



# Digital Event Strategist

## Lesson 5: Planning the Live Event

### LEARNER OUTCOMES:

- **Assess** the time commitment for speakers and create an expectation outline.
- **Measure** registration numbers to determine the number and type of team support roles needed for the live event.
- **Define** characteristics of a successful digital event speaker to aid in selecting the right speakers for your audience.

**Presented by**  
Kaila Bongiovanni

## SPEAKER LOGISTICS

Presented by Kaila Bongiovanni

Interview with Anne Walker, Executive Producer, MS Studios

### Event Hosts

When should you use a host?

- For longer events.
- Complex events with many sessions that need to be sutured together.
- When you want to engage the audience from their perspective.

A Host Can:

- Facilitate the content flow, help less experienced speakers feel at ease and engage in conversation, rather than a stiff presentation.
- Stand in for the audience, asking the questions the audience has, and even speaking directly to the audience. This is particularly important with online events, where the experience is often more passive than an in-person experience.

If you decide to use a host, should they be professional talent or someone from within your industry or company? Decide who you want representing your company.

- If it's more important for the event to look polished and add entertainment value, then a professional host who excels at being on camera is the way to go - you can train them on key messaging.
- If you want to be thought leader in the space and need someone who really knows the business or the company, you might want to look inside your organization for someone who is good on camera.

### Speaker & Content Logistics

Develop your request to speakers to include everything you need up front; make sure and make all your asks: including time needed, social needs, if they are willing to do live Q&A.

- Start thinking of your content first and early, have a short list of presenters, and develop a content review cycle. Get buy-in from all stakeholders as soon as possible.
- Make formal requests to your top speakers that are organized and complete. Make all requests upfront so they know what they're getting into.
  - How much time are you asking from them?
  - Outline preparation requirements (briefing calls, rehearsals, etc)
  - What is the topic?
  - Ask if they promote your event through their social media channels
  - Are they comfortable taking live Q&A?

## Preparing your Speakers

- Two weeks before the event: Set up a pre-interview to gather information, stories, and examples, from the speakers. This is an opportunity to listen to the speaker for specificity.
  - Coach for what works well online - specific, vivid stories. Concrete real-life examples, short sentences. Segments that last no more than 15-20 minutes (ideal).
  - Discuss visual assets/aids - a prop, video or graphics that help illustrate their point. These create memorable moments and illustrate rather than describe. "Show me, don't tell me" is your motto when creating online content.
  - Think about their take-away. What do they want the audience to remember and go do at the end of their presentation?
  - By the end of that interview, you should have a set of co-scripted interview questions and the main beats of the presentation.
- One week before the event: 2<sup>nd</sup> pre-interview to further refine the presentation. Have the speaker walk through the speech, format or interview as though they were on stage. Give notes and make sure the beginning and end of the presentation is as strong as possible.
  - Offer wardrobe tips - usually business casual, simple clothing, jewel-tone colors, no dangling/noisy jewelry.
  - Recommendations for what is going to look good and sound on camera - coach them to communicate in the best way to make them look like pros.
- Rehearsal on stage, day before the event: This is a chance for the speaker to physically embody their presentation and the surrounding. It is also a chance for them to get used to the microphone, the earpiece, looking into camera, and ignoring the camera!

### NOTES:

## ENGAGING SPONSOR PARTICIPATION AND RECOGNITION

Interview with Jennifer Kingen Kush and Dave Sclanders

What are some of your goals for partnership and sponsorship within digital events?

- Raise awareness for destination.
- Aligned value of technology and innovation.
- Support industry education to help push the industry forward and help meeting professionals gain the skills to design and produce digital events.
- Demonstrate thought leadership.

From a sponsorship perspective, what is the most exciting element of participating in the digital event space?

- The ability to actively engage with the audience.
- The extended reach to connect with professionals globally.
- The rich metrics capabilities to demonstrate ROI.

What would be your advice on ways to engage and support sponsors from a partner perspective?

- Don't be afraid, be seen as an innovator.
- Open your mind.
- Learning opportunities for both conference planners and sponsors.
- Instantaneous responses.

### 3 Best Practices to extend to your digital event sponsor to enhance their experience and ROI for your events.

1. Conduct a VIP walk-thru of environment pre-event for the sponsor:
  - Highlight the recognition/branding areas (*be sure to get approvals during the build out process to ensure expectations are met*)
  - Give them a sneak peak of the online environment, walk them through the user's experience and demonstrate how to best navigate the platform
  - Share an overview of the program, highlighting key sessions, and provide recommendations of the special ones not to miss
  - Provide projected audience demographics; how many people, where are they coming from, who they are, etc.
2. Share best practices for engaging with audience during the event:
  - Create a message board in the sponsor's online space [booth]; encourage attendees to visit them and share a special note of thanks on their message wall
  - Identify the sponsor's participating team members prior to the event.
  - Encourage the sponsor to engage in the online chat as an active participant; they should optimally have an opinion/insight/example of the topic under discussion in addition to networking with friendly banter. It creates a very approachable and personable presence with the attendees.

- Be sure to advise the hybrid moderators, who from the sponsor[s] will be participating and request they perform special shoutouts welcoming and thanking them publicly for their support while encouraging the attendees to do the same.
3. Make sure you share your event stats with your sponsors. It's important they know the ROI for the exposure and engagement with your audience.

### DAY OF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE EVENT LEAD

Presented by Kaila Bongiovanni, Senior Digital Marketing Manager, Microsoft

Regardless of the scale of event you're producing, regardless of your budget, the role of the event lead during a livestream event is the same.

#### *T Minus One Day*

- Monitor registration number.
  - Do you need to amp up your staffing? How does expected turnout impact your last minute staffing considerations? le., more staff for live chatting and social media conversations.

#### **NOTES:**

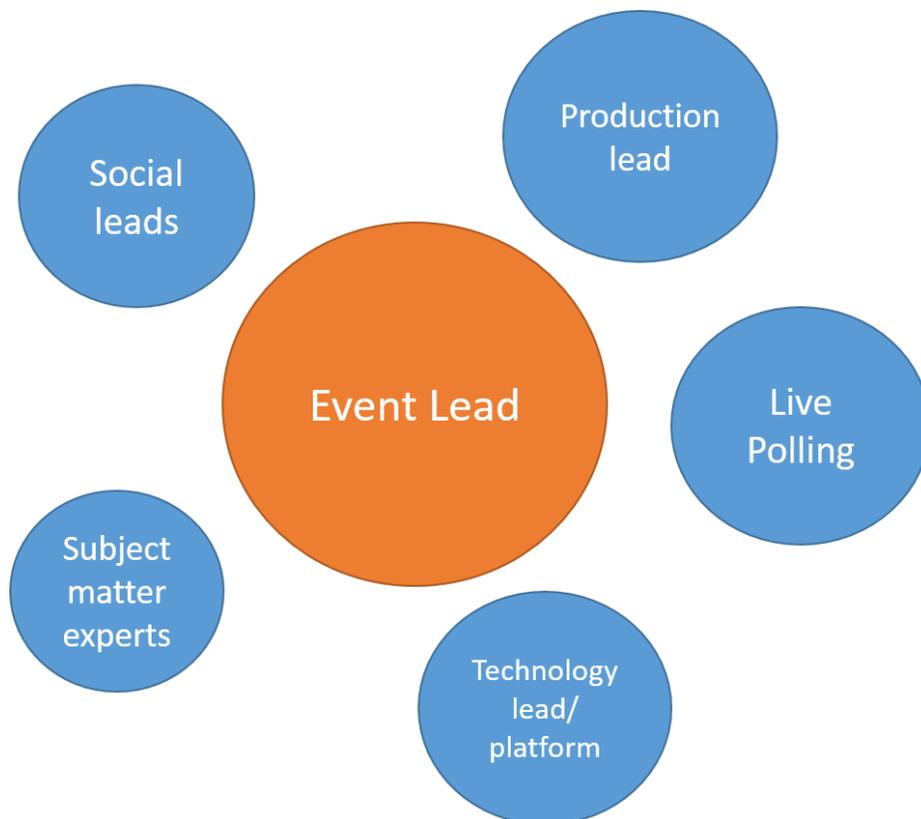
- 1 expert for every 300 attendees.
- Must be able to answer attendee questions quickly enough.
- Use your average conversion rate to make assumptions of how many registered will actually attend to guide your staffing needs.
- Will your technology support an influx of additional last-minute attendees?

### Day Of

- Have very crisp and understand the role and responsibilities for day of.
- Have your trained dream team in place and in a command center room/online bridge together (min. 30 mins before event starts).
  - At Microsoft for hybrid events, that includes:
    - Event lead to run full team, execution and questions.
    - Platform management or platform SME to address technical issues.
    - In-person.
    - Point person with onsite production.
    - Social lead(s) for proactive and reactive postings during live event.
    - SMEs for chat room, live polling, social media.

The team that's in your command center will be dependent on what type of platform you're using and what type of event you are producing and the scale of the event (length/#attendees, level of interactivity).

- The more interactivity you have, the more staff you need to man them



**NOTES:**