

The essential guide to keeping your virtual audience engaged



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Scott Gould, engagement consultant and author of “[The Shape of Engagement](#),” describes the three different psychological states of engagement:

- Head engagement, or cognitive engagement, when someone is connected with you mentally. This happens when event content and communication is highly compelling.
- Hands engagement, or behavioral engagement, when someone is physically involved and creating things they’ll actually use. This requires opportunities for participation.
- Heart engagement, or affective engagement, when someone feels a sense of bonding and inclusion. This requires organizers to create a real community around their events — and get people excited to be part of that community.

The best events hit all three states of engagement. The TED events are known for striking this balance. Their events typically feature compelling presentations, hands-on workshops, and space to talk and share meals.

“In particular, they excel at head engagement,” Scott says. “They recognize people are happy to sit and listen when you’ve got world-class speakers on stage.”

Let’s face it, most virtual (and many physical) events we attend could improve their engagement elements a bit. But here’s what’s really at stake: What can **you** do to secure your registration numbers and ensure **your** audience stays tuned in for the entire event?

This document offers a number of strategies for you to take and apply to your own events. Follow this advice and watch your events go from strength to strength.

STRATEGY 1:

Timing is everything

The success of your virtual event relies heavily on how long people will need to be sitting in front of their screen.

People will be too busy (or sleepy) in the early morning and booked up later in the evening. These are typically hours when your potential attendees are likely to be least engaged with your event.

To counteract this, consider scheduling your events for mid-day.

Research suggests that people are at their cognitive best during the late morning to early afternoon.

A [study published](#) in the journal “Cognitive Science” found that problem-solving, logical reasoning, and alertness tend to peak between 10am and 1pm.

With this in mind, a mid-day timing might give you the sweet spot between the morning’s emails and the anticipation of evening plans, maximizing engagement from your attendees.

Another timing aspect to consider is the length of your event.

[The ideal webinar length](#) is between 30 to 60 minutes, which prevents “[Zoom fatigue](#)” while providing ample time to engage attendees and convey your key messages. If your event runs for a longer duration, consider incorporating breaks every 45-60 minutes to allow your attendees a brief respite.



The ideal webinar length is between 30 to 60 minutes, which prevents “Zoom fatigue”

STRATEGY 2:

Make it for the on-the-go attendee

The way people interact with events has changed. People tend to be more mobile-focused and there's a good chance that your audience could be attending your virtual event while being out and about. They could be anywhere—lounging by the pool, taking a road trip, or perhaps even at a Salsa class.



The US market for Mobile Data Traffic is estimated at 30.3GB per month per device in 2024



It's important to cater to this 'on-the-go' lifestyle by making sure your events are mobile-friendly.

The US market for [Mobile Data Traffic](#) is estimated at 30.3GB per month **per device** in 2024, with more than half of all internet traffic on mobile. This is expected to only grow, making mobile optimization for your virtual event no longer a luxury but a necessity.

Mobile optimization could mean a few different things.

It might involve a mobile-optimized website where attendees can easily find information about your event, register, and access the event itself.

Mobile optimization also means your content should be readily viewable and navigable on a phone (or tablet). This could require [choosing a platform](#) that automatically adapts to different screen sizes or creating content that is succinct and clear, considering the smaller display of mobile devices.

If your event requires more complex interaction or specific tools, a dedicated app could be beneficial. Several successful events have used apps that provide information, live stream capabilities, and interaction possibilities.

By optimizing for the on-the-go attendee, you increase the convenience factor. This not only enhances the user experience but also makes it more likely that your attendees will stay engaged for the entire event, no matter where they're joining from.

STRATEGY 3:

Gamification

The term might be overused to the point of cliché, but gamification has proven to have a positive impact on engagement and interaction with everything from sales targets to tax returns.

You could start by including interactive elements such as [quizzes or polls](#). These fun activities not only serve as mental palate cleansers but also provide a chance for attendees to interact with the event and each other, creating a more immersive experience, and increasing the likelihood they will stay for the entire duration.

For instance, take a leaf out of TEDxSydney's book. They implemented '[Fast Ideas](#),' a segment where attendees pitched ideas, and the audience voted for their favorite one, culminating in a lively and interactive experience.

Depending on the tone of your event, you might consider ways to include one of these games in your event:

Virtual scavenger hunt

Designing a virtual scavenger hunt for your event is an easy way to provide a customized interactive experience. You could use this as a way to encourage attendees to explore areas of your event to find hidden "tokens" and earn prizes.

Launch a sponsor raffle

The promise of an exciting prize is a great way to encourage attendees to visit virtual exhibitor booths.

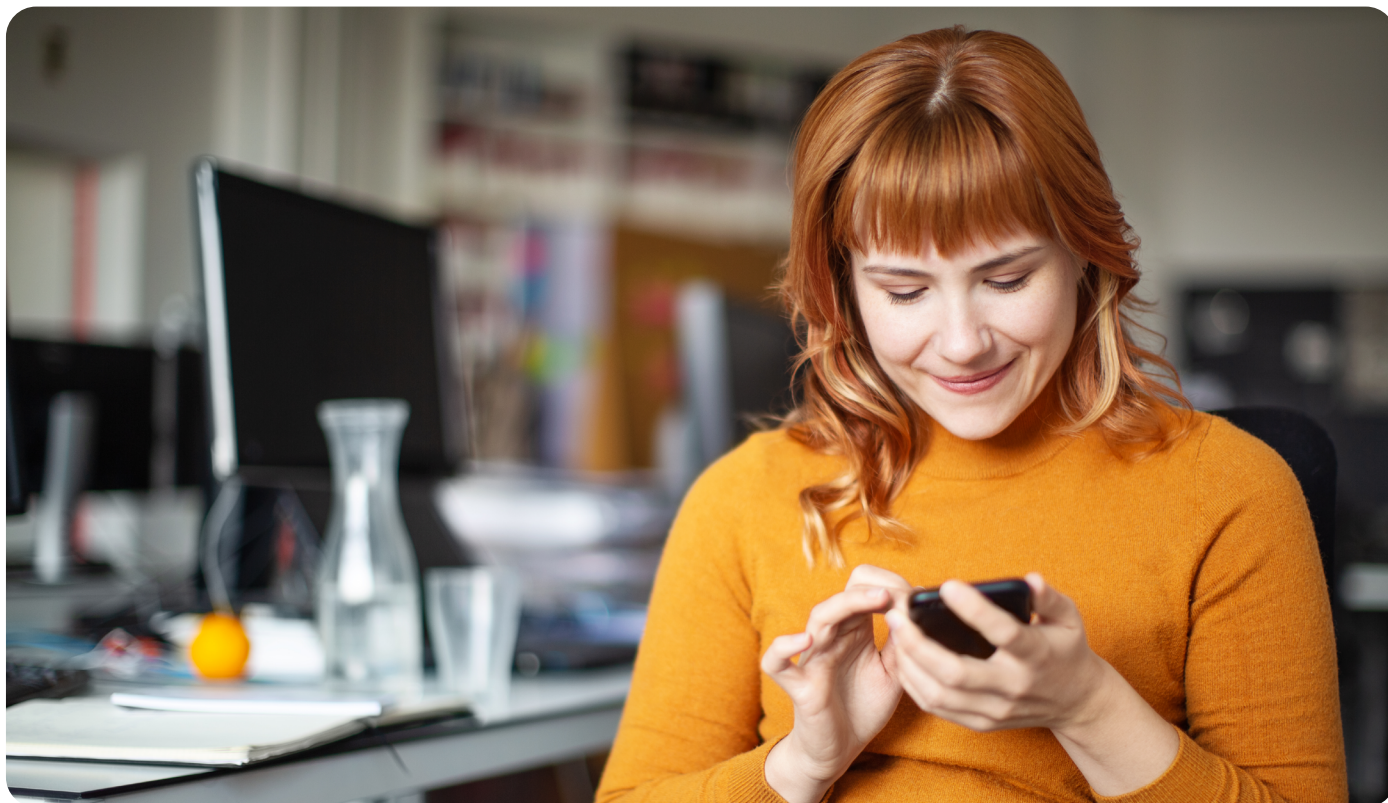
When an attendee is viewing an expo booth on RingCentral Events, they can click a call-to-action button to connect with the sponsor. This triggers an email to the sponsor with contact information the attendee provides—making post-event outreach easy.

Tap into app experiences

Third-party app integrations can enhance the gamification experience and take some of the burden of planning or creating a game off your shoulders. Below are a few examples of services event professionals use to make their events a success:

Kahoot allows you to integrate a fun single-player game for attendees to tackle on their own time, or take virtual presentations to the next level with the app's interactive presentation tools.

An app like Picture Mosaic allows guests to submit photos and see them placed in a mosaic in real-time. After the event, attendees can share their photos on social media to create buzz.



STRATEGY 4:

Keep it light and fun

If you're open to creating an engaging and memorable experience for your attendees, try these tips for how you can do this well.

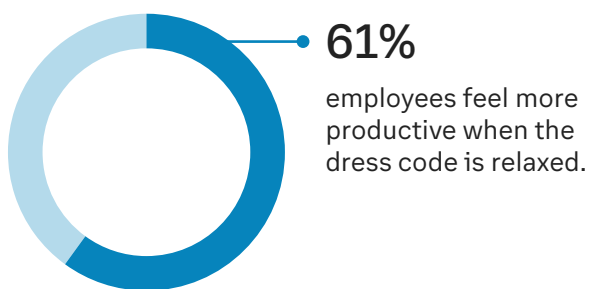
Themes

Using [bright and engaging visuals](#) (think summer colors, tones etc.) can also make your event more on brand with the summer vibe.

Don't shy away from incorporating colorful infographics, slides, or videos to put people at ease and pique their interest for what is to come.

[Colored visuals](#) increase people's willingness to read a piece of content by 80%, so be sure to [take advantage](#).

Clothing



Consider a laid-back dress code—that doesn't mean people need to turn up in fancy dress, but a less formal approach can help attendees feel more comfortable and relaxed.

61% of employees feel [more productive](#) when the dress code is relaxed. So keeping with a themed event can help create a more interactive environment and ensure that those attendees are staying for the full 30 or 40 minutes.

Just remember to strike a balance between fun and professionalism. While it's important to incorporate elements of fun to keep the mood light and the attendees engaged, it's equally vital that your event delivers the valuable content your attendees have signed up for.

This balance will make sure that your virtual event is both enjoyable and enriching, creating an unforgettable experience for your attendees.

STRATEGY 5:

Say it out loud (on social)!

Everybody knows the value of promotion on social media, so take our advice and use these platforms to build anticipation for your event.



It's always important to make sure you have content that stands out in your audience's feeds. Stick with your theme for your event and think vibrant graphics or short, engaging videos that highlight key aspects of the event.

You can also consider creating a unique and catchy hashtag for your event to track the buzz that is happening before, during, and after your event.

Hashtags can be an effective way to consolidate all conversations related to your event, encouraging attendees to share their own experiences and thoughts. [#AdobeSummit](#), Adobe's annual conference, encourages attendee participation on Twitter, resulting in huge visibility and engagement.

Think about hosting social media contests or challenges related to your event—before or during it. You might ask your followers to share a post or story about why they're excited to attend your event, with the chance to win a prize.

During your event, make sure to also share live updates, snippets from sessions, or behind-the-scenes glimpses. This will help maintain a connection with your audience, even if they can't attend live, and generate FOMO (fear of missing out) among those who didn't register.

STRATEGY 6:

Provide on-demand content

Using all of the strategies above, it is most likely that there will still be a few attendees who will not be able to attend your live event—from clashing schedules to spontaneous plans—can affect live attendance.

That's where on-demand content comes into play.

On-demand content is not just a contingency plan, but an important strategy in its own right. It provides flexibility for those who couldn't make the live event to engage with your content at their leisure.

Another form of on-demand content could be keeping your event live after the main event to keep discussions going or have Q&A threads that [remain active after the event](#). This can help foster a sense of community among attendees.

On-demand content not only allows for greater flexibility, catering to your attendees' varying schedules and preferences, but also extends the life of your event, keeping the engagement going long after the live sessions have concluded.

Recap

Garnering attention in your event promotion, and maintaining high engagement levels during virtual events, can be a daunting task. However, by incorporating strategic measures, it's possible to turn the challenge into an opportunity.



Remember, timing is of the essence: aim for mid-day slots when attendees are at their cognitive peak.



Cater to the on-the-go attendee with mobile-friendly content and platforms.



Keep the energy high with light, fun elements, such as gamification and vibrant visuals.



Use social media platforms to amplify your event's reach.



Remember the value of on-demand content, allowing your attendees to engage on their terms and extend the lifespan of your event.

About RingCentral

These strategies serve as ways to innovate and enhance the overall attendee experience. Let's make your next virtual event a total success!

For more advice on how RingCentral can help you do exactly that, [visit us online today](#).

For more information, please contact a sales representative. Visit ringcentral.com or call 855-774-2510.

RingCentral

RingCentral is a leading provider of AI-driven cloud business communications, contact center, video and hybrid event solutions. RingCentral empowers businesses with conversation intelligence and unlocks rich customer and employee interactions to provide insights and improved business outcomes. With decades of expertise in reliable and secure cloud communications, RingCentral has earned the trust of millions of customers and thousands of partners worldwide. Visit ringcentral.com to learn more.

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