



# Your Virtual Event

The Creative Approach

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Charley Webster, a TV sports presenter, hosted a launch event from the Sofitel Hotel, Heathrow. The event involved Charley interviewing a number of key personnel who were involved in the launch. The programme was streamed to other company colleagues back at the head office and to mobile devices.

## The right content, the right delivery

If you are looking to run your event virtually, there are three major areas to consider. The first is the content and “Content is King”. No matter how great the technical aspect of the event, if the content is poor, the engagement is lost.

Secondly, how do we disseminate your message to our delegates, attendees and viewers in the most engaging and interactive way? With virtual events this is a major consideration. Without engagement, your audience will lose focus.

Finally, the technical aspects that needs to be considered: what platform shall we stream from, what is a good venue, what technical support do I need in the room, what is the internet capability?

**So, if it's all about content and delivery, you might have to think of your game plan in terms of Live TV rather than Live event.**



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#### Exhibition Launch - Science Museum

Hayley McQueen, from SKY Sports, hosted a live link from the Science Museum back to our client's head office and to mobile devices. The event was the opening of an Exhibition which included speeches from Lord Jim O'Neill and Angela Rippon.

## Engage with your audience

Audience engagement is a must for professional live streaming events

The content of presentations is outside our remit but we are happy to offer advice on many aspect of the presentation to help prepare them for the new virtual event approach.

**It's important to remember that the audience isn't in the same room anymore.** If they are not in a small group in a work environment, they're at home, wondering whether the coffee maker has finished brewing its second pot of the morning. In this environment, distractions such as texts, emails, news notifications, and even small children are everywhere. **So the need to engage your audience and to keep their attention is more critical than at a live event.** The longer the event the more it needs to engage and interact with the viewer and it is the responsibility of all of us to maintain the audience's attention for the duration of the live stream.

So what are the options?



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### **Hospital Catering Association Forum**

**Roy Lilley**, who is a health policy analyst, writer, broadcaster and commentator on the National Health Service, hosted a three day event for the HCA at the Celtic Manor Hotel, South Wales, which included Jonathan Ashworth, the current Shadow Health Secretary as guest speaker

## **Be Dynamic**

To help engage your audience, the event has to have a degree of entertainment. Your first question might be, “How do we do that yet stay professional looking?” Of course, we don’t expect entrants from X-Factor to appear anytime soon but there are a number of ways your audience can ‘be entertained’, yet still convey your message in the most professional way possible.

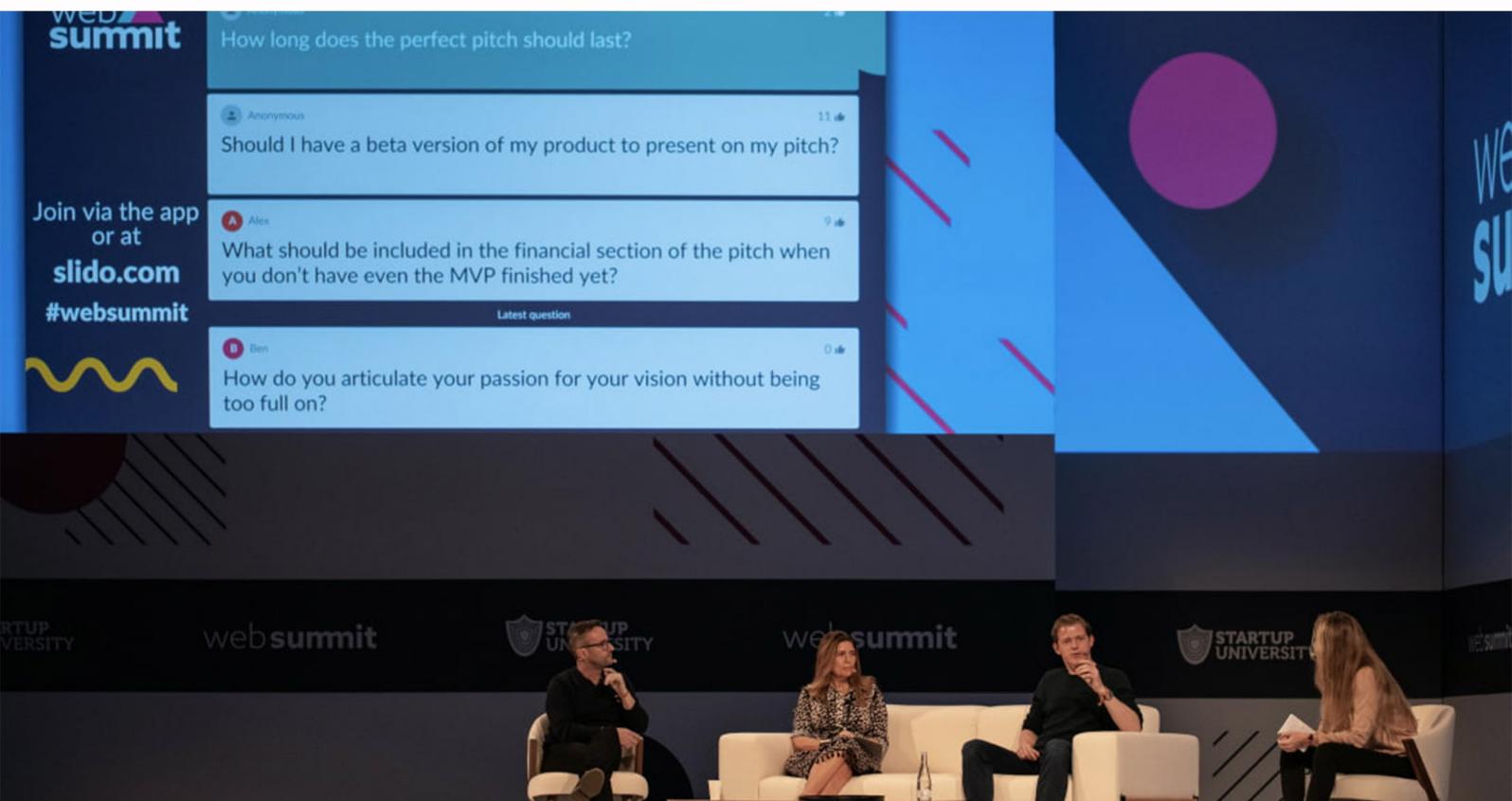
### **Personalities, Compères and Hosts**

We all appreciate that being TV stars is not generally the skill set of your presenters and invited guests, so perhaps your event needs a professional host to act as a link and pace setter. Professional live streaming requires the perfect pace and a good Compère has the experience finding the sweet spot between delivering the content too fast or too slow. When you watch a live video professional, you’ll notice that it’s dynamic and you can keep up without being bored. This is key if you want to keep your audience engaged over an extended period of time.

### **Bring in industry experts**

It goes without saying that a Key Opinion Leader or personality in any industry carries a lot of influence. People will travel long distances and pay good money to hear the latest opinions and thoughts of a person who is well respected in their field.

This also holds true in the virtual world. The audience may not be able to shake their hand but they can still feel as though the presenter has had some impact on them.



# Interaction

The audience is watching you live, which means, in most cases, they expect you to be able to interact with them. It gives them more to do than just watch and listen. These activities are pretty much the same as you would offer to a room full of attendees. The only difference is the audience is physically not present. So how do we encourage viewers to participate? Slido is a popular option but there are a number of software options.

## Hosting Q&A sessions

Let everyone in the audience ask their questions and vote for the ones they like the most. You can prioritise the discussion topics for conference Q&A's and panel discussions.

## Live polls

Make your meetings and events more interactive by polling your audience in real time. Live polls are an easy way to kick-start the conversation, check knowledge or get instant feedback.

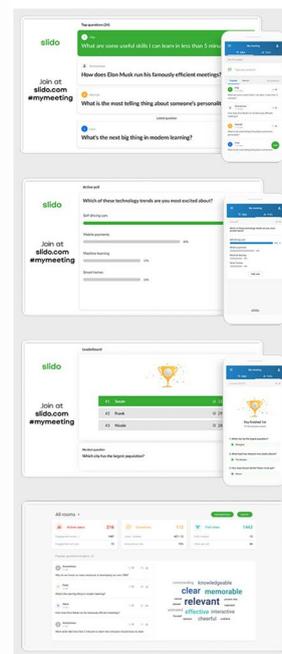
## Quizzes

Sometimes you need a break from the heavy stuff. Design a fun quiz that fits your presentation or training theme. You can use it to break the ice, recap the content, entertain or test the attendees.

## Analytics

Discover what topics resonate with your audience and use it to fuel your decisions. You can view, analyse and export all the interaction data from your event.

slido





# Visual formats

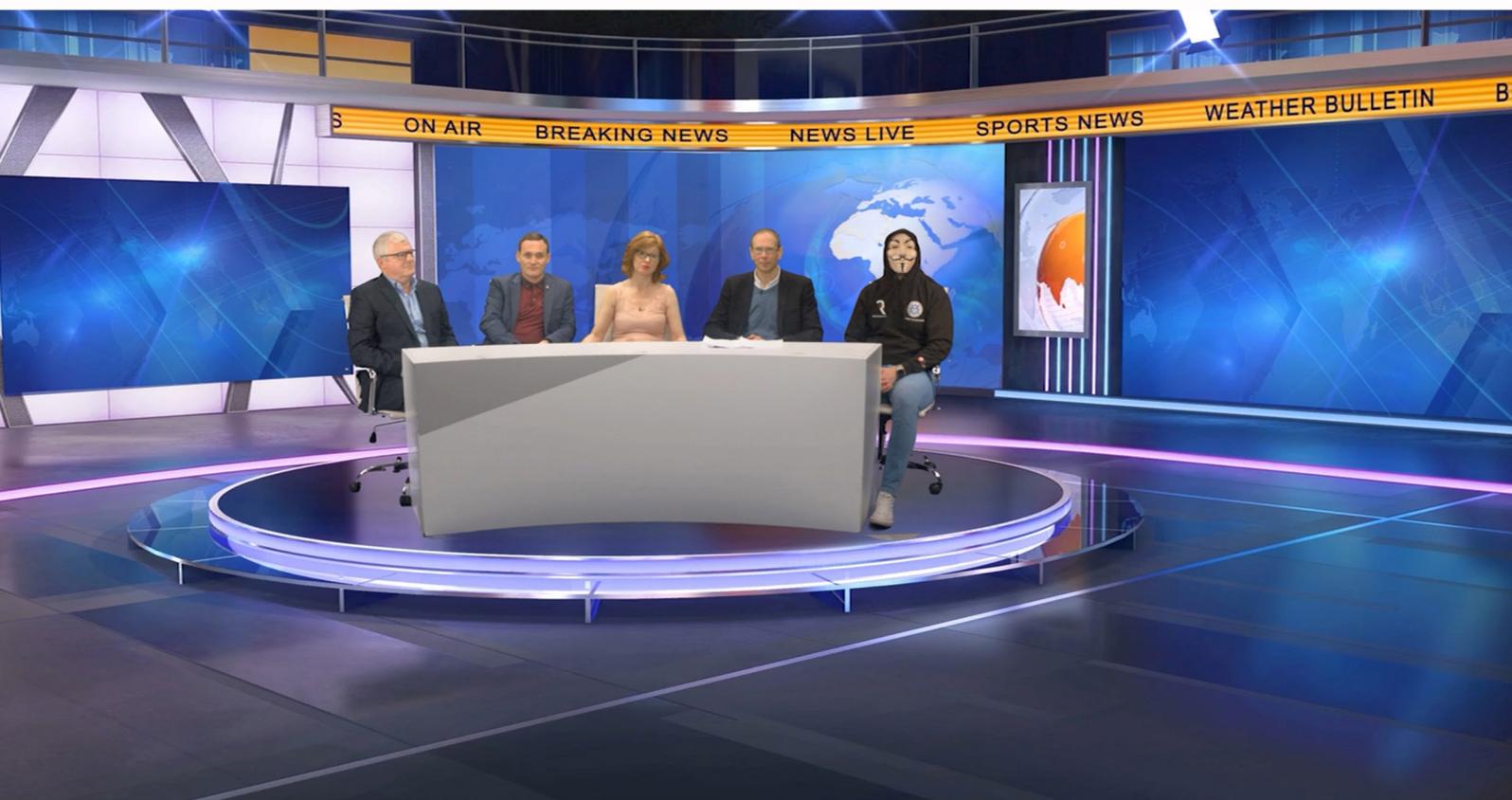
You might want to think of your event in terms of Live TV rather than Live Event

Although there are a number of technical differences between Live TV and Live Event there are also a number of similar aspects.

One major difference for the presenters is that there might not be an audience, only cameras. Are your presenters comfortable presenting without an audience? Is there an opportunity for them to have a small audience to engage with?

For your event, what is the balance between formal presentation and informal conversation? For your Live TV event, variety is the spice of life. Presenters can stand at podiums and present slides, but don't let this go on for too long. Key Opinion Leaders can be interviewed by the host in a number of situations: on sofas or on bar stools at a small table for example. There could be a panel of speakers for a Q&A session either behind a table or sitting on sofas. Maybe a person being interviewed by the host in the studio is somewhere else and they are being streamed into the 'studio'.





### Green Screen

The image above is a still from a project for one of the high street banks. The presenters were in a green screen room and the background was added in behind. This event was about cyber security in the banking industry

## Pre-recorded

Video recordings have always been an important aspect of an event. Sometimes a presenter, who cannot attend virtually, can pre-record their presentation or message. Content can include case studies or promotional material. Perhaps break-out sessions are pre-recorded and made available for attendees to view when there is a pause in the live event or after the event has finished.

## Multi-sessions

Some platforms allow for more than one presentation to happen at the same time. It is worth looking into the possibility of, the platform chosen, managing simultaneous feeds so that attendees can choose at different times of the day to dial into different break out presentations.

## Visual resources

All the usual suspects will need to be shown at these events. These will include slide decks and pre-recorded videos. An extra bonus is that live graphics can be over-laid to provide more information or introduce the next speaker.

## Build in breaks

Don't forget to build in those virtual breaks. Even though they are not in the room, people still need coffee, time to walk the dog and trips to the bathroom. These might be opportunities to showcase products, success stories or exhibition material.

## On demand viewing

All material is recorded so once the event has finished all presentations can be made available on demand post event. If presentations need to be shortened or disclaimer information needs to be added, this can be edited in before up-loading.



# Important factors

## Pre-event

As we all adjust to life online, so it's worth the effort to prepare your audience for the event. Communicate both the event logistics and the value of your event to ensure maximum attendance. A well-managed event that has not marketed its self well or has failed to manage delegates pre-event expectations, will find that their event is poorly attended.

## Venue

The venue is critical for the success of the event. Of course, an on-line event does not need to cater for 400 attendees in one room but event expectations will dictate the type of space required. Offices and meeting rooms in head office are fine for small presentations. An event with a number of speakers, a host and important branding may require a stage set up in a conference room or even a small TV studio.

For satellite locations you can provide a location where a small number of people can gather to watch the event. Ground:zero can provide technicians to manage these spaces or local IT support can be arranged.





# Important factors

## Production value

Events can be held with just a small camera and a laptop. In fact you can run it entirely from your phone. Is this the production value you are looking for when promoting the company to your valued customers and influencers?

Production value is more important than ever when you're pivoting to a digital event, largely because it's so obvious to your viewers. Instead of thinking of a simple video or screen share meeting, think of it more like the type of high-quality broadcast you see from a major news network or TV magazine show such as the One Show, with the ability to be interactive. It is important, therefore, that there is a high production value, not only from the event aspect but also from the broadcast aspect.

## Platform

Your event will be broadcast through a streaming platform. The platform chosen is dependent on where and who your audience is. Public events can be broadcast through platforms such as Facebook Live, YouTube or any number of providers that provide a streaming service. Quite the opposite to public streaming, private streaming is just that.....private. If the content is sensitive or you want people to pay to view, you will need to put in place a process that only allows invited attendees to be able to view.

## A word of caution

The internet is not always your friend. If your event venue is sharing the internet with other guests or the general public, your event team are not in control of the final broadcast quality. It is important that locations can provide a dedicated internet service for your event only. We can advise you when it comes to booking the right event space.



## Contact details

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Through our websites

Groundzero Live is our dedicated Event Broadcast website. Go here first. The other site is our main Live event site

**[www.groundzerolive.co.uk](http://www.groundzerolive.co.uk)**

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