up a survey builder tool, drop in some questions and send it off to their attendees. But to design effective surveys and make the most of your results, it's important to have an understanding of the data you are collecting, and how to interpret it.

Quantitative vs. Qualitative

Put simply, **quantitative** research is focused on the numbers. It's an objective, structured method of data collection, allowing you to gain a broad understanding of your audience and their experiences.

Qualitative questions offer non-numerical insight, and help you answer the "why." Why did this event resonate with your audience, or why did it fall short? Asking qualitative questions can deepen your understanding and add nuance to the broad implications of your quantitative questions.

Quantitative and qualitative methods often complement each other and can be used in tandem when designing your event survey. Let the size of your event, and what feedback is most valuable to your organization guide your question choice. It's also a good idea to make answering open-ended, qualitative questions optional, which will lead to more completed surveys. The more attendees you hear from the better!

HOW TO CREATE KILLER SURVEYS

Survey Goals and Design

For quantitative questions, make the answers balanced, and avoid absolutes. Using scale questions will provide attendees with more nuanced options, and provide data that more accurately describes your attendee's thoughts about your event.

When designing your post-event qualitative survey questions, start with an explicit, definable goal in mind and be specific. For example, if your goal is, "I want to understand if our virtual events are converting prospects into customers, and the rates at which they do so," create survey questions that will help answer that question for you accordingly.

Shorter Surveys = More Responses

Remember: Less is more when it comes to surveys, so be mindful of going overboard with questions. Attendees are doing you a favor by answering your questions, and more questions doesn't always equal more valuable data. Short and sweet brings you more responses.

Important points to remember:

- Lead with your most important question.
- Try to keep surveys to 5 or 6 questions.
- Ten should be an absolute maximum.
- Make your open-ended, qualitative questions optional.

HOW TO CREATE KILLER SURVEYS

What to Do With Your Results

Now it's time to put those answers to work! Data from registration questions, mid-event polls, and feedback surveys can be measured, stored, and acted on to generate leads and make your next event your best yet. Your event software's reporting tools should offer you single event and program-level reporting to help you assess trends across multiple events.

Questions from the registration pages: Add answers into your CRM so all the information on prospects is in one place, adding to the efforts of your sales and marketing teams.

Mid-event polls: Use the information from polls to inform and improve future events, and to understand what your audience is interested in hearing more about. You can also use what you learned about attendee interests and experience levels to qualify leads.

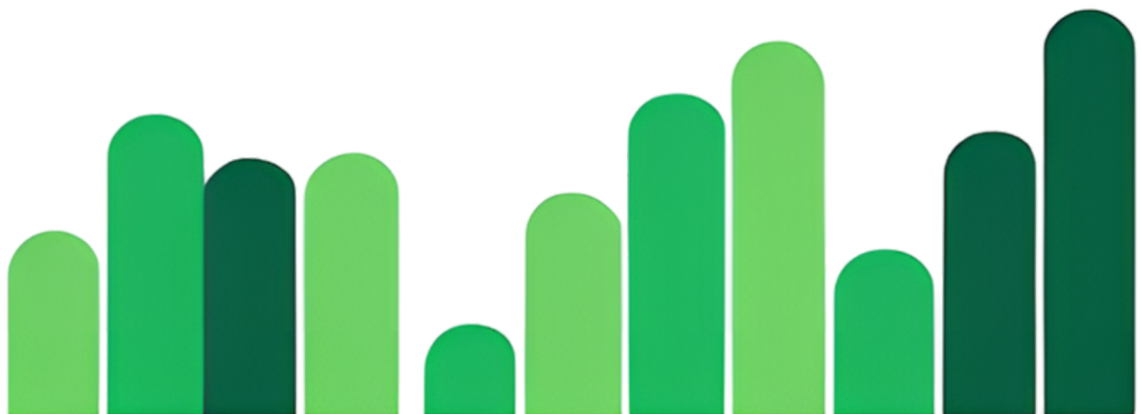
Post-event surveys: Use feedback from your audience to track your events over time and see how results change. Are you getting more responses, and more positive feedback? Consistently getting feedback from your attendees allows you to see how audience preferences may shift over time, and allow you to respond accordingly. To make the most of this data, stay consistent with the questions you ask and how you ask them to help you accurately measure progress or trends.

HOW TO CREATE KILLER SURVEYS

What to Do With Your Results

Pass it on: When it comes to identifying leads, it's imperative that you ensure your prospect has opted in to share their information and receive communications from you. Once filtered for consent, assess the lead's answers to your event questions to help you determine which leads/prospects are ready pass on to your sales team. Answers to questions about experience, interests, and job titles also help your sales team determine which leads are ready to buy and which ones may be better suited for a nurture campaign, as well as providing them with valuable information for continuing the conversation.

Get a Partner: If you're short on time and lack the resources you need to collect and thoroughly analyze user answers, it's worth looking into partnering with an events management company to outsource your survey design and analysis tasks.



OVERWHELMED WITH YOUR EVENT TASK LIST?

WE'VE GOT YOU!

Need some guidance on implementing a winning engagement strategy? Good news! Our professional event management services combine our powerful software suite with our virtual event expertise to help you and your events succeed.

Partner with us, reach your goals, and leave the details to us so you can focus on what matters most: **your content.**

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