



TYCOON
EVENTS

SEASONAL EVENT GUIDE 2022 – PART 1

Tips and tricks to planning events
this upcoming season.

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Alberta has reopened, and has rescinded a majority of restrictions as we ease into the Spring and Summer seasons. There is a range of viewpoints and emotions surrounding the lifting of restrictions, with some people forging quickly ahead into a world without restrictions and others remaining reserved and cautious of these new changes. With the growing desire for live events to come back and an elevated enthusiasm for hybrid events, how do these changes affect your next event?

We've created this guide to help you with the planning of your next event regardless of format: virtual, hybrid or in-person. Our team has researched and reflected on best practices that consider every comfort level. With a safety-first and people-first mindset, we have included applications and tips that will help you and your attendees build connections in a safe environment.

Let's take a look at some of this season's most common event types and offer suggestions, with best practices, to set you up for success:

- Appreciation and awards events
- Fundraising events
- Conferences
- Social events, galas, and receptions
- Tradeshow and exhibitions



EVENT HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

While the restrictions have been lifted in Alberta, it is important to remember that COVID-19 is still something to be mindful of when planning any event. Although many people are comfortable with gathering again, there are a range of comfort levels to plan for. It is essential to keep in mind that one size does not fit all.

You may have a group of attendees who will be interested in wearing a mask, keeping their distance from their peers, and limiting food and drink consumption, while others will be comfortable mingling with no precautions in place. You must plan for attendees on both ends of the spectrum and get creative in ways that you can build safety into your event design.

Keep in mind that, while the restrictions were lifted at time of publishing, it is essential to reference the regulations and direction of local health authorities prior to your event.

With safety, comfort, and peace of mind at the forefront of all that we do, let's talk about how to make that happen.



PRE-EVENT

Things to Consider:

- Know your audience. Send a survey to your potential attendees to gauge their comfort levels.
- Check local health regulations to see if there are any mandates or guidelines in place for the location of your event, or venue.
- Create a contingency plan in the event that restrictions change, and you need to implement more safety measures.
- Create a safety plan that outlines what measures you have in place and how you will enforce these measures.
- Also include what to do if someone becomes ill or is displaying symptoms at your event.
- Consider points of contact and how to reduce risk in these spaces:
 - > Registration
 - > Access points
 - > Food and beverage
 - > Seating arrangements
 - > Networking
 - > Bathrooms

Event Application and Tips:

- Send multiple communications to attendees and vendors prior to the event so they know the expectations.
- Share the safety plan and expectations with the event team, and ensure you have compliance amongst everyone.
- Create signage and traffic flow markers to be used throughout the space. Be sure to have them at eye level or higher so that guests can see them. Floor markers are sometimes hard to spot in a crowded space and one doesn't naturally look at the ground when walking.
- Consider event flow and be mindful of physical space – creating intentional areas for attendees to gather in small groups without creating a bottleneck.

DURING THE EVENT

Things to Consider:

- If you have implemented any policies such as masking, QR codes or physical distancing, how will you enforce these protocols?
- What will you do if attendees are resistant or hesitant to follow the policies/regulations?
- If the health regulations have recently changed, ensure that your guests have been reminded of the changes prior to the start, on arrival, and throughout the event. For example, if masking rules changed from optional to mandatory.
- How will attendees communicate with organizers in the event of illness or the onset of symptoms?

Event Application and Tips:

- Clear signage that details expectations should be on site in multiple places.
- On the day of the event, remind event team members and vendors of expectations and the policies in place.
- Use SMS or email updates to remind attendees of expectations or important updates.
- Open communication from attendees to organizers is important so they are comfortable and able to report any onset of symptoms as necessary.
- Designated onsite 'Safety Person':
 - > This person will be responsible for ensuring that attendees are following the guidelines in place at your event.
 - > They will also be responsible for mitigating any issues that may arise, in regards to safety protocols at the event.
 - > Ensure the 'Safety Person' has a copy of the safety communications that have been provided to attendees for reference and a de-escalation plan in case a situation arises.
- Have sanitizing stations throughout the event.

POST-EVENT

Things to Consider:

- Collect feedback from attendees, vendors and event team about what went well and what could be improved upon next time.
 - > Did attendees feel safe?
 - > Were the vendors happy with the guidelines in place? Did they have feedback from attendees they interacted with?
 - > Did the event team have any difficulties enforcing the guidelines?

Event Application and Tips:

- Send a survey to attendees encouraging them to share their honest feedback.
- Send an additional survey to vendors (tailored to them) to ensure you met their expectations for safety.
- Check in with your event team to discuss what went well and what could be improved upon.



Image source: Tycoon Events

EVENT SUGGESTIONS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR SPRING AND SUMMER

No matter what type of event you're planning, the most important pieces to have in place are staffing and communication plans.



Image source: www.pexels.com/photo/photo-of-people-doing-handshakes-3183197/



Staffing Plan:

- Consider additional staff in any place where there may be bottlenecks or backlogs, such as food and beverage lines, registration or check in, and entrances and exits.
- Ensure every staff member knows their role and who to contact with questions. We recommend pre-event team briefings to bring everyone, including casual staff and volunteers, up to speed on all tasks and safety protocols.

Image source: CHUTERSNAP on Unsplash



Communication Plan:

- Open communication channels with attendees, volunteers, staff and vendors early, so that you can share important details. Know how you will reach out to these individuals should you need to report an outbreak or any immediate changes they need to be aware of.
- Ensure that all onsite staff have a way to communicate back and forth with one another in a timely and reliable way (i.e. radios, a Whatsapp group chat, dedicated Slack channel, mobiles, etc.).
- Provide pre-event communication that addresses any additional restrictions you will be implementing at the event. This could include any masking or vaccination requirements that are set at the venue, or event that are in addition to current government restrictions.
- Share your health and safety plan with anyone who will be working onsite. Discuss how to report any illness, restrictions that will be in place at the event, and the enforcement plan for anyone not complying with this plan.
- Appoint a 'Safety Person', a 'Communications Lead', and an 'Event Lead' for your event. Share their contact details with everyone who may need to reach out to them, including attendees as required
- Signage with event QR codes can be used around the venue to provide attendees with access to important information such as the health and safety policies and procedures, contact information for the event organizer, and any other important event details. The more information they have available to them, the more comfortable they will feel.



Image source: Tycoon Events



Image source: Tycoon Events

APPRECIATION AND AWARDS EVENTS



Ideas on how to execute virtual events:

- Consider adding VR (virtual reality) or AR (augmented reality) elements to your event design to offer attendees an experience that exceeds their expectations and one that is engaging.
- Utilize live entertainment so attendees can engage in real-time with performers. Pre-recordings are great because you can control the look and sound, giving optimal performance; however, they don't allow for that engagement factor.
- Provide ample opportunities for networking so attendees can talk and mingle. Most guests are used to virtual events where all they discuss is business, rather than catching up with each other on a personal level.
- Encourage attendees to personalize their profiles/online presence so that they are more relatable to their peers.
- Consider sending award nominees customized backdrops (physical or virtual) so that they can be easily recognized as nominees.
- Utilize digital prizes, gifts, or NFT's instead of tangible items. This is ultimately better for the environment, while still allowing you to recognize people's contributions.

- If you are incorporating delivery boxes sent to the attendee's homes, they must be curated and intentional. The last thing you want to do is send something that will just be tossed in the trash.
 - > Boxes could include items that are necessary for your event, such as:
 - Curated cocktail or mocktail kits
 - Food or ingredients for a specific, unique meal
 - Materials for a certain activity or workshop
 - Thoughtful gift purchased based on your attendees' specific likes



Ideas to execute in-person events:

- Consider using an outdoor event space or venue, when appropriate. Since studies have shown that COVID-19 transmission is quite minimal outdoors, you can provide peace of mind to attendees.
- If you have chosen an outdoor venue, ensure to have plenty of seating stations, picnic tables and/or picnic blankets for attendees to use.
 - > Make sure there are items for keeping your guest comfortable, like blankets, mosquito spray, or hand fans.
 - > Alternative options in case of bad weather are also an important consideration.
 - > Ensure that a heating or cooling plan for guests is also in place.
- If you're planning to use an indoor venue, double check that their space requirements fit your needs. Even though provincial guidelines are 'back to normal,' some venues have opted to keep their spaces functioning at a reduced capacity.
- Set up sanitization stations throughout the event, accompanied by signage reminding attendees of best practices.
- Utilize touchless technology for registration, and even food and drink orders.
- If you are facilitating an event for a client with attendees from multiple locations, consider hosting several small events simultaneously instead of hosting everyone in one location.
 - > Set up live streams where each location can see each other to give the overall feeling of unity.
 - > Think about incorporating friendly competitions between the staff at each location to encourage engagement.



Ideas to execute hybrid events:

- Break geographical barriers by hosting viewing parties in various locations.
- Consider utilizing technology or apps that allow attendees to network digitally, this allows for all attendees to connect regardless of location. If you are unsure of what options are available, refer to our [Virtual Event Resource](#) to find a robust list.
- If you are limiting the number of attendees, consider having the nominees or award recipients attend the live event to accept their awards and make their acceptance speech. Live stream the awards stage to other attendees who would like to participate and show their support.



Image source: Tycoon Events



Image source: PATRICK SEMANSKY_AP_SHUTTERSTOCK

FUNDRAISING EVENTS



Ideas on how to execute virtual events:

- Host a virtual silent auction which can be opened over an extended period of time and close off at the live event. Check out our [Virtual Event Resource](#) for virtual platform ideas.
 - > Include digital prizes, gifts, or NFT's as well as tangible items.
- Consider adding VR or AR elements to your event design to offer attendees an experience that is worth their time and engaging.
- To encourage team fundraising try:
 - > A virtual 'night at the races' (version of horse races)
 - > Virtual bingo
 - > Trivia nights
- Utilize live entertainment so attendees can engage in real-time with performers and performers can prompt attendees to donate.



Ideas on how to execute hybrid events:

- Runs, walks and bikeathons allow the attendee to participate in-person on the race day or virtually at their own pace.
- If you are fundraising for a physical space, incorporate hybrid tours where attendees can visit in person or receive a live-streamed virtual tour experience.

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Ideas on how to execute in-person events:

- Drive-in movies are a great way to bring attendees together, while respecting comfort levels. Here are a few things to remember:
 - > Time of day – optimal viewing requires low light (i.e. from dusk onwards)
 - > Have plans in place for inclement weather (extra security for the screen in case it's windy).
 - > Will you allow attendees to sit on site without remaining in their vehicles? If so, offer a designated viewing area that has shelter from the elements.
 - > Have food and beverage options available, like food trucks.
 - > Have sound options available for attendees that will be sitting outside their vehicle in lawn chairs or in the beds of trucks.
 - > Be sure to have a 'vehicle idling' policy in place if necessary and specify what types of vehicles are permitted onsite.
- Golf tournaments are a great option and can be tailored to meet the needs of various attendee comfort levels. Some additional considerations:
 - > Offer a sanitization swag bag at the first hole.
 - > Stagger start times so that some groups are finishing while others are just getting started.
 - > Include a variety of contests such as longest drive, straightest drive or closest to the pin where attendees can compete at their leisure throughout the day to prevent bottlenecks.
 - > Consider hosting the dinner in two locations, with each streaming to the other, so the group sizes are smaller.



Image source: Tycoon Events

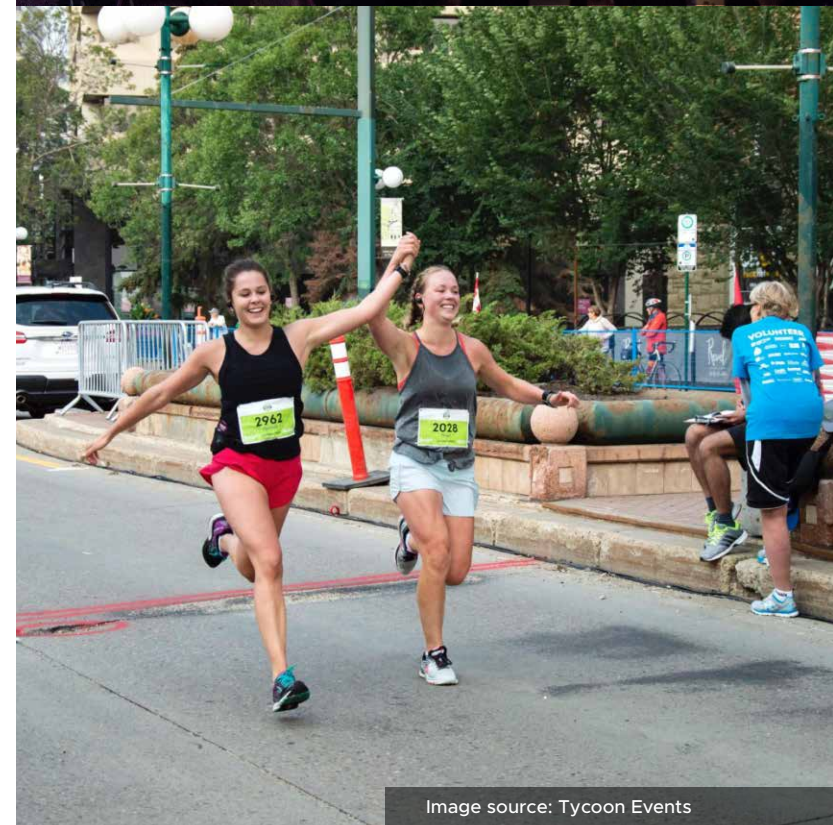


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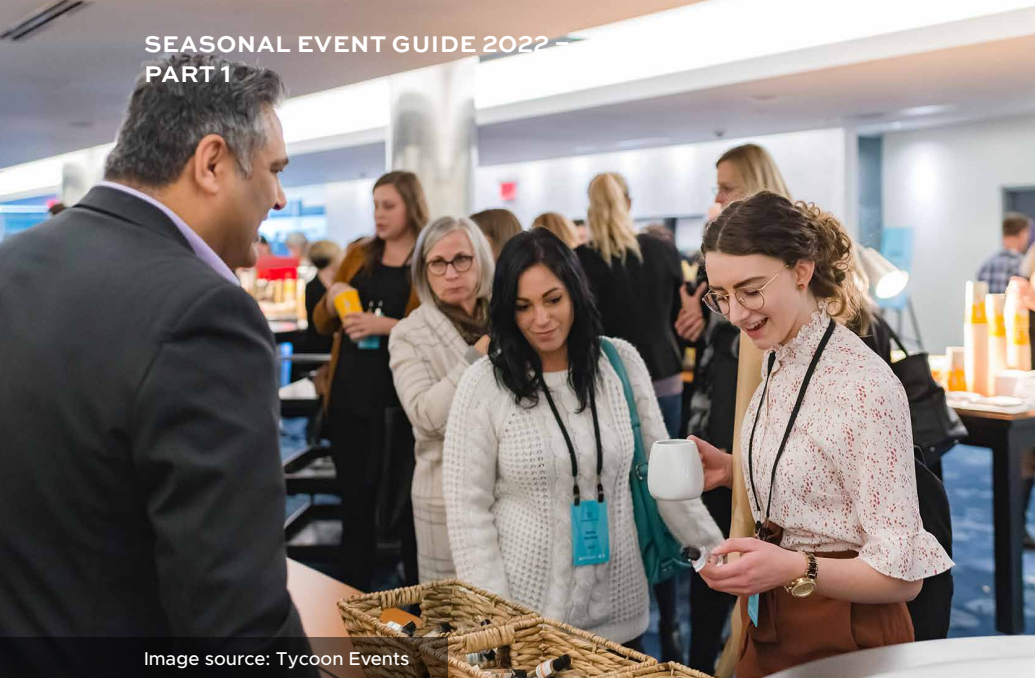


Image source: Tycoon Events



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CONFERENCES



Ideas on how to execute virtual events:

- The same delivery box concept mentioned in Appreciation and Awards Events can be used here. Additional options could include:
 - > Midday snack boxes.
 - > Supplies packages to participate in team building or ice breaker activities (Could include options to build or create something).
 - > Rise and grind box with items like specialty coffee, branded mugs or other caffeinated treats.
 - > Tech focussed box with items like wireless headphones, blue light glasses or leather mouse pads.
- Consider adding VR or AR elements to your event design to offer attendees an experience that is worth their time and engaging.
- Create balance in the schedule between educational and fun elements. Think about including fun team-building exercises, wellness check-ins, educational breakout sessions, and inspirational keynotes.
- Incorporate audience engagement and interaction as often as possible. Choosing a platform that allows attendees to create avatars within the platform or conduct live Q & A with onstage speakers will elevate your conference experience. For options of virtual platforms, check out our [Virtual Event Resource](#).



Ideas on how to execute hybrid events:

- Allow attendees to choose to attend in person or virtually by live streaming your keynote and breakout sessions to an integrated virtual platform.
- Ensure you have a way for the virtual audience to interact with the speakers during Q & A sessions. This can be done by having a designated person to ask the questions from the virtual audience to the speaker.
- Look into technologies that may be available to you to better the virtual attendee experience. This could include options like [The Beam Pro at the Vancouver Convention Centre](#).
- Micro Events that highlight a specific topic or speaker could also be offered.



Ideas on how to execute in-person events:

- Create designated quiet, safe spaces for attendees to be able to step away from the crowd. As some attendees may be overwhelmed with higher attendance events, this can help provide an opportunity to relax and reset before returning to the live programming.
 - > Including soft lighting, comfortable seating, and items like yoga mats or meditation chairs are an added boost to the attendee experience.
- Create a communication and safety plan early in the planning process and communicate it often to all parties involved.

- Reduce bottlenecks, gathering points, and touch points wherever possible. Consider options such as:
 - > Virtual check in from your phone.
 - > Eliminating swag or pivoting to virtual swag and gifts such as: gift cards, charitable donations on behalf of attendees, or NFTs.
 - > Stagger session start and end times if possible to limit the number of people gathering in common areas.
 - > Signage with a QR that links to the event website throughout the event can be useful. This could include information such as the health and safety plan, schedule, site map, and frequently asked questions. This can help reduce congestion at areas such as the help desk.



Image source: Tycoon Events



Image source: Tycoon Events

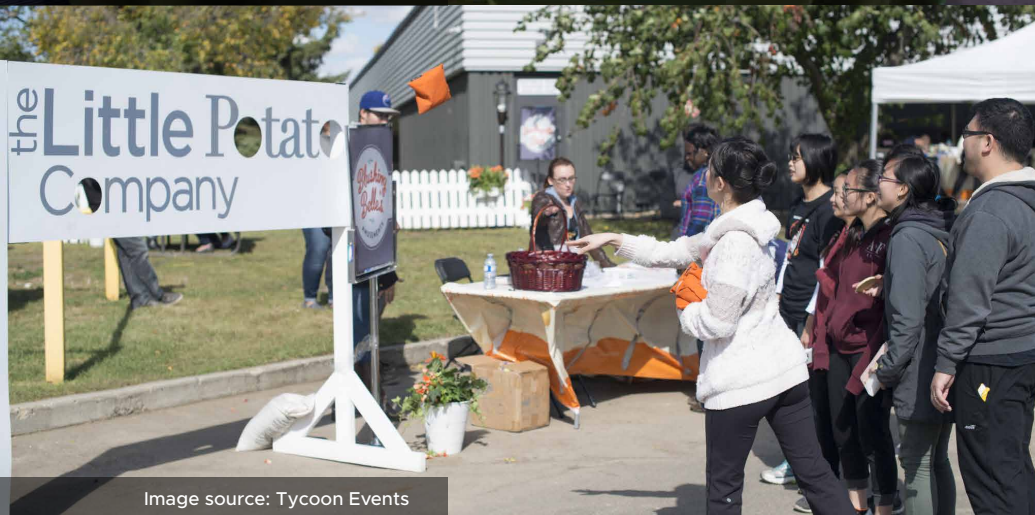


Image source: Tycoon Events

SOCIAL EVENTS, GALAS, AND RECEPTIONS



Ideas on how to execute virtual events:

- Utilize third party virtual activity providers that engage the audience. Options could include:
 - > Virtual travel experience where attendees get to experience a new location live streamed from the tour guide.
 - > Escape rooms.
 - > Murder mysteries.
 - > Trivia night.
 - > Bingo with a fun twist such as: hosted by drag queens or music themed bingo.
- Delivery boxes can be utilized to send out necessary supplies for attendees to join an interactive workshop. This could include:
 - > Floral arrangements that are fitting to the theme and season.
 - > Cocktail or mocktail class.
 - > Intro to calligraphy class.
 - > Watercolor or oil painting tutorial.
 - > Cookie or cake decorating.
 - > Wine or beer tasting or pairing class.

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- > Wellness classes such as yoga, meditation, hypnotherapy or a virtual nature walk.
- > Educational workshops that align with your audience's different personality types and interests.
- Host real-time entertainment from a studio and stream it to attendees.
 - > Allowing attendees to be involved in the entertainment will increase guest experience. This could include a mentalist that uses volunteers from the virtual audience for example.
 - > Incorporate a virtual photo booth. Some options also allow for virtual photo booth props.
 - > Include a networking and socialization space that allows for attendees to connect throughout the event. Check out our [Virtual Event Resource](#) for virtual platform ideas.



Ideas on how to execute hybrid events:

- Create a VIP experience by inviting some guests to attend live from a studio or select location, while offering a stream of the entertainment to other attendees in the virtual setting.
- Have your event span multiple geographical locations and cities, all of whom get to enjoy the same entertainment experience via a live stream of the entertainment. Coordinating the event atmosphere and menu between locations is essential to ensure the audience is getting a similar experience regardless of where they are attending.



Image source: Tycoon Events



Ideas on how to execute in-person events:

- Pre-event questionnaires can be used to determine the comfort levels of your attendees and help you determine which precautions need to be put in place.
- For concerts or movies-in-the-park events, create 'spaces' that people can buy instead of seats. Set up spaces with 10x10 tents or picnic table areas that people can purchase with their friends or family.
- Offer food service options that fit the comfort level of your attendees. This could mean having servers come to each area or table to collect food orders instead of having attendees line up.
- Traffic flow markers, queues, stanchioned lines, and additional signage are all options that can help keep traffic flowing and prevent bottlenecks.
- Make sure that ample washrooms, port-a-potties and hand washing/sanitizing stations are available.
- Follow the local Government's most updated guidelines when it comes to serving cannabis, alcohol and beer gardens. Keep in mind that these may vary from region to region.

TRADESHOWS AND EXHIBITIONS



Ideas on how to execute virtual events:

- Selection of the best platform, or platforms within your technology stack, will be extremely important. Check out our [Virtual Event Resource](#) for ideas on a platform that is best suited for your event.
- Evaluate your virtual “real estate” such as position within the platform and how many clicks are required to find the specific section, when selling your booths and exhibitor slots within the show. Spots on the home page, or opportunity to display advertising within sessions will be higher value over ads on a general sponsor page.
- Prepare all of your exhibitors with a pre-event meeting and package that describes all of the best practices for using the platform, how they will be able to engage with attendees, and who to contact if there are any issues they are experiencing. The better prepared your exhibitors are, the better experience for the attendees!
- Look for ways to incorporate AI (artificial intelligence) to help connect attendees with the exhibitors that are best suited to their interests. This creates a better experience for attendees and a better ROI for your exhibitors.
- Send swag or other conference materials to your attendees addresses so they can have a physical connection to the event and your exhibitors.

Image source: Tycoon Events

Image source: Tycoon Events

- Have a gamification plan in place that incentivizes attendees to check out the exhibitor booths and engage with exhibitors.
- Have a gamification plan in place for your exhibitors that incentivizes them to engage with and connect with the event attendees.
- Content is king! Allow your exhibitors to share documents, videos, digital brochures and links with your attendees through their page on the event platform.



Ideas on how to execute hybrid events:

- Maintain engagement by utilizing polls, Q&A sessions, live demonstrations, and quizzes that both the in-person and virtual audience can participate in.
- Registration options and packages are more diverse. Ensure potential attendees know what is included and the relative costs for each option for registration:
 - > In-person.
 - > Virtual.
 - > Combination.
- Prepare your exhibitors to be able to interact with both the in-person and virtual attendees. Ensure they have the technology, staffing, and knowledge to be able to execute both sides simultaneously and with a maximum return.
- Create a gamification plan for all attendees that aligns with their chosen participation path.



Ideas on how to execute in-person events:

- Your health and safety plan will need to be top priority and discussed with each exhibitor, staff, volunteer, and vendor.
- Pre-event questionnaires to determine the comfort levels of your target audience can also be utilized here.
- Consider your attendee comfort level when planning crowded demos, raffles with high touch points, group games, or packed presentations. Capacity limits, staggered starts, online raffles, or other factors may need to be considered to ensure your attendees feel comfortable throughout the event.
- Incorporate virtual reality or augmented reality interactions that can help elevate the attendee experience to the next level.
- Focus on the purpose and objectives of your event to ensure your attendees and exhibitors are receiving the highest return on their investment. With the additional costs to attend in-person, these individuals are expecting to see that additional investment in every aspect of the event.

STAY IN THE LOOP!



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Contact us today to start
planning your next event!



“To us, it really is all in the details!”