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Virtual Events:
What Works, What Doesn't and What the Industry Has Learned Over the Course of a Tumultuous Year

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has upended most of life and work as we know it—and the events industry is on the front lines of those seismic shifts taking place in how professionals learn, network and make deals.

A survey commissioned by Aventri revealed what event professionals have learned about hosting and holding virtual events over the past several months, where their pain points are and what they need to know now to leverage this technology and deliver value to their attendees, sponsors and other stakeholders.

While 70% of survey respondents had 20 or fewer virtual events planned for 2020 prior to the spread of Covid-19 in the U.S.—including 55% who said they had fewer than six planned—the pandemic's impact on the meetings sector can hardly be overstated: Now, a mere 3% have no virtual meetings planned, and more than one in three—36%—are planning for between six and 20 virtual meetings.

Many planners spent the early weeks of the pandemic relying on Zoom and other webinar technology. It soon became clear, however, that the events industry would need to source more robust tools and allocate more resources to creating remote facsimiles of face-to-face conferences, training convenings, trade shows, hosted buyer gatherings, and the like.

With in-person gatherings limited or off the table entirely for much of the year, virtual events have become the main players on the industry stage, a reality experts say is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.
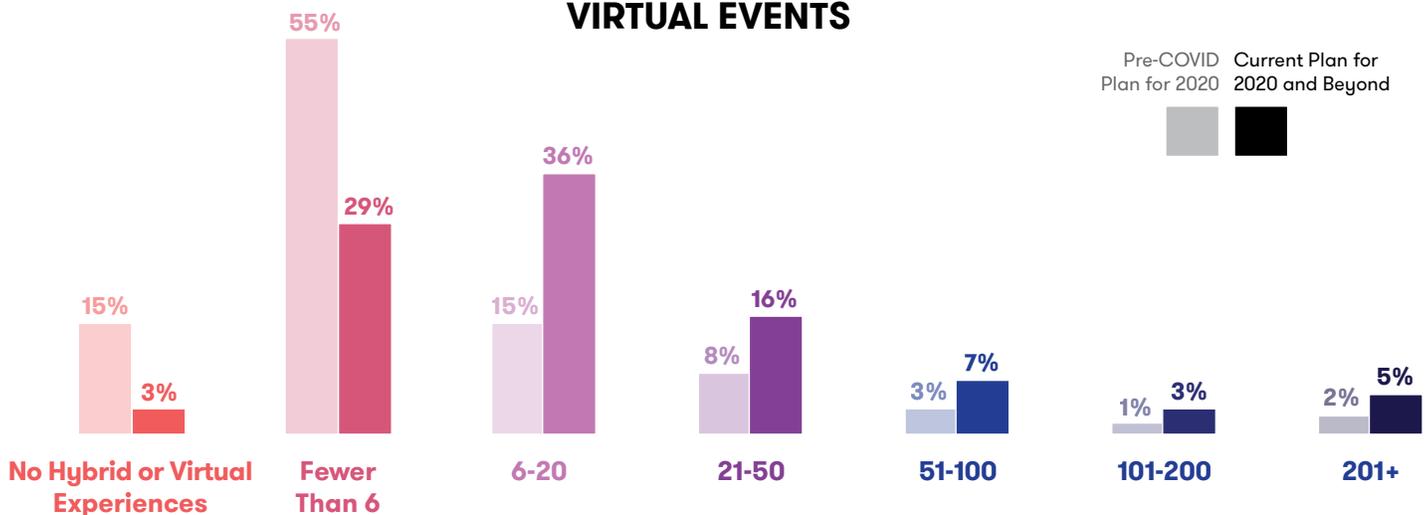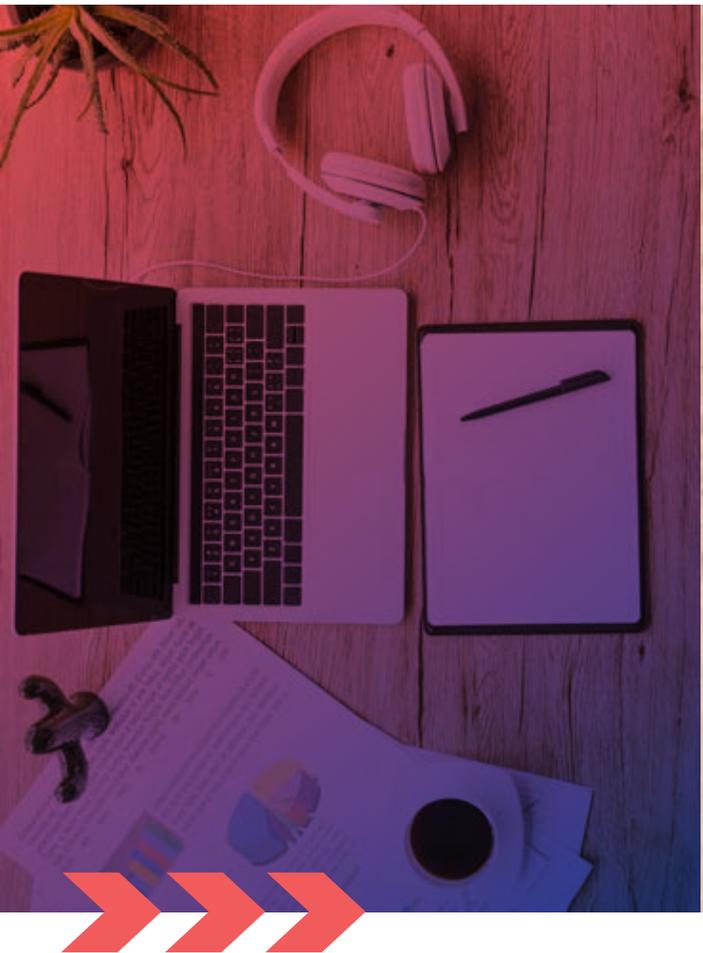
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to Learn About These Key Virtual Event Goals

✔ **Streamlining** Use of Multiple Platforms

✔ **Improving** Attendee Engagement

✔ **Driving and Proving Value** for Stakeholders

✔ **Benchmarking** ROI of Organizational Virtual Event Investments

VIRTUAL EVENTS

Pre-COVID Plan for 2020 | Current Plan for 2020 and Beyond

Category	Pre-COVID	Current
No Hybrid or Virtual Experiences	15%	3%
Fewer Than 6	55%	29%
6-20	15%	36%
21-50	8%	16%
51-100	3%	7%
101-200	1%	3%
201+	2%	5%

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CONCLUSION

The near-total collapse of in-person events as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic has strained corporations, trade associations, trade show organizers, event marketers and the rest of the industry.

It has become quite clear that planners need expert, experience-driven consultative advice to address their growing pains and friction points with virtual events technology. Those that undertake rapid adoption of virtual events platforms and software and can leverage those tools most successfully will be at a clear competitive advantage.

To achieve this, planners need to seek out a consultative partner to effectively execute benchmarking goals. Specifically, organizers should source and partner with a single virtual events platform provider to improve cost effectiveness and streamline the user experience.

Event organizers who can successfully quantify organizational value via high-quality data-tracking, -capture and -analytics will be able to deliver quality ROI metrics to their exhibitors and sponsors—and their own organizational leaders.

ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

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Aventri is a global leader in cloud based analytics and data driven end-toend event management and venue sourcing solutions. The award-winning, open-source platform delivers innovative technology solutions to streamline the event process, providing real-time data and analytics on event performance, customer engagement, and increasing measurable event ROI. Founded in 2008, Aventri has assisted over 25,000 event professionals in planning, executing, and measuring their events. With a focus on event sourcing, registration, marketing, logistics, engagement, mobile, and data analytics, the company serves more than 1,300 customers including leading corporations, associations, agencies, and educational institutions globally. Headquartered in the United States, the company also has offices in the UK, Belgium, Australia, Singapore, India, and UAE. Aventri is a portfolio company of private equity firm HGGC. Learn more at aventri.com or email sales@aventri.com.

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