

You can't provide the same person to person experience right now, but what can you do?

- Avoid getting a monotone host that will bore people
- Determine what's unique to your organization, and use that to make your event unique.
 - Use this to relay your message and be entertaining in your own way.

Ways to structure your virtual event

- Be conscious of what people are comfortable with in terms of in-person attendance
 - 10 or under is a good baseline if you want to do something in person
 - Consider multi-day events
- Small groups can gather separately, and then tune in virtually.
- Keep your presentation below 40 minutes. You don't have the captive audience like you do with a traditional gala around a dinner table.
- Your silent auction and donation initiatives can be going on that whole week rather than just during the presentation.
- Be conscious of your audience and technology
 - Going live can be exciting, but having your presentation pre-recorded is more forgiving of them having technical difficulties and protects you against technical difficulties.
 - Having your gala live allows for interruptions.
 - Some people may not have or follow you on Facebook or LinkedIn
 - Be sure you get them a link!
 - Having a chat moderator and a helpline or email address is essential.
 - It's alright for people to have opinions. Take their feedback and be polite. They're potential donors and it's better that they're engaged anyways.
- Think of it as a TV show! Plug in commercials for your sponsors to give people a break.
- Let a video with timestamps live on your website after the event with a call to donate nearby.



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Ways to make your online gala exciting and authentic

- Avoid having a monotone Executive Director talking on Zoom.
- Think about the best parts of your event.
 - Examples
 - Cocktail hour
 - Silent Auction
 - Be aware that businesses are struggling and may not be able to provide you with items for a silent auction.
 - Maybe this is an opportunity to be creative with what you could offer.
 - Dinner
 - Dance
 - Live music
 - Videos to tell your story and drive home your impact
 - Can you take them online? How?
 - Cut out the other stuff

How to charge for your event

- Ask your sponsors for the same amount and don't shy away from it.
 - Let them know how many more clients you have.
 - If they say no, ask them genuinely, "What *can* they do?"
- Be thoughtful of what you're providing to your attendees when considering what to charge.
 - All virtual may not be full price. But if you're delivering wine or dinner, for example, that warrants a higher price to attend.
 - A lower price points mean more donations because they can be written off.

Biggest piece of advice: HAVE SOMETHING THIS YEAR. Be thankful for what you can get. Be geared up for a huge 2021!



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